

## Rural Space in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Age

# Fundamentals of Medieval and Early Modern Culture

Edited by  
Albrecht Classen and Marilyn Sandidge

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# Rural Space in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Age

The Spatial Turn in Premodern Studies

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### “Lazarus and Abraham, our Jews of Eggenburg”: Jews in the Austrian Countryside in the Fourteenth Century

“It never entered my mind to live in a village without minyan and prayer,” a Jewish woman in one of the *responsa* of Rabbi Meir ben Baruch of Rothenburg ob der Tauber (ca. 1250–1293), the famous thirteenth-century scholar, states.<sup>1</sup> Living in the countryside was, according to Rabbi Meir, trying, cumbersome, and arduous, and therefore altogether not desirable. Meir, who had studied in Würzburg, Mainz, and Paris, had founded the Rothenburg Jeshiva that attracted students from all over Europe, and had spent his later years in his hometown, Worms, notably perceived urban and rural living spaces as being diametrically opposed, with urban existence as the ‘real’ way of living.

Cities, he argued, were the only environment that safeguarded the necessary requirements for ‘proper’ Jewish life, hence, urban Jewish communities were those that provided their members with institutions and facilities such as synagogues, *mikhvot*, and cemeteries, whereas in the countryside, the living conditions for the *Benei haKefarim*, the Jewish people in the villages, were troublesome at best. Living in the countryside meant living away, and, more often than not, too far away from these essential structures to make use of them on a regular basis, or even at any

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Toch, “Economic Activities of German Jews in the Middle Ages,” *Wirtschaftsgeschichte der mittelalterlichen Juden: Fragen und Einschätzungen*, ed. id. Schriften des Historischen Kollegs, Kolloquien, 71 (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 2008), 180–210; here 207. The research for this article was funded by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) who also finances the ongoing publication project “Regesten zur Geschichte der Juden in Österreich.” Two volumes that cover the time until 1365 have already been published (see notes 4 and 40), the third volume (1366–1386) is forthcoming in 2012.

time when the need arose. Living in the countryside therefore meant for medieval Jews that they had to adapt to more than living along with, and together with another religious group that, however close the contacts and however intense the cultural transfer might have been, remained different in many regards.<sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless, Jewish existence in Ashkenazic Europe was never exclusively urban. To which extent the early medieval commercial bases along the trade routes were actually settlements, is still much disputed; for the early Middle Ages, we can assume a very low number of Jews actually settling in Northwest and Central Europe.<sup>3</sup> The Jews such as those mentioned in the *Raffelstettener Zollordnung*, an early tenth-century toll regulation for Upper and Lower Austria that included the payment obligations for *iudei et ceteri mercatores* ("Jews and other merchants"), were most definitely exactly that: Jews who were traveling through the Bavarian east, however slowly and with however many stops.<sup>4</sup> There is no conclusive evidence for a connection between what is referred to as *Judendörfer* ("Jewish villages"), a quite high number of eleventh-century market towns, villages, and farmsteads in the eastern Alpine areas that include the word 'Jud' in their names, and actual Jewish settlement that only got going about two centuries later in this area; nevertheless, a linkage to staging posts and/or shelters of Jewish tradesmen has been suggested.<sup>5</sup>

In the northern and western areas of the Holy Roman Empire as well as in the north of France, most of the Jewish rural settlements of the high Middle Ages were set up in the hinterland of the urban centers, whereas in the southeast, particularly in the territories of today's Austria, it should take up to the mid-thirteenth century that any Jews living outside the cities were mentioned at all—which is a lot less remarkable if we consider how late Jewish settlement in these regions started compared to the areas of the huge Jewish communities, such as the Rhineland.

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<sup>2</sup> Rainer Barzen, "*Benei haKefarim* – die Leute aus den Dörfern: Zur jüdischen Siedlung auf dem Lande in Aschenas und Zarfai im hohen und späteren Mittelalter," *Campana pulsante convocati. Festschrift anlässlich der Emeritierung von Prof. Dr. Alfred Haverkamp*, ed. Frank G. Hirschmann and Gerd Mentgen (Trier: Kliomedia, 2005), 21–37; here 21. Meir tried to leave the realm of the Holy Roman Empire around 1286 when King Rudolph I imposed new taxes on the Jewry, but was caught and imprisoned until his death in 1293.

<sup>3</sup> Michael Toch, *Die Juden im mittelalterlichen Reich*. Enzyklopädie deutscher Geschichte, 44, sec. ed. (1998; Munich: Oldenburg, 2003), 5–6, speaks of 'no more than a few dozen Jewish families' in the ninth century, and 'a few hundred at most' in the tenth (my translation).

<sup>4</sup> Eveline Brugger and Birgit Wiedl, *Regesten zur Geschichte der Juden in Österreich im Mittelalter, 1: Von den Anfängen bis 1338* (Innsbruck, Vienna, and Bolzano: StudienVerlag, 2005), 15, n. 1 (for the internet version, see [http://www.injoest.ac.at/projekte/laufend/mittelalterliche\\_judenurkunden/](http://www.injoest.ac.at/projekte/laufend/mittelalterliche_judenurkunden/), last accessed on Jan. 16, 2012).

<sup>5</sup> Markus Wenninger, "Die Siedlungsgeschichte der innerösterreichischen Juden im Mittelalter und das Problem der 'Juden'-Orte," *Bericht über den 16. österreichischen Historikertag 1984. Veröffentlichungen des Verbandes Österreichischer Geschichtsvereine*, 25 (Vienna: Eigenverlag des Verbandes Österreichischer Geschichtsvereine, 1985), 190–217; here 194–208.

Before the year 1200, the beginning of a Jewish community can be proposed for Vienna<sup>6</sup>; the Jew Schlom, master of the mint<sup>7</sup> of Duke Leopold V (1157–1194) and mentioned around 1192/1196, is the first Jew living on Austrian territory who is known by name.<sup>8</sup>

In the 1220s, Rabbi Isaak bar Mosche, who counted among the most important Ashkenazic scholars, settled down in Vienna<sup>9</sup>; big-scale Jewish businessmen, like the Hungarian Jew Teka, extended the range of their activities into the Austrian territory; and in the first decades of the thirteenth century the Jewish communities of Wiener Neustadt and Krems, second largest to Vienna, started to prosper.<sup>10</sup> By the late 1230s, the Jewish population in the duchy of Austria had grown to an extent that it warranted the attention of the Austrian duke. Up until then, the definition of the legal and economic position of the German Jewry had been the sole right of the Holy Roman Emperor to whose treasure they belonged, although in many other areas of the Empire the Emperor's prerogative had by then already been reduced to a mere claim in the course of the transition of imperial rights to the regional rulers.

The Austrian Duke Frederic II (1211–1246), already engaged in a power struggle with his imperial namesake in the 1230s, managed to assert his rights to the Jews living in his territories, even though it should take until 1331 that the *Judenregal*, the 'right to the Jews,' was officially given to the (then Habsburg) dukes of Austria.<sup>11</sup> Frederic's (as well as his successors') interest in 'his' Jews was primarily economic, and in his ducal privilege of 1244, the first encompassing definition of the legal standing of the Austrian Jews, he granted the Austrian Jewry a series of

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<sup>6</sup> In 1204, the (by then already existing) Viennese synagogue was mentioned for the first time, Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 18–19, n. 5.

<sup>7</sup> Jews as masters of a mint were not uncommon in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; see Toch, *Juden im mittelalterlichen Reich* (see note 3), 7; Markus Wenninger, "Juden als Münzmeister, Zöllpächter und fürstliche Finanzbeamte im mittelalterlichen Aschkenas," *Wirtschaftsgeschichte der mittelalterlichen Juden* (see note 1), 121–38.

<sup>8</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 16–18, ns. 3 and 4. Schlom and his family were killed by crusaders in 1196.

<sup>9</sup> Avraham (Rami) Reiner, "From Rabbenu Tam To R. Isaac of Vienna: The Hegemony of the French Talmudic School in the Twelfth Century," *The Jews of Europe in the Middle Ages (Tenth to Fifteenth Centuries)*, ed. Christoph Cluse (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), 273–83; here 273–76; Martha Keil, "Gemeinde und Kultur – Die mittelalterlichen Grundlagen jüdischen Lebens in Österreich," Eveline Brugger, Martha Keil, Christoph Lind, Albert Lichtblau, and Barbara Staudinger, *Geschichte der Juden in Österreich* (Vienna: Ueberreuter, 2006), 15–122; here 27 and 64.

<sup>10</sup> Eveline Brugger, "Von der Ansiedlung bis zur Vertreibung – Juden in Österreich im Mittelalter," *Geschichte der Juden in Österreich* (see note 9), 123–228; here 127–29.

<sup>11</sup> On May 4, 1331, Emperor Ludwig IV confirmed a series of legal titles for the Habsburg dukes Albrecht II and Otto, among these the 'rights to the Jews'; see Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 278, n. 338.

economic privileges and a quite wide-ranging protection that suggest that he aimed at providing a further incentive for Jews to settle down in Austria.<sup>12</sup>

In return, Frederic and his successors profited from a prospering Jewish population. They subjected them to taxation and maintained control over Jewish business in general, which enabled them to raise considerable amounts of money whenever they needed to. In addition to that, their control over Jewish business also helped the dukes to keep in check those members of the nobility who indebted themselves to their, the dukes', Jews. The ducal privilege applied to all Jews in Austria, regardless of their place of residence. While the ducal interest lay mainly with the bigger communities, Jewish settlement in the lesser populated areas was not discouraged. By mid-thirteenth century, Jews were living in a number of smaller towns in the countryside of today's Austria, such as in Tulln (1267, mention of Jews in the regulations of the butchers' guild) and Laa an der Thaya (1277, town charter) in Lower Austria,<sup>13</sup> or in the Carinthian market town of Straßburg, the residence of the bishops of Gurk.<sup>14</sup>

Apart from legal documents such as royal or ducal privileges, town charters or guild regulations, the documents that deal with daily interaction between Christians and Jews are mostly business charters, and herein lies the major source-related problem when dealing with low(er)-scale Jewish business. Transactions between members of the nobility and high-ranking financiers, that usually included high, long-term credits, were more likely to be recorded in writing, and, if added to the treasure/archive of a noble family, more likely to be preserved; thus, the transmitted source material focuses heavily on the social and economic elite of both Christian and Jewish business partners. Low, short-term loans and the transactions of small-scale pawn brokers, however, were hardly ever preserved in writing, and while literacy and access to literate people—as, e.g., in the 'institution' of town writers—became more common in the urban centers of the thirteenth century, it remained the exception in the rural areas. Due to this scant appearance of Jews dwelling in a rural setting in the source material, any conclusive

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<sup>12</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 35–38, n. 25. For the pull factors in regard to Jewish (im)migration in general, see Hans-Jörg Gilomen, "Jüdische Migration in die Städte im Spätmittelalter — 'Ganz Israel ist füreinander verantwortlich beim Tragen der Last des Exils'," *Migration als soziale Herausforderung: Historische Formen solidarischen Handelns von der Antike bis zum 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. Joachim Bahlcke, Rainer Leng, and Peter Scholz. Stuttgarter Beiträge zur historischen Migrationsforschung, 8 Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2011), 123–48; here 127–28.

<sup>13</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 61–62, n. 46 (Tulln), 73, n. 57 (Laa), Birgit Wiedl, "Jews and the City. Parameters of Jewish Urban Life in Late Medieval Austria," *Urban Space in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Age*, ed. Albrecht Classen. Fundamentals of Medieval and Early Modern Culture 4 (Berlin and New York: deGruyter, 2009), 273–308; here 293 and 297.

<sup>14</sup> Wilhelm Wadl, *Geschichte der Juden in Kärnten im Mittelalter. Mit einem Ausblick bis zum Jahre 1867*. Das Kärntner Landesarchiv, 9. 3rd ed. (1981; Klagenfurt: Verlag des Kärntner Landesarchivs, 2009), 227.

deductions regarding their social and economic status and their Christian clientele are problematic at best.

The earliest documents of Jewish business activities in the countryside generally show an urban involvement from one or both sides of the business partners. In 1305, the Viennese Jew Isak sold revenues at Falkenstein, that had been his private property, to Count Berthold of Maidburg.<sup>15</sup> While Isak, “servant” of the Queen Elisabeth (*der* [ . . . ] *chueniginnen jude*) and related to the wealthiest and most influential families, was doubtlessly a member of the higher social and economic class, four other Jews served as witnesses out of whom at least one (also named Isak) was living in Mautern, an old but comparatively small settlement opposite Krems on the south bank of the Danube.<sup>16</sup> This document represents the only known mention of Jewish presence in Mautern, and one of the earliest Jews who lived in the countryside known by name.

It is quite likely that any Jews who lived there were members of the Jewish community in the town of Krems that housed one of the biggest communities in the duchy of Austria. While Isak of Mautern therefore would have had easy access to the synagogue and the other facilities at Krems and would have been able to participate in the community prayers and festive ceremonies, his contemporary Leb, who lived in the village of Gars at the river Kamp, would have had to cover a distance of about 30 kilometers downstream the river through a rather hilly landscape to get to Krems.<sup>17</sup> Unlike Isak of Mautern however, who only appears as a witness to a business transaction of a high-ranking businessman, Leb himself was (to judge by his few appearances) an accomplished moneylender: in 1312, three brothers of the noble family of Buchberg pawned their castle, several plots of land, and the village of Otten with all its revenues to Leb for the sum of 150 pound pennies, a loan that had presumably already been taken out by their father.<sup>18</sup>

The Buchberg family had been in financial troubles for several years, counting some of the most prestigious Jewish moneylenders among their creditors, and continued to incur debts with Jewish business partners in the following years. Tied

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<sup>15</sup> Eveline Brugger, *Adel und Juden in Niederösterreich. Die Beziehungen niederösterreichischer Adelsfamilien zur jüdischen Führungsschicht von den Anfängen bis zur Pulkauer Verfolgung 1338* (St. Pölten: Niederösterreichisches Institut für Landeskunde, 2004), 51–53 and 119–20; Klaus Lohrmann, *Die Wiener Juden im Mittelalter* (Berlin and Vienna: Philo, 2000), 131–32.

<sup>16</sup> See *1100 Jahre civitas Mutarensis. Mautern in Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit*. Ausstellungskatalog, 2nd. ed. (Mautern: Verlag der Gemeinde 1999).

<sup>17</sup> A medieval synagogue at Hadersdorf am Kamp (which would have shortened Leb’s journey by about 5 kilometers) is only reported by the very unreliable Leopold Moses, *Die Juden in Niederösterreich (mit besonderer Berücksichtigung des XVII. Jahrhunderts)*. (Vienna: Verlag Heinrich Glanz, 1935), 129; see also Pierre Genée, *Synagogen in Österreich* (Vienna: Löcker Verlag, 1992), 28.

<sup>18</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 182–83, n. 183.

to the document from 1312 was a Hebrew charter from after 1330<sup>19</sup> that was issued by the Jewish brothers Rachem and Manoach, sons of Jehuda haKohen, who sold half of the castle Buchberg, that had fallen to them, to Duke Albrecht II (1298–1358). Unfortunately, no information as to how it had come to pass that Rachem and Manoach were entitled to selling the pawn or as to where they lived is provided in the text of the document, but the additional corroboration by Mosche bar Gamliel, the Viennese Rabbi,<sup>20</sup> gives evidence to the fact that they were members of the Viennese community.

An identification of Leb with Rachem and Manoach's father Jehuda, as argued for by Spitzer, is at least problematic<sup>21</sup>: while names meaning 'lion' were used as *kinmuim*, that is, vernacular or profane names, for Jehuda (due to the comparison of Judah to a young lion in Jacob's benediction, Genesis 49:9),<sup>22</sup> there is not necessarily any connection between the 'holy name,' the Hebrew name that is given to the Jewish boy at his circumcision, and the name that is usually used.<sup>23</sup> Another appearance of Leb of Gars a few years later further speaks against this identification; and while it disproves any connection of Leb with the big Viennese community, it points at a more continuous presence of at least one Jewish family in Gars: in 1324, Leb had moved to Retz,<sup>24</sup> a small town close to Moravia that had been newly founded only a few decades earlier. In his business documents with the local lower nobility, he was called "Leb the Jew of Retz, son of Menlein of Gars", indicating that not only he but also his father—and therefore presumably the whole family—had taken up residence in Gars for at least several years. The wording of the charter allows the assumption that Menlein was not only still alive in 1324 but still living in the small Lower Austrian village.

Leb is a rather typical example (if we can deduce any 'typical' characteristics of source material that scarce) of a Jew living in the countryside who was yet

<sup>19</sup> The Hebrew charter was tied to the charter from 1312 with a string that has been removed; the charter is now filed under the date 1330–1347 at the Austrian State Archives at Vienna (Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv Wien, AUR 1330–1347); see Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 266–67, n. 317 (full Hebrew text and German translation); Brugger, *Adel und Juden* (see note 15), 65–66.

<sup>20</sup> Keil, "Gemeinde und Kultur" (see note 9), 65.

<sup>21</sup> Shlomo Spitzer, "Niederösterreichische hebräische Urkunden aus dem 14. Jahrhundert," *Unsere Heimat* 51 (1980), 185–91; here 187, with fn. 5.

<sup>22</sup> Alexander Beider, *A Dictionary of Ashkenazic Given Names: Their Origins, Structure, Pronunciation, and Migrations* (Bergenfield, NJ: Avotaynu, 2001), 358.

<sup>23</sup> Martha Keil, "'Petachja, genannt Zecherl': Namen und Beinamen von Juden im deutschen Sprachraum des Spätmittelalters," *Personennamen und Identität. Namengebung und Namensgebrauch als Anzeiger individueller Bestimmung und gruppenbezogener Zuordnung*, ed. Reinhard Härtel. *Grazer grundwissenschaftliche Forschungen*, 3, Schriftenreihe der Akademie Friesach, 2 (Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1997), 119–146; here 120–21 and 133–35.

<sup>24</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 225–26, n. 256 (1324) and 276, n. 334 (1331, with no mention of the father); Brugger, *Adel und Juden* (see note 15), 64, 125–26 and 130–31 (edition).



financially strong enough to be of interest to a noble clientele, although he was no match to his urban contemporaries, such as the Viennese Jewess Gutmanin, or Nachman of the Carinthian town of Friesach that was under the rulership of Salzburg.<sup>25</sup> Leb's later business dealings suggest at least considerable wealth; in 1324, he bought a feudal estate for 62 pound pennies, seven years later, a tithe for 95 pound pennies, both located in the immediate surroundings of his residence, which sheds not only (some) light on his financial background but also on his close ties with the rural area he lived in.<sup>26</sup>

Another source-related problem that affects both urban and rural Jews lies in the type of the transmitted source material. Business charters—if the transaction was deemed important enough to warrant a written record at all—such as obligations, debenture bonds, letters given out to the guarantors, or quittances, were documents that lost their validity when either the debt had been paid back or new arrangements had been made (including the increasingly popular 'killing' of the debt in the late fourteenth century—an annulment of the debt by ducal order). This means that even with regard to the rather random tradition of written documents of the late Middle Ages, the percentage of business documents lost to us is particularly high. Sometimes, a V-shaped incision was cut into an obligation as a sign of cassation, which was kept by the (former) debtors as a proof for the payback of the debt or the redemption of the pawn; yet the majority of these documents is irrevocably lost. An exception to this are monasteries, in whose archives the expensive parchment was sometimes put to another use: many high and late medieval charters found their way into book covers, either as a 'filling' or as the inside page of the cover.<sup>27</sup>

The presence of several Jews in the *Waldviertel* area, the north-west of today's Lower Austria, in the years 1316/1321 is documented in a rather unique way: at some point in time, annulled obligations were cut up and sewn together to form pouches for the seals of charters that were deemed more important. On these snippets can be found the only evidence that the Jew Abraham, who had been

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<sup>25</sup> Nachman, for example, gave out a loan of (about) 800 *mark* silver, the family, originating from the Styrian town of Judenburg, owned houses in Vienna and had 'branch offices' in Salzburg and, presumably, Regensburg; see Wadl, *Geschichte der Juden in Kärnten* (see note 14), 209–22; Gutmanin, widow and daughter-in-law of two prestigious Viennese moneylenders, Gutman and Lebman, had borrowed 430 pound pennies to the noble family of Hagenberg (Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* [see note 4], 308, n. 392 [Nachman], 233, n. 268 [Gutmanin]; see the index there for further examples).

<sup>26</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 225–26, n. 256, 276, n. 334.

<sup>27</sup> See for example the two obligations to the Viennese Jew Efferlein that were re-used as a book cover by the monastery of Zwettl, <http://www.mom-ca.uni-koeln.de/mom/AT-StiAZ/Urkunden/1323-1325/charter> and [http://www.mom-ca.uni-koeln.de/mom/AT-StiAZ/Urkunden/1306\\_III\\_22/charter](http://www.mom-ca.uni-koeln.de/mom/AT-StiAZ/Urkunden/1306_III_22/charter) (last accessed on Jan. 16, 2012).

living with his father at Eggenburg around 1311, had moved to Zwettl in or before 1316. Furthermore, these seal pouches add to our knowledge about three other Jews in the area: Syboto and his son Joseph, who lived in the small town of Horn (40 kilometers north of Krems) and did business with the monastery of Zwettl,<sup>28</sup> and Hendlein of Gmünd (70 kilometers northwest of Krems at the Bohemian border), who appears as a business partner of the monastery of Zwettl and the nunnery of St. Bernhard in the vicinity of Zwettl (see Fig. 2).<sup>29</sup>

In the archives of the abbey of Lilienfeld, another Jewish family can be traced that had taken up residence in the countryside in the first half of the fourteenth century. In 1317, the Jewess Hadas, her sons Sechlein and Smeril and “other relatives living in Traiskirchen,” a village about 25 kilometers south of Vienna, got into a dispute with the Abbey of Lilienfeld over four vineyards which the Jews claimed had been pawned to them prior to the donation to the monastery by the former owner. By an arbitral verdict of King Frederic’s representatives, the Jews were granted 16 pound pennies, plus half of the vineyards’ harvest until Hadas’s death.<sup>30</sup> At least her son Smeril stayed in Traiskirchen, where he can be traced doing business with the local gentry and Viennese citizens, whereas none of the other family members are mentioned again.<sup>31</sup>

However, transactions between Jews and villagers, let alone peasants, which presumably made up the majority of the clientele of the rural Jewry, were hardly ever even noted down. It is therefore difficult, if not impossible, to give a conclusive judgment as to how extensive the businesses of most of the rural Jews (as well as their low-scale urban counterparts) were. The (preserved) business documents of Jews such as Isak of Raabs,<sup>32</sup> Lazarus and his son Abraham, called ‘our Jews’ by the town council of Eggenburg,<sup>33</sup> Abraham and Jeschem of Zwettl,<sup>34</sup> Smerlein of Krut,<sup>35</sup> and the Jewesses Sterna of Wolkersdorf<sup>36</sup> and Hendlein of Stockstall<sup>37</sup> hardly ever include references to more than 20–30 pound pennies,

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<sup>28</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 213–14, n. 234. Syboto and Joseph are otherwise documented in a manuscript kept at the library of Zwettl, id., 209–10, ns. 228–29.

<sup>29</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 237–39, ns. 275–76, 265–66, n. 316.

<sup>30</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 199–200, n. 212.

<sup>31</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 246, n. 288 (1328), and 259, n. 306 (1329).

<sup>32</sup> 1330, Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 269, n. 322.

<sup>33</sup> 1311, Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 179–80, n. 178.

<sup>34</sup> 1315–1317 (Abraham), 1337 (Jeschem), Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 190, n. 196,

<sup>35</sup> 1390, Rudolf Geyer and Leopold Sailer, *Urkunden aus Wiener Grundbüchern zur Geschichte der Wiener Juden im Mittelalter*. Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte der Juden in Deutschösterreich 10 (Vienna: Deutscher Verlag für Jugend und Volk, 1931), 112, n. 335. Krut is either Großkrut or Dürnkrut, both located in the northern Weinviertel, northwest of Vienna.

<sup>36</sup> 1331, Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 279, n. 340.

<sup>37</sup> 1383 and 1387, Geyer and Sailer, *Urkunden aus Wiener Grundbüchern* (see note 35), 19, n. 55, 70–71,

often less, while Syboto of Horn, about whose other business transactions we know nothing, had at least been able to give out a loan that had, with interest, added up to a sum of 130 pound pennies. In 1305, a *sefer mizwot katan* ("small book of regulations") was written for a Jew Jacob of Horn.<sup>38</sup> Whether this Jacob might be identified with a Jew Jacob who appears in a business charter that was issued in Horn in 1327<sup>39</sup> is unclear, yet possible, which would suggest a continuous presence of (somewhat wealthy) Jews in the town for several decades.

None of the early business dealings of the Jew Mosche, son of Isak, who lived in the market town of Perchtoldsdorf (ca. 15 kilometers south of the center of Vienna, right at today's city border) since 1355, suggest any high financial capacity. The purchase of a farmstead, and the re-selling of it a year later never exceed the amount of 50 pounds, and his possession of a house at Perchtoldsdorf only indicate a sufficient livelihood.<sup>40</sup> His corroborative signature on a Hebrew charter of the Carinthian Jew Abrech of Friesach in 1357, however, points at more far-reaching business contacts,<sup>41</sup> and a document from 1361 gives proof of Mosche's considerable capacity as a moneylender: in a settlement with the noble family of Schaunberg, the Austrian Duke Rudolph IV (1339–1365) agreed to pay off some of his debts by taking over the Schaunbergs' obligations toward Mosche of Perchtoldsdorf that had amounted to no less than 1.200 pound pennies.<sup>42</sup> A note scribbled at the bottom of the document suggests that Mosche did indeed get his money from the—habitually broke—Austrian duke, indicating that Rudolph IV did not want to impair the financial capacities of someone he deemed useful.

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n. 197.

<sup>38</sup> *Germania Judaica*, II: *Von 1238 bis zur Mitte des 14. Jahrhunderts*, part 1: Aachen – Luzern, part 2: Maastricht – Zwolle, ed. Zvi Avneri (Tübingen: J. C. B Mohr/Paul Siebeck, 1968); here II/1, 370.

<sup>39</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 240–41, n. 279.

<sup>40</sup> 1355, 1358, 1360 (mention of his house in Perchtoldsdorf), Eveline Brugger and Birgit Wiedl, *Regesten zur Geschichte der Juden in Österreich im Mittelalter*, 2: 1339–1365 (Innsbruck, Vienna, and Bolzano: StudienVerlag, 2010); for the internet version, see [http://www.injoest.ac.at/projekte/laufend/mittelalterliche\\_judenurkunden/](http://www.injoest.ac.at/projekte/laufend/mittelalterliche_judenurkunden/), last accessed on Jan. 16, 2012), 172, n. 808, 200, n. 868, 241, n. 948. The entries in *Germania Judaica*, II/2 (see note 38), 648–49 and *Germania Judaica*, III: 1350–1519, part 1: *Ortschaftsartikel Aach – Lychen*, part 2: *Ortschaftsartikel Mährisch-Budwitz – Zwolle*, part 3: *Gebietsartikel, Einleitungsartikel und Indices*, ed. Arye Maimon, Mordechai Breuer, and Yacov Guggenheim (Tübingen: J. C. B Mohr/Paul Siebeck, 1987, 1995, 2003), here III/2, 1094–95 and 1605, with fn. 189, are somewhat problematic since they place Mosche firmly in Vienna, with Perchtoldsdorf as his "secondary residence;" yet although the source material gives evidence that Mosche enjoyed strong ties to the Viennese community, he is always called "from/of Perchtoldsdorf" in the sources.

<sup>41</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 2* (see note 40), 186–87, n. 840.

<sup>42</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 2* (see note 40), 266, n. 999; see Birgit Wiedl, "Die Kriegskassen voll jüdischen Geldes? Der Beitrag der österreichischen Juden zur Kriegsfinanzierung im 14. Jahrhundert," *Krieg und Wirtschaft von der Antike bis ins 21. Jahrhundert*, ed. Wolfram Dornik, Walter Iber, and Johannes Giessauf (Innsbruck, Vienna, and Bolzano: StudienVerlag, 2010), 241–60; here 244 and 250–51.

Mosche's further business contacts mainly concerned members of the Viennese citizenry but extended also to high-ranking noblemen such as the Counts of Ortenburg and Pfannberg, the Austrian lord steward, and, again, the Austrian dukes Rudolph IV and Albrecht III (1349/1350–1395).<sup>43</sup> A document from 1367 gives evidence of Mosche's high rank also in a social context: together with three Jews from Vienna, and one of Korneuburg and Ödenburg/Sopron respectively, Mosche is named "Jewish master" (*Judenmeister*) by the Austrian dukes who demanded the payment of 20.000 florin from the Jews who had stood surety for another Mosche, a high-ranking moneylender from the town of Cilli (Celje, Slovenia).

Since Mosche of Cilli (and his brother Chatschim) had fled from the ducal territory, these *judenmeister* were responsible for collecting the money, while—quite untypical for guarantors—the dukes promised them that they would not be liable for the sum with their own properties.<sup>44</sup> The status of these six *judenmeister* is not clear—it is quite unlikely that they were rabbis but more probable that they were *parnassim*, the heads of the respective Jewish communities, which gives possible evidence of an established Jewish community at Perchtoldsdorf around 1360. The community at Perchtoldsdorf flourished from the 1370s onward, a synagogue was established, and moneylenders such as Patusch<sup>45</sup> joined Mosche, who continued doing business together with his son Mankut and his grandson Nassan.

The presence of at least two Jewish families engaged in moneylending warranted the appearance of Jewish judges, Christians who were responsible for business dealings between Jews and Christians, that can be traced in the sources from 1377 onward until the 1420s when Jewish life was brought to a violent end in Austria. Like Mosche's, Patusch's family was business-wise oriented toward

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<sup>43</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten* 2 (see note 40), 271, n. 1010 (1362, the Count of Pfannberg stands surety for a debt of the Count of Ortenburg), 275, n. 1019 (Rudolph IV settles a dispute between his servant Caspar of Altmannsdorf and Mosche), Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv Wien (Austrian State Archives Vienna), AUR Uk. 1369 I 18 (Albrecht III annuls the debts of his lord steward with the Jews Mosche of Perchtoldsdorf and Judman of Vienna). Mosche makes his last appearance in 1381 when selling a vineyard to a Viennese citizen (*Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Wien*, II: *Regesten aus dem Archive der Stadt Wien*, part 1: *Verzeichnis der Originalurkunden des städtischen Archivs 1239–1411* [Vienna: Verlag des Alterthums-Vereines zu Wien bei Carl Konegen, 1898], 243, n. 1019).

<sup>44</sup> Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv Wien (Austrian State Archives Vienna), AUR Uk. 1367 VI 16; Christian Lackner, *Regesta Habsburgica. Regesten der Grafen von Habsburg und der Herzoge von Österreich aus dem Hause Habsburg*, 5: *Die Regesten der Herzoge von Österreich (1365–1395)*, part 1: 1365–1370 (Vienna and Munich: Oldenbourg, 2007), 97, n. 199. Klaus Lohrmann, *Judenrecht und Judenpolitik im mittelalterlichen Österreich* (Vienna and Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 1990), 226.

<sup>45</sup> Patusch is mentioned as Jew of Perchtoldsdorf from 1373 to 1377, *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Wien*, III: *Grundbücher der Stadt Wien*, part 1 (Vienna: Verlag des Alterthums-Vereines zu Wien bei Carl Konegen, 1898), ns. 521, 522, 694, and 909.

Vienna, namely his nephew Lesir who counted many citizens of Vienna among his clientele and quite possibly lived there at least part-time.<sup>46</sup> Lesir served as a *parnass* in the Viennese community in 1386 and 1398, for the second time together with his son Chadgim,<sup>47</sup> and one of Patusch's daughters was married to Tenichlein, a Viennese moneylender and rabbi.<sup>48</sup> It attests to the importance of the Perchtoldsdorf 'branch' of the family that, when doing business with the Priory of Klosterneuburg, Tenichlein was called "Jew of Vienna, son-in-law of Patusch of Perchtoldsdorf,"<sup>49</sup> just as Lesir was referred to as "Patusch's nephew" in most of the documents.

Residing in a rural area did therefore not necessarily equal having to eke out a living, nor did it mean a limitation of the clientele to small-town citizenry and peasants. Big-deal moneylenders such as Mosche of Perchtoldsdorf and, particularly, Hetschel of Herzogenburg<sup>50</sup> might have been the exception, but Jews like Nechlein, son of Maymon, who (both?) lived in Weiten, which was nothing but a hamlet about 15 kilometers north of Melk, could at least muster the financial capacity to lend a hundred pound pennies to the noble family of Reichenstein.<sup>51</sup> Their appearance is the only evidence of Jewish presence apart from the mention of Weiten among the list of blood sites of 1338 in the Nürnberg memorial book; the alleged existence of a medieval synagogue was already interpreted as a legend in the nineteenth century.<sup>52</sup> Some rural Jews would establish, or join, companies with high-profile moneylenders, such as the Jew Scheblein who lived in the Styrian market town of Schwanberg, about 50 kilometers south-west of Graz, but in 1340 appears together with his namesake Scheblein of Cilli (Celje, today's Slovenia) and Mendlein of Graz, two financiers of the high nobility.<sup>53</sup>

But even if ducal and noble customers were too upscale a target group for most of the Jewish moneylenders in the countryside, they managed to built up their own circle(s) of clientele which often extended beyond the residents of the their immediate surroundings into the lower social strata of the urban centers. In the

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<sup>46</sup> Geyer and Sailer, *Urkunden aus Wiener Grundbüchern* (see note 35), 600 (list of entries for Lesir); Lohrmann, *Judenrecht und Judenpolitik* (see note 44) 176–77;

<sup>47</sup> Geyer and Sailer, *Urkunden aus Wiener Grundbüchern* (see note 35), 55, n. 147 (1386), 293, n. 959 (1398).

<sup>48</sup> Keil, "Gemeinde und Kultur" (see note 9), 65; Lohrmann, *Judenrecht und Judenpolitik* (see note 44) 176–77, 211 (on Tenichels business).

<sup>49</sup> Stiftsarchiv Klosterneuburg (Archives of the Monastery of Klosterneuburg), Uk. 1372 III 2.

<sup>50</sup> See the contribution of Eveline Brugger in this volume.

<sup>51</sup> 1361, Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 2* (see note 40), 261, n. 987.

<sup>52</sup> Genée, *Synagogen in Österreich* (see note 17), 28.

<sup>53</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 2* (see note 40), 15–16, ns. 468–69, the identification of the Scheblein that appears from 1342–1344 with either Scheblein of Cilli or Scheblein of Schwanberg is questionable.

*Judenbuch der Scheffstrasse*,<sup>54</sup> a manuscript recording the debts of the inhabitants of the Scheffstrasse, an area outside the Viennese city walls mostly populated by craftsmen, for the years 1389–1420, non-Viennese Jews appear in high number: Josepin (Sara) of Feldsberg and David of Drauburg (Dravograd, Slovenia) granted as many loans as local Jews, and far more than the members of the most prestigious and wealthy Steuss family who were possibly ‘out of range’ for the average craftsman.

The Viennese *Grundbücher* (land registers and rent rolls) show an only slightly different picture—while more business dealings of Viennese Jews, including high-ranking financiers such as Rabbi Meir of Erfurt, David Steuss’s son-in-law, and his wife Hansüß, are recorded and make up the better part of the entries. Jews like Hirsch of Lengbach, Slomlein of Zistersdorf, and, again, the Feldsberg family of the Jewess Josepin figure prominently. A closer analysis of these sources, however, uncovers a main problem that arises when dealing with ‘countryside Jews’: for a good part of the entries, it is impossible to determine where the Jews in question actually lived. Denomination by origin is quite common for both Jews and Christians, meaning that the ‘location’ that usually follows their names—“Slomlein the Jew of Zistersdorf”—might as well have referred only to their origin instead of their actual place of residence. Even more problematic are documents that identify Jews by means of naming a prominent relative, such as “the Jew Schäftlein, Josepin of Feldsberg’s son-in-law,” since “of Feldsberg” could very well be referring to Josepin only. This, nevertheless, offers evidence supporting the importance of the Feldsberg Jewess, were it not for the fact that Josepin herself, who is only documented in Viennese sources, might have lived in Vienna at least part-time as well.<sup>55</sup>

Jewish settlement in rural villages was with a few exceptions limited even in the late fourteenth century, the Jewish population was often likely to consist of no more than one or two families. We know very little about the daily life of these Jews, and how they coped with, and overcame the difficulties they had to face when living not only door to door, but quite often together in one house with their Christian neighbors. While it is tantamount to a commonplace by now even to mention the numerous, and manifold daily contacts between Christians and Jews living in a city, and the cultural translation that came as an inevitable result of these contacts, Jewish urban space was, even if the Jews were by no means confined to it, more clearly defined than in the rural areas. Jews in the countryside,

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<sup>54</sup> Arthur Goldmann, *Das Judenbuch der Scheffstraße zu Wien (1389–1420), mit einer Schriftprobe. Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte der Juden in Deutsch-Österreich*, 1 (Vienna and Leipzig: Wilhelm Braumüller, 1908); on *Judenbücher* in Austria in general, see Wiedl, “Jews and the City” (see note 13), 291–92.

<sup>55</sup> Keil, “Namen und Beinamen” (see note 23), 124–25.

however, often had to celebrate their feasts inside a house that was otherwise occupied by Christians, and to rely on their Christian neighbors that they would at least partly provide their daily needs and aid them in their daily work.

Apart from houses, Jewish ownership of vineyards was perhaps the most common form of Jewish landownership in the Middle Ages that integrated the owner, be they urban or rural, at least partly into the cycle of rural work.<sup>56</sup> Already the earliest documents on Jewish existence in Austria deal with vineyards:<sup>57</sup> the twelfth-century Jew Schlom, master of the ducal mint, was involved in a legal dispute with the Bavarian monastery of Vornbach over the property titles to a vineyard. Schlom stated that the vineyard had been in his possession and that the Christian who had sold it to the monastery had been his official who had only cultivated the vineyard.<sup>58</sup>

The possession of a vineyard (the location of which is unclear) does, however, not make Schlom a country-dweller. While Schlom was living in Vienna, where around this time the first Jewish community was being established, the case is not so clear for other thirteenth-century Jews who, at least temporarily, were in the possession of vineyards. In 1239, the subdeacon Blasius confirmed the surrender of several estates to the monastery of Saint Nicola at Passau, including two vineyards at Rossatz (on the southern bank of the Danube, ca. 10 kilometers west of Krems). Before the monastery could fully take possession of the vineyards, however, they needed to redeem them for the amount of ten pound Viennese pennies from the Jew Bibas, to whom Blasius had pledged them.<sup>59</sup> In 1275, the Priory of Klosterneuburg sold a vineyard to Konrad of Tulln, the Austrian *landschreiber* ("county scribe"), and his wife, who had redeemed the vineyard from the Jewess Dreslinna for 100 pound pennies.<sup>60</sup> Both transactions are examples for vineyards that had been pledged to Jews by their former (Christian) owners who, in failing to redeem them, had to sell them to other Christians who were able to come up with the required amount of money. Vineyards were a popular pawn of Christian debtors, particularly with the manifold varieties of possibilities they offered.

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<sup>56</sup> For the earliest notion of Jewish ownership of vineyards in the Ashkenazic region, see Toch, "Economic Activities" (see note 1), 205–06. See also Gerd Mentgen, *Studien zur Geschichte der Juden im mittelalterlichen Elsaß*. Forschungen zur Geschichte der Juden, Abteilung A: Abhandlungen, 2 (Hanover: Verlag Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1995), 557–74.

<sup>57</sup> Martha Keil, "Velliner, Ausstich, Tribuswinkler: Zum Weingenuss österreichischer Juden im Mittelalter," „Und wenn schon, dann Bischof oder Abt". *Im Gedenken an Günther Hödl (1941–2005)*, ed. Christian Domenig, Johannes Grabmayer, Reinhard Stauber, Karl Stuhlpfarrer, and Markus Wenninger (Klagenfurt: Kärntner Druckerei, 2006), 53–72; here 55–56.

<sup>58</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 16–17, n. 3. Schlom was murdered by crusaders in 1196; see ead., 17–18, n. 4.

<sup>59</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 33, n. 22.

<sup>60</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 69, n. 53.

The vineyard itself could be pawned, but in doing so the owner faced the imminent danger of losing his property if it remained unredeemed, as the examples above show. To avoid this, some debtors only pledged the annual crop yield while the estate itself remained in their possession.<sup>61</sup> In the wine-growing parts of Austria, particularly along the eastern Danube, and in the hinterland of the towns of Wiener Neustadt and Marburg (Maribor, Slovenia), vineyards were the most common pledges.<sup>62</sup> If the unredeemed vineyard (or at least certain rights to it) had passed into the ownership of the Jewish creditors, they were, however, under no obligation to resell it to Christians, but quite often kept the vineyard for some time and cultivated it themselves. Vineyards were included in the property on which the tax obligations of the Jews were based on,<sup>63</sup> and the obligation of a Jewish owner toward the respective lord of the vineyard differed in no way from those of their Christian neighbors.

The son of the wealthy Jewish businessman Schwärzlein, Mordechai, had moved from the family's main seat in Vienna, where he had been involved in high-ranking business dealings with his father and brothers, to the small town of Zistersdorf, close to the Hungarian border, and had acquired a vineyard there which he seemed to have cultivated himself. In 1319, he was accused by the Abbey of Heiligenkreuz of not having handed over his annual due of one *eimer* ('bucket', ca. 58 liters) to them for several years. The arbitrators, the Austrian cellarer (who was responsible for disputes concerning vineyards) Konrad of Kyburg and the Viennese Jew Marusch, ordered Mordechai to pay an annual fee of fifteen Viennese pennies from this year on, yet there is no mention of any compensation payment for the past years. The involvement of high-profile officials (the document is corroborated with the seal of the Austrian treasurer, responsible for the Austrian Jewry) and the surprisingly lenient decision in regard to any compensation were possibly due to Mordechai's (and his family's) prominent status,<sup>64</sup> yet the general procedure differs in no way from similar disputes, even though not only the accused but also one of the arbitrators were Jewish. The verdict also hints at Mordechai's continuing stay at Zistersdorf; unfortunately, it is his last appearance in the sources. Whether the Jews that lived in Zistersdorf around 1400, Yzcka and the brothers Joseph and Slomlein, were related to Mordechai, is unknown.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Keil, "Zum Weingenuss österreichischer Juden" (see note 57), 56. This practice was generally common; see Mentgen, *Juden im mittelalterliche Elsaß* (see note 56), 566–68.

<sup>62</sup> Keil, "Zum Weingenuss österreichischer Juden" (see note 57), 57 (on Wiener Neustadt).

<sup>63</sup> Keil, "Zum Weingenuss österreichischer Juden" (see note 57), 58–60.

<sup>64</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 203–04, n. 219; Lohrmann, *Wiener Juden* (see note 15), 45.

<sup>65</sup> Geyer and Sailer, *Urkunden aus Wiener Grundbüchern* (see note 35), 14–15, n. 45 (Yzcka of Zistersdorf, together with Hesklein of Raabs), 598 (entries of Joseph), 608 (entries of Slomlein).



Apart from being a valuable pawn, vineyards and their fruit were of vital ritual importance for medieval Jews. Kosher wine was required for all Jewish feasts, weddings, and circumcisions and was thus needed by both rural and urban Jews. The production procedures of kosher wine had to be carried out either by the Jewish owners themselves or other Jews who were capable of maintaining the ritual purity of the product.<sup>66</sup> Whereas non-Jews were often employed as helping hands for those vineyards in Jewish possession that were not intended for personal use, vineyards that were to yield kosher wine were to be maintained by Jews only. Other than that, however, Jewish viticulture followed the same rules as those that applied to their Christian contemporaries. Jewish winemakers cultivated the same types of vine as their Christian neighbors, and we must certainly not disregard the possibility of a helping hand being offered every now and then if need arose. In the areas dominated by agriculture, the organization of labor was very much governed by the calendar: harvest times, such as grape gathering, were the same for Jews and Christians, and were often organized “by the vineyard”, meaning that all those who owned a vineyard in a certain area went to gather the grapes together, even if, as already eleventh-century Rabbi Isaak bar Jehuda of Mainz confirmed in one of his resolutions, the days for harvesting would collide with the half-holidays of *sukkot*.<sup>67</sup>

Even more pragmatic solutions were found for the problem that occurred when Jews were out harvesting their grapes and had no possibility to take their meals at the *sukkah*, the temporary, twig-covered hut constructed for the holiday, as ritually required. Fifteenth-century’s Mosche bar Jakob Mulin (Maharil), the later Rabbi of Mainz, reported of his teacher, the famous Rabbi Shalom bar Isaak of Wiener Neustadt, that he had told him of Jews who were working in the vineyards during *sukkot* and simply took their meals “in the huts the peasants had erected in their farmsteads because of the heat”; and even Shalom himself, when he was harvesting the grapes in his vineyards, sat “under the same roof made of twigs as the non-Jews who drank their wine there.” These practices did not only root in the—generally immensely practical—approach of a religious minority but also in ritual considerations, since producing ritually pure wine, which could not be done by non-Jews but had to be accomplished according to the seasonal work cycle, was considered more important than observing the rules of *sukkot*. Nevertheless, these scenes also give evidence of close everyday contacts that went far beyond the

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<sup>66</sup> See Haym Soloveitchik, “*Halakhah*, Taboo and the Origin of Jewish Moneylending in Germany,” *The Jews of Europe in the Middle Ages (Tenth to Fifteenth Centuries)*, ed. Christoph Cluse (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), 295–304, on the “taboo of Gentile wine” 296; Keil, “Zum Weingenuss österreichischer Juden” (see note 57), 63–66 (on the precautions taken to prevent ritual contamination); Mentgen, *Juden im mittelalterlichen Elsaß* (see note 56), 559–60.

<sup>67</sup> Barzen, “Leute aus den Dörfern” (see note 2), 28–29.

occasional meeting on the streets but extended to sharing the breaks during what was typical rural work.<sup>68</sup>

When Duke Rudolph IV settled a dispute between his servant Caspar of Altmannsdorf and Mosche of Perchtoldsdorf over outstanding debts, he ordered that the payment be not in money but in kind – Caspar should hand over two *fuder* (1 fuder = 1811 liters) of wine to Mosche.<sup>69</sup> Whether the wine was for consumption or reselling was not mentioned (and neither Rudolph's nor Caspar's concern); and although the handling of Christian wine posed a certain halachic problem, the acceptance of it as a form of debt retirement was explicitly allowed by Ashkenazic rabbis.<sup>70</sup> Repayment of debts or interest rates in the form of wine, or the pawning of the harvest, was so common that Duke Albrecht III, when he fixed the tax rates on must and mash for Vienna in 1374, explicitly exempted the Viennese Jews from this obligation for both their own wine (*paw wein*) and "the wine that was given to them because of debts."<sup>71</sup> That Jews were paid in kind – already a dwindling but, particularly in the rural areas, still prevailing method of payment – also shows their integration into both the regional economy and the seasonal cycle of rural work. When in 1311 the judge and council of Eggenburg mediated between "their Jews" Lazarus and Abraham and the Priory of Zwettl who quarrelled over the claims to a farm, the compromise they reached arranged for a payment of one *mut* of corn (i.e. rye, 1 mut = ca. 1844 liters) to the Jews.<sup>72</sup> In 1376 the Jewess Sara, widow of Joseph of Feldsberg, was to receive *censum et fructus*, as noted in the rent-rolls of the Scottish Abbey of Vienna – presumably a sort of revenue from either vineyards and/or houses she owned.<sup>73</sup>

Jewish possession of estates and farmsteads did not necessarily imply Jewish agricultural activity.<sup>74</sup> The taboo on Gentile wine did not extend to the production of other aliments; a sufficient supply with staple food did therefore not necessitate the development of an extended Jewish agricultural engagement.<sup>75</sup> While urban Jews engaged in a great variety of economic activities, such as craftsmen who worked for both the Jewish community members and for a non-Jewish clientele,

<sup>68</sup> Keil, "Zum Weingenuss österreichischer Juden" (see note 57), 61–63.

<sup>69</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten* 2 (see note 40), 275, n. 1019.

<sup>70</sup> Keil, "Zum Weingenuss österreichischer Juden" (see note 57), 54; Soloveitchik, "Halakhah, Taboo and the Origin of Jewish Moneylending" (see note 66), 296.

<sup>71</sup> Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv (Municipal Archives of Vienna), Hauptarchiv Urkunde n. 842; Christian Lackner, *Regesta Habsburgica. Regesten der Grafen von Habsburg und der Herzoge von Österreich aus dem Hause Habsburg*, 5: *Die Regesten der Herzoge von Österreich (1365–1395)*, part 2: 1371–1375 (Vienna and Munich: Böhlau and Oldenbourg, 2010), 199–200, n. 1154 (with a list of full-text editions).

<sup>72</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten* 1 (see note 4), 179–80, n. 178.

<sup>73</sup> Geyer and Sailer, *Urkunden aus Wiener Grundbüchern* (see note 35), 551, n. 1837.

<sup>74</sup> Toch, "Economic Activities" (see note 1), 206–07, with an analysis of the few known exceptions.

<sup>75</sup> Toch, *Juden im mittelalterlichen Reich* (see note 3), 6.

Jewish agricultural activities are scarcely documented for the Middle Ages<sup>76</sup>; and while part-time farming of Jews living in the countryside is highly likely, it is barely traceable in the sources. Jews who came into possession of rural estates, such as the brothers Lubin and Nekelo, tax farmers of the Austrian duke (and later Bohemian king) Přemysl Otakar II (1232–1278), often did so in the course of a (in this case somewhat unclear) business transaction. The two brothers managed to defend their title to the sixteen feudal estates against the bishop of Freising, yet the (continuous?) possession of these estates meant additional income, not rural activity, for the two high-ranking Jews who enjoyed not only close ties to the Austrian ducal but also the Hungarian royal court.<sup>77</sup> Nevertheless, Jewish possession of (even feudal) rural estates, annual dues and rents, and even tithes, is documented (albeit scarcely) throughout the Middle Ages, both acquired as unredeemed pledges and bought property. As far as the legal procedures are concerned, Jews bought, sold, and re-sold these possessions just as ‘normally’ as Christians did, sometimes even in company with them.<sup>78</sup>

Jews who lived in the closely knit neighborhoods of rural areas or small towns or villages were often participating in the duties of these communities. By royal/ducal consent, the Jews of the small Lower Austrian town of Laa an der Thaya (ca. 65 kilometers north of Vienna, at the border to today’s Czech Republic) were required from 1277 onward to share the tax load with the Christian inhabitants,<sup>79</sup> their taxes being included into the town’s taxes instead of—as usual—being a part of the collective Jewish tax the levying of which was the responsibility of the respective Jewish communities.<sup>80</sup>

However close and peaceful the neighborly contacts might have been, the relations between Jews and Christians in a small community remained volatile at best. Unlike the pogroms of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries in the

<sup>76</sup> See in general the collection of articles by Michael Toch, *Peasants and Jews in Medieval Germany: Studies in Cultural, Social and Economic History*. Variorum collected studies series, 757 (Aldershot: Ashgate Variorum, 2003); for an overview over the literature, see Toch, “Economic Activities” (see note 1), 179–80, fn. \*; and 207–08, with a list of occupations 208.

<sup>77</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 50–51, n. 38.

<sup>78</sup> When reselling half of a farmstead in 1358, Mosche of Perchtoldsdorf confirmed in his sales document that the farmstead was his ‘bought possession’ (*Kaufgut*) and that he had a ‘regular bill of sale’ for it; a common phrase to corroborate the legality of the transaction (Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 2* [see note 40], 200, n. 868). In the same year, Nikolaus Goldener, a citizen of Marburg/Maribor and the Jew Chatschim sold a rent of four pounds and a duty of chicken and eggs to the hospital of Marburg (id., 199, n. 867).

<sup>79</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 74, n. 57. The privilege to Laa was issued by King Rudolph I, who was de facto ruling the duchy of Austria in 1277, with a reference to two older, ducal privileges.

<sup>80</sup> Lohrmann, *Judenrecht und Judenpolitik* (see note 44) 113–14 (on Laa) and 281–98 (general development); Keil, “Gemeinde und Kultur” (see note 9), 44–47; Brugger, “Juden in Österreich im Mittelalter” (see note 10), 147–148; Wiedl, “Jews and the City” (see note 13), 293.

western parts of the Holy Roman Empire that took their origins in the cities and subsequently wreaked havoc on both urban and rural Jewish settlement,<sup>81</sup> the persecutions of Jews in the south-east sprung up in exactly these close-knit communities of the rural area: the small towns of Laa an der Thaya, Korneuburg, and Pulkau were the first places of persecution around 1300. In this time, new accusations against Jews had emerged, such as the blood libel that for the first time since antiquity had appeared in mid-twelfth-century England, and the host desecration accusation that quickly spread from Paris from 1290 onwards throughout the Holy Roman Empire.<sup>82</sup>

With the transubstantiation doctrine having been declared a Church dogma at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, these accusations against Jews of desecrating hosts by stealing them (or having them stolen) and subsequently maltreating them were reinforced in the public mind and became in the regions of today's Austria the most common trigger for anti-Jewish outbreaks. Already four years after the emergence of the Paris legend, the first of these persecutions hit the Jewish inhabitants of a small town in the Lower Austrian countryside: In 1294, the Jews of Laa an der Thaya were accused of having hidden a stolen host in a stable, and, since the mere possession of a host wafer warranted their guilt, they were killed immediately.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> For the vast literature on this topic, see the overviews *Juden und Christen zur Zeit der Kreuzzüge*, ed. Alfred Haverkamp. Konstanzer Arbeitskreis für mittelalterliche Geschichte, Vorträge und Forschungen, 47 (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 1999); and Jörg R. Müller, "Erez geserah – 'Land of Persecution': Pogroms against the Jews in the *regnum Teutonicum* from c. 1280 to 1350," *Jews of Europe in the Middle Ages* (see note 9), 245–60.

<sup>82</sup> The earliest murder of Jews in today's Austrian territory was the killing of Schlom and his family that took place in Vienna in 1196; see above. For an overview over the persecutions on the grounds of alleged host wafer desecrations, see Friedrich Lotter, "Hostienfrevelvorwurf und Blutwunderfälschung bei den Judenverfolgungen von 1298 ("Rintfleisch") und 1336–1338 ("Armleder")," *Fälschungen im Mittelalter: internationaler Kongress der Monumenta Germaniae Historica, München, 16. – 19. September 1986*. Monumenta Germaniae Historica Schriften, 33/5: *Fingierte Briefe, Frömmigkeit und Fälschung, Realienfälschungen* (Hanover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1988), 533–83; Miri Rubin, *Gentile Tales. The Narrative Assault on Late Medieval Jews* (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 1999; sec. ed. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004, the quotes herein refer to the first edition). For the ritual murder accusation, see *Die Legende vom Ritualmord. Zur Geschichte der Blutbeschuldigung gegen Juden*, ed. Rainer Erb. Dokumente, Texte, Materialien. Zentrum für Antisemitismusforschung der Technischen Universität Berlin, 6 (Berlin: Metropolis, 1993); Jeremy Cohen, *Christ Killers: the Jews and the Passion from the Bible to the Big Screen* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), and Richard Utz, "Remembering Ritual Murder: The Anti-Semitic Blood Accusation Narrative in Medieval and Contemporary Cultural Memory," *Genre and Ritual: The Cultural Heritage of Medieval Rituals*, ed. Eyolf Østrem, Mette Birekdal Bruun, et. al. *TRANSfiguration* 1–2, 2003 (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2005), 145–62, all with further literature.

<sup>83</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten* 1 (see note 4), 89–90, n. 82.

It is a somewhat sad fact that quite a lot of the knowledge about rural Jewish settlement stems from notes on Jewish persecution, such as the report of the *Anonymus Leobensis* of a persecution of Jews in Styria and Carinthia in 1312 that was caused by the alleged retrieval of a desecrated host at a Jew's house *prope Fuerstenvelde*, in the proximity of the Styrian town of Fürstenfeld (for which no Jewish inhabitants are documented for that time<sup>84</sup>), suggesting a rural setting.<sup>85</sup> Many of the Jewish settlements in today's Germany, Austria and Bohemia are mentioned just once, in what is known as the *Nürnberg Memorbuch*, the Nürnberg memorial book,<sup>86</sup> a medieval collection of mostly names and locations. The memorial book starts its lists with the locations of (then former) Jewish presence (*Blutstätten*, "blood sites") that had fallen prey to the crusaders in 1096, and continues with lists of former Jewish settlements that had been affected by the persecution waves due to alleged host desecrations and blood libels, such as those identified with the names Armleder, Rintfleisch, and the town of Deggendorf, and the devastating pogroms that followed, and often preceded, outbreaks of the Black Plague in mid-fourteenth century.<sup>87</sup>

The geographical pattern of these settlements—if identifiable—suggests a considerably more widespread Jewish presence in the countryside than documented by other sources, particularly in regard to the settlement of Jews outside of urban centers. These persecutions and their consequences would change Jewish settlement patterns in many areas of the Holy Roman Empire, for in their course not only the lives of many, most of, or even all the Jews living in a town or village had been wiped out, but also the existing community structures, however small and 'improvised' they might have been, had been destroyed. Chapels, monasteries or churches were erected at the sites of former synagogues,<sup>88</sup> and in small-scale settlements the size of which had not warranted the establishing of a Jewish community, houses that had been owned and/or inhabited by Jews were turned into sites of Christian worship, such as it was the case in the small Lower

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<sup>84</sup> In 1342, a Jew Muschlein of Fürstenfeld is documented, Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 2* (see note 40), 31, n. 500.

<sup>85</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 185–86, n. 188.

<sup>86</sup> Siegmund Salfeld, *Das Martyrologium des Nürnberger Memorbuches*. Quellen zur Geschichte der Juden in Deutschland, 3 (Berlin: Leonhard Simion, 1898). The term "Memorbuch" originates from the mid-seventeenth century; see Aubrey Pomerance, "'Bekannt in den Toren': Name und Nachruf in Memorbüchern," *Erinnerung als Gegenwart. Jüdische Gedenkkulturen*, ed. Sabine Hödl and Eleonore Lappin (Berlin and Vienna: Philo, 2000), 33–54; here 24. For the list of the blood sites related to Pulkau, see Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 348–49, n. 455; further Barzen, "Leute aus den Dörfern" (see note 2), 25–26.

<sup>87</sup> Müller, "Land of Persecution" (see note 81); Lotter, "Hostienfrevelvorwurf" (see note 82); Rubin, *Gentile Tales* (see note 82), 48–57.

<sup>88</sup> Rubin, *Gentile Tales* (see note 82), 89–92.

Austrian town of Korneuburg.<sup>89</sup> Thus, it was made sure that the Jews (and their alleged crimes) stayed in the collective memory of the Christian community when their real presence was a thing of the past.

The events that befell the Jews of the small Austrian town of Korneuburg in 1305 are a model example of how volatile and precarious the (up until then) peaceful neighborhood between Jews and Christians in a village community was.<sup>90</sup> When a bloodied host wafer was found on the threshold of the Jew Zerkel's house, the enraged mob killed the house-owner, Zerkel, and ten more Jews, presumably the entire Jewish population of Korneuburg. The course of events and its consequences are quite revealing in regard to the living conditions of what was presumably a somewhat extended Jewish family and their servants in a small town in the vicinity of Vienna. The house at which's doorstep the host was found is throughout the sources called "the Jew's house", or "Zerkel's house", clearly defining it as the Jew's property.

Also, several testimonies given at the huge investigation that was launched by the bishop of Passau, indicate that the Christian population of Korneuburg—the Jews' immediate neighbors—had not shied away from entering the "Jewish" house, nor was there any caution or reluctance on the Christian side of allowing the Jews to enter their houses, and the way they addressed each other speaks of more than just occasional contact. These close relations notwithstanding, the Jews knew immediately that they were in mortal danger when they found the bloodstained host on their doorstep, and they were justified in fearing that the mere accusation of a "typically Jewish" crime was enough for the Korneuburg citizens to turn against their neighbors and murder them within what could not have been more than a few hours.

While the Korneuburg persecution remained a local incident, the accusation of a host desecration raised against the Jews of Pulkau, a town about 80 kilometers north-west of Vienna, in 1338 brought about the first wave of persecution in Austria that went beyond the local scope.<sup>91</sup> Prior to that, Jewish presence at Pulkau

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<sup>89</sup> Birgit Wiedl, "The Host on the Doorstep. Perpetrators, Victims, and Bystanders in an Alleged Host Desecration in Fourteenth-Century Austria," *Crime and Punishment in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Age*, ed. Connie Scarborough. Fundamentals of Medieval and Early Modern Culture, 11 (Berlin and New York: DeGruyter, forthcoming, 2012), Rubin, *Gentile Tales* (see note 82), 57–65. and 89–91 on the erection of sites of Christin worship over former Jewish places; for a general discussion of 'cultural memory' and its ways of remembering Jews, see Utz, "Remembering Ritual Murder" (see note 82), and Cohen, *Christ Killers* (see note 82), with further literature.

<sup>90</sup> Wiedl, "Host on the Doorstep" (see note 89).

<sup>91</sup> The Nürnberg memorial book names altogether 20 Lower Austrian towns, market towns, and villages as places of persecution (Pulkau, Eggenburg, Retz, Znaim, Horn, Zwettl, Raabs, Falkenstein, Hadersdorf am Kamp, Gars am Kamp, Rastendorf, Mistelbach, Weiten, Emmersdorf, Tulln, Klosterneuburg, Passau, St. Pölten, Laa an der Thaya, and Drosendorf), with the (somewhat questionable) addition of the Carinthian town of Villach, the Moravian towns of Budweis,

is only documented once, and it is highly likely that the Jew Merchlein, who is recorded as having bought a field in 1329,<sup>92</sup> is the same *Marquardus iudeus* in front of whose house the desecrated host had allegedly been found. Although the Austrian dukes Albrecht II and Otto (1301–1339) were able to protect the huge community in Vienna (who, at the insistence of the Viennese citizenry, had to lower the interest rates in return)<sup>93</sup>—and there is no mention of persecutions in the bigger communities of Krems and Wiener Neustadt—the incidents at Laa and Korneuburg, and the pogroms following Pulkau revealed the limits of the ducal protection that could not be brought to effect quickly enough in the rural areas to warrant a survival of the local Jewry.

After the Pulkau persecutions of 1338, Jewish (re-)settlement focussed for a long time rather on the urban centers with their already established Jewish communities that could, at least in the perception of the surviving Jews, provide more efficient protection than a rural surrounding.<sup>94</sup> The urban centers of Jewish life in Austria experienced an increase in their importance in the second half of the fourteenth century, which was mainly due to the strong ducal protection that kept them safe from Plague-related pogroms that wreaked havoc on many Jewish communities of the Holy Roman Empire in the mid-fourteenth century.<sup>95</sup> Jewish

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Erdberg, Jamnitz, Frattling, Libisch, Trebitsch, Feldsberg, Tschaslau, Prichowitz, and the Bohemian town of Neuhaus; see Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 348–49, n. 455, and 333–35, n. 434–36; See further Manfred Anselgruber and Herbert Puschnik, *Dies trug sich zu anno 1338. Pulkau zur Zeit der Glaubenswirren* (Pulkau: Verlag der Stadtgemeinde, [1992]), and Birgit Wiedl, “Die angebliche Hostienschändung in Pulkau 1338 und ihre Rezeption in der christlichen und jüdischen Geschichtsschreibung,” *medaon. Magazin für jüdisches Leben in Forschung und Bildung* 6 (2010), internet journal; see [http://medaon.de/pdf/A\\_Wiedl-6-2010.pdf](http://medaon.de/pdf/A_Wiedl-6-2010.pdf) (last accessed on Jan. 16, 2012). Rubin, *Gentile Tales*, 65–68 (see note 82), who gives (without a source reference) the number of ‘150 Jews of Pulkau’ who were killed during the persecutions, which is by far too high a number for that small Lower Austrian town. Her assessment that it was Duke Otto’s ‘abandonment’ of the Austrian duchy in favour of the ‘recently annexed’ Styria (which was neither ‘annexed’ nor recently acquired by the Habsburgs nor governed by Otto alone) that made the Pulkau persecutions possible is the result of a misunderstanding: she ignores the existence of Otto’s brother, Duke Albrecht II (whom she mistakes for Albrecht II of Saxony, the bishop of Passau), who had learned his lesson and managed to protect the Austrian Jews in 1349/1350.

<sup>92</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 257–58, n. 303.

<sup>93</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 338, n. 440.

<sup>94</sup> Rosemarie Kosche, “Erste Siedlungsbelege nach 1350,” *Geschichte der Juden im Mittelalter von der Nordsee bis zu den Südalpen*, 1: *Kommentarband*, ed. Alfred Haverkamp (Hanover: Verlag Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2002), 243–47; Barzen, “Leute aus den Dörfern” (see note 2), 27; Wenninger, “Siedlungsgeschichte der innerösterreichischen Juden” (see note 5), 191–92.

<sup>95</sup> The Jewish community of Krems was the only one that was affected by a Plague-related pogrom in the duchy of Austria; the effective protection duke Albrecht II managed to wield over his Jews earned him some scathing remarks from the ecclesiastical chroniclers; see Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 2* (see note 40), 94–101, ns. 645–50; see also Kosche, “Siedlungsbelege” (see note 94), 245 (on Austria and Bohemia).

life in the countryside, however, particularly in the north of the duchy of Austria, had suffered a substantial blow, and if at all, it took decades before Jews returned to the former rural places of settlement after the devastating persecutions of 1338.<sup>96</sup>

With the exception of the town of Klosterneuburg, where Jewish inhabitants stayed beyond 1338,<sup>97</sup> we know neither of a continuous presence of Jews in any of the market towns nor of a re-settlement of families that had lived in the afflicted areas before. The latter is, however, also a source-related problem; for all we know, the Jew Isak, who lived in Laa an der Thaya in 1357/1358,<sup>98</sup> might as well have been a former inhabitant of the small town, or was related to former inhabitants the names of which are unknown. In the 1380s, at least two Jews lived, or had lived, in the 1338 blood site of Feldsberg (Valtice, Czech Republic); the Jews Frenklein<sup>99</sup> and Joseph, whose widow Sara (Josepin) and her heirs rose to be among the main moneylenders to the inhabitants of the *Scheffstrasse* in the years 1389 to 1420 (suggesting that she, or at least part of her family, had moved there).<sup>100</sup> Yet as for Laa, there is no evidence as to whether any of the Feldsberg Jews of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries were in any way related to the Jews that had once lived there; the same is true for the Jew Herschlein of Hadersdorf am Kamp.<sup>101</sup> In Raabs and Eggenburg, Jews resettled in the late

<sup>96</sup> For the following (market) towns, Jewish presence can be traced in the second half of the fourteenth century: Bruck an der Leitha, Eggenburg, Hainburg, Herzogenburg, Korneuburg, Laa an der Thaya, Langenlois, Marchegg, Neulengbach, Tulln, Weikersdorf, Weiten, Weitra, Ybbs, and Zisterdorf. Quite uncertain (since the names most likely referred to the origin, not the place of residence, of the Jews) are Hadersdorf am Kamp, Himberg, Krut (which is either Groß- oder Dürnkut), Mistelbach, Reichenbach, Stockstall, Waidhofen an der Ybbs, Waltersdorf, Wullersdorf, and Zell; see *Germania Judaica* III/3 (see note 40), 1979

<sup>97</sup> See the appearance of the Jewess Plume and her son-in-law in 1339 (Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten* 2 [see note 40], 9, n. 457). The document, that deals with a surety concerning a debt with Plume, is however one of the few business documents that refer to the Pulkau persecution: if the payback of the debt would be moot 'due to the events concerning the Jews,' the guarantors too should be free of any obligations. Plume is mentioned again in 1343, which means that Jewish life was not completely extinct in Klosterneuburg (id., 34, n. 508).

<sup>98</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten* 2 (see note 40), 196, n. 859, 204, n. 877.

<sup>99</sup> Geyer and Sailer, *Urkunden aus Wiener Grundbüchern* (see note 35), 15–16, n. 46 (1383).

<sup>100</sup> Sara appears first in 1385 as "Czaerln, widow of Joseph," Geyer and Sailer, *Urkunden aus Wiener Grundbüchern* (see note 35), 47, n. 120, and continues to do so under this name until 1395, partly together with another widow, Pheblein. In 1396, Joseph appears alone (263, n. 862), and three years later together with his grandmother, here called Josepinn (307, n. 1005). In the *Judenbuch der Scheffstrasse*, she shows up (as Josepin) very frequently. From 1389 to 1405, business is conducted too by her sons-in-law Süßman, Schäftlein, and Mendlein, and up until 1417, by Schäftlein's son Smerlein and his cousin David (see the lists of entries in Goldmann, *Judenbuch der Scheffstrasse* [see note 54], 134, [David, 1404], 135 [Josepin and Mendlein, 1390–1399 and 1391–1393 respectively], 136 [Schäftlein, 1389–1405], and 137 [Süßman and Smerlein, 1398–1403 and 1415–1417 respectively], and Geyer and Sailer, *Urkunden aus Wiener Grundbüchern* [see note 35], 606 [Schäftlein], 610 [Süßman]), although it is not quite clear whether all of them lived at Feldsberg.

<sup>101</sup> The Jew Swerzl, son of Herschlein of Hadersdorf, is documented as a house owner in Krems



fourteenth century,<sup>102</sup> while in other areas, such as Pulkau itself as well as the small towns of Retz, Zwettl, and Horn, and the village of Gars am Kamp, where Jewish presence is documented for the time before 1338, no signs of (re-)settlement has been traced (yet). For other market towns, namely Rastenfeld, Mistelbach, Drosendorf, and Emmersdorf, the notes on the extinction of Jewish life in 1338 remained the only reminder of its entire existence.

Yet even for many regions that are not counted among the blood sites of the 1338 persecution, a time gap where no Jewish existence is traceable can be noted. Jews might still have been present in the 1350s in the village of Traiskirchen,<sup>103</sup> where the family of the Jewess Hadas had been living in the early fourteenth century, since for the year 1351 (and again in 1363), a (Christian) Jewish judge is documented.<sup>104</sup> It should take until 1382 that Jews reappear in the sources, when the Jewess Twora, Merchlein of Traiskirchen's sister-in law, gave out loans to Viennese citizens.<sup>105</sup> The connection to Vienna remained close over the next decades: while his father Efferlein resided in Traiskirchen, there is no evidence that the Jew Seklein, a quite busy moneylender for the Viennese citizenry, ever lived in Traiskirchen himself.<sup>106</sup> Other "Jews of Traiskirchen", such as Chadgim<sup>107</sup> and Hendlein,<sup>108</sup> are likewise best documented through their business contacts to citizens of Vienna, which might indicate at a secondary, or even principal, residence in Vienna; while Chadgim's father Musch shared Efferlein's fate of only being documented through his son's businesses. Chadgim's son Rachim continued his father's business, and counted the Scottish Abbey at Vienna among his clientele that owed him and the Jew Jacob of Weitra (140 kilometers north-west of Vienna at the Bohemian border) the considerable sum of 370 pound pennies.<sup>109</sup>

Whereas the orientation toward Vienna might also be a source-related 'distortion' due to the higher number of documents, particularly rent rolls and

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around 1400, *Germania Judaica* II/1 (see note 38), 313; allegedly, a synagogue existed in the fifteenth century, but no traces have been found yet; see Genée, *Synagogen in Österreich* (see note 17), 28.

<sup>102</sup> Hesklein of Raabs and his son Pfefferlein are documented for 1383 and 1402; see Geyer and Sailer, *Urkunden aus Wiener Grundbüchern* (see note 35), 14–15, n. 45 (Yzcka of Zistersdorf, Hesklein of Raabs), 342–43, n. 1133 (Hesklein [Heschken], Pfefferlein, and Joseph), and Goldmann, *Judenbuch der Scheffstrasse* (see note 54), 59, n. 223; David of Eggenburg was a quite important moneylender and ducal tax collector in the 1370s; see Lohrmann, *Judenrecht und Judenpolitik* (see note 44) 286. *Germania Judaica* III/2 (see note 40), 1461–62.

<sup>103</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 2* (see note 40), 114, n. 682, 289, n. 1049.

<sup>105</sup> Geyer and Sailer, *Urkunden aus Wiener Grundbüchern* (see note 35), 5, n. 17, 8, n. 28 (both 1382).

<sup>106</sup> Geyer and Sailer, *Urkunden aus Wiener Grundbüchern* (see note 35), 604 (list of his entries, 1388–1399).

<sup>107</sup> Geyer and Sailer, *Urkunden aus Wiener Grundbüchern* (see note 35), 594 (list of his entries, 1384–1396); Goldmann, *Judenbuch der Scheffstrasse* (see note 54), 51, n. 198 (1389).

<sup>108</sup> Geyer and Sailer, *Urkunden aus Wiener Grundbüchern* (see note 35), 430, n. 1432 (1408).

<sup>109</sup> Geyer and Sailer, *Urkunden aus Wiener Grundbüchern* (see note 35), 475–76, n. 1589 (1412).

land registers, that have been transmitted for Vienna, an existence of several low- to mid-scale dynasties of Jewish moneylenders, who either originated from or resided in market towns in the Lower Austrian countryside—Josepin of Feldsberg, the Traiskirchen family, Hirsch of Lengbach—and maintained close ties to the Viennese community, can be clearly noted for the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. While some, or even many, of these seemingly rural Jews, particularly those from the northern areas, might in fact have only originated from these market towns, there is additional evidence of prospering Jewish life in the southern regions.

An indication of Jewish presence is the appearance of the *Judenrichter* (*iudex iudeorum*, “Jewish judge”), an office that had been introduced in the 1244 privilege and that remained quite unique to the eastern parts of today’s Austria and Slovenia. The Jewish judge—not to be mistaken with the judge(s) of the *Bet Din*, the rabbinical court—was a Christian, usually a member of the urban (or market town’s) elite, and responsible for settling disputes between Jews and Christians; in addition to that, he often corroborated Jewish business documents with his seal, and, in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, was involved in the more comprehensive jurisdictional and economic control of the towns over their Jew.<sup>110</sup> Since the Jewish judge kept his title even when no Jews were involved in the business transaction that was documented in the respective charter, the appearance of a Jewish judge is sometimes among the earliest indications of Jewish presence, such as it was the case with the Jewish judges of Mödling and Herzogenburg, who sealed charters in 1364 and 1369 respectively.<sup>111</sup> The rise in importance of Jewish communities such as Traiskirchen, Mödling, and Perchtoldsdorf also bear testimony to a new pattern of settlement after 1338 that had shifted geographically from the northwest (where Pulkau is located) to the south, while only a few places of long-term Jewish settlement continued to existed in the north. At the same time, Vienna (as well as the other big cities) remained a main focus of Jewish migration, attracting not only Jews from the nearby countryside and the adjacent countries but from as far away as northern Italy and the Rhineland.<sup>112</sup>

The constitutive facilities of a Jewish community, namely synagogues, Jewish baths (including the ritual baths, *mikhvot*), and cemeteries,<sup>113</sup> are difficult to trace

<sup>110</sup> Wiedl, “Jews and the City” (see note 13), eadem, “Juden in österreichischen Stadtrechten des Mittelalters” *Österreichisches Archiv für Recht und Religion* 57.2 (2010), 257–72; here 259–60.

<sup>111</sup> For Herzogenburg, see the contribution of Eveline Brugger in this volume, for Mödling; see below.

<sup>112</sup> *Germania Judaica* III/3 (see note 40), 1979.

<sup>113</sup> Additional facilities were dance and/or assembly halls, slaughtering houses, bakeries, and hospitals, that were usually only found in big and prosperous communities; see for Austria Keil, “Gemeinde und Kultur” (see note 9), 40–41, and generally *Germania Judaica* III/3 (see note 40), 2081–89.

(not only) in the countryside, since after an expulsion and/or murdering of the Jewish population, the buildings that had housed these institutions were either torn down or put to another use. The most evidence can be gathered for synagogues, both in archaeological excavations and documents, albeit most of the latter date from centuries when early modern denominations for the house/plot of land, that had long ceased to serve its ritual purpose, hint at its former function, sometimes erroneously so. Outside the urban centers, medieval synagogues are documented for the Lower Austrian towns of Bruck an der Leitha, Neulengbach, Mödling, Eggenburg, Perchtoldsdorf, Neunkirchen, and the Styrian town of Hartberg, whereas for Hadersdorf am Kamp and Weiten, the evidence is questionable (see above).<sup>114</sup> Despite these difficulties, synagogues can be of immeasurable value when it comes to assessing the existence, size, and prosperity of a Jewish community.

The beginnings of the Jewish community at Mödling are only scarcely documented in written sources. Jewish presence before 1350 is possible; a son of Mosche of Perchtoldsdorf, Isak, might have resided there, and Viennese Jews such as Zacharias held property—most likely vineyards—in Mödling.<sup>115</sup> In the second half of the fourteenth century, the first hint at Jewish inhabitants is the existence of a Jewish judge who is documented for the years 1364 and 1365, when Michael Kolb, Jewish judge of Mödling, corroborated two bills of sale with his seal.<sup>116</sup> Although no Jews were involved in these transactions, members from the big Jewish communities of Vienna and Wiener Neustadt were perhaps already living in Mödling around that time—in 1370, Leubmann, the son of Vreudman of Wiener Neustadt, had taken up residence in Mödling,<sup>117</sup> and with Joseph, a member of the Steuss family, a Jew with very strong ties to the most prestigious Viennese financiers, had moved to Mödling in 1377 at the latest.<sup>118</sup>

Written evidence of their business activities remains comparatively limited though; and for most of the Jewish inhabitants of Mödling, a secondary (or even principal) residence in Vienna can be assumed.<sup>119</sup> Yet what gives ample evidence of the importance (and, presumably, the wealth) of the Jewish community at

<sup>114</sup> See Keil, “Gemeinde und Kultur” (see note 9), 17–24, for a description of the medieval synagogues of Austria (including Marburg/Maribor and Ödenburg/Sopron in today’s Slovenia and Hungary respectively).

<sup>115</sup> Wiedl, “Kriegskassen” (see note 42), 245–47. See also *Germania Judaica* II/2 (see note 38), 544–45, where however Melk is mistaken for Mödling (concerning the Jewess Radel).

<sup>116</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten* 2 (see note 40), 319–20, n. 1110, 326–27, n. 1124.

<sup>117</sup> Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv Wien, AUR 1370 XI 14.

<sup>118</sup> *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Wien, III: Grundbücher der Stadt Wien, part 3: Satzbuch A1 (1373–1388)* (Vienna: Verlag des Vereines für Geschichte der Stadt Wien, 1921), 86, n. 3394 (1377, *consobrinio Steussonis de Wienna*); Goldmann, *Judenbuch der Scheffstrasse* (see note 54), 28–29, n. 111 (1394).

<sup>119</sup> *Germania Judaica* III/2 (see note 40), 878–89.

Mödling is the synagogue that, according to drawings and (later) reconstruction plans, must have been quite extensive; in addition to the synagogue, one, or perhaps even two Jewish baths existed.<sup>120</sup> The most stunning part however is the entrance door to the synagogue, dated between 1350 and (before) 1420 and made from iron plates that were riveted together. The door is elaborately decorated with motifs that can also be found in Hebrew manuscripts.<sup>121</sup>

While a *mikhva* could (more) easily be improvised by making use of a river, or a pond,<sup>122</sup> communal facilities such as a kosher butcher (*Schächter*) and/or tailor, or a cemetery were difficult, if not impossible, to obtain. It is quite likely that Jews living in the countryside knew how to provide themselves with kosher meat by butchering the animals themselves. Several regulations that forbade the Jews to sell those parts of the slaughtered animals they considered unfit for their consumption to Christian customers hint at the quite common practice of Jewish in-house slaughtering<sup>123</sup>; likewise, the use of the municipal slaughtering house is documented.<sup>124</sup> Even if the majority of these regulations were drawn up by representatives of cities, they also applied to Jews coming in from the countryside on the market days to sell their products there.

The cemetery that was bound to several halachic and ritual regulations, posed a real problem for many Jews in the countryside, since establishing and maintaining it not only required a certain amount of personnel that was only to be had at a bigger community, but also included the granting of a plot of land by the respective ruler.<sup>125</sup> According to Jewish tradition, these cemeteries were purchased 'for eternity,' which also meant that only the bigger communities, those who hoped for a more continuous existence, established cemeteries at all; in the territory of modern-day Austria, medieval Jewish cemeteries are documented only for Vienna, Krems, and Wiener Neustadt (the three main communities) as well as Salzburg, Villach, Friesach, Graz, Judenburg, Marburg/Maribor, and Pettau/Ptuj (both in Slovenia).<sup>126</sup> Therefore, it was more the rule than the exception for rural Jews to have no, or at least limited access to a Jewish cemetery in their vicinity. Rural Jews coped in several ways: Private burial sites were established in towns

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<sup>120</sup> Roland Burger et. al., *Ausgelöscht. Vom Leben der Juden in Mödling* (Mödling and Vienna: edition umbruch, 1988), 10–23.

<sup>121</sup> Keil, "Gemeinde und Kultur" (see note 9), 20–21, with illustration.

<sup>122</sup> Keil, "Gemeinde und Kultur" (see note 9), 41.

<sup>123</sup> Wiedl, "Jews and the City" (see note 13), 296–99; ead., "Juden in österreichischen Stadtrechten" (see note 110), 264–67.

<sup>124</sup> Keil, "Gemeinde und Kultur" (see note 9), 40.

<sup>125</sup> Martha Keil, "Orte der jüdischen Öffentlichkeit: Judenviertel, Synagoge, Friedhof," *Ein Thema – zwei Perspektiven. Juden und Christen in Mittelalter und Frühneuzeit*, ed. Eveline Brugger and Birgit Wiedl (Innsbruck, Vienna, and Bolzano: StudienVerlag, 2007), 170–86; here 179–81.

<sup>126</sup> Keil, "Gemeinde und Kultur" (see note 9), 24.

that housed only a few Jewish inhabitant, as it is documented for the (today) Tyrolian town of Lienz.<sup>127</sup>

Although the Christian surroundings for the Jews living in Lienz were urban, there was never enough Jewish presence to initiate the establishing of a Jewish community.<sup>128</sup> In 1325, a *Judenhaus* (Jewish house) is mentioned that was situated inside the inner town wall, and a hundred years later, when Jewish existence came to an end in Lienz in the wake of a blood libel persecution in 1442/1443, it was noted that “a number of Jews” (*etliche Juden*) had taken up their residence in two houses, raising the population to no more than a few families.<sup>129</sup> However extensive the Jewish population at Lienz might have been, the nearest cemetery was too far away: about 110 kilometers, in the Carinthian town of Villach that was under the rule of the Bishop of Bamberg.

Villach had all the features a community needed, in fact it housed one of the most important Jewish communities in the southern regions, with its cemetery dating back to the twelfth century, and a synagogue that was first mentioned in 1342<sup>130</sup>; yet even if the Jews of Lienz had been willing to carry their deceased to that cemetery, they would have faced an impossible task due to the surrounding mountains, at least in winter. Another solution was found that is traceable through a document from 1498, long after the extinction of any Jewish presence: a field on the southern bank of the river Drau (which means on the opposite bank) was sold, called *der Judenfreythoff*, “the Jewish cemetery,” indicating that, at some time, the Jews of Lienz had established their own burial grounds despite the absence of a ‘full’ Jewish community.<sup>131</sup>

For most of the rural Jews, however, granting their deceased a proper burial meant having them transferred to the closest cemetery of an urban community, which often included the covering of considerable distances. In the early fourteenth century, the town council of the (then) Styrian town of Wiener

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<sup>127</sup> Markus Wenninger, “Juden im Herrschaftsbereich der Grafen von Görz und Görz-Tirol,” *Symposium zur Geschichte von Millstatt und Kärnten*, ed. Franz Nikolasch (Millstatt: n.p., 2000); Wadl, *Geschichte der Juden in Kärnten* (see note 14), 229–33.

<sup>128</sup> Around 1300, the Jew Isak of Lienz was an influential moneylender and tenant of tolls and mints whose business contacts reached as far as the Adriatic Sea (Wenninger, “Juden als Münzmeister” [see note 7], 125, Brugger, “Juden in Österreich im Mittelalter” [see note 10], 191). Despite the presence of such a high-ranking businessman, the overall extent of Jewish existence in Lienz should not be over-estimated (Wenninger, “Juden in Görz” [see note 127], 120, in contrast to Wadl, *Geschichte der Juden in Kärnten* [see note 14], 233, who deduces the existence of a synagogue from the mention of the burial site).

<sup>129</sup> Wenninger, “Juden in Görz” (see note 127), 120 and 130–33.

<sup>130</sup> Wadl, *Geschichte der Juden in Kärnten* (see note 14), 164–65, Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 2* (see note 40), 30–31, n. 499.

<sup>131</sup> Wadl, *Geschichte der Juden in Kärnten* (see note 14), 233, Wenninger, “Juden in Görz” (see note 129), 120 with fn. 79.

Neustadt, situated at the passage from Austria to Styria, issued a series of toll regulations in the course of which three citizens were required to declare the customs of the last 30 years, according to which the new regulations were settled. Among these, the question of how to deal with Jews who were transferring their deceased was regulated: if such a party were to pass the toll station, no official tax was required, but the Jews should come to an arrangement with the toll officer themselves. Jews from the duchies of Austria or Styria—those who were most likely to pass the toll station—were exempt from any toll payment, which gives evidence for a rather frequent ‘use’ of this method of transferring the deceased.<sup>132</sup>

Despite the fact that Jewish life in the countryside could prosper, a tendency to migrate toward the urban centers even among quite successful rural businessmen is evident.<sup>133</sup> The family of the most important moneylender to the Habsburg dukes in the second half of the fourteenth century, the Viennese Jew David Steuss, originated from the town of Klosterneuburg, where in the shadow of the Priory of the Canons Regular (who made good business partners), Jews had settled already in the late thirteenth century. While the Steuss family owed their wealth and importance to the Jewess Plume, David’s grandmother, who had spent her life in Klosterneuburg, already Plume’s son Hendlein had moved to Vienna.<sup>134</sup> Most of the more successful moneylending families usually either had family members that lived in the bigger cities, or were part-time living in the city themselves, with the rural abode being more and more ‘degraded’ to a secondary residence.

Migration from urban centers to the countryside was rare, and, if it happened, it was often only temporarily. Some moves to the countryside might have had professional reasons: Abrech of Friesach, a high-profile Carinthian moneylender of the 1360s, who had negotiated the donation of the cemetery of Friesach in 1352,<sup>135</sup> apparently moved to the market town of Straßburg for at least a year.

<sup>132</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 189, n. 194.

<sup>133</sup> Lohrmann, *Judenrecht and Judenpolitik* (see note 44), 211 (with a list of towns and villages from where Jews had migrated to Vienna in the second half of the fourteenth century). See, generally, Gilomen, “Jüdische Migration” (see note 12), for an overview over the research concerning Jewish migration, 124–25.

<sup>134</sup> Wiedl, “Kriegskassen” (see note 42), 248–49; Eveline Brugger, “Loans of the Father: Business Succession in Families of Jewish Moneylenders in Late Medieval Austria,” *Generations in Towns. Succession and Success in Pre-Industrial Urban Societies*, ed. Finn-Einar Eliassen and Katalin Szende (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), 112–129; here 117–18. This migration pattern can even be detected between cities with smaller and more important Jewish communities, such as the Salzburg-based family of Aron, whose members one-by-one move to city town of Regensburg, which might not have been a larger town but housed the much more important and flourishing Jewish community.

<sup>135</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 2* (see note 40), 134, n. 725. In 1354, the bishop of Bamberg gave permission to erect the synagogue at Villach to a Jew Aschrok of Friesach, who, despite the misspelled name, might be identified with Abrech; see id., 153, n. 767, and Wadl, *Geschichte der Juden in Kärnten* (see note 14), 166, 223; Wiedl, “Jews and the City” (see note 13), 282

Although Jews lived in Straßburg since the late thirteenth century,<sup>136</sup> Abrech's stay there was most likely due to the fact that Straßburg was the residence of the bishops of Gurk, who were among his business partners; in 1354, he had obviously already returned to Friesach. Abraham of Obervellach had been master of the mint of the Counts of Görz and had done some additional business there that continued past his holding the office.<sup>137</sup> Other moves, however, are less easily explained. Hetschel, son of Rabbi Israel of Krems, exchanged Krems for Herzogenburg around 1370,<sup>138</sup> and 50 years earlier, two sons of important Viennese financiers, Mordechai, son of Schwärzlein, and Kalman, son of Lebman, moved to Zistersdorf and Hainburg respectively.

While Mordechai had been engaged in high-end moneylending with his brothers Pessach, Mosche, and Isak in Vienna until 1317,<sup>139</sup> Kalman had never attained the same importance as his father and his brother Gutman; with the move to the countryside, however, both ceased to appear in any business deals. Prosperity could nevertheless be gained in the countryside as well—when the Austrian dukes Albrecht III and Leopold III (1351–1386) appointed five tax collectors (generally known as *absamer*) between 1365 and 1379, one of them was David of Eggenburg, a small town in the north of Lower Austria.<sup>140</sup> In the following years, several members of the Jewish community at Perchtoldsdorf joined the office.<sup>141</sup>

Jewish families who were a few steps lower on the business scale seemed to be more prone to remain in the countryside—Leb of Gars, who moved to the slightly bigger but still not 'urban' town of Retz, has been mentioned already. Abraham, son of Lazarus of Eggenburg, might be identified with his namesake who was living in Zwettl for some years.<sup>142</sup> The towns of Eggenburg and Zwettl are about

<sup>136</sup> Wadl, *Geschichte der Juden in Kärnten* (see note 14), 226–29.

<sup>137</sup> Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten* 2 (see note 40), 274, n. 1018; Wadl, *Geschichte der Juden in Kärnten* (see note 14), 234; see for other Jewish mint masters in Carinthia (in the towns of St. Veit and Völkermarkt) id., 140.

<sup>138</sup> See the contribution of Eveline Brugger in this volume.

<sup>139</sup> Brugger, *Adel und Juden* (see note 15), 55–59, particularly on the connection to the Buchberg family.

<sup>140</sup> Ernst Freiherr von Schwind and Alphons Dopsch, *Ausgewählte Urkunden zur Verfassungs-Geschichte der deutsch-österreichischen Erblände im Mittelalter* (Innsbruck: Verlag der Wagnerschen Universitäts-Buchhandlung, 1895), 266–68, n. 136; Lackner, *Regesta Habsburgica* 5/1 (see note 44), 40, n. 47. The original document has been lost, and the (undated) copies only name two of the altogether five Jewish *absamer*: Swogel of Linz and David of Eggenburg; see Lohrmann, *Judenrecht und Judenpolitik* (see note 44) 286.

<sup>141</sup> *Germania Judaica* III/2 (see note 40), 1095.

<sup>142</sup> See Birgit Wiedl, "Die Zwettler Siegeltaschen, ein historisches Puzzle," *Zwischen den Zeilen: 20 Jahre Institut für jüdische Geschichte Österreichs* (2008), 32–38, (see for the internet version: [http://injoest.ac.at/upload/JME2008\\_17\\_38.pdf](http://injoest.ac.at/upload/JME2008_17_38.pdf) last accessed on Jan. 16, 2012). See for the fragments Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten* 1 (see note 4), 190–91, n. 196, 196, n. 206, 198–99, n. 210, 213–14, n. 234, 237–39, ns. 275–76, 265–66, n. 316, for scans see [www.monasterium.net](http://www.monasterium.net) (collaborative archive,

50 kilometers apart and both located in the hilly and forest-dominated northwest of Lower Austria, which would have meant rather similar living conditions for Abraham, at least with regard to climate and surroundings. While Lazarus and his son are the only Jews documented for Eggenburg at this time,<sup>143</sup> Jewish presence at Zwettl might have been more extensive than it appears at first glance. Although apart from Abraham, one other Jew appears in business documents,<sup>144</sup> a rabbinical response of the famous Meir of Rothenburg from the late thirteenth century that deals with the re-marriage of a widow after a Jew of Zwettl who had been murdered, allows a different interpretation. When Rabbi Meir came to the conclusion that the remarriage should be allowed, he did so under the condition that Rabbi Eliezer “as well as the other rabbis that are present there” agree. While the identity of Rabbi Eliezer and the others remain unclear—the manuscript also mentions Krems—it has been suggested that there was a rabbi present in Zwettl, at least for some time.<sup>145</sup>

A similar migration pattern of the members of a Jewish family that lived in the countryside can be traced for the brothers Joseph and Slomlein of Zistersdorf: in 1383, the Jews Yczka of Zistersdorf and Hesklein of Raabs granted a loan to the Scottish Abbey in Vienna. In 1402, Hesklein still lived in Raabs, presumably together with his son Pfefferlein, while his grandson Joseph had moved to Zistersdorf, where he did business not only together with his brother Slomlein but also, from 1408 onwards, with Freudlein, Hesklein’s widow (and thus presumably his grandmother).<sup>146</sup>

Already with the rule of duke Rudolph IV (r. 1358–1365), the ducal protection of the Austrian Jews had begun to wane. The legal status of the Austrian Jewry remained unchanged from 1244 until the end of Jewish life in Austria, but the ducal concept of granting (and actively exerting) protection not only in exchange for taxation, but also as an integral part of the ruler’s sovereignty<sup>147</sup> that had been

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Archivbestände Zwettl, Stiftsarchiv).

<sup>143</sup> In the second half of the fourteenth century, Jewish settlement in Eggenburg seemed to be more extensive since a synagogue is documented for this time; see Keil, “Gemeinde und Kultur” (see note 9), 23; *Germania Judaica* III/1 (see note 40), 284–85.

<sup>144</sup> Jeschem, 1337, Brugger and Wiedl, *Regesten 1* (see note 4), 232, n. 418. See Eveline Brugger, “... daz wier schullen gelten Abraham dem juden von Zwetel...” *Mittelalterliche Spuren jüdischen Lebens im Waldviertel*, *Jüdisches Leben in Zwettl. Koexistenz und Verfolgung, vom Mittelalter bis ins 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. Friedel Moll, Zwettler Zeitzeichen, 13 (Zwettl: Eigenverlag der Stadt, 2009), 8–15.

<sup>145</sup> Simcha Emanuel, “Unpublished Responsa of R. Meir of Rothenburg” *Jews of Europe in the Middle Ages* (see note 9), 282–93; here 288–90.

<sup>146</sup> Geyer and Sailer, *Urkunden aus Wiener Grundbüchern* (see note 35), 14–15, n. 45 (Yczka of Zistersdorf, Hesklein of Raabs), 342–43, n. 1133 (Hesklein [Heschken], Pfefferlein, and Joseph), 429, n. 1430 (Joseph, Slomlein, and Freudlein).

<sup>147</sup> Toch, *Juden im mittelalterlichen Reich* (see note 3), 49–51 and 102–03 on the idea of the protection of the Jewry as part of the ‘classical virtues of a ruler’ (my translation).



at the base of the 1244 privilege, had changed into mere financial exploitation. While it were the big communities such as Krems as well as individual and particularly wealthy Jews,<sup>148</sup> who suffered most from the ducal policy toward their Jews,<sup>149</sup> the overall situation of the Austrian Jewry worsened perceptibly toward the end of the century. The reasons that led to the wide-ranging persecutions and expulsions of Jews in the fifteenth centuries were manifold<sup>150</sup>; economic rivalry of Christians who began to push (officially) into the moneylending sector, anti-Jewish concepts and sentiments that were repeated, permeated, and enhanced by theology, literature, and iconography alike, together with the rapidly spreading ideas of Jewish well-poisoning, ritual murder, and host desecration being only the most important ones. In Austria, it was the events of the Vienna Gesera,<sup>151</sup> the murdering and expulsion of the Jews at the instigation of Duke Albrecht V (1397–1439, the later King Albrecht II) in 1420/1421 that brought a violent end to Jewish life. In the text of the Gesera, the Yiddish narration that tells of the incarceration of the Viennese Jews, their torture and murder, a few sites of rural settlement are mentioned as places of persecution—Langenlois, Herzogenburg, Laa, Zistersdorf, Hainburg, Marchegg, Mörtersdorf, Vitis, and Winkel, bearing a last witness to a Jewish life that had extended beyond the boundaries of the urban centers. When Jews started to return to the Austrian territories in greater number in the course of the sixteenth century, it would be under different conditions, with no perceptible continuity of their medieval ancestors.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> David Steuss, the by far wealthiest Jewish businessman, was imprisoned in 1383 and only set free against a ransom of 50,000 pound pennies; see “Wiener Annalen 1348–1404,” *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Deutsche Chroniken*, 6, ed. Josef Seemüller (Hanover and Leipzig: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1909), 231–242; here S. 232.

<sup>149</sup> For a closer look at the ducal policy, see the contribution of Eveline Brugger in this volume.

<sup>150</sup> *Germania Judaica* III/3 (see note 40), 2298–2327, for an analysis of the economic aspects, see David Nirenberg, “Warum der König die Juden beschützen musste, und warum er sie verfolgen musste,” *Die Macht des Königs: Herrschaft in Europa vom Frühmittelalter bis in die Neuzeit*, ed. Bernhard Jussen (Munich: Beck, 2005), 225–40 and 390–92, for Austria, see Brugger, “Juden in Österreich im Mittelalter” (see note 10), 208–27.

<sup>151</sup> Goldmann, *Judenbuch der Scheffstrasse* (see note 54), 112–33 (introduction and edition); Samuel Krauss, *Die Wiener Geserah vom Jahre 1421* (Vienna and Leipzig: Wilhelm Braumüller, 1920), particularly 80–92 on the Jewish settlements hit by the persecution.

<sup>152</sup> Barbara Staudinger, “Gantze Dörffer voll Juden”. *Juden in Niederösterreich 1496–1670* (Vienna: Mandelbaum Verlag, 2005), and ead., “Die Zeit der Landjuden und der Wiener Judenstadt 1496–1670/71” *Geschichte der Juden in Österreich* (see note 9), 229–338.



Fig. 1: Main places of small-town and rural Jewish settlement in Austria in the Middle Ages (smaller dots, the bigger dots indicate the main urban centers).



Fig. 2: Two obligations of Arnold von Fritzelsdorf and Konrad von Kirchberg for the Jew Hendlein of Gmünd, around 1326, both cut up and used as seal pouches (Zisterzienserstift Zwettl, Archiv und Bibliothek)