

JEWS AND CHRISTIANS IN MEDIEVAL EUROPE

Religion and Law in Medieval Christian and Muslim Societies

7

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In the middle ages, from Baghdad to Barcelona, significant communities of religious minorities resided in the midst of polities ruled by Christians and Muslims: Jews and Christians throughout the Muslim world (but particularly from Iraq westward), lived as *dhimmis*, protected but subordinate minorities; while Jews (and to a lesser extent Muslims) were found in numerous places in Byzantine and Latin Europe. Legists (Jewish, Christian and Muslim) forged laws meant to regulate interreligious interactions, while judges and scholars interpreted these laws.

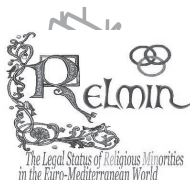
Religion and Law in Medieval Christian and Muslim Societies presents a series of studies on these phenomena. Our goal is to study the history of the legal status of religious minorities in Medieval societies in all their variety and complexity. Most of the publications in this series are the products of research of the European Research Council project RELMIN: The Legal Status of Religious Minorities in the Euro-Mediterranean World (5th-15th centuries) (www.relmin.eu).

Au moyen âge, de Bagdad à Barcelone, des communautés importantes de minorités religieuses vécurent dans des Etats dirigés par des princes chrétiens ou musulmans: dans le monde musulman (surtout de l'Iraq vers l'ouest), juifs et chrétiens résidèrent comme *dhimmis*, minorités protégées et subordonnées; tandis que de nombreuses communautés juives (et parfois musulmanes) habitèrent dans des pays chrétiens. Des légistes (juifs, chrétiens et musulmans) édictèrent des lois pour réguler les relations interconfessionnelles, tandis que des juges et des hommes de lois s'efforcèrent à les interpréter.

La collection *Religion and Law in Medieval Christian and Muslim Societies* présente une série d'études sur ces phénomènes. Une partie importante des publications de cette collection est issue des travaux effectués au sein du programme ERC RELMIN: Le Statut Légal des Minorités Religieuses dans l'Espace Euro-méditerranéen (V^e-XV^e siècles) (www.relmin.eu).



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JEWS AND CHRISTIANS IN
MEDIEVAL EUROPE:
THE HISTORIOGRAPHICAL LEGACY
OF BERNHARD BLUMENKRANZ

Edited by
Philippe Buc, Martha Keil and John Tolan

BREPOLS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Philippe Buc, Martha Keil and John Tolan</i> , Foreword	7
<i>Robert Chazan</i> , Medieval Christian–Jewish Relations in the Writings of Bernhard Blumenkranz	11
I. THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH AND THE JEWS	21
<i>Capucine Nemo-Pekelman</i> , The Ambiguous Notions of Jewish Legal ‘Statutes’ and ‘Status’ in Blumenkranz’s Work	23
<i>Anna Sapir Abulafia</i> , Engagement with Judaism and Islam in Gratian’s <i>Causa</i> 23	35
<i>Birgit Wiedl</i> , Sacred Objects in Jewish Hands. Two Case Studies	57
<i>Eveline Brugger</i> , Smoke in the Chapel: Jews and Ecclesiastical Institutions in and around Vienna during the Fourteenth Century	79
II. CONVERSION AND PROSELYTISM	95
<i>Martha Keil</i> , What Happened to the ‘New Christians’? The ‘Viennese Geserah’ of 1420/21 and the Forced Baptism of the Jews	97
<i>Danièle Iancu-Agon</i> , Nostradamus’ Maternal Great-Grandfather from Marseilles: Neophyte Networks and Matrimonial Strategies (1460–1496)	115
<i>Claire Soussen</i> , The Epistle of Rabbi Samuel de Fez, What Kind of a New Strategy against Judaism?	131

III. ART AND MATERIAL CULTURE	147
<i>Debra Higgs Strickland</i> , Gazing into Bernhard Blumenkranz's <i>Mirror of Christian Art</i> : The Fourteenth-Century Tring Tiles and the Jewishness of Jesus in Post-Expulsion England	149
<i>Eva Haverkamp</i> , Jewish Images on Christian Coins: Economy and Symbolism in Medieval Germany	189
<i>Katrin Kogman-Appel</i> , Eschatology in the Catalan <i>Mappamundi</i>	227
IV. PLACES AND ENCOUNTER	253
<i>Gerard Nahon</i> , L'Athènes des juifs : sources hébraïques sur les juifs de Paris au Moyen Âge	255
<i>Ram Ben Shalom</i> , Isaac Nathan: The Last Jewish Intellectual in Provence	293
<i>Javier Castaño</i> , The Peninsula as a Borderless Space: Towards a Mobility 'Turn' in the Study of Fifteenth-Century Iberian Jewries	315
<i>Judith Olszowy-Schlanger</i> , 'Meet you in court': Legal Practices and Christian-Jewish Relations in the Middle Ages	333
<i>Claude Denjean et Juliette Sibon</i> , Être historien des juifs médiévaux en France après Bernhard Blumenkranz	349
INDEX	367
Opus	369
Subjects	371
Person	373
Geo	381



FOREWORD

This volume contains the fruits of a conference organized at the Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften in Vienna on 23–25 October 2013. We brought together 15 specialists on the history of medieval Judaism to discuss the legacy of Bernhard Blumenkranz. Bernhard Blumenkranz was born in Vienna in 1913 to a family of Polish Jews.¹ He went to France at about the time of the *Anschluss*; he was arrested and placed in the Gurs prison camp in Pyrénées Atlantique, where the Vichy government interred foreign-born Jews. He escaped from Gurs and made his way to Switzerland, where he stayed out the war in Basel and prepared a doctorate at the University of Basel on the portrayal of Jews in the works of Augustine.²

After the war, he moved to France and wrote a *thèse d'État* entitled '*Juifs et chrétiens dans le monde occidental, 430–1096*' (Jews and Christians in the Western World, 430–1096). Through his numerous publications and through the foundation of two important research institutions (the Mission française des archives juives in 1961, and the « Nouvelle *Gallia Judaica* » in 1971), he revitalized the study of Jewish history in France and in Europe. His many publications and his teaching had a profound impact on the scholarship concerning medieval Jewish history and on the history of anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism. Most of his rich production falls into three areas. His earliest work deals with Christian perceptions of Jews and Jewish-Christian relations in the early Middle Ages: from Augustine to the first crusade. Much of this work involved the close study of Latin texts, for some of which he produced critical editions (notably Gilbert Crispin's *Disputatio judei et christiani*, published in Utrecht in 1956).³ His second major field of research, beginning in the 1960s, was the place of Jews in Medieval Christian iconography. Finally, towards the end of his career, he wrote extensively about the history of the Jews in France, from the Middle Ages to the modern era.

In all of these areas, Bernhard Blumenkranz's work was fundamental in reassessing and in reinvigorating research. A generation of scholars has been profoundly influenced by his work, and much of the work in these three fields over the past fifty years has been built on the foundations that he laid. In some cases his conclusions have been called into question or nuanced: for example on the First

¹ This brief biography is based on 'Blumenkranz, Bernhard,' in *Dictionnaire encyclopédique du Judaïsme*, Geoffrey Wigoder and Sylvie Anne Goldberg, ed. (Paris: R. Laffont, 1996) and on Gilbert Dahan's preface to Bernhard Blumenkranz, *Juifs et chrétiens dans le monde occidental, 430–1096* (Leuven: Peeters, 2006).

² Bernhard Blumenkranz, *Die Judenpredigt Augustins* (Basel: Helbing & Lichtenhahn, 1946).

³ See now *The Works of Gilbert Crispin*, ed. Anna Sapir Abulafia and Gilian R. Evans (London: 1986).

Crusade as a break between an early Medieval Christian society largely tolerant of Jews and a later Medieval society overwhelmingly hostile. But even where scholars have argued against his positions, they have acknowledged their fundamental debt to the questions he posed and to his ground-breaking research in the field.

In the Anglo-American world, his influence was sometimes explicit, sometimes self-evident. We cannot for this reason provide a literature review, and thus will limit ourselves to citing a few cases. Blumenkranz's chronology was received by such standard discussions of antisemitism as Gavin I. Langmuir, *History, Religion, and Antisemitism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), in the main accepted by Jeremy Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law. Ideas of the Jew in Medieval Christianity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), although he sees premises of later changes already in the early Middle Ages, in particular with Isidore of Seville. See as well for the reception of Blumenkranz's position on Augustine Amos Funkenstein, *Perceptions of Jewish History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993). The chronology – whether the eleventh century represents a predictable turning point (with forerunners) is discussed in David Malkiel, 'Jewish-Christian Relations in Europe, 840–1096', *Journal of Medieval History* 29/1 (2003), 55–83. For yet another example in that historiography revisiting the narrative of high and late medieval persecution, see Jonathan Elukin, *Living Together, Living Apart: Rethinking Jewish-Christian Relations in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007); for an example of sensitivity to the complexity of relations into the later Middle Ages, even on the charged topic of money-lending, see Joseph Shatzmiller, *Cultural Exchange: Jews, Christians, and Art in the Medieval Marketplace* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013).

We would like to thank all of those who made possible this conference and this publication. The conference grew out of an international European collaboration. In France, we benefitted from the contribution of the JACOV team («De Juifs à Chrétiens : aux origines des valeurs») at the University of Toulouse, the Nouvelle Gallia Judaica (a research unit founded by Bernhard Blumenkranz) and the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme Ange Guépin in Nantes. Our Austrian partners were the Historisch-Kulturwissenschaftliche Fakultät of the Universität Wien; the Institut für Geschichte of the Universität Wien; the Institut für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung embedded at the same University; the Institute for Jewish History in Austria, and last but not least the Institut für Mittelalterforschung der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, which hosted the conference (with special thanks to Walter Pohl). Franco-Austrian help came from the Institut Français de Vienne. Particular thanks go to Nicolas Stefanni in Nantes and Karin Jirik in Vienna for their handling of the logistics. Last but not least, thanks to the European Research Council (ERC), which provided funding

through the RELMIN project (*The Legal Status of Religious Minorities in the Euro-Mediterranean World, Fifth-Fifteenth Centuries*). Our thanks also to Brepols and in particular to Loes Diercken for help with the publication.

This volume is part of a wider reflection, as the seventh volume of the collection 'Religion and law in Medieval Christian and Muslim Societies' on social and legal status of religious minorities in the Medieval world. The first volume, *The Legal Status of Dhimmī-s in the Islamic West*, published in 2013, examined the laws regarding Christian and Jews living in Islamic societies of Europe and the Maghreb and the extent to which such legal theory translate into concrete measures regulating interreligious relations. The second volume in this series (published in 2014), was devoted to *Jews in Early Christian Law: Byzantium and the Latin West, 6th-11th centuries*. Volume 3, *Religious cohabitation in European towns (10th-15th centuries)*, was published in 2014, as was volume 4, a monograph by Clara Maillard entitled *Les papes et le Maghreb aux XIII^{ème} et XIV^{ème} siècles: Étude des lettres pontificales de 1199 à 1419*. Volume 5 (2015) was devoted to *Expulsion and Diaspora Formation: Religious and Ethnic Identities in Flux from Antiquity to the Seventeenth Century*, whereas volume 6 (2015), opening up comparative perspectives from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century, addresses *Religious minorities, integration and the State*. Subsequent volumes, to be published in 2016, are *Law and Religious minorities in Medieval Societies: between theory and praxis*; and *Medieval Minorities: Law and Multiconfessional Societies in the Middle Ages*. And the RELMIN database continues to make available online key legal sources of the Middle Ages concerning religious minorities.⁴

Philippe Buc, Martha Keil and John Tolan

⁴ <http://www.cn-telma.fr/remlin/>.



II

CONVERSION AND PROSELYTISM



WHAT HAPPENED TO THE ‘NEW CHRISTIANS’? THE ‘VIENNESE GESERAH’ OF 1420/21 AND THE FORCED BAPTISM OF THE JEWS

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In his article ‘Jüdische und christliche Konvertiten im jüdisch-christlichen Religionsgespräch des Mittelalters’, published in German in 1966, Bernhard Blumenkranz recalls the situation of the Jews who had been forcefully baptised in Visigothic Spain around the year 800:

Und wie wenn der anfängliche Zwang bei der Zuführung zum Christentum nicht genügt hätte, so kam nun auch noch die polizeimäßige Überwachung und Bespitzelung und alle anderen Ausnahmegesetze für diese Neukristen hinzu [...]

[and as if the original coercion involved in their steering to Christianity had not been enough, it was now followed by police-like surveillance and spying as well as all other extraordinary laws for New Christians [...]].¹

More than 40 years later, Benjamin Scheller (Berlin) researched the fate of those Jews and their descendants who, in the Kingdom of Naples, after severe persecution, were coerced to conversion in 1292. This involved more than 20 Jewish communities, particularly in the Apulian seaport of Trani. Scheller noted that all the members of that socio-religious group had been marked or stigmatised for 200 years with the label *neofiti* (neophytes), *christiani novi* or *christiani novelli* (new Christians). Although some of them played an active and even leading role in the administration of the city and in the whole kingdom, they had continued to live in a special quarter (*Iudayaca, Guidecca*), and had had to face accusations of heresy. In three waves, 1495 (accompanied by a pogrom), again in 1510, and finally in 1514, these *non boni christiani* (not-good Christians) were forced to leave southern Italy together with the Jews.²

¹ Bernhard Blumenkranz, ‘Jüdische und christliche Konvertiten im jüdisch-christlichen Religionsgespräch des Mittelalters’, in *Judentum im Mittelalter. Beiträge zum christlich-jüdischen Gespräch*, ed. by Paul Wilpert, *Miscellanea Mediaevalia*, 4 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1966), pp. 264–82 (p. 265).

² Benjamin Scheller, ‘Die politische Stellung der Juden im mittelalterlichen Süditalien und die Massenkonversion der Juden im Königreich Neapel 1292’, in *Wechselseitige Wahrnehmung der Religionen*

Basic questions

The first question which I would like to answer in this paper relates to the status of those Jews who were forcefully baptised during the Viennese *Geserah* of 1420/21: Did they remain stigmatised as converts – in a ‘Semantik der Differenz’, as Scheller calls it.³ Did they live separate lives from the ‘old Christians’? Did they marry exclusively within their secluded group? Were they subject to special rights and restrictions? Were they mistrusted in terms of the reliability of their Christianity, and were they continuously considered heirs to the murderers of Christ (as had been noted by Jonathan Elukin using English sources)?⁴ What can be said about the integration and affiliation of those New Christians when looking at Austrian sources after 1421? Where did they live and whom did they get married to?

In his famous 1988 book, *Pest, Geißler und Judenmorde*, Frantisek Graus answered quite straightforwardly my second question: ‘Economically, the New Christian was often faced with ruin’ (‘Ökonomisch stand der ‚neue Christ‘ oft vor dem Nichts’).⁵ But this statement still leaves much open: What kind of new living conditions were the converts confronted with? Directly after a voluntary conversion, the baptised would lose the inheritance of Jewish parents, and therefore any basis for a new life.⁶ During the *Geserah*, the forcefully baptised were even more confronted with that fact insofar as the entire Jewish population had been dispossessed of its assets, which had been confiscated by duke Albrecht V. The prohibition on taking interest ‘amongst brethren’ – in this case amongst Christians and New Christians – required the converts to search for a new source of income. Do the sources provide us with information on a second career as Christians? And a related issue: were the converts given access to schools, education, skilled crafts, trades and offices?

im Spätmittelalter und in der Frühen Neuzeit, ed. by Ludger Grenzmann and others (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2009), pp. 143–71 (p. 143); idem, ‘The materiality of difference. Converted Jews and their descendants in the late medieval Kingdom of Naples’, *Medieval History Journal* 12/2 (2009), pp. 405–30, and idem, *Stadt der Neuchristen. Konvertierte Juden und ihre Nachkommen im Trien des Spätmittelalters zwischen Inklusion und Exklusion* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2013).

3 Scheller, *Stadt der Neuchristen*, p. 311.

4 Jonathan M. Elukin, ‘From Jew to Christian? Conversion and Immutability in Medieval Europe’, in *Varieties of religious conversion in the middle ages*, ed. by James Muldoon (Gainesville, Fla. [a. o.]: Univ. Press of Florida, 1997), pp. 171–89 (p. 182).

5 Frantisek Graus, *Pest – Geißler – Judenmorde. Das 14. Jahrhundert als Krisenzeit*. 2. Reviewed edition (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1988), p. 266. Magin also points out that many converts were poor. See Christine Magin, ‘Wie es um die Juden recht stet’. *Der Status der Juden in spätmittelalterlichen deutschen Rechtsbüchern*. Göttinger Philosophische Dissertationen D7 (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 1999), p. 203.

6 Magin, ‘Wie es um die Juden recht stet’, pp. 198–210.

Methodologically, one pragmatic issue is how our target population can be identified as such within the sources: the first name does not give any indication regarding religious affiliation. Baptised Jews had Christian standard names such as Matthias or Caspar, Daniel or Johannes (John), Paul, Thomas, Michael and also Jakob, Barbara, Elisabeth, Katharina or Magdalena. Almost never do they have bynames such as *Jud*, *Judeus*, *Judenkopf* or similar. All these bynames present in the university registers from the middle of the fifteenth century yet apparently refer to 'old' Christians.⁷ As early as 1136, the 'Traditionskodex' of the Klosterneuburg monastery mentions an *Ernestus iudeus*, at a time when there was not any Jewish settlement in Austria.⁸ Neither an apparently 'Jewish' byname, nor the new name of a baptised Jew can be expected to give any indication concerning a religious identity that may have left behind. Nor is it to be assumed that names such as *Unglaub* ('infidel') or *Wucherlein* ('small usurer') – both of them are taken from the University register from the 1440ies – refer to Jews.⁹ Even *Rudpertus Taufkind* ('godchild') from Salzburg was not of Jewish origin and baptised as a child, as one might think, but came from a long-established Christian patrician family in Salzburg.¹⁰ His ancestor *Konrad Taufkind* was the first mayor mentioned by name (1370–1374) there.¹¹ The derivation of his name is not known.

Baptised Jews and Jewesses can thus only be identified by the following unambiguous denominations in the sources I used: *quondam judeus*, *judeus baptizatus*, *vormalis judin gewesn* ('formerly Jewess'), *neukrist* ('New Christian'), *taufster jud* ('baptised Jew') and *neophytus*, *neofitus* or *neophita/neofita*, with the same suffix employed for males as well.¹² Those identifiers have to be searched for, and unfortunately they have only rarely been included in the indexes of editions, which requires a precise and detailed search in our many sources.

7 *Die Matrikel der Universität Wien. Vol. I, 1377–1450*, Publikationen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung, 6. Reihe: Quellen zur Geschichte der Universität Wien, ed. by Archiv der Universität Wien (Wien-Graz-Köln: Böhlau 1956), p. 177: *Johannes Judenkopff de Monaco* (Munich) (sub dato 1431 October 13, *Natio Renensium*); p. 218: *Jacobus Jud de Gundersdorf* (sub dato 1440, October 13, *Natio Austriae*); p. 277: *Dom. Paulus Jud de Prukberg* (sub dato 1450 April 14, *Natio Renensium*).

8 Eveline Brugger, 'Von der Ansiedlung bis zur Vertreibung. Juden in Österreich im Mittelalter', in idem, Martha Keil a. o., *Geschichte der Juden in Österreich*, (Vienna: Ueberreuter, 2006), pp. 123–227 (p. 125), with more examples of 'Juden-Namen'.

9 *Die Matrikel der Universität Wien. I. Band 1377–1450*. Quellen zur Geschichte der Universität Wien. Publikationen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung, ed. by Leo Santifaller, 6. Reihe Quellen zur Geschichte der Universität Wien, 1. Abteilung Die Matrikel der Universität Wien. Register der Personen- und Ortsnamen, ed. by Archiv der Universität Wien (Graz-Köln: Böhlau, 1956), p. 674: *Conradus Vnglaub de Kuelsbaim* (sub dato 1441 April 14, *natio Rhenenses*); p. 702: *Jacobus Wucherlen de Tropheya* (sub dato 1440 October 13, *natio Australes*), and others.

10 *Ibid.*, p. 395: *Rudbertus Taufkind de Salzburga* (sub dato 1450 October 13, *natio Rhenenses*).

11 He died in 1382; See *Geschichte Salzburgs. Stadt und Land* 1/2, ed. by Heinz Dopsch (Salzburg: Anton Pustet 1983), pp. 717, 853.

12 See also Scheller, *Stadt der Neukristen*, 313–23.

Historical Background: the Viennese Geserah 1420/21

In order to give a time-line for the individual fates discussed below, a short overview of the events of the Viennese Geserah is necessary:

In a climate of growing hostility, and following a financial and political crisis which was mainly the result of the costs for the Hussite Wars and the planned wedding of Duke Albrecht V with the Emperor's daughter Elisabeth,¹³ the Jewish population in Vienna and Lower Austria was arrested on May 23rd, 1420 on the orders of the Duke; it was then forced to convert under threat of death. According to the *Kleine Klosterneuburger Chronik* ('Small Chronicle of Klosterneuburg', written after 1428 and covering the time between 1322 and 1428), *ettlich* ('numerous') were baptised but among those, *ettlich* in turn reconverted to Judaism. They were then – according to this Chronicle, here our sole source – burnt to death as renegades. In September 1420, 800 destitute Jews were put on rafts on the river Danube and were left to drift downstream. Most of them were received partly in Hungary and partly – as will be shown later – in Pressburg/Bratislava. Many eventually reached Moravia or Bohemia. Once the Albrecht V had returned, in defeat, from Hussite Wars, wealthy Jews and Jewesses were tortured in order to reveal the hiding places of their treasures and to accept baptism – a fact that was reported by the Yiddish text *Winer gesere* as well as by the theologian and Rektor of the University, Thomas Ebendorfer. His *Chronica Austriae* also mentions that some older people committed suicide rather than convert to Christianity. The ritual suicide *le-kiddush ha-shem* of a group of Jewish prisoners in the synagogue is described in much detail and with many topoi in the *Winer gesere*. In Jewish as well as Christian reports, the burning at the stake of between 210 (as reported by the *Winer gesere*) and 240 Jews and Jewesses (as noted by the *Klosterneuburger Chronik*) took place at Erdberger Lände in today's third district of Vienna. The execution was followed with considerable attendance and interest by the Christian population. Politically, this 'cold-bloodedly organised political murder' (Michael Toch¹⁴) was justified by the alleged collaboration of Jews with the Hussite enemy even though such a crime would have had to be punished with expulsion and not with execution. The burning at the stake was justified with reference to a Host desecration in Enns that had allegedly taken place years

13 Petr Elbel (Vienna/Brno) and Wolfram Ziegler (Vienna) see mainly financial motives for the persecution: 'Die Wiener Gesera. Neue Überlegungen zu einem alten Forschungsproblem', in: 'Avigdor, Benesch, Gitl' – Juden in Böhmen und Mähren im Mittelalter, Samuel Steinherz zum Gedenken (Proceedings of a conference in Brno, 27–29. November 2012), ed. by Pavel Kocman and Helmut Teufel, Judaica Bohemiae, supplement volume, Prague [in preparation].

14 Michael Toch, 'Die Verfolgungen des Spätmittelalters (1350–1550)', in *Germania Judaica* III/3, ed. by Arye Maimon, Mordechai Breuer and Yacov Guggenheim (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995), pp. 2298–327 (p. 2309).

before, and had astonishingly not been revealed earlier. The eviction and murder was then followed by an 'eternal' prohibition of settlement, which was upheld in Vienna for about 150 years.¹⁵

Individual Fates of Baptised Jews

We cannot say for sure how many forced baptisms took place in the course of the Viennese Geserah. As already mentioned, the *Kleine Klosterneuburger Chronik* noted *ettlich* ('numerous') converts¹⁶ in 1420, while the *Winer gesere* gives the impression of numerous affected people without mentioning numbers. An anonymous chronicle (the *Anonymi Viennensis Breve Chronicon Austriacum*) mentions *irer vil* ('many of those') baptised.¹⁷ In contrast to the already mentioned case of Trani (Apulia), however, the Viennese baptised cannot be apprehended as a group and can only be grasped individually after a detailed search or by chance.

To anticipate our results, one can find 28 New Christians, identified by name or as anonymous individuals. Seventeen of them are men – of which four or five are German students at the University of Vienna – four are women and seven are children or youths. 22 of them were definitely baptised in due course of the *Geserah*. It is unclear whether the rare occurrence of female 'New Christians' is due to the Jewesses' stronger fidelity to their beliefs. Even though the *Winer gesere* states that more women than men (110 as against 90) were among the victims, the lower representation in communal sources is connected to their legal status. It is mostly the husbands who were the actors in property transactions. Their wives were only mentioned by their first names and without further description. I am aware of the fact that we cannot pull valid statistics from the limited number of 28. The context does, however, allow for some conclusions due to comments and their context.

15 Brugger, 'Von der Ansiedlung,' pp. 221–24. A new critical edition of the *Winer gesere* still is a desideratum; see the edition made by Artur Goldmann, 'Die "Wiener Gesera" und die Urteils-Verkündigungen vom Jahre 1421, in *Das Judenbuch der Scheffstraße zu Wien (1389–1420), mit einer Schriftprobe*, ed. by Artur Goldmann (Vienna-Leipzig: Braumüller 1908), pp. 112–33 (pp. 125–32). See the remarks to the topoi in the Jewish reports in Martha Keil, 'Gemeinde und Kultur – Die mittelalterlichen Grundlagen jüdischen Lebens in Österreich,' in: *Geschichte der Juden in Österreich*, pp. 15–122 (pp. 119–21). Without hardly any source criticism, Kurt Schubert, 'Die Wiener Gesera und der Freitod von Wiener Juden zur "Heiligung Gottes",' in: *Memoria – Wege jüdischen Erinnerns. Festschrift für Michael Brocke zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. by Birgit Klein and Christine Müller (Berlin: Metropolis 2005), pp. 541–51. Still basic: Samuel Krauss, *Die Wiener Geserah vom Jahre 1421* (Vienna-Leipzig: Braumüller, 1920).

16 Klaus Lohrmann, 'Die Juden im mittelalterlichen Klosterneuburg,' in *Klosterneuburg. Geschichte und Kultur 1: Die Stadt* (Klosterneuburg: Stadtgemeinde Klosterneuburg, 1992), pp. 209–23 (p. 222).

17 Cited in Michael H. Shank, 'Unless You Believe, You Shall not Understand'. *Logic, University and Society in late medieval Vienna* (Princeton/New Jersey: Princeton University Press 1988), pp. 196–97, note 117.

Baptised Women

Hanna, called *Peltlin*, being the widow of *Peltl* of Salzburg – he died before 1401¹⁸ – ran her own lending business and owned a house in Vienna.¹⁹ Her daughter Lea apparently accepted baptism in 1420/21, but we do not know what happened to her second daughter *Schöndl*, a moneylender like her mother; no further information has been passed down.²⁰ Being a Christian, Elisabeth/Lea did not inherit her mother's house at Kurrentgasse 12.²¹ She was, however, given a possibly better house as a present by Albrecht V in April 1422 at Wipplingerstraße 12 (corner Stoß im Himmel). She can be identified as the new owner without any doubt: *Elspeth die Newkristinn, etwann genant Lea, der Peltlin Judin tochter, hat gevangen nucz und gewer ains hauß, gelegen in der Wildbercherstrass ze Wienn.* ('Elspeth the New Christian, earlier called Lea, daughter of the Jewess Peltlin, has won the profit and use of a house located on *Wildbercherstrass* [today 1st district, Wipplingerstraße] in Vienna').²²

The source mentions neither a husband nor any children, nor do we know anything about her mother's fate. Maybe Hanna died during the persecution, because as late as in August 1420, during the imprisonment of the wealthy Jews

18 Rudolf Geyer, Leopold Sailer, *Urkunden aus Wiener Grundbüchern zur Geschichte der Wiener Juden im Mittelalter*. Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte der Juden in Deutsch-Österreich, X (Vienna: Deutscher Verlag für Jugend und Volk, 1931), p. 575 nr. 1926 (sub dato 1401, Schotten-Urbur): *Hanna die judin Poeltleins wittib*.

19 Ignaz Schwarz, *Das Wiener Ghetto, seine Häuser und seine Bewohner*, Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte der Juden in Deutsch-Österreich II (Wien-Leipzig: Wilhelm Braumüller, 1909), p. 153, note 31 (his assumption, that Hanna's husband Peltlin died in 1411, is not correct, see above, note 18). Hanna gave several loans to Viennese burghers: Geyer-Sailer, *Urkunden*, p. 455 nr. 1520 (sub dato 1411 February 11), and p. 594, register, entrance 'Hanna von Salzburg'. On Jewish Business Women see Martha Keil, 'Business Success and Tax Debts: Jewish Women in Late Medieval Austrian Towns', in: *Jewish Studies at the Central European University II* (1999–2001), ed. by Andras Kovács and Eszter Andor (Budapest: Central European University, 2002), pp. 103–23; Martha Keil, 'Public Roles of Jewish Women in Fourteenth and Fifteenth-Century Ashkenaz: Business, Community, and Ritual', in: *The Jews of Europe in the Middle Ages (Tenth to Fifteenth Centuries): Proceedings of the International Symposium held at Speyer, 20–25 October 2002*, ed. by Christoph Cluse, Cultural Encounters in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages 4 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), pp. 317–30; Martha Keil, 'Mobilität und Sittsamkeit: Jüdische Frauen im Wirtschaftsleben des spätmittelalterlichen Aschkenaz', in *Wirtschaftsgeschichte der mittelalterlichen Juden. Fragen und Einschätzungen*, ed. by Michael Toch, Schriften des Historischen Kollegs München, Kolloquien 71 (München: Oldenbourg Wissenschaftsverlag, 2008), pp. 153–80.

20 Schwarz, *Das Wiener Ghetto*, p. 153, note 31. One of Schöndlein's loans in Geyer-Sailer, *Urkunden*, p. 455 nr. 1521 (sub dato 1411 February 13).

21 Her house was sold by Albrecht V to *Jakob Schetinger* and *Magdalen*, Schwarz, *Das Wiener Ghetto*, p. 95 nr. 405A (sub dato 1424 May 26).

22 The entry in the land register in Schwarz, *Das Wiener Ghetto*, p. 86 nr. 385D (sub dato 1422 April 29) and Geyer-Sailer, *Urkunden*, p. 530 nr. 1774 (sub dato 1422 April 29).

of Vienna, she confirmed the payment of a Viennese burgher's debt.²³ The New Christian Elisabeth did not live in isolation but received a house in an area that already had Christian neighbours in the days of the Viennese Jewish quarter. Before the Viennese *Geserah*, the building had belonged to Rabbi Meisterl, who is mentioned in the *Winer gesere* as having been subjected to torture.²⁴

The second baptised Jewess named in the *Kleine Klosterneuburger Chronik* had a similar fate:

Ein judin zu Klosterneuburg liess sich tauffen und wardt genant Barbara, hat vorher zu der ehe den Scheblein juden gehabt, die nam darnach zu der ehe Niclasen den Lueger eines erbarn burgers sun, da derselb starb, da nam sie Niclasen den Lister eines burgers sun von Presburg.

[A Jewess at Klosterneuburg accepted baptism and was named Barbara; beforehand she had been married to the Jew Scheblein, afterwards she took *Niclas den Lueger*, who was the son of an honourable burgher, as husband. When he died, she took *Niclas den Lister*, son of a burgher from Pressburg/Bratislava as husband.]²⁵

We do not learn the Jewish name of this woman, nor did her husband Scheblein leave any trace in the sources according to today's knowledge.²⁶ It is remarkable, though, that she could immediately marry into the Christian bourgeoisie even though she brought with her three – also baptised – children. The latter are recorded in a different context. In November 1430, Barbara drew up a charter together with her children Thomas and Kathrei, and also in the name of their minor brother Jakob. They sold that half of their house on *Nidern Markt*²⁷ which Albrecht V had given them because all four of them – Barbara and her three children – had converted to Christianity. The previous owner had been the Jew Lewein.²⁸ The charter describes the procedure as follows:

23 Adolf Altmann, *Geschichte der Juden in Stadt und Land Salzburg von der frühesten Zeit bis auf die Gegenwart*. Weitergeführt bis 1988 von Günter Fellner und Helga Embacher (Salzburg: Otto Müller, 1990), p. 146, charter nr. 2142 (sub dato 1420 August 14).

24 Goldmann, *Die Wiener Geserah*, pp. 127–28.

25 *Kleine Klosterneuburger Chronik* p. 245, cited in Klaus Lohrmann, *Judenrecht und Judenpolitik im mittelalterlichen Österreich* (Wien-Köln: Böhlau, 1990), p. 301 note 1069.

26 Lohrmann, 'Die Juden im mittelalterlichen Klosterneuburg', p. 220, mentions a certain Manusch, son of a Scheblein, who granted numerous small loans of approximately 10 pounds around the year 1400. But Manusch was a bit too old to be Barbara's son.

27 Lohrmann, 'Die Juden im mittelalterlichen Klosterneuburg', p. 219, mentions a house owned by Jews in 1389 on *nidern Markt*.

28 Stiftsarchiv (Archive of the Monastery) Klosterneuburg, Urkunde 1430 XI 12 (registered in the online database of Monasterium.Net: <http://www.mom-ca.uni-koeln.de/mom/search?q=1430+XI+12&sort=date&arch=AT-StiAK> (accessed 8. Sept. 2014), but without any transcription, picture or register). Lohrmann, 'Die Juden im mittelalterlichen Klosterneuburg', p. 223, mistakenly names Scheblein as editor of the deed of sale and wrongly dates it with September 12, 1430.

Das Haus gab uns unser genediger Herr am Ersten so wir alle vire egenannt die heilig tauff haben empfahen und abgetreten haben vom Judischen Irrsal,²⁹ auf den heiligen kristenleuchen glauben wir uns bekennt haben [...]

[Our gracious Lord gave us the house immediately after all four of us had received holy baptism and had abjured the Jewish heresy [*sic*], we avowed ourselves to the holy Christian faith [...]]

Barbara's story was known in Klosterneuburg and seemed to the chronicler worth retelling. His account, however, only contains factual information (about the baptism and the two marriages), but no moral or even religious judgment. It can be assumed that Barbara had already had contact with Christian customers while being the wife of Scheblein – and that maybe her second husband, *Niklas der Lueger*, had been amongst them. Further, she was immediately integrated into Christian society socially as well as topographically. We do not know anything about the fate of Scheblein. Maybe he had already died before 1420, and his widow with her three children had then looked for safety among Christians.

The two women ended up coming off well from the catastrophe. But of course the context – violence and fear of death – renders irrelevant any discussion as to whether Lea or Barbara's baptisms had been forced or voluntary.

Baptised Children

Barbara's charter relates to the fate of her baptised Jewish children. The 1244 *Judenordnung* (ordinance which regulated the Jewish status), which Albrecht V had confirmed, had punished the abduction of Jewish children as theft: *Item si aliquis vel aliqua puerum iudei abduxerit, ut fur volumus condempnetur* ('Likewise, if any man or woman should kidnap a Jewish child we wish that he be punished as a thief.')

29 Matthias Lexer, *Mittelhochdeutsches Handwörterbuch. Zugleich als Supplement und alphabetischer Index zum Mittelhochdeutschen Wörterbuche von Benecke-Müller-Zarncke*. Reprint of the original edition Leipzig 1872–1878 with an introduction of Kurt Gärtner, 3 volumes (Stuttgart: S. Hirzel, 1992), online: <http://woerterbuchnetz.de/Lexer/?sigle=Lexer&mode=Vernetzung&clmid=LI00756#XL100756> (accessed 8. Sept. 2014): *irrsal*: 'Irrtum in Glaubenssachen, Ketzerei' ('error in matters of faith, heresy').

30 Eveline Brugger and Birgit Wiedl, *Regesten zur Geschichte der Juden in Österreich im Mittelalter*. Vol. 1: *Von den Anfängen bis 1338* (Innsbruck-Wien-Bozen: StudienVerlag, 2005), pp. 35–38 nr. 25 (p. 36, provision 26). English translation: *The Jewish History Sourcebook*, online: www.fordham.edu/halsall/jewish/1244-jews-austria.asp (accessed 8. Sept. 2014). Magin, 'Wie es umb der iuden recht stet', p. 193; German Translation and commentary: Lohrmann, *Judenrecht und Judenpolitik*, pp. 53–84 (pp. 58–9). According to the Viennese municipal laws, thieves were flogged, *ibid.* p. 59, not killed, as *The Jewish History Sourcebook* comments. Robert Chazan, *Reassessing Jewish Life in Medieval Europe* (Cambridge and others: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 123–25, mainly deals with the economical aspects of the charter.

or debated it as controversial.³¹ Even Pope Martin V, who, in a letter dated January 1st, 1421, prohibited under the threat of excommunication any forced baptism in general and the baptism of Jewish children below the age of 12 against the will of their parents,³² did not prevent Albrecht V from abducting Jewish children and having them baptised. The ducal measure not only aimed at the salvation of the children's lives but predominantly at the salvation of their souls. Albrecht's radical position in 1420/21 was consistent with the prevailing doctrine of his time. The theological faculty of the University of Vienna had already solidified its conviction that after forced baptism the religious belief and Christian faith, and with it the dogmas that could not be cognitively grasped, would eventually sink in and settle: 'Unless you believe, you shall not understand...' – thus the Viennese theologian Heinrich von Langenstein cited Augustin's *Nisi credideritis, non intellegitis*, referring to (but not citing literally) Isaiah 7. 9. Michael Shank used this scriptural verse as title for his famous book in 1988.³³

What happened to the abducted Jewish children? We have in the abbot *Martin von Leibitz* a relatively 'objective' eyewitness of the burnings in March 12, 1421; he answered this question – *quid de parvulis iudeorum?* – in his *Senatorium*. The answer was structured like a dialogue between a *senex* and a *juvenis* and stated the following: 'The children were spared the burning at the stake; some were handed over to monasteries where they were more useful than the others. Two of those saved children are even now prioresses at the nunneries of Himmelpfort and Sankt Magdalena.'³⁴

31 Magin, 'Wie es umb der iuden recht stet', pp. 185–98; Shlomo Simonsohn, *The Apostolic See and the Jews. History* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1991), pp. 240–43, 253–57. Ulrich Horst and Barbara Faes de Mottoni, 'Die Zwangstaufe jüdischer Kinder im Urteil scholastischer Theologen', *Münchener Theologische Zeitschrift* 40/3 (1989), pp. 173–99.

32 Shlomo Simonsohn, *The Apostolic See and the Jews. Documents: 1394–1464* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1989), pp. 695–97 nr. 606 (sub dato 1421 January 1). Another version of the text mentions the children in the Austrian duchy, *temporali dominio dilectorum filiorum Austriae and Venetiarum ducum*, *ibid.*, p. 697. Heinz Schreckenber, *Die christlichen Adversus-Judaes-Texte und ihr literarisches und historisches Umfeld* (13. –20. Jh.), (Frankfurt/Main-New York: Peter Lang, 1994), p. 489 nr. 6 (sub dato 1421 January 1); Pope Martin V repeated this prohibition on September 20, 1421, at the request of the Jews in Spain, *ibid.*, nr. 7, and Simonsohn, *The Apostolic See, Documents*, p. 698 nr. 608.

33 Michael H. Shank, 'Unless You Believe, You Shall Not Understand'. *Logic, University, and Society in Late Medieval Vienna* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1988), pp. 139–89. Actually, this is not Isaiah's correct verse; the translation of the King James Bible says: 'If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established.'

34 'Senatorium magistri Martini olim abbatis Scotorum Wyennae', in: *Scriptores rerum austriacorum veteres ac genuini quotquot ex Austriae vicarumque provinciarum bibliothecis et tabulariis, decumano labore perlustratis, aut primum in lucem vindicau, aut ex mss codicibus auctiores et emendatioris edi potuerunt*. Tomus 2, ed. by Hieronymus Pez (Lipsia: no publisher, 1725), col. 626–74 (col. 631), Online: http://reader.digital-sammlungen.de/de/fs1/object/display/bsb10798774_00364.html (accessed 11. Sept. 2014), cited in Lohrmann, *Judenrecht und Judenpolitik*, p. 300, note 1064: 'JUVENIS: Quid de parvulis iudeorum? SENEX: Reservati sunt et aliqui dati sunt ad monasteria et plus aliis profecerunt. Nunc regit priorissa ad Coeli Portas et priorissa ad Sanctam Mariam Magdalenam, de incendio reservata.'

I think we can accept this information as a fact, in particular as both nunneries are precisely named: the Premonstratensian nunnery of *St. Agnes an der Himmelpforte* and the nunnery of *Sankt Magdalena vor dem Schottentor* (today near the main building of the university), governed in accordance with the Augustinian rules.³⁵ Ignaz Schwarz, whose still valuable monograph *Das Wiener Ghetto* was published in 1909, already considered this information as valuable fact and tried to find out the names of those two women based on these two nunneries' sources.³⁶ He assumed – according to the knowledge available at the time – that Martin von Leibitz had still been alive in the 1470s, and he did find two prioresses for that time frame. However, Martin had already died in 1464, which made a certain Magdalena the only abbess of St. Agnes known by name – she was abbess between 1444 and 1463.³⁷ The fact that Magdalena is not given the byname of a baptised Jewess in any of the documents does not mean that the conclusion drawn is wrong. For the nunnery *Sankt Magdalena vor dem Schottentor* and for the period concerned, no names of abbesses have been passed down to us.³⁸

My colleague Eveline Brugger (St. Pölten) has brought to my attention a highly informative document bearing on the fate of baptised children. It describes a procedure that was certainly not uncommon: In March 1421, Provost Erhart at the Canons regular of St. Augustine, St. Andrä an der Traisen, confirmed the receipt of 50 pounds of Viennese Pfennig from Duke Albrecht V which the boy Matthias was to receive at the time of his coming of age.³⁹ In January 1430 – maybe at the time of his 18th birthday, maybe earlier – Mathias *New Kristen von Herczogenbuerkch puertig* ('New Christian born in Herzogenburg') confirmed that the provosts of the Convent of St. Andrä an der Traisen had *liepleich inngehabt und in kristenleichen gelauben getzogen haben* ('lovingly looked after him and educated him in the Christian faith') and had let him attend school to his

35 Richard Perger and Walter Brauneis, *Die mittelalterlichen Kirchen und Klöster Wiens*, Wiener Geschichtsbücher 19/20 (Wien-Hamburg: Paul Zsolnay, 1977), pp. 186, 189. Joseph Kopallik, *Regesten zur Geschichte der Erzdiözese Wien 1: Regesten zur Geschichte der aufgehobenen Klöster Wiens* (Wien: Gorischeck, 1890), p. 29.

36 Schwarz, *Das Wiener Ghetto*, p. 7, note 9.

37 Harald Tersch, *Österreichische Selbstzeugnisse des Spätmittelalters und der Frühen Neuzeit (1400–1650). Eine Darstellung in Einzelbeiträgen* (Wien-Köln: Böhlau, 1998) pp. 52–65 (p. 52); Alfons Zák, 'Das Frauenkloster Himmelpforte in Wien', *Jahrbuch für Landeskunde Niederösterreichs* 4–5 (1905–1906), pp. 139–224 (pp. 202–5); 6 (1907), pp. 95–187 (p. 185: list of the prioresses).

38 Franz Maschek, 'Geschichtliches vom Magdalenerinnenkloster in Wien', *Jahrbuch des Vereins für die Geschichte der Stadt Wien* 14 (1958), pp. 133–40 (pp. 137, 140: list of the prioresses).

39 Vienna, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv (HHStA), Familienurkunden, nr. 43 (1422 March 21); Eveline Brugger, 'Hetschel und wer noch? Anmerkungen zur Geschichte der Juden in Herzogenburg im Mittelalter', in: *900 Jahre Stift Herzogenburg. Aufbrüche – Umbrüche – Kontinuität. Tagungsband zum wissenschaftlichen Symposium vom 22.–24. September 2011*, ed. by Günter Katzler and Victoria Zimmerl-Panagl, Sonderpublikation des NÖ Instituts für Landeskunde (Innsbruck-Wien-Bozen: StudienVerlag, 2013), pp. 119–37 (p. 18).

benefit and honour. Matthias had used for, and invested for various ventures the 50 pounds of his *gnedigen Herrn* ('honoured Lord') the Duke, plus other endowment (*vertigung*); he confirmed vis-à-vis the provost that he was not owed anything anymore.⁴⁰ Therefore it was not only the convent that had been responsible for Matthias' upbringing and livelihood, but also Albrecht V, the very same man who had presumably murdered his parents and had most certainly taken away from them 'their only child, their property and their home country' – as put in a nutshell by Eveline Brugger.⁴¹

The Rabbi's Son

The only thing that we hear about the little son of a famous rabbi and victim of the *Geserah* – namely Rabbi Aron Blümlein, grandson of Israel of Krems and uncle of Rabbi Isserlein of Wiener Neustadt – comes from a Hebrew source, a responsum by Maharil of Mainz (*d.* 1427).⁴² A certain *Chaver Shimon* asked him whether an inheritance of 3 florins from Aron Blümlein could be passed on, as titled, to his son-in-law, Rabbi Murklein of Marburg (Maribor), and to other heirs or whether 'his son who is amongst the *goyim*' (*beno she-bein ha-goyim*) would have to be taken into consideration, too. Maharil decided that the inheritance could be paid out as Aron's son had been 'forced in his childhood' (*be-tinokiut ne'enass*, i.e. forced baptism); he was therefore a 'full Jew who had been taken prisoner by the *goyim* and had spent all his days in error (or: in unknown and unaware sin, *be-shogeg*)'. Thirteen years had passed since then – the responsum therefore dates to 1434 – and the boy had come of age to fulfil the commandments but had not returned in a ritual of atonement. Therefore, the money should be given to Rabbi Murklein for his yeshiva and he would pass it on to the *Gabbai*, the custodian of the alms (*Zedaka*) for poor *Bachurim*, Talmud students. The legal situation is thus somewhat ambiguous; while the forcefully baptised son is not entitled to an inheritance, the other heirs are to donate the money to a holy cause. Another baptised child, the 'daughter of *Lemlein hakham*' ('the sage Lemlein') is also mentioned in the responsum; she is 'with the *goyim* and it is unknown what happened to her'.⁴³

40 Stiftsarchiv (Archive of the monastery) Herzogenburg, Urkunden St. Andrä an der Traisen nr. 167 (sub dato 1431 January 15), online: http://www.mom-ca.uni-koeln.de/mom/AT-StiAHe/StAndraeCanReg/1431_I_15/charter?q=1431%20I%2015 (accessed 11. Sept. 2014).

41 Brugger, 'Hetschlein', p. 19.

42 Jakob Molin (Maharil), *She'elot u-Teshuvot be-hadashot*, ed. by Ytzhak Satz (Jerusalem: Mif'al Torat hakhme Ashkenaz, 2nd Edition, 1977), pp. 234–35 nr. 166. Israel J. Yuval, *Scholars in Their Time. The Religious Leadership of German Jewry in the Late Middle Ages* (in Hebrew), (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1988), p. 62, stated that this must have been a late pregnancy.

43 Maharil, *She'elot u-Teshuvot be-hadashot*, pp. 234–35 nr. 166 (p. 234).

How did New Christians Make a Living?

'[...] it is unknown what happened to her'. Maharil's statement touches upon my second question: How did the New Christians earn money and which professional possibilities were open to them? The sources are not very helpful as they do not always mention the individuals' professions. In August 1422, *Jakob von Steyr, der peckh* ('the baker'), burgher of Vienna, and his wife Anna sold a house to *dem erbern maister Gabrieln dem Newkristen* ('the honourable master Gabriel, the New Christian') and his wife Anna and their heirs for the price of 45 pounds *Pfennige*.⁴⁴ Apart from the term 'New Christian', the two attributes 'honourable' and 'master' are interesting. They are not at all discriminating but rather a sign of appreciation as a bourgeois business partner; unfortunately we do not know which trade Gabriel was working in. We also do not know whether his wife Anna was a baptised Jewess, too.

When looking at the entries in the land charge register for December 1435, the pattern repeats itself: *Leupold Leyttesperger* and his wife Anna sold their house at the Rotenturm in Vienna for 315 pounds *Pfennige dem erbern Nicodemus dem Newenkristen* ('to the honourable Nicodemus the New Christian') and his heirs. The extremely high amount points to a particularly grand building.⁴⁵ A small academic side-remark: Rudolf Geyer and Leopold Sailer, neither of them Jews, listed the two *Newkristen* in the register of their edition of 1931 amongst the Jews and not the Christians.⁴⁶ *Friedreich Pobenberger*, alias *Moyse der Vorsprech* (an official at law court), was a third and seemingly well-integrated baptised Jew who set up his last will in 1427.⁴⁷ The testament of Friedrich's wife from 1429 further hardens the assumption that he had been a convert, for Ignaz Schwarz pointed out that she granted *ainem Newn Kristen genant Jeronimus, den sie erzogen hat* ('a New Christian called Jeronimus whom she had brought up') 20 pound *Pfennige*.⁴⁸

We can only make assumptions about this family: was Jeronimus the biological son of Friedrich alias Moses? Was his wife also a baptised Jewess or had Friedrich married a Christian after his baptism? Regarding the fate of Jewish children this entry only discloses that they could not only be handed over to monasteries but also to private individuals for further education. A search in testaments with an eye to such aspects would certainly be worthwhile. We do

44 On the same day, master Gabriel the New Christian in Vienna and his wedded wife Ann ('Maister Gabriel der Newkristen ze Wienn und Ann sein haustraw') sold two pound burgage tenure of this house to the nunnery of the Sisters of St. Clare; Geyer, Sailer, *Urkunden*, p. 533 nr. 1781 (sub dato: 1422 August 12) und 533 nr. 1782, same day.

45 Geyer, Sailer, *Urkunden*, p. 547 nr. 1820 (sub dato 1435 December 12).

46 Geyer, Sailer, *Urkunden*, Register, p. 593: Gabriel and Anna; p. 603: Nicodemus.

47 Schwarz, *Das Wiener Ghetto*, p. 7, note 8.

48 Schwarz, *Das Wiener Ghetto*, p. 7, note 8.

not know the time of marriage but we can assume that the former Jew Friedrich had participated in the upbringing of Jeronimus – his Christianity seemed solid enough to educate a baptised Jewish child. There is no hint of mistrust in the strength of belief and reliability of the convert.

New Christians at the Viennese University

Of all things, we notice an absence of prejudice against New Christians within one of the leading institutions that propagated anti-Judaism in the late Middle Ages, the University of Vienna. A prime example for climbing its career ladder is *Paulus de Mellico*, Paul of Melk, a New Christian. He was Canon of St. Stephan in 1451, Dean in 1460 and 61, Vice Chancellor of the University in 1465 and Rector in 1451, 1457, 1461 and 1471.⁴⁹ Up until now, as the records and registers of the Faculty of Arts for the years 1416–45 had yet not been edited, researchers had hardly noticed Paul of Melk's Jewish origins. Among the numerous entries of his name within the registers and files of the University, only one refers to him as a *neophitus*. He is noted as *baccalaureus* at the Faculty of Arts in the winter semester of 1427: *Paulus neophitus de mellico*.⁵⁰ For all subsequent entries his former religion is irrelevant. It is noteworthy that *Paulus de Mellico* had a byname – that of Leubman. This could refer to a Jewish name widely found in Austria, Lebman. There is even evidence to a Leubman, son of Josef, in Mödling – a small town south of Vienna – for the years between 1405 and 1408. This man worked as a money lender and could be considered to be Paul's father.⁵¹ The scribes of the University register rarely noted the cognomen *Leubman*, but in those cases where Paul himself wrote the minutes of the faculty sittings, he always included it – *decanatus primus magistri Pauli Leubman de Mellico*. During two further periods of office as dean, he jugged them down similarly.⁵² Was this a form of commemoration to his Jewish father who had maybe been murdered in the Geserah? This is something we do not know. *Paulus de Mellico* died on January 22, 1479 – he must

49 *Die Akten der Theologischen Fakultät der Universität Wien (1396–1508)*, ed. by Paul Uiblein, Vol. 2 (Vienna: Verband der wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft Österreichs, 1978), p. 689. Uiblein writes that Paulus 'was designated as *neophitus* quite often'; this is not the case, the denomination *neophitus* just shows up in 1427, when Paul only was *baccalaureus*, see the next remark.

50 University Archive Vienna (UAW), Ph 7: *Liber secundus actorum Facultatis artium* 1416–1443, fol. 88r, 2. entry, 2. line. I heartfully thank Martin Wägendorfer (Munich) for this information! See the online database 'Wiener Artistenregister' 1416–1447, *Acta Facultatis Artium* II (UAW cod. Ph 7), Nr. 3233–9262, by Thomas Maisel, Ingrid Matschinegg and Andreas Bracher, online: <https://fedora.phaidra.univie.ac.at/fedora/get/o:217/bdef:Container/get/AFA2%20nr%203233%20bis%209262.pdf> (accessed 16. Nov. 2014), p. 57 (sub dato 1427 I, 22.7.1427), 5116, b-1.

51 Geyer-Sailer, *Urkunden*, Register, p. 601: eight entries on Leubman, son of Joseph from Mödling.

52 *Die Akten der Theologischen Fakultät der Universität Wien (1396–1508)*, vol. 2, pp. 252, 257, 266.

therefore have been around 20 years old at the time of his entry in the university; further, he may have been baptised as a youth and educated at Melk Abbey.

Another chance find confirms Paul's Jewish origin: In August 1438, Empress Elisabeth, wife of Albrecht V – at this time already Emperor Albrecht II – instructed the mayor and council of Pressburg/Bratislava to hand over to our *getrewen lieben Meister Paulus de Melliko* ('truthful dear master Paulus de Melliko') his *Muhme* (i.e. his aunt), 'a Jewess and her Jewish child' upon personal conveyance of her letter.⁵³ Nothing is known about the further fate of woman and child but we can assume that they were not allowed to keep their Jewish faith with Paulus in Vienna.

The repeated election of Paulus for rector as *egregius vir*, excellent man,⁵⁴ allows us to assume a perfect integration within the academic and theological world and high esteem for him as a person. Careers like these can be found among New Christians in Spain, who were, however, often torn between the chance to reach highest positions and the religious mistrust against them.⁵⁵ If a careful conclusion may be drawn from the topics of Paul's intellectual production – the study of which I am not qualified for – he might have been one among the particularly devoted and eager converts: amongst his works we find one about the planetary configuration and – maybe not coincidentally – a commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews and on Good Friday.⁵⁶ The Austrian National Library's catalogue of manuscripts contains a number of codices which Paulus Leubman de Mellico had presented to the *Collecium ducale*, the first house of the University of Vienna, and to the *Rosenburse*, a student hall and centre in Vienna.⁵⁷ Among them there is a theological collection, written by Thomas Ebendorfer.⁵⁸ Like Paulus Leubman, Thomas Ebendorfer, who had died 15 years earlier in 1464, several times had been

53 Municipal Archives Bratislava (Mesto Bratislava), Listiny c 1082. Many thanks to Eveline Brugger for this information! The Register of this document in: Eduard Marie Fürst von Lichnowsky and Ernst Birk, *Geschichte des Hauses Habsburg, Vol. 5: Vom Regierungsantritt Herzog Albrecht IV. bis zum Tode König Albrecht II.* (Vienna: Schaumburg, 1841), p. CCCXLVI nr. 4004 (sub dato 1438 August 27). Paul and his Jewish aunt are mentioned in Ignaz Franz Keiblinger, *Geschichte des Benediktinerstiftes Melk in Niederösterreich, seiner Besitzungen und Umgebungen*, Vol. 2, *Geschichte der Besitzungen*, Part 1: *Besitzungen in den Vierteln ob und unter dem Wiener-Walde* (Vienna: Beck, 1869), p. 109, but he did not notice Paul's Jewish origin and conversion (p. 108).

54 *Die Akten der Theologischen Fakultät der Universität Wien* (1396–1508), Vol. 2, pp. 271, 274–5, 282.

55 Kevin Ingram, 'Series Introduction: Converso and Morisco Studies', in: *The Conversos and Moriscos in late medieval Spain and beyond 2. The Morisco issue*, ed. by Kevin Ingram (Leiden a. o.: Brill, 2012, pp. IX–XXII (pp. XI–XVIII and p. XI, note 2).

56 Joseph Aschbach, *Geschichte der Wiener Universität im ersten Jahrhundert ihres Bestehens. Festschrift zu ihrer fünfthundertjährigen Gründungsfeier* (Vienna: Verlag der K. K. Universität, 1865), pp. 558–60, but he is not mentioning Paul as a 'neophitus', and his dates concerning Paul's university career are not exact.

57 Friedrich Simader, *Bücher aus der mittelalterlichen Universität Wien und ihrem Umfeld* (online article, Vienna, Austrian National Library: from 2007 onwards): <http://www.onb.ac.at/sammlungen/hschrift/kataloge/universitaet/Rosenburse.htm#seitenanfang> (accessed 13. Nov. 2014).

58 Austrian National Library, Cod. 4954 Han.

dean of the Theological Faculty of the University of Vienna. It is most probable that the two scholars knew each other very well. But we cannot prove that Paulus was the *neophitus* who helped Ebendorfer to translate the Hebrew anti-Christian concoction *Toldot Yeschu*. Our sources speak of Ebendorfer *cuiusdam Neophiti in hebraea lingua satis periti fretus auxilio* ('relying on the help of a certain neophite who had a great expertise in the Hebrew language'). But the man's name is never mentioned.⁵⁹ In consideration of Paul's catholic piety, this assumption is not to be ruled out.

Paul is, however, not the only *neophitus* who enrolled between the late 1420ies and the 1450s at that University. I would like to thank Martin Wagendorfer (Munich), who is currently indexing the medieval University acts and registers and who called my attention to one *Augustinus neophitus* in 1427, to another *Augustinus quondam neophitus* in 1439, and to one *Johannes Judeus baptisatus* already in 1416.⁶⁰

The registers of the Faculty of Medicine, which Sonia Horn analysed for her doctoral thesis, have brought out additional reference to baptised Jews – a fact that is in itself not surprising as Jewish doctors were part of any medieval town's landscape. Already four months after the *Geserah*, on July 31st, 1421, the Faculty of Medicine had to deal with a certain Caspar, *iudeum baptisatum*, who had been working as doctor without its approbation.⁶¹ Caspar cited Albrecht V's permission, who actually avowed himself to be his advocate at the faculty. The dispute wore on until January 1423, and it not clear how it turned out. Caspar – also once referred to as Caspar *neophitus* – is however not listed amongst the authorized doctors.⁶² We cannot make out whether Caspar lacked the required knowledge,

59 *Das jüdische Leben Jesu – Toldot Jeschu. Die älteste lateinische Übersetzung in den Falsitates Judeorum von Thomas Ebendorfer*, ed. by Brigitta Callsen, Manuela Niesner and others, Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung (Vienna-Munich: Böhlau, 2003), p. 88; Krauss, *Die Wiener Geserah*, p. 140.

60 University Archive Vienna (UAW) Ph 7: *Liber secundus actorum Facultatis artium* 1416–1443, fol. 88r, 3rd line (*Augustus neophitus de Vienna* 1427/28), fol. 141r, 8th line (*Augustinus quondam neophitus* 1439), fol. 2r (*Johannes Judeus baptisatus* 1416). The last two bynames are not to be found in online database 'Wiener Artistenregister' 1416–1447, only *Augustus neophitus de Vienna*, p. 57 (sub dato 1427 I, 22.7.1427), 5117, b-2.

61 UAW, Cod. Med. 1.1, *Acta Facultatis Medicae Universitatis Vindobonensis* I 1399–1435, ed. by Sonia Horn and Annette Löffler, unpublished, but online: <http://www.sonia-horn.eu/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/AFM-Vol-1-Beta.pdf> (accessed 13. Nov. 2014), pp. 47 (sub dato 1421 July 31), 51 (sub dato 1422 January 22 and February 12), 56 (sub dato 1423 January 29). Sonia Horn's thesis is online as well: Sonia Horn, 'Examiert und approbiert. Die Wiener medizinische Fakultät und nicht-akademische Heilkundige in Spätmittelalter und Früher Neuzeit' (unpubl. doctoral thesis, University of Vienna, 2001, online: <http://www.sonia-horn.eu/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Diss-Horn-UB-pdf.pdf> (accessed 13. Nov. 2014), pp. 73–5 (Caspar).

62 See the first edition of Cod. Med. 1.1, *Acta facultatis medicae universitatis Vindobonensis* I 1399–1435, ed. by Karl Schrauf (Vienna: Verlag des medicinischen Doctoren collegiums, 1894), pp. 95–101. See also pp. 46, 48, 52–3, 94.

whether the faculty did not want to admit further competition, or whether his Jewish origin was the reason for the rejection. We do know for sure, though, that Albrecht V entered into a power game with the University for the sake of Caspar, thereby causing the *neophiti* to become what Jews had been before – pawns between two forces. Whether Caspar was Albrecht's 'personal physician' – as claimed by Samuel Krauss – is not proven.⁶³

Two further baptised *empirici* ('doctors practicing without the Medical Faculty's approbation') kept the faculty busy. We know of one *empiricus omnino illiteratus* ('a practicing student fully lacking in letters'), who obviously did not speak any Latin in August 1438. We have also one Johann Gabriel *baptizatus*, who failed his exam in July 1442 and complained that he had been examined too harshly. The latter clearly did not leave Vienna, for in May 1451 he received another summons to the faculty.⁶⁴ From the 1450s onwards, a number of students from the 'Rhenish nation' – from Günzburg, Worms, and Passau – matriculated at the university and were referred to as *neophiti*.⁶⁵

Some Failed Lives

Among the baptised Jews in Austria there were certainly also some who failed to succeed in their new lives. Yet we only hear of those if they came in conflict with the law. One infamous example is the *tauf christjud* ('baptised Christian Jew') *Hans Veyol* who accepted baptism numerous times in order to get hold of the baptism gifts, who deceived and denounced others and eventually was condemned to die in Regensburg by drowning.⁶⁶ Begging and travelling baptised Jewesses were successful as fortune tellers. This has allowed Rudolf Glanz to refer to the entire baptism of Jews as a 'new, spivvy sector of industry', which resulted in a reversal of order, as Christian beggars could pretend they were converted Jews.⁶⁷

63 Krauss, *Die Wiener Geserah*, p. 142.

64 *Acta facultatis medicae universitatis Vindobonensis* II, 1436–1501, ed. by Karl Schrauf (Vienna: Verlag des medicinischen Doctorencollegiums, 1899), pp. 13 and 25; Horn, 'Examinert und approbiert', p. 80.

65 *Die Matriken der Universität Wien. II. Band 1451–1518, Part 1: Text*, ed. by Willy Szaivert and Franz Gall (Publikationen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung. 6. Reihe; Quellen zur Geschichte der Universität Wien, 1. Abteilung, Vienna: Böhlau, 1967), pp. XVI; 63 (sub dato 1459 April 14: *Johannes Neophitus de Gunzburg*; 186 (sub dato 1484 April 14: *Michael Mayer neophitus Patauiensis*); 424 (sub dato 1515 October 13: *Steffanus Franciscus ex Wormacia olim Hebreus pauper*).

66 *Urkunden und Aktenstücke zur Geschichte der Juden in Regensburg 1453–1738*, ed. by Raphael Straus, mit einem Geleitwort von Friedrich Baethgen, *Quellen und Erörterungen zur bayerischen Geschichte*, New Series XVIII (Munich: Beck, 1960), p. 40 nr. 149. See Martha Keil, 'Zwang, Not und Seelenheil. Jüdische Konversionen im mittelalterlichen Aschkenas', in: *Treten Sie ein! Treten Sie aus! Warum Menschen ihre Religion wechseln*, ed. by Hanno Löwy and Hannes Sulzenbacher (Berlin: Parthas, 2012), pp. 124–32.

67 Rudolf Glanz, *Geschichte des niederen jüdischen Volkes in Deutschland. Eine Studie über historisches Gaunertum, Bettelwesen und Vagantentum* (New York: Waldon Press, 1968), p. 69.

Conclusion

In contrast to other episodes of forced conversion, like in Spain or Southern Italy, the Austrian Jews were neither stigmatised nor excluded. They were integrated in the city of Vienna and its community or in smaller towns like Klosterneuburg. After one generation, their Jewish origin was not visible anymore. What connects all those individual fates after the Geserah is not only the baptism following a violent – or at least life-endangering – situation but also the positive attention Albrecht V gave them. Albrecht V, who went down in history as a brutal murderer and persecutor of Jews, supported baptised children, women and men by granting them alimentary pensions, gifts of money and houses. In addition, he tried to intervene – as was the case with Caspar – to their advantage. It is possible that he acted with the intention to follow canon law, and to therefore return to the baptised Jews the heritage of their evicted and murdered parents.⁶⁸ Under his rule, a Paulus de Mellico, also a protégé of Albrecht's wife Elisabeth, was able to rise to highest honours and be elected rector numerous times.

Those friendly measures towards New Christians reveal the burning of Austrian Jews to have been even more drastically motivated by religion than scholarship has up until now assumed. Obviously, Albrecht V's primary motives were neither political nor financial. He fought against Jews only as long as they persisted in their religious 'error'. Once they had become Christians, they stood under his personal protection. It seems that c. 1420 Judaism was no longer considered to be a specific religion, but only a deviation from the Christian faith, a heresy which could only be atoned for with death by fire.

This thesis is confirmed by a charter which was published by Franz Kurz in 1835. This remarkable text has therefore been known for more than 150 years, yet has not been analysed until now. On September 27th, 1421 Jakob of Krems, *etwann genant ytsekl Jud* – 'formerly known as Jew Isak' – confessed that he had been incarcerated in Krems (an hour west of Vienna) because he had admitted without torture that he was planning to leave the Christian faith and to return to the 'Jewish and heretical faith.' He had therefore 'forfeited life and soul'. 'With God's mercy' – also towards his wife and children – the judge and council of Krems released him under the condition that Jakob swore an oath to remain from now on true to Christianity and not accept another faith.⁶⁹ They followed the

68 Magin, 'Wie es umb der iuden recht stet', pp. 199–200; Simonsohn, *The Apostolic See, History*, pp. 239–40 and 248–53.

69 Municipal Archive Krems, StAKr-0203 (1421 September 27), online: <http://monasterium.net/mom/AT-StAKrems/Krems/StAKr-0203/charter> (accessed 16. Nov. 2014). The Regesta misinterprets the word *etwan* ('former') as a family name 'Etrann'. The document is printed in Franz Kurz, *Österreich unter K. Albrecht dem Zweyten*. Zweyter Teil (Vienna: Kupffer und Singer, 1835), pp. 364–5 nr. 2. The

Schwabenspiegel, which stated that a recidivist convert was to be forced to remain true to the Christian faith by secular and clerical courts or sentenced to death by fire.⁷⁰ It is very likely that Isak-Jakob's family was well-known to the council of Krems, a city which along with Vienna and Wiener Neustadt held one of the three oldest Jewish communities in Medieval Austria.

This charter gives a solid base to the note in the *Kleine Klosterneuburger Chronik* that 'numerous' people who had wanted to return to Judaism were burnt to death. As postulated by Pope Clement VI in his 1267 encyclical *turbato corde, relapsi* such as heretics were to be punished by burning at the stake.⁷¹ Jews were presented to the Inquisition if they supported these reconverts, received them in the Jewish community or refused their denunciation. They were subject to the same criteria as those Christians who supported heretics. From the late thirteenth century onwards – and in particular during the Hussite rebellion – the identification of Jews with Christian heretics can also be noticed in Ashkenaz. The last step to actual burnings of Jews for reasons of faith was not so wide any more. Numerous legal opinions (*responsa*) from the 1420s to the 1460s, owed to the like of Israel Isserlein, Israel Bruna, Jakob Weil and Maharil, concerned themselves with the problem of forced converts, their wives and children, and those ready for atonement. Rabbi Isserlein, who had lost his mother and his uncle Aron Blümlein in the *Geserah* and whose little cousin had been forced to baptism, passed down to us a strict ritual of atonement in accordance with the tradition of the *Chasside Ashkenaz*, a small, but influential group of Rhenish scholars and pietists of the thirteenth century.⁷² Whether he dared impose it on an atonement-willing apostate has not been recorded.

'Urfehilde' is followed by an extensive declaration of oath of truce. In spite of the correct transcription of the document, Kurz interpreted it as him having confessed under torture.

70 Magin, 'Wie es umb der iuden recht stet', p. 175.

71 Simonson, *The Apostolic See, History*, pp. 345–48 (p. 346). Magin, 'Wie es umb der iuden recht stet', pp. 164–84, especially pp. 170–71 about how to proceed against heretics.

72 Krauss, *Die Wiener Geserah*, p. 139; the *Teshuvah* ritual of Israel Isserlein in Josef Jossel bar Mosche, *Leket Joscher*, ed. by Jakob Freimann (Berlin: Zwi Hirsch Itzkawsky 1903, repr. Jerusalem: Chanoch Wagschal, 1964), Part 1, p. 136; See the forthcoming publication of: Emese Kozma, 'The Practice of *teshuvah* (Penance) in the Medieval Ashkenazi Jewish Communities' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Eötvös Lorand University Budapest, 2012, abstract online: <http://doktori.btk.elte.hu/hist/kozmaemese/thesis.pdf> (accessed 16. Nov. 2014)).