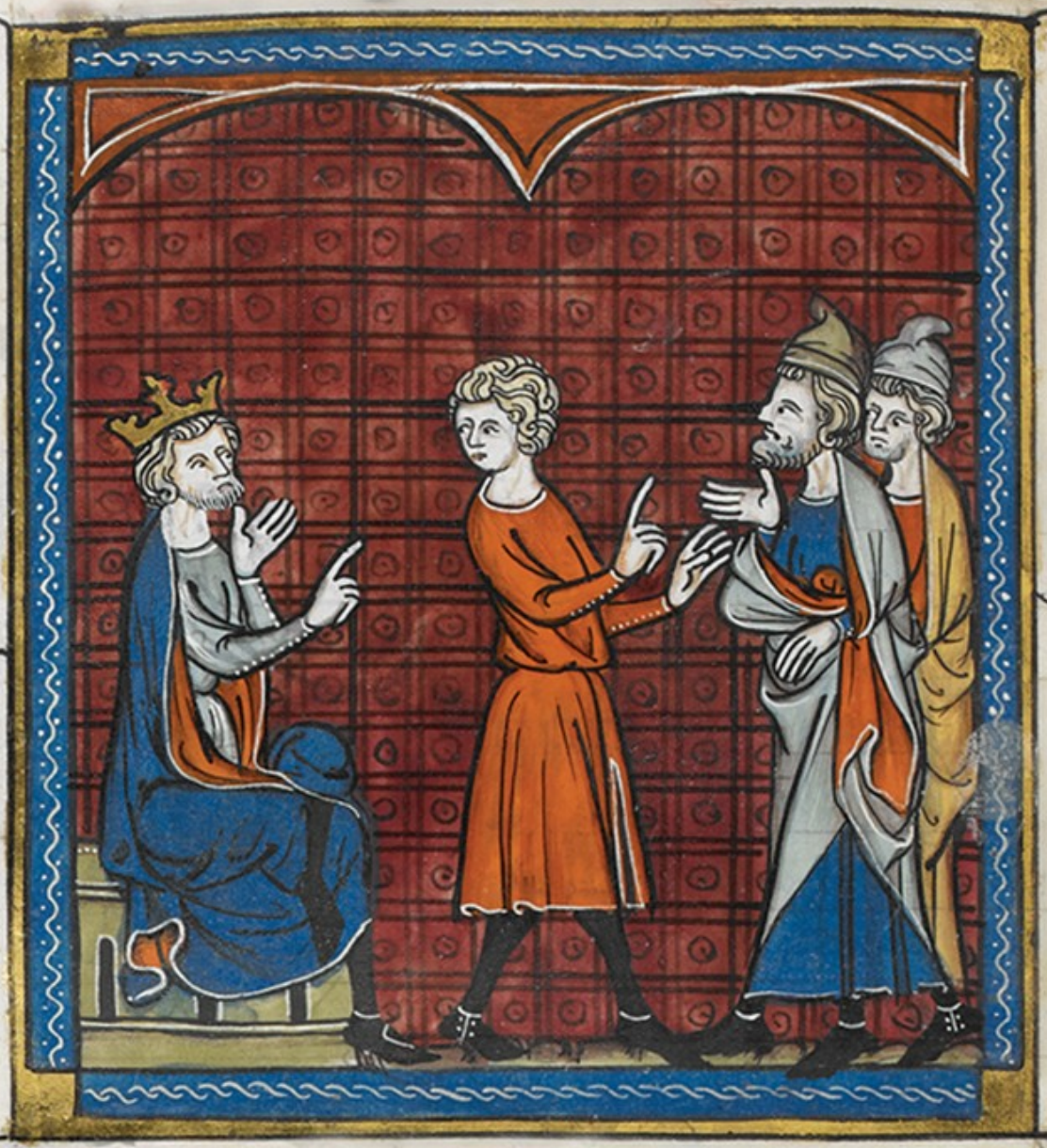

CONVERSION, CIRCUMCISION, AND RITUAL MURDER

in Medieval Europe

Paola Tartakoff

Conversion, Circumcision, and Ritual Murder in Medieval Europe

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To Daniel, Isaac, Jonah, and Eli

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Note on Usage

In the pages that follow, all translations are my own unless otherwise indicated. I have anglicized the names of people and places, unless the forms in other languages are well known. I have retained original spellings in Latin and Romance vernacular quotations. I have transliterated Hebrew in accordance with the standards of the *AJS Review*.

Conversion, Circumcision, and Ritual Murder in Medieval Europe

Introduction

In Norwich, England, during the 1230s, Jews were charged with seizing and circumcising a five-year-old Christian boy because they "wanted to make him a Jew." The present book examines this unusual accusation, both in the context of this particular case and also as a window onto contemporaneous Christian concerns about Christian apostasy to Judaism. In the process, it investigates the elusive backstory of a tragic show trial, and it analyzes the relationship between Christian constructions of apostasy to Judaism and the realities of conversion and return to Judaism across western Christendom during the high and late Middle Ages.

I use the term "conversion"—which scholars have applied to a wide array of phenomena, Including an inner spiritual transformation—to denote a public change of religious affiliation undertaken in accordance with the institutional norms of the religious community being joined.[1] It is in this sense that many of the sources consulted here use the term—*conversio* in Latin, literally, a "turning around," and *gerut* in Hebrew, literally, a "coming to reside." I use the term "apostasy" to denote the repudiation of a religious faith and community as understood by the apostate himself or herself as well as by the community that he or she left behind. It is in this sense that many of the sources consulted here use the term—*apostasia* in Latin, from the Greek *apostasis*, meaning "defection," and terms related to *shemad* in Hebrew, meaning "destruction."[2]

At the same time as this book engages "conversion" and "apostasy" as analytical categories, it interrogates and historicizes these and related constructs, which scholars often reify and take for granted. It shows, for instance, that labels such as "convert" and "apostate"—and even "Christian" and "Jew"—could be subjective. For example, according to Christian canon law, an individual who was baptized and who subsequently repudiated

Christianity and underwent a formal process of conversion to Judaism was a Christian apostate (*apostata*), albeit still a Christian. According to Jewish law, however, this same individual was a convert to Judaism (*ger*) and thus a Jew. According to dominant interpretations of canon law, an individual who was born of a Jewish mother but who subsequently was baptized was a convert to Christianity (*conversus*) and thus a Christian. According to dominant interpretations of Jewish law, however, he or she was a Jewish apostate (*meshummad*) and still a Jew. If this same individual—who had converted from Judaism to Christianity—later repudiated Christianity and sought to resume life as a Jew, he or she was a Christian apostate and still a Christian, according to canon law. According to Jewish law, however, he or she was a "repentant Jew" (*ba'al* [m.]/*ba'alat* [f.] *teshuvah*). Beyond the legal realm, popular perceptions of individuals who sought to change their religious affiliation further muddled the meanings of "Christian" and "Jew."

This book demonstrates that even circumcision—a bodily marker of religious identity that typically is assumed to be clear and permanent—could exist in the eye of the beholder. A formal reexamination, years later, of the body of the boy whom Norwich Jews allegedly circumcised produced ambiguous results. According to the examination report, the boy did not appear fully circumcised; his circumcision would not have met Jewish legal standards. Yet, the Christians who adjudicated the "Norwich circumcision case," as it came to be known, ruled that the boy was indeed circumcised. Moreover, demonstrating that medieval Christian views of circumcision as the sign par excellence of Jewishness were not constant, these Christians insisted that, In spite of his circumcision, this boy was still a Christian. Navigating unstable constructs through the analysis of a wide array of Jewish and Christian sources, this book seeks to recover the complexity of medieval Jewish-Christian conversion.

The Norwich Circumcision Case

The beginnings of the Norwich circumcision case are unclear. The affair first surfaces in a royal writ from 1231 that declares that a Jew named Senioret ben Josce was banished for "circumcising Edward, the son of Master Benedict." The same document specifies that King Henry III seized and

granted to Master Benedict a messuage (a dwelling with adjacent lands and buildings) that had belonged to Senioret.[3] No records regarding the case survive from the period between 1231 and 1234. During these years, hearings likely were held in the archidiaconal and coroners' courts as well as before the king's itinerant justices.[4]

In 1234, Master Benedict, who was a Christian physician, came before the royal court at Norwich. So state the Curia Regis Rolls of King Henry III, which preserve a summary of legal proceedings pertaining to the case that unfolded in 1234 and 1235.[5] Before the assembled justices, the prior of Norwich, Dominicans, Franciscans, and other clerics and laymen, Master Benedict accused a Jew named Jacob of having snatched and circumcised his son Edward four years earlier, when Edward was five. Jacob circumcised Edward, Master Benedict explained, because Jacob "wanted to make [Edward] a Jew."[6] Master Benedict implicated twelve additional Jews as accessories to this crime. At least five of these other Jews—Senioret ben Josce (who was outlawed in 1231, as noted above), Meir ben Senioret, Isaac ben Solomon, Diaia (Elazar) le Cat, and Mosse ben Abraham—were leading local moneylenders.[7] The likeness of one of these moneylenders, Mosse ben Abraham—who was known also as Mosse Mokke and Mosse *cum naso* ("Moses with the nose")—is sketched atop an Exchequer receipt roll from the year 1233, In an intricate and rather mysterious drawing that includes the earliest extant depictions of non-biblical, historical Jews (Figure 1).[8]

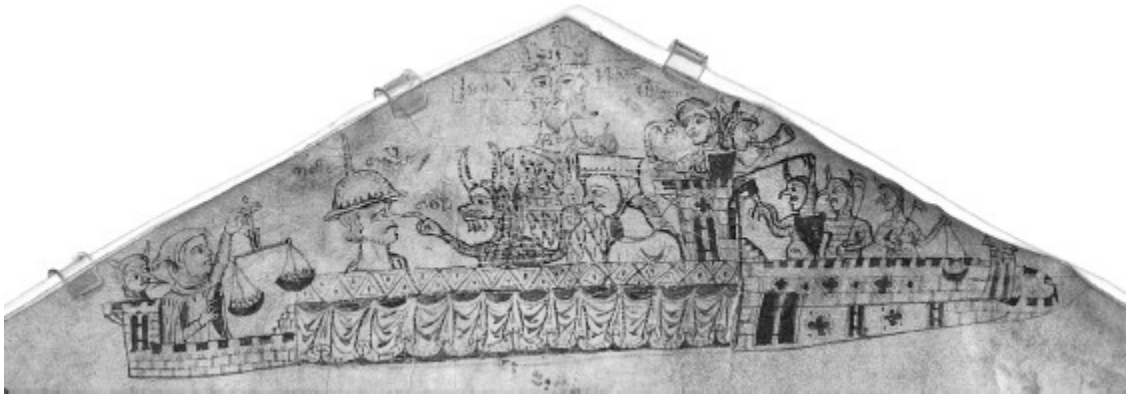

Figure 1. Exchequer receipt roll, Hilary and Easter terms, 1233. London, TNA, E401/1565 Ml.

Edward, now nine years old, also took the stand in 1234. He told the crowd of onlookers that, In Jacob's home four years earlier, one Jew held him and covered his eyes, while another Jew "circumcised him with a small

knife." Edward added that, Immediately after circumcising him, the Jews gave him a new name. To choose this name, they placed "the bit that they cut off of his member," that is, his foreskin, In a bowl of sand and took turns searching for it with small straws. The Jews renamed Edward "Jurnepin" after the Jew who uncovered his foreskin.[9]

Circumcision and the bestowal of a new name were both integral parts of the Jewish ritual sequence that brought boys and men into the Jewish fold. Additional testimonies given at Norwich in 1234, as well as before the itinerant justices at Catteshall, stated explicitly that Norwich Jews had sought to make Edward one of their own. A Christian woman named Matilda de Bernham, who allegedly rescued Edward after he "escaped from the hands of the Jews," said that she found Edward "weeping and wailing and saying that he was a Jew." The coroners of the city and county of Norwich and the former constable Richard of Fresingfeld testified that, after Matilda brought Edward to her home, Jews repeatedly tried to take Edward back "with great force," declaring that "Jurnepin" was "their Jew." The constable recounted how some Jews even lodged a formal complaint with him that "Christians wanted to take away their Jew." In addition, according to the coroners and the constable, the Jews forbade Matilda "to give [the boy] swine's flesh to eat because, they said, he was a Jew."[10]

Following the 1234 hearings at Norwich and Catteshall, hearings were held at Westminster before King Henry III, the archbishop of Canterbury, and the majority of the bishops, earls, and barons of England. Meanwhile, other developments were under way. In 1235 and 1238, Christians in Norwich beat Jews and set fire to Jewish homes in outbursts of violence that the circumcision case undoubtedly contributed to fueling.[11] In addition, Norwich Jews made several attempts to extricate themselves from their predicament. For instance, they gave the king one mark of gold (£6 13s. 4d.) to have Edward's body reexamined to reevaluate whether or not Edward had been circumcised.[12] This examination, whose intriguing outcome shall be analyzed in Chapter 5, did not, however, change the course of the proceedings. From the Tower of London, the Jews who had been accused of "circumcising a certain Christian boy" promised to pay the king one hundred marks to have respite of judgment.[13] This, too, had no effect. Nor did the Jews' promise the following year (1236–37) to pay two hundred pounds to have a trial "according to the Assize of the Jews of England"—that is, before a mixed

jury of Christians and Jews—and fifty marks to be let out on bail.[14] Nor did a payment in 1240 of twenty pounds again to be tried before a mixed jury of Christians and Jews.[15] Ultimately, the case was turned over to ecclesiastical officials. According to the chronicler at St. Albans Abbey in Hertfordshire, Matthew Paris (1200–1259), this was done at the command of William of Raleigh, who became bishop of Norwich in 1239.[16]

As a result of this investigation, at least three Jews—three of the leading moneylenders whom Master Benedict accused in court, Isaac ben Solomon, "Theor" (probably Diaia le Cat), and Mosse ben Abraham—were hanged, and their property reverted to the Crown.[17] At least ten Jews became fugitives, one of whom went to live in France.[18] For his part, Master Benedict was granted more property. In addition to receiving the messuage of Senioret ben Josce in 1231, In 1240, he received the house of "Theor, Jew of Norwich, [who was] hanged for the circumcision of a certain Christian boy."[19]

Beyond Calumny

In some regards, the Norwich circumcision case was not unusual. It was one of many instances in which thirteenth-century Christians imprisoned and executed Jews on charges of having harmed Christians. Starting in the twelfth century, amid social, political, religious, and economic changes, Christians increasingly marginalized and demonized the Jewish minority that lived in their midst. To be sure, Christians and Jews continued to interact in multiple registers; cooperation, collaboration, and friendship between individual Christians and Jews endured. Mistrust and hostility were on the rise, however, and Jews were increasingly vulnerable. The last decades of the thirteenth century witnessed the first expulsions of Jews from European polities. In 1290, the Jews were expelled from England.[20]

The Norwich circumcision case specifically exemplifies the thirteenth-century trend of prosecuting Jews on charges of having preyed on a Christian boy. During the 1230s and 1240s, two narratives developed about the Norwich circumcision case, both of which portrayed Norwich Jews as kidnapping and circumcising Edward. The first of these narratives, which is preserved in the summary of the legal proceedings mentioned above,

characterized the Jews' aim as converting Edward to Judaism. The second narrative, by contrast, transformed the case into an attempted ritual murder—that is, the torturing to death of a Christian (usually a young boy) out of spite for all things Christian. According to the chroniclers at the abbey of St. Albans, Norwich Jews circumcised Edward in anticipation of crucifying him.

In the nineteenth century, the historian and philosemitic Jewish convert to Christianity Moses Margoliouth declared that the Norwich circumcision case was "a venomous calumny invented by Christians in order to possess themselves of their Jewish neighbors' wealth."[21] Most subsequent observers have shared this assessment.[22] I concur that anti-Jewish sentiments shaped Master Benedict's accusation as well as the Christian response. The fact that the legal proceedings targeted and despoiled leading Jewish moneylenders is one of several considerations that strongly suggest that the affair was a travesty of justice that smeared Jews as cruel and depraved while personally benefiting Master Benedict. This book probes the many ways in which the Norwich circumcision case participated in contemporary anti-Jewish discourse.

This book maintains also, however, that Master Benedict's claim that Norwich Jews sought to turn his son into a Jew can teach us more. In medieval Europe, Christians forcibly converted Jews—including countless Jewish children—to Christianity, and not the other way around. Even the *charge* that Jews sought to convert a Christian child to Judaism was unprecedented. As such, this particular aspect of Master Benedict's allegation invites scrutiny, both for what it might reveal about Christian constructions of Jews and also as a possible clue to actual Jewish practices.

Master Benedict's accusation that Jews sought to convert his son to Judaism draws attention to three aspects of thirteenth-century Jewish-Christian relations that have largely eluded systematic scholarly analysis. First, it points to the thirteenth-century revival of Christian concerns about formal Christian apostasy to Judaism and about Jews as agents of Christian apostasy to Judaism. These concerns first emerged in late antiquity, but they receded thereafter, as Christianity rose to political, cultural, and demographic dominance. Starting in the thirteenth century, however, popes, kings, Inquisitors, and Christian chroniclers and preachers began to write with horror about individuals who had been born into Christian families who

did not vaguely “Judaize” but, Instead, brazenly repudiated Christianity and joined the Jews. These Christians expressed alarm, too, about alleged Jewish efforts to lure Christians over to Judaism. These developments are especially intriguing as they arose at a time when Jews were increasingly reviled. Master Benedict’s accusation and its Christian reception, I argue, constitute early evidence of this trend.

Second, Master Benedict’s accusation raises questions about actual cases of movement out of Christianity and into Judaism during the high and late Middle Ages. Here again, the results are surprising and significant. In thirteenth-and fourteenth-century Christendom, some Jews converted their slaves to Judaism. In addition, against dominant power dynamics, a small number of people who were not slaves and who had been born into Christian families—including learned clergy—risked their lives to convert to Judaism. Jews risked their lives to facilitate these conversions and also to re-Judaize repentant Jewish apostates. Some Jews even pressured unrepentant Jewish apostates to return to Judaism. In short, Christian concerns about Christian apostasy to Judaism and about Jews as agents of Christian apostasy were not divorced from all reality. Movement between Judaism and Christianity was in fact bidirectional, even if asymmetrically so. Moreover, the interplay between fact and fantasy was complex. Depicting Jews as the spiritual corruptors of Christians served a specific Christian hermeneutic function. At the same time, it was suggestive of certain social facts.

Third, by focusing on the experiences of a child, Master Benedict’s accusation invites examination of the relationship between movement across religious boundaries, on the one hand, and family dynamics, on the other. This aspect of the present investigation illuminates the fluidity of religious conversion and the ways in which individual instances of movement into, out of, and back to Judaism sometimes intertwined. The conversion or apostasy of one adult could trigger the conversion, apostasy, or return to Judaism of his or her spouse and children. Christians and Jews contested the religious identities of all of these religious travelers, but disagreements over the religious identities of children proved particularly explosive.

At the same time, then, as the Norwich circumcision case stands as one of many examples of Christian abuse of Jews in thirteenth-century Christendom, the accusation at its heart leads deep into less familiar aspects of Christian constructions of Jews and actual Jewish practices. These contexts, moreover,

strongly suggest that, while the legal proceedings were indeed a travesty of justice, they may well have been sparked by an actual occurrence.

Toward a More Inclusive Framework for the Study of Medieval Conversion

Delving into social, cultural, and intellectual history on the basis of sources in Latin, Hebrew, and Romance vernaculars, this study bridges multiple historiographies. First and foremost, it intervenes in the historiography of medieval Jewish-Christian conversion. Traditionally, this historiography has been divided in two, the larger part focusing on Jewish conversion to Christianity, which was exponentially more common than its reverse, the smaller part on Christian conversion to Judaism.

This book brings the latter, less common, and less studied direction of medieval Jewish-Christian conversion to the fore. In so doing, it builds on the work of scholars who have examined discrete aspects of the phenomena that it draws together. Short segments of two tomes published in 1925 and 1953, respectively, consider the relationship between actual thirteenth-century Christian conversions to Judaism, on the one hand, and contemporaneous Christian attitudes toward Jews, on the other.[23] The next decades produced a small number of studies on Jewish attitudes toward conversion to Judaism during the high Middle Ages,[24] as well as a flurry of scholarship on Christian conversion to Judaism during the eleventh century, some of it informed by discoveries in the cache of Jewish manuscript fragments known as the Cairo Geniza.[25] Two essays published in 1897 and 1968, respectively, and a 1977 master's thesis offer broader overviews of medieval Christian conversion to Judaism.[26] In recent years, Ephraim Kanarfogel and Avraham (Rami) Reiner have produced sophisticated analyses of learned Jewish attitudes toward conversion and return to Judaism in twelfth- and thirteenth-century Europe.[27]

Breaking new ground, this book investigates the social realities of Christian conversion to Judaism as well as Jewish and Christian attitudes toward conversion to Judaism on the basis of an unprecedented diversity of Jewish and Christian sources. These include secular and ecclesiastical court records; rabbinic responsa (questions and answers pertaining to Jewish law

that were addressed to and answered by prominent rabbis); Christian exempla (moral anecdotes); Jewish folktales; royal and papal correspondence; legal, biblical, and talmudic commentaries; Jewish and Christian chronicles; Jewish liturgical poems; polemical texts; and documents from the Cairo Geniza. Drawing on this variegated source base, the present study shows how significant Christian conversion to Judaism was both for Jewish communities and also for Christian perceptions of Jews. In addition, it sheds light on the extent of Christian knowledge about trends and practices in Christian conversion to Judaism, and it provides insight into the backgrounds, motivations, and fates of Christian converts to Judaism. By paying close attention to women's experiences as converts to Judaism and as facilitators of conversion to Judaism, this book elucidates aspects of the interplay between gender and religious conversion. It breaks with much prior scholarship on medieval conversion to Judaism by distinguishing carefully between evidence of Jewish proselytizing (defined as a determined effort to turn non-Jews into Jews) and evidence of conversion to Judaism. It operates on the assumption that the latter was not evidence of the former.

While this book's primary historiographical impact pertains to the history of Christian conversion to Judaism, it intervenes in the historiography of Jewish conversion to Christianity, as well. During much of the twentieth century, medievalists who studied Jewish conversion to Christianity focused on thirteenth-century ecclesiastical leaders' "spasm of aggressive conversionism," which envisioned bringing all peoples to Christianity.[28] They also elucidated the careers and analyzed the Latin writings of a number of Jewish men who embraced baptism and became zealous anti-Jewish polemicists.[29] These historians portrayed medieval Jewish conversion to Christianity as a phenomenon that was primarily male and that was significant especially in the contexts of religious and intellectual history.

In recent decades, approaches to the study of medieval Jewish conversion to Christianity have become more expansive. Scholars now recognize that many medieval Jews who converted to Christianity were neither intellectuals nor victims of Christian violence. Instead, they included marginalized Jews and others who sought first and foremost to escape personal predicaments.[30] Scholars increasingly recognize, as well, that many medieval Jewish converts to Christianity were women and that the motivations and fates of female converts typically differed in certain ways

from those of their male counterparts.[31] Tracing the experiences of this motley crew, historians have shown that most converts fared poorly after baptism and that many sought to return to Judaism. In the process, they have illuminated new aspects of the hopes, fears, and practices of the Christian communities that converts sought to join and of the Jewish ones that they abandoned.[32] The present study builds on these recent developments, approaching Jewish conversion to Christianity as a venture that all kinds of Jews undertook. Considering the ways in which Jewish conversion to Christianity affected children, it expands understandings of the impact of Jewish conversion to Christianity on Jewish communities. Applying the lens of gender, it elucidates women's experiences as converts to Christianity, returnees to Judaism, and facilitators of the re-Judaization of Jewish apostates. It also probes Jewish and Christian perceptions of the roles of women in the determination of lineage and as conveyers of religious identity.

Most important, this book charts a new course in the study of medieval Jewish-Christian conversion by jointly considering the histories of conversion to and from Judaism—two subjects whose historiographies have passed until now like ships in the night.[33] Doing so produces new insights. It reveals, for instance, that, although conversions from Christianity to Judaism were rare, conversions in both directions occurred during the same decades in the same regions. In addition, just as conversions from Judaism to Christianity occurred under a wide range of conditions—such that some are considered more "voluntary" or "coerced" than others—so, too, did conversions from Christianity to Judaism. As noted above, during the centuries in question, at the same time as some high-ranking Christians risked their lives to convert to Judaism, some Jews converted their slaves to Judaism. Moreover, just as a wide array of Jews pressured Jewish apostates to Christianity to return to Judaism, a wide array of Christians pressured Christian apostates to Judaism to return to Christianity. Similarly, just as Jewish authorities assigned acts of penance to repentant Jewish apostates, Christian authorities assigned acts of penance to repentant Christian apostates. Analyzing the social histories of conversion to and from Judaism in tandem reveals additional parallels between the experiences of converts in both directions. Converts in both directions—learned male converts in particular—were celebrated by religious leaders in the communities they joined as testaments to the truth and superiority of their new faiths. Some

male converts in both directions engaged in polemics against their former faiths and thus came to "man" the front lines of Jewish-Christian rivalry.

Recognizing these parallels makes it possible to analyze the differences between the experiences of converts to and from Judaism with greater sensitivity and precision. To be sure, there were ways in which conversion to Judaism did not resemble conversion to Christianity because Jewish minority status mattered. For instance, conversion to Judaism could not function as an escape valve to the same extent as conversion to Christianity. Whereas the Christian majority's social, legal, and political dominance promised to grant Jewish converts to Christianity legal protection, Jews' subordinate status was such that conversion to Judaism promised persecution. In addition, Jewish converts to Christianity gained access to unique means of harming their former coreligionists as they could denounce them to Christian authorities; Christian converts to Judaism gained no such advantages. Nor did the facilitation of conversion in the two directions have the same implications. Supporting converts to Christianity garnered public praise. Supporting converts to Judaism courted disaster.

Analyzing the social histories of conversion to and from Judaism together reveals also that individual conversions in both directions could be linked. In some instances, one cannot tell the story of a conversion in one direction without referring to a conversion in the other. For example, on several occasions, Christian conversions to Judaism led Christian authorities to harshly punish Jews. To extricate themselves from these punishments, some Jews converted to Christianity. In a further twist, some of these Jewish converts to Christianity subsequently returned to Judaism. Individual Jewish converts to Christianity directly affected the lives of individual Christian converts to Judaism also when they denounced the latter to Christian authorities. Finally, Christian conversions to Judaism sometimes occurred in tandem with the return to Judaism of Jewish apostates. These scenarios could arise when a Jew converted to Christianity, married a Christian, and then decided to return to Judaism. At this point, his or her Christian spouse might decide to convert to Judaism, and the couple's children might join the Jewish fold, as well.

In sum, studying conversion to and from Judaism together produces a much fuller picture of the nature of interreligious movement in thirteenth-century Christendom. It lays bare parallels in the experiences of converts in

both directions that pertained to basic human needs and tendencies. It shows that Jewish and Christian attitudes toward converts and apostates often mirrored each other. It highlights distinctive trends that pertained to Jewish minority status. And it uncovers an intricate fabric of personal connections and relationships. Indeed, it reveals that individuals who traversed religious boundaries had personal and cultural ties not only to the community they sought to abandon, the community they sought to join, and other individuals who journeyed religiously in the same direction. They also had much in common with a broader set of individuals who shared the liminal space between Jewish and Christian communities, a group whose members journeyed in both directions between Judaism and Christianity.

In bridging the fields of Christian conversion to Judaism and Jewish conversion to Christianity, this book deepens understandings of thirteenth-century ecclesiastical attitudes toward converts and religious conversion. It suggests that the thirteenth-century surge in Christian efforts to convert "infidels" to Christianity fanned Christian unease about the changeability of religious affiliation. Popes and inquisitors increasingly pondered conversion to and from Judaism in tandem, both as theoretical inverses and also, notionally at least, as equally possible. This book demonstrates, In addition, that popes and inquisitors intimately associated conversion and return to Judaism as two forms of Christian apostasy to Judaism and thus as essentially the same sin. Elucidating connections between Christian attitudes toward Christian apostasy to Judaism and thirteenth-century anti-Judaism, this book establishes that the Christian charge that Jews were sinister agents of Christian apostasy belonged to the same constellation of anti-Jewish libels as the charges of ritual murder and host desecration (the accusation that Jews physically abused consecrated eucharistic wafers). The central role of circumcision in male conversion to Judaism, moreover, rendered conversion to Judaism a form of Jewish attack that Christians construed as wounding Christians both spiritually and physically.

In its interpretation of thirteenth-century Christian accusations against Jews—and of the Norwich circumcision case, In particular—as combining "fact" and "fantasy," the present investigation adopts an approach to medieval anti-Jewish libels that scholars including Israel Yuval pioneered. This approach stresses that even "utterly wild, Imaginary fabrications [had] an actual, authentic context."[34] This book develops this line of thought on

multiple levels. It does so across its overarching examination of the Norwich circumcision case and Christian concerns about Christian apostasy to Judaism, as well as with regard to a host of discrete issues. The latter include Christian claims about the tactics that Jews employed to re-Judaize Jewish apostates and Christian contentions that conversion and return to Judaism often were related in practice. All of these preoccupations, I argue, reflected the entanglement of ideology, on the one hand, and perceptions of Jewish practice, on the other. Significantly, Jewish converts to Christianity played key roles in mediating—and often intentionally distorting—Christian perceptions of Jewish practice.

Chronology, Geography, and Sources

This book ranges widely chronologically and geographically in an effort to better understand the significance of the accusation that Norwich Jews seized and circumcised a five-year-old Christian boy because they "wanted to make him a Jew." Local sources are sparse and fragmentary. An aggregation of sources from an array of roughly contemporaneous, Interconnected contexts, however, reveals patterns in Jewish and Christian attitudes and practices that transcended local specificity.

Rooted in the thirteenth century, the present study dips back into the twelfth century in order to trace the history of thirteenth-century social and cultural developments—including tendencies in conversion and return to Judaism, Christian attitudes toward Jews, and Jewish attitudes toward converts and apostates. It reaches forward into the fourteenth century in order to follow enduring trends—including tendencies in conversion and return to Judaism and expressions of Christian concern about Christian apostasy to Judaism and about Jews as agents of apostasy. It stops in the late fourteenth century, as expulsions of Jews from much of northwestern Europe and the Iberian massacres and forced conversions of 1391 significantly shifted the social and cultural landscape of Jewish-Christian conversion.[35]

Geographically, this book straddles northern Europe (the British Isles and the regions that today comprise northern France and Germany) and Christian Mediterranean Europe (Castile, the Crown of Aragon, and the regions that today comprise southern France and much of Italy)—realms that

traditionally have been studied separately.[36] In so doing, this study does not intend to minimize the demographic, cultural, economic, and political differences between these areas, suggest that Jewish and Christian attitudes and practices were homogeneous throughout, or discount the importance of local analyses. Certainly, every locale presented unique conditions. Ephraim Kanarfogel has delineated contrasts, for instance, between Jewish attitudes toward Christian converts to Judaism in German lands, on the one hand, and neighboring northern France, on the other.[37] Every document that is analyzed in this book—starting with the legal records pertaining to the Norwich circumcision case—arose in a specific context without careful attention to which it cannot fully be understood. Applying a wide geographic lens to the study of medieval Jewish-Christian conversion, however, reveals key patterns regarding, for instance, the backgrounds and fates of Christian converts to Judaism and the attitudes of Jewish and Christian intellectual elites toward Christians who converted to Judaism. For the purposes of the present investigation, these broad patterns are most interesting.

One challenge in analyzing geographically diverse sources is that different kinds of texts survive from different regions. Relatively few legal and religious Jewish writings survive from medieval England, the Italian peninsula, and Castile, for example, whereas many more survive from German lands, northern and southern France, and the Crown of Aragon. Documentary sources, which often provide the most straightforward record of medieval experience, survive from the Crown of Aragon, southern France, and England—and to a lesser degree from northern France, German lands, and the Italian peninsula—but not from Castile. Archives in Catalonia, southern France, and Italy preserve invaluable records of inquisitorial proceedings involving Jews, converts, and returnees to Judaism. Such documents are lacking, however, for England, where the papal inquisition (the institutional antecedent to the notorious Spanish Inquisition) never took root. German Jewish communities produced especially valuable texts for the study of attitudes and practices relating to Jewish conversion. These include the anthology of twelfth- and thirteenth-century polemic known as the *Sefer Niẓẓaḥon Yashan* (Old Book of Victory); the *sui generis* early thirteenth-century Hebrew compilation of ethical teachings and pietistic practices that was written mainly by Rabbi Judah ben Samuel of Regensburg (Judah-

Ḥasid, d. 1217), *Sefer Ḥasidim* (Book of the Pious); the *Nuremberg Memorbuch* (Nuremberg Book of Remembrance), which was created in 1296 to commemorate local martyrs and record bequests that Jews made for the sakes of their souls; a thirteenth-century circumciser's manual titled *Kelalei ha-Milah* (Rules of Circumcision); and thirteenth- and fourteenth-century compilations of Jewish folktales. Aware that any attempt to construct a narrative on the basis of such a variegated source base will leave significant gaps and open questions, I strive to read these documents together as carefully and coherently as possible.

Additional challenges relate to sources' genres. Some texts that I cite repeatedly, Including *Sefer Ḥasidim*, pose special interpretative challenges as scholars debate the extent to which the anecdotes and moral teachings that they preserve reflected broad trends as opposed to the views of a discrete group.[38] Others, such as the *Sefer Niẓẓaḥon Yashan* and the treatises against "the enemies of the church" of the mid-thirteenth-century Bavarian inquisitor known as "the Passau Anonymous," have distinctly polemical agendas. Comments in biblical and talmudic commentaries, rabbinic responsa, and legal compendiums often are more prescriptive than descriptive, and they shed more light on the ideals of learned men and on individual scholars' views on precise points of law than on lived experience. Papal bulls (decrees to which a special leaden seal—a *bulla*—was appended for authentication) and other documents produced in chanceries (administrative offices) often reproduce generic passages from formularies (compendiums of model documents), obscuring the details of the specific matter at hand.

These considerations notwithstanding, all of the texts on which I draw have the potential to illuminate Jewish or Christian attitudes, If not practices. Whenever possible, I seek to assess how widely representative particular details might be by reading texts against contemporaneous Jewish and Christian sources. In addition, I am sensitive to the fact that many of the documents I analyze may be read on more than one level. For instance, I interpret the court records pertaining to the Norwich circumcision case as accurately, albeit incompletely, documenting who was arrested, who testified, and who was convicted. I read these court records also as reflecting the anti-Jewish prejudices of the Christians who testified in court, the scribes and clerks who recorded the proceedings, and the authorities who

adjudicated the case. At the same time, I comb these records cautiously for possible clues to actual Jewish practices. Similarly, I treat records pertaining to proceedings of the papal inquisition as providing evidence of Christian anxiety about Christian apostasy to Judaism and about Jews as agents of Christian apostasy. I read these records also as reflecting inquisitorial assumptions about Jews, Inquisitors' understandings of their own mission, and inquisitors' professional goals. Insofar as inquisitorial records often include Jewish testimonies, however, and insofar as the content of these testimonies sometimes aligns with evidence from a variety of Jewish sources, I draw on these records also in seeking to understand daily life.

Chapter Outline

In search of a fuller and deeper appreciation of the landscape of movement between Judaism and Christianity in medieval Christendom, this book applies a sequence of lenses to the Norwich circumcision case and the thirteenth-century resurgence of Christian concerns about Christian apostasy to Judaism. Chapters 1 and 2 examine the accusation at the heart of the Norwich circumcision case—namely, that Jews seized and circumcised a Christian five-year-old because they "wanted to make him a Jew"—through the lens of contemporaneous developments in Christian culture. Chapter 1 presents this accusation as early evidence of a revival of Christian concerns about Christian apostasy to Judaism and about Jews as agents of Christian apostasy. I demonstrate that broad ecclesiastical anxieties about the instability of religious identity contributed to the resurgence of these preoccupations. Contemporaneous churchmen grappled with the realities of Christian heresy and apostasy to Islam; they were distressed about Christian deviance generally. Their hopes and misgivings about Jewish conversion to Christianity focused their attention further on the changeability of religious affiliation. I show that the high-ranking laymen and clergy who adjudicated the Norwich circumcision case belonged to the learned circles that debated these issues during the first half of the thirteenth century. Their prolonged public investigation of the circumcision affair reflected and heightened Christian sensitivity to Christian apostasy to Judaism.

Chapter 2 demonstrates that the revival of concerns about Jews as agents of Christian apostasy to Judaism participated also in the evolution of Christian anti-Judaism. Through close analyses of the summary of the legal proceedings in the Norwich circumcision case and the chronicle accounts of the case from the abbey of St. Albans, I argue that the accusation that Jews lured unsuspecting Christians over to Judaism was of a kind with better-known anti-Jewish libels, such as the charges of ritual murder and host desecration. It was cast in the same narrative framework as these other libels. Moreover, on account of the central role of circumcision in male conversion to Judaism, it resembled them in portraying Jews as causing bodily harm. Chapter 2 also explores links between accusations of circumcision and accusations of ritual crucifixion in the context of contemporaneous developments in Christian thought and devotional practices. I show that, for thirteenth-century Christians, circumcision evoked a physical characteristic of Christ's body as well as the first stage of Christ's passion. Performed on Christians as a rite of Jewish initiation, circumcision therefore also connoted Christ's sufferings at the hands of Jews.

Chapters 3 and 4 examine how the Christian concerns about apostasy to Judaism that Master Benedict's accusation reflected did—and did not—align with actual Jewish attitudes and practices. Chapter 3 surveys the social history of Christian conversion to Judaism. It reveals that, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, a small number of individuals who had been born into Christian families risked their lives by converting to Judaism. These converts included men and women from a range of backgrounds, Including learned clergy. I suggest that these conversions distressed ecclesiastical authorities as they attested to the enduring potency of Judaism and as they bore the potential to sow doubts in additional Christians about the superiority of Christianity to Judaism. I argue further that some Christians interpreted the Jewish facilitation of these conversions as evidence of Jewish enthusiasm for Christian conversion to Judaism. I demonstrate, however, that, contrary to Christian characterizations of Jews as zealous proselytizers, Jews did not seek to attract Christians to Judaism. In fact, many Jews were ambivalent about accepting converts, not least on account of the dangers involved.

Chapter 4 presents an overview of "return to Judaism" in medieval Europe—a phenomenon that relates to a possible context that could have

sparked Master Benedict's accusation. Chapter 4 discusses the backgrounds and motivations—and the divergent Jewish and Christian perceptions—of Jewish converts to Christianity who sought to return to Judaism. Examining how Jews went about re-Judaizing repentant Jewish apostates, it stresses that some Jews actually pressured Jewish apostates to return to the Jewish fold. I argue that the phenomenon of return to Judaism further nourished and shaped Christian anxieties about Christian apostasy to Judaism and about Jews as agents of Christian apostasy. I contend also, both here and in Chapter 5, that the extent to which conversion and return to Judaism merged in the minds of some Christian authorities as two kinds of Christian apostasy to Judaism may help to explain the terms in which Christians cast the Norwich circumcision case and other possibly similar affairs. Chapters 3 and 4 also establish the bidirectionality of Jewish-Christian conversion in high and late medieval Christendom. Noting parallels and personal links between the various kinds of movement between Judaism and Christianity, they illustrate the value of adopting a broad view of the history of religious conversion.

Chapter 5 proposes a solution to the mystery surrounding the events that spurred Master Benedict's accusation. Reexamining the summary of the legal proceedings in light of medieval Jewish attitudes and practices pertaining to Jewish children who either had been, or were in danger of being, baptized, I posit that, to Jews, these events constituted an internal Jewish affair. In the eyes of the church, however, they amounted to a vicious Jewish attack on a particularly vulnerable member of the Christian flock. Fundamentally irreconcilable, these Jewish and Christian understandings of the same events illustrate the chasm that could separate Christians and Jews in the same world in which some Christians and Jews—who journeyed back and forth between Judaism and Christianity—knew each other far more intimately than hitherto has been imagined.

Written for a broad audience that includes medievalists, Europeanists, students of Jewish history, students of religion interested in conversion, and students of Christianity as well as Judaism, this book explores questions about the nature of religious identity that pertain to the medieval world and beyond. It probes the mutability of religious affiliation, constructions of the identities of individuals who journey from one religion to another, and understandings of the significance of bodily markers of religious identity—all issues that are arguably as relevant and contentious today as they were

eight hundred years ago. In grappling with these themes, the following chapters contend also with the complex interplay between malicious accusations against a group that bear the strong imprint of ideology, on the one hand, and that group's actual behavior, on the other. It is my hope that, by examining these matters in one particular historical context, this study will contribute to advancing their understanding more broadly.

Chapter 1

Christian Vulnerabilities

The twelfth and thirteenth centuries witnessed a foreboding shift in Christian attitudes toward Jews. After long casting Jews as enemies of the historical Christ yet as docile denizens of contemporary Christendom, a growing number of Christians at all levels of society began to view Jews as imminently menacing Christian welfare.[1] A multiplicity of factors contributed to this intensification of the traditional Christian sense of Jewish enmity. The Crusades heightened Christian anxieties about perceived existential foes. A rising sense of Christendom and individual nations as unified Christian bodies made Jews appear to be contaminating foreign elements. Augmented Christian piety across the socioeconomic spectrum spread awareness of the Gospels' portrayals of Jews as the killers of Christ.[2]

This turbulent context spawned anti-Jewish allegations that portrayed present-day Jews as intent on harming the body of Christ, understood both as the Christian faithful and also as the Eucharist (the bread consecrated during Mass that Christians believed literally to have become the body of Christ). The charge of ritual murder—that is, the charge that Jews tortured and killed Christians (usually young boys) out of contempt for all things Christian—was documented as early as the mid-twelfth century in Norwich, England, where the case that frames this book unfolded. Writing during the third quarter of the twelfth century, the Benedictine monk Thomas of Monmouth described in gory detail how Norwich Jews allegedly murdered a Christian boy named William in 1144. By the 1230s, the charge of ritual murder was a stock anti-

Jewish calumny across western Europe.[3] Imputations that Jews poisoned Christians—whether in the context of tending to medical patients or by contaminating the water supply—surfaced during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and assumed devastating proportions during the fourteenth century.[4] The charge of host desecration—the notion that Jews physically abused consecrated eucharistic wafers—began to circulate in German lands and northern France during the second half of the thirteenth century and soon proliferated.[5] The Christian conviction that Jews sought to oppress Christians financially became especially pronounced in late twelfth- and thirteenth-century England where, on the eve of the Third Crusade, Christians attacked Jews in several cities.[6] In 1190, Norwich Christians robbed and killed Jews at night and torched Jewish homes and synagogues.[7] In 1200, Norwich Christians desecrated the local Jewish cemetery.[8]

When, then, as the Curia Regis Rolls of King Henry III state, in 1234, a Christian physician named Master Benedict came before the royal court at Norwich and declared to the assembled justices, the prior of Norwich, Dominicans, Franciscans, and other clerics and laymen that, four years earlier, local Jews "wickedly and feloniously" seized and circumcised his young son Edward because they "wanted to make him a Jew," his claims fell on receptive ears. In fact, Master Benedict leveled this charge during a decade in England that was characterized by especially intense anti-Jewish animus. During the 1230s, Jews were heavily taxed, extorted, and leaned on for loans. Consequently, they were increasingly resented as creditors.[9] The Norwich circumcision case compounded the ill will of Norwich Christians —who probably numbered about eight thousand at the time—toward the approximately two hundred Jews who lived in their midst. This ill will drove Norwich Christians to loot and set fire to Jewish homes and physically assault Jews in 1235 and 1238.[10]

This book seeks to understand Master Benedict's accusation—as it was recorded by Christian scribes and clerks—both in the context of contemporaneous Christian fears and fantasies and also as a window onto actual Jewish practices. Chapter 2 explores how the charge of forced circumcision participated in the anti-Jewish discourse of the period. The present chapter considers Master Benedict's assertion that Norwich Jews "wanted to make [his son] a Jew." I argue that this intriguing contention constitutes early evidence of a facet of thirteenth-century Christian

constructions of Jews that has not yet received systematic scholarly attention—namely, the view that Jews were intent on drawing Christians to Judaism. Indeed, the Norwich circumcision case attests to the revival of long dormant Christian concerns about Christian apostasy to Judaism and about Jews as agents of Christian apostasy.

During the early Middle Ages, Christian authors sometimes accused Christians vaguely of "Judaizing," referring to associating with Jews or adopting ideologies or practices that were deemed "Jewish," such as sustained attention to the literal sense of Bible.[11] Occasionally in the late eleventh century and increasingly by the late twelfth, they accused Jews of sowing doubts in Christians about Christianity. By contrast, thirteenth- and fourteenth-century popes, kings, bishops, inquisitors, lawmakers, preachers, and chroniclers in England, northern and southern France, German lands, the Italian peninsula, Aragon, Catalonia, and Castile contended that born Christians (i.e., Christians who had been born into Christian families) were repudiating Christianity and joining the Jewish community, often at the instigation of Jews. As the following pages show, these Christians described Christian apostasy to Judaism as starting with a "turning away" from Christianity. They claimed that Christian apostates to Judaism "denied the truth of the Catholic faith," "apostatized," and "strayed from the faith of Christ."

In some cases, Christian authors blamed lust or the devil for these deviations from the Christian fold. In others, they blamed Jews. At times, they blamed Jews in relatively neutral terms, stating, for example, that Jews "made" Christians Jews, or that Jews "turned" or "led" Christians over to Judaism. Often, however, Christian authors stressed that Jews acted against Christians' will and with evil intent. They referred to Jews as "compelling Christians to apostatize" and as "dragging," "wickedly attracting," and "seducing" Christians into error. Jews allegedly did so "maliciously" and "secretly," "through devilish trickery" and "the promotion of a lie." Jews' "cunning methods" were said to include sophistry and bribery. Jews purportedly threatened "unsuspecting" Christians of all kinds—lay and religious. Often, they targeted the most vulnerable: women, children, and "simple" folk.

Crucially, almost without exception, thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Christian authors mentioned only one element of actual Jewish conversion

procedure—namely, circumcision. Circumcision may have been the only actual Jewish conversion rite of which some Christians were aware. Christians were familiar with it from the Bible, where circumcision is the only ritual associated with becoming a Jew.[12] They knew of it also from contemporary Jewish practice, as circumcision constituted verifiable evidence that steps had been taken toward joining the Jewish fold. Thus, according to the chronicler at the abbey of St. Albans, Matthew Paris (1200–1259), Christians examined the body of a former deacon who allegedly converted to Judaism and was condemned at the 1222 Council of Oxford to see if he had been circumcised.[13] Similarly, the testimonies given in the course of the judicial proceedings relating to the Norwich circumcision case repeatedly emphasized that Edward's circumcised penis had been seen: Master Benedict declared that he had shown Edward's body to the justices of Norwich shortly after his son's alleged circumcision and that "it was clear" that Edward had been circumcised. The official of the archdeacon, the coroners of Norfolk and Norwich, and a large group of priests affirmed that they, too, had seen Edward's recently circumcised member. [14] References to circumcision in Christian discussions of conversion to Judaism did not relate only to the physical realities of circumcision. "Circumcision" could be understood more loosely, as well, as metonymy for conversion to Judaism. To "become circumcised" was shorthand for "converting to Judaism," even when speaking about the experiences of women. For instance, in his discussion of Christians "who den[ied] faith in Christ and turn[ed] away to the faithlessness of Jews," the mid-thirteenth-century Bavarian Dominican inquisitor known as "the Passau Anonymous" listed clerics, merchants, craftsmen, and women who "circumcised themselves."[15] Insofar as Christians portrayed circumcision as the sum total of Jewish conversion procedure, they deprecated conversion to Judaism. Circumcision involved a minor anatomical operation; it was "of the flesh." Baptism, by contrast, effected a spiritual transformation.[16]

Finally, in addition to specifying that Christian apostates to Judaism abandoned Christianity, often at the behest of Jews, and that male apostates were circumcised, thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Christian authors noted that apostates assumed a new identity or adhered to a new tradition. Some stated that Christians had been "made into Jews." Some described apostasy to Judaism as the decision to "take on" living in accordance with Jewish law

and custom. Most often, Christian authors described converts as reorienting themselves spatially—as "turning toward," "being carried over to," or "flying over to" a destination variously referred to as "Judaism," "the Jewish sect," "the rite of the Jews," "the Jewish law," "Jewish unbelief," "the error of unbelief," "the damnable rite," or "the execrable rite."

This chapter begins to investigate the thirteenth-century revival of Christian anxieties about apostasy to Judaism and about Jews as agents of Christian apostasy. It demonstrates that these developments participated in broad ecclesiastical worries that did not pertain only to Jews. Thirteenth-century popes, bishops, and inquisitors were distressed about Christian deviance generally. They associated Christian apostasy to Judaism conceptually with apostasy to Islam and with falling into Christian heresy. In addition, they associated alleged Jewish efforts to draw Christians to Judaism with the alleged efforts of Muslims and Christian heretics to draw Christians to Islam and Christian heresy, respectively. This chapter shows also that Christian concerns about Christian apostasy to Judaism and about alleged Jewish efforts to draw Christians to Judaism were related to the hopes and misgivings of some ecclesiastical leaders about Jewish conversion to Christianity. Insofar as this was the case, Christian concerns about Jewish apostasy were manifestations of widespread unease about the changeability of religious affiliation.

The pages that follow first trace the early history of concerns about apostasy to Judaism and about Jews as agents of apostasy. They then document the reemergence of these concerns during the first half of the thirteenth century and show how these budding thirteenth-century anxieties were part and parcel of broader ecclesiastical preoccupations about the instability of Christian identity in particular and religious identity in general. The second half of this chapter focuses on the period 1250–1350, when expressions of Christian concern about apostasy to Judaism and about Jews as agents of apostasy multiplied. Documenting this proliferation through the analysis of secular law codes, the canons of church councils, royal decrees, papal and episcopal correspondence, inquisitorial writings, and moral exempla, i delve more deeply into the ties between these specific Christian anxieties and broader Christian preoccupations. This chapter's conclusion considers what the records of the Norwich circumcision case reveal about the mechanisms whereby a single accusation that Jews sought to convert a

Christian to Judaism could circulate widely, further propagating Christian anti-Jewish prejudices across all levels of society.

A Tradition of Concern About Conversion to Judaism

Concern on the part of non-Jews about conversion to Judaism predated the Christianization of the Roman Empire. These earlier worries arose in a cultural context very different from that of high and late medieval Europe. The Roman Empire was religiously pluralistic, especially before the mid-fourth century. Several emperors and jurists of the second and third centuries CE nonetheless objected to conversion to Judaism, in particular on the grounds that it drew individuals away from participating in civic and imperial rituals.[17] In the meantime, conversion to Judaism coalesced as a Jewish legal process whose key components were the acceptance of the commandments of the Torah, circumcision, and ritual immersion for men; and the acceptance of the commandments and ritual immersion for women.[18] The requirement of circumcision for men rendered conversion to Judaism uniquely repugnant to Roman sensibilities. Like many Greeks, many Romans regarded circumcision as a particularly unseemly type of bodily mutilation.[19]

During the second century CE, Romans began to enact laws against conversion to Judaism. The spirit of this legislation was rooted in an ethos specific to the Roman Empire. This legislation sometimes was adopted in later contexts, however, such that it bore an important legacy. Emperor Antoninus Pius (138–62 CE) decreed that Jews who circumcised non-Jews would suffer the same punishment as castrators—namely, the death penalty and confiscation of property.[20] According to the *Historia Augusta*, Emperor Septimius Severus (193–211 CE) forbade his subjects from "becoming Jews" under threat of heavy penalties. [21] At the end of the third century, the jurist Julius Paulus declared in his *Sententiae* that "Roman citizens who suffer[ed] that they themselves or their slaves be circumcised in accordance with the Jewish rite [we]re [to be] exiled perpetually to an island and their property [was to be] confiscated; the doctors [who performed the circumcisions were to] suffer capital punishment." This text survived in Emperor Justinian's *Digest* (530–33), whose rediscovery at the turn of the twelfth century prompted a revival of the study of Roman law.[22]

Over the course of the fourth and fifth centuries, as Christians grew in influence within the empire, Roman attitudes toward non-Christians hardened and formal conversion to Judaism assumed new significance. Christian Roman emperors perpetuated earlier prohibitions against joining the Jewish fold. They also advocated for more deliberate boundaries between Christians and Jews, and they threatened severe penalties for Jews who tried to prevent members of their community from converting to Christianity, for non-Jews who sought to join the Jewish community, and for Jews who welcomed proselytes.[23] The church fathers (influential Christian theologians of the first centuries of the Common Era) defined Christians and Christianity in opposition to Jews and Judaism, such that Christian apostasy to Judaism involved defecting to a rival community. Moreover, it involved joining the ranks of the archvillains in Christian history, a people whom the Gospels cast as having not only rejected Christ but also caused his death. In addition, Christian apostasy to Judaism represented a reversal of the course of Christian salvation history, the putative progressive unfolding of time on which Christian supersessionism was predicated.[24] As the sign par excellence of Jewish-Christian difference, circumcision constituted an especially marked affront to Christianity. St. Paul had deemed circumcision as observed by contemporary Jews to be spiritually void; he extolled a spiritual alternative, "circumcision of the heart."[25]

During the first millennium, Christian authorities were especially critical of the Jewish practice of circumcising male slaves upon acquisition, which was rooted in biblical law (Gen. 17:12–13). Upon emancipation, these slaves became full converts to Judaism.[26] In an attempt to end this practice, in 335, Emperor Constantine declared that slaves whom Jews circumcised would automatically become freemen. In 339, he threatened Jews who circumcised slaves with the death penalty.[27] Merovingian church councils condemned the conversion of slaves to Judaism, as did Visigothic legislation.[28] A sixth-century legend about the bishop of Paris St. Germanus (d. 576) depicted Germanus as having heroically intervened to prevent Jews from converting a young slave to Judaism. According to this tale, which was recorded by the poet and bishop Venantius Fortunatus (d. ca. 600), Germanus miraculously broke the bonds of a boy whom Jews were leading about the countryside in chains "for being unwilling to subject himself to the Jewish

laws."[29] Over the course of the ensuing millennium, popes and church councils repeatedly forbade Jews to convert their slaves to Judaism.[30]

The issue of slave conversion aside, Christian expressions of concern about Christian apostasy to Judaism—and about Jews as agents of apostasy—dwindled over time. Exceptionally, in ninth-century southern Gaul, bishops Agobard and Amulo of Lyon decried alleged Christian attraction to Judaism and alleged Jewish efforts to convince Christians that Judaism was superior to Christianity.[31] Into the twelfth century, however, Christian anti-Jewish writings sought primarily to expose Judaism's theological errors and expound on the ways in which Jewish scriptures supported Christian doctrine.[32] Through the end of the twelfth century, the notion that Christians who were not slaves might formally convert to Judaism seems to have been far from churchmen's minds.

The Thirteenth-Century Resurgence of Christian Concern

The turn of the thirteenth century witnessed two interrelated developments. First, Christian authors increasingly depicted Jews as spiritually corrupting Christians.[33] They described Jews as distancing the Christian servants who lived in Jewish homes from faith in Christ.[34] They also portrayed Jews as publicly mocking Christian doctrine. In 1205, for instance, Pope Innocent III informed King Philip Augustus of France that he had heard that Jews in France were openly proclaiming that Christians believed in a peasant who had been hanged by the Jewish people and that Jews ran around town on Good Friday, laughing at Christians for adoring the Crucified One. Jews did these things, the pope explained, expressly in order to turn Christians away from "the duty of [Christian] worship."[35] Between 1227 and 1230, the first of thirteen articles proposed for discussion at a provincial synod of the archdiocese of Tours likewise contended that Jews were brazenly ridiculing Christianity. It stated that Jews, "the enemies of the Christian faith," should be expelled from small towns and villages because they were asserting that it was impossible for a virgin to conceive, for a closed womb to give birth, and for the true body of the Lord to look like bread.[36] During the third quarter of the thirteenth century, the influential Franciscan preacher Berthold of Regensburg (d. 1272) cautioned his audiences that Jews engaged "simple"

Christians in informal religious disputations in order to erode their faith. "You are so unlearned," he explained, "whereas [the Jews] are well-trained in Scripture. [The Jew] has thought out well for a long time how he will converse with you, in order that you might thereby become ever weaker in your faith."[37] In 1289, King Charles II of Naples—who was also Count of Provence and Forcalquier, Prince of Achaea, and Count of Anjou and Maine—justified his expulsion of the Jews from Anjou and Maine by way of reference to a litany of alleged Jewish misdeeds. The first item on this list was the charge that Jews "deceitfully turned many people of both sexes who [we]re considered adherents of the Christian faith away from the path of truth."[38]

Second, early in the thirteenth century, Christian expressions of concern about formal Christian apostasy to Judaism reemerged. One example surfaces in the critique of contemporary monastic life, the *Speculum ecclesiae* (Mirror of the Church, 1216), of the widely traveled Cambro-Norman archdeacon Gerald of Wales. Gerald reported that two Cistercian monks had "cast away their garments, abandoned their household," and apostatized to Judaism. The first monk, Gerald wrote, "had himself circumcised in the Jewish rite" and "damnably joined himself to the most despicable enemies of the cross of Christ." The second monk, whom Gerald specified was from Garendon Abbey in Leicestershire, allegedly "flew off with swift and wicked wings to Judaism, the domicile of damnation." According to Gerald, when the Oxford archdeacon Walter Map (d. ca. 1210) heard about these two apostates, Map exclaimed that he had never before heard of men of any profession or rank apostatizing to Judaism.[39] This remark underscores the novelty in Map's milieu of the notion of Christian apostasy to Judaism. Gerald was a notoriously imaginative reporter, and the veracity of his account may reasonably be questioned. His primary interest in this passage was to criticize the Cistercian monastic order.[40] Thus, he intimated that these two monks were lustful and self-indulgent. He claimed that they converted to Judaism "instigated by the spirit of fornication" and because "they could no longer bear the harshness and rigor of [their] order."[41] Regardless of the accuracy of Gerald's claims, Gerald's decision to illustrate alleged Cistercian degeneracy by contending that two Cistercians abandoned Christianity for Judaism is significant. It shows that some early thirteenth-century Christian intellectuals were beginning to contemplate the

phenomenon of Christian apostasy to Judaism and that they regarded it as reprehensible in the extreme.

Roughly contemporaneous chronicles related another alleged instance of Christian apostasy to Judaism in the British Isles—that of the deacon who was degraded and sentenced at the 1222 Council of Oxford. In this case, too, Christian authors contended that lust drove apostasy. Purportedly, this deacon "was circumcised for the love of a Jewish woman."[42] Early thirteenth-century accounts alluded merely in passing to this Jewish love interest. In the 1250s, however, Matthew Paris cast this woman as a formidable temptress, thereby placing the blame for this deacon's apostasy squarely on a Jew. According to Paris, this Jewish woman declared to the lovelorn deacon, who "ardently pined" for her "embrace": "'I will do what you ask … if you apostatize, have yourself circumcised, and faithfully adhere to Judaism.'"[43] Specifying that this Jewish woman demanded that the deacon "faithfully adhere to Judaism," Paris implied that this affair involved a formal conversion—or at least an attempted formal conversion—to Judaism, as opposed to a circumcision that was undertaken independent of a communal Jewish framework. It is not known whether Jewish authorities in fact sanctioned and supervised this deacon's alleged conversion. No Jews are known to have been punished in relation to this case. It is well attested, however, that the Oxford Council turned this deacon over to the sheriff's officers for execution. According to several chronicles, the deacon was burned; according to Paris's *Chronica majora* (Great Chronicle), he was hanged; according to Paris's *Historia Anglorum* (History of the English), he was beheaded. Whatever its means, this execution constituted the first known case of the death penalty being exacted for religious deviance in England.[44]

During the 1230s—the decade during which the Norwich circumcision case unfolded—for the first time in centuries, claims about people who were not slaves, who had been born into Christian families, and who apostatized to Judaism began to surface in papal and episcopal correspondence. On March 5, 1233, for instance, in the bull *Sufficere debuerat* (which is referred to, like all papal bulls, by the initial words of the official Latin text), addressed to archbishops, bishops, and other prelates in German lands, Pope Gregory IX reported "with sorrow and shame" that he had heard about three sets of circumstances under which Christians were apostatizing to Judaism. First, Jews owned Christian slaves whom they circumcised and forced to

"Judaize." Second, Gregory continued, "some people, who were Christians not in deed but only in name, were going over to the Jews willingly and, pursuing their rite, they allowed themselves to be circumcised and publicly declared themselves to be Jews." Third, Jews who—in contravention of the Third Council of Toledo (589) and the Fourth Lateran Council (1215)—had been granted "secular dignities and public offices" were "venting their anger against Christians" and "making some [Christians] keep their [Jewish] rite."[45] In short, according to Gregory, some Christians were apostatizing to Judaism of their own accord. In addition, in contexts in which Jews wielded power over Christians, Jews were causing Christians to convert to Judaism.

Three months later, on May 18, 1233, Gregory called on the archbishop of Compostela to compel King Ferdinand III of Leon and Castile to address a roster of Jewish offenses that, he said, "it would [have] be[en] not only improper but inhuman for the faithful of Christ to tolerate." In terms nearly identical to those that he had employed in his March bull to German prelates, Gregory claimed that he had heard that, among other things, Jews in Spain who had been granted "secular dignities and public offices" were "venting their anger against Christians" and "making some [Christians] keep their [Jewish] rite."[46] In the same year, in his tractate against the Albigensians, the Leonese bishop Lucas of Tuy—who must have been familiar with Gregory's missive to the archbishop of nearby Compostela—accused Jews of bribing Christian officials to join their ranks. He claimed that "the malignant Jews" not only blasphemed against Christianity but also "led [Christian] magistrates to their own [Jewish] worship by means of gold."[47]

During the middle decades of the thirteenth century, three major Castilian law codes addressed Christian apostasy to Judaism and alleged Jewish efforts to draw Christians to Judaism. The first, the *Fuero juzgo* (Forum of the Judges), was a Castilian translation and adaptation of the Latin Visigothic *Forum judicum* (Forum of the Judges), which King Ferdinand III—to whom Pope Gregory IX had written—assigned to Toledo, Córdoba, Seville, and other towns in Andalusia and Murcia as their municipal charter. The *Fuero juzgo* stipulated that "a Christian of either sex, and especially one born of Christian parents, who practiced circumcision or any other Jewish rite should be put to an ignominious death … and all of his property should be confiscated for the benefit of the royal treasury."[48] In addition, the *Fuero juzgo* stated that men who circumcised Christians or Jews were to have their

penises amputated and their possessions confiscated. Women who performed circumcisions or brought their sons to be circumcised were to have their noses cut off, suffer a financial penalty, and be exiled for the rest of their lives. Anyone who "carried Christian men or women away from the faith of Christ and turned them toward Jewish disbelief and error" was to receive the same penalties as a circumciser.[49] These provisions contravened established norms of Christian toleration of Jews and Judaism in thirteenth-century Castile, and there is no evidence that they were enforced. However, the translation and dissemination of these laws during the thirteenth century suggest at least heightened Christian awareness that Jews had the potential to draw Christians to Judaism and circumcise them.[50]

Two other Castilian law codes may have reflected contemporaneous concerns about Christian apostasy to Judaism, although they often echoed Roman and Visigothic material. Redacted between 1256 and 1265 and promulgated in 1348, the *Siete partidas* (Seven Divisions) of King Alfonso X (d. 1284) included a section on Jews that thrice addressed Christian apostasy to Judaism. Law 10 of this section focused on slave conversion. Law 2 threatened the death penalty and confiscation of goods for Jews who preached to or converted a Christian to Judaism "by praising the law of the Jews and deprecating the law of the Christians."[51] Law 7 stipulated that Christian apostates to Judaism were to be put to death and their possessions were to be confiscated.[52] Redacted between 1252 and 1255 by the circle of Alfonso X as a template for municipal law codes, the *Fuero real* (Royal Forum) addressed Christian apostasy to Judaism in the second of its seven laws on Jews. The *Fuero real* forbade "any Jew to induce any Christian to turn away from his law [i.e., Christianity] or circumcise him" on pain of death and confiscation of goods.[53] In 1255 and 1256, Alfonso assigned the *Fuero real* to the towns of Sahagún, Aguilar de Campoo, Palencia, and Burgos.[54]

In sum, during the second and third decades of the thirteenth century, chroniclers, popes, kings, jurists, and others in the British Isles, German lands, Leon, and Castile began to express concern about Christian apostasy to Judaism. They penned accounts of alleged cases of apostasy, voiced outrage at rumors that Christians were going over to Judaism, and publicized penalties for apostates to Judaism and their Jewish abettors. In so doing, they depicted Christian apostasy to Judaism sometimes as voluntary and

sometimes as the result of sinister Jewish machinations. They contended that Jewish men and women drew Christians to Judaism by taking advantage of Christian lust and greed, abusing the power that they sometimes wielded over Christians, and employing rhetorical skill.

The Instability of Christian Identity

Burgeoning thirteenth-century concerns about apostasy to Judaism were inextricably tied to broader ecclesiastical preoccupations with the instability of Christian identity. During the thirteenth century, ecclesiastical alarm about Christian deviance reached new heights. Determined to root out Christian groups that turned their backs on the church hierarchy and its teachings, Pope Innocent III launched the Albigensian Crusade (1209–29), which applied military force to the problem of heresy in the south of France. During the 1230s, Pope Gregory IX appointed the first inquisitors—Franciscan and Dominican friars whom the pope tasked with using Roman inquisitorial procedure to identify and eliminate Christian heretics.[55]

Meanwhile, Christian self-confidence was rattled by conversions of European Christians to Islam. Some of these transpired in Christian lands that were home to Muslim communities, such as parts of Spain, Hungary, and Sicily. Others took place among Christians who traveled, resided, or waged war in Muslim realms, including in the Near East, North Africa, and Central Asia.[56] Some of the same Christian authors who addressed Christian heresy and Christian apostasy to Judaism wrote about Christian apostasy to Islam. For instance, as shall be discussed further below, Pope Gregory IX reported having heard that Muslims in Hungary were buying Christian slaves, forcing them to apostatize, and forbidding them to baptize their children.[57] In addition, in 1235, in collaboration with his confessor the canonist Raymond Penyafort (1175–1275), Gregory responded to questions pertaining to Christian apostasy to Islam that had been sent to him by the Franciscan minister and the Dominican prior residing in Tunis. [58] For his part, Matthew Paris lamented in his *Chronica majora* that, during the Muslim siege of the French during the Seventh Crusade battle of Fariskur (1250), some Christian deserters “apostatized and adhered to [the Muslims’] filthiness” and that “the

faith of many [Christians] began to waver. [Christians] said to one another … 'Is the law of Mohammad better than that of Christ?'[59]

In the context of widespread consternation about the instability of Christian identity, Judaism was one of several dangerous destinations to which Christians were feared to stray. Twelfth- and thirteenth-century churchmen routinely categorized Jews together with Muslims and Christian heretics as unbelievers, and they often conceived of Christian apostasy to Judaism together with Christian apostasy to Islam and falling into Christian heresy.[60] In fact, in relatively rapid succession, several popes applied the same stock phrases to describe apostasy to Judaism and Islam. For example, when, as noted above, in April 1233, Gregory IX reported having heard that "some people [in German lands], who were Christians not in deed but only in name, were going over to the Jews willingly and, pursuing their rite, they allowed themselves to be circumcised and publicly declared themselves to be Jews," he drew on language that Pope Honorius III had used with regard to apostasy to Islam (although, strikingly, Honorius had not referred to circumcision).[61] In 1225, in a missive addressed to the archbishop of Kalocsa in Hungary, Honorius had reported having heard that "some Christian peasants [in Hungary] were going over to the Saracens willingly and, pursuing their rite, they publicly declared themselves to be Saracens."[62] In letters that he dispatched on March 3, 1231, and August 12, 1233, to the archbishop of Esztergom and to King Andrew II of Hungary, respectively, Gregory reapplied some of this language to apostasy to Islam. He wrote of "many Christians who went over to the Saracens willingly, adopting their rite."[63] The deployment of identical phrases to describe apostasy to Judaism and apostasy to Islam is a reminder that these documents reveal more about practices of document production in the papal chancery than about lived experience. Scribes typically drew phrases and passages from formularies, instead of composing missives from scratch. The deployment of identical phrases shows also, however, that churchmen deemed the phenomena of apostasy to Judaism and apostasy to Islam to be similar in essence and morally equivalent.

Illustrating further that influential Christians conceived of apostasy to Judaism as fundamentally similar to apostasy to Islam and falling into heresy, in its section on Muslims, the *Siete partidas* prescribed the same consequences for "a Christian man or woman … who bec[ame] a Jew,

Muslim, or heretic." Regardless of the faith for which a Christian departed, if he or she remarried, his or her former spouse was to receive all of his or her property.[64] Similarly, in law 7 of its section on Jews, the *Siete partidas* prescribed the same punishments for apostates to Judaism and Christian heretics: "Where a Christian is so unfortunate as to become a Jew," it stated, "we order that he shall be put to death just as if he had become a heretic, and we decree that his property shall be disposed of in the same way that we stated should be done with that of heretics." [65] Promulgated by King James I of Aragon in 1240 and again, in expanded form, in 1261 (revised in 1271), the law code known as the *Furs de Valencia* (Forum of Valencia) prescribed the same penalty for apostates to Judaism and Islam. It decreed that a Christian who "chose the Jewish or Muslim law and, on account of this, was circumcised, was to be burned."[66]

In the context of broader ecclesiastical preoccupations, Jews were one of several groups whom leading thirteenth-century churchmen conceptualized as seeking to spiritually corrupt Christians. Gregory IX, for instance, articulated concerns, not only about Jews leading Christians over to Judaism, but also about Christian heretics and Muslims bringing faithful Christians into heresy and Islam, respectively. On April 19, 1233—six weeks after he wrote to German prelates about Christians who were voluntarily becoming and publicly declaring themselves to be Jews, and one month before he wrote to the archbishop of Compostela about Jews in public office who were causing Christians to become Jews—Gregory promulgated the bull *Gaudemus* in which he first appointed papal inquisitors to eradicate Christian heresy. In this bull, Gregory reported having heard that "the wicked ministers of Satan [i.e., Christian heretics] were sowing the evil seed for the harvest of [their] master … wickedly infecting an unbridled multitude … spreading venom … and bringing many people to Tartarus."[67] In his 1231 letter to the archbishop of Esztergom and in his 1233 letter to the king of Hungary, Gregory warned that Muslims in their domains were "wickedly attracting [Christians] to the error of disbelief."[68] In 1236, in a letter to Emperor Frederick II, Gregory IX wrote that Muslims in the Sicilian kingdom were "driving the flocks of the faithful away from the Lord's sheepfold."[69]

Further demonstrating that early thirteenth-century churchmen thought about Jews together with Muslims and Christian heretics as spiritual corruptors, ecclesiastical leaders described all three groups as operating

similarly in their alleged efforts to draw faithful Christians into their respective beliefs and practices. Echoing the New Testament, twelfth- and thirteenth-century Christian legislation and exempla routinely portrayed Christian heretics as "wolves in sheep's clothing"—that is, as men and women who masked false doctrine with good works and sophistry in order "more freely to invade the [Christian] flock."[70] Lucas of Tuy reported that some heretics chose to assume the appearance of Jews—even becoming circumcised—in order to "more freely sow heresies."[71] The theme of false appearances figured in ecclesiastical writings about Jews, as well. In 1239, for instance, in a letter to the bishop of Córdoba, Gregory IX reported that he had learned from clerics in Córdoba and Baeza that Jews were pretending to be Christians in order to deceive Christians even more. These Jews allegedly abducted Christian children and sold them to Muslims.[72] Gregory IX cast Muslims, too, as assuming false appearances. In his 1231 letter to the archbishop of Esztergom and in his 1233 letter to the king of Hungary, Gregory accused Muslims of "falsely pretending to be Christians" "in order covertly to shoot the innocent." In this instance, the Christians on whom infidels allegedly preyed were women. "While seeming to be Christians," Gregory explained, "[Muslim men] marr[ied] Christian women whom they later force[d] to apostatize."[73] The article that was proposed between 1227 and 1230 for discussion at the provincial synod of Tours also cast Jews as preying on Christian women. It claimed that Jews took advantage of Christian women who came to them from near and far for loans and frequently impregnated them and led them to Judaize.[74]

Thirteenth-century churchmen conceived of Jews, Muslims, and Christian heretics not only as assuming false appearances in their efforts to mislead Christians spiritually but also as targeting particularly vulnerable members of Christian society. As noted above, they conceived of Muslims and Jews as targeting Christian women, and Gregory IX depicted Jews as kidnapping Christian children whom they sold to Muslims. The Norwich circumcision case reveals that some early thirteenth-century Christians believed that Jews tried to convert young Christian children to Judaism. In 1304, the Dominican preacher Giordano da Pisa, who preached daily in the vernacular to crowds of middle-class townsmen in and around Florence, echoed this conviction. He reported that Jews abducted poor Christian boys, promised them money, and circumcised them.[75]

Most frequently, the particularly vulnerable Christians whom churchmen claimed that Muslims, Jews, and Christian heretics sought to mislead were "simple" Christians—that is, Christians who lacked the necessary knowledge and capacity for sophisticated rational thought and therefore depended on the religious guidance of the learned. The article that was proposed for discussion at the provincial synod of Tours contended that Jews were deceiving "simple" Christians and leading them into error.[76] In his 1233 missive to German prelates, Pope Gregory IX warned that Jews were causing "simple" Christians "to slide into the snare of [Jewish] error under the pretext of disputation."[77] Over the course of the thirteenth century, the Franciscan scholastic theologian Alexander of Hales (ca. 1183–1245) and other prominent churchmen repeated words of Pope Alexander III: "Our mores and those of the Jews do not agree in anything. Hence [Jews] might be able easily to make simple souls incline toward their [Jewish] superstition and faithlessness through their continuous contact and assiduous familiarity."[78] In 1267, in the bull *Dampnabili perfidia judaeorum*, addressed to the archbishop and bishops in Poitiers, Toulouse, and Provence, Pope Clement IV lamented having heard that Jews were trying to "attract simple Christians of both sexes to their damnable rite."[79] Popes used this same trope in missives about Muslims and Christian heretics. For example, in his 1199 bull *Vergentis in senium*, addressed to the clergy and people of Viterbo, Pope Innocent III described Christian heretics as having "deceived many simple people and seduced certain astute ones, while cloaked in the appearance of religion."[80] Gregory IX echoed these words and sentiments in his letter of March 3, 1231, to the archbishop of Esztergom and again in his letter of August 12, 1233, to the king of Hungary. In both, he lamented having heard from the archbishop and others that Muslims "deceived many simple people among the Christians and seduced some of the astute, while cloaked in the appearance of piety."[81] On April 19, 1233, in the bull *Gaudemus*, Gregory reported having heard from the Dominican friar known as Brother Robert that Christian heretics who "had the appearance of piety" were "deceiving the astute and seducing the simple."[82] Like the use of related phrases to describe apostasy to Judaism and apostasy to Islam, these portrayals of Jews, Muslims, and Christian heretics as operating similarly arose in the first instance from scribal practices that involved copying

formulas. At the same time, they reflected and spread the view that all of these "unbelievers" were intent on misleading the Christian faithful.

This wider context is key to understanding the resurgence of Christian expressions of concern about Christian apostasy to Judaism and about Jews as agents of Christian apostasy. The Christian men who recorded and adjudicated purported cases of Christian apostasy to Judaism belonged to the ecclesiastical circles that voiced broader anxieties about Christian deviance and infidels' and heretics' alleged schemes. Gerald of Wales, for instance, who wrote about the two alleged Cistercian apostates, met with Pope Innocent III in 1198 and spent much of the period between 1199 and 1203 living in Rome. Twelve of the bishops who attended the 1222 Oxford Council, which condemned the apostate deacon, participated in the Fourth Lateran Council, which met in Rome in 1215.[83] The third canon of Lateran IV summarized all pontifical legislation to date pertaining to heretics and delineated procedures against heretics and their accomplices. The sixty-eighth canon of Lateran IV promoted separating Christians from Jews and Muslims. At the 1222 Oxford Council, English bishops republished the Lateran decrees. Many of these same bishops were present when the Norwich circumcision case came before King Henry III at Westminster in 1235. Moreover, Gregory IX personally appointed the archbishop of Canterbury, Edmund Rich, who attended the hearings pertaining to the Norwich case at Westminster in 1235 and traveled to Rome in 1238.[84] Contacts with the Roman curia undoubtedly further sensitized Gerald of Wales and English bishops to the problem of Christian deviance, invigorating these men's sense of duty to monitor and protect the Christian flock and prosecute its corruptors.

The Instability of Religious Identity

The resurgence of Christian expressions of concern about apostasy to Judaism related not only to preoccupations with Christian deviance and infidels' and heretics' alleged schemes. It related also to contemporaneous Christian ambitions to convert non-Christians to Christianity.[85] The early thirteenth century saw the establishment of the influential Franciscan and Dominican orders, some of whose leaders stressed the importance of

external mission.[86] "The ministry of our order," declared the Dominican master-general Humbert of Romans in a 1255 encyclical, "should … bring the name of the lord Jesus Christ to the unbelieving Jews, the Saracens … the idolatrous pagans, to all the barbarians and the peoples of the world, so that we might be its witnesses and the salvation of all to the very ends of the earth."[87] Thirteenth-century popes took up the conversionary banner, too. In February 1233, Gregory IX addressed the bull *Celestis altitudo consilii* to Muslim leaders worldwide, calling for their conversion.[88] In 1235, in the bull *Cum hora undecima*, which was reissued by Innocent IV in 1245 as well as repeatedly thereafter, Gregory instructed Christian missionaries to "preach the gospel to all men so that the process of salvation might be completed."[89] Christian kings also promoted conversion to Christianity. In 1232—three years before the Norwich circumcision case came before his court—Henry III established a home for Jewish converts to Christianity in London, the Domus Conversorum.[90] In 1243, King James I of the Crown of Aragon promulgated legislation aimed at improving the lives of Muslim and Jewish converts to Christianity. During the ensuing decades, secular leaders in Castile, England, France, and German lands followed suit, focusing on Jewish converts in the latter three cases. Monarchs and their Christian subjects across western Europe volunteered to serve as godparents to Christian neophytes.[91]

Thirteenth-century Christian conversionary efforts generated Christian unease and disappointment. Attempts to convert North African Muslims to Christianity proved prohibitively difficult; friars turned to providing pastoral care to local Christians instead. Muslims who converted to Christianity in Iberia—whether in isolation or in droves, as in the aftermath of the anti-Islamic riots in Valencia in 1276–77—often returned to Islam.[92] The new mandate to convert Jews, moreover, constituted a radical departure from centuries of tradition. The church had always welcomed individual Jewish conversions to Christianity, but Jewish conversion en masse had long been expected to occur only at the End of Days, in keeping with biblical prophecies and Romans 11:25, which stated that some Jews would remain "hardened" until all the nations came to Christ.[93] Moreover, thirteenth-century conversionary efforts produced few Jewish conversions to Christianity. The Jewish conversions to Christianity that did occur tended to be motivated by mundane considerations. Archival evidence from across

medieval Christendom supports the claim of the tosafist (northern European talmudic commentator) Isaac ben Samuel of Dampierre (Ri, d. 1189) that many of the Jews who decided to go over to Christianity did so on account of poverty.[94] Addressing the shortcomings of actual conversions, canon 70 of Lateran IV railed against Jewish converts to Christianity who "did not wholly cast off the old person … [but, instead,] kept remnants of their former rite."[95] In addition, as Chapter 4 considers, Jewish conversions to Christianity were often short-lived; many Jewish converts to Christianity returned to Judaism.[96]

Christian misgivings about Muslim and Jewish conversion to Christianity may further have stimulated Christian concerns about Christian apostasy. It is conceivable that the latter in part constituted a psychological projection of Christian unease and disappointment about the former. Troubled by the reversal of traditional attitudes toward converting Jews, the general failure of Christian conversionary efforts, and the tenuous and mundane nature of many actual conversions to Christianity, some Christians could have focused, instead, on imagining that Jews were inappropriately pressuring Christians to convert to Judaism and that some Christians were shamefully going over to Judaism.[97] Such theories, however, cannot be proven.

It is more likely that Christian conversionary aspirations intertwined with anxieties about Christian apostasy insofar as apostasy was the logical inverse of conversion. There is subtle evidence that, early in the thirteenth century, some Christians were beginning to think about movement from Judaism to Christianity in tandem with movement from Christianity to Judaism. For instance, in a letter that he sent to the archbishop of Sens in 1213, Pope Innocent III told of an individual who had abandoned Judaism for Christianity who informed on an individual who had distanced herself from Christianity on account of Jewish influence. Innocent related that a recent Jewish convert to Christianity told him that, on account of Jewish seductions, a Christian woman—presumably a servant—who lived in the home of this convert's Jewish father became "enveloped in the shadow of Jewish error."[98] Referring to two liminal figures—the Christian neophyte and the lapsed Christian—in the same vignette, the pope implicitly acknowledged that movement was possible in two directions between Judaism and Christianity. Religious allegiances were fundamentally unstable.

During the second quarter of the thirteenth century, churchmen who wrote about conditions in North Africa, where Christians lived amid Muslims, similarly described movement to and from Islam in the same missives. In June 1225, for instance, Pope Honorius III called upon Dominican friars in Morocco to convert Muslims to Christianity and reconcile Christians who had apostatized to Islam.[99] Some time between 1245 and 1250, Raymond Penyafort wrote to the Dominican master general, listing the achievements of Spanish Dominicans in Muslim lands. In this missive, Raymond referred both to "many Saracens" who had been "converted to the [Catholic] faith" and also to Christian apostates to Islam and "many Christians who were … on the verge of apostatizing [to Islam], whether because of great poverty or because of the Saracens' seduction."[100] All of these missives acknowledged the bidirectionality of religious conversion.

Some mid- thirteenth-century texts juxtaposed conversion to and from Judaism both in terms of the direction of movement and also in terms of moral valence. The preamble to the section on Jews in the *Siete partidas*, for instance, linked conversion to and from Judaism by referring to Christian apostasy to Judaism directly after it referred to Jewish conversion to Christianity. In addition, it made clear that converts to Christianity were to be protected, whereas apostates to Judaism were to be punished. It promised that the code's section on Jews would address both "how Jews who bec[ame] Christians should not be oppressed; in what ways a Jew who bec[ame] a Christian [wa]s better off than Jews who d[id] not; what penalty those who harm[ed] or dishonor[ed] a Jew for becoming a Christian deserve[d]"; and "what penalty Christians who bec[ame] Jews should receive."[101]

An undated bull of Pope Clement IV (1265–68) contrasted conversion to and from Judaism in an additional way. After affirming that conversion to Judaism involved movement away from the truth, whereas conversion to Christianity involved movement toward the truth, it contended that conversions to Judaism necessarily were obtained through unseemly methods, whereas conversions to Christianity by no means needed to be. Clement warned that Jewish conversions to Christianity could be obtained through illicit means—and thus could resemble Christian conversions to Judaism—if they were effected by force. "Just as [Jews] are forbidden to have the audacity to seduce unsuspecting Christians away from the truth of

the Christian faith into the error of Jewish unbelief," Clement wrote, "so, too, [Jews] are not to be forced to [join] the [Christian] faith against their will."[102]

The era's preoccupation with Christian apostasy to Judaism and with Jews as agents of apostasy to Judaism, then, was tied in multiple ways to broader concerns about the instability of religious identity. It formed part of a Christian sense that non-Christians and deviant Christians were intent on leading Christians astray. It also reflected Christian recognition that religious conversion was a two-way street. Thus, lay and ecclesiastical leaders wrote about converts to and from Christianity in the same missives, they discussed conversion to and from Christianity sequentially in law codes, and they compared and contrasted conversion to and from Christianity in theoretical terms. Christian fears about Christian apostasy were inseparable from Christian hopes for conversion to Christianity; inherent in the possibility of movement in one direction was the possibility of movement in the other.[103]

The Consolidation of a Discourse: The Late Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries

During the second half of the thirteenth century and into the fourteenth, popes, kings, inquisitors, bishops, jurists, polemicists, chroniclers, and preachers across western Europe continued to express consternation about Christian apostasy to Judaism and Jews as agents of Christian apostasy. At least two provincial councils addressed alleged Jewish efforts to draw Christians to Judaism. The Council of Vienna (1267) recommended a number of measures "to restrain Jewish insolence." Suggesting that local Christians were concerned that Jews were pressuring Christians to convert to Judaism, these measures included forbidding Jews to "lure Christians over to Judaism" or "recklessly circumcise them."[104] The only canon of the Council of Bourges (1276) regarding Jews called for Jews to live separately from Christians on the grounds that Jews' "unbelief fraudulently deceived many simple Christians and maliciously drew [Christians] into [Jews'] own error."[105] Fourteenth-century German legal works addressed alleged Jewish efforts to draw Christians to Judaism, as well. Written around 1325, the gloss of Johann von Buch to the East Saxon common law collection known as the

Sachsenspiegel (Saxon Mirror, ca. 1220), which rarely mentions Jews, stated: "No Jew shall convert a Christian to his faith; if he does it costs him his life."[106] In the late fourteenth century, the legal compendium arranged alphabetically by theme known as the *Regulae juris* "*ad decus*" forbade Jews to convert Christians to Judaism.[107]

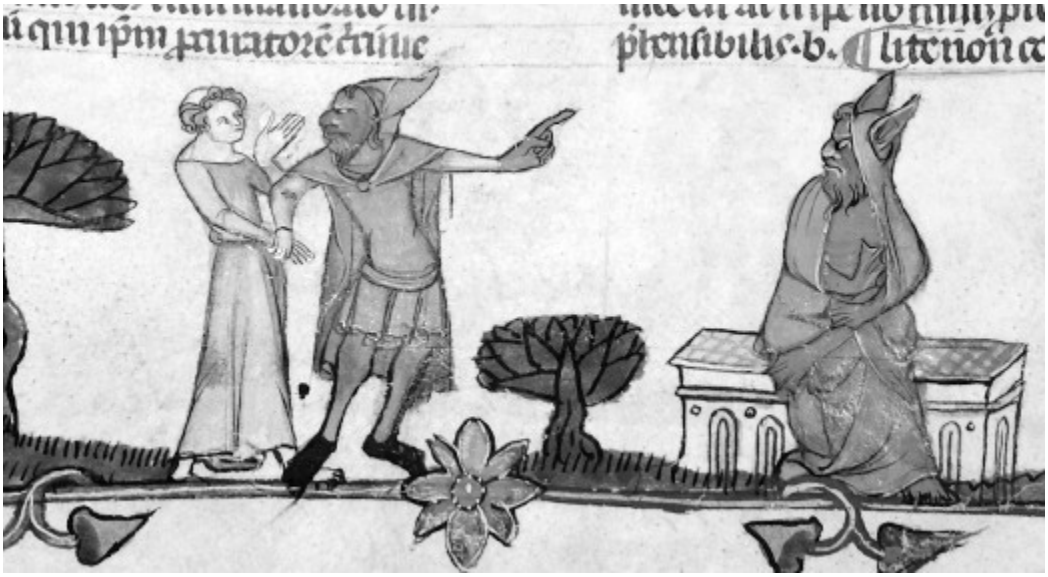

Figure 2. Detail from the Decretals of Gregory IX with gloss of Bernard of Parma ("Smithfield Decretals"), ca. 1300–1340. London, British Library, Royal MS 10 E IV, fol. 164v. London, TNA, E401/1565 M1.

Other sources depicted Jews as intent on turning Christians away from Christianity, even if not specifically to Judaism. Pictorial representations from Castile, German lands, France, and England of the widespread Marian miracle story known as the Theophilus legend—a tale in which a Jew facilitates a pact between the devil and a demoted archdeacon named Theophilus—portrayed this Jewish intermediary as physically pushing or pulling Theophilus toward the devil, who demanded that Theophilus "deny Christ and his mother" (Figure 2).[108] Accusations that reverberated across southern France in 1321 to the effect that lepers had poisoned wells also gave voice to the fear that Jews were intent on spiritually corrupting Christians. According to multiple French chronicles, Jews persuaded the lepers to poison wells, and first they made these lepers "renounce the Catholic faith."[109]

During the later decades of the thirteenth century and the first decades of the fourteenth, Christian concerns about Christian apostasy and its alleged encouragement by Jews remained part and parcel of broader concerns about the instability of Christian identity. Alarm about apostasy to Islam and about Muslims as agents of Christian apostasy ran especially high in Mediterranean Europe. In the 1260s, in two crusade sermons, Cardinal Odo of Châteauroux accused Muslims in Lucera in southern Italy of "seizing many Christians, especially women and children, infecting them with the error of the law of Mohammad, and blinding them spiritually."[110] The collection of hymns known as the *Cantigas de Santa María* (Canticles of Holy Mary) of King Alfonso X of Castile depicted a Muslim woman in Tangiers as warning two female Christian prisoners that, unless they "became Muslims and renounced Christianity," "she would put them both in chains and submit them to such great tortures that no sound piece of skin nor nerves nor veins would remain in their bodies; in addition, she would have them beheaded." According to this text, one of the Christian women "said in fear that she would willingly [convert to Islam]."[111] In his novel *Blanquerna* (1283), the Catalonian polymath Ramon Llull (1232–1316) lamented that Christians living under Muslim rule had "no more belief in the Holy Catholic Faith, but renounce[d] it and t[ook] the faith of those among them they live[d] in opposition to the will of God."[112] Compiled in the late thirteenth century by the Castilian Dominican Pedro Marín (1232–93), a collection of miracles allegedly performed by St. Dominic of Silos (1000–1073) prominently featured stories about the liberation of Christian captives who were on the brink of apostatizing to Islam at the hands of their Muslim captors.[113] In 1290, Pope Nicholas IV appointed a new bishop of Morocco for the sake of, among other things, "reconciling [Christian] apostates" to the church.[114] The 1321 well-poisoning accusations in southern France also reflected the fear that Muslims sought to turn Christians away from their faith. According to the deposition of the head of the leper colony in Pamiers, Guillaume Agasse, who appeared before Bishop Jacques Fournier (later Pope Benedict XII) and his deputies, Muslim rulers who allegedly supported the plot to poison Christians demanded that lepers "deny the faith of Christ and his Law" and that they spit and trample on "the cross of Christ and his body." These Muslim rulers purportedly warned, moreover, that any lepers who refused to abjure Christianity would be decapitated.[115] Attributed to the widely traveled

Spanish theologian and bishop Pedro Pascual (d. 1299), a work known as the *Biblia pequeña* portrayed Jews as collaborating with Muslims in leading Christians astray. It contended that Jews visited imprisoned Christians in Muslim Granada and persuaded them to believe in "the false sect of the Muslims."[116]

Links between Christian anxieties about apostasy to Judaism, on the one hand, and falling into Christian heresy, on the other, are apparent in the subsuming, starting during the third quarter of the thirteenth century, of matters pertaining to apostasy to Judaism under the jurisdiction of the papal inquisition, which was established in the 1230s, as noted above, to eradicate Christian heresy. In 1267, in the bull *Turbato corde*, Pope Clement IV reported having heard, "with a troubled heart," that Christians, "abandoning the truth of the Catholic faith, had damnably gone over to the Jewish rite." Clement authorized and urged Dominican and Franciscan inquisitors to proceed against Christian apostates to Judaism. In addition, he instructed them to do so in the same way "as [they proceeded] against heretics." The same personnel were now to monitor both arenas of Christian defection from the fold—falling into Christian heresy and apostasy to Judaism—using the same procedure. Clement also instructed inquisitors to impose "a fitting punishment" upon Jews found guilty of having "induced Christians of either sex to join [the Jews'] execrable rite."[117]

Several secular rulers explicitly recognized inquisitors' jurisdiction over matters concerning apostasy to Judaism, and they sought to promote the inquisitorial prosecution of Christian apostates to Judaism and their Jewish abettors. In 1276, King Charles I of Sicily, Naples, and Albania—who was also Count of Provence, Forcalquier, Anjou, and Maine—ordered the seneschal and other officials of Provence to extend full support to the Dominican Bertrand de Rocca, whom Charles described as inquisitor "against heretics and against those reprobate Christians who turn from Christianity to Judaism, their patrons, receivers, and defenders, as well as against the Jews who induce Christians [to accept] Judaism."[118] In 1284, King Philip III of France ordered his officials in Champagne and Brie to assist Guillaume d'Auxerre, whom he characterized as "inquisitor of the heretics and unbelieving Jews in the kingdom of France."[119]

Crucially, as Chapter 3 shows, during the latter half of the thirteenth century as well as during the fourteenth century, inquisitors in German lands,

France, northeastern Spain, and the Italian peninsula prosecuted born Christians who apostatized to Judaism as well as the Jews suspected of having aided them. A variety of inquisitorial writings provide insight into inquisitors' engagement in the campaign against Jewish "unbelief." The compilation of short treatises against "the enemies of the church" attributed to the Passau Anonymous gave full expression to the view that alleged Jewish efforts to draw Christians to Judaism formed part of a broader effort on the part of unbelievers to mislead the Christian faithful. One recension announced: "The Catholic faith is assaulted by Jews, heretics, [and] pagans [i.e., Muslims.] [These groups] arouse and seduce to their sects all whom they are able—men and women, laymen, clerics, and regular clergy." In addition to reflecting and refracting the sense that Jews were one of several groups that indiscriminately assailed faithful Christians, the Passau Anonymous claimed that Jews, Muslims, and heretics employed the same methods—rhetorical persuasion, bribery, and blasphemy—to do so. All three groups allegedly "gloried in their [respective] law[s] and extolled [them] with authorities and explanations, and they enticed their believers [also] by means of temporal promises and by blaspheming [against] the Catholic faith."[120]

Thirteenth- and fourteenth-century inquisitorial manuals prescribed the same consequences for "Judaizing" and sliding into heresy. For instance, an anonymous thirteenth-century Bohemian handbook advised that "the house or synagogue in which someone was re-Judaized or hereticized" should be destroyed.[121] In addition, inquisitorial manuals devoted chapters to Jews alongside chapters on Christian heretics. The inquisitor of Toulouse, Bernard Gui (1262–1331), who was among the judges who condemned the leper Guillaume Agasse in 1322, opened the chapter on Jews in his widely disseminated *Practica inquisitionis heretice pravitatis* (Practice of the Inquisition of Heretical Depravity, ca. 1324) by thundering: "The faithless Jews try whenever and wherever they can secretly to mislead Christians and drag them into Jewish unbelief."[122] As Chapter 5 considers, Gui's manual and at least four other thirteenth- and fourteenth-century inquisitorial guides directed inquisitors to interrogate Jews specifically about the manner in which they circumcised Christians.[123]

During the last decades of the thirteenth century, at the same time as inquisitors increasingly prosecuted apostates to Judaism and their purported

Jewish abettors, lay and ecclesiastical leaders persisted in promoting conversion to Christianity. Dominicans established schools where friars were to study Arabic and Hebrew, partly in order to aid in their missionary efforts.[124] Around 1270, the Catalan Dominican Raymond Martini penned the massive *Pugio fidei adversus mauros et iudaeos* (Dagger of Faith Against Muslims and Jews) as a handbook for Christian missionaries. In England, France, and Catalonia, kings commanded Jews to attend conversionary sermons.[125] As in earlier years, however, Christian conversionary efforts proved disappointing. Muslims converted to Christianity in lands that came under Christian rule, but few were baptized in Muslim realms. In 1274, Humbert of Romans lamented that the very few Muslims who had ever been baptized were captives and that these converts seldom became good Christians.[126] Jewish conversions, too, continued to fall short of Christian ideals.[127]

Christian sources from the last decades of the thirteenth century and the first decades of the fourteenth reveal a number of ways in which Christian concerns about Christian apostasy to Judaism continued to participate in a broader preoccupation with the changeability of religious affiliation. For instance, Christian authors in various parts of Europe contemplated the possibility that an agent of conversion to a particular faith could become an apostate from that same faith. Recognizing that Jewish-Christian encounters —and religious debates in particular—could lead to crossings of the boundary between Judaism and Christianity in two directions, the anonymous redactor of the Mallorca Disputation (1286) noted that it was agreed at the outset of this debate—likely in jest, but suggestively nonetheless—that the loser would convert to the religion of the winner. If the Jew were to be defeated, he "would be made a Christian and be baptized"; if the Christian were to be defeated, he would "be made a Jew and be circumcised."[128]

This was not a new trope. According to the *Gesta regum Anglorum* (Deeds of the English Kings) of English historian William of Malmesbury (d. ca. 1143), in the late eleventh century, the second Norman king of England, William Rufus, swore that if London Jews won a debate against Christian bishops, "he would go over to their sect."[129] Thirteenth-century authors, however, seem particularly frequently to have pondered the interchangeability of the roles of missionizer and missionized. In his collection of saints' lives known as the *Golden Legend*, the Italian chronicler

and archbishop Jacobus de Voragine (ca. 1230–98) included an anecdote in which Pope Sylvester I (d. 335) offered to consider converting to Judaism during a disputation in which he and his clerks debated against a group of learned Jews. According to this account, when one of the Jews suggested that the contest turn from words to deeds, Sylvester declared that, if the Jews could revive a dead bull, he would believe that they operated by the power of God and not by the power of the devil. For their part, the Jews agreed that, if Sylvester could raise the bull in the name of Jesus, they would believe in Christ.[130] Some contemporaneous Christian authors evoked the interchangeability of religious identities similarly in relation to Islam. According to Ramon Llull's autobiographical *Vita coaetanea* (A Contemporary Life), in the 1290s, Llull assured Muslims in Tunis—likely in order to draw them into debate—that, if they could convince him of the truth and superiority of Islam, he would convert to Islam.[131]

The fourteenth-century Old French version of the (now lost) eleventh-century Latin *Historia Normannorum* (History of the Normans) portrayed a Christian missionary as actually becoming drawn to Judaism. It recounted how "Jews' rhetoric"—"the venomous sweetness of their words"—temporarily "destroyed the devotion to the [Christian] faith" of a Christian youth who had set out "to dissuade the Jews from their evil belief and faith." According to this text, "the Jews counseled this Christian [youth] to leave the Son and believe only in the Father," and "the devil bound [the youth] to the Jews' words."[132]

The notion that encounters between Christians and infidels could result in conversion either to or from Christianity is evident also in the simultaneous circulation of narratives that were closely related, except that one culminated in Jewish conversion to Christianity and the other culminated in Christian apostasy to Judaism. Two types of references to a host desecration charge that was leveled in Paris in 1290 illustrate this phenomenon.[133] Latin and French homiletic and chronicle accounts of this host desecration charge portrayed it as having led to conversions from Judaism to Christianity. According to the anonymous *De miraculo hostiae* (On the Miracle of the Host, ca. 1299), for example, when the Jewish host desecrator threw the host into a cauldron of boiling water, the water became bloody and the host was transformed into a crucifix that hovered above the cauldron. Upon witnessing this miracle, the Jewish culprit's wife and children converted to Christianity.

In addition, “many other Jews, moved by so patent a miracle, converted to the [Christian] faith, as well, and embraced the sacrament of baptism.”[134] By contrast, in the same year (1299), in a plea to the justices of his kingdom to cooperate with inquisitors in punishing a spectrum of purported Jewish offenses, King Philip IV, “the Fair,” of France referred to Jewish host desecration not by way of celebrating how associated miracles could lead Jews to convert to Christianity but, instead, by way of warning that Jewish offenses of this nature could lead Christians to apostatize to Judaism. “[By] daring wickedly to handle the most holy body of Christ [i.e., to desecrate the host] and to blaspheme other sacraments of [the Christian] faith,” Philip cautioned, Jews were “seducing many simple Christians and circumcising those whom they had seduced.”[135] Here, Philip IV took Christian concerns about the impact on Christians of alleged Jewish anti-Christian blasphemy and sacrilege to a new level. Previously, Christian authorities had contended that Jewish expressions of scorn for Christianity could sow or deepen Christian doubts about Christianity. Philip warned, however, that they could drive Christians to abandon Christianity and join the Jews.

Another set of late thirteenth-century narratives that attests to Christian recognition that the border between Judaism and Christianity could be crossed in either direction described dream visions of the afterlife. The first type of narrative in this set appeared in the *Cantigas de Santa María* and the *Speculum historiale* (Mirror of History) of the French scholar Vincent of Beauvais (d. ca. 1264), as well as elsewhere. Here, the Virgin Mary appeared to a London Jew named Jacob, first in a dream, then in person. Mary showed Jacob a valley filled with dragons and devils that were torturing the souls of Jews. Then, she showed him Christ in glory, surrounded by singing angels and a great host of saints. Moved by these visions, Jacob went to a monastery where the abbot baptized him.[136] A contrasting narrative is preserved in an anonymous work on dreams, *Expositio sompniorum* (Interpretation of Dreams), in a Paris manuscript from the second half of the thirteenth century. Drawing on a tale from the *Collationes patrum in scetica eremo* (Conferences of the Desert Fathers) of John Cassian (d. 435),[137] It tells of a monk who, after hearing about the great deeds of Moses and beginning to prefer Moses to Christ, received a dream from the devil. In this dream, this monk saw Moses with a chorus of angels dressed in white and

Christ with a chorus of men dressed in black. On account of this vision, this "wretched" monk "strayed from the faith of Christ and was made a Jew."[238]

Together with texts that explored the notion that the same individual could serve as an agent of conversion to his or her own faith or apostatize to another faith, these two sets of narratives—the set about the consequences of Jewish host desecration and the set about dream visions of the afterlife—indicate that, during the latter half of the thirteenth century and into the fourteenth, Christians were pondering conversion to and from Judaism in similar terms and sometimes in tandem. These narratives also underscore the stark opposition in Christians' eyes between these two directions of conversion. Conversion to Christianity was the product of divine grace and revelation, of eucharistic miracles and apparitions of the Virgin Mary. It was the ultimate desideratum, the happiest of conceivable endings. Apostasy to Judaism, by contrast, was the result of anti-Christian crimes and demonic deception, of Jewish blasphemy and sacrilege and dreams from the devil. The worst of nightmares come true, apostasy to Judaism was the portal to perdition.

* * *

The thirteenth-century revitalization of Christian concerns about apostasy to Judaism is key to understanding Master Benedict's contention that Norwich Jews seized and circumcised his son because they "wanted to make him a Jew." Indeed, Master Benedict's accusation stands as early evidence of this revival. Voiced and validated in a milieu with close ties to the papal curia, the links of this specific charge to broader ecclesiastical anxieties are unmistakable. Leading churchmen who traveled in the same circles as the bishops who adjudicated the Norwich circumcision case conceived of apostasy to Judaism as being of a piece with a broader set of deviations and defections from the church. They treated movement into heresy and apostasy to Islam and Judaism as parallel and morally equivalent phenomena, and they conceptualized Christian heretics, Muslims, and Jews as agents of Christian apostasy who operated similarly in their efforts to "seduce" the Christian faithful. Moreover, some of these same men participated in thirteenth-century Christian conversionary efforts and likely were uneasy about the apparent interchangeability of religious affiliation. Polemical works, literary exempla,

royal pronouncements, sermons, and chronicles all reveal that thirteenth-century Christians pondered apostasy to Judaism as the troubling inverse of Jewish conversion to Christianity. The charge that in Norwich in 1230 Jews sought to convert a Christian to Judaism thus resonated with ecclesiastical anxieties about Christian deviance, infidels' and heretics' alleged anti-Christian designs, and the instability of religious identity.

In addition to drawing attention to the thirteenth-century revival of Christian concerns about Christian apostasy to Judaism, the Norwich circumcision case provides insight into how a single allegation that Jews attempted to convert a Christian to Judaism could reinforce and further disseminate Christian fears. The Christians who attended the various hearings in the Norwich circumcision case constituted a cross-section of Christian society. As noted in the Introduction, they included King Henry III, noblemen, bishops, Dominicans, Franciscans, and municipal officials, as well as thirty-six male residents of Norwich, the woman named Matilda de Bernham who allegedly rescued Edward after his circumcision, and undoubtedly other commoners, as well. Surely, each of these onlookers spread word of the affair within his or her personal and professional circles. Moreover, the high-ranking ecclesiastical officials traveled internationally, including to Rome, after the legal proceedings in the Norwich circumcision case were under way, carrying news of the case with them. There is reason to think also—although there is no hard evidence—that news of the case spread to German lands. In 1236, Henry III sent two Jewish converts to Christianity to counsel Emperor Frederick II regarding a blood libel accusation—the charge that Jews ritually murdered Christian children specifically in order to collect their blood—that had been leveled in Fulda.[139] These two Jewish converts to Christianity from England who were close to Henry must have been familiar with the Norwich circumcision case and likely mentioned it at Frederick's court. Jews in France, moreover, surely learned about the case, as at least one of the Norwich Jews who became fugitives as a result of the proceedings fled to France. [140] These contacts constituted additional vectors for the propagation of the view that Jews were intent on turning Christians into Jews.

Chapter 2

From Circumcision to Ritual Murder

In addition to reflecting Christian fears about the instability of religious identity and the machinations of infidels and heretics, the resurgent conviction that Jews were intent on drawing Christians to Judaism bore the imprint of trends specific to anti-Judaism. [1] Twelfth- and thirteenth- century Christian intellectuals often grouped Jews together with Muslims and Christian heretics as "unbelievers." They did not, however, lose sight of the uniqueness of the relationship between Christians and Jews. Unlike Christian heretics, who emerged from within the Christian flock, and unlike Muslims, who were absent from much of Christendom and whom Christians viewed often as a political and military threat, Jews were the deniers and alleged killers of Christ who lived as outsiders in Christians' very midst. This distinctive profile is key to understanding the anti-Jewish libels that proliferated during the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries: the charges that Jews ritually murdered Christians in order to parody Jews' alleged historical killing of Christ, poisoned Christians by prescribing toxic medicaments and contaminating the water supply, abused consecrated eucharistic wafers that Christians deemed to be the actual body of Christ, and preyed upon Christians financially through the practice of usury.

This chapter argues that the allegation that Jews were determined to turn Christians into Jews belonged to the same constellation of anti-Jewish libels as these better-known accusations. Christian authors characterized all of these alleged crimes as expressions of Jewish spite for all things Christian.

For instance, when discussing the alleged ritual murder of young Richard of Pontoise (1179), the French chronicler Rigord de Saint-Denis (d. ca. 1209) asserted that Parisian Jews murdered a Christian every year "as an insult to the Christian religion."[2] Writing about the alleged ritual murder of eight-year-old Hugh of Lincoln (1255), Matthew Paris recounted how the Jews of Lincoln had invited Jews from across England to participate in this "sacrifice" "as an insult and an affront to Jesus Christ."[3] Christian authors used similar language to describe purported Jewish proselytizing. In 1290, In the bull *Attendite fratres*, addressed to prelates in Aix, Arles, and Embrun, for example, Pope Nicholas IV declared that Jews, "the corruptors of [the Christian] faith," promoted Christian apostasy "as an insult to the Christian faith."[4]

The participation of the charge of Jewish proselytizing in contemporary anti-Jewish discourse is apparent also insofar as medieval people grouped this charge together with other anti-Jewish allegations. In 1205, for example, In a missive addressed to the king of France, Pope Innocent III reported that "news had reached him" about many Jewish offenses. These included turning Christians away from "the duty of [Christian] worship," as noted in Chapter 1, as well as appropriating ecclesiastical goods and Christian possessions through "the evil practice of usury" and seizing opportunities to kill Christian guests.[5] The second law of the section on Jews of the *Siete partidas* discussed Jewish proselytizing alongside ritual murder as a Jewish crime against Christians that merited the death penalty.[6] The nineteenth canon of the 1267 Council of Vienna prohibited Jews from "luring Christians over to Judaism or recklessly circumcising Christians for any reason," in addition to forbidding Jews from tending to sick Christians and charging excessive rates of interest. It also directed Jews to close their windows when a consecrated eucharistic wafer was carried through the street in a procession. [7] In 1304 in Florence, the Dominican preacher Giordano da Pisa accused Jews of engaging in an offensive against Christ that involved abducting and circumcising Christian boys as well as committing host desecration and ritual murder.[8] As noted in Chapter 1, well-poisoning charges in southern France in 1321 encompassed allegations that Jews not only bribed lepers to contaminate the water supply but also required lepers to "renounce the Catholic faith."[9]

Further indicating that the charge of Jewish proselytizing was of a piece with other medieval anti-Jewish accusations, early modern refutations of medieval calumnies debunked the charge that Jews sought to draw Christians to Judaism alongside some of these others. In his apologetic work *Las Excelensias de los Hebreos* (The Excellences of the Hebrews, 1679), for example, the *converso* polemicist Isaac Cardoso refuted ten accusations against Jews. These included the allegation that Jews "persuaded the nations to [come to] Judaism" as well as the charge of ritual murder.[10]

The present chapter explores how two thirteenth-century accounts of the Norwich circumcision case further illuminate the embeddedness of the charge of Jewish proselytizing in contemporaneous anti-Jewish discourse. The first account—the extant summary of the legal proceedings that unfolded in 1234 and 1235—portrayed Edward's alleged circumcision as part of an effort to "make him a Jew." The second, crafted by the chroniclers at St. Albans Abbey in Hertfordshire, Roger Wendover and Matthew Paris, portrayed Edward's alleged circumcision, Instead, as part of an attempted ritual murder. The pages that follow first analyze the thematic and structural features of the first account. I show that these illustrate how the charge that Jews were intent on drawing Christians to Judaism could fit into the same narrative framework as contemporaneous tales about other alleged expressions of Jewish iniquity. I demonstrate also that the first account presents circumcision as a quintessentially Jewish form of violence, revealing yet another link between the allegation that Jews were determined to turn Christians into Jews and the better-known anti-Jewish libels of the period: Nearly all of these accusations portrayed Jews as threatening the bodily integrity of Christ or his flock.

The second half of this chapter turns to the "ritual murder version" of the Norwich circumcision case as recorded in the chronicles from St. Albans. I argue that this second account of the case, which also underscores Christian perceptions of circumcision as a cruel form of maiming, additionally highlights the ways Christians associated circumcision with the body of the historical Christ. To thirteenth-century Christians, circumcision evoked a physical characteristic of Christ's body as well as the first stage of Christ's passion. Practiced on Christians as a rite of Jewish initiation, circumcision not only physically wounded Christians, it also recalled the first time Jews shed Christ's blood. In closing, I suggest that the near simultaneous

development of the “conversion” and “ritual murder” versions of the Norwich circumcision case—and the substitution of ritual murder for conversion in the latter—point to the fundamental similarity of the anti-Jewish charges they promoted.

Circumcision as a Rite of Jewish Initiation

Preserved in the Curia Regis Rolls of King Henry III, the extant summary of the legal proceedings in the Norwich circumcision case does not present a linear account of Norwich Jews’ alleged crime.[11] Instead, it summarizes multiple testimonies one after another. It opens with the testimony of Master Benedict and then proceeds with that of nine-year-old Edward; the collective testimony of a representative of the archdeacon, “a great group of priests,” the coroners of the county and city of Norwich, and thirty-six Norwich parishioners; the testimony of a woman named Matilda de Bernham, who allegedly rescued Edward after he escaped from the Jews; that of the constable of Norwich, Richard of Fresingfeld; and, finally, the joint testimony of the bailiffs of Norwich, Simon of Berstrete and Nicholas Chese. Two paragraphs at the end of these summarized testimonies explain that the case eventually was transferred from the royal court to an ecclesiastical court and that Norwich Jews made a last-ditch attempt to extricate themselves from the proceedings by paying King Henry III to have Edward’s body reexamined.

This document presents myriad interpretative challenges. As a compilation of information from various sources and an abridgment of much lengthier records, it is the product of a process of culling, rewriting, and translation into Latin in the course of which a great deal inevitably was distorted and omitted. In addition, even insofar as it accurately represents certain aspects of the proceedings, one cannot ascertain to what extent the prosecution and witnesses misreported the experiences they described, whether in order to advance personal agendas or to conform—consciously or not—to widespread preconceptions. Edward’s testimony is particularly unreliable. As a nine-year-old reminiscing about what allegedly happened when he was five, Edward easily could have been told what to say by an adult.

These considerations notwithstanding, the summary of the legal proceedings may fruitfully be analyzed as reflecting some of its authors' cultural assumptions. Indeed, when read as shaped by the ways in which contemporaneous Christians conceived of Jews, this document illustrates how naturally the charge that Jews were intent on drawing Christians to Judaism could fit into the narrative framework that characterized tales in the large corpus of Christian anti-Jewish writings that developed during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Primarily of clerical origin, these anti-Jewish yarns appeared in preaching manuals, literary exempla, folktales, miracle collections, chronicles, and royal, papal, and episcopal missives across western Europe.[12]

The authors of the summary of the legal proceedings—that is, the prosecution and witnesses in the case, the scribes who recorded their statements, and the clerks who finalized the extant record—constructed a narrative about an alleged Jewish effort to turn a Christian into a Jew that so thoroughly infused reportage with tropes familiar from anti-Jewish lore that often it is impossible to distinguish between plausible fact, on the one hand, and fantasy, on the other. The near total omission of Jewish voices from this account leaves no doubt, however, that these authors carefully curated their composition. In court, the Jewish defendants in the Norwich circumcision case were given the opportunity to speak. In fact, the summary of the proceedings notes that the Jews "defended themselves as Jews against a Christian [i.e., Master Benedict]." This document is silent, however, regarding what the Jews said. Insofar as it was crafted to put forth a simple and satisfying tale in which righteous Christians triumphed over wicked Jews, such information was irrelevant.

Numerous features of the Norwich circumcision case facilitated its narration in this register. One was Edward's youth at the time of his alleged seizure and circumcision. Young Christian boys were the quintessential victims of alleged Jewish machinations in contemporaneous anti-Jewish tales, especially stories of ritual murder.[13] As recorded in the summary of the legal proceedings, Master Benedict's indictment of Norwich Jews underscored Edward's youthful innocence. Its opening lines stated that, when Edward was kidnapped, he was five years old. Moreover, they specified that Edward was "playing [in the street in the town] of Norwich."[14] Contemporaneous anti-Jewish tales likewise referred to Jews' young victims

as being unsuspectingly at play when Jews snatched them. For instance, In his account of the alleged ritual murder of Hugh of Lincoln, Matthew Paris cast Hugh as last having been seen, prior to entering a Jewish home, "playing with Jewish boys his age." [15] The mid-fourteenth-century chronicle of Erfurt depicted a seven-year-old girl named Margaretha, whom Jews were accused of having killed in order to collect her blood, as having frequently played with the daughter of a Christian woman who later sold her to Jews.[16] Master Benedict's indictment of Norwich Jews also emphasized how physically small Edward was by describing how a Jew named Jacob "carried" Edward into his home. The date given for Edward's alleged kidnapping and circumcision further evoked Edward's helplessness. The opening sentence of the summary of the Norwich legal proceedings noted that Edward was seized on the eve of the feast of St. Giles (August 31). According to legend, St. Giles (d. ca. 710 near Nîmes) was a Christian hermit who was accidentally shot by an arrow that a huntsman intended for a deer. On account of this experience, St. Giles became the patron of the physically disabled. There was considerable devotion to St. Giles in thirteenth-century Norwich, such that the significance of the date of Edward's alleged ordeal would have been apparent to local Christians. [17] Likening Edward to St. Giles reinforced the sense that Edward was an innocent victim of violence.

As a young boy, Edward played a role in the legal proceedings pertaining to the Norwich circumcision case that matched the roles of children in some contemporaneous anti-Jewish narratives: He served as an unassailable witness regarding events that transpired behind closed doors in Jewish homes.[18] In court, before the assembled justices, the prior of Norwich, Dominicans, Franciscans, and other clerics and laymen, Edward recounted how, In Jacob's home, "one [Jew] held him and covered his eyes, while another circumcised him with a small knife." Edward's claim that the Jews covered his eyes constitutes yet another instance in which possible fact and fantasy seem to merge. On the one hand, this claim is plausible. On the other, it resonates with the hoary motif of Jewish blindness to Christian truth—a common theme not only in Christian polemical literature but also in medieval art that personified Judaism as the blindfolded woman Synagoga.[19]

The centrality of circumcision in the Norwich case would have been especially appealing to contemporaneous Christian anti-Jewish sensibilities. Christian theologians conceded that, prior to the advent of Christ,

circumcision served a number of positive functions.[20] As practiced by contemporary Jews, however, circumcision had diverse negative connotations. Following St. Paul, theologians deemed contemporary circumcision to be spiritually obsolete and illustrative of Jews' stubbornness in clinging to the Old Law and privileging the flesh over the spirit.[21] Anti-Jewish polemicists deprecated circumcision as an inferior rite of initiation to baptism as it discriminated on the basis of gender: Only boys were circumcised, whereas both boys and girls were baptized.[22] In the twelfth century, the Christian theologian Peter Abelard cast the Jew in his *Dialogus inter philosophum, Iudaeum, et Christianum* (Dialogue Between a Philosopher, a Jew, and a Christian) as asserting that gentiles found circumcision "abhorrent" and that Christian women would never consent to having sex with Jewish men, "believing that the truncating of this member [wa]s the height of foulness."[23] Two thirteenth-century Iberian anti-Jewish polemicists balked in particular at the practice of *meẓiẓah*, the sucking of blood from the wound. Raymond Martini deemed *meẓiẓah* "utterly abominable and loathsome" and a fitting punishment for Jewish mouths that blasphemed against Christ.[24] An anonymous source vulgarly likened *meẓiẓah* to sexual intercourse, Identifying the mouth that sucked the wound with a "cunt."[25] In their commentaries on Genesis 34—in which the sons of Jacob trick the Shehemites into being circumcised under the pretense of wanting them to join the Jewish nation, but then murder the Shehemites while they are weak and "still in pain" in order to exact revenge for the rape of their sister Dinah—Christian exegetes criticized the sons of Jacob as typifying Jews' refusal to join with other peoples. In the context of this critique, circumcision functioned as the lynchpin of a cruel Jewish ruse.[26] Some medieval Christians recoiled from circumcision on account of its bloodshed and pain. In his sermon "On the Circumcision of the Lord," in the course of discussing why baptism was superior to circumcision, Peter Abelard remarked: "Who does not dread to be circumcised by sharp stones in the tender part of the body?"[27] The theologian Gilbert of Poitiers (ca. 1076–1154) explained that one of the reasons why circumcision was abandoned after the coming of Christ was that it was "great torture."[28]

Produced within a decade of the Norwich proceedings, an illuminated initial in a Bible that was assembled in Canterbury for the Benedictine abbot

Robert de Bello presented a striking depiction of circumcision (Figure 3). [29] In the foreground of this image, a swarthy, hairy, beak-nosed, grimacing man, dressed in a luxurious red robe, crouches before three tall, fair, naked boys who stand in a cluster on the right.[30] With his left hand, the brutish man draws forth from below the penis of the boy who is closest to him. With his right hand, he brings a small knife with a curved blade to the top of the tip of the boy's penis. The three boys gaze—two in wonder, the one who is about to be circumcised with apprehension—at flowing blue water in the upper left of the panel, behind the back of the circumciser. The boys' feet are planted in a shiny, undulating reddish brown substance. From the textual context, it is clear that this image depicts Joshua circumcising the Israelites who had been born in the wilderness after leaving Egypt (Josh. 5:2–9). These younger Israelites gaze at the Jordan River, while standing on the dry ground at Gilgal.[31] The polemical overtones of this illuminated initial, however, are unmistakable. This image may be read as juxtaposing circumcision to baptism. As if to draw the viewer's attention to the dichotomy between circumcision and baptism, the boy who is about to be circumcised points down with his left hand to his impending circumcision, and perhaps also to what may be the blood of circumcision on the ground below. With his right hand, he gestures upward toward the glistening water. This image may be understood also as depicting a malevolent Jew who is perversely circumcising defenseless Christian boys, much as the Norwich Jew named Jacob was said to have done to Edward.[32]

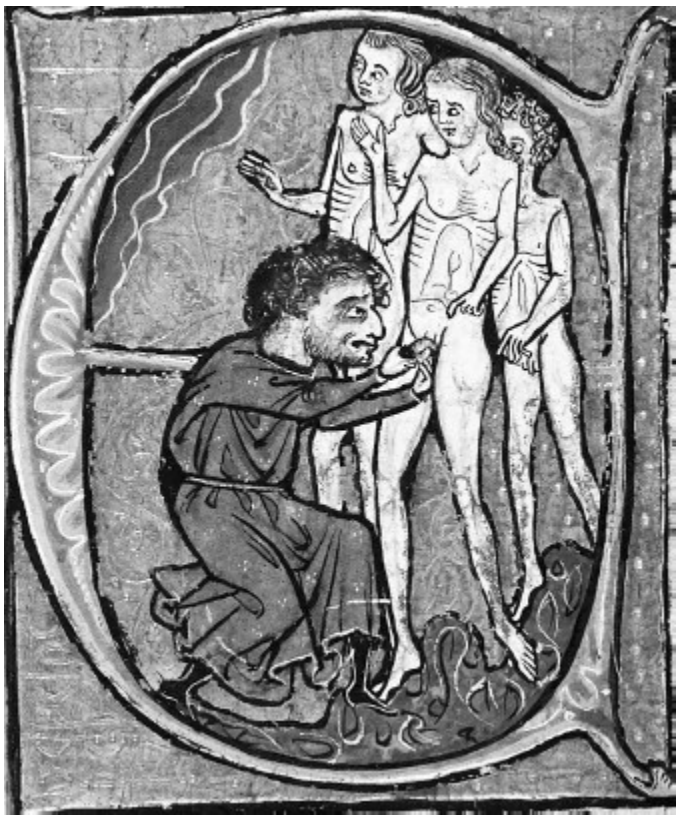

Figure 3. Detail from the “Bible of Robert de Bello,” ca. 1240–53. London, British Library, Burney 3, fol. 90r.

During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, a number of developments likely heightened the Christian sense that circumcision constituted reckless abuse. For instance, reports emerged from the Holy Land according to which Muslims forcibly circumcised Christians in orgies of bloodletting. In his account of the speech that Pope Urban II gave at Clermont in 1096 calling for the First Crusade, the author of the *Historia Hierosolymitana* (History of Jerusalem) reported: “The [Muslims] circumcise the Christians, and the blood of circumcision they either spread upon the altars or pour into the vases of the baptismal font. When they wish to torture people by a base death, they perforate their navels and, dragging forth the extremity of the intestines, bind it to a stake; then, with flogging, they lead the victim around until, the viscera having gushed forth, the victim falls prostrate upon the ground.”[33]

Circumcision’s associations with castration undoubtedly reinforced the Christian sense that circumcision was cruel.[34] During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, castration served as a particularly humiliating form of

retribution for sexual incontinence. Peter Abelard was castrated for his illicit love affair with his pupil Heloise, for example. He explained in his *Historia calamitatum* (History of Calamities) that Heloise's uncle and kinsmen "cut off those parts of [his] body with which [he] had done that which was the cause of their sorrow." Abelard, moreover, took his own revenge by having two of the men who were responsible for his castration genitally mutilated and by having their eyes gouged out.[35] Thirteenth-century French fabliaux (humorous narrative poems) described the castrations of lascivious priests.[36] The Lincolnshire Assize Rolls document a case of punitive castration that transpired in England in 1202. In this instance, a Christian couple—Alan and Emma—dragged a Christian man into their home and each cut off one of his testicles. As they were subsequently acquitted in court, it seems likely that the man whom they castrated had sexually assaulted one of their relatives.[37] In the same year, a Christian named Robert of Sutton accused a Jew from Bedford named Bonefand of having "wickedly had [Robert's nephew Richard] emasculated" and thereby caused him to die.[38] It has been suggested that Bonefand in fact circumcised Richard in the context of converting him to Judaism.[39] To be sure, Christian sources sometimes blurred the distinction between circumcision and other types of genital mutilation. Given the currency of punitive genital mutilation during this period in England, however, a literal reading of this source seems warranted. It is likely that Bonefand had Robert's penis and testicles removed in order to take revenge on him.[40] This would explain why Bonefand paid the king one mark for a trial before a jury, why the jury acquitted Bonefand, and why Robert was found guilty of a false appeal.[41] Matthew Paris related yet another instance of punitive castration that transpired during the first half of the thirteenth century in England. In this case, a knight of Norfolk named Godfrey de Millers, who had entered the house of a certain John Brito to have sex with John's daughter, was caught in a trap, hung upside down by his feet from the beams, castrated, and then thrown out.[42]

Attesting to thirteenth-century associations between circumcision and castration, the Passau Anonymous regaled his readers with a bawdy story that included both procedures and derided the centrality of genital mutilation to male conversion to Judaism. He told of "a certain monk" who "circumcised himself" and married a lascivious Jewish woman with whom he was infatuated. "On account of love for his [Jewish] wife," the Passau

Anonymous explained, this former monk long withstood pressure from his brother, a Christian prelate, to return to Christianity. Out of spite, the prelate eventually decided to compound his brother's genital injuries. He had the former monk castrated, thereby inflicting a mirror punishment for both conversion to Judaism and sexual misconduct.[43] When, on account of this castration, the Jewish wife was no longer able to have sex with the former monk, she spurned him. At this point, having been rejected by his Jewish wife, the circumcised and castrated former monk returned to Christianity and the monastic life.[44]

Understood as a form of physical violence, circumcision was akin to many of the other acts of which thirteenth-century Christians accused Jews. Like murder, poisoning, and host desecration (understood as the desecration of the body of Christ), circumcision injured Christian bodies. The summary of the legal proceedings in the Norwich case foregrounded Edward's description of his alleged circumcision and repeatedly stressed the physical harm that this procedure had caused. Punctuating the summary at regular intervals, the official of the archdeacon, the coroners, and the constable of Norwich all testified that, when they saw Edward shortly after his circumcision, his "cut member" was "enlarged," "very swollen," and "bloody." When Matilda took the stand, she declared that Edward seemed so sick when she and her daughter found him that they "thought he would soon die."[45]

The alleged violence in the Norwich circumcision case was compatible with contemporaneous Christian anti-Jewish sensibilities also in that its perpetrators were Jewish men—the typical culpable parties in anti-Jewish tales about ritual murder, poisoning, host desecration, and financial malfeasance. As noted above, Master Benedict singled out a certain "Jacob" as the principal malefactor in Edward's alleged kidnapping and circumcision. According to the summary of Master Benedict's testimony, "Jacob, a Jewish man, seized Edward, carried him into his home, and circumcised him," and he "kept [Edward] in his home for one day and [one] night." Master Benedict testified that, when he ultimately found his son, he discovered him "in the hands of the aforesaid Jacob." Stressing that Jacob acted out of hatred for all things Christian, Master Benedict added that Jacob "did [all of] this wickedly and feloniously, In contempt of the Crucified One and Christianity, as well as [in contempt of] the peace of the lord king."

According to Master Benedict's and Edward's statements, moreover, Jacob did not act alone. Master Benedict named twelve additional Jewish men as accessories to the alleged crime, at least five of whom, as noted in the Introduction, were leading local money-lenders.[46] As Miri Rubin has observed, wealthy Jewish men, who were "in a position of economic power and patriarchal authority and bound to other men by ties of sociability and shared ill intent," figured in Christian narratives as particularly menacing abusers.[47] The juxtaposition of a posse of grown men to a small child moreover, evoked a sense of danger, heightening the pathos of the tale and highlighting Edward's vulnerability.

Even the instrument with which the summary of the legal proceedings portrayed Norwich Jews as having circumcised Edward—"a small knife"—echoed Christian claims elsewhere about the ways Jews wounded Christians and harmed objects that Christians held sacred.[48] To be sure, small knives were in fact used in circumcisions. It is noteworthy, however, that these implements figured prominently in host desecration and ritual murder narratives, as well. According to a manuscript from the second half of the thirteenth century, for example, In 1183, Jews in Bristol used a small knife to cut off the nose and upper lip of a boy named Adam, whom they subsequently crucified in a latrine. [49] According to Matthew Paris, the Jews who tortured Hugh of Lincoln each pierced him with a small knife.[50] According to the chronicles of the abbey of Saint-Denis, when, In Paris in 1290, a Jew was accused of host desecration, he was said to have pierced the host he had procured with a small knife. [51] A cult developed, moreover, not only around this eucharistic wafer, which allegedly miraculously bled, but also around the "holy knife" with which it was stabbed.[52]

Crucial to the compellingness of the Norwich circumcision case as an anti-Jewish narrative was its resolution in favor of Christians and the Christian faith. According to the summary of the proceedings, this resolution began when Edward escaped "from the hands of the Jews" shortly after his circumcision, and Matilda de Bernham discovered him sobbing by the river.[53] In this scene, Edward's tears, the river, and Matilda's kindness may be read as standard tropes. To be sure, it would have made sense for a traumatized boy to be crying at this point, and it is entirely plausible that Edward might have walked by the river Wensum. The symbolism of water as representing purification and renewal, however, seems apt, as well. Water's

cleansing and transformative properties figured frequently in contemporaneous literature. For instance, In a story in the annals of Egmond Abbey in the county of Holland, a Jewish father—the cruel adult male Jew of Christian lore—drowned his son in the Danube to prevent his baptism. Although this boy's body had been weighted with lead, the river lifted it up and gently washed it ashore, shining. In the meantime, the water cured the blindness of a female onlooker, evoking how this boy's mystical passage from Judaism to Christianity entailed a restoration of sight.[54] Similarly, both Edward's tears and the river that flowed by him may be read as representing a salvific cleansing, perhaps even a rebaptism.[55]

For her part, Matilda de Bernham also played roles familiar from tales of ritual murder and host desecration. First, like the pious Christian women in such narratives, she served as a detector of Jewish abuse.[56] Second, as a maternal figure, she evoked the Virgin Mary, who figured prominently in contemporaneous anti-Jewish literature.[57] The summary of the legal proceedings stressed that Matilda was a mother. She discovered Edward together with her daughter, and she came before the justices at Norwich "with her daughter similarly under oath." Furthermore, Matilda acted maternally toward Edward. According to the summary, Matilda testified that she and her daughter "kept [Edward] in their home for the love of God because they did not know whose son he was."[58] Matilda's solicitousness toward Edward further accentuates the pathos of the account, highlighting the absence of Edward's own mother from the records of the proceedings—an absence that is analyzed in Chapter 5.

Finally, the summary of the legal proceedings mirrored the narrative arc of contemporaneous anti-Jewish tales by stressing that Norwich Christians defeated the Jews. Although the document was composed in 1235, before the case entered its final stages in ecclesiastical court, its closing words made clear that the Jews had begun to endure their deserved punishment: They "remain[ed] in prison."[59]

In short, the summary of the legal proceedings in the Norwich circumcision case was inscribed with thematic and structural features common to contemporaneous anti-Jewish literature. Like myriad tales from its cultural milieu, this record cast Jewish men as harming a Christian boy out of contempt for Christianity and receiving their just deserts. Additional familiar topoi included the innocent child victim who was initially at play,

the child as truth-teller, Jewish blindness, the purifying and regenerative power of water, and the intervention of a pious Christian woman who evoked the Virgin Mary. Presenting a more or less stock narrative, the summary of the legal proceedings illustrates how the charge that Jews were intent on drawing Christians to Judaism could assume the same form as contemporaneous tales about other alleged expressions of Jewish iniquity. Possibly, the legal nature of the summary of the proceedings bolstered its perceived credibility. This document's conformity to and reiteration of ingrained anti-Jewish myths, however, likely also made it convincing. To quote Anthony Bale, "When 'fantasy' proliferates and eclipses 'truth,' the fantasy is more real, more true, than reality."[60]

Circumcision as Prelude to Crucifixion

The Norwich circumcision case was retold in five thirteenth-century chronicles. The *Chronicle of Bury St. Edmunds* and the second continuation of the *Chronicle of Florence of Worcester* both stated simply that, In 1240, "at Norwich, four Jews were drawn by horses and hanged on account of various crimes [but] especially because they circumcised a certain Christian boy according to the rite of the Jews."[61] Between about 1236 and 1253, Roger Wendover and his successor at St. Albans Abbey, Matthew Paris, recorded a strikingly different account.[62] Preserved in the entry for the year 1235 in Wendover's *Flores historiarum* (Flowers of History)—as well as in the entries for the year 1235 in Paris's *Chronica majora* and *Historia Anglorum*—the short version of this account stated that "seven Jews, who had circumcised a certain boy at Norwich, whom they had secretly stolen away, and whom they had hidden from the sight of Christians for a year, wanting to crucify him at Easter, were brought before the king at Westminster." The Jews confessed their crimes and were found guilty and imprisoned.[63] The longer version, which is found in Paris's entry for the year 1240 in his *Chronica majora*, Is more detailed. It mentions that the Jews renamed Edward. It claims that Edward's father searched for him. It describes Edward's eventual reunion with his father, and it explains the case's final adjudication by ecclesiastical authorities. According to this account:

> Jews circumcised a Christian boy in Norwich. Having circumcised him, they named him Jurnin. They kept him, however, In order to crucify him as an insult to Jesus Christ crucified. The father of the boy, however, from whom the Jews had secretly stolen the boy, having diligently searched for his son, found him confined in the Jews' custody. With jubilant cries, he pointed to his son, whom he thought he had lost, who was wickedly confined in a certain Jewish chamber. When so great a crime came to the attention of Bishop William of Raleigh, a prudent and circumspect man, and some other nobles, all the Jews of that town were seized, lest, through the neglect of Christians, so great an injury to Christ should go unpunished. And when [the Jews] wanted to place themselves under the protection of royal authority, the bishop said: "These matters regard the church. They are not to be dealt with by the royal curia, as this case concerns circumcision and the wounding of the faith." Four of the Jews were found guilty of the aforesaid crime. First, they were dragged by the tails of horses, and then they were hanged by the gallows, where they exhaled the wretched remains of life.[64]

Like the narrative that emerges from the summary of the legal proceedings, Wendover's and Paris's short and long versions of the Norwich circumcision case—on whose commonalities the following pages focus—had all the elements of a typical anti-Jewish tale. They cast malevolent Jewish men as preying on a helpless Christian child and being punished. Unlike the summary of the legal proceedings, however, these chronicle accounts did not present Norwich Jews as intent on bringing Edward into the Jewish community. Instead, they claimed that Norwich Jews circumcised Edward with the intention of crucifying him at Easter. In other words, they recast Edward's circumcision as a prelude to—or a first step in—an attempted ritual murder. This interweaving of circumcision and crucifixion into a single anti-Jewish story was unprecedented, and it provides fresh insight into contemporaneous Christian views of circumcision and Jewish proselytizing.

To modern sensibilities, the notion that Jews would circumcise a child whom they intended to murder is puzzling. Why would Jews perform a rite that they typically performed on their own infants to welcome them into the

Jewish community on Christian children whom they allegedly wanted to kill? As the seventeenth-century Portuguese Jewish scholar Menasseh ben Israel pointed out in his refutation of Wendover and Paris's narrative in his *Vindiciae judaeorum* (Vindication of the Jews), from a Jewish perspective, circumcision and murder were antithetical. Jewish circumcision was "a testimony of great love and affection," he explained, "and [Jews presumably would] not dare make a sport of one of the seals of their covenant." Menasseh ben Israel concluded that the whole Norwich story was a "prank" and that Norwich Jews' imputed deeds were in fact worthy of Spanish Catholics in the Americas "who first baptized the poor Indians, and afterwards … inhumanely butchered them.[65]

Wendover and Paris did not spell out how they conceived of the relationship between circumcision and crucifixion.[66] As noted above, Wendover and Paris wrote simply that "Jews hid a certain boy from Christian view for a year and circumcised him, wanting to crucify him at Easter."[67] Paris's additional, more detailed account stated merely that "Jews circumcised a Christian boy. Having circumcised him, they called him Jurnin. They kept him, however, to crucify him, as an insult to Jesus Christ crucified."[68]

It is possible that Wendover and Paris did not envision any particular logical connection between circumcision and crucifixion. Perhaps, In portraying the Norwich circumcision case as an attempted ritual murder, they conflated it with one of the earliest documented allegations of ritual murder in medieval Europe, which arose in Norwich, too, a century prior—the charge that, In 1144, Norwich Jews murdered a young Christian boy named William.[69] Such a conflation, however, seems unlikely. Paris demonstrated a keen interest in alleged Jewish crimes, writing in detail about incidents in Berkhampstead in 1150, London in 1244, and Lincoln in 1255.[70] Amid all of Wendover's and Paris's writings, however, there is only one vague and brief reference to William. In his continuation of Wendover's *Flores historiarum*, Paris noted succinctly that, In 1144, "a certain boy was crucified by the Jews at Norwich."[71] Moreover, Paris appears to have composed this part of his continuation of Wendover's *Flores historiarum* after he and Wendover wrote their accounts of the Norwich circumcision case. It is possible that Wendover and Paris did not even know about William when they wrote about the circumcision case.[72] This would not be surprising. Although William of

Norwich is well known today—much better known than Edward—word of William did not circulate widely during the Middle Ages. Prior to the fifteenth century, Thomas of Monmouth's *vita* of William (which survives in a single manuscript from the last quarter of the twelfth century) was virtually unknown outside Norwich. Information about William that was independent of Thomas's *vita* spread slowly.[73]

Alternatively, the portrayal of the Norwich circumcision case as an attempted ritual murder may have been reflexive. By the 1230s, the charge of ritual murder was well known across western Europe, and accusations that Jews harmed Christian children in a variety of ways commonly evolved into tales of crucifixion. For instance, whereas in 1232 the Hampshire Eyre Rolls specified that Winchester Jews mutilated and strangled a one-year-old, [74] the *Annals of Winchester* later stated that Winchester Jews "crucified" this boy.[75] Indicating that crucifixion came to dominate some anti-Jewish narratives in subsequent centuries, as well, some later authors who wrote about the Norwich circumcision case—including the Roman legal scholar Marquardus de Susannis (d. 1578), the English chronicler Raphael Holinshed (d. 1580), and the French essayist Albert Monniot (d. 1938)—omitted any reference to circumcision and mentioned only crucifixion. Marquardus de Susannis even contended that Norwich Jews not only planned to crucify Edward but actually accomplished the deed.[76]

It is also possible, especially in light of Christian views of circumcision as cruel, that Wendover, Paris, and their readers imagined circumcision in the context of a ritual murder as a form of torture. As such, circumcision fit particularly well in a ritual murder narrative. Thirteenth-century Christians depicted Jews as subjecting their alleged ritual murder victims to a wide array of torments, Including a variety of kinds of mutilation. As noted above, according to a manuscript from the second half of the thirteenth century, In 1183 Jews in Bristol cut off the nose and upper lip of a boy named Adam whom they subsequently crucified in a latrine. According to the *History of the Monastery of St. Peters at Gloucester*, In 1168, Gloucester Jews tortured a boy named Harold "with extreme cruelty": "Placing him between two fires, they severely burned his sides, his back and buttocks…. They put molten wax in his eyes as well as his ears…. They also knocked out his front teeth."[77] During the thirteenth century, moreover, Christians increasingly claimed that Jews maimed or disemboweled their purported victims, often in

the same ways that were used in judicial punishments and reported of the bodily sufferings of saints. It is striking that, In the very same decade as the Norwich circumcision case, *genital* mutilation surfaced in an English ritual murder accusation: According to the Hampshire Eyre Rolls, In 1232, Winchester Jews gouged out the eyes and heart and "removed the testicles" of the boy whom they strangled.[78] In sum, contemporaneous Christian perceptions of circumcision and trends in tales of ritual murder indicate that it is possible that some Christians imagined circumcision in the context of a ritual murder narrative as a characteristic form of Jewish abuse.

Wendover's and Paris's interweaving of circumcision and crucifixion also invites consideration of contemporaneous developments in Christian thought and devotional practices. As a prelude to crucifixion, circumcision could have powerful Christian meaning. In medieval Christian theology, the circumcision of Christ—which the Gospel of Luke portrays as the occasion for Christ's naming (2:21)—was understood as demonstrating that Christ was fully human and as adumbrating, and even initiating, Christ's passion.[79] During the thirteenth century, In the context of increasing theological investment in Christ's humanity and the flourishing of affective piety, Christ's circumcision assumed heightened devotional importance. Alleged fragments of the foreskin of Christ were venerated as holy relics, [80] and Christ's circumcision began to figure in devotional meditation as the first of the seven sorrows of Mary.[81] The collection of saints' lives and verse homilies known as the *South English Legendary* (composed ca. 1270–85) presented the feast of Christ's circumcision (January 1) as its first festal narrative, emphasizing that Christ was born into the Old Law even as he ushered in a new era in salvation history.[82] Around 1260, Jacobus de Voragine affirmed in the *Golden Legend* that Christians celebrated the feast of Christ's circumcision because it marked, among other things, the first time Christ shed his blood for humanity and, thus, the start of redemption.[83] By the early fourteenth century, In texts and images, the *arma Christi* (instruments of Christ's passion) had begun to include not only nails and pliers but also the knife used in Christ's circumcision.[84]

Christians often imagined that, when Jews committed ritual murder, they sought closely to parody the passion of Christ. In addition to accusing Jews of crucifying their purported victims, they envisioned Jews as reenacting other aspects of Christ's passion. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* noted, for

instance, In regard to the case of William of Norwich, that Jews tortured William "with all the tortures with which our Lord was tortured."[85] In his *Chronica majora*, Matthew Paris described the precise correspondence between the tortures that Jews allegedly inflicted on Hugh of Lincoln and those endured by Christ. Paris wrote that Lincoln Jews appointed one Jew to serve as a judge, "like Pilate," and that the Jews scourged Hugh "till the blood flowed," crowned him with thorns, mocked him, spat upon him, Insulted him, and, finally, crucified him and pierced his heart with a spear.[86]

In the context of a parody of Christ's passion, circumcision could have served as a parody of Christ's circumcision, understood as the first step in Christ's passion. This is, In fact, how, In the late fifteenth century, the alleged circumcision of two-year-old Simon of Trent, whom Jews were accused of murdering, was explained in the *Geschichte des zu Trient ermordeten Christenkindes* (History of the Murdered Trent Christ Child, printed by Albertus Duderstadt/Albrecht Kunne in 1475). In this work, the text accompanying a woodcut depicting a Jew cutting Simon's penis stated that the Jew performed a "circumcision" in mockery of Christ's "first bloodshed."[87] In the thirteenth century, Wendover's and Paris's accounts of the Norwich circumcision case, too, could have been understood as casting circumcision as the first stage in a reenactment of Christ's passion. This interpretation leaves questions unanswered, however. For instance, If, In the narratives of Wendover and Paris, circumcision was a parody of the first step in Christ's passion, where were the other elements of the passion leading up to crucifixion? And why did Wendover, Paris, and other thirteenth- and fourteenth-century authors not cast Jews as circumcising other ritual murder victims, as well?

It is possible that Matthew Paris did imagine that Jews circumcised at least one other purported ritual murder victim. In the nineteenth century, In his edition of Paris's *Chronica majora*, which is based on what may be the only autograph manuscript of the text, the historian Henry Richards Luard included the transcription of a now illegible note from the lower margin of the folio on which Paris described the tortures that Jews allegedly inflicted on Hugh of Lincoln. According to Luard, the note read: "the Jews … to circumcise … and to call the circumcised [child] 'Jesus'" (Judaei circumcidere et circumcisum Jesum vocare).[88] It seems that Paris wished to add that, at some point in the process of abusing Hugh, the Jews circumcised

him and started to call him “Jesus.” The notion that Jews circumcised Hugh of Lincoln did not make it into the ballads that were later composed about Hugh or into Chaucer’s “Prioress’s Tale.” There may, however, be some evidence of awareness of Paris’s note across the ages. In the nineteenth century, the Scottish thinker Robert Chambers (d. 1871) wrote that Matthew Paris “state[d] that the Jews of Lincoln circumcised and crucified a Christian child in 1250 [probably meaning 1255] at whose tomb miracles were performed.”[89]

In explaining that the Jews circumcised Hugh and then started to address him as “Jesus,” this note provides a clue to another way in which thirteenth-century Christians could have understood circumcision as functioning as a prelude to ritual murder. The act of circumcision could have signaled the moment at which the victim started to become “like Christ,” while marking him with a physical likeness to Christ. One scholar has offered a related interpretation of the circumcision in the Norwich case: Abraham Gross has suggested that Christians might have imagined that Norwich Jews, wanting to “repeat the crucifixion of Jesus,” found it necessary first to “make [the boy] Jewish [by circumcising him].”[90] Discussing the alleged circumcision of Simon of Trent, David Areford similarly has suggested that Simon’s “circumcision [wa]s a moment that both strip[ped] the boy of his Christianity (by physically marking him as a Jew) and seal[ed] his identification with Jesus.”[91] To my knowledge, the marginal note in the autograph manuscript of Paris’s *Chronica majora* that explicitly links Jews circumcising Hugh of Lincoln to Jews starting to address Hugh as “Jesus” provides the first textual corroboration for this understanding of circumcision.

This interpretation of the role of circumcision in an alleged ritual murder resonates with two key thirteenth-century developments. First, it relates to practices pertaining to *imitatio Christi* (the imitation of Christ). These could involve ethical behavior, preaching, poverty, and chastity, and they could also involve intense focus on Christ’s body, leading to mystical assimilation into Christ’s corporeality and to taking on Christ’s bodily sufferings with striking literalism—for instance, by receiving the stigmata (marks corresponding to those left on Christ’s body by his crucifixion).[92] For an array of reasons, Including attitudes toward the Old Law and concerns about Judaizing, Christians did not consider it appropriate to imitate the body of Christ by becoming circumcised.[93] Nevertheless, Christians who were

accustomed to the notion of imitating the body of Christ could well have imagined that Jews would have engaged in this unseemly kind of likening. Christians, In fact, at times expected the bodies of Jews' alleged victims to manifest signs of Christ's passion. For instance, In recounting the alleged discovery, In St. Benedict's cemetery in London in 1244, of the corpse of a boy on whose legs, arms, and torso Hebrew letters allegedly were inscribed, Matthew Paris noted that "bruises and flog marks appeared on the body, as did signs and clear vestiges of some other torments." Paris noted also, however, distinguishing between what Christians actually saw and what they expected to see but were unable to detect, that "the five wounds of Christ did not appear on the hands and feet and side of the little body.[94]

Second, viewing the circumcision of a purported ritual murder victim as signaling the moment at which he began to become "like Christ," while marking him with a physical likeness to Christ, resonates with thirteenth-century views that purported ritual murder victims actually *became* Christ.[95] Earlier ritual murder narratives (as well as some contemporaneous and later ones) maintained—and portrayed Jews as maintaining—a clear distinction between the bodies of Jews' purported contemporary victims and that of Christ.[96] Starting in the thirteenth century, however, some ritual murder narratives began to suggest a more complex view. The manuscript that relates the story of the crucifixion of Adam of Bristol, for example, at some points portrays Jews as distinguishing between Adam and Christ; yet, at others, it portrays Jews as identifying Adam with Christ. A distinction between the bodies of Adam and Christ is apparent, for instance, when a Jew named Samuel tells Adam: "You will suffer a more painful death because of Christ your God." But Samuel seems to identify Adam with Christ in his repeated references to Adam as the "God of the Christians," and when he boasts (referring to previous ritual murders) that Adam was the fourth "God of the Christians" whom he had crucified.[97] In a culminating moment, the Christian author even cast God as confirming that Adam was Christ. From on high, and in Hebrew no less, he had God bellow: "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whom for the fourth time you have crucified.[98]

While it does seem that Paris envisioned circumcision as a Jewish means of making Hugh of Lincoln more like Christ, there is no indication that this was how Paris or Wendover conceived of the Norwich circumcision. However, it is possible that Wendover and Paris and some of their readers

imagined that this circumcision served to make Edward more like Christ, an interpretation that would have been compatible with viewing the Norwich circumcision as a parody of the circumcision of Christ. More generally, Insofar as Wendover's and Paris's interweaving of circumcision with crucifixion highlighted ways in which thirteenth-century Christians associated circumcision with the body and passion of the historical Christ, it suggests that Christian horror at circumcision in the context of conversion to Judaism may have derived not only from the perception that circumcision was cruel but also from the fact that circumcision called to mind the sufferings that Jews had inflicted on Christ. During the thirteenth century, and increasingly during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Christian artists sometimes cast Christ's circumcision as a Jewish attack, grotesquely caricaturing the Jewish circumciser and showing a reluctant child and fearful parents.[99] Insofar as this devotional context was part of Christians' frame of reference for circumcision, the Jewish act of circumcising Christian converts to Judaism evoked alleged Jewish guilt in Christ's passion.

Wendover's and Paris's claim that Jews circumcised a Christian boy in anticipation of crucifying him had little contemporary influence, appearing in only one other chronicle over the course of the next two centuries. [100] It was not until the late fifteenth century that narratives that combined some kind of genital mutilation with ritual murder gained currency. In 1475, the medical examination of the corpse of Simon of Trent was said to have revealed a wound on the child's penis that the examiners attributed to a "laceration caused by a thorn."[101]In his influential account of this case, one of the physicians who inspected Simon's corpse, Giovanni Mattia Tiberino, claimed that a Jew named Moses had "cut the tip of the child's penis" while sitting on a bench outside a synagogue.[102] The iconography of Simon's suffering and death emphasized the wounding of Simon's genitals, as well. The third of twelve woodcuts in the *Geschichte des zu Trient ermordeten Christuskindes*, which provided the iconographic prototypes for most subsequent depictions of Simon, focused on Simon's alleged circumcision.[103] In this image, which evokes contemporaneous depictions of the circumcision of Christ, the naked child lies in the lap of the Jew named Moses who sits in a large chair and cups the child's genitals, while other Jews stand around. The accompanying text states that Moses performed a circumcision with a knife.[104] In the famous woodcut depicting the ritual murder of Simon that

accompanied the 1493 Nuremberg *Weltchronik* (World Chronicle) of Hartmann Schedel, Jews hold a naked Simon upright with his arms outstretched as if hanging from a cross, while they pierce his chest and arm with long nails, and with a large knife drain blood from his penis that they collect in a bowl. [105] In the late fifteenth century, moreover, some Christians regarded circumcision as part and parcel of the modus operandi of purported Jewish ritual murderers, and they retrojected circumcision onto earlier alleged ritual murders. A fifteenth-century panel depicting the alleged ritual crucifixion of William of Norwich in the rood screen at Holy Trinity, Loddon (Norfolk), for instance, depicts William with wounded genitals on the model of the woodcut in the Nuremberg *Weltchronik*.[106] In 1476, when Christians interrogated Jews from Regensburg about a ritual murder that they were accused of having committed in 1467, they asked the Jews how they had "cut off the foreskin on the[ir victim's] penis" and "which Jews cut off the penis [*sic*] and what was done with it."[107] In sixteenth-century German lands, Christians tried to frame Jews for infanticide by cutting off the foreskins of dead boys.[108]

These late fifteenth-century trends likely contributed to the considerable popularity of Wendover's and Paris's version of the Norwich circumcision case in the early modern period. At least one of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English authors who retold Wendover's and Paris's tale, Robert Fabyan (d. ca. 1512), owned and read the Nuremberg *Weltchronik*, with its iconic representation of Simon of Trent.[109] In seventeenth-century England, Wendover's and Paris's narrative appears to have reinvigorated the belief that circumcision was a typical first step in Jewish ritual murder. The English jurist John Selden (d. 1654) prefaced his account of the Norwich circumcision case by declaring that "every year towards Easter … [Jews would] steal a young boy, circumcise him, and, after a solemn judgment, making one of their own nation a Pilate … crucify him out of their devilish malice to Christ and Christians."[110] Eighteenth-century authors who wrote about the Norwich circumcision case persisted in retrojecting circumcision onto earlier ritual murder narratives. They claimed, for instance, that Jews had circumcised the alleged ritual murder victims William of Norwich, Richard of Pontoise, and Hugh of Lincoln.[111]

The eventual currency of the notion that Jews circumcised their ritual murder victims belies the obscurity of the concept's thirteenth-century

origins. It will never be possible to ascertain exactly how Wendover, Paris, and their thirteenth-century readers understood the pairing of circumcision and crucifixion. Given circumcision's contemporaneous connotations of Jewish cruelty and of the corporeality and salvific sacrifices of Christ, however, it is clear that this pairing bore unique potential to reinforce the view that Jews were the archenemies of Christians and Christianity.

* * *

At the same time, then, as the revived Christian belief that Jews were intent on turning Christians into Jews was part and parcel of broad ecclesiastical anxieties about the instability of religious identity and infidels' and heretics' designs, it derived also from trends specific to the evolution of anti-Judaism. Like the better-known charges of ritual murder, poisoning, host desecration, and financial predation, it was rooted in the conviction that contemporary Jews imminently menaced the integrity and security of the Christian faith and flock. The two surviving versions of the Norwich circumcision case—the "conversion to Judaism" version preserved in the summary of the legal proceedings and the "ritual murder" version penned by Wendover and Paris —helped to cement a Christian belief that Jews were people who kidnapped and mutilated Christian children. In addition, they provide further insight into the embeddedness of the charge of Jewish proselytizing in contemporaneous anti-Jewish trends.

The summary of the legal proceedings reveals how a narrative about the alleged seizure and circumcision by Jews of a young Christian boy could shift between the worlds of legal action and tale. It demonstrates that thirteenth-century Christians could construct the same kinds of stories about purported Jewish efforts to draw Christians to Judaism as about other alleged Jewish anti-Christian crimes. Like many contemporaneous Christian anti-Jewish yarns, the summary of the legal proceedings underscored the helplessness of a young Christian boy in the hands of adult male Jews. It depicted a pious Christian woman coming to the rescue, and it resolved with the triumph of Christianity over Judaism. In the process, it plied widely diffused anti-Jewish themes, Illustrating how literary trends could frame the interpretation of actual Jewish behavior. The summary of the legal proceedings also showcased the Christian view of circumcision as a vicious

form of Jewish attack, such that conversion to Judaism—like ritual murder, host desecration, and poisoning—involved injuring Christian bodies. Chronicle accounts of the Norwich circumcision case from the abbey of St. Albans, which cast the case as an attempted ritual murder, also point to Christian horror at the physical violence of circumcision at the same time as they highlight the resonances of circumcision with contemporaneous trends in Christian thought and devotional practices. Transposed onto a Christian body, circumcision was not only one more way in which—starting in the thirteenth century—Christians imagined Jews physically harming Christians. It was also a practice that evoked Jews' alleged culpability in Christ's passion.

The roughly simultaneous development of the summary of the legal proceedings in the Norwich circumcision case, on the one hand, and the St. Albans chronicle accounts, on the other, further demonstrates the degree to which the charge of Jewish proselytizing participated in contemporary anti-Jewish discourse. It suggests that some Christians perceived ritual murder and forced conversion to Judaism to be fundamentally similar as alleged Jewish crimes against Christians. Both the records of the judicial proceedings pertaining to the Norwich circumcision case and Paris's *Chronica majora* account dwelled on the anti-Christian tenor of the Jews' imputed actions. As noted above, according to the summary of the legal proceedings, Edward's father, Master Benedict, declared that Jews seized and circumcised his son "in contempt of the Crucified One and Christianity."[112] For his part, Paris noted that Bishop William of Raleigh understood the Jews' crime to have constituted "a wounding of the [Christian] faith."[113] Moreover, both alleged offenses reflected and reinforced Christian stereotypes of contemporary Jews as bloodthirsty and depraved, and both could specifically involve circumcision. Finally, both led to a type of death. Ritual murders ended their victims' earthly lives. Conversions to Judaism doomed their subjects' eternal souls.

Chapter 3

Christian Conversion to Judaism

The Christian concerns about apostasy to Judaism that Master Benedict's accusation reflected involved a great deal of fantasy. They drew on broad assumptions about the ill intentions of non-Christians and on noxious stereotypes of Jews in particular. However, the notion that Christians were apostatizing to Judaism with Jewish support was not divorced from all reality. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in western Europe, In spite of increasingly difficult conditions of Jewish life, a handful of born Christians actually went over to Judaism, with the help of Jews. The present chapter examines these conversions as they, too, stoked Christian alarm. It analyzes them also in order to illustrate the incongruity of Christian claims that, during the 1230s, Norwich Jews rapaciously sought to turn a born Christian into a Jew. Not only is there no evidence that contemporaneous Jews were intent on drawing born Christians to Judaism; it is clear that many Jews had deep reservations about facilitating conversions.

As Christian conversions to Judaism were punishable by death in medieval Christendom, they were clandestine and their numbers are difficult to estimate. Some sources suggest that, In some times and places, they were nonexistent. For instance, a circumciser's manual from thirteenth-century Germany titled *Kelalei ha-Milah* (Rules of Circumcision) noted: "At this time, when [conversion to Judaism] is life-threatening, conversions are not performed."[1] Extant records, however—including archival documents in Catalonia and England, rabbinic responsa, chronicles, talmudic

commentaries, Inquisitorial records, documents from the Cairo Geniza, Jewish liturgical poetry, and tombstone inscriptions—refer to about forty conversions of European Christians to Judaism that transpired during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (and to about forty additional conversions of European Christians to Judaism that transpired during the eleventh and twelfth centuries).[2] As a point of comparison, well over one thousand Jewish conversions to Christianity are mentioned in thirteenth-century records alone.[3] Still other sources suggest that there were more Christian conversions to Judaism than we shall ever know. The Jewish scholar David Kimḥi (Radak, 1160–1235, born in Narbonne) indicated, for example, that he had firsthand knowledge of more than one contemporary conversion. In his commentary on Psalms, he reported that he had "seen French converts to Judaism."[4] Intimating that converts to Judaism were a not uncommon presence in some Jewish communities in Ashkenaz, the early thirteenth-century Hebrew compilation *Sefer Ḥasidim* (Book of the Pious), which was written mainly by the German Pietist Judah ben Samuel of Regensburg (Judah he-Ḥasid, d. 1217), warned Jews not to quarrel with Jewish apostates, lest these apostates inform on the Jews and on the converts to Judaism who lived in their midst.[5] This remark is intriguing, not only as it refers to converts in the plural, but also as it points to one way in which individuals who moved from Judaism to Christianity could affect the lives of individuals who moved from Christianity to Judaism—namely, by denouncing the latter to Christian authorities.

A Christian source from the third quarter of the thirteenth century showcases such denunciations and alludes to a dubiously large number of Christian converts to Judaism. In his compilation of treatises against "the enemies of the church," the Passau Anonymous attributed his information on Bavarian Christian apostates to Judaism to a Christian apostate to Judaism—a churchman from a monastery in the diocese of Passau who had "been circumcised"—whom the Passau Anonymous claimed personally to have "detained and called back to the [Christian] faith." In the section of this work on "those who apostatize[d] from the faith of the church," the Passau Anonymous reported that this informant wrote to him about one hundred people who had "circumcised themselves" (i.e., converted to Judaism).[6] Undoubtedly an exaggeration, these one hundred "circumcisions" are

suspiciously reminiscent of the one hundred foreskins of slain Philistines that the biblical Saul asked David to pay for his bride, Michal (1 Sam. 18:25). The imputation of the existence of such a large number of Christian converts to Judaism, however, Is suggestive. It hints at the existence of at least a few.

Chapters 1 and 2 of this book demonstrated that thirteenth- century Christian concerns about Christian apostasy to Judaism were inextricably tied to fears about the instability of religious identity, Infidels' and heretics' anti-Christian schemes, and a heightened sense of Jewish enmity. This chapter shows that social realities fueled Christian concerns, as well. Revealing that a small number of European Christians actually converted to Judaism and that Jews facilitated these conversions, it explores the wide-ranging identities, uncertain motivations, and diverse fates of these converts as well as the nature of Jewish involvement in their conversions. I argue that these conversions worried Christian authorities. They seemingly attested to the weakness of Christians' faith, to Jews' conversionary zeal, and to Judaism's continued allure, and they threatened to sow doubts about the truth and superiority of Christianity in additional members of the Christian flock. I show also, however, that, although Jews generally supported converts, Jews were deeply ambivalent about taking on conversion candidates and made no effort to attract born Christians to Judaism.

This chapter also probes the broader implications of the bidirectionality of Jewish-Christian conversion in medieval Christendom. It considers how the experiences of Christian converts to Judaism related to those of Jewish converts to Christianity. It highlights a number of parallels between the experiences of converts in the two directions, and it points to instances in which individual converts in one direction affected the lives of converts who journeyed in the opposite direction. In these ways, this chapter signals the importance of considering the histories of conversion to and from Judaism in tandem, embracing a more holistic and integrative approach to the history of movement between religions.

Extant sources about medieval conversion to Judaism are few and fragmentary. Fashioning an overview of converts' experiences and contemporaneous Jewish attitudes and behaviors thus requires mining a chronologically and geographically wide-ranging source base that presents the full spectrum of methodological challenges described in the Introduction. In the pages that follow, I strive to bring these heterogeneous texts into

conversation with one another as judiciously as possible, with attention especially to questions of genre. I strive also to be sensitive to the specific challenges of documentation about Christian converts to Judaism. Instances of Christian conversion to Judaism that unfolded smoothly left few traces. Christian authors typically recorded cases of Christian conversion to Judaism when Christian authorities intercepted them, whereas Jewish authors often wrote about converts when they posed legal problems. This has resulted in two sets of records that provide very different kinds of information about converts to Judaism and very limited data overall. Moreover, because Christian converts to Judaism were profoundly polarizing figures, Jewish and Christian authors sometimes wrote about them in ways that idealized or demonized them, respectively, such that it can be difficult to separate layers of polemic from kernels of truth.

Converts' Identities and Motivations

In medieval Europe, Christian converts to Judaism hailed from a wide range of social strata. At least through the eleventh century, some converts to Judaism were former slaves of Jews.[7] The scope of this phenomenon remains unclear. Rooted in biblical law (Gen. 17:12–13), slave conversion to Judaism was supposed to unfold in two stages. Upon acquisition by a Jewish master, a male slave was to be circumcised and ritually immersed—a female slave was to be ritually immersed—thereby assuming the status in Jewish law of a "Canaanite slave." This obligated the slave to observe all of the "negative commandments" of the Torah (commandments to abstain from certain acts, e.g., to not steal) as well as "positive commandments" that were not time-bound (e.g., to return lost items). Upon emancipation, a slave was again immersed and given a writ of manumission. The status of a freed slave who had been (circumcised and) reimmersed was that of a full-fledged convert to Judaism.[8] In Iberia, slaves were usually of Muslim or "pagan" (e.g., Tartar) origin, but some were Greek Christians.[9] In northern Europe, slaves were usually "pagans" of Slavic origin.[10] As noted in Chapter 1, leading churchmen were concerned that Jews were preventing their Muslim and pagan slaves from converting to Christianity and converting their Christian slaves to Judaism; they had legislated against slave conversion to

Judaism for centuries.[11] Suggesting that, during the thirteenth century, some Jews in northern Europe may have owned Christian slaves whom they sought to convert to Judaism, In 1233, Pope Gregory IX reported "with sorrow and shame" in his bull *Sufficere debuerat*, addressed to archbishops, bishops, and other prelates in German lands, that he had heard that Jews in German lands had Christian slaves whom they circumcised and forced to "Judaize."[12] The Christian belief that some Jews owned slaves whom they converted to Judaism undoubtedly nourished the Christian sense, discussed in Chapter 1, that Jews preyed especially on the most vulnerable members of society.

Jewish and Christian sources make it possible to learn more about the conversions of individuals who were not slaves. Some of these converts likely were Christian commoners. The Passau Anonymous contended that, according to his informant, craftsmen and merchants converted to Judaism.[13] Jewish texts and artifacts from German lands document the conversions to Judaism of women. The *Nuremberg Memorbuch*, for instance, which was created in 1296 by Isaac ben Samuel of Meiningen to commemorate deceased community members, lists a female convert to Judaism to whom it refers as "Marat [an honorific title] Hatsiva the convert" among the Jews who perished in Cologne during the 1096 massacres of the First Crusade. This text specifies that Christians killed Hatsiva together with her Jewish husband and two daughters.[14] The *Nuremburg Memorbuch* lists two thirteenth-century female converts to Judaism among individuals who pledged money to Jewish communal institutions that was intended to atone for donors' sins and assure their entry to heaven: "Marat Guta the convert" and "Marat Pesslin the daughter of our father Abraham."[15] Tombstones attest to the existence of two more women who converted to Judaism during the thirteenth century. A certain "Marat Esther [daughter of] our [father] Abraham" died in 1241; her tombstone was found at Neuburg on the Danube.[16] The tombstone of the second woman was found in the Jewish cemetery of Würzburg. Its inscription states that this convert "left her father" (Ruth 2:11), came to "the Rock of Israel" (Isa. 30:29), and died in 1250.[17] The anthology of twelfth- and thirteenth-century German Jewish polemic known as the *Sefer Niẓẓaḥon Yashan* (Old Book of Victory) discussed the hardships that male and female converts to Judaism each endured.[18] The Passau Anonymous, too, suggested that women converted to Judaism. He

declared that Jews “attract[ed] and seduce[d]” both “men and women” to their “sect.”[19]

Jewish and Christian sources document the conversions of women to Judaism also in southern Europe. The registers of Bishop Ponç de Gualba of Barcelona record, for instance, that, In 1316, Ponç de Gualba and the Dominican inquisitor Joan Llotger heard the confession of a woman named Johana from the town of Stella in Navarre. Johana, who was “the daughter of a Christian man and a Christian woman,” had “made herself a Jew” with the help of Jewish men and women.[20] Documents preserved in the Cairo Geniza tell of additional cases in which European women converted to Judaism. Two letters penned by a Jewish scribe, likely in the late eleventh century, recount the travails of a Christian woman who “went forth from the house of her father, from great wealth and a distant land, and came on behalf of the Lord to take refuge under the wings of the Divine Presence [Ruth 2:11].” In Narbonne, she married a certain Rabbi David.[21] An eleventh- or twelfth-century copy of a court deposition preserved in the Cairo Geniza tells of two sisters—one older, one younger, “who were, prior to that day, uncircumcised” (i.e., not Jewish)—whom a group of Jewish travelers in Christian Europe converted to Judaism, ritually immersing them.[22] A thirteenth-century petition from the Cairo Geniza records the plea of a convert from Christian Europe named Rachel, whose husband, Joseph of Barcelona, abandoned her in Alexandria. “I am a convert and a foreigner!” Rachel cried according to this document, which provides a rare echo of the voice of a female convert.[23]

On the basis of available documentation, it is impossible to ascertain the motivations of these female converts to Judaism. Some of these women married Jewish men after their conversions. One may therefore speculate that, In some cases, relationships with these men predated and spurred their conversions. In spite of rising tensions between Christians and Jews during the high and late Middle Ages, Christians and Jews often lived in close proximity, and they interacted in contexts that could have fostered such relationships. Contemporaneous Christian exempla included stories of romantic liaisons between Christians and Jews. These tales often plied stock tropes about clerical incontinence and the allure of “foreign” women. Like Jewish and Christian prohibitions against interfaith sex, however, these tales

likely reflected concerns about actual encounters that could lead to conversion.[24]

Strikingly, Jewish and Christian sources also document the conversions to Judaism of learned churchmen. It is well known that Christian clergy converted to Judaism earlier in the Middle Ages. In the *Annales Bertiniani* (Annals of St. Bertin), Bishop Prudentius of Troyes (d. 861) recounted how a certain Bodo, who "converted to Judaism" in 838, taking the name Elazar, was the highly educated scion of a German tribe and the royal deacon to Emperor Louis the Pious.[25] In his chronicle *De diversitate temporum* (On the Heterogeneity of [These] Times), the Benedictine Alpert of Metz (d. 1024) reported that a certain Wecelin, who "consented to the error of the Jews" around the year 1005, had been a priest in the household of Duke Conrad of Carinthia.[26] In his *vita* of St. Fulcran (d. 1006), the fourteenth-century inquisitor of Toulouse Bernard Gui recounted how a man who "apostatized from Christian worship and faith and wickedly Judaized" around the turn of the eleventh century had been a prelate.[27] According to his memoirs preserved in the Cairo Geniza, the convert Johannes, son of Dreux, of Oppido, who "entered the covenant of the God of Israel" in 1102, taking the name Obadiah, had been a monk. A letter of recommendation that the prominent twelfth-century Aleppo rabbi Barukh ben Isaac wrote for Obadiah specified that Obadiah was "an expert in the reading of [Christian] books" and that he "returned to the Lord of Israel with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his strength [Deut. 6:5], and became a convert in a law court of Israel because of his understanding of what he read [in the] books of [Christian] error."[28] After his conversion to Judaism, Obadiah became an expert in Hebrew language and calligraphy and the author of the oldest known signed Hebrew musical manuscript.[29] Obadiah implied in his memoirs that one of his inspirations in converting to Judaism was another churchman, Andreas, archbishop of Bari, who "was stirred by God to the love of Moses' Torah, left his country … and circumcised the flesh of his foreskin."[30]

Jewish sources reveal the existence of several additional twelfth-century converts to Judaism who were remarkably biblically literate, suggesting that these men, too, may have been former churchmen. In France, one such convert named Yehosephia composed six Hebrew *piyyutim*, or liturgical poems.[31] Another twelfth-century Christian convert to Judaism produced exegetical insights that drew on his knowledge of the Bible. According to the

Tosafot (northern European commentaries) to Babylonian Talmud tractate Kiddushin 70b–71a, "Abraham the convert" adduced the notion that righteous men remind God of the evil of sinners (1 Kings 17:18) to elucidate the talmudic dictum "converts are difficult for Israel" (Kiddushin 70b–71a; Yevamot 47b, 109b; Niddah 13b). He proposed that converts were "difficult for Israel" because they were extremely knowledgeable concerning the commandments and meticulous in their observance, and their good behavior reminded the Holy One of the sins of Israel.[32] In his comments on Exodus 8:3 and 8:14, which are preserved in the *Sefer Niẓẓaḥon Yashan*, "Abraham the convert" drew on his knowledge of the New Testament to buttress the popular medieval Jewish view that Jesus was a magician. To support his assertion that Jesus discovered the secret name of God by means of magic that he learned in Egypt, he cited "the Gospels," according to which Jesus lived in Egypt for two years (Matt. 2:14).[33] Several Jewish sources may refer to a learned convert to Judaism named Isaac. Doubt as to whether this individual was in fact a convert stems from the possibility that the Hebrew word that often follows "Isaac" in references to this man can be read as meaning either "the convert" (*ha-ger*) or that this man hailed from Hungary (hagar).[34] According to the *Sefer Niẓẓaḥon Yashan*, Isaac pointed out inconsistencies in Christian interpretations of Isaiah.[35] According to the Tosafot to Kiddushin 71a, the leading tosafist (northern European talmudic commentator) Jacob ben Meir of Ramerupt (Rabbenu Tam, 1100–1171) replied to a query that Isaac posed regarding why the morning Shema prayer was followed by only one blessing.[36] In the ethical treatise *Sefer ha-Pardes* (Book of the Garden), the tosafists credited Isaac with an explanation for why the Sabbath preceding Passover is known as "the Great Sabbath."[37]

Jewish and Christian authors documented the conversions to Judaism of additional churchmen during the thirteenth century. As noted in Chapter 1, during the first quarter of the thirteenth century, Gerald of Wales wrote of two Cistercians who allegedly converted to Judaism.[38] In addition, Christian chroniclers in England recounted how the 1222 Council of Oxford degraded and sentenced a deacon for apostatizing to Judaism.[39] In the 1260s, the Passau Anonymous noted that two priests and a deacon from a monastery in the diocese of Passau "were circumcised together" and that a canon from Strasbourg named Ulricus Sunnechalp "circumcised himself."[40] According to

the *Nuremberg Memorbuch*, In the mid-thirteenth century, a man who had been "the head of all the barefoot ones"—perhaps a high-ranking Franciscan, as some Franciscans went unshod—and who came to be known among Jews as "Abraham son of our father Abraham of France" converted to Judaism. [41] Benedictine chroniclers and the Dominican scholar Robert Holcot (d. 1349) wrote of a London Dominican named Robert of Reading—a "famous preacher who was very learned in the Hebrew language"—who, around 1275, "apostatized and flew over to Judaism, married a Jewish woman, and had himself circumcised and called 'Haggai.'"[42] An eighteenth-century register in Italian that summarizes Latin documents that are no longer extant attests to the conversion to Judaism around 1284 in Ferrara of a Christian cleric named Solomon Pisano.[43] The Westphalian Dominican chronicler Henry of Herford (d. ca. 1370) and a Cistercian chronicler known as "Albert" (d. ca. 1454) told of a canon from the diocese of Soest named Robert, who, some time prior to 1299, "relinquished his [Christian] faith, joined the Jews, was circumcised," and "was sullied" for many years by "Judaizing." Henry and Albert both noted that Robert was a renowned scholar who, on the eve of his apostasy to Judaism, enjoyed great prestige. Albert added that Robert was the author of an account of the life of the third-century martyr St. Patroclus, "whose sayings were glorious to sing and worthy of being carefully redacted."[44]

Two fourteenth-century Christian chroniclers each told of the conversion to Judaism of a fourteenth-century mendicant (i.e., Franciscan or Dominican) lector—that is, a particularly learned friar tasked with lecturing daily to his brethren on the Bible and Christian theology. According to the Swiss Franciscan John of Winterthur (writing between 1340 and 1348), around 1327, a Franciscan lector "apostatized from the Franciscan order, deviating to the Jews," with whom he went to live in Alsace.[45] According to the Lübeck Dominican Hermann Korner (1365–1438)—who claimed to have derived his information from the no longer extant *Chronica Saxonum*, which was composed at the Benedictine abbey of St. Blaise in Baden-Württemberg—in 1364, a Dominican lector from the town of Magdeburg, who had "renounced the title of Christian and his holy religion … took on the perfidious [Jewish] rite and had himself circumcised."[46]

The Significance of the Conversions of Churchmen

The conversions to Judaism of churchmen were more likely to be recorded than those of lay men and women. Christian authors were usually churchmen themselves, and they were predisposed to hone in on scandals involving their colleagues and rivals.[47] Some Jewish authors viewed the conversions of Christian clergy as particularly satisfying vindications of Judaism. Insofar as the churchmen who converted to Judaism were learned, they could be presumed to have converted on account of a deep understanding and appreciation of their new creed. This possibility undoubtedly unsettled Christian observers. Indeed, Christian efforts to counter the perception that churchmen were intellectually drawn to Judaism may have fueled some of the dismissive Christian claims, mentioned in Chapters 1 and 2, that Christian clergy converted to Judaism because they were attracted to Jewish women. A Christian desire to quash perceptions of contemporary Judaism as intellectually compelling may have participated also in the Christian contention, discussed in Chapter 1, that "simple" Christians were particularly susceptible to going over to Judaism.

Jewish esteem for churchmen who converted to Judaism was reflected in the attribution of the influential Jewish anti-Christian polemic *Sefer Nestor ha-Komer* (Book of Nestor the Priest), to a (likely fictional) former priest. The Hebrew version of this work, which originally was composed in Arabic, explained that "Nestor" "detested the faith of the uncircumcised [i.e., Christians] and their error and took shelter under the wings of the Divine Presence. God brightened his eyes, [Nestor] entered the Jewish faith, and he circumcised the flesh of his foreskin."[48] The text related also that, as a convert from Christianity to Judaism, Nestor possessed special skills. Because he "understood and knew all the [Christian] error and the darkness in which he [previously] had been," he had a unique ability "to explain to [Jews] the erroneous faith of the uncircumcised" and offer "testimony about God."[49] Additional medieval Jewish anti-Christian polemics—including the twelfth-century *Sefer ha-Brit* (Book of the Covenant) of the biblical commentator Joseph Kimḥi, who settled in Narbonne, the twelfth-century *Milḥamot ha-Shem* (Wars of the Lord) of the Spanish polemicist Jacob ben Reuben, the thirteenth-century *Vikuah la-Radak* of uncertain authorship, the mid-thirteenth-century *Milḥemet Miẓvah* (Commanded War) attributed to

Meir ben Simeon of Narbonne, and the *Sefer Niẓẓaḥon Yashan*—cited the Hebrew version of the *Sefer Nestor*, reflecting and perpetuating the sense that churchmen who converted to Judaism were uniquely knowledgeable and that their conversions constituted valuable corroboration of the superiority of Judaism to Christianity.[50]

Jewish pride in the conversions of churchmen could pertain also to social status. Former clergy who had been high ranking carried particular prestige. Attesting to their appeal to some Jews as converts, a Jewish legend of which variants abounded in the traditions of the German Pietists featured the conversion to Judaism of the archbishop of Salzburg. According to one version of this tale, the archbishop of Salzburg initially attempted to murder Judah he-Ḥasid Judah prevented him from doing so by using a mystical technique that involved invoking the Divine Names.[51] Chastened and impressed, the bishop began to favor Jews. Then, after some time, "he left his [Christian] faith and converted to Judaism, and he was faithful to the creed of Israel."[52]

The Jewish predilection for learned and high-ranking converts from Christianity points to a parallel in Jewish and Christian attitudes toward converts from the other group's faith: Among Christians, there existed a predilection for learned and high-ranking converts from Judaism.[53] The compilation made by the monks of St. Matthias Abbey in Trier known as the *Gesta Treverorum* (Deeds of the Treveri) thus celebrated the fact that a twelfth-century Jewish convert to Christianity known as Bruno, whom the archbishop of Trier allegedly persuaded to convert to Christianity, was "very learned in medicine, as well as in Hebrew and Jewish knowledge, and possessed a knightly bearing.[54] Similarly, In his *vita* of Thomas Aquinas (1225–74), Bernard Gui extolled the great theologian for converting two Jews who were wealthy as well as learned in "the mosaic law." [55] Jews were aware of the Christian desire for converts of this kind: A Jewish legend that described the determination of the archbishop of Mainz to convert the fictional Rabbi Amnon to Christianity (a case memorialized in the Jewish high holy day Unetanneh Tokef prayer) described Rabbi Amnon as "rich, learned, wise, [and] of distinguished family." [56] This parallel in Jewish and Christian attitudes indicates that Christians and Jews valued similar characteristics in converts to their respective faiths. Both groups viewed

learned converts as powerful testaments to the validity and superiority of their respective faiths and took pride in having socially high-ranking individuals join their folds.

The scholarly achievements—pre- and post-conversion to Judaism—of the churchmen mentioned above suggest that intellectual inclinations may have led some churchmen to convert to Judaism. Some of these men—in particular, the likes of Robert of Reading, who was said to have been "very learned in the Hebrew language"—may have been drawn to Judaism in the course of studying Hebrew and Jewish exegesis. Starting in the twelfth century, especially in France and England, some Christian scholars who sought a deeper understanding of the Bible turned to rabbis for instruction.[57] Some churchmen recognized that this enterprise could be spiritually perilous. Thus, In the mid-twelfth century, the Benedictine exegete Ralph of Flaix composed a voluminous and widely recopied commentary on the book of Leviticus intended to strengthen Christian clerics against the appeal of Jewish interpretations of scripture.[58] In 1198, the Cistercian general chapter sought to discipline a monk from the abbey of Poblet in Catalonia about whom the chapter records state only that he was "being taught Hebrew texts by a certain Jew." This monk, who may have begun to question Christian interpretations of scripture, was sent to the abbot of Clairvaux for correction.[59] In the fourteenth century, In his massive biblical commentary known as the *Postilla litteralis super totam bibliam* (Literal Commentary on the Entire Bible), the French Franciscan exegete Nicholas of Lyra (1270–1349) warned of the dangers inherent in according Jewish texts intrinsic value, and he chastised Christian scholars who "Judaized [in their exegesis] more than Rashi [Solomon ben Isaac of Troyes, 1040–1105] himself.[60]

Churchmen could have become drawn to Judaism also in the course of informal Jewish-Christian debates. Jewish and Christian sources from twelfth-and thirteenth-century German lands, northern and southern France, Gascony, northern Spain, and the Italian peninsula indicate that such encounters were not uncommon and that Jews could be formidable debaters.[61] A passage in the *Sefer Niẓẓaḥon Yashan*—whose tone is decidedly combative—advised Jewish interlocutors "not to allow [their Christian] antagonist to change the subject" and to "be strong-willed, asking questions or giving responses that deal[t] with the specific issue at hand and

not permitting [their Christian] antagonist to extricate himself from that issue until it ha[d] been resolved … [so that] the [Christian would be] thoroughly embarrassed."[62] The Christian author of an anonymous twelfth-century *Tractatus adversus Judaeum* (Treatise Against a Jew) portrayed Jews as engaging in the very tactics that the *Sefer Niẓẓaḥon Yashan* advised Jews to stymie in their Christian opponents. He maintained that Jewish disputants "scattered off here and there through diverse places, and, when they thought themselves captured, they leapt back from place to place like foxes leaping amid snares. [In those places] where they thought themselves to be more strongly held, unless ambushes arrived first, they quickly slipped away."[63]

Just as Christian leaders feared the consequences of studying with Jews, they were concerned about the impact on Christians of Jewish-Christian disputations. According to the late thirteenth-century crusade chronicle of Jean de Joinville (1224–1317), King Louis IX of France (1226–70) lamented that Christian onlookers at Jewish-Christian disputations "went away misbelievers through not fully understanding the Jews."[64] Thomas Aquinas warned that it was "hazardous to debate about the [Christian] faith in the presence of simple [Christians]," and he advised against Jewish-Christian disputations unless they were organized and managed by the church.[65] In his 1253 "statute concerning the Jews," King Henry III of England forbade Jews to insult the Christian faith or "publicly dispute about it."[66] A remark in the commentary on the Psalms of David Kimḥi suggests that Christian fears about the impact on Christians of Jewish-Christian disputations were not unfounded. After showing, as Jews might have in the context of a debate with Christians, that it was a mistake to interpret Psalm 3 christologically, Kimḥi noted that he had seen French Christians convert to Judaism on account of such realizations.[67]

Insofar as some intellectually inclined Christian converts to Judaism continued to engage in learned pursuits after their conversions, their passion for learning bridged their pre- and post-conversion lives. Significantly, postconversion, a number of these converts engaged in anti-Christian polemics. The Mozarab scholar Paul Alvar (d. 861) preserved in his own correspondence alleged fragments of letters that the Christian convert to Judaism Bodo/Elazar sent to him. In these missives, Bodo/Elazar defended Judaism and deprecated Christianity.[68] In his *De diversitate temporum*,

Alpert of Metz included a letter that he claimed that the Christian convert to Judaism Wecelin had written to a certain Henry, a cleric of Emperor Henry II (1002–24). This letter was a polemical tract that attacked the Christian veneration of saints as well as Christian beliefs in the incarnation, the supplanting of the Jews by Christians as God's chosen people, and the abrogation of Jewish law. [69] As noted above, the twelfth-century converts to Judaism "Abraham the convert" and "Isaac and convert" contributed to Jewish anti-Christian polemics, as well. Suggesting that some thirteenth-century Christians were aware of the efforts of some converts to Judaism to discredit Christianity, the Passau Anonymous claimed to have heard from his informant that converts to Judaism "tossed the pearls of the church before swine [Matt. 7:6], producing writings full of blasphemies against Christ and against the sacraments of the church." [70]

The engagement of some Christian converts to Judaism in anti-Christian polemics points to an important parallel in the behavior of converts to and from Judaism. Numerous Jewish converts to Christianity—including Peter Alfonsi, Guillaume de Bourges, Nicholas Donin, Pablo Christiani, Alfonso de Valladolid, and others who did not gain fame—became anti-Jewish polemicists and preachers. [71] Every convert who engaged in polemics against his former faith had a unique story. At the same time, many responded to similar general conditions. Like the probably fictional Nestor, these neophytes possessed valuable insider knowledge of their former faith. They also had the capacity to deploy this knowledge in the service of their new faith, whether as an expression of their zeal for their religion of choice, as a way to retaliate against their former community, as a way to ingratiate themselves with their new coreligionists, or as some combination of the above.

The engagement of some Christian converts to Judaism in anti-Christian polemics points also to a link that could exist between individual converts to and from Judaism. At least one Christian convert to Judaism is recorded as having refuted the anti-Jewish arguments of a Jewish convert to Christianity: According to the *Sefer Niẓẓaḥon Yashan*, when "Isaac the convert" pointed to inconsistencies in Christian interpretations of Isaiah, he was countering the claims of a Jewish convert to Christianity. [72] In this instance, two converts—

one from Christianity to Judaism, the other from Judaism to Christianity—dueled indirectly as warriors for their new faiths.

An entry in the *Liber de rebus memorabilioribus* (Book of Memorable Things) of Henry of Herford raises an additional possibility about the circumstances under which some churchmen became attracted to Judaism. Henry reported that, some time prior to 1297, an Augustinian canon from the town of Lemgo, who was called "the blessed," "apostatized from the [Christian] faith and—having been circumcised—joined the Jews." This canon, Henry added, had been "a most wicked Patarene."[73] This statement is puzzling: Patarene heretics lived in late twelfth-century northern Italy, and the other heretics who were sometimes referred to loosely as "Patarenes" lived earlier, too.[74] A footnote in a nineteenth-century edition of Henry's chronicle corrects "Patarene" to "Passagian," which may make more sense.[75] The Passagians, who may have been known also as "the Circumcised," were Christian heretics who may have observed biblical laws regarding circumcision, dietary restrictions, and holy days, who were accused of teaching that Christ was subordinate to God the Father, and who rejected the church hierarchy.[76] Possibly, this Augustinian canon—and perhaps some other Christians, as well—first distanced themselves from normative Christian beliefs and practices and subsequently became drawn to Judaism. Similar dynamics may have played out in the lives of some Jewish converts to Christianity, such as Nicholas Donin of La Rochelle, who appears to have turned away from normative Judaism long before he sought baptism. According to his Jewish opponent at the Paris Disputation of 1240, Yeḥiel of Paris, Donin "apostatized with regard to rabbinic doctrine fifteen years [prior to his baptism], believing only in the written text of the Bible without any oral interpretation."[77] It is possible also that some Christians became drawn to Judaism via Christian heretical movements, such as Passagianism, that adopted approximations of some Jewish practices.

Any number of Christian conversions to Judaism was too great in the eyes of church authorities. As noted in Chapter 1, Christian apostasy to Judaism constituted a total repudiation of the Christian faith. Moreover, it specifically entailed embracing the faith that Christianity understood itself as having superseded, the faith that embodied the darkness and error against which Christianity defined its light and truth. It also involved joining the

archenemies in Christian salvation history—the people accused of having killed the historical Christ and suspected of plotting daily to destroy Christians and all that they held sacred. Christian conversions to Judaism were alarming also because they exposed the fragility of Christian identity and suggested that Judaism remained attractive a millennium after Christianity first touted its defeat.

The conversions to Judaism of learned churchmen must have been particularly disconcerting to Christian authorities. Unlike the conversions of "simple" Christians—including slaves, women, and most commoners—these could not be attributed to helplessness or ignorance. Instead, they suggested that some Christians who possessed considerable knowledge of Christian scriptures and theology found Judaism more compelling than Christianity—so much so that they were willing to risk death for the sake of Judaism. Insofar as some clergy were public figures, moreover, word of their apostasy to Judaism spread rapidly and bore the potential to be socially and religiously destabilizing. Thus, the Passau Anonymous remarked that it was "widely known" that two local priests, a deacon, and a canon had "been circumcised."[78] And, In his *vita* of St. Fulcran, Bernard Gui noted that the apostasy to Judaism of the prelate in southern France "elicited great outrage among the population."[79] The conversions to Judaism of learned churchmen suggested that no segment of Christian society was safe. As King Charles II of Naples put it in 1289, "the Jews seem[ed] to subvert all whom they c[ould]."[80]

The Fates of Converts to Judaism

The conversions to Judaism of born Christians in western Christendom during the high and late Middle Ages are especially remarkable on account of the hardships that conversion entailed. The *Sefer Niẓẓaḥon Yashan* listed circumcision among the challenges faced by men.[81] *Kelalei ha-Milah* noted that "the anguish of circumcision" was so great that it had the potential to deter prospective male converts from following through with their conversions.[82] As noted in Chapter 1, Christian observers were keenly aware of the centrality of circumcision to the conversions of men. Almost without exception, circumcision was the only element of actual Jewish conversion

procedure that Christian authors mentioned; Christian authors referred to "circumcision" even as metonymy for "conversion to Judaism," including when denoting the conversions of women. Christians undoubtedly were struck by the determination of male converts to undergo this painful procedure. Circumcision likely captivated Christians' attention also on account of its theological significance as the sign par excellence of Jewishness. As such, the circumcision of Christian converts to Judaism constituted an exceptionally powerful repudiation of Christianity. Thus, the thirteenth-century Jewish poet Moses ben Jacob portrayed the Christian convert to Judaism "Abraham son of our father Abraham of Augsburg," who was tortured and "burned for the unity of God" in 1264, as declaring defiantly to his Christian persecutors: "Know that I have no foreskin! / [For] I circumcised myself in order to be a Hebrew!"[83] This proclamation reminded listeners of the lengths to which Abraham had gone to become a Jew and it constituted a bold statement of pride in Judaism and scorn for Christianity.

Even more formidable than circumcision—and more intimately familiar to Christian authorities—was the prospect of Christian arrest and execution. Over the course of the Middle Ages, a number of Christians who converted to Judaism were put to death. According to Bernard Gui's *vita* of St. Fulcran, the apostate prelate was "burned by the people."[84] According to a letter fragment preserved in the Cairo Geniza, Christians sought to burn the female convert who married Rabbi David in Narbonne in the late eleventh century, but Jews in Najera in northern Spain ransomed her for thirty-five dinars.[85] Matthew Paris specified that, at the 1222 Council of Oxford, as the former deacon "did not wish to recover his senses in any way," the archbishop of Canterbury, Stephen Langton, defrocked him and turned him over to secular officials for execution.[86] The *Nuremberg Memorbuch* memorialized the deaths at Christian hands of several converts to Judaism. These men and women included "a convert whose name was not known" and "Marat Hatsiva the convert," mentioned above, who both perished in Cologne in 1096 during the massacres of the First Crusade.[87] They also included three converts who were "burned for the unity of God" during the third quarter of the thirteenth century: "Abraham son of our father Abraham of Augsburg," "Abraham son of our father Abraham of France," who had been "the head of all the barefoot ones," and a certain "Isaac son of our father Abraham of

Würzburg."[88] The *Nuremberg Memorbuch* also mentioned a convert who perished during the Rintfleisch massacres in 1298 "who converted [to Judaism in Nuremberg] at the hour of God's wrath."[89] In 1275, King Edward I turned the Christian convert to Judaism Robert/Haggai over to Simon Sudbury, the archbishop of Canterbury, for correction. According to Robert Holcot's commentary on Ecclesiastes, Robert/Haggai died in prison "in his wickedness," that is, unrepentant.[90] Henry of Herford reported that, In Paris in 1297, the former Augustinian canon from Lemgo who converted to Judaism was "arrested, examined, and burned."[91]

Fourteenth-century Christian chroniclers in German lands recounted two cases in which Christian apostates committed suicide before Christians could execute them. John of Winterthur reported that, when the former Franciscan lector, mentioned above, apostatized to Judaism and went to live with Jews in Alsace, his former Franciscan brothers tracked him down and carried him away. According to John of Winterthur, these men tried with all their might, "by means of arguments, explanations, and citations from sacred Scripture," to get this former lector to "abandon his [Jewish] errors." When these efforts failed, these friars decided to take him to Würzburg, where they believed that "the skill of a certain religious guardian" would help him "recover from the [Jewish] error." Along the way, this group stopped at a guesthouse, where the friars locked the former lector in a room while they went to eat. The former lector seized this opportunity to die dramatically as a Jew. He called through the window to the Christian passersby: "All of you who walk by and see me, know that I am not a Christian but a Jew and that I die in [the Jews'] faith! As a sign of this, I [now] stab myself before your eyes!" With these words, he seized a knife "that carelessly had been left there" and fatally wounded himself.[92]

Hermann Korner reported that the former Dominican lector from Magdeburg who apostatized to Judaism went to live with Jews in Sudenburg but was located there by his former Dominican brothers who sent four "robust" friars to retrieve him. These men seized and bound the former Dominican lector, threw him in a cart, and hauled him away, "against the will of the Jews." When this party reached the middle of the town square, the sister of the former lector appeared, and the group came to a halt. Appealing to her brother with emotion (as opposed to with logic and texts, as had the Franciscan friars in the previous case), this woman "filled the air with most

pitiable weeping and wailing. She pleaded with and urged her brother to do penance for his sin and return, contrite, to Christian worship." The former lector, however, would not be swayed. According to Korner, he declared: "Do not be saddened or troubled, good sister. Your brother will die today as a good Jew." With these words, "he brandished a small knife that he had been hiding in his cape. Thrusting it into his heart, he released his wretched soul."[93]

In narrating these accounts, John of Winterthur and Hermann Korner likely sought to shock Christian audiences with the exploits of protagonists who spiraled from the grave sin of apostasy to the most extreme expression —suicide—of the worst sin of all in Christian tradition, namely, despair.[94] In the second tale, the reaction of the sister of the former Dominican lector to her brother's death likely modeled the desired effect. Korner wrote that, upon witnessing her brother's death, "such a horrible way of living entered th[is] sister that, as long as she lived, she carried with her the horrible image of her dead brother." Korner noted also that his source for this story was a devout woman named Katherine Rupines who heard it from the apostate's sister and shared it "with many tears."[95] If these two former mendicant lectors actually did kill themselves (conflicting chronicle accounts of the nature of the execution of the former deacon at Oxford caution us to remain skeptical), their deaths might be interpreted as attesting to the persistence of a Jewish ethos of "active martyrdom" (i.e., killing oneself for God) during the fourteenth century—a period by which *kiddush ha-Shem* (sanctifying the name of God through martyrdom) less frequently involved taking one's own life.[96] The deaths of these two former mendicants—and Christian representations of them—also might be understood as drawing on contemporaneous Christian models of martyrdom, Including those memorialized in narratives about fourteenth-century mendicant missionaries in Muslim lands.[97] At the same time, Winterthur's and Korner's stories evince the extreme stakes involved in Christian conversion to Judaism.

Violent death was not an inevitable consequence of conversion to Judaism. Some converts died peacefully as Jews. As noted above, three female converts to Judaism were laid to rest in Jewish cemeteries. In addition, according to the fifteenth-century chronicle of the French jurist Guillaume Bardin, a certain Perrot, who had "professed the Christian religion from birth" and converted to Judaism a few years before 1278, was

buried by the Jews of Toulouse in their cemetery near the Château Narbonnais (a castle of the counts of Toulouse). Perrot's case did not end well, however. When the representative of the inquisitor of Toulouse, the Dominican Johannes de Frontlio, got wind of the affair, he had the consuls of Toulouse undertake a criminal investigation. This resulted in the disinterment and public burning of Perrot's corpse.[98] Documents from the Cairo Geniza reveal that some earlier European Christians who converted to Judaism fled to Muslim North Africa to escape Christian persecution. One such convert traveled first to Damascus and then to Jerusalem, whence he planned to continue on to Egypt.[99] Another went from southern Italy to Aleppo, Baghdad, Damascus, and Jerusalem, before arriving in Egypt.[100] Andreas "fled from the Christians who were seeking to slay him" in Bari to Constantinople, and from Constantinople to Egypt.[101] The woman who was redeemed by Jews in Najera appears to have traveled on to Egypt, as the letters about her were found in the Cairo Geniza. Like this woman, some other converts were released by Christian officials in exchange for money. The responsa of the tosafist Meir ben Barukh of Rothenburg (Maharam, d. 1293) discuss two such instances that transpired in thirteenth- century German lands. In the first, a Jewish community ransomed a convert for thirty zekukim. In the second, Christians heavily fined a convert.[102]

In still other cases, Christian authorities succeeded in bringing Christians who had converted to Judaism back to Christianity. The Passau Anonymous claimed personally to have "detained and called [his informant] back to the [Christian] faith."[103] In mid-thirteenth century Castile, the *Siete partidas* intimated that it was not uncommon for Christian apostates to return to Christianity. In fact, this law code defined an "apostate" as "a Christian who became a Jew or a Muslim and who repented afterwards and returned to the Christian faith."[104]

Several sources grant glimpses of the procedure whereby repentant Christian apostates were reconciled to the church. The Passau Anonymous specified that he and his Dominican brethren had sent the man who later became his informant to Rome, where the pope reconciled him to the church.[105] Only the pope and churchmen whom the pope authorized to act in his stead had the authority to formally absolve the sin of Christian apostasy. Thus, In Barcelona in 1316, Bishop Ponç de Gualba and the inquisitor Joan Llotger requested permission to absolve Johana, who had been "made a

Jew." They wrote that they "anxiously sought that [Johana] be canonically reconciled [to the church]."[106] The records of a 1255 church council in Valencia clarified that individuals who had been baptized and confirmed and who subsequently became Muslims or Jews but who afterward wished to return to Christianity did not require rebaptism or reconfirmation. Contrition and reconciliation administered by an authorized bishop sufficed.[107] Thirteenth-century pontificals (books containing the rites to be performed by bishops)—including the pontifical of William Durand, which was composed between 1292 and 1295, while Durand was bishop of Mende in southern France—preserve the liturgy for "reconciling schismatic or heretical apostates." Bishops were to lead the repentant sinner into a church and say to him or her: "Enter the church of God from which you heedlessly wandered and realize that you have escaped the snares of death. Abhor idols [and] repudiate every"—at which point bishops were to insert either "heretical, pagan [i.e., Muslim], or Jewish"—"distortion or superstition." [108] According to the *Siete partidas*, apostates who returned to Christianity deserved some kind of penalty. "Although [such a person might] repent," this law code stated, "he [should] not remain without punishment for he … made a mockery of the [Christian] laws."[109]

The Christian desire to bring Christian apostates back to Christianity and the actual returns to Christianity of some Christian apostates point to additional parallels between Jewish and Christian approaches to and experiences of religious conversion. As Chapter 4 shows, In spite of the great risks involved, Jews sought to bring some Jewish apostates back to Judaism. Like Christians, Jews sometimes pressured apostates to return to their former faith, they administered formal rituals of return, and they assigned acts of penance to returnees. These structural parallels attest to the great significance of apostasy for both Christians and Jews, In spite of the dramatic power imbalance between Christians and Jews and the great disparity in scope between Christian apostasy to Judaism and Jewish apostasy to Christianity.

Moreover, the fact that some Christian apostates returned to Christianity and, as Chapter 4 shows, many Jewish apostates returned to Judaism provides insight into the instability of religious affiliation in high and late medieval Europe. It was not merely the case that a small number of Christians converted to Judaism and many more Jews converted to

Christianity. It was also the case that some converts' religious peregrinations continued after a conversion, sometimes leading back to their initial point of departure. Some converts continued to vacillate even after they formally returned to their faith of origin. The Passau Anonymous reported that his informant—who had converted from Christianity to Judaism and whom the pope reconciled to the church in Rome—subsequently "returned to the vomit of unbelief [i.e., Judaism]" (Prov. 26:11; 2 Pet. 2:22).[110]

The willingness of male converts to Judaism to endure circumcision, of all converts to risk arrest and execution, and of some converts to resist Christian efforts to reconcile them to the church and to actually undergo execution suggests that many converts were profoundly committed to Jews and Judaism. A passage in the *SeferNiẓẓaḥon Yashan* noted that it was unthinkable that Christians would have been willing to suffer so greatly for the sake of "taking refuge under the wings of the Divine Presence unless they knew for certain that their faith [i.e., Christianity] [wa]s without foundation and that it [wa]s all a lie, vanity, and emptiness."[111] Undoubtedly, some Christian observers feared that this was true. Therefore, although Christian conversions to Judaism were few in number, their import should not be underestimated. Every case—and especially cases involving learned churchmen—had the potential to fuel Christian concerns about the vitality of Judaism and stir Christian doubts about the intrinsic merits and success of Christianity.

Jews as Agents of Conversion to Judaism

Jewish participation in ushering born Christians into the Jewish fold strengthened the erroneous conviction of some Christians that Jews were intent on turning Christians into Jews. According to classical and medieval rabbinic authorities, Jewish conversion procedure—*giyyur*—was a highly structured process that an official Jewish body supervised. A rabbinic court made up of three men who were upstanding and unrelated to one another was to oversee its main components—the acceptance of the commandments of the Torah, circumcision, and ritual immersion for men; the acceptance of the commandments and ritual immersion for women.[112]

Normative Jewish texts assigned Jewish women key roles in the conversion rituals for female candidates. For instance, Jewish women were to oversee the ritual immersions of women. The post-talmudic tractate Gerim 1:1 specified: "A man immerses a man; a woman immerses a woman." The thirteenth-century tosafist Moses ben Jacob of Coucy (1200–1260) explained: "Women escort [the female candidate] into the water … and then she immerses in front of [the men who tell her some of the commandments], and [then the men] turn around and go out so that they do not see her when she comes out of the water."[113] The paragraph on the laws for women who convert to Judaism in *Kelalei ha-Milah* specified that Jewish women placed the female candidate in water up to her neck while two scholars or two eminent community members stood outside, as "it would not be decent [for the men] to see [the female candidate] naked." From outside, the men taught the female candidate about some difficult and easy commandments as well as about the world to come. Inside the bathhouse, the Jewish women taught her about the laws of ritual purity.[114] When, In 1316, the bishop of Barcelona wrote about Johana's conversion to Judaism, he mentioned that two Jewish women from Castile named Huruceta and Vilida had been accused of "providing counsel, help, and support in the error of [Johana's] wicked conduct." Possibly, Huruceta and Vilida had assisted with Johana's immersion and instruction.[115]

In addition to overseeing conversion candidates' acceptance of the commandments, their circumcisions, and their immersions, Jews also sheltered and fed conversion candidates, often for extended periods of time. For men, a considerable interval could elapse between circumcision and immersion. The Babylonian Talmud specified that arrangements were not made for a male candidate's immersion until he had healed from his circumcision, as "water might irritate the wound."[116] The author of *Kelalei ha-Milah* added that Jews helped the circumcised candidate to heal from his circumcision just as Jews cared for a circumcised baby.[117]

Following the completion of the conversion process, Jews enabled converts to become integrated into the Jewish community in numerous ways. Jewish men and women married converts. In addition, some Jews engaged with converts financially. According to the *Sefer ha-Yashar* (Book of Righteousness) of Rabbenu Tam, for instance, a convert who lived in the home of the brother of the twelfth-century tosafist Moses of Pontoise

entrusted the large sum of thirty-seven pounds to his mentor with the understanding that they would invest it together.[118] Some Jews welcomed converts' engagement in the religious life of the Jewish community. Some scholars—including the tosafists Isaac ben Samuel of Dampierre and Joel ben Isaac ha-Levi of Bonn (d. ca. 1200)—approved of converts leading communal prayers.[119] Rabbenu Tam actually encouraged a particular convert to lead grace after meals.[120] The *Nuremberg Memorbuch* shows that some converts participated in pious practices such as the making of the bequests. As noted, "Marat Guta the convert" and "Marat Pesslin daughter of our father Abraham" both made charitable bequests "for the sakes of their souls." Marat Guta designated 0.75 pounds for the upkeep of the communal cemetery. This was a small donation; the average donation for women was 2.9 pounds. Marat Pesslin made a remarkably large donation, suggesting that she was well off. She designated 3 pounds for the care of the sick, 3 pounds for the upkeep of the cemetery, 2 pounds for synagogue lighting, and 2 pounds for the education of children. Two male converts made modest bequests for the sakes of their souls. The average donation for men was 7.3 pounds. "Jacob son of our father Abraham" designated 1 pound for the cemetery; "Isaac son of our father Abraham" designated 1.5 pounds for the education of children.[121]

In addition, Jews provided destitute converts with material support. Female converts whose husbands died or abandoned them were especially likely to rely on Jewish charity. Jewish communities in northern Spain provided for the female convert who had married Rabbi David of Narbonne, after her husband was killed in a spate of anti-Jewish violence. Jewish charity also sustained the thirteenth-century convert from Christian Europe named Rachel, whose husband left her in Alexandria. In a letter to the judge Elijah ben Zechariah that is preserved in the Cairo Geniza, Rachel explained that, after she gave birth to two daughters, Joseph "went away and did not leave her a thing." Rachel maintained that Joseph's mother was pressuring him to take a second wife. "Who is this Jew who thinks it is permitted to leave his small daughters?" she cried. Rachel assured the judge that the Jewish community had "made every effort" to help her, but she asked in desperation "until when [she] could remain a burden on the community."[122]

During the eleventh and twelfth centuries, some of the foremost Jewish scholars developed personal relationships with particular converts. The

earliest known tosafist, Isaac ben Asher ha-Levi of Speyer (Riba, d. 1133), housed a convert.[123] Rabbenu Tam did, as well.[124] According to the *Sefer ha-Yashar* of Rabbenu Tam, the brother of Moses of Pontoise, who lodged and went into business with a convert, taught this convert Torah and Mishnah "night and day."[125] The tosafist Eliezer ben Joel ha-Levi of Bonn reported in the name of his father that a particular convert claimed that Jewish scholars in Speyer lent him a Latin Bible to help him study Torah as he "did not know the holy language" (i.e., Hebrew). This convert explained: "The sages of Speyer lent me books belonging to [Christian] priests to copy."[126]

Significantly, Jews supported converts in all of these ways—supervising their instruction, circumcisions, and immersions; sheltering and feeding them; marrying them; engaging with them financially; welcoming them into Jewish religious life; providing for them in times of need; and studying with them—at great risk. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, bishops and inquisitors prosecuted individual Jews and entire Jewish communities in England, northern and southern France, German lands, northern and southern Italy, Catalonia, and Aragon on charges of abetting Christian apostasy to Judaism.

On several occasions, Christians put such Jews to death. According to the chronicle of Guillaume Bardin, for instance, In 1278, the inquisitorial representative Johannes de Frontlio initiated a criminal investigation against the Jews of Toulouse and a certain Rabbi Isaac Males who allegedly personally "accepted the abjuration [of Christianity]" of the Christian convert to Judaism named Perrot. Johannes de Frontlio condemned Rabbi Males and turned him over to the city consuls who had him burned at the stake.[127] Jews may have been put to death on account of their involvement with converts also during the third quarter of the thirteenth century in southern Germany. Directly prior to listing three converts to Judaism whom Christians executed during this period—"Abraham son of our father Abraham of Augsburg," "Abraham son of our father Abraham of France," and "Isaac son of our father Abraham of Würzburg"—the *Nuremberg Memorbuch* listed several born Jews as martyrs: Moses son of Simon; Samson son of Solomon; Gershom son of Yekutiel "and a young man from France"; Isaac son of Abraham, "burned for the sanctification of God"; Rabbi Isaac son of Asher, with his wife Dolca, "burned for the unity of God"; the young Isaac son of Joseph, who "died in torture at the wheel in

expiation for the community of Würzburg"; and Ephraim son of Samuel the Hazan, "who died as a martyr by fire." [128] The grouping of these born Jews together with three converts to Judaism in a single paragraph in the *Memorbuch* raises the possibility that all of these deaths were interrelated. Possibly, Christians executed these particular Jews because they had facilitated the conversions of—or otherwise supported—the converts together with whom they were listed.

In other cases, Christian authorities stopped short of executing Jews but imposed harsh penalties. In 1284 in Lombardy, for example, the Dominican inquisitor Florio da Vicenza demanded the confiscation of all of the possessions of two Jews named Leazaro and Isaac da Pesaro for having, among other things, "recently led to Judaism a Christian cleric named Solomon Pisano who was born of Christians [and for having] received and Judaized [him] in synagogue."[129] During the second decade of the fourteenth century, Inquisitors and bishops fined, confiscated the property of, and exiled Jews in Catalonia and Mallorca for allegedly "having offered aid and counsel to two German Christians who asserted that they wished to leave the Catholic faith and convert to the Jewish sect." It is possible that these candidates were affiliated with the circles of Asher ben Yeḥiel (Rosh, ca. 1250–1328) and other students of Meir of Rothenburg, who moved from the Rhineland to Toledo around this time. As a result of this investigation, Christians also turned a synagogue in Mallorca into a Christian chapel.[130]

This case points to another type of link that could exist between individuals who converted to and from Judaism, respectively. As noted above, Jewish converts to Christianity sometimes denounced Christian converts to Judaism to Christian authorities, and Christian converts to Judaism sometimes responded to the polemical arguments of Jewish converts to Christianity. The events surrounding the conversions to Judaism of these two German Christians reveal that, In addition, conversions in one direction between Judaism and Christianity could indirectly prompt conversions in the other direction: In order to reduce the fines that they had incurred on charges of facilitating the conversions of the two German Christians, three Jews from Tarragona converted to Christianity.[131]

Finally, In some instances, Christian authorities exonerated Jews, likely in exchange for money (just as some Christians allowed Christian converts to

Judaism to go unpunished in exchange for payment). In 1316, for instance, Ponç de Gualba exonerated the Jewish men and women who had been accused of leading Johana to convert to Judaism. He declared: "We were able to find nothing against the previously named Jews … that blackened their status or reputation…. For that reason … we hold and inwardly deem them to be innocent."[132]

Some outcomes of Christian prosecutions of Jews on charges of abetting Christian apostasy to Judaism are unknown. For example, it is not known what ultimately happened in a case referred to in a responsum by the thirteenth-century scholar Ḥayim Eliezer (the son of Isaac ben Moses of Vienna [ca. 1200–1270] and a student of Meir of Rothenburg). In this instance, a Jewish community was placed under the threat of physical persecution on account of the actions of a certain Rabbi Isaac, who was said to have "circumcised converts."[133]

To some Christian observers, Jews' willingness to risk their lives by facilitating conversions to Judaism and supporting converts likely demonstrated that Jews were intent on converting Christians to Judaism. Perpetuating this view, the Passau Anonymous reported that Jews lavished converts with material comforts. He claimed that his informant told him that Jews cherished converts and enriched them.[134] To be sure, some Jews believed that it was a divine mandate to accept exceptionally driven and devout conversion candidates into the Jewish fold. This stance was a far cry, however, from active proselytizing. There is no evidence that high and late medieval Jews reached out to born Christians and sought to draw them to Judaism.

Jewish Ambivalence

In fact, many Jews were reluctant to perform conversions. In conformity with rabbinic tradition, medieval Jewish authorities stressed that prospective converts whom Jews agreed to take on as conversion candidates should a priori be deeply committed to converting to Judaism. [135] In addition, Jewish authorities perpetuated the rabbinic prescription to discourage prospective conversion candidates. *Kelalei ha-Milah* instructed Jews to greet prospective converts with a particularly severe slew of admonitions. First,

citing the major eighth- or ninth-century Babylonian legal code Halakhot Gedolot (Great [Compilation of] Laws), this practical guide instructed Jews to proceed as recommended in Yevamot 47a: "[When] a [prospective] convert comes to convert," *Kelalei ha-Milah* taught, "one says to him: 'Why do you wish to convert and join a lowly nation like Israel? Do you not know that Israel at this time is despised, sick and eroded in exile?'" Next, *Kelalei ha-Milah* quoted the foreboding maxim, mentioned above, that appears four times in the Babylonian Talmud: "Proselytes are as difficult for Israel as a sore on the skin."[136] Finally, Incorporating a tradition articulated in the aggadic midrash on Ruth, Ruth Rabbah (redacted during or after the sixth century CE),[137] *Kelalei ha-Milah* instructed that if, at this stage, the prospective convert still wished to convert, Jews were to turn him or her away three times.[138]

The copy of the court deposition preserved in the Cairo Geniza that tells of the two sisters who were converted to Judaism by Jewish travelers in Europe portrays the practice of discouraging prospective converts in action. According to this document, the Jewish travelers sought to deter these two sisters from converting to Judaism. They allegedly told them: "Know, our sisters, that it is not easy to be with us in the community of Israel. It is difficult. The yoke of heaven is upon us [i.e., we are bound by the commandments], and we are despised and hated and tortured by all the nations. You are not able to bear all of these conditions. It would be better for you that you be with your brothers and your people."[139] This document may reveal more about what its Jewish authors wanted their Jewish audiences in Fustat to believe about the conversions they described than about the actual conversions. Its authors likely depicted these conversions—which had transpired far away, In Europe—in idealized terms in order to ensure that local Jewish authorities would deem them valid. At the very least, however, this deposition attests to the endurance of the ideal of discouraging conversions to Judaism.

Attesting further to an ethos of ambivalence toward conversion to Judaism, medieval Jewish authors emphasized that opportunities for conversion candidates to abandon the conversion process were woven into the process of *giyyur*. Echoing a line in Yevamot 47b and a similar line in Gerim 1:1, *Kelalei ha-Milah* matter-of-factly stated that prospective converts who came to inquire about conversion were free to walk away. "If

[upon hearing Jews' admonitions, the prospective convert] withdraws," the text declared, "let him withdraw." In addition, Jews were to give male and female candidates an opportunity to abandon the conversion process after notifying them about some of the commandments. Again following Yevamot 47b, which specified that the purpose of informing prospective converts about some of the commandments was to give them the opportunity to withdraw from the conversion process, *Kelalei ha-Milah* interjected: "if, at this point, [the candidate] should [decide to] withdraw [from the conversion process] … let him withdraw." [140] In its paragraph on conversion procedure for women, *Kelalei ha-Milah* repeated that it was acceptable at this point for a female prospective convert to withdraw from the conversion process. [141] In his collection of responsa, the *Even ha-Ezer* (Stone of Help), the tosafist Eliezer ben Nathan of Mainz (Raban, 1090–1170) treated the instructional phase of the conversion process as an opportunity for Jews to discourage conversion. He explained that, when a prospective convert withdrew because of the strictness of the Torah, it was for the best. [142] In his *Sefer Miẓvot Gadol* (*Semag*), Moses ben Jacob of Coucy contended that this initial instruction in Jewish law was in fact intended to dissuade conversion candidates from completing the conversion process. He added that it provided prospective converts with fair warning about the duties that would be incumbent upon them as Jews. The candidate was to be told about some of the commandments, he explained, so that he or she should not later say: "Had I known this, I would not have converted." [143]

Jewish reluctance to accept converts derived not only from adherence to rabbinic tradition. It was informed also by the great perils to personal and communal security surveyed above. As noted, *Kelalei ha-Milah* stated plainly that present-day conversions were "life-threatening." [144] *Sefer Ḥasidim* told of a prospective convert who "came to convert [to Judaism] and who accepted all of the commandments … and asked to be circumcised" but who was not yet circumcised because "the people of the city were afraid." [145] In his collection of sermons, the *Malmad ha-Talmidim* (Teacher of the Disciples/Goad to the Students), the thirteenth-century translator of Averroes, Jacob ben Abba Mari Anatoli, who lived in Naples, warned that, "in [his] day, conversions to Judaism brought danger." Anatoli advised Jews

to tell prospective converts to follow the seven Noahide commandments until they found a safe place to convert to Judaism.[146]

Medieval rabbinic authorities additionally expressed concerns about the potential impact of accepting converts on standards of religious observance and the purity of Jewish lineage. In the late eleventh century, In his commentary on the Talmud, Rashi warned that converts were "difficult as a sore" because they retained their non-Jewish ways and did not know the details of the commandments. As a result, Rashi explained, converts lowered the standards of Jewish religious observance. (As noted above, In the twelfth century, "Abraham the convert" interpreted this dictum very differently.) Moreover, Rashi maintained, converts' religious missteps risked bringing divine punishment upon the entire Jewish community, as Jews were considered responsible for each other's sins.[147] In twelfth-century northern France, Isaac ben Samuel of Dampierre warned that converts were "as difficult as a sore" because they alienated the *Shekhinah* (Divine Presence) from the Jewish community. Isaac ben Samuel of Dampierre explained that the *Shekhinah* conferred itself only upon Jewish families "of pedigree," and converts were of lesser status.[148]

In sum, against medieval Christian contentions that Jews were bent on turning Christians into Jews, extant evidence indicates that Jewish authorities accepted converts cautiously, In keeping with rabbinic tradition and concerned about communal security and integrity. Christian suspicions and surveillance undoubtedly made Jews even less likely to accept converts than they might have been otherwise, further widening the gap between the actual nature of Jewish involvement in conversions to Judaism and Christian construals of Jewish attitudes and behaviors.

* * *

Extant sources limit what can be known about Christian conversion to Judaism in high and late medieval Europe. It is clear, however, that, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, a small but diverse group of European Christians converted to Judaism. These men and women included emancipated slaves of Jews as well as individuals of other ranks. Thus, during the very centuries that witnessed an intensification of Christian anti-Judaism, some Christians found either particular Jews or Judaism so deeply

attractive that they risked their lives to become one with them. These observations indicate that Jewish-Christian conversion in Christian Europe was bidirectional, even if asymmetrically so. They demonstrate also that individuals' affective and intellectual inclinations sometimes propelled personal choices, such as conversion to Judaism, that defied Christian social, religious, and legal norms.

Knowledge of these conversions to Judaism deepens understandings of contemporaneous Christian alarm about Christian apostasy to Judaism. Christian authorities were aware that some born Christians apostatized to Judaism at great risk and that these apostates included respected leaders of the Christian flock. Relatives and former associates of Christian apostates tried to bring some of these men and women back to Christianity, as did the Christian officials before whom apostates appeared in judgment, with mixed results. Christians witnessed how some apostates publicly embraced death for the sake of Judaism. In short, although instances of Christian apostasy to Judaism were rare, their implications and possible repercussions were significant. Illustrating the instability of Christian identity and the enduring attractiveness of Jews and Judaism to some Christians, they fueled Christian insecurities and threatened to alienate additional members of the Christian flock.

Christians were aware also that Jewish men and women facilitated the conversions of born Christians to Judaism and integrated these converts into their communities. Predisposed to view Jews as scheming enemies, many Christians likely understood Jewish support for converts as confirmation that Jews were intent on drawing born Christians to Judaism. In fact, however, Jews were ambivalent about accepting converts. The link between Christian concerns about Jews as agents of Christian apostasy, then, and actual Jewish involvement in Christian conversions to Judaism was quite tenuous. As Chapters 4 and 5 show, however, and as the Norwich circumcision case may demonstrate, the connection between Christian concerns about Jews as agents of Christian apostasy and another phenomenon that Christians labeled "Christian apostasy to Judaism" may have been stronger.

Considering the experiences of born Christians who converted to Judaism and of the Jews who helped them sheds light on the interconnectedness of conversions to and from Judaism in medieval Christendom. Chapter 1 revealed connections between conversions to and

from Judaism in the minds of popes, Inquisitors, and other Christian authors who acknowledged the existence of both phenomena and pondered the theoretical links between them. This chapter has pointed to connections between conversions to and from Judaism in daily life. It has shown that the experiences of Christian converts to Judaism sometimes paralleled those of Jewish converts to Christianity: Learned and high-ranking male converts to and from Judaism were particularly prized by the communities they joined as testaments to the truth and superiority of their new faiths. A subset of male converts in both directions participated in polemics against their former faiths and thus came to "man" the front lines of Jewish-Christian rivalry. Some converts in both directions were pressured by their former coreligionists to return to their former communities; they underwent formal rites of return and performed acts of penance. These parallels indicate that, In spite of the implications of Jewish minority status, converts to and from Judaism could have much in common. They all were individuals whose present conditions were shaped by their outsider origins and for whom the possibility of returning to those origins lingered. They all were individuals also whose religious status was especially ideologically significant to the communities they joined and left behind.

In addition to delineating parallels between the experiences of converts to and from Judaism, this chapter has begun to show that the stories of converts to and from Judaism often intertwined. Individuals who moved from Judaism to Christianity denounced individuals who moved from Christianity to Judaism, sometimes leading to their arrest. The polemical attacks of a Jewish convert to Christianity could elicit rebuttals from a Christian convert to Judaism. Jews could convert to Christianity to mitigate the punishments they incurred for supporting Christian converts to Judaism. Indeed, the story of medieval conversion to Judaism cannot be told in isolation from the story of medieval conversion to Christianity.

Chapter 4

Return to Judaism

Alongside the conversions to Judaism of a small number of born Christians, another arena of lived experience fueled Christian concerns about apostasy to Judaism—namely, the return to Judaism of Jews who had converted to Christianity. The latter phenomenon likely was more vivid in Christians' minds as it was far more common. I suggest that the determination of some Jews to re-Judaize particular apostates—which contrasted starkly with the absence of Jewish efforts to encourage born Christians to convert to Judaism—may have informed Christian beliefs about Jewish proselytizing generally. In addition, the ways that conversion and return to Judaism merged in the minds of leading churchmen may help to explain the terms in which Christians framed their concerns about apostasy to Judaism. These dynamics are essential to grasping how fact and fantasy both shaped Christian constructions of Jews as agents of Christian apostasy. Chapter 5 shows that they are key also to uncovering a possible social context that could have sparked Master Benedict's accusation.

To Jews, conversion and return to Judaism differed fundamentally. In fact, no single Hebrew term encompassed both the conversion to Judaism of a non-Jew (*giyyur*) and the return to Judaism of a Jewish apostate (*ḥazarah bi-teshuvah*).[1] In eleventh-century northern France, Rashi famously insisted that Jewish apostates were still Jews according to Jewish law; therefore, they were obligated to repent and reembrace Judaism.[2] In addition to differing in the eyes of Jewish law, conversion and reversion differed in

terms of their social implications. Born Christians who converted to Judaism typically did not have deep preexisting ties to the Jewish community. Jewish apostates, by contrast, had Jewish roots and complex personal bonds with their former coreligionists. To Christian authorities, however, conversion and return to Judaism were fundamentally similar. According to canon law, Jews who had been baptized were fully Christian, even in almost all cases in which they were baptized under duress. It followed that returning to Judaism constituted an act of Christian apostasy—a total repudiation of the Christian faith—just like born Christian conversion to Judaism.

In order to elucidate the similarities and differences between conversion and return to Judaism and probe the ramifications of Christian authorities' association of these two phenomena, this chapter surveys the dynamics of return to Judaism in medieval Europe. It focuses first on the identities and motivations of Jewish converts to Christianity who returned to Judaism and then on Jewish involvement in re-Judaizing Jewish apostates. Throughout, this chapter assesses the extent of Christian knowledge of these dynamics and the spectrum of Christian responses to them. In so doing, this chapter—like other chapters in this book—navigates an uneven aggregation of Jewish and Christian sources. It grapples additionally with interpreting the intriguing but unreliable claims of Jewish converts to Christianity about Jewish re-Judaization efforts—claims that may be more or less accurate or that may have been fabricated or embellished in order to harm Jews. On account of these challenges, the pages that follow often raise more questions than they answer. At the same time, however, they further illuminate the nature of movement between Judaism and Christianity in high and late medieval Christendom, Illustrating more fully its bidirectionality and fluidity and revealing additional parallels and links between diverse religious trajectories.

Regretting Conversion to Christianity

In late twelfth-, thirteenth-, and fourteenth-century Christendom, well over one thousand Jews were baptized under a spectrum of circumstances, ranging from brute force to variously motivated personal choice.[3] Jewish and Christian sources indicate that a significant number of these men and women

subsequently sought to rejoin the Jewish community and resume life as Jews. Some of these individuals had never ceased to consider themselves Jews. The Jewish crusade chronicle of Solomon bar Samson, which cast Rhineland Jews in a pious light, claimed that hundreds of Jews who were baptized amid the anti-Jewish violence of the First Crusade did their utmost to continue to live as Jews. It maintained that these converts "examined meat according to the regulations of the sages. They did not drink 'wine of libation' [i.e., wine touched by non-Jews]. They rarely went to church. And when they did go, they went out of great duress and fear…. The non-Jews themselves knew that [these Jews] had not converted wholeheartedly," the chronicle states, "but only out of fear of the crusaders. They knew that [these Jews] did not believe in [the Christians'] deity but that, Instead, they clung to the fear of the Lord and held fast to the sublime God, creator of heaven and earth."[4] The Christian chronicler Roger of Hoveden (d. 1201) wrote about an individual Jewish convert to Christianity who never ceased to identify as a Jew. Roger of Hoveden related that, one day after a Jewish moneylender named Benedict chose baptism over death during the anti-Jewish riots that surrounded the coronation of King Richard I in 1189, Benedict identified himself before King Richard as "Benedict, your Jew from York." Roger of Hoveden reported that Benedict "returned to the Jewish depravity."[5] The records of an inquisitorial trial that transpired in 1320 in Pamiers document similar behavior on the part of a Jewish scholar named Baruch, who was baptized amid the anti-Jewish violence of the Shepherds' Crusade (1320). Baruch declared before inquisitor Jacques Fournier that "he wished to live as a Jew and not as a Christian, as he did not consider himself to be a Christian." Baruch explained that he had accepted baptism "only to survive the moment."[6]

Jewish and Christian sources indicate that other Jewish apostates who sought to return to Judaism initially desired baptism for one reason or another but became disillusioned by life as Jewish converts to Christianity, which often involved poverty and other challenges.[7] The legal compendium of Isaac ben Moses of Vienna (Riaz, ca. 1200–1270), known as the *Sefer Or Zaru'a* (Light Is Sown [allusion to Ps. 97:11]), told, for instance, of a Jewish handmaid in early thirteenth-century Hungary who ran away and converted to Christianity when she was suspected of stealing. Subsequently, however, she experienced a change of heart. After two years, she complained of abuse by

her Christian employer and she sought to return to the Jewish community.[8] The record of an inquisitorial deposition that was made in Toulon around 1320 gave voice to the anguish of Jewish apostates of this kind. It quoted a regretful Jewish apostate as having confessed before the tribunal of the Franciscan inquisitor Bertrand de Cigoterio that, after he was baptized, he "greatly suffered and lamented [his conversion to Christianity] and therefore wished to return to Judaism."[9]

Some repentant Jewish apostates returned to Judaism as inconspicuously as possible, by escaping to a place where no one knew them and there resuming life as Jews. Thus, Isaac ben Samuel of Dampierre observed that some apostates journeyed to "a different land [in order to] return [to Judaism]" because they were "afraid of [being punished by] non-Jews."[10] In the late thirteenth-century, a repentant Jewish apostate wrote that it was well known that destitute apostates went "to a place where they [we]re not known and revert[ed there] to their origins."[11] A responsum of the communal leader of Barcelona Solomon ben Abraham ibn Aderet (Rashba, 1235–1310) tells of a married Jewish woman who converted to Christianity along with her Jewish lover, was granted a divorce by her Jewish husband, and then moved with her lover to Toledo, where this couple was known to "go out [in public] as if they were Jews and husband and wife."[12]

Christian authorities were aware that some Jewish converts to Christianity returned to Judaism abroad. In a 1286 missive to the archbishop of Canterbury and his suffragans, Pope Honorius IV complained that, among those Jewish converts to Christianity who reverted to Judaism, some wickedly moved to another town where, "unknown, they returned to their unbelief."[13] In 1359, Pope Innocent VI wrote to the Franciscan inquisitor of Provence Bernard Dupuy, urging him to apprehend "some Hebrews who, having abjured the error of Jewish blindness and been immersed in sacred baptism, shortly thereafter returned to Jewish unbelief." Innocent explained that, "in order to avoid punishment, they fled [from the Comté Venaissin and Provence] to other lands and kingdoms."[14] In 1364, Pope Urban V wrote to secular officials in southern France, exhorting them to assist the inquisitor of Provence Hugo de Cardillon in detaining and punishing "quite a few people of both sexes" from the counties of Provence and Forcalquier "who came from Hebrew blindness to the light of the Christian faith … and damnably returned to that blindness." Urban explained that these men and women had

“left those counties and flown to other lands” so that “justice would not be able to be administered.”[15]

The registers of Bishop Ponç de Gualba of Barcelona provide further evidence that Christian authorities were aware that Jewish converts to Christianity returned to Judaism abroad. In addition, they illustrate how conversions in one direction between Judaism and Christianity could unleash a chain of passages between these two faiths. A safe conduct that Ponç de Gualba issued in 1312 reveals that one of three Tarragona Jews who converted to Christianity to reduce their part of a communal penalty incurred for sheltering two German converts to Judaism (as discussed in Chapter 3) subsequently returned to Judaism. Benvenist Barzilay/Petrus fled with a son named Jucef to the Barbary Coast. In this Muslim environment, where he could revert to Judaism with impunity, Benvenist Barzilay/Petrus resumed life as a Jew. [16] Here, two Christian conversions to Judaism indirectly led to three Jewish conversions to Christianity, at least one of which was reversed when one Jewish apostate returned to Judaism.

Christian Responses to Renunciations of Christianity

The renunciation of Christianity by Jewish converts to Christianity alarmed ecclesiastical leaders. According to church teaching, baptism imprinted a permanent character on the soul. As such, it was irrevocable. The canon *De iudaeis* of the Fourth Council of Toledo (633), which the twelfth-century canon lawyer from Bologna known as Gratian incorporated into his influential collection of canon law known as the *Decretum*, specified that forced conversions—although undesirable—were binding. It declared: “It is right that those who were forced … to become Christian be obliged to hold the faith which they received, albeit by force or by necessity, lest the name of the Lord be blasphemed and the faith which they have received considered worthless.”[17] In his summa on the *Decretum* (ca. 1188), the Italian canonist Huguccio of Pisa modified this view, distinguishing between absolute and conditional coercion. He argued that individuals who were baptized under absolute coercion were not to be compelled to live as Christians. Huguccio’s definition of “absolute coercion,” however, was extremely narrow. Baptizing by absolute coercion involved pouring water over a physically constrained

person who never retroactively consented to baptism, not even tacitly—for example, by receiving the Eucharist. Threatening a Jew with death or physical harm did not constitute "absolute coercion."[18] Pope Innocent III formally sanctioned this position in 1201 in the decretal *Maiores*, and nearly all subsequent canonists adopted it, as well.[19] The result was an ethos that deemed essentially all baptisms irreversible and essentially all baptized Jews Christians. Illustrating this posture, In 1264, the inquisitorial tribunal in Manosque, Provence, asked a woman named Regina/Raymbauda, who had converted from Judaism to Christianity but who subsequently returned to Judaism, married a Jew, and bore and raised six children as Jews over the course of fourteen years, to take a solemn oath, not on "the book of the Ten Commandments," but on the Gospels.[20]

On the principle that baptized Jews were Christians, the renunciation of Christianity by a Jewish convert to Christianity constituted an act of Christian apostasy. In the eyes of the church, the phenomenon of return to Judaism thus significantly increased the number of Christian apostates to Judaism. In addition, it indicated that the church was failing to retain not only some individuals who were born into its flock but also some of the Jewish converts whom it professed so dearly to covet, as discussed in Chapter 1. The phenomenon of return to Judaism demonstrated that quite a few of the church's conversionary "victories" were, In fact, short-lived. For all of these reasons, the renunciation of Christianity by Jewish converts to Christianity deepened Christian unease about the instability of Christian identity and the merits of Christianity versus those of Judaism. In an effort to prevent instances in which Jewish converts to Christianity sought to return to Judaism "like dogs to their vomit," generations of popes urged bishops, abbots, and other officials to provide for converts' material well-being generously.[21]

The phenomenon of return to Judaism troubled ecclesiastical leaders all the more insofar as it perdured in spite of the risks of arrest and execution. To be sure, there is evidence from earlier in the Middle Ages that, In spite of the theological gravity of the offense of renouncing Christianity, not all Christian leaders were committed to stopping or punishing it. In fact, just as some Christian laymen and clergy allowed Christian converts to Judaism to live unmolested as Jews (usually in exchange for money, as noted in Chapter 3), some were willing to "sin against God" and even help to facilitate returns to Judaism.[22] In the wake of the massacres and forced conversions of the

First Crusade, for example, Emperor Henry IV permitted forcibly baptized Jews to return to Judaism.[23] This concession enraged the antipope Clement III (ca. 1029–1100), who vigorously protested Henry's decision to permit these men and women to "apostatize and rot in the Jewish rite." Clement deemed the emperor's decision "unheard of and utterly heinous." [24] According to the *Sefer Zekhirah* (Book of Remembrance) of Ephraim ben Jacob of Bonn (b. 1132), which recounts attacks on Jews in Germany, France, and England in 1147 during the Second Crusade, a priest who "took neither silver nor gold" guided Jews who had been forcibly baptized from Germany to France and elsewhere "so that they might return to their Torah."[25] Roger of Hoveden related that the archbishop of Canterbury and King Richard I acquiesced to Benedict of York's decision to return to Judaism, mentioned above. Instead of declaring, as Roger stated that the archbishop should have, "we demand that [Benedict/ William] be brought to a Christian trial as he has become a Christian and now contradicts that fact," the archbishop gruffly conceded: "If he does not choose to be a Christian, let him be a man of the devil."[26]

Other popes and kings, however, encouraged the prosecution of so-called *relapsi* (literally, "backsliders"; in the masculine singular, *relapsus*) and even initiated such proceedings themselves. In 1144 in Paris, King Louis VII of France, for instance, reminded his subjects that "Jews who were reborn in Christ through the grace of baptism and who presumed to fly back to their old error" were to be punished with exile or capital or corporal punishment.[27] At the First Council of Lyon (1245–47), Pope Innocent IV called for the punishment, according to canon law, of "Jews who voluntarily received the sacraments of the [Christian] faith and [then] fell back into the precipice of their error."[28] King Henry III of England commenced proceedings against two Jewish converts to Christianity who renounced Christianity. In 1245, pending instructions from the bishop of Lincoln Robert Grosseteste, Henry ordered the capture and imprisonment of a "[Christian] apostate who had [previously] left the Jewish rite, been baptized, and become a [Christian] acolyte."[29] In 1247, Henry ordered the sheriff of Wiltshire to deliver to the constable of the Tower of London a certain Solomon "who first was a Jew and then was baptized and then again apostatized and returned to Judaism."[30]

Ecclesiastical efforts to prosecute *relapsi* intensified during the third quarter of the thirteenth century, when matters pertaining to Christian apostasy to Judaism came under the jurisdiction of the papal inquisition.

Illustrating how closely popes and inquisitors associated conversion and return to Judaism, papal and inquisitorial statements from this period sometimes referred to conversion and return to Judaism as one and the same. The bull *Turbato corde*, for instance, which Pope Clement IV issued in 1267, referred to these two phenomena without distinguishing between them. It commissioned inquisitors to join in prosecuting "many Christians, who, denying the truth of the Catholic faith, [had] damnably gone over to the Jewish rite." [31] Subsequent iterations of this bull (in 1274, 1288, and 1290) specified that these "Christians" who "went over" to Judaism included both Jewish converts to Christianity and also born Christians—individuals who had "converted from the error of Jewish blindness to the light of the Christian faith" as well as "many Christians who, denying the truth of the Catholic faith, wickedly went over to the Jewish rite." [32] This clarification suggests that Clement's original wording—"Christians"—was meant to denote both Jewish converts to Christianity and born Christians.

Manuals for inquisitors similarly initially elided conversion and return to Judaism, and they similarly subsequently specified that they intended to refer to both phenomena. An inquisitorial interrogation formula first attested between 1250 and 1275 in northern France, for instance, Instructed inquisitors to ask Jewish defendants whether they "knew any Christian who Judaized." [33] When, however, In the 1320s, Bernard Gui incorporated this question into his *Practica inquisitionis*, he spelled out that "Christian" in this context referred to both born Christians and also Jewish converts to Christianity. Gui instructed inquisitors to ask defendants whether they "knew any Christian who Judaized or who had been Judaized and [whether they knew] any baptized person who was an apostate or had been re-Judaized." [34]

During the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, popes and inquisitors referred to conversion and return to Judaism in the same breath on other occasions, as well. In 1298, In the bull *Contra Christianos*, for example, Pope Boniface VIII instructed inquisitors to proceed against "Christians who *went over or returned* to the Jews" as against heretics (emphasis mine). [35] Similarly, the abjuration formula that Bernard Gui provided for Christian apostates to Judaism in his *Practica inquisitionis* included a promise to denounce to inquisitors both born Christians and also Jewish converts to Christianity who apostatized to Judaism—"those apostate

Christians who had crossed over to the Jewish rite and those baptized Jews who returned to the rite and vomit of Judaism.[36]

During this period, Christian efforts to prosecute *relapsi* led to the same range of consequences as Christian efforts to prosecute born Christians who converted to Judaism. Some of these efforts came to naught. In the early 1280s, for example, the archbishop of Canterbury John Peckham proved unable to track down thirteen Jewish men and women who were suspected of having been baptized and then, "as unbelieving apostates," abandoned the Catholic faith. These "false Christians," as Peckham later called these individuals, took refuge among Jews in London, where the royal writs for their arrest proved ineffective due to procedural technicalities.[37]

In other instances, Inquisitors caught up with *relapsi* only after their deaths—as was sometimes the case with born Christians who had converted to Judaism. Joseph Shatzmiller has argued that a letter by the noted Provençal rabbi Jacob ben Elijah of Venice (formerly of Montpellier) accused Jacob ben Elijah's former student, the Jewish convert to Christianity Pablo Christiani (formerly Saul of Montpellier) who served as the Christian disputant at the Barcelona Disputation of 1263, of disinterring Jewish converts to Christianity who had returned to Judaism and been buried as Jews. Shatzmiller contended that an elegy by the Italian poet Benjamin ben Abraham (ca. 1215–95) referred to this practice, as well. Both of these texts —Jacob ben Elijah's letter and Benjamin ben Abraham's elegy—referred to Christians exhuming corpses from Jewish cemeteries, but they did not specify whose corpses these were.[38] Additional sources leave no doubt that the corpses of some deceased *relapsi* were disinterred and consigned to the flames. In 1312, Bernard Gui condemned the corpse of a "convert from Judaism" named Josse/Joan from the diocese of Auch in southwestern France, who "had returned to the vomit of Judaism" and died "damnably persevering in [Jewish] unbelief," to be exhumed and burned "as a sign of perdition."[39] Suggesting the endurance decades later of this practice, In 1359, In a letter to the Dominican inquisitor of Provence Bernardo de Podio, Pope Innocent VI encouraged the disinterment of the corpses of *relapsi*—whom he referred to as "wicked [Christian] neophytes"—for the purposes of "doing justice."[40]

When Christian authorities succeeded in apprehending *relapsi* while they were still alive—as when they apprehended born Christians who had

converted to Judaism—their immediate aim was supposed to be to elicit repentance. Thus, for example, the register of Bernard Gui noted that "numerous wise men frequently warned and exhorted" Josse/Joan to renounce "the faithlessness [of the Jews]."[41] In some cases, Inquisitors managed to reconcile *relapsi* to the church. Reconciliation typically involved the imposition of a penance that was intended to expiate sin while also serving an instructional function for the rest of Christian society. [42] The first continuation (completed ca. 1315) of the chronicle of William of Nangis, who was a monk at the Benedictine abbey of Saint-Denis, stated that, In 1307, an inquisitorial tribunal in Paris imposed "a salutary penance" on a Jewish convert to Christianity named Molot (Mutlotus)/Johannes, who had publicly renounced Christianity.[43] Similarly, In 1320 in Pamiers, following two months of theological discussions with Jacques Fournier, Baruch, who had accepted baptism to avoid death at the hands of the Pastoureaux, formally abjured "the Jewish perversion of the faith and the superstitions and ceremonies of the Jewish Law," and he swore "that he would do and complete every penance, punishment, satisfaction, and burden which the Lord Bishop or his successors, themselves or through someone else, would cause to be enjoined and imposed upon him, Johannes, In his person or his property."[44] In 1341 in Aragon, after a recently baptized Jewish apostate "repented for [having publicly renounced Christianity and reembraced Judaism] and begged to be reconciled to the Catholic faith," the Dominican inquisitorial commissary Sancho de Torralba imposed on him the penance of perpetual prison.[45]

When Jewish converts to Christianity who had renounced Christianity refused to be reconciled to the church, they—like born Christians who converted to Judaism and refused to be reconciled to the church—were sentenced to death. An anonymous journal that described life in Paris in the late 1260s recounted the 1268 execution of "an accursed Jew who was a Christian for more than twenty years" and then "Judaized." "Having chosen fire for himself rather than to return to Christianity," the journal explained, "this man was led into the square where hogs were sold in Paris. There, bound fast, he was totally consumed by the fire, so that nothing remained unburned either of his body or of his limbs."[46] A late thirteenth-century Jewish elegy described the execution in Metz in 1276 of a certain Samson who was likely a *relapsus*. This poem described Samson in Hebrew as

"forced," a word that could signal that Samson was baptized under duress. Samson was broken on the wheel and burned alive.[47] Excerpts from the rolls of the Paris Chamber of Accounts that were compiled by the seventeenth-century auditor Vyon d'Hérouval reveal that, In 1302, "a [Jewish] convert [to Christianity] who returned to the bad faith [i.e., Judaism]" was burned and brought to justice in Pontoise. The same compilation relates that, In 1323, firewood was purchased for the burning of "a convert [named] Stephen." Presumably, Stephen had sought to return to Judaism.[48]

in short, during the same decades when, and in the same regions where, some born Christians risked their lives by formally converting to Judaism, many more Jewish converts to Christianity risked their lives by renouncing Christianity and reidentifying as Jews. The phenomenon of return to Judaism thus significantly increased the scope of "Christian apostasy to Judaism," from an ecclesiastical perspective, and magnified its attendant ills. Understanding conversion and return to Judaism as two forms of Christian apostasy to Judaism, popes and inquisitors sometimes referred to these two phenomena as one and the same, and often they discussed them in tandem. Popes, Inquisitors, kings, and local Christian officials responded to conversion and return in the same ways with the same range of outcomes, which included burning perceived offenders at the stake.

Jewish Reluctance to Re-Judaize Jewish Apostates

Like Jewish attitudes toward converting born Christians to Judaism, Jewish attitudes toward re-Judaizing repentant Jewish apostates were nuanced and complex. Jewish sources from German lands—including several texts associated with Jewish pietistic circles—provide insight into the dynamics that could fuel reluctance to readmit repentant apostates to the Jewish fold. This reluctance could stem in part from a general disdain for apostates. In the eyes of some Jews, apostates of all kinds had betrayed the Jewish community by abandoning Judaism for the false creed of Jews' oppressors. Moreover, apostates had been ritually defiled through baptism and life among non-Jews.[49] The horror with which many medieval Jews regarded apostasy is palpable in the ferocity with which some Jews imagined preventing apostasy.[50] Two tales from a *ma'aseh* book (collection of legends) depicted

Jews physically restraining young men until their desire to apostatize to Christianity passed. In the first, Judah he-Ḥasid advised a Jewish father to imprison a son whom he predicted would desire to apostatize (literally, "go out to a bad culture"). When the parents and siblings of the young man went to "persuade him with words" not to apostatize, the young man cried for a priest to baptize (literally, "defile") him.[51] In the second tale, Judah he-Ḥasid had his students physically intercept a young man who wanted to "go out to a bad culture" and "deny the Creator."[52] A Jewish legal compendium attributed to Meir of Rothenburg included the story of a young London scholar named Yom Tov who dealt with his own temptation to convert to Christianity—a demon tormented him by showing him the shape of a cross and pressuring him "to worship idols"—by hanging himself with his belt.[53]

Jews were reluctant to readmit some Jewish apostates to the Jewish fold specifically because of these apostates' deeds prior to their baptisms. Some apostates had been persona non grata within the Jewish community. They had been banned from a Jewish community for violating communal norms or had incurred Christian punishment for a crime.[54] *Sefer Ḥasidim* referred to an apostate who apparently had long sought to convince other Jews to apostatize to Christianity. "When he was a Jew, he would throw non-kosher meat into the pot," the narrator explained, adding: "It is better [now] to leave him among the non-Jews. That way, he won't cause other [Jews] to stray and he won't cause Jews to sin."[55]

The behavior of some Jewish apostates after baptism further fanned Jewish mistrust. As noted in Chapter 3, some Jewish apostates tried to gain Christians' confidence and, possibly, retaliate against Jewish foes by harming their former coreligionists. Thus, just as some Christian converts to Judaism engaged in anti-Christian polemics, some Jewish converts to Christianity engaged in anti-Jewish polemics. In fact, some became Christian preachers who subjected their former coreligionists to royally endorsed conversionary sermons.[56] In addition, like some repentant Christian converts to Judaism, some Jewish converts to Christianity denounced Jews to Christian authorities on charges of anti-Christian crimes.[57] A passage in *Sefer Ḥasidim* warned Jews not to help a particular apostate return to Judaism on the grounds that he "would immediately tell the non-Jews that the Jews advised him on this matter and this would pose a danger [to the Jewish

community].”[58] (Below, I discuss two instances in which Jewish apostates actually denounced Jews to Christians on charges of having pressured them to return to Judaism.)

Late twelfth-, thirteenth-, and fourteenth-century Christian records attest to Jewish spite for some Jewish apostates, as well. Kings in thirteenth-century Aragon and Castile found it necessary to forbid Jews to insult apostates.[59] The *Siete partidas* warned that Jews who could be shown to have stoned, wounded, or killed a Jewish convert to Christianity, or a prospective one, would burn at the stake. [60] Some Christian sources referred to specific instances of alleged Jewish violence against Jewish apostates. According to the *Historia rerum Anglicarum* (History of England) of the Augustinian canon William of Newburgh (1136–98), In February 1190, In King’s Lynn near Norwich, Jews seized and attacked “a certain person [who had been] converted from [the Jewish] superstition to the Christian faith.” According to William, these Jews “thirsted for [this Jewish apostate’s] blood as [they considered him to be] a deserter and a renegade.” They “assailed the man” with weapons. And, when he took refuge in a nearby church, they “smashed open its doors and dragged the fugitive out for punishment.” William went on to explain that Christians saved the life of this Jewish apostate and that they attacked and killed many Jews and looted and burned Jewish homes, which were “destroyed by avenging flames.”[61] The Plea Rolls of the Exchequer of the Jews recount how, one century later, Oxford Jews assaulted a Jewish apostate named William, who may have been collecting Jewish taxes.[62] In 1363, Christian authorities in Catalonia prosecuted the Jews of Puigcerdà for the murder of a Jewish convert to Christianity named Nicolau de Gràcia, who had become a Christian preacher. [63] Around the turn of the fifteenth century, the northern French *Chronique du religieux de Saint-Denys* (Chronicle of the Monk of Saint-Denis) noted that, In 1393, the provost of Paris Jean de Folleville accused four Jews of having “secretly by night abducted one of their own who had converted to Christianity and cruelly put him to death, out of hatred for the Crucified One and the Christian faith.” This convert, the chronicle added, “had repeatedly complained of violent acts that the accused [Jews] had perpetrated against him.” [64] Records of the Parlement of Paris indicate that the convert in question was Denis Machaut, whom Jews allegedly previously had paid to stop harming their community.[65]

Jews were reluctant to readmit apostates, not only on account of the behavior of some apostates before and after their baptisms, but also on account of fear of Christian punishment. This fear is apparent in efforts that Jews in late thirteenth-century Provence made to preemptively convince inquisitors that they had taken no part in recent transactions involving Jewish apostates. According to two documents from the Manosque court register, In 1288, seven Jews presented themselves before the local bailiff and Franciscans to disavow any connection with a burial that had taken place the night before in the local Jewish cemetery. These Jews explained that a Jew from the town of Talard, eighty kilometers to the north, had hired Christians to bury "a Jewish woman" whom they suspected "came from the Jewish faith to the Christian faith and afterwards went back to the Jewish [faith]." In the same year, a Jew named Bonus Nomen (Shem Tov) came before a civil tribunal in Manosque to try to prove that he had not known that a Jew from Marseille named Jacob de Alamania, whom he had hosted, had "come from Judaism to Christianity and afterwards [returned to Judaism]."[66]

Jewish fears of Christian reprisals were well founded. Lay and ecclesiastical officials prosecuted Jews whom they suspected of re-Judaizing Jewish apostates just as they prosecuted Jews whom they suspected of converting born Christians to Judaism, with the same range of outcomes. During the fourteenth century, Christian authorities condemned several Jews to death on charges of having re-Judaized Jewish apostates. In or before 1323, for instance, a Jew from Catalonia named Isaac Necim was condemned to death for having allegedly sheltered "someone who had been made Christian [but] renounced the Catholic faith." Isaac fled and his property was slated for burning.[67] In 1342 in Barcelona, the Dominican inquisitor Bernat de Puigcercós sentenced a Jewish husband and wife to perpetual prison and turned a Jew named Jucef Quatorze over to secular officials for burning, as a repeat offender, on charges of having "induced some Christians who previously were Jews to yield to Jewish unbelief." [68] In 1395, the provost of Paris sentenced to death the Jews who were accused of paying Denis Machaut to return to Judaism. Later, however, the provost reduced this sentence. Instead of being executed, these Jews were to be paraded naked in a cart and beaten until they bled on four successive Sundays. After two Sundays of this treatment, Jews paid 18,000 gold francs (!) to end this ordeal. The money was used to rebuild the bridge known as the

Petit Pont, at one end of which a cross was erected with an inscription describing these circumstances.[69]

In a number of cases, Christian prosecution resulted in other harsh penalties. *Sefer Ḥasidim* recounted how, on one occasion, after an apostate told Christians that Jews had advised him regarding returning to Judaism, "[Christians] almost killed Jews, [and the Jews had to] pay a large sum of money."[70] In 1284, the inquisitor Florio da Vicenza condemned a Jew named Bonaluce, who had "caused a certain [Christian] neophyte to apostatize," to wear a badge on his clothes that would publicize his disgrace. In addition, Florio confiscated all of Bonaluce's possessions, two-thirds of which went to the office of the inquisition and one-third of which went to the municipality of Ferrara.[71] In 1290, In Apulia, Inquisitor Bartolomeo de Aquila fined a Jew from Naples named Ribamelis for, "together with some other Jews," leading a convert to Christianity named Paulo back to Judaism. [72] Around 1313, the archbishop of Tarragona Guillem de Rocabertí and the inquisitor Joan Llotger imposed heavy fines on the Jewish community of Montblanc in Catalonia for supporting a repentant Jewish apostate named Joan Ferrand.[73]

In at least one case, a bishop exonerated a Jew who had been accused of re-Judaizing a Jewish apostate: In 1315, Ponç de Gualba—who in 1316 cleared the Jews who were charged with converting Johana to Judaism, as discussed in Chapter 3, and who also dealt with the case of Benvenist Barzilay/Petrus—acquitted a Jew from Barcelona named Chaim Quiç who had been accused of advising his nephew, a Jewish apostate named Bonafos, to return to Judaism. "We were not able to find anything against Chaim," Ponç de Gualba declared. "Therefore, we consider him entirely innocent of the aforesaid charges."[74]

The outcomes of some prosecutions of Jews who were accused of seeking to re-Judaize repentant Jewish apostates are unknown. These additional proceedings are worth noting, nevertheless, as further evidence of Christian efforts to stymie re-Judaization efforts. It is not known, for instance, what happened after Jews from the environs of Barcelona informed King Peter III of Aragon in 1284 that the vicar and bailiff of Barcelona were allowing Dominicans and others to undertake proceedings against them on charges of having "supported some Jews who had been made Christians or welcomed them into their homes and given them other help."[75] Nor is it

known what became of Salves Barbe, whom the inquisitor Bertrand de Cigoterio investigated in 1320 in Toulon, on charges of having "managed the apostasy" to Judaism of a Jewish convert to Christianity named Johannes.[76] Nor is it known what ensued after Pope Urban V wrote to secular authorities in southern France in 1364, exhorting them to assist the inquisitor of Provence Hugo de Cardillon in detaining and punishing "quite a few" *relapsi* "of both sexes" as well as their alleged Jewish "seducers."[77]

Re-Judaizing Jewish Apostates

In spite of these dangerous conditions, there existed among some Jews a sense of duty to bring apostates back into the Jewish fold. As noted above, Rashi famously taught that apostates were still Jews according to Jewish law and therefore obligated to repent. He interpreted the talmudic dictum "Israel, even though [it] has sinned, remains Israel" (Sanhedrin 44a) to mean: "Even though a Jew has apostatized, he remains a Jew."[78] Writing around the turn of the eleventh century, Rabbenu Gershom issued a *takkanah* (communal ordinance) that, following the Mishnah (Bava Mezi'a 4:9), forbade the reviling of repentant apostates because of their former sins.[79] In a responsum regarding a young Jewish man who was at risk for apostasy, the Iberian legal scholar Yom Tov ben Abraham Ishbili (Ritva, 1250–1330) declared that it was "a great mitzvah to save a Jewish soul from the desecration of idol worship and bring it back in repentance."[80] A medieval Jewish folktale advocated reconciling even the most noxious Jewish apostates, as long as they had some redeeming quality. In this story, a divine sign—specifically, the miraculous blooming of a wooden staff—convinced Judah he-Ḥasidto help rehabilitate a repentant apostate who "had caused the death of many Jews by his wicked conduct which he pursued for many years" but who once spoke out against the blood libel. Judah he-Ḥasidtold the man: "If this is so [i.e., that you once condemned the blood libel], I guarantee that you will have a place in Paradise if you wholeheartedly return [to Judaism]."[81]

In the spirit of encouraging repentant Jewish apostates to return to Judaism, some Jews urged repentant apostates to flee and return to Judaism abroad. According to a passage in *Sefer Ḥasidim*, for instance, a local scholar once recommended that a particular apostate who professed

repentance slip away by "fooling the non-Jews and saying that he wanted to go on a pilgrimage" and thus leave "the place where people knew him." Making explicit that this strategy would be to the advantage of local Jews, as they would not be implicated in this re-Judaization, the narrator explained: "Thus, there [would] be no [Christian] complaints against the Jews."[82]

Some Jewish parents became personally invested in bringing their (presumably more or less grown) apostate children back into the Jewish community. The English chronicler Eadmer of Canterbury (ca. 1060—ca. 1126) wrote that a Jewish father once paid King William II of England (1087–1100) sixty silver marks to command his baptized son to return to Judaism.[83] *Sefer Ḥasidim* told of a Jewish mother and father who were "very busy" trying to get "their son who apostatized and went among the non-Jews and behaved like a non-Jew" out of Christian society and bring him to their home. These parents vowed to donate money to charity in the hope of gaining God's favor and thereby procuring their son's return.[84] Documents from an inquisitorial register in Manosque relate an instance in which Jewish parents remunerated Christians for returning their daughter. They reveal that, around 1283, a Jewish mother and father (Rosa and Abraham de Grassa) were accused of having paid to retrieve their baptized daughter, Belia/Agnes, from a beguinage (a group home for lay religious Christian women) in Lausanne, where she had lived for more than five years. In addition, Rosa and Abraham were said to have "made" Belia/Agnes "believe in their [Jewish] law and belief."[85]

Additional sources point to the involvement of apostates' siblings in orchestrating their returns to Judaism. According to the continuation of the chronicle of William of Nangis, for instance, In 1307, a Jewish convert to Christianity named Samuel/Proteus (whose namesakes included the early Christian martyr St. Protasius as well as, appropriately, an ancient Greek sea god known for his ability to transmutate) told an inquisitorial tribunal in Paris that his brother Moses (Moussetus) instigated his return to Judaism.[86] The registers of King James II of Aragon relate that, In 1311, James informed his officials that seven relatives, Including the brother Cecri of an apostate from Zaragoza named Salomon Abenbeli, were accused of "making [Salomon] renounce [Christianity]."[87]

To the extent that apostates' relatives sought to draw their estranged relations back into the Jewish fold, they may have been motivated by concern for the well-being of their kin or a desire to lessen their family's stigma. The disgrace of apostasy could affect a family even after an apostate repudiated Christianity. In late thirteenth- or early fourteenth-century Germany, a query addressed to Yedidyah ben Samuel of Nuremberg noted that "the world … did not marry [repentant] apostates or their relatives, [even] more so than other sinners."[88] At least in some times and places, however, Jews did marry repentant apostates. In fact, the parents of Belia/Agnes were charged with having forced "their beguine daughter" to marry a Jewish man named Amideus, who "impregnated her and caused her to abandon belief in the faith of the Christians."[89] In addition, as noted above, during the third quarter of the thirteenth century in Manosque, Regina/Raymbauda converted from Judaism to Christianity, returned to Judaism, and married a Jewish man.[90]

Several Christian sources portray Jews who may or may not have had familial ties to particular apostates as lobbying for apostates' return. Eadmer of Canterbury and the English chronicler William of Malmesbury (ca. 1095–ca. 1143) recounted that Jews in Rouen once petitioned King William II of England "with bribes" to allow recent forced converts to Christianity to return to Judaism.[91] In 1286, Pope Honorius IV urged English clergy to stop Jews from leading Jewish converts to Christianity to apostatize "by means of manifold gifts."[92] As noted above, In 1395, the provost of Paris condemned seven Jews for, among other things, paying Denis Machaut to return to Judaism.[93]

Three entries in the Plea Rolls of the Exchequer of the Jews record the claims of a Jewish convert to Christianity named Juliana who maintained that a small group of Jews resorted to physical violence in seeking to re-Judaize her. Juliana testified that, In London in 1274, five Jewish men and four Jewish women imprisoned her for several days in the home of a Jewish widow named Antera and then subjected her to "a variety of tortures." "With the [other Jews'] assent and at their insistence," Juliana explained, Antera "fastened a cord about [Juliana's] neck and threatened to hang her if, having abjured the Catholic faith, she did not desire to return to their unbelief."[94] A number of factors cast doubt on this story. One is that its author—Juliana—was a Jewish convert to Christianity. As noted above, Jewish converts to Christianity were notorious for denouncing Jews to Christian authorities,

often on false charges of anti-Christian behavior. The continuation of Juliana's story is particularly suspicious, as it contains key elements of a cluster of contemporaneous Jewish and Christian folktales. Juliana maintained that, after kidnapping her, the Jews conspired to send her to France under the care of a cruel man named Solomon, that Solomon tried to rape her at sea, and that she escaped from him after a storm drove their ship back to England. These details resemble some versions of the "Crescentia type" folktale, In which a woman is a victim of an attempted rape, Is taken aboard a ship that gets stuck in a storm, and eventually is saved.[95] This resonance suggests, at the very least, that Juliana used some poetic license in pleading her case. The resolution of Juliana's case casts doubt on Juliana's claims, as well: Under circumstances that remain unclear, Juliana withdrew her plea, and the Jews were not found guilty. Juliana may have fabricated some or most of her narrative. Her accusations are significant, however, for they provide insight into the kinds of stories that Christians heard about Jewish efforts to re-Judaize Jewish apostates. The Christians who learned of Juliana's tale pictured Jews as physically ruthless in their determination to re-Judaize Jewish apostates—or, In Christian terms, to lead "Christians" to "apostatize" to Judaism.

An inquisitorial dossier preserved in the Archive of the Cathedral of Barcelona documents an instance in which a Jewish apostate named Alatzar/Pere denounced a small group of Jews for deprecating Christianity in an effort to re-Judaize him. In Calatayud, Aragon, In 1341, Alatzar/Pere declared before an inquisitorial tribunal that, two weeks after his baptism, two Jewish men, their wives, and a daughter-in-law accosted him in the kitchen of one of their homes and convinced him to return to Judaism. Alatzar/Pere testified that "both the women and men" demanded how he could have committed "so great a crime" as to have "renounced the law of the one God, accepted the empty and dead law of the Christians, and been baptized." They warned him that "the law of Moses, the law of the one, true, and immortal God, was the only law through which one could be saved." And they recounted a version of the coarse Jewish parody of the life of Christ known as the *Toledot Yeshu*, which portrayed Mary as a prostitute and Jesus as a charlatan. According to the records of the same trial, at least two of the Jews whom Alatzar/Pere denounced confessed to having used the same approach to turn a Jewish apostate named Abadia back to Judaism in 1331.[96]

It is impossible to ascertain to what extent Alatzar/Pere was telling the truth. On the one hand, Abadia did indeed renounce Christianity and burn at the stake in 1331, and Alatzar/Pere renounced Christianity as well and nearly burned at the stake shortly before he testified. (He was taken down from the pyre at the last minute for interrogation by the local inquisitor.) Clearly, something led Abadia and Alatzar/Pere to return to their faith of origin in this way. On the other hand, Jewish apostates routinely accused their former coreligionists of anti-Christian crimes. Moreover, Alatzar/Pere's accusations conformed to Christian stereotypes of Jews not only as agents of Christian apostasy but also as blasphemers. These charges could have been inspired by and designed to capitalize on anti-Jewish sentiments. Like Juliana's narrative, however, Alatzar/Pere's is significant in spite of these caveats, In large part because of the impression that it undoubtedly made on Christians.

To some of the Christians who witnessed, heard, and read about the contentions and situations described above, the determination of some Jews to rehabilitate particular Jewish apostates likely further illustrated Jews' alleged determination to bring any and all "Christians" into the Jewish fold. It is noteworthy, moreover, that Christian authors portrayed Jews as using some of the same methods to persuade Jewish apostates to return to Judaism and to convince born Christians to convert to Judaism. As noted in Chapter 1, popes, bishops, chroniclers, and preachers maintained that Jews "secretly" "compelled" and "dragged" born Christians to apostatize by means of rhetorical persuasion, bribery, and blasphemy. The summary of the legal proceedings in the Norwich circumcision case depicted Jews as employing physical violence to convert a Christian boy. This overlap raises the possibility that the strategies that some Jews actually may have used to get Jewish apostates to return to Judaism shaped the ways that Christians imagined that Jews approached born Christians.

The Rite of Re-Judaization

A formal ceremony involving ritual immersion often marked repentant Jewish apostates' return to the Jewish community. This rite, which is attested in Jewish sources starting in the twelfth century, may have originated as a popular Jewish custom that reflected a broad societal sense—which ran

counter to the contentions of Jewish legal authorities—that baptism vitiated one's status as a Jew. Some thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Jewish legal authorities—including Solomon ben Abraham ibn Aderet and Yom Tov ben Abraham Ishbili and the tosafists Isaac ben Asher ha-Levi of Speyer and Isaac ben Abraham (Riḥba, d. 1210)—stressed that this ceremony was not required. Joseph Shatzmiller and others have suggested that these scholars balked at the practice because it seemed to attribute potency to the Christian sacrament of baptism.[97] Ephraim Kanarfogel has shown, however, that some rabbinic authorities recognized the value of this ceremony. These scholars included the tosafists Isaac ben Samuel of Dampierre, Simḥah of Speyer (d. ca. 1225) and his student Isaac ben Moses, Eliezer ben Joel ha-Levi (1140–1225), the leading German Pietist Eleazar ben Judah of Worms (ca. 1160–1238), Avigdor ben Elijah Kohen Ẓedek of Vienna (who flourished in the mid-thirteenth century), and Meir of Rothenburg. For these scholars, the ritual immersion of repentant Jewish apostates served a range of functions. It purified repentant apostates of ritual contamination and sin and marked the restoration of their status as religiously obligated Jews.[98]

Just as thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Christians were aware that some Jews pressured particular Jewish apostates to return to Judaism, they knew that Jews ritually immersed repentant Jewish apostates. Indeed, Christian sources from across western Christendom referred to this practice. In his collection of exempla, the *Dialogus miraculorum* (Dialogue on Miracles), the Cistercian hagiographer Caesarius of Heisterbach (ca. 1180–ca. 1240) mentioned it obliquely and sarcastically. He depicted a Jewish mother telling her stubborn apostate daughter who refused "to return to Judaism": "I'll remove your baptism! I will draw you three times through the opening of the latrine, and thus the virtue of your baptism will be left there!" [99] In 1281, the Dominican inquisitor of Lombardy Florio da Vicenza consulted with jurists from Padua, Bologna, and Ferrara regarding whether synagogues were to be destroyed in which Jews "washed" "Christians" and led them to renounce the Christian faith. In response, these jurists issued a *consilium* (a structured brief that contained certified professional opinions about a difficult case) in which they declared that such synagogues were indeed to be demolished. [100] In 1292, the inquisitor Bartolomeo de Aquila informed King Charles II of Naples that Jews in Salerno had "washed" a man named Azarias "in the well or font" of the "major synagogue."[101]

Some inquisitorial writings described re-Judaization rituals in greater detail. A badly damaged inquisitorial record that was used to bind a notarial register in Provence relates that, around 1320, a Jew named Salves Barbe confessed to the inquisitor Bertrand de Cigoterio that he helped a repentant Jewish apostate to Christianity named Johannes return to Judaism. Salves maintained that Johannes immersed twice, first at night at the beach near the port of Toulon, accompanied by a group of Jews; then, In specially prepared warm water. Salves confessed also that this re-Judaization included a verbal renunciation of Christianity: After the second immersion, Salves explained, Johannes "rejected Christ and holy baptism." [102] The inquisitorial register of Bernard Gui noted that, In 1319, Gui condemned the *relapsus* Johannes of Bretz, son of Jacob of Serignac, who allegedly returned to Judaism in Lerida "by means of the customary rite of re-Judaization." This register specified that this re-Judaization rite involved shaving the head—as Eliezer ben Joel ha-Levi specified, as well—cutting fingernails and toenails "until they bled"—possibly as a form of penance—and immersing the head in running water.[103]

Bernard Gui's *Practica inquisitionis* provides the most thorough description of re-Judaization rituals in any medieval Jewish or Christian source. Gui explained that one Jew opened the proceedings by asking the repentant Jewish apostate whether he wished to immerse in running water "in order to become a Jew." If the repentant apostate responded in the affirmative, the presiding Jew referred to him as a "Baaltussuna" (i.e., *ba'al teshuvah;* literally, a "repentant one" or "returnee"). An initial bathing in warm water ensued. Next, Jews scraped off the nails on the apostate's hands and feet "until they bled" and shaved the apostate's head. In addition, they sought specifically—symbolically, at least—to remove all traces of Christian matter from the apostate's body. They rubbed the apostate with sand, especially on the forehead, chest, and hands—"the places where holy chrism [i.e., consecrated oil] was placed during baptism." [104] At the culmination of these rites, Jews immersed the returnee in "living water, plunging [the returnee's] head in the water three times, and recited this blessing: 'Blessed be God, the Lord eternal, who has commanded us to sanctify ourselves in this water or bath which is called *tymla* [*sic*; i.e., *tevilah*] in Hebrew.'" When the returnee emerged from the water, the Jews kissed him and gave him new clothes and "the name that he had prior to baptism." The returnee professed

his belief in the Law of Moses and promised to keep and observe it, and he "renounced baptism and the faith of the Christians" and promised to no longer keep or observe it. At the conclusion of this ceremony, the Jews gave the returnee a certificate or testimonial letter "[addressed] to all other Jews so that they might receive, trust, and assist [the returnee]."[105]

As Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi concluded in his analysis of Gui's account of this rite of re-Judaization, "most of [its] elements appear highly plausible." Jewish ritual immersion for all purposes was indeed to take place in "living water" (in accordance with Lev. 15:13). Jews who immersed for the sake of ritual purity typically cut their nails very short. Early modern Jewish authorities attested to the practice of paring the nails and shaving the heads of Jewish proselytes and returnees. Moreover, the wording of the blessing upon immersion is accurate.[106] In short, Gui seems to have possessed considerable knowledge of this ceremony. His familiarity with Hebrew terms, such as *ba'al teshuvah* and *tevilah*, Is particularly striking and seems to have reflected a broader trend among inquisitors. Around 1313, the archbishop of Tarragona Guillem de Rocabertí and the inquisitor Joan Llotger, too, noted that Jews referred to "a person who had [previously] been a Jew" as a "bahall teçuva." [107] The damaged inquisitorial record from early fourteenth-century Provence quoted inquisitor Bertrand de Cigoterio interrogating the Jew named Salves Barbe about a "baltesuva."[108]

In administering formal rituals that marked repentant Jewish apostates' reentry into the Jewish fold, Jewish approaches to retrieving Jewish apostates mirrored Christian approaches to retrieving Christian apostates. As noted in Chapter 3, a special Christian liturgy existed for reconciling Christian apostates to the church (although this Christian liturgy did not involve immersion in water). Jewish and Christian approaches to retrieving apostates mirrored one another also insofar as Jews and Christians both assigned returnees acts of penance, some of which were to be performed in public.[109] Isaac ben Moses of Vienna recommended that a Jewish returnee "make himself uncomfortable and afflict his body in order to achieve expiation."[110] In his penitential treatises, Eleazar ben Judah of Worms recommended that repentant apostates wear hair shirts, fast regularly for several years, refrain from meat and wine, and avoid bathing except prior to festivals. In addition, suggesting concern that returnees might revert to Christianity—behavior that, as noted above, Christian authorities in fact

encouraged—Eleazar ben Judah of Worms specified that repentant Jewish apostates should avoid "idolaters," especially "clergymen and priests," and that they should not come near their homes or the courtyard of a church.[111] At the turn of the fourteenth century in Barcelona, Solomon ben Abraham ibn Aderet and Yom Tov ben Abraham Ishbili likewise demanded that returning apostates perform public penance. Solomon ben Abraham ibn Aderet affirmed that they required lashes.[112]

Christians seem to have known more about Jewish re-Judaization practices than about the process of conversion to Judaism. As noted in Chapters 1, 2, and 3, Christians knew that male conversion to Judaism involved circumcision. Rarely, however, did Christian discussions of conversion to Judaism refer to instruction or immersion.[113] Indeed, presumably because many Christians did not know about these other aspects of Jewish conversion procedure, some Christians could not fathom how women could convert to Judaism, as Jews did not circumcise women.[114] Surely, re-Judaization procedure was clearer in Christians' minds than Jewish conversion procedure because return to Judaism was far more common than conversion to Judaism. Inquisitors prosecuted more cases involving return to Judaism and thus heard more confessions and testimonies about it. Inquisitors disseminated this knowledge by sharing it with one another, as well as with jurists, bishops, and the large and diverse audiences before whom they conducted public ceremonies during which they described the sins and announced the penances of the accused.[115] Ultimately, however, the ritual differences between conversion and return to Judaism mattered little to ecclesiastical authorities. In the eyes of the church, Jewish involvement in conversion and return to Judaism pertained to one and the same crime: abetting Christian apostasy to Judaism. As far as popes, bishops, and inquisitors were concerned, the Jewish facilitation of returns to Judaism thus contributed significantly to the extent of Jewish proselytizing.

Further Associations Between Conversion and Return

Just as popes and inquisitors often wrote about conversion and return to Judaism in the same documents, so, too, they often wrote about the Jewish facilitation of conversion and return to Judaism in the same documents. For

instance, In the 1286 bull *Nimis in partibus*, addressed to the archbishops of York, Evreux, and Canterbury, Pope Honorius IV reported having heard that Jews were engaged in "outrageous actions and horrible works that were insulting to [the] Creator and detrimental to the Catholic faith." These included both "trying to attract the minds of the [Christian] faithful [i.e., born Christians] to their pestilential sect" and also "inducing individuals to apostatize who, abjuring the error of unbelief [i.e., Judaism], had flown over to the Catholic faith."[116] In 1290, In the bull *Attendite fratres*, In which Pope Nicholas IV rallied clergy in Aix, Arles, and Embrun to support the work of inquisitors, Nicholas declared that "the Jews, the corruptors of [the Christian] faith," sought to "infect" Jewish converts to Christianity as well as born Christians.[117] So, too, In the opening to the section on Jews in his *Practica inquisitionis*, Bernard Gui portrayed Jews as targeting Jewish converts to Christianity as well as born Christians in their efforts "secretly to mislead Christians and drag them into Jewish unbelief." Gui warned that Jews aimed especially—but not only—to corrupt those Christians "who first were Jews but who converted and received baptism and the faith of Christ."[118]

Insofar as late medieval inquisitors wrote about the Jewish facilitation of conversion and return to Judaism in the same documents, they did so not only because they associated the two phenomena conceptually. They did so also because they believed that the same Jews sometimes actually facilitated both, such that the two phenomena were related in daily life. Thus, In 1284, Inquisitor Florio da Vicenza condemned the Jews Leazaro and Isaac da Pesaro both for having "led to Judaism and received and Judaized in synagogue" a Christian cleric "who was born of Christians," and also for having led two baptized Jews named Bonomo and Meir back to Judaism. [119] In 1292, Inquisitor Bartolomeo de Aquila, too, appears to have accused the same Jews of facilitating both a conversion and a return to Judaism. He informed King Charles II of Naples that Jews in Salerno washed a man named Azarias in the "well or font" of the major synagogue and circumcised "a certain Christian called Moses." Presumably, as per the discussion above regarding Christian understandings of the rituals involved in conversion and return to Judaism, "washing" Azarias referred to re-Judaizing Azarias, whereas "circumcising" Moses referred to converting Moses to Judaism. [120] During the second decade of the fourteenth century in Catalonia, churchmen

again charged the same Jews with facilitating conversions and returns to Judaism. The archbishop of Tarragona prosecuted the Jews of Montblanc both for "having offered aid and counsel to [the] two German Christians who asserted that they wished to leave the Catholic faith and convert to the Jewish sect," as discussed above and in Chapter 3, and also for "similarly giving help and aid" to the repentant Jewish apostate Joan Ferrand.[121]

Inquisitorial interrogation formulas assumed that the same Jews facilitated—or at least had the potential to facilitate—conversions and returns to Judaism. In his *Practica inquisitionis*, for instance, Bernard Gui instructed inquisitors to ask Jews whether they had induced anyone to "Judaize" or "re-Judaize" and whether they personally were acquainted with any "Judaizing or Judaized Christian or any baptized apostate or re-Judaized person."[122] The inquisitorial record from early fourteenth- century Provence that was used to bind a notarial register reveals that, In practice, some inquisitors followed this advice: In the middle of one line on the damaged parchment, the Hebrew terms for "male convert to Judaism," "female convert to Judaism," and "returnee"—*guer*, *guioret*, and *baltesuva*—are decipherable, spelled out in the Latin alphabet. This suggests that the inquisitor Bertrand de Cigoterio interrogated the Jew Salves Barbe regarding whether he had knowledge of or contact with converts to Judaism or repentant Jewish apostates. According to the next line, Bertrand asked Salves whether he had "heard of or knew any person or persons who had attended the apostasy of a baptized person [i.e., a Jewish convert to Christianity] or of a [born] Christian."[123]

Inquisitors also employed abjuration formulas that assumed that the same Jews might have been—or in the future might be—involved in instances of both conversion and return to Judaism. According to the abjuration formula that Gui's *Practica inquisitionis* provided for Jews "who committed enormous offenses against the Catholic faith," Jews were to promise to desist from abetting conversion and return. They were to repeat: "Henceforth, I will not induce or encourage any Christian to be Judaized, that is, to observe the rite of the Jews, nor will I encourage or induce in any manner any baptized convert to be re-Judaized, that is, to return to Judaism or to commit apostasy from the faith of baptism. Henceforth, I will not knowingly receive or admit into my home any Judaizing Christian who has denied the truth of the Christian faith, nor any convert who has been re-Judaized, that is, who has

reverted to Judaism."[124] There is evidence that this norm, too, was followed in practice. In Barcelona in 1342, three Jews promised, "by the Lord God and the Ten Commandments of the Law that the Lord God gave to Moses on Mount Sinai, while physically touching the Book of the Ten Commandments," never again to abet conversion or return.[125] Two of these Jews swore "never by word or deed or any other means to induce any Christian to return or go over to the rite or unbelief of the Jews, nor to be present, nor to give counsel or aid in the aforesaid things."[126] Similarly, the third Jew swore "not to give any consent nor in any way whatsoever cooperate such that any Christian man or woman might return or go over from the Christian faith to Jewish unbelief."[127]

The inquisitorial conviction that the same Jews facilitated conversions and returns to Judaism was not entirely unfounded. Indeed, In addition to further illuminating the ways churchmen associated conversion and return to Judaism, it points to an actual feature of medieval crossings between Judaism and Christianity: On occasion, conversions and returns to Judaism actually occurred in tandem. There were instances, for example, In which a Jew converted to Christianity, married a born Christian, and later returned to Judaism, at which point the returnee's spouse converted to Judaism so that the couple could remain together.[128] If the couple had children, they, too, often joined the Jewish fold. Both Jewish and Christian sources describe cases of this kind. Ephraim Kanarfogel has traced the evolution of related rabbinic rulings in northern Europe during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. He notes that these often reflected "more than theoretical interest." [129] Christian sources provide an instructive counterpoint to these rabbinic rulings. For instance, the anonymous journal that described life in Paris in the late 1260s related that the "accursed Jew who was a Christian for more than twenty years" and who later returned to Judaism had married a Christian woman who bore him "Christian children." When he returned to Judaism, this man "made two of these children Judaize with him." [130] The 1281 *consilium* that Christian legal experts from Padua, Bologna, and Ferrara drafted discussed the similar case of a Jewish man who converted to Christianity, married a woman who was a born Christian, lived as a Christian for many years, and then returned to Judaism, at which point he "made" his Christian wife "Judaize"; she was later buried in a Jewish cemetery.[131] In both of these cases, a conversion from Christianity to Judaism occurred alongside a return

to Judaism, and presumably some of the same Jews facilitated both processes. In both of these cases, too, a conversion from Judaism to Christianity that reversed course eventuated a conversion from Christianity to Judaism, Illustrating one more way in which movement in one direction between Judaism and Christianity could relate, on an individual level, to movement in the opposite direction.

* * *

During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, then, some Jews risked their lives by encouraging and facilitating the re-Judaization of Jewish apostates. To Jews, these activities constituted an internal Jewish affair. Ecclesiastical officials were acutely aware of these re-Judaization efforts, and they regarded them—and especially the Jewish pressuring of Jewish apostates to return to Judaism—as further proof that Jews were intent on seducing "Christians" over to Judaism. To Christians, conversion and return to Judaism were not one and the same crime merely in theory, moreover. Christian authorities treated them as one and the same in practice. They legislated and interrogated Jews about the two offenses in tandem, and they responded to both in the same ways. Chapter 5 shows that these observations about the ways Christian authorities conceived of and treated conversion and return to Judaism may be key to deciphering the backstory of the Norwich circumcision case.

The social dynamics involved in the return to Judaism of Jewish apostates expose further experiential parallels and personal connections between individuals who traveled in opposite directions between Judaism and Christianity. Complementing the discussion in Chapter 3 of the return to Christianity of Christian converts to Judaism, they elucidate how some Jews pressured Jewish apostates to return to Judaism, administered formal rites of re-Judaization, and assigned acts of penance to repentant Jewish apostates. Adding to the roster of links between individual converts in opposite directions, they illustrate how a single conversion could precipitate a series of religious reorientations, sometimes back and forth between Judaism and Christianity. This could occur, for instance, when a Jew converted to Christianity to mitigate his or her punishment for allegedly facilitating Christian conversions to Judaism and then he or she subsequently returned to

Judaism. This could occur also when a Jewish convert to Christianity returned to Judaism, leading his or her spouse and children to convert or return to Judaism. Never the story of just one person, every voyage between Judaism and Christianity—be it a conversion or a return—was embedded in a broader social landscape. Often, these journeys intersected specifically with those of other religious travelers.

Chapter 5

Contested Children

Several aspects of the Norwich circumcision case suggest that Master Benedict's accusation—namely, that Norwich Jews circumcised his son Edward because they "wanted to make him a Jew"—had some link to an actual occurrence. First, unlike in other instances in which medieval Christians accused Jews of seizing and harming a Christian child, In this case, the child actually existed and lived to tell his tale: Edward was reunited with his father, and, four years later, he testified in court. Second, according to multiple witnesses, after Edward allegedly escaped from the Jews and Matilda de Bernham took him in, Jews tried to remove Edward from Matilda's home "with great force." In addition, some Jews lodged a formal complaint with Richard of Fresingfeld, the constable of the castle of Norwich, accusing Christians of having seized "their Jew." Jews whom Christians had falsely accused of seizing a child would have done no such thing. Third, numerous Christians affirmed that Edward's penis looked like it had been circumcised. According to the summary of the legal proceedings pertaining to the case, Edward's body was inspected on multiple occasions. Master Benedict testified in 1234 that he had shown his son's body to the official of the archdeacon and local coroners in 1230. In court in 1234, this official, the county and city coroners, a group of priests, and thirty-six men of Norwich all affirmed that they had seen Edward's body in 1230. Several of these men recalled that Edward's "cut member" had been "large and very swollen and bloody." For her part, Matilda testified in 1234 that, when in

1230 she discovered Edward sobbing by the river, it was clear that Edward had recently suffered some physical trauma. She declared that Edward was "so sick that [she] thought he would soon die." In 1234, the royal justices saw Edward's body and they concluded that "it was clear that he was circumcised." In 1236, Edward's body was reexamined yet again. As shall be discussed below, Christian officials interpreted the results of this last inspection as reaffirming that Jews had circumcised Edward.[1]

In an effort to understand who young Edward may have been and what actually might have happened to him in 1230, this chapter engages in further historical sleuthing. It analyzes the summary of the legal proceedings pertaining to the Norwich circumcision case in light of roughly contemporaneous Jewish and Christian accounts of Jewish efforts to prevent the baptisms of Jewish children and to retrieve the baptized children of Jewish parents. Jews deemed such children Jewish and often took great risks to keep them within the Jewish fold. Christians, however, disagreed among themselves regarding the legal situation of such children. Some maintained unequivocally that such children were to be raised as Christians. Others favored reuniting them with their Jewish kin, at least until they came of age. I argue that Edward could have been the baptized son of a Jewish mother and a Christian father whom Jews attempted to reclaim.

This chapter also considers how the ways that conversion and return to Judaism merged in the minds of some Christians—as discussed in Chapter 4—may help to explain the terms in which Christian authorities wrote about the Norwich circumcision case. Specifically, they may clarify the disparity between the plain sense of Master Benedict's accusation and other Christian references to the case, on the one hand, according to which Jews indiscriminately seized a born Christian child off the street in order to convert him to Judaism, and a possible actual occurrence that involved the Jewish recovery of a specific child whom Jews deemed already to be Jewish, on the other. The fact that, according to canon law, facilitating conversion and return to Judaism constituted one and the same crime—namely, facilitating Christian apostasy to Judaism—enabled Christians to cast what Jews considered an internal Jewish communal matter as an ominous incident that illustrated the threats that Jews posed to Christian children at large.

In order to contextualize the possibility that Norwich Jews sought to recover the baptized son of a Jewish mother, the following pages first present the array of circumstances under which Jewish children were baptized in medieval Europe, and they outline Jewish and Christian assessments of the religious identities of and proper custodial arrangements for such children. The next section explains why it is plausible that Edward was the baptized son of a Jewish mother by investigating the identities of Edward's parents and analyzing the alleged behavior of Norwich Jews. On the basis of the divergent portrayals of Edward's reunion with his father in the summary of the legal proceedings and Matthew Paris' account of the case, it suggests further that Edward was a neglected child. In closing, this chapter considers what the summary of the legal proceedings might reveal about medieval Jewish efforts to retrieve children. It examines the identities of the Jews who purportedly circumcised Edward as well as the manner in which these Jews allegedly chose Edward's Jewish name. It also returns to the subject of circumcision, raising questions about the nature of circumcisions that were performed under unusual circumstances and probing the degree to which being "circumcised"—like being "Jewish" or being "Christian"—could be in the eye of the beholder.

Jewish Children, Baptized

In medieval Christendom, Jewish children—loosely defined as individuals younger than about thirteen years of age whose mother was Jewish according to Jewish law—were baptized under a wide range of circumstances. [2] Some children were baptized by force amid, or in the aftermath of, Christian attacks on Jewish communities. This happened in Normandy and the Rhineland in 1096, In Blois in 1171, In southern and central German lands in 1298, and in southern France in 1320, to list only a few examples. One such child convert, who was baptized at age five or six in Rouen, during the anti-Jewish violence at the start of the First Crusade, became the prolific Benedictine author William of Flaix.[3] In addition, Jewish children were forcibly baptized when Christians raided Jewish communities specifically in order to seize Jewish children, as occurred in Navarre in 1246, [4] In France and German lands in 1247,[5] In Frankfurt in 1349,[6] and in Paris in 1380.[7]

On other occasions, Christians kidnapped and forcibly baptized individual Jewish children. A papal formulary reveals, for instance, that, In the mid-thirteenth century, a cleric had his female companion abduct the seven-year-old daughter of a Jew named Eleazar, and he sent the girl to a distant monastery.[8] Jewish converts to Christianity sometimes sought to abduct their Jewish siblings and convert them to Christianity. According to the purported autobiography of the twelfth-century Jewish convert to Christianity Judah/ Herman of Cologne, who was baptized at the age of twenty-one, for instance, Judah/Herman kidnapped his seven-year-old half brother Samuel and deposited him at the Augustinian house of Flonheim for Christian instruction.[9]

Christian literary sources—which often portrayed Jewish children as the ideal Jewish converts to Christianity on account of their purported malleability—described some Jewish children as becoming drawn to Christianity through the influence of their Christian peers. In his version of the widely disseminated "Tale of the Jewish Boy," for example, Caesarius of Heisterbach told of a Jewish boy whose Christian peers teased him about converting to Christianity. "Why don't you become a Christian like us?" they asked him. Solemnly, it seems, the Jewish boy responded: "because I am afraid of my [Jewish] parents." "Would you like us to make you a Christian?" the Christian boys persisted. When the Jewish boy answered "yes," the Christian boys proceeded to pray over him and baptize him, Imitating what they had seen the priest do in church. Caesarius of Heisterbach explained that God sanctified the boys' work through the Holy Spirit.[10] Isaac ben Samuel of Dampierre similarly observed that Christian social pressure could draw Jewish children to Christianity. He warned against allowing Jewish children to visit Christian homes without supervision on the grounds that, In their homes, Christians tried to attract Jewish children to Christianity.[11]

Jewish children came to be baptized also when their parents chose to convert to Christianity. An epistle that the Benedictine Anselm of Canterbury (d. 1109) addressed to the prior and archdeacon of Canterbury recounts, for example, that, at the turn of the twelfth century, a Jew "abandoned his parents and their law" and "went over from unbelief to the true faith with his small family."[12] A letter that Pope Honorius III sent to officials of a church in Bonn refers to a Jewish man who converted to Christianity in 1221 "with his wife and children."[13] In 1347, Pope Urban V wrote to the dean of St. Peter's

church in Strasbourg regarding the welfare of a Jewish convert to Christianity and "his wife and children" from the diocese of Constance. This family of converts had begged door-to-door for sixteen years.[14] During the third quarter of the fourteenth century, a Jewish convert named Johannes Catalan petitioned Urban V for indulgences for Christians in Provence who supported a group of eighteen adult Jewish converts to Christianity and their nine baptized children.[15]

Some Jewish children were baptized with only their fathers. For instance, when Pablo Christiani converted to Christianity, he had his children baptized, leaving their Jewish mother bereft. Years later, a former acquaintance reminded him, In a letter ostensibly meant to dissuade Pablo from continuing to harm Jews, how greatly Pablo's wife suffered from the loss of her children. The author of this letter berated Pablo, lamenting: "You have not had mercy on your wife, your faultless dove [Song of Songs 5:2]. While she still nested on her chicks, you took her children [from] under her wings and removed them from their habitat. All of this [your wife's] eyes saw and her ears heard. Woe to her eyes that saw this! Woe to her ears that heard this! … Who shall console [her]?"[16] In still other cases, Jewish children were baptized with only their mothers. Isaac ben Samuel of Dampierre referred, In a responsum, to "a child of three or two years [of age] who apostatized along with [his] mother."[17] In 1236, Pope Gregory IX wrote to the bishop of Paris William of Auvergne about a Jewish woman in northern France who converted with her daughter and two sons.[18]

Attitudes Toward the Baptized Children of Jewish Parents

Christians and Jews largely disagreed regarding the religious identities and appropriate treatment of the baptized children of Jewish parents. According to Jewish law since the second century CE, children were Jewish if their mother was Jewish—that is, If their mother's mother was Jewish, regardless of whether or not their mother had been baptized.[19] This principle can be seen in action during the thirteenth century in a manuscript responsum of Isaac ben Samuel of Dampierre. Isaac ben Samuel of Dampierre prohibited Jews from lending at interest to the "son of an apostate woman," that is, the son of a woman who had converted from Judaism to Christianity, on the

grounds that, In spite of his mother's apostasy, this individual was still a Jew. (Following Deuteronomy 23:21, the taking of interest was forbidden between Jews.) A number of medieval rabbinic authorities stressed that children were not responsible for their baptisms. Isaac ben Samuel of Dampierre equated the child of a Jewish mother who had apostatized to Christianity to a "minor who was captured [and consequently raised] among gentiles"—a talmudic category (Shevu'ot 5a; Shabbat 68b) denoting a child of Jewish origin who was not knowledgeable about Judaism. Such a child failed to practice Judaism by no fault of his or her own. He or she was unquestionably Jewish such that "Jews were obligated to save his [or her] life." [20] According to the *Or Zaru'a* of Isaac ben Moses of Vienna, Isaac ben Samuel of Dampierre once asked rhetorically: "How does the fact of having been submerged in water [i.e., baptized] matter [in the case of a child]? Doesn't the Lord consider it as though [the child] was not converted?" [21] According to the thirteenth-century legal commentary on the Talmud known as the *Mordekhai*, Rabbenu Tam once remarked that a child who "could not distinguish between his right and his left" was still a Jew, even if he was led into idolatry. [22] In a responsum, Meir of Rothenburg insisted that a minor did not forfeit his inheritance rights upon being baptized, as the persuasion of a minor was tantamount to inexorable compulsion. "We do not divide up the possessions [that he has the potential to inherit] until he reaches majority," he wrote, "as the coercing of a minor is considered a violation." [23]

Christian authorities were of several minds regarding the legal situation of children who were baptized without the consent of one or both of their Jewish parents. The influential Italian canonist Hostiensis (Henry of Segusio, d. 1271) stated unambiguously that no baptized minors should reside with an unbaptized parent. According to Hostiensis, matters of faith took precedence over parental rights. [24] Moreover, several thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Christian theologians—including the Dominicans William of Rennes (d. 1264) and Vincent of Beauvais (1184–ca. 1264) in France, the Franciscan Duns Scotus (1266–1308) in England, the archdeacon Guido de Baysio (d. 1313) in Italy, and the Franciscan Francesc Eiximenis (d. 1409) in the Crown of Aragon—approved of removing Jewish children from their parents and forcibly baptizing them. [25] According to Duns Scotus and others, princes had a duty to take children away from parents who wanted to educate them "against the worship of God." [26] Other major theologians, however, Including Thomas

Aquinas, condemned baptizing Jewish children against their parents' wills as a violation of parental rights.[27] During the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, moreover, German princes repeatedly prohibited the forced baptism of Jewish children.[28]

Lack of Christian consensus regarding the legal situation of children who had at least one Jewish parent is apparent in the adjudication of particular cases. During the 1220s, the archbishop of Strasbourg Berthold of Tech was unsure how to proceed when a Jewish mother begged for custody of her four-year-old son whose father had converted from Judaism to Christianity. This mother argued that her son should either stay with her or reside with neither parent until he reached the age of legal responsibility—which could range from seven to fourteen, depending on the opinion of the authority and the sex of the child—and could decide for himself.[29] Unable or unwilling to resolve the affair, Berthold appealed to Pope Gregory IX, who ruled in favor of the father, on the grounds both that children were in their father's power and also that the mother (and other Jews) would lead the boy into error and might even kill him in order to prevent his baptism.[30]

During the first quarter of the thirteenth century, to cite another example, a court battle over the custody of a seven-year-old girl raged for over two years. According to the collection of exempla by the Dominican Thomas of Cantimpré (1201–72) titled *Miraculorum et exemplorum memorabilium sui temporis* ([A Book] of Miracles and Memorable Tales of His Age), Rachel/Catherine—who is mentioned also in a 1270 donation charter for the monastery she later entered—was born into a Jewish family and from a young age played freely with Christian children.[31] She became drawn to Christianity when, with her Christian playmates, she began to visit the home of a priest. Eventually, she snuck away to be baptized and entered the monastery of Parc-aux-Dames in the Brabant. Outraged, her Jewish parents mobilized to retrieve her. In court, her father's Christian lawyer argued that Rachel/Catherine had been kidnapped and forcibly baptized. He argued also that "because [she] was under the legitimate age," she should be returned to her parents until she turned twelve. At that point, If she still persisted in the Christian faith, her father conceded, she could return to living as a Christian.[32] Strikingly, Henry I, Duke of Brabant, and the bishop of Liège Hugh de Pierrepont sided with Rachel/Catherine's Jewish parents and lobbied the monastery of Parc-aux-Dames to return their daughter. Thomas of

Cantimpré lamented that the Jews' money "lured many great and literate Christian men" to help Rachel/ Catherine's family. [33] Financial inducements alone did not account for the commitment of some Christians to this Jewish family, however. As Aviad Kleinberg has pointed out, the parents' arguments appear to have carried some legal weight. Extant documents record no counterarguments that were marshaled in court, only personal threats.[34]

Further indicating that the legal status of children who were baptized without the consent of one or both of their Jewish parents was unclear, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, kings, popes, and municipal authorities advocated allowing contested children to decide their religious affiliations for themselves, just as the Jewish mother in Strasbourg and the lawyer of the Jewish father of Rachel/Catherine proposed. [35] In 1236—while the Norwich proceedings were under way—King Henry III told the constable of Northampton to bring two Jewish children before their father, Fermin of Amiens, who was planning to be baptized, In order for these children to decide whether "to follow [their father into Christianity], If they should like, or to remain in their [Jewish] error." [36] In the mid- thirteenth century, Pope Clement IV ordered that the seven-year-old Jewish girl who had been kidnapped by a cleric and sent to a distant monastery be returned to her Jewish father, Eleazar, on the condition that Eleazar would not object if his daughter later chose to become Christian.[37] In 1309, King James II of Aragon ruled that the local justice in Morvedre, Valencia, should determine whether the two children—Astrugo and Stella—of a Jewish convert to Christianity desired baptism or not. If they did not, the king instructed, they were to be allowed to remain Jews.[38]

In short, Christians and Jews often were at loggerheads regarding the religious identities and proper treatment of the baptized children of Jewish parents, and Christians did not always agree among themselves. These considerations make it possible to begin to piece together a possible backstory of the Norwich circumcision case. Indeed, a number of considerations suggest that Edward was the baptized son of a Jewish mother and a Christian father whom Christians and Jews both claimed as one of their own.

Recovering Edward

It is clear that Edward's father, Master Benedict, was Christian. It would have made no sense for a(n unbaptized) Jewish father to take Jews to court on charges of having "wickedly and feloniously" circumcised and renamed his son "in contempt of the Crucified One and Christianity."[39]

Historians including Walter Rye, Vivian Lipman, and Cecil Roth suggested that Master Benedict was a Jewish convert to Christianity. Lipman contended that Master Benedict's name and profession "confirmed [this] hypothesis."[40] To be sure, the rate of Jewish conversion to Christianity increased precipitously in thirteenth-century England as King Henry III imposed ruinous taxes on Jews, destroying Anglo-Jewish magnates and undermining the Jewish community's internal charitable mechanisms. Robert C. Stacey estimates that, during the 1240s and 1250s, there may have been as many as three hundred Jewish converts to Christianity in a total Jewish population that numbered between three thousand and five thousand.[41] It is unlikely, however, that Master Benedict was one of these converts. The titles applied to Benedict—*magister* (master) and *fisicus* (doctor)—do not shed light on Benedict's religious status. During the 1230s, these titles could apply to a Jew, a Jewish convert to Christianity, or a born Christian.[42] The informal title *magister* could function as a general term of respect. *Fisicus* could denote someone with an advanced medical education and knowledge of natural philosophy, but it could also more loosely designate any practitioner of general internal medicine.[43] Decades later, when these titles indicated a university education (which was off-limits to Jews), they still would not help to distinguish between a born Christian and a Jewish convert to Christianity, as a Jewish convert to Christianity could have attended university after his baptism. Similarly, Master Benedict's denunciation of Jews to Christian authorities on charges of "anti-Christian" activities does not establish that he was a convert. It is true that Jewish converts to Christianity frequently denounced their former coreligionists, whether out of Christian zeal, anger at Jews, or a desire to gain Christian trust. Born Christians, however, routinely accused Jews of misdeeds, as well.

Three factors suggest that Master Benedict was a born Christian. Two of these are the very factors that Vivian Lipman cited as evidence that Benedict was a Jewish convert to Christianity. First, Master Benedict's profession—medicine—was more commonly a Christian one than a Jewish one in thirteenth-century England. There were some Jewish doctors. But the

majority of medical practitioners were Christian.[44] Second, the name "Benedict" would have been an odd one for a Jewish convert to Christianity. Benedict was a common Jewish name (Berekhiah, Barukh) in thirteenth-century England and only occasionally a Christian name. [45] But Jewish men who converted to Christianity typically assumed distinctly Christian names, such as John, William, Henry, Richard, Thomas, Robert, Philip, and Hugh. It would have been at least as unusual for a Jewish convert to Christianity to retain his Jewish name as for a born Christian to be named Benedict. Third, medieval Christian clerks and scribes routinely appended descriptors such as "convert," "baptized one," or "formerly a Jew" to the names of converts. Yet, they never referred to Master Benedict in such terms.[46]

While Edward's father was probably not born Jewish, Edward's mother may very possibly have been. Unlike Edward's father, Edward's mother is glaringly absent from the records of the Norwich circumcision case. It is possible that Christian clerks and scribes passed over her in silence because they deemed her identity immaterial to the matter at hand. As noted above, there existed within Christian tradition both an understanding that religion passed through the father and also an understanding that children with only one Christian parent were to be raised as Christians, regardless of whether their Christian parent was their mother or their father.[47] As noted as well, however, In practice, such considerations did not necessarily override others.

It seems more likely that Edward's mother was not mentioned in the records of the Norwich circumcision case because she was Jewish. Indeed, a suggestive pattern emerges when one examines the Christian records of other cases in which Jews were accused of circumcising "Christian" boys or men. In at least two cases—albeit from a century later in northeastern Iberia—Christian scribes similarly refrained from mentioning the mothers of boys and men whom Jews allegedly circumcised. The registers of King James II record, for instance, that, In 1329, the Jews of Tàrrega, Catalonia, were prosecuted on charges of having circumcised "the sons of a certain Christian man."[48] In the mid-1320s, the Jews of Calatayud, Aragon, were subject to inquisitorial prosecution on charges of having circumcised a boy who was "the son of a knight who was Christian in nature."[49] In both of these instances, Christian records mentioned the religious identities only of fathers, and they specified that these fathers were Christian. Possibly this is because this

information was deemed sufficient to establish that the boys or men whom Jews allegedly had circumcised were Christian. It seems significant, however, that when inquisitors did mention the mothers—or both parents—of individuals whom Jews were accused of having brought into the Jewish fold, they specified that these particular mothers were Christian. As noted in Chapters 3 and 4, In 1284, the inquisitor of Lombardy Florio da Vicenza condemned two Jews for having converted to Judaism a Christian cleric "who was born of Christians."[50] As noted in Chapter 3, as well, In 1316, the bishop of Barcelona described the woman named Johana, who confessed to having converted to Judaism, by way of reference to both her father and mother. The bishop specified that Johana was "the daughter of a Christian man and a Christian woman."[51] To the extent that Christian authorities mentioned the mothers of boys or men whom Jews allegedly circumcised only when these mothers were Christian, it would seem to follow that, when they did not mention mothers, these mothers were Jewish.

If this was so, it is possible that Christian authorities passed over mothers who were Jewish in order to avoid calling attention to facts that bore the potential to weaken Christian claims to the custody of particular children. As noted above, Christians disagreed among themselves regarding the legal situation of baptized children who had at least one Jewish parent. Christian authorities might have sought to avoid documenting the Jewish parentage of a child whom Jews allegedly circumcised because it weakened a potent anti-Jewish narrative. It reduced a story about Jews preying on any and all Christian children to a more specific and nuanced affair.

The strongest evidence that Edward's mother was Jewish pertains to the behavior that was imputed to Norwich Jews, starting with the accusation that they seized Edward. In medieval Christendom, fear of losing children to Christianity constituted a major source of Jewish anxiety. For this reason, losing children was one of the most common motifs in medieval Jewish folklore.[52] Simha Goldin has argued that fear of losing children also shaped medieval Jewish education, which aimed to strengthen Jewish children against the appeal of the Christian world and against Christian attempts to convert Jews to Christianity.[53] Jews feared that the baptisms of Jewish children would result in the irrevocable loss of these children. Rabbenu Tam went so far as to declare that it was better for baptized Jewish children to die than to grow up as Christians. He taught that the Jewish family of a child

whom Christians seized should not mourn if this child actually died, "for, If [this child] lived, he would engage in idol worship and follow the path of the idolaters."[54]

To prevent the baptisms of children, some Jews resorted to drastic measures. Hebrew chronicles described how Jews in the Rhineland slaughtered their children at the dawn of the First Crusade in order to stop "the uncircumcised" from seizing them and raising them in "the erroneous faith."[55] Latin chronicles recorded such behavior on this and later occasions, as well. The *Annales* of the early fourteenth-century German chronicler Eberhard of Ratisbon, for instance, recounted how, during the Rintfleisch massacres in 1298, some "older Jews, fearing that [Jewish] children and women would ask for baptism in order to escape the fire, threw [children and women] into the fire with their own hands, before jumping into the fire themselves."[56] The "second continuation" of the chronicle of William of Nangis described how, near Tours in 1321, when 160 Jews were burned in a large pit on charges of well-poisoning, Jewish widows threw their own children into the flames to prevent "the Christians and the nobles who were present" from "seizing [their children] for baptism."[57]

In other cases, Jews physically removed children from parents who intended to baptize them. In 1236, for instance, Jews from Northampton took away the children of the Jew named Fermin of Amiens who was planning to be baptized.[58] About 1340, In Catalonia, a Jewish grandfather hid his daughter and two granddaughters, who were "between the ages of three and nine," from his recently baptized son-in-law in order to prevent their baptisms. This son-in-law petitioned the bishop of Barcelona Ferrer d'Abella and the inquisitor Bernat de Puigcercós for help retrieving his wife and daughters.[59]

In addition, after a Jewish child had been baptized, Jews sometimes physically retrieved him or her. In 1236, for instance—in close geographic and chronological proximity to both the Norwich circumcision case and the Northampton case—Oxford Jews were accused of having "carried off" a Jewish boy who had been "converted and baptized." As a result, the justice of the Jews William le Bretun turned several Oxford Jews over to the local constable for imprisonment in Oxford Castle, where they were to await trial. Meanwhile, the missing boy was located among Jews in Exeter.[60] Master Benedict's accusation that a Jew named Jacob seized five-year-old Edward

—and his indictment of twelve additional Jews as accessories to this crime—may point to another instance in which Jews sought to bring a child whom they deemed to be Jewish back into the Jewish fold. Moreover, it may point to yet another case in which Jews sought to do so specifically in England during the 1230s. Possibly such efforts increased in England during this period due to the surge in Jewish conversions to Christianity that accompanied Jewish impoverishment and royal conversionary pressure.[61] These efforts to recuperate children may have constituted a defiant Jewish attempt to stanch this conversionary trend.

Norwich Jews' alleged circumcision of Edward aligned with contemporaneous Jewish practices relating to admitting or readmitting boys to the Jewish community. When an uncircumcised boy was already Jewish according to Jewish law—as Edward was if indeed his mother was Jewish—Jews circumcised him to fulfill the commandment of *brit milah* (circumcision). Thus, a manuscript version of a ruling by Simḥah of Speyer recounts that Jews circumcised the young sons of a Jewish woman who was baptized and gave birth as a non-Jew when this woman returned to Judaism with her sons.[62] When a boy whose mother was not Jewish according to Jewish law was to be circumcised, his circumcision functioned as a key ritual in conversion to Judaism. [63] This occurred in Paris in 1268, when, as mentioned in Chapter 4, a Jewish apostate who had "been a Christian for twenty years or more" returned to Judaism with the children of his marriage to a Christian woman. The anonymous thirteenth-century journal that described the fate of this apostate specified that this apostate "caused two [of his children] to be circumcised."[64] In 1281, legal experts from the universities of Bologna and Padua described similar behavior in a *consilium* that they sent to Florio da Vicenza. In this instance, a Jewish man converted to Christianity, married a woman who was a born Christian, and later returned to Judaism with his son, who had been baptized and who had lived for many years as a Christian. At this point, the son was circumcised, and thereafter he lived as a Jew.[65] The ordinary gloss of the German canonist Johannes Teutonicus (ca. 1170–1245) on the influential twelfth-century collection of canon law known as Gratian's *Decretum* may have referred to the circumcisions of boys who were converting or returning to Judaism. In his comments on the *Decretum*, part 2, case 28, question 1, canon II—a passage that instructed Christians to remove children from their Jewish

parents so that they might be raised as Christians—Johannes Teutonicus noted: "I understand this as pertaining to sons who were already Christians [i.e., baptized], whom perhaps their parents wished to circumcise."[66]

The ways in which Norwich Jews behaved after Edward allegedly escaped from their custody also aligned with the ways in which medieval Jews are known to have acted in efforts to recover children. First, Norwich Jews appealed to a local Christian official for aid. In court, In 1234, Richard of Fresingfeld testified that, on the day following Edward's alleged escape, Norwich "Jews came to him, protesting that Christians wanted to take away their Jew."[67] Roughly contemporaneous Jewish and Christian sources document other instances in which Jews appealed to Christian authorities for help in recuperating recently baptized children.[68] Jews knew that some Christians might be willing to assist them. In some instances, it is clear that Jewish appeals were accompanied by bribes. According to a letter that the Jews of Troyes sent to Jews in the Rhineland in the aftermath of the 1171 massacre of Jews in Blois, for instance, Jews paid William, archbishop of Sens, 120 pounds for, among other things, permission for forcibly baptized children to return to Judaism. An additional 100 pounds purchased the consent of William's brother, Theobald, Count of Blois.[69] As noted above, according to Thomas of Cantimpré, the Jewish father of Rachel/Catherine gave "a great sum of money" to the Duke of Brabant and the bishop of Liège when he appealed to them for aid in recuperating his daughter.[70]

Like Norwich Jews' appeals to the constable, other Jews' appeals to Christian authorities for aid in retrieving baptized children often proved ineffectual. The purported autobiography of Judah/Herman recounted poignantly how, when Judah/Herman kidnapped his Jewish seven-year-old half brother in order to have him baptized, this boy's mother, "whose excesses of grief made her mad, ran to the leading men of the city wailing bitterly." These men sent messengers to stop Judah/Herman, but they were unable apprehend him.[71] In 1289, Jews in England lamented to King Edward I that a Jewish boy had been baptized "against their will" in the church of St. Clement in London. Edward was not moved by their appeal, however. The Parliament Rolls state that "Edward did not wish to revoke the baptism and did not inquire after certain people; therefore, nothing was done."[72] In northern France in the early 1390s, Lionne de Cremi, the Jewish wife of the Jewish convert to Christianity Denis Machaut, discussed in Chapter 4,

appealed to the provost of Paris to regain custody of her four children. This petition, too, had no effect. By August 1394, Lionne's three older children—who were eleven, nine, and five years old—were being held at the prison of the Châtelet, and her one-year-old child was being cared for by a Christian nurse. The provost decreed that the one-year-old "was to remain under the father's guardianship and receive a Christian upbringing, while the other three children were entrusted to Christian families." Moreover, their father was to be allowed to visit them, whereas their mother was not. "After a period of time determined by the provost, the children were to be interrogated regarding whether or not they intended to become Christians."[73]

In addition to appealing to the constable for aid, Norwich Jews came to blows with Christians over Edward. According to Matilda, the coroners of the city and county of Norwich, and thirty-six men from the city of Norwich, when Norwich Jews learned that Matilda had Edward in her home, they rushed over, clamoring that Edward was "their Jew" and "their son," that his name was Jurnepin, and that they "wished to take him." Before long, their numbers swelled to a great multitude, and these Jews sought to wrest the boy from the Christians with "great force" and "take him with them." Hearing this racket, the Christian neighbors rushed over, and they, too, heard and saw the Jews call the boy "their Jew" and insist that his name was Jurnepin. Eventually, Christians "came by force and seized [Edward] from the hands of the Jews."[74]

Like Norwich Jews' alleged kidnapping and circumcision of Edward and their appeal to the constable, this striking episode of mutual Jewish-Christian violence—in which Christians sought to seize Edward from the Jews whom these Christians claimed had seized Edward from Christians—suggests that a Jewish effort to retrieve the son of a Jewish mother undergirded the Norwich circumcision case. On at least two occasions in medieval Christendom, physical altercations are known to have erupted between Christians and Jews when Jews sought to prevent baptisms. First, according to the *Cronica Sancti Petri Erfordensis moderna*, In 1241 in Frankfurt, Jewish efforts to prevent the baptism of a Jewish youth drove Jews to kill "a few Christians" (and drove Christians to kill 153 Jews and forcibly baptize at least 24). [75] Second, according to a missive of King Alfonso IV of Aragon, In 1331, In an attempt to recover a Jewish boy who allegedly desired baptism, a group of Jews from Borja attacked two Franciscan friars who were accompanying the boy

down a public road. These Jews purportedly insulted the friars, drew swords, threw stones, struck the friars, and knocked them down. It was said that, If Christians had not come running upon hearing the friars' cries, the Jews would have killed the friars and carried the boy away. These Jews eventually were pardoned in exchange for 2,500 Jaca *solidi*. [76] The physical tug-of-war in which Norwich Jews engaged Christians over Edward would seem to have been of a kind with these episodes—an instance in which Jews threw caution to the wind, consumed by a visceral determination to reclaim a child, dramatically demonstrating in the process just how passionately contested children could be.

The summary of the legal proceedings in the Norwich circumcision case includes one more detail that may be read as attesting to the profundity of Norwich Jews' conviction that Edward was Jewish. It states that the coroners of the county and city of Norwich and thirty-six parishioners of Norwich testified that, when, at the end of the brawl in Matilda's house, the Jews realized that they "could not have [Edward] on account of the Christians," they forbade Matilda "to give [Edward] swine's flesh to eat because, they said, he was a Jew." [77] This puzzling plea to not feed Edward pork may be read as the expression of a futile hope that Christians would respect Edward's Jewish identity by helping him observe Jewish dietary restrictions. It may be read also as a Jewish refusal to admit defeat even when it was clear that Christian constructions of Edward's identity would prevail.

In short, extant evidence strongly suggests that a Jewish attempt to bring a child whom Jews deemed Jewish back into the Jewish fold sparked Master Benedict's accusation. Considered in light of roughly contemporaneous cases in which Jews sought to prevent the baptisms of children or recover recently baptized children, the silence in the summary of the legal proceedings regarding Edward's mother, this document's claims that Jews seized and circumcised Edward, and its descriptions of Jews appealing to the constable for aid and physically fighting Christians all support this possibility.

The summary of the legal proceedings and Matthew Paris's iteration of the Norwich circumcision case in the entry for the year 1240 in his *Chronica majora* make it possible to refine this hypothesis. The fact that, by age five, Edward still was uncircumcised suggests that, although Edward's mother likely was Jewish, Edward was not raised within the Jewish community.

Possibly Edward's mother died in childbirth. Or perhaps—as medieval Jewish and Christian women are known to have done when they bore children out of wedlock—she abandoned him at birth.[78] Either way, Edward could have been taken in by Christians as an infant and raised among Christians.

A number of factors suggest, moreover, that Edward was a neglected child. To begin, according to the summary of the legal proceedings, Edward seems to have had nowhere to go after he escaped from Jacob's home. Matilda and her daughter discovered him "sitting by the river," and they took him in "for the love of God because they did not know whose son he was." Even after more Christians came to see Edward in Matilda's home, no one knew whom to summon until a mysterious "certain woman" declared "that [Edward] was the son of Master Benedict, the physician." At her command, Master Benedict was summoned to Matilda's house.[79] Had Edward been the cherished son of a local Christian physician, it is unlikely that Christians would have had trouble identifying his guardian.

Master Benedict's apparent initial obliviousness to Edward's kidnapping, as portrayed in the summary of the legal proceedings, suggests that Master Benedict was estranged from his son. One would expect a father who normally lived with his five-year-old to have noticed when his son went missing and to have searched for him. One would expect this especially of a Christian father in a narrative crafted by Christians that cast Jews as wicked child predators. As noted in Chapter 2, contemporaneous Christian anti-Jewish stories often demonized Jewish fathers; it would have been natural therefore to cast Master Benedict as a positive foil to his maligned Jewish counterparts.[80] No testimony, however—not even Master Benedict's own—described Master Benedict as having missed, let alone searched for, his son. Moreover, when Matthew Paris retold the story in the entry for the year 1240 in his *Chronica majora*, he apparently felt a need to rework this material. Giving Master Benedict a more predictable role, Paris reinvented Master Benedict as having "diligently searched for his son."[81]

The awkward reunion between Master Benedict and Edward in Matilda's home, as portrayed in the summary of the legal proceeding, also suggests that Edward and Master Benedict were not close. According to Matilda's testimony, upon entering Matilda's home and seeing Edward, Master Benedict did not cry out or rush to embrace his son, as one might

expect from a father. Instead, Master Benedict "hid himself in Matilda's chamber to hear what the Jews [were saying] to his son." Only when Master Benedict heard that the Jews were calling his son "their son," "Jurnepin," and "their Jew" did he emerge from the room, contradicting them. Even then, moreover, Master Benedict did not push through the melee to rescue his five-year-old. Instead, oddly, he turned matters over to Edward: He asked Edward what his name was. Further confusing things, according to Matilda, Edward first replied that his name was Jurnepin—the name that the Jews had given him. Only later, "seeing his father," Matilda explained, the boy "rejoiced and said that he was Edward, [Master Benedict's] son." [82] To be sure, little stock should be placed in the details of this account, which was recorded at least four years after the alleged events and which inevitably was shaped by the conscious and unconscious choices of multiple authors—the Christians who spoke at the court proceedings, the Christians who spoke among themselves about the court proceedings, and the scribes and clerks who recorded and later distilled the proceedings. That said, it is difficult to imagine why Christians falsely would have imputed this behavior to Master Benedict and Edward. Tellingly, Matthew Paris overhauled this scene, too. Creating a more satisfying denouement, Paris instead portrayed Master Benedict as having personally and heroically "discovered" Edward "who was wickedly confined in a certain Jewish chamber" (Paris omitted any mention of Edward's alleged escape from the Jews and Matilda's rescue) and as having emitted "jubilant cries" when he saw his son.[83]

The image of Edward that emerges from this closer reading of the summary of the legal proceedings and Matthew Paris's *Chronica majora*, together with contemporaneous Jewish and Christian sources, Is that of a highly unusual child. Far from the Christian "everyboy" conjured by most references to Edward in documents about the Norwich circumcision case, Edward appears to have been a neglected and socially marginalized boy whom Christians considered Christian and Jews considered Jewish.

Circumcision's Ambiguities

If a Jewish attempt to recover a child did in fact spark the Norwich circumcision case, then the summary of the legal proceedings has the

potential to shed light on Jewish practices. To begin, it suggests that a substantial portion—and veritable cross section—of a Jewish community could be involved in an effort to retrieve a single child. At least one-tenth of the Jewish population of Norwich—which Vivian Lipman estimated at about two hundred out of a total urban population of about eight thousand—may have participated in the Norwich circumcision affair, whether by attending Edward's circumcision, seeking the constable's aid, or attempting physically to remove Edward from Matilda's house.[84]

These Jews spanned a range of social strata. As noted in the Introduction, at least five of the thirteen Jews whom Master Benedict accused in court—Isaac ben Solomon, Diaia (Elazar) le Cat, Senioret ben Josce, Meir ben Senioret, and Mosse ben Abraham—were leading moneylenders.[85] Registers of debts contracted or repaid that were kept in special chests known as the Norwich *archa* reveal, furthermore, that two of these men—Isaac ben Solomon and Mosse ben Abraham—were close business associates. Isaac and Mosse engaged in five joint dealings—far more than any other Jewish creditors in medieval Norwich, most of whom operated independently.[86] Seven Jews who appear in records associated with the Norwich circumcision case seem to have been "ordinary middle class," based on data that Vivian Lipman culled from seven lists of Norwich Jews and the sums owed to or paid by each of them during the period between 1220 and 1240.[87] These Jews included two men whom Master Benedict accused in court—Simon Cok ben Sarra and Sampson ben Ursel—as well as Aaron Henn, whom the Close Rolls of the reign of Henry III referred to in 1240, together with Mosse ben Abraham, as having been "arrested for the circumcision of a certain Norwich boy," and three Jews who were listed around 1241 as fugitives on account of the circumcision case: Manasser ben Mosse, Meir ben Josce, and his wife Rosa.[88] Significantly, Meir ben Josce, who resided in Norwich between about 1220 and 1240, was the most frequently mentioned rabbinic authority in Norwich at the time.[89] Little is known about the eight other Jews whose names surface in conjunction with the circumcision case: Jacob—upon whom Master Benedict cast the primary blame—Leo ben Margareta, Deudone Joppe, F. ben Thea, Benedict ben Avegay, Abraham le Prestre, Josce ben Sampson, Elias ben Deudone, and Benjamin. It is likely that some of these Jews were of modest means.

In addition to providing a glimpse of the social composition of a group of Jews who may have organized to retrieve a child, the summary of the legal proceedings provides a surprising account of the rituals involved in naming a child who was being brought back into the Jewish community. According to this record, In 1234, nine-year-old Edward testified that, when he was five, Jews gave him a new name right after they circumcised him. He explained that the Jews chose this name by placing his foreskin—"that bit that they cut off of his member"—in a basin filled with sand, searching for it with small straws, and naming him "Jurnepin" after the Jew who uncovered his foreskin.[90] It was indeed customary in medieval Ashkenaz, during circumcisions, to allow the foreskin to fall into a bowl of sand.[91] The summary of the legal proceedings thus refers to a well-attested Jewish practice, Indicating either that Edward actually witnessed it or that someone who was familiar with it told him about it. The summary also documents the means whereby this Jewish practice came to be known to a broader Christian audience that included the Christians who were present at the court proceedings and those who read or heard about them. The practice of naming through a game of lot that involved searching for the foreskin, however, has not, to my knowledge, surfaced in other sources.[92] Possibly Edward's account documents an otherwise unrecorded popular practice that existed either locally or more diffusely. Possibly it documents a one-time occurrence that was particular to Edward's personal circumstances and specifically to his apparent status as an abandoned child. Presumably, the Jewish names of "returning" children typically were chosen more solemnly, perhaps to honor a relative who had lived and died as a faithful Jew. Possibly Edward's account of naming through a game of lot combined some knowledge of actual Jewish practice with knowledge of a game from another context.[93]

The specific name that Norwich Jews were said to have given Edward may shed further light on the identities of the Jews who attended Edward's alleged circumcision. As noted, Edward claimed to have been renamed "Jurnepin" (likely a diminutive of Jurnin, Jurnet, or Joseph) after the Jew who uncovered his foreskin in the bowl of sand. During the course of the court proceedings, a number of witnesses—including Matilda and the coroners of the county and city of Norwich—also referred to Jews calling Edward "Jurnepin." In itself, this name is not necessarily odd. A number of male converts in medieval Ashkenaz and Mediterranean lands took the first

name Abraham in honor of the biblical Abraham, the prototype of turning to monotheism and the father of all nations.[94] Male converts assumed other names, as well, however, as noted in Chapter 3, Including Elazar, Haggai, Isaac, Jacob, Obadiah, and Yehosephia. (The names that Jews gave female converts included Hatsiva, Esther, Guta, Pesslin, and Rachel.) It is strange, however, that Master Benedict did not indict a Jew named Jurnepin (or anything similar) for seizing and circumcising his son. No Jew with such a name appears in any extant records relating to the case. One of the most prominent Jews whom Master Benedict indicted, however—Daia le Cat—had a son named Jurnin.[95] Possibly young Jurnin was present at Edward's circumcision, but Master Benedict did not mention him in court due to his youth. Possibly the adult Jews drew young Jurnin into the action during Edward's circumcision by involving him in Edward's naming though the use of a game. Possibly they "honored" Jurnin by letting him win the game and become Edward's namesake. And possibly Edward was renamed "Jurnepin," as opposed to "Jurnin," to distinguish Edward from his namesake. Jews of all ages attended the circumcisions of Jewish infants. And, In at least one other case, the presence of a Jewish youth is attested at the circumcision of a boy whom Jews (re-)Judaized. During the course of an inquisitorial trial that was held in Aragon in 1341–42, a Jew named Jucef Quatorze testified that, In 1321, when he was fourteen, he attended with his father the circumcision of a boy who was "the son of a Christian."[96]

In addition to shedding light on the number and identities of the Jews who were involved in Edward's circumcision and on naming practices, the summary of the legal proceedings in the Norwich case may provide insight into the difficulties of circumcising individuals who were not infants. The summary notes that, in 1236, six years after Edward's alleged circumcision, Jews demanded that Edward's body be reexamined: "All the Jews came together and gave King Henry III one mark of gold for the boy [i.e., Edward] to be seen … to determine if he was circumcised or not."[97] As Jews requested and paid the king for this reexamination, it stands to reason that they believed that this measure would demonstrate that Edward had *not* been circumcised and that it would thus serve to exonerate them. Indeed, at first glance, this Jewish request casts doubt on the possibility that Jews actually did circumcise Edward in 1230. Henry accepted the gold and granted the Jews' request. Due to the damaged state of the extant record, it is impossible

to know who examined Edward. The critical word reads either *judeis* (Jews) or *justiciis* (Christian justices).[98] Strikingly, whereas in 1234 the justices declared that it was "clear that [Edward] was circumcised," this reexamination produced ambiguous results. Instead of stating that Edward was found to be circumcised or uncircumcised, the record hedged: "The boy was examined, and his member was found to be covered with skin in front, on the head."[99]

This oddly technical and inconclusive description calls to mind intriguing inquisitorial claims about the ways Jews allegedly circumcised "Christians." A paragraph that is appended to an anonymous treatise against the Christian heretics known as the Poor of Lyon in a thirteenth-century Paris compilation of material relating to the inquisition in France stated: "Note that the Jews circumcise [their own] children in one way, and our Christian adults, when they Judaize, In another. They cut off the foreskin [of Christian adults] halfway from above, not in a full circle, as they do to their own children."[100] As Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi and Shaye J. D. Cohen have noted, In the early fourteenth century, Bernard Gui included this passage in his *Practica inquisitionis*, adding a reference to Jews circumcising Christian children as well as Christian adults. Gui stated: "Jews circumcise their own children in one way and Christians, whether children or adults, In another. In circumcising Christians, adults or children, they cut off their foreskin halfway from above and not in a full circle, as they d[o] to their own Jewish children."[101] At the end of the fourteenth century, the Aragonese inquisitor Nicolas Eymeric included Gui's wording in his inquisitorial manual, the *Directorium inquisitorum* (Inquisitors' Guide).[102] Could Edward have been the subject of one of these putative semicircular circumcisions? If his penis was "covered with skin in front, on the head"—and thus presumably not on the back of the head—was this because his foreskin had been removed "halfway from above, and not in a full circle," as some inquisitors expected?

To be sure, semicircular—or otherwise imperfect—circumcisions were not valid according to the letter of Jewish law. According to nearly all medieval rabbinic authorities, the circumcision of converts was to be identical to that of Jewish infants—involving cutting off the foreskin of the penis (*milah*) and scraping off the remaining membrane under the foreskin (*peri'ah*).[103] Yevamot 47b directed: "If shreds [i.e., of the membrane under the foreskin] remain on [the convert's penis] that impede the circumcision,

[Jews] circumcise him a second time." So, too, *Kelalei ha-Milah*, whose thirteenth-century author went further, Insisting that, "if shreds remained, circumcision should be redone [not only] a second time—[but, If necessary,] even four or five times."[104]

It is likely that, In spite of these admonitions, some circumcisions were imperfect. Conceivably, some Jews circumcised "Christians" in a semicircular fashion intentionally. Nicolas Eymeric maintained that Jews did so in order to preserve a bodily distinction between these individuals and the rest of the Jewish community.[105] In theory, this could have been useful for the adjudication of inheritance of debt claims in instances in which it was not clear whether an individual was born before or after his mother converted to Judaism. According to some rabbis, child converts to Judaism who were born before their mother converted to Judaism were considered to have been reborn at the moment of their conversion and thus to have severed all legal ties to their biological parents. It followed that, If their parents died with money owed to them, this money did not have to be repaid to these children.[106] This explanation would not, however, account for why Jews would have circumcised someone like Edward in a semicircular fashion; there is no evidence that Edward's mother converted to Judaism. Some Jews intentionally might have circumcised "Christians" in a semicircular fashion with an eye toward Christian appraisal. Perhaps they circumcised "Christians" only "in the back" in the hope that these circumcisions would stand a chance of going unnoticed by Christian inspectors or of being dismissed as an anatomical abnormality. Claims that indeterminate circumcisions were, In fact, birth defects became common in the early modern period before tribunals of the Spanish and Portuguese inquisitions, when midwives and doctors participated in adjudications.[107] Zefira Entin Rokeah has suggested yet another possibility. According to Rokeah, Jews could, on occasion, have performed incomplete circumcisions in order to leave room for plausible Jewish deniability. Jews could have hoped that, by assuring Christians of the technical invalidity of these circumcisions according to Jewish law, they might reduce Christian charges from religious ones, which fell within the purview of ecclesiastical authorities, to charges of bodily harm, which royal officials, who typically were more lenient toward Jews, could adjudicate. [108] If some Jews did circumcise "Christians" differently with an eye toward Christian appraisal, this would be a

fascinating phenomenon indeed: Jews inscribing what they construed as a mark of Jewishness in a way that deviated from rabbinic norms with an eye toward Christian construals of this mark.

These theories, however, are not compelling. There is no evidence that Jews would have tolerated such an instrumental attitude toward circumcision, let alone that any Jewish communities in fact espoused such an approach.[109] It seems more likely that, If Jews did circumcise Edward and Edward's circumcision later looked irregular, it was simply because it was difficult to circumcise individuals who were no longer infants. Children are much larger than infants, they are likely to be fearful and resistant, and they experience pain differently. Another consideration could also explain why, If Jews did circumcise Edward in 1230, this circumcision looked irregular in 1236. Circumcised foreskins can, over time, readhere to the rim of the glans. The Mishnah itself notes that a circumcised male might subsequently appear to be uncircumcised (Shabbat 19:6). When, then, Jews paid Henry III to have Edward reexamined, these Jews could have been gambling on the significant chance that Edward's genital marking was ambiguous, whether because Edward was imperfectly circumcised in 1230 or because his anatomy subsequently changed.

Be this as it may, the seemingly equivocal reexamination report did not affect Christian authorities' determination of Jewish guilt. The two sentences that follow the reexamination report in the summary of the legal proceedings —which constitute the last two sentences of the document—make clear that the reexamination changed nothing. "In this state," they read, "[the boy] was released to his father so that his father might […] him in the presence of the ecclesiastical judges. And the Jews remain in prison."[110]

The fact that Edward's circumcised status was ambiguous in 1236 not only raises questions about the anatomical realities of convert circumcision. In addition, it challenges the assumption that circumcision—the physical characteristic that ostensibly distinguished Jewish boys and men from their Christian counterparts—was necessarily clear, permanent, and legible in only one way. Indeed, it indicates that, like the abstract categories "convert," "apostate," and "returnee"—and even "Christian" and "Jew"—a visible and tangible bodily mark could be subject to divergent interpretations.

* * *

Of all the kinds of religious crossings between Judaism and Christianity that transpired in medieval Christendom, those involving children aroused the strongest passions. The baptisms of the children of Jewish parents horrified Jews and they divided learned churchmen. Some Jews stopped at nothing to try to prevent their children from being baptized and to try to recover baptized children. These efforts could involve seeking Christian legal recourse, bribing Christians, physically accosting Christians, and directly seizing contested children.

The Norwich circumcision case may well have been sparked by a Jewish effort to recover a child whom Jews deemed to be Jewish. If so, this case stands as important evidence not only of the heightened anti-Jewish animus in thirteenth-century England and Christendom more broadly and of the resurgence of Christian concerns about Christian apostasy and about Jews as agents of Christian apostasy. It stands as important evidence also of Jewish responses to Christian abuses of Jews and especially to the ever-looming prospect of losing Jewish children. In addition, the summary of the legal proceedings in the Norwich circumcision case may provide unprecedented insight into an actual instance in which Jews tried to recover a child, revealing new details about the identities of the Jews involved as well as about naming and circumcision practices. At the same time, Christian records' framing of the Norwich circumcision case as an instance in which Jews kidnapped and circumcised a boy who was a born Christian—and the Christian outrage that this case elicited, garnering the attention of the king and bishops and sparking widespread anti-Jewish violence—presents an instructive irony. Even as Christians seized and forcibly baptized countless Jewish children over the course of the Middle Ages, they smeared Jews with false imputations of mirror behavior. Christians thus lived in fear of the image they produced, which was, In many ways, an image of themselves.

Conclusion

Framed by an investigation of the Norwich circumcision case, this book has explored how fact and fantasy both shaped resurgent Christian constructions of Jews as agents of apostasy to Judaism in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Europe. It has argued that these constructions of Jews—which had a devastating impact on Jews—in part reflected broad Christian preoccupations with Christian deviance, the instability of religious identity, and the machinations of infidels and heretics. They cannot fully be understood without attention to contemporaneous Christian attitudes toward Muslims and Christian heretics and renewed ecclesiastical interest in converting Jews to Christianity. These constructions of Jews partook also of the heightened sense of Jewish enmity that characterized the high and late Middle Ages and spawned anti-Jewish calumnies. Like the charge of ritual murder, the accusation that Jews wickedly seduced Christians over to Judaism portrayed Jews as imminently threatening Christian welfare. It depicted Jews as endangering Christians spiritually and wounding men physically. To thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Christians, Jewish circumcision of Christians additionally evoked Jews' alleged culpability for Christ's passion.

This book has argued further that Christian constructions of Jews as agents of apostasy to Judaism can serve as a prism through which to glimpse actual Jewish practices and the experiences of individuals who converted between Judaism and Christianity. First and foremost, they raise the curtain on a small number of conversions of born Christians to Judaism during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. These remarkable conversions were undertaken at great risk by men and women of all ranks, Including learned clergy, who defied the dominant power dynamics of their day. Some of these converts ultimately chose to die at the stake rather than return to Christianity. Although Christian conversions to Judaism were rare, their implications and possible repercussions were significant; they illustrated the fragility of

Christian identity and the enduring potency and allure of Judaism. Jews facilitated these conversions and supported the small number of born Christians who converted to Judaism. Contrary to the contentions of many Christians, however, Jews did not seek to attract born Christians to Judaism. Christian portrayals of Jews as wily proselytizers thus did not align with actual Jewish behavior.

Christian constructions of Jews as agents of Christian apostasy to Judaism related more closely to Jewish efforts to re-Judaize adults and retrieve children who were born to Jewish parents but who subsequently were baptized. As some Christian authorities were aware, often due to the divulgences of Jewish converts and returnees to Christianity, some Jews pressured adult apostates to return to Judaism and physically seized children who had been, or were in danger of being, baptized. According to dominant interpretations of canon law, such practices technically induced Christian apostasy to Judaism. The social realities of return to Judaism thus combined with theological semantics—as well as with Christian misperceptions of Jewish attitudes toward conversions to Judaism, the evolution of Christian anti-Judaism, and broad ecclesiastical worries about Christian vulnerabilities—to fuel Christian concerns about Jews as agents of Christian apostasy. Through this investigation, conversion and return to Judaism emerge as important developments that worsened the relationships between Christians and Jews across thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Europe.

In the course of probing the interplay of fact and fantasy in Christian constructions of Jews, this book has applied a wide lens to the landscape of movement between Judaism and Christianity in medieval Christendom. By considering Christian conversion to Judaism in tandem with Jewish conversion to Christianity and the return to Judaism of Jews who had converted to Christianity, it has shown that, even though movement from Judaism to Christianity was far more common than its reverse, Jewish-Christian conversion was bidirectional and somewhat fluid. Further demonstrating the value of a more inclusive framework for the study of interreligious conversion, this book has laid bare parallels in and personal connections between the experiences of individuals who moved in both directions between Judaism and Christianity. These links shed new light on the complexity of a period that is notorious for the intensification of interfaith

animosity, and they are key to understanding how conversion affected individual families.

This capacious perspective is essential also to grasping the full import of the Norwich circumcision case. I submit that the accusation at the heart of this case drew on both fact and fantasy in its own right. On the one hand, as recorded in the summary of the legal proceedings, Master Benedict's claim that Norwich Jews circumcised his son Edward "because they wanted to make [Edward] a Jew" stands as an early expression of resurgent thirteenth-century Christian concerns about Christian apostasy to Judaism. As such, it drew on and further disseminated the view that Jews preyed on helpless Christian children out of spite for all things Christian. Anti-Judaism profoundly shaped the unfolding of the Norwich circumcision case. Master Benedict's charge aimed to harm Jews, and the proceedings led to violence against Jews and Jewish property and to the exile and execution of Jews.

On the other hand, Norwich Jews may in fact have circumcised five-year-old Edward. It is plausible that Master Benedict's accusation was sparked by a Jewish attempt to retrieve a boy who was being raised among Christians even though his mother was Jewish. If this hypothesis is correct, then, from the perspective of at least some Christian theologians and canonists, Edward was Christian, whereas according to Jews, he was Jewish. According to canon law, Edward was a Christian who had been rescued from the hands of Jews. According to Jewish law, Edward was a Jew whom Jews had tried to rescue from the hands of Christians. Also at play, then, In the Norwich circumcision case were competing Jewish and Christian understandings of Edward's identity.

The fact that the extant records of the Norwich circumcision case ostensibly obscure this backstory, referring to Edward simply as "a Christian boy" and never mentioning his mother, Is suggestive. The Christian authors of the thirteenth-century accounts of the Norwich circumcision case may have sought to craft a stark narrative that pitted Christians against Jews in order to avoid the ambiguities and internal Christian disagreements regarding the proper custodial arrangements for baptized children who had at least one Jewish parent. Edward thus became a Christian "everyboy" and Norwich Jews emerged as imminently menacing all Christian children. In significantly distorting social reality, these authors cast what likely was, to Jews, an

internal Jewish affair as a Jewish assault on the most vulnerable of Christians.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the chroniclers Roger Wendover and Matthew Paris indulged in fantasy even more liberally. Building on the notion that Norwich Jews had seized and circumcised a "Christian boy," they supplanted the trial records' narrative of attempted forced conversion to Judaism with a narrative of attempted ritual murder. In so doing, these chroniclers established the version of the Norwich circumcision case that most later chroniclers encountered and propagated. In the fourteenth century, In his work of universal history and theology, the *Polychronicon*, the Benedictine chronicler at the abbey of St. Werburgh in Chester, Ranulf Higden (d. 1364), briefly paraphrased the short account of the Norwich case that is found in the entry for the year 1235 in Wendover's *Flores historiarum* (and is repeated in the entries for the year 1235 in Paris's *Chronica majora* and *Historia Anglorum*).[1] At the turn of the sixteenth century, the sheriff and alderman Robert Fabyan (d. ca. 1512)—who owned and read the *Nuremberg Chronicle* with its iconic representation of the alleged two-year-old ritual murder victim Simon of Trent (d. 1475), [2] who was said to have been both genitally mutilated and crucified, as discussed in Chapter 2—introduced several changes to this account in his *New Chronicles of England and France*. Fabyan claimed that the child whom Norwich Jews allegedly circumcised was one year old (not five), that a Christian man named John Toly (not Master Benedict) had denounced the Jews, and that the Jews went unpunished.[3] Later in the sixteenth century, the historian John Foxe (d. 1587) explained in his *Acts and Monuments* (popularly known as *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*) that Norwich Jews circumcised a child and detained him for a year intending to crucify him, and that eighteen of these Jews were hanged and the rest remained in prison.[4] The antiquarian John Stow (d. 1605)—who, under the patronage of the archbishop of Canterbury Matthew Parker (1504–75), produced the first edition of the *Flores historiarum* of Roger Wendover in 1567 and of the *Chronica majora* of Matthew Paris in 1571—noted briefly in his *Summarie of the Chronicles of England* that, In 1235, "the Jews at Norwich stole a boy and circumcised him, minding to have crucified him at Easter, for which they were convicted.[5]" Stow repeated this note in *The Chronicles of England*, adding that the Jews "were convicted both bodies and goods at the king's pleasure.[6]" In his *History of Great Britain*, the

cartographer and historian John Speed (ca. 1551–1629) paraphrased the short account of the Norwich case that is found in the entry for the year 1235 in Wendover's *Flores historiarum*.[7] In his *Dictionary of Dates*, Joseph Haydn (d. 1856) wrote in the entry for "Jew" under the year 1235: "[The Jews] circumcise[d] and attempt[ed] to crucify a child at Norwich; the offenders [we]re condemned in a fine of 20,000 marks."[8]

Together with the case of Simon of Trent, the "ritual murder version" of the Norwich circumcision case came to inform the view that circumcision was a standard first step in Jewish ritual murder. In the seventeenth century, the antiquarian John Weever (1576–1632) prefaced his description of the Norwich case (which closely echoed Wendover's short account) in a digression in his collection of funerary inscriptions, *Ancient Funeral Monuments*, by announcing that "the Jews in the principal cities of the kingdom [of England] used sometimes to steal away, *circumcise*, crown with thorns, whip, torture, and crucify some [Christian] neighbor's male-child, In mockery and scorn of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (emphasis mine). [9] The hagiographer Alban Butler (d. 1773) quoted Weever's generalization about circumcision as the first step in ritual murder and added that the alleged ritual murder victims Richard of Pontoise and Hugh of Lincoln had both been circumcised.[10]

During the centuries that the Norwich circumcision case came to be known primarily as an attempted ritual murder, Christian concerns about Christian apostasy to Judaism and Jews as agents of apostasy persisted. It is beyond the scope of this concluding chapter to analyze how these concerns evolved during the early modern and modern periods. One example, however, Illustrates the endurance not only of these Christian concerns but also of Christian authorities' practice of masking the complexities of return to Judaism by portraying the phenomenon vaguely as "Christian apostasy" to Judaism. The notorious edict expelling the Jews from Spain in 1492 specified no Jewish crime other than that of inducing "Christians" to become Jews. At face value, this decree described Jewish efforts to convert any and all Christians to Judaism. Yet, the "Christians" in question were, In fact, *conversos*—that is, Jewish converts to Christianity and their descendants. By obscuring this distinction, Ferdinand and Isabella followed in the footsteps of the medieval popes, kings, Inquisitors, and others whom this book has discussed, further propagating the view that Jews sought to harm Christians

at large. As earlier, as well, the 1492 iteration of the accusation that Jews were "stealing faithful Christians" and "subverting them to their own wicked [Jewish] belief" had grave ramifications.

The year 1492 was not the last time that Christian figures of authority accused Jews of drawing Christians to Judaism. Early modern popes did so, as well, writing about "Christian apostasy" in general terms, even though the cases they had in mind often involved Jewish converts to Christianity and their descendants who returned to Judaism.[11] In 1538, Martin Luther opened his treatise "Against the Sabbatarians" by declaring that he had heard that "the Jews [we]re making inroads in various places throughout [Bohemia and Moravia] with their venom and their doctrine and that they ha[d] already induced some Christians to let themselves be circumcised and to believe that the Messiah or Christ ha[d] not yet appeared, that the law of the Jews must prevail forever, [and] that it must be adopted by all the Gentiles." Luther was responding to claims that Jews were proselytizing born Christians, and he proceeded to explain how Christians could refute Jews' arguments by citing scripture.[12] In the mid-seventeenth century, to cite another example, the Hamburg pastor Johannes Müller lamented: The Jews "seduce the Christians. In Holland, there are examples of men who converted from Christianity to Judaism and had themselves circumcised. [The German historian and linguist Christoph] Helvig tells … of eight different examples of such seductions that took place in Germany and gives the name of each one. In 1638, a Christian in the Netherlands was led into error through a dispute with a Jew over Isaiah 7 and converted to Judaism."[13] As Müller's claims suggest, a trickle of born Christians continued to convert to Judaism. During the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, some anti-Trinitarian and Protestant Christians converted to Judaism, as did a handful of Catholics in Counter-Reformation Spain. A small number of born Christians converted to Judaism also in eighteenth-century Poland, Lithuania, and Russia. As during the Middle Ages, these converts included women and men, some of whom were learned. Indeed, some early modern converts to Judaism were Catholic and Protestant clergy, philo-Semitic Hebraists, students of Kabbalah, skeptics, and deists. As earlier, too, at least one of these converts, Moses Germanus (formerly Johann Peter Spaeth), became a dedicated Jewish missionary in the safe haven of eighteenth-century Amsterdam.[14] Quite a few of these converts to Judaism were arrested by Christian authorities and burned at the stake.[15]

To be sure, responses to conversions to Judaism were distinct when and where there was freedom of religion and a separation between church and state. In such contexts, such as the modern United States, conversion to Judaism was not a crime but a newsworthy curiosity.[16] Yet, even in such contexts, certain patterns endured. The cause célèbre of conversion to Judaism in the antebellum United States involved a Christian missionary turned Jewish convert named Warder Cresson. First a Quaker, then a Shaker and millenarian, In 1844, Cresson journeyed to Palestine as the first U.S. consul to Jerusalem to do missionary work among Jews. In Jerusalem, however, Cresson formally converted to Judaism; he was circumcised and took the name Michoel Boaz Yisroel ben Avraham. Cresson's behavior after his conversion to Judaism is reminiscent of the behavior of some thirteenth-century converts: Cresson became a spokesman for his new religion. When he returned to Philadelphia—where his family put him on trial for insanity—he stumped on the street, arguing for the superiority of Judaism over Christianity. In addition, Cresson wrote a memoir, which he hoped would lead other Christians to convert to Judaism.[17]

Of all of the dynamics explored in the present study, perhaps the most enduring pertain to the passions evoked by cases involving children. This book has shown how medieval Jews were haunted by the fear that Christians would seize Jewish children and how some Jews risked everything to prevent Jewish children from being baptized and to retrieve baptized children. This book has shown also that, even though, over the course of the Middle Ages, Christians seized untold numbers of Jewish children, Christians spread vicious tales about Jews seizing Christian children. Tragically, some of these trends, too, persisted into modern times. The case of six-year-old Edgardo Mortara, who was seized from his Jewish parents in 1858 in Bologna by order of the Roman inquisition, Is particularly notorious.[18]

The small boy whose story has formed the backbone of this book shall likely forever elude historians' grasp. It is doubtful that we shall ever be able to ascertain exactly who he was, what happened to him when he was five, or what became of him after these fateful events. It is clear, however, that, amid the heightened Jewish-Christian tensions of his day, he galvanized the hopes and fears of Jews and Christians alike. This much is clear, as well: Behind Jewish and Christian constructions of this boy, there was once a

living and breathing child who bore the scars of battles he never chose to fight.

Abbreviations

ACA	Archivo de la Corona de Aragon
ACB	Arxiu de la Catedral de Barcelona
ADB	Arxiu Diocesà de Barcelona
AHR	*American Historical Review*
Baer, *Urkunden*	*Die Juden im christlichen Spanien: Urkunden und Regesten*. Edited by Yitzhak [Fritz] Baer. 2 vols. Berlin, 1936. Reprint, London, 1970.
BT	Babylonian Talmud
C	Còdex (within ACB series)
Canc.	Cancelleria Reial (within ACA series)
CCCM	*Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis*. Turnhout, Belgium, 1966–.
CHR	*Catholic Historical Review*
CIC	*Corpus iuris canonici*. Edited by Emil Friedberg. 2 vols. Leipzig, 1879–81.
GLAJJ	*Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*. Edited by Menachem Stern. 3 vols. Jerusalem, 1974–84.
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
JQR	*Jewish Quarterly Review*
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica
MGH *Leges*	Monumenta Germaniae Historica, *Leges*
MGH *Quellen*	Monumenta Germaniae Historica, *Quellen zur Geistesgeschichte des Mittelalters*
MGH SS	Monumenta Germaniae Historica, *Scriptores* (in folio)
MGH SS rer. Germ.	Monumenta Germaniae Historica, *Scriptores in rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi*
MGH SS rer. Germ., n.s.	Monumenta Germaniae Historica, *Scriptores in rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi, Nova series*
PAAJR	*Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research*
PL	*Patrologiae cursus completus, series Latina*. Edited by J.-P. Migne. 221 vols. Paris, 1844–64.

PRO	Public Record Office
RC	Registrum Communium (within ADB series)
Reg.	Registro (within ACA series)
Régné, *History*	*History of the Jews in Aragon: Regesta and Documents (1213–1327*). Compiled by Jean Régné and edited by Yom Tov Assis. Jerusalem, 1978.
REJ	*Revue des études juives*
RHGF	*Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France*. Edited by M. Bouquet et al., 24 vols. Paris, 1738–1904. New ed., edited by Léopold Delisle. 20 vols. Paris, 1869–80.
TJHSE	*Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England*
TNA	National Archives
X	*Decretales Gregorii IX (Liber extra*)

Notes

INTRODUCTION

1. For discussions of the complex relationship between the experience of conversion and documents written about it, see Ryan Szpiech, *Conversion and Narrative: Reading and Religious Authority in Medieval Polemic* (Philadelphia, 2013); Jean-Claude Schmitt, *La conversion d'Hermann le juif: Autobiographie, histoire et fiction* (Paris, 2003); Karl Morrison, *Understanding Conversion* (Charlottesville, VA, 1992); Karl Morrison, *Conversion and Text: The Cases of Augustine of Hippo, Herman-Judah, and Constantine Tsatsos* (Charlottesville, VA, 1992). On the historiography of "conversion studies," see Yaniv Fox and Yosi Yisraeli, eds., *Contesting Inter-Religious Conversion in the Medieval World* (New York, 2017), 2–9.

2. On medieval Jewish terms for Jewish apostates and their meanings, see Norman Roth, *Conversos, Inquisition, and the Expulsion of the Jews from Spain* (London, 1995), 5–7. On this terminology in early modern Ashkenaz, see Elisheva Carlebach, *Divided Souls: Converts from Judaism in Germany, 1500–1750* (New Haven, CT, 2001), 12; Ruth Langer, *Cursing the Christians? A History of the Birkat HaMinim* (Oxford, 2012), 133–34.

3. Inquisition, 25 Henry III, no. 17, published in Walter Rye, "The Alleged Abduction and Circumcision of a Boy at Norwich in 1230," *Norfolk Antiquarian Miscellany* 1 (1877): 333–34 (no. 18).

4. See Zefira Entin Rokeah, "The Jewish Church-Robbers and Host-Desecrators of Norwich (ca. 1285)," *REJ* 141 (1982): 341–42 n. 29.

5. London, TNA, KB 26/115B, m. 22.

6. London, TNA, KB 26/115B, m. 22: "voluit ipsum facere Judeum."

7. See Vivian Lipman, *The Jews of Medieval Norwich* (London, 1967), 38–46, 78, 89, 106–7, 174. On the name "Diaia," see *Starrs and Jewish Charters Preserved in the British Museum*, ed. Israel Abrahams and H. P. Stokes, with additions by Herbert Loewe, 3 vols. (Cambridge, 1930–32), 2:166–69.

8. For an analysis of this image, see Sara Lipton, "Isaac and Antichrist in the Archives," *Past and Present* 232 (2016): 3–44.

9. London, TNA, KB 26/115B, m. 22.

10. London, TNA, KB 26/115B, m. 22.

11. For an overview of this violence, see Rye, "The Alleged Abduction," 312–21; Lipman, *Jews of Medieval Norwich*, 62–64. On tensions between Christians and Jews in thirteenth-century England, see Robert C. Stacey, "1240–60: A Watershed in Anglo-Jewish Relations?," *Historical Research* 61 (1998): 135–40; Nicholas Vincent, "Jews, Poitevins, and the Bishop of Winchester, 1231–1234," in *Judaism and Christianity*, ed. Diana Wood (Oxford, 1992), 119–32; Paul R. Hyams, "The Jewish Minority in Mediaeval England, 1066–1290," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 25 (1974): 270–93. On the situation specifically during the 1230s, see Lipton, "Isaac and Antichrist," 33–35. On Jewish-Christian tensions in thirteenth-century Norwich, see Rokeah, "The Jewish Church-Robbers."

12. London, TNA, KB 26/115B, m. 22.

13. Pipe Roll, 19 Henry III (dorse of Norfolk and Suffolk) (printed in Rye, "The Alleged Abduction," 330 [no. 10]). Norwich Jews were imprisoned first in Norwich, then in London at Newgate and, finally, at the Tower of London. On these jail transfers, see Close Roll, 19 Henry III, m. 23; Pipe Roll, 19 Henry III, m. 15; Close Roll, 19 Henry III, m. 20 (printed in Rye, "The Alleged Abduction," 329 [nos. 7, 8, 9]).

14. Pipe Roll, 20 Henry III (printed in Rye, "The Alleged Abduction," 330 [no. 11]).

15. Initially, the king told his itinerant justices in Norfolk that the Jews were to be tried in this manner (Close Roll, 24 Henry III, m. 17 [printed in Rye, "The Alleged Abduction," 332 (no. 16); and in J. M. Rigg, ed., *Select Pleas, Starrs, and Other Records from the Rolls of the Exchequer of the Jews, A.D. 1220–1284* (London, 1902), xlvii]). But a month later, he ordered the justices to proceed as they thought best, even though the Jews had paid money, "as the business would never be finished if Jews were joined with Christians in a jury" (Close Roll, 24 Henry III, m. 18/16? [printed in Rye, "The Alleged Abduction," 333 (no. 17); and in Rigg, *Select Pleas*, xlvii]).

16. Matthew Paris, *Chronica majora*, ed. Henry Richards Luard, 7 vols. (London, 1872–83), 4:30–31.

17. On "Theor" as a corruption of Diaia, see Lipman, *Jews of Medieval Norwich*, 61.

18. These Jews included Abraham le Prestre; Jacob; Magister Meir and his wife Rosa; Senioret; Meir, son of Senioret; Manasser, son of Mosse; Josce, son of Sampson; Elias, son of Deudone; and Benjamin (Westminster Abbey Muniments, nos. 6695, 9061, cited in Lipman, *Jews of Medieval Norwich*, 61–62).

19. *Close Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, ed. H. C. Maxwell Lyte et al., 14 vols. (London, 1902–1938), 4:247. In his article "Royal Taxation and the Social Structure of Medieval Anglo-Jewry: The Tallages of 1239–1242," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 56 (1985): 179–81, Robert C. Stacey considers the possibility that the Norwich case led also to the imposition on Jews by Henry III of the 20,000 mark tallage (an arbitrary tax levied by kings) of 1241–42.

20. On the expulsion from England, see Robert C. Stacey, "Parliamentary Negotiation and the Expulsion of the Jews from England," *Thirteenth-Century England* 6 (1997): 77–101; Robin Mundill, *England's Jewish Solution: Experiment and Expulsion, 1262–1290* (Cambridge, 1998).

21. Moses Margoliouth, *The Jews in Great Britain: Being a Series of Six Lectures* (London, 1846), 230.

22. See, for example, Leonard Glick, *Marked in Your Flesh: Circumcision from Ancient Judea to Modern America* (Oxford, 2005), 103; James Shapiro, *Shakespeare and the Jews* (New York, 1996), 108, 111.

23. Louis Newman, *Jewish Influence on Christian Reform Movements* (New York, 1925); Jacob Raisin, *Gentile Reactions to Jewish Ideals, with Special Reference to Proselytes* (New York, 1953).

24. See, for example, Ben Zion Wacholder, "Cases of Proselytizing in the Tosafist Responsa," *JQR* 51 (1961): 288–315.

25. See, for example, Bernhard Blumenkranz, *Juifs et chrétiens dans le monde occidental, 430–1096*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 2006), 159–211; Norman Golb, "Notes on the Conversion of European Christians to Judaism in the Eleventh Century," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 16 (1965): 69–74.

26. Nathan Sampter, *Judenthum und Proselytismus: Ein Vortrag* (Breslau, 1897); Wolfgang Giese, "*In Iudaismum lapsus est:* Jüdische Proselytenmacherei im frühen und hohen Mittelalter (600–1300)," *Historisches Jahrbuch der Görres-Gesellschaft* 88 (1968): 407–18; Kenneth Auman, "Conversion from Christianity to Judaism in the Middle Ages" (master's thesis, Yeshiva University, 1977).

27. See, for example, Ephraim Kanarfogel, *Brothers from Afar: Rabbinic Approaches Toward Apostasy and Reversion in Medieval Europe* (Detroit, forthcoming); Ephraim Kanarfogel, "Approaches to Conversion in Medieval European Rabbinic Literature: From Ashkenaz to Sefarad," in

Conversion, Intermarriage, and Jewish Identity, ed. Robert S. Hirt, Adam Mintz, and Marc Stern (New York, 2015), 217–57; Ephraim Kanarfogel, "Returning Apostates and Their Marital Partners in Medieval Ashkenaz," in Fox and Yisraeli, *Contesting Inter-Religious Conversion*, 160–76; Avraham (Rami) Reiner, "The Status of the Proselyte in France and Ashkenaz in the Middle Ages" [in Hebrew], In *Ta-Shma: Studies in Judaica in Memory of Israel M. Ta-Shma*, ed. Rami Reiner et al. (Alon Shvut, 2011), 747–69, published in French as "L'attitude envers les prosélytes en Allemagne et en France du XI^{e} au XIII^{e} siècle," *REJ* 167 (2008): 99–119.

28. Robert I. Burns, "Jews and Moors in the *Siete Partidas* of Alfonso X the Learned: A Background Perspective," in *Medieval Spain: Culture, Conflict, and Coexistence*, ed. Roger Collins and Anthony Goodman (New York, 2002), 50.

29. See, for example, Jeremy Cohen, "The Mentality of the Medieval Jewish Apostate: Peter Alfonsi, Hermann of Cologne, and Pablo Christiani," in *Jewish Apostasy in the Modern World*, ed. Todd A. Endelmann (New York, 1988), 20–47; Jeremy Cohen, *The Friars and the Jews: The Evolution of Medieval Anti-Judaism* (Ithaca, NY, 1982).

30. See, for example, Paola Tartakoff, "Testing Boundaries: Jewish Conversion and Cultural Fluidity in Medieval Europe, 1200–1391," *Speculum* 90 (2015): 728–62; David Malkiel, "Jews and Apostates in Medieval Europe: Boundaries Real and Imagined," *Past and Present* 194 (2007): 3–34; William Chester Jordan, "Adolescence and Conversion in the Middle Ages," in *Jews and Christians in Twelfth-Century Europe*, ed. Michael A. Signer and John Van Engen (Notre Dame, IN, 2001), 77–93; Joseph Shatzmiller, "Jewish Converts to Christianity in Medieval Europe, 1200–1500," in *Cross Cultural Convergences in the Crusader Period: Essays Presented to Aryeh Grabois on His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. Michael Goodich, Sophia Menache, and Sylvia Schein (New York, 1995), 297–318; Kenneth Stow, "Jacob of Venice and the Jewish Settlement in Venice in the Thirteenth Century," in *Community and Culture: Essays in Jewish Studies in Honor of the Ninetieth Anniversary of the Founding of Gratz College, 1895–1985*, ed. Nahum M. Waldman (Philadelphia, 1987), 228–32; Simha Goldin, "Juifs et juifs convertis au Moyen Âge: 'Es-tu encore mon frère?,'" *Annales: Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 54 (1999): 851–74.

31. See Paola Tartakoff, "Jewish Women and Apostasy in the Medieval Crown of Aragon, c. 1300–1391," *Jewish History* 24 (2010): 7–32.

32. See Tartakoff, "Testing Boundaries."

33. Exceptionally, In *Conversion and Narrative*, Ryan Szpiech addresses conversion both to and from Judaism in a discussion of narrative representations of conversion in polemical works directed against other religions.

34. Israel Yuval, *Two Nations in Your Womb: Perceptions of Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Berkeley, CA, 2006), 167. On the historiography of interpretations of medieval anti-Jewish accusations, especially the blood libel, see Hannah R. Johnson, *Blood Libel: The Ritual Murder Accusation at the Limit of Jewish History* (Ann Arbor, MI, 2012).

35. On the violence of 1391, see Benjamin Gampel, *Anti-Jewish Riots in the Crown of Aragon and the Royal Response, 1391–1392* (Cambridge, 2016).

36. On the historiography of this divide, see Tartakoff, "Testing Boundaries."

37. See Kanarfogel, "Approaches to Conversion."

38. See the discussion of these approaches to *Sefer Ḥasidim* in Ivan G. Marcus, *The Religious and Social Ideas of the Jewish Pietists in Medieval Germany: Collected Essays* [in Hebrew] (Jerusalem, 1986), 11–24.

CHAPTER 1

1. On the ways that persecution functioned socially and politically in medieval Europe, see R. I. Moore's controversial classic *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Power and Deviance in Western Europe, 950–1250* (Oxford, 1987); and the reappraisal by John Arnold, "Persecution and Power in Medieval Europe: *The Formation of a Persecuting Society*, by R. I. Moore," *AHR* 123 (2018): 165–74. On problems with distinguishing between "popular" and "elite" views and between the perspectives of the "laity" and the "clergy," see the discussion and bibliography in Caroline Walker Bynum, *Christian Materiality: An Essay on Religion in Late Medieval Europe* (New York, 2015), 129–30, 332–33.

2. For an incisive overview of these factors, see David Berger, "From Crusades to Blood Libels to Expulsions: Some New Approaches to Medieval Anti-Semitism," Second Victor J. Selmanowitz Memorial Lecture, Touro College, New York, 1997, published in *Persecution, Polemic, and Dialogue: Essays in Jewish-Christian Relations*, ed. David Berger (Boston, 2010), 15–39. Also see David Berger, "Anti-Semitism: An Overview," in *History and Hate: The Dimensions of Anti-Semitism*, ed. David Berger (Philadelphia, 1986), 3–14; Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The Crusades, Christianity, and Islam* (New York, 2008), 25–27; Salo Wittmayer Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1952–83), 11:192–201; Jeremy Cohen, *The Friars and the Jews*, esp. 255; Robert C. Stacey, "History, Religion, and Medieval Antisemitism: A Response to Gavin Langmuir," *Religious Studies Review* 20 (1994): 95–101.

3. Thomas of Monmouth, *The Life and Passion of William of Norwich*, ed. and trans. Miri Rubin (London, 2014). The scholarship on William of Norwich is vast. Salient contributions include Gavin I. Langmuir, "Thomas of Monmouth: Detector of Ritual Murder," *Speculum* 59 (1984): 820–46; John M. McCulloh, "Jewish Ritual Murder: William of Norwich, Thomas of Monmouth, and the Early Dissemination of the Myth," *Speculum* 72 (1997): 698–740; Johnson, *Blood Libel;* E. M. Rose, *The Murder of William of Norwich: The Origins of the Blood Libel in Medieval Europe* (Oxford, 2015). Israel Yuval argues that the ritual murder accusation originated in German lands during the First or Second Crusade: "The Vengeance and the Curse, the Blood and the Libel" [in Hebrew], *Zion* 58 (1992–93): 33–90. For an overview of the spread of related charges, see Anna Sapir Abulafia, *Christian-Jewish Relations, 1000–1300: Jews in the Service of Medieval Christendom* (Harlow, UK, 2011), 167–88. On medieval Jewish responses to ritual murder accusations, see Israel Yuval, "'They Tell Lies: You Ate the Man': Jewish Reactions to Ritual Murder Accusations," in *Religious Violence Between Christians and Jews: Medieval Roots, Modern Perspectives*, ed. Anna Sapir Abulafia (New York, 2002), 86–106.

4. On the charge that Jewish medical practitioners poisoned Christian patients, see Irven Resnick, *Marks of Distinction: Christian Perceptions of Jews in the High Middle Ages* (Washington, DC, 2012), 136–40. On accusations of well poisoning, see Tzafrir Barzilay, "Early Accusations of Well Poisoning Against Jews: Medieval Reality or Historiographical Fiction?," *Medieval Encounters* 22 (2016): 517–39; Tzafrir Barzilay, "Well Poisoning Accusations in Medieval Europe: 1250–1500" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2016).

5. On the rise and spread of charges of host desecration, see Miri Rubin, *Gentile Tales: The Narrative Assault on Late Medieval Jews* (New Haven, CT, 1999).

6. On the roles of Jews in the medieval English economy, see Robert C. Stacey, "Jewish Lending and the Medieval English Economy," in *A Commercialising Economy: England 1086 to c. 1300*, ed. Richard H. Britnell and Bruce M. S. Campbell (Manchester, 1995), 78–101. On the evolution of the stereotype of the Jewish moneylender, see Julie L. Mell, *The Myth of the Medieval Jewish Moneylender*, 2 vols. (New York, 2017–18).

7. Ralph de Diceto, *Ymagines historiarum*, In *Radulfi de Diceto decani Lundoniensis opera historica*, ed. William Stubbs, 2 vols. (London, 1876), 2:69. See the discussion of anti-Jewish violence in England at this time in Abulafia, *Christian-Jewish Relations*, 158–61.

8. *Pleas Before the King or His Justices, 1198–1202*, ed. Doris Mary Stenton, Publications of the Selden Society, vol. 67 (London, 1948), 295–96.

9. See Robert C. Stacey, "1240–60: A Watershed in Anglo-Jewish Relations?," *Historical Research* 61 (1998): 135–40; Nicholas Vincent, "Jews, Poitevins, and the Bishop of Winchester, 1231–1234," in *Judaism and Christianity*, ed. Diana Wood (Oxford, 1992), 119–32; Hyams, "Jewish Minority in Mediaeval England," 270–93.

10. See discussion in Lipman, *Jews of Medieval Norwich*, 35–38, 62–64.

11. See Sean Murphy, "Concern About Judaizing in Academic Treatises on the Law, c. 1130–c. 1230," *Speculum* 83 (2007): 560–94.

12. See, for example, Genesis 17:10–14; Judith 14:10.

13. Matthew Paris, *Historia Anglorum*, ed. Frederic Madden, 3 vols. (London, 1866–69; repr., Nendeln, Liechtenstein, 1964–71), 2:254.

14. London, TNA, KB 26/115B, m. 22.

15. *Der Passauer Anonymus: Ein Sammelwerk über Ketzer, Juden, Antichrist aus der Mitte des 13. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Alexander Patschovsky, Schriften der MGH 22 (Stuttgart, 1968), 152. I am grateful to Christine Magin for bringing this source to my attention. On the treatise of the Passau Anonymous, also see Margaret Nickson, "The 'Pseudo-Reinerius' Treatise: The Final Stage of a Thirteenth-Century Work on Heresy from the Diocese of Passau," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 34 (1967): 255–314. Other Latin and Hebrew sources also state that converts to Judaism "circumcised themselves." It is not clear when this is to be taken literally and when it is a mere turn of phrase.

16. See Paola Tartakoff, "From Conversion to Ritual Murder: Re-Contextualizing the Circumcision Charge," *Medieval Encounters* 24 (2018): 361–89.

17. On the process of conversion to Judaism in antiquity, see Shaye J. D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties* (Berkeley, CA, 1999); and David C. Sim, "Gentiles, God-Fearers and Proselytes," in *Attitudes to Gentiles in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. David C. Sim and James S. McLaren (London, 2013), 18–26. On conversion to Judaism as a rejection of core Roman values, see, for example, Tacitus, *Historiae* 5.5.1–2, trans. C. H. Moore, In *GLAJJ*, 2:19 (no. 281); and discussion in Peter Schäfer, *Judeophobia: Attitudes Toward the Jews in the Ancient World* (Cambridge, MA, 1997), 116–18.

18. This process was redacted by rabbinic authorities in Babylonia by the fifth century CE in the Babylonian Talmud (hereafter, BT), tractate Yevamot 47a–b. It is depicted also, with substantial variations, In the post-talmudic tractate Gerim 1:1. On the origins and development of this procedure, see Shaye J. D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness;* Moshe Lavee, "The 'Tractate' of Conversion —BT Yeb. 46–48 and the Evolution of Conversion Procedure," *European Journal of Jewish Studies* 4 (2011): 169–213; Moshe Lavee, "The Rabbinic Conversion to Judaism; the Rabbinic Conversion of Judaism," in *Conversion in Late Antiquity: Christianity, Islam, and Beyond*, ed. Arietta Papaconstantinou, with Neil McLynn and Daniel L. Schwartz (Farnham, 2015), 219–40; Joseph Kulp, "The Participation of a Court in the Jewish Conversion Process," *JQR* 94.3 (2004): 437–70.

19. See Karin Neutel and Matthew Anderson, "The First Cut Is the Deepest: Masculinity and Circumcision in the First Century," in *Biblical Masculinities Foregrounded*, ed. Peter-Ben Smit and Ovidiu Creanga (Sheffield, 2014), 291–306.

20. Herennius Modestinus, *Digesta* 48.8.11, In Amnon Linder, ed., *The Jews in Roman Imperial Legislation* (Detroit, 1987), 100.

21. *Historia Augusta*, 17:1, In *GLAJJ*, 2, 625 (no. 515).

22. Paulus, *Sententiae*, 5.22.3–4, In Linder, *Jews in Roman Imperial Legislation*, 50, 80–81, 118.

23. See, for example, the Theodosian Code 16.8.1, printed and discussed in Linder, *Jews in Roman Imperial Legislation*, 81, 124–32. For an overview of this legislation, see Shlomo Simonsohn, *The*

Apostolic See and the Jews: History (hereafter, Shlomo Simonsohn, *History*) (Toronto, 1991), 228–30.

24. See discussion in Steven Kruger, *The Spectral Jew: Conversion and Embodiment in Medieval Europe* (Minneapolis, 2006), 170; Szpiech, *Conversion and Narrative*, 5, 24, 96.

25. See, for example, Romans 2:25–29.

26. See discussion in Chapter 3.

27. See discussion in Shlomo Simonsohn, *The Jews of Italy: Antiquity*, Brill's Series in Jewish Studies 52 (Leiden, 2014), 142–43.

28. See the sources collected, translated, and annotated in Amnon Linder, ed., *The Jews in the Legal Sources of the Early Middle Ages* (Detroit, 1997).

29. Venantius Fortunatus, *Vita Germani episcopi Parisiaci*, ed. Bruno Krusch, In MGH SS rer. Germ. (Hannover, 1920), 7:411. See discussion in Michael Toch, *The Economic History of European Jews: Late Antiquity and Early Middle Ages* (Leiden, 2013), 179–80.

30. See Toch, *The Economic History*, 183 n. 18; Shlomo Simonsohn, *History*, 157–63.

31. See Jeremy Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law: Ideas of the Jew in Medieval Christianity* (Berkeley, CA, 1999), 123–67; Bernhard Blumenkranz, *Les auteurs chrétiens latins du moyen âge sur les juifs et le judaïsme* (Paris, 1963), 159–211, esp. 178.

32. See Jeremy Cohen, "Scholarship and Intolerance in the Medieval Academy: The Study and Evaluation of Judaism in European Christendom," *AHR* 91 (1986): 592–613; published also in *Essential Papers on Judaism and Christianity in Conflict: From Late Antiquity to the Reformation*, ed. Jeremy Cohen (New York, 1991), 310–41.

33. For examples of this trend in the late eleventh century, see, for example, Peter Damian, *Antilogus contra Judaeos*, In *PL* 145:41; and the discussion in David Berger, "Mission to the Jews and Jewish-Christian Contacts in the Polemical Literature of the High Middle Ages," *AHR* 91 (1986): 580.

34. See, for example, Rigord, *Histoire de Philippe Auguste*, ed. and trans. (into French) Élisabeth Carpentier, Georges Pon, and Yves Chauvin (Paris, 2006), 144; *Osnabrücker Urkundenbuch*, ed. Friedrich Philippi, Max Bär, and Horst-Rüdiger Jarck, 6 vols. (Osnabrück, 1892–1989), 1:1088–89 (no. 1264); and the discussion in Shlomo Simonsohn, *History*, 163.

35. Solomon Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews in the XXIIIth Century*, 2 vols. (New York, 1966–89), 1:105–9 (no. 14). On this missive, see John Tolan, "Of Milk and Blood: Innocent III and the Jews, Revisited," in *Jews and Christians in Thirteenth-Century France*, ed. Elisheva Baumgarten and Judah Galinsky (New York, 2015), 139–49.

36. *Les Conciles de la Province de Tours*, ed. Joseph Avril (Paris, 1987), 130–31. For an analysis of these thirteen articles, see Joseph Avril, "La province de Tours après le IV^{e} concile du Latran: Les 'Articuli missi archiepiscopo Turonensi …,'" *Annuarium Historia Conciliorum* 6 (1974): 291–306.

37. Berthold of Regensburg, *Vollständige Ausgabe seiner Predigten*, ed. Franz Pfeiffer, 2 vols. (1862–80; repr., Berlin, 1965), 1:530. English translation from Jeremy Cohen, *The Friars and the Jews*, 234. On Berthold of Regensburg, see Cohen, *The Friars and the Jews*, 229–38.

38. Pierre Rangeard, *Histoire de l'Université d'Angers*, 2 vols. (Angers, 1877), 2:183–87. English translation from Robert Chazan, ed., *Church, State, and Jew in the Middle Ages* (West Orange, NJ, 1980), 313–17.

39. Gerald of Wales, *Speculum ecclesiae*, In *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera*, ed. J. S. Brewer, vol. 4 (London, 1873), 139–40.

40. See Joseph C. Castora, "The Cistercian Order as Portrayed in the *Speculum Ecclesiae* of Gerald of Wales," *Analecta Cisterciensia* 53 (1997): 73–97.

41. Gerald of Wales, *Speculum ecclesiae*, 139–41.

42. *Annals of Dunstable*, In *Councils and Synods, with Other Documents Relating to the English Church*, ed. F. M. Powicke and C. R. Cheney, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1964), 2:106.

43. Paris, *Historia Anglorum*, 2:254–55.

44. The next known case transpired in 1401, when the Lollard William Sawtrey was put to death. See discussion in Frederic Maitland, "The Deacon and the Jewess, or, Apostasy at Common Law," in *Roman Canon Law in the Church of England: Six Essays*, ed. Frederic Maitland (London, 1898), 158–79.

45. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 1:198–201 (no. 69).

46. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 1:204–7 (no. 71).

47. Lucas of Tuy, *De altera vita fideique controversiis adversus Albigensium errores, libri tres*, 3.3, ed. Juan de Maríana and J. Gretser (Ingolstad, 1612), 159–60. See discussion in Norman Roth, "Jews and Albigensians in the Middle Ages: Lucas of Tuy on Heretics in Leon," *Sefarad* 41 (1981): 71–93; Baron, *Social and Religious History*, 9:57–58.

48. *Fuero juzgo en Latin y castettano* (Madrid, 1815), 12.2.17, p. 184; compare with the Latin, p. 146. English translation of the Latin *Forum judicum* in *The Visigothic Code (Forum judicum*), trans. S. P. Scott (Boston, 1910), 376–77.

49. *Fuero juzgo* 12.3.4, pp. 189–90; compare with the Latin, pp. 150–51. English translation of the Latin *Forum judicum* in *The Visigothic Code*, 385–86. On castration as a Visigothic punishment for Jews who circumcised Christians, see Rolf H. Bremmer Jr., "The Children He Never Had; the Husband She Never Served: Castration and Genital Mutilation in Medieval Frisian Law," in *Castration and Culture in the Middle Ages*, ed. Larissa Tracy (Cambridge, 2013), 111.

50. On Jewish-Christian relations in medieval Castile, see Maya Soifer Irish, *Jews and Christians in Medieval Castile: Tradition, Coexistence, and Change* (Washington, DC, 2016). I am grateful to Maya Soifer Irish for discussing this material with me.

51. Dwayne E. Carpenter, *Alfonso X and the Jews: An Edition and Commentary on "Siete Partidas" 7.24 "De los judíos,* "Modern Philology 115 (Berkeley, CA, 1986), 29, 63–66.

52. Carpenter, *Alfonso X and the Jews*, 34, 83–84. Unlike several other laws in this section of the *Siete partidas*, laws 2 and 7 were not drawn from the collection of pontifical decrees known as the *Decretals*, which was compiled in 1234 by the Dominican canonist and papal confessor Raymond Penyafort. See Larry Simon, "Jews in the Legal Corpus of Alfonso el Sabio," *Comitatus: A Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 18 (1987): 86–88; Burns, "Jews and Moors in the *Siete Partidas*," 53.

53. *Fuero real*, book 4, title 2, law 2, in *Opúsculos legales del rey don Alfonso el Sabio* (Madrid, 1836), 2:118.

54. See Teófilo Ruiz, "El siglo XIII y primera mitad del siglo XIV," in *Burgos en la edad media*, ed. Carlos Estepa Díez and Julio Valdeón Baruque (Valladolid, 1984), 113. Also see Simon, "Jews in the Legal Corpus of Alfonso el Sabio," 80–97.

55. Salient contributions to scholarship on thirteenth-century heresies and the papal Inquisition include Malcolm Lambert, *Medieval Heresy: Popular Movements from the Gregorian Reform to the Reformation*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1992); James B. Given, *Inquisition and Medieval Society: Power, Discipline, and Resistance in Languedoc* (Ithaca, NY, 1997); Mark Gregory Pegg, *The Corruption of Angels: The Great Inquisition of 1245–1246* (Princeton, NJ, 2001).

56. On Christian apostasy to Islam during the Middle Ages, see Robert I. Burns, "Renegades, Adventurers, and Sharp Businessmen: The Thirteenth-Century Spaniard in the Cause of Islam," *CHR* 58 (1972): 341–66; A. J. Forey, "Western Converts to Islam (Later Eleventh to Later Fifteenth Centuries)," *Traditio* 68 (2013): 153–231. On Christian anxieties over the apostasy to Islam of Christian captives in particular, see Jarbel Rodriguez, *Captives and Their Saviors in the Medieval Crown of Aragon* (Washington, DC, 2011), 67–93.

57. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 1:170–75 (no. 53), 184–87 (no. 61), 207–9 (no. 73).

58. See John Tolan, "Ramon de Penyafort's *Responses to Questions Concerning Relations Between Christians and Saracens:* Critical Edition and Translation," in Convivencia *and Medieval Spain: Essays in Honor of Thomas F. Glick*, ed. Mark T. Abate (Cham, Switzerland, 2019), 159–92.

59. Paris, *Chronica majora*, 5:106–9. English translation in *Matthew Paris's English History from the Year 1235 to 1273*, trans. J. A. Giles, 2 vols. (London, 1852–54): 2:334–36. Paris additionally related a likely fictitious episode in which King John of England offered to "renounce the Christian law, which he deemed empty, and faithfully adhere to the Muhammadan law" (Paris, *Chronica majora*, 2:559–60). Matthew Paris's account of this episode was repeated in the *Gesta Abbatum Monasterii Sancti Albani*, ed. Henry Thomas Riley, 3 vols. (London, 1867), 1:236–37. See discussion in Ilan Shoval, *King John's Delegation to the Almohad Court (1212): Medieval Interreligious Interactions and Modern Historiography* (Leiden, 2016); Nevill Barbour, "The Embassy Sent by King John of England to Miramolin, King of Morocco," *Al-Andalus* 25 (1960): 373–81.

60. On the increasing linkage of Jews and Muslims in canon law during the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, see Benjamin Kedar, "*De Iudeis et Sarracenis:* On the Categorization of Muslims in Medieval Canon Law," in *Studia in honorem eminentissimi cardinalis Alphonsi N. Stickler*, ed. Rosalius Josephus Castillo Lara (Rome, 1992), 207–13; James Powell, "The Papacy and the Muslim Frontier," in *Muslims Under Latin Rule, 1100–1300*, ed. James Powell (Princeton, NJ, 1991), 189–93.

61. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 1:198–201 (no. 69). A cursory survey of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century texts suggests that, more often than not, Christian references to conversion to Islam (unlike Christian references to conversion to Judaism) did not mention circumcision.

62. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 1:170–73 (no. 53). On Christian conversion to Islam in thirteenth-century Hungary, see Nora Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom: Jews, Muslims and "Pagans" in Medieval Hungary, c. 1000–c. 1300* (Cambridge, 2001), 152–54, 186–87; Katarína Stulrajterová, "Convivenza, Convenienza and Conversion: Islam in Medieval Hungary (1000–1400)," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 24 (2013): 194–97. On papal relations with Hungary in this period, see Michael Lower, "Negotiating Interfaith Relations in Eastern Christendom," *Essays in Medieval Studies* 21 (2004): 49–62.

63. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 1:184–87 (no. 61), 206–11 (no. 73).

64. *Siete partidas* 7.25.6, In *Las siete partidas del rey don Alfonso el Sabio* (Madrid, 1807), 3:679.

65. Carpenter, *Alfonso X and the Jews*, 34, 83–84.

66. *Fori antiqui Valentiae, edición crítica*, ed. M. Dualde Serrano (Valencia, 1967), 242 (no. 119.29). See Burns, "Renegades," 345 n. 8.

67. *Registres de Grégoire IX*, ed. Lucien Auvray, 4 vols. (Paris, 1896), 1:707–9 (no. 1253).

68. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 1:184–87 (no. 61), 206–11 (no. 73).

69. *Epistolae saeculi XIII e regestis pontificum Romanorum selectae*, ed. Carl Rodenberg and G. H. Pertz, 3 vols. (Berlin, 1883–94), 1:573–76. See discussion in Powell, "The Papacy and the Muslim Frontier," 195–96.

70. L. J. Sackville, *Heresy and Heretics in the Thirteenth Century: The Textual Representations* (Woodbridge, 2011), 161–71.

71. *De altera vita*, 278. See Baron, *Social and Religious History*, 9:57–58; Norman Roth, "Jews and Albigensians."

72. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 1:244–45 (no. 99).

73. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 1:184–87 (no. 61), 206–11 (no. 73).

74. *Les Conciles de la Province de Tours*, 130–31.

75. *Racconti esemplari di predicatori del due e trecento*, ed. Giorgio Varanini and Guido Baldassarri, 3 vols. (Rome, 1993), 2:322–28 (nos. 167–68). On Giordano da Pisa, see Jeremy Cohen, *The Friars and the Jews*, 238–41.

76. *Les Conciles de la Province de Tours*, 130–31.

77. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 1:198–201 (no. 69).

78. For the words of Alexander III, see Shlomo Simonsohn, *The Apostolic See and the Jews: Documents, 492–1404* (hereafter, Shlomo Simonsohn, *Documents*) (Toronto, 1988), 59–60 (no. 56). For the words of Alexander of Hales, see his *Summa universae theologiae*, 4 vols. (Venice, 1625), 2:392 (Q.160). Also see *X* 5.6.8, In CIC, 2:774.

79. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 2:106–10 (no. 28).

80. *X* 5.7.10, In *CIC*, 2:782.

81. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 1:184–87 (no. 61), 206–11 (no. 73).

82. *Registres de Grégoire IX*, 1:707–9 (no. 1253).

83. For a list of bishops who attended the Fourth Lateran Council, see Raymonde Foreville, *Latran I, II, III et Latran IV* (Paris, 1965), 391–95. The composition of the 1222 Oxford Council is not known. According to the continuator of the English chronicler Gervase of Canterbury, the council was celebrated by the archbishop and "the rest of the bishops of England and Wales" (*Councils and Synods*, 2:100 n. 2).

84. C. H. Lawrence, "Edmund of Abingdon [St. Edmund of Abingdon, Edmund Rich] (c. 1174–1240), archbishop of Canterbury," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2014), https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/8503.

85. On the conversionary fervor of the thirteenth century, see, for example, Berthold Altaner, *Die Dominikanermissionen des 13. Jahrhunderts*, Breslauer Studien zur historischen Theologie (Habelschwerdt, 1924); Robert I. Burns, "Christian-Islamic Confrontation in the West: The Thirteenth-Century Dream of Conversion," *AHR* 76 (1971): 1386–434; Benjamin Kedar, *Crusade and Mission: European Approaches Toward the Muslim* (Princeton, NJ, 1984); Robert Chazan, *Daggers of Faith: Thirteenth-Century Christian Missionizing and Jewish Response* (Berkeley, CA, 1989); Robert Chazan, *Barcelona and Beyond: The Disputation of 1263 and Its Aftermath* (Berkeley, 1992); Jeremy Cohen, *The Friars and the Jews;* Harvey J. Hames, "Approaches to Conversion in the Late Thirteenth-Century Church," *Studia Lulliana* 35 (1995): 75–84; Harvey J. Hames, *The Art of Conversion: Christianity and Kabbalah in the Thirteenth Century* (Leiden, 2000); John Tolan, "Esgrimiendo la pluma: Polémica y apologética religiosa entre judíos, cristianos y musulmanes (siglos XIII al XV)," in *L'esplendor de la Mediterrània medieval (segles XIII–XV*) (Barcelona, 2004), 243–59. Robin Vose, *Dominicans, Muslims, and Jews in the Medieval Crown of Aragon* (Cambridge, 2009), provides a corrective to much of this historiography.

86. See discussions in Kedar, *Crusade and Mission;* Isabelle Heullant-Donat, "La perception des premiers martyrs franciscains à l'intérieur de l'Ordre au XIIIe siècle," in *Religion et mentalités au Moyen Âge*, ed. Sophie Cassagnes-Brouquet et al. (Rennes, 2003), 211–20; James D. Ryan, "Missionary Saints of the High Middle Ages: Martyrdom, Popular Veneration, and Canonization," *CHR* 90 (2004): 1–28; Vose, *Dominicans, Muslims, and Jews*, 198–208; John Tolan, *Saint Francis and the Sultan: The Curious History of a Christian-Muslim Encounter* (Oxford, 2009).

87. *Monumenta Ordinis fratrum praedicatorum historica*, 27 vols. (Rome, 1896–1998), 5:18–19.

88. Published in Karl-Ernst Lupprian, ed., *Die Beziehungen der Päpste zu islamischen und mongolischen Herrschern im 13. Jahrhundert anhand ihres Briefwechsels* (Vatican City, 1981), 120–27 (no. 7–12).

89. Published in José María Coll, "Escuelas de lenguas orientales en los siglos XIII y XIV (Período raymundiano)," *Analecta Sacra Tarraconensia* 17 (1944): 136–38 (no. 1).

90. On the London *domus*, see Michael Adler, *Jews of Medieval England* (London, 1939), 279–339; Robert C. Stacey, "The Conversion of Jews to Christianity in Thirteenth-Century England," *Speculum* 67 (1992): 263–83; Lauren Fogle, "The Domus Conversorum: The Personal interest of Henry

III," *Jewish Historical Studies* 41 (2007): 1–7. A Jewish convert from Norwich named Hugh entered the London *domus* in 1234. See Close Roll, 18 Henry III, m. 20. Printed in Rye, "The Alleged Abduction," 334–35 (no. 20).

91. For an overview of these developments, see Tartakoff, "Testing Boundaries," 728–62.

92. Vose, *Dominicans, Muslims, and Jews*, 181–82. Also see Brian Catlos, *Muslims of Medieval Latin Christendom, c. 1050–1614* (Cambridge, 2014), 333–40.

93. David Berger has shown that, until the twelfth century, most anti-Jewish polemicists displayed a marked reluctance to proselytize among Jews (Berger, "Mission to the Jews").

94. *Teshuvot Maharam mi-Rothenburg ve-Ḥaverav*, ed. Simcha Emanuel (Jerusalem, 2012), 489 (no. 188). On Jewish apostate poverty, see Paola Tartakoff, "Of Purity, Piety, and Plunder: Jewish Apostates and Poverty in Medieval Europe," in *Converts and Conversion to and from Judaism*, ed. Theodor Dunkelgrün and Pawel Maciejko (Philadelphia, forthcoming).

95. English translation published in H. J. Schroeder, *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils: Text, Translation and Commentary* (St. Louis, MO, 1937), 291.

96. On the efforts of thirteenth-century monastic chroniclers to grapple with the contemporary realities of Jewish conversion, see Ruth Nisse, "'Your Name Will No Longer Be Aseneth': Apocrypha, Anti-Martyrdom, and Jewish Conversion in Thirteenth-Century England," *Speculum* 81 (2006): 734–54, esp. 739–43.

97. Scholars have proposed psychological projection as an explanation for other anti-Jewish accusations of the high and late Middle Ages. Lester Little argued, for instance, that charges of financial malfeasance involved the Christian projection of guilt for Christian participation in the profit economy and that characterizations of Jews as murderers of Christians involved the Christian projection of guilt for Christian murders of Jews (Lester K. Little, *Religious Poverty and the Profit Economy in Medieval Europe* [Ithaca, NY, 1978], 42–57). Alan Dundes proposed that the blood libel involved the Christian projection of guilt for the Christian consumption of the body and blood of a savior whose crucifixion Christianity required (Alan Dundes, "The Ritual Murder or Blood Libel Legend: A Study of Anti-Semitic Victimization Through Projective Inversion," *Temenos* 25 [1989]: 7–32). Gavin I. Langmuir understood psychological projection as a key element that differentiated antisemitism from anti-Judaism; see, for example, Langmuir, *Toward a Definition of Antisemitism* (Berkeley, CA, 1990), 338. On the role of psychological projection more generally in theories of antisemitism, see Hannah R. Johnson, "Stories People Tell: The Blood Libel and the History of Antisemitism," *Law and Literature* 28 (2016): 11–26.

98. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 1:136–39 (no. 29).

99. *La documentación pontificia de Honorio III (1216–1227)*, ed. Demetrio Mansilla (Madrid, 1965), 416–17 (no. 562). Expressing further concern about Christian apostasy to Islam in Morocco, In 1226, Honorius advised the archbishop of Toledo to send mendicant friars there to minister to "Christian captives [who we]re said to have apostatized on account of fear of punishments and death, [as well as to] other [Christian captives], feeble in faith, [who we]re tottering toward the edge of an abyss" (*Documentación pontificia*, 450–52 [no. 595]). See the discussion of both of these documents in Michael Lower, "The Papacy and Christian Mercenaries of Thirteenth-Century North Africa," *Speculum* 89 (2014): 617–19.

100. Published in Coll, "Escuelas de lenguas orientales," 138 (no. 2). English translation in Vose, *Dominicans, Muslims, and Jews*, 217–18.

101. *Siete partidas*, 7.24.0, In *Las siete partidas*, 3:669.

102. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 2:113–15 (no. 30). Also see Solomon Grayzel, "Jewish References in a Thirteenth-Century Formulary," *JQR* 46 (1955): 63.

103. See discussion in Kruger, *The Spectral Jew*, 132. This development may be related to the late twelfth-century shift of intellectual paradigms that Caroline Walker Bynum discerned, In which medieval people began to conceive of the nature of change as involving "replacement" instead of "evolution." See Caroline Walker Bynum, *Metamorphosis and Identity* (New York, 2001).

104. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 2:246–49 (no. 7).

105. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 2:287–88 (no. 49).

106. *Jewry-Law in Medieval Germany: Laws and Court Decisions Concerning Jews*, ed. Guido Kisch (New York, 1949), 44. On the *Sachsenspiegel*, see María Dobozy, *The Saxon Mirror: A Sachsenspiegel of the Fourteenth Century* (Philadelphia, 1999).

107. *Regulae juris "ad decus*," J. 164, In *Jewry-Law*, 129.

108. See discussion in Jerry Root, *The Theophilus Legend in Medieval Text and Image* (Cambridge, 2017), 75–77; Pamela Patton, "Constructing the Inimical Jew in the *Cantigas de Santa María:* Theophilus's Magician in Text and Image," in *Beyond the Yellow Badge: Anti-Judaism and Antisemitism in Medieval and Early Modern Visual Culture*, ed. Mitchell Merback (Leiden, 2007), 233–56. Warm thanks to Edgar Vargas Oledo for bringing the Theophilus legend to my attention.

109. *Chronique latine de Guillaume de Nangis de 1113 à 1300 avec les continuations de cette chronique de 1300 à 1368*, ed. Hercule Geraud, 2 vols. (Paris, 1843), 2:33–34; Jean de Saint-Victor, *Prima Vita Joannis XXII*, In Etienne Baluze, *Vitae paparum avenionensium*, ed. Guillaume Mollat, vol. 1 (Paris, 1914), 131; "Chroniques de Saint-Denis," in *RHGF*, 20:703–5; "Chronicon Girardi de Fracheto et anonyma ejusdem operis continuatio," in *RHGF*, 21:56; *Les grandes chroniques de France*, ed. Jules Viard, 10 vols. (Paris, 1920–53), 8:359. See discussion in Carlo Ginzburg, *Ecstasies: Deciphering the Witches' Sabbath*, trans. Raymond Rosenthal (New York, 1991), 35 and Resnick, *Marks of Distinction*, 132–36. I am grateful to Tzafrir Barzilay for bringing these sources to my attention.

110. See Latin and discussion in Christoph T. Maier, "Crusade and Rhetoric Against the Muslim Colony of Lucera: Eudes de Châteauroux's *Sermones de Rebellione Sarracenorum Lucherie in Apulia," Journal of Medieval History* 21 (1995): 378, 380.

111. *Cantigas de Santa María*, ed. Walter Mettman, 4 vols. (Coimbra, 1959–72), 3:152–55 (no. 325). English translation from *Songs of Holy Mary of Alfonso X, the Wise: A Translation of the "Cantigas de Santa María,"*trans. Kathleen Kulp-Hill (Tempe, AZ, 2000), 394. On depictions of Muslims in the *Cantigas*, see Mercedes García-Arenal, "Los moros en las *Cantigas* de Alfonso X el Sabio," *Al-Qantara: Revista de estudios árabes* 6 (1985): 133–51; Albert Bagby, "The Moslem in the *Cantigas* of Alfonso X, El Sabio," *Kentucky Romance Quarterly* 20 (1973): 173–207.

112. Ramon Llull, *Llibre d'Evast e Blanquerna* (Barcelona, 1982), chap. 85, p. 240.

113. Anthony Lappin, *The Medieval Cult of Saint Dominic of Silos*, Modern Humanities Research Association Texts and Dissertations 56 (Leeds, 2002), 291–96.

114. Louis de Mas Latrie, *Traités de paix et de commerce et documents divers concernant les relations des chrétiens avec les Arabes de l'Afrique septentrionale au Moyen Âge* (Paris, 1866), 17–18 (no. 18). See discussion in Lower, "The Papacy," 629–30.

115. *Le registre d'Inquisition de Jacques Fournier, evêque de Pamiers (1318–1325*), ed. J. Duvernoy, 3 vols. (Toulouse, 1965), 2:143. See discussion in Malcolm Barber, "Lepers, Jews, and Moslems: The Plot to Overthrow Christendom in 1321," *History* 66 (1981): 8; Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*, 42–43; Geneviève Pichon, "Quelques réflexions sur l'affaire des lépreux de 1321," *Sources: Travaux historiques* 13 (1988): 27–28.

116. *Obras de S. Pedro Pascual, Mártir*, ed. Pedro Armengol Valenzuela, 4 vols. (Rome, 1906–8), 2:1.

117. English translation in Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 2:3–45, at 15; for the Latin, see Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 2:36–37 n. 90.

118. *Actes et lettres de Charles I*, ed. A. de Bouard (Florence, 1927), 305 (no. 985).

119. Henry Charles Lea, *A History of the Inquisition of the Middle Ages*, 3 vols. (New York, 1887), 2:575 (no. 7).

120. Erfurt, Universitätsbibliothek Erfurt, CA quarto 149, fol. Ir. Quoted in *Der Passau Anonymus*, 23. On medieval Christian references to Muslims as "pagans," see John Tolan, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination* (New York, 2002), 105–34.

121. See Alexander Patschovsky, ed., *Die Anfänge einer Ständigen Inquisition in Böhmen* (Berlin, 1975), 101.

122. Bernard Gui, *Practica Inquisitionis heretice pravitatis*, ed. Célestin Douais (Paris, 1886), 288.

123. On three such manuals that are anonymous, see the discussion in Shaye J. D. Cohen, "Between Judaism and Christianity: The Semicircumcision of Christians According to Bernard Gui, His Sources and R. Eliezer of Metz," *HTR* 94 (2001): 290–93. Also see Gui, *Practica*, 289–90; Nicolas Eymeric, *Directorium inquisitorum* (Venice, 1595), 349.

124. On these schools, see Vose, *Dominicans, Muslims, and Jews*, 104–15.

125. For an overview of these developments, see Paola Tartakoff, "Christian Kings and Jewish Conversion in the Medieval Crown of Aragon," *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 3 (2011): 27–39.

126. Humbert of Romans, *Opusculum tripartitum*, 1.16, In Ortuin Gratius, *Fasciculus rerum expetendarum et fugiendarum*, ed. Edward Brown, 2 vols. (London, 1690), 2:188.

127. For an overview of these developments, see Tartakoff, "Testing Boundaries."

128. Ora Limor, *The Disputation of Majorca, 1286: A Critical Edition and Introduction*, 2 vols. (Jerusalem, 1985), 2:179. See discussion in Kruger, *The Spectral Jew*, 159. On informal Jewish-Christian disputations during the Middle Ages, see Berger, "Mission to the Jews"; and Ram Ben-Shalom, "Between Official and Private Dispute: The Case of Christian Spain and Provence in the Late Middle Ages," *AJS Review* 27 (2003): 23–71.

129. William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum*, 4.317, ed. Thomas Duffus Hardy, 2 vols. (London, 1840), 2:500. I am grateful to Kati Ihnat for bringing this passage to my attention. On William of Malmesbury, see John Gillingham, "The Ironies of History: William of Malmesbury's Views of William II and Henry I," in *Discovering William of Malmesbury*, ed. Rodney M. Thomson, Emily Dolmans, and Emily A. Winkler (London, 2017), 37–48; Kati Ihnat, "William of Malmesbury and the Jews," in *Discovering William of Malmesbury*, 49–64.

130. Jacobus de Voragine, *Legenda aurea*, ed. Theodor Graesse (Bratislava, 1890), 78. I am grateful to Harvey Hames for bringing this source to my attention. This legend about St. Sylvester is discussed in Amnon Linder, "*Ecclesia* and *Synagoga* in the Medieval Myth of Constantine the Great," *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 54 (1976): 1019–60.

131. *Raimundi Lulli Opera Latina*, ed. F. Stegmüller et al. (Palma, 1959–67; Turnhout, Belgium, 1975–), 8:289. English translation in Ramon Llull, *Vita coaetanea*, In *Selected Works of Ramon Llull*, ed. Anthony Bonner, 2 vols. (Princeton, NJ, 1985), 1:34.

132. Aimé du Mont-Cassin, *Ystoire de li Normant:* Édition du manuscrit BnF fr. 688, ed. Michèle Guéret-Laferté (Paris, 2011), 300–302. The English translation is printed in Amatus of Montecassino, *The History of the Normans*, trans. Prescott N. Dunbar, revised with introduction and notes by Graham A. Loud (Woodbridge, 2004), 81–82. I am grateful to Nadia Zeldes for bringing this source to my attention.

133. On this charge, see Miri Rubin, *Gentile Tales*, esp. 40–48; Susan Einbinder, *Beautiful Death: Jewish Poetry and Martyrdom in Medieval France* (Princeton, NJ, 2002), 155–79.

134. *RHGF*, 22:32–33. See discussion in Jessica Elliott, "Jews 'Feigning Devotion': Christian Representations of Converted Jews in French Chronicles Before and After the Expulsion of 1306," in *Jews and Christians in Thirteenth-Century France*, 169–82.

135. Gustave Saige, *Les juifs du Languedoc antérieurement au XIV ^{e} siècle* (Paris, 1881), 235–36 (no. 20).

136. *Cantigas de Santa María*, 1:268–70 (no. 85); Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum historiale*, book 7, chap. III (Venice, 1494), fol. 83v. On depictions of Jews in the *Cantigas*, see Vikki Hatton and Angus MacKay, "Anti-Semitism in the *Cantigas de Santa María*," *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* 60 (1983): 189–99; Albert Bagby, "The Jew in the *Cantigas* of Alfonso X, El Sabio," *Speculum* 46 (1971): 670–88; Sara Lipton, "Where Are the Gothic Jewish Women? On the Non-Iconography of the Jewess in the *Cantigas of Santa María*," *Jewish History* 22 (2008): 139–77.

137. *John Cassian: The Conferences*, trans. and ed. Boniface Ramsey (New York, 1997), 89–90 (*Conf*. 2.8).

138. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, lat. 16610, fol. 4. The Latin is quoted in Gilbert Dahan, *Les intellectuels chrétiens et les juifs au moyen âge* (Paris, 2007), 191 n. 168. The thirteenth-century manuscript is described in Lynn Thorndike, ed., *A History of Magic and Experimental Science*, 8 vols. (New York, 1923), 2:297–99. The dream is analyzed briefly in Blumenkranz, *Juifs et chrétiens*, 159.

139. For an analysis of the Fulda blood libel, see Langmuir, *Toward a Definition*, 263–81. For Henry's letter to Frederick about the two converts, see Close Roll, 19 Henry III, part 2, m. 2, published in W. W. Shirley, *Royal and Other Historical Letters Illustrative of the Reign of Henry III*, 2 vols. (London, 1862–66), 2:8–9. For Frederick's bull discrediting the blood libel, see "Privilegium et sententia in favorem Iudaeorum," in *Constitutiones et acta publica imperatorum et regum*, ed. Ludwig Weiland, In MGH *Leges*, sec. 4 (Hannover, 1896), 2:274–76 (no. 204).

140. Westminster Abbey Muniments, nos. 6695, 9061, cited in Lipman, *Jews of Medieval Norwich*, 61–62.

CHAPTER 2

1. A portion of this chapter has appeared in Tartakoff, "From Conversion to Ritual Murder." It is reprinted by permission of Brill.

2. Rigord, *Gesta Philippi Augusti*, In *Oeuvres de Rigord et de Guillaume le Breton, historiens de Philippe-Auguste*, ed. H. François Delaborde, 2 vols. (Paris, 1882–85), 1:15.

3. Paris, *Chronica majora*, 5:516. On the case of Hugh of Lincoln, see David Carpenter, "Crucifixion and Conversion: King Henry III and the Jews in 1255," in *Laws, Lawyers and Texts: Studies in Medieval Legal History in Honour of Paul Brand*, ed. Susanne Jenks, Jonathan Rose, and Christopher Whittick (Leiden, 2012), 129–48; Gavin I. Langmuir, "The Knight's Tale of Young Hugh of Lincoln," *Speculum* 47 (1972): 459–82; Kate McGrath, "English Jews as Outcasts or Outlaws: The Ritual Murder of Little St. Hugh of Lincoln in Matthew Paris's *Chronica Majora*" in *British Outlaws of Literature and History: Essays on Medieval and Early Modern Figures from Robin Hood to Twn Shon Catty*, ed. Alexander L. Kaufman (Jefferson, NC, 2011), 11–27.

4. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 2:174–78 (no. 58).

5. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 1:105–9 (no. 14).

6. Dwayne E. Carpenter, *Alfonso X and the Jews*, 29.

7. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 2:246–49 (no. 7).

8. *Racconti esemplari di predicatori*, 2:322–28 (nos. 167–68).

9. *Chronique latine de Guillaume de Nangis*, 2:33–34; Jean de Saint-Victor, *Prima vita Joannis XXII*, 131; "Chroniques de Saint-Denis," 703–5; "Chronicon Girardi de Fracheto," 56; *Les grandes chroniques de France*, 8:359. Again, I am grateful to Tzafrir Barzilay for bringing these sources to my attention. On the history of the charge that Jews poisoned wells, see Barzilay, "Early Accusations of Well Poisoning," 517–39.

10. On Cardoso's treatment of these accusations and for references to related discussions in the writings of Simone Luzzatto and Menasseh ben Israel, see Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *From Spanish Court to Italian Ghetto: Isaac Cardoso; A Study in Seventeenth-Century Marranism and Jewish Apologetics* (Seattle, 1971), 413–72.

11. London, TNA, KB 26/115B, m. 22. This document has a complicated archival history. In the seventeenth century, the number 21 was marked at the foot of the membrane, leading some scholarly works to reference it as being on m. 21. During later conservation work, the number 25 was stamped on the dorse, leading to further confusion (personal communication with medieval records specialist Euan Roger at TNA, October 5, 2017). Edward's trial and related documents are published in Rye, "The Alleged Abduction," 322–44; *Curia Regis Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, ed. C. T. Flower et al., 20 vols. (London, 1922–72), 15:333–35; Rigg, *Select Pleas, Starrs, and Other Records*, xliv–xlvii. An abridged version of the records was published in William Prynne, *Short Demurrer to the Jewes Long Discontinued Remitter into England*, part 1 (London, 1656), 19–21; D'Blossiers Tovey, *Anglia Judaica; or, The History and Antiquities of the Jews in England* (Oxford, 1738), 98–101; Margoliouth, *The Jews in Great Britain*, 319–22.

12. On the outpouring of anti-Jewish literature during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, see Miri Rubin, *Gentile Tales*. On this literature in England in particular, see Anthony Bale, *The Jew in the Medieval Book: English Antisemitisms, 1350–1500* (Cambridge, 2006); Adrienne Williams Boyarin, *Miracles of the Virgin in Medieval England: Law and Jewishness in Marían Legends* (Cambridge, 2010); Kati Ihnat, *Mother of Mercy, Bane of the Jews: Devotion to the Virgin Mary in Anglo-Norman England* (Princeton, NJ, 2016).

13. On childhood as a period of exceptional vulnerability according to medieval authors, see William F. MacLehose, *"A Tender Age": Cultural Anxieties over the Child in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries* (New York, 2006). Also see Diane Peters Auslander, "Victims or Martyrs: Children, Anti-Semitism, and the Stress of Change in Medieval England," in *Childhood in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: The Results of a Paradigm Shift in the History of Mentality*, ed. Albrecht Classen (New York, 2005), 105–34; Magdelene Schultz, "The Blood Libel: A Motif in the History of Childhood," *Journal of Psychohistory* 14 (1986): I–24; Miri Rubin, *Gentile Tales*, 23–27.

14. The words between "playing" and "of Norwich" are illegible in the original record. The editor of the 1972 edition of the Curia Regis Rolls suggested that they originally read: "in the street in the town" (*in via ville*). See London, TNA, KB 26/115B, m. 22; *Curia Regis Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, 15:333.

15. Paris, *Chronica majora*, 5:517.

16. "Liber cronicorum sive annalis Erfordensis," in *Monumenta Erphesfurtensia, Saec. XII. XIII. XIV.*, ed. Oswald Holder-Egger, In MGH SS rer. Germ. (Hannover, 1899), 42:773–74.

17. In 1249, Bishop Walter Suffield dedicated the local hospital that he founded to St. Giles. See Carole Rawcliffe and Richard Wilson, eds., *Medieval Norwich* (London, 2006), 74.

18. See Miri Rubin, *Gentile Tales*, 77–78.

19. On Jewish "blindness" and Synagoga, see Michael Camille, *The Gothic Idol: Ideology and Image-Making in Medieval Art* (Cambridge, 1991), 187–89 and Miri Rubin, "*Ecclesia* and *Synagoga:* The Changing Meanings of a Powerful Pairing," in *Conflict and Religious Conversation in Latin Christendom: Studies in Honor of Ora Limor*, ed. Israel Yuval and Ram Ben-Shalom (Turnhout, 2014), 55–86.

20. As the practice that God had demanded of Abraham and his male descendants as a sign of God's covenant with them (Gen. 17:10–14), it had prefigured baptism, kept Jews separate from other nations ensuring Christ's Davidic ancestry, and even conferred divine grace. On the evolution of Latin Christian views of circumcision as practiced before the advent of Christ, see Shaye J. D. Cohen, *Why*

Aren't Jewish Women Circumcised? Gender and Covenant in Judaism (Berkeley, CA, 2005), 80–92; Murphy, "Concern About Judaizing," 560–94.

21. For an overview of the Pauline foundations of Christian views of circumcision, see Shaye J. D. Cohen, *Why Aren't Jewish Women Circumcised?*, 68–73.

22. See discussion in Shaye J. D. Cohen, *Why Aren't Jewish Women Circumcised?*, 80–92.

23. Peter Abelard, *Dialogus inter philosophum, Iudaeum et Christianum*, In *PL* 178:1623–24.

24. Raymond Martini, *Pugio fidei*, part 3, dist. 3, chap. 11, par. 18 (Paris, 1651), 614.

25. "La boca de vestro rabi … feches cono de muier." Enzo Franchini, *Los debates literarios en la Edad Media* (Madrid, 2001), 227–28, quoted in Resnick, *Marks of Distinction*, 64 n. 43.

26. On Jewish and Christian interpretations of Genesis 34, see William Chester Jordan, *The French Monarchy and the Jews: From Philip Augustus to the Last Capetians* (Philadelphia, 1989), 11–14; Elliott Horowitz, "Genesis 34 and the Legacies of Biblical Violence," in *The Blackwell Companion to Religion and Violence*, ed. Andrew Murphy (Oxford, 2011), 163–82.

27. Aware that contemporary Jews no longer used stone knives for circumcision, Abelard added: "although the Jews today never do it in this way [i.e., with stone knives] because of the difficulty of the matter" (Abelard, Sermon 3, In *PL* 178:404a–c; English translation in Sean Eisen Murphy, "Judaism in the Thought of Peter Abelard" [PhD diss., Cornell University, 2000], 419–20; also see the discussion of this passage in Murphy, "Judaism," 171).

28. Gilbert of Poitiers, *Sententiae*, In N. M. Häring, "Die Sententie Magistri Gisleberti Pictavensis Episcopi," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 45 (1978): 145.

29. The Bible of Robert de Bello. London, British Library, Burney 3, fol. 90r.

30. Margaret Scott speculates that fabric that was portrayed in illuminations with a delicate dotted floral pattern—like the fabric of the crouching man's robe—represented patterned silk (Margaret Scott, *Medieval Dress and Fashion* [London, 2007], 74 fig. 43). I am grateful to Sarah-Grace Heller for explaining that the red color and the ample draping in this fabric are indicative of luxury.

31. For a starkly contrasting depiction of Joshua circumcising the Israelites, In which Joshua and the Israelites look similar except for a halo around Joshua's head, see Sonia Fellous, *Histoire de la Bible de Moïse Arragel: Quand un rabbin interprète la Bible pour les chrétiens* (Paris, 2001), 316.

32. Elad Zamir has suggested further that this image may juxtapose the Old Law and the New. In this reading, the red substance on the ground may represent the blood of Christ. The water may represent the New Dispensation, ushered in by Christ, who was baptized in the Jordan River and whose followers replaced circumcision with baptism (personal conversation, June 21, 2017). I am grateful to Adam Cohen, Marcia Kupfer, and Sara Offenberg for discussing this image with me, as well.

33. Translation from Robert the Monk, *Historia Hierosolymitana*, published in Dana C. Munro, "Urban and the Crusaders," *Translations and Reprints from the Original Sources of European History*, vol. 1, no. 2 (Philadelphia, 1895), 5–8. On this passage and its context, see Suzanne Conklin Akbari, *Idols in the East: European Representations of Islam and the Orient, 1100–1450* (Ithaca, NY, 2005), 237. For additional reports of Muslims forcibly circumcising Christians, see Einar Joranson, "The Spurious Letter of Alexius," *AHR* 55 (1949–50): 811–32; *Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris*, ed. Antonio Maya Sánchez, In *Chronica hispana saeculi XII, Pars I*, ed. Emma Falque, Juan Gil, and Antonio Maya Sánchez, *CCCM (Turnhout, 1990*) 71:109–248. Warm thanks to Irven Resnick for bringing the last source to my attention.

34. On associations between circumcision and castration in Roman law, see Ra'anan Abusch, "Circumcision and Castration Under Roman Law in the Early Empire," in *The Covenant of Circumcision: New Perspectives on an Ancient Jewish Rite*, ed. Elizabeth Wyner Mark (Lebanon, NH), 75–86. On parodies of circumcision as castration in fourteenth-century Italian theater, see Claudine Fabre-Vassas, *The Singular Beast: Jews, Christians, and the Pig*, trans. Carol Volk (New York, 1997), 113–14. In the fifteenth century, written and iconographic sources often blurred the lines

between circumcision, castration, and cutting off the penis and testicles. See, for instance, R. Po-Chia Hsia, *The Myth of Ritual Murder: Jews and Magic in Reformation Germany* (New Haven, CT, 1988), 74.

35. Peter Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, chap. 7, In *PL* 178:134–35.

36. See Larissa Tracy, "The Uses of Torture and Violence in the Fabliaux: When Comedy Crosses the Line," *Florilegium* 23 (2006): 143–68.

37. *The Earliest Lincolnshire Assize Rolls, 1202–1209*, ed. Doris Mary Stenton (London, 1926), 773–75; also printed in F. W. Maitland, ed., *Select Pleas of the Crown*, vol. 1, *A.D. 1200–1225* (London, 1888), 14–16.

38. Maitland, *Select Pleas of the Crown*, 26.

39. Joseph Jacobs, *The Jews of Angevin England: Documents and Records, from the Latin and Hebrew Sources, Printed and Manuscript* (London, 1893), 216–17.

40. On "emasculation" as referring to the removal of the penis and testicles during the Middle Ages, see Yves Ferroul, "Abelard's Blissful Castration," in *Becoming Male in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen and Bonnie Wheeler (New York, 2000), 129–49.

41. Maitland, *Select Pleas of the Crown*, 26.

42. Paris, *Chronica*, 5:34–35.

43. On the concept of "mirror punishments," see Bremmer, "The Children He Never Had," 111.

44. *Der Passauer Anonymus*, 152. See discussion in Tartakoff, "From Conversion to Ritual Murder," 375–76.

45. London, TNA, KB 26/115B, m. 22.

46. London, TNA, KB 26/115B, m. 22.

47. Miri Rubin, *Gentile Tales*, 24, 71–73. Also see Kenneth Stow, "The Cruel Jewish Father: From Miracle to Murder," in *Studies in Medieval Jewish Intellectual and Social History*, *Festschrift in Honor of Robert Chazan* (Leiden, 2012), 245–78.

48. London, TNA, KB 26/115B, m. 22.

49. London, British Library, MS Harley 957, published in Christoph Cluse, "'Fabula ineptissima': Die Ritualmordlegende um Adam von Bristol nach der Handschrift London, British Library, Harley 957," *Aschkenas: Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur der Juden* 5.2 (1995): 305–27. On this case, also see Robert C. Stacey, "'Adam of Bristol' and Tales of Ritual Crucifixion in Medieval England," *Thirteenth-Century England 11* (2007): 1–15; Robert C. Stacey, "From Ritual Crucifixion to Host Desecration: Jews and the Body of Christ," *Jewish History* 12.1 (1998): 11–28; Harvey Hames, "The Limits of Conversion: Ritual Murder and the Virgin Mary in the Account of Adam of Bristol," *Journal of Medieval History* 33 (2007): 43–59; Yuval, *Two Nations in Your Womb*, 190–204. On facial mutilation, see V. Groebner, "Losing Face, Saving Face: Noses and Honor in the Late Medieval Town," *History Workshop Journal* 40 (1995): 1–15.

50. Paris, *Chronica*, 5:517.

51. "Chroniques de Saint-Denis," 145–46.

52. Miri Rubin, *Gentile Tales*, 44.

53. London, TNA, KB 26/115B, m. 22.

54. *Annales Egmundani*, ed. G. H. Pertz, In MGH SS (Hannover, 1859), 16:454–55. See discussion in Chaviva Levin, "Jewish Conversion to Christianity in Medieval Europe, Encountered and Imagined, 1100–1300" (PhD diss., New York University, 2006), 223–29.

55. On the uses and meanings of tears in the Middle Ages, see the studies in Elina Gertsman, ed., *Crying in the Middle Ages: Tears of History* (New York, 2013).

56. Miri Rubin, *Gentile Tales*, 73–77.

57. See Ihnat, *Mother of Mercy*.

58. London, TNA, KB 26/115B, m. 22.

59. London, TNA, KB 26/115B, m. 22.

60. Bale, *The Jew in the Medieval Book*, 6–7.

61. *The Chronicle of Bury St. Edmunds, 1212–1301*, ed. Antonia Gransden (London, 1964), 10; *Florentii Wigorniensis monachi chronicon ex chronicis*, ed. Benjamin Thorpe, 2 vols. (London, 1849), 2:177.

62. On the relationship between the work of Wendover and Paris, see Richard Vaughan, *Matthew Paris* (Cambridge, 1958), 21–34; V. H. Galbraith, *Roger Wendover and Matthew Paris* (Glasgow, 1944), esp. 25–29.

63. Roger Wendover, *Flores historiarum*, ed. H. G. Hewlett, 3 vols. (London, 1886–89), 3:101; Paris, *Chronica majora*, 3:305–6; Paris, *Historia Anglorum*, 2:375.

64. Paris, *Chronica majora*, 4:30–31.

65. Menasseh ben Israel, *Vindiciae judaeorum* (London, 1743), 11–12.

66. Prior to the 1230s, Christians occasionally may have associated circumcision with ritual murder. For instance, according to the *History of the Monastery of St. Peter's at Gloucester*, In 1168, Gloucester Jews convened to ritually crucify a boy under the pretense of gathering for a Jewish circumcision. It is hardly clear, however, that circumcision per se sparked this charge; many kinds of Jewish social gatherings spurred such accusations. See the *Historia et Cartularium Monasterii Sancti Petri Gloucestriae*, ed. W. H. Hart, 3 vols. (London, 1863), 1:20–21; English translation by William Barber in appendix 15 of David Welander, *The History, Art and Architecture of Gloucester Cathedral* (Wolfeboro Falls, NH, 1991), 609–10. On this case, see Joe Hillaby, "The Ritual-Child-Murder Accusation: Its Dissemination and Harold of Gloucester," *Jewish Historical Studies* 34 (1994–96): 69–109.

67. Wendover, *Flores historiarum*, 3:101; repeated in Paris, *Chronica majora*, 3:305–6; and Paris, *Historia Anglorum*, 2:375.

68. Paris, *Chronica majora*, 4:30–31.

69. For bibliography on the case of William of Norwich, see Chapter 1.

70. On Matthew Paris's attitudes toward Jews, see Stephen D. Benin, "Matthew Paris and the Jews," in *Proceedings of the Tenth World Congress of Jewish Studies*, ed. David Assaf (Jerusalem, 1990), B.2:61–68; Sophia Menache, "Matthew Paris's Attitudes Toward Anglo-Jewry," *Journal of Medieval History* 23 (1997): 139–62; McGrath, "English Jews as Outcasts or Outlaws"; Stacey, "1240–60," 148–50; Hames, "The Limits of Conversion," 46–49.

71. Matthew Paris, *Flores historiarum*, ed. Henry Richards Luard, 3 vols. (London, 1890), 2:65.

72. On the relationship of Matthew Paris's *Flores historiarum* to his other works, see Vaughan, *Matthew Paris*, 92–109.

73. See McCulloh, "Jewish Ritual Murder," 698–740.

74. London, PRO, MS JUST 1/775, m. 20, published in Zefira Entin Rokeah, "Crime and Jews in Late Thirteenth-Century England: Some Cases and Comments," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 55 (1984): 154–55.

75. *Annales monastici*, ed. Henry Richards Luard, 5 vols. (London, 1864–69), 2:86. On this case, see Vincent, "Jews, Poitevins, and the Bishop of Winchester," 128–29.

76. Marquardus de Susannis, *Tractatus de Judaeis et aliis infidelibus* (Venice, 1558), fol. 25; Raphael Holinshed, *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland*, 6 vols. (London, 1807), 2:378; Albert Monniot, *Le crime rituel chez les Juifs* (Paris, 1914), 148–49.

77. *Historia et Cartularium*, 1:20–21; English translation in Welander, *The History*, 609–10.

78. London, PRO, MS JUST 1/775, m. 20.

79. See Leo Steinberg, *The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and Modern Oblivion*, 2nd ed. (Chicago, 1996), 49–56; Caroline Walker Bynum, "The Body of Christ in the Later Middle Ages: A Reply to Leo Steinberg," *Renaissance Quarterly* 39 (1986): 399–439, published also in Bynum,

Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion (New York, 1992), 79–117; Resnick, *Marks of Distinction*, 62–63; Glick, *Marked in Your Flesh*, 93–96.

80. See Robert P. Palazzo, "The Veneration of the Sacred Foreskin(s) of Baby Jesus: A Documented Analysis," in *Multicultural Europe and Cultural Exchange in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. James P. Helfers, Arizona Studies in the Middle Ages and Renaissance 12 (Turnhout, 2005), 155–76.

81. Manuel Trens, *María: Iconografía de la Virgen en el arte español* (Madrid, 1946), 223–32.

82. Boyarin, *Miracles of the Virgin*, 84–85.

83. Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, trans. William Granger Ryan, 2 vols. (Princeton, NJ, 1993), 1:74.

84. See Sara Lipton, *Dark Mirror: The Medieval Origins of Anti-Jewish Iconography* (New York, 2014), 227; Bale, *The Jew in the Medieval Book*, 178.

85. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Revised Translation*, ed. Dorothy Whitelock (New Brunswick, NJ, 1961), 200.

86. Paris, *Chronica majora*, 5:516–19.

87. Quoted in David Areford, *The Viewer and the Printed Image in Late Medieval Europe* (Farnham, 2010), 198, 222 n. 98. On the case of Simon of Trent, see R. Po-Chia Hsia, *Trent 1475: Stories of a Ritual Murder Trial* (New Haven, CT, 1992).

88. British Library, Royal MS 14 C VII, fol. 176v, transcribed in Paris, *Chronica majora*, 5:517 n. 1. On the identity of Matthew Paris's handwriting, see Richard Vaughan, "The Handwriting of Matthew Paris," *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 1 (1953): 376–94. I am grateful to Justin Clegg, curator of medieval literary manuscripts at the British Library, for discussing this material with me. Efforts to examine the faded notes in this manuscript using ultraviolet and infrared light have led to the conclusion that Luard's readings were accurate and that they are the best record of these notes, pending the development of more advanced imaging techniques.

89. Robert Chambers, *The Book of Days: A Miscellany of Popular Antiquities*, 2 vols. (London 1888), 1:447.

90. Abraham Gross, "The Blood Libel and the Blood of Circumcision: An Ashkenazic Custom That Disappeared in the Middle Ages," *JQR* 86 (1995): 173 n. 10.

91. Areford, *The Viewer*, 199.

92. Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption*, 143–46; Giles Constable, *Three Studies in Medieval Religious and Social Thought: The Interpretation of Mary and Martha, the Ideal of the Imitation of Christ, the Orders of Society* (Cambridge, 1995), 143–248.

93. See Murphy, "Concern About Judaizing," 560–94.

94. Paris, *Chronica majora*, 4:377–78. On this case, see Ruth Nisse, "A Romance of the Jewish East: The Ten Lost Tribes and *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* in Medieval Europe," *Medieval Encounters* 13 (2007): 511–12.

95. See Stacey, "From Ritual Crucifixion"; Kenneth Stow, *Jewish Dogs: An Image and Its Interpreters* (Stanford, CA, 2006), 60–70; Kenneth Stow, "The Cruel Jewish Father," 253–57. Stacey argues that the increasing identification of Jews' purported victims with Christ corresponded to the movement of ritual murder stories beyond their original monastic milieu (Stacey, "From Ritual Crucifixion," 19–21). On the convergence of the themes of eucharistic devotion and anti-Judaism, also see Leah Sinanoglou, "The Christ-Child as Sacrifice," *Speculum* 43 (1973): 491–509; Denise Despres, "Cultic Anti-Judaism and Chaucer's Little Clergeon," in *Modern Philology* 91 (1994): 413–27; Denise Despres, "Mary of the Eucharist: Cultic Anti-Judaism in Fourteenth-Century English Devotional Manuscripts," in *From Witness to Witchcraft: Jews and Judaism in Medieval Christian Thought*, ed. Jeremy Cohen (Wiesbaden, 1996), 375–401.

96. This distinction is clear, for instance, In the *vita* of William of Norwich, In which the Jews who allegedly crucified William declare: "Just as we have condemned Christ to a most shameful death, so we condemn a Christian, so that we punish both the Lord and his servant in the punishment of reproach" (Thomas of Monmouth, *Life and Passion*, 17). On this distinction in the *passio* of Werner of Oberwesel (1287), see Kenneth Stow, "The Cruel Jewish Father," 253–54; Kenneth Stow, *Jewish Dogs*, 60–70.

97. Cluse, "'Fabula ineptissima,'" 308.

98. Cluse, "'Fabula ineptissima,'" 310. See discussion in Stacey, "From Ritual Crucifixion"; Hames, "The Limits of Conversion"; Uri Shachar, "Inspecting the Pious Body: Christological Morphology and the Ritual-Crucifixion Allegation," *Journal of Medieval History* 41 (2015): 17–18.

99. See Eric M. Zafran, "The Iconography of Anti-Semitism: A Study of the Representations of the Jews in the Visual Arts of Europe, 1400–1600" (PhD diss., New York University, 1973), 32–33; Ruth Mellinkoff, *Outcasts: Signs of Otherness in Northern European Art of the Late Middle Ages*, 2 vols. (Berkeley, CA, 1993), plate 2.23 and the discussion at 1:43 and 1:106–7; Areford, *The Viewer*, 223 n. 103.

100. Ranulf Higden (d. 1364), *Polychronicon*, trans. John Trevisa, 9 vols. (London, 1865–86; repr., Nendeln, Liechtenstein, 1964), 8:208–9.

101. W. P. Eckert, "Il Beato Simonino negli 'atti' del processo di Trento contro gli Ebrei," *Studi Trentini di Scienze Storiche* 44 (1965): 205.

102. Tiberino's account was published in Frumenzio Ghetta, *Fra Bernardino Tomitano da Feltre e gli ebrei di Trento nel 1475* (Trent, 1986), 40–45.

103. Areford, *The Viewer*, 170.

104. Lamberto Donati, *L'inizio della stampa a Trento ed il Beato Simone* (Trent, 1968). See discussion in Areford, *The Viewer*, 173, 198; and Zafran, "The Iconography of Anti-Semitism," 61.

105. See discussions in Areford, *The Viewer*, 187–84; Dana E. Katz, *The Jew in the Art of the Italian Renaissance* (Philadelphia, 2008), 119–57.

106. See the discussions in Anthony Bale, *Feeling Persecuted: Christians, Jews and Images of Violence in the Middle Ages* (London, 2010), 52; Julian Luxford, "The Iconography of St. William of Norwich and the Nuremberg Chronicle," *Norfolk Archaeology* 47 (2016): 240–46. Warm thanks to Julian Luxford for sharing his unpublished work with me. In the eighteenth century, Francis Blomefield wrote that William of Norwich had been circumcised (Francis Blomefield, *The History of Norwich, Part First*, vol. 3 of *An Essay Towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk* [London, 1806], chap. 12).

107. Quoted in Hsia, *The Myth of Ritual Murder*, 74.

108. Hsia, *The Myth of Ritual Murder*, 125–26, 157–58. Additional links between genital mutilation and allegations of ritual murder emerged in the fifteenth century. The Spanish Franciscan Alfonso de Spina (d. 1491) claimed, for instance, that Jews collected the blood of their alleged victims in the same bowl in which they collected the circumcision blood of Jewish infants (Alfonso de Spina, *Fortalitium fidei* [Nuremberg, 1494], fol. 145). In Endingen in 1462 and in Tyrnau in 1494, Jews were said to use the blood of their purported ritual murder victims to help Jewish infants heal from their circumcisions (Joshua Trachtenberg, *The Devil and the Jews*, 2nd ed. [Philadelphia, 1983], 149–50).

109. Robert Fabyan, *The New Chronicles of England and France*, ed. Henry Ellis (London, 181I), 329. See M. T. W. Payne, "Robert Fabyan and the Nuremberg Chronicle," *Library* 12 (2011): 164–69; M. T. W. Payne, "Robert Fabyan's Civic Identity," in *The Yorkist Age*, ed. Hannes Kleineke and Christian Steer (Donington, UK, 2013), 275–86.

110. John Selden, "Of the Jews Sometimes Living in England," in Samuel Purchas, *Purchas his Pilgrimage* (London, 1626), 152. Here, Selden drew also on Matthew Paris's account of the alleged ritual murder of Hugh of Lincoln in 1255 (Paris, *Chronica majora*, 5:516). Similarly, the antiquarian

John Weever (d. 1632) introduced the Norwich circumcision case by announcing that "the Jews in the principal cities of the kingdom used sometimes to steal away, circumcise, crown with thorns, whip, torture, and crucify some neighbor's male-child, In mockery and scorn of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (John Weever, *Ancient Funeral Monuments* [London, 1767], 167).

111. See, for example, Alban Butler, *The Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs, and Other Principal Saints*, 12 vols. [Dublin, 1866], 3:245; Blomefield, *History*, chap. 12.

112. London, TNA, KB 26/115B, m. 22.

113. Paris, *Chronica majora*, 4:30–31.

CHAPTER 3

1. *Zikhron Brit la-Rishonim*, ed. Jacob Glassberg (Berlin, 1892), 133. *Kelalei ha-Milah* likely was compiled by the noted circumcisers Jacob and Gershom ha-Gozrim ("the circumcisers").

2. The most comprehensive studies of medieval Christian conversions to Judaism are Wolfgang Giese, "*In Iudaismum lapsus";* and Auman, "Conversion from Christianity." For the earlier Middle Ages, see Dahan, *Les intellectuels chrétiens et les juifs*, 189–91; and Golb, "Notes on the Conversion."

3. On conversions from Judaism to Christianity, see the sources cited in Tartakoff, "Testing Boundaries," 734. Over one thousand Jews converted to Christianity during the late thirteenth century in southern Italy alone. See Joshua Starr, "The Mass Conversion of Jews in Southern Italy (1290–1293)," *Speculum* 21 (1946): 203–11.

4. Published in A. Marmorstein, "David Kimhi Apologiste: Un fragment perdu dans son commentaire des Psaumes," *REJ* 66 (1913): 247–48, 251.

5. *Sefer Ḥasidim*, ed. Yehudah Wistinetzki (Berlin, 1891), 73 (no. 189).

6. *Der Passauer Anonymus*, 152.

7. On the nature and meanings of "slavery" in medieval Europe, see Ruth Mazo Karras, *Slavery and Society in Medieval Scandinavia* (New Haven, CT, 1988), 5–39. Domestic slavery persisted in England, France, and Scandinavia throughout the Middle Ages, and it was a consistent feature of life in the Balkans and the Adriatic region. In Mediterranean Europe, slavery increased starting in the thirteenth century, In the context of the revival of trade with the Levant. In these parts of Europe, some Jews—like some Christians and some Muslims—owned slaves. See Susan Mosher Stuard, "Ancillary Evidence for the Decline of Medieval Slavery," *Past and Present* 149 (1995): 3–28; David Wyatt, *Slaves and Warriors in Medieval Britain and Ireland, 800–1200* (Leiden, 2009). Also see the studies in Reuven Amitai and Christoph Cluse, eds., *Slavery and the Slave Trade in the Eastern Mediterranean (c. 1000–1500 CE*) (Turnhout, 2017).

8. See discussion in Menachem Finkelstein, *Conversion: Halakhah and Practice* (Ramat-Gan, 2006), 108–58. On Jewish slave ownership and conversion, see Ben Zion Wacholder, "The Halakah and the Proselyting of Slaves During the Gaonic Era," *Historia Judaica* 18 (1956): 89–106; Simcha Assaf, "Slaves and the Slave Trade in the Middle Ages" [in Hebrew], *Zion* 5 (1940): 271–80. On Jews as slave traders, see Toch, *The Economic History of European Jews*, 178–89; Michael Toch, "Was There a Jewish Slave Trade (or Commercial Monopoly) in the Early Middle Ages?," in *Mediterranean Slavery Revisited (500–1800*), ed. Stefan Hanss and Juliane Schiel (Zurich, 2014), 421–44.

9. On Jewish slaveholding in medieval Spain, see Yitzhak Baer, *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia, 1966; reprint, 1992), 1:181, 2:48. On the slave trade in the high medieval Mediterranean, see Stephen Bensch, "From Prizes of War to Domestic Merchandise: The Changing Face of Slavery in Catalonia and Aragon, 1000–1300," *Viator* 25 (1994): 63–94; Robert I. Burns, "Interactive Slave Operations: Muslim-Christian-Jewish Contracts in Thirteenth-Century Barcelona," *Medieval Encounters* 5 (1999): 135–55; Olivia Remie Constable, "Muslim Spain and Mediterranean

Slavery: The Medieval Slave Trade as an Aspect of Muslim-Christian Relations," in *Christendom and Its Discontents: Exclusion, Persecution, and Rebellion, 1000–1500*, ed. Scott L. Waugh and Peter D. Diehl (Cambridge, 1996), 264–84; Michael McCormick, "New Light on the 'Dark Ages': How the Slave Trade Fueled the Carolingian Economy," *Past and Present* 177 (2002): 17–54; Charles Verlinden, *L'esclavage dans l'Europe médiévale* (Bruges, 1955); Craig Perry, "The Daily Life of Slavery and the Global Reach of Slavery in Medieval Egypt, 969–1250 CE" (PhD diss., Duke University, 2014).

10. On Jewish slaveholding in northern Europe, see Jacob Katz, *Exclusiveness and Tolerance: Studies in Jewish-Gentile Relations in Medieval and Modern Times* (Oxford, 1961), 41–42. On the central European context, see Nora Berend, Przemysław Urbańczyk, and Przemysław Wiszewski, *Central Europe in the High Middle Ages: Bohemia, Hungary and Poland, c. 900–c. 1300* (Cambridge, 2013).

11. For an overview of the history of Christian prohibitions against Jews circumcising their slaves, see Shlomo Simonsohn, *History*, 157–68, 228–30.

12. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 1:198–201 (no. 69).

13. *Der Passauer Anonymus*, 152.

14. Siegmund Salfeld, *Das Martyrologium des Nürnberger Memorbuches* (Berlin, 1898), 9. On the term *marat*, see Avraham (Rami) Reiner, "'A Tombstone Inscribed': Titles Used to Describe the Deceased on Tombstones from Würzburg Between 1147–1148 and 1346" [in Hebrew], *Tarbiz* 78 (2008): 146.

15. Salfeld, *Das Martyrologium*, 92, 93. Converts to Judaism often assumed the patronymic "son/daughter of Abraham," as Jews considered the biblical Abraham to be the father of all converts to Judaism. On medieval Jewish bequests *pro anima*, see Elisheva Baumgarten, *Practicing Piety in Medieval Ashkenaz: Men, Women, and Everyday Religious Observance* (Philadelphia, 2014), 103–37; Judah Galinsky, "Jewish Charitable Bequests and the Hekdesh Trust in Thirteenth-Century Spain," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 35 (2005): 423–40.

16. Daniel J. Cohen, "A Thirteenth-Century Tombstone of a Proselyte's Daughter Discovered at Neuburg on the Danube" [in Hebrew], *Zion* 22 (1957): 68–69.

17. Avraham (Rami) Reiner, "The Dead as Living History: On the Publication of *Die Grabsteine vom juischen Friedhof in Würzburg, 1147–1346*," in *Death in Jewish Life: Burial and Mourning Customs in Medieval Ashkenaz*, ed. Stefan C. Reif, Andreas Lehnardt, and Avriel Bar-Levav (Berlin, 2014), 205–7; Karlheinz Müller, Simon Schwarzfuchs, and Abraham (Rami) Reiner, eds., *Die Grabsteine vom jüdischen Friedhof in Würzburg aus der Zeit vor dem Schwarzen Tod (1147–1346)*, 3 vols. (Würzburg, 2011), 1:189–91.

18. David Berger, *The Jewish-Christian Debate in the High Middle Ages: A Critical Edition of the Niẓẓaḥon Vetus* (Philadelphia, 1979), 206–7 (no. 211) (=144–45 [no. 211] in Hebrew).

19. Erfurt, Universitätsbibliothek Erfurt, CA quarto 149, fol. 1r, quoted in *Der Passau Anonymus*, 23. Also see Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 2714, fol. 45a–b, quoted in *Der Passauer Anonymus*, 152.

20. Yom Tov Assis, "The Papal Inquisition and Aragonese Jewry in the Early Fourteenth Century," *Mediaeval Studies* 49 (1987): 409–10 (no. 6) and Barcelona, ADB, RC 3, fol. 88v.

21. On this case, see Jacob Mann, *Texts and Studies in Jewish History and Literature*, 2 vols. (Cincinnati, 1931), 1:31–33; Eliyahu Ashtor, "Documentos españoles de la Genizah," *Sefarad* 24 (1964): 44–47; Norman Golb, "New Light on the Persecution of French Jews at the Time of the First Crusade," *PAAJR* 34 (1966): 1–63; Norman Golb, "Monieux," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 113 (1969): 67–94. For a reassessment, see Edna Engel, "The Wandering of a Provençal Proselyte: A Puzzle of Three Genizah Fragments" [in Hebrew], *Sefunot* 7 (1999): 13–21; and Yosef Yahalom, "The Manyo Letters: The Handiwork of a Country Scribe from North Spain" [in Hebrew],

Sefunot 7 (1999): 23–31. Also see Edna Engel, "Hebrew Letters of Old Castile in the Cairo Genizah," in *Jewish Studies at the Turn of the Twentieth Century*, vol. 1, *Biblical, Rabbinical, and Medieval Studies*, ed. Judit Taragarona Borrás and Angel Sáenz-Badillos (Leiden, 1999), 398–405.

22. Mordechai Friedman, *Ribuy Nashim be-Yisra'el: Mekorot Hadashim mi-Genizat Kahir* [Jewish Polygyny in the Middle Ages: New Documents from the Cairo Geniza] (Jerusalem, 1986), 337 (no. 13). The record cites no place-names; it is written on the verso of a personal letter in Arabic script. See the discussion of this case in Moshe Yagur, "Captives, Converts, and Concubines: Gendered Aspects of Conversion to Judaism in the Medieval Near East," in *Language, Gender, and Law in the Judaeo-Islamic Milieu*, ed. Amir Ashur and Zvi Stampfer (Leiden), forthcoming. Warm thanks to Moshe Yagur and Oded Zinger for discussing this document with me.

23. Friedman, *Ribuy Nashim*, 213–16.

24. On the "seductive *juive fatale* of preachers' nightmares," see Lipton, "Where Are the Gothic Jewish Women?" Also see Ivan Marcus, "Jews and Christians Imagining the Other in Medieval Europe," *Prooftexts* 15 (1995): 209–26; Ivan Marcus, "Images of Jews in the *Exempla* of Caesarius of Heisterbach," in *From Witness to Witchcraft: Jews and Judaism in Medieval Christian Thought*, ed. Jeremy Cohen (Wiesbaden, 1996), 247–56; James A. Brundage, "Intermarriage Between Jews and Christians in Medieval Canon Law," *Jewish History* 3.1 (1988): 25–40.

25. Prudentius of Troyes, *Annales Bertiniani*, ed. G. Waitz, MGH SS rer. Germ. 5 (Hannover, 1883), 17–18. Also see Amulo Lugdunensis, *Epistola seu liber contra Judaeos ad Carolum Regem* 42, In *PL* 116:171; *Annales Augienses*, ed. Georg Pertz, MGH SS (Hannover, 1826), 1:68; *Annales Weingartenses*, ed. Georg Pertz, MGH SS (Hannover, 1826), 1:65. On Bodo, see, for example, Allen Cabaniss, "Bodo-Eleazar: A Famous Jewish Convert," *JQR* 43.4 (1953): 313–28; Frank Riess, "From Aachen to Al-Andalus: The Journey of Deacon Bodo (823–76)," *Early Medieval Europe* 13 (2005): 131–57; Frank Riess, *The Journey of Deacon Bodo from the Rhine to the Guadalquivir: Apostasy and Conversion to Judaism in Early Medieval Europe* (London, 2019).

26. Alpert of Metz, *De diversitate temporum*, ed. Georg Pertz, MGH SS (Hannover, 1841), 4:704.

27. Bernard Gui, *Vita S. Fulcranni episcopi Lodevensis*, In *Acta Sanctorum*, 68 vols. (Antwerp and Brussels, 1643–1940), 5:715.

28. This letter is published in Jacob Mann, "Obadya, prosélyte normand converti au Judaïsme, et sa meguilla," *REJ* 89 (1930): 245–59, 247–49; and in Norman Golb, "The Scroll of Obadiah the Convert" [in Hebrew], in *Mehkarei edot ugenizah: S. D. Goitein Jubilee Volume*, ed. I. Ben-Ami, S. Morag, and N. Stillman, (Jerusalem, 1981), 77–107. English translation in Norman Golb, "The Autograph Memoirs of Obadiah the Proselyte of Oppido Lucano," prepared for the international conference "Giovanni-Ovadiah da Oppido, proselito, viaggiatore e musicista dell'età normanna," Oppido Lucano (Basilicata), March 28–30, 2004, 1, 17. Also see Norman Golb, *Jewish Proselytism: A Phenomenon in the Religious History of Early Medieval Europe* (Cincinnati, 1987), 22.

29. See Norman Golb, "The Music of Obadiah the Proselyte and His Conversion," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 18 (1967): 1–18.

30. Golb, "The Scroll," 95; English in Golb, "The Autograph Memoirs," 1–2. On Andreas, see Alexander Scheiber, "Some Notes on the Conversion of Archbishop Andreas to Judaism," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 15 (1964): 159–60. On Obadiah, also see Mann, "Obadya," 245–59; Alexander Scheiber and J. L. Teicher, "The Origins of Obadyah, the Norman Proselyte," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 5 (1954): 32–37; S. D. Goitein, "Obadyah, a Norman Proselyte (Apropos the Discovery of a New Fragment of His 'Scroll')," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 4 (1953): 74–75; Joshua Prawer, "The Autobiography of Obadyah the Norman, a Convert to Judaism at the Time of the First Crusade," in *Studies in Medieval Jewish History and Literature*, ed. Isadore Twersky (Cambridge, MA, 1979), 110–34.

31. See Eliezer Landshut, *Pillars of Work* [in Hebrew] (Berlin, 1857–62), 88.

32. Tosafot Kiddushin 70b–71a.

33. Berger, *The Jewish-Christian Debate*, 63–64 (no. 32) (=23–24 [no. 32] in Hebrew), 253. See Ephraim Urbach, "Études sur la littérature polémique au moyen-âge," *REJ* 100 (1935): 73–75. On the notion that Jesus was a magician, see Daniel Barbu, "The Case About Jesus: (Counter-)History and Casuistry in the *Toledoth Yeshu*," in *A Historical Approach to Casuistry: Norms and Exceptions in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Carlo Ginzburg and Lucio Biasiori (London, 2018), 71–75.

34. Scholars Ephraim Urbach, Judah Rosenthal, and David Berger are inclined to believe that Isaac was, In fact, a convert. See discussion in Urbach, "Études sur la littérature polémique," 74–75; introduction to *Sefer Yosef ha-Mekanne*, ed. Judah Rosenthal (Jerusalem, 1970), 27; Berger, *The Jewish-Christian Debate*, 252; Norman Roth, "Conversion to Judaism," in *Medieval Jewish Civilization: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Norman Roth (New York, 2003), 201.

35. Berger, *The Jewish-Christian Debate*, 62 (no. 28) (=22 [no. 28] in Hebrew).

36. Eleazar ben Judah of Worms, *Sefer Rokeaḥ ha-Gadol* (Jerusalem, 1960), *hilkhot berakhot*, Introduction, p. 207.

37. See discussion in Urbach, "Études sur la littérature polémique," 74.

38. Gerald of Wales, *Speculum ecclesiae*, 139–43.

39. On this case, see Maitland, "The Deacon and the Jewess," 158–79.

40. *Der Passauer Anonymus*, 152.

41. Salfeld, *Das Martyrologium*, 22.

42. *Chronicle of Bury St. Edmunds*, 58; *Florentii Wigorniensis monachi chronicon*, 2:214; *Ropertus Holkot super librum Ecclesiasticum* (Venice, 1509), lect. 1, fol. 40vb. See discussion of the latter source in Beryl Smalley, "Robert Holcot, O.P.," *Archivum fratrum praedicatorum* 26 (1956): 61–62.

43. Ferrara, Archivo Storico Diocesano, *Monasterio di S. Caterina Martire*, Inventario cronologico generale, ed. Giacomo Filippo Guerini (Ferrara, 1750), fol. 14v; quoted in Vittore Colorni, "Nuovi dati sugli ebrei a Ferrara nei secoli XIII e XIV," *La Rassegna Mensile di Israel* 39 (1973): 409–10. I am grateful to Laura Graziani Secchieri for discussing this document with me.

44. Henry of Herford, *Liber de rebus memorabilioribus sive chronicon Henrici de Hervordia*, ed. Augustus Potthast (Göttingen, 1859), 216–17; also published in *Westfalia Judaica: Urkunden und Regesten zur Geschichte der Juden in Westfalen und Lippe*, ed. Berhard Brilling and Helmut Richtering (Stuttgart, 1967), 63 (no. 38); Albert Stuten, *Weltchronik des Mönchs Albert 1273/77–1454/56*, ed. Rolf Sprandel, MGH SS rer. Germ., n.s. (Munich, 1994), 17:195–96. The relics of St. Patroclus were transferred to Soest in 964.

45. *Chronica Iohannis Vitodurani*, ed. Friedrich Baethgen, MGH SS rer. Germ., n.s. (Berlin, 1924), 3:85. I am grateful to Christine Magin for bringing this source to my attention. On John of Winterthur, see R. Aubert, "Jean de Winterthur," in *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastique*, 31 vols. (Paris, 1998–2000), 27:817.

46. *Die Chronica novella des Hermann Korner*, ed. Jakob Schwalm (Göttingen, 1895), 280. On these two cases, see Paola Tartakoff, "Martyrdom, Conversion, and Shared Cultural Repertoires in Late Medieval Europe," *JQR*, forthcoming.

47. Some Christian references to conversions of churchmen to Judaism may be understood in the context of rivalries between groups of clergy—between regular and secular clergy, for example, and between the mendicant orders, on the one hand, and regular and secular clergy, on the other. To the extent that some accounts of churchmen's conversions to Judaism were imaginative condemnations of ecclesiastical rivals, Judaism functioned in these narratives as a placeholder for error and falsehood. On the history of Christian religious orders vilifying one another, see Caroline Walker Bynum, "Did the Twelfth Century Discover the Individual?" in *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley, CA, 1982), 82–108, esp. 90–95. For other instances in which anticlerical and

anti-Jewish discourses intersected, see Miri Rubin, *Gentile Tales*, 78–80; Stacey, "From Ritual Crucifixion," 20.

48. Daniel J. Lasker and Sarah Stroumsa, eds., *The Polemic of Nestor the Priest: Qissat Mujadalat al-Usquf and Sefer Nestor Ha-Komer*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia, 1996), 1:97, 2:27. See discussion in Szpiech, *Conversion and Narrative*, 108–10; Robert Chazan, *Fashioning Jewish Identity in Medieval Western Christendom* (Cambridge, 2004), 84–86.

49. Lasker and Stroumsa, *Polemic*, 1:97, 2:27. See discussion in Szpiech, *Conversion and Narrative*, 108–10; Chazan, *Fashioning Jewish Identity*, 84–86.

50. Joel Rembaum, "The Influence of *Sefer Nestor ha-Komer* on Medieval Jewish Polemics," *PAAJR* 45 (1978): 155–85; Lasker and Stroumsa, *Polemic*, 1:34–35.

51. On the invocation of the Divine Names and other mystical practices in medieval Ashkenaz, see Eli Yassif, *The Hebrew Folktale: History, Genre, Meaning*, trans. Jacqueline S. Teitelbaum (Bloomington, IN, 1999), 351–70; Ephraim Kanarfogel, *"Peering Through the Lattices": Mystical, Magical, and Pietistic Dimensions in the Tosafist Period* (Detroit, 2000).

52. Adolph Jellinek, *Beit ha-Midrash*, 6 vols. (Leipzig, 1853–77), 6:139–41. An English translation of a Yiddish version of this tale is published in Moses Gaster, ed., *Ma'aseh Book: Book of Jewish Tales and Legends Translated from the Judeo-German*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia, 1934), 2:368–73 (no. 174). In the version of this tale preserved in MS Jerusalem no. oct. 3182 and published in Eli Yassif, *Ninety-Nine Tales: The Jerusalem Manuscript Cycle of Legends in Medieval Jewish Folklore* [in Hebrew] (Tel Aviv, 2013), 99 (no. 27), the bishop does not convert to Judaism. On medieval legends about Judah the Pious, see Tamar Alexander, "Rabbi Judah the Pious as a Legendary Figure," in *Mysticism, Magic, and Kabbalah in Ashkenazi Judaism*, ed. Karl Erich Grözinger and Joseph Dan (Berlin, 1995), 123–38.

53. For an example of Muslims portrayed as preferring learned Christian converts to Islam, see [Arnald of Sarrant], *Chronica XXIV generalium ordinis minorum, Analecta franciscana* 3 (1897): 516–17. English translation in Arnald of Sarrant, *Chronicle of the Twenty-Four Generals of the Order of Friars Minor*, trans. Noel Muscat (Malta, 2010), 697.

54. *Gesta Treverorum*, ed. G. Waitz, MGH SS (Hannover, 1848), 8:194. See discussion in Albert Haverkamp, "Baptised Jews in German Lands During the Twelfth Century," in *Jews and Christians in Twelfth-Century Europe*, ed. Michael Signer and John Van Engen (Notre Dame, IN, 2001), 277–79.

55. Bernard Gui, *Vita S. Thomae Aquinatis*, In *Fontes Vitae S. Thomae Aquinatis*, ed. D. Prümmer (Toulouse, 1911), 182. English translation in Kenelm Foster, *The Life of Saint Thomas Aquinas: Biographical Documents* (London, 1959), 36.

56. Isaac ben Moses of Vienna, *Sefer Or Zaru'a* (Zhitomir, Ukraine, 1862), book 2, no. 276; English translation in "The Martyrdom of Rabbi Amnon of Mayence," trans. Moses Gaster, *The Rosh Hashanah Anthology*, ed. Philip Goodman (Philadelphia, 1973), 246–48. On this tale, see Israel Yuval, "The Silence of the Historian and the Ingenuity of the Storyteller: Rabbi Amnon of Mayence and Esther Minna of Worms," trans. Naomi Goldblum, *Common Knowledge* 9 (2003): 228–40.

57. See Beryl Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1952); Deborah Goodwin, *Take Hold of the Robe of a Jew: Herbert of Bosham's Christian Hebraism* (Leiden, 2006); David Malkiel, *Reconstructing Ashkenaz: The Human Face of Franco-German Jewry, 1000–1250* (Stanford, CA, 2009), 219–32; Aryeh Grabois, "The *Hebraica Veritas* and Jewish-Christian Intellectual Relations in the Twelfth Century," *Speculum* 50 (1975): 613–34; Jeremy Cohen, "Scholarship and Intolerance in the Medieval Academy," 592–613; Kruger, *The Spectral Jew*, 130–32.

58. See John Van Engen, "Ralph of Flaix: The Book of Leviticus Interpreted as Christian Community," in *Jews and Christians in Twelfth-Century Europe*, ed. Michael Signer and John Van Engen (Notre Dame, IN, 2001), 150–70; Robert Harris, "The Book of Leviticus Interpreted as Jewish Community," *Studies in Jewish-Christian Relations* 6 (2011): 1–15.

59. E. Martène and U. Durand, *Thesaurus novus anecdotorum*, 5 vols. (Paris, 1717), 4:1292.

60. Jeremy Cohen, "Scholarship," 612. On Nicholas of Lyra as a Christian mediator of Hebrew traditions, see Deeana Copeland Klepper, *The Insight of Unbelievers: Nicholas of Lyra and Christian Reading of Jewish Text in the Later Middle Ages* (Philadelphia, 2007).

61. See Ben-Shalom, "Between Official and Private Dispute," 23–71; Berger, "Mission to the Jews," 576–91.

62. Berger, *The Jewish-Christian Debate*, 169 (no. 155) (=108 [no. 155] in Hebrew). See discussion in Berger, "Mission to the Jews," 588–91.

63. *Tractatus adversus judaeum*, In *PL* 213:749. See discussion in Berger, "Mission to the Jews," 588.

64. Jean de Joinville, *Histoire de Saint Louis*, ed. Natalis de Wailly (Paris, 1883), 23.

65. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* 2.2, q. 10, art.7, ed. Thomas Gilby et al., 61 vols. (New York, 1964), 32:58. See discussion in Alex Novikoff, *The Medieval Culture of Disputation: Pedagogy, Practice, and Performance* (2013), 167–71.

66. *Councils and Synods*, 2:472–74.

67. Quoted in Marmorstein, "David Kimhi Apologiste," 247.

68. Paulus Alvarus, *Epistolae*, In *PL* 121:483, 491–92, 512–13.

69. Golb, *Jewish Proselytism*, 4; Alpert of Metz, *De diversitate temporum*, 720–23. Anna Sapir Abulafia translates and analyzes this debate in "An Eleventh-Century Exchange of Letters Between a Christian and a Jew," *Journal of Medieval History* 7 (1981): 153–74.

70. *Der Passauer Anonymus*, 152.

71. See Tartakoff, "Testing Boundaries," 749–51 and the sources cited therein. On less well-known convert preachers, see especially Jaume Riera i Sans, "Les llicències reials per predicar als jueus i als sarraíns (segles XIII–XIV)," *Calls* 2 (1987): 113–43.

72. Berger, *The Jewish-Christian Debate*, 62 (no. 28) (=22 [no. 28] in Hebrew).

73. Henry of Herford, *Liber de rebus memorabilioribus*, 216–17, also published in *Westfalia Judaica*, 63 (no. 38). I am grateful to Christine Magin for bringing this source to my attention. To my knowledge, no other chronicles refer to this Augustinian canon.

74. On the Patarenes, see Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, 36–33; H. E. J. Cowdrey, "The Papacy, the Patarenes and the Church of Milan," in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 18 (1968), 25–48; R. I. Moore, *The Origins of European Dissent* (London, 1977), 55–63.

75. For the nineteenth-century footnote, see *Lippische Regesten: Aus gedruckten und ungedruckten Quellen*, ed O. Preuss and A. Falkmann, vol. 1, *vom J. 783 bis zum J. 1300* (Lemgo and Detmold, 1860), 282–83 (no. 467). On possible connections between Jews and Passagians, see Shaye J. D. Cohen, "Between Judaism and Christianity," 315.

76. Although inquisitors remained aware of, and on the lookout for, Passagians into the fourteenth century, like the Patarenes, the Passagians appear to have lived in northern Italy and to have disappeared by the mid-thirteenth century. On the Passagians, see Walter Wakefield and Austin Evans, *Heresies of the High Middle Ages* (New York, 1969), 173–85; Alexander Patschovsky, "Passagi(n)er," in *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, 9 vols. (Stuttgart, 1993), 6:1756, s.v. "Passagi(n) er"; Newman, *Jewish Influence*, 255–90. In his inquisitorial manual, the *Practica Inquisitionis heretice pravitatis*, Bernard Gui cited a bull of Pope Clement IV that cited an edict of the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II (1215–40) against heretics including the Passagians. See Gui, *Practica*, 304–10. Warm thanks to Deeana Klepper, Sean Field, and Jessica Elliott for discussing this material with me.

77. On historians' interpretations of Donin's motivations, see Jeremy Cohen, *The Friars and the Jews*, 60–76, esp. 61 n. 19.

78. *Der Passauer Anonymus*, 152.

79. Gui, *Vita S. Fulcranni*, 715.

80. Published in Rangeard, *Histoire de l'Université d'Angers*, 2:183–87; English translation in Chazan, *Church, State, and Jew*, 313–17.

81. Berger, *The Jewish-Christian Debate*, 206–7 (no. 211) (=144–45 [no. 211] in Hebrew).

82. *Zikhron*, 133.

83. Abraham Habermann, ed. *Sefer Gezerot Ashkenaz ve-Ẓarfat* (Jerusalem, 1945), 189–90. The poet and halakhic authority Mordechai ben Hillel, who perished in the Rintfleisch massacres in 1298, also wrote a piyyut (liturgical poem) in honor of Abraham of Augsburg. It is published in Habermann, *Sefer Gezerot*, 186–89. On contemporaneous piyyutim extolling Jewish martyrs, see Einbinder, *Beautiful Death*. On Abraham of Augsburg, see Abraham Gross, *Spirituality and Law: Courting Martyrdom in Christianity and Judaism* (Lanham, MD, 2005), 49–51; Simha Goldin, *Apostasy and Jewish Identity in High Middle Ages Northern Europe*, trans. Jonathan Chipman (Manchester, 2014), 107–9. On Abraham of Augsburg and on Christian converts to Judaism as martyrs, see Tartakoff, "Martyrdom, Conversion, and Shared Cultural Repertoires."

84. Gui, *Vita S. Fulcranni*, 715.

85. Ashtor, "Documentos españoles," 45–46.

86. Paris, *Historia Anglorum*, 2:254–55. On this case, see Maitland, "The Deacon and the Jewess," 158–79.

87. Salfeld, *Das Martyrologium*, 9.

88. Salfeld, *Das Martyrologium*, 22. Two more converts—"Isaac son of our father Abraham who was burned for the sanctification of the Name [of God]" and "the convert son of our father Abraham who was slain"—appear in lists of individuals who pledged donations to communal institutions for the sake of their souls. It is not clear if these converts were the same as two of those mentioned above (Salfeld, *Das Martyrologium*, 89, 92).

89. Salfeld, *Das Martyrologium*, 36.

90. *Chronicle of Bury St. Edmunds*, 58; *Florentii Wigorniensis monachi chronicon*, 2:214; *Ropertus Holkot super librum Ecclesiasticum*, lect. 1, fol. 40vb. See Smalley, "Robert Holcot, O.P.," 61–62.

91. Henry of Herford, *Liber de rebus memorabilioribus*, 216.

92. *Iohannis Vitodurani Chronica*, 85. On this case, see Tartakoff, "Martyrdom."

93. Korner, *Chronica Novella*, 280. On this case, see Tartakoff, "Martyrdom."

94. See Alexander Murray, *Suicide in the Middle Ages*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1998), esp. 1:113–19.

95. Korner, *Chronica Novella*, 280.

96. See Shmuel Shepkaru, *Jewish Martyrs in the Pagan and Christian Worlds* (Cambridge, 2006), 255–57.

97. See Tartakoff, "Martyrdom." On mendicant martyrs in Muslim lands, see Christopher MacEvitt, "Martyrdom and the Muslim World Through Franciscan Eyes," *CHR* 97 (2011): 1–23; Isabelle Heullant-Donat, "Les risques de l'évangélisation: Sur quelques figures nouvelles de l'apostasie au XIIIe siècle," in *Chrétiens, Juifs et Musulmans dans la Méditerranée médiévale: Etudes en hommage à Henri Bresc*, ed. Benoît Grévin, Analiese Nef, and Emanuelle Tixier (Paris, 2008), 133–48; Isabelle Heullant-Donat, "Martyrdom and Identity in the Franciscan Order (Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries)," *Franciscan Studies* 70 (2012): 429–53; James D. Ryan, "Conversion or the Crown of Martyrdom: Conflicting Goals for Fourteenth-Century Missionaries in Central Asia?" in *Medieval Cultures in Conflict*, ed. Richard F. Gyug (New York, 2003), 19–38; Ryan, "Missionary Saints of the High Middle Ages," 1–28; Kedar, *Crusade and Mission*, 124–26.

98. *Histoire g*énérale de Languedoc, ed. Joseph Vaissette and Claude de Vic (Toulouse, 1872–92), vol. 10, *Preuves*, col. 8. Discussed in Joseph Shatzmiller, "Paulus Christiani: Un aspect de son activité anti-juive," in *Hommage à Georges Vajda: Études d'histoire et de pensée juives*, ed. Gérard Nahon

and Charles Touati (Louvain, 1980): 208–9. On the moving of this Jewish cemetery in 1280, see E. Szapiro, "Les cimetières juifs de Toulouse au Moyen Âge," *REJ* 125 (1996): 395–99. On inquisitorial understandings of postmortem burnings, see Christine Caldwell Ames, *Righteous Persecution: Inquisition, Dominicans, and Christianity in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia, 2009), 79.

99. Norman Roth, "Conversion to Judaism," 199.

100. Alexander Scheiber, "A Proselyte's Letter to the Congregation of Fustat," in *Geniza Studies*, ed. Alexander Scheiber (Hildesheim, 1981), 268–72.

101. Translation from Golb, *Jewish Proselytism*, 11.

102. *She'elot u-Teshuvot Maharam* (Cremona, 1557), 25a (no. 54); *She'elot u-Teshuvot Maharam* (Prague, 1608), 22a–b (no. 103) (paraphrased in English in Irving Agus, ed., *Rabbi Meir of Rothenburg: His Life and His Works*, 2 vols. [Philadelphia, 1947], 2:666–67 [no. 772]). See discussion of both cases in Wacholder, "Cases of Proselytizing in the Tosafist Responsa," 308–9.

103. *Der Passauer Anonymus*, 152.

104. *Siete partidas*, 7.25.5, In *Las siete partidas*, 3:678.

105. *Der Passauer Anonymus*, 152.

106. Assis, "The Papal Inquisition," 409–10 (no. 6) and Barcelona, ADB, RC 3, fol. 88v.

107. *Collectio maxima conciliorum omnium hispaniae et novi orbis*, ed. José Sáenz de Aguirre and Giuseppe Catalani, 5 vols. (Rome, 1753–55), 5:198. On contemporaneous procedures for reconciling Christian apostates to Islam to Eastern Christianity, see Uriel Simonsohn, "Conversion, Apostasy, and Penance: The Shifting Identities of Muslim Converts in the Early Islamic Period," in *Conversion in Late Antiquity: Christianity, Islam and Beyond*, ed. Arietta Papaconstantinou, Neil McLynn, and Daniel Schwartz (Oxford, 2015), 206–7; Uriel Simonsohn, "'Halting Between Two Opinions': Conversion and Apostasy in Early Islam," *Medieval Encounters* 19 (2013): 348–49; Leslie S. B. MacCoull, "The Rite of the Jar: Apostasy and Reconciliation in the Medieval Coptic Orthodox Church," in *Peace and Negotiation: Strategies for Coexistence in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. Diane Wolfthal (Turnhout, 2000), 145–62.

108. Paris, Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, MS 143, fol. 228. On this liturgy in earlier pontificals, see Miguel S. Gros, "El antiguo ordo bautismal catalano-narbonense," *Hispania Sacra* 28 (1975): 37–51.

109. *Siete partidas*, 7.25.5, In *Las siete partidas*, 3:678.

110. *Der Passauer Anonymus*,152.

111. Berger, *The Jewish-Christian Debate*, 206–7 (no. 211) (=144–45 [no. 211] in Hebrew).

112. On the origins and development of this procedure, see Shaye J. D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness;* Lavee, "The 'Tractate' of Conversion," 169–213; Lavee, "The Rabbinic Conversion to Judaism," 219–40; Kulp, "The Participation of a Court," 437–70; Yair Furstenberg, "The Christianization of Proselyte Baptism in Rabbinic Tradition," in *Coping with Religious Change in the Late-Antique Eastern Mediterranean*, ed. Eduard Iricinschi and Chrysi Kotsifou (Tübingen, forthcoming).

113. Moses ben Jacob of Coucy, *Sefer Miẓvot Gadol*, 2 vols. (Venice, 1547; repr., Jerusalem, 1993), 2:200.

114. *Zikhron*, 136.

115. Assis, "The Papal Inquisition," 409–10 (no. 6) and Barcelona, ADB, RC 3, fol. 88v.

116. *Yevamot* 47b.

117. *Zikhron*, 133.

118. *Sefer ha-Yashar le-Rabbenu Tam; Ḥelek ha-Teshuvot*, ed. S. P. Rosenthal (Berlin, 1898), 106–7 (no. 51). See discussion in Kanarfogel, "Approaches to Conversion," 243 n. 10; Wacholder, "Cases," 296.

119. *Sefer Raviah*, ed. Avigdor (Victor) Aptowitzer, 6 vols. (Berlin and Jerusalem, 1912–36; repr., Brooklyn, 1983), 2:253–56 (no. 549). See discussion in Shaye J. D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of*

Jewishness, 332–36; Kanarfogel, "Approaches," 218; Reiner, "L'attitude," 110; Wacholder, "Cases," 302. Against the Mishnah (Bikkurim 1:4–5), the Jerusalem Talmud recorded the opinion that converts *could* refer to the biblical patriarchs as their fathers when reciting prayers, as the biblical Abraham was the father of all nations (Gen. 17:5). On the view of Maimonides (Rabbi Moses ben Maimon, 1135–1204), see his *Responsa* [in Hebrew], ed. Joshua Blau, 2nd ed., 4 vols. (Jerusalem, 1986), 2:548–50 (no. 293). See English translation in *A Maimonides Reader*, ed. Isadore Twersky (Springfield, NJ, 1972), 474–76; and discussion in Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness*, 331–32.

120. See the discussion in Kanarfogel, "Approaches," 241 n. 3.

121. Salfeld, *Das Martyrologium*, 91–93; Baumgarten, *Practicing Piety*, 125.

122. Friedman, *Ribuy Nashim*, 213–16. On Jewish charity in medieval Egypt, see Mark R. Cohen, *Poverty and Charity in the Jewish Community of Medieval Egypt* (Princeton, NJ, 2005).

123. *Mordekhai, Bava Meẓi'a*, nos. 258, 259. See discussion in Kanarfogel, "Approaches," 243 n. 10; Wacholder, "Cases," 298.

124. MS Cambridge 667.1, cited in Kanarfogel, "Approaches," 241 n. 3.

125. *Sefer ha-Yashar*, 106–8 (no. 51). See discussion in Reiner, "L'attitude," 111–12; Kanarfogel, "Approaches," 243 n.10; Wacholder, "Cases," 296.

126. *Sefer Raviah*, 2:253–56 (no. 549). For discussions of this text, see Shaye J. D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness*, 332–33; Wacholder, "Cases," 302–3; Reiner, "The Dead as Living History," 207–8; Reiner, "L'attitude," 110; Jacob Katz, *Exclusiveness and Tolerance*, 78–79; Kanarfogel, "Approaches," 217–18.

127. *Histoire g*énérale de Languedoc, vol. 10, *Preuves*, col. 8.

128. Salfeld, *Das Martyrologium*, 22.

129. Colorni, "Nuovi dati sugli ebrei a Ferrara," 409–10.

130. Baer, *Urkunden*, 1:204–6 (no. 166) (=Régné, *History* 546 [no. 2952]); Baer, *Urkunden*, 1:207–8 (no. 168) (=Régné, *History* no. 2966). See discussion in Vose, *Dominicans, Muslims, and Jews*, 183–86; Assis, "The Papal Inquisition," 400–401. On the synagogue that became a chapel, see D. Vicente Mut, *Historia del reino de Mallorca*, 3 vols. (Palma, 1841), 3:384; Fidel Fita, "Los Judíos Mallorquines y el concilio de Viena," *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia* (1900): 232–33. On Jewish migration from Germany to Toledo in the early fourteenth century, see Israel Ta-Shma, *Keneset Mehkarim*, 3 vols. (Jerusalem, 2004), 2:157–61. I am grateful to Ephraim Kanarfogel for discussing this material with me.

131. Barcelona, ADB, RC 3, fols. 91v–92r. See discussion in Tartakoff, "Jewish Women and Apostasy," 14.

132. Assis, "The Papal Inquisition," 409–10 (no. 6) and Barcelona, ADB, RC 3, fol. 88v.

133. See *Teshuvot Maharah Or Zaru'a*, no. 142, ed. M. Abbitan (Jerusalem, 2002), 133 (no. 142); and the other sources cited and discussed in Kanarfogel, "Approaches," 237, 254 n. 58.

134. *Der Passauer Anonymus*, 152.

135. See, for example, *Zikhron*, 132. The two foundational texts that established the process by which, according to Jewish law, a non-Jew could become a Jew—BT Yevamot 47a–b and Gerim 1:1—implied that, In order to convert to Judaism, prospective converts were to initiate contact with Jews and inquire about conversion to Judaism of their own accord. On a posteriori willingness to ratify conversions that were born of less lofty motivations, see discussion in Avi Sagi and Zvi Zohar, *Transforming Identity: The Ritual Transition from Gentile to Jew—Structure and Meaning* (London, 2007), 19, 29–30.

136. Yevamot 47b, 109b; Kiddushin 70b–71a; Niddah 13b.

137. This midrash explained that, just as Naomi told her daughters-in-jaw, Ruth and Orpah, three times to return home (Ruth 1:8–13), so, too, prospective converts to Judaism were thrice turned away (Ruth Rabbah 2:16).

138. *Zikhron*, 132.

139. Friedman, *Ribuy Nashim*, 337.

140. *Zikhron*, 132.

141. *Zikhron*, 136.

142. *Sefer Raban*, ed. Solomon Ehrenreich (Simluya, 1926; repr., Jerusalem, 1975), fols. 29b–30a, sec. 36. See discussion in Kanarfogel, "Approaches," 226.

143. *Sefer Miẓvot Gadol*, 2:195. See discussion in Kanarfogel, "Approaches," 225; and Sagi and Zohar, *Transforming Identity*, 178. At least one Christian author, Nicholas of Lyra, was aware of the Jewish inclination to dissuade prospective conversion candidates. See Munich, Bayerische StaatsBibliothek, BSB-Ink B-447-GW4287 (Bible with the *Postillae* of Nicholas of Lyra), 430. English translation in Lesley Smith, *Medieval Exegesis in Translation: Commentaries on the Book of Ruth* (Kalamazoo, MI, 1996), 59. I am grateful to Elisheva Baumgarten for bringing this work to my attention. See discussion in Lesley Smith, "The Rewards of Faith: Nicholas of Lyra on Ruth," in *Nicholas of Lyra: The Senses of Scripture*, ed. Philip D. W. Krey and Lesley Smith (Leiden, 2000), 45–58, esp. 52–54.

144. *Zikhron*, 132.

145. *Sefer Ḥasidim*, 77 (no. 214).

146. Jacob ben Abba Mari Anatoli, *Malmad ha-Talmidim* (Lyck, 1886), 12a. According to the Talmud, the seven Noahide laws (six of which were exegetically derived from passages in Genesis) were given by God to all of humanity.

147. See Rashi's comments on Yevamot 47b, 109b, Niddah 13b, quoted and discussed in Reiner, "L'attitude," 102–3.

148. Tosafot, Niddah 13b. See discussion in Reiner, "L'attitude," 105. On the significance of lineage to Ashkenazi Jews in this period, see Kanarfogel, "Approaches," 234–35; and the studies by Avraham Grossman listed in Kanarfogel, "Approaches," 252 n. 49.

CHAPTER 4

1. On the significance of the varied terminology with which converts and returnees were described in Jewish sources, see Szpiech, *Conversion and Narrative*, 99–100. On cases in which medieval rabbinic authorities used this terminology loosely, see Kanarfogel, "Returning Apostates," 164.

2. See Jacob Katz, "Although He Has Sinned, He Remains a Jew" [in Hebrew], *Tarbiz* 27 (1958): 203–17; and Jacob Katz, *Exclusiveness and Tolerance*, 69–73.

3. For an overview, see Tartakoff, "Testing Boundaries," 728–62. Also see Malkiel, *Reconstructing Ashkenaz*, 114–47; Malkiel, "Jews and Apostates in Medieval Europe," 3–34.

4. Adolf Neubauer and Moritz Stern, *Hebräische Berichte über die Judenverfolgungen während der Kreuzzüge* (Berlin, 1892), 29 (Hebrew), 138 (German). I have followed the English translation in Robert Chazan, *God, Humanity, and History: The Hebrew First Crusade Narratives* (Berkeley, 2000), 118. On this episode, see Kenneth Stow, "Conversion, Apostasy, and Apprehensiveness: Emicho of Floheim and the Fear of Jews in the Twelfth Century," *Speculum* 76 (2001): 911–33.

5. *Chronica magistri Rogeri de Houedene*, ed. William Stubbs, 4 vols. (London, 1870), 3:12–13.

6. Fournier, *Le registre d'Inquisition*, 1:184; J. M. Vidal, "L'Emeute des Pastoureaux en 1320," *Annales de Saint-Louis des Français* 3 (1898–99): 165. See discussion in Solomon Grayzel, "The Confession of a Medieval Jewish Convert," *Historia Judaica* 17 (1955): 89–120; Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, "The Inquisition and the Jews of France in the Time of Bernard Gui," *HTR* 63 (1970): 317–76.

7. On the challenges of convert life, see Tartakoff, "Testing Boundaries"; and Tartakoff, "Of Purity, Piety and Plunder."

8. Isaac ben Moses of Vienna, *Sefer Or Zaru'a*, no. 758. See discussion in Edward Fram, "Perception and Reception of Repentant Apostates in Medieval Ashkenaz and Premodern Poland," *Association for Jewish Studies Review* 21 (1996): 308–9; Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom*, 95.

9. Text published in the original Latin and in English translation and discussed in Joseph Shatzmiller, "Converts and Judaizers in the Early Fourteenth Century," *HTR* 74 (1981): 74, 77.

10. *Teshuvot Maharam mi-Rothenburg ve-Haverav*, 489 (no. 188).

11. Adolf Neubauer, ed., "Maestro Andrea's Brief übersetzt von Jacob ben Elijah aus Venedig," *Israelitische Letterbode* 10 (1884–85): 76. The letter of Master Andrea is published in English translation in Stow, "Jacob of Venice," 228–32. On this letter, also see Robert Chazan, "The Letter of Rabbi Jacob ben Elijah to Friar Paul," *Jewish History* 6 (1992): 51–63.

12. Solomon ben Abraham ibn Aderet, *She'elot u-Teshuvot*, 7 vols. (Benei Berak, 1957–59), vol. 5, no. 240. On this case, see Sarah Ifft Decker, "Conversion, Marriage, and Creative Manipulation of Law in Thirteenth-Century Responsa Literature," *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 6.1 (2014): 42–53.

13. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 2:157–62 (no. 50). On why this bull was sent at this time and how Honorius came to know such details about Jewish life, see Solomon Grayzel, "Bishop to Bishop 1," in *Gratz College Anniversary Volume*, ed. Isidore David Passow (Philadelphia, 1971), 131–45.

14. *Annales minorum*, ed. Luke Wadding, 17 vols. (Rome, 1773), 7:142–43 (no. 1).

15. Shlomo Simonsohn, *Documents*, 422–23 (no. 397).

16. His wife, Conort, who had not converted to Christianity, later followed him to Tripoli, bringing "several" of their children with her. When Benvenist/Petrus died, Ponç de Gualba authorized Conort's return to Catalonia and promised her protection; hence, the safe conduct. See Barcelona, ADB, RC 3, fols. 91v–92r, published and discussed in Tartakoff, "Jewish Women and Apostasy," *Jewish History* 24 (2010): 14, 20 (no. 3).

17. *Decretum Gratiani* (DG), distinction (D.) 45, causa (c.) 5, in *CIC* 1:161–62.

18. Huguccio, *Summa* to DG D. 45, c. 5, quoted and discussed in Kenneth Pennington, "Gratian and the Jews," *Bulletin of Medieval Canon Law* 31 (2014): 117–19. Also see Aviad Kleinberg, "Depriving Parents of the Consolation of Children: Two Legal Consilia on the Baptism of Jewish Children," in *De Sion exibit lex et verbum domini de Hierusalem: Essays on Medieval Law, Liturgy and Literature in Honor of Amnon Linder*, ed. Yitzhak Hen (Turnhout, 2001), 129–44, at 130–33.

19. *X* 3.42.3 in *CIC*, 2:644–46.

20. Joseph Shatzmiller, *Recherches sur la Communauté Juive de Manosque au Moyen Age: 1241–1329* (Paris, 1973), 56–57. On Jewish oaths taken in medieval Christian courts, see Joseph Ziegler, "Reflections on the Jewry Oath in the Middle Ages," in *Christianity and Judaism*, ed. Diana Wood (Oxford, 1992), 209–20.

21. See Tartakoff, "Of Purity, Poverty, and Plunder."

22. Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus miraculorum*, ed. Joseph Strange, 2 vols. (Cologne, 1851), 1:96.

23. See Ekkehard of Aura, *Ekkehardi Uraugiensis chronica*, ed. G. Waitz, MGH SS (Hannover, 1844), 6:208; Neubauer and Stern, *Hebräische Berichte*, 171; Habermann, *Sefer Gezerot Ashkenaz ve-Ẓarfat*, 94.

24. *Regesten zur Geschichte der Juden im Fränkischen und Deutschen Reiche bis zum jahre 1273*, ed. Julius Aronius et al. (Berlin, 1902), 94.

25. Habermann, *Sefer Gezerot*, 122.

26. *Chronica magistri Rogeri de Houedene*, 3:12–13.

27. *RHGF*, 16:8 (no. 19).

28. Shlomo Simonsohn, *Documents*, 182–83 (no. 172).

29. *Close Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, 5:298.

30. English published in *Calendar of Liberate Rolls. Henry III*, ed. William Stevenson et al., 6 vols. (London, 1917–64), 3:133.

31. Translation from Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 2:15; for the Latin, see Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 2:36–37 n. 90.

32. See discussion and references in Shlomo Simonsohn, *History*, 233–34, 345–46; Vose, *Dominicans, Muslims and Jews*, 181.

33. Yerushalmi, "The Inquisition and the Jews," 345 n. 67 (c).

34. Gui, *Practica*, 289.

35. *Liber Sextus* 5.2.13 in CIC, 2:1075. The text is reprinted in Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 2:209 (no. 78) and Shlomo Simonsohn, *Documents*, 285 (no. 278).

36. Gui, *Practica*, 300.

37. F. Donald Logan, "Thirteen London Jews and Conversion to Christianity: Problems of Apostasy in the 1280s," *Historical Research* 45 (1972): 219, 226.

38. Joseph Shatzmiller, "Paulus Christiani," 203–17.

39. Bernard Gui, *Le livre des sentences de l'inquisiteur Bernard Gui, 1308–1323*, ed. and trans. Annette Pales-Gobillard, 2 vols. (Paris, 2002), 1:805–7.

40. *Annales minorum*, 7:142–43 (no. 2).

41. Gui, *Le livre des sentences*, 1:805–7.

42. See discussion in Ames, *Righteous Persecution*, 141–47, 169–77.

43. *Chronique latine de Guillaume de Nangis*, 1:363–64.

44. Vidal, "L'Emeute des Pastoureaux en 1320," 173; English translation from Grayzel, "Confession," 120.

45. Barcelona, ACB, C 126, fols. 25r, 90r. On this case, see Tartakoff, *Between Christian and Jew;* Josep Perarnau i Espelt, "El procés inquisitorial barceloní contra els jueus Janto Almuli, la seva muller Jamila i Jucef de Quatorze (1341–1342)," *Revista Catalana de Teologia* 4 (1979): 309–53.

46. Léopold Delisle, "Notes sur quelques mss. du musée britannique," *Mémoires de la société de l'histoire de Paris* 4 (1877): 189. See discussion and translation in Robert Chazan, *Medieval Jewry in Northern France: A Political and Social History* (Baltimore, 1973), 146.

47. See the eloquent discussion of this elegy in Einbinder, *Beautiful Death*, 100–123.

48. Alexandre Bruel, "Notes de Vyon d'Hérouval sur les baptizés et les convers et sur les enquêteurs royaux au temps de saint Louis et de ses successeurs (1234–1334)," *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartres* 28 (1867): 618.

49. On medieval rabbis' distinctions between forced and voluntary apostasy to Christianity, see Malkiel, "Jews and Apostates in Medieval Europe."

50. On medieval Jewish efforts to strengthen Jews against the pressures of Christian society, see Anna Sapir Abulafia, "Invectives Against Christianity in the Hebrew Crusade Chronicles of the First Crusade," in *Crusade and Settlement: Papers Read at the First Conference of the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East*, ed. Peter W. Edbury (Cardiff, 1985), 66–72; Einbinder, *Beautiful Death*, 17–44; Simha Goldin, "Jewish Children and Christian Missionizing" [in Hebrew], In *Sexuality and the Family in History*, ed. Israel Bartal and Isaiah Gafni (Jerusalem, 1998), 97–118.

51. Yassif, *Ninety-Nine Tales*, 195–96 (no. 29); English translation of Yiddish version in Gaster, *Ma'aseh Book*, 2:375–79 (no. 176); German summary in Nehemias Brüll, "Beiträge zur jüdischen Sagen- und Spruchkunde im Mittelalter," *Jahrbücher für jüdische Geschichte und Litteratur* 9 (1889): 28–29 (no. 17). See the discussion of this tale in Einbinder, *Beautiful Death*, 25 and 41 n. 27; Levin, "Jewish Conversion," 185–86; Alexander, "Rabbi Judah the Pious," 133.

52. Yassif, *Ninety-Nine Tales*, 196–97 (no. 30); English translation of Yiddish version in Gaster, *Ma'aseh Book*, 2:379–80 (no. 177); German summary in Brüll, "Beiträge zur jüdischen Sagen," 29 (no.

18). See the discussions of this tale in Einbinder, *Beautiful Death*, 25 and 41 n. 27; Levin, "Jewish Conversion," 186–87; Alexander, "Rabbi Judah the Pious," 133.

53. Meir of Rothenburg, *Sefer Hilkhot Semaḥot ha-Shalem*, ed. Akiva Landa and Ya'akov Landa (Jerusalem, 1976), 103–5 (no. 89). See English translation and discussion in Ephraim Shoham-Steiner, "'Vitam finivit infelicem': Madness, Conversion, and Adolescent Suicide Among Jews in Late Twelfth-Century England," in *Jews in Medieval Christendom: "Slay Them Not,"*ed. Kristine Utterback and Merrall Llewelyn Price (Leiden, 2013), 74–81; Einbinder, *Beautiful Death*, 25; Baumgarten, *Practicing Piety*, 95.

54. See Tartakoff, "Testing Boundaries," 740–42.

55. *Sefer Ḥasidim*, ed. Wistinetzki, 72 (no. 183).

56. See Riera i Sans, "Les llicències," 113–43.

57. See Tartakoff, "Testing Boundaries," 748–49.

58. *Sefer Ḥasidim*, ed. Wistinetzki, 75 (no. 200). See discussion in Goldin, "Juifs et juifs convertis," 870.

59. See Tartakoff, "Testing Boundaries," 753.

60. *Siete partidas* 7.24.6, In Carpenter, *Alfonso X and the Jews*, 33.

61. William of Newburgh, *Historia rerum Anglicarum*, book 4, chap. 7, In *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II, and Richard I*, ed. Richard Howlett, 4 vols. (London, 1884–89), 1:309–10. On William of Newburgh as a historian, see Nancy F. Partner, *Serious Entertainments: The Writing of History in Twelfth-Century England* (Chicago, 1977), 51–140.

62. Cecil Roth, *Jews of Medieval Oxford* (Oxford, 1951), 162. On William le Convers as one of the collectors of the 1278 poll tax, see *Select Pleas, Starrs, and Other Records from the Rolls of the Exchequer of the Jews, A.D. 1220–1284*, ed. J. M. Rigg (London, 1902), 113. On the 1290 attack, see *Calendar of Patent Rolls. Edward I*, 4 vols. (London, 1893–1901), 2:397.

63. Barcelona, ACA, Canc., Reg. 714, fol. 84r–v, cited in Riera i Sans, "Les llicències," 124.

64. *Chronique du religieux de Saint-Denys*, ed. L. Bellaguet, 6 vols. (Paris, 1839–52), 2:120.

65. On this alleged murder, see Roger Kohn, *Les juifs de la France du nord dans la seconde moitié du XIV^e siècle* (Paris, 1988), 262–63; and Henriette-Rika Benveniste, "Crossing the Frontier: Jewish Converts to Catholicism in European History," in *From Florence to the Mediterranean: Essays in Honour of Anthony Molho*, ed. Diogo Ramada Curto, Anthony Molho, Niki Koniordos, et al., 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 2:460.

66. These documents are discussed and published in Joseph Shatzmiller, "Paulus Christiani." For another reference to a Jew hosting a Jewish apostate allegedly unknowingly, see Tartakoff, *Between Christian and Jew*, 97.

67. Barcelona, ACA, Canc., Reg. 223 fol. 251 (=Régné, *History*, 599 [no. 3259]). On the inquisitorial penalty of destroying houses that had harbored "heretics" or been the scene of "heretical" activity, see below.

68. Barcelona, ACB, C 126, fol. 17r. On this case, see the bibliography listed above.

69. *Questiones Johannis Galli*, ed. Marguerite Boulet (Paris, 1944), 419.

70. *Sefer Ḥasidim*, ed. Wistinetzki, 75 (no. 200); English translation in Fram, "Perception and Reception," 306.

71. Colorni, "Nuovi dati sugli ebrei," 409–10. On the wearing of penitential badges, see Ames, *Righteous Persecution*, 171–72. On Florio da Vicenza, see Riccardo Parmeggiani, "L'inquisitore Florio da Vicenza," in *Praedicatores, Inquisitores I: The Dominicans and the Medieval Inquisition* (Rome, 2004), 681–99.

72. Gennaro María Monti, "Da Carlo I a Roberto di Angiò: Ricerche e documenti," *Archivio storico per le province napoletane* 59 (1934): 174.

73. Baer, *Urkunden*, 1:207–8 (no. 168) (=Régné, *History*, 547 [no. 2954]).

74. Assis, "The Papal Inquisition," 408–9 (nos. 4, 5).

75. Barcelona, ACA, Canc., Reg. 43, fol. 30v (Régné, *History*, 218–19 [no. 1206]).

76. Joseph Shatzmiller, "Converts and Judaizers."

77. Shlomo Simonsohn, *Documents*, 422–23 (no. 397).

78. See Jacob Katz, "Although He Has Sinned," 203–17; and Jacob Katz, *Exclusiveness and Tolerance*, 69–73.

79. See Tosafot, Sotah 39a, and the other sources listed in Goldin, "Juifs et juifs convertis," 854 n. 10. Also see Louis Finkelstein, *Jewish Self-Government in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1924), 175, 179–80.

80. Yom Tov ben Abraham Ishbili, *She'elot u-Teshuvot*, ed. Yoseph Kapah (Jerusalem, 1959), no. 159.

81. Yassif, *Ninety-Nine Tales*, 273; Brüll, "Beiträge zur jüdischen Sagen," 29–31 (no. 19). English translation of a Yiddish version of the same tale in Gaster, *Ma'aseh Book*, 2:380–83 (no. 178). Also see Rella Kushelevsky, "'Aaron's Rod': An Exploration of One Criterion for Establishing a Thematic Series" [in Hebrew], *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Folklore* 13–14 (1992): 205–28. This apostate's denunciation of the blood libel calls to mind Jewish apostates' denunciation of the blood libel in Fulda during the 1230s (see Chapter 1). On three thirteenth-century northern French Jewish folktales whose epilogues differentiated starkly between Jewish apostates who repented and those who did not, see Elisheva Baumgarten, "Tales in Context a Historical Perspective," epilogue to *Tales in Context: Sefer ha-ma'asim in Medieval Northern France*, by Rella Kushelevsky (Detroit, 2017), 717–20. Also see discussion in Elisheva Baumgarten, "Seeking Signs? Jews, Christians, and Proof by Fire in Medieval Germany and Northern France," in *New Perspectives on Jewish-Christian Relations*, ed. Elisheva Carlebach and Jacob Schachter (Leiden, 2012), 219–23.

82. *Sefer Ḥasidim*, ed. Wistinetzki, 75 (no. 201). See discussion in Fram, "Perception and Reception," 305–7.

83. Eadmer of Canterbury, *Historia novorum*, In *PL* 159:411; English translation in *Eadmer's History of Recent Events in England*, trans. Geoffrey Bosanquet (London, 1964), 103–5.

84. *Sefer Ḥasidim*, ed. Wistinetzki, 72 (no. 183).

85. Joseph Shatzmiller, "L'Inquisition et les juifs de Provence au XIIIe siècle," *Provence historique* 23 (1973): 336–38.

86. *Chronique latine de Guillaume de Nangis*, 1:363. See discussion in Sean Field, *The Beguine, the Angel, and the Inquisitor: The Trials of Marguerite Porete and Guiard of Cressonessart* (Notre Dame, IN, 2012), 82–84.

87. Baer, *Urkunden*, 1:201–3 (no. 164).

88. *Teshuvot Ba'alei ha-Tosafot*, ed. Irving Agus (New York, 1954), 238; English translation from Fram, "Perception and Reception," 316. On the stigma of a relative's apostasy, also see Carlebach, *Divided Souls*, 17.

89. Joseph Shatzmiller, "L'Inquisition," 336–38.

90. Joseph Shatzmiller, *Recherches*, 56–57.

91. Eadmer of Canterbury, *Historia novorum*, In *PL* 159:410–11; English translation in *Eadmer's History of Recent Events*, 103–5; William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum*, 4.317, ed. Hardy, 2:500. See the discussions of this incident in Norman Golb, *The Jews in Medieval Normandy: A Social and Intellectual History* (Cambridge, 1998), 133–34; Norman Golb, *Les Juifs de Rouen au Moyen Âge: Portrait d'une culture oubliée* (Rouen, 1985), 91–94.

92. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 2:157–62 (no. 50).

93. Quoted in Benveniste, “Crossing the Frontier,” 452–53; Kohn, *Juifs de la France du nord*, 253–59. Also see *Questiones Johannis Galli*, 418.

94. London, TNA, Exchequer of the Jews, Plea Rolls 9/17 m. 10; 9/21 m. 4; 9/21 m. 8. English translation published in *Calendar of the Plea Rolls of the Exchequer of the Jews*, ed. J. M. Rigg et al., 6 vols. (London, 1905–), 2:209–10; 3:18, 41–42. See the discussion of this case in Emma Cavell, “Conversion and Coercion: Rough Justice in the Jewish Community of Thirteenth-Century London,” *Women Negotiating the Boundaries of Justice: Britain and Ireland, c. 1100–c. 1750*, blog post, June 22, 2016, http://womenhistorylaw.org.uk/en/blog/1/12/conversion-and-coercion-rough-justice-in-the-jewish-community-of-thirteenthcentury-london. Also see Adler, *Jews of Medieval England*, 33–34; Robert C. Stacey, “The Conversion of the Jews,” 280.

95. See Yassif, *The Hebrew Folktale*, 274–75. I am grateful to Elisheva Baumgarten for bringing this to my attention.

96. On this case, see Tartakoff, *Between Christian and Jew;* Paola Tartakoff, “The *Toledot Yeshu* and the Jewish-Christian Conflict in the Medieval Crown of Aragon,” in *Toledot Yeshu (“The Life Story of Jesus”) Revisited*, ed. Peter Schäfer, Michael Meerson, and Yaacov Deutsch (Tübingen, 2011), 297–309.

97. See Ephraim Kanarfogel, “Returning to the Jewish Community in Medieval Ashkenaz: History and Halakhah,” in *Turim: Studies in Jewish History and Literature Presented to Dr. Bernard Lander*, ed. Michael A. Shmidman (New York), 69–97; Joseph Shatzmiller, “Converts and Judaizers”; Yerushalmi, “The Inquisition and the Jews”; Carlebach, *Divided Souls*, 28–89.

98. See Kanarfogel, “Returning to the Jewish Community”; Yerushalmi, “The Inquisition and the Jews”; Joseph Shatzmiller, “Converts and Judaizers,” 66–72; Tartakoff, *Between Christian and Jew*, 125–28; Yagur, “Captives, Converts and Concubines.”

99. Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus miraculorum*, 1:98.

100. Riccardo Parmeggiani, *I consilia procedurali per l’inquisizione medievale (1235–1330*) (Bologna, 2011), 121–28, esp. 124–25, 127. See discussion in Pennington, “Gratian and the Jews,” 120–23; Kenneth Pennington, “The Law’s Violence Against Medieval and Early Modern Jews,” *Rivista Internazionale di Diritto Comune* 23 (2012): 23–44.

101. Monti, “Da Carlo I a Roberto di Angiò,” 175–76. Joshua Starr suggested that Moses was a repentant Jewish apostate whom Jews “symbolically” circumcised (Starr, “The Mass Conversion of Jews,” 203–11).

102. Joseph Shatzmiller, “Converts and Judaizers,” 70, 74. Warm water is referred to also in the description of the re-Judaization of Samuel/Proteus in Paris in 1307 (*Chronique latine de Guillaume de Nangis*, 1:363).

103. Gui, *Le livre des sentences*, 2:1038.

104. In 1341 in Aragon, Jews confessed that they instructed a repentant apostate (who sought martyrdom) to scandalize Christian officials by demanding that they subject him to a parody of some of these rituals, amputating the fingers with which he had made the sign of the cross, ripping off the skin of his forehead that had come into contact with chrism, and flaying the skin of his knees on which he had knelt before crucifixes. See Tartakoff, *Between Christian and Jew*, 104.

105. Gui, *Practica*, 288–89.

106. Yerushalmi, “The Inquisition and the Jews,” 371–73.

107. Baer, *Urkunden*, 1:207–8 (no. 168) (=Régné, *History*, 547 [no. 2954]).

108. Joseph Shatzmiller, “Converts and Judaizers,” 73.

109. On penitential practices among the German Pietists, see Talya Fishman, “The Penitential System of Hasidei Ashkenaz and the Problem of Cultural Boundaries,” *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy* 9 (1999): 1–29.

110. Kanarfogel, “Returning to the Jewish Community,” 81.

111. Kanarfogel, "Returning to the Jewish Community," 88. See discussion in Baumgarten, *Practicing Piety*, 95–96.

112. Solomon ben Abraham ibn Aderet, *She'elot u-Teshuvot*, vol. 7, no. 411. On the perspectives of Solomon ben Abraham ibn Aderet and Yom Tov ben Abraham Ishbili, see Joseph Shatzmiller, "Converts and Judaizers."

113. The Jewish convert to Christianity Peter Alfonsi (d. 1140) referred to immersion in his *Dialogues against the Jews* (see Petrus Alfonsi, *Dialogi contra Iudaeos*, In *PL* 157:535–672, at 659; English translation in Resnick, *Marks of Distinction*, 255). As noted in Chapter 3, Nicholas of Lyra referred to instruction and to the Jewish practice of discouraging prospective converts to Judaism.

114. See Berger, *The Jewish-Christian Debate*, 224 (no. 237) (=158 [no. 237] in Hebrew).

115. On one occasion, a Christian author maintained that Jews both immersed and circumcised a returnee to Judaism: According to the continuation of the chronicle of William of Nangis, Samuel/Proteus confessed to an inquisitor that Jews bathed him in warm water and then circumcised him "as was habitually done by Jews in such affairs" (*Chronique latine de Guillaume de Nangis*, 1:363). This claim is doubly dubious and seems to have been born of confusion. First, Jews were not to recircumcise individuals unless they were improperly circumcised the first time. Second, In the context of conversion to Judaism, which called for both circumcision and immersion, Immersion was to follow circumcision, and not the other way around (see BT Yevamot 46a). For an instance in medieval Mainz in which a convert to Judaism was (incorrectly) immersed first and then circumcised, see *Zikhron*, 133; and the discussion in Kanarfogel, "Approaches to Conversion," 232.

116. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 2:157–62 (no. 50).

117. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 2:174–78 (no. 58).

118. Gui, *Practica*, 288.

119. Ferrara, Archivo Storico Diocesano, *Monasterio di S. Caterina Martire*, Inventario cronologico generale, ed. Giacomo Filippo Guerini (Ferrara, 1750), fol. 14v; quoted in Colorni, "Nuovi dati," 409–10. I am grateful to Laura Graziani Secchieri for discussing this document with me.

120. Monti, "Da Carlo I, 175–76.

121. Baer, *Urkunden*, 1:207–8 (no. 168).

122. Gui, *Practica*, 289.

123. Joseph Shatzmiller, "Converts and Judaizers," 73.

124. Gui, *Practica*, 299–300. Translation from Shaye J. D. Cohen, "Between Judaism and Christianity," 298.

125. Barcelona, ACB, C 126, fol. 16v; also see fols. 32v, 83r.

126. Barcelona, ACB, C 126, fols. 16r–v, 32v.

127. Barcelona, ACB, C 126, fol. 83r.

128. Conversions and returns to Islam similarly could occur in tandem. During the third quarter of the thirteenth century, for instance, a woman converted from Islam to Christianity, taking the name María, and married a born Christian from Valencia named Dominic of Sert. María subsequently returned to Islam, and Dominic and their children followed—they "made themselves Saracens" (Robert I. Burns, *Foundations of Crusader Valencia: Revolt and Recovery, 1257–1263*, Diplomatarium of the Crusader Kingdom of Valencia 2 [Princeton, NJ, 1985], 411 [no. 470]).

129. Kanarfogel, "Returning Apostates," 166.

130. Delisle, "Notes sur quelques mss. du musée britannique," 189.

131. Parmeggiani, *I consilia*, 127–28.

CHAPTER 5

1. London, TNA, KB 26/115B, m. 22.

2. On the variety of medieval Jewish and Christian definitions of childhood, see Jessie Sherwood, "Rebellious Youth and Pliant Children: Jewish Converts in 'Adolescentia,'" in *Medieval Life Cycles: Continuity and Change*, ed. Isabelle Cochelin and Karen Elaine Smyth (Turnhout, 2013), 184–85. On Jewish childhood in medieval Ashkenaz, see Elisheva Baumgarten, *Mothers and Children: Jewish Family Life in Medieval Europe* (Princeton, NJ, 2004). Also see Elliott Horowitz, "The Worlds of Jewish Youth in Europe, 1300–1800," in *A History of Young People in the West*, ed. Giovanni Levi and Jean-Claude Schmitt, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA, 1997), 1:93–94.

3. On William of Flaix, see, for example, Jessie Sherwood, "A Convert of 1096: Guillaume, Monk of Flaix, Converted from the Jew," *Viator* 39 (2008): 1–22.

4. See Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 1:260–61 (no. 110).

5. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 1:262–65 (no. 113).

6. Mary Minty, "*Kiddush ha-Shem* in German Christian Eyes in the Middle Ages" [in Hebrew], *Zion* 59 (1994): 216.

7. James Parkes, *The Jew in the Medieval Community* (London, 1938), 142–43.

8. Grayzel, "Jewish References in a Thirteenth-Century Formulary," 63.

9. *Hermannus quondam Judaeus: Opusculum de conversione sua*, ed. Gerlinde Niemeyer, MGH *Quellen* (Weimar, 1963), 4:114–16.

10. Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Die Fragmente der Libri VIII miraculorum* 3.18, ed. A. Meister (Rome, 1901), 148. On this tale, see Miri Rubin, *Gentile Tales*, 7–27; Boyarin, *Miracles of the Virgin in Medieval England*, 62–29. "Interfaith play" and its dangers figure also in Thomas of Cantimpré's account of the conversion of Rachel/Catherine (Thomas of Cantimpré, *Bonum universale de apibus* 2.29.21, ed. Gregorius Colvernerius [Douai, 1628], 296); and in Matthew Paris's account of the alleged ritual murder of Hugh of Lincoln (Paris, *Chronica majora*, 5:517).

11. Tosafot, Avodah Zarah 26a, s.v. *ovedet kokhavim*. I am grateful to Ephraim Kanarfogel for helping me track down this source, which Ephraim E. Urbach cited incorrectly in *The Tosaphists: Their History, Writings and Methods* [in Hebrew], 2 vols., 4th ed. (Jerusalem, 1980), 1:242.

12. Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera omnia*, ed. F. S. Schmitt, 6 vols. (Edinburgh, 1938–61), 5:323–24 (no. 380).

13. Shlomo Simonsohn, *Documents*, 115–16 (no. 112).

14. Shlomo Simonsohn, *Documents*, 419–21 (no. 394). On converts as beggars, see Tartakoff, "Of Purity, Piety, and Plunder."

15. Shlomo Simonsohn, *Documents*, 261 (nos. 398, 399).

16. The letter was published by Joseph Kobak in *Jeschurun* 6 (1868): Heb. sec., 1–31. The quoted passage corresponds to sec. 22. I am grateful to Ilana Kurshan and Iddo Winter for their help translating this passage. On this source, also see Kenneth Stow, "Jacob of Venice," 221–32; also printed in Kenneth R. Stow, *Popes, Church, and Jews in the Middle Ages: Confrontation and Response* (Burlington, VT, 2007); Chazan, "The Letter of R. Jacob ben Elijah," 51–63.

17. *Shitat ha-Kadmonim al Massekhet Avodah Zarah*, ed. Moshe Yehuda Blau, 3 vols. (New York, 1969–91), 3:250. I am grateful to Ari Schwab for bringing this source to my attention.

18. Shlomo Simonsohn, *Documents*, 160–61 (no. 151).

19. On the origins of the matrilineal principle, see Shaye J. D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness*, 263–307; Ranon Katzoff, "Children of Intermarriage: Roman and Jewish Conceptions," in *Rabbinic Law in Its Roman and Near Eastern Context*, ed. Catherine Hezser (Tübingen, 2003), 277–86.

20. Urbach, *The TTosaphists*, 1:243. Unlike Isaac of Dampierre, the Babylonian Talmud refers to an "infant," not a "minor." On lending money at interest to an apostate, see Jacob Katz, *Exclusiveness and Tolerance*, 71–72. See the discussion of this case in Ari Schwab, "Medieval Christian Conversion to Judaism" (PhD diss., Yeshiva University, In progress).

21. Isaac ben Moses of Vienna, *Or Zaru'a*, book 2, no. 428. See discussion in Goldin, "Juifs et juifs convertis," 867.

22. *Mordekhai, Sanhedrin*, no. 716. See discussion in Baumgarten, *Mothers and Children*, 181–82.

23. Meir of Rothenburg, *She'elot u-Teshuvot* (Cremona, 1557–58) (no. 82); English paraphrase in Agus, *Rabbi Meir of Rothenburg*, 2:616–17 (no. 686).

24. Hostiensis to *X* 3.33.2, In *Henrici de Segusio Cardinalis Hostiensis Decretalium commentaria*, 6 vols. (Venice, 1581), 3:123v–124r. See discussion in Aviad Kleinberg, "A Thirteenth-Century Struggle over Custody: The Case of Catherine of Parc-aux-Dames," *Bulletin of Medieval Canon Law* 51 (1990): 63.

25. On the views of Francesc Eiximenis on this matter, see María Teresa Ferrer i Mallol, "Frontera, convivencia, y proselitismo entre cristianos y moros en los textos de Francesc Eiximenis y de San Vicente Ferrer," in *Pensamiento medieval hispano: Homenaje a Horacio Santiago-Otero*, ed. José María Soto Rábanos (Madrid, 1998), 1596–99.

26. Duns Scotus, *Quaestiones in quartum Sententiarum*, d. 4 q. 9, *Opera omnia*, ed. Louis Vivès, 26 vols. (Paris, 1891–95), 16:487–89. See discussion in Kleinberg, "A Thirteenth-Century Struggle," 66–67.

27. See, for example, Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, 2a 2ae, q. 10, art. 12; 3a, q. 68, art.10; Quodl. 2, q. 4, art. 2. English translation by Sandra Edwards in Thomas Aquinas, *Quodlibetal Questions 1 and 2* (Toronto, 1983), 90–94.

28. See Friedrich Lotter, "Imperial Versus Ecclesiastical Jewry Law in the High Middle Ages: Contradictions and Controversies Concerning the Conversion of Jews and Their Serfs," in *Proceedings of the Tenth World Congress of Jewish Studies, Division B, II* (Jerusalem, 1990), 53–60.

29. On age of discretion, see discussion in Kleinberg, "A Thirteenth-Century Struggle," 59–61.

30. Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews*, 1:180–82 (no. 59); *X* 3.33.2, In CIC, 2:723.

31. On the donation charter, see Emile Brouette, "La Cistercienne Catherine de Louvain fut-elle abbesse de Parc-les-Dames?" *Analecta Bollandiana* 78 (1960): 84–91.

32. Thomas noted disdainfully that "the [Jewish] parents wickedly thought that, In the meantime, they could easily turn a young mind, such that [their daughter] would return to the vows of [her] birth parents" (Thomas of Cantimpré, *Miraculorum et exemplorum memorabilium sui temporis, libri duo* 29.20 [Douai, 1605], 298).

33. Thomas of Cantimpré, *Miraculorum et exemplorum*, 298–99.

34. Kleinberg, "A Thirteenth-Century Struggle," 57.

35. See, for comparison, the discussion of medieval Muslim jurists granting children religious choice in Maya Shatzmiller, "Marriage, Family, and the Faith: Women's Conversion to Islam," *Journal of Family History* 21 (1996): 247–48.

36. *Close Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, 3:264, 358; see Stacey, "The Conversion of Jews," 279–80.

37. Grayzel, "Jewish References," 63.

38. Barcelona, ACA, Canc., Reg. 143, fol. 251r—v. See discussion in Mark D. Meyerson, *Jews in an Iberian Frontier Kingdom: Society, Economy, and Politics in Morvedre, 1248–1391* (Leiden, 2004), 81.

39. London, TNA, KB 26/115B, m. 22.

40. See Rye, "The Alleged Abduction," 320–21; Lipman, *Jews of Medieval Norwich*, 62; Cecil Roth, *History of the Jews in England* (Oxford, 1964), 53.

41. See Stacey, "The Conversion of Jews," 269.

42. For examples of thirteenth-century Jews in England referred to as *magister* and *fisicus*, see Cecil Roth, "Intellectual Activities of Medieval English Jewry," British Academy Supplemental Papers 8

(London, 1948), 65; Lipman, *Jews of Medieval Norwich*, 147. Warm thanks to Naama Cohen-Hanegbi for suggesting this line of inquiry.

43. Nancy Siraisi, *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine: An Introduction to Knowledge and Practice* (Chicago, 1990), 20–21.

44. See Cecil Roth, "Intellectual Activities," 65–69; C. H. Talbot and E. A. Hammond, *The Medical Practitioners in Medieval England: A Biographical Register* (London, 1965). Two Jewish physicians —father and son—who lived in thirteenth-century Norwich were named Isaac and Solomon (Lipman, *Jews of Medieval Norwich*, 118).

45. In fact, it was the fourth most common Jewish name in Angevin England, and one of the Jews whom Master Benedict accused of circumcising Edward was named Benedict (Eliezer Halevi, "Jewish Naming Convention in Angevin England," at http://heraldry.sca.org/names/jewish.html).

46. Only exceedingly rarely were such descriptors not applied, as in the case of the convert Henry of Winchester whom King Henry III of England knighted. See Jean-Claude Schmitt, *The Conversion of Herman the Jew: Autobiography, History, and Fiction in the Twelfth Century*, trans. Alex J. Novikoff (Philadelphia, 2010), 190; Stacey, "The Conversion of Jews," 266, 276–77. On the significance of memorializing the Jewish pasts of medieval Jewish converts to Christianity, see Jonathan Elukin, "From Jew to Christian? Conversion and Immutability in Medieval Europe," in *Varieties of Religious Conversion in the Middle Ages*, ed. James Muldoon (Gainesville, FL, 1997), 174–75.

47. See Walter Pakter, *Medieval Canon Law and the Jews* (Ebelsbach, 1988), 314–31.

48. Barcelona, ACA, Canc., Reg. 434, fol. 136r.

49. Barcelona, ACB, C 126, fols. 81v–82r, 92r.

50. Ferrara, Archivo Storico Diocesano, *Monasterio di S. Caterina Martire*, Inventario cronologico generale, ed. Giacomo Filippo Guerini (Ferrara, 1750), fol. 14v; quoted in Colorni, "Nuovi dati," 409–10.

51. Barcelona, ADB, RC 3, fols. 59r (published in Yom Tov Assis, "The Papal Inquisition and the Jews in the early Fourteenth Century," *Medieval Studies* 49 [1987]: 409–10 [no. 6]), 88v.

52. Yassif, *The Hebrew Folktale*, 307.

53. Goldin, "Jewish Children and Christian Missionizing," 98–100.

54. *Or Zaru'a*, book 2, no. 428.

55. Habermann, *Sefer Gezerot*, 35.

56. *Eberhardi archdiaconi Ratisponensis annales*, ed. Ph. Jaffé, In MGH SS (Hannover, 1861), 17:597. Multiple Christian chronicles described similar Jewish behavior during the near annihilation of the Jewish community of Frankfurt in 1349. See Minty, "*Kiddush ha-Shem*," 217–19.

57. *Chronique latine de Guillaume de Nangis*, 2:35.

58. *Close Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, 3:264, 358.

59. Barcelona, ADB, RC 9, fols. 189v–190r, published in Josep Perarnau i Espelt, "Documents de tema inquisitorial del bisbe de Barcelona, fra Ferrer d'Abella (1334–1344)," *Revista Catalana de Teologia* 5 (1980): 467–68 (no. 9).

60. The constable of Exeter had the boy sent to the Dominican Robert Bacon at Oxford, who provided instruction to a number of Jewish converts (*Close Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, 3:323, 383).

61. See Stacey, "The Conversion of Jews."

62. *Teshuvot u-Pesakim me-et Ḥakhmei Ashkenaz ve-Ẓarfat*, ed. Efraim Kupfer (Jerusalem, 1973), 290–91 (no. 171). See discussion in Kanarfogel, "Returning to the Jewish Community," 82. Thirteenth-century Jews also ritually immersed boys who were to be admitted or readmitted to the Jewish community. See discussion in Kanarfogel, "Returning to the Jewish Community," 81–85.

63. On rabbinic and medieval Jewish approaches to the conversion to Judaism of minors, see Sagi and Zohar, *Transforming Identity*, 153, 170–71; Michael Corinaldi, "The Conversion of Minors,"

Jewish Law Association Studies 7 (1994): 31–40; Kanarfogel, "Approaches to Conversion," 217–57.

64. Delisle, "Notes sur quelques mss.," 189.

65. Parmeggiani, *I consilia*, 127–28.

66. *Corpus iuris canonici* … [with] *glossa ordinaria* (Rome, 1582), 2036. The ordinary gloss on Gratian's *Decretum* was written by Johannes Teutonicus between 1211 and 1215 and finalized by Bartholomew of Brescia in 1245 or 1246.

67. London, TNA, KB 26/115B, m. 22. On relations between local constables and Jewish communities in thirteenth-century England, see Hyams, "The Jewish Minority," 275–76.

68. See, for comparison, a 1401 case in which a Muslim father appealed to King Martin of Aragon when his three-year-old son was seized by a Christian man who claimed to be the boy's father. The Muslim father feared that the Christian man would baptize his son: Ferrer i Mallol, "Frontera, convivencia, y proselitismo," 1599–1600; Ferrer i Mallol, *Els sarraïns de la*, 27–28, 73.

69. Habermann, *Sefer Gezerot*, 145–46.

70. Thomas of Cantimpré, *Miraculorum et exemplorum*, 298–99.

71. *Hermannus*, 115.

72. Rye, "The Alleged Abduction," 336 (no. 23).

73. Robert Anchel, *Les Juifs de France* (Paris, 1946), 117–19; Kohn, *Juifs de la France du nord*, 262–63; Benveniste, "Crossing the Frontier," 460.

74. London, TNA, KB 26/115B, m. 22.

75. *Cronica Sancti Petri Erfordensis moderna*, ed. Oswald Holder-Egger, MGH SS rer. Germ. (Hannover and Leipzig, 1899), 42:237. See Isidor Kracauer, *Geschichte der Juden in Frankfurt A.M.*, 2 vols. (Frankfurt, 1925), 1:7–8. On this episode, see Rachel Furst, "Captivity, Conversion, and Communal Identity: Sexual Angst and Religious Crisis in Frankfurt, 1241," *Jewish History* 22 (2008): 179–221.

76. Baer, *Urkunden*, 1:264–65 (no. 195).

77. London, TNA, KB 26/115B, m. 22.

78. See Baumgarten, *Mothers and Children*, 172–74. I am grateful to Elad Zamir for encouraging me to consider this possibility.

79. London, TNA, KB 26/115B, m. 22.

80. Miri Rubin, *Gentile Tales*, 24, 71–73. Also see Stow, "The Cruel Jewish Father," 245–78.

81. Paris, *Chronica majora*, 4:30. Paris, Incidentally, used the same words to describe the efforts of the Christian mother of the alleged ritual murder victim Hugh of Lincoln (Paris, *Chronica majora*, 5:517).

82. London, TNA, KB 26/115B, m. 22.

83. Paris, *Chronica majora*, 4:30.

84. Lipman, *Jews of Medieval Norwich*, 35–38.

85. See Lipman, *Jews of Medieval Norwich*, 38–46, 78, 89, 106–7, 174.

86. Lipman, *Jews of Medieval Norwich*, 89–90.

87. Lipman, *Jews of Medieval Norwich*, 40–45.

88. *Close Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, 4:168; Lipman, *Jews of Medieval Norwich*, 40–45, 148. On the fugitives, see Westminster Abbey Muniments, nos. 6695, 9061, cited in Lipman, *The Jews of Medieval Norwich*, 61–62.

89. Lipman, *Jews of Medieval Norwich*, 147–48. Cecil Roth suggested that Meir ben Josce of Norwich was identical with Meir of England, whose work on the laws of mourning is quoted several times by Meir of Rothenburg. Ephraim Urbach pointed out that Meir of England is sometimes referred to as Meir of London and suggested that, therefore, he was a different person. See Cecil Roth, "Intellectual Activities," 27–29; Urbach, *The Tosaphists*, 513–15; Simcha Emanuel, *Fragments of the*

Tablets: Lost Books of the Tosaphists [in Hebrew] (Jerusalem, 2006), 309–10. I am grateful to Pinchas Roth for discussing this with me.

90. London, TNA, KB 26/115B, m. 22. *Fusselletis* (straws) has been read also as *suffletis/ sufflatis* (puffs of breath). See, for example, Tovey, *Anglia Judaica*, 99; Selden, "Of the Jews Sometimes Living in England," 152.

91. See Elisheva Baumgarten, "Marking the Flesh: Circumcision, Blood, and Inscribing Identity," in *La pelle umana/The Human Skin*, Micrologus 13 (Florence, 2005), 320.

92. On naming practices in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Ashkenaz, see Lilach Assaf, "Lovely Women and Sweet Men: Gendering the Name and Naming Practices in German-Jewish Communities (Thirteenth to Fourteenth Centuries)," in *Intricate Interfaith Networks in the Middle Ages*, ed. Ephraim Shoham-Steiner (Turnhout, 2016), 231–47.

93. I am grateful to Lilach Assaf for discussing this possibility with me (personal communication, August 30, 2017).

94. Maimonides wrote: "Since Abraham taught all peoples the true way and to abandon idolatry and converted many, all converts in all generations are like his students and members of his household. He is the father of all his students, who are the proselytes" ("Maimonides' first letter to Obadiah the Proselyte," English translation in *A Maimonides Reader*, ed. Twersky, 474–76). On the prevalence of the name Abraham for converts who are mentioned in documentary sources from the Cairo Geniza, see Moshe Yagur, "The Donor and the Gravedigger: Converts to Judaism in the Cairo Geniza Documents," in *Contesting Inter-Religious Conversion in the Medieval World*, ed. Yaniv Fox and Yosi Yisraeli (New York, 2017), 123–26.

95. A list of Jews from about 1241 "whose property passed to the Crown because they had been convicted or were fugitives" describes Diaia le Cat as the "father of Jurnin" (Westminster Abbey Muniments, nos. 6695, 9061, cited in Lipman, *The Jews of Medieval Norwich*, 61–62).

96. Barcelona, ACB, C 126, fol. 81v. See discussion in Tartakoff, *Between Christian and Jew*, 53–55. On the participation of children in life-cycle rituals in early modern Ashkenaz, see Tali Berner, "Children and Rituals in Early Modern Ashkenaz," *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 7 (2014): 65–86.

97. London, TNA, KB 26/115B, m. 22.

98. Walter Rye and J. M. Rigg read *judeis* (Rye, "The Alleged Abduction," 325; Rigg, *Select Pleas*, xliv). William Prynne, Moses Margoliouth, and C. T. Flower read *justiciis* (Prynne, *Short Demurrer*, 21; Margoliouth, *The Jews in Great Britain*, 322; *Curia Regis Rolls of the Reign of King Henry III*, 15:333–35).

99. London, TNA, KB 26/115B, m. 22.

100. Paris, Bibliothèque Mazarine, no. 2015. The relevant paragraphs are published in Martène and Durand, *Thesaurus novus anecdotorum*, 5:1794. See discussion in Yerushalmi, "The Inquisition and the Jews," 374–76; Shaye J. D. Cohen, "Between Judaism and Christianity," 285–321, esp. 290–93, 313.

101. Gui, *Practica*, 289–90. See Shaye J. D. Cohen, "Between Judaism and Christianity," 287.

102. Eymeric, *Directorium inquisitorum*, 349. See Shaye J. D. Cohen, "Between Judaism and Christianity," 287.

103. On the surgical details of circumcision according to rabbinic law, see Shaye J. D. Cohen, *Why Aren't Jewish Women Circumcised?*, 24–26.

104. *Zikhron*, 134.

105. Eymeric, *Directorium inquisitorum*, 349.

106. See Reiner, "L'attitude," 113–14.

107. See José Pardo Tomás, "Physicians' and Inquisitors' Stories? Circumcision and Crypto-Judaism in Sixteenth—Eighteenth-Century Spain," in *Bodily Extremities: Preoccupations with the Human Body in Early Modern European Culture*, ed. Florike Egmond and Robert Zwijenberg

(Burlington, VT, 2003), 168–94; Henriette-Rika Benveniste and Giorgos Plakotos, "Converting Bodies, Embodying Conversion: The Production of Religious Identities in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe," in Fox and Yisraeli, *Contesting Inter-Religious Conversion*, 245–67. On a case in Barcelona in 1437 in which Christians first attributed an infant's physiognomy to circumcision but then changed their minds, see Josep Hernando i Delgado, "El procés contra el converso Nicolau Sanxo, ciutadà de Barcelona, acusat d'haver circumcidat el seu fill (1437–1438)," *Acta Historica et Archaeologica Mediaevalia* 13 (1992): 75–100.

108. Rokeah, "The Jewish Church-Robbers," 342–43.

109. I am grateful to Katrina Olds for discussing this with me.

110. London, TNA, KB 26/115B, m. 22.

CONCLUSION

1. Higden, *Polychronicon*, 8:208–9.

2. Payne, "Robert Fabyan and the Nuremberg Chronicle"; Payne, "Robert Fabyan's Civic Identity." On the case of Simon of Trent, see Hsia, *Trent 1475*.

3. Fabyan, *New Chronicles*, 329.

4. *The Acts and Monuments of John Foxe*, ed. Josiah Pratt, 3rd ed., 8 vols. (London, 1870), 2:534–35. According to this edition of *Acts and Monuments*, John Foxe derived this information from the work of Nicholas Trivet. I have not, however, been able to find a reference to the Norwich circumcision case in Trivet's *Anglo-Norman Chronicle* or in his *Annales sex regum Angliae*. John Foxe's story seems to have conflated the fate of Norwich Jews with the fate of the Lincoln Jews who were transported to London after being falsely blamed for the death of Hugh of Lincoln. On the case of Hugh of Lincoln, see David Carpenter, "Crucifixion and Conversion"; Langmuir, "Knight's Tale of Hugh of Lincoln"; McGrath, "English Jews as Outcasts or Outlaws."

5. John Stow, *A Summarie of the Chronicles of England* (London, 1590), 207.

6. John Stow, *The Chronicles of England* (London, 1580), 265. In his *Survey of London* (London, 1598), 14, however, John Stow recounted a different version of the Norwich circumcision case. This version did not refer to ritual murder.

7. John Speed, *History of Great Britain* (London, 1614), 521.

8. Joseph Haydn, *Dictionary of Dates and Universal Reference* (London, 1841), 282. Haydn appears to have tied the Norwich circumcision case to the 20,000 mark tallage of 1241–42. He may not have been wrong in doing so. Although there is no direct evidence to confirm this connection, the "Third" of 1239–40 was explicitly described as a punishment for some unspecified offense of which the entire English Jewish community was alleged to be guilty. When the receipts from the Third were disappointing, the king credited them against a new 20,000 mark tallage that he imposed in 1241–42. See Stacey, "Royal Taxation," 179–81.

9. Weever, *Ancient Funeral Monuments*, 167.

10. Butler, *Lives*, 3:245 (March 24).

11. See Shlomo Simonsohn, *History*, 237.

12. Martin Luther, "Against the Sabatarians" (1538), In *Martin Luther, the Bible, and the Jewish People: A Reader*, ed. Brooks Schramm and Kirsi I. Stjerna (Minneapolis, 2012), 148. See discussion in Thomas Kaufmann, *Luther's Jews: A Journey into Anti-Semitism*, trans. Lesley Sharpe and Jeremy Noakes (Oxford, 2017), 88–89.

13. Johannes Müller, *Judaismus, oder Judenthumb: Das ist Ausfuhrlicher Bericht von des jüdischen Volckes Unglauben, Blindheit und Verstockung* (Hamburg, 1707), 1387, quoted in Elisheva Carlebach, "Ich will dich nach Holland schicken …": Amsterdam and the Reversion to

Judaism of German-Jewish Converts," in *Secret Conversions to Judaism in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Martin Mulsow and Richard Popkin (Leiden, 2004), 51–63.

14. See Allison P. Coudert, "Judaizing in the Seventeenth Century: Francis Mercury van Helmont and Johann Peter Späth (Moses Germanus)," in Mulsow and Popkin, *Secret Conversions*, 71–121.

15. See examples throughout Mulsow and Popkin, *Secret Conversions*. See also Yerushalmi, *From Spanish Court to Italian Ghetto*, 450. On conversions to Judaism in imperial Russia, see Ellie Schainker, *Confessions of the Shtetl: Converts from Judaism in Imperial Russia, 1817–1906* (Stanford, CA, 2016), 147–48.

16. On Christian conversions to Judaism in early America, see Jonathan Sarna, "The American Jewish Response to Nineteenth-Century Christian Missions," *Journal of American History* 68 (1981): 45–46.

17. See Lincoln A. Mullen, *The Chance of Salvation: A History of Conversion in America* (Cambridge, MA, 2017), 173–220; Frank Fox, "Quaker, Shaker, Rabbi: Warder Cresson, the Story of a Philadelphia Mystic," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 95 (1971): 147–94; Stuart Schoffman, "'Insane on the Subject of Judaism': Pursuing the Ghost of Warder Cresson," *JQR* 94 (2004): 318–60.

18. See David Kertzer, *The Kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara* (New York, 1997).

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