

THE STRUCTURE OF MEDIEVAL JEWISH SETTLEMENT IN THE SOUTHERN LOW COUNTRIES

Christoph Cluse

The following observations relate to the broad question of the relationship between the spread of Jewish settlements in medieval Europe and the process of urbanization. More particularly, they concern those factors that influenced the history of medieval Jewry in the Low Countries, which is the subject of my doctoral thesis.¹

In contrast to early modern times, the Low Countries never developed a major centre of Jewish life during the Middle Ages. The medieval settlements have largely been identified by Jean Stengers in his 1950 thesis, *Les juifs dans les Pays-Bas au moyen-âge*, and I can only modify and complement the pattern that he established.² Most striking of all is the absence of Jews in Flanders, a late-comer perhaps among the feudal princedoms of Europe, but one with an extreme growth rate, with flourishing cities and an early development of trade — factors, that is, which we have tended to associate with Jewish presence and activity. Similarly, the cities of the Meuse valley had developed a strong export trade by the High Middle Ages.³ Here also, Jews were conspicuously

1 *Studien zur Geschichte der Juden in den mittelalterlichen Niederlanden*, Forschungen zur Geschichte der Juden, A 10, Hanover 2000. For the following, see especially part I, with a fuller discussion of the documentation.

2 Jean Stengers, *Les Juifs dans les Pays-Bas au Moyen-Age*, Mémoires de l'Académie Royale de Belgique. Classe des lettres et des sciences morales et politiques, II/45, Brussels 1950.

3 H. P. H. Jansen, 'Handel en nijverheid 1000-1300,' in *Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, vol. II: *Middeleeuwen*, Haarlem 1982, pp. 86-148.

absent. The main principalities where we do find them in the Middle Ages are the county or duchy of Guelders in the North, and in the South, the duchy of Brabant and the county of Hainaut. I will concentrate my remarks on the latter two.

Jewish history in the southern Low Countries was confined to a period between about 1200 and the persecutions of the Black Death, in 1349. After that, there was only a brief attempt at re-establishing the communities of Brussels and Leuven, from 1368. This was ended by another persecution in 1370. Jews did not return to the Southern Low Countries until well into the sixteenth century. The map shows all Jewish settlements found up to the mid-fourteenth century.

The earliest evidence comes from the town of Leuven or Louvain. In the 1220s, the Cistercian Caesarius of Heisterbach wrote of a Jewish girl who had been abducted from her parents living in this town. Little Rachel was baptized and brought to a Cistercian nunnery.⁴ The Dominican friar Thomas of Cantimpré, member of the Leuven convent, in his *Bonum universale de apibus* claims that he had spoken to the convert Catherine in person.⁵ According to Thomas, the girl's parents had immigrated from Cologne not long before the child's abduction, and they were not the only Jewish family at Leuven.⁶ Despite the bias in both accounts, it is very likely that Jews first settled in the capital of the counts of Leuven, later dukes of Brabant, around the year 1200. The same dating holds true for Tienen (or Tirlemont), a small but dynamic town at the frontier towards Liège, counted for some time among the important towns of Brabant, and certainly among the foremost places in the textile industry of the Low Countries.⁷ Tienen had received a town charter as

4 Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus miraculorum*, ed. by J. Strange, Cologne and Brussels 1851, vol. I, pp. 95-98 (Liber II *De contritione*, ch. 25).

5 Thomas of Cantimpré, *Miraculorum et exemplorum memorabilium sui temporis libri duo*, ed. by Georgius Colvenerius, Douai 1605, pp. 97-296.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 297: *Contigit autem quod parentes eius a Colonia in Louanium Brabantiae opidum cum filia deuenirent. [...] conuenientibus Iudaeis pluribus [...].*

7 Franz Petri, 'Die Anfänge des mittelalterlichen Städtewesens in den Niederlanden und dem angrenzenden Frankreich,' in: *Studien zu den Anfängen des europäischen Städtewesens*, ed. by Theodor Mayer, Vorträge und Forschungen, 4, Konstanz 1958, p. 285.

early as 1168, and in 1232, a Jewish row (*platea Iudaeorum*) is named. The only known tombstone from our region, dating from the year 5015 (1255/56 C. E.) was found at Tienen.⁸ The indication of a cemetery implies a community of some importance.

Also in the first half of the thirteenth century, one Jakob of Geldenaken (Jodoigne) and his son Vivus were recorded to own property in the Jewish quarter of Cologne.⁹ Jodoigne on the upper Gette river was held by the counts of Duras until well into the twelfth century. In 1184 it fell into the hands of Duke Henry I of Brabant, who systematically developed it as a frontier town by founding a *ville neuve* at the foot of the castle, granting a town charter and, in 1217, a toll.¹⁰ This period of expansion also saw the intensification of lordship in the northern regions of the duchy. Hertogenbosch (Bois-le-Duc) was granted town status in 1185, and again military considerations played a main role.¹¹ According to a sixteenth-century tradition, Jews were said to have settled there shortly after the foundation of the *nova civitas*,¹² but I have found no confirmation for this. A Jewish row is attested in the early fourteenth century.¹³

To the East of Brabant's heartlands, the town of Sint-Truiden (Saint-Trond) belonged half to the local abbey, the other, to the principality of

- 8 Emile Ouverleaux, 'Notes et documents sur les Juifs de Belgique sous l'Ancien Régime,' *Revue des études juives*, 7 (1883), p. 127.
- 9 *Kölner Schreinsurkunden des zwölften Jahrhunderts: Quellen zur Rechts- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte der Stadt Köln*, ed. by Robert Hoeniger, Publikationen der Gesellschaft für rheinische Geschichtskunde, 1, vol. I, Bonn 1884, p. 225; *Das Judenschreibsbuch der Laurenzpfarre zu Köln*, ed. by Robert Hoeniger and Moritz Stern, Quellen zur Geschichte der Juden in Deutschland, I, Berlin 1888, p. 3 nos. 12-13, p. 6 nos. 35-37, p. 8 no. 46.
- 10 *Communes de Belgique: Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie administrative*, ed. by Hervé Hasquin, Raymond van Uytven and Jean-Marie Duvosquel, vol. I, Brussels 1981, pp. 66-764.
- 11 Willy Steurs, 'Les phénomènes urbains dans le Brabant septentrional jusqu'aux environs de 1300,' in: *Villes et campagnes au moyen âge: Mélanges Georges Despy*, ed. by Jean-Marie Duvosquel and Alain Dierkens, Liège 1991, p. 644.
- 12 Jacob Becker, 's-Hertogenbosch de oudste joodse gemeente in de noordelijke Nederlanden,' *Studia Rosenthaliana*, 18 (1984), pp. 74-75.
- 13 *Oorkondenboek van Noord-Brabant tot 1312*, vol. II: *De Meierij van 's-Hertogenbosch (met de heerlijkheid Gemert)*, ed. by H. P. H. Camps, The Hague 1979, part II, pp. 54-953 (10 September 1309).

Liège. The duke of Brabant would have had some influence as lay advocate. Here there was a fourth Jewish settlement traceable to the early thirteenth century. Thomas of Cantimpré, again, tells us in his *Life of Saint Christina Mirabilis*, written around 1232, that Christina even went into the local Jewry to give consolation to the dying. Thomas describes the Jewish community as a *congregatio maxima*.¹⁴ Around the middle of the century, there must have been a Jewish cemetery in the episcopal half of the town. An undated Hebrew document Israel Yuval has pointed out to me, perhaps from around the year 1300, speaks of the important rabbinic authorities who used to live there, when 'it was still a *kehilla*'. According to this anonymous source, Sint-Truiden was still outstanding among the Jewish settlements of the region. This claim was based on the existence of a cemetery (*beit ha-Chofshît*) at Sint-Truiden.¹⁵

Thus, we can identify four Jewish settlements in the southern Low Countries in the period up to 1250. We do, however, have to take account of other possible settlements not documented in the sources. The existence of two cemeteries in very close proximity would make further Jewries in the region seem very likely.

In the second half of the thirteenth century a growing number of Jewries in Brabant comes to light. Many of these are attested in sources relating to the Jewish quarter of Cologne, and to Jews whose names indicate an origin in the Low Countries.¹⁶ Apart from Jodoigne, which

14 Thomas of Cantimpré, 'Vita Christinae,' in *Acta Sanctorum Julii V*, Brussels 1868, p. 655 (ch. III. 27).

15 Ms. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Hébr. 242 (15th century), fol. 1v; the source was first edited by Benzion Dinur, ישראל בגולה: *A Documentary History of the Jewish People from Its Beginning to the Present*, vol. II/2, Tel Aviv and Jerusalem 1966, p. 407. A new edition by Yuval will appear, together with a German translation by Yacov Guggenheim, in the appendix to my thesis.

16 The problem is of course that such names could also be derived from the name of a house or could have been passed on in the family. However, the documentation contained in the chest of the parish of Saint-Lawrence includes Latin and Hebrew parallel charters. Thus, in some cases there is some degree of certainty that Jews indeed came from the places they were named after. For example, Joseph *de Sancto Trudone* did indeed come *me-'Ir Trudo* ('from the Town of Trudo'), and his house was named after him, not *vice versa*: *Judenschreibsbuch* (above, note 9), p. 29 no.

was mentioned above, the names of Jews in Cologne indicate settlements in Brussels, Leuven, Tienen, Sint-Truiden, and Heerlen. I shall only name some of them: Gutheil, daughter of the *Chaver* David of Tienen and widow of *Chaver* Isaac *de porta* of Tienen, first appeared at Cologne around 1275, probably after the death of her husband.¹⁷ She invested part of her dowry or inheritance in real property, in order to be able to sell it off later. She came, to judge by her own name, not from Tienen but from Sint-Truiden. This corresponds to the fact that her husband Isaac is named among the members of a Beit-Din there, together with one *Rav El'azar* and the 'great Rabbi Isaac Qîton' about whom otherwise nothing is known.¹⁸

It is probably no coincidence that in 1266, the Duchess of Brabant donated a house and garden at Tienen which had formerly belonged to a Jew, to the local Franciscans.¹⁹ The circumstances are very unclear, but there is a chance that this might have had to do with the demand for expelling all Jewish and Lombard moneylenders, expressed in the last will of her husband, Duke Henry III, in 1261.²⁰ There is evidence for the friars' influence on that will, and for their continual concern about the presence of Jews in Brabant down to at least 1270.²¹ Yet there is no proof that the demand for expulsion was ever carried out.

[116-17] and p. 67 no. [187]. Similarly, the Jew Isaac *de porta* was a *Judeus de Thine*, not just Isaac of Tienen: *ibid.*, pp. 35-36 no. 33-131 and [33-131], pp. 47-48 no. 153 and [153]. What is more, we also know him as *Yitzhaq min ha-Sha'ar* from the Hebrew source mentioned above. Thus, the Cologne documentation offers a more reliable guide to the settlements of the Southern Low Countries than is sometimes believed.

17 *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36 no. 33-131 and [33-131], pp. 47-48 no. 153 and [153].

18 As in note 15. It is a tempting thought that the name חַיִּטּוֹן is perhaps erroneous for חַיִּינּוֹן (i. e., Chinon), but the spelling in the manuscript is unambiguous. Isaac Chinon was indeed a leading scholar of the 13th century.

19 Sebald van Ruyssevelt, 'De Franciskaanse Kerken in België: De Stichtingen van de 13e eeuw,' *Franciscana*, 1970, p. 109.

20 G. Boland, 'Le testament d'Henri III duc de Brabant (26 février 1261),' *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique*, 38 (1942), p. 94.

21 Christoph Cluse, 'Zum Zusammenhang von Wuchervorwurf und Judenvertreibung im 13. Jahrhundert,' in: *Judenvertreibungen in Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit*, ed. by Friedhelm Burgard, Alfred Haverkamp and Gerd Mentgen, *Forschungen zur Geschichte der Juden*, A 9, Hanover 1999, pp. 135-163.

To return to the settlement history: The charters kept in the chest of Saint-Lawrence at Cologne reveal that a number of Jewish families from the Low Countries must have become rich and influential. Moreover, the sources indicate neighbourhood relations at Cologne which probably reflect the families' relations in their region of origin. As in the period before, the communities of Tienen and Sint-Truiden stand out as most important.

Further sources from Brabant itself confirm that there were Jews at Brussels and probably Leuven, and attest further settlements at Zoutleeuw (or Léau) and Genappe. In Mechlin, an exclave of the prince-bishops of Liège held in fief by the Berthout family, the Jew Hagin helped a Christian scholar translate Abraham ibn Ezra's *Reshit Chokhmah*²² in 1273. A Jewish row or alley is mentioned in 1287, and an agreement of 1312 contains the clause that the Berthouts held the local Jews in fief from the Duke of Brabant.²³ Similarly at Maastricht, where the Bishop of Liège and the Duke each had authority over certain groups of the population, the Jews were subject to the Duke. A Jewish row is in evidence from 1295.²⁴

Thus, the number of Jewish settlements in the southern Low Countries rose to ten in the second half of the thirteenth century, as compared to four in the first half. The development is a good example for the observation made by Franz-Josef Ziwes about the rise of Jewish settlements in feudal towns in this period, whereas in earlier times the cathedral and imperial cities and royal boroughs had prevailed.²⁵ In our region with only little property owned by the crown, Jewish settlement

22 *The beginning of wisdom. An Astrological Treatise by Abraham ibn Ezra*, ed. and trans. by Raphael Levy and Francisco Cantera, Baltimore 1939, p. 125.

23 *De Oorkonden van Pitsenburg, Commanderie van de Duitse Ridderorde te Mechelen (1190-1794)*, ed. by A. Jamees, vol. I, Antwerp 1991, p. 162 no. 209; *Le Livre des feudataires de Jean III, duc de Brabant*, ed. by L. Galesloot, Brussels 1865, p. 48.

24 Hartog Beem / R. C. Hekker, 'De Joden in Limburg van de dertiende tot de negentiende eeuw,' *Bulletin van de Koninklijke Nederlandse Oudheidkundige Bond*, ser. VI, 66 (1967), p. 60.

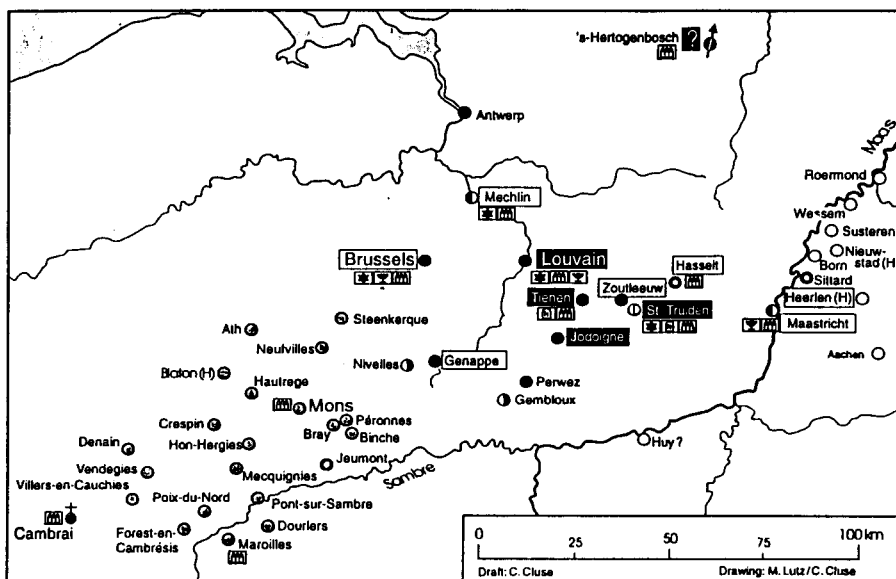
25 Franz-Josef Ziwes, *Studien zur Geschichte der Juden im mittleren Rheingebiet während des hohen und späten Mittelalters*, Forschungen zur Geschichte der Juden, A 1, Hanover 1995, p. 28.

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relied completely on the princes. Among these, the dukes of Brabant, especially Henry I and John I, the victor of Worringen, stand out as the most important. The expansion of the domain and intensification of administration accelerated, and Jewish and even more, Lombard moneylenders were instrumental in these processes. Apart from Brabant, only the principality of Liège had towns with Jews. In Mechlin and Maastricht, these were under the dukes' authority; only at Sint-Truiden (where Brabant was not without influence) can we be certain that the Jews settled under the bishop's staff.

Just as in other regions, the highest density of Jewish settlements in the Low Countries was reached in the first half of the fourteenth century.

Jewish Settlements in the Medieval Low Countries, c. 1200 - c.1350



- | | | | | | |
|--|---|--------------------|-----|----------------------------------|---|
| Community status | + | Cathedral city | ○ | Principality of Liège | Age of Jewish Settlement (first evidence) |
| ☐ Designated as community (Qahal, communas...) | ● | Duchy of Brabant | ⊕ | Shared/disputed authority | pre-1250 |
| ☒ Jewish cemetery | ○ | Vassals of Brabant | ○ | Others | pre-1300 |
| Buildings | ○ | County of Hainaut | (H) | Attested only by names of origin | all others:
pre-1350 |
| ☒ Jewish row or quarter | ○ | Vassals of Hainaut | | | |
| ☒ Synagogue | | | | | |

The picture is at the same time overshadowed by the horrific persecutions in 1349-50. In the Low Countries, a persecution by crusaders in 1309 had already preceded. To some degree these events reflect on the evidence we have for new Jewish settlements: for a number of places, we only know of Jewish inhabitants from the Hebrew martyrologies. They list persecutions at Antwerp, Brussels, Mechlin, Leuven, Sint-Truiden, Hasselt, Born, Sittard and Susteren, and also, as I would conjecture, in Jodoigne.²⁶

However, the intensification of the Jewish settlement pattern is no mere matter of documentation. A large proportion of the settlements attested before 1300 continued into the next century. Further, the immigration of English and above all French Jews after the expulsions of 1290 and 1306 would have contributed to the expansion. This is quite plain in the county of Hainaut, but certainly also affected Brabant, and not only in its southern, French-speaking parts.

We may assume that there was a functioning Jewish community at Brussels, and we know of a certain *presbyter Iudaeorum* by the name of Moses at Leuven. From what we know, the settlement at Antwerp must have been very small indeed. Similarly, the Memorbuch is the first certain evidence for Jews at Mechelen. At Maastricht however, there is even evidence for a synagogue.

Among the changes the fourteenth century brought about was the immigration of Jews to the southern, French-speaking parts of Brabant. This is evidenced in normative sources like the *landcharters* of John II for the land of Nivelles in 1292 and the privilege for the abbey of Gembloux, in 1307. Moreover, the Duke risked a conflict with the

26 *Das Martyrologium des Nürnberger Memorbuches*, ed. by Siegmund Salfeld, Quellen zur Geschichte der Juden in Deutschland, 3, Berlin 1898, pp. 78, 80, 84-85. The list of placenames taken from a fourteenth-century prayerbook (p. 80) gives the names of Born, Louvain, Sayn (?), Sittard, Susteren, Hasselt, Brussels, Sint-Truiden, and גולדבך, followed by Salzbουργ. However, Halberstam and Berliner read גולדינג, Neubauer even גילדינג, and this would be 'Geldenach', i.e., Jodoigne (the Dutch form is Geldenaken). A Jewish settlement in 'Goldbach' is unknown according to *Germania Judaica II and III*, whereas Salfeld's guess (*ibid.*, note 26), 'vielleicht ist Goldeck bei Salzbürg gemeint', appears unwarranted. The names of Born and Sittard can also be found in ms. Oxford, Neubauer 1108; see Adolf Neubauer, 'Le Memorbuch de Mayence,' *Revue des études juives*, 4 (1882), p. 29.

abbess of Nivelles, who in accordance with the status of immediacy to the crown which her monastery enjoyed, exerted control over the nearby town. Apparently, John II interfered in her rights of authority when he placed Lombards who lent money at interest there, and tolerated Jews in the *nueve rue* outside the walls — not to mention such things as his presumption of judicial and taxation rights in the town. A memorandum by the Abbess, dated between 1306 and 1312 according to Jean-Jacques Hoebanx, makes explicit mention of this recent Jewish settlement.²⁷ However, the latter does not appear to have continued for long. Perhaps this has to do with the so-called crusade of 1309, or with the fact that, like many exiles from France, the Jews only stayed for a short time and then moved further East, as Bernhard Blumenkranz has observed in other regions.²⁸

At the abbey town of Gembloux, affairs went somewhat differently in the early fourteenth century. A charter of 1307 accords higher and lower justice at Mont-Saint-Guibert and Dion to the Abbot, while the Duke only makes his usual claims over Lombards, Jews, waters, roads and taxes, as his predecessors had done. In 1329, however, the abbot was able to secure the right to collect the overdue debts which inhabitants of Gembloux and its appendices had incurred with Jewish or Lombard moneylenders there.²⁹

Other Jews of French origin, to judge from their name, were Master Sause of Blaton who lived at Perwez, and Benjamin *de Brabancia* whom we know of from sources relating to Trier.³⁰

27 Brussels, Archives Générales du Royaume, Archives Ecclésiastiques, inv. no. 1462; cf. Jean J. Hoebanx, *L'abbaye de Nivelles: Des origines au XIV^e siècle*, Mémoires de l'Académie Royale de Belgique. Classe des lettres et des sciences morales et politiques, ser. II, 46/4, Brussels 1952, pp. 57–255, note 4.

28 Bernhard Blumenkranz, 'En 1306: Chemins d'un exil,' *Evidences*, 13 (1962), pp. 17–23.

29 *Recueil des chartes de l'abbaye de Gembloux*, ed. by Charles-Gustave Roland, Gembloux 1921, p. 153 no. 119, pp. 74–171 no. 126; cf. *Germania Judaica II*, vol. I, pp. 99–101, note 4, and Stengers (see note 2), p. 160, note 257 (4).

30 Ouverleaux (see note 8), pp. 23–122 (a loan charter of 26 October 1344; according to Ouverleaux, the Hebrew note on the back indicates the French origin of Master Sause); Alfred Haverkamp, 'Erzbischof Balduin und die Juden,' in: *Balduin von Luxemburg. Erzbischof von Trier — Kurfürst des Reiches 1285-1354. Festschrift*

It is not clear whether in the principality of Liège, Jews lived anywhere except for Sint-Truiden.³¹ Jews are also conspicuously absent from the episcopal city itself. This is paralleled by the situation in Cambrai and Utrecht, where we have only sparse and rather inconclusive evidence for a Jewish presence.

In conclusion I would argue that the evidence for the Brabant area indicates a structure of Jewish settlement that was strongly influenced by the interests of the dukes. Jewish settlements could become an instrument in the hands of the prince (as could the granting of a licence to Lombard moneylenders). This is evident from the policy of placing Jews in frontier towns, and of turning the ducal right to protect the Jews into an instrument of expansion — against Liège, but also against imperial abbeys such as Nivelles. Thus, it comes as no surprise that Jews were to be found in most of the important towns of Brabant, certainly in all of the seven *hoofdsteden*.³²

The picture is completely different in the neighbouring county of Hainaut. Here, the first Jews are attested in the years 1307 and 1308, no doubt exiles from France. In these years, they obtained individual safe-conducts from Count William.³³ From time to time, some of them are mentioned in the account books of the town of Mons.³⁴ This is not surprising: Mons was the centre of the county, where the counts held court and where, as early as 1283, more than eleven hundred taxpayers were listed.³⁵

aus Anlaß des 700. Geburtstages, ed. by Franz-Josef Heyen and Johannes Mötsch, *Quellen und Abhandlungen zur mittelrheinischen Kirchengeschichte*, 53, Mainz 1985, p. 458, note 83.

31 Mention is made in the accounts of Louvain in 1349 of *enen brieve vanden Joeden van Hoye* (Leuven, Stadsarchief, inv. no. 4986, fol. 61r / inv. no. 5540, pec. a), but I tend to read this as meaning 'a letter from Huy concerning the Jews', not 'a letter concerning the Jews of Huy'.

32 By the later thirteenth century, these were Louvain, Brussels, Antwerp, Hertogenbosch, Tienen, Nivelles, and Zoutleeuw.

33 Mons, Archives d'Etat, cartulaire no. 20, fols. 55v-56r, 114v-115r.

34 *Les plus anciens comptes de la ville de Mons (1279-1356)*, ed. by Christiane Piérard, vol. I (Brussels, 1971), pp. 38, 40, 46, 69-70, 74 and 95.

35 'Les plus anciens rôles d'impôt de la ville de Mons,' ed. by M.-A. Arnould, in: *Mélanges de philologie romane offerts à M. Karl Michaëlsson*, Goteborg 1952, pp. 11-30.

However, the comital accounts also give scattered evidence in the 1320s and 30s, on Jews in Vendegies, Denain, Villers-en-Cauchies, as well as in unknown places in the châtelainie of Bouchain and elsewhere in the county.³⁶ In the 1330s, the Jewish population of Hainaut had already reached a considerable number. A collective charter for the Jews of the duchy and the adjacent domain of Pont and Dourlers (which the dukes held in pawn), dating from 24 April 1337, about six weeks before the death of the old count, gives the names of 25 Jewish men and women, plus at least eight unnamed members of their families, not included *tous les enfans dou dit Lion mariés et non mariés!* These Jews lived in at least eleven different places: Ath, Binche, Crespin, Dourlers, Forest, Maroilles, Mecquignies, Neufvilles, Péronnes, Pont-sur-Sambre, and elsewhere 'in the franchise of the lord (Count)'.³⁷

After the collective charter of 1337, there is almost no evidence until the year 1349, when the Hainaut Jewry was completely wiped out after accusations of well-poisoning. The comital administration accounted for the taxes of some Jews for the period between Corpus Christi day (11 June 1349), 'until the day that they were burned'.³⁸ Only Bray (near Binche) and Poix-du-Nord (*prévôté* Le Quesnoy) are explicitly mentioned as places of settlement. All further references from this year relate to the great persecution, which took place in August.³⁹ According to these, Jews had lived in Ath, Neufvilles, Steenkerque, Hautrege, Mons, Hon-Hergies and Jeumont, as well as in other places in the *prévôtés* of Mons and Valenciennes.⁴⁰ About 25 adult Jewish women

36 Mons, Archives d'Etat, Trésorerie, vol. 52, no. 91 (roll of the Châtelain de Bouchain, December 1327 to June 1329); *ibid.*, no. 93 (Châtelain de Bouchain, 1329); Lille, AD du Nord, B 7860* (Compte du receveur, February 1334 to February 1335), fol. 31r.

37 *Monuments pour servir à l'histoire des provinces de Namur, de Hainaut et de Luxembourg*, vol. III, ed. by L. Devillers, Brussels 1874, pp. 460-462 no. 344.

38 Lille, AD du Nord, B 7864, fol. 21v: *pour se demoree en Haynn. dou jour du Sacre l'an XLIX juskes au jour k'il furent ars.*

39 See the detailed account in my thesis (above, note 1), ch. III. 2.

40 Brussels, AGR, Chambre des Comptes, inv. no. 14808/2 (Châtelain d'Ath, 1350/51), fol. 7v; *ibid.*, no. 14808/4 (Châtelain d'Ath, 1352/53), fols 3v, 4r; *ibid.*, no. 15109/2 and /6 (lists of outstanding debts owed to Jews of Mons, Hautrege, Neufvilles and Steenkerque), *passim*; Lille, AD du Nord, B 10817 (Prévôt de Bavay,

and men can be accounted for, the actual size of county's Jewish population must have been much larger.

If we take a look at the settlement structure here, it is striking that the much more recent Jewish population in Hainaut was far quicker to spread over the region than the more traditional Jewry of neighbouring Brabant, and their pattern of settlement became dense within about one generation. During the first half of the fourteenth century, Jews lived, at least temporarily, in 21 places within the duchy (a certain instability and flux will have to be taken into consideration). Of the two important urban centres only Mons had a Jewish settlement; it is also one of the places where we have evidence for a Jewish row (the *rue des Juifs* is only attested at the end of the fifteenth century). The Jews were never able to establish themselves at Valenciennes. If we take a brief look at the towns serving as centres of administration, the picture is again confirmed: of eight seats of *châtellenies* or *prévôtés*, only three (Ath, Mons, and Binche) had Jews; they are not to be found at Flobecq and Lessines, at Braine-le-Comte, Bouchain, Valenciennes, Le Quesnoy, Bavay, Maubeuge or Beaumont. Instead of Jews, Lombard moneylenders settled in these places. On the whole, they had a much firmer hold in the region.⁴¹ In contrast, the dukes of Brabant had, by the mid-fourteenth century, settled Jews in the majority of their administrative centres.

Many of the places in Hainaut where Jews did live were small towns rural in outlook. If we take the hearth tax lists of the late fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries as a rough guide, most places with Jewish settlements must have had no more than between 50 and 100, and rarely more than 200 households.⁴²

I would argue that these differences in Jewish settlement patterns are not merely an impression that can be explained by the differences in documentation. It is true that we lack the account books of the Dukes of Brabant for the period when quite a few of such are extant in Hainaut,

1349); *ibid.*, no. B 7865* (Compte du receveur, 1350/51), fol. 17r; *ibid.*, B 11655 (Prévôt de Valenciennes, 1349), fol. 9v.

41 I owe this information to Dr. habil. Winfried Reichert, Trier.

42 See the figures in Maurice-A. Arnould, *Les Dénombrements des foyers dans le Comté de Hainaut (XIV^e XVI^e siècle)*, Brussels 1956, pp. 75–236.

and we also have a few very scattered references to Jews in rural settings. But the evidence for a deliberate policy of placing Jews in all major towns of Brabant is overwhelming.

Returning to the question of urbanization and Jewish settlement, I would also argue that in the Southern Low Countries, the Jews were certainly no catalyst of urban development. Jewish settlements followed in the wake of urbanization, and Jews did not serve as town-builders. In Brabant, the take-off in urban development and in trade and industry was achieved in the twelfth century;⁴³ in Hainaut, apart perhaps from Valenciennes, the growth of a market economy has been dated to the later thirteenth century.⁴⁴ In both regions, Jews followed after one or two generations. Areas with a very early development of active trading — the Meuse valley and Flanders in particular, had no Jews at all.

The population maps of the Low Countries drawn by N. J. G. Pounds on the basis of 15th century evidence⁴⁵ would also suggest that Jews found better opportunities for settling and for doing business in regions where the general pattern of settlement was, as it were, scattered. In the Southern Low Countries at least, they lived in networks of middling to small towns rather than in the great urban centres like those of Flanders, where the few large towns and their élites completely dominated the surrounding countryside. This argument would probably also hold true for the urban centers in upper Italy.

The pattern of Jewish settlements in the Low Countries thus differs from the one prevalent in the Rhine valley, where Jews in fact *did* have a role to play in the process of urbanization. The difference is, I think, a result of the fact that their settlements only spread into our region after the twelfth century. It is therefore quite significant and not surprising that in the county of Hainaut, where they did not arrive until the

43 Jansen (see note 3), pp. 76–175.

44 Gérard Sivéry, *Structures agraires et vie rurale dans le Hainaut à la fin du moyen-âge*, vol. II, Lille 1980, p. 374.

45 N. J. G. Pounds, 'Population and Settlement in the Low Countries and Northern France in the Later Middle Ages,' *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*, 49 (1971), pp. 369–402.

fourteenth, the Jews' connection with urban culture is even weaker than in Brabant.

This is well illustrated by the position of the *rue des Juifs* at Mons: The latecomers had to content themselves with settling on the outskirts of the town, almost about half a mile from the comital castle and market place. In contrast, the Jews of Leuven settled right behind the church of Saint Peter, which in turn was right next to the town hall, at the centre of a town of considerable size (expanded to 410 hectares around 1356).

Rather than regarding Jews as a *factor* in urbanization, I would in conclusion suggest describing their *function* as instrumental for the territorial princedoms' internal integration, and in particular, in connecting centres of lordship rights with the surrounding countryside. This is why feudal overlords readily accepted Jews and even tried to place them as their immediate subjects, in places where authority was divided or disputed. This is also why later medieval criticism of Jewish economic activity was often voiced within the context of moral exhortations aimed at the Jews' overlords. To name but one example, taken from our region: in the 1320s, the secular cleric Jean d'Anneux wrote a Mirror of Princes dedicated to William I of Hainaut. The dedication is surprising in that it is rather a diatribe. Among other things, the author accused Count William of tolerating Jews and Lombards in his lands for money, and that he kept himself *tenus et lijes* to them.⁴⁶

46 Susanne Stracke-Neumann, *Johannes von Anneux: Ein Fürstenmahner und Mendikantengegner in der ersten Hälfte des 14. Jahrhunderts*, Mammendorf 1996, p. 212.