



WORKSHOP CONVERTS OF CONVICTION FAITH AND SCEPTICISM IN NINETEENTH CENTURY EUROPEAN JEWISH SOCIETY

The study of Jewish converts to Christianity in the modern era has not always been a favorite subject of Jewish historiography. Labeled disparagingly in the Jewish tradition as meshumadim [apostates], many earlier Jewish scholars treated them in a negative light or generally ignored them as not properly belonging any longer to the community and its historical legacy. This situation has radically changed in recent years with an outpouring of new studies on converts in variegated times and places, culminating perhaps in the most recent synthesis of Todd Endelman, one of the pioneers in the study of converts in the modern era.

While Endelman argues that most modern converts left the Jewish fold for economic, social, or political reasons, he does acknowledge the presence of those who chose to convert for ideological and spiritual reasons. The purpose of our workshop is to consider the latter group, perhaps the most interesting from the perspective of Jewish intellectual history, those who moved from Judaism to Christianity out of a conviction that they were choosing a superior faith, and out of doubt or lack of confidence in the religious principles and practices of their former one. Their spiritual journeys often led them to doubt their newly adopted faiths as well, and some even returned to Judaism or adopted a hybrid faith consisting of elements of both religions. Their intellectual itineraries between Judaism and Christianity offer a unique perspective on the formation of modern Jewish identities, Jewish-Christian relations, and the history of Jewish sceptical postures.

TUE, 29.03.2016
(Seminar Room/5th Floor)

**MAIMONIDES CENTRE
FOR ADVANCED STUDIES**

Schlüterstraße 51
20146 Hamburg

Convenor:
Prof. Dr. David Ruderman

PROGRAMME

09:30 – 10:00 WELCOMING REMARKS AND INTRODUCTION
Giuseppe Veltri (Maimonides Centre for Advanced Studies) and
David Ruderman (University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia)

10:00 – 12:00 SESSION I
Chair: Andreas Brämer (Institute for the History of the
German Jews, Hamburg)

**A Tale of Two Brothers: David and Paulus Cassel's Roles
as Scholars of Judaism and Jewish Christianity**
Christian Wiese (Goethe University Frankfurt)

**Jerusalem Letters: Vasily Levison's Ruminations on Faith,
Doubt, and Conversion from Judaism to Russian Orthodoxy**
Ellie Schainker (Emory University Atlanta)

13:30 – 15:00 SESSION II
Chair: Mirjam Thulin (Leibniz Institute of European History, Mainz)

**The Intellectual and Spiritual Journey of Stanislaus Hoga:
From Judaism to Christianity to Hebrew Christianity**
David Ruderman (University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia)

**Students of the Rabbinical School as Converts:
Interactions Between Missionaries and Jews in Warsaw**
Agnieszka Jagodzinska (University of Wrocław)

15:30 – 16:00 ROUNDTABLE

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ספקנות
Maimonides Centre for Advanced Studies
JEWISH SCEPTICISM

The event is open to the public, with advance registration via e-mail.
Contact: maimonides-centre@uni-hamburg.de