

## Introduction

### Female convents and music in Vienna, 1650–1785

Sunday, August 14, [1707]. Today, in the morning, both their imperial majesties, with a retinue of many gentlemen and ladies, went to the foundation of the very worthy choir nuns of the Augustinian order “at the Himmelpforte” [and] due to the usual devotion they attended the sacred service, celebrated by his high-princely grace the bishop of Vienna. They then ate the midday meal there, after which they remained to hear an excellent spiritual oratorio.

*Wienerisches Diarium*, August 17, 1707<sup>1</sup>

In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, Vienna’s musical nuns rivaled their Italian sisters. No mere imitators of Italian traditions, Viennese convents developed distinct musical practices and genres, and significantly enriched their city’s musical life. Nuns and *Kostfräulein* (boarding-school girls) in several musical convents played a variety of instruments and sang exquisitely, astonishing their audiences. As well as contributing music to the sacred services, they performed oratorios, *feste teatrali*, and plays with music before the imperial family and other visitors.

This is all the more remarkable in that Viennese noble families rejected the Italian practice of consigning large numbers of well-born girls to convents. Many Viennese girls took the veil, certainly. But there were only seven convents in that city in the late seventeenth century, with two suburban institutions added in the early years of the eighteenth. The convents ranged in size from some thirty choir nuns and lay sisters to about seventy, for a total of 350 to 400 in a city of 100,000 around 1700.<sup>2</sup> By comparison, in

<sup>1</sup> “Sonntag, den 14. Augusti. Heute Vormittags haben sich beede Kayserliche Majestäten, im Gefolg vieler Cavalliren, und Damen, in das Stifft deren WW. EE. Regulirten Chor-Frauen des H. Augustini, bey der Himmelporten, erhoben, und daselbst, wegen der gewöhnlichen Andacht dem Gottes-Dienst, welchen Ihre Hochfürstl. Gnaden, der Herr Bischoff zu Wienn, versehen, beggewohnt, so dann das Mittagmahl allda eingenommen, nachdeme Sich daselbst bey einem fürtrefflichen geistlichen Oratorio verweylet.”

<sup>2</sup> On the population of Vienna, see Andreas Weigl, “Frühneuzeitliches Bevölkerungswachstum,” in Karl Vocelka and Anita Traninger (eds.), *Die frühneuzeitliche Residenz (16. bis 18. Jahrhundert)*, vol. II of *Wien: Geschichte einer Stadt*, ed. Peter Czendes and Ferdinand Opll (Vienna: Böhlau, 2003), 110. The number of nuns increased somewhat in the early eighteenth century.

Milan, a city of about 100,000 inhabitants in the mid-seventeenth century, there were then around six thousand choir nuns, spread among some forty institutions.<sup>3</sup>

Entering a convent was not the social norm in Vienna, as in Italy, but a more conscious choice – religious devotion, perhaps a desire to serve others, the prospect of power and authority within the institution, or a dedication to musical or artistic activity. There is occasional evidence of girls entering convents unwillingly or because they lacked alternatives, but as the number of nuns was small, there cannot have been many such incidents. A Viennese girl of good family had other acceptable possibilities, besides marriage to an elder son of similar social standing. She might marry a man of a wealthy or prominent but recently ennobled family: the social structure, except for the highest born, was a little more fluid in Vienna than in many Italian cities, and faithful service to the crown often brought ennoblement, as was the case for a number of prominent musicians in court service. She might remain unmarried, perhaps devoting herself to the service of her family, as did Archduchess Maria Magdalena (1689–1743), a sister of Emperors Joseph I and Karl VI; a survey of death records of the nobility in Vienna reveals a small, but not inconsiderable, number of women who had never married.<sup>4</sup> She might join a service (tertiary) order.<sup>5</sup> The Englische Fräulein were an uncloistered teaching order active briefly in Vienna in the 1620s and then in St. Pölten from 1707. The Elisabethinen, an order of Franciscan tertiaries devoted to nursing and care of the poor, established themselves in Graz in 1690, in Vienna in 1709, and later in Klagenfurt, Linz, and Pozsony (Bratislava);<sup>6</sup> they were considered to be nuns, but their mission was incompatible with strict enclosure. Or she might enter a *Damenstift*, a foundation where women lived a quasi-religious, communal life. The Savoyensches Damenstift for noblewomen in need of homes was founded

<sup>3</sup> Robert L. Kendrick, *Celestial Sirens: Nuns and Their Music in Early Modern Milan* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 27, 38–39.

<sup>4</sup> Totenprotokolle Adelige, A-Wsa. On Maria Magdalena, see Brigitte Hamann, *Die Habsburger: Ein biographisches Lexikon* (Vienna: Amalthea, 1988), 339.

<sup>5</sup> Sabine Weiss, *Die Österreicherin: Die Rolle der Frau in 1000 Jahren Geschichte* (Graz: Verlag Styria, 1996), 354–55. On the Englische Fräulein, founded by the English educator Mary Ward, see Linda Maria Koldau, *Frauen – Musik – Kultur: Ein Handbuch zum deutschen Sprachgebiet der Frühen Neuzeit* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2005), 356–57; Anne Conrad, *Zwischen Kloster und Welt: Ursulinen und Jesuitinnen in der katholischen Reformbewegung des 16./17. Jahrhunderts*, Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Europäische Geschichte Mainz, Abteilung Religionsgeschichte, 142 (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1991), 84–94; and Silvia Evangelisti, *Nuns: A History of Convent Life* (Oxford University Press, 2007), 211–19.

<sup>6</sup> Weiss, *Die Österreicherin*, 355, and Felix Czeike, *Historisches Lexikon Wien*, 6 vols. (Vienna: Kremayr & Scheriau, 2004), s.v. “Elisabethinen,” “Elisabethinenkirche.”

in Vienna only in 1772<sup>7</sup> (it is probably no coincidence that entering a convent there became more difficult around that time), but the königliches Damenstift Hall in Tyrol had been founded considerably earlier, in 1564. A frequent destination for travelers in the region, Damenstift Hall maintained a professional *Kapelle* of men and boys and was in the seventeenth century the most important musical institution in Tyrol after the famed *Hofkapelle* in Innsbruck.<sup>8</sup>

Vienna was a very musical city, at least in part because music played a prominent role in the public representation of the imperial family.<sup>9</sup> From the early seventeenth century, when the court moved permanently to the city, the Habsburgs cultivated a large and excellent *Hofkapelle*, drawing fine musicians from Italy, their own lands, and elsewhere to provide magnificent music in support of their dignity as both rulers of their hereditary lands and the family of Holy Roman Emperors. Lavish court musical productions trumpeted the family's fame in less than subtle allegories.<sup>10</sup>

For the Austrian Habsburgs of the seventeenth and the early eighteenth centuries, music was much more than a personal diversion and a symbol of wealth and power. Most of them were trained in music, and several emperors, including Leopold I and his elder son Joseph I, were composers – orderers of sound and creators of harmony – as well as political rulers, their music serving as an aural symbol of the harmony of their rule and their personal fitness to reign.<sup>11</sup> In a biography published in 1712, the year after his death, Joseph is credited with the musical talent that elevates the Habsburgs above other noble families; this talent, passing from one legitimate ruler to the next, links him to his father, Leopold I, and back to the

<sup>7</sup> On *Damenstifte*, see Koldau, *Frauen*, 877–915, and Karl Vocelka and Lynne Heller, *Die private Welt der Habsburger: Leben und Alltag einer Familie* (Graz: Verlag Styria, 1998), 278–79.

Ceremonies for the opening of the Savoyensches Damenstift are described in *Zwei Jahrhunderte des Ursulinerklosters in Wien, 1660–1860* (Vienna: Ludwig Mayer, 1860), 40.

<sup>8</sup> Walter Senn, *Aus dem Kulturleben einer süddeutschen Kleinstadt: Musik, Schule und Theater der Stadt Hall in Tirol in der Zeit vom 15. bis zum 19. Jahrhundert* (Innsbruck: Tyrolia-Verlag, 1938), 134–222, 331, 354–56, 449–50, 612–33, and Koldau, *Frauen*, 59–65, 814–15.

<sup>9</sup> Andrew H. Weaver, *Sacred Music as Public Image for Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand III* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), and Maria Golubeva, *The Glorification of Emperor Leopold I in Image, Spectacle, and Text* (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 2000).

<sup>10</sup> On court musical productions as celebrating the harmony of Habsburg rule, in particular at the court of Leopold I, see Golubeva, *The Glorification of Emperor Leopold I*, especially Chapter 4, “*L’idea del felice governo*: Peace, harmony and patronage of the arts in the representations of Leopold I.” An overview of political themes in European opera in the seventeenth century appears in Lorenzo Bianconi and Thomas Walker, “Production, consumption and political function of seventeenth-century opera,” *Early Music History*, 4 (1984), 259–74.

<sup>11</sup> This idea may not have been universal, the court’s engagement with music being considered by some critics as an expensive distraction: Koldau, *Frauen*, 107–8.

ancient kings. And what makes him such a good musician is an innate quality, impossible to achieve by any amount of practice:

Just like the great Leopold, [he] on occasion composed arias and other cantatas, which were afterwards considered by the greatest connoisseurs of music as incomparable; thus Emperor Joseph was also in this science so complete, that in his leisure hours, without breaking into the great business of ruling, he was able to compose the most perfect pieces, which afterwards were heard by everyone with pleasure. He played the harpsichord in a finished manner and played the flute, and also many other instruments, with such ease that even those who make a profession of it had to admit that they could not surpass him in *grace*, and only had the advantage in being able to practice all day long.<sup>12</sup>

The other guiding and legitimating idea of the dynasty was piety, emphasized in the wake of the Counter-Reformation. This virtue was concisely expressed in the depiction of Emperor Leopold I on the *Dreifaltigkeitssäule* (Holy Trinity column) in the center of Vienna.<sup>13</sup> Leopold kneels in supplication, begging on behalf of his people for an end to the plague epidemic of 1679 (Figure 1).

Piety and music constantly intertwined. Court composers set texts extolling their emperors as models of that virtue and others,<sup>14</sup> and emperors themselves wrote sacred music that remained in the repertory of the *Hofkapelle* for decades, each performance evoking the ruling family's devotion. Piety, music, and the political need for constant visibility combined in a yearly cycle of state visits to churches, monasteries, and convents, which court calendars and the newspapers of the day reported to the larger world. In this cycle of "stational worship," members of the imperial family, together with their courts, attended services at a convent, monastery, or church on the

<sup>12</sup> Eucharius Gottlieb Rinck, *Josephs des Sieghafften Röm. Käysers Leben und Thaten* (Cologne, 1712), I:40: "Eben wie der grosse Leopold *arien* und andere *cantaten* zum öfftern *componirte*, welche hernach von den grösten kennern der *music* vor unvergleichlich gehalten worden, also war auch der Käyser Joseph in dieser wissenschaft so vollkommen, daß er bey müßigen stunden, ohne den grossen regierungs-geschäften abbruch zu thun, die vollkommensten stücke verfertigte, die hernach mit iedermans vergnügen angehörtet wurden. Er spielete selbst ein vollkommenes *clavecín*, bließ die flöte, und *tractirte* noch viel andere *instrumenta* mit solcher annehmlichkeit, daß auch diejenigen, so *profession* davon machten, gestehen musten, daß sie ihn in der *grace* nicht übertreffen, und nur hierdurch einen vorthail hätten, daß sie den gantzen tag darmit umgiengen." It is perhaps most likely that a German nobleman would have played the transverse flute, rather than the recorder.

<sup>13</sup> The classic study of piety as Habsburg princely virtue and as political policy is Anna Coreth, *Pietas Austriaca: Ursprung und Entwicklung barocker Frömmigkeit in Österreich* (Vienna, 1959), trans. William D. Bowman and Anna Maria Leitgeb (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2004).

<sup>14</sup> Weaver, *Sacred Music as Public Image*, Chapter 5: "Musical portraiture: Representations of the emperor in sound."



**Figure 1.** Holy Trinity column, Vienna (1682–94), by Matthias Rauchmüller, Paul Strudel, J. B. Fischer von Erlach, Ludovico Burnacini, I. J. Bendl, Joseph Frühwirth, Tobias Kraker, and Matthias Gunst. Detail showing Emperor Leopold I. Photo: author.

patron saint's day or other day of special importance to the institution, associating themselves and their reign with the virtues of the saints and the piety of those devoted to a religious life (Table 1). This cycle of visits expanded over the course of the seventeenth century, reached a peak in the century's last decade, and began to wane around 1715.<sup>15</sup> By tradition, reaching back to the reforms of Emperor Ferdinand II at the beginning of the seventeenth century, Habsburg women, especially dowager empresses and unmarried archduchesses, were responsible for much of this pious duty, visiting convents and churches, attending religious services, and participating in pilgrimages.<sup>16</sup>

The story of the Viennese convents and their music is bound up with the city's religious and political history. The oldest convents, including St. Agnes

<sup>15</sup> On public processions, church visits, religious celebrations, and acts of piety as theater, political representation, and indicators of social change in eighteenth-century Vienna, see Elisabeth Kovács, "Kirchliches Zeremoniell am Wiener Hof des 18. Jahrhunderts im Wandel von Mentalität und Gesellschaft," *Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs*, 32 (1979), 109–42.

<sup>16</sup> Katrin Keller, *Hofdamen: Amtsträgerinnen im Wiener Hofstaat des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2005), 131.

**Table 1.** Visits to Viennese convents by the imperial family, as listed in *Wienerisches Andachts-Büchl oder Festcalender vor das Jahr 1715* (Vienna: Johann Baptist Schönwetter, 1715), *Corriere ordinario* (1715), and *Wienerisches Diarium* (WD; 1715).

Date	Convent	Occasion (feasts in bold, movable feasts marked *)
Jan. 22	Königinkloster (Clarissan order)	<b>Anniversary of the death of the founder, Elisabeth, Queen of France:</b> emperor & empress attend Mass. WD lists this visit on Jan. 21: Empress Mother Eleonora Magdalena & archduchesses visited the convent & dined there. According to WD, the imperial couple were away. <sup>a</sup>
Jan. 22	Königinkloster	<b>Eve of the wedding of the Blessed Virgin Mary (BVM):</b> Dowager Empress Amalie Wilhelmine & young archduchesses attend 1st Vespers.
Jan. 23	St. Joseph (Carmelite order)	<b>Wedding of the BVM:</b> emperor & empress attend services. Eleonora Magdalena & archduchesses attend services & dine.
Feb. 2	Königinkloster	<b>Purification of the BVM:</b> Eleonora Magdalena visits.
Feb. 3	St. Nikolai (Clarissan order)	Amalie Wilhelmine & archduchesses attend a profession ceremony & dine.
Feb. 10	St. Agnes (Augustinian order)	Profession of Countess Carafa: emperor, empress, dowager empresses & their daughters attend Mass & profession ceremony; the dowager empresses & their daughters dine & hear Vespers.
Feb. 17	St. Nikolai	Eleonora Magdalena & archduchesses attend services & dine.
Feb. 21	St. Laurenz (Augustinian order)	Eleonora Magdalena & archduchesses make devotions & dine.
Feb. 23	St. Nikolai	Eleonora Magdalena & her daughters make a private visit to the convent.
Feb. 28	St. Joseph	Eleonora Magdalena & archduchesses make devotions & dine.
Mar. 3	Königinkloster	Eleonora Magdalena & archduchesses attend services & dine.
Mar. 8	Königinkloster	<b>*Exposing of the Vial of Holy Blood</b> (2nd Friday in March): emperor & empress, Eleonora Magdalena & archduchesses attend Mass; Eleonora Magdalena dines there; Amalie Wilhelmine attends evening services.
Mar. 18	St. Joseph	<b>Eve of St. Joseph:</b> Amalie Wilhelmine & archduchesses attend services & dine.
Mar. 19	St. Joseph	<b>St. Joseph:</b> emperor, empress & court attend Mass; Eleonora Magdalena dines in the convent. WD: Eleonora Magdalena & archduchesses attend services & dine.
Apr. 14	Königinkloster	<b>*Palm Sunday:</b> Eleonora Magdalena attends services.
Apr. 17	Königinkloster	Eleonora Magdalena attends services.
Apr. 19	Königinkloster	<b>*Good Friday:</b> Eleonora Magdalena makes her devotions at the convent. WD: Eleonora Magdalena, archduchesses & nobles visit city churches.
Apr. 20	Probably several convents	<b>*Holy Saturday:</b> emperor & empress visit city churches.

Table 1 (cont.)

Date	Convent	Occasion (feasts in bold, movable feasts marked *)
Apr. 20	Königinkloster	<b>*Holy Saturday:</b> Eleonora Magdalena, her daughters & her court attend the passion service.
May 2	Königinkloster	Eleanora Magdalena & archduchesses attend services & dine.
May 13	St. Joseph	Eleonora Magdalena & archduchesses attend services & the procession.
May 15	St. Joseph	<b>Patronage of St. Joseph</b> [of St. Joseph as patron of the Carmelite order]: Eleonora Magdalena attends services.
May 31	Königinkloster	Beginning of the 9-day devotion “zum Heiligen Geist”: Eleonora Magdalena, Amalie Wilhelmine & archduchesses attend services.
Jun. 4	Königinkloster	Amalie Wilhelmine & archduchesses attend the entrance ceremony of 3 noblewomen.
Jun. 8	Königinkloster	Eleonora Magdalena & archduchesses attend services for 9-day devotions.
Jun. 11	Königinkloster	Eleonora Magdalena & archduchesses attend services and dine.
Jun. 28	St. Ursula	<b>*Sacred Heart of Jesus</b> (3rd Friday after Pentecost): Eleonora Magdalena & archduchesses attend services.
Jun. 30	Königinkloster	Eleonora Magdalena & archduchesses attend services & the clothing ceremony of the 3 noblewomen who entered June 4.
Jul. 15	St. Joseph	<b>Eve of the Feast of the Scapular:</b> Amalie Wilhelmine attends services.
Jul. 16	St. Joseph	<b>Feast of the Scapular:</b> emperor & empress attend Mass, dine & hear Vespers & Litany. WD: Eleonora Magdalena & archduchesses attend services.
Jul. 25	St. Jakob (Augustinian order)	<b>St. Jakob</b> (James): emperor & empress, Eleonora Magdalena & her daughters attend services, dine & hear an oratorio. WD: Eleonora Magdalena & archduchesses attend services & dine.
Jul. 28	St. Agnes	<b>St. Valentine:</b> Eleonora Magdalena & archduchesses attend services & dine.
Aug. 2	Königinkloster	<b>Portiuncula:</b> Eleonora Magdalena, Amalie Wilhelmine & archduchesses attend services & dine.
Aug. 5	Königinkloster	<b>Dedication of the Church of Our Lady of the Snows (Maria Schnee):</b> Eleonora Magdalena & archduchesses make devotions & dine. WD: Eleonora Magdalena, Amalie Wilhelmine & archduchesses attend services.
Aug. 10	St. Laurenz	<b>St. Laurenz:</b> emperor & empress attend Mass; Dowager Empress [Eleonora Magdalena?] dines & attends Vespers.
Aug. 12	St. Nikolai	<b>St. Clara:</b> emperor, empress & dowager empresses attend Mass, dine & attend Vespers. According to WD, Eleonora Magdalena & archduchesses went to St. Nikolai, Amalie Wilhelmine & archduchesses to the Königinkloster.



Table 1 (cont.)

Date	Convent	Occasion (feasts in bold, movable feasts marked *)
Aug. 12	Königinkloster	<b>St. Clara:</b> Amalie Wilhelmine & archduchesses to Königinkloster.
Aug. 12	St. Agnes	<b>St. Clara:</b> members of the imperial family attend prayers & Litany.
Aug. 14	St. Agnes	Eleonora Magdalena & archduchesses attend services.
Aug. 15	St. Agnes	<b>Assumption of the BVM</b> , conclusion of the 8-day devotions in honor of the BVM, the convent’s patron: one of the dowager empresses attends the services. WD: on this day the court attended services in several churches, but no convents.
Aug. 22	St. Ursula	Eleonora Magdalena & archduchesses attend services & dine.
Aug. 29	Königinkloster	<b>Beheading of St. John the Baptist:</b> Eleonora Magdalena & her daughters attend services & dine.
Sep. 9	Königinkloster	Eleonora Magdalena & archduchesses attend services & a profession ceremony.
Oct. 15	St. Joseph	<b>St. Teresa of Ávila</b> (co-founder of the Carmelite order): emperor, empress & dowager empresses attend services & dine. WD: the dowager empresses & archduchesses attend services & dine.
Oct. 21	St. Ursula (Ursuline order)	<b>St. Ursula:</b> Amalie Wilhelmine & her daughters attend services & dine.
Nov. 11	St. Laurenz	Eleonora Magdalena & archduchesses make devotions & dine.
Nov. 19	St. Elisabeth (Elisabethinen, Franciscan order)	<b>St. Elisabeth of Hungary or Thuringia:</b> Eleonora Magdalena makes her devotions there.
Nov. 24	St. Elisabeth	<b>Octave of the Feast of St. Elisabeth:</b> Amalie Wilhelmine & her daughters attend Mass.
Nov. 24	St. Agnes	<b>Octave of the Feast of St. Elisabeth:</b> Amalie Wilhelmine & her daughters dine & attend Vespers.
Nov. 27	Königinkloster	Eleonora Magdalena & archduchesses dine.
Dec. 6	St. Nikolai	<b>St. Nicolas:</b> emperor, empress & dowager empresses attend services. In WD this was not mentioned, on account of the death of the Elector of Trier (Charles Joseph of Lorraine) in Vienna.
Dec. 14	St. Joseph	<b>St. John of the Cross</b> (co-founder of the Carmelite order): Eleonora Magdalena & eldest archduchess attend services & dine.

<sup>a</sup> Discrepancies among these reports suggest that they were often formulaic, repeated from year to year, and that attendance of the imperial family, especially of the emperor and empress, may not have always been exactly as reported.



zur Himmelpforte and St. Jakob auf der Hülben (St. James on the Marsh), dated back to the thirteenth century or even earlier, and others came and went over time. In contrast to the continuity of Italian convents, Viennese convents experienced a break in the mid-sixteenth century, as Protestantism became a major force in the region. Viennese convents were reduced to a few nuns, and musical traditions were certainly lost. The Counter-Reformation brought revival, and from this time the court took an interest in the convents. Royal women founded new ones in the city, beginning with the Clarissan convent of Maria, Königin der Engel (known as the Königinkloster), endowed by Elisabeth, daughter of Emperor Maximilian II, in 1582. From the late sixteenth century, Viennese convents grew in size and respectability; they were enclosed at the turn of the seventeenth century, and wealthy and educated girls – many probably with musical training and inclinations – began to enter. The court's yearly cycle of public church visits included the Königinkloster by 1629,<sup>17</sup> and it expanded to include the others over the course of the century. The Augustinian convent of St. Jakob was producing notable music by 1650, and others followed.

The pairing of music and piety in Habsburg political thought encouraged a flowering of musical entertainments in Viennese convents around the end of the seventeenth century. Now enveloped in a web of political representation, the convents began to entertain and flatter their royal visitors with music, drama, and dance. Members of the imperial family frequently attended, and sometimes even participated in, ceremonies of entrance, clothing, and profession for noble girls. As the Habsburgs often brought their *Hofkapelle* with them when they visited, cloistered nuns regularly heard excellently performed church music, and had a fine model to emulate in their own musical efforts. In many Italian cities, the religious authorities disapproved of polyphonic music in convents and sought to restrict nuns' music-making and access to musical training. But in Vienna, the court, which also served as the city's religious authority, approved and even encouraged such activity.

In the second decade of the eighteenth century the mutually beneficial relationship of court and convents began to unravel. Public visits by the more important members of the imperial family decreased (although private visits continued at several convents). Convent musical productions became more homely, and ceremonies with court participation less frequent. From the 1760s, the convents came under increasing pressure as their relevance was

<sup>17</sup> Andrew Hudsko Weaver, "Piety, Politics, and Patronage: Motets at the Habsburg court in Vienna during the Reign of Ferdinand III (1637–1657)," unpublished PhD dissertation, Yale University (2002), 117. When exactly this expansion took place is as yet unclear.

questioned, and they maintained their daily devotional obligations only with difficulty. In January 1782, the Carmelite convent of St. Joseph and Vienna's two Clarissan convents, the Königinkloster and St. Nikolai, were dissolved by Emperor Joseph II, among the first monastic institutions to meet that fate; Vienna's three Augustinian female convents soon followed. St. Ursula, the only convent within the city walls to escape dissolution, had its musical life severely curtailed in 1783, as a result of Joseph's reforms of church music. Thus ended the golden age of Viennese convent music.

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Most of the convents in Vienna were clustered south and east of St. Stephen's Cathedral and close to the Augustinian and Franciscan monasteries and the Jesuit churches and colleges (Figure 2). Musicians from St. Stephen's performed at several convents on important feast days, and monks and priests from the monasteries and colleges tended to the spiritual needs of the nuns. The two convents founded in the early eighteenth century, the Salesianerinnenkloster and St. Elisabeth, are located in the present-day third district, also south and east of St. Stephen's but outside the city walls.

Viennese convents varied in their style of living and approach to music. At the three Augustinian female convents, St. Jakob auf der Hülben, St. Agnes zur Himmelpforte, and St. Laurenz, the nuns, or canonesses, sang and played a variety of instruments. St. Jakob had an enduring and successful musical tradition, attracting musically inclined girls, providing them with professional training, and presenting oratorios and *feste teatrali* before the imperial family. St. Agnes, which became an Augustinian *Frauenkloster* in 1586, also had a strong musical tradition, presenting oratorio-like works before the imperial family in the early eighteenth century and popular *Trauer-Gesänge* (German-language *sepolcri*) in the 1720s and 30s. St. Laurenz was noted for its education of girls, and also served as a devotional destination for noblewomen. The plays with music presented there in the late seventeenth century were performed by *Kostfräulein* rather than nuns.

Two Clarissan convents were founded in Vienna by royal women: the Königinkloster and St. Nikolai. The latter was founded by Empress Eleonora (I), wife of Ferdinand II, in 1625, on a site used first by Cistercian nuns, then by Franciscan monks, and later as a city orphanage. There was considerable music-making in these convents besides the daily plainchant, although perhaps confined to singing and playing keyboard instruments.

The Carmelite convent of St. Joseph, founded in 1638 by Empress Eleonora, then the widow of Ferdinand II, was later visited by Maria Theresia for respite from the cares of state (she described the nuns there as "quite simple,