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Franke, Hans:

The History and Fate of the Jews in Heilbronn.

From the Middle Ages until the Time of the National Socialist Persecution (1050 – 1945)

Heilbronn 1963

Heilbronn City Archives Publication 11

Online Version Expanded with Corrections

Heilbronn 2009 / 2011

Translated by Tom Bonsett 2013

To be continued

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Hans Franke

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Foreword

The citizens of a city leave a mark on its character. Among those are the Jews, even centuries after medieval persecution. Among them, many have made a vital contribution to the public and cultural life of our city with a loyal and civic minded attitude. Certainly this contribution has been little discussed till now; the time of the modern persecution has nearly buried the manner and the significance of this contribution. Therefore it must be the goal someday, not only for the sake of research but also tolerance, to depict the fate of the Jews and by doing so to give an account of the participation of Jewish citizens in the civil, cultural, and religious spheres of life. This is all the more imperative because the evidence is becoming harder and harder to recognize because of emigration and the terrible persecution.

Yet today we need to ask ourselves what do we know in general about the Jews of Heilbronn? How did they live and what has become of their families, of the relatives of those respectable men and women whose path led in many instances to death?

It is, therefore, a “hometown” duty to investigate their history in order to thoroughly examine this fate, especially for the sake of the younger generation.

The suggestion made on the occasion of the Heilbronn *Heimattage* [hometown celebration] on Pentecost 1960 by a Heilbronner living abroad to record the history and fate of the Jews who lived in our city therefore fell on fertile ground. I followed up on the suggestion and the same year the city council decided to prepare such a documentary account.

Hans Franke, the editor of the *Neckar-Zeitung* [Neckar Newspaper] from 1920 to 1934, took this laborious task upon himself. From the beginning he conceived the task thus: first of all to research the path and fate of the Jews during the twelve years from 1933 till 1945, but along with that to give an explanation of the history of the Jews in Heilbronn in general.

The result is now in your hands.

Here I would like to thank Hans Franke and all those who supported and enabled the publication of this documentary work and the many citizens of the city who willingly provided information (especially the former Jewish inhabitants of our city whose assistance we requested). It was not always easy to get the required information because many were quite understandably deterred from depicting some of the experiences or the fate of their close relatives because of their “trail of tears.” Thus there were many qualms to be overcome, and it often required the encouragement and assurance that we did not have the intent to collect

material, to fill up filing cabinets, or to compile documents. Rather, our intent was to demonstrate two things with respect to the history of the Jews in our city:

- 1) The significance of the Jews who once lived in Heilbronn for the economic and cultural development of our city and
- 2) The tragic fate of these former Jewish fellow citizens, in order that the memory of that fate not be lost.

When every year on 4 December the city of Heilbronn remembers the many victims of the past war and destruction, we also include in our thoughts the sons and daughters of our city who were persecuted and lost their lives as a result of race, religious belief, and political conviction.

With this book we wish to honor the many individuals who in past years either had to leave their homes or lost their lives.

Heilbronn, February 1963

PAUL MEYLE

Mayor

Author's Preface

Like many other towns in Baden-Württemberg, as is the case with many towns in Germany, Heilbronn has taken upon itself the task of creating a record of the victims of the Nazi regime. The production of such a documentation was considered by the City Council as a given and I was approached at the end of 1960 with the question as to whether or not I would be willing to undertake this task. I accepted, little realizing the difficulties that would confront the author of such a work. The only evidence that could prove who in fact and at any given time was a resident (or to be more precise, a citizen) of Heilbronn is the register of inhabitants, which no longer exists because of the destruction. Hence, I found myself limited to referring to the various (often times contradictory) registers which had been saved, including address books and some deportation lists. However, these deportation lists did not in any way refer to Heilbronners who were sent to ruin outside of Heilbronn.

Because I did not agree with the plan to depict only the terrible time of Jewish persecution, I asked the city administration for permission to broaden the task so that the entire history of the Jews from the time of their appearance up until their expulsion and extermination be portrayed. This is admittedly a larger, but necessary, task because this historical record is intended for future generations and other historical works about the Jews are either nonexistent or inaccessible.

In addition to the time of deportation, I directed particular attention to the time immediately before, during, and after the Emancipation Law of 1828 because at this time the Jews reemerged as inhabitants and citizens in Heilbronn and became residents. Indeed, in general the modern history of the Jews begins at this point in time. In connection with this I made important discoveries in the local council records as well as in the state archives in Ludwigsburg and Stuttgart.

In order to assist with the undertaking, Mayor Meyle and I initially put together a questionnaire with about twenty questions concerning origin, occupation, emigration, parents, deportation, etc. This questionnaire was sent to 238 addresses of emigrated Jews of whom the city administration had knowledge. This questionnaire had a response rate of 63.2% and, after a time-consuming interpretation, the responses provided an excellent supplement to local results.¹ Also, at the end of 1961 I sent a personal questionnaire to a small number of close acquaintances and good friends, thereby bringing to light more important facts and hints. An appeal issued in the press by Mayor Paul Meyle on 3 June 1961 had little success. In reference

¹ Vital support for this effort was provided by means of an appeal which the Jewish newspaper *Aufbau*, New York (Dr. Manfred George), issued in their editorial of the spring 1961 issue.

to the planned research he turned to the people of Heilbronn in order to elucidate the fate of the Heilbronn Jews, asking for eyewitness accounts of the deportation as well as for clues regarding the removal of religious artifacts, likewise for impressions of the burning of the synagogue. Less than a dozen letters were received, which for the most part dealt with insignificant matters and only in two or three instances offered the basis for future research. These respondents deserve special thanks.

It was most gratifying that unreserved support was provided by the Jewish people and that no inquiry that I made remained unanswered. Rather the opposite, these inquiries were willingly answered in detail whenever it seemed important to me to obtain a vivid depiction of Jews such as from Miss Johanna Gottschalk (the former matron of the Sontheim regional elder care home) who escaped the horrors. – In large measure photos, family papers, and other documents were placed at the disposal of this project. Gratitude is also expressed here for that.

All of this led to an extensive exchange of letters, which indeed in and of itself reestablished old ties between the city and this editor.

Two works need to be mentioned which provide valuable, purely historical, background information. One, published by Dr. Oskar Mayer, *Die Geschichte der Juden in Heilbronn* (1927) [The History of the Jews in Heilbronn], was written on the occasion of the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the synagogue. The other, the splendid and detailed work by Dr. A. Tänzer, *Die Geschichte der Juden in Württemberg* [The History of the Jews in Württemberg], wonderfully portrays and evokes the religious and community life of the Jews. Without the resource material provided by these two works, such an expeditious writing of the book (especially in the historical section) would have been impossible.

The author has many government offices to thank, above all the *Internationale Suchdienst* [International Tracing Service] in Arolsen, likewise the *Sonderstandesamt* [special registry office], as well as the “Israeli Cultural Association” in Stuttgart, and the Yad-Vashem Institute in Jerusalem (which untiringly replied to inquiries). Notably, the first two mentioned often tabulated and corrected incomplete personal data and death notices. Furthermore, the work was supported by the Main State Archive in Stuttgart, the *Landesamt* [Regional State Archive] in Ludwigsburg, the Heilbronn City Archive, the Regional Office for Restitution in Stuttgart, the Reverend Maier-Leonhardt Lutheran Shelter for the Racially Persecuted in Kornwestheim, the Leo Baeck Institute in London and Jerusalem, and by the Heilbronn District Attorney’s Office. For various reasons the history and the fate of the Jews in Sontheim, and within this context the Jewish elder care homes (including the regional elder care asylum), had to be taken into consideration as well. For that reason I would like to especially thank the former Mayor R. Stieglitz for making available materials that had already been collected and for advice regarding

Sontheim. Moreover, deserving mention are the Civil Registry Office of Heilbronn with its officials and its employees and the untiring municipal official Mr. Weil as well as Mrs. Giehl (both of the main city office) who were always ready to be of assistance. Important direction was provided by Dr. Erdmute Heller (Munich) regarding historical matters, by the editor Willy Dürr and the former city council member Karl Knauss (both of Heilbronn) regarding contemporary matters, and by the city official Mr. Ege (Park and Cemetery Office of Heilbronn) regarding the topic of cemetery and grave related matters. Alexander Renz and Dr. Helmut Schmolz assisted with proofreading and corrections.

I must not forget those Jews who provided information orally during visits to Heilbronn, who wrote accounts, or who were willing helpers. The reviewed material, the exchange of letters, the form letters, the questionnaires, as well as the various lists were handed over to the Heilbronn City Archive so that they may support further research on this topic. – At this point others are in agreement with me that because so much of the supporting information (such as the inhabitant card index of 1933, etc.) is missing, errors in the documentation are likely. These errors can only be rectified through a centralized documentation for the state of Baden-Württemberg. The plan is to collect in the Heilbronn City Archive all such clarifications and comments from the people who were contacted; possibly these will be put together as a supplement.

Introduction

In this work the attempt will be made to describe the history and the fate of the Jews in Heilbronn and Sontheim without becoming excessively lost in historical details.

A historical depiction starting with the Middle Ages was selected because in this manner it can be made clear how the medieval brutalities were tragically repeated in the 20th century. Also, it can be made clear how the Jewish people (including those of our city) – after a uniquely fortunate century of aspirations, liberation, equality of rights, and prosperity – were again slandered by being cast in the role of pariahs, troublemakers, and archenemies, and once more they were expelled and finally almost exterminated.

In order to achieve synopsis and clarity and in order to see these terrible times in their historical context, this work avoided becoming bogged down in details (except for the requisite rosters and statistics).

The history of the earliest years of the Jews in Heilbronn and Sontheim is shrouded in darkness. We do not know when, from where, and by which routes the Jews came to Heilbronn and settled, whether individually or in groups. They did not leave any traces of this early time behind. That is to say, there are no known facts that can help us today. In the chronicles of the city of Heilbronn their suppression first appears with the persecution of the year 1298, that terrible pogrom which brought great sorrow to the sizeable Jewish community. From then on the life of the Jews in the annals can be read as a constant sequence of ups and downs, as a series of those torments, exploitations, and disparagements such as characterize the path of the Jews in general during those centuries. In this context new research results for Heilbronn have surfaced. The imperial free city had expelled the Jews at various times; on the other hand, they were able to lead an almost undisturbed existence in the regions under control of the Teutonic Order. In spite of that, the Jews never completely vanished from the city to which they came as merchants, money lenders, and traders. Not until the free spirit of the Enlightenment and the stormy wind of freedom of the French Revolution did they secure their readmission into Heilbronn after centuries of privation and persecution. The famous Emancipation Law of 1828 finalized what this had paved the way for.

The author placed great value on the decades following this law because here the research is (up to now) essentially dormant. But also within the various research results one must remain selective and concise. Nevertheless, it seemed important to the author to describe how these newly emancipated Jews came knocking at Heilbronn's door, to describe how they labored to become citizens of the city, to obtain rights, to show what they were capable of doing (in spite

of the humiliations that their ancestors had to endure), to show how – just as every Christian family man – they valued tradition, faith, protection.

If you consider specifically this time period, then one will come to learn that the Jews in such a sense proved their worth. They began in small or large businesses, in tiny shops in the inner city, on the other hand they preferred the former “Jew’s alley” (*Lohtorstrasse*) as well as other streets where they pursued their livelihood and handicrafts, maintained contact with one another, and saw mainly in religion the one unifying and indivisible bond of their community. There is no doubt that at the beginning of the 19th century the Jewish family was still a bulwark of religion. Without this deeply ingrained commitment in the family to religious practice in the observance of its commandments, the Jewish tradition would not have been able to maintain and preserve itself over hundreds of years and then to transmit such knowledge from the father to the son, from the teacher to the student, from the Rabbi to the congregation, even without any written records. Each and every individual family, every individual Jewish community, especially in the times of oppression, was a place of preservation of religious tradition.

These ideas were still quite alive when the Jews returned to Heilbronn. That is evident from the behavior of the first Jews in our city, from their attitude towards this same tradition, from their efforts to stay integrated as a community, and from the construction (carried out at a fanatical pace) of their own house of worship. Still, the Jews at the beginning had to go to Sontheim to worship because they honored the Sabbath and the holy days. But the day came on which they proudly (and also no doubt humbly) went into the large, beautiful synagogue on the *Allee* [1] which they had erected through their infinite sacrifice.

In particular, the depiction of these beginnings yields a picture of strenuous efforts, untiring labor, and a series of setbacks and successes. At the same time, it illuminates the developmental milestones of the city from being one based on trade and wine, to becoming an industrial city, and finally to becoming an important harbor city.

However, along with this general description, some family history of the Heilbronn Jews is recorded. It is certainly the case that these two or three dozen families who came to Heilbronn in 1828 or shortly thereafter were joined, first around 1870, then around the turn of the century by new groups of immigrants. The old established families branched out, the children married among themselves and thus had soon established something like a complete patriarchal society similar to that which we can observe in an aristocracy. It is good to understand that the descendents of these “pioneers” are still today proud of this family tradition.

In addition to achieving a position in society and material security, it is a traditional Jewish family aspiration to establish their children (at that time naturally that meant their sons) in

intellectual professions. Thus they became physicians, attorneys, artists, scientists, and researchers. In this way arose the close contact of the Jewish people with art, theater, and literature. This also has its tradition. The encouragement of science belongs to the precepts of Judaism. So deeply is this precept rooted in the Jewish religion that in the prayer with which the Jew both begins and closes his daily work, the request for “knowledge, insight, and comprehension” is prominent. That Judaism has preserved itself through thousands of years of mankind’s history in part results from great teachers continually arising who, through their intellectual work, gave the people intellectual armor and spiritual support.

Who among us has seriously concerned himself with Jewish intellectual life, perhaps with Baruch Spinoza? If one wants to understand the philosophy as represented by thinkers of Jewish origin in accord with Jewish tradition, then one needs to consider the very important Jewish philosophers such as Philon of Alexandria and Moses Maimonides. The philosophical precedents which Jewish thinkers first initiated in the Hellenistic/Roman world and later in the Arabic/medieval world are unfamiliar to the German intellectual world. Professor Dr. Erwin Rosenthal of Cambridge University, who stems from an old Heilbronn Jewish family, has made important contributions on these topics.

One has already forgotten too quickly that the German Jews were of special spiritual significance for the whole of the Jewish people. On the Rhine, where the Jewish communities of Speyer, Worms, and Mainz went under the common name of *Shum* [2], an influential Jewish center developed. The Middle High German components of Yiddish can be traced back to the Pfalz and the Rhein/Hessian dialects of *Shum* communities. In the *Shul* [Yiddish for synagogue] (and thus in the synagogue) at Worms seventy young Jews were studying, whose number had shrunk to around ten by 1750. In 1060 Rabbi Isaac sat at the foot of his teacher, the famous Raschi (one of the most important teachers in western Jewry, who later returned to his hometown of Troyes in France). In the year 1220 a notable Jewish synod was held at Speyer. At that synod the *Takkanot Shum* (an institution dealing with religious law) was established which had the ultimate authority over all of central and eastern European Jewry. Just as unknown is the contribution to mathematics and astronomy that the Jews had already made in earlier times, especially in connection with the blending into the Moorish-Spanish world. It is also little known that already by the year 1200 over 1,000 texts for Jewish pedagogy and Jewish education had been produced (for instance for instruction in Hebrew, etc.) and that side by side with Rome, Venice, Vienna, Padua, Amsterdam, the Jewish centers of publication were in the German cities such as Fürth, Berlin, Vienna, Pressburg, etc. Truly the most grotesque fact to note is that at the same time the persecution of the Jews was commencing in various regions of Europe, students of these very lands were drawn to the university in Cordoba in order to bring the intellectual treasures of the Moorish-Jewish world back home to where the Jews were being mistreated. To be sure, that was for the Germans more or less an unknown territory. Of course,

the same was true for those Jews in Germany, certainly the majority of them who consciously sought contact with the German intellectual life in order to complete assimilation. That was the starting point for the opponents of assimilation, the Orthodox Jews and Zionists, who believed that too much assimilation of the Jews deprived them of the strict and essential commitments to the religious core. This topic must be dealt with as well in the text (albeit briefly, of course). There existed in Heilbronn important groups of both factions, therefore the discussion regarding Zionism never let up in any of the camps.

Also, for various reasons, the study had to be expanded to include Sontheim and along with it the Jewish regional elder care home founded in 1907 (usually called the *Altersheim*). This is quite important for family history because many of the later Heilbronn Jews came from Sontheim. However, this became an essential chapter where the documentation of the victims is dealt with. This elder care home was not only a year round residence for about forty elderly Jewish citizens; in the time of the persecution it was also an intermediate stop for numerous out-of-town Jews. It was necessary to develop a complete documentation in order to facilitate the research, especially in this matter.

Now back to historical matters. Very soon the stalls and workshops (that were at first so small), the storehouses and small manufactories, the warehouses of the fruit, wine, and leather traders grew. With time the Jewish merchants in Heilbronn quickly recognized that new methods were emerging, that industrialization loomed, and they managed to keep up with this development. They followed suit. But that was not enough; they became partners in the guilds, the associations, the societies. They also founded numerous societies themselves, and nearly twenty years after their reappearance in the city they placed themselves at the disposal of the Local Council. They were men of experience, full of insight and having a sense of civic duty, worthy, brave, and true. In the city government, that is to say on the Local Council, and on the Citizen's Committee (as well as on other committees) several of them literally sacrificed themselves for the public good and they applied themselves to become valued and considered as model coworkers. Having become hardened through hundreds of years of oppression, they became wise through the humiliations they were exposed to, clever and not without finesse. From these very factors they went on their way (often steeply upwards) while the majority lived in the middle class or in modest means, a picture which differed in no way from the general picture of life in Heilbronn at that time. Because it is a general cross section that is presented here, there were not lacking among the Jews those who broke laws and rules in order to get rich faster and to more easily attain success. All of mankind often consists of a variegated conglomeration of good and evil, of ethical and unethical. But can one write a history based on the few who distanced themselves from civic respectability? No, one cannot do that; that would be a one-sided, malicious history. But that is what the anti-Semitic history writers did, such as is shown by National Socialist historical description of Heilbronn. If one leafs through legal

files and minutes, documents and judgments, one can find numerous legal proceedings, appeals, and lawsuits. History presents itself, so to speak, as page upon page of legal proceedings, as actions against the laws and thus against the public at large. One can collect just names and facts, thus it is certainly possible to write a history – but thereby a history of the negative! It is a fact that the respectable citizens honestly lived their lives, uprightly paid their taxes, and regularly met their obligations, rarely appearing in the records, at least not those of the courts. If for instance (as has happened), one singles out the admittedly exaggerated lawsuit by one of the most prominent Jewish citizens of Sontheim, but on the other hand ignores that this same Jew through his petition had a considerable role in the abolishment of the degrading *Leibzoll* [body tax], then such a historical description becomes a distortion.

Another argument against anti-Semitic historical description is the state of Israel, this unprecedented, incredible achievement of the Jewish people, a founding of a state under the most difficult of circumstances, which today shows that Jewish men - even women - can hold their own in all occupations, particularly as settlers and soldiers! In response to an appeal by the writer Alfred Döblin on 24 February 1933 on behalf of the state of Israel, the Heilbronn Nazi newspaper responded derisively: “One cannot make the Palestinian land productive with Jewish intellectuals and students and one cannot create an agricultural state from a colony of shopkeepers,” as if the majority of the Jews in the earlier centuries had not been settlers.

The author sought to be objective and to serve the truth, although he is certain that still to this day he must struggle against the residues of Nazi distortions. Because of Hitler’s boundless demagoguery, something like a sickness corroded the German people, changed many of its members, led others to degeneracy and somehow damaged a majority in spite of all protests. Only a few could immunize themselves. For all of those who consider the description and the depiction of the willful evil and crime, ignorance, insensitivity, horrors, and sorrows, it becomes obvious that all of us need to seriously ask ourselves whether we made ourselves guilty in regard to the Jewish question. However, there were also hundreds of thousands in the Third Reich who were especially horrified by the anti-Semitic measures of the regime and who, as far as their own safety allowed (and often above and beyond), offered encouragement and help to their Jewish friends. However, it is just as certain that even without considering the staunch party followers, all too many were entangled in the demagogic phraseology of anti-Semitism and their resistance quickly wilted. Humanitarian considerations should have compelled everyone to protest or to act, no matter how tight the grip of those in power was, no matter how unavoidable any potential persecution resulting from protest. A possible excuse might be that none of us could imagine the consequences and in particular what was being planned as the Final Solution. In regard to the deportation of the Jews “to the east,” it seemed to us (just as to many elderly Jews themselves upon arrival at Theresienstadt) that they would be settled in a new peaceful environment in order to lead a less insecure life than previously at home. Many

at home naively believed that with the removal of the Jews the torment of Jew baiting would stop, the images of the *Stürmer* [3] would disappear, in short that the whole depressing problem could be solved. Others regarded the alarming foreign news reports as propaganda. Right-minded individuals could not imagine that the German mind could think up as well as carry out such a thing. In a kind of self-anesthesia most people did not think the thing through to the end and slowly fell victim to the propaganda.

The truth was something else. It was gruesome and it will stare at us from the final sections of this book and from the statistics and numbers.

Of the 855 Jews who in 1933 were counted [as inhabitants] of Heilbronn and Sontheim, 225 were victims of the persecution – that is 26 percent. In Sontheim (as will later be explained) an accurate statistic is almost impossible because the inhabitants of the regional elder care home were regularly counted as citizens. Before the persecution there were roughly a total of 65 souls. However, because new groups of elderly Jews were continually transferred into the regional elder care home, there were at times 100, even 150, inhabitants in the Sontheim elder care home alone. Still there were 82 souls in this fluctuating group who fell victim to the [Nazi] regime who cannot be expressed as a percentage of the former population.

Those are terrifying numbers, numbers of horror that should shock us!

We should not forget the other roughly 600 of our Jewish fellow citizens who were forced to leave their homeland. They were forced to start a new existence in a foreign land, often with limited means. The emigrants had their available funds reduced by diabolical regulations; they had to deposit funds for the “support” of those who had remained behind. They faced the question whether or not to change occupation; licenses and documents were often not accepted. Once again it came down to depending on the will - on the tenacity – which had been weakened by sorrows, old age, and privation. We will take that into consideration. And we will not forget what was imposed upon those who remained behind before they had to go down the path to destruction. The statistics tell a story about this. They were often forced to change residence two times, three times, even four times. They were brought together in the so-called Jews’ houses. Wearing the Jewish star, they began to dig, to do demeaning forced labor (at first in their homeland), and then finally they began to be transferred to do forced labor in the eastern regions so that the Final Solution could be carried out more effectively. The journeys to poverty were often by way of several intermediate stops before ending in Theresienstadt, in ghettos, in the death camps. Barely just arrived in these inhumanely primitive camps, they faced death in the form of hunger, disease, and wasting away; or hunger and ceaseless work soon made the younger ones skeletons with whom those in control of the prison camps toyed before sending them to the gas chambers.

We must always remember that these deportations dealt primarily with the elderly who were often frail. Children under age ten up to those up to the age of 40 constituted 16.2 percent of the Heilbronn deportation, but those from between ages of 40 to 90 constituted 83.8 percent! The 60 to 70 year olds made up the largest share, namely 30.2 percent. These old people who, just like all of us, had earned peaceful golden years were forced onto hand carts, were taken to Stuttgart or somewhere else, were forced onto rail cars like cattle, and were loaded off like living freight. There were whips and sticks to compel them to walk faster, even to make them run. They found themselves in cold attics, in foul, substandard dormitories, and they were alone. This was just the beginning of their unspeakable martyrdom!

But these, our Jewish fellow citizens, were people just like you and me, people formed by God's hand, endowed with shortcomings, merits, passions, and feelings of happiness. They strived to find one's way in life, to achieve success in business or culture, to keep their faith, to maintain friendships, to have a part of German culture, and above all to live! Therein lies the pitiless tragedy.

The author's hope to obtain from the former Heilbronn Jews (as well as from their descendants) reports of their experiences (descriptions of the time in Heilbronn, the establishment of their new existence, the difficult times) in addition to the returned questionnaires has been only partly fulfilled. It is understandable that not all want to remember these times, that overall it takes a great deal of human superiority and maturity with an abundance of tolerance to answer and to write at all. When written responses were received all the remarks showed evidence of an unbroken love for this city, the love for Heilbronn, for its old streets, for its oak and beech forests, for autumn. One recalls the sound of the Kilianskirche church bells, the organ concerts in the church, theater productions, concerts, and lectures, debates, and discussions as well as Christian Leichtle and his *Volkshochschule* [4]. What the Jews carried with them into foreign lands were manifestations of what we call German culture, requisite material in our "provincial" educational landscape. Names were mentioned, titles of books, etc. It is unsettling to read these things! The most touching of all these accounts are the ones dealing with the Jews and the Germans.

When the reader has skimmed through the death lists he will certainly be still for a moment and pause. He should take a decisive step here and admit shame in his conscience and into every last corner of his heart. Theodore Heuss pointed out in regard to the Jewish question that only through "collective shame" could the past be cleansed and overcome. What did a greeting across the street mean during the difficult times of the Jews? How about the help given from house to house? What was the effect of the kind words, the attempts to help suffering Jews with their errands? We know from their letters and their reports that it gave comfort to the

Jews. Many good deeds of Heilbronnians in regard to the Jews have become known, and we hope that these deeds are just fragments of the truth of the matter. However, we cannot get away from this feeling of shame, therefore as we have stated, on the whole everyone tolerated it. The fear of the anonymous power of the terror was so great that an intervention on behalf of the Jews, such as had happened in Denmark and Holland, was no longer possible in Germany.¹

Inadequate after 1945 as excuses were arguments such as: Who knew that it was so bad? and It could not have been so many millions. The numbers here play no role. What is at stake is whether we are supporters of a Christian world order acknowledging the beliefs of Christianity and thereby the laws of humanity, or not. At the beginning of his research the author of this work was asked by a Jewish visitor for whom he should undertake this task and for whom this writing was intended. Would it become part of school instructional materials? The person asking this question touched upon an important point. It serves no purpose when the work shows to our Jewish friends that we did not forget their history and the sufferings of their relatives, their parents, their friends, that it is designated a memorial, though they would recognize that as a worthy deed of the city. It serves no purpose when this book finds its way into the hands of the incorrigible who have been indoctrinated to the extent that they shake their heads and say that it happened otherwise. This work only has a purpose when it is placed into the hands of the youth and future generations.

In effect the work wants to, and does, speak to the young people who perhaps have not yet in their lives come into contact with or spoken with Jewish people, who have perhaps already been “infected” through their upbringing, who have not had it sufficiently explained to them in school, who are completely in the dark regarding the essential contribution of the Jewish citizens to the development of Heilbronn. They will be shown that misunderstandings, prejudices, and intolerance enable tragedies to be provoked (such as the Rindfleisch Pogrom and the Nazi crimes) - that prejudice and intolerance are enough to persecute and exterminate people, groups, and even entire sections of the population. Intolerance looks for a scapegoat to explain its own failures; for hundreds of years it was the Jews.

When one of the young Jews from one of the old families wrote that he had “no feeling of revenge” and cited the Christian sentence “He who is without sin...” then that was on the same

¹As soon as the Danish king learned that the Jewish star was going to be introduced, he declared to the occupation authority that he, as well as his entire family, would wear this star. The planned measures did not occur after that. – Nine months after the German troops marched into Holland there were major strikes by the Dutch workers and employees in Amsterdam and the neighboring industrial cities because the inhumane acts against their Jewish fellow countrymen did not set with them any better than did the required service of the metal workers to be sent to Germany. With the exception of the main railway station in Amsterdam, on 25 February 1940 almost all public services, shops, offices, and all of the dock workers went on strike. The next day martial law was declared in the city and a state of emergency was announced.

plane as the disturbing declaration made by the author Hermann Kesten at a PEN [5] conference. There he opined that he was shuddering and enchanted as he went on a moonlit night through this wonderful but disgraced city. He did not feel himself to be an accuser but rather, in the final analysis, someone who shared in the guilt “because every person remains somewhat guilty by virtue of the idealistic demands of humanity.” The idealistic demands of humanity make life worthwhile, compelling us towards reconciliation, friendship, love, and understanding.

Moreover, in addition to illuminating a bit of Heilbronn and Sontheim history, this work above all seeks to serve the concepts of humanity and tolerance!

Heilbronn, December 1962

Hans Franke

The 3rd Reich

Anti-Semitism – The Beginning of the Persecution – The Boycott

As a historian one cannot face the events of the 3rd Reich without posing the question as to whether there already was a significant amount of anti-Semitism in Heilbronn before this time. While recounting the events after the Law of 1828, our attention had already been drawn to the thought processes of the biased citizens of the imperial cities, whose forefathers, having driven out the Jews, did not find it easy to take the Jews back in. The ill will associated with that is amply demonstrated by the commentaries of the Citizen's Committee and the Local Council in regard to the granting of citizenship rights. They were set in their ways, yet the fundamentally democratic attitude of the times had planted a spirit of open-mindedness in the hearts of the citizens. Still, however, there was the likelihood for many conflicts. But we have seen that certainly in the first 50 years after 1828 the way was paved for coexistence, following a path of development that one might consider normal.

Certainly, anti-Semitism was fueled in the Kaiser's empire by the ideas of Paul de Lagarde, the assertions of the royal court preacher Stöcker, the work of Houston Stewart Chamberlain titled "The Foundations of the 19th Century," or in Austria by the politically oriented thoughts of Georg von Schönerer. In 1893 there was, for the first time, an anti-Semitic group in the Reichstag. The so-called *Deutsch-völkische Bewegung* [1] was the nexus for anti-Semitic endeavors. In France an anti-Jewish movement climaxed in the Dreyfus affair.

Perhaps one of the first anti-Semitic reactions was manifested in a small inquiry put before the Local Council on 2 December 1880. It dealt with a petition to the Imperial Chancellor Otto von Bismarck in which he was requested to implement a "restraint upon the influence of the Jews." Whether this petition originated in the Heilbronn region and was then directed on to the *Reichskanzler* [Imperial Chancellor], or instead was a petition that circulated throughout Germany and also reached Heilbronn, cannot be ascertained. We ought to assume the latter. Furthermore, Lord Mayor Carl Wüst made the observation that he saw no reason to pursue the matter, but that he would notify the Local Council that the petition had been received. Commenting further, he defended the Jews who "are barred from many social circles" and therefore formed "separate societies" because they were indeed prevented "by the current movement" from having social interactions with their fellow citizens out of fear of being insulted. One can assume that the actions of the above mentioned movement formed by the cathedral and royal court chaplain Adolf von Stöcker (1835-1909), which demonstrably had an anti-Semitic character, sent waves towards Heilbronn. During those years Stöcker had founded the Christian Social Party (1878). The body of the Local Council was split into two groups in its decisions and responses. Local council member Herrmann called it "a scandal for the

German people” that “such an agitation” had been stirred up (although others had agreed this was the right thing to do) and, above all, that “the press grasped in the hands of the Jews had besmirched Christian religious institutions.” The decision of the Local Council was to consider the matter closed. Nevertheless, this foreshadowed future accusations.¹ At no time were any of the newspapers in Heilbronn under Jewish ownership.

Anti-Semitism found a new fuel after the First World War. From this war the so-called *Dolchstoß* myth [2] was born after the defeat and the Treaty of Versailles. Just as was the case with the crusades and the plague, a culprit had to be found for this debacle. One thought to find the culprit in the form of the Jews. Of course, other events had an even larger effect.

These events were the influx of Jews into America after the 1904-1905 Russian Revolution and, above all, the trickling in of Jews from the east during and after the First World War. As a consequence of Poland being transformed into a major theater of the war, the second great wave of eastern Jewish emigration began. This wave was directed mainly towards Austria and Germany due to the blockade of the Central Powers. Hundreds of thousands of Polish Jews migrated to Vienna and Berlin: children of a foreign culture, having a foreign jargon, foreign customs, and foreign points of view. They came as refugees, impoverished, compelled to support themselves by every means possible. Where they were barred from lawful paths of supporting their family, etc. they saw themselves compelled to follow unlawful paths. Still, there were some of these *Ostjuden* [East European Jews] who managed to become wealthy rapidly. Because that happened during a period of general economic depression in Germany (especially in Vienna and Berlin) anti-Semitism rose to a high level and found new adherents. As is often the case with parvenus, these Jews tastelessly displayed their wealth and provoked public criticism. The mass of poor Jewish refugees disappeared from public view and then reemerged in the countryside – where they were not especially welcome. Thus the concept of *Ostjuden*, as opposed to *Westjuden* [West European Jews], appeared for the first time. As we have shown, the emancipation in the nineteenth century in Heilbronn concerned itself almost exclusively with *Westjuden* who came into the western or southwestern German states via Spain, Holland, or France. They were very proud of their origin and, it must be said, they likewise viewed the post-war invasion with extremely mixed feelings. They felt they were ready for total assimilation, through their contact with German culture they already felt completely German. By far, the *Westjuden* stood culturally and spiritually closer to the non-Jews who surrounded them than to the *Ostjuden* who initially were foreign to them. But anti-Semitism did not differentiate, viewing the Jews as a mass of inferior, decayed, contemptible creatures whose oppression or extermination must be the task of the superior race.

¹ According to the wording of the local council proceedings, see appendix page 274.

Already in March of 1930 the NSDAP [3] had entered a resolution in the Reichstag whose articles 4 and 5 stated: "Whoever attempts to hand over the German people and German cultural assets to the influences of foreign races will be sentenced to prison for cultural treason. Whoever contributes towards or threatens to contribute to the racial degeneration and disintegration of the German people by interbreeding with those of Jewish blood or colored races will be sentenced to prison for racial treason." In the same year Hitler answered the question of the American correspondent [Karl Henry von] Wiegand regarding why he had made anti-Semitism part of his agenda, "Because the German people would not understand it if I had not done so!"

The accusation that the anti-Semites raised at that time is epitomized in the sentence: "All Germany, from left to right, is 'verjudet'." [4] They declared as being under Jewish influence (and thereby tainted) both the Imperial Constitution [1871] (through the collaboration of Lasker and Bamberger) and the Weimar Constitution [1919] (through the contribution of Preuss). In the 19 state governments of the [Weimar] Republic with altogether 387 Reich Ministers there were only two Jews, namely Preuss and Rathenau, and three of Jewish ancestry, namely Landsberg, Gradnauer, and Hilferding. Among the 500 imperial officials ranging from senior civil servants up to State Secretary there were 15 Jews or those of Jewish ancestry (in Prussia 10 out of 300). In Prussia none of the 12 *Oberpräsidenten* [5], 35 heads of governmental districts, and 400 chief district administrative officers were Jews. Nevertheless, the anti-Semites claimed that the Jews controlled Germany.

Other main accusations were: the "race," the power of Jewish international finance, the alleged Jewish wealth, that Marxism, socialism, and Bolshevism were closely identified with the Jews, the enmity towards Christianity, the secret law of the Talmud, the so-called double standard of morality with respect to their religion, the subversive mind, the lack of culture, the "non-productivity," the "contempt" for trades and farming, the alleged control of trade and, above all, the press. During the five years before Hitler came to power counterarguments were rarely heard. Almost outlawed, the Jew had to let himself be insulted; printed insults were seldom retracted. In his *Angriff* [The Attack] [6] of 21 January 1929 Goebbels stated, "The Jew is immune to all insults. He is a scoundrel, a parasite, a profiteer - insults flow off of him like water off of a duck's back. Call him a Jew and you will be surprised how he will be taken aback...The Jew is a foreigner, not of German blood, ...the so-called religious morality of the Jews is no morality, instead it is an encouragement to deceit...whoever is neither persecuted nor praised by the Jews is deemed useless and harmful..." The Weimar Republic allowed for all of these hidden and public attacks to take place. Even the Supreme Court rendered a judgment of free speech in the case of the editor of the *Westdeutscher Beobachter* [West German Observer] [7] who had maintained in an article of 13 March 1929 "that the Jews use Christian blood for ritualistic purposes in accord with the instructions of the Talmud."

Between 1923 and September 1932, 128 cemetery and 50 synagogue desecrations were identified. Eight Jews were killed in early 1930, later 78 were injured. On 2 May 1931 students occupied all of the entrances to the Berlin University and assaulted all of the students who looked Jewish, quite a few of whom had to be taken to the hospital. Although this attack went on for some hours, the president of the university made no effort to contact the police!

It can be shown statistically that before 1933 this insidious boycott was already severely affecting the Jewish population. Because of this boycott, unemployment rose at a faster than average rate, particularly among the Jewish intelligentsia. Also, Jewish shopkeepers became poorer and already were being cut off from their means of support. When he went into the countryside the dealer had to consider the trade-offs, in certain cases risking his "health." The consequence of the general economic crisis and of the boycott was that in the time just prior to Hitler coming to power, 30,000 of the 115,000 Jewish wage-earners had already become unemployed and 40,000 of the 170,000 Berlin Jews obtained poor relief from Jewish organizations and offices. With the exception of the leftist and centrist parties, all other parties were hostile to the Jews. After 1919, the German nationalist Hugenberg controlled over half of the German newspapers, more than the Jewish firms Ullstein and Mosse together. It can be shown with certainty that the unbridled hatred of the Jews was the main attraction of Hitler's party. In 1920 the NSDAP had 64,000 members, in 1931 there were almost 600,000 registered members, and in the fall of 1930 Hitler's party received 6.4 million votes in the election.

In view of these dramatic facts H. G. Adler was right when he wrote: "Where it concerns the matter of the Jews, they were not viewed as human beings - whether or not a Jew could be regarded as noble, as respectable was of no consequence. The Jewish people as a whole were considered 'poison' and needed to be opposed and exterminated. Thus ended the time of emancipation of the Jews in Germany..."²

Naturally, German nationalistic and later National Socialistic ideas gained traction early on in Heilbronn, especially since the German nationalistic and pan-Germanic ideologies were never free of anti-Semitism. The events after the Revolution of 1918, the myth of the so-called *Dolchstoß*, and the *Ostjuden* intensified such trains of thought. Hence, from this time on, one can speak of a latent anti-Semitism in Heilbronn.

² The data used here, especially the statistical data, is taken from the book *Die Juden in Deutschland, Von der Aufklärung bis zum Nationalsozialismus* [The Jews in Germany, from the Enlightenment up to National Socialism], Kösel-Verlag, Munich, pages 147 and following.

Representative of this is a report of a meeting from 1921 on the occasion of a lecture which was sponsored by the Heilbronn branch of the *Deutschvölkischer Schutz- und Trutzbund*.³ [8] Professor Dr. Lichtenberg of Gotha had been recruited as the speaker and his topic of “The Influence of Jewry on Our Intellectual Life” packed the lecture hall of the Neckar Hotel. A book dealer led the meeting. Likewise it was proclaimed on posters that “the Jews are the destroyers of German intellectual life.” This meeting ended somewhat tumultuously because the lawyers Rosengart and Dr. Gumbel, as representatives of the attacked Jews, energetically interjected themselves into the course of the meeting and the discussion, seeking to clarify the contradictions and untruths that had been put forward.

The course of this particular meeting strikes us as typical because it became increasingly evident how the process was largely carried out by means of slogans which propagated from one meeting to the next.⁴

It was just these half-truths and erroneous teachings which, by reinforcing each other, brought to fruition the goals of the anti-Semites and right-wing radicals. These slogans, which by this time were used at all political gatherings, at cultural organizations, and especially in the economic and political sphere, constituted the dominant recurring theme of the time. The meetings became continually contentious, often ending up in a fight between opponents with numerous people killed - especially in the industrial areas and large cities. These were victims of a struggle which is unfathomable today. Adolf Hitler spoke in Heilbronn on 15 May 1926 and thereby increased the number of his party's adherents. One could already see the *Sturmabteilung* [Brown Shirts] (SA) [9] as well as the *Saalschutz* [Protection Squad] (SS) [10] in uniformed service in Heilbronn, and as the worldwide economic depression drove the unemployed out onto the streets, the number of party members rapidly grew. Thus was also the case in Heilbronn. It was not too long before Hitler would seize power.

In the face of these events the Jews in Heilbronn remained relatively calm - several of them in an admirable manner (above all the lawyer Dr. Gumbel as well as the lawyer Dr. Emil Meyer). They dared to publicly confront the anti-Semitic NSDAP. They fearlessly opposed the accusations that lumped together the Jews, the Freemasons, the Marxists, the Bolsheviks, the “slaves of the Jews,” etc., as well as the political spokespersons of the leftist parties (for example Fritz Ulrich, the editors Lukas Müller or Will Schaber, generally speaking the representatives of the Social Democrat Party), no less the Communists who were represented in

³ In October 1928 a local branch of the *Verein zur Abwehr des Antisemitismus* [Society for Resisting Anti-Semitism] was formed (nothing is known about the details). By reading a report about the founding of the society one can get the first glimpse of anti-Semitism where nevertheless “Jews and Christians are living here side by side without friction.”

⁴ The local chapter of the NSDAP was founded in Heilbronn in 1922, after disbandment it was renewed in 1925.

the Local Council till 1933 by Wilhelm Schwan and Erich Leucht, likewise the representatives of the trade unions, or those of the Democratic Party (for example Dr. Peter Bruckmann, Dr. Ludwig Heuss or Willy Dürr), and the Catholics (the city parish priest Dr. Stegmann, among others). In all of these gatherings, on all of these posters, and in the display cases of the party newspapers (later in those of Streicher's *Stürmer* [11]) the reprehensible jargon of those days emerged. There was not anybody who did not use that abominable slogan "Germany Awake – Perish Judah!" This slogan took hold. One could find it printed all over the pages of the newspapers. It stared out at us from the poster columns, and it resounded as a chorus throughout the streets and squares of the city.

It is no wonder that this "infiltration" was already taking place in the schools. It is painful to learn that early on in the schools of Heilbronn teachers were conducting themselves in a manner hostile to the Jews. There were teachers who assigned the Jewish children places at separate benches (one of these teachers arranged this bench so that the Jewish children were seated facing the other children), or they humiliated the Jewish children by inspecting them to see whether or not they were well washed and combed. Gymnastics instructors loved to frequently disparage the Jewish children with humiliating remarks such as "Jews have no aptitude for gymnastics" and so forth. Especially noteworthy in regard to an active anti-Semitism was a professor at a *Realgymnasium* [12] who was also known as being a German nationalist and an anti-Semite. With such an attitude on the part of the teachers, it is obvious that the students would deride or even beat up their Jewish schoolmates.

On the other hand, many of the teachers and principals went to great pains to display a large degree of admirable tolerance up to the very end. The headmaster of the *Realgymnasium*, Mr. Weber, distinguished himself in a noteworthy manner. After making arrangements with Rabbi Dr. Beermann, the students of an upper level class were allowed to participate in a Jewish service in order to give them an insight into the Jewish ritual. At a lecture given by the retired minister Lamparter on 10 April 1931, which had the theme "Anti-Semitism and Christianity," a resolution was passed which rejected "racial anti-Semitism." At this time the NSDAP was already quite active, speakers continually appeared (including some who would later occupy leadership positions within the Württemberg party). A play with National Socialist overtones "Die Laterne" [The Lamppost] by F. W. Ilges was brought to Heilbronn and presented on 5 October 1931 in the Neckar Hotel. On 13 May 1931 the *Zentralverein der Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens* [Central Association of German Citizens of Jewish Faith] together with the *Reichsbund jüdischer Frontsoldaten* [Reich Federation of Jewish Front Soldiers] organized a debate dealing with the topic of the "Jewish question." It was moderated by the lawyer Max Rosengart and the presentation was given by the tireless lawyer Dr. Siegfried Gumbel. There he supported with authority the meaning of faith in Judaism and said, "If indeed the Jews were the materialists they are declared to be, then they would have long ago given up their faith."

Rabbi Dr. Max Beermann answered the question of Colonel Fromm regarding the origin of anti-Semitism with a historical-philosophical explanation.



The Heilbronner Beobachter [Heilbronn Observer] – This newspaper for justice and freedom,” as it called itself, was from the start a reprehensible and, above all, an anti-Semitic propaganda paper. The physician Dr. Julius Bachrach was attacked in this paper because he was a physician with the Arbeiter-Samariter [13] and in that capacity participated in a local practice in Besigheim. But the Arbeiter-Samariter and the Reichsbanner [14] also had to endure abuse because they tolerated a Jewish physician in their ranks. The number of this issue was from 17 May 1930.

Starting in 1930 the weekly newspaper the *Heilbronner Beobachter*, which was published by Jakob Mayer, spearheaded the agitation and the anti-Semitic derision.⁵ The name of the newspaper was patterned after that of the *Völkischer Beobachter* [15] and it freely mixed the terminology of the *Stürmer* with that of Goebbels’ *Angriff*, albeit written at the level of provincial journalism. In Stuttgart this role was played by the *Flammenzeichen* [The Beacon] which arose from the nationalist movement. This newspaper also occasionally dealt with issues pertaining to Heilbronn. The *Heilbronner Beobachter* knew no limits in the aggressiveness of its editorials and its spewing of scorn and slanders. In a lawsuit filed by the honorary citizen of the city, town council member Max Rosengart against Jakob Mayer, the latter was found guilty of libel.⁶

⁵ Unfortunately, issues of the *Heilbronn Beobachter* could not be obtained. Neither the Regional Library nor the City Archive of Heilbronn has any issues available. – *Flammenzeichen*, a nationalistic German newspaper for the north German race standing for religion, culture, government, and an economy free from foreign ideas and adulteration of race,” publisher and responsible editor: Alfred Miller, Leonberg. Publishing firm: *Die Schwertschmiede* [The Sword Smith] Leonberg near Stuttgart. – The *Heilbronner Tagblatt* is available neither from the Regional Library nor the State Archive, but examples of the first years of issue, albeit with large gaps, are found in the Heilbronn City Archive.

⁶ The defense lawyer of Jakob Mayer, Hans Frank, was later the General Governor of Poland. He was executed in Nuremberg on 16 October 1946.

Joining the *Heilbronn Beobachter* was the *Heilbronner Tagblatt* [Heilbronn Daily Newspaper] which began on 27 January 1932. It appeared at first as a weekly then, starting on 1 March 1932, as a daily. From the start it was declared to be the “voice” of the NSDAP. In no respect did it differentiate itself from the rest of the provincial newspapers of this type, although it did not engage in the extremely vulgar tone that dominated, for example, the Ulm newspapers. In general, one can say that the agitation against the Jews intensified and was directed against them during the years 1932 and 1933, then again flared up in 1938. During some of the intervening years the incitement against the Jews fell into the background in comparison with other problems (most of all, the events during the war). [16]

During the time before and directly after Hitler came to power this [anti-Jewish] agitation rose to a crescendo for the first time. At that time the obvious sadism which drove the agitation no longer knew any bounds! Day in day out attacks and personal insults were dished out in the newspapers – even in letters to the editor. In this context, we must look discerningly at all of the official announcements that were distributed across the board to all of the newspapers (such as those by the DPA [17]). These announcements were full of governmental measures and replies of the NSDAP in regard to their reactions, the official announcements then being reprinted in all of the newspapers.⁷ We must restrict ourselves to local events as far as our subject is concerned.

What was still just a skirmish in 1932 became a massive attack after Hitler seized power. With articles such as “Galician Lice in the Fur” (*Heilbronner Tagblatt* 21 January 1933), “Judah Judges Itself” (ibid. 21 January 1933), with poems such as “Gentle Advice for Cohn” (ibid. 28 January 1933), with provocative articles such as “*Edelmenschen oder Untermenschen*” [Noble People or Sub-Humans] [18] (ibid. 28 January 1933), and with countless other pieces from the readership, supplemented by personal slanders, the vocabulary of National Socialism was utilized to stoke up a well-directed Jew baiting campaign. Of course hatred was stirred up as well against the Catholic Church (above all against the local parish priest Dr. Stegmann), against the Marxists and socialists, against political opponents in general, and against the local press in particular (*Neckar-Echo*, *Neckar-Zeitung*, *Abend-Zeitung* [Evening Newspaper]). The Jews as corrupters of the people, as extortionists and profiteers, as creators of degenerate art, as

⁷ To further investigate the official announcements would lead us too far afield. Also, there are an adequate number of publications dealing with the political events – that is to say, there are already commentaries.

friends of Communism and Bolshevism - Heilbronners (especially her Jewish citizens) had to endure a ceaseless tirade of such slogans.⁸

On 12 March 1933 the offices of the *Neckar-Echo* and the *Volkshaus* [19] on Weinsberger Street were occupied. The police, the SA, and the SS were assigned a common provisional chief and on 16 March 1933 a local meeting took place for the purpose of planning the election of a new Lord Mayor. Because Lord Mayor Emil Beutinger was ill, the meeting was led by his deputy Carl Wulle. He began the meeting by stating to the city administration and the Local Council “that in view of the new situation they need to be mindful of fulfilling their obligations and tasks.” Indeed, he then came out against the many “individual acts of violence” which, according to the instructions of the government, would have to cease. The city administration did not need to fear a fair and objective scrutiny of their executive management.

The NSDAP faction [of the Local Council] submitted a comprehensive motion whose first article requested the Württemberg state government to modify the local bylaws so that the composition of the Local Council would be readjusted to reflect the election results of 5 March 1933. Likewise, the motion dealt with the question of who would occupy the post of Deputy Mayor. In the future the salary of the incoming Lord Mayor would amount to 1,000 Reich marks, not including an expense allowance. The fifth article provided for “rescinding the honorary citizenship awarded to the Jew Max Rosengart in 1930” and the sixth article declared that “the Jewish local council member Gumbel should immediately be unseated.” Furthermore, it was stipulated that “the pictures of the Marxists in the local council chamber should be removed.”

Moreover, it is interesting that in the face of the constantly resolute behavior of the Social Democrats a simple trick was resorted to. The *Heilbronner Chronik* [Heilbronn Chronicle] reported that, “some members of the SPD were taken into protective custody at the market place and spent time in the city hall police station. Consequently, they could not be present at the session.” Also, the local council member W. D., the editor of the democratic *Heilbronner Abendzeitung*, could not be present because the day before he had been assaulted at the publishing firm and mistreated and was in the hospital with a concussion.

The majority of Heilbronners disagreed with this scheme against these two deserving members of the Local Council – but no protest whatsoever was made regarding this matter.

⁸ How utterly grotesque the level of notions this persecution mania became is shown by a notice in the *Heilbronner Tagblatt* of 23 January 1933 in which the SPD [*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschland* - Social Democratic Party of Germany] was reproached for having introduced an Esperanto section into the *Neckar-Echo*. If Esperanto is a Jewish invention, then “Judah aims for the destruction of the cultural languages whose intellectual wealth is more or less of Aryan stamp.”

Even though Lord Mayor Professor Beutinger had communicated in writing that he would soon recover, local council member Gültig was installed as the first deputy of the Lord Mayor and Krauss of the *Bürgerliche Vereinigung* [Civic Club] was selected as the second deputy. On 5 April 1933 the Local Council was then dissolved and a new election was prepared.

During those weeks there were two events that were grist for the mill of Jew baiting. The Max-Meyer Bank (Kaiserstrasse 1-3) already had to suspend payments on 9 July 1932. The son of the banker Meyer as well as a legal representative of a firm were arrested on the train from Heilbronn to Berlin. It was discovered that 230,000 Reich marks worth of securities were missing. The bank failed. In total, the losses amounted to 370,000 Reich marks. The creditors lost 30%. In the spring of 1933 a lawsuit against Meyer Jr. was prepared. This affair stoked the National Socialist press which made hay out of these facts through headlines and commentary. – Similarly, as a result of a fraudulent bankruptcy, legal proceedings were undertaken against the proprietor of a store (*Haus für Alle* [A House for Everybody]) at Fleiner Street 5. Shortly before that the proprietor, Isaac Pariser (who was really named Hansen), had been accused of running a “discount store” of the worst kind. Through these two events the reputation of Jewish businessmen in general was degraded, the respectable ones among them had to suffer.

Meanwhile, local council member Heinrich Gültig was named “State Commissioner.” Later he would become Lord Mayor, with local council member Hugo Kölle being his deputy.

Immediately after Hitler seized power the “*Einzelaktionen*” [individual acts of violence] [20], which local council member Wulle had referred to, were set in motion in Germany and thus in Heilbronn. These “individual acts of violence” were primarily directed against the Jews. However, they were also directed against others, in most cases against those who were persecuted for political reasons. In this context, the barbarism of the opposing party knew no limits.

These were the days during which all those who had opposed the regime (without exception all the Jews) were no longer safe in regard to either their health or life. By day, and especially by night, individuals and groups attempted to gain access to the residences of the above mentioned under the pretext of conducting a “house search” – seizing the Jews, often mistreating them terribly. Even worse was the mistreatment in the basement of the *Braunes Haus* [21] (at that time located at Wilhelmstrasse 1 in the former Goppelt property). Here opponents of the regime, but above all the Jews from Heilbronn and from other places, were subjected to

punches, kicks, steel rods, and brass knuckles. Many of them not only needed medical attention, but they received permanent injuries.⁹

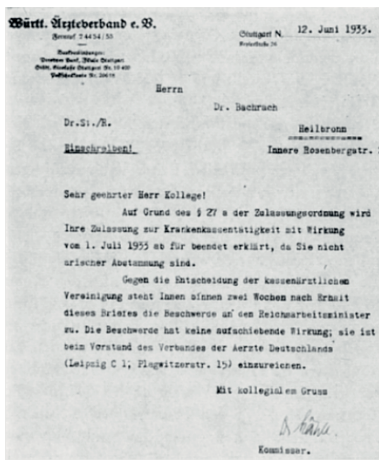
It is impossible to individually list these acts and incidents. In addition to the Jews, these acts affected all opponents of the system. In many cases the victims were dragged through the streets and taunted (such as the local parish priest Dr. Stegmann, among others), badgered and jostled, as well as beaten. In several instances the intimidation and ill-treatment led to suicide. Also, they became accustomed to using the so-called anger of the people, those well-organized mass incitements which were common in those days. One of these [incitements] was the throng of people in front of the *Heilbronn Bankverein* [Heilbronn Bank Society] who were chanting and demanding that the bank director Otto Igersheimer be handed over, even though he had already been warned and had left. Another one of these [incitements] was the notice put up on the Landauer Brothers Department Store on Kaiserstrasse, also known as the *Webwarenhaus zur Brücke* [textile goods store at the bridge].¹⁰

Moreover, it was common knowledge that some took advantage of that uncertain state of affairs in order to commit extortion against those whom the blackmailers found undesirable. Commissioner S. issued a proclamation on 28 March 1933 in which he cautioned against these extortionists. The proclamation stated, "There had been cases in which attorneys, business people, and private citizens had been requested to return without delay any sums of money which had previously been awarded to them in civil proceedings, otherwise they would be arrested by the SA and taken into protective custody." This was a warning that was not just directed towards Jews, but rather it was applied in general.¹¹

⁹ Neighboring residents still to this day can describe the screams and the calls for help from the basement of the *Braunes Haus* as being intolerable and horrible. On one occasion a Jew who had escaped from this underground place of inhumane torture lay for a long time bloodied on the street in front of the Fleiner Gate Apothecary without any of those passing over him taking any notice.

¹⁰ At this time the political director Gg. J. Wilhelm did his best to intervene against the excesses, often in vain.

¹¹ Refer to page 215 in the appendix for such individual acts of violence.



Non- Aryan: In this manner deserving physicians were prevented in 1933 from participating in the publicly funded healthcare system. [22]

As a result of this agitation – and the often bloody and even fatal individual acts of violence – the conscience of foreign countries was called upon. As has been historically demonstrated since then, the full scope of the National Socialist goals and actions was not recognized by these countries. Rather the opposite was the case in that, for example, in England the “new” Germany found support for a long time. Some countries protested against this Jew baiting and in a few countries there were passionate demonstrations against the “new” Germany. Now in Hitler’s Germany the tables were turned and one accused the Jews of having started a wicked “persecution of German nationals abroad.”

The leading associations of German Jews, namely The Central Association of German Citizens of Jewish Faith, The Reich Federation of Jewish Front Soldiers, the *Verband nationaldeutscher Juden* [Association of German National Jews], and a few others published a communiqué on 31 March 1933 (perhaps as a preventative measure) in which they challenged this alleged hatred on the part of Jews against German nationals living abroad. On the same day the *Oberrat der Israelitischen Religionsgemeinschaft* in Württemberg [Supreme Council of the Religious Community of Württemberg Jews] concurred with this announcement.

The Day of the Boycott

In spite of this, the *Judenboykott* [boycott of the Jews] also began in Heilbronn on 1 April 1933.

For this boycott, which was intended to “open the eyes” of the German people to the harmful influence of the Jews, so-called action committees had been formed with a “central committee” having the notorious Julius Streicher at the head as chairman. This central committee had

drawn up “11 NSDAP Resistance Rules” and 10,000 mass meetings were organized, spread throughout the Reich.

“Judah Declares War on Germany,” so proclaimed the headline of a provocative article in the 29 March 1933 edition of the *Heilbronner Tagblatt*. In Heilbronn the action committee consisted of the political leaders at the time, the authorized leaders of the SS and SA, and always a representative of the *NS-Bauernschaft* [NS-Farming Community] and the *Kampfbund für die Erhaltung des Bauerntums* [Patriotic Fighting Society for the Support of the Farming Community].

With the Saturday edition of 1 April 1933 the press led off the campaign with the headline (and the associated commentary): “Join the fight against the Jewish ‘national pests’ – Smite the enemies of the people!” At 10 a.m. the SA, SS, and HJ [23] set out according to plan in order to install signs (a green dot on a black background) at the retail businesses and to post two men at each store entrance warning the customers not to enter and distributing handbills. Individually or in groups, the SA men occupied posts in front of lawyers’ offices, the homes of Jewish physicians, etc. At the same time detachments marched through the city with placards which demanded a boycott of the Jews. This action, which brought forth joy in the followers of the regime but evoked worry and disgust on the part of those who thought otherwise, continued until 5 p.m. The action was to be repeated the following Wednesday in the event that the “agitation” by the Jews living abroad increased. As it turned out, that was not the case. The *Neckar-Zeitung* of 1 April 1933 reported that most of the Jewish businesses had closed.

The wave of Jewish persecution had begun.

One can break this persecution down into four phases:

1933-1935	Individual measures based on the appearance of legality established by means of emergency decrees and enabling acts
1935-1938	The Nuremberg Laws and the orders and regulations based on these laws
1938-1941	Pogroms and the first deportations to Polish concentration camps
1941-1945	Ultimately, physical mass extermination by means of firing squads and gas chambers

Even before the first legal measures took place, the Heilbronn Local Council dissolved on 5 April 1933. On 6 April 1933 the political faction leader Richard Drauz became the political

commissioner of the Heilbronn District Office.¹² However, even though the boycott was over, the chain of individual acts of violence did not let up. It stretched out for long months. A particularly flagrant case is demonstrated by the attack on the *Adlerbrauerei* [Adler Brewery], which was carried out by a throng of National Socialists. They severely mistreated the proprietor Alfred Würzburger, his wife, and his uncle. The brewery had already had been forced to cease its production and had lost its customers. During the coming years the Adler Brewery at Klarastrasse 21 would serve as a meeting place for the Jews. School instruction was temporarily given here. Later this place was the *Israelitisches Gemeinde-Lokal* [Jewish Community Center] run by Max Strauss.¹³

Undiminished, through slogans and headlines, accounts, provocative articles, and poems the *Heilbronner Tagblatt* preached: “Don’t buy from the Jews!” “Whoever buys from the Jews will die thereby!” “The Jewish department store is the gravedigger of the German middle class!” “Anti-Semitism is the command of the hour!” In this connection the editor H. H. emerged as a “frothing at the mouth” anti-Semite. He came from the “Hammer Movement” of Theodore Fritsch [24] and let forth his anti-Semitic ideas at every opportunity; he was obstinate and intransigent.¹⁴

The ensuing legal measures must have hit the Jews really hard.

On 7 April the *Gesetz zur Wiederherstellung des Berufsbeamtentums* [Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service] [25] (RGBl. [26] 1933, page 175) was enacted as well as a decree (RGBl. I, page 222) concerning the granting of hospital staff privileges to Jewish physicians. Furthermore, there was one decree dealing with managing editors. All of these were measures intended to remove Jews from their jobs and positions, as the guiding principles of the *Reichsbeamtengesetz* [Law Governing the Officials of the Reich] [27] (RGBl. I, page 575) demonstrated only too clearly. In this law it was stipulated that someone who was descended from non-Aryan (especially Jewish) parents or grandparents would now be considered non-

¹² Richard Drauz (born on 2 April 1894 in Heilbronn, executed on 4 December 1946 in Landsberg) came from Obertürkheim to Heilbronn on 5 October 1932. The City Chronicles first mentioned him as the district leader on 23 April 1933, specifically during an event of the *Kampfbund des Mittelstandes der NSDAP* [The NSDAP Patriotic Fighting Society of the Middle Class].

¹³ In this connection the raid on the house of Lord Mayor Prof. Emil Beutinger must be mentioned. This raid took place after the lawsuit against Beutinger; the furnishings of his house were completely destroyed. District leader Drauz commented regarding the outcome of this lawsuit (in which Beutinger was acquitted) in the article “The Beutinger Scandal,” which appeared in the 24 June 1933 issue of the *Heilbronner Tagblatt*.

¹⁴ In spite of this, towards the end of 1933 he could not find fault with adding to the program of the Heilbronn Civic Theater the comedy “Biedermeier,” which he had co-written with the well-known Jewish comedian Leo Walther Stein. As a rationale, [H.H.] stated that [Leo Walther Stein] was a purely “Aryan looking” Jew.

Aryan. It was sufficient to be considered non-Aryan if one parent or grandparent was non-Aryan – especially if one of these was a practicing Jew. At the same time, those of illegitimate birth fell into this category of people. If their Aryan descent was doubtful, then a judgment needed to be provided by a racial expert who was commissioned by the Ministry of the Interior. – Also a *Reichserbhofgesetz* [State Hereditary Farm Law] [28] was passed at this time.

Next to the business owners, all of these measures weighed most heavily on the physicians and lawyers, most of all upon those who had either not participated in World War I or were not decorated.

In Heilbronn the most popular argument of Jew baiting was to point out that a gentile girl could never be a servant for Jews because the Jews are bent on “chasing her like a prized deer ... until she was made submissive by receiving gifts.” - Letters to the editor railing against the Jews, their firms and their tricks were never lacking and on 6 September 1933 it was alleged that the firms of Danziger and Landauer had instructed their staff to avoid shopping at any National Socialist owned business.¹⁵

After the occupation and silencing of the *Neckar-Echo*, the struggle was directed exclusively against the Schell Publishing Company owned by Viktor Kraemer, under whose auspices the *Neckar-Zeitung* continued to be published. For a few months the *General-Anzeiger* [General Advertiser] still appeared. During 1933 the democratic *Heilbronner Abendzeitung* was the first of Kraemer’s newspapers that had to cease publication. The *Neckar-Zeitung* continued to publish until 27 February 1934 when a large ad appeared in the newspaper announcing that the Schell Publishing Company (along with all of its copyrights) would be under the ownership of the *Heilbronner Tagblatt*, effective as of 1 March 1934. “In spite of the great sacrifice, sensing our moral obligations, we have kept the entire staff on the payroll of the Schell Publishing Company” (this remark is not correct, the arts editor HF was not retained). Furthermore, the announcement stated that henceforth the *Heilbronner Tagblatt* would appear as a morning paper at 7 a.m. and the *Neckar-Zeitung* would appear at 4:30 p.m. as an afternoon paper. The editor-in-chief of the *Heilbronner Tagblatt* would be Hans Hauptmann; the editor-in-chief of the *Neckar-Zeitung* would remain Dr. Heinz Goldammer (who was the object of an unending attack from the very pages of the *Heilbronner Tagblatt* in 1933). In an explanatory note it was further stated that, “We hope that through the takeover the character of the *Württemberg Unterland* [29] press now has a healthy foundation and we seek the energetic support of the people in the future. Our chief objective, which we constantly maintain, is to win over every last one of our

¹⁵ Already it was tough going for the Jewish business people. By 20 March 1933 it had been decreed that purchases made with *Winterhilfe* [a compulsory charity] food ration cards could not be made at Jewish owned businesses and department stores. Later that also included credit for wedding related purchases.

fellow countrymen to the intentions of our führer, Adolf Hitler. Therefore we call upon you and those in your circle of acquaintances to continue to collaborate on this marvelous nation building project.”¹⁶

Nevertheless, not only in Heilbronn but also in the rest of Germany, the year 1934 brought a certain amount of calm. An increasing number of voices from inside the Jewish community made the call to “Stay in Germany.” There was less civil disorder in the streets.

The year 1935 brought a wave of public assemblies and a series of political campaigns. The press, the radio, etc. had to push these political campaigns (that is to say the hatred) with vigor – this was the case also in Heilbronn.

The fall of 1935 brought the first decisive blow against the Jews in the form of the *Reichsbürgergesetz* [Reich’s Citizenship Law] (RGBl. I, 15 September 1935, page 1146) in which (as it is well known) it was proclaimed that, (§2) “A citizen of the Reich is only one who is a German national and of kindred blood.” It was only logical that a “law for the protection of German blood and German honor” would follow. There it stated, “One is a Jew who is descended from at least three full-blooded Jews for grandparents” (RGBl. I, 1935, page 1333). The hunt for the Jewish grandmother was off and running. According to the first regulation of the *Reichsbürgergesetz*, neither participation in World War I nor being decorated was taken into consideration. In logical consequence of this law, all Jewish governmental officials (even veterans) were retired effective as of 31 December 1935. Likewise, Jewish physicians were barred from being on hospital staffs.

A decree of the Württemberg State Police of 15 April 1935 advised that all attempts of the “German-Jewish Alliance,” which had the goal to convince Jews to stay in Germany, ought to be counter-acted. At the same time, all cultural organizations, leagues, lodges, etc. of the Jews were combined under the umbrella organization *Reichsverband jüdischer Kulturbünde Deutschlands* [Reich Association of Jewish Cultural Alliances in Germany]. By this means they aimed at a centralized supervision of these organizations.¹⁷

¹⁶ Before the takeover it was stated, “German men, German women: away with this ‘fork-tongued’ newspaper, this double morality – your newspaper is the *Heilbronner Tagblatt*,” *Heilbronner Tagblatt* edition of 10 July 1933.

¹⁷ This decree was the reason that the *Herder Lodge* essentially closed at a later date (on 16 April 1937) than the other non-Jewish lodges, the *Karl zum Brunnen des Heils* [Karl at the Fountain of Healing] and the *Furchtlos und Treu* [Fearless and Loyal], which had already ceased functioning by 1934.

In this decree the State Police clearly advised that the attempt will be made to place Zionists at the head of all local chapters in order to “suppress any attempt at assimilation.” Jewish educational and religious organizations were initially exempted from this rule. Certainly in 1933 a decree was in force in Heilbronn which restricted the admission of non-Aryan students to secondary schools. The percentage of [non-Aryans] would not be allowed to constitute more than 1.5 percent of the total student body. Otherwise, those students in excess of the quota would need to be expelled. That also applied to private schools. For this reason (and above all as a consequence of the inconveniences imposed on Jewish students) private Jewish schools were already beginning to be established in the large cities.

Also, the situation of young Jews in Heilbronn was one of being oppressed. Today it will seem unimaginable to us that there was a teacher who pasted into scrapbooks hate articles and illustrations taken from Streicher’s *Stürmer* (which certainly depicted the lack of conscience that typified the German people) in order to go around to the schools and read these hate articles out loud! Although at the request of Jewish mothers the very loyal school director intervened and sought to put an end to this practice, he was not able to do so. Consequently, the mothers felt compelled to take their children out of this school. Students who supported a Jewish fellow student were beaten up.

By 6 June 1934 Jewish religious instruction in the schools had already ceased. The Jewish religious instruction was transferred to the *Adlerkeller* [Adler Pub] at Klarastrasse 21.

Decree followed decree. After 1945 it was ascertained that over 250 laws, regulatory statutes, decrees, regulations, and mandates poured down upon the Jews! In 1936 the issuing of passes was made more difficult, Jews were forbidden to wear the *Reichssportsabzeichen* [Reich sports badge], the confiscation of weapons and the ban on serving as an advisor participating in tax examinations followed in February. On 25 April 1936 a decree issued by the Württemberg Political Police forbade the use of the Hebrew language in lectures etc. and set up a special surveillance of Jews. More frequently one saw signs stating “Jews not wanted”¹⁸ on restaurants and other so-called Aryan businesses. More and more the Jews of Heilbronn had to withdraw to the *Adlerbrauerei* and later the *Adlerkeller* which had been allotted to them as a Jewish public gathering place, common room, and meeting hall. Alfred Würtzburger even earned some “praise” from the aforementioned Stuttgart *Flammenzeichen*¹⁹ when he installed a sign that said, “Only Jews may enter into this establishment.”

¹⁸ A decree of the führer’s representative issued on 29 January 1936 had the exclusion wording (which was preferred in the rural areas), “Jews set foot in this place at their own risk.”

¹⁹ *Flammenzeichen* No. 32, 1936.

There were still a large number of [Jewish] retail businesses. All indications are that the remaining customers often only dared to enter the store by a side or rear entrance. They needed to bring, or had brought, plain wrapping paper in order not to appear to be customers of such stores.

Social interaction with their Jewish fellow citizens became more difficult, spying became the order of the day, and telephones were tapped. When trying to maintain old contacts, many were overcome by fear. Indeed there was a ceaseless clamor of hateful language in the speeches against the Jews of the government leaders. Adolf Hitler never passed up an opportunity to reiterate his ideology.

Nevertheless, it is astounding that in spite of this situation the pulse in Jewish cultural life in Heilbronn went on. Rabbis and teachers worked hard so that this [cultural] life would not die. Established speakers (approved by the gestapo) came here from Berlin and elsewhere and the *Israelitisches Familienblatt* [Jewish Family Newspaper] in Hamburg (which from time to time relayed reports from individual districts) credited Heilbronn with an important role in this maintenance of culture.²⁰

It was very depressing that from then on the establishment of “public grade schools for Jews” became mandatory. Of particular importance in this regard was the report, submitted on 9 February 1936, of the District Authority of Regional Assembly. The report was titled “The Establishment of Religious and Private Schools in Württemberg.” The consequences of the persecution of the Jews in connection with the *Reichsbürgergesetz* already had effects in regard to the schools. For 22 communities the question of establishing private schools [for Jews] was not even considered; in the Heilbronn region this included Affaltrach, Eschenau, Bonfeld, Lehrensteinsfeld, Massenbach, Oedheim, Olnhausen, Sontheim, and Talheim.

For Heilbronn the establishment of such a private school had now become a necessity. What had been the *Adlerkeller* at Klarastrasse 21 was assigned to be the schoolroom. The school was in essence an intermediate school. In addition to Heilbronn, such Jewish schools were established in Göppingen, Oberdorf, Öhringen, Rottweil, and Ulm. The instruction was provided, as before, by the rabbis and the cantors or teachers. The supervision over the entire new school system was entrusted to the retired headmaster Abraham Buttenhausen, who also came to Heilbronn several times for inspection.

²⁰ *Israelitisches Familienblatt*, especially Vol. 25-38, such as Vol. 38 issue of 30 April 1936 “Regarding Cultural Activity”; Vol. 39 issue of 23 July 1937 “Lectures in the ZOG and in the Community”; Vol. 40 issue of 31 March 1938 “Cultural Events.” This newspaper is no longer available in German archives.

The Fateful Year of 1938

The fateful year for the Jews was to be 1938. At the beginning of this year it was publicly announced that for fellow [Nazi] party members to associate with Jews would mean expulsion from the party and that for civil servants to shop in Jewish businesses would result in summary dismissal. In March the importance and the legal position of the *Israelitische Kultusvereinigung* was reduced, its officials had their civil service status revoked without their having any claim to financial support or a pension.

By means of a gestapo decree, emigration laws were made more restrictive, there was no more going to Austria, Jews could no longer sit on a board of directors, and later the *Reichsbürgergesetz* was applied in Austria. A decree of the *Reichsbürgergesetz* of 14 June 1938 demanded the registration of all Jewish businesses and, moreover, there was a special index in which they were registered and officially identified. This measure laid the foundation for further state schemes against the Jews.

The *Verordnung über die Anmeldung des Vermögens der Juden* [Decree Regarding the Reporting of Jewish Property] (RGBl. I, 26 April 1938, page 414) seriously affected the Jews more than anything that had come before. Without any regard to their trade or other occupation, all Jews had to submit this registration and later declare any change of property. First of all the NSDAP issued that decree because they wanted to obtain a survey of the size and the proportion of Jewish property within the entire economy. This decree considered as property everything except items designated for personal use and regarded as luxury goods (so long as they did not exceed 5,000 Marks in value). Everything else needed to be precisely itemized. Violation or false declaration would result in imprisonment.

The decree showed its true nature in "Section 1" in which it was ordered that henceforth "all legal transactions aiming at a transfer to Jewish management will be subject to prior authorization." In this manner public authorities as well as party authorities intervened in the sale of businesses in order to have the possibility of transferring such businesses to favored party members. This requirement was a continuation of the oppressive secret decree of 3 February 1937. This was a questionnaire with 26 questions which was distributed under conditions of "strict confidentiality" by the Württemberg Ministry for Economic Affairs. This questionnaire's goal was the "survey of the property of non-Aryans involved in private enterprises and of non-Aryans involved in businesses of all kinds and in independent professions." It was precisely these two decrees that prepared the way for the complete exclusion of Jews from the economy (also from the wholesale trade and large scale industry,

which up till then seemed not to be affected) and that initiated the actual ruin of the Jews which was decisively accomplished by the *Kristallnacht*.²¹ [30]

On 23 July 1938 the compulsory identification card was introduced and brought forth an outcry because all Jews who previously had come in conflict with the law one time or another would now be sent to camps.

Deeply humiliating was the decree (RGBl. I, page 1044) regarding the placing of the names “Sara” and “Israel” in front of customary given names, in addition to which one month later a large letter “J” was supposed to be stamped [onto the identification card]. It was a matter of course that the issuing of identification papers for travelers was first curtailed then forbidden. With the fifth decree of the *Reichsbürgergesetz* the Jewish lawyers were prohibited from practicing their profession. They were banned entirely.

In October 1938 the first deportations took place!

These deportations included the Jews who were listed in the local government office for the registration of residents as being Polish citizens and also those Jews who appeared to be *Ostjuden*. Those deported from Heilbronn were the following families and individuals:

Nachmann Gersinsky	storekeeper [31]	23/1 Wolfgangsgasse
Marie Gersinsky	housewife	“
Dina Mangel	merchant	“
Bernhardt Mangel	merchant	“
Adele Mandellaub	housewife	105 Sülmerstrasse
Simon Mandellaub	shoe seller	“
Sylvia Mandellaub	student	“
Chajem Schiffer	butcher	14 Untere Neckarstrasse
Pauline Schiffer	housewife	“

²¹ An excellent synopsis of all of the important laws, decrees, and executive orders related to this subject is given by the book published by the city of Ulm: *Dokumentation über die Verfolgungen der Jüdischen Bürger von Ulm – Zusammenge stellt und bearbeitet von Heinz Keil, Ulm – Herausgegeben im Auftrage der Stadt* [Documentation related to the persecution of the Jewish citizens of Ulm – collected and prepared by Heinz Keil, Ulm – publication commissioned by the city of Ulm]. Our book has repeatedly (and gratefully) relied upon this above mentioned synopsis and commentary.

[Determining] the fate of precisely these Jews who were deported in October 1938 caused the author many headaches because the supporting documentation has proven to be completely inadequate and contact with the descendants could be established only at the last minute.

In any event, it has now been established that they were taken together to the Polish border and then perished in Poland (as best as could be determined) at that time or later.²² On the other hand, it has been proven that Jews deported in this manner individually returned home because the Polish border had already been closed. The great majority of the Jews were crammed onto trucks. They were only allowed to have with them what they could carry and they were simply dumped near the Benschen border crossing. Some of the elderly and infirm did not survive these measures and inhumanities.

It is only thanks to the efforts of the “American [Jewish] Joint Distribution Committee” [32] that the surviving Jews succeeded in finding shelter in a few Polish cities. Thus it is testified by a member of the Mandellaub family (Mrs. Gisela Katz, born Mandellaub) that her parents and her sister indeed reached their hometown Kolomea, but then later they were overcome by the wave of extermination when the Germans marched in.

It has already been documented that the situation of Jews in commerce and industry was relatively tolerable until 1938 and how these firms, so long as they were under Jewish ownership or co-ownership, were to some extent out of the “line of fire.” Severe economic disturbances were feared in the event that anti-Semitic measures were implemented. Indeed, this had been predicted in the autumn of 1937 by Dr. Hjalmar Schacht (who, incidentally, had resigned). However, [these economic disturbances] had also been taken into account by Göring in his position as the “official responsible for the Four Year Plan.”

But here too the situation changed suddenly with the events of 9 and 10 November 1938. With these actions, the fight against the Jews entered its third phase (as we have described).

²² These nine listed Heilbronn Jews were thus deported to Poland and according to the existing (for the most part, private) communications they all perished there. Originally Leopold (Leon) Gersinsky and Frieda Laufer (born Gersinsky) were counted as victims because they were erroneously designated in the supplied list of emigrants as being “deported to Poland.” However, according to a letter from Leon Gersinsky dated 11 June 1963, they had already emigrated a few years after 1933. – Thus the letter from the *Kriminalsekretär* [middle ranking police official] E. R. dated 6. December 1947 is certainly questionable. This letter incidentally offers evidence that the former Heilbronn Chief of Police H. W. in October 1938 enabled the release from the Police Jail II of the Police District of Stuttgart of a Heilbronn family of four. They could prove that they already had their emigration documents and that their transport papers were in order. - The above mentioned Police Chief W. was, on the occasion of his own detention, shown by means of an unusually large number of documents that he in fact remained humane and provided an energetic opposition to *Kreisleiter* [district committee leader] Drauz and his inhumanities, as was acknowledged by the Jewish side.

As is well known, the gunshot which the young Jew Hershel Grünspan delivered to von Rath (the head of the German diplomatic delegation in Paris) which resulted in the young diplomat's death a few days later was used to organize the "public anger against the Jews." This led to the *Kristallnacht*. Grünspan pulled the trigger because his parents, being *Ostjuden*, had been deported to Poland as part of the action described above. The question as to whether Grünspan's act was in fact political in nature or whether private, subliminal motives played a role has been the topic of many sometimes sensational publications. The fact of the matter is that, at the beginning at least, these deportations had a somewhat legal character to it. The Polish government had passed a law on 31 March 1938, according to which Polish citizens living abroad had to return to their Polish hometown before 30 October 1938 or they would lose their citizenship. Altogether, 50,000 Poles living in Germany were affected by this law, not all of them were Jews. In 1938 the NSDAP held back from sending foreign Jews to concentration camps. – From the advocates of the interpretation that Grünspan acted from private motives, it was pointed out that Grünspan had received news from his parents that they had safely arrived in Poland. Later the young Jew (who was to bring so much misery on his coreligionists) was branded by the NSDAP as a symbol of "international Jewry" who had instigated the war. A major legal action was prepared against him in which Bonnet (who in 1938 was the French foreign minister) appeared as a witness. Later, however, it was feared that a trial would give rise to hero worship of von Rath (who personified the Junker opposition [to Hitler] [33]). After much "to and froing" the large show trial was adjourned on 11 May 1942. Grünspan later died in a concentration camp (see also Reitlinger, *Die Endlösung* [The Final Solution], pages 34/35).

The action that followed was directed against Jewish business life and the Jewish economy and was intended to drive the Jews to emigrate faster. This action was also directed against the Jewish houses of worship, the synagogues.

It turned out that the severely wounded delegation leader [von Rath] died during the night that the leadership circle of the NSDAP was commemorating the unsuccessful Putsch of 1923 (the march to the *Feldherrnhalle* [34]), at which location they were holding the celebration. In this way the SA leaders who were present could be incited by Goebbels and orders for a general action could be given, which was then carried out – also in Stuttgart and Heilbronn.

Translator's Endnotes:

Introduction

1. *Allee* – a major avenue in Heilbronn.
2. “*Shum*” is formed by the initial letters of the Hebrew names for Speyer, Worms, and Mainz: Shpira, Vermayza, and Magentza.
3. *Stürmer* [The Attacker] – the name of an anti-Semitic weekly tabloid-format Nazi newspaper.
4. *Volkshochschule* – an institution for adult continuing education that generally does not award a degree.
5. PEN - a worldwide association of writers.

Chapter 7

1. *Deutsch-völkische Bewegung* [German People's Movement] – a populist movement that combined a patriotic interest in German folklore, local history, etc. and viewed the German people as a “race.” Its *völkisch* [nationalistic] ideologies were influential in the development of Nazism.
2. *Dolchstoß[legende]* – the “stab-in-the-back” myth that Germany did not militarily lose World War I, rather that Germany was betrayed by civilians on the home front.
3. NSDAP – abbreviation for “Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei” [National German Socialist Worker's Party] a.k.a. “Nazi.”
4. *verjudet* – Nazi usage of German language meaning “influenced, controlled, or infiltrated either by Jews or by alleged Jewish attitude”; translated from “Vokabular des National-Sozialismus,” Cornelia Schmitz-Bering, 2nd edition, de Gruyter, 2007, page 629.
5. *Oberpräsidenten* were the appointed heads of each of the Prussian provinces.
6. *Der Angriff* [The Attack] - a NSDAP newspaper founded by Joseph Goebbels, published in Berlin.
7. *Westdeutscher Beobachter* [West German Observer] - a newspaper in Cologne-Aachen belonging to the NSDAP.
8. *Deutschvölkischer Schutz- und Trutzbund* [German Nationalist Protection and Defiance Federation] - the largest, most active, and most influential anti-Semitic federation in Germany after the First World War.
9. *Sturmabteilung* [Storm Detachment or Storm Troopers, also known as the “Brown Shirts”] - functioned as a paramilitary organization of the Nazi party.

10. “SS” is more commonly used as the abbreviation for *Schutzstaffel* [Protection Squad]. Here, however, “SS” seems to be used here as an abbreviation for *Saalschutz* [meeting hall security].
11. *Stürmer* [The Attacker] – the name of an anti-Semitic weekly tabloid-format Nazi newspaper.
12. *Realgymnasium* - a secondary school with an emphasis on science.
13. *Arbeiter-Samariter* - a relief and aid organization that had no political or religious affiliations.
14. *Reichsbanner* - an ex-serviceman’s association.
15. *Völkischer Beobachter* - an official newspaper of the NSDAP.
16. The author’s statement is anachronistic. The time period being discussed is 1933 – 1938, World War II did not start until 1939.
17. It is not clear what the author was referring to by the abbreviation “DPA.” The Deutsche Presse-Agentur (DPA) [German News Agency] was not founded until 1949. Perhaps he was referring to the Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro (DNB) [German News Bureau] which was founded in 1933).
18. *Untermenschen* [sub-humans] - Nazi terminology used to refer to “inferior” people, e.g. eastern Europeans and Jews.
19. *Volkshaus* [people’s house] – served as a union hall.
20. *Einzelaktion* “In the aftermath of the Nazi seizure of power in January 1933, and before the first anti-Semitic laws were passed in April 1933, “individual acts of violence” (*Einzelaktion*) were directed against the Jews of Germany. These took the form of boycotting Jewish shops, random arrests of Jews, and the beating of Jews by Nazi storm troopers.” Quoted from “Historical Dictionary of the Holocaust”, 2nd edition, Jack R. Fischel, Scarecrow Press, Lanham Maryland, 2010, page 62.
21. *Braunes Haus* [brown house] - local Nazi party headquarters. This was also the name of the NAZI national headquarters building in Munich; this building was named for the color of the party uniforms.
22. Germany has Europe’s oldest universal health care insurance system dating back to Otto von Bismarck’s social legislation.
23. “HJ” (Hitler Jugend) [Hitler Youth] – a Nazi paramilitary organization, membership was mandatory for “Aryans.”
24. In 1912 Theodor Fritsch founded the anti-Semitic Reichshammerbund [Reich’s Hammer League], which was one of the first political groups to adopt the swastika.
25. *Gesetz zur Wiederherstellung des Berufsbeamtentums* [Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service] – this law enacted on 7 April 1933 (two months after Hitler came to power) allowed for tenured civil servants to be dismissed and forced the retirement of non-Aryans and opponents of the regime.

26. "RGBl." is the abbreviation for *Reichsgesetzblatt* [Official Law Bulletin of the German Reich].
27. *Reichsbeamten-gesetz* [Law Governing the Official of the Reich] – persons of Jewish blood (except for those who served at the front) were prohibited from holding any public office.
28. *Reichserbhofgesetz* [State Hereditary Farm Law] – a Nazi law to implement the principles of "blood and soil", its aim being to "preserve the farming community as the blood-source of the German people."
29. *Württemberg Unterland* - the region around Heilbronn.
30. *Kristallnacht* [Crystal Night, Night of the Broken Glass] – a series of coordinated attacks carried out against Jews in German and Austria on 9 & 10 November 1938.
31. The source text has "*Vorkaufsgeschäft*" – perhaps this is a typographical error and should be "*Verkaufsgeschäft*" [a store].
32. "American [Jewish] Joint Distribution Committee" – a worldwide Jewish relief organization founded in 1914 and headquartered in New York City.
33. Junker opposition to Hitler – after 1939 there was a link between "Junker" generals and large industrialists in their opposition to Hitler.
34. *Feldherrnhalle* [Field Marshall's Hall] – a large building in Munich that was the scene of a confrontation between the Bavarian State Police and the supporters of Adolf Hitler during the so-called Beer Hall Putsch of 1923.