



Anna Junge

“There’s nobody left”

Anti-Semitic Exclusion and Persecution
in Rauschholzhausen, 1933-1942

Anna Junge (2018), "There's nobody left"
Anti-Semitic Exclusion and Persecution in Rauschholzhausen,
1933–1942, Dokserver des Zentrums für Zeithistorische Forschung Potsdam,
<http://dx.doi.org/10.14765/zzf.dok.1.1128>

Copyright der digitalen Ausgabe:

© Clio-online – Historisches Fachinformationssystem e.V. und Autorin, alle Rechte vorbehalten. Dieses Werk wurde von der Autorin für den Download vom Dokumentenserver des Zentrums für Zeithistorische Forschung Potsdam e.V. freigegeben und darf nur vervielfältigt und erneut veröffentlicht werden, wenn die Einwilligung der o.g. Rechteinhaber vorliegt. Bitte kontaktieren Sie: redaktion@zeitgeschichte-digital.de

Written by: Anna Junge

Translated by: David A. Brenner, PhD

Translation edited by: Helga Schier, PhD

Setting and Layout by: Christian Walter

Cover illustration: Zimmerplatz in Rauschholzhausen, around 1905.

Central square in the village and site of the deportation in 1942.

(Private photo and document collection of Ingrid Binot, Rauschholzhausen.)

The translation was made possible by Arnold Spier, Joel Spier, Ralph Spier, my parents Marianne and Carlpeter Junge, my grandfather Bruno Tögel, the Tristeza Collective, the student committees of the Technische Universität Berlin and the Humboldt-Universität Berlin as well as the Naturfreundejugend Berlin.

Original German title:

»Niemand mehr da«.

Antisemitische Ausgrenzung und Verfolgung

in Rauschholzhausen 1933–1942.

© 2012 Jonas Verlag für Kunst und Literatur GmbH, Marburg

<https://asw-verlage.de>

Anna Junge

“There’s nobody left”

Anti-Semitic Exclusion and Persecution
in Rauschholzhausen, 1933-1942

Translated from the Original German
by David A. Brenner

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.14765/zf.dok.1.1128>

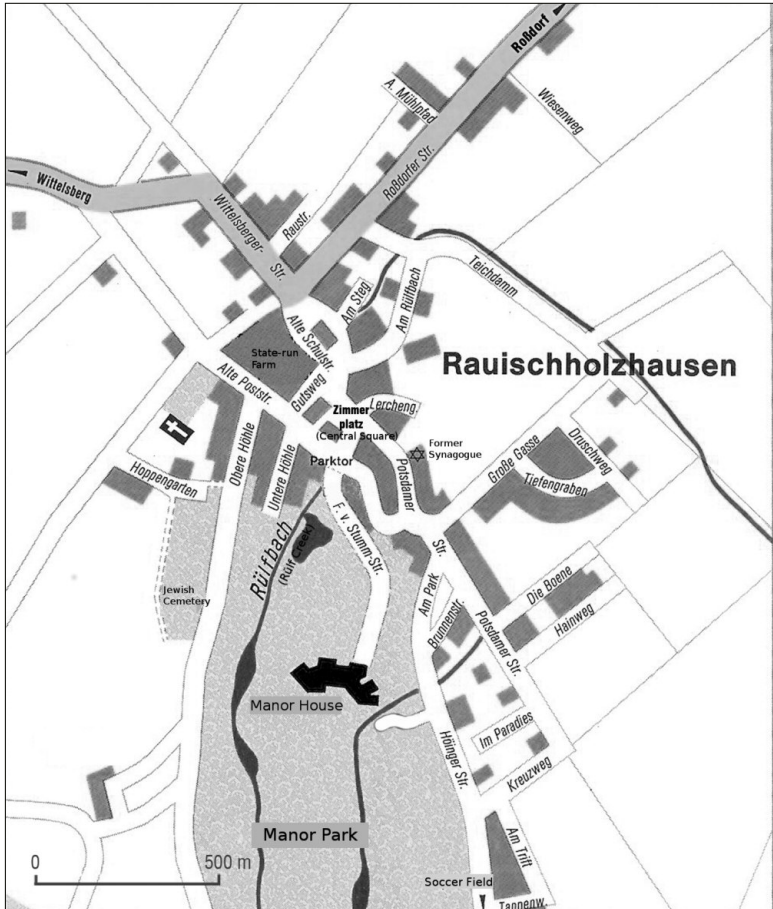
*For Walter and Martin Spier,
and Alfred Spier,
and Edith Baumann.*

Village Map	ix
Foreword by Walter Spier	xi
Personal Foreword	xiii
Thematic Approach	1
Introduction	1
Methodological Pre-Considerations	8
<i>The Research Process</i>	8
<i>Oral History</i>	12
<i>Representability</i>	15
Prehistory	19
On the History of Rauischholzhausen and Its Jewish Residents	19
Jewish Life in the Village at the Beginning of the 20th Century	26
Family Descriptions	33
Rauischholzhausen and the Holocaust	47
Section 1: From the Transfer of Power to the Nuremberg Laws	47
<i>Transfer of Power to Hitler</i>	47
<i>Social Exclusion</i>	51
<i>Economic Exclusion</i>	64
Section 2: From the Nuremberg Laws to the November Pogroms	73
<i>The Nuremberg Laws and an Upsurge in Violence</i>	73
<i>Destruction of Economic Livelihoods</i>	82
<i>Expulsion</i>	86
Section 3: From the November Pogroms to the German Attack on Poland	101
<i>November Pogroms</i>	101
<i>Emigration</i>	110
<i>Increased Monitoring and Exploitation</i>	116
<i>Forced Labor</i>	118
<i>Synagogue and Jewish Cemetery</i>	120

Table of Content

Section 4: From the German Attack on Poland to Deportation	128
<i>Isolation</i>	128
<i>Ghettoization and Deportation</i>	139
<i>Murder</i>	159
<i>Enriching Oneself</i>	162
After the Holocaust	169
American Occupation	169
Returning	173
Revenge	182
Hachshara	187
Sara Mendel	199
Conclusion	207
Evaluation	207
Assessment	215
Today's Perspective	220
Afterword by Hajo Funke	225
Notes	231
Bibliography	293
Primary Sources	293
<i>Oral History Sources</i>	293
<i>Autobiographical Reports by Survivors</i>	294
<i>Private Collections</i>	295
<i>Archival Sources</i>	295
<i>Internet Archives and Databases</i>	296
<i>Edited Sources and Legal Compendia</i>	297
Secondary Sources	297
<i>Literature</i>	297
<i>Internet and Press Publications</i>	302
Photo Credits	303

Village Map



Map of Rauschholzhausen, presumably for the period around 1980.
(Card by Ludwig Dreher, in: Deuker/Dienstbach, *Der Schloßpark*, p. 51, modified and expanded
by Philipp Kuebart, Berlin 2009/2012.)

Foreword by Walter Spier

My name is Walter Spier and I was born in Marburg, near Rauischholzhausen, in October 1927. I am the youngest of five children born to Abraham and Jenny Spier. Germany and the world changed in the latter part of the 1930's culminating with "Kristallnacht" on November 9th, 1938, the unofficial start of the Holocaust. We witnessed firsthand the deteriorating conditions for Jews in Germany and in 1939 my older siblings, Edith, Julius and Alfred, were able to go to England on a Kindertransport with the hope that Martin, our parents and I would soon follow. This great plan did not happen and in September of 1942 the four of us, we together with fourteen other Jews from Rauischholzhausen and vicinity were deported to Theresienstadt after we gathered at the Zimmerplatz. My grandmother died in Theresienstadt. We were transferred to Auschwitz-Birkenau where my parents were murdered. I was subsequently sent to Sosnowitz and then put on a death march to Mauthausen where I was liberated on May 5th, 1945. With the help of an American soldier, Captain Michel E. Levy, I was able to return to my hometown where I was reunited with my brother, Martin. Frau Sara Mendel, Martin and I were the only Jews who survived to return to Rauischholzhausen. We felt that everyone was still against us just because we were Jewish and realized that there was no way for us to enjoy a normal life in Germany, so we immigrated to the United States.

In the USA I married my wife, Karla, and together we raised a wonderful family and practice our religion proudly and openly.

Several years ago we visited Germany mainly to visit the graves of our forefathers. I felt very uneasy and uncomfortable in Germany. Every time I saw an older person I wondered what he had been doing during the Nazi era. I know that there were good Germans during the War, but they were few and far between. When we visited I paid respect and visited

those good people that helped my family during the Nazi regime. We visited Germany again with our two sons and later with our three grandsons. We brought them to two of the concentration camps I was a prisoner in and visited cemeteries in four hometowns.

Three years ago we were contacted by Anna Junge who was interested in interviewing my sister Edith, brother Martin and me in New York. At first we were confused about her motive. Why would a young German want to interview an old Jew about his life in Rauischholzhausen under the Nazis? She is not Jewish, her parents were not Jewish – why is she doing this? But after several visits and many discussions over the years I realized that Anna is truly interested in what happened to the Jews by the Germans during those years. She is thoroughly committed to finding out and teaching the truth to future generations, no matter how difficult that may be. I admire Anna for her integrity and commitment to this project.

At the beginning of 2011 we were contacted through Anna and teachers of the local school about a visit to teach the young people of Rauischholzhausen about those horrible years. At first I did not want to go because I felt it would be too emotional for me; however my children and grandchildren convinced me to go. It was important for the young people to see a Jewish survivor and to hear firsthand the truth of what happened, before our story is only in history books and some could deny it ever even happened.

The trip was very emotional but also very rewarding to not only those students but to me as well. I now realize that not only Anna, but many young Germans are interested in learning the truth and perpetuating the memories.

I thank Anna for her project and wish her much success in the future.

*Walter Spier,
New York City, December 2011*

Personal Foreword

This book is the result of my research between April and November of 2009. It was submitted that same year, in almost identical form as the published version, in fulfillment of the requirements for the master's degree in "Holocaust Communication and Tolerance" at Touro College of Berlin.

I have been thinking about questions surrounding the antisemitic persecution of the Jewish population in Rauschholzhausen¹ since my youth, when I first discovered the Jewish cemetery at the edge of a local park. Back then, however, no one answered my many questions. Fifteen years later, in my master's thesis, I decided to return to those questions about the history of my grandparents' village. The most important source for this work has been my conversations with survivors² from the (former) Jewish community of Rauschholzhausen, the siblings Edith Baumann and Walter, Martin, and Alfred Spier.

In the village, reactions to my project varied greatly. Several of today's non-Jewish residents³ also shared their memories with me. All of them still recall their former Jewish neighbors and the years of persecution. Yet, when I launched my research, people in the village had hardly ever spoken about this past in public. Some did not wish this to change, and my project and I repeatedly met with local resistance. I do not wish to reveal any names, yet I am certain that those who (now as then) have refused to help me (or made threats) are aware that I am referring to them, even if I don't identify them explicitly.

Since I began the research, much has taken place — much more than I dared to hope for back in 2009. My notes from initial conversations in the Ebsdorfergrund Town Hall read today as if they were recorded in another era. Since then, the Village Association of Rauschholzhausen (*Dorfgemeinschaft Rauschholzhausen e.V.*) has been established and is

planning various educational projects. Young people have interviewed their (great-) grandparents. And the municipality of Ebsdorfergrund announced its plan to install a memorial plaque. (Yet, as of this writing in 2017, there is still no plaque commemorating the murdered.) Students at the Ebsdorfer Grund Comprehensive School have begun to study the local past under the Nazis, and in May 2011, the school organized a public memorial service at the Jewish cemetery, with Alfred and Walter Spier's participation. For nearly a week, the brothers were guests in Rauischholzhausen and the surrounding region, and their schedule was packed full of events. Among their many visits in the area were those with the children of their parents' old friends, at cemeteries, at their former family home, with the son of someone who helped refugees in Kirchhain, and at the sites of former synagogues. Their primary focus, though, was on lecturing to interested young people. The weeklong visit of the Spiers is unforgettable — to them, to me, and to everyone who met them.

Today, when I walk through Rauischholzhausen, residents come up and talk to me. At first they approached hesitantly but now they do so more openly. In particular, I am approached by the “second generation” — people who, like my parents, were born in the 1940s and wish to share their childhood memories. They remember, for instance, the candy jar in Sara Mendel's shop (discussed at length below) where they could buy beautiful photos to put in their scrapbooks. Others ask me questions about their parents or property, and they now conduct research on their own families' history. Yet, there are other, opposing tendencies as well. One of my former interviewees has unexpectedly become (much) more reserved toward me. The vast majority of those whom I interviewed asked not to be mentioned by name in this publication. That is why I have consistently anonymized their names in what follows.⁴ While the questions I posed in my interviews of 2009 touched only upon private memories, these questions are now asked not only in living rooms but also in public, and include the fundamental question as to whether such an examination of the past is generally warranted. Helping me has become a more difficult and more serious matter.

In short, the silence in Rauischholzhausen has been broken, which

pleases me greatly. Of course, there is still a tough critic here or there, and some may have dubious motives to be involved. At the same time, however, many are interested for honest reasons. Each memorial plaque remains open to criticism if it is only “casting in metal what really requires more animated discussion.”⁵ But it seems to me that such a discussion is finally taking place in the village.

With the publication of this work, I very much hope to play a role in advancing the discussion that has now begun, in disseminating the knowledge, and in remembering those that have been persecuted and murdered, thus keeping the history of their persecution alive.

A couple of additional comments are necessary at this point:

After 1933 there were people in Rauischholzhausen who helped their Jewish neighbors. Their actions were highly significant. In fact, they form a standard for today’s critics because they reveal the existence of alternative ways of behaving. Resistance and solidarity were clearly possible in Germany after 1933. There were individuals who took it upon themselves to risk standing outside the *Volksgemeinschaft* (“national community”). Therefore, I think it is important to name those who provided help in the village.

After much deliberation, I have finally decided *not* to anonymize the names of local perpetrators⁶ in this publication. My decision is grounded in the idea that perpetrators should not be protected and that any hint of falsehood should be avoided. Most German local research on the Nazi period only indicates the names of victims of persecution. But I would like to accomplish two things here: to get closer to the perspectives of the persecuted *as well as* to reconstruct the deeds of the persecutors. On both sides, there were actors whose names should be revealed.

But the decision not to anonymize is highly delicate. The major sources for information on the perpetrators were the memories of witnesses. Especially with respect to the perspectives of the persecuted, my sources were therefore very limited, mainly describing deeds committed against the Spier family. The circle of local perpetrators was probably larger, including persons whose names I did not learn. Revealing the names of those I know in this book might have an exculpatory effect on

the perpetrators I do not know about. To oppose this notion, however, I would argue that my work does not claim to be complete. Any actions and names brought to my attention or concealed from me were limited by the extent to which those I spoke to remembered or were willing to mention them and the extent to which regional Nazi authorities destroyed their files. The events referred to in this work must therefore be understood as examples.

The decision not to anonymize the names of perpetrators is difficult for another reason. The aim of my work is not to expose a few individuals but to understand the *overall dynamics* in the village. During the Nazi period, there were not only those who helped or harmed others. Rather, a broad range of behaviors and degrees of involvement can be found. What happened in Rauischholzhausen between 1933 and 1942 was carried out with the complicity of both perpetrators and a silent majority, which sometimes benefited from the persecution. I also focus here on the silence of that majority. Only by representing the gray zones — those behaviors that were ambivalent and sometimes contradictory — can we arrive at an idea of what happened after 1933. Identifying only helpers or perpetrators might obscure these connections and exclude all the different conduct — and degrees of responsibility — of many other people. This is particularly problematic in cases where someone identified as a helper was implicated in ambivalent situations. Readers might draw the wrong conclusions if the names of their counterparts were protected. In a few cases, therefore, the names of some of those who profited are also revealed. I ask my readers to understand these cases as examples, too. Besides the “groups” and exceptions mentioned here, I have otherwise decided to refrain from exposing names.

Finally, it should be noted that this work only includes literature and sources available to me up until November 2009.

As a result, research published after that date did not make it into this work. This includes, for example, the continually expanding information on the Jewish community of Rauischholzhausen available on the lexicographic homepage of “Alemannia Judaica.”⁷ In addition, the new Internet portal, *Vor dem Holocaust* [Before the Holocaust], presents a rich and

ever-growing photo collection on Jewish daily life in Hesse, thereby providing another valuable resource.⁸ I am very impressed with both these projects. In the summer of 2010, I readjusted some of the wording in the text, and sent it to the siblings Baumann/Spier for their comments; since then, no major revisions have been made to this work.

None of that, however, applies to mistakes I might have made. After 2009, I continued to check on suggestions of errors. Subsequently, four passages were corrected, which have been noted and dated in the end-notes.

New information I have received in conversations has not been considered, except in a few instances.⁹ After completing the manuscript, I was twice more in New York City where I visited the siblings Baumann/Spier. Recently, I have benefited from more intensive conversations with Edith Baumann. I also traveled repeatedly to Ebsdorfergrund where I made many new acquaintances. I can say that I learn something new in every conversation about this topic. For instance: a few months ago, I acquired new details about the man who liberated Walter Spier from Mauthausen, the American captain Michel Levy. Walter had been searching for him for decades and had just made contact with Levy's family. To incorporate new information of this kind continuously into my work would have meant never being able to finish writing it. In addition, several things remain that could be considered, such as archives of village organizations or files from denazification proceedings.¹⁰ I do not view this work as a final exhaustive account of events, yet I hope it will motivate others to continue the research. I am thus happy for every comment and correction I receive.

I am happy that so many people supported me in the process of writing this work in 2009 and between 2011 and 2012. I would first like to thank the Tristeza Collective, my former housemates, and the Touro College of Berlin, in addition to Philipp Kuebart, Fabian Eckert, Ricky Heinitz, Esther Rachow, Rona Torenz, Hannes Vogel, Jasko Benduski, Ralph Monneck, Maria Stuff, Michael Rhode, Robert Claus, Freia Meyer, Nora Böttner-Wirth, and Nina Helm for their understanding, proofreading, criticism, and advice — and for catching me when I was falling. I am



01 Aerial view of Rauischholzhausen, 1938 or 1939. Among the roofs, one can also see the roof of the synagogue.

also grateful to Arnold Spier, Ingrid Binot, Christian Pfeiff, Monica Kingreen, Anne Wenz-Haubfleisch, Jennifer Spier-Stern, Jim Tobias, and Hajo Bewernick for their time, efforts, and sound professional advice. I also wish to thank the Geschichtswerkstatt Marburg e.V. (“History Workshop of Marburg”) for providing access to their valuable transcripts of interviews, collection of source materials, as well as their support in the final phase of my work.

Above all, I would like to express my appreciation to my (nonbiological) grandfather, Bruno Tögel, for his commitment, interest, delivery services, multiple trips to Marburg, contacts, research assistance, and support at some of the interviews.

I would especially like to thank my university supervisors, Ingo Loose and Hajo Funke. Their friendly, encouraging help and support went far beyond what could be expected of academic advisors. Prof. Funke accompanied me all the way to Rauischholzhausen, giving me a great deal of hope and strength, especially in the eventful second phase of this work. Both of them were always available to me.

I also wish to acknowledge my dear brother, Michael Junge, for all his assistance and criticism, in the second phase of this work as well, which I probably would not have survived without him. It means a great deal to me that he has supported me in what is also a family project.

Stefan Auch provided unending help at all levels. Without him, this work would certainly not have come to be. He traveled with me to New York, assisted in conversations with the siblings Baumann/Spier, and supported the entire writing process. And in May 2011 he documented on film the visit of the brothers Alfred and Walter Spier to Rauschholzhäusen. This book is also his.

I owe special gratitude to my interview partners. Among them, I wish to thank my mother Marianne Junge and my grandmother Anna-Katharina Tögel, as well as all of those who shared their memories with me. Without them, this research would not have been possible. I also want to acknowledge Karla, Monica, and Hannelore Spier for supporting my interviews with their spouses; I am further grateful for their warmth and openness.

Nonetheless, my greatest thanks go out to the siblings Edith Baumann, Walter, Martin and Alfred Spier, for their courage and confidence in meeting and sharing with me their indescribable memories.

Berlin, January 2012

Thematic Approach

Introduction

“I come from this little place — Rauschholzhausen. Where everybody knows everyone. [...] Most of the farmers there were ordinary people. That’s why you can’t imagine that such a mass murder could happen. Incomprehensible. I still can’t understand it today.”

*(Alfred Spier)*¹¹

There it lies peacefully: the village of Rauschholzhausen, nearly 1,100 souls strong today, surrounded by large forests and blossoming canola fields in the picturesque Ebsdorfergrund, about 15 kilometers southeast of the Hessian university town of Marburg. A large state-run farm sits on your right, shortly after you enter the village. Once you cross the Rülff Creek, you reach the Zimmerplatz (a central square) surrounded by half-timbered houses. Directly behind the inn is the entrance to the manor park. The local manor house is a splendid sight.

At one time, there was a small rural Jewish community in Rauschholzhausen. In 1933, it made up just under three percent of the population. But the Holocaust forever destroyed Jewish life here. These days, there are no more Jews¹² living in the village. At first glance, there is nothing to remind you of them except an old Jewish cemetery at the forest’s edge, which can only be found if you know exactly where to look. (As of 2017, both an information board and a street sign are located there.)

But there is more here than meets the eye. You have to look beyond the surface, shift your perspective and look for who is missing.¹³ For there are empty places in the village left by the persecution and extermination of the Jewish residents. Daniel Libeskind attempts to grasp this



02 Village idyll in Rauischholzhausen, undated photo.

emptiness (or “void”) using the concept of structural trauma and its connotations: While the emptying of a place — i.e., the destruction of Jewish life and the deportation of the Jewish population — produced the trauma, the emptied space itself — i.e., the village of Rauischholzhausen — is structured by the trauma until today.¹⁴ The current empty spaces, which Libeskind labels “irreconcilable gaps”, are not just something that is no longer there. Rather, they are a “present absence” — an invisible structure of the present that refers to an irrevocable history of persecution and extermination:¹⁵

And that’s exactly what I propose: [...] one has to [...] put the emptiness in a very different context, assign it to shadowy figures who have never been born: the “traces of the unborn” [...]. I’m thus not only speaking about the trace of what was born and destroyed, but also the trace of what remained unborn.¹⁶

If you search in Rauischholzhausen for what is missing today, you’ll find things rather quickly. Files are missing from the municipal archives. A house is missing in the Potsdamer Straße. When the local sports club celebrated its 60th anniversary, one of the founding members — who was

still *alive*—was missing on the list of honorees.¹⁷ Also missing are those responsible for the Yiddish expressions that became part of the regional dialect, as well as the original owners of furniture pieces found in local homes. In a sense, the actual state of things reveals what is absent. The knowledge of this absence thus provides a context for the present. Presence and absence are dialectically related to each another.¹⁸

The present study attempts to reconstruct the disenfranchisement and persecution of the Jewish population of Rauschholzhausen between 1933 and 1942. It is the result of a search for those who are missing: those displaced, those deported, and those murdered. It is a result of a search for the reasons of their absence, with the intent of remembering them. By marking those who are absent and the world which has vanished forever, I aim to make the village's empty spaces once again present, thereby historicizing today's *status quo*. By interacting with the local population in this way, the village should be prompted to deal with the Holocaust.

As is well known, the Nazi persecution of "Jews" was not concerned with the self-understanding of those deemed "Jewish" but rather with racist constructs about them. Yet, according to our present state of knowledge, all of the individuals persecuted by Nazi antisemites in Rauschholzhausen understood themselves as Jewish. By representing the stories of their lives and their persecution, it is not my goal to create a counter-image to antisemitic constructs of them. Rather, my discussion will take place on two distinctive levels: On one level, the persons victimized will henceforth be remembered as agents of history. On the other, I will deal with the antisemitic persecution in Rauschholzhausen that affected only (those who understood themselves as) Jews.¹⁹

The present study describes what transpired in the small village of Rauschholzhausen. It is therefore primarily the history of specific actors and scenes of crimes. By focusing my research in this manner, clear limits are provided on what can be meaningfully concluded. The results of my study address historical events in Rauschholzhausen, and there alone. I want to remember specific people and the violence they suffered. Certainly, antisemitic persecution in Rauschholzhausen was in many domains scarcely different from other villages within the territory of the

Reich. Yet comparing the persecution in other villages or regions would not only have exceeded the limited scope of this study; it was also not a goal of my research. The events in this village, however, will regularly be related to the events in the Reich as a whole. That way, one can see that what transpired in Rauischholzhausen in many respects went beyond the official laws and decrees of the Nazi state.

Why *Rauischholzhausen*? The choice of this specific place has to do with my own family history. I spent many of my holidays there, especially as a child. It is the hometown of my mother, Marianne Junge, née Becker (born in Marburg in 1945). My grandmother Anna-Katharina Tögel, née Nau (born in Moischt in 1915), moved from the neighboring village Moischt to Rauischholzhausen in 1940, after her marriage. She worked as a cook and trainer of domestic staff at the largest farm in the village, an agricultural estate once owned by the aristocratic family von Stumm and run as an experimental farm by the University of Giessen after 1934.²⁰ Her first husband, my biological grandfather Heinrich Becker (born in Giflitz, in the district of Eder, in 1912), was a member of the SA (the Nazi *Sturmabteilung*), a regional leader of the Hitler Youth, and the administrator of that same farm. In 1943, he left the village and died in Soviet captivity in 1945. Consequently, for me this study is also a piece of my own family history. Knowing that my grandparents were living in the village at that time and that my grandfather had a certain position in the village increased my interest. But it also increased my worry that what I would learn might be unsettling—and especially that I would be emotionally affected when I interviewed survivors.

Another important goal of my research was to enlighten my family members about the history of what was their hometown, birthplace, or holiday destination, respectively. In addition, I wanted to illuminate events in the life of my grandmother (who was still alive when I was conducting this research). Those events were rarely—and never adequately—discussed in our family. My study therefore constantly moved between opposing poles: On the one hand, I wanted to take advantage of my family's (especially my father's) interest in my research project and let them share in its progress. On the other, I was afraid of burdening my



03 Village idyll in Rauischholzhausen around 1945.

research with family conflicts and emotions. This tension influenced me in many areas, such as my decision to conduct interviews with my mother and grandmother, and my decision to involve my grandmother's second husband, i.e., my nonbiological grandfather Bruno Tögel, in the process, having him share in some of the interviews conducted with people in the village. (He was born in 1925 in Německá Loděnice [also called *Deutsch Lodenitz*], in the district of Šternberk [also called *Sternberg*] in the Sudetenland province of Czechoslovakia, and moved to Rauischholzhausen in 1947.) Ultimately, the aforementioned tension led to my decision to refrain at first from conducting focused research on my biological grandfather and instead defer the issue to a later stage of the process. I naively assumed that I would encounter him due to his position in the course of my general research, without having to focus on him specifically. Moreover, I had neglected to consider that my sources on local perpetrators would consist largely of interviews conducted with his contemporaries. These “contemporary witnesses” (or “witnesses to the times” —

Zeitzeugen in German) perceived me as a grandchild of Heinrich Becker. While it provided me a certain measure of relief that the Jewish survivors were hardly able to remember him, the reactions of non-Jewish villagers suggested something different. I could hardly believe that all of them initially declared that they hadn't known my grandfather. After I finally asked one of them again about this, he explained that he hadn't dared to tell me anything about my grandfather. There was only one thing he wanted me to know: that Becker had been a "big shot."²¹ As a consequence, my grandfather remains largely unmentioned in this study—a very unsatisfactory outcome.

As for the structure of my study, the main part is divided into three chronological sections: the general history of the Rauschholzhausen and its Jewish population, the period between 1933 and 1942, and the immediate aftermath of the war. Antisemitic exclusion and persecution took place in Nazi Germany in a typological manner: in addition to systematic state disenfranchisement, citizens committed acts of terror that went beyond what was sanctioned by the laws of the state. These two types of anti-Jewish activity were combined in many ways, each inspiring the other. The disenfranchisement lowered the threshold for attacking "Jews", while the "people's anger" (or *Volkszorn*) was used as an excuse to justify new laws.²² Hence, these two types of oppression cannot be depicted separately. As a result, the middle section of the main part of this study is subdivided chronologically into four phases: the phase from the beginning of Hitler's government²³ and the Nuremberg Laws in 1935; the phase leading up to the November pogroms of 1938; the phase culminating in the German attack on Poland in 1939; and finally, the phase ending with the deportation of the Jewish population in September of 1942. Within these chapters, however, the subdivisions are thematic. A summary, an overall assessment of the events, as well as a critique of the non-presence of history in the village today round off the study.

This study reconstructs the National Socialist persecution of a rural Jewish community in the district of Marburg and can thus be situated in the specific context of research on Jewish history and the Holocaust. In attempting to reconstruct Jewish life in this era, one can draw on not only

the important portrayals of the history of Jews in Hessen²⁴ and of Jewish rural life in Germany²⁵ but also on the small amount of research conducted on the history of the Jewish population in Rauischholzhausen, such as the works of Alfred Schneider and Paul Arnsberg.²⁶ Since 2008, information can also be found on the lexicographic homepage “Alemania Judaica” about the cemetery of the Jewish community of Rauischholzhausen. As of 2009, this information has been regularly supplemented by additional material on the former Jewish community.²⁷ With respect to reconstructing the history of antisemitic persecution in Nazi Germany, there are both numerous comprehensive summaries²⁸ as well as research on the persecution in rural areas²⁹ and in Hesse.³⁰ The Nazi period in the district of Marburg is treated in Händler-Lachmann/Händler/Schütt and Rehme/Haase.³¹ Along with its impressive overall presentation of 20th-century Jewish life in this region (including during the Nazi period), Händler-Lachmann/Händler/Schütt contains a great deal of specific information on the Nazi persecution in Rauischholzhausen. Especially in the early days of my research, it provided important guidance, in methodological matters as well.³² In addition, there is also a memorial book, the Händler-Lachmann/Schütt volume entitled “*unbekannt verzogen*” oder “*weggemacht*”, which commemorates the murdered Jews of the Marburg district.³³ To date, however, I am not aware of any studies that focus specifically on the Nazi persecution in Rauischholzhausen.

Two references to the Holocaust can be found in the official chronicle (or *Ortschronik*) of Rauischholzhausen, published in 1975: “A Jewish synagogue was built in 1872, [...] it was torn down in 1935, since a large number of the Jews had moved away. [...] At the beginning of World War II, there were only seven people from four families left here; in 1942 they were brought to transit camps. Of those, three individuals returned in 1945.”³⁴ While this information contains factual errors, it still has an element of truth. The Rauischholzhausen synagogue, built around 1860, had already been seriously damaged by 1935. By the start of 1936, it had been completely ruined but was not torn down until 1939. In the summer of 1939, there were times when only seven Jews lived in the village. Three years later, there were eighteen people (i.e., including Jews from other

villages nearby) were deported to Theresienstadt from the Zimmerplatz in Rauschholzhausen. Several Jewish villagers failed to escape. They were deported and eventually murdered from other locations. The local chronicle's gaps, defects and uncontextualized statements convey an incorrect and trivialized image of events. The false information it provides has had a serious impact on the collective memory of the village, and has even been adopted in some of the significant lexicographic summaries.³⁵ As a result, lexicographic publications on the Nazi persecution of the Jewish population in the district, in Hesse, or in Germany are usually marked by erroneous (or a complete lack of) information on Rauschholzhausen.³⁶ Therefore, the present study is mainly based on original sources that I have recently discovered.

Methodological Pre-Considerations

The Research Process

The present study is the result of extensive research—at scenes of crimes and cemeteries, in archives and memorial books, as well as in local reminiscences. Yet its primary sources are conversations with Jewish survivors.

My inquiry began in mid-April 2009 with three fully open-ended questions: Where can I find archives and written records? Who in the village is willing to talk with me? And, above all, are there any Jewish survivors left?

The search for names of former Jewish residents of the village and those who might have survived began at the Rauschholzhausen Jewish cemetery, in addition to my research in genealogical databases and memorial books. But the information I located was contradictory. In an

online genealogical database, I finally came across relatives of former Jewish Rauschholzhauseners. I wrote them yet did not receive any immediate replies.

My search for archival material was also not very successful at first. After a short time, the municipal director of Rauschholzhausen informed me that there were no files remaining from the Nazi era, except for one registry of residents. I did not give up, however, and made an appointment with the then current mayor of the municipality of Ebsdorfergrund (into which Rauschholzhausen had been amalgamated).³⁷ But the search of records I commissioned there (in the Dreihausen Town Hall) turned up nothing: The pre-1945 municipal archive of Rauschholzhausen, which apparently had never been requested, had disappeared. It is safe to assume that many of the records were destroyed by the Nazis in 1945 or thereafter.

All the same, the inconclusiveness of my early research soon came to an end: On the Internet I came across an article in the regional monthly magazine *Grundblick* about the Spier family from Rauschholzhausen. I contacted the editor and learned of Alfred Spier, a Jewish survivor who now lived in Bielefeld. He had made it to England in 1939 as a 15-year-old on a *Kindertransport* (“children’s transport”). When I first called him, he was hesitant: Was it really necessary to meet in Bielefeld? Couldn’t he just answer my questions on the phone? We agreed to speak again in a few weeks, and Alfred Spier gave me the contact information for his surviving siblings: Edith Baumann, Martin Spier, and Walter Spier in New York City.

What really jump-started my work was the History Workshop of Marburg (*Geschichtswerkstatt Marburg e.V.*), which in the 1980s and 1990s had already interviewed Alfred Spier and Friedel Rülff (another Rauschholzhausen Jewish survivor) as well as two non-Jewish villagers, as part of their aforementioned research projects.³⁸ From them I obtained a number of interview transcripts and browsed through their archives for several long days. At the same time, I made my first contacts with non-Jewish villagers who had been witnesses to the (Nazi) times, thanks to my non-biological grandfather and the then current pastor couple in

Rauischholzhausen. I then spent months in the Marburg State Archives, specifically examining files of the Marburg District Office (the administrative entity to which the municipality Rauischholzhausen reported after 1932), the files of the Regional Council in Kassel (the next bureaucratic level above the District Office), as well as files of the Marburg district leadership of the Nazi Party. This analysis was very tedious: the available inventory is not digitalized, and they are partially written (and supplemented) by hand.³⁹ What is truly regrettable, though, is the state of some of the files themselves, especially the holdings of the Marburg Nazi district leadership. These consist of remnants that survived destruction by the Nazis in 1945 and then were seized by the U.S. military and transported to the U.S.; only later were they returned to Germany. Their condition is an indication of their special history: important files designated in the archival inventory are missing; others are so faded that they are barely legible.⁴⁰ And the files are only partially paginated, if at all.⁴¹ To some extent, then, my research was either incomplete or guided by coincidence. Lastly, other difficulties arose because the names of those I was researching were sometimes similar.⁴²

In addition, I traveled repeatedly to Frankfurt, where I received valuable suggestions for research at the Fritz Bauer Institute as well as at the Frankfurt branch of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims against Germany. In the Jewish Museum of Frankfurt, I was able to examine the collections of the historian Paul Arnsberg, which also included photographs. In the Central State Archive of Wiesbaden, I perused files of the Marburg Tax Office and the Kassel Foreign Exchange Office, found in the inventory of the Hessian State Office of Property Control and Reparation (*Hessisches Landesamt für Vermögenskontrolle und Wiedergutmachung*). It was very moving to inspect the files on the attempts of those persecuted (or their descendants) to obtain “compensation.”

By chance, a Dreihausen Town Hall employee responsible for the maintenance of Jewish cemeteries told me of a forthcoming visit by Brunhilde North, the New York-based daughter of Siegfried Bachenheimer, a Rauischholzhausener who had emigrated to the United States in 1934. I was thus able to accompany Mrs. North, along with her son and her

grandchildren, on a tour of Rauschholzhausen that included the Jewish cemetery and the former home of her father. Alfred Spier and his siblings Martin and Walter had already been interviewed in the 1990s by the USC Shoah Foundation Institute.⁴³ The public can access the Foundation's Visual History Archive at the Free University of Berlin, so I had the opportunity to see those interviews and transcribe them.

Studying the persecution of Sinti in the region eventually put me in touch with Mirko Meyerding, a teacher at the Ebsdorfer Grund Comprehensive School in the nearby village of Heskem. In the framework of our plans for creating a history study-group, we undertook a village tour with some of the students who live in Rauschholzhausen, visiting places where former Jewish residents had lived. Through Mr. Meyerding, I also met Bettina Decke, who had been mentioned to me on several occasions as a "Jewish" resident of Rauschholzhausen in the 1950s and 1960s (although she does not identify as "Jewish"). I visited her in Bremen. A short time later, I also interviewed my mother.

Another difficult aspect of my research was finding more detailed information on the *Hachshara*⁴⁴ in Rauschholzhausen after 1946,⁴⁵ mentioned in Arnsberg's and the Marburg History Workshop's publications. I spent several fruitless days examining copies of (some of) the holdings of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, available in the Berlin Center for Research on Antisemitism. Thanks to information received from the Nuremberg Institute for Research on National Socialism and Jewish History in the 20th Century and from the Archives of the International Tracing Service in Bad Arolsen, I finally located a wide range of detailed material in the Post-War Europe Collection at the branch of the Wiener Library in the Jewish Museum of Berlin.

Back in Rauschholzhausen, I got hold of the memoirs of a non-Jewish contemporary witness, and I conducted interviews with nine non-Jewish witnesses born between 1915 and 1936 — among them, my grandmother. The antisemitism with which I was sometimes confronted in these conversations was shocking.

In early August 2009, I visited Alfred Spier in Bielefeld. Two weeks later, I traveled to New York City, where I met his siblings Edith, Martin

and Walter. While Edith, like Alfred, emigrated to England in 1939, Martin and Walter were deported together with their parents to Theresienstadt in 1942; from there, they were transported to Auschwitz, where their parents were murdered. The conversations with the siblings Baumann/Spier were indescribably moving. They are the most important basis for this study.

Oral History

My conversations with witnesses to the events opened up new perspectives and conveyed an overwhelming amount of information not recorded in any other form. It was only through them that I learned the details and measure of the persecution. These interviews served as the main source for identifying perpetrators. To a significant extent, this study includes sources obtained through oral historical inquiry, known as “oral history”, such as the transcribed interviews of the Marburg History Workshop and the USC Shoah Foundation Institute and, most significantly, my own interviews with non-Jewish witnesses and Jewish survivors. Although oral history projects have now found enormous dissemination in the science of history, theoretical and methodological reflections on them remain surprisingly rare.⁴⁶ The relevant literature has contented itself with merely noting that oral history sources—like all others—should be exposed to source-critical analysis.⁴⁷ This is true, of course, and yet there are source-specific features to be considered in source criticism. Oral history sources differ from classical written archives in many respects. First, they are co-authored by the historian herself. The interviews I conducted were recorded on audiotape, then summarized immediately in brief recollections, and lastly transcribed verbatim. The resulting transcripts are used as sources in my study. These are sources where I both conducted the interviews and transcribed them. In writing down the interviews, I had to reduce all the non-verbal communication, emotion, and tense interactions, limiting myself to what was (audibly) said and deciding whether it was comprehensi-

ble.⁴⁸ The attempt to record paralinguistic phenomena as well enabled me to slightly moderate, though not cancel out, this reduction. As a result, whenever I had to check on the authenticity of individual interview sequences in the course of interpreting them, I had to go back to the taped recordings. The fact that I was involved in the collection of the sources also has significant implications in evaluating the verifiability of my conclusions. The transcripts of these sources are not provided in any archive but on my bookshelf, and therefore not yet accessible to others.

Special considerations also apply when evaluating the historical veracity of an oral history source. One has to first understand the relationship of the witness herself to the past event. The interviewee may have experienced the event actively or as a passive spectator. Or she may have heard it from a third party (at that point in time or later). Or she may even have learned about it, say, from an official chronicle.⁴⁹ Understanding the frame of reference is not always possible; sometimes the boundaries are unclear, even to the person remembering. The autobiographical recollections of the interviewee are processes constructed in the present. Hence, event and memory are *not* identical.⁵⁰ Decisive is the meaning and significance the person remembering the event attaches to it today, as well as the extent to which she has processed or understood it.⁵¹ Memories are not only related to the present but also experienced through psychoanalytic phenomena such as forgetting or repression, especially when the experience has been traumatic. Such experiences are further subject to later experiences, changes that take place throughout one's life.⁵² The Jewish survivor Edith Baumann, née Spier, told me soon after I met her that she was not ready to have a deeper conversation: "I tell you the truth ... You want to forget about it."⁵³ Her brother Walter Spier explained: "Like when [...] Spielberg [...] asked us to interview us [*sic*], and I said [to my brother Martin], let's do it together. [But] [...] Martin couldn't do it, because [...] it is not an easy thing to do."⁵⁴ Certain experiences cannot be described with words.

In addition, memories are marked by their collective origins. That is, individually perceived memory is dependent on the socialization of the person remembering within his or her social environment. It is also

based on social discourses and collective memory.⁵⁵ Not least, memory is subject to the limits of socially acceptable discourse.⁵⁶

In view of the historical authenticity of memories, it is also important to think about the particular context in which it emerges: the interview situation. As a result, the person of the interviewer takes on a particular relevance. In my conversations with non-Jewish villagers, I was mostly assigned the role of an urban-based, university-educated young woman and the granddaughter of well-liked neighbors. One contemporary witness, when asked what his profession was, answered me with condescending laughter: “*Proletarian*. You know that term? Is it something you learned at school?”⁵⁷ Differing political attitudes of course influenced the interviews. It was sometimes very difficult for me to maintain my composure when my interlocutors made antisemitic remarks. For each of them, it was probably important that I had relatives in Rauischholzhausen. By contrast, in my interviews with Jewish survivors, other personal characteristics became more important, such as “non-Jewish”, “German”, and the “granddaughter of a perpetrator.” Time and again, I had the feeling I was an interloper. And clearly, there were linguistic problems, both in the case of Hessian-speaking villagers⁵⁸ and my (primarily) English-language conversations with the siblings Baumann/Spier in New York City.

The interviews I conducted about their memories did not proceed according to a rigid methodology. In social-scientific terms, they would most likely be classified as “problem-centered interviews.” For they were essentially open-ended conversations guided by some key questions. Yet, in the broadest sense, they focused on the subject of the persecution of the Jewish population in Rauischholzhausen between 1933 and 1942. At the same time, what the interviewees told me was regularly linked back to the main subject by asking questions that were problem-related but intended to generate narratives.⁵⁹ The fact that, by the time the interviews took place, I already had fairly extensive knowledge of the events in question, also allowed me to pose specific questions meant only to pass on information. Sometimes a kind of role reversal even took place, and I would inform the interviewee about my research findings

to that point. Such explanations on my part sometimes produced irritations and tensions in the conversation, especially when the information was about my interlocutors themselves or their relatives.⁶⁰

The fact that these conversations were tape-recorded was not the only reason why those interviewed might present themselves in a logical, reasonable, and stringent manner. Rather, there was also the thematic focus that structured the interviews in advance, enhanced by my main (chronological) questions and follow-up.⁶¹ And there were my reactions, in addition to the preconceptions or prejudices that my interlocutors expected me to have. All of these factors influenced the interviewees in their decisions about what they should reveal to me. Another matter to think about is the influence of others present at the interviews. These included other contemporary witnesses as well as observers such as my nonbiological grandfather, friends or relatives of the interviewees.

The comments above disclose only a few of the factors that might have produced inaccuracies in the interviews. Yet I have only in a few cases recorded my thoughts on the reliability of the interview data. Hence, it is not always easy to understand my process of interpretation. Whenever possible, the statements of the interviewees have been compared with information from other sources; these are often presented alongside one another. Statements that could not be verified when compared with other sources are framed as memories below.

Representability

In the end, the visits to the village, research in archives, and interviews all yielded a broad wealth of information. The present study presents only a selection of what I learned. My decision as to what should be included was guided by my goal to provide the most comprehensive representation of the events possible. However, my thinking was always constrained by my subjective standards of assessment. There's not much that can be done about it — every scholarly study demands that choices

be made. Nonetheless, the subjective element always has to be considered.

This study incorporates sources from perpetrators as well as from the persecuted. As much as possible, these sources have been substantiated by juxtaposing them with others. The present study aims to commemorate the victims of persecution — an idea that clearly implies partiality. The fact that this study is motivated by partisanship, though, does not mean that it is easy to decide which sources are historically accurate. In particular, many perpetrators' sources have been found to be without substance in light of historical reality. A Nazi Party memo classifying a Jew, Simon Frenkel, as a Communist clearly cannot be relied on as a description of Frenkel's political orientation. And yet, the present study does not always forego reproducing such sources. For, in the pursuit of historical truth, these are the only sources capable of authentically reflecting the views of the persecutors. Moreover, the sources from the victims also contain inaccurate information (regardless of whether it was provided consciously or unconsciously). When I interviewed subjects about their memories, they did make mistakes about dates or personal information. Plus, some files regarding "compensation" cases contain erroneous information about the victim's former income or their losses due to persecution — for very understandable reasons. Once again, I did not always forego reproducing testimonies by the victims that may have conveyed a faulty (albeit Jewish) perspective. Information acknowledged as faulty is always identified as such. In problematic cases, especially when the various sources contradict each other, I have made the verification process transparent. In cases of unresolvable inconsistencies, contradictory information is presented side-by-side.

Saul Friedländer's method of integrated history serves as a model for my selection and presentation.⁶² Most German representations of the Holocaust are based in large part on perpetrator sources, those documents created by the Nazi Party or the state, and preserved in Germany's national archives. The persecuted are usually only rendered as a collective entity and thus as objects of persecution. The present study, however, understands the persecuted as actors in history while striving to

move their perspective to the center of the narrative. What they have passed on is the most direct testimony to the dimensions of the Holocaust and is therefore “indispensable” if one wants to achieve “an understanding of that past.”⁶³

Unlike most German representations of the Holocaust, mine here (following Friedländer’s method) often reproduces the actual sources word for word. This form of presentation, as well as some abrupt shifts in perspective—moving from the Jewish victims to the persecutors’ actions, then to the perceptions of non-Jewish observers—serves the purpose of generating a sense of alienation, revealing that the Holocaust cannot be understood using standardized terminology. This applies especially to the voices of the victims, because they are the only ones capable of finding words for their individual persecution and fate.⁶⁴

The siblings Edith Baumann, Martin and Walter Spier still have not forgotten German—their native language—despite having lived over sixty years now in the English-speaking world. Their decision to speak mostly English with me in the interviews, besides their greater confidence in expressing themselves, may also have resulted from a need to dissociate themselves from their German past. Consequently, their statements were reproduced in English even in the original German version of my study. Time and again, however, the siblings switched to German, often even in the same sentence. Their reason for doing so was clearly a wish to accommodate me at times. Yet they also shifted between languages depending on the subject being discussed or how intensely (or personally) it affected them, thereby illustrating the presence of the past and the difficulty of dissociating oneself from it. Statements that switch between English and German are therefore presented unaltered in the original German version of this study but have been translated fully into English in the present book.

Prehistory

On the History of Rauischholzhausen and Its Jewish Residents

Rauischholzhausen, located in what is now the Marburg-Biedenkopf district, celebrated its 1200th anniversary in 1981.⁶⁵ In 1749, the village had 419 inhabitants. From that point on, the town grew steadily. In 1838, there were already 634 people living there; in 1933, 700; and in 1950, over 1,000. Today Rauischholzhausen has just under 1,100 residents.⁶⁶

The earliest documented reference to the village as “Holzhusen” can be found in the Fulda Monastery’s deeds of gift from the second half of the 8th century.⁶⁷ A church existed demonstrably since the 14th century. In the Reformation era, the village became Protestant and has remained so to the present. After 1369, Holzhausen and its surrounding areas formed a noble court district, which was transferred by the Archbishopric of Mainz as a fief to the family of “Rau von Holzhausen.”⁶⁸ In 1749, Rau’s real estate extended to an area of about 460 hectares, including two castles.⁶⁹ The distribution of land was reflected notably in the occupational structure of the populace, since only a few individuals owned significant estates. In 1838, only 22 % of the village residents were employed full-time in agriculture, while 33 % worked in local crafts and 45 % were short-term laborers.⁷⁰ In 1803 at the latest, Rau’s autonomy ended, and Holzhausen was absorbed by the Electorate of Hesse (or *Kurhessen*).⁷¹ The Electorate was occupied by Prussia in 1866, becoming part of the Prussian province of Hesse-Nassau. That province was subdivided into two “administrative districts” (or *Regierungsbezirke*): that of Wiesbaden, and that of the provincial capital of Kassel (to which the Marburg

region belonged). At the lower level of administration, what was “Rau’s Holzhausen” belonged to the Kirchhain district after 1821, which was then combined with the town of Marburg and the district of Marburg in 1932.⁷²

The last member of the Rau von Holzhausen family, a Hessian officer, refused to transfer into the Prussian army. He therefore sold all of his real estate in 1871 to Imperial Ambassador Ferdinand von Stumm, who was awarded the title of baron in 1888.⁷³ Once the von Stumms settled in the village, they made several innovations. By 1900, a manor house had been constructed, a new cemetery had been laid out, a new church and a new school had been built, a Lutheran community hall (with a preschool) had been created, and a dairy had been established. Then came a doctor’s office and a pharmacy, distinguishing the village noticeably from others in the region.⁷⁴ A non-Jewish villager describes it this way:

The big property owners were the Raus. And the Stumms. [Another resident present adds: “Yes, and then the three big farmers.”] And that was it. And everyone else was just farmhands or maids at the farmers’. Or they were employed at the manor house or that estate. And whoever couldn’t find work here had to move on and find work somewhere else.⁷⁵

The first documentary evidence of Jewish residents in Holzhausen dates from the mid-16th century.⁷⁶ Jewish settlement can probably be explained within the context of persecutions. The Hessian Landgrave, Philip the Magnanimous,⁷⁷ and his successors in Kassel and Darmstadt had repeatedly expelled the Jewish population from their lands. It was not until 1675 that Jews were allowed to reside in the realm. Many aristocratic landowners, and thus also Rau von Holzhausen, offered protection to those displaced, allowing them to move there — a privilege for which they had to pay a great deal, however.⁷⁸

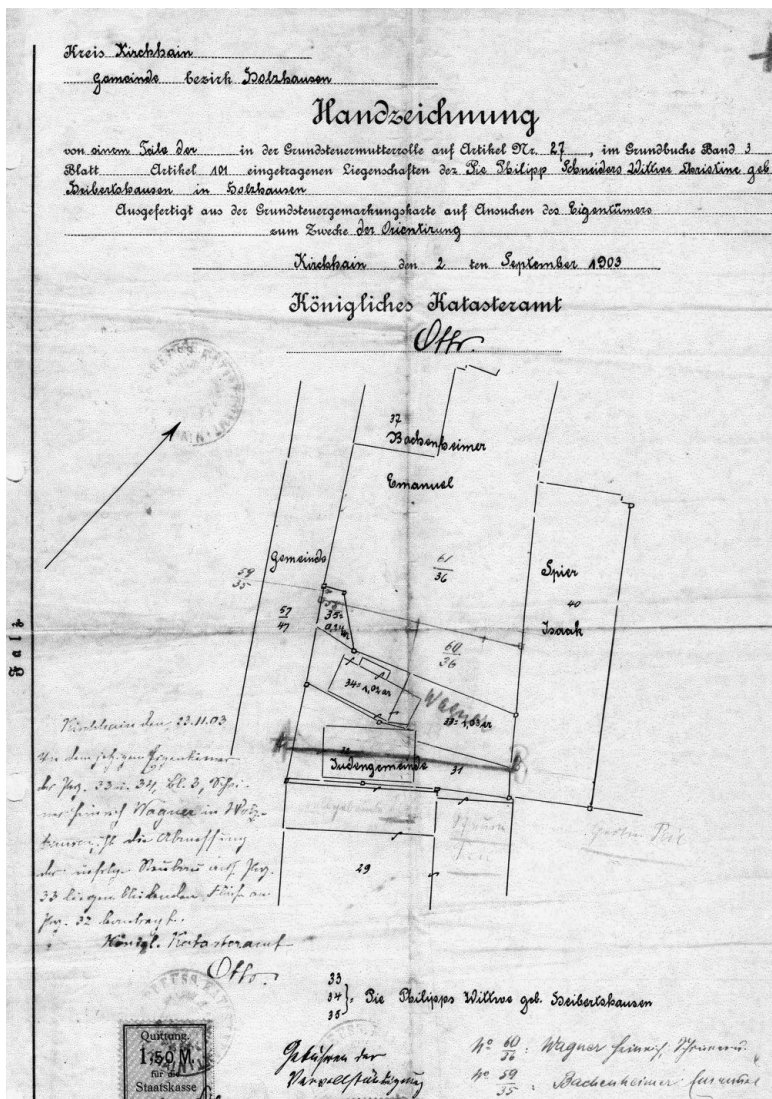
In 1749, Rauischholzhausen had 22 Jewish residents. Their numbers rose steadily and, at 81 residents in 1850, they formed 12.4 % of the village population.⁷⁹ In the 19th century, the proportion of Jewish residents

in the region of the Prussian province of Hesse-Nassau was generally well above the national average. In 1880, they constituted 2.66 % of the province of Hesse-Nassau, compared with only 1.33 % of the entire area of Prussia, and only 1.24 % of the entire German Reich.⁸⁰ Besides the large Jewish communities in Frankfurt and Kassel, there were a sizeable number of small Jewish rural communities. This was particularly true in the Ebsdorfer Grund (the geographic region to which Rauischholzhausen belonged), which was referred to as the “Jewish breadbasket.”⁸¹

It is not known when the Jewish residents of Rauischholzhausen became formally organized as a religious community. Ultimately the community founded a synagogue together with Jewish residents in the neighboring village of Wittelsberg (thereby forming the “Jewish Community of Holzhausen-Wittelsberg”).⁸² The first documented evidence of communal institutions can be found in the mid-19th century.

At 2445 square meters, the Jewish cemetery above the manor gardens, on the Walzenberg, is one of the larger ones in Upper Hesse. It was originally built by the von Rau family.⁸³ In 1849, its maintenance was reaffirmed by the Kirchhain District Administration.⁸⁴ The cemetery was of central importance since it also served as the burial site for Jewish residents of Wittelsberg, Roßdorf, Mardorf, Ebsdorf, Leidenhofen (and initially also for those of Schweinsberg).

At the present-day street address of Untere Höhle 4, a Jewish elementary school was opened in 1843 for local children and those from the neighboring villages of Roßdorf and Mardorf.⁸⁵ From the end of the 19th century, the number of students declined steadily. On account of the decline, the school was closed following the 1919 retirement of Jakob Rothschild,⁸⁶ who had been the official teacher for forty years.⁸⁷ After that, the Marburg teacher Salomon Pfefferling provided Jewish religious instruction for children from Holzhausen, Wittelsberg, Mardorf, and Roßdorf. He at first taught in Mardorf once a week, then on alternating Wednesdays in Holzhausen and Mardorf.⁸⁸ After Rothschild's death, the shepherd of the aristocratic estate acquired the Jewish elementary school building in Rauischholzhausen. It is still inhabited today but is in very dilapidated condition.

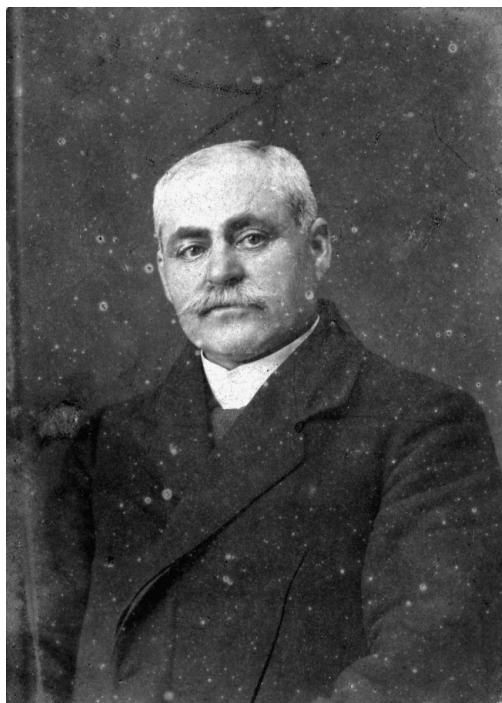


04 Handmade drawing of the Rauschholzhausen synagogue and neighboring properties in what today is referred to as "Potsdamer Straße", 1903.

In the same period of the mid-19th century, one also finds the first confirmation of plans for constructing a new synagogue. Despite considerable efforts, I have not been able to track down photos of the façade of the Rauschholzhausen synagogue. However, in the archives of the former Kirchhain District Office, I discovered some undated sketches of the building plans. What is not known is whether a synagogue had existed previously, as suggested by the titles of drawings, such as “Plan for the Construction of *New Synagogue*” [emphasis added] or the diagram labeled “The *New Synagogue* with a Classroom and School Teacher’s Dwelling” [emphasis added].⁸⁹ Presumably, both worship and schooling had originally taken place in a private home.⁹⁰ In April 1849, there is at least a record of a decision issued by the official Jewish community to transform an existing barn into a synagogue, accompanied by a teacher’s residence, school grounds, and a ritual bath for the women.⁹¹ Building was supposed to commence on 21 November 1851, but apparently could not be implemented as planned.⁹² On the one hand, the start of construction seems to have been delayed a few years; it was not until 1858 that the mayor of Holzhausen approved the building’s inspection.⁹³ On the other, the small synagogue on Potsdamer Straße, situated between today’s street numbers 5 and 7, did not contain school premises or a *mikveh* (at least after the 1920s).⁹⁴ According to the castratal fire map of 1884, that building contained a Torah shrine for safekeeping of the Torah scroll, an altar and a pulpit, twelve pews, and a women’s balcony.⁹⁵ Both sides of the synagogue were very close to the adjacent buildings. And, in the rear of the property, there was a small garden area. People have differing memories of the exterior façade. Walter Spier claims it was a half-timbered building. A modern-day villager remembers that the façade was foliated and that the building’s foundation was made of sandstone.⁹⁶

We do know who the office holders of the Jewish community were at the beginning of the 20th century. The communal chairman after 1910 was prayer leader Juda Rülff. The communal secretary was David Stern until his death in 1933. Jakob Rothschild held the office of ritual slaughterer (or *shochet*)⁹⁷. After his death in 1921, Selig Stern of Amöneburg or Hermann Mendel performed this duty.⁹⁸

The Orthodox community of Rauschholzhausen lived as a relatively self-contained group among the village population. Until the 19th century, the community also spoke Yiddish.⁹⁹ From 1833 onwards, the Electorate of Hesse instituted laws concerning the legal equality of the Jewish population; these, however, were limited once again after 1848. Comprehensive civil equality was not granted until 1869, after Prussia annexed Kurhessen. But the community's group character was no less apparent even after it had obtained legal equality. Despite its members' newfound freedom of movement, most of them remained in the village. Migration from the countryside to urban areas only occurred slowly.¹⁰⁰



05 Juda Rülff, around 1925. Chairman of the Jewish Community of Holzhausen-Witelsberg, 1910–1938.

In the 1880s, the province of Hesse-Nassau — and within it especially the district of Kirchhain (encompassing Holzhausen)—became the stronghold of the radical antisemitic farmers’ movement around Otto Böckel, an assistant librarian, publicist and folklorist from Marburg.¹⁰¹ Böckel saw himself as the defender of the lifestyle of small farmers in his native Kurhessen, who were vulnerable to agricultural crises. This peasantry, he felt, epitomized a genuine German “people’s culture” opposed to “Jewish parasites”, who practiced “usury” and “exploitation of goods.”¹⁰² As an antisemitic agitator, Böckel moved through villages in Hesse, finding enthusiastic support particularly among small farmers. In 1887, he was elected to the Reichstag (the German Parliament), receiving 56.6 percent of votes in the constituency of Marburg-Kirchhain-Frankenberg-Vöhl; he went on to serve as a parliamentary deputy for over fifteen years.¹⁰³ In 1890, Böckel founded the “Antisemitic People’s Party”, which three years later changed its name to the “German Reform Party.” “Jew-free” cattle markets were established, along with agricultural cooperatives and antisemitic legal protection bureaus. The rural peasantry organized in the “Central German Association of Farmers” celebrated Böckel as a “second Luther.”¹⁰⁴ By 1900, however, his movement had become less significant due to the successes of the cooperative Raiffeisen Movement, which exploited antisemitism in its own fashion.¹⁰⁵

No reliable conclusions can be made concerning the significance of the Böckel Movement in Rauischholzhausen. On the one hand, it might have been rather high on account of the poverty of many inhabitants, the numerous Jewish residents involved primarily in trade, and the fact that the majority of the population was Protestant.¹⁰⁶ On the other hand, the peculiar distribution of land and its associated occupational structure in Rauischholzhausen, where farmers were clearly in the minority, might have weakened any resonance. According to Rabbi Isaak Rülff, born in Holzhausen, Jewish cattle dealers¹⁰⁷ “[knew] how to defend their rights and [...] [their] persons.”¹⁰⁸ The Böckel Movement had negative economic consequences for most of the Jewish merchants in the district; as a result, a considerable number of Jewish residents moved away. In Rauischholzhausen, too, the Jewish population declined between 1861 and 1905 by

26 persons, i.e., by 33 %.¹⁰⁹ Jews continued to leave the area in the following years between 1905 and 1925, reducing the size of the community by another 27 persons. In 1925 Rauschholzhausen had only 25 Jewish residents left.¹¹⁰

Jewish Life in the Village at the Beginning of the 20th Century

At the beginning of the 20th century, the Jewish residents of Rauschholzhausen were engaged in virtually all spheres of public village life. Their families had lived in the village for many generations, and just like their Christian neighbors, they were the bearers of so-called “village names” in addition to their legal names. Jewish citizens were frequently members of the municipal council and participated in the village’s sports club, choral society, and theater group.¹¹¹ Their children attended the general primary school starting in the 1920s. And the men served in the military, sacrificing their lives in war for the “Fatherland.”¹¹²

Juda Rülff, the Jewish community chairman and prayer leader, was also the vice-chairman of the village veterans’ association for many years.¹¹³ His son Friedel Rülff recalls:

My father, oh [...] was he proud to be in the military! [...] When my brother was drafted, I can still remember how, in 1916 — he [i.e., the father] was proud that he entered the military! He visited my brother in Berlin.¹¹⁴

Friedel’s brother Isidor had “proven his Germanness on the battlefields of France by sacrificing his life” and Friedel himself also “always felt German.”¹¹⁵ Brunhilde North, too, born in 1929 as the daughter of Siegfried Bachenheimer (formerly of Rauschholzhausen) observed that her Orthodox Jewish parents consciously wanted to give her a “German name”



06 Abraham Spier as a soldier in World War I, 1914.



07 Abraham Spier, in the middle, with other soldiers, apparently members of the village veterans' association, in World War I, around 1914.

(Brunhilde) instead of a traditional Jewish one.¹¹⁶ The Jewish residents of Rauschholzhausen were just as down-to-earth and nationally-minded as their Christian neighbors. However, this conclusion should not obscure the fact that they differed pointedly from the Christians surrounding them—religiously, professionally, and socially.¹¹⁷

The Jewish residents of Rauschholzhausen were strictly Orthodox in their religious practice. Martin Spier remembers –

[...] it was a small town—everybody was Orthodox. We were Orthodox, all kept the holidays and Saturdays. And I remember my father used to come home not Fridays at one hour before Shabbat—he came home at noon! Made sure that he got home. And the holidays meant a lot to my family. My mother prepared whatever she could.¹¹⁸

The different religions, starting with various holidays and dietary laws, already marked the boundaries of possible social intercourse.¹¹⁹ For

example, only the Christian children attended school on Saturdays. A non-Jewish villager remembers:

But, funny enough, I didn't know that Christians had gone to Jews' funerals. [...] After all, they had very different rites. The coffin and putting it in the ground and what do I know? And all in Hebrew. Nobody understood that, anyway. So you said to yourself, "Why should I go to that?"¹²⁰

Furthermore, there were essential differences in the occupational structure. While Christian residents were employed as craftsmen, but above all as temporary workers at the few independent farms or at the estate of the von Stumm family, Jewish residents were primarily in independent trade. Among the ten Jewish families living in Rauischholzhausen in 1920, six were active in commerce and two as butchers.¹²¹ According to the rural Protestant work ethic of the majority of villagers, commerce was frowned upon as nonproductive, as somehow "lazy" or "improper." A non-Jewish villager observes:

Here there were mainly, usually only [...] day laborers. Yes, and the Jews had — were — partly business people. That was the difference. You know, that's why nothing could come of it. Of the many contacts.¹²²

Of particular importance was the cattle trade, practiced most of all by Jewish merchants in the district. Even in the 20th century, they still spoke Yiddish to some extent.¹²³ The cattle and horse dealers of Rauischholzhausen had regular customers in a number of villages that they commonly visited, usually in a small horse-drawn cart. Marburg and Gießen had the nearest horse markets; the closest cattle market was in Kirchhain. Alfred Spier recalls:

[I]n Kirchhain was a market, a cattle market, I believe [...] every other week. And now and then, he [i.e., his father Abraham Spier] traveled

to Gießen, [...] the cattle were driven to Kirchhain, where they were loaded and shipped to Gießen. And we [i.e., Alfred Spier and his brothers] had to work very early. In the mornings before school, we had to help drive the cattle to Kirchhain.¹²⁴

He adds:

In those days, everything was done a bit differently. There were no contracts. Everything was done by handshake. [...] Yes, there was haggling, “No! — Yes! — No! — Yes!” And then you agreed to something in the middle. Then that was sealed with a handshake.¹²⁵

The Jewish residents also appeared to be more middle-class than their neighbors, based on what has been handed down about their home furnishings, reading newspapers on Saturdays, or employing Christian maids.¹²⁶

The Jewish community was highly cohesive. Walter Spier explains:

I think their friends [i.e., friends of his parents] were mostly Jews. The Jews more or less [...] stuck together. Like I remember, as a child, in the summer time, they used to go to each other’s houses, Saturday afternoons, what they call a “kaffeeklatsch.”¹²⁷

On weekdays, the Jewish women regularly met at the Spier family’s home to do needlework together.¹²⁸ Relations with the non-Jewish population, however, were mainly based on proximity and trade. Marriages with Christians did not occur, and close friendships were the exception rather than the rule.¹²⁹ My nonbiological grandfather, who only came to the region after 1945, reports:

Yes, it was a special relationship, but it was a relationship. So, everything was okay with the Jews up to a certain point. I heard that, for example, in Wittelsberg as well. [...] [They] played chess together with them, etc., and cards, etc. But he [i.e., an acquaintance in Wit-

telsberg] says there was always a certain boundary. So, directly, a like close friendship, no, that never happened! [...] There was, for example, the uncle [...] of Wittelsberg, the brother-in-law [...]. They were born in 1907; they understood it all well and knew what was up. And they were together with them, too. They played cards with them in the tavern. [...]. They said that they were always good players, [...] the Jews. But there was a certain limit. So, at some point, probably on both sides, probably [...] each side [...] kept their distance a little.¹³⁰

It is also worth noting, in this context, the story of the “war memorial” for the soldiers from Holzhausen who had died on the battlefield in World War I. Nine Jewish villagers had taken part in the war, three of whom had been killed in action.¹³¹ After the war, a communal plaque was initially arranged for. Friedel Rülff recalls:

How the war memorial was built in Holzhausen after the World War I—there were indeed only three [i.e., Jewish soldiers] from Holzhausen who were killed in action; the others were actually from Wittelsberg. My brother, Moses Rülff, and Leopold Reiss— they were the three from Holzhausen. So, they raised money for the war memorial. There was Pastor Korff¹³²— you see, I’m not forgetting names. And my father was head of the Jewish community. Well, all of the Jews donated money for the memorial. And my father thought about it, and he said, “Mr. Korff, [...] so where do you want to build this monument?” — “Why, in front of the church.” And my father said, “No, no, Mr. Korff, a war memorial shouldn’t go in front of a church. It has to be erected in a public place. If you put it in front of the church, then give us Jews the money back, and we’ll make our own.”¹³³

The pastor prevailed, and the Jewish community had its own marble plaque made for the Jewish soldiers killed. That plaque was then mounted in the synagogue.¹³⁴



08 Memorial plaque for Jewish soldiers who were killed in World War I. Photo taken in 1965 at the Jewish cemetery in Rauischholzhausen.

It is difficult to determine to what degree social relations in the 1920s were marked by antisemitism. Antisemitism was a tradition that ran deep. Not least, the images stirred up by the Böckel Movement had likely persisted, although they were perhaps used for a different purpose or unwittingly. A non-Jewish villager declares:

Well, people sometimes had hassles with them, in business. Now they only traded in cattle. [...] Well, then they didn't — couldn't — agree so quickly on the price.¹³⁵

Another woman living in the village today adds:

Yes, there were a lot of people who helped out at the Jews' homes. And they always talked about when it was *shabbos*¹³⁶ [...] the Jews weren't allowed to do any work, to turn on the lights or anything at all. They had to go there in the day [i.e., before the start of the Sabbath] and had to be there early the next morning and —. There were many of them! But I don't know who they all were. [...] They were in service at their homes, as domestics. Because some [i.e., Jewish families] could afford to have a maid. And if it was *shabbos*, then everything had to be cleaned. And then, in the evenings, they [i.e., the maids] brought bologna [i.e., pork, the consumption of which is prohibited by Jewish dietary laws] and spread it all over the table. And then it was no longer pure [i.e., ritually pure, or kosher]. [At this point, another villager adds: "But the Jews didn't know."] Um, it was for a laugh, you might say.¹³⁷

In the last ten years before Hitler began to rule, another four Jewish families left the village. A non-Jewish villager explains:

They [i.e., Siegfried and Jenny Bachenheimer] moved to Kirchhain, yes. That was the beginning of a trend, you understand? So, the Jews and them [i.e., Emanuel and Ida Bachenheimer], [...] they also moved to Kirchhain! [...] The initial trend of persecuting the Jews or — [...]

there was already this, well, how shall I express myself, this —. [...] this way of doing things, it was already known everywhere. “They’re worthless” and such things. [Question: “And did the Jews notice that, too?”]. Of course!¹³⁸

This “initial trend” also had economic consequences. As Friedel Rülff reports,

I can recall that at the end of the 1920s, we had an annual income that more than once exceeded 10,000 Marks. In 1930, however, the Nazi influence had already become somewhat clearer, so our income that year was only 8,000. In 1931, it was the same. In 1932, it decreased by around 500 and 1,000 Marks for the year.¹³⁹

Family Descriptions¹⁴⁰

In the early 1920s, there were still ten Jewish families in Rauschholzhäusen.

Until that time, the Rothschild family lived in the building located today at Untere Höhle 4. Jakob Rothschild (born on 30 January 1856, probably in Rauschholzhäusen) served for 40 years as the teacher of the Jewish elementary school, housed in the same building. Moreover, he served as the ritual slaughterer of the Jewish community. He died in 1921, shortly before his wife Regina Rothschild, née Katz-Stiefel (born on 4 October 1854 in Rauschenberg, in the Marburg district).¹⁴¹ Nothing is known about the subsequent lives of their three children.

Today’s so-called “Potsdamer Str. 4” was the address of Betti Reiss, née Stiefel (born on 1 September 1856 in Rüdtingshausen, Gießen district), and her husband Herz (born on 25 December 1849 in Rauschholzhäusen), whose village name was “Vöyils.” Herz Reiss sold clothing and textile goods, and he operated a small trade in goats on the side.¹⁴² Their

son Leopold (born on 6 July 1884, probably in Rauschholzhausen) was killed in 1918 during World War I. Betti Reiss died in 1921, as did her husband five years later, in 1926. Both were buried in Rauschholzhausen. Their children Lina (born on 16 October 1889, probably in Rauschholzhausen) and Moritz (born on 11 October 1891, probably in Rauschholzhausen) sold their parents' property to the baker Ludwig Grün and likely moved to Neu-Ulrichstein.¹⁴³ I do not know whether Lina and Moritz Reiss survived the Holocaust.

Former residents at what is now called "Potsdamer Str. 1" were Ida, née Rosenbusch (born on 26 August 1879 in Borken), and Emanuel Bachenheimer (born on 12 February 1871 in Rauschholzhausen), whose village name was "Joukofs." Ida Bachenheimer ran a grocery store.¹⁴⁴ Emanuel Bachenheimer was a cattle dealer, a soldier in World War I, and a member of the Holzhausen choral society.¹⁴⁵ After the death of Emanuel's parents Seligmann and Bette Bachenheimer (dates of birth unknown), Ida



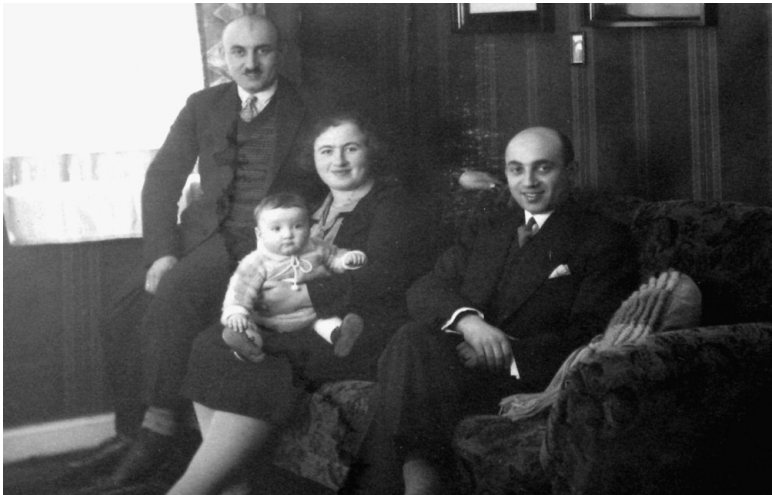
09 Residence with shop of the family of Emanuel Bachenheimer in what today is called "Potsdamer Straße", around 1911. Standing in front of the house [from left to right]: Ida, her son Hermann, Emanuel's father Seligmann, and Ida's son Herbert Bachenheimer.

and Emanuel sold their property in 1925 to the Ebinger family and moved to Kirchhain with their four sons—Julius, Hermann, Louis (birth dates unknown) and Herbert (born on 13 February 1904 in Rauschholzhäusen).¹⁴⁶ From there, the members of the family fled between 1936 and 1938 (in succession) to the United States.¹⁴⁷



10 Ida and Emanuel Bachenheimer with their sons [from left to right]: Hermann, Herbert, Julius, and Louis, around 1912.

The building at today's Alte Schulstr. 4 was the home of Betti Bachenheimer, née Rosenbaum (born in Baumbach, District of Rotenburg an der Fulda, date of birth unknown) and her son Siegfried (born on 24 March 1900 in Rauischholzhausen). After the early death of her husband Aron (born 29 January 1874 in Rauischholzhausen) in 1910, their other two sons — Josef (born on 19 May 1903 in Rauischholzhausen) and Henri (born 22 December 1906 in Rauischholzhausen) — grew up in an orphanage. Siegfried was a soldier in World War I and in the textiles business.¹⁴⁸ After the death of his mother Betti and his marriage to Jenny, née Katz (born in Heinebach, District of Rotenburg an der Fulda, date of birth unknown), Siegfried sold the property to Daniel Scheld, and moved with Jenny to Kirchhain in 1928.¹⁴⁹ In 1929, their daughter Brunhilde was born. In 1933, the young family moved from Kirchhain to Jenny's birthplace of Heinebach. Antisemitic attacks and Siegfried's brief imprisonment forced the family to flee to the United States via Bremen as early as January 1934.¹⁵⁰



11 Family of Siegfried Bachenheimer in their apartment in Kirchhain, in the Untergasse, in 1929. From left to right: Siegfried, daughter Brunhilde, Jenny, and Siegfried's brother Josef Bachenheimer.

Both Bachenheimer families and the Reiss family sold their property to persons (respectively, Ludwig Grün, Heinrich Ebinger and Daniel Scheld) who, by the 1930s (at the latest), were among the most aggressive Nazis in the village.

When Hitler took office, the following six families were the only Jewish families still living in Rauischholzhausen:

The Frenkel family lived at present-day Roßdorferstr. 19: Rosa, née Löwenstein (born on 23 April 1878 in Rauischholzhausen) with her husband Simon (born 6 April 1882 in Falkenberg, Homberg district) and their three children Resi (born on 5 April 1909 in Rauischholzhausen), Irene (born on 24 June 1910 in Rauischholzhausen) and David (born on 11 September 1911 in Rauischholzhausen). In 1907, Simon relocated from Falkenberg to Rauischholzhausen, and the couple was married in January 1908.¹⁵¹ According to their marriage certificate, Simon was a trained bookbinder; he was probably also a soldier in World War I.¹⁵² The Frenkels were relatively prosperous.¹⁵³ They operated a general store while Simon was also active in the textile and flax trades.¹⁵⁴ Next to the Frenkels' newly constructed home, the couple had a large garden where Jewish women often met on Saturday afternoons for coffee under the arbor.¹⁵⁵ In the 1920s, Rosa Frenkel had a very good relationship with her non-Jewish neighbor, whom she regularly helped out with groceries.¹⁵⁶ The Frenkels' daughter, Resi, attended the Elisabethschule, a girls' high school administered by the town of Marburg. She completed the *Abitur* in 1929, moving the same year to Halberstadt where she likely began her university studies.¹⁵⁷ The younger daughter Irene left the Elisabethschule in 1928 (before the *Abitur*) and became an assistant in a women's home in Bad Nauheim. In 1931, she accepted a similar position in a women's home in Amsterdam, moving to the Netherlands where she married Salomon Cohen (born on 13 May 1911 in Coevorden, Netherlands) in 1932.¹⁵⁸ The Frenkels' son David completed business training in Frankfurt and then became an independent sales representative for the company Katzenstein in Fulda.¹⁵⁹

In addition to Rosa Frenkel, her older sister Sara, née Löwenstein (born on 9 May 1876 in Rauischholzhausen), remained in the village. In

September 1903, she married Hermann Mendel (born on 11 February 1878 in Bonn).¹⁶⁰ The Mendels (called “Mendils” in the village) lived in Rosa and Sara’s parents’ house at Am Rülfbach 1. Their marriage remained childless. Their impressive house had been built for their parents Karoline, née Plaut (born 1 October 1845 in Rauischholzhausen) and David Löwenstein (born on 6 August 1848 in Fronhausen, Marburg district) in exchange for their original residence, the site of the former brewery of the von Rau family. Since the von Stumms were concerned that the brewery was located right at the entrance to the manor gardens, they had the new house built for the Löwensteins, after which time the brewery was demolished.¹⁶¹ Sara and Hermann, a soldier in World War I, continued the butcher shop that had already been established by Rosa and Sara’s grandparents, and they had a textiles business on the side.¹⁶² They employed one domestic in the household.¹⁶³ The Mendels were probably also quite wealthy, their house fairly well-furnished by rural standards.¹⁶⁴ In addition to their home, the slaughterhouse, and stables, they owned the field called the “Geizäcker” and two pastures, designated “Die Bodenwiese” and “Am Lampertshäuser Teich.”¹⁶⁵ Hermann was additionally a member of the local drama club.¹⁶⁶

Several Jewish families lived around the present-day Lerchengasse. In the village jargon, it is called “The Corner” (or *Die Ecke*).

Right on the Lerchengasse, at the site of present-day number 5, lived Berta Rülff, née Kanter (born on 16 March 1872 in Neustadt, Marburg district) together with her adult sons. Their house no longer exists today. The family acquired the antisemitic village name of “Itzig” — a name that was “certainly not” used by the Jewish villagers (according to Alfred Spier).¹⁶⁷ Around 1900, Berta Rülff had married the Rauischholzhausen butcher Moses Rülff (born on 13 December 1874 in Rauischholzhausen).¹⁶⁸ Alongside their house on the Lerchengasse, they had a courtyard, a garden, and a small slaughterhouse.¹⁶⁹ The couple had three children: Louis (born on 29 May 1902 in Rauischholzhausen), Julius (born on 22 December 1906 in Rauischholzhausen) and Selma (probably born in 1910 or 1911).¹⁷⁰ Berta’s husband Moses died early; he was killed in 1917 while serving as a soldier in World War I. Their daughter, Selma, also

died young, no later than 1927 or 1928.¹⁷¹ Julius and Louis were members of the Holzhausen choral society; in 1925 they took over the butcher shop of their deceased father.¹⁷² The business was probably quite successful at first. Julius Rülff remarks:

We did not sell [anything] in Rauschholzhausen, but only wholesale, supplying mainly hotels in Bad Nauheim and the wholesale meat market in Frankfurt am Main. [...] There were at least three people working regularly in the slaughterhouse; besides me, there was my brother and a hired butcher. But we needed temporary workers quite often when there was a lot to do.¹⁷³

In 1930, the brothers acquired an old Chevrolet with a trailer from the von Stumm family, transporting their wares in that vehicle.¹⁷⁴ A non-Jewish contemporary witness from Ebsdorf recalls:

There, around the region, we repaired cars [...]. And we also went out to Holzhausen. There were two “calf-[selling] Jews.” They drove to Frankfurt with the calves they slaughtered. As for their car, they had a Chevrolet, a convertible—it was their pride—the two. And then we worked on it there, fixing the brakes and everything else.¹⁷⁵

In spite of the car and the butcher shop, Berta Rülff and her sons were most probably already living in rather impoverished conditions before 1933. A non-Jewish Rauschholzhausener says of them:

The mother of the boys, she wrapped the meat in a kind of cloth, and she went with them, you see. From house to house. None of them lived so well.¹⁷⁶

Other reports state that the Rülff family was not as Orthodox as others in the community.¹⁷⁷

Besides Berta Rülff and her sons, another family named Rülff was residing in the village. The father was Juda Rülff (born on 3 December 1867 in



12 Selma Rülff in Rauischholzhausen, circa 1918.

Rauischholzhausen), whose village name was “Jures.”¹⁷⁸ He lived with his adult children in today’s Alte Schulstr. 10. It is not known whether Juda was related to Berta and her late husband Moses. Juda Rülff was chairman and prayer leader of the Jewish community. By profession, he was a horse trader. Juda’s wife, Lina, née Bachenheimer (born on 1 January 1873 in Rauischholzhausen), died in 1930 of blood poisoning.¹⁷⁹ The couple had four children: Isidor (born on 11 July 1898 in Rauischholzhausen), Selma (born on 16 May 1900 in Rauischholzhausen), Rosa (born on 14 July 1901 in Rauischholzhausen), and Friedel (born on October 17 1905 in Rauischholzhausen).¹⁸⁰

Juda’s eldest, Isidor, was killed in action in 1917 during World War I. Selma moved, in 1923 at the latest, to Gladenbach, where she married Julius Meier (born on 17 May 1893 in Gladenbach); the couple had two chil-

dren.¹⁸¹ Rosa looked after the household following her mother's death, and Friedel entered his father's horse trade in 1922. Friedel remembers:

So, for example, we did business in Ebsdorfer Grund almost every day, going to Kleinseelheim, Großseelheim, Schönbach, Betziesdorf—that was our territory. In Betziesdorf we had [...] customers, [...] good customers, [with] large farms, who used four or five horses at the time.¹⁸²

At least some of the animals were purchased in the Rhineland and then sold to their solid customers in the region.¹⁸³ The Rülfs employed a maid, a farmhand, and several helpers to drive the horses.¹⁸⁴ They owned about 90 *ares* [i.e., over two acres] of arable land (called “Die Hermann”) and did some farming, but that business was not particularly significant in comparison to the horse trade. Due to the fact that they had many employees and that they basically sold only to farmers who could pay in cash, it can be assumed that the Rülff family was rather well-off. Juda Rülff was rather respected in the village and was for many years vice-chairman of the local general veterans' association.¹⁸⁵ His son Friedel had non-Jewish friends and was a member of the Holzhausen choral society. He was also a co-founder, and at times even the chairman, of the local sports club.¹⁸⁶

I set up the first soccer field that we had alongside the forest. I brought the wood out of the forest with [a] couple of horses. No one did anything. We had to do everything ourselves.¹⁸⁷

A non-Jewish witness comments, “Friedel was in the sports club. [...] He was one tough soccer player. [...] He had to do everything himself.”¹⁸⁸

Likewise in “The Corner”, on today's Lerchengasse 2 (diagonally across from the home of Berta Rülff and her sons), lived Juda Rülff's nephew, Abraham Spier (born on 18 January 1881 in Ebsdorf, Marburg district), together with his family (all of whom were called “Mines” by the villagers). Abraham had relocated from Ebsdorf to Rauischholz-



13 Minna Spier in her house in the current Lerchengasse, circa 1920.



14 Abraham and Jenny Spier, around 1919.

hausen at the end of the 19th century, along with his parents, Minna, née Rülff (born on 16 February 1859 in Rauischholzhausen, the sister of Juda Rülff), and Isak Spier (born on 12 June 1850, probably in Leidenhofen, Marburg district) as well as his brother Siegfried (born on 29 November 1886, place of birth unknown).¹⁸⁹

Abraham married Jenny, née Wertheim (born on 4 June 1890 in Hatzbach, Marburg district), and they had five children: Edith (born on 10 December 1920 in Marburg), Julius (born on 17 June 1922 in Rauischholzhausen), Alfred (born on 4 January 1924 in Rauischholzhausen), Martin (born on 11 July 1925 in Rauischholzhausen) and Walter (born on 17 October 1927 in Marburg).

Abraham Spier served in World War I⁹⁰ and, like his father, was active in the cattle trade. He was rather respected in the village, and his company had a good reputation in the region.¹⁹¹ After the death of his par-

ents, he also took over his mother's small textile shop, located in Spier's house, for a few years.¹⁹² On 21 February 1935, his brother Siegfried also died. The living circumstances of the Spier family were relatively middle-class. The children attended the general elementary school in the village. The family employed a maid and at times hired temporary personnel to help with the cattle.¹⁹³ In addition to their home, the Spiers had a garden, two fields ("In den Grundäckern" and "Auf den Gänsebetten"), a pasture ("Beim Mardorfer Stege") in the municipality of Amöneburg, as well as a 1/88th share of a forest in Leidenhofen.¹⁹⁴ As was common in the village, the Spiers provided chiefly for themselves: they grew vegetables and fruit in the garden, supplied their own wood and plums from their forest property, and baked their bread with others at the local baking house.¹⁹⁵ Martin Spier remembers:

My mother worked very hard. It is not like, [...] you got a shirt that is worn, so you throw it out and buy a new one. We didn't have the money to buy it. My mother was sitting [...] [at] night, two o'clock in the morning, fixing, stitching, or applying a new colour to the shirt, or even putting patches on the pants. Anything that had to be fixed, she fixed at night. During the day she was busy in the house and at the farm.¹⁹⁶

On Shabbat, the Spier family would take extended walks:

We always took a walk in the woods or on the farm, the land they owned, and looked for corn, oats, potatoes or whatever. [...] That was Saturdays. We always took a walk together. Everybody. And he [i.e., their father, Abraham Spier] told us stories from World War I, from his father.¹⁹⁷

Abraham Spier had a very close relationship with his uncle Juda Rülff:

Every Sunday morning Juda came to our house and they used to re-hash all their business from the week. He [i.e., Juda Rülff] used to sit there with a long pipe.¹⁹⁸

Family Descriptions



15 Edith, Julius, and Alfred Spier in the garden of their parents' house, circa 1926.



16 Abraham Spier with a household domestic and his sons [from left to right]: Martin, Alfred, and Julius in front of their house at present-day Lerchengasse, around 1927.

The Stern family (called “Feist” in the village) lived on Untere Höhle, near the end of the road on the left side, likely next door to today’s number 13. Their house no longer exists. Hedwig Stern, née Kaufmann (born on 17 May 1872 in Wiesloch, Heidelberg district), was a seamstress. Her husband David Stern (born on 20 August 1873 in Rauischholzhausen) was the secretary of the Jewish community and a shoemaker by trade.¹⁹⁹ The couple had two children: Franziska (born on 8 April 1902 in Rauischholzhausen) and Herbert (born on 16 January 1906 in Rauischholzhausen). David operated his little shoemaking shop out of the house. A non-Jewish villager recollects,

It used to always be [that way] here: We went to the shoemaker. The shoemaker didn’t come to you; you had to go to him.²⁰⁰

David was the only shoemaker in the village and trained a number of Christian apprentices.²⁰¹ Besides their house with its courtyard and garden, they owned the field “Die Baumschule.”²⁰² Their son Herbert studied law in Frankfurt am Main and passed his main state law examination in early June 1933.²⁰³ Likewise, Franziska probably moved to Frankfurt am Main in the late 1920s. Hedwig’s husband David Stern died on 19 November 1933. After he died, Hedwig Stern lived alone and in indigent circumstances.²⁰⁴

To summarize, it can be said that the Jewish families, with the exception of Mr. and Mrs. Mendel, lived in the center of Rauischholzhausen. Most lived in the immediate vicinity of the present-day Zimmerplatz, at the heart of the village. Many of them lived in or next to “The Corner”, today’s Lerchengasse. In particular, Juda and his son Friedel Rülff were quite respected by the Christian majority of the population. They, as was probably true for the Frenkel family as well, had closer non-business relationships to non-Jewish villagers. The Frenkels were presumably also the wealthiest family among the Jewish residents. The least privileged were probably Berta Rülff and her sons, in addition to Hedwig Stern, for both were widows. The family of Berta Rülff probably observed the Jewish faith the least. The Spier family was the only family in 1933 that had non-



17 Siegfried Spier, around 1925.

adult children; only Hermann and Sara Mendel had a childless marriage. Because they worked as artisans, the Sterns, a shoemaker and a seamstress, likely came closest to the other villagers' ideas of "real" workers.

At the beginning of 1933, twenty Jewish people still lived in Rauschholzhausen. They constituted less than 3 % of the approximately 700 people residing there. There were the couples Frenkel, Mendel, and Stern; Berta Rülff with her adult sons, Julius and Louis; Juda Rülff with his grown children Rosa and Friedel; and Abraham and Jenny Spier — along with Abraham's brother Siegfried — and their five children. By February 1935, David Stern and Siegfried Spier had died, thereby reducing the Jewish population to eighteen individuals.²⁰⁵

Rauischholzhausen and the Holocaust

Section 1: From the Transfer of Power to the Nuremberg Laws

Transfer of Power to Hitler

When Adolf Hitler was appointed chancellor on 30 January 1933, he had about half of the people of Rauischholzhausen behind him. Protestant Rauischholzhausen had traditionally voted for the Social Democratic Party (hereafter “SPD”, the German abbreviation for this party). In the Reichstag elections of the Weimar Republic, the SPD was fairly stable, winning 40–50 % of local support until 1930. Then, between 1928 and November 1932, the SPD lost almost 40 % of their votes, especially to the Communist Party of Germany (hereafter “KPD”, the German abbreviation for this party), whose share of the vote increased 5.5-fold between 1930 and 1932.²⁰⁶ In the second Reichstag election of 1932, 47 Rauischholzhauseners, about 12.5 % of the voters, chose the Communists, although the Communist Party won only 6.1 % of votes in the entire area of the former Kirchhain district. The strongest counterparty to the SPD — besides the liberal German Democratic Party (*Deutsche Demokratische Partei*), which was losing more and more significance as early as 1924 — was the German National People’s Party (*Deutschnationale Volkspartei*) until 1930, along with its spin-off party, the Christian-National Farm and Country People’s Party (*Christlich-Nationale Bauern- und*

Landvolkpartei). In 1930, the Christian Social People's Service (*Christlich-Sozialer Volksdienst*) also garnered a large number of votes.

In the same year of 1930, the National Socialist German Worker's Party (NSDAP; hereafter "Nazi Party") also achieved significant success for the first time: it was the choice of 25 residents, and thus of 8.1 %, of Rauischholzhausen. In the entire district of Kirchhain, the Nazi Party won 23.5 % of the votes in 1930. However, its share of votes in Rauischholzhausen rose rapidly in the following elections. In July 1932, it was already 35 % and in November 1932 reached 41.6 %. In March 1933, the Nazi Party gained an absolute majority in Rauischholzhausen with 52.8 % of the results. While this was consistent with voting behavior in the entire area of the former Kirchhain district, it clearly exceeded the nationwide result of 43.9 %. These election returns are significant in three respects: No one voted for the Nazi Party in Rauischholzhausen until 1928. Hence, its followers grew within five years from one individual to an absolute majority.

Lastly, the high number of Communist voters was impressive.²⁰⁷ One of them was likely the neighbor of the Spier family, the tailor Wilhelm Seip.²⁰⁸ Communists were the first victims of the new Nazi regime. After the Reichstag Fire at the end of February 1933, anti-Communist mass arrests led to the detention of nearly 10,000 party members and suspected sympathizers in newly created concentration camps.²⁰⁹ It is not known to what extent Communist voters from Rauischholzhausen were subject to repression. All my interview partners, both Jewish and non-Jewish, responded with discernible surprise when hearing about the large number of those who voted Communist.²¹⁰ The anti-Communist policy of the Nazis was reflected in the voting behavior of the village, for the Communists' share of the vote declined between November 1932 and March 1933 from 12.5 to 9.6 %. And yet, there was likely no intensive political persecution of Communists in the village.

Unlike the number of KPD voters would suggest, Hitler's rise to power appears to have been met by no noticeable resistance in Rauischholzhausen. In 1941, the Roßdorf gendarmerie reported that Simon Frenkel had started a fight against Nazis prior to 1933, trying to interfere with

their events and promoting the Communists locally.²¹¹ In early 1933, Hermann Mendel was sentenced to a fine of 59 Reichsmark for making a “political insult.”²¹² The later Nazi Party *Blockleiter* (i.e., local leader) of Rauischholzhausen, Daniel Scheld, described the incident as follows:

In 1933, before the Nazis came to power, the “Horst Wessel Song” was played for the first time on the radio. Someone in my house had a radio receiver at that time, turned it up loud, and the neighbor, Mr. Mendel, heard it. Mendel strongly insulted me in front of my apprentices and other villagers so that I denounced him for it to the judge [...] in Holzhausen.²¹³

Given that these sources originate with Nazis, little can be concluded about their veracity. Instead, the only resistance action that can be verified to have taken place in the village is the following, Alfred Spier recollects:

Yes. What happened [is], if you go to the park, at the Zimmerplatz, there is the Kaiser farm. [...] Then you turn left. [...]. There was a little garden there, and in front of it was a display case that had *Der Stürmer* [i.e., the Nazi weekly tabloid]. And one night someone threw shit on the case.²¹⁴

A non-Jewish villager adds: “At that time, they suspected [Hermann] Mendel. Once again, the Jews had to suffer for that.”²¹⁵ Regarding the real culprit, Alfred Spier narrates:

Yes, the perpetrator was never caught. I know there was a lot of interest in the village about it. I have to mention something: the Gestapo came from Marburg to investigate the case and never caught him. But after the war [...] people knew who did it, yes. It was [...] a boy, a teenager, who lived where Peil lived, close by.²¹⁶

Apparently that was “the only kind of resistance” that occurred in Rauschholzhausen.²¹⁷

One can only speculate about the general mood in the village at the beginning of 1933. In terms of political administration within the province of Hesse-Nassau, which was under Regional Governor [*Oberpräsident*] Prince Philip of Hesse²¹⁸ and Head Regional Administrator [*Regierungspräsident*] Konrad Monbart,²¹⁹ Rauschholzhausen was subject to the District Office [*Landsratsamt*] of Marburg. That office had been led by Ernst Schwebel since 1924,²²⁰ and by Hans Krawielitzki after 1934.²²¹ Krawielitzki pursued policies that completely toed the Nazi Party line.²²² As of 1919, the mayor of Rauschholzhausen was Heinrich Amend.²²³ The responsible gendarmerie was located in the neighboring village of Roßdorf. Nothing is known about Heinrich Amend that would reveal his political views. The fact that he was replaced in 1935 by the staunch Nazi Heinrich Otto²²⁴ suggests that Amend was not particularly zealous about conforming to the Party. The same applies to Heise, the ruling gendarme in Roßdorf in 1933. He was replaced by Justus Seipel, probably in late 1934.²²⁵ In party politics, Rauschholzhausen was subordinated to the Nazi Party district leadership in Marburg, which was part of the *Gau* (region) of Kurhessen headed by Karl Weinrich.²²⁶ However, Marburg District Administrator Hans Krawielitzki served at the same time as the district leader of the Party.²²⁷ At first, the closest local Nazi group was in Heskem. Starting in 1934 probably, there was one in Wittelsberg, adjacent to Rauschholzhausen; it was managed by Johannes Preiß (of Wittelsberg).²²⁸ Rauschholzhausen likely got its own so-called “party cell” [*Parteizelle*] in the mid-1930s.²²⁹

Major non-state authorities in the village, such as the church and the von Stumm family, seem to have behaved neutrally. Given their influential positions, their neutrality indirectly supported the new regime. Pastor Francks, for instance, “stayed out of everything.”²³⁰ Alfred Spier also recalls “having no connection, no relationship to the pastor.”²³¹ A small majority of residents had a positive attitude toward the political changes, judging by their voting behavior. And those who had already been organized (as Nazis) paraded through the village in celebration. “I know there

were parades with flags”, remembers Alfred Spier.²³² The 40 % who were SPD and KPD voters looked on passively at what was taking place: “One really didn’t take it so seriously at the time.”²³³

Social Exclusion

One didn’t take it so seriously. For the first antisemitic measures of the Nazi Party were less directed at everyday life in the village than at expelling Eastern European Jews and immobilizing “the Jewish elite”, i.e., Jewish civil servants, intellectuals, and artists. Then, on 7 April 1933, the “Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service” was proclaimed. Four days later, the first enforcement of this law prescribed that “[n]on-Aryans are considered those persons who are descended from non-Aryans, especially from Jewish parents or grandparents. It suffices if only one parent or grandparent is not Aryan [which] is particularly to be assumed if a parent or grandparent has been a member of the Jewish religion.”²³⁴ The definition of those to be persecuted as “Jews” put forth by this law became the point of departure for all subsequent definitions and for all subsequent anti-Jewish legislative measures.²³⁵ The systematic registration of the Jewish population living in the Reich had begun shortly after the Nazi Party came to power. In early May 1933, the Gestapo in Kassel ordered the Marburg District Administration that notification had to be made if any Jewish persons changed their residence or civil status.²³⁶

Herbert Stern was already living in Frankfurt am Main in 1933. On 9 June 1933, he completed his legal training, passing the main state law examination.²³⁷ As early as 31 March 1933, Jewish lawyers employed at courts in the state of Prussia were forced to go on leave by a provisional order of the Reich Commissioner for the Prussian Judiciary. The number of court-authorized “Jewish” attorneys was reduced to the percentage of “Jews” in the overall population.²³⁸ On the same day, the same official issued an edict that only “Aryan” applicants would henceforth be admitted to the bar association. On April 4th, a circular was released that generally

banned “Jewish” attorneys from acting as legal counsel for others.²³⁹ Lastly, on 7 April 1933, a nationwide law completely revoked admission to the practice of law by “Jewish” attorneys.²⁴⁰ Five days after successfully passing his bar exam, Herbert Stern received a letter from the Prussian Ministry of Justice disqualifying him as a Jew from the Prussian judicial service.²⁴¹ In September he traveled to England but returned a few months later to Germany.²⁴² Despite having a law degree, he had to become a volunteer at the nursery of the Frankfurt Jewish community.²⁴³

The village life of Stern’s parents in the first years of Nazi-ruled Rauschholzhausen, while it involved increased monitoring and systematic registration, was marked less by state forms of disenfranchisement than by terror practiced against individuals by a group of aggressive antisemites in the village. Although local antisemitism in the Weimar Republic had taken forms such as separate war memorials or “practical jokes”, the year of 1933 most likely represented a distinctive turning point in the readiness to use violence.²⁴⁴

As a Jewish survivor from Mardorf recounts:

Oh, no. There were only a few SA folks in Mardorf, right? [...] In Rauschholzhausen it was really worse, generally speaking, as it was in [all] the Protestant villages. [...] In Rauschholzhausen there were a lot of Nazis. I know that. It was known by everyone. But I can’t remember their names right now, what they were all called.²⁴⁵

Among the circle of those who gradually became the most aggressive antisemites of Rauschholzhausen were: Heinrich Otto (born in 1903, village name “Weidemüller”),²⁴⁶ who was a miller, future mayor, and Nazi Party *Zellenleiter* (cell leader); Daniel Scheld (born in 1903),²⁴⁷ a plumber, electrician and later Nazi Party *Blockleiter* (local leader), who lived in the former home of the Jewish family of Siegfried Bachenheimer; Heinrich Becker (born in 1912), my biological grandfather and the administrator of the estate operated as an experimental farm by the University of Giessen after 1934²⁴⁸; (Johann) Konrad Schweißguth (born in 1905),²⁴⁹ the local postmaster, later Nazi Party *Blockleiter* and Otto’s successor

as Nazi *Zellenleiter*; Johannes Deuker (born in 1899, nicknamed “Goebels’che”)²⁵⁰; Ludwig Grün (born in 1900, nicknamed “I-Mann”), who managed his bakery in the former home of the Jewish family Reiss²⁵¹; the brothers Adam and Heinrich Dörr (born in 1907 and 1914, village name “Anneliesches”)²⁵²; two male relatives, possibly brothers of a family named Schneider²⁵³; Else Schmidt (born in 1893), the future head of local branch of the Women’s League²⁵⁴; Elisabeth Vogel and her husband Johannes (born in 1890 and 1894, village name “Werter”)²⁵⁵; and Heinrich Ebinger (born 1898, village name “Braune”, nicknamed “Braune Wulle”) who lived in the former house of the Jewish family of Emanuel Bachenheimer.²⁵⁶

In addition to future mayors and gendarmerie officials, all of the perpetrators *known to me by name* comprise a group of seventeen individuals from twelve families, fourteen of them men. Nine of them, including two women, were born between 1890 and 1907, many around the turn of the century. Hence, in 1933, they averaged thirty-three years of age. Dates of birth could not be established in the case of another woman and three men, but I believe that they too were born around 1900. Two of these seventeen perpetrators were born between 1912 and 1914, making them 18 or 20 years old when the Nazis took office. Another two were possibly even younger.

Moreover, seven of the seventeen perpetrators are said to have been highly organized (i.e., within the Nazi Party and SS, as well as especially within the SA). And that was likely the case for two others; for another six, it remains a conjecture. We can conclude that the perpetrators in Rauischholzhausen were typically men, born between 1894 and 1905, and organized at least in the Nazi Party, albeit often in the SA as well.

While the women were likely homemakers, at least four of the seven male perpetrators (in addition to the mayor and police) whose occupations are known to us were affiliated professionally with the old middle class (craftsmen/traders, e.g., a baker) or the new one (civil servants/white-collar employees, e.g., a postal official, a teacher, an estate administrator). Accordingly, they had considerable incomes. This finding appears significant when considering that most villagers were often hired

out only as temporary workers at the estate of the noble family or at one of the small number of local farms. Consequently, the knowledge we have—despite the poor source material—confirms the assumption that the average income of the perpetrators was above average when compared with the rest of the villagers.

Initially, the violence of the perpetrators was primarily aimed at excluding Jewish persons from all areas of social life in the village and thus mainly manifested as psychological terror. As Friedel Rülff relates:

One evening in the pub [i.e., at “Jirje’s”, the village name of which was *Gasthaus Otto*], I was playing skat with somebody. The next day he wouldn’t even look at me, [this fellow who was] my next-door neighbor.²⁵⁷

Still, the majority of villagers was not immediately ready to go to such lengths. In the summer of 1933, the Frenkels threw an engagement party for their daughter Resi (who had moved to Halberstadt) and Siegfried Helish of Halberstadt.²⁵⁸ On such an occasion, it was customary for the unmarried men of the village to serenade the young couple. Resi Helish recalls:

One [...] example of our closeness to the village [Holzhausen] took place on the evening of my engagement, in summer 1933. The village boys showed up to serenade me on my engagement. Considering the political situation at the time, we were rather worried about it; so we asked the boys to take their fee—the sum of money they would get for the serenade—and to have a good time in the pub. But they refused. “Unless we get to sing, we won’t take the money.” So they sang and then went off to the pub. Later that night, we heard people gathering. Someone from the village had called up his Nazi friends from the area to protest against the “Jewish fun” being had in the pub. And that’s what they did. They took the boys into the courtyard outside the tavern, made them form a line, and then poured out the barrel of beer in front of them.²⁵⁹

One of the village women today knows the following from a non-Jewish neighbor:

And those Holzhausen boys, they were all friends. This agitation was only — not yet so serious. So, the Holzhausen boys still did a serenade at the wedding.²⁶⁰

The next day, the *Oberhessische Zeitung*²⁶¹ published an article entitled “Holzhausen’s Jewish Beer” with the following description:

Recently a village Isidor in Holzhausen celebrated an engagement. [...] At the appointed time, these Jew-friends appeared and started to sing. [...] An SA man from Holzhausen drove at top speed to his *Sturmführer* [supervising officer], informing him of the shameless behavior of these village boys. *Sturmführer* Fus [from] Leidenhofen drove immediately to the pub along with the SA man [...]. Without hesitating, Fus confiscated the keg of beer [...]. One can easily imagine the long faces on the song-happy friends of that Lebanese Tyrolean [i.e., an antisemitic insult]. That ended their fun.

[...] With lightning speed, the news of this Jewish beer spread through Holzhausen, and the number of onlookers grew rapidly. [...] At that point [*Sturmführer*] Fus condemned the shameless behavior of these boys, desperate for free beer, and reaped thunderous applause from the German patriots of Holzhausen.²⁶²

It seems highly questionable considering Resi Helish’s descriptions that these “boys” were really only after free beer or that the assembled Rauischholzhausen residents showed appreciation for the Nazi intervention. Instead, the incident reveals that the Jewish population of Rauischholzhausen was not yet excluded from the village community in the summer of 1933, and that it evidently still perceived itself as an integral part of that community. Resi Helish remembers:

For decades, I dreamt at night about my parents' house [...]. [...] [W]hen we both [i.e., Resi Frenkel and her fiancé Siegfried Helish in the fall of 1933] wanted to emigrate, [...] my aunt, Mrs. Sara Mendel, told me quite indignantly, "What, you want to emigrate? And we, your mother and I, were ladies of honor for the veterans' association?!" This sentence proves how absolutely connected our family was to the village of Holzhausen. We were quite clearly "Holzhäuser" like everyone else.²⁶³

An exemplary linking of state disenfranchisement and individual terror took place when the Nazi co-optation [*Gleichschaltung*] of the sports club was implemented in Holzhausen. On 25 April 1933, the Reich Sports Commissioner issued the directive to exclude all "non-Aryan" persons from German sports and gymnastics associations.²⁶⁴ Friedel Rülff, who had been co-founder three years earlier (and even for a time the chair) of the Holzhausen sports club, recalls:

How did they call it? *Gleich-*? [...] *Gleichschaltung* [...] And how did they go about that? They apologized: [...] "You can't be in the soccer club, unfortunately", or something like that.²⁶⁵

Just exactly "how they went about that" is revealed by a non-Jewish witness:

Friedel [...] always paid [for a lot of items for the] sports club: flags and jerseys, shoes [...]—and it was all burned! We couldn't get in [i.e., into the clubhouse]. When we saw that all the stuff flying out the door, the front door, we took off. We were all still boys, right? [...] Friedel was popular here. After all, he gave the sports club virtually everything, right? [...] Yep, there were a few troublemakers [i.e., in the sports club], right?²⁶⁶

Friedel Rülff never played soccer again in his life.²⁶⁷

It likely did not take long until his father Juda Rülff lost his position (as

vice-chair) in the local veterans' association — that is, if he even still held it in 1933. For in the course of that year, Jewish associations grew quickly in the Reich, and a number of new ones were launched.²⁶⁸ In Rauischholzhausen, no Jewish societies were founded, though. The Jewish residents of the village also did not join the many Jewish associations in Kirchhain (about ten kilometers away), probably because of the distance.²⁶⁹ That signaled the end of any social or political organizing by the local Jewish citizens during 1933.

Among those also affected quite early by the social exclusion were the children of the Spier family, who attended the general village elementary school along with non-Jewish children. Alfred Spier attended the school from 1930 to 1935²⁷⁰:

We were insulted, called “smelly” or “dirty Jew.”²⁷¹

His brother Martin adds:

Gentile pupils were playing ball, but of course we couldn't play with them, they wouldn't let us.²⁷²

Friendships also came to an end:

The son [i.e., of the neighboring Vogel family] was my best friend. He stayed over at our house all the time. I slept at his house. [...] As soon as Hitler came to power, the friendship was gone. He didn't ever come over anymore; he did not talk to me anymore. Nothing. [...] [I'm referring to] Hannes, Junior.²⁷³

Since Jewish religious instruction was provided by Salomon Pffifferling on alternate Wednesdays in Mardorf and in Rauischholzhausen, the Spier brothers had to go every other week to the neighboring village of Mardorf. Martin Spier recollects:

And when we went to Mardorf, we didn't walk, we had to run, [so] that the kids didn't hit us and every time we took a different route.²⁷⁴

At first, they were able to defend themselves, according to Alfred Spier:

I didn't have to put up with it. In addition, when I was attacked, I, I fought back, but — .²⁷⁵

It wasn't just the other children; the Spiers were also harassed by teachers. There were two of them at the school, Johannes Gade and Otto Nadolny.²⁷⁶ A non-Jewish villager remembers Gade in this way:

You could get along with him okay at times, but [...] when he pulled those Jews up by the seat of their pants, he'd beat on them like there was no tomorrow!²⁷⁷

Another contemporary witness elaborates:

Awful — [people] said he wasn't always right in the head. Yep, that's how he was! [...] Oh, my God! He was a real jerk! Jeez! We were so afraid of him! Really! It's true! We were really afraid of him!²⁷⁸

Teacher Gade was a brutal sadist, but he probably did not treat the Jewish children much worse than the non-Jewish ones. In Walter Spier's words:

Gade was a good man. A good man. [...] [But Nadolny was a] Bastard. He made us sit in the back, never called on you.²⁷⁹

His brother Martin adds:

That teacher didn't teach us anything.²⁸⁰ [W]hen we came to a test, we had to write "not taken." You know, we weren't able to take it.²⁸¹

Hence, Nadolny did not let them take the tests; he failed them instead.

On 16 August 1934, Rudolf Hess ordered all Nazi Party members not to associate with “Jews” in public.²⁸² On 11 April 1935, he extended that order: “I am reluctant in general to sound off to Party comrades about obvious matters. Nonetheless, I see myself once again compelled to forbid all Party comrades from associating personally with Jews.” He then concluded this order by ordering Party members to inform on others.²⁸³ A short time later, Krawielitzki received a piece of anonymous mail. It contained a photo of a wedding party with a comment on the back:

The wedding of the district manager of R[auisch-]Holzhausen with Jews as guests. How long will this man continue to be tolerated in office, who is not respected in the village and is only harming National Socialism?²⁸⁴

Two of the wedding guests on this photo were marked with a penned-in “X”. It was a photo of the wedding of the Rauischholzhausen arbitrator [*Schiedsrichter*] Heinrich Otto. He had invited Jewish guests such as the siblings Julius and Louis Rülff, as well as probably Juda Rülff, to his reception in February 1931.²⁸⁵ Yet the District Administration had nothing to worry about in the case of Heinrich Otto. As Juda Rülff’s son comments:

He was the biggest scoundrel in all of Holzhausen. Maybe he did invite some Jews to his wedding, but after it he would have said, “[Go ahead and] slit their throats.”²⁸⁶

In the same year, 1935, Nazi Party comrade Otto became the mayor of Rauischholzhausen. After a brief investigation, the District Administrator was reassured two months later that “[f]urther investigations [of him] will [...] be a waste of time.”²⁸⁷

The social exclusion became increasingly public. A display case with *Der Stürmer* was mounted at the Zimmerplatz. And antisemitic signs were displayed on many shops and private houses. Non-Jewish villagers remember:

Shopkeepers had notices on their doors, “Jews prohibited from entering”, or, “I-Mann” [i.e., the nickname of baker Ludwig Grün] had one that read “The Jews are our misfortune.”²⁸⁸

Other signs threatened: “Whoever buys from a Jew is committing treason.”²⁸⁹ On 27 November 1934, the Marburg District Administrator received a letter from the Gestapo in Kassel with a new directive. In order to avoid (anti-Nazi) “atrocious propaganda abroad”, the only antisemitic signage permitted had to be distinguishable from official notices and could not be posted near public squares, large streets, or near to them. There must have been a considerable number of signs in the district that did not meet these requirements because on 14 January 1935 Krawielitzki wrote to the Marburg SA Brigade 48:

Since, according to the gendarmes, signs with antisemitic messages are also being displayed in the district of Marburg at the prompting of the SA office and since the State Police Office has ordered them to be removed immediately, I find it necessary to inform the SA offices that the SA must remove these signs immediately.²⁹⁰

By and large, though, this problem does not seem to have been corrected. A year later, the gendarmerie in Roßdorf received the following admonition from the District Administration:

The Chief of Police and SA *Gruppenführer* [i.e., “major general”] von Pfeffer [i.e., Fritz Pfeffer von Salomon, called “von Pfeffer”] in Kassel, in his capacity as head of the State Police Office, has again indicated that the directive among the orders of 27 Nov. 1934 [...] and of 23 Apr. 1935 has to be observed to the letter. [...] In consideration of the Olympic Games taking place this year, the State Police Office has ordered that the Jewish signs in question [...] shall be removed or changed immediately.²⁹¹

The terror was not only psychological. Even as early as the first year after the transfer of power to the Nazis, an assortment of violent — even physical — assaults against the Jewish population of Rauischholzhausen occurred. Only a few of them have been passed down. Martin Spier tells the following about his next-door neighbors, the Vogel family:

I had one friend. A neighbor. About 1933 and then later on [...] his mother [i.e., Elisabeth Vogel²⁹²] became one of the biggest Nazis in our town. And whenever [she] could do harm to my parents [she] would. [...] She threw stones. Whatever she could do, she did. She broke windows. That was right after Hitler came to power — 1933, 1934.²⁹³

Evidently, the native Rauischholzhausener Siegfried Bachenheimer made a mistake in thinking that he had left his birthplace once and for all when he relocated from Kirchhain to Heinebach to live with his wife Jenny's family in 1933. Martin Spier reports that, a short time after the move, Bachenheimer received a visit in Heinebach from Ludwig Grün, who brutally assaulted him.²⁹⁴ His brother Alfred Spier remarks:

Wulle, Braun [i.e., Heinrich Ebinger] [...] He was a bad guy, ruthless. I think he once got hold of Friedel Rülff [...] and beat him up.²⁹⁵

Rülff himself remembers additional assaults:

Yes, [there was] Wilhelm [i.e., Wilhelm Nau, the most brutal anti-semitic in the neighboring Catholic village of Roßdorf, according to the Spier brothers²⁹⁶]. In [...] Roßdorf, he was the SS man, one of the meanest there ever was! There wasn't anybody more awful. Vile! Back then, [...] when they were after me — like when I came home from Kirchhain on my bike in the evening — he was there, too.²⁹⁷

Even in 1935, Simon Frenkel had not yet lost his confidence in the judicial system. On 9 March 1935, the gendarme Justus Seipel from Roßdorf reported the following to the Marburg senior public prosecutor:

The businessman Simon Frenkel (Jew) has appeared [...] & filed the following charge: On March 6 [of this year], around 6:15 pm, he was riding his bicycle, coming from Schröck & headed towards Roßdorf. Along the way, William Nau from Roßdorf caught up with him & insulted him. Since he [Frenkel] had already been harassed a few weeks earlier by Nau, he did not respond to him [this time]. Nau rode his bicycle alongside of him, pushed him to the side of the road, removed his air pump from the bike & beat him over the head with it several times while still biking. Then Nau jumped off the bike & hit him another 10-15 times over the head with the pump. He [Frenkel] fell on the road & Nau kept hitting him. Then he called out for help, at which point Nau is reported to have said, "Be quiet, or I'll beat the life out of you." At this point, he [Frenkel] wanted to keep going to Roßdorf, yet Nau blocked the way & forced him back in the direction of Schröck. Nau came up behind him & hit him several more times over the head with the pump. The criminal complaint and medical certificate are enclosed. Nau is an SS-man & part of the 35th SS Unit & is employed in the surgical clinic in Marburg.²⁹⁸

Two months later Krawielitzki informed the Gestapo in Kassel that the case against Nau had been suspended by order of the public prosecutor "since there is no identifiable public interest in prosecuting him." Frenkel was urged to seek redress in civil court. Krawielitzki noted down, that he was not aware whether Frenkel had "pursued this path."²⁹⁹

On 20 August 1935, in the office of Hjalmar Schacht — Reichsbank President and Reich Minister of Economics — an inter-ministerial meeting was held, which Minister of the Interior Wilhelm Frick also attended. During that meeting, the economic consequences of "individual anti-semitic actions" were discussed.³⁰⁰ On the same day, Frick dispatched a secret letter to all state governments:

The Führer and Chancellor has ordered that individual actions against Jews by members of the Nazi Party, its structures and its affiliated organizations are unconditionally to be avoided. [...] I therefore request that all such actions be countered ruthlessly and that unreserved calm, security, and order be ensured by all means. [...] I will pursue the most severe punishment in disciplinary proceedings against officials responsible for any carelessness in implementing this decree.³⁰¹

Justus Seipel, the gendarme in Roßdorf responsible for Rauischholzhausen, received this decree on 4 September 1935. It included the following comment from the District Administration:

Elements that are prone to riot are to be clearly warned against doing so and made aware of the consequences they will have to suffer. Should such riots take place, they are to be reported to me as quickly as possible, at any hour of the day. The decree from the Minister himself, which has been received as “classified” material, should not enter into the public domain and must not be read or shown to any private individuals; instead, it is to be treated as classified.³⁰²

In spite of all the demands of confidentiality, the Nazis in Marburg were to be warned in advance.

As drastic and brutal as they were, the “individual actions” discussed above—the physical violence as well as the new initiative aimed at exclusions—were actions taken by individuals in Rauischholzhausen in early years of the Nazi period. However, the success of these actions, excluding the Jewish residents ever more completely from public life, was soon supported by the majority of the villagers.

Economic Exclusion

The exclusion of “Jews” from economic life was less straightforward. As early as spring 1933, anti-Jewish occupational prohibitions were directed at civil officials and professionals. Besides, the commercial activity of Jews in the first years after the transfer of power was almost unhindered by *legal* measures, on account of economic-strategic considerations.³⁰³

In 1933, the Jewish population of Rauschholzhausen was active in the shoemaking and tailoring crafts, in the meat as well as the grocery business, as well as in textiles and the livestock trade. Shortly after Hitler’s rise to power, antisemitic boycotts commenced in the village. Due to Rauschholzhausen’s particular commercial infrastructure and the diversity of local shopping options (when compared with other places in the region), there were hardly any infrastructural disadvantages once the Jewish grocery or butcher shops had to be avoided. The non-Jewish competitors readily benefitted from such business closures. And when David Stern, the only local shoemaker, died in November 1933, the village no longer needed to depend on *him*. We do not know exactly how Goebbels’ nationwide call on 1 April 1933 for an anti-Jewish boycott was implemented in Rauschholzhausen.³⁰⁴ What is certain, however, is that the Jewish residents were soon exposed to drastic boycott measures and bureaucratic caprice.

The first victim of the social boycott was likely the Frenkel family, which ran one of the five grocery stores in Rauschholzhausen.³⁰⁵ As early as 1933, the Frenkels had to close their business “as a result of the boycott of Jewish businesses, coupled with violent assaults and extortions.”³⁰⁶ In 1934, their store was transferred to the non-Jewish carpenter Peter Deuker.³⁰⁷ Whether he maintained the business or used the premises for something else is unknown. Simon Frenkel, after giving up the store, worked as an itinerant trader selling manufactured goods.³⁰⁸ Yet in 1935, that came to an end as well. In August 1935, he contended:

In light of the changed circumstances, I am unable to earn anything.³⁰⁹

The first victims of systematic state harassment were the brothers Julius and Louis Rülff, who operated one of several butcher shops in Rauischholzhausen. The sale of meat to the Orthodox Jewish population had already come to an abrupt end with the national ban of *shechita* (Jewish ritual slaughter) on 21 April 1933.³¹⁰ As of 1933, the Rülffs' butcher shop was also the object of an intense antisemitic boycott.³¹¹ In the fall of 1934, their shop was eventually closed as a "preventative police measure" by the gendarme Justus Seipel.³¹² Julius Rülff recalls:

The pretext given was that the butcher shop did not meet hygiene requirements. The truth, however, was that almost all Jewish butcher shops were shut down at that time, using all kinds of pretexts. I then had my butchering done for a while at the slaughterhouse in Giessen. After about a month, however, that too was prohibited by the slaughterhouse management. I tried then [...] to have the slaughtering done in a small village near Giessen, but that was not possible, either. At that point, I was no longer able to be employed in Germany.³¹³

Not every Rauischholzhausen resident joined in the economic exclusion. But as early as 1933, only secret business with Jewish residents seemed possible. Thus, a non-Jewish villager remembers his dealings with the shoemaker David Stern, who was already dead by November 1933:

In Holzhausen, when someone said he would buy a pair of shoes at Feist's [i.e., the village name of the family Stern] David, [...] he knew exactly how that worked. He didn't go there on clear Sunday at noon, when everyone could see him. [Instead] he went there in the evening when it was dark, or he'd be done for.³¹⁴

A non-Jewish woman from the village elaborates:

There was [a fellow] from here who had done his apprenticeship with him. As a shoemaker. [...] And they made it so he failed his test since he had apprenticed with a Jew.³¹⁵

Yet, besides this incident, it appears that in Rauschholzhausen — by and large — more *threats* were made than were carried out. Friedel Rülff reports:

There was probably some business done in secret [i.e., transactions made with the Jewish population]. But the people were afraid. They were afraid! [...] A couple of folks in the village influenced these things. So, they'd [...] say, "If you do that again, then we won't buy your milk anymore." That did the trick. They coerced the others, putting the knife to their throats.³¹⁶

Regarding the neighboring village of Wittelsberg, the Marburg District Administrator reported to the Gestapo in Kassel on 15 April 1935:

In the night between the 13th and 14th [i.e., of this month], in the municipality of Wittelsberg, as yet unknown assailants painted red graffiti on some homes of residents who were proven to have done business lately with Jewish merchants. In presenting 5 complaints that were reported — the return of which I hereby request — I am also requesting instructions on how this matter should be dealt with.³¹⁷

One of the Wittelsberg farmers who was affected testified that —

The following things [graffiti] were written: on my house, "Flax-Moses"; on the barn, "You're a white Jew"; on the stall, "Here lives a comrade of Judas." [...] For the Jewish manufacturer Weinberg from Treysa, I drove three carts of flax from Wittelsberg to the train station in Wittelsberg and to the train station in Schröck. At first, I didn't know that Weinberg was a Jew. [...] The graffiti were photo-

graphed yesterday by a gentleman who is not from here, during the lunch hour. He was apparently rambling toward Rauisch-Holzhausen.³¹⁸

Another person added courageously:

I admit that I have repeatedly had business relationships with Jewish traders. I feel that is no reason to show me up or harm me this way. I belong to the local farmer's league and am a member of the *Reichsnährstand* [i.e., the national organization for agriculture]. Because I own 32 hectares, I have the largest farm in the village.³¹⁹

Three weeks later Krawielitzki received an answer from Kassel:

Nothing more needs to be done in this case.³²⁰

The suppression of Jewish cattle and horse dealers turned out to be more difficult than for other sectors of the economy. Yet this had nothing to do with the behavior of the non-Jewish population in Rauischholzhausen. Due to the special occupational structure of the village, such as the limited number of local farmers, the horse dealers Juda and Friedel Rülff and the cattle dealer Abraham Spier conducted most of their business in neighboring towns. Jewish merchants had always dominated cattle and horse trade in the district. Hence, they could not be swiftly replaced by the work of cattle cooperatives or by "Aryan" dealers. At first, there were no legal restrictions, yet local authorities in many places did not hesitate to find random ways to impose some. In May 1933, Jewish merchants were barred from the Marburg cattle market.³²¹ At the end of 1933, the Kirchhain cattle market, held every two weeks, was declared "Jew-free" on the mayor's authority.³²² The Kirchhain mayor was clearly not impressed by the contrary orders of the Reich Ministry of Economics issued in September and October of 1933 — that local authorities had to refrain from such economic constraints or cancel already enacted bans since these violated the Reich Trade and Commerce Code. The result was



18 The horse trading business J. Rülff, located in today's Alte Schulstraße, around 1910. Standing in front of the building are Juda Rülff's children, from left to right: Rosa, Friedel, and Selma.

that the cattle market nearest to the Rauschholzhausen cattle dealer Abraham Spier remained “Jew-free.”³²³ In 1934, the same thing happened at the horse market in Giessen, which significantly impacted Juda and Friedel Rülff.³²⁴

In addition to the official harassment, there was the growing threat of antisemitic attacks on overland trips. My grandmother's memories of her experiences as a young adult on the family farm in the neighboring village Moischt seem harmless by comparison:

The cattle dealers? [...] They came. To Moischt. Yes, indeed. [...] A horse dealer, one of them. And Bachenheimer, who dealt in cows [i.e., Emanuel Bachenheimer; born in Rauschholzhausen, who lived after 1925 in Kirchhain]. And the “Itzigers” [i.e., the village name of Julius and Louis Rülff]. The two of them were called “Itziger.” One of them, he rode a bicycle, and the other one sat up front [...] on the bike. And once we were in the pasture below, and

Frenkel [i.e., Simon Frenkel, who after giving up his grocery business worked as a traveling salesman] came by. He had a horse and had something like a buggy, I want to say. [...] And then our [...] [maid], she was from Cappeln [...], she gathered up some frogs in her apron, frogs from the pasture — we were making hay there — and she threw them at the Jew and at the cart. [...] Those are the kinds of pranks we pulled.³²⁵

The former horse dealer Friedel Rülff has an additional account:

And across from — across the road from Peil — lived Mr. Grün, the baker. He ran after me in the Marburg Forest with a hammer. I had two horses with me. I wanted to bring them to Marburg to be loaded. [...] So he ran after me with the hammer [...]. I had to let the horses go, and I ran away. And he was gone, too.³²⁶

Soon the cattle trade was also conducted only in secret. Walter Spier recalls:

If farmers sold cattle to our father, they had to do so in the middle of the night, because the farmer was afraid.³²⁷

His brother Martin adds:

My father had bought a cow in Roßdorf. [...] They were not supposed to do business with a Jew, so he took it home. We [i.e., Martin and his brothers] had to [...] — I think Alfred or Julius, my brother — we had to make a [detour] [...]. [From] Roßdorf we brought the cow to Kirchhain. [We] went through the forest, through [...] a field, to Schröck and all around there. We brought [the cow] to an uncle who lived in Kirchhain. The people [...] were afraid of doing business with the Jews.³²⁸

As a result, District Administrator Krawielitzki had a hard time investigating these incidents:

Unlike in the past, the Jewish traders are not present at the weighing of the cattle which they want to acquire. The farmers weigh the cattle on their own and then bring the cattle back to their property in order to remove them from the stable at night and drive them to the Jewish merchants.³²⁹

After being asked to formally observe what was going on, the gendarmerie in Kirchhain also reported:

But it's hard to get anyone to identify names since both sides proceed with the greatest caution. The cattle are weighed by the farmers and then are transported for the Jew by unknown drivers.³³⁰

Despite all the difficulties, threats, and massive calls for boycott, the Jewish traders of cattle and horses did not let themselves be driven out of the region as quickly as Krawielitzki wanted. Based on their many years of experience and countrywide relationships in the business, many of them offered perfect price estimates and made loans possible. They themselves visited the most remote farms, paid in cash, bought also weaker animals and exchanged working and breeding cattle for beef cattle.³³¹ By contrast, when the farmers did business with sales cooperatives, which had been coopted by the Nazis in April 1933, they regularly had to wait a long time to get paid and also had to absorb large price reductions.³³² The economy was therefore most likely the most important reason why non-Jewish business associates continued to conduct business with Jewish traders.³³³ The Rauischholzhausen horse dealer Friedel Rülff recalls:

Yes, yes, it lasted until '35 or '36, [...]. It went on that long. They still weren't that fanatical, especially not in the Catholic places: Roßdorf, Mardorf, Schröck. [...] [In] Roßberg, we had good, good, good cus-

tomers [...]. Once I heard [that] there was an elderly man who had died of grief that my father left [i.e., Juda Rülff had emigrated in 1938 to the United States]. “Cloos” is what he was called.³³⁴

Furious, Krawielitzki wrote to Kassel in the fall of 1935:

Unfortunately, the cattle trade is still today largely in the hands of the Jews, which (in my opinion) is due to the fact that the newly established cattle cooperative offices have still not gained the confidence of the rural population.³³⁵

He goes on to explain:

While the farmers have often gotten used to the egg cooperative association to some extent, the complaints about the cattle cooperatives have been almost unanimous. They represent a second red thread through almost all reports by the mayors and gendarme officials in the district.³³⁶

So, at the end of 1935, the activities of Jewish cattle and horse dealers had not yet come to a complete standstill.

Among the business associates of the Jewish traders, at first there were even some office-holders — much to the displeasure of Krawielitzki (the Marburg District Administrator). Following Krawielitzki’s inquiry, made at the request of the Gestapo in Kassel, as to which public figures or members of local councils were working with “Jews” after 1 August 1934, the Roßdorf gendarme Seipel reported two Rauischholzhauseners, one of whom was one of the (few) farmers in the village: i.e., Franz Kaiser, a member of the local council and of the Nazi Party.³³⁷ Accompanied by a note that he was making no claim to completeness, Krawielitzki sent his report on 189 office-holders in his district to Kassel:

The mayors and councilors have now been cautioned by me, with the threat that they will be relieved of their offices if they carry out any more transactions with Jews.³³⁸

The names of the “disloyal” Party members were subsequently posted in the local *Der Stürmer* display case.³³⁹

The lack of legal constraints on anti-Jewish economic activity contradicted the Party’s propaganda. The inconsistency resulted from two irreconcilable objectives: the struggle against “the Jews” and the desire to promote Germany’s economic recovery.³⁴⁰ The Head Regional Administrator in Kassel, von Monbart, confirmed in August 1934:

The Jewish Question still plays a significant role. In business life, the Jews are still presenting themselves quite strongly. The cattle trade is once again completely dominated by them. The position of the Nazi organizations on the Jewish Question is unchanged. In particular, it often conflicts with the instructions of the Reich Minister of Economics concerning the treatment of Jewish businesses. The State Police Office and I have repeatedly had to cancel local official boycott measures and raids.³⁴¹

The Gestapo Office in Kassel corroborated this account:

The entire Jewish Question suffers from a contradiction between the Jewish policy of the Ministry of Economics and our Movement. [...] The general public does not at all understand this disparity in Jewish policy. The simple [Nazi] fighter does not grasp that he will be held accountable for actions that have grown out of the propaganda of the Movement.³⁴²

Section 2: From the Nuremberg Laws to the November Pogroms

The Nuremberg Laws and an Upsurge in Violence

Early 1935 saw a rise in agitation as well as a second wave of antisemitic violence throughout the Reich. All this was the result of continuing economic difficulties, resentment over the murder of SA head Ernst Röhm, and a sense that efforts resulting in increased Party membership had gone unappreciated.³⁴³ In Rauischholzhausen as well, the violence took on new dimensions that year.

Sometime near the end of 1934, Justus Seipel of Rauischholzhausen took over the Roßdorf gendarmerie responsible for policing Rauischholzhausen.³⁴⁴ In early 1935, Heinrich Otto — who had previously served as a lay judge and was a staunch Nazi — became the mayor.³⁴⁵ In the mid-1930s, a local Nazi Party cell was evidently founded in the village, subordinate to the Wittelsberg local group [*Ortsgruppe*].³⁴⁶ Due to very limited source material, however, particularly the lack of Nazi Party files, little is known about the allocation of offices within the Rauischholzhausen party cell.³⁴⁷ As for who held the office of Nazi Party “cell leader”, a non-Jewish contemporary maintains,

I’m assuming that if it wasn’t Becker [i.e., Heinrich Becker, my biological grandfather], then it was “Goebbels”, [that is,] Deuker [i.e., Johannes Deuker, nicknamed “Goebbels’che”].³⁴⁸

Another non-Jewish contemporary witness believes that the local Nazi Party functionaries were –

Weidemüller [i.e., the village nickname for Heinrich Otto] and “Goebbels’che”, Schweißguth. Now, who were all the others? There

were enough women in it. [...] Yes, Becker'sche was among them back then; he was a general practitioner. [...] And his wife was among them. [...] Their name was Becker. [...] And don't forget: the Schmidts over there [i.e., Else Schmidt and relatives]! [...] All of the Schmidts! *All* the Schmidts!³⁴⁹

In 1939, Daniel Scheld was appointed Nazi local leader (or *Blockleiter*).³⁵⁰ For 1941, an overview of the Nazi local group of Wittelsberg reports that Mayor Otto (who was actually serving in the armed forces [*Wehrmacht*] at the time) was the head of Rauschholzhausener Nazi Party cell [*Zellenleiter*].³⁵¹ The same overview of 1941 names Scheld and Konrad Schweißguth as local leaders within the Party cell. Else Schmidt of Rauschholzhausen served as the head of the Nazi Women's League within the Wittelsberg local group.³⁵² After Otto's tenure, in 1943 at the latest, Schweißguth then became the head of the Nazi Party cell [*Zellenleiter*].³⁵³

Meanwhile, in June 1935, the Spiers were looking forward to a major event: the bar mitzvah of their eldest son.³⁵⁴ On Monday, 17 June, Julius had turned thirteen. For the whole week, the family prepared for the banquet on Saturday. On Friday, before the start of *shabbat*, their out-of-town relatives arrived. But as the festive group entered the synagogue that Saturday morning, they found it had been completely ruined the previous night. Julius' brother Martin remembers,

[T]hat night, they threw eggs in the synagogue. And [...] the next day, I remember that [there] were eggs all over the seats.³⁵⁵

According to his brother Walter,

[F]rom that day on people moved away. People moved to other towns [or] emigrated to the U.S.³⁵⁶

Two months later, on 27 August 1935, Gendarme Köthe from the station in Schröck contacted the Marburg chief prosecutor. Köthe informed him

that the mayor of Moischt had just told him “that many locals were talking about” Hermann Mendel, who in July had visited a forcibly sterilized 23-year-old woman³⁵⁷ while her mother was ill.³⁵⁸ Two boys who happened to be at that home had been sent away, “each of them getting 5 Pfennig to buy candy.” Hermann Mendel had thus been left alone with the young woman, leading others to “assume[] that the girl had been sexually abused.” As a result of this village gossip, the woman in question had now made “a confession” — after at first “denying it for a while.”³⁵⁹ The next day, Mendel was summoned by Köthe for questioning; he denied the allegations, claiming to have visited the woman in order to buy a goat.³⁶⁰ At a subsequent police lineup, the woman “suddenly began [...] to cry and said [...] [she had] not properly considered the matter.” Hermann Mendel had not raped her but grabbed her neck with his hands.³⁶¹ Mendel initially refused to continue with the interrogation but then admitted to her new depiction of the events, that he had taken hold of her neck. Even the perpetrator files provide a very clear picture of what happened here: Hermann Mendel had become the victim of the delusional racist fantasies of villagers in Moischt. While the rape allegations were successfully contested, there was still fear of possible “blood pollution” [*Blutsbeschmutzung*]. On 3 September 1935, the District Administrator in Marburg ordered that —

The Jew Hermann Mendel in R-Holzhausen continues to be closely observed. The investigation into his relations [*Verkehr*] with Aryan girls will continue. This Jew is obviously not clean.³⁶²

Mendel had thereby been “lucky”.³⁶³ On 15 September 1935, an evening session of the Reichstag took place in Nuremberg. Hitler proclaimed that the provocative behavior of “the Jews” was creating tension with other countries while also increasing general discontent in Germany:³⁶⁴

If these actions do not lead to very decisive (and individually unforeseeable) defensive reactions by our outraged population, the only path left to us is a legal resolution of the problem. The govern-

ment of the German Reich is thereby guided by the idea that a unique secular solution can perhaps create a way that it makes it possible for the German people to have a tolerable relationship with the Jewish people. If this hope should not be fulfilled, if domestic and international Jewish agitation continues, this situation will have to be reevaluated.³⁶⁵

With that rationale, two historic laws were issued that same evening. The first, the Reich Citizenship Law, established the difference between German nationals [*Staatsangehörige*] and “Reich citizens” [*Reichsbürger*]. One could become such a citizen of the Reich, with full political and civil rights, only if one were of “German or kindred blood.”³⁶⁶ As early as 1933, the Rauschholzhausen Mayor Amend was not certain what should be entered under the column of “nationality” when recording for the village registry [*Meldebuch*] the departures and arrivals of Jews in the town. He decided to leave the column blank in the case of Jewish individuals. In July 1935, he entered “Jew” for the first time when Julius Rülfs registration had to be modified but then crossed it out later. His successor as mayor, Otto, took up this idea and entered the term “Jew” again. On 4 February 1939, however, he decided to summarily eliminate the columns on “nationality” and “religion” when referring to the Jewish inhabitants. Starting that day, then, the village registration book recorded the Jewish residents of Rauschholzhausen as devoid of nationality or religion. After 1941, under Otto’s successor Karl Wahl, these same residents were once again registered as “Jews.”³⁶⁷

Under the second Nuremberg decree of 15 September 1935 — the “Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor” — marriages and extramarital sexual intercourse between “Jews” and citizens “of German or kindred blood” became punishable by law.³⁶⁸ In both cases, men were threatened with imprisonment, pursuant to Section 5 (I and II) of the law.³⁶⁹ So, why could Hermann Mendel have been considered “lucky”? The charges against him had been dropped on 26 September 1935 owing to insufficient evidence.³⁷⁰ The next day, though, the Marburg District Administrator also received the directive that –

[...] in all cases of “race defilement” [*Rassenschande*] committed *prior to the law’s announcement* [...], one must refrain from taking suspected persons into custody.³⁷¹

With respect to the proceedings against Hermann Mendel, the District Administrator had no choice but to note that –

Because, according to a memorandum of the Chief Prosecutor, the trial has been discontinued; there is no reason to pursue the matter further.³⁷²

Section 3 of the “Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor” announced yet another innovation in the lives of Jewish villagers in Rauischholzhausen:

Jews may not employ in their households female nationals of German or kindred blood who are under 45 years of age.

This provision was to apply to all households where there were any Jewish men of sixteen years (or older).³⁷³ Among those who had to say good-bye to their employers were a 39-year-old domestic in the Frenkels’ house (who also did the laundry for Juda Rülff and his children), a 44-year-old domestic in the home of the Mendels, and a housekeeper at the Spiers.³⁷⁴ This law, besides excluding Jews socially, also affected the religious practices of the Orthodox community. The work they were forbidden to do on the Sabbath had always been performed by Christian domestics. According to Alfred Spier,

We did not light fires [on the Sabbath]. As long as we still had maids, they did that. [...] And later, yes, I don’t know what we did in the winter. [...] We cooked before [the Sabbath started]. And I think we lit the stove on Friday evening and left it on [for the duration of the Sabbath].³⁷⁵

Needless to say, Hitler's explanatory statement that the new law was intended to reduce "popular discontent" was only a pretense. The readiness of people to commit anti-Jewish violence in Rauschholzhausen was not moderated by the new laws. Instead, it reached a short-term peak by the end of 1935. When members of the Jewish community sought to enter the synagogue on 1 January 1936, "[...] they found that the T. S. [Torah scrolls³⁷⁶] had been stolen and had been — as they later discovered — incinerated at the local bakery."³⁷⁷ Martin Spier maintains:

There was a baker next door [i.e., Ludwig Grün]. And he took the *sifre torah* [i.e., Torah scrolls] and put them in the stove.³⁷⁸

The extent of that New Year's Eve looting is indicated in a letter composed by the attorneys commissioned by the Jewish community. According to the correspondence, sent in the summer of 1937 to the provincial government:

Over two years ago, there was a burglary in the synagogue of our community; two Torah scrolls were stolen as well as a number of prayer books, candelabras, and various other items, including a silver ornament from a Torah scroll.³⁷⁹

But the Rauschholzhausen synagogue was not only looted. That night it was devastated beyond the point of repair. Alfred Spier recalls that the synagogue —

[...] was no longer — used. Couldn't be used any more. I mean, it was ruined on the inside.³⁸⁰

1 January 1936 thereby marked the end of Jewish institutional life in Rauschholzhausen. In the next years, the building housing the synagogue became a storage site for a local farmer's hay and straw.³⁸¹

Two months after the synagogue was ruined, both Julius Rülff and the Baum family of Wittelsberg emigrated.³⁸² After they left, there were

fewer than ten men left in the Jewish community of Rauischholzhausen-Wittelsberg, even when adding the Jewish residents in Roßdorf. That meant the *minyan* necessary for worship was no longer there.³⁸³ The community joined the official Jewish community of Mardorf-Roßdorf and henceforth attended the synagogue in Mardorf.³⁸⁴

Because the synagogue had been destroyed, the Jewish community filed a complaint at the Roßdorf gendarmerie and reported the incident to the District Administration. However, no one ever investigated to find the perpetrators.³⁸⁵ The inaction of the authorities was fully consistent with the spirit of the time, as described in a letter from the provincial government to the Marburg District Administrator:

I must unfortunately conclude that the individual actions prohibited against Jews in the administrative district have not ceased but have instead continued into the present. This situation is not consistent with the will of the Führer or with the policies of the Reich government. [...] I have the impression that little has been done in the way of a precautionary prevention of riots or an energetic prosecution of the perpetrators in the district. Efforts to prevent riots have hardly been undertaken. Police investigations have been largely inconclusive, although in some cases a positive determination might have been made. These conditions can no longer be tolerated. [...] If, in the future, a riot should take place, you must in each case provide me with a detailed report of why it [...] was not possible to prevent and what steps were taken to actively prosecute the perpetrators.³⁸⁶

As early as 1936, the “individual activities”³⁸⁷ still prohibited in Rauischholzhausen became *numerous* activities being undertaken by *many*. A rough picture of conditions is conveyed in the same 1937 letter to the provincial government written by attorneys hired by the Jewish community:

This past fall, about five gravestones were overturned in our cemetery. As a result, we filed charges at the gendarmerie. Within the last few weeks, approximately twelve more have been overturned. One can see that the gravestones were forced out of the ground. [...] Lately, windows have been repeatedly broken at the homes of community members. This [vandalism] took place most recently on the night of 1 July. Six windows were broken at the widow Berta Rülff's home, approximately two at Abraham Spier's, and six at Hermann Mendel's.³⁸⁸

It appears that young people in particular were imitating the SA bosses in the village. As Alfred Spier notes that –

With respect to losses or damages, I know they were constantly occurring.³⁸⁹

According to a non-Jewish witness of the times,

Yes, I wanted to tell you [about] that, how the schoolchildren all came here. [...] I took a look and said, "So, what are they all doing here?" And they kept coming. In their aprons, they had —. [...] At the time, the girls still wore aprons, even to school. And they had their aprons full of thick stones. And then I said, "Okay, so where are they going?" And back there, there was an old lady [i.e., Hedwig Stern] [...] And [...] there was suddenly — and there was a screech back there! And then — that poor old, good woman — they kicked her door down, the front door. And threw stones [at] the whole house, the windows, [...] thick stones. [...] Back then, they said that their teacher was a Nazi, too. He was the one who got the kids to do it! [...] Girls and boys. They were the ones going there. [...] [It was i]n broad daylight, late in the morning. It was from the school that they were sent there.³⁹⁰

Another non-Jewish witness remembers the same (or a similar) incident as follows:

I saw how they broke the woman's [i.e., Hedwig Stern's] windows. [...] I saw it! They came over. [With l]arge sticks, stones under their arms. And then they broke all the windows below! The windows there were low. [...] The Feist family [i.e., the village name of the Stern family] had a bunch of low windows. [...] And then they broke all the windows! [...] These were school kids from Holzhausen! [...] Mostly boys.³⁹¹

It wasn't just the teacher Nadolny egging on the schoolchildren. Based on something she heard, a third witness in the village explains,

Weidemüller [i.e., the village name for Mayor Heinrich Otto], [...] came to the school and said, "Boys, today you're going to break the Jews' windows!" [...] That's what I heard this afternoon from my [neighbor]. [...] She was in the school at the time.³⁹²

One of the contemporary witnesses cited above explains:

So, the boys went up the street (the *Gässchen*, as we call it), where they encountered [some] Jewish boys; a mother stood on the stairs and called out, "What are you doin'? You want to be Hitler Youths, but you just let them walk by?" That's what one mother said!³⁹³

It was becoming progressively more dangerous for Jews to defend themselves. Walter Spier recalls:

It was a Jewish holiday, Tisha B'av³⁹⁴, [...] and for a week you're not supposed to eat meat, only on Saturday. And we only kept [i.e., observed the holiday for] three days. [...] Why three days, I don't [remember]. [...] So, what I wanted to bring out [...]: on that day, my father came into the house, and Braune Wulle [i.e., Heinrich Ebinger]

was in [...] back of my father. He wanted to hit him. And I came out, and I gave him a push. They could have killed me! The Nazis, you know? And he [i.e., Ebinger] ran away.³⁹⁵

Destruction of Economic Livelihoods

1936 also marked the beginning of a new phase of Nazi economic policy. Previously, it had been necessary to pursue a relatively moderate approach in some sectors to stabilize the economy. Now, however, full employment and economic recovery meant that the contradictions could gradually be resolved in the measures governing anti-Jewish economic policies to that point. After 1936, “ideology and policy could increasingly [proceed] in lockstep.”³⁹⁶ From then on, antisemitic policies had three main objectives: to accelerate the Aryanization of Jewish businesses, to increase pressure on “Jews” to emigrate, and to promote antisemitic agitation.³⁹⁷ As a result, 1937 heralded the end of economic livelihoods for Jews in Rauischholzhausen.

In February 1937, nonetheless, the Marburg Nazi district leadership announced:

Time and again, we can see that the Jews are still well-represented in the cattle trade. [...] A local [Nazi] group thus reports that the Giessen cattle market is a purely Jewish affair, even today. [N.B., the Giessen horse market had already been “free of Jews” since 1934.³⁹⁸] According to this report, there is strong criticism, especially in the villages of our hinterland, that the Giessen cattle market is not yet free of Jews. [...] This is not understood by local farmers who have been asked to stop doing business with Jews. [...] According to our information, half of the market hall at the Dortmund horse market consists of Jewish dealers.³⁹⁹

But the district leadership’s troubles would soon disappear.

Since 1935 the awarding of livestock trade concessions, a process

requiring annual renewals, had become the responsibility of the *Reichsnährstand* (the national farmers' organization). This meant that Jewish cattle dealers were repeatedly and arbitrarily denied authorization by the leader of the district's farmers, who (himself) was subordinate to the *Reichsnährstand*.⁴⁰⁰ While legal recourse was possible for Jewish businessmen, it was not particularly promising. What is more: in order to deal with the failures of the livestock cooperatives to take over the Jewish cattle and horse businesses, an attempt was made after 1935 to seize the accounting records of those businesses. The disclosure of these transactions thus increased the pressure on any non-Jewish customers, and the Jewish traders could be sanctioned for even small irregularities in their account books.⁴⁰¹ On 12 October 1937, for instance, the Jewish cattle dealer Isidor Wertheim from Bürgeln (in the Marburg district) received the following letter from the Livestock Industry Association [*Viehwirtschaftsverband*] of Kurhessen:

On the occasion of [recent] monitoring by our representative in the Marburg district peasantry, it was determined that your last livestock purchases took place on 15 April and 11 May. These animals were then sold in [this past] August. I have to conclude from these facts that your livestock operation had been closed for business more than temporarily, although you did not notify me of this closure. As a result, the aforementioned sale [of livestock] would have been subject to [administrative] approval. In this case, I will refrain from imposing an administrative fine; however, I am herewith informing you that [...] your livestock operation is henceforth regarded as shut down.⁴⁰²

By the end of August 1935, Krawielitzki was already able to report an initial (if partial) success:

On the whole, Jewish commerce — especially the cattle trade — has declined significantly in recent weeks. [...] Weaning the population from trading with Jews is merely a question of education and char-

acter. [...] Another factor in the suppression of the Jewish cattle trade was the strict monitoring of the cattle-buying and -selling books of the Jewish traders, which I have been overseeing for several months now. This monitoring has repeatedly revealed prosecutable inconsistencies and made the dealers' lives difficult.⁴⁰³

In January 1937, the Reich Ministry for Nutrition and Agriculture finally proclaimed a "Regulation on the Trade in Cattle."⁴⁰⁴ This decree stipulated that decisions as to who would be admitted to the cattle trade would depend on "a variety of material conditions and the personal reliability" of the dealers concerned. This vague formulation permitted much leeway for administrative interpretation. In practice, it resulted in Jewish cattle dealers being rejected across the board as lacking the necessary "personal reliability."

Abraham Spier was one of the 219 Jewish cattle dealers who lost their business concessions in the province of Hesse-Nassau in 1937.⁴⁰⁵ In the course of 1936, Spier's monthly income already amounted to less than 135 *Reichsmark* [hereafter, "RM"] (based on an average of 4.5 animal sales per month).⁴⁰⁶ In 1937, his income fell once more, soon becoming negligible.⁴⁰⁷ Then, on 22 December 1937, Abraham Spier and his brother-in-law Adolph Wertheim (in Kirchhain) each received the same letter, stipulating:

On the basis of Section 3 in conjunction with Section 7 of the Regulation on the Trade in Cattle decreed on 25 January 1937 [...] I hereby revoke the license of your livestock trading company, effective 1 April 1938, because you do not have the personal or factual suitability for leading such a company. According to the Regulation on the Trade in Cattle [...], you are permitted to appeal this decision to the Arbitration Court of the Livestock Industry Association of Kurhessen.⁴⁰⁸

Evidently, Abraham Spier only gradually recognized the factual finality of this decision. He first filed for arbitration but then abandoned the ef-

fort a short time later—likely on account of the court costs.⁴⁰⁹ He was then unsuccessful in an attempt to earn a living as a traveling salesman of manufactured goods; customers stayed away from him.⁴¹⁰ When the Law Amending the Commercial Code was issued on 6 July 1938, “Jews” were finally prohibited from practicing itinerant trades as well as any trade beyond their places of residence.⁴¹¹

The Mendels’ butcher shop had to close up at this time, too. In 1937, the police investigated Hermann Mendel on suspicion of having disregarded the prohibition on Jewish ritual slaughter as well as having “smuggled meat.” He was penalized by the Marburg police administration with a “10 RM [fine] or two days in jail.”⁴¹² In the same year, the Roßdorf gendarme Justus Seipel arbitrarily forbid the Mendel couple from continuing to operate the business, calling on them to sell off their goods and suspend commerce.⁴¹³ Fifteen years later, Seipel justified his actions as follows:

[...] the customers were not buying. One cannot speak of a business run by the Mendels in 1937; at most one can speak of a bit of old inventory.⁴¹⁴

Once closed, the butcher shop was used free of charge by the village as a goat stable.⁴¹⁵ In the following period, the Mendels tried to gain an economic foothold by dealing in various wares. But like the attempts made by Simon Frenkel and Abraham Spier to do business with manufactured goods, the Mendels also did not experience significant sales.⁴¹⁶ The economic survival of the Jewish population of Rauischholzhausen had been destroyed.⁴¹⁷

In November of 1937, the Marburg Nazi district leadership also seemed reassured:

As a result of the legislation on Jews and also the educational efforts that have been intensified in the countryside [...], Jewish influence in the Marburg district has continued to decline steadily. This conclusion was already apparent in the decrease (in absolute numerical terms) of the district’s Jewish population to 520 this year. [...] An-

other consequence of these measures is the pronounced waning of Jewish commerce, which goes far beyond the decline of Jewish influence that might be attributed to the losses in Jewish population. The waning of the Jewish cattle trade should be noted as characteristic for these developments [...]. It has been reported in most communities that cattle trading with Jews has almost completely ceased. As conveyed by the district's farmers, another 30 Jews (of the total amount of 72 Jewish traders listed as of 1 June 1937) will be eliminated from the trade by 31 December 1937 at the latest (after finishing the installation of the new Professional Association of Cattle Distributors), lacking the necessary resources to continue. Seven Jewish cattle dealers whose businesses were doing reasonably well have closed up shop in recent months; they have either emigrated or are on the verge of doing so. In the coming months, more of them are expected to leave the country. In addition, other forms of commerce with Jews are [...] in decline everywhere. No doubt, this welcome change can be attributed to the fear of possible punishment by the *Reichsnährstand* or other entities (a fear at least among the older generation). For the most part, however, the change can be explained by an increased recognition that the Jews are parasitic. The only ones who perceive this differently are a few communities, primarily Catholic ones [...]. The conduct and demeanor of the Jewish residents has been cautious and restrained. I have received no reports of Jewish disobedience or insolence. In many cases, the Jews are attempting to be good and dutiful citizens, emphasizing their service in the Great War, their wounded [veterans], etc.⁴¹⁸

Expulsion

Slowly but surely, the Jewish citizens of Rauschholzhausen were realizing they no longer had a future there. In the winter, at the start of 1938, Abraham Spier wrote to his cousin Friedel Rülff in the U.S.:

[Walter] is sitting here in the kitchen [...], sitting at the desk. He can't go to school and I don't know what to do.⁴¹⁹

At that point, Spier's youngest son Walter was the only Jewish child still living in Rauischholzhausen. In 1935 and 1936, humiliation and harassment by teachers and students at the local primary school [*Volksschule*] were clearly on the rise. As Martin Spier remembers it:

[W]e had to play together. We [...] [were] the only [Jewish] children left in our town, in Holzhausen. [...] We couldn't go out on the street. We had in front of our building a little yard, where we played. [...] We had no money to buy toys or anything. Whatever we made, we made by ourselves. [...] We [...] [were] close. But we had nobody else to play with.⁴²⁰

The Spiers had already been able to find alternatives for Walter's four older siblings. Their daughter Edith, denied admission to the *Realschule* in Kirchhain, was the first to leave the village. She relocated to Bielefeld, likely at the beginning of 1936. Her relatives there, Sally and Henny Salomon, were able to get her a menial job in Altenau (in Lower Saxony).⁴²¹ A short time later in 1936, their eldest son Julius also left Rauischholzhausen. After trying to find work nearby, the 14-year-old eventually took a job as a farmhand in Versmold (near Bielefeld).⁴²² His younger brother, Alfred, left the Rauischholzhausen primary school in 1935. After trying to get admitted to secondary schools in Marburg, his parents registered him at the Jewish primary school in Marburg. From then on, Alfred rode his bike every day from Rauischholzhausen to Marburg, in constant danger of being assaulted along the way. His lessons were held in the rooms of the Marburg synagogue:

And our teacher there was Pfifferling. We had a school room, and all the grades — all eight of them — were [...] together in that same room. I can tell you: we learned almost nothing there.⁴²³

Section 2: From the Nuremberg Laws to the November Pogroms



19 Jewish Orphanage in Frankfurt am Main, Röderbergweg 87, no date.



20 Martin Spier on the balcony of the Frankfurt Jewish Orphanage, circa 1939.

In the spring of 1938, his parents succeeded in getting their (now 14-year-old) son Alfred into a Jewish boarding school that had opened up in Bad Nauheim in 1937.⁴²⁴ The Spiers, at the end of 1937, were compelled to have their youngest sons leave the Rauischholzhausen primary school, where they had been the last two Jewish children left.⁴²⁵ Martin, their 12-year-old, left Rauischholzhausen in early 1938 to enroll in the Jewish Samson Raphael Hirsch School in Frankfurt.⁴²⁶ His parents first managed to put him up in a children's home in the Hölderlinstraße in Frankfurt and later in the Jewish orphanage.⁴²⁷

Their other son, Walter, only ten years old at the time, spent more than a year at home alone with his parents—without the benefit of school, siblings, or friends: “That’s why I’m so smart”, he quipped.⁴²⁸

For Abraham Spier, 1938 was another serious year. This time it meant saying goodbye to his uncle and best friend Juda Rülff. Between 1936 and 1938, the majority of Jews in Rauischholzhausen presumably made efforts to emigrate. Only a few were successful, though. A major obstacle, besides the various measures undertaken by the Reich to rob them of their assets, was the restrictive immigration policies of most countries toward refugees. In the U.S., for example, where many wished to go, immigration permits were awarded on the basis of national quotas. Of the 300,000 applications from Germany in 1938, only 27,370 “quota visas” were made available.⁴²⁹ Nor did the situation improve after the conference in Évian (France) held at the initiative of President Roosevelt in July 1938. None of the 32 countries that participated were willing to agree to higher quotas for immigrants.⁴³⁰

Abraham Spier’s friend Juda Rülff left Rauischholzhausen in July 1938. It would have been unthinkable to do so just five years earlier, according to his son Friedel:

There was Cloos of Moischt, the younger one (well, he was young at the *time*). He told my father in 1933 [...]: “Herr Rülff, you know I am a good friend of yours. I only want the best for you. [And my advice is to] sell everything you have and leave! This Jewish program will be

followed to the letter.” And [my⁴³¹] father just sat there and said, “You’re just talking nonsense.”⁴³²

The first to depart was Juda Rülff’s daughter Selma. She emigrated from Gladenbach to the U.S. with her husband Julius Meier and their children after they were brutally assaulted one night in 1936.⁴³³ A year later, her brother Friedel left.

In June 1937, I went from Rauischholzhausen to Hamburg and from there to America on the steamer “Washington”,⁴³⁴

he recalls. He then explains,

My father had done some business after I left. He wrote me that one of his competitors was still doing quite a bit of business there. At that point, I wrote [my father] back, “Let him do the business and you come to America!” And then he did come, in July, along with my younger sister.⁴³⁵

Jewish communal leader Juda Rülff, in virtual shock, took leave of his former servant in July 1938 with the following words:

My whole life I never took a farmer to court. Whenever there was a problem, I left it alone.⁴³⁶

After Rülff had left Rauischholzhausen with his daughter Rosa, Abraham Spier entered the empty house of his friend.⁴³⁷ It was the day Walter Spier saw his father cry for the first time:

After Juda Rülff left, my father stood in [the Rülff’s] house and he cried. And I said to him: “Papa, why do you cry?” — “I will never see him again.” And he was right. He never saw him again. Because he left for the United States. And — I was a child, and really, like children, children are children, five minutes later you forget about

it [...]—but to my father, and to my mother, it was a friend who [had] left for good.⁴³⁸

After that, Abraham Spier became the next Jewish community elder.⁴³⁹

The German state enriched itself from this exodus of Jewish citizens on several levels. Starting already with the July 1933 laws — “On the Revocation of Naturalization and Denial of German Citizenship” and “On the Confiscation of Assets Unfavorable to the People and the State” — those persons “living abroad and whose behavior harmed German interests” could be deprived of their German citizenship and could have their property confiscated by and relinquished to the Reich.⁴⁴⁰ In addition to the general tax disadvantages placed upon “Jews”, anyone emigrating also had to pay a so-called “Reich Flight Tax” [*Reichsfluchtsteuer*] when leaving the country.⁴⁴¹ This tax, introduced in 1931, initially affected all emigrants with assets of more than 200,000 RM or with a monthly income of more than 20,000 RM.⁴⁴² It thereby amounted to a quarter of



21 Rosa Rülff, circa 1925.

one's taxable assets. On 18 May 1934, the tax-exempt allowance was revised: it now affected those who earned more than 50,000 RM per year or 10,000 RM per month.⁴⁴³ Anyone who had exceeded these values in any year since 1 January 1931 was required upon emigration to pay taxes amounting to one quarter of his or her current assets.

Yet the Reich Flight Tax [*Reichsfluchtsteuer*] was not the only thing that made emigration difficult. Whoever wanted to leave Germany first had to endure arduous, time-consuming visits to multiple offices, agencies, and consulates. If one wished to transfer one's assets, one needed clearance certificates [*Unbedenklichkeitsbescheinigungen*] from both the local tax office and municipality, additional certification from the Emigrant Counseling Office [*Auswandererberatungsstelle*] as well as final approval from the State Foreign Exchange Office [*Devisenstelle*] in Kassel.⁴⁴⁴ The exchange rate for the transfer of assets declined steadily, until in 1940 the rate of depreciation had gone up to 96 %.⁴⁴⁵ Abandoned funds in German banks became "emigrant suspended accounts" [*Auswanderersperrguthaben*] and, just like abandoned real estate, became subject to the control of the relevant foreign exchange office.⁴⁴⁶ In cases of expatriation, one's assets became the property of the Reich. In December 1936, the foreign exchange offices received additional authority to order restrictions on the assets of those assumed to be preparing to emigrate.⁴⁴⁷

Though completely destitute, Julius Rülff managed to defy much of the Nazi machinery of harassment and expropriation. Early in 1936, he was able to emigrate illegally.⁴⁴⁸ At the end of February 1936, Mayor Otto announced to the District Administrator:

I hereby inform you that the Jew Julius Rülff has left R-Holzhausen (without formal notification of having changed his residence) and has emigrated to America.⁴⁴⁹

The Roßdorf policeman Seipel added:

The butcher Julius Rülff (Jew) — born on 22 Dec. 1906 and last residing in Rauischholzhausen — relocated about 4 weeks ago, suppos-

edly to find work, according to information provided by his mother. R. has now corresponded from South America. His mother claims she did not know that he was emigrating.⁴⁵⁰

Julius Rülff succeeded in getting to Buenos Aires via Hamburg on a ship called the “Cap Arcona.”⁴⁵¹ After a short stay in Paraguay, he settled down in Argentina. The farmer (and later local chronicler) Franz Kaiser provided Rülff financial assistance for his departure.⁴⁵² Forty-seven years later, Julius Rülff wrote a letter to his helper on the occasion of the latter’s 93rd birthday:

After so many years, I would like to write a few lines to you, my dear friend. I have heard from Friedel Rülff that you turned 93 in December. [...] Dear Franz, I’m still grateful today, because without your help I would not have gotten out of Germany and would no longer be alive today. [...] Many greetings to Heinrich Pfeiff (on Hoppen-garten Street). Perhaps he remembers me? And to all the others who were my friends and are still alive.⁴⁵³

Julius Rülff had to leave behind his mother Berta and his brother Louis. They did not receive permission to enter Argentina, presumably for health reasons. Julius never saw them again.⁴⁵⁴

Emigration, though eagerly desired, was also strictly monitored in Rauischholzhausen. Herbert Stern, the attorney who moved to Frankfurt to be a volunteer gardener, was able to emigrate to South Africa in October 1936. At the end of August, he said goodbye to his mother. On 27 August 1936, the Roßdorf gendarme Justus Seipel reported to the District Administrator that –

The Jew Herbert Stern, born on 16 Jan. 1906 in Rauischholzhausen, residing in Frankfurt a. M. is visiting Rauischholzhausen again. No specific observations could be made.⁴⁵⁵

Six days later, he received a request to observe Stern closely during his stay in Rauschholzhausen. If Stern should stay there longer, confirm whether he has fulfilled his legal obligation to inform police of his whereabouts.⁴⁵⁶

Two days later, Seipel was able to report that –

Stern only stayed a short time. After his departure, he spent one more day in R.Holzhausen. It is presumed that St[ern] plans to emigrate. No specific observations could be made.⁴⁵⁷

The District Administrator continued to be obsessed with monitoring Herbert Stern even when he had returned to Frankfurt (and was no longer in his jurisdiction). On September 29, Krawielitzki wrote to Seipel:

Stern [...] has supposedly received an extraordinary number of parcels from his [...] mother; just as many parcels from him are said to have arrived in Rausch-Holzhausen. I am asking you to monitor this traffic in parcels in a seemly and inconspicuous manner and to report to me immediately if you see anything interesting. Is it true that the Jews in your service district are once again behaving brazenly? If so, you must provide details; general descriptions are not enough.⁴⁵⁸

His zeal was misplaced, for Seipel answered him:

An increased traffic in parcels between St[ern] and his mother could not be established. The parcels probably contain laundry and groceries. It is not true that the Jews are again getting more brazen.⁴⁵⁹

A short time later, Herbert Stern managed to emigrate to South Africa, where he was nonetheless unable “to establish himself”, as he later put it. In early 1937, he traveled to the Netherlands to arrange from there his departure to the U.S.⁴⁶⁰ A year later, he received his entry visa, finally reaching the States on 8 June 1938.⁴⁶¹

In the Frenkel home, too, thoughts of leaving Germany came up in 1936. The daughters Irene and Resi had emigrated, one in 1931 to the Netherlands and the other in fall 1933 to Palestine.⁴⁶² In 1935, Simon and Rosa visited their daughter Irene in Holland; in late April 1936, they traveled to Palestine to visit their daughter Resi. However, because their son David was in Germany, as well as their house, they were unable to commit to settling in Palestine at that point. Two months later, they made their way back to Rauischholzhausen.⁴⁶³

As early as July 1933, a legal measure had been adopted to compel the ultimateness of emigrations of Jews: the “Law on the Revocation of Naturalization and Denial of German Citizenship.” This decree aimed to prevent the return of Jewish emigrants (among others) to the Reich.⁴⁶⁴ In June 1934, the Gestapo in Kassel ordered that the interrogation of all returning emigrants should be intensified.⁴⁶⁵ Late in January 1935, the Gestapo declared that all returnees to Germany would have to undergo a so-called “training detention” since they constituted a collective “source of danger to the internal peace and security of the Reich.”⁴⁶⁶ In July 1935, the Gestapo of Kassel reported:

Recently there have been a variety of attempts to circumvent the measures adopted against returning emigrants. To get around the training detention, they pretend to be visiting people who are living in Germany and then leave the country again. To the extent that requests [to visit] are even granted, the length of stay may not exceed 10 days. In that time, the persons in question are required to report to the local police every day; in addition, they are to be treated like persons who are under police supervision. If they do not comply with the reporting requirement or if their conduct in any way conflicts with the interests of the new [German] state, they are to be placed in preventive detention [*Schutzhaft*] immediately and the State Police are to be informed by telephone. [...] I request [...] that you ensure that returning emigrants are scrupulously registered and reported on immediately.⁴⁶⁷

A month later, the Kassel office intensified its position:

The experiences that we have had regarding the temporary stay of returning emigrants, particularly Jewish ones, have shown the necessity of firming up the orders previously given. The sojourns of such persons, even when they are visiting, will have to be reduced to the bare minimum. I therefore ask that all requests and inquiries from emigrants be forwarded to the State Police Office [...]; please include your own position on each case. Do not provide verbal information to relatives. In each case, decisions are to be made solely by the State Police.⁴⁶⁸

In April 1936, the Gestapo in Kassel finally declared:

All Jews who travel outside Germany are basically to be considered emigrants. It does not matter whether these Jews return to the Reich after a temporary stay abroad. Accordingly, all Jews returning from abroad are to be reported immediately, brought [to Kassel] for preventive detention, and then transported collectively to the police prison here. Additional measures, especially any transfers to a training camp, will be arranged from here.⁴⁶⁹

On 2 June 1936, Justus Seipel dutifully reported the following to his District Administrator:

The Jew Simon Frenkel has returned with his wife to Rauischholzhausen from Palestine where the two of them stayed for several weeks.⁴⁷⁰

Krawielitzki appears to have been confused about how to deal with this news. After his phone call to the Gestapo in Kassel, he noted that –

According to the State Police, preventive detention cannot be immediately considered when someone has only visited another country.

Consequently, nothing can be undertaken against Mr. and Mrs. Frenkel. However, they should be monitored continuously.⁴⁷¹

Eight days later the Gestapo explained the situation again in written form:

If a Jew, in keeping with the circumstances of the individual case, can be assumed to have left the country temporarily with the intention of returning [...], he cannot be treated as an emigrant. Specific cases cannot of course be pre-determined. At all times, the important thing is whether we can assume that they have given up residency and their lives here. It is safe to assume that is the case, of course, when a Jew has fled from [Germany].⁴⁷²

The travels of the Frenkels also concerned Mayor Otto. In November 1936, he went to Marburg to personally convey his observations to the District Administrator:

Last year, the Jew Frenkel was in Holland with his wife. [...] Last spring Frenkel traveled with his wife to Palestine [...]. In the village, people are now saying that the Frenkel Jews are going to Holland again. [...] Since I assume that the Frenkels may be smuggling money across the border, I propose taking the family into preventive detention. On previous trips, the Frenkels claimed each time that they were going for the birth of a grandchild [...]. This time, according to talk in the village, one of their daughters will be giving birth again.⁴⁷³

After consulting with the Marburg Tax Office, Krawielitzki provided the Gestapo with this information and instructed the police office in Roßdorf "to continue special monitoring."⁴⁷⁴ But Gendarme Seipel in Roßdorf replied:

The journey of the Frenkel family to Palestine was financed by their son, who lives in Fulda, & by their married daughter in Palestine.

[...] It could not be determined whether he [i.e., Simon Frenkel] has contacts with other Jews [i.e., abroad]. There is also no evidence that he is smuggling money across the border for other Jews. F[renkel] is planning to emigrate to Palestine.⁴⁷⁵

That is how the Frenkels escaped preventive detention. However, their plans to emigrate to Palestine never succeeded.

David, the Frenkel's son living in Fulda, was repeatedly the victim of cruel violent acts. He finally fled to Southern Rhodesia in September 1938, along with his wife and two-year-old daughter Hannelore.⁴⁷⁶ Although they experienced substantial economic hardship and serious illness in their new life in southern Africa, it meant that their persecution had come to an end. David Frenkel noted,

Yet, we had to leave our next of kin behind in Germany. We were constantly worried about them, and the fear was demoralizing.⁴⁷⁷

For a time, he was able to maintain contact with his parents. Their letters allowed him to grasp the economic exploitation they had to endure.⁴⁷⁸

In August 1935, when Simon Frenkel attempted to withdraw money from the passbook account he had set up for his daughter Irene, the Marburg local savings bank [*Kreissparkasse*] refused to release the funds. The bank had recently placed a hold on the account when it learned that Irene had emigrated.⁴⁷⁹ A few days later, Simon Frenkel contacted the Foreign Exchange Office in Kassel as follows:

The passbook in question, no. 5049, was opened by me in my name many years ago. Because I am a concerned father, at some point I had the savings account — without my daughter knowing anything about it — transferred into her name. [...] My daughter never took possession of the passbook. So these are not [her] assets. Because it was a gift, [...] I would at least have had to surrender the passbook to my daughter in order to render the transfer a valid one. That is the reason I am the legitimate owner of the passbook; the equivalent

value must be paid out to me, a resident of Germany, living here. [...] In view of the changed circumstances, I am unable to earn anything. My wife and I want to use this money for living expenses. [...] I have no other way to subsist than to live from these savings.⁴⁸⁰

A few weeks later, he maintained in another letter:

I live in a small village and was, not surprisingly, unaware of the foreign exchange regulations issued in 1931.⁴⁸¹

Nonetheless, his letters did nothing to change the situation. The four accounts he created for his children at the Marburg *Sparkasse* remained frozen. From that point on, withdrawals by Frenkels (from the passbook accounts of their children) were only possible if the Foreign Exchange Office allowed an exception to be made, of limited duration and indicating a specific purpose. The following letter from the Foreign Exchange Office to Simon Frenkel of November 1936 serves as an example of this new form of state-based harassment:

According to my findings, you sent the sewing machine, purchased for 240 [RM] on 6 Oct. 1936, to Palestine as a gift, thereby providing false information on how your savings were used [...].⁴⁸²

A few months later, the Foreign Exchange Office claimed:

If it is impossible for the foreign recipient of the sewing machine, which you sent to Palestine illegally without an export value statement, to pay the full purchase price in foreign currency, then the machine must be returned to Germany no later than 15 July 1937. By that time, you must also provide me with proper verification that the machine has been returned by forwarding me the shipping documents. [...] If case of any further delay of this matter, I reserve the right to take appropriate steps.⁴⁸³

Finally, in order to “avoid the risk of capital flight”, the financial assets of Simon Frenkel himself were “put on hold” on 8 August 1938, because he had been classified as a potential émigré. His personal account at the Hamburg-based Bank of Warburg & Co. KG was frozen. From now on, deposits and expenditures were to be made from a “currency account” created for Simon Frenkel.⁴⁸⁴ Every withdrawal required Frenkel to apply (and provide a rationale) for advance approval at the Foreign Exchange Office; receipts had to be submitted afterwards. In December, approval was granted for him to withdraw monthly 250 RM for living expenses. As a result, on 8 August 1938, the carpenter Peter Deuker in Rauischholzhausen received a dispatch from the Foreign Exchange Office:

You have bought from the businessman Simon Frenkel [...] a property with a garden for 11,000 RM. Pursuant to Section 37a of the Foreign Currency Act of 4 February 1935, I have frozen the assets of Simon Frenkel. This action also affects the purchase that you are making. The purchase amount may only be paid into Simon Frenkel’s account at a German foreign exchange office. Transactions on this account can only be made with prior approval by me.⁴⁸⁵

Hence, while Deuker presumably paid the purchase price on the house, the funds transferred were very likely credited to the “German National Community [*Volksgemeinschaft*].” The house had been sold, and the Frenkels received at most a small portion of the money left in their frozen account, possibly so that they could pay rent from that point on.⁴⁸⁶

In the fall of 1938, there were only eight other Jewish people left in Rauischholzhausen beside the Frenkels: Mr. and Mrs. Mendel, the widow Hedwig Stern, the widow Berta Rülff with her adult son Louis, and Mr. and Mrs. Spier with their eleven-year-old son, Walter,⁴⁸⁷ who recalls that –

[...] those few Jews, who were there, became all of a sudden like brothers and sisters.⁴⁸⁸

Section 3: From the November Pogroms to the German Attack on Poland

November Pogroms

In November 1938, antisemitic violence reached new dimensions throughout the Reich and in Rauischholzhausen. In the days of the nationwide pogroms, the *Gau* (“region” in Nazi-speak) of Kurhessen played a “model role.”

As early as the evening of 7 November, the day that Herschel Grynzspan assassinated the German embassy secretary Ernst von Rath in Paris, serious antisemitic attacks took place in Kassel and two other northern Hessian towns in the region.⁴⁸⁹ What happened elsewhere in the *Gau* (hereafter, *region*) was influenced significantly by Kassel, the administrative center of the state of Hesse-Nassau, as well as the seat of the provincial government. Kassel was where the Nazi leadership of the region of Kurhessen was located, as well as SS Section XXX and a SD subsection. On 8 November, riots took place in many places in Kurhessen. In the district of Marburg, too, pogroms took place as early as 8 November—in Kirchhain, Momberg, Neustadt, Roth and Schweinsberg.⁴⁹⁰ The riots led by the local SS *Obersturmführer* in Kirchhain, Ernst Teichmann, were particularly radical. In addition to the complete destruction of the synagogue, serious property damage, and extensive looting in private homes, the physical attacks on the Jewish residents were life-threatening.⁴⁹¹ On the morning of 9 November, the Marburg SA leader Stollberg was visited by two members of the Kassel SD; he was ordered to burn down the Marburg synagogue. The act took place on the same evening.⁴⁹²

Due to the similar course taken by the pogroms of 7 to 9 November in the region, it can be assumed that the early actions in Kurhessen were not launched spontaneously or on personal initiative by local SA and political leaders but instead were coordinated and guided centrally by

higher authorities.⁴⁹³ Most likely, the pogroms took place on the initiative of Heinrich Gernand, the regional head of propaganda in Kassel. However, it may also have been a kind of “pilot project” for Joseph Goebbels.⁴⁹⁴

On 9 November, at 1:25 pm, the Marburg District Administrator finally received a telegram from the Regional Administrator in Kassel:

Requesting, with immediate effect, that you proceed vigorously against all acts of anti-Jewish violence with police force. According to the State Police Office, district leaders are [hereby] instructed by [the] Regional Leader that actions against Jews are to cease.⁴⁹⁵

Shortly after this directive, however, the groundwork was laid in Munich for a nationwide pogrom night that would soon commence. On 9 November, at 5:30 pm, von Rath died of his injuries in Paris.⁴⁹⁶ At about 9:00 pm, the news of his death was conveyed to Hitler, at the traditional meeting of senior SA and party officials on the anniversary of the failed Nazi putsch attempt of 1923. Until that point, Hitler, like Goebbels, had been completely silent about all these events, presumably something they had agreed to earlier.⁴⁹⁷ After a more thorough discussion with Hitler, Goebbels delivered a speech. Referring to the ongoing “demonstrations” in the regions of Kurhessen and Magdeburg-Anhalt, he announced that the Führer had decided that –

[...] such demonstrations were neither to be prepared nor organized by the Party, but they should not be opposed to the extent that they arose spontaneously.⁴⁹⁸

For the assembled elite SA and Nazi Party functionaries, Goebbels’ encoded message unmistakably meant that demonstrations “could and should” be welcomed and that they should organize them themselves.⁴⁹⁹ Around midnight they hurried to the phone and passed the information along to their subordinate offices, to subsidiary SA leaders as well as Nazi regional leaders and propaganda heads.

With astounding speed, the Gestapo in Berlin also issued nationwide instructions for a fundamentally different mission: the arrest of several tens of thousands of “Jews.”⁵⁰⁰ As early as around midnight, the orders of the Gestapo head Müller went out to all the Gestapo offices in the Reich:

In the shortest possible time, actions will be taking place against Jews, especially their synagogues, throughout Germany. These activities are not to be disrupted. However, in consultation with the order police [*Ordnungspolizei*], it should be ensured that looting and other types of riots are prevented. [...] The arrest of about 20–30,000 Jews in the Reich should be prepared. Especially wealthy Jews should be chosen. Further orders shall be issued in the course of this night.⁵⁰¹

About one hour later, Heydrich provided detailed instructions.⁵⁰²

On 10 November, at 5:30 pm, Krawielitzki received the following radio message from Kassel:

In regard to the actions taking place against Jews in your local district, you should only intervene to the extent that German life and property are at risk. Looting and theft are to be prevented. Looters are to be arrested. In your district, as many Jews should be arrested as there is space for detaining them. There should be no mistreatment [of them] under any circumstance. Only healthy, able-bodied male Jews should be arrested, but no foreigners, as transfer to camps is being planned from here [i.e., from Kassel]. If possible, you should ensure that well-to-do Jews are arrested. Until 11 November 1938, at precisely 8 pm (i.e., today) it should be reported if and where synagogue fires have occurred in recent days. At the same time, I hereby request reports on the number of Jews arrested to that point in time.⁵⁰³

The Gestapo did not aim for any long-term detentions. Rather, it wanted to increase the pressure on the Jewish residents to emigrate by means of imprisoning them, as well as blackmailing them into “aryanizing” their property more quickly. While in cities the criterion of affluence attracted attention, in small towns and villages, often all the Jewish men were arrested.⁵⁰⁴ The age of those to be arrested was probably set at 18-60 years.⁵⁰⁵

A few hours later, the following directive also reached Krawielitzki:

[These] actions are understandable and should only be monitored or interrupted by police according to very specific guidelines [...]. The order police should accompany these demonstrations and actions, only in small numbers and in civilian clothing, to prevent possible looting. Uniformed order police should be used only in extreme emergencies. Arrests should only be made by the security police. [...] Destroyed stores, apartments, synagogues, and businesses of Jews that are open are to be sealed off, guarded [and] protected from looting. To the extent necessary, police reinforcements should be called in by the general and active SS according to the RFSS [i.e., Reich SS Head].⁵⁰⁶

On the morning of 10 November, violent excesses had already broken out in many places, and public attention focused on the mistreatment of Jewish persons, burning synagogues, and destroyed or devastated houses and shops. At the same time, however, the police and gendarmerie officers set out to execute mass arrests of tens of thousands of Jewish men under the direction of the Gestapo.

In Rauschholzhausen, the pogrom night probably took place from the evening of 10 November to the morning of the 11th, thereby taking place after the arrest of male Jewish villagers.⁵⁰⁷ In November 1938, the only Jewish men still living there were Louis Rülff, Simon Frenkel, Hermann Mendel, and Abraham Spier. By coincidence, Abraham Spier's 16-year-old son Julius was visiting his parents at the time. In the course of November 10, Simon Frenkel, Hermann Mendel, and Julius Spier were arrested

by Seipel, the gendarme in Roßdorf, and then taken to the transit camp for prisoners in Kirchhain.⁵⁰⁸ Then they were transferred to Kassel the next day, specifically to the barracks at Hohenzollernstrasse 106.⁵⁰⁹ Either on the same or the following day, they were transported from Kassel to the Buchenwald concentration camp.⁵¹⁰ There they were housed in the so-called “special camp.”⁵¹¹ Louis Rülff was paralysed in the left leg—the likely reason he escaped arrest, which had only been ordered for men who were “healthy” or “fit for work.”

Abraham Spier was warned in advance by the gendarme Justus Seipel. His son Walter, then eleven years old, recalls:

And then, unfortunately, came the 9th of November. The “Kristallnacht.”⁵¹² And even though you were a child [...] overnight you were grown up. [...] A gendarme [...] came to my father, and he said: “Mr. Spier, [...] if [...] [von Rath] dies, I have to arrest you.” That was the 6th or the 7th of November. “If you can help it—leave town.” And on the 8th of November we heard that he died [N.B. von Rath did not die until the 9th of November]. And my father went through the woods to my uncle [i.e., Adolph Wertheim] in Kirchhain [...], where my grandmother [i.e., Sannchen Wertheim] lived and my mother was born.⁵¹³ And then came “Kristallnacht” and they arrested my oldest brother, who came back from Bielefeld. They took him from—we also had land, farming, we did our own farming, potatoes and whatever⁵¹⁴—and they took my oldest brother to Buchenwald on the 9th of November [N.B., Julius Spier was most probably not arrested until the 10th of November,⁵¹⁵ because von Rath did not die until the previous day].⁵¹⁶

His brother Martin also affirms:

My father went away. The gendarme at least told my father a couple of days before: “Get away. If he [i.e., von Rath] dies, I’ve got orders to arrest you.” But he, he went away. But didn’t realize they would take my brother. He [i.e., Julius] was a kid.⁵¹⁷

Justus Seipel's action is particularly striking. Aside from the remarkable fact that Seipel—in his position as a gendarme—issued a warning to Abraham Spier, it still remains entirely unclear how Seipel was able to *know* prior to 10 November that arrests would be ordered. Despite the formulations of the Spier brothers, it can therefore be assumed that Seipel—because of the pogroms raging in the district since November 8 and their accompanying press coverage—merely *suspected* that such an order would be issued, thereby acting on instinct and, most of all, with astonishing foresight.

On the evening of November 10, a pogrom mood was emerging in Rauschholzhausen. In the course of that night, the houses of the Jewish residents were severely damaged.⁵¹⁸ The synagogue building too was heavily damaged but not set on fire.⁵¹⁹ On the one hand, it had already been used as a barn for some time, and was thus “previously ruined.”⁵²⁰ On the other hand, the parcel of land was very narrow and the structure bordered almost directly on the neighboring buildings on both sides. Arson would thus have endangered the property of non-Jews next door. As a non-Jewish witness explained:

The stables were [...] right on the property line, and directly next to it was the house of Wagner, the carpenter. It was built right up against the property line.⁵²¹

It is not known who set in motion the riots in the village. Only one person interviewed provided concrete information about the perpetrators:

The Kristallnacht, I believe, was where they were smashing all the windows. And everything here. [...] The two Schneiders were involved. [...] Their [legal] names were “Schneider.”⁵²²

All the interviewees agree in suspecting that the majority of perpetrators were from Rauschholzhausen. Walter Spier, eleven years old at the time, remembers:

And at night they smashed the windows. And the few Jewish families, we were all together in one house [N.B., in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Frenkel]. All we heard was the sound of the glass.⁵²³

His brother Martin, who was sent home a day later by his school in Frankfurt due to the devastation there, recollects:

Not a single man was in Holzhausen. All the women [...] were in one house. They shuttered all the windows with wood, so that they couldn't break in. [...] And I remember, when I came home, we had [...] no more furniture left, everything was broken. The windows [...] [were] broken. And I think that was all about two or three weeks till my mother and my brother moved back [into our house].⁵²⁴

When the riots began that evening, the Jewish residents took refuge in the house of the Frenkels because it had already been sold to the Deukers, a non-Jewish couple. The house was therefore spared from attack. A non-Jewish contemporary witness comments:

Here [i.e., in the house of the Frenkel family] nothing was done because it was not allowed; he [i.e., the owner Peter Deuker] prevented it, the fellow who'd bought it: "If they do anything to this place, they'll have to pay for it." They got together there; it's where they always went. [...] And that's why they were staying in there. [...] Well, they were safe in there.⁵²⁵

For days to come, the house remained a refuge for the Jewish families at night.⁵²⁶ Another non-Jewish contemporary witness also recalls:

So, they came there late in the evening and were in there. And in the morning they went back home.⁵²⁷

But Walter Spier's father Abraham had fled to Kirchhain, to a place that could not at all be considered safe at the time. Walter Spier reports:

And, I was 11 years old, my mother wanted to know, what happened to our father, her husband, who was with her mother [...]. And early in the morning, it was about 8 km from our town, I ran through the woods to my grandparents' and my aunt and uncle's house. And my father came and he said: "How is Mama?" I said: "Everything is fine." — "And what damage did they do?" And I said: "I don't know." Because I remember, they didn't do anything to our house, except for one window. But the Jewish family across the street from us [i.e., at the home of Berta and Louis Rülff], all the windows were broken. And my grandmother said to me: "Stay here, stay here." And my father and my uncle said: "You can't stay, because otherwise your mother will worry about you. Go back." Again — I went through the woods back home. Each time I avoided the street, stayed only on farmland. [...] And I came back, and I found my mother and all the other Jews also in good health. Very nervous, [because] you don't know, what the next moment will bring: Will they come back? Will they start again? We didn't know. Like I said earlier — [before] you were a child, [suddenly] you were the master of the house. [...] And after a couple of days my father came back home. And that gendarme, the policeman [i.e., Justus Seipel], came at night, and he said to my father: "I know you are here. But try not to go out. You are not safe yet."⁵²⁸

Yet those who remained — the women, Louis Rülff, Walter, and his two brothers Martin and Alfred Spier (who had now arrived from Frankfurt and Bad Nauheim) — were seriously concerned for the men who had been deported. In carrying out mass arrests, the Gestapo had aimed to force Jews to speed up their emigrations as well as the "aryanisations" of their businesses or real estate. In line with this objective, as early as 21 November 1938, the first persons were dismissed from prison, as long as their emigration or "aryanisation proceedings" were imminent.⁵²⁹ From late November 1938 to January 1939, orders were issued for the gradual release of those who were front-line soldiers [*Frontkämpfer*] in World War I, as well as for prisoners who were over 50 and under 18 years of age.⁵³⁰

As early as 18 November, Rosa Frenkel called on the Marburg District Administrative office:

My husband, the merchant Simon Frenkel [...] was taken into custody and transported to Kirchhain on Thursday, 10 November 1938. Since we intend to emigrate to Palestine and will receive the remaining papers over the next few days, I request that my husband be released from prison immediately for the purpose of emigrating.⁵³¹

At first, Rosa Frenkel had no success. When the District Administrator inquired, he was told by the Gestapo that –

The release of the Jew Frenkel can be undertaken from here when his emigration papers have been made completely available and payment of his ship travel can be confirmed.⁵³²

A month later, Sara Mendel also traveled to Marburg, where she also visited the District Administration there:

My husband, the Jew Hermann Mendel from R. Holzhausen, born on 11 Feb. 78, was taken into custody on 10 Nov. 38. By means of group transport, he was transferred to the police prison in Kassel from Kirchhain, and from there to the concentration camp of Buchenwald near Weimar. Since my husband is over sixty years old, and I am also in the process of selling our property — something I cannot carry out alone — and since my husband was a front-line soldier [in World War I], I am requesting again that my previously submitted application be approved and my husband be released from custody.⁵³³

All three of the Rauischholzhausen men affected did survive Buchenwald. All of them were probably released in December or no later than January 1939.⁵³⁴ Hermann Mendel's release occurred evidently due to his advanced age and his past as a front-line soldier in World War I.⁵³⁵ The

16-year-old Julius Spier, along with Simon Frenkel, had to commit to emigrate within a specified period.⁵³⁶ At the end of January 1939, the Gestapo issued the following order:

Preparations for emigration by those Jews released from prison are to be observed so that they can actually be implemented as quickly as possible. If delays are feared, I request that appropriate conditions be placed on these individual Jews.⁵³⁷

It is not known to what extent the residency of Simon Frenkel or Julius Spier were henceforth subjected to certain conditions, such as a daily obligation to report to the authorities.⁵³⁸

Emigration

Even before Simon's imprisonment, the Frenkels had sought to make final emigration to Palestine to be with their daughter Resi. Yet in December 1938, they were still waiting for the required "parents' certificate" [*Eltternzertifikat*] to be issued. After the horrors of the November Pogrom, the couple had decided (at least provisionally) to move to the Netherlands, where their daughter Irene was living, in order to plan their ultimate emigration from there. On 16 December, Simon Frenkel informed the Foreign Exchange Office that –

I can no longer wait for the time to be summoned [...]. My children who are living in Palestine have informed me in January 1939, or in February at the latest, my wife and I will definitely receive a request for a parents' certificate. Further, we have been authorized to stay temporarily with our married daughter in Holland; we therefore want to emigrate as soon as possible, i.e., as soon as the packing permit [*Packgenehmigung*] has been granted. But I, Simon Frenkel, intend to move to Holland in December, which is why I am requesting that you return my passport to me soon.⁵³⁹

On 15 January 1939, Rosa and Simon Frenkel relocated to the Netherlands.⁵⁴⁰ However, they did not succeed in continuing their emigration to Palestine. In October 1942, after the Germans had occupied the Netherlands, the Frenkels were deported from their residence in Apeldoorn to the Westerbork transit camp. From there, they were sent to the Auschwitz death camp, where they were gassed.

Jenny Spier also did her best to help her son Julius to emigrate after his release. In the end, she managed to obtain spots — not only for Julius but also for her second eldest Alfred — on *Kindertransporte* (“children’s transports”) to England that were organized by the Jewish Welfare Service in Frankfurt am Main.⁵⁴¹ Julius left Rauischholzhausen on 4 February 1939; his brother Alfred followed him four months later.⁵⁴² The brothers found employment as agricultural laborers on a large farm in Scotland.



22 Alfred and Julius Spier [in the center] with other farm workers in Scotland, 1939.

Under the sponsorship of their supervisor, Sir Robert Grant, their sister Edith was able to join them in August 1939. Martin Spier remembers the farewell:

My sister said to my father, we should all go to England together, where my two brothers were working, in Scotland. [...] So Edith said to my father: "I want that we all go together." He [i.e., their father] said: "No. You go now." And it was good that she went out. Two weeks later, she wouldn't [have] gone out. Then the war broke out.⁵⁴³

In 1940, Edith emigrated from Great Britain to the US.

When Great Britain joined the war, dramatic changes in national policy toward refugees followed. Germans and Austrians already in the



23 Edith Spier in the courtyard of a London hostel that served as an accommodation for Jewish refugees, around 1940.

country came under a general suspicion of espionage, labeled as “enemy aliens.” Starting in the early summer of 1940, these people were taken into custody. That summer, the British government had some 8,000 internees transported to Australia and Canada — among them, both Nazis and Jewish refugees.⁵⁴⁴ As German emigrants, Julius and Alfred, too, came under suspicion of espionage in 1940. Eventually, they were shipped to Australia on the “Dunera.”⁵⁴⁵ Two years later, their former boss in Scotland managed to get them freed, and in late 1942 the brothers succeeded in returning to England, where both had enlisted in the British Army by 1944.⁵⁴⁶

Yet their parents and brothers in Rauischholzhausen were no longer able to leave. All attempts failed. Martin Spier recalls:

In 1938 on the “Crystal Night”, my father was in hiding. [...] And my mother came to Frankfurt to pick up the numbers [i.e., the waiting numbers for a US entry visa which were restricted by a highly restricted quota] to get out of Germany to come to America. And I remember, it was in the 33,000[s] and — to get a number for my two brothers and for my sister. She got it, and she went home. But in [the] meantime they went to England. Two weeks later she came back to Frankfurt to pick up the numbers for my parents and for my brother Walter and for myself. But they [i.e., the numbers] [...] [were] already so high that we never had a chance to get out.⁵⁴⁷

A guarantee of financial support was also not sufficient. Alfred Spier tells it as follows:

Friedel Rülff provided a guarantee — I still have the document somewhere, where [he] had to fill out a questionnaire and report his income. And his income was too low to guarantee support for four people.⁵⁴⁸

In addition, the Scottish lord and supervisor of the children Alfred and Julius tried to reunify the family, too:

Yes, we came to Scotland, to a farm [...] belonging to a Sir Robert Grant, a very wealthy man. [...] And he applied for my parents and two brothers to come to Scotland. And he submitted it, too. They even got the documents in Holzhausen. And one day [...] he came out to the fields—we'd been working out there. And he says, "I'm terribly sorry: We're now at war. Your parents and brothers can't come anymore." It was all over then. If the war had broken out four or five weeks later, my parents and brothers would've been able to get to Scotland.⁵⁴⁹

Alfred Spier painfully remembers: "And then the dream was over."⁵⁵⁰ In the meantime, his youngest brother Walter had followed Martin into the Jewish orphanage in Frankfurt am Main. At first, the siblings attended the Jewish Samson Raphael Hirsch School and eventually switched to the Philanthropin.⁵⁵¹

Because of the Spier family's attempts to emigrate, a freeze was placed on Abraham Spier's financial assets in September 1939. He was required to open a "limited access security account" [*Sicherungskonto*] at a foreign exchange bank within five days. Although he was permitted to retain his existing accounts, the credit was only available if first transferred to the security account. Without the consent of the Foreign Exchange Office, the family was only allowed (provisionally) to access a monthly allowance of 200 RM.⁵⁵²

At the end of August 1939, there were only seven Jewish people left in Rauschholzhausen: the Spier and Mendel couples, Berta Rülff and her son Louis, as well as Hedwig Stern.⁵⁵³ After World War II began in September 1939, none of them succeeded in emigrating from Germany.



24 Martin and Walter Spier on the balcony of the Frankfurt Jewish Orphanage, around 1939.



25 Hanukkah celebration in the Frankfurt Jewish Orphanage, around 1940. In the center Walter Spier is standing behind the candles. All the other children photographed were likely murdered in the following years.

Increased Monitoring and Exploitation

The November Pogroms throughout the Reich also had momentous consequences, resulting in increased monitoring and economic exploitation of the Jewish population.

Jews in Germany, meticulously scrutinized since 1933, were required to carry an identity card [*Kennkarte*] with a number and place of registration since the “Third Proclamation on Compulsory Identity Cards” was decreed on 23 July 1938.⁵⁵⁴ Section 2.1 of “Second Regulation on the Implementation of the Law on Changing First and Last Names” issued on 17 August 1938, compelled “Jews” to accept the additional (middle) name of *Sara* or *Israel* by 1 January 1939.⁵⁵⁵ On 15 December 1938, the directive was given to seize and collect all pre-1876 “synagogue registries”, i.e., Jewish congregational records of births, marriages, and deaths in the community.⁵⁵⁶ On 10 February 1939, the Roßdorf gendarmerie confirmed that –

The synagogue registries of Rauischholzhausen & Mardorf were seized in the first days of Jan[uary] and sent on from there. The Jews declare that they do not possess duplicate records.⁵⁵⁷

On 12 November 1938, the “First Regulation on Excluding Jews from German Economic Life” was decreed.⁵⁵⁸ Along with its implementing provisions, it signaled an end to all independent commercial efforts. However, it no longer had any impact on Rauischholzhausen since Jewish residents no longer conducted any business there, anyway. On the same day, the “Regulation on Atonement Payment [*Sühneleistung*] by Jews of German Citizenship” was decreed on the basis of the “Regulation on the Registration of Jewish Assets” that had already been decreed in April 1938, according to which “Jews” had to report to the tax offices all of their assets (also those that were not taxable) amounting to more than 5,000 RM.⁵⁵⁹ Based on those statements of assets, “Jews” then had to pay a “penalty tax” of 20 percent of their assets in four (later, five) installments. In its entirety, the liability imposed on German and stateless

“Jews” in the Reich to pay (as “compensation”) amounted to one billion RM.⁵⁶⁰ In order to make his contribution to this “tax”, Abraham Spier was compelled to sell off a piece of land, and interested buyers were soon found.⁵⁶¹

Another “Regulation on the Use of Jewish Assets” issued on 3 December 1938 introduced a far-reaching set of restrictions.⁵⁶² Section 7 barred “Jews” from acquiring land and related rights; Section 8 mandated that any disposition of real estate or related rights would be subject to government authorization. The authority responsible for such approval was von Monbart, the Regional Administrator of Kassel.⁵⁶³ In the decree of 6 February 1939, which implemented this regulation, the Reich Minister of the Economy described it as follows:

In approving real estate transactions, it should be assumed that [...] there should be no unjustified enrichment of certain private interests and no complete devaluation of Jewish assets. It is important to ensure that the Jew retains a certain amount of cash for financing his subsequent emigration. In addition, the Jewish seller will, largely, have to use the sales proceeds to cover public and private expenses as well as his living expenses, which would otherwise have to be paid for by public relief. Sales transactions are, in principle, only to be approved if the purchase price stays in some measure within the limits of the market value. This is generally, in the case of real estate, not to be lower than the unit value. [...] On the other hand, depending on the individual case, that price may also be significantly higher than the unit value. If contracts are presented in which the purchase price is significantly outside the confines of the market value, approval shall be granted only on condition that the difference between the purchase price and a moderate market value is paid out as a compensation payment to the Reich. [...] Such compensatory payments levied for the benefit of the Reich are to be transferred immediately to the chief Reich account in Berlin to be credited to a special “suspense account” [*Verwahrkonto*] for “compensation payments”, indicating the buyer’s name and the type of property.⁵⁶⁴

If there are several interested buyers,

[...] the first ones to be considered should be persons with many children or such persons for whom the purchase of real estate seems particularly urgent for economic or other reasons, particularly old *Pg.* [i.e., *Parteigenossen* or “Nazi Party comrades”] and to other men who have especially served the people and state.⁵⁶⁵

Similarly, the contract that Abraham Spier signed to sell his field on 22 December 1938 — in order to pay the penalty tax equal to 20 % of his assets — was approved on 8 July 1939 under the appropriate provisions: the couple buying the property had to make a compensation payment of 400 RM to the Chief Reich Account in Berlin (for “the benefit of the Reich”) and transfer the remaining balance of the purchase price (800 RM) to a frozen account at the Dresdner Bank, which Abraham Spier — having been classified as a potential émigré — could only make use of with the approval of the Foreign Exchange Office.⁵⁶⁶

In accordance with Section 14 of the “Regulation on the Use of Jewish Assets”, “Jews” had already been banned from buying, trading, or selling privately any works of art or objects made of precious metals. Then, on 21 February 1939, an order was issued that all objects of gold, platinum, or silver as well as precious stones and pearls had to be relinquished at public purchasing agencies established by the Reich.⁵⁶⁷ Mr. and Mrs. Mendel were forced to send to the Gestapo in Kassel their silver cutlery, various jewels, rings, and a pocket watch.⁵⁶⁸

Forced Labor

Many things happened earlier in Rauschholzhausen than elsewhere. As early as 1938, probably in the first half of the year — and thus long before the relevant national directives — Mayor Otto decided to force Abraham Spier to do unpaid labor. Martin Spier relates,

I was not home anymore. Walter was at home. My father had to clean the streets. [...] There in the market place, in the fall, the press machine had been installed. They separated the grain and [...] [the] wheat, all of it. And when they were done, every night, my father and Walter had to clean up the marketplace.⁵⁶⁹

His brother Walter adds:

Weidemüller [i.e., the village nickname for the mayor, Heinrich Otto] came to my father and said: “You got to clean [...] [the] village square [...]. You gotta clean the street.” And naturally I said to my father: “You’re not gonna go, I’m gonna go”, you know. So, I cleaned the street. And Weidemüller was nearby. He used to chop up the grain and everything. He came with his horses, and he went to the [...] village square, and let the horses make their [shit] there. So [then] I had to clean it up again.⁵⁷⁰

The first nationwide orders on forced labor were not issued until December 1938, after the November Pogroms. On 20 December 1938, the administrators of regional employment offices received a circular [*Runderlass*] from Friedrich Syrup, President of the Reich Institute for Labor Placement and Unemployment Insurance, after he had consulted with Göring: “According to the reports available to me, the number of unemployed Jews has increased substantially. The state has no interest in leaving the labor of operational unemployed Jews unexploited or in supporting them with public funds without anything in return.”⁵⁷¹ The goal was to accelerate the employment of all unemployed “Jews.” However, only such work was to be provided where “Jews” would not encounter “members of the German nation [*Volksgenossen*].”

Under the new rules, Hermann Mendel was forced to work in the explosives factories of Dynamit Nobel AG und Westfälisch-Anhaltische Sprengstoff AG, probably from spring 1939 on. These dynamite manufacturing plants were located 16 km away in Allendorf [i.e., today called “Stadtallendorf”].⁵⁷² Nothing is known about the conditions under

which he worked. Some non-Jewish villagers remember that Hermann Mendel disappeared every day over the fields in the direction of Mardorf.⁵⁷³ A non-Jewish contemporary witness from Ebsdorf, who worked as a driver or making deliveries for the explosives factory, reports:

There was also still a Jew here in Holzhausen. I knew him well: Mendel. Mendel drove with me to Allendorf, to the munitions factory. He worked there back then, Mendel. Old Mendel. [...] That was before the war.⁵⁷⁴ [...] In the munitions plant in Allendorf — that's where they had to work.⁵⁷⁵

On 26 October 1939, a legal basis was finally provided for forcing Abraham Spier to perform public labor for the village authorities.⁵⁷⁶

Synagogue and Jewish Cemetery

Since the interior of the Rauischholzhausen synagogue had already been destroyed in 1936, the pogroms of November meant the loss for Jewish residents of the synagogue they had been attending in the neighboring village of Mardorf for almost three years. The Mardorf synagogue was also not set on fire because it stood directly next to the house of the farmer Josef Dörr. The buildings were in fact connected to each other.⁵⁷⁷ However, the synagogue building was heavily damaged and largely ruined on the inside, likely on 9 November.⁵⁷⁸

According to Gestapo orders, the objects stolen from synagogues were to be seized and not to be returned to their previous owners “insofar as they were useful in the framework of the Four-Year Plan (e.g., cups, candlesticks, bowls made of metal, etc.).”⁵⁷⁹ On 14 November the following directive was circulated:

Until further notice, no reconstruction of destroyed or burned-down synagogues is to be considered, regardless of who is planning it.⁵⁸⁰

On November 25, Krawielitzki informed the Regional Administrator that –

The ruins of the synagogues in Neustadt and Schweinsberg have now been disposed of; almost all of the remaining synagogues are being used for the purpose of storing grain.⁵⁸¹

Although the Reich Minister of Churches, Kerrl, deemed “removing the ruins” as the best solution,⁵⁸² the synagogue building in Mardorf (today located at Marburger Str. 31) was sold by the Jewish community to Josef Dörr, the owner of the adjacent property. It is still preserved and to this day is used as a barn by the family Dörr.⁵⁸³ In Rauischholzhausen, Kerrl’s wishes were fully realized. As early as 20 July 1938, a notarized purchase agreement had been finalized between the combined members of the Jewish Community of Holzhausen-Wittelsberg and Andreas Peil, a farmer who owned the adjacent land, for the synagogue property—which in the meantime had become a place to store hay and straw.⁵⁸⁴ Since Andreas Peil is praised in the reports of all survivors,⁵⁸⁵ it is to be assumed that the community’s sale of the real estate was intended not only to obtain necessary funds but also to preserve the property over the long term (placing it in good hands, as it were). The agreed upon price of 1,500 RM was explicitly above the unspecified unit value; Peil was to transfer 1,000 RM to the Provincial Association of the Jewish Welfare Service in Frankfurt am Main and the remaining 500 RM to Hermann Mendel.⁵⁸⁶ On August 25, 1938, the Regional Administrator, who had been consulted by the Kirchhain notary Georg Pfeiffer announced that “approval for selling the real estate of the Israelite community of Holzhausen-Wittelsberg [was] not necessary.”⁵⁸⁷

However, the message of the Regional Administration also reached Krawielitzki. He then raised concerns about the purchase price, especially since the Prussian State Building Authority II in Marburg had assessed the value of the property at only 750 RM. Evidently, Andreas Peil also got wind of the District Administrator’s reservations. In April 1939, Dr. Bruno Schönfeld,⁵⁸⁸ a Jewish attorney in Marburg commissioned by

the community in Holzhausen-Wittelsberg, reported as follows to the Reich Deputation of Jews in Germany⁵⁸⁹: Although Andreas Peil had already paid out 1000 RM to the Provincial Association of the Jewish Welfare Service in Frankfurt am Main as well as 71.58 RM to the community elder Juda Rülff (for emigration assistance), he was now refusing to pay the remaining amount of “approximately 430 RM” to Hermann Mendel, based on the low assessment of the local building authority. A few days later Schönfeld added:⁵⁹⁰

On 31 October 1938, the District Administrator has already raised objections — probably because of the price freeze regulation — to the purchase price [...]. The District Administrator has told the notary that he will reduce the purchase price to this amount in the absence of an agreement. [...] In light of the state of affairs, nothing else can be done, then, about the remaining sum of 500 RM. Mr. Peil is unwilling, as Mr. Mendel has informed me, to pay this balance. Mr. Peil might possibly be able to reclaim the difference of 250 RM, in accordance with Sections 812 and 814 of the *BGB* [i.e., *Bürgerliches Gesetzbuch*, the German Civil Code — in this case, concerning claims against unjustified enrichment].⁵⁹¹

Andreas Peil’s refusal to pay, as documented in this case, is difficult to reconcile with the positive reports survivors have made about him. Therefore, these events should not go uncommented. First, it must be remembered that in the course of these negotiations the November Pogroms occurred, which diminished the value of the building again significantly (assuming that Peil had planned to preserve it). Nonetheless, the situation can only be explained in light of additional circumstances. For, most likely, Heinrich Wagner, the owner of the property adjacent on the other side, at this stage had already been involved in plans for its future. And there were agreements contrary to the official contractual document according to which Mr. Wagner — not Mr. Peil — would have to pay the remaining debt.

Friedel Rülff, who had already left Rauschholzhausen in 1937, points out:

Peil was a decent man. But Wagner, Wagner, he was a Nazi. [...] Peil, though, was a good friend of my father's, and originally he wanted to buy it alone. [...] So, my father — who was the head of the [Jewish] community — he didn't have any other choice, he sold it to both of them, the synagogue. [...] Too bad. I still have the letter at home, the one that Wagner wrote to my father, an insulting letter. He wrote the letter in Holzhausen. Because he [Wagner] still owed something for the synagogue. Then he ran into my father on the street. He said something to him, [and my father] did this [i.e., Friedel Rülff makes the sign for money, rubbing his thumb against his index finger]. Then he [i.e., Mr. Wagner] wrote him that [...] “it was insulting [to do that] openly in the street. It isn't legally allowed to ask someone for money on the street.” [...] But he wanted to be considered because my father was “an old Jew.” [...] So, if he apologized, Wagner wouldn't denounce him. But *my* father? He should apologize? To such a stupid youngster? Never! He'd never do that, my father — for God's sake! He [i.e., Friedel's father] never [again] heard anything about the whole thing. [...] I've still got the letter today. That was the young Wagner. Well, he is dead and buried. Probably in Stalingrad or somewhere around there.⁵⁹²

Friedel Rülff's father Juda no longer lived in Rauischholzhausen at the time this sales contract was finalized on 20 July 1938. Instead, a few days earlier he had begun his escape to the United States. On the deed of sale between the Jewish community and Andreas Peil, then, Juda Rülff is not mentioned at all. However, what his son remembers suggests that Wagner, as someone residing next-door to the synagogue, had already been part of the pre-contractual negotiations taking place.⁵⁹³ His involvement might have already been finalized at this early stage, but for unknown reasons it did not find its way into the official sales contract.

There is more clarity to be found in a written explanation by the Rauischholzhausen mayor in 1946. It reports: “The original buyer, A. Peil, *at the suggestion of Party authorities, must* have shared the place with the other neighbor, Heinrich Wagner, master carpenter” [emphasis

added.].⁵⁹⁴ Only the pressure brought by the Party and the forced participation of Wagner can explain what kept Andreas Peil from paying the rest of his debt to the Jewish community.

Then, from the summer of 1939 on, Wagner's participation and the legal uncertainties between the neighbors found their way into the correspondence regarding the property sale. On 15 May 1939, the attorney Bruno Schönfeld, after renewed consultation with Abraham Spier, had conferred with the Regional Administrator about Peil's unsettled debt. After referring to the decision already made on 25 August 1938, according to which approval of the contract was not necessary, Schönfeld asked whether that opinion still stood:

If an authorization [now, however,] should be required, I therefore request approval [...] of the agreed-upon purchase price of 1,500 RM, of which 1,000 RM has already been paid. If necessary, I request that the assessment of the Prussian State Building Authority II (in Marburg)—that the property is only worth 750 RM—be reexamined.⁵⁹⁵

Four months later, Wagner's interests were mentioned in a reply by the Regional Administrator, who probably had not read the attorney's letter carefully. In the reply, the date of the purchase agreement was changed to July 1939, thereby retroactively applying the new legal situation:

Regarding the sale of the real estate registered in the Rausch-Holzhausen land register, page 384, [...] in accordance with the contract approved by the assessor of notary Georg Pfeiffer in Kirchhain as of 20 July 1939 [...] I [hereby] impart the necessary authorization—pursuant to Section 8 of the Regulation on the Use of Jewish Assets of 3 Dec. 1938 [...]—under the stipulation that the purchase price be reduced to 1,000 RM and that the purchaser [...] also make a compensation payment of 500 RM [...] to the Reich. [...] The applicant is further required to tear down the synagogue within a reasonable amount of time as well as to cede to the other neighbor Wagner

a suitable piece of land in exchange for appropriate payment. In case of a dispute, the District Administrator will make the final determination of the purchase price and the property lines. That portion of the purchase, to be paid in cash, should not be paid directly to the seller, but is instead [...] to be disbursed to the Reich Association of Jews in Germany.⁵⁹⁶

It is not clear who subsequently made the compensation payment to the state, but due to the threat of sanctions in the decision, it is likely that it was made.

Late in October 1939, the District Administrator wrote directly to Heinrich Wagner and requested that he finalize an (notarized) agreement with his neighbor Peil on the division and price of the synagogue property.⁵⁹⁷ Around the same time, in fall 1939, the synagogue building was supposed to have been razed, according to the stipulations made.⁵⁹⁸ The neighbors agreed on the distribution of the property, and Mr. Wagner paid Mr. Peil the sum of 329 RM.⁵⁹⁹ The newly created open space is still used as a garden today.

In addition, a contract was finalized on the Jewish cemetery in spring 1939, likely under pressure from Mayor Otto. A finalized (and notarized) agreement, labeled a “purchase contract” has survived in excerpted form, between the mayor, acting on behalf of the municipality of Rauischholzhausen, and Abraham Spier, on behalf of the Jewish community. The cemetery property, valued at 300 RM, was left to the municipality free of charge under the obligation to preserve its existing use as a cemetery.⁶⁰⁰ Yet the Regional Administrator denied approval for the contract on 2 June 1939.⁶⁰¹ After that, the Jewish community leased the land for a fee of 10 RM annually to a non-Jewish villager, most likely Johannes Pfeiff, on the condition that the cemetery be preserved and looked after.⁶⁰²

In June 1940, the District Administrator asked the mayors and gendarmerie officers to appraise which villages had Jewish cemeteries and whether they were interested in “returning these current burial grounds to secular uses, such as economic life [...]”⁶⁰³ While the majority of the surveyed officials in the district responded positively to the idea of “sec-

ularization”, outdoing one another in proposing new uses or bragging that they had already re-assigned the land for “secular purposes”,⁶⁰⁴ Justus Seipel reported:

In Rauschholzhausen there is still a Jewish cemetery. [...] In the past 30 years, 56 Jews have been buried there. There is no interest here in using this land and property for business. The leaseholder of the burial ground has already planted fruit trees [...] and is also making use of the fallow portion there.⁶⁰⁵

Three months later, in September 1940, the District Administrator informed the municipalities that they could ask the Regional Administrator to have the police close the cemeteries since, in Marburg, a collective cemetery for the Jewish population of the district was being established.⁶⁰⁶ It remains unknown if such a request was ever made in the case of the Jewish cemetery in Rauschholzhausen and if or when the area lost its official status as a cemetery.⁶⁰⁷ The last funeral probably took place in this Jewish cemetery in June 1941.⁶⁰⁸

On 12 February 1943 a final request was issued by the Hesse-Nassau District Office of the Reich Association of Jews in Germany (which was the legal successor to the former Jewish community of Rauschholzhausen) to the mayor of the village:

We are now compelled to put this cemetery for sale and ask to be informed whether the municipality wants to act as a buyer. [...] If the municipality does not wish to buy the cemetery, we would be grateful to know of prospective private buyers.⁶⁰⁹

A month later, the Reich Association added:

We are also notifying you that we are compelled [to sell] [...] the more valuable gravestones — to the extent they are available — such as those made of granite or other materials, that can be re-used after

being crushed. Is there interest in this on the part of your municipality or could you identify those who might be interested?⁶¹⁰

The municipality responded that it was not interested and designated Johannes Pfeiff, who lived near the cemetery and was most likely the leaseholder of the land already, as possibly an “enthusiastic buyer.”⁶¹¹ After an exchange of letters between Pfeiff and the District Office of the Reich Association of Jews in Germany, an agreement was made to sell the property for 300 RM.⁶¹² Mr. Pfeiff declared that he would use the land to plant ten plum trees and was not interested in changing the gravestones.⁶¹³ However, the purchase agreement was no longer realized. For, a few weeks later, the Reich Association was expropriated.⁶¹⁴ After its assets had acceded to the state, the cemetery property was leased to Johannes Pfeiff for 10 RM annually on 5 October 1943 by the Reich Treasury, represented by the director of the Marburg Tax Office.⁶¹⁵ The cemetery has been preserved, apart from repeated desecrations of individual gravestones, until today.

Section 4: From the German Attack on Poland to Deportation

After annexing Austria as well as the “Sudetenland” and the Czech portion of Czechoslovakia, the German *Wehrmacht* on Hitler’s orders began a war of aggression against Poland on 1 September 1939. Two days later Britain and France declared war on the Reich. In due course, several men in Rauischholzhausen were drafted into the army and left the village. In time, the first forced laborers, predominantly Poles, arrived in Rauischholzhausen. Their labor was exploited primarily at the university-operated farm.⁶¹⁶ The village mayor, Heinrich Otto, also started military service at the end of 1940. His successor was Karl Wahl, the owner of the local dairy.⁶¹⁷ Konrad Schweißguth took over the office of Nazi local leader [*Zellenleiter*] in 1943 at the latest.⁶¹⁸ In addition, changes in the local infrastructure were taking place. Sometime in 1938 or 1939, a Hitler Youth Centre was built in the village; it was the only one in the vicinity.⁶¹⁹ In 1941, a training institute for pre-school teachers was established by the Nazi People’s Welfare organization on the manor house, the premises of the von Stumm estate, which had only just been sold.⁶²⁰

Isolation

Although the Nazi regime was pursuing a “dual strategy” of forced emigration and segregation of the Jews left behind in the wake of the nationwide pogroms in November 1938, the outbreak of World War II meant that opportunities for emigration were significantly reduced.⁶²¹ Diplomatic missions of other countries were closing up, and transportation options were disappearing. After the war began, not a single Jewish resident of Rauischholzhausen managed to escape.⁶²² Three years and five

Edith u. alle Verwandten.
Wie ich aus Deinem schreiben ersehen geht es
Dir sehr ^{gut} ^{mich} sehr freud. Beinahe wäre
ich auch schon bei Dir gewesen, hoffentlich
klappt es noch, worüber Du Dich auch
sicher freuen wirst. Wie Du siehst bin ich
noch hier in ferien, und Montag sind die
schöne Tagen wieder heru. Von lb. Martin
hadden wir soeben auch Brief, schreib' gut.
Wie ich aus Deinem lb. Brief. sehe hast
Du jetzt gute Tage. Viele Grüsse an lb. Julius
u. lb. Alfred. Noch viele herzliche Grüsse u.
Küsse Deinem Bruder Walter

26 Letter from Walter Spier to his sister Edith in England, 1941. Her family in Rauischholzhausen did not know that Edith had already emigrated to the United States.

Dear Edith and all relatives,

As I can see from your letter, you are doing very well. I am so glad to hear that.

I almost managed to get over there to you. Hopefully I'll make it eventually; I'm sure you are looking forward to that.

As you can see, I am still on vacation here. But on Monday these relaxing days will be over. We have just received a letter from our dear Martin. He writes [that he is doing] well. As your letter says, you are having good days now.

Send my regards to our dear Julius and dear Alfred.

Hugs and kisses,

Your brother Walter

days later, those remaining in the village were loaded onto trucks at the Zimmerplatz and deported to Theresienstadt.

The existential conditions for Jews got worse steadily. Between 9 November 1938 and December 1940, the Reich issued more than 500 anti-Jewish laws, regulations, and decrees.⁶²³ For Jews in Germany, this meant more isolation and concentration, more poverty and loss of rights, and more humiliation and exploitation.⁶²⁴ Early in 1939, all Jewish political organizations were disbanded, from the Central Association of German Citizens of the Jewish Faith to the Zionist Federation of Germany.⁶²⁵ In July 1939, all Jewish organizations and communities were forcibly incorporated into the “Reich Association of Jews in Germany”, the organization which all those considered “Jews” were compelled to join; for the privilege, they even had to pay a fee. This state-directed reorganization signaled the end of any independent, openly elected deputation of Jewish Germans. The Reich Association was to be supervised by the Minister of the Interior and was under the direct control of the Gestapo, the SD, and Reich Main Security Office (abbreviated as “RSHA” in German). It also had to inform the local communities about any new directives, becoming a national kind of “Jewish council” (or *Judenrat*).⁶²⁶ The *Jüdische Nachrichtenblatt*, the only authorized Jewish newspaper in the Reich, became merely the organ that published Gestapo and RSHA ordinances for “Jews.”⁶²⁷

With the outbreak of the war, Jewish residents had less and less access to information and communications. On 21 September 1939, District Administrator Krawielitzki received an urgent letter from the Gestapo:

As an extension of the Regulation on Extraordinary Radio Broadcasting of 1 September 1939 [...] the Jews in Germany are to be excluded from any radio communications. [...] Any radio equipment found in the possession of Jews is to be confiscated by the State Police.⁶²⁸

Two days later, on Yom Kippur,⁶²⁹ he observed that –

Seipel reports by telephone that he has seized the following [...] [from] Hermann Mendel: 1 people’s radio [*Volksempfänger*], 1 detector.⁶³⁰

Hermann Mendel was apparently the only Jew in Rauischholzhausen who owned radios and he managed to keep one from being confiscated. Martin Spier recalls:

[There was a fellow Jewish resident who] lived in the same town [...], [he] always had a radio on. And it was against the law [for] Jewish persons to own a radio. [...] His name was Mendel. I remember exactly Saturdays when he'd listen to the radio and [...] told us what [was happening]. Of course we [...] [were] not allowed to get any newspapers.⁶³¹

In all, eighteen radios in the district were seized.⁶³² Two weeks later, they were transferred to the Nazi regional leadership in Kurhessen, to the Main Office of Broadcasting for “*Wehrmacht* purposes.”⁶³³

When the war commenced, Jews throughout the Reich became subject to a nightly curfew.⁶³⁴ For the months from October to March, that curfew was to be in force from 8pm to 6am; for the summer months, it would last from 9pm to 5am.⁶³⁵ A few weeks later, the Jewish population was forced to shop at certain stores at specific times. As the Gestapo declared:

No German can reasonably be expected to line up together with Jews in front of a store. See to it as quickly as possible that Jews are consigned to shopping at certain grocery stores, solely to cover their basic needs. [...] I recommend that Jews be permitted to purchase groceries at certain times in the afternoon in stores whose owners can be depended on. The police and the state police offices will decide which ones are dependable. I am further requiring that, wherever Jews are still living in smaller groups, [...] that they be searched to determine if they are hoarding goods.⁶³⁶

The ration cards distributed when the war began were accordingly labeled with a “J” when provided to “Jewish” persons, whose options for purchasing groceries were limited.⁶³⁷ It is unknown when the Jews were

supposed to have done their shopping in Rauschholzhausen.⁶³⁸ One of the shopowners deemed “dependable” (in the sense of the decree) was Ludwig Grün, owner of a bakery and grocery store and a committed Nazi. Other “dependable” Nazis included Karl Wahl, the owner of a dairy who became mayor in 1941, as well as Konrad Schweißguth, a postal official and Nazi block (and later cell) leader.

Yet these new laws, as drastic as they most certainly were, seemed to have had little impact on the practical lives of Rauschholzhausen’s Jews. As early as 1937, the Jewish villagers were no longer using local businesses in a normal manner. The majority of local business owners had decided on their own to stop selling their wares to the Jews. A non-Jewish villager recalls:

For old Mrs. Stern, who was now all alone, [my mother] took a handcart to Roßdorf and got wood for her! [i.e., firewood in winter] [...] Because she wasn’t getting any wood! Everywhere there were little signs that read “No entry for Jews.”⁶³⁹

She adds:

The neighbors then brought her things. My grandmother told me she always went to “Beckersch” for Jures [i.e., the village nickname for Juda Rülff’s family which had emigrated to the U.S. by July 1938]. “Beckersch” was also a baker. [But] then Schweißguth [i.e., Konrad Schweißguth] [...] came right over and took it away from her [again], the bread.⁶⁴⁰

Getting provisions became increasingly difficult. Martin Spier thus remembers:

As soon as Hitler came [to] power, he stopped *schächten*, kosher [slaughter]. And of course we never ate meat from 1933 on. So we ate vegetables, potatoes, [which] we still had on the farm. That was our luck. [And w]e had grain. Before the grain could be made into

flour, it had to go through a mill. And then the miller couldn't do it anymore for us. They wouldn't do it for the Jews. That was very hard. Then later on, I don't know in what year, the land was taken away from us, was given to other people. So, [all] we had left was a little garden.⁶⁴¹

Even after the regulations on shopping had been decreed, business owners still exercised some leeway in determining the options available to residents. Ration cards, opening times, and store allotments were not usually such significant factors. According to Martin Spier,

No, he [i.e., the postal official Konrad Schweißguth] was very — he was very bad. He picked up the mail and I don't know if he [gave] it to us or not. He was a Nazi, but his mother — .⁶⁴²

As explained by his brother Walter,

His mother was an angel. [...] You were allowed to shop or to go to a public place only a certain hour of the day. [...] I forgot now, was it in the morning [just for] one hour? I don't know, I don't remember. But in the post office also. He [i.e., Konrad Schweißguth] wouldn't deliver our mail. [But] [...] if we went there and [...] the old lady saw us, she used to run and give it to us.⁶⁴³

The situation was similar at the dairy:

[W]hen we used to go there [i.e., to the dairy of the future mayor, Karl Wahl], with cards [i.e., stamps for food rations], one daughter, Elisabeth, who [...] had to go with a can to pick up the milk, she gave me an extra. [She n]ever took the card, the food stamps. Never. And she used to say: "Go away, Dad. Go away, Dad."⁶⁴⁴

Even Ludwig Grün's actions were not predictable:

There was one little [...] store where you were allowed to go, let's say from 2 till 3 [o'clock]. And the owner of that store said to my mother: "Frau Spier, you can come whenever you want and buy whatever you want." Even though he was in the SA, [he] was good to my mother.⁶⁴⁵

In all likelihood, however, Jenny Spier was the only Jewish resident treated so well.

More than the laws, local conditions made Jewish residents increasingly dependent on help from their neighbors. Alfred Spier discloses:

I know from my brothers, who now live in America, what took place in the first years of the war [...]. They were essentially fed by the neighbors, my parents and my two brothers. [Those neighbors] threw them bread and butter over the fence.⁶⁴⁶

A non-Jewish villager comments:

Oh, there were [loyal] neighbors. Yes, [...] they didn't only have enemies in the village. [...] Either from potatoes or such, they got their basic diet from somewhere —. And for Feist [i.e., the village nickname for Hedwig Stern], you just went shopping [for her] sometimes. If there was anything to buy, that is. [...] Whatever you could gather up in the fields. You simply gave her something to eat.⁶⁴⁷

Among those who did not look away but regularly gave food to the local Jews were Wilhelm Seip, Andreas Peil and Bettchen Scheld as well as a farmer in Roßdorf (the next village), whom the villagers called "Kaske Hannes."⁶⁴⁸

Yet the majority of non-Jewish residents did nothing at all. And those who helped almost always did so at night to avoid being seen.⁶⁴⁹ However, providing such assistance was not illegal for non-Jews.⁶⁵⁰ To be sure, if Jewish residents were to associate too closely with non-Jews, "Jewish" suspects were threatened with being deported to the "work

education camp” [*Arbeitserziehungslager*] in Breitenau.⁶⁵¹ Yet no one needed the cover of darkness to give away food. Giving away food without coming too close was possible in many ways. It is thus absurd to think that non-Jews helped at night in an attempt to protect their Jewish neighbors from state repression. Rather, they acted at night in order to protect *themselves*—for they feared that they might be punished for their action. That said, only one person who helped Jews and wasn’t a member of the Party was ever sanctioned in reality. That person was the carpenter Heinrich Bodenbender, who in early summer of 1938 had built some moving boxes for Juda Rülff. Because he helped a Jewish neighbor, someone relieved himself outside his front door.⁶⁵²

On 7 September 1939, the Gestapo reminded Krawielitzki “that riots against Jews could not be permitted under any circumstances.”⁶⁵³ By then, even the Gestapo no longer spoke of “individual actions.” In the last years before they were deported, the Jews of Rauischholzhausen were utterly impoverished and isolated, restricted in their freedom of movement, and separated from their families. Four of the seven who remained were already over sixty years old. Little is known of the extent to which the community stuck together in solidarity. The fear of being attacked was so great that Jewish residents hardly ever left their homes. A non-Jewish villager learned the following from the local forester:

And if they needed wood [i.e., firewood], [...] then they would come in the evening. In the dark. So no one saw them. But I don’t know, of course, how they brought the wood home. But he [the forester] says the Jews came at night. In the dark.⁶⁵⁴

Windows of Jewish homes had been boarded up after the November Pogrom. And, for the years from 1939 to 1941, there are no reports by Jewish survivors about conditions in Rauischholzhausen. Yet the memories of non-Jewish villagers convey a brutal picture. “It was no surprise that the Jews withdrew, is it?”⁶⁵⁵ The same contemporary witness explains:

She [i.e., Hedwig Stern] didn't go anywhere, couldn't go out anymore. Couldn't let herself be seen, no? For "the brothers" roamed throughout the village. [...] Her windows were all boarded up. All of them, because they had been broken. All of them. [These guys] came down [the street], with clubs in their hands. Old Hedwig, [...] the first time they ringed [at her place] [...] I still remember it, when she opened the thing up, the window. Because she didn't know what was going on. And then "Hummi", as we called him, the tailor, he had such a thick club, and then he hit her window frame! [...] After that, [Hedwig's] windows were all boarded up.⁶⁵⁶

He adds:

Well, Itzig's Loui' [i.e., the village nickname of Louis Rülff], [they] were always after him; he couldn't run fast. [N.B., his left leg was lame.] [...] He hardly went out anymore, either. Cause he didn't dare to. [...] He lived there in "The Corner" [i.e., the village name for today's *Lerchengasse*], you know? Abraham [i.e., Abraham Spier] lived there, so did the Itzig family [i.e., Berta und Louis Rülff], and Vogel Hannes, too. His name was *Vogel*. [...] And if Loui' had to go to the toilet, then they would throw stones at the toilet out there. [...] Outside the slaughterhouse, there [was] a shack, right up next to it. The shack had a privy. [...] Whenever the rocks were flying [towards the privy], he [i.e., Louis Rülff] saw he'd have to get out of there fast. And it wasn't that far to the stairs [of the house]. Then he'd rush up the stairs and back in [the house].⁶⁵⁷

Another non-Jewish contemporary witness provides more detail:

That fellow [i.e., Louis Rülff], [...] lived over there; his brother sent the letter.⁶⁵⁸ He could hardly run; he'd had polio. Those paving stones they threw at him, they could have killed him.⁶⁵⁹



27, 28 Bakehouse on the Zimmerplatz with sled and straw doll. In the background / next to it on the left, the former firehouse, in 1939 or 1940.

According to another non-Jewish witness, people fantasized about murdering Jews. The following story is most likely based on events of 1939 or 1940:

I can only remember [...] how they all got the sled at Abraham's [i.e., Abraham Spier's] and got it up on top of the [bakehouse]. And they threw in a straw doll, and on top of it was a sign, "Abraham won't freeze or sweat, 'cause on top of the bakehouse he sat." They'd put him up on the roof there! [...] The straw doll [...] was supposed to represent Abraham.⁶⁶⁰

On 9 September 1941, Gendarme Seipel received the following important correspondence from Marburg:

According to the Regulation on the Identification of Jews of 1 September 1941 [...], all Jews who have reached six years of age must wear the Jewish Star. It is to be a palm-sized six-pointed star of yellow fabric, outlined in black and labeled with the word "Jew" (in black). It is to be sewn firmly on the left breast-side of garments and is to be worn so it can be seen. Jews are prohibited from [...] leaving their community of residence without having written permission from the local police. [...] I urge you to immediately alert all Jews living in your municipality of this regulation. [...] Violators will be punished by a fine of up to 150 RM or a prison sentence of up to six weeks, on the basis of Section 4 of this regulation.⁶⁶¹

On 13 March 1942, Krawielitzki recorded:

In this district, the Jews are also wearing the star in their homes. None of them has applied for an exemption. [...] Permits to leave the boundaries of the municipality will only be issued in very urgent cases.⁶⁶²

In April 1942, he informed district mayors that –

The homes of Jews are to be designated, effective immediately. White paper should be used so that the [Jewish] star is more conspicuous; in most cases, it should be placed near the front door next to the name plate.⁶⁶³

Eight days later, Krawielitzki got a reply from Rauschholzhausen:

The marking of Jewish residences here has been completed according to orders.⁶⁶⁴

Ghettoization⁶⁶⁵ and Deportation

On 22 October 1940, the final day of the Jewish Festival of Tabernacles (*Sukkot*),⁶⁶⁶ a special event took place in the Jewish community of Rauischholzhausen: the bar mitzvah of 13-year-old Walter Spier. The ceremony was observed at the Spier family's home. During the celebration, Hedwig Stern suddenly got news that her relatives Regina and Gustaph Kaufmann had been deported from Wiesloch (near Baden-Baden).⁶⁶⁷ As Walter Spier recollects,

In 1940, on the day of my bar mitzvah—I was born in 1927—in October 1940, I came home. [...] And when I came home, in our living room I had my bar mitzvah. When I started to read [the] *parashah* [i.e., Torah portion], we got [the] news that the first transport [had] left from Germany.⁶⁶⁸ [...] We never found out where they went or anything. And that, more or less, was the end of my childhood.⁶⁶⁹

After the bar mitzvah, Walter and Martin Spier returned to Frankfurt:

For one more year. But we didn't learn much. Because first, we were in the Hirsch *Realschule* [i.e., the Samson Raphael Hirsch School], which was considered a more Orthodox school. That closed because [of] a lack of teachers and a lack of students, since they either were transported [away] or left Germany [...]. Today you had a teacher, and tomorrow the teacher was no longer there [...]. So we had very little school, and it was very difficult to keep the schools open.⁶⁷⁰

While Walter attended the Philanthropin School as long as he could, Martin had the opportunity to complete the first year of carpentry training in 1941 in a Jewish training institute for unemployed youth.⁶⁷¹

And I think in 1942, the beginning of 1942, the home [i.e., the institute] closed. And we were sent back—those who had parents [went] [...] back to their parents.⁶⁷²

Once they returned to Rauschholzhausen, the 16-year-old Martin was assigned to forced labor:⁶⁷³

And a year before we went to the camp, I was back in Holzhausen. And I was working in Marburg, for the [town of] Marburg, as a carpenter.⁶⁷⁴

In addition to encountering hostility from non-Jewish “work colleagues” on a daily basis, Martin and other Jews feared being assaulted on the way to work:

I had a bicycle,⁶⁷⁵ and I couldn’t take the same road every day. Well, I was afraid [that] they would stop me, that they would come after me. So a lot of times I went to the woods. I even carried the bicycle, to go [in]to the woods, [so] that they [wouldn’t] stop me.⁶⁷⁶

At first, he did not get paid. In desperation, his father wrote to the Foreign Exchange Office on 20 June 1942:

My son Martin Israel Spier, born on 7 Nov. [19]25, has been working at the public utilities of Marburg on the Lahn since 20 May 1942. He earns 38 P [i.e., *Reichspfennig*] per hour. I request that my son be paid this amount since he needs that amount for subsistence and travel.⁶⁷⁷

A few days later, Abraham Spier received the following response from Kassel:

Regarding your request dated 20 June 1942, I release you from the security order [*Sicherungsanordnung*] issued against you [...] on 25 September 1939, with respect to the wages of your son who is employed at Marburg Public Utilities. I wish to emphasize that you are not permitted to possess more than 40 RM in cash per my decision of 10 Nov. 1939, in addition to these wages for your son.⁶⁷⁸

Eleven months after the deportation of Baden's Jews to Gurs (in France) and four months after the racial-ideological predatory war of annihilation against the Soviet Union had commenced, Hitler ordered to deport each and every Jew out of the "Old Reich" [*Altreich*]. By late October 1941, the goal of the "Final Solution" had taken full shape. In December 1941, the Nazis began to operate their first extermination camp in Chełmno, where murder was committed in gas vans.⁶⁷⁹ In this period, preparations were also made for the first of three deportations of the Jewish residents in the Kassel region. Starting in December within nine short months, 2,286 Jews from the regional district of Kassel were deported to ghettos, concentration and extermination camps.⁶⁸⁰ The Gestapo in Kassel forced the Regional Office of the Reich Association of Jews in Germany to assist in putting together lists of those to be deported.⁶⁸¹

On Monday, 8 December 1941, eighty-four people were taken away from the district of Marburg to a transport camp in Kassel.⁶⁸² They were deported the next day in a transport of 1,024 people from the regional district to the Riga Ghetto, which had only been established a few months earlier.⁶⁸³ On 30 November 1941 as well as on 8 and 9 December 1941, approximately 27,000 Latvian Jews had been driven into a forest a few kilometers away. There they had been shot dead in order to make space in the ghetto for deportees from the German Reich. Other victims of the mass shootings included those 1,053 Berlin Jews who had already arrived "too early" on 30 November 1941. Only twelve of the Jews deported to Riga from the district of Marburg survived the Holocaust.⁶⁸⁴

Six months later, the second deportation from the administrative region took place. On Monday, 31 May 1942, 509 people — including thirty-four from the district of Marburg — were relocated to a transport camp in Kassel.⁶⁸⁵ Among those who were deported from the district of Marburg were Jenny Spier's brother Adolph Wertheim (born on 11 April 1896 in Hatzbach, Marburg district), his wife Betty née Siesel (born on 23 November 1902 in Altenstadt, district of Büdingen), and their children Martin (born on 26 April 1927 in Kirchhain) and Carola (born on 2 June 1932 in Kirchhain) from Kirchhain. In addition, among those deported were Hermann Ehrlich (born on 2 July 1891 in Roßdorf), his sister Frieda

Ehrlich (born on 19 January 1893 in Roßdorf), his wife Katinka née Simon (born on 1 October 1888 in Niederweidbach, district of Wetzlar), and their daughter Anita (born on 23 May 1929 in Roßdorf) from Roßdorf.⁶⁸⁶ The next day, their train traveled via Chemnitz to Lublin where the transport was divided. Men between the ages of 15 and 50 were deported to Majdanek, which had been expanded as a concentration camp in October 1941. The older men, along with all women and children, were most probably transported to the Sobibor extermination camp, where they were gassed immediately after their arrival.⁶⁸⁷ Only one individual among them, who managed to escape from Majdanek a few weeks after arrival, was able to survive the Holocaust. All the other 508 people from the region of Kassel were murdered.⁶⁸⁸

According to the guidelines of the Reich Main Security Office, the first two transports targeted those who were able to work and under sixty-five years old. Couples and children of up to fourteen years were



29 Sannchen Wertheim with her husband Wolf, circa 1925.

deported together since it was thought that they would be financially dependent on one another.⁶⁸⁹ At first, forced laborers in strategically vital occupations were not slated for deportation. Combat veterans [*Frontkämpfer*] of World War I along with their families were exempted, at least in the administrative region of Kassel.⁶⁹⁰ Those left behind, then, were primarily the elderly and those who were ill. Due to such exceptions, the Jewish residents of Rauischholzhausen were initially spared from deportation. Hermann Mendel and Abraham Spier had fought as soldiers in World War I.⁶⁹¹ Berta Rülff and Hedwig Stern were over sixty-five years old. Because of his limp (due to polio), Louis Rülff was likely classified as not fully fit for work. On 4 June 1942, four days after the deportation of her son Adolph, Sannchen Wertheim née Edelmuth (born on 26 December 1860 in Reiskirchen, district of Gießen) moved from Kirchhain to the home of her daughter Jenny Spier in Rauischholzhausen.⁶⁹²

At the latest, after the first wave of deportations had begun, the Jewish residents of Rauischholzhausen suspected that it was only a matter of time until they too would be deported. Martin Spier recalls:

In 1940 [...] the first transports were sent to France, to Gurs. And then, my father started to pack and to store things with people, with the farmers.⁶⁹³

According to the 11th Regulation of the Reich Citizenship Law, of 25 November 1941, Jews who resided abroad would have to forfeit their German citizenship (i.e., after being deported). Their assets would thus be ceded to the Reich.⁶⁹⁴ According to an implementation order dated 3 December 1941, such regulations also applied to those whose “usual place of residence is or *in the future will be* in areas occupied by German troops or under German administration” [emphasis added]. Consequently, the regulation even applied to those who would be deported *in the future*.⁶⁹⁵

In order to prevent any transfers of private wealth before the state could enrich itself, a regulation was issued on 27 November 1941 prohibiting “Jews” from disposing of their personal assets.⁶⁹⁶ This regulation

does not seem to have been put into practice regularly. Those about to be deported found it necessary to sell their possessions in haste, thus giving non-Jewish residents a chance to enrich themselves at the lowest prices possible. On 15 May 1942, the District Administrator thus had to make the following request of mayors in the district:

The members of the [German] nation [*Volksgenossen*] in local municipalities [are] to be informed in a manner deemed suitable (such as meetings of local groups or cells) that they may henceforth no longer purchase anything from Jews unless a public sale is being held by the tax office. To comply with this, contact should be made with the local Nazi authorities.⁶⁹⁷

Members of the Spier family were able to leave some of their valuables and household effects for safekeeping with their neighbors. Martin Spier recalls:

[In the neighboring village of Roßdorf] was “Kaske Hannes”, who was very, very good to my parents. And there was another [guy] by [the] name of Ried. A butcher. [...] He lived, when we went to Kirchhain, on the left hand side. [In] a small house. He was good to the Jews. In fact, my father put away stuff [there], like linens and pictures, whatever. And he put [those things away] at the homes of “Kaske Hannes” and [Ried].⁶⁹⁸

Other items were stored for Jews by Rauischholzhausen residents Peter Hofmann and Andreas Peil. Alfred Spier maintains that –

With Peter Hofmann [they] deposited different things: bed linen, cutlery, and stuff like that, no? That’s where they were stored. At Peter Hofmann’s. Very decent people.⁶⁹⁹

Friedel Rülff provides more specifics:

The old Peil [...] stored in his house Jewish prayer books; I think he even kept a Torah scroll for the Spiers.⁷⁰⁰

Hedwig Stern apparently had no hope of returning to the village. Instead of storing her property for safekeeping, she decided to give many items away to those who had helped her, assuming she would not be able to take everything with her once she was deported. A non-Jewish interviewee explains:

I can remember that, before she left, Hedwig gave us one of those huge basins [...] that people used to use in their laundry rooms. [...] In the old days, you know, nobody had a bathroom. They had big basins to wash themselves with. [One of those] [...] Hedwig gave to us. I can still remember that. That we got it. Still have it. But we didn't [take on] any furniture. Mother said, "We don't want any." [...] She [i.e., Hedwig Stern] had already suspected somewhat what was coming. They [i.e., the Jewish residents] probably discussed, you know, what [would happen].⁷⁰¹

Early in fall 1941, Hedwig Stern was also trying to sell off her residential property, which was still registered in the name of her husband (who had already died in 1933). It consisted of a house in the courtyard with a garden. But her request to transfer the property to her name, submitted to the land registry office at the district court in Kirchhain (and requiring a fee) was rejected on 10 December 1941:

[David Stern] bequeathed [...] his assets to the applicant (1/4 of the whole) and to their two children, Franziska and Herbert Stern (each receiving 3/8) as a joint community of heirs. According to a notarized application filed 10 June 1938 [...] the daughter transferred her share of the inheritance to her mother as a gift. However, the son's share of the inheritance was not [officially] transferred to the applicant. While he had bequeathed his share of the inheritance to his mother on 6 May 1938, this transaction was not legal since a *dispo-*

sition of a share of inheritance requires *certification by a notary or a court* under Sections 2033 and 2371 of the [German] Civil Code. The formal provision was not complied with. For the son, Herbert, has merely declared in a simple document that he assigns his rights and power of attorney to his mother; [only] his signature [i.e., and not the *disposition* as such] *has been certified* by a Dutch notary. The son Herbert is thus still co-owner of the property in question under the terms of the inheritance. [...] Nonetheless, because the son emigrated several years ago, he has lost his German citizenship consistent with the 11th Regulation of the *RBG* [i.e., The Reich Citizenship Law] [...]. In line with Section 3 of the same regulation, the assets of anyone who has lost his citizenship are to be transferred to the Reich. Accordingly, [David Stern's] wife — with respect to her own inheritance and that of her daughter — can only be registered as the partial owner, the other part belonging to the German Reich. [...] Since the application [...] cannot be granted in part, the entire application to make corrections had to be rejected.⁷⁰²

Four months later, at the end of April 1942, Hedwig Stern decided to sell her (and her daughter's) share of the inheritance to the Schwarz family, the couple living next door. According to the notarized contract of sale,

Considering the total estimated value of the aforementioned property of 16 00 RM, the purchase price amounts to 1000 RM. The widow Stern is living on the premises and will continue to reside there until her deportation. Until that time, she shall assume all current obligations. Payment for the sale will take place after approval has been granted in accordance with the [regulation] of 3 Dec. 38 and after the German Reich has also concluded a purchase agreement pertaining to the share of the son Herbert Stern.⁷⁰³

Hedwig Stern never saw anything from the proceeds of this sale. The purchase contract required by the state for her son's share of the sale was presumably never finalized. One month after Hedwig Stern agreed to

this contract, the Reich Economics Ministry dispatched the following confidential letter to the Marburg District Administrator:

So that the future conversion of Jewish real estate (according to standard guidelines, it should go to frontline soldiers) is not preempted, contracts of sale for Jewish real estate (aside from those utilized for agricultural or forestry purposes) are not to be finalized in cases where such assets are being transferred to the Reich, in accordance with the 11th Regulation of the Reich Citizenship Law. Such agreements can only be approved if the relevant (Main) State Police Office has informed you that such assets are not anticipated to be transferred to the Reich in the foreseeable future. If the Gestapo informs you that the Jewish land owner is expected to leave the Reich in the foreseeable future, such conversions [of real estate] are to be quietly suspended.⁷⁰⁴

In addition to the prohibitions and restraints on utilizing their assets, the Jewish residents were required to surrender their belongings. In early January 1942, in the middle of winter, they were ordered to give up all fur and wool clothing they owned.⁷⁰⁵ In the middle of June 1942, they were required to relinquish (without remuneration) all –

[...] used clothing (men's and women's outerwear) and used fabrics (clothes, other textile scraps and rags), located in their households, to the extent these are expendable in a modestly managed household [...].⁷⁰⁶

As explained by the Gestapo in Kassel:

The material acquired in the course of action should be collected in what appears to be a suitable neutral place. They should be made available to the Nazi Party offices for used clothing and fabric collection by means of the respective local police offices. One should bear pay heed that Jews do not appear where the goods are being

handed over. Appropriate Jewish representatives are to be responsible for seeing to it that, on and inside of the delivered goods, there is no evidence to indicate who the previous owners were [...].⁷⁰⁷

Any violation of these surrender requirements was threatened with arrest (in protective custody) and transfer to a concentration camp.⁷⁰⁸

Four days after this State Police report, Abraham Spier delivered to Mayor Wahl the following handwritten summary:

Today the following items have been surrendered by the Jewish residents of Rauisch-Holzhausen: 1 coat, 1 bedsheet, 1 skirt, 3 towels, 1 leather coat, 1 dress, 1 blouse, 1 bedsheet, 2 lady's hats, 6 collars, 4 ties, 3 shirts, 2 dresses, 1 skirt, 1 coat, 1 pants, 1 cap, 8 ties, 1 skirt. [In] Rauisch-Holzhausen, on 17 June 1942. Abraham Israel Spier, Jew, reference number A 00131. Registration site Marburg/Lahn.⁷⁰⁹

A short time later, on 5 August 1942, he wrote again:

Today I have sent (via the post office) to the administrative office in Kassel via the District Office of Central Germany of the Reich Association of Jews in Germany 2 furs from Albert Feibelmann [of] Rauisch-Holzhausen (formerly [of] Schweinsberg) [N.B., Albert Feibelmann had been forced to relocate to Rauischholzhausen on 30 July 1942]. Reference number A 00001 [;] registration site Schweinsberg.⁷¹⁰

Regarding Albert Feibelmann's furs and two others as well as a pair of fur gloves from Momberg, the District Administrator produced a small list with the concluding note:

As I have been informed by the local tax office, there are no furs among the household goods of those Jews who have been deported to the East.⁷¹¹

Three months after Hedwig Stern sold her share of her inheritance, her house became one of the (probably) three “Jewish houses.” Jews from the surrounding region were forcibly relocated into these homes, in combination with preparations for the third and final deportation of Jewish residents from this administrative district.⁷¹² As early as April 1941, the first coerced “consolidating” relocations of Jewish residents had taken place within the district.⁷¹³ On 24 July 1942, Mr. and Mrs. Mendel received the following letter from the Kassel District Office of the Reich Association of Jews:

On behalf of the Gestapo, we wish to inform you [...] that you must move immediately into the house of Mr. Abraham Israel Spier, in view of the fact that you are still living together with persons of German blood [N.B., the ground floor of the Mendels’ home had already been assigned for rental to a family named Otto as of 1 September 1941].⁷¹⁴ In this exceptional case, you are permitted to sell without delay and at reasonable prices [...] any furniture and household items that you will have to relinquish because you are having to relocate [...].⁷¹⁵

Approximately the same day, Abraham Spier also received a letter. His son Walter remembers:

All of a sudden, my father gets a notice that he should come to the mayor’s office. The towns—[...] some of them [were] 2 km, 1 km, 3 km apart—[...] got orders, that all the Jews in the neighborhood, [within] 5 or 6 miles, were [to be] put into one home. Since we had the biggest house in town [...] there were four or five families living with us.⁷¹⁶

On 30 July 1942, the mayor of Schweinsberg reported:

As of today, all the Jews who were still living here have moved to Rauisch-Holzhausen. As a consequence, there are no longer any Jews residing in this village.⁷¹⁷

Those forcibly relocated from Schweinsberg to Rauischholzhausen that day were:⁷¹⁸ Albert Feibelman (born 20 January 1878 in Kaiserslautern), Abraham Spier's cousin Rosa Schaumberg (born on 13 October 1888 in Schweinsberg, district of Marburg)⁷¹⁹ and the couple of Moritz Katz (born on 20 May 1891 in Schweinsberg, district of Marburg) and Paula Katz, née Jakob (born on 17 December 1894 in Büdesheim, district of Bingen), as well as the couple of Moses Schirling (born on 18 April 1860 in Mardorf, district of Marburg) and Johanna Schirling, née Rothschild (born on 24 February 1862 in Angenrod, district of Alsfeld).⁷²⁰

Four days later, more forced relocations took place from Mardorf. Those impacted were Rosa Maas, née Goldenberg (born on 9 October 1883 in Kestrich, district of Alsfeld), and Pauline Stern, née Rosenbaum (born on 30 March 1874 in Rodheim, district of Friedberg).⁷²¹ Abraham Spier and Louis Rülff obtained extraordinary permission to leave Rauischholzhausen to assist with the "move" from Mardorf.⁷²² Jews were forced to live together in probably three houses in Rauischholzhausen. At least eleven people were housed at today's Lerchengasse 2, the site of the residence of the family Spier (which included five members with Jenny's mother). In addition to the Mendels who had already been living there for a week, its occupants included Abraham's cousin Rosa Schaumberg, Albert Feibelman, and Mr. and Mrs. Katz.⁷²³ As of 30 July 1942, Mr. and Mrs. Schirling were forced to reside in the house of the Spiers' neighbors Berta and Louis Rülff.⁷²⁴ After that day, fifteen Jewish people resided in the small cul-de-sac formed by the Lerchengasse. But the Mardorf residents, Rosa Maas and Pauline Stern, were quite likely forced to resettle in Hedwig Stern's home, next door to today's Untere Höhle 13.⁷²⁵ A non-Jewish contemporary witness observes:

Later on, they were near us [i.e., at Untere Höhle]. There were more people, who didn't normally live there. From Mardorf, or wherever they were from. Jews.⁷²⁶

On August 3rd Krawielitzki proudly reported his success to the Gestapo:

The Jewish families living in the communities of Schweinsberg and Mardorf have been brought together with the Jews in R-Holzhausen so I can control them better. The municipalities of Schweinsberg and Mardorf are now free of Jews.

He added that –

The rest of the Jews will be settled in the municipality of Roth so that there will only be Jews in the municipalities of R-Holzhausen and Roth. Besides having better control over the Jews, who until now have been living dispersed throughout the district, our correspondence will be simplified now that the Jews have been brought closer together. Henceforth, only the two mayors of R-Holzhausen and Roth have to be informed of any regulations involving Jews whereas previously circa 10 communities had to be updated.⁷²⁷

Nonetheless, the forced relocation to Roth did not take place (or at least not to the extent planned).⁷²⁸

On 25 August 1942, the Gestapo finally gave notice of the impending final deportation to the District Administrator:

On 7 September 1942 the Jews who remain will be deported from the administrative district of Kassel to Theresienstadt. [...] All Jews will be concentrated prior to the deportation in a detention camp [*Auffanglager*] in Kassel. The public schools at the intersection of Schillerstrasse and Wörthstrasse in Kassel will be used for this purpose. [...] When deregistering the Jews, the local registration offices shall neither note their destination nor describe them as “evacuated to Theresienstadt.” All they should report is “destination unknown” or “emigrated.” As for luggage, Jews may take with them one suitcase or backpack with the following items: a) full clothing (proper footwear), b) bedding with a blanket, c) tableware (plate or pot) with spoon, d) food supplies for three days.⁷²⁹

Additional possessions were to be transported to Kassel by freight train. “Jews” were to pay the freight charges themselves. The transports were supposed to be accompanied by gendarmes as well as a number of “Jewish overseers” [*Ordner*].

The Jews should take all of their cash with them on the transport. You will be provided with 50 RM per person, an amount to be paid in advance by the Jews and to be collected at the Jewish community in Kassel.⁷³⁰ Any remaining cash will not be taken from them until they are here in the detention camp. I further ask that the Jews be allowed to keep with them valuables such as gold, silver, platinum, etc., since they will be subject to physical and baggage searches anyway once they have arrived at the detention camp. [...] Property left in their homes will be seized once they have been deported. To get an overview of this, the Jews will be given asset declarations to fill out here, which they will then have to submit via their Jewish representative at the State Police Office in Kassel. Any remaining inventory should be labelled with nametags by the Jews, so that the previous owner can be immediately identified. The Jews are to hand over the keys when leaving their apartments [...]—marking them with nametags as well—to the police in their district. They are to be collected in envelopes with the corresponding address of the previous owners. The keys are then to be surrendered to the proper tax authorities or delivered on demand. After the Jews have departed, their homes are to be checked over (at least randomly) and then sealed off. If there are any problems prior to or during the evacuation process, I ask that you take responsibility for them and exercise a large degree of autonomy [...] if need be in consultation with the local authorities and party offices. If you have difficulties on site that you cannot really deal with, you should inform me immediately by telephone and wait for my instructions.⁷³¹

On 28 August 1942, just nine days before the deportations, Krawielitzki notified the respective mayors of the plans, adding that he already had precise estimates of the personal assets concerned:

The keys to abandoned dwellings [...] are [...] to be surrendered to the mayor as the *OPB* [*Ortspolizeibehörde*; i.e., the local police authority] before the emigrations commence. I am directing you to close off these homes and keep the surrendered keys in an envelope, which must also be sealed and marked with your signature. Prior to that, you should see that the windows are properly closed and the water shut off; no lights should be left on, either. [...] Since some Jews are bedridden and incapable of moving on their own, they will have to be driven to the train station. I authorize you to provide suitable vehicles for this purpose; the Jews will be liable for the expenses. I hope that the evacuation takes place smoothly and that any trouble will be prevented. Most of all, it is very important that no harassment etc. takes place. Otherwise, I will have to be merciless in calling to account those who are at fault. The removal [i.e., of the Jews] must take place without a hitch. [...] If there is still any confusion about this, I can answer your queries by phone.⁷³²

After new instructions were issued from Kassel concerning the departure time of 10:16 am from Marburg Central Station, the District Administrator supplemented his orders two days later:⁷³³

To update my decree [...] the deportation of the Jews will take place on 6 September 1942 from the Marburg train station. [...] [It] is [...] necessary for the Jews to be there by 9am at the Central Station in Marburg, in the waiting room for 3rd class. [...] The transport of additional items belonging to the Jews [will take place] by freight cargo shipments; these are to be immediately delivered by the Jews at the appropriate freight depot. [...] All transport costs are to be borne by the Jews themselves. Transport supervision will be arranged by the Jews themselves; I presume that all those who will supervise have

already been informed of this. [...] By 2 September 1942, you are expected to have reported to me that you have arranged what is required and that no problems have occurred. I also wish to be informed by 6 September 1942 that there are no longer Jews registered there.⁷³⁴

Just two days later, Mayor Wahl proclaimed the following for Rauschholzhausen:

With respect to your correspondence of 30 August of this year, I am apprising you that I have caused to happen what is required. The luggage cargo has been relinquished this afternoon at the freight office in Kirchhain to be forwarded to the address in Kassel specified in your letter of 28 August 1942.⁷³⁵

It is impossible to imagine how the victims felt after learning of their fate. A non-Jewish villager explained how Louis Rülff said goodbye to Johannes Pfeiff:

He had had polio. [...] And he [i. e., Johannes Pfeiff] said, "Loui' was here." Rülff's Louis had told him, "Hannes, tomorrow we're gonna be taken away. But what do they want with me?"⁷³⁶

Martin and Walter Spier remember the last night they spent with their parents together in Rauschholzhausen. Walter recollects, what their father told them:

"Children, we won't make it." That means my mother and him. He says: "You make it. And should you be separated from each other, after the war you go back to your hometown. To our hometown."⁷³⁷

One non-Jewish neighbor could not sleep that night. Martin Spier remembers,

Wilhelm Seip. A night before we went to Theresienstadt, he came by. [In the] [...] night, barefoot, he brought us bread and cold cuts. [...] You know, there were good people, too.⁷³⁸

Early on the morning of 6 September, the Jewish residents of Rauischholzhausen were assembled by Mayor Karl Wahl. Walter Spier recalls,

Certain things you remember, and certain things you don't want to remember. You understand? Like, to me — to us — the worst thing was when we walked out of the house. And my father had to give the keys of the house to [Mayor] Wahl. You know, that was —. This picture, as long as I live, I [will] see in front of me.⁷³⁹

Trucks on the Zimmerplatz stood ready to transport the Jews away. Several non-Jewish residents remember the festive mood that day on the village square. According to one contemporary witness:

And the way they got them at that time; [...] it was a Sunday morning. [...] I watched it from an old barn, at a close distance. And then I saw how [...] the trucks were standing there. And there were different people there, alas, and they were enjoying themselves! And were laughing! [...] It was mainly women who were standing around and enjoying themselves as they [i.e., the Jews] were being loaded onto the trucks.⁷⁴⁰

Another woman remembers:

Our father came [home], got there and said [...] that the citizens of Rauischholzhausen had really shouted and rejoiced that they [i.e., the Jews] were being taken away.⁷⁴¹

In Walter Spier's words:

We had to be ready [...] Sunday morning. Sunday morning we had to be ready. And he [i.e., Mayor Wahl] came and [...] whatever you could carry, you [carried]. We all walked down [there].⁷⁴²

As his brother Martin recalls:

We put on two suits and a lot of underwear. [...] I remember, my mother carried a tub [with her] for washing.⁷⁴³

None of those who had acted in solidarity with them to that point showed up to say goodbye. Walter Spier adds:

They [were] all, they were afraid. They were afraid. [...] Like my wife said earlier, that one guy [...], he said later on: "I watched you, when you were brought away." Nobody said that again. Nobody. [...] They were [too] afraid.⁷⁴⁴

His brother Martin continues, regarding Wilhelm Seip, who had brought them food the night before: "He should [...] [have] come around."⁷⁴⁵ The only one who came was "Deubel's Lisbeth, she was there on the corner. She cried."⁷⁴⁶ Loaded together on the truck beds, the Jewish villagers were driven away.

[Wahl] picked us up in an open vehicle, and he drove us to Marburg. Wahl, with his long pipe.⁷⁴⁷

On 7 September 1942, Krawielitzki informed Kassel,

[...] that the evacuation of the Jews here has gone smoothly and no difficulties have come up. All Jews on the list provided have been delivered at the appointed time.⁷⁴⁸

Yperiesiensstadt vom 23/12 43.
Werte Familie Klingelhöfer
hoffentlich geht n' Grief gesünd
geitlich gut, wir glauben es
war und allen gries barrieten
Korn, aber Post kommt
günstlich sind an, ich danke
Gries für das Paket.
Wir sind sind allen zusammen
freundlichen Gries von uns
alle Jenny Spier
Berggasse 17
Besten Gries Abraham Spier
Gries an Sabsi Berggasse. 17

30 Last sign of life for friends in Hessen: Postcard from Jenny Spier, reverse side, December 1943.

Dear Family Klingelhöfer,

I hope you are in good health. I am happy to report that we are.

The mail arrives here on time. Thank you so much for the package. We are all together here.

Greetings from us all, Jenny Spier, Berggasse 17.

Best, Abraham Spier, Berggasse 17.

Say hello to Sabsi [name illegible].

On that same day, the Rauschholzhausen Jewish population was deported from Kassel to the ghetto and transit camp of Theresienstadt.⁷⁴⁹

On the updated registry of Jews living in the district, the District Administrator stamped “6 September 1942” in the column titled “comments” after the names of the deportees.⁷⁵⁰ Mayor Wahl noted in the Rauschholzhausen registry “emigrated on 6 September 1942.”⁷⁵¹



31 Postcard from Jenny Spier, frontside, December 1943.

MURDER

Hermann Mendel died in Theresienstadt on 4 April 1943
at the age of 65.⁷⁵²

Berta Rülff, née Kanter, died in Theresienstadt on 14 November 1942
at the age of 70.⁷⁵³

Berta's son Louis Rülff was murdered in Auschwitz on 29 January 1943;
he was 40 years old.⁷⁵⁴

Abraham Spier was deported to Auschwitz in mid-May of 1944. He was
murdered soon after his arrival; he was 63 years old.⁷⁵⁵

Abraham's wife Jenny Spier, née Wertheim, was deported in mid-May of
1944 to Auschwitz, where she too was murdered soon after her arrival;
she was 53 years old.⁷⁵⁶

Jenny's mother, Sannchen Wertheim, née Edelmuth, perished in
Theresienstadt on 19 May 1943 at the age of 82.⁷⁵⁷

Abraham Spier's cousin Rosa Schaumberg was deported to Auschwitz
on 23 January 1943, where she was probably murdered shortly after
arriving; she was 54 years old.⁷⁵⁸

Hedwig Stern, née Kaufmann, was 70 years old when she was (most
likely) deported on 29 September 1942 to the Treblinka extermination
camp. There she was murdered.⁷⁵⁹ According to another source, she
was murdered on 29 September 1942 at the extermination camp of
Maly Trostinets.⁷⁶⁰

At the age of 60, Simon Frenkel was deported on 30 October 1942 from the Westerbork transit camp to Auschwitz, where he was then murdered.⁷⁶¹

Simon's wife Rosa Frenkel, née Löwenstein, was deported to Westerbork in the night of 2 to 3 October 1942, and on 30 October 1942 to Auschwitz.⁷⁶² There she was murdered on 2 November 1942 at the age of 64.⁷⁶³

Simon and Rosa's daughter Irene Cohen, née Frenkel, was also deported to Westerbork in the night of 2 to 3 October 1942. She was sent to Auschwitz on 10 November 1942.⁷⁶⁴ There she was murdered on 13 November 1942 at the age of 32.⁷⁶⁵

Irene's husband Salomon Cohen (born 13 May 1911 in Coevorden, Netherlands) was transported in the night of 2 to 3 October 1942 to Westerbork. Like his wife, he was deported to Auschwitz on 10 November 1942.⁷⁶⁶ On 21 January 1945, he was murdered at an unknown site; he was 33 years old.⁷⁶⁷

Irene and Solomon's daughter Carla Cohen (born on 21 August 1939 in Apeldoorn, Netherlands) was transported on the night of 2 to 3 October 1942 to Westerbork and deported to Auschwitz on 10 November 1942.⁷⁶⁸ She was murdered there on 13 November 1942, at the age of 3.⁷⁶⁹

Rosa Maas, née Goldenberg, was deported to Auschwitz on 23 January 1943. She was likely murdered there shortly after her arrival at the age of 59.⁷⁷⁰

Pauline Stern, née Rosenbaum, died on 8 September 1942 at the age of 68 years in Theresienstadt.⁷⁷¹

Albert Feibelmann died on 23 February 1943 at the age of 65 years in Theresienstadt.⁷⁷²

Paula Katz, née Jakob, was deported on 12 October 1944 to Auschwitz, where she was likely murdered shortly after her arrival at the age of 49.⁷⁷³

Moritz Katz was deported to Auschwitz on 12 October 1944. There he was probably murdered shortly after his arrival at the age of 53.⁷⁷⁴

Moses Schirling was most likely deported on 29 September 1942 to Treblinka. He was presumably murdered there or in Maly Trostinets at the age of 82.⁷⁷⁵

Johanna Schirling, née Rothschild, was deported on 29 September 1942, most likely to Treblinka. She too was probably murdered there or in Maly Trostinets at the age of 80.⁷⁷⁶

Enriching Oneself

“And once they were gone, the doors to their homes stood open.”⁷⁷⁷ Evidently, Mayor Wahl was not so scrupulous in fulfilling the Gestapo’s orders to close and seal off the newly abandoned homes. Immediately after the Jewish families had been transported away, their former homes were eagerly looted. While I was told that “not everyone” took part, there is no doubt that a large number of villagers were involved.⁷⁷⁸

The assets of those Jewish residents deported to Theresienstadt were transferred to the Reich, in accordance with the 11th Regulation of the Reich Citizenship Law in conjunction with its implementation provisions of 3 December 1941. After March 1942, the administration and conversion of these assets came under the authority of the Chief Finance President in Kassel. Putting these into practice became the responsibility of the relevant local tax offices.⁷⁷⁹ For this purpose, an “Office for the Disposal and Utilization of Jewish Property” (hereafter, “Property Utilization Office”) was launched at the tax office in Marburg; its operation was entrusted to some members of the property area, especially tax inspector Waldemar Kämmerling.⁷⁸⁰ The job of organizing the auction of the personal property in the district of Marburg went to the auctioneer Karl Schott. He set to work immediately, registering and making inventories of the possessions left behind by the deportees. His records were thorough and likely based both on the inventories already filed with the tax offices and on his own on-site inspections. His summaries enumerated each item in each room, and he distinguished in each case between the “taxed” value of the item and the value “declared” in the list (perhaps by the owner himself or herself).

Hence, Berta Rülff had left behind in her kitchen a kitchen cabinet with a stated value of 15 RM, taxed at a value of 5 RM. There was also a kitchen table (5 RM, taxed at 2 RM), three pots (6 RM, taxed at 4 RM), four curtains (4 RM, taxed at 3 RM), a dining service (50 RM, taxed at 10 RM), a coffee service (10 RM, taxed at 5 RM), a dress suit, and two men’s hats (together 24 RM, taxed at 3 RM).⁷⁸¹ Plainly, after the assets were recorded, there was some consultation between the Property Utilization Office and

the Nazi district leadership. A few days after Berta Rülff was deported, the District Administrator (most likely) picked up her valuable set of bedroom furniture.⁷⁸² A non-Jewish villager recalls:

They got themselves a new bedroom [set] that was very stylish for the times. And the District Administrator [i.e., District Administrator and Nazi district leader Hans Krawielitzki] grabbed it for himself. [...] It had belonged to the Itzigs [i.e., the village name for Berta Rülff's family] and then he took it for himself. He snapped it up once they were gone.⁷⁸³

Of course, the new bedroom set did not show up again in Schott's exhaustive summary. The officials in charge of Jewish assets always knew how to acquire good furniture, for themselves and for their colleagues in the tax office, too. In fact, the employees of the Marburg Tax Office enriched themselves so completely that eventually, on 1 October 1942, their superior Max von Brincken⁷⁸⁴ prohibited them to acquire any more property that used to belong to the Jewish deportees from that region.⁷⁸⁵ Some of the belongings of those deported from Rauischholzhausen were distributed to the Nazi People's Welfare as well.⁷⁸⁶

Whatever private property remained — after the looting, the appropriations by tax officials, and the allocations to the Nazi People's Welfare — was sold at public auction in Rauischholzhausen. Yet, according to all contemporary witnesses interviewed, that auction was conducted not by Schott but by (at least) three local residents, some of them members of the Nazi Women's League. When in 1954 Schott was asked by the tax office in Marburg about former assets of murdered Rauischholzhausen resident, Albert Feibelmann, he indicated that he had taken possession of Feibelmann's household assets in September 1942, then transferred them to the municipality of Rauischholzhausen — specifically to the mayor — at an assessed value of 48 RM. He could no longer verify what the individual items were. Nor did he know about any auction proceeds from the sale of the furniture, clothes, and other belongings.⁷⁸⁷ It could not be determined exactly how this private property was utilized in

Rauischholzhausen, whether Schott first sold it at the estimated value to the village, which then held an auction with the assistance of some residents, or whether the auction was carried out with the work being shared between the auctioneer and the Women's League.⁷⁸⁸

What is nonetheless true is that the auction itself was a big, happy event in the village. It took place in the course of one day, shortly after the deportation, in front of the former homes of the Spiers and Sterns. Evidently, the entire village got together that day and vied for the possessions of the deportees. People were familiar with the former owners and their furniture and clothing. Perhaps one or the other had long been eyeing a neighbor's pretty coffee service.⁷⁸⁹

A non-Jewish contemporary witness remembers the auction that took place in front of the Spiers' old home:

And I remember there were auctions. They auctioned off things of the Jews. The items were carried out of the house. So people couldn't go inside. There were a few people there, from the [Nazi] party I assume; they carried the stuff out, and whoever wanted to could bid on it. I've watched, too, but not to buy anything, just out of curiosity. [...] It was here in "The Corner" [i.e., the village name for the Lerchengasse]. [...] Later on, they [i.e., the local "Jews"] practically lived all together in one house. And the people [i.e., the local "non-Jews"] came out. There were stairs going *this way* and *that way*, and they stood up there on the steps, up there by the house door and they held out the stuff [to see]. And whoever wanted to could bid on it.⁷⁹⁰

The entire village came out to watch:

Yes, everybody knew about it! And a whole lot of folks were there! Even people who bought nothing and didn't want to buy anything. They were just curious. [...] It was mostly women, really. Maybe the men carried the furniture out. The linens and so on were brought out by the women, the Women's League. And [they] stood at the top

of the stairs. There were stairs going *this way* and *that way*, with a big stone slab by the front door. Then they stood there and showed what they had. And the people made bids.⁷⁹¹

Another contemporary witness confirms that –

Else Schmidt, [...] and the wife of “Goebbels’che” [i.e., of Johannes Deuker]—they put out the Jews’ stuff to look at.⁷⁹²

The situation was similar in front of Hedwig Stern’s former residence. A third non-Jewish interviewee recalls:

Yes, and I can still remember it: from all the places where Jews lived, furniture and everything was brought up the road to the Feists [i.e., the village name for the Stern family]. And it was auctioned off there. And I still remember who held the stuff up! [...] At Feist’s. It was auctioned off at the Feists’. [...] In front of the house. I can still see it, how somebody was standing on the steps and offering the stuff for sale. Pots, fabric, bed linens—furniture and whatnot. [...] From here in the area, [in] Mardorf, there were Jews too. And all those things were left here and then auctioned off. [...] Who bid on it? [...] And did you know, who held up the stuff? [...] I can still see it, like it was happening today.⁷⁹³

In addition, the houses of the deportees were in high demand. The land registers were quickly updated in favor of the state. The Property Utilization Office in Marburg was also responsible for managing the real estate of Jews. The management of the agricultural land was transferred to the Treasury for Estates [*Domänenrentamt*] starting in April 1943.⁷⁹⁴ Soon the creditors of those deported also reported their claims on the assets and demanded to be considered in the framework of utilizing Jewish property. For instance, a letter of Dresdner Bank to the Chief Finance President in Kassel on 23 September 1942, reads as follows:

[Abraham Spier] [...] owes us approximately 4,377 RM plus interest, while we have from him security in the form of a mortgage in the amount of 6,000 RM that is registered on his [former] house and the farm property in Rauischholzhausen. As we hear from the Gestapo in Kassel, this Jew has now been deported to Theresienstadt (Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia) on 7 September 1942. [...] We kindly request information whether you are now intending to sell the real property belonging to this Jew. We are very interested, hoping to obtain our money in this way.⁷⁹⁵

According to a decree circulated by the Reich Ministry of Finance on 22 April 1942, real estate surrendered to the Reich was generally not to be sold off (to anyone).⁷⁹⁶ With this in mind, the former real estate of the deportees from Rauischholzhausen was merely rented out or leased as agricultural parcels by the Office for Disposal and Utilization of Jewish Assets. Any renovations were, if possible, to be paid out of the assets of the expropriated deportees. Otherwise, that office was permitted to pay for them with “cash amounts received in a different fashion from Jewish assets.”⁷⁹⁷ The leases were usually issued on a temporary basis. Those given Rauischholzhausen real estate was preferentially assigned to loyal Party members, needy families with multiple children, as well as people fleeing from bombing raids.⁷⁹⁸

Problems ensued from the fact that unauthorized purchase contracts had been concluded on various real estate prior to the deportation of their former Jewish owners. However, these potential buyers often were completely ignored when the state allocated housing after the deportations had started.

On 4 November 1942, the Marburg Tax Office received a complaint from Elizabeth Dörr, prospective buyer of Berta Rülff's home:

By law, any real estate contracts made by members of the nation [*Volksgenossen*] with Jews are invalid. As your office is aware, I signed a purchase agreement and paid the corresponding taxes on it as well. Franz Kaiser, a “hereditary farmer” [*Erbhofbauer*] in Rauischholz-

hausen, now claims to have leased these properties from you. In my view, as the buyer, I should have had the first option to claim this lease.

Her letter concludes with a threat:

As a German woman, I intend to submit this concern to the relevant District Administrator of the Nazi Party in Marburg, since I am not well versed in legal matters. *Heil Hitler*.⁷⁹⁹

Franz Kaiser had financially assisted Berta's son Julius in 1936 when the latter decided to flee to Argentina. It was likely no coincidence that Kaiser, apparently in the capacity of property manager, rented the house in 1942, paying 12 RM per month. Perhaps he had been asked to do so by Berta Rülff. It is conceivable that he arranged this acquisition of ownership directly with the Rülffs and that he had then implemented it by deploying clever strategies vis-a-vis the state after Berta and Louis had been deported. However, this idea is contradicted by the fact that Berta Rülff had apparently made an agreement with Mrs. Dörr. Or perhaps Franz Kaiser had considered his duty as a friend of the family simply to take the rental payment upon himself and to take care of the house and its maintenance in their absence. I am not aware whether he used the premises himself despite his own rather large property in the village. At the very least, the upstairs rooms had been rented to another family.⁸⁰⁰ If the sublet payments had been intended to compensate him for the money he had given Julius to escape Germany, the plans did not succeed. For, although the payments were made directly to Mr. Kaiser, his own rent was raised accordingly, to 20 RM.⁸⁰¹ In any event, Mrs. Dörr's petition to the tax office did not succeed. Franz Kaiser, the farmer and future local historian, remained the tenant while Dörr might have been put off with promises that she would receive "first consideration" in any sale after the war.⁸⁰²

Mr. and Mrs. Schwarz experienced something quite similar. As the next-door neighbors of Hedwig Stern, they had already made an agree-

ment in April of 1942 to purchase her portion of the property she had inherited.⁸⁰³ Yet, on 17 November 1942, the Property Utilization Office leased the dwelling for the next three years to the Otto family, who had previously resided on the ground floor of the Mendel family's house.⁸⁰⁴ The complaints made by Mr. and Mrs. Schwarz at the District Administration did not succeed, either. Reference was made to the indigence of the Otto family and the general housing shortage (that conflicted with plans to demolish the Stern house).⁸⁰⁵ In his frustration, Johannes Schwarz then decided to arbitrarily move and re-purpose the fence that separated his place from the neighbor's property (which he and his wife were coveting), thereby creating his own access to his property. The Ottos were thereupon indignant and reported to the tax authorities that the yard was being destroyed by the neighboring children.⁸⁰⁶ Since at the end of April 1943 nothing had changed in the dispute over the land claimed by both sides, an official site visit was set up by government inspector Wagner, the Nazi managing director of the district [*Kreisgeschäftsführer*] Dörr, Mayor Wahl and local party leader Schweißguth. That inspection resulted in a compromise over the disputed property line. The fence that Johannes Schwarz had converted had to be replaced in accordance with the land registry office. For that, the Schwarzes were awarded a part of the neighboring garden for drying laundry in exchange for a fee of .50 RM per month to be paid to the Ottos.⁸⁰⁷

The hardnosed manner in which people fought over the rights to Hedwig Stern's property is scandalous. Without any scruples, the majority of the village residents enriched themselves from the former property of the deportees. None of them seemed to doubt that their former Jewish neighbors were gone for good.

After the Holocaust

American Occupation

At the end of March 1945, American troops reached Rauschholzhausen. Although about 200 *Wehrmacht* soldiers tried to defend the town of Kirchhain on March 29,⁸⁰⁸ the surrender of the village of Rauschholzhausen was relatively peaceful. A large white sheet was affixed to the chimney of the dairy owned by the mayor's family, a structure that towered high above the village.⁸⁰⁹ To officially surrender for the village, Mr. von Stumm, Mayor Wahl, and Dr. Pfaff, the head of the university-operated farm, came out to meet the American soldiers at the edge of the village.⁸¹⁰ There were three (most likely symbolic) shots fired from the American side, though hardly anyone today remembers where they landed.⁸¹¹ Houses were searched for weapons and Nazi propaganda materials.⁸¹² The U.S. forces took over the manor house (and the farm); in the ensuing period, a military casino was set up there.⁸¹³ However, troops were never actually stationed in Rauschholzhausen.⁸¹⁴

At this point, at least three people from Rauschholzhausen belonged to the Allied troops fighting against Germany: Julius and Alfred Spier in the British military, and Friedel Rülff in the U.S. Army.

Friedel Rülff observed the official surrender of Germany while in Magdeburg. After 10 May, he was stationed in Bad Nauheim.⁸¹⁵



32 Julius Spier as a soldier in the British Army, 1945.



33 Alfred Spier as a member of the British military in Bielefeld, 1948.

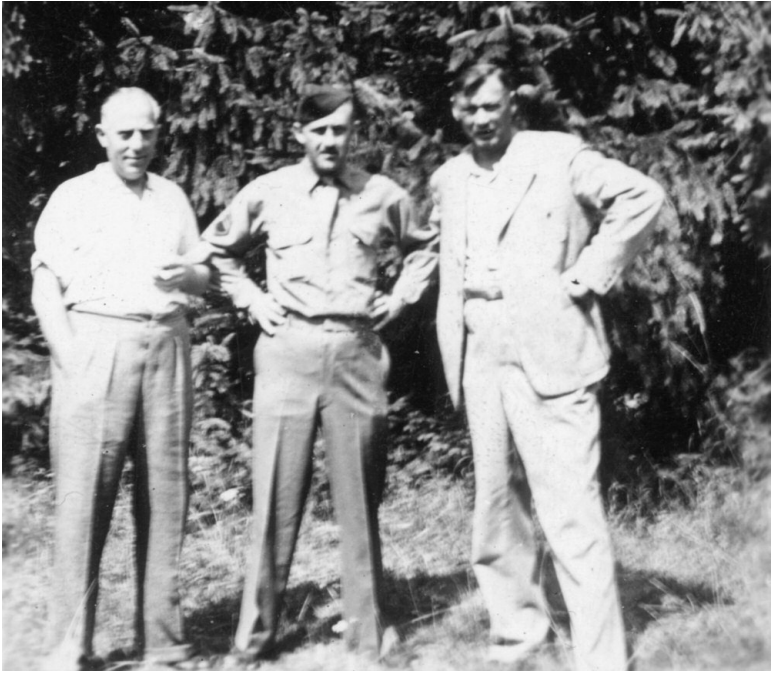
A few days later, he decided to visit his old “hometown;” armed and in American uniform he traveled to Rauschholzhausen.⁸¹⁶ He remembers:

And when I was [...] in Holzhausen in 1945, I was at Peil’s place [i.e., Andreas Peil’s]. Since it was the 10th of May when we got there [i.e., to Bad Nauheim], it was maybe [...] three or four days later. At that point we still had weapons; we had guns. And then he [i.e., Ludwig Grün, the baker, who lived across the street from Andreas Peil and had pursued Friedel Rülff with a hammer a few years earlier in the forest] was at the window: “You can come over to my place.” I then reached for my gun. I say, “If you don’t shut your window ...!” And he was gone! And then came his wife [...] [and said]: “Friedel, you know how he is!” And I say, “Of course, I know how he is. [...] He should close the window; he should get away! You think I’m coming after him?” I never, never once took revenge. To me, that—I thought differently from them.⁸¹⁷



34 American military personnel at one of the first Jewish worship services to be held after the war, in Bad Nauheim, 1945; Walter Spier is in the last row at the far right.

There were apparently no sensational criminal proceedings brought against local Nazis. Nor do we know much about the denazification measures taken by the Americans in Rauischholzhausen.⁸¹⁸ While the teacher Johannes Gade was likely incarcerated relatively quickly, Karl Wahl apparently continued to serve without interruption as mayor for almost another half a year.⁸¹⁹ By and large, the village residents adjusted to the new situation.⁸²⁰ Their *BdM* [League of German Girls] uniforms were dyed another color; the red Party flags were made into skirts. As for the general atmosphere in the village: on the one hand, it is reported that there were strong tensions between former Nazis and Social Democrats; on the other, there were probably many cases where the Social Democratic villagers helped the Nazis by making exculpatory statements on their behalf in denazification proceedings.⁸²¹ The tensions that characterized relationships within the village appear not to have spilled over beyond the village's boundaries.⁸²² The residents stuck together against the "new enemy", i.e., the Americans. As a result, SA and SS members from Rauisch-



35 Friedel Rülff [center] together with his former helpers Wilhelm Seip [left] and Peter Hofmann [right] in Rauschholzhausen, August 1945.

holzhausen could spend their days hiding in the local forest for a period of about six months without being tracked down by the American military.⁸²³ The cohesion of the “German national community” [*deutsche Volksgemeinschaft*] also ultimately made it possible for “ethnic German” [*volksdeutsch*] refugees to be welcomed warmly. Mainly from Hungary and Czechoslovakia, these people managed to settle in Rauschholzhausen in the years to come.⁸²⁴

And completely against expectations, the “old enemy” also returned to Rauschholzhausen.

Returning

Three of the Rauschholzhauseners deported to Theresienstadt survived the Holocaust: Walter and Martin Spier as well as Sara Mendel. All three returned to Rauschholzhausen in 1945.

Walter Spier was liberated after a death march on 5 May 1945, in the concentration camp at Mauthausen; Martin Spier and Sara Mendel were both liberated on 8 May, in Theresienstadt.

The Spier brothers had been separated shortly after their arrival in Auschwitz in May 1944 and transported to different forced labor camps. After their liberation, the siblings remembered their father's words:

We will not make it. [...] But you will make it; should you be separated, after the war, you go back to your hometown.⁸²⁵

And:

Go back to your hometown and be proud of your name.⁸²⁶



36 Shortly after liberation in Mauthausen, May 1945. Walter Spier [left] and two other former prisoners with their liberator, Captain Michel Levy [center, rear].

Walter Spier remembers his liberation as follows:

[I] don't know if it was after a week or — I don't remember. Captain Levy came to me and to the others and said: "Do you have any family in other countries?" So I said: "Yes, I have a sister and [...] [two] brother[s], who went with the *Jugend-Aliyah*, with the children's transport to England." He says: "Write them a note."⁸²⁷ And he put an ad in *Aufbau* [a German-Jewish journal published after 1934]. I didn't know about *Aufbau* or anything. I didn't know where my brother [Martin] was. I [only] knew my parents weren't alive, you

Personen in U.S.A., die von ihren Verwandten und Freunden in Europa gesucht werden

Nähere Auskunft im Büro des World Jewish Congress, 1834 Broadway (Columbus Circle, 59. Str.), New York, täglich von 10 a. m. bis 3 p. m., ausser Samstag und Sonntag. Wir bitten, in jeder Anfrage sich auf No. 444-A beziehen zu wollen.

444-A

<p>Belgel, Emil, Rabbi, Chicago, gesucht von Pola Gruenberg, z. Z. Schweden.</p> <p>Einhorn, Adolf, Chicago University, gesucht von Alice Bagova, Schweden.</p> <p>Frater, Sara, New York, gesucht von Intrater Kichman, Schweden.</p> <p>Gruener, Bernard, Chicago, gesucht von Elisabeth Gruener, Schweden.</p> <p>Handel, Hannah, New York, gesucht von Frederic Weissmann, Belgien.</p> <p>Heumann, Adolf und Alfred, gesucht von Manfred Mayer, Frankreich.</p> <p>Hofhauser, Selig, Brooklyn, gesucht von N. Hofhauser, Schweden.</p> <p>Mayer, Walter und Frieda, Reno, gesucht von Max Turteitau, Frankreich.</p> <p>Neumarkt, Jakob, Brooklyn, gesucht von Elli Hershberg-Rottenberg, Schweden.</p> <p>Petschek, Eva, Scarsdale, N. Y., gesucht von Reini und Lieslotte Baecher, Schweden.</p> <p>Rosenblum, Isidor und Juda, Brooklyn, gesucht von Ludwik Falk, Schweden.</p> <p>Saffratz, New York, gesucht von Frederic Weissmann, Belgien.</p>	<p>Cauko, Armin, New York, gesucht von Anna Schickler, Schweden.</p> <p>Daskal, Bela, New York, gesucht von Solic Daskal, Malmo, Schweden.</p> <p>Denhofer, Morne, Detroit, gesucht von Livia Silberstein, Schweden.</p> <p>Deutsch, Moritz, Detroit, gesucht von Vera Gsontow, Schweden.</p> <p>Ecker, Geza, Ohio, gesucht von Edit Ecker, Schweden.</p> <p>Ehrlich, Julius, Leslie, New York, gesucht von Deszoe Atlasz, Dr., Buchenwald.</p> <p>Engelman, Samu, Philadelphia, gesucht von Elizabeth Engelmann, Schweden.</p> <p>Etra, Hannah, New York, gesucht von Julia Langer, Schweden.</p> <p>Fishhof, Jenoe, New York, gesucht von Fischhof, Schweden.</p> <p>Fried, U. S. A., gesucht von Livia Naiger, Schweden.</p> <p>Friedman, Hermann, Brooklyn, gesucht von Deszoe Friedman, Gracow.</p> <p>Friedman, Eugen, New York, Brief aus Deutschland.</p> <p>Friedman, Samuel, New York, gesucht von Ethel Friedman, Bergen-Belsen.</p> <p>Friedman, Sigmund, Newark, gesucht von Andrej Erdoes, Schweiz.</p> <p>Fried, Tobiasz, New York, gesucht v. Elisabeth Glueck, Schweden.</p> <p>Gansz, Jankel, New York, gesucht von Helen Gansz, Schweden.</p> <p>Gross, Hermann Tobiasz, New York, gesucht von Etta Gross-Fleissmann, Schweden.</p>
---	--

N. Y. gesamt von Hetty Schoenholz-Wertheim, Schweden.

Spier, Edith, Julius u. Alfred, New York, gesucht von Waiwei Spier, Germany.

Spies, Hilda und Ehemann und Besatz, Chicago, gesucht von...

Waukec, Wisc. (arrived fr. Canada).

37 Search notice placed on behalf of Walter Spier in *Aufbau*, vol. 11, no. 33, August 17, 1945, p. 30.

know?⁸²⁸ And I wrote: “I’m looking for my brother Julius, my brother Alfred and my sister Edith Spier.” And my sister found it, which I found out later on [N.B., a colleague of Edith Spier’s in New York City saw Walter’s ad in an issue of *Aufbau*].⁸²⁹

Captain Levy advised those liberated, for the time being, to make their way to the American occupation zone in Germany. So, Walter Spier set out for Rauschholzhausen. By way of Linz and Munich, he was able to reach Marburg. At the train station, he asked about the next train to Witelsberg.

And the way he [i.e., a train station employee] looked at me, he said to me: “You are a *Judenjung*’ [“Jewish boy”].” And I said “Yes.” [And he said:] “A couple of days ago, another Jewish boy, a *Judenjung*’, came.” And I knew: It was my brother! Because there were no other [Jewish] boys in our hometown. [...] And he said to me: “You missed the morning train. The next train is at 3 or 4 o’clock in the afternoon.” And I said to myself: I’m not gonna wait till the afternoon. As little as I was, I knew my way and I started marching, start[ed] walking. And in the first town I came to, I saw a bicycle and I took the bicycle. [...] And I went to my hometown, to my parents’ house. And [I was] looking for my brother. And there were Gentiles [i.e., non-Jews] living in our house. And they said to me: “Your brother is at your former [...] [maid’s] sister.” A small town—I knew exactly where that was. [...] And when [Deubel’s] Lisbeth saw me, she screamed: “Walter!” And I said: “Where is Martin?” And that was in the morning and Martin was still sleeping and I opened up his eyes—and what shall I tell you? That’s how I found my brother Martin. And again—the two of us, we became stronger. We were not alone. Two is better than one.⁸³⁰

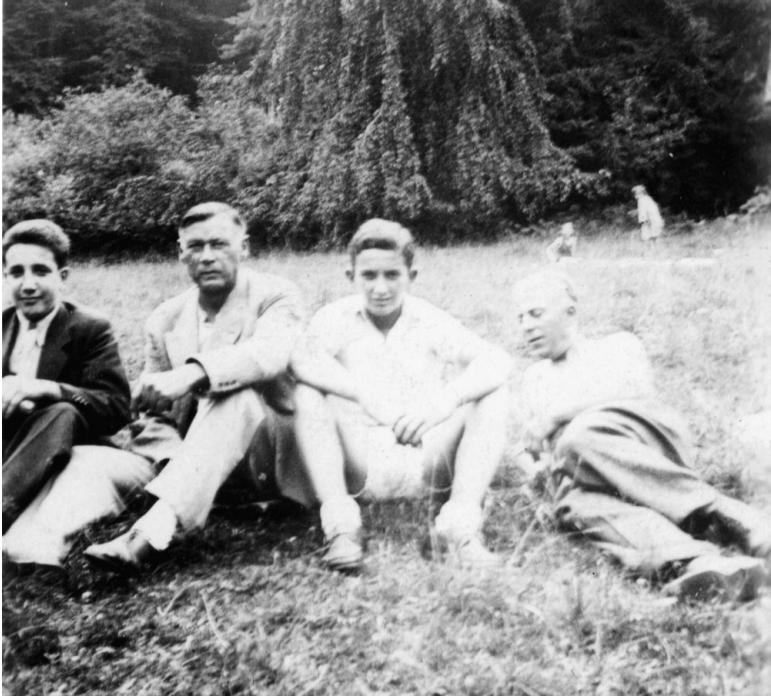
Returning



38 Reunited in Rauscholzhausen:
Walter and Martin Spier in front of the
former home of their uncle Friedel Rulf,
1945, shortly after their return.



39 Martin Spier and Sara Mendel with Siegfried Stern [right], a Jewish survivor from Amöneburg, in
Rauscholzhausen, 1945.



40 Martin and Walter Spier with Peter Hofmann [second from left] and Wilhelm Seip [right] at the pond Bitteich near Rauschholzhausen, July 1945.

In 1945, at the end of August, Sara Mendel likewise returned to Rauschholzhausen.⁸³¹ The arrival of the survivors was entirely unexpected to the villagers who had not counted on their return. Walter Spier remembers:

There were Gentiles living in our house. And since my father never sold the house, [...] we [...] [kicked] them out, and moved back into our house. And we tried to put the pieces [of our lives back] together, which was very hard.⁸³²

The valuables that their father had left for safekeeping with Andreas Peil, Peter Hofmann and two people in Roßdorf were returned to the brothers. It proved impossible, however, to get back the furniture and household goods that had been auctioned off. No one volunteered to return anything. The American military government had ordered Rauschholzhäuser residents to bring out to the Zimmerplatz (i.e., onto the plaza) any assets of Jewish people that had been confiscated or sold at auction. Yet, nobody complied with that order.⁸³³ Both the tax officials and the mayor refused to provide the returning survivors with any information about who had purchased their property.⁸³⁴ And the new officials at the Marburg District Administration were reluctant to actively obey orders issued by the American military government,⁸³⁵ initially writing to the tax office that –

On multiple occasions, Jews who have returned have appeared in our offices asking for the return of their personal assets confiscated by the Party government [...]. Since the administration of Jewish property was carried out by the tax offices, I am requesting that you forward me the files on these objects for inspection. At present, the case involving the Jewish family Spier of Rausch-Holzhausen needs to be resolved. If such files are no longer available, I request that you question those officials responsible for the allocation of assets about the whereabouts of the Spiers, and then send me the transcripts of that investigation.⁸³⁶

The tax office put a note on the letter “Schott to the municipality of R. Holzhausen”,⁸³⁷ telling the District Administrator that the relevant files, as such, could not be “provided due to security considerations.” However, information could be obtained on a case-by-case basis depending on the files.⁸³⁸ Yet, in the individual cases of Spier and Mendel, it was impossible to get that kind of information from the tax office. Thus, on the orders of the military government, the District Administrator proceeded with an alternative approach: he ordered the uncompensated seizure of the (former) property of other former Jewish residents in the district:

The two Jews, Martin and Walter Spier (20 and 18 years of age) have returned to Rauisch-Holzhausen from the Auschwitz concentration camp. They want to be housed there in their former childhood home. Previously this had not been possible since all the furnishings are missing. In highly provisional conditions, they were initially housed with another family. This situation needs to be changed immediately. The former furnishings of the Rauisch-Holzhausen Spier family were in those days seized by the tax authorities and allegedly sold at auction by the auctioneer Schott in Marburg [N.B., “Schott *from* Marburg” is probably what is meant here]. The buyers, however, are not easy to determine, so we now need to resort to obtaining replacement furnishings. According to documents of the tax office, many sets of furniture previously owned by Jewish residents from the country district were also sold to residents from the urban district of Marburg. These will now have to be used instead. For the brothers Spier in Rauisch-Holzhausen, it would be suitable to obtain the bedroom furniture acquired at that time by District Chief Secretary [i.e., the Nazi *Bezirksoberssekretär*], Jacob Schneider, whose address is Reitgasse 13 in Marburg. That previously Jewish-owned property consists of 2 beds, a wardrobe and washbasin. I request that you collect this set of furniture — or, if not possible, another such set — and provide it to the Spier brothers in Rauisch-Holzhausen.⁸³⁹

On occasion, the survivors themselves had to be present at the property confiscations to identify the objects seized. At the end of November 1945, the mayor of Kirchhain was informed as follows by August Eckel (who had been the District Administrator of Marburg since October 1945):

Mr. Walter and Mr. Martin Spier in R-Holzhausen are authorized by me to select the furniture and household items that they will use for furnishing their residence in R-Holzhausen from among those possessions belonging to their relatives and recorded in the attached transcript and that had been auctioned in Kirchhain on

24 August 1942. [N.B., what is referred to here was likely the former property of their grandmother Sannchen Wertheim (who died in Theresienstadt) or of the murdered family of their uncle Adolph Wertheim]. The things that they are selecting can be seized and are to be reassigned to the Spier brothers. I request that you carry out this seizure and support the brothers Spier in selecting the items by releasing information to them and, if necessary, granting them police protection.⁸⁴⁰

Ultimately, on the orders of the military government, seizures were also made of the property of former higher-level Nazi activists.



41 Celebration of Jewish survivors at the wedding of Werner Schaumberg from Schweinsberg and his girlfriend Rosa [seated in the middle] in Marburg, 1945. Among the guests were also Martin Spier [standing in the back row, third from the right] and Trude Löwenstein, a relative of Sara Mendel from Fronhausen [standing in front of Martin].



42 Martin and Walter Spier with their uncle Friedel Rülff in Rauschholzhausen, August 1945.



43 Rauschholzhausen, 1945. Rear: Martin Spier. Front, from left to right: Walter Spier, Martin's friend Kurt Israel from Borken, Sara Mendel, Siegfried Stern from Amöneburg and a relative of Sara, a soldier in the British Army.

To ensure that the residences of Jewish survivors who had returned to Kirchhain were suitably furnished, the District Administrator directed the Mayor of Kirchhain to furnish –

[...] the apartment [...] in a manner befitting their station, with furniture, etc. [...] that you can take from well-known Nazi activists, such as the attorney Pfeiffer. In the same manner, the aforementioned should be supplied with winter clothing, bedding, a sewing machine, a radio, a bicycle and firewood and such.⁸⁴¹

Those affected by the confiscation reacted indignantly, with complaints in which they tried to deny their Nazi activities. Their efforts were at times even successful.⁸⁴² And occasionally, the police officers refused to carry out the confiscations they had been instructed to perform.⁸⁴³

The three survivors from Rauischholzhausen were glad that they had each other and could serve one another as a surrogate family. Friedel Rülff also came to visit several times from Bad Nauheim and helped his nephews, above all financially. Sara Mendel cooked every day for the brothers Spier, and they helped the 69-year-old to set up a small general store. Yet the Spiers and Sara Mendel's feelings regarding their own future in the village were not quite the same.

Revenge

Martin and Walter Spier soon realized that there would be no future for them in Germany. Their desire for revenge was intense, as Walter Spier recalls:

And our next door neighbor [i.e., Elisabeth Vogel⁸⁴⁴], she was the worst anti-Semite you can think of. [...] When I came back after the war, and I went into our house and I didn't know where Martin was,



44 Martin and Walter Spier in front of their first car which they had stolen from a Nazi. Photographed in Schröck, 1945.

she came out of the stall, with a pail of milk, you know, she milked the cows. I took the pail of milk and I poured it over her head. I didn't care, you know, I, I didn't care and I put it over her head. And she [...] ran into the house.⁸⁴⁵

They also paid a visit to Mayor Otto, who in 1938 had forced Walter and his father to sweep the village square, and who had then harassed them by throwing out more waste grains and horse manure to sweep up:

When we came back after the war, after I met my brother, I went to [see] him [i.e., Mayor Otto, who at this point was interned in a French POW camp where he remained until 1947⁸⁴⁶]. And he had some manure in front of his house. [...] Like [...] a manure pile. I took a shovel and I went to the house. I put manure on it and I threw it

on the kitchen floor! And the wife said: “What is that for?” And I said in German: “You ask your husband. [...] This is from Walter Spier.”⁸⁴⁷

One day when the brothers were at Mrs. Mendel’s for lunch, they saw Heinrich Ebinger, who had wanted to attack their father on Tisha B’av a few years earlier. Walter Spier remembers:

We saw him going into the field. And Martin looks at me and I look at Martin. [...] And we wanted, and I wanted, to take the cleaver; and I wanted to kill him. And Mrs. Mendel said: “Hit him but don’t kill him.”⁸⁴⁸ “You leave the cleaver here.” My brother and I, we went out. I think, at that time we had [...] another survivor with us, and we beat him up. But we didn’t kill him. And till today I’m thankful to Mrs. Mendel [that] I didn’t kill him. ‘Cause I didn’t want to have it on my conscience.⁸⁴⁹

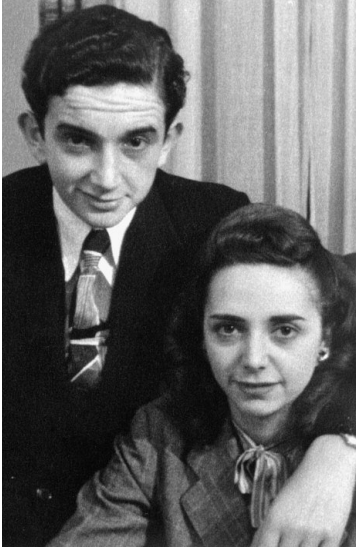
The brothers also paid particular attention to the Jewish cemetery. In May 1945 it was in terrible condition. Many gravestones had been overturned; others were broken. The entire site was devastated. Brunhilde North, daughter of Siegfried Bachenheimer, recounts that Friedel Rülff told her that he had forced the Rauschholzhausen villagers — presumably with the help of the American military government — to repair the damage. The repairs, however, were done very superficially and many stones were not even restored to their original pedestals.⁸⁵⁰ Martin and Walter Spier remember that they found the cemetery in complete ruins when they arrived. The German authorities provided no help at all.⁸⁵¹ Thus, along with Johannes Pfeiff,⁸⁵² they started to glue the stones back together, returning them to their old places, and hiring a company to restore the inscriptions.⁸⁵³ There are two possible explanations for their approach. Either the forced labor of the villagers was performed so superficially that there was hardly any visible evidence of it after the Spier brothers had returned, and thus the work had to be redone. Or, the pres-

sure exerted by Friedel Rülff and the Americans had really only had an effect on one villager, Johannes Pfeiff.⁸⁵⁴

The unexpected return of the survivors was highly uncomfortable for the village residents. No exchange of views took place on what the three had experienced during the war.⁸⁵⁵ Many locals were afraid because suddenly, the people that had been affected were back — people who could denounce local perpetrators to the military government.⁸⁵⁶ Yet the village felt as though it were the real victim of history: items that residents had owned for three years had to be returned and real estate property “paid for twice.”⁸⁵⁷ Finally, there was the risk of being subjected to revenge attacks. In the spring of 1946, Alfred Spier also returned to Germany, working as an interpreter for a British military court in Bielefeld. He repeatedly visited his siblings in Rauischholzhausen. A non-Jewish villager explains:

So, the SA and SS men did come back slowly. I’ve already said that. And here they were, [...] they were hiding in the park [...], these SA men. It was after ’45 then. They were indeed the first to harass the Jews [in the 1930s] — . They had stayed in the forest a long time until one fine day when they were here in the village, — [...] They threw one of the Jews in the creek, down there at “Jirje’s” [i.e., the village name for the *Gasthaus Otto*]. And then it was all over! The Jews were gone. [...] The older one, in uniform, in the English uniform. The one who emigrated to England, what was his name? Julius! [N.B., the witness must mean *Alfred Spier*; *Julius Spier* never returned to Rauischholzhausen⁸⁵⁸] [...] He was briefly here, [only a] few days in the village, in British uniform. He was still in the army at that time. And they threw him in the creek, I remember. [...] [People] said: “[They] were thrown in the creek and now they’re gone [again].”⁸⁵⁹

The brothers Alfred and Martin Spier do not mention this incident when interviewed about their memories. When I finally ask about it, I find out from their brother Walter that it did not take place.⁸⁶⁰ One therefore has



45 Reunion in New York: Walter Spier and his sister Edith, around 1946.



46 Surviving: Edith Baumann with her son Stanton, circa 1949.

to presume that the assault described never occurred but is instead a legend. Hence, the fairy tale that my (non-Jewish) interviewee above knows only from hearsay is very well-suited to letting the village sound like the victor: the villagers would thus have defeated “the Jews” a second time, caused them to finally emigrate for good.

In June 1946, Martin and Walter Spier finally received their longed-for entry permits for the United States, thanks to the assistance of Friedel Rülff’s sister Selma Meier. They gave their furniture to Sara Mendel. That same month they left the village with their last mementos of their parents, items that had been safeguarded by individual neighbors. Martin Spier only ever returned to Rauschholzhausen once.

Hachshara

Shortly before emigrating, the Spier brothers engaged themselves in one other undertaking. Walter Spier reports:

There was [...] a Baron von Stumm, like a lord, who had a big farm and he also had a big building, like a villa. And as inexperienced as we were in our lives, [...] we were always, my brother and I, from the day we were liberated, [willing] to help other people. And — how it came about, I don’t know — we went to the German government. And there were a lot of young people, boys and girls, who didn’t [...] [have] a home to go to. We were back in our hometown; we had the facilities. And we made sure that they had a home and we took care of them and we brought them into that villa [N.B., to the so-called “fortress” at the Zimmerplatz]. And made sure that they were taken care of.⁸⁶¹

When the Allies occupied Germany in 1945, about 6.5 to 7 million displaced people found themselves in the territory of the three (future) Western occupation zones. All of these persons had been displaced as a

result of World War II from their countries of origin — expelled, forced to flee, or deported.⁸⁶² The Allied occupation forces made an effort to organize the fastest possible return of these so-called “displaced persons” to their countries of origin. By May 1946, 88 % of them had already been repatriated.⁸⁶³ Yet among them at the time of Germany’s capitulation were approximately 60,000 Jewish survivors.⁸⁶⁴ Their numbers were increasing continuously because of a Jewish mass exodus owing to pogroms in Eastern Europe, particularly those in Kielce, Poland, in June 1946. This specific migration reached its high point in the summer of 1947, culminating in about 182,000 Jewish displaced persons on German territory, about 80 % of them from Poland.⁸⁶⁵ At this point, however, most Jewish refugees were neither interested in remaining in Germany nor in returning to Eastern Europe. They saw the Allied occupation zones as just a temporary stop on their way to settle permanently in Palestine or in the United States.⁸⁶⁶ Nonetheless, to emigrate legally to Palestine or to the United States was quite elusive, subject to highly restrictive quotas until 1948. Zionist organizations felt responsible for doing something. Utilizing a secret network of escape routes, approximately 77,800 Jews from all over Europe succeeded in immigrating illegally to Palestine between 1945 and 1948.⁸⁶⁷ As a rule, though, the Jewish displaced persons spent the first years after World War II in “DP camps”, predominantly in the American Zone. After August 1945, antisemitic attacks by non-Jewish displaced persons led to the establishment of exclusively Jewish DP camps in the U.S. Zone. In preparation for life in Palestine, Zionist youth organizations organized *kibbutzim*⁸⁶⁸ and *hachsharot*, i.e., agricultural training schools organized as *kibbutzim*. Some of these were external facilities of existing DP camps; others were independent entities. In the American Zone, except for Berlin, about 12 % of the Jewish displaced persons were living in *kibbutzim*.⁸⁶⁹ *Hachsharot* residents comprised in mid-1946 just under 5 % — and in mid-1947 about 2 % — of the Jewish displaced persons, the total number of which had swelled in this period.⁸⁷⁰

In the summer of 1946, a *hachshara* was also established in Rauischholzhausen. Its presence has thus far remained largely unacknowledged

in the research on displaced persons.⁸⁷¹ One reason for this may be the fact that there were likely two other “Holzhausen kibbutzim” in the American Zone: one in Holzhausen near Landsberg and the other in Holzhausen near Eschwege. In addition, the kibbutz in Rauischholzhausen was not supported by the American aid agency—the American Joint Distribution Committee⁸⁷²—but instead by the Jewish Relief Unit,⁸⁷³ a British organization.⁸⁷⁴

In all likelihood, the majority of residents of the kibbutz in Rauischholzhausen were members (i.e., kibbutzniks) of the former “Kibbutz in Memory of the United Fighting Organization in the Vilna Ghetto.”⁸⁷⁵ It was founded in February 1946 in western Poland by six members of the Socialist-Zionist youth organization, *Hashomer Hatzair*.⁸⁷⁶ In May 1946, 70 new members had joined. 88 % had returned from the Soviet Union, a third of them had fought in the Red Army, and the great majority had survived concentration camps.⁸⁷⁷ This kibbutz was closely involved in the activities of Hashomer Hatzair in Poland. In May 1946, a group of 25 children and young people joined. On 8 June 1946, these kibbutzniks started their journey via Bratislava and Vienna to the American occupation zone in Germany. Once in Munich, they were assigned to a *hachshara* named “Holzhausen.”⁸⁷⁸ The fact that the residents of the *hachshara* in Rauischholzhausen are referred to in numerous documents as former “partisans” is evidence that this group was actually assigned to Rauisch-Holzhausen. And in compliance with the directories produced by the International Tracing Service (or “ITS”), they gave as their last place of residence either Polish or Soviet towns, especially in the Soviet Republic of Lithuania but also in Byelorussia and the Ukraine.⁸⁷⁹ One of these lists of residents additionally designates these kibbutzniks as “infiltrates”, i.e., Jews chiefly of Polish origin who had fled after the war to the Allied occupation zones, in order to escape antisemitic riots in Eastern Europe.⁸⁸⁰ Finally, the residents of this kibbutz in Rauischholzhausen were demonstrably closely affiliated with Hashomer Hatzair.⁸⁸¹ Even a non-Jewish villager recalls: “As far as I know, they came directly from Poland.”⁸⁸²

The *hachshara* in Rauischholzhausen was under the supervision of the regional department (in Bad Hersfeld) of the United Nations Relief

and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA)⁸⁸³ and its subdivision in Al-lendorf within the Second District of the U.S. Army.⁸⁸⁴ The *hachshara* emerged mainly out of the personal initiative of Toby Barback, an employee of the British aid organization, “Jewish Relief Unit”, who hailed from Glasgow. Barback was stationed in Marburg where she cared for Jewish survivors of German origin and a group of Jewish DP students.⁸⁸⁵ While her own organization frequently cast doubt on her project,⁸⁸⁶ she had an excellent reputation with the UNRRA Regional Director.⁸⁸⁷ Barback was a member of Zionist organizations, including the Women’s International Zionist Organization (or WIZO) and the Glasgow Ziona. She spoke both German and Yiddish and had been to Palestine several times.⁸⁸⁸ Her planning for the kibbutz in Rauischholzhausen had already commenced in spring 1946. A very skeptical April 1946 report by her supervisors in the Jewish Relief Unit maintained that –

Toby Barback has acquired a house and part of the Marburg Experimental University farm and is endeavouring to establish a Kibbutz. Of the 50 people who were supposed to go to this place situated some ten miles outside the town, only three actually turned up, which fact has not helped to stabilise Toby’s normally erratic and somewhat obscure intentions.⁸⁸⁹

The kibbutzniks from Poland reached Rauischholzhausen in June 1946:

We have been here for a few days [...]. Spirits are high and everyone is happy with the work (which is not too hard). In these ten days we have been browned by the sun, we sing and discuss at night until 1:00 am. And no less important, we are eating very well — meat — drinking milk, [and] eating cheese, butter, vegetables.⁸⁹⁰

The UNRRA was responsible for providing them with food and medical care.⁸⁹¹

Their lodgings included a hall in the village inn “Zum Stern” as well as the “fortress” already mentioned by Walter Spier, belonging to the von

Stumm estate, across the street from the inn. Both buildings were located in the center of the village, right next to the Zimmerplatz. A non-Jewish woman from the village recalls,

They lived down there in the fortress, in the front house where the dentist is now. [...] In the fortress were the women. [...] The men were at Preiß's [i.e., the hall in "Zum Stern", the inn run by the Preiß family] [...].⁸⁹²

The agricultural work took place at the farm, which continued to be operated by the University of Giessen after the war.⁸⁹³ On June 20, 1946, Toby Barback made the following request to the District Administrator's Office:

You probably know how it is going at the kibbutz on the university farm in R.-Holzhausen, where my young Jewish DPs are working. I have about 70 men and women there, and every week, half of them work on the farm while the other half are active in the household and do some studying, in order to begin to make up for the years in their youth that they lost working as slaves for Hitler. I can only give them what is most basic. If it could be arranged for them to receive a small weekly payment for working on the farm, it would help give them a sense of independence and pride that I am striving for. If you wish, you can verify the accuracy of my remarks here by contacting the inspector of the estate, Mr. Hebbler, or Dr. Pfaff of the Univ. Giessen, Agricultural School.⁸⁹⁴

She was successful. Three weeks later, she received the promise that wages would be paid out.⁸⁹⁵

The opening ceremony for the *hachshara* took place on 21 July 1946.

HA6B/2-24 11/V

Hierdurch laden wir Sie ein

zu der am Sonntag, dem 21. Juli 1946,

im Kibbutz-Holzhausen stattfindenden

Herzl-Bialik-Akademie

und zur **Eröffnung des Kibbutz**

Es werden sprechen: CHAPL. M. ABRAMOWITZ
US-ARMY

MISS TOBY BARBACK
JEWISH RELIEF UNIT

MISS Dr. H. GOLDSTEIN
AMERICAN JOINT DISTRIBUTION
COMMITTEE

RED. ISRAEL BLUMENFELD
JEWISH REHABILITATION COMMITTEE

MR. JONKHEER
UNERA-HEADQUARTERS

MR. JEHOCHUA BRUCK
JEWISH AGENCY FOR PALESTINE

*Die gesamte jüdische Bevölkerung Marburgs wird gebeten, sich am Sonntag,
dem 21. Juli 1946, pünktlich um 3 Uhr, vor dem Büro des Jüdischen Komitees,
Schulstr. 14, zu versammeln, um von dort mit Autobussen nach Holzhausen ge-
bracht zu werden. Zur Rückfahrt stehen die gleichen Autobusse zur Verfügung.*

Jewish Rehabilitation Committee Marburg

47 Invitation to the opening ceremony of the *hachshara* in Rauischholzhausen, 1946.

On 2 August 1946, the Jewish DP newspaper *Der Weg* reported:

The Jewish Relief Committee for the town and district of Marburg has founded an agricultural school on a state farm in Holzhausen. There about 100 [Jewish] community members are being trained. Most of the students are former partisans who took part in the fighting in Russia. Here they are now preparing for emigration to Palestine.⁸⁹⁶

A report by the Jewish Relief Unit reported on the opening ceremony of the *hachshara*:

The solemn dedication of the [...] farm school was attended by delegates from UNRRA H.Q. [i.e., headquarters], American Joint Council, Jewish Relief Unit, Jewish Agency for Palestine, and the Jewish Community of the Town and District of Marburg on Sunday 21st July. Opening the proceedings, Israel Blumenfeld⁸⁹⁷ who miraculously survived the notorious camps of Treblinka and Auschwitz, enthralled his audience of over 500 people with his endearing memoirs of Theodor Herzl [...] who prophesied [...] “That at first the desperate, then the poor, then the rich will go to Palestine,[“] and now 42 years after the death of Herzl the desperate leftovers of European Jewry go so slowly to Palestine leaving behind them a cemetery with six million Jewish victims. This march of the desperate and poor [...] should not be hindered by any force in the world, was the earnest wish of Toby Barback who during the last six months had fought vigorously to remove all obstacles in the path of bringing into being the Farm School. She [...] hoped in a very short while the misunderstandings between the Jewish and English peoples will disappear and these Jewish partisans in her Farm School will be the avant-garde for a peaceful and strong foundation to help in the difficult but wonderful work of building a Jewish Land. The administrator of the Marburg district, Herr Eckle [*sic*], regretted deeply the sufferings caused to the Jewish people. He understood only too well as he himself, though a German, [i.e., “German” in the racialist-national-

ist sense of “non-Jew”] had been in Buchenwald Concentration Camp for two long years because of his opinion as a Social Democrat. Chaplain Meyer Abramovitz (U.S. Army) brought greetings straight from Palestine. [...] The students then formed a human *Magen David* [Star of David] around the flag staff, the chaplain prayed while they slowly unfurled their beautiful flag which the young girls had made by hand from materials sent to Germany from Glasgow. Sandwiches, beer and ice cream were enjoyed by all in the beautiful surroundings of this lovely village during a day of golden sunshine; and after readings from Bialik and the singing of the *Hatikvah* [N.B., the hymn of the Zionist movement, today the national anthem of Israel], the students lit a bon-fire and danced the *hora* [i.e., a dance intended to exemplify new life in Israel⁸⁹⁸] until they were all tired and happily ready for bed. The guests ruefully departed—many of them having come 200 kilometres to witness a lovely Jewish ceremony for the first time in their lives and to realise how earnest these Displaced People are to help in the making of a new and safe homeland for the leftovers of European Jewry.⁸⁹⁹

In late 1946 and early 1947, the *hachshara* in Rauschholzhausen had 123 members between the ages of 16 and 34. On average, they were about twenty years old; there were a few more men than women.⁹⁰⁰ The kibbutzniks made sure that they had a full day of work, according to a report from July 1946:

In an organizational meeting we decided on a new schedule: 6.00 wake up, 6.00–6.25 washing, 6.30–7.00 breakfast, 7 am–1 pm work, 1.00–1.30 washing, 1.30–2.30 lunch, 2.30–3.30 rest (at this time the Hebrew teachers meet), 3.30–5.00 Hebrew class, 5.00–5.30 light supper, 5.30–7.00 classes (even though they still don’t take place), 7.00–8.30 sports, 8.30–9.00 dinner, assembly and 10.00 sleep.⁹⁰¹

In addition to the work in the fields, there were lessons in Hebrew and English.⁹⁰²



48 Raushholzhausen kibbutzniks working in the field, 1946.



49 Raushholzhausen kibbutzniks, 1946.

Not least because of the help of the Jewish relief organization ORT,⁹⁰³ which was supplying the necessary means of production, new types of work were inaugurated that winter — possibly even for a time at the dairy business of former mayor Karl Wahl.⁹⁰⁴ In a report of activities — which described, for instance, another celebration at the kibbutz in early 1947, one attended by nearly 300 people — Toby Barback announced proudly:

It is with pride I report a year's activity in my Kibbutz. [...] We had a lovely celebration [...]. We had an impressive introduction and some lovely singing and then the leader of the Kibbutz, a young idealist Natan Fajerstein, gave us an account of how this group that had started with three, were now 125 good men and true and all well-versed in agriculture and other useful crafts necessary to the new life they were all eagerly awaiting to take up in Eretz Israel. [...] Work on the [f]arm has come to a temporary halt owing to the [s]eason. However, each day as many workers as the inspector asks for are provided for the indoor work and of course the dairy keeps the girls busy. We have a little tailor shop, a hairdresser room and woodwork-ing shop, and the boys have been kept busy with burst pipe repair-ing.⁹⁰⁵

The celebrations of the kibbutzniks are likewise remembered by one of the non-Jewish villagers:

Every Sunday — one day a week, I don't know when it was — in front at the entrance, they had kind of a rise in the terrain where they put a big flagpole. And then [...] they danced — that was a regular thing — they danced around this flagpole and [sang]. [...] And they often had a festival, and then Maria — she was the house-keeper, the cook for everybody — then she always borrowed from my mother the tablecloths for the festival and brought [us] *matzah* for it.⁹⁰⁶

In their free time, the kibbutzniks often played soccer in the gardens of the village manor. A non-Jewish contemporary witness recalls:

Yes, they played soccer up there in the park on the grass. Above the manor there, they set up goals and they played soccer.⁹⁰⁷

Thirteen years after the oppressive Nazi co-optation of the *Spielvereinigung 1930 Holzhausen*, the soccer club once again had Jewish players, albeit for a short time. The non-Jewish villager adds:

They had a soccer club, played soccer here with us. Even the Jews played on the team. [...] in the Holzhausen [club]. [...] Two of them played [in it].⁹⁰⁸

There were also games on a regular basis against the Jewish DP club Makkabi Marburg, founded in the spring of 1946.⁹⁰⁹

Little is known about their relationship with non-Jewish villagers. However, it can hardly have been good, as evidenced by the unremittingly stark antisemitic statements and memories of the non-Jewish contemporary witnesses recently interviewed.⁹¹⁰ The village residents were suddenly faced with a situation they were hardly capable of understanding: the presence of over a hundred Zionists likely speaking Yiddish. To the natives, it must have been as if their value system had collapsed: just four years after Rauischholzhausen had been proclaimed “Jew-free”, more Jews than ever before lived there unexpectedly.

For the kibbutzniks, by contrast, it must have been unbearable to still be stuck in Germany, working for “them.” We do not know if it ever got to the point of civil unrest. Yet, as the refugees’ frustration grew, so did their desire to emigrate quickly. Toby Barback commented on the births in the kibbutz as follows:

I wish the affidavits would move as quickly as the births. Supplies of all types and also visas are still much below what a normal human requires [...]. Surely there must soon be a solution and objec-

tive rehabilitation with clear and open-minded direction coming from the right quarter.⁹¹¹

In April 1947, the number of residents in the *hachshara* temporarily rose to 152.⁹¹² Finally, in May of 1947, the first long-awaited emigrations began. Consequently –

During May, 85 of the original group left and news has been received that they have been absorbed in *hachsharot* in Palestine.⁹¹³

Barback was now trying to make it possible for other displaced persons to move into the *hachshara*:

With permission from [...] the D.P. Officer in charge to make up the numbers again to 100/125, I have sent out S.O.S. to various camps which are overcrowded and made many strenuous personal appeals and approaches, but to date without success.⁹¹⁴

Yet, from that point on, the number of kibbutzniks fell steadily, until there were only 49 left in September 1947.⁹¹⁵

From the beginning, Barback did not get much support within the Jewish Relief Unit for her project. Her outstanding commitment to the kibbutzniks was either not taken seriously or it was criticized as additional work that overextended the organization.⁹¹⁶ A great deal of internal correspondence confirms that the organization was planning, at least since the spring of 1947, to cut Barback's position in Marburg and focus more on the British Zone.⁹¹⁷ It is likely that the *hachshara* was disbanded by the end of 1947. What happened to the last 49 Rauschholzhausen kibbutzniks is unknown.

Sara Mendel

After the relocation or (hopefully successful) emigration of the last kibbutzniks from Rauischholzhausen, there was only one Jewish resident left in the village: Sara Mendel. Mendel was already 69 years old and very frail when she returned to Rauischholzhausen in August 1945. Her husband had not survived the Holocaust, and they had not had any children. Her next of kin were the children of her murdered sisters, Rosa Frenkel and Friderike Bein,⁹¹⁸ who had all begun new lives in Southern Rhodesia, Palestine, and England respectively.⁹¹⁹ Until 1942, Sara Mendel had spent her entire life in Rauischholzhausen, where she had a large house. Due to her age, her physical weakness, and the lack of relatives, she almost certainly did not know of any other alternative than to attempt to “continue” her old life in Rauischholzhausen.⁹²⁰ She opened up a small dry goods business and avoided talking to her neighbors about the Holocaust.⁹²¹

Sara Mendel had it very hard. Since 1942 she had regularly experienced heart attacks and bouts of anxiety, usually late at night.⁹²² In addition, she suffered increasingly from mobility problems.⁹²³ Further, because of the lack of housing in the village, she was compelled to share her accommodations, at least for a time, with another family.⁹²⁴ Her letters to the Support Center for the Politically, Racially, and Religiously Persecuted, under the auspices of the municipal authorities in Marburg, provide a rough picture of her financial distress:

I am writing you today with the request for assistance in recovering my property or in obtaining a replacement for it. [...] Before we were deported [...] our entire property and assets were taken from us. [...] Unfortunately, despite previous efforts, I was only able to recover a few makeshift furnishings. I thus am missing — in addition to many other things — my sewing machine; it is particularly missed, and it was new when I purchased it. [...] Since I am already 70 years old and, not surprisingly, have suffered greatly in my years of being im-

prisoned, I cannot even take on the great number of errands and all the running around required for getting these possessions back.⁹²⁵

Twenty months later, in September 1948, she wrote once more:

I've been trying for years to get my sewing machine back or to procure a new one. Unfortunately, my efforts still have not been successful. Nonetheless, I urgently need a sewing machine because all of my clothing was lost, and I have to be able to make new things. Although I could now purchase a sewing machine, I no longer have my own resources to do so. I am asking you to grant me a purchase subsidy from the special fund. As a matter of form, I am also informing you that I lost all of my liquid assets, my household, etc., clearly as the result of my imprisonment.⁹²⁶

In the spring of 1949, she received the following answer:

At its meeting on 25 February '49, the Council of this Support Office was unable to approve your application for special funds for the present because significantly larger emergencies than yours have to be remedied with the resources currently available to us.⁹²⁷

It is not known whether Mendel ever got assistance in acquiring a sewing machine after that.

But even those objects that had initially been assigned to Sara Mendel were supposed to be taken back from her after a time, at least in part. In February 1949, she received the following letter from the District Administrator:

In late '45 / early '46 a radio was seized from Mrs. Else Mink in R-Holzhausen without compensation and [...] assigned to you. This seizure was made at the time on the basis of a general authorization given to the liaison officer of the local military government, but it can no longer be sustained because the legal relationships have since

been consolidated. [...] In view of the aforementioned circumstances and the fact that high-performing, good radios can now be purchased everywhere, I ask you to return the unit to Mrs. Mink as soon as possible. Otherwise, there is definitely a risk that Mrs. Mink's lawyer will take legal action [...] and that you will lose the case. [...] Quite apart from the costs incurred, losing at trial is also not in the interest of racial, political, and religious persecutees. I would therefore like to avoid such a trial under all circumstances.⁹²⁸

Sara Mendel stood her ground:

I wish to inform you, politely but firmly, that I regret that I cannot voluntarily comply with your request. It is utterly incomprehensible to me that all of the actions and regulations taken at that time in our favor due to extraordinary events have now suddenly been declared unlawful and unjustified, thereby returning the law to former or current Nazis, as if they had been treated unfairly at the time, by some kind of mistake. Yet one cannot possibly today dismiss a measure officially taken back then (1945) with such a remark and declare it invalid and illegal. At the same time, the District Administrator should remember that this measure was really only taken initially on the basis of certain previous events — specifically, the officially ordered seizure of my two radio sets (without compensation!). [...] However, by voluntarily surrendering it [i.e., the newly obtained radio] [...] without any kind of replacement, I would only be contributing, in my opinion, to the unfortunate decline (indeed, weakening) resistance of official and non-official agencies towards the networks of Nazis who continue to be active or are becoming so once more. I am therefore unprepared to comply with your request.⁹²⁹

For the remainder of her life, Sara Mendel never had enough money to cover her living expenses. Business was very bad; customers rarely came in her shop.⁹³⁰ Until the time of her death, she was persistently corresponding with all of the authorities responsible for “restitution matters”,

yet the financial assistance she received from the state remained wholly inadequate until the end. In late 1948, Sara was awarded a “restitution pension” [*Wiedergutmachungsrente*] of 130 DM [*Deutsche Mark*; hereafter “DM”] per month. This payment, however, was no longer made to her after May 1950.⁹³¹ After mid-1949, she received, as a surviving dependent of her late husband, an additional “war disability pension” of 34 DM per month.⁹³²

In September 1950, she was awarded compensation for having been imprisoned [*Haftentschädigung*] for 32 months in Theresienstadt, in the amount of 4800 DM, to be disbursed in two installments. The first of the two was ordered to be paid in October 1950.⁹³³ The second installment, however, was reduced in amount by some previously approved advance payments for various medical bills of the amount of 775 DM. The final payment was only initiated a year later after Mendel had sent out numerous letters of complaint.⁹³⁴ As late as August 1951, she contacted the Regional Administrator concerning this matter:

I wish to respectfully inquire if you could give me some advice on how I might obtain the money that I am rightfully due. [...] I have set up a small business to support myself but I have no money to buy goods to be sold in it.⁹³⁵

The payment of the balance on the second installment, which was apparently due at the end of August 1951, was unnecessarily prolonged with partial monthly installments until March 1952. The Regional Administrator justified these late payouts by proposing the following conspiracy theory to the Hessian Ministry of the Interior:

[Sara Mendel] owns a house at an assessed value of 8000 DM as well as land, 50 *ares* of which are leased out. Her monthly income from leasing and renting is 41 DM. As a surviving dependent of her husband, she is receiving a monthly war disability pension [*Kriegsbeschädigtenrente*] of 34 DM since 1 August 1949. No one can therefore say that she is completely destitute or had been left unassisted in the past.

At her age and state of health, it can be assumed that she will hardly be able to attend to her dry goods business and generate income from it. As a result, it is to be feared that *interested persons of her acquaintance* are making a business out of realizing [i.e., *attempting to realize*] restitution claims [emphasis added in final sentence].⁹³⁶

This rejectionist attitude on the part of the authorities was accompanied by an incredible historical amnesia. Hence, the denial of Sara Mendel's application for compensation of damages due to economic discrimination in the Nazi period was based mainly on testimony collected from Justus Seipel, the former gendarme. He claimed that the Mendels' butcher business was not suspended in 1937 for "racial reasons" but that its closing was instead the result of legal proceedings based on the charge of prohibited "selling of meat."⁹³⁷

In March 1951, Sara Mendel was finally awarded 4000 DM in compensatory damages for having been dispossessed of her movable assets.⁹³⁸ That amount, however, was very likely never paid out although she even contacted the West German Federal Government with her appeal for relief.⁹³⁹ About seven months before she died, Sara Mendel still wrote the following to the regional government:

Please excuse me for once again contacting you with my request for help in maintaining my rights to restitution. I had sent to you, Mr. *Regierungspräsident* [(Chief) Regional Administrator] all the papers on my claim, yet I still have not received a reply. As you know, I will be 78 years old on May 9th. I have to earn my own living, and have expenses and don't know how to pay them. I receive a small pension, but it is not sufficient to sustain myself and pay taxes. I am on my own: all my family members were killed in the concentration camps. I sometimes don't know what I should do. If it is in your power, Mr. *Regierungspräsident*, to help me and to advocate for me in this matter, then I humbly request that you do so and would be most grateful. Respectfully yours, Mrs. Sara Mendel.⁹⁴⁰

The pleading, submissive wording of Sara Mendel's later letters is disturbing. The once resilient 69-year-old woman had survived the Holocaust, and she had had the courage after the loss of her family to start a business and even refuse a directive to surrender her radio set. Without assistance, she lived out her final years in declining health — withdrawn, solitary, and utterly impoverished. Bettina Decke,⁹⁴¹ a non-Jewish villager deemed “Jewish” by her neighbors (and by the terms of the Nuremberg Laws), remembers Sara Mendel's last year of life:

She could hardly walk. I remember her always sitting. On a chair, or an easy chair, maybe standing up shakily. I also remember that we were also sometimes in her sitting room where she always remained somehow, so that she'd be able to sit.⁹⁴²

She observes:

I don't know if she ever really left her house again.⁹⁴³

In addition to her physical and financial distress, Sara Mendel was in fact the only Jew and Holocaust survivor living in the village. The statements of the non-Jewish village residents are consistent and should be taken at face value: none of those interviewed disliked her.⁹⁴⁴ But Sara Mendel was still not part of the village community, for the antisemitism of her neighbors did not suddenly vanish at the war's end. Some of the non-Jewish women born in the 1940s remember having bought sweets at Sara Mendel's every so often when they were young.⁹⁴⁵ My mother remembers my grandmother's warnings:

I recall [...] that [she] [...] said, “But count what she gives you. She really likes to take advantage [*behumsen*] of others.” [...] Like, something along those lines. [...] *Behumst* means: “Oh, maybe there'll be only eight candies even if you bought ten.” [...] “Yes, you really need to count them over again; that's just how *they* are.” [...] Yes, [people in the village said things] like that, in an anonymous way [emphasis added].⁹⁴⁶

Sara Mendel's sole support in the last stage of her life was probably the fact that she had a close friend. Bettchen Scheld had trained as a housekeeper in the Mendels' home⁹⁴⁷; she ended up caring for Sara Mendel until her death.⁹⁴⁸

She lived — officially she didn't live at Sara Mendel's — but she was there every day. [...] These two women: they were really close friends.⁹⁴⁹

Sara Mendel died on 23 October 1954 at the age of 78. She was buried in the Jewish cemetery in Rauischholzhausen. Hers was the final Jewish funeral in the village; there has not been another one since. Mendel's death thus signified the end of Jewish life in Rauischholzhausen. In spite of that, antisemitism persisted even without the presence of any Jews.



50 Gravestone of Sara Mendel in the Jewish cemetery of Rauischholzhausen, photo taken in 2011.

Conclusion

Any assessment of the events in Rauschholzhausen is limited by the incomplete nature of the source material. This is especially true when considering the perspective of those who were persecuted. The survivors I interviewed are not just members of the same family but also of the same generation. They were all children and teenagers at the time, and none of them resided in Rauschholzhausen in the crucial years between 1939 and 1941.

Evaluation

“Here in the village, no one was beaten to death.”
(*Non-Jewish contemporary witness A*)⁹⁵⁰

In comparison with events elsewhere in the German Reich, what transpired in Rauschholzhausen after 1933 went beyond the laws and ordinances of the Nazi regime in several respects. The dates familiar to everyone — the anti-Jewish boycott of April 1933, the Nuremberg Laws of 1935, and the pogroms of November 1938 — refer to events that represent official policies of exclusion. By contrast, every community in Germany has its own special history, its own acts of individual and collective terror, representative of the second type of antisemitism in Nazi Germany.

As early as August 1935, villager Hermann Mendel became the target of racist fantasies of tainted blood — even before the enactment of the “Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor.” As early

as New Year's Eve 1935, the local synagogue in Rauischholzhausen had been completely ruined; it was also looted and its Torah scrolls reduced to ashes. Two and a half years later, amid the nationwide November Pogroms, the locals were unable to do much more damage to it. They had to content themselves with an act of symbolic destruction, breaking the windows of the building, which by that time had been repurposed as a barn. Instead, they now focused their violence on Jewish homes in Rauischholzhausen. By the end of 1937, Mr. and Mrs. Spier felt compelled to take their youngest sons Martin and Walter out of the village public school; they were the last two Jews being taught there. Eleven-year-old Walter had already been out of school for a year when in November 1938 Jewish children were officially prohibited from attending "German" schools across the country. A year prior to the so-called "Kristallnacht", the majority of the Jews had also been excluded from the economic life of the village. Effective 1 April 1938, Abraham Spier had his cattle trade license taken away. The fact that he had been able to operate commercially until that point was not so much due to his Rauischholzhausen neighbors. Hardly any of them were involved in the cattle trade. Rather, Spier's remaining loyal customers lived outside the village. Then, the "Law Amending the Industrial Code", implemented nationwide in July 1938, rendered hopeless any last efforts he might have made. The "Regulation on Excluding Jews from German Economic Life", promulgated in November 1938, therefore had no real impact on Rauischholzhausen. For by that same year, Spier and his son Walter had already been conscripted by the village into forced labor, before any official decrees had been issued. By the time laws to restrict shopping were finally enacted in September 1939, local Jews had not been able to buy groceries for quite some time. Such activities had for years already been subject to the whims of local businesspeople, thereby compelling those affected to depend on the assistance of (non-Jewish) neighbors.

As far as the persecuted are concerned, the Jewish community of Rauischholzhausen in the Weimar years was tiny, marked by its Orthodox Judaism and German patriotism. Comprising only 3 % of Rauischholzhausener, the Jews represented a clear minority among the local

population. Social, political, and cultural activities took place in the framework of general village life, as in local clubs for veterans, theater, singing, or sports. Jewish children also attended the local primary school (*Volksschule*). There were no specifically Jewish associations. However, other than in the social or economic sphere, relations with the non-Jewish population were the exception rather than the rule. Basically, Jewish Rauschholzhauseners only associated privately with other Jews. The Jewish community in the Weimar years was held together by its common faith and religious practice. In addition, the women met regularly for needlework or a *kaffeeklatsch* at the end of the week. Nonetheless, the only really close ties or friendships were usually rooted in family relationships, such as between Frenkel and Mendel families or the Spiers and the Rülfs (i.e., Juda Rülff and his children).

The exclusionary measures taken in the Reich after 1933 robbed the Jewish population of any remaining forms of social or political association. In their wake, Jewish political or cultural organizations were not established. Young Jewish adults moved to surrounding towns or they emigrated; those left behind were mainly children and the elderly. While at the outset Jewish children fought back when they were physically assaulted, adults who did so immediately risked being sent to prison. As a result, the response of parents and grandparents was primarily to preserve their options for earning a living and to safeguard their religious practice. The Jewish communities of Rauschholzhausen-Wittelsberg and Mardorf-Roßdorf helped one another form *minyans* for worship. Their social events usually took place on religious holidays.

The Jews of Rauschholzhausen did not grasp the dimensions of the danger until rather late. Neither Juda Rülff nor Abraham Spier paid much heed to early warnings from their non-Jewish acquaintances. Mr. and Mrs. Frenkel even returned to the village after visiting Palestine for several weeks in 1936. On the one hand, it may have taken Rauschholzhausen's Jews such a long time to realize how endangered they were because antisemitism was nothing fundamentally new for them. On the other hand, the initial contradictions of Nazi policies might have sustained hopes that there might be limits on the exclusionary policies of

the regime, that economic or foreign policy considerations, for instance, might make a difference, especially for Jewish veterans of World War I. Finally, the fact that there had been a Jewish presence in Rauschholzhausen for generations cannot be underestimated as a powerful influence on attitudes. Because Jewish locals had acquired their own property and had multiple professional and family ties, the idea of emigrating must have seemed unimaginable at the beginning.⁹⁵¹ Although the external threat promoted greater cohesion within the Jewish community, it remained an internal family matter of whether to make specific plans for the future, such as arranging for emigration.

Until the November Pogroms of 1938, the majority of Jews — or at least the older generation — did not recognize that they might not have a future in Germany. The so-called “Kristallnacht” elicited new dimensions of government-approved terror, accompanied by imprisonment and official pressure to emigrate.⁹⁵² Because Jews from the village had limited contacts abroad, only a few managed to escape. After the war commenced, the few who remained became fully isolated and impoverished; only family and religion were able to sustain them. Since they feared even leaving their houses, their interactions with fellow victims were increasingly restricted.⁹⁵³

With respect to non-Jewish adults in Rauschholzhausen, three distinct groups can be distinguished: perpetrators, bystanders — who comprised the majority of the population — and those who showed solidarity with the Jewish residents.⁹⁵⁴

The group of perpetrators included Nazi Party functionaries, state authorities like mayors and police officials, as well as Party leaders at the cell or block level or in the Women’s League. And then there were all those villagers willing to resort to violence, who terrorized local Jews, attacking them and regularly initiating new forms of social or economic exclusion. In addition to Otto, Wahl, and Seipel, I am aware of the names of seventeen persons who belong to this category. The source material is extremely limited when it comes to identifying the names of local victimizers inasmuch as many of the source documents have been destroyed. My conclusions are essentially based on what I have been told

by contemporary witnesses: it is thus fair to assume that there were other perpetrators whose names we do not know.

With respect to the perpetrators' actions, major distinctions have to be made. Heinrich Otto, mayor and Nazi cell leader, initiated a series of harassment measures. In addition, he proved quite successful in anticipating state acts of terror, such as his early conscription of Jewish forced labor. Gendarme Justus Seipel, by contrast, was predisposed to applying the laws as they stood. He did not exploit some of the options available—and even offered—to him by his superiors. In November 1938, for instance, Seipel decided to warn Abraham Spier right before he was to be arrested. A few days later, though, he arrested Spier's 16-year-old son Julius. Despite such qualitative differences, these two functionaries exhibited willing and voluntarily cooperation with the powers-that-be.

Almost all of the contemporary witnesses I interviewed (both men and women) called attention to the fact that there was a remarkable number of women among the perpetrators. In fact, this was the case as early as 1933—and not just after 1939 when many of the men had already been drafted into the *Wehrmacht* or assigned to higher posts. Due to the increasing absence of male villagers after 1939, women were the *main* ones who took action such as looting or agitating when Jewish villagers were being transported away.⁹⁵⁵

This group of local perpetrators also included teacher Otto Nadolny and Heinrich Becker, the administrator of the state farm. Other authorities of the village who were socially influential behaved inconspicuously: in this case the church, as represented by Pastor Heinrich Franck, deserves mention but also the aristocratic von Stumm family, the main employers in Rauschholzhausen. By 1935 at the latest, all the powers-that-be were among the perpetrators (or remained inconspicuous).⁹⁵⁶ The Nazis had control over many of the local businesses and stores, such as the post office, bakery, mill, or the dairy. And they paid close attention to indoctrinating young people in the village; thus, children and adolescents participated in much of the antisemitic violence.

The classic Rauschholzhausen perpetrator was male, born between 1894 and 1905, and a member of the Nazi Party; he also frequently be-

longed to the SA.⁹⁵⁷ Based on the limited sources available, one can assume that his income was above average when compared with the usual working-class profile of most villagers.⁹⁵⁸ Research on the SA has shown that its membership was consistent with the dominant social milieu of the region or locality and rarely critical of the regional or local establishment.⁹⁵⁹ For one might have anticipated greater involvement of laborers in offences against Jews, given the particular social structure in the formerly aristocratic district of Rauischholzhausen.

The scope of antisemitic attacks after 1933, according to scholars, was particularly dependent on the extent to which local Nazis were mobilized. The existence of a local Nazi group was ordinarily a necessary condition for such strength.⁹⁶⁰ The group initially established in neighboring Heskem and based in Wittelsberg after 1934, likely provided the organizational framework Rauischholzhausen needed. In the mid-1930s, a separate Party cell was established in Rauischholzhausen.

The vast majority of village residents fell into the category of bystanders. That is, they did not take an active role in the physical violence and they did not initiate any new forms of exclusion.⁹⁶¹ They watched what the perpetrators did and adapted to the new circumstances. They assisted in marginalizing the Jewish population at every level. Soon private contacts were suspended, Jewish neighbors were no longer greeted on the street, and their businesses were boycotted. The majority of villagers showed no solidarity with the persecuted Jews. Perhaps a few of them experienced the closings of stores owned by Jews as a loss to their infrastructure. Nonetheless, the situation proved quite profitable for them all. In Rauischholzhausen, privately held farmland and centrally located homes suddenly became available at rock-bottom prices while many villagers joined in the looting that followed the deportations, with most of them profiting at the ensuing auctions.

Although the limited source material makes assessment difficult, a minority of the village population showed solidarity with the Jews of Rauischholzhausen. Those who helped were most likely their closest neighbors. Even if they minimized their personal contacts after 1933, they did not break off all relations with Jewish residents. They provided

groceries (without asking for compensation) to Jewish residents and may even have offered some protection against physical attacks. As we have learned, Franz Kaiser helped Julius Rülff financially so that he could emigrate, Johannes Pfeiff preserved the grounds of the cemetery, and several non-Jewish neighbors safeguarded valuables in 1942. And even though William Seip said goodbye to the Spier family, none of the non-Jews showed up at the Zimmerplatz on the morning of the deportation, 6 September 1942.⁹⁶² The assistance of these people, nevertheless, was a matter of life or death for the Jews in the village. Walter Spier confirms that –

If every German Gentile would have been a Nazi, no Jew would have come out alive.⁹⁶³

Two further observations, however, should be made when evaluating the conduct of those who helped Jews:

Evidently the mail of Jewish residents sometimes was delivered outside the limited business hours, and some of them may have been paid for their assets before the contracts for them were approved by the authorities. By and large, though, the actions of those who assisted Jews always took place within the framework of what was legally acceptable. The Nazi regime never issued an absolute prohibition on associating with Jews. Consequently, it was still permissible to greet Jewish neighbors, give them food, or shelter their assets. Those who helped Jews in Rauschholzhausen may have exhibited a purely existential solidarity, yet for the most part they did not go above or beyond what was permitted by Nazi legislation. Although it was legal to do so, they only assisted their Jewish neighbors secretly, usually at night and over the fence. After 1933, not a single case is recorded in which a non-Jew *publicly* advocated for a Jew.

Although there was no real danger of governmental sanctions (though people might have feared them), it is safe to assume that local perpetrators might have issued their own. However, although a number of threats were issued in Rauschholzhausen, there is no record that they were actually carried out. And, with just one exception, there were no cases of

property damage, physical intimidation, or public defamation of those who assisted Jews. Only property damage in the neighboring village of Wittelsberg has been reported, in addition to some internal Nazi Party investigations of misconduct against just a few party members or public officials, which were then announced in the local *Stürmer* display cases. To my knowledge, a sanction against a person who was not an officeholder or party member in Rauischholzhausen was issued only once, in response to an incident in which someone “relieved himself” at the front door of Heinrich Bodenbender, a carpenter who had built some moving boxes for Juda Rülff early in the summer of 1938. Considering how openly my non-Jewish interviewees reported on attacks against Jews they had observed, I assume that they would also have told me about attacks witnessed against non-Jews.

Although there may have been no threats of direct retribution by local perpetrators (something that might have reasonably been feared), we can nonetheless assume that those helping Jews had reason to fear for their reputation (as opposed to suffering physically or materially). This in turn implies that a relatively broad consensus among the majority population, or at least the assumption of such a consensus, determined the conduct of those who helped Jews. It is therefore likely that a large majority of Rauischholzhauseners supported the ideologies of antisemitism and a national community (*Volksgemeinschaft*) as early as 1933 (though perhaps only owing to indifference or economic motivation).

Finally, it should be noted that several of the helpers whose names we know also benefited materially from the assistance they provided. Six years after giving Julius Rülff money for his escape from the Reich, Franz Kaiser continued to rent Rülff’s parents’ house for 12 Reichsmark per month. Presumably, he was acting on a request from — or in the interest of — Berta Rülff and presumably took care of the building and did a great deal to maintain it, despite having conceivably little use for the rooms of the house. But nonetheless — he was the proprietor of a coveted house. The efforts of Andreas Peil to acquire the land surrounding the synagogue were certainly motivated by a desire to save the building and assist the Jewish community financially. Although Peil’s efforts likely resulted

in a dispute with the Party, which then partially undermined them, they ultimately led to his ownership of the garden area directly adjacent to his home. In addition, in the end Johannes Pfeiff was successful in his efforts to purchase and lease out the grounds of the Jewish cemetery. While Pfeiff's efforts may have clearly been intended to preserve the cemetery, they also secured his possession of a garden property. My aim in adding these points is not to minimize the assistance these people provided to persecuted Jews. Their primary motive for taking action was to assist their Jewish neighbors. Nonetheless, in any complete assessment, the potential for profiting from such assistance cannot be ignored.

Assessment

“A village is, after all, still like your community, right? Where people are dependent on each other [...]. Later, all the men were gone, and then everybody had to help one another to get on — to survive, you could say, right? [Question: “But the Jews could have also [been protected]; one could have seen to it that they did not ‘disappear.’”] Yesss, ... but they were a totally different people! The Jews. [...] [Question: “But why were they a ‘different people’ [...]?”] Well, because they didn't belong [here]!”

*(Non-Jewish contemporary witness F)*⁹⁶⁴

Antisemitism had long been a tradition in Rauschholzhausen, shaped as it had been by Protestantism, German nationalism, and the Böckel Movement.

The formation and development of modern European antisemitism in Europe cannot be explained monocausally. Its roots can be located in the alarmingly occult construction of a Jewish “Antichrist” within Christian anti-Judaism.⁹⁶⁵ And its manifestations and practices were fueled by a variety of historical conditions and ideological factors. Ultimately, these were inseparably linked with the emergence of bourgeois-capitalist society.

At the end of the nineteenth century, the development and rapid expansion of industrial capitalism and the accompanying formation of European states resulted in profound social changes and the loss of traditional values, structures, and hierarchies. In Central Europe, this phase coincided with the political and social emancipation of Jewry. In addition, capitalism was accompanied by a mode of production that obscured social conditions. Together with modern antisemitic ideology, “the Jews” became the personification of all the negative consequences of capitalism and were identified with the abstract rule of capital.⁹⁶⁶ “The Jew” was deemed a threat, someone trying to dominate the world—sometimes as a communist, sometimes as a capitalist.

In German-nationalist antisemitism, “the Jew” became the fundamental and primary threat to German national homogeneity. The construction of a national collective, of a national identity, always necessitated basic ideas for negotiating the relationship between the state and a society divided into classes. Usually, these are built on existing historical, political, geographical, linguistic or religious traditions, attempting to integrate them into a national(ist) ideology.⁹⁶⁷ Given the political and geographical scattering of “German” territories, and given the absence of a “German collective” that could clearly be situated historically or geographically, “the German nation” was constructed by imagining an organic unity between the state and its “people” (*Volk*). This notion did not emerge from a documented history in an original area of settlement, but was founded on an ethnocultural myth of a “German national spirit” (*Volksgeist*).⁹⁶⁸ The myth that all Germans descended from “Germanic tribes” also gave rise to the notion of a homogeneous “German nation.”

The acceptance of a national social order divides the world into binaries: one’s own collective versus all others. In a logical sense, such an understanding of the German nation was linked to the exclusion of all non-Germans.⁹⁶⁹ The German “people” (*Volk*), in the sense of an organic whole, could thus be juxtaposed with the French or English “people.” Consistent with modern antisemitism, though, “the Jews” represented neither of these two sides but were instead perceived as the negation of the national structure.⁹⁷⁰ They were deemed a “nation *within* a nation, a

state *within* a state, a *tribe of their own* among a foreign race [emphasis added].”⁹⁷¹ In the German-nationalist ideology of organic wholeness, it was inconceivable that one totality could be present *within* another. The existence of “Jews” became a paradox, threatening at its roots the construction of the nationalistic world order.

In the “Third Reich”, the foundational myth of a homogeneous “German nation” — now based on racial theory — was elevated to the organizing principle of the state. “Racial purity” was described as the “nation’s source of strength” and “the Jewish race” as a threat to its very existence, as something that sustained itself parasitically by means of “permanent mixing.”⁹⁷² The fear of a “racial degeneration” of the “nation” (*Volk*) turned the annihilation of “the Jews” into a redemptive struggle.⁹⁷³

The imaginary organic unity of “people” and state made preserving the “Aryan race” the pre-condition for the existence of the state and hence the highest purpose of state-building. As Hitler himself put it:

We, as Aryans, are only able to imagine a “state” as *the living organism of a nation* which both assures the preservation of that nation and also leads to [...] its greatest freedom [emphasis added].⁹⁷⁴

When “the people” [*das Volk*] are sovereign, force becomes legitimate against those who do not belong to “the national community” [*Volksgemeinschaft*]. It also becomes legitimate to renounce a constitution grounded in equality before the law, protection under the law, and judicial authority.⁹⁷⁵

In many cases, events in Rauschholzhausen often got ahead of the statutes of the Nazi regime.⁹⁷⁶ For the perpetrators, the Jewish population increasingly became “fair game.” And for the majority of the population, compassion or solidarity with the Jews became unthinkable. Instead, the majority conformed in silence and thus “[laid] the groundwork for violence.”⁹⁷⁷ Those who helped Jews did so secretly, though they did not need to fear any official consequences for their actions. Since there was no legal basis for many antisemitic attacks, Simon Frenkel tried to

defend himself against a physical assault by making a criminal complaint, and Abraham Spier did the same by seeking a formal remedy in administrative court when his business license was revoked. Nonetheless, the monitoring state authorities failed to grant them any relief.

It is not correct, however, to conclude that the perpetrators acted without regulation or in a legal vacuum. A society is not only governed by official laws but also by other legal frameworks, such as the categories of honor and tradition. In the processes involved in establishing modern states, these legal structures were increasingly pushed back so that the state could monopolize force. Still, even though their influence declined, they did not disappear entirely.⁹⁷⁸

Law in the Nazi state was designed to defend and strengthen the German “national community.” The fundamental principle of public order did not encompass the subjective rights of the individual, but the greater good of “the community.” As a consequence, “the national community” was declared the “source of [all] law.”⁹⁷⁹ The laws of the state and desires of the people were supposed to complement one another; they were intended to serve “the community” — not the welfare of the individual. At all times, they were to be synchronized in conformity with the Nazi ideology. Violent force became “communitarised.”⁹⁸⁰

Rauischholzhausen, too, was subject to the laws of “the German people.” These were co-determined by “the people” (Volk) of the village, alongside the regulations of the state.⁹⁸¹ The portion of the laws defined by “the national community” itself was a process that involved the entire village. By means of violence and exclusionary initiatives, the group of perpetrators created the master definitions. Yet these “violations of the law” were successful, gradually acquiring the status of effective law when assisted by the silence of the majority and the approving response of bystanders.⁹⁸² The legal order of “the national community” could not be fully constituted without the shared efforts of the perpetrators and the consent of “the people.” Once combined, these two elements created de facto laws against “the Jewish threat.” Consequently, the perpetrators were not “lone wolves” but persons acting in the name of “the community.”⁹⁸³ When their actions exceeded the laws on the books, it was not

the result of anarchy or a lack of control. Rather, they were oriented toward and consistent with that communal order which they were simultaneously co-determining.

In the space of the village, the rule⁹⁸⁴ [*Herrschaft*] of “the people” found its particular expression. The constriction of that space opened up possibilities for comprehensively monitoring the residents.⁹⁸⁵ Hence, there was no such thing as remaining anonymous within the village. Those who assisted Jews were in no danger of governmental sanction or of being harmed physically or materially by some violence-prone thugs. Instead, what these helpers deemed truly threatening was the prospect of being excluded from the village “community.” In the context of that transparent structure, the persecuted had little hope of hiding or being forgotten. And in the vicinity of the village, it was easier to plot against or exploit them. Moreover, the perpetrators knew quite well the kinds of things that their Jewish neighbors owned.

Every deed tacitly approved created the foundations for another, more radical one. And each additional radicalization extended the “law” of “the nation.”⁹⁸⁶ As rule over “the enemy” expanded, “the community” itself became more cohesive. Consequently, the “self-empowerment” and “complicity” of the villagers was just as essential as formal state legislation in establishing the rule of “the German people.”⁹⁸⁷ Ultimately, “the community” could not be produced without the interplay of state and village, or without the participation of all “members of the [German] nation” [*Volksgenossen*] in whose name the Holocaust could be realized and Rauschholzhausen’s Jews could be expelled “without a hitch.”⁹⁸⁸

Today's Perspective

“You see, my brother, he visited Germany a few times with his children. I just can’t go back there. [Yet] we are planning to go with our grandson now. If my wife feels good. We’ll see. I [would] like to go, once more to Holzhausen, to the cemetery, and to Kirchhain. I want to see, but ... there’s nobody left.”

(*Martin Spier, 2009*)⁹⁸⁹

By those *no longer left there*, Spier is referring to the Jews who lived in Rauschholzhausen. They were deprived of their rights, persecuted, expelled, and murdered. These “Jews” had either “gotten out”⁹⁹⁰ or been “taken away.”⁹⁹¹ And they ultimately *stayed* away, with just three exceptions. Those who returned after the Holocaust were completely unexpected — and unwelcome.⁹⁹²

Their absence is marked today by “voids” in the village.⁹⁹³ These empty spaces explain why certain people now own certain living room furnishings, or why the lawn near the Jewish cemetery is rarely mowed. Such voids also influence plans for honoring members of the local sports club, as Friedel Rülff explained in 1990:

It [the club] has now been around for sixty years. I was surprised they didn’t invite me back. [...] I was one of the founding members. They did invite me for the 50th anniversary, and I wrote ’em back point blank: “If you send me the money [for the flight], I’ll come; otherwise, forget it.” And Hans Vogel, the current [president of the club] — I don’t know if he’s still president — his mother was one of the biggest antisemites in the whole village.⁹⁹⁴

Such voids are invisible except to those who know about them. The only ones who know and remember them are individual witnesses to the past.⁹⁹⁵ If they walk from the Zimmerplatz across the small bridge over the Rülffbach, they may from time to time remember their Jewish neigh-



51 All five of the siblings in the Spier family managed to survive [from left to right]: Martin, Alfred, Edith, Julius, and Walter; in New York, around 1975.

bors lingering under a linden tree, deep in conversation after worshipping in the synagogue. To the present day, the older generation refers to that tree as the “Jews’ Linden.”⁹⁹⁶ Many of them have relatives who were perpetrators. And they know exactly who used to own a neighbor’s field or the sister’s beautiful coffee set.

The overwhelming lack of reflection revealed in conversations with non-Jewish contemporary witnesses in Rauschholzhausen was striking. To mention a particularly conspicuous instance: one of my conversation partners claimed (wrongly) that the massive “war memorial” in front of the village church, which commemorates German soldiers killed in both World War I and World War II (and such memorials can be found in almost every German town), must have also included the names of German Jews who “passed away” in World War II.⁹⁹⁷ In addition, the traditions passed down by these non-Jewish witnesses contained the full array of antisemitic sentiments.

At the same time, the collective memory of the village remains largely untouched by the traces of those now absent.⁹⁹⁸ Although the Jewish

cemetery still exists, it is so hidden from view that my mother — born and raised in Rauischholzhausen — had never seen it until I began my research. While caring for the cemetery is the responsibility of the municipality, the grounds are only looked after when a visit has been announced, despite the private funding provided by Jewish survivors.⁹⁹⁹ Building blocks of the synagogue can be found as paving stones, and its premises are now used as a garden plot. And the former homes of Jews continue to be inhabited by others. Such is the state of affairs, which has not changed much since 1942. Until now, the villagers of Rauischholzhausen lived among the traces of this annihilation history, observing a sort of “moratorium on history.”¹⁰⁰⁰ Those traces were accepted to the extent they were useful, in the form of garden plots or expressions such as “meschugge” or “Itziger” (a pejorative term for a Jew).¹⁰⁰¹ But what is not at all acceptable is to speak publicly about that history. In dealing with the voids in their midst today, residents of the village have developed a stance of forbearance, a balance that should not be upset. As a result, the origin of those voids cannot be passed on or remembered collectively.¹⁰⁰²

Because there is no form of collectively organized remembrance, the generations born afterwards are limited in their access to knowledge about the past. What they have are the few remaining witnesses to those times (who are often antisemitic) or the official (yet error-ridden) village chronicle, which treats the persecution of the Jewish villagers in a separate chapter. Discussions on the history of Rauischholzhausen rapidly become inaccurate, trivializing, or anti-Jewish. The historical amnesia reaches its highest point when these elements all come together. Thus, one witness who lived in the village between 1935 and 1939 recounted in an interview with the Marburg History Workshop: “The synagogue was torn down in ‘35; [I know] because I just read about it yesterday [in the official village chronicle].”¹⁰⁰³

The motivation for my book was to confront this historical amnesia in Rauischholzhausen and to explain the history of the current status quo. The way things are now is not how they always were. What is missing are the Jews. And there are reasons for their absence: antisemitism, ex-

pulsion, persecution and murder. This has irrevocably changed the composition of Rauschholzhausen, leaving behind voids that are invisible, and remain so. Yet whoever is familiar with these absences will be able to discern them. Only those who see and want to see what once was there can adequately confront and understand the present.

Afterword by Hajo Funke

Touro College Berlin

„I come from a little place — Rauschholzhausen. Where everybody knew everyone else. [...] Most of the farmers there were ordinary people. That's why you can't imagine that such a mass murder could have taken place there. It's incomprehensible; I still can't understand it today.”

(Alfred Spier)

Testimony: the visit of 83-year-old Walter Spier and his brother Alfred at the cemetery of Rauschholzhausen on 9 May 2011

May 9th. The Jewish cemetery is situated in the woods above the village. Secluded and abandoned. A few rays of mild sunlight reach it on this early summer afternoon. On the patchy ground there, Walter Spier is looking for the grave of Sara Mendel. She was the only one of the (few) Jewish survivors returning after 1945 who actually stayed in the village where she died, poor and isolated, in 1954.

The day before, Walter Spier, along with his brother Alfred, had visited their former family home where a young family now resides. This is the house where he was born in 1927, as son of the cattle dealer Abraham Spier. Walter, his four siblings, and their parents had been among the 700 or so villagers of Rauschholzhausen in those days. The present residents welcome Walter into the house, and he remembers where the kitchen and the best room were located. He also recalls the large garden and the barn that his grandfather built in 1907. The back of this spacious

yard is adjacent to the site of the former synagogue, a place that is now deserted. On the other side of the road, there is a house where one of the most active Nazis lived, the baker Ludwig Grün. It was he who burned the Torah scrolls after the synagogue had already been destroyed. Walter Spier explains how he was forced to sit in the last row at the village school, and how the local synagogue had been attacked as early as 1935.

While the older siblings were able to emigrate with the *Kindertransports* to England, the youngest, Walter and Martin, stayed behind with their parents. Their father Abraham Spier assumed that he and his family would be protected, since he was a veteran of World War I. When the first rumors of deportations appeared, it was too late for them to leave Germany. Attacks by the local villagers escalated. To protect themselves, the Jewish residents boarded up their windows. It became increasingly difficult for them to obtain enough food to eat.

There was one person in the village who helped the Spiers, going to their house at night and removing his shoes so no one could hear him. This person provided them with essentials, even on the night of 6 September 1942, when the few remaining Jews were forced to assemble on the Zimmerplatz. There, under the direction of Mayor Wahl, they were loaded onto a truck. They were first deported via Kassel to Theresienstadt. From there, in May 1944, Walter and Martin were sent to Auschwitz along with their parents. Their mother and father were gassed immediately upon arrival; the two sons were separated. Walter was transported to a forced labor camp in Sosnowiec. In the winter of 1944–45, he was led on a death march to Mauthausen. From the thousands on that march, just a few hundred actually survived. Walter remained alive because an SS man shared his food with him and kept him from falling asleep during the breaks.

Walter remembers what his father told him: “We aren’t going to make it. But you will. Be proud of your name. And if you get separated, try to find each other again in Rauschholzhausen.” So, Walter made his way to Marburg, meeting someone at the train station who told him that a boy about the same age had recently traveled in the same direction. He suspected and hoped that it was his brother, whom he was reunited with

in the village. The brothers stayed in Rauschholzhausen another year and then decided to emigrate to New York to join their sister. For Walter, the important things in his life after 1945 were his name, his religion, and his siblings as well as his family, wife, children, and grandchildren.

An exceptional, village-centered study of victims, perpetrators, and bystanders in the Holocaust

On these days in May 2011, almost 70 years after they were deported to Auschwitz, Walter and Alfred Spier have returned again to Rauschholzhausen because Anna Junge was able to speak with them for her study of the Holocaust in the village. She was also able to make friends with them. Their children had convinced them to come and tell today's villagers — and us — what they had experienced in Rauschholzhausen.

“Today there are no longer any Jews living in the village, and at first glance there is nothing to remind one of them, except for an old Jewish cemetery at the edge of the forest, which can only be found if you know exactly where to look for it.” Anna Junge has conveyed this void of an obscure history and searched for what that empty space conceals — doing so openly, systematically, and relentlessly. She has searched for files and met with difficulties; she has encountered resistance, at times wishing to abandon her work. However, by proceeding painstakingly, she has created a unique study of the life and death of the Jewish residents — as well as of the perpetrators — of this village. She has conducted exhaustive interviews with octogenarians of the Spier family from Rauschholzhausen, making it possible for us to hear the perspective of Jewish survivors. For her, the voices of the persecuted are crucial “because they alone are capable of finding the words to depict their individual persecution.”

She has also interviewed the other side, examining in horror the everyday antisemitism of *those* octogenarians, thereby imagining why things happened the way they did in the village. She has been able to demonstrate that what took place after 1933 had a (considerable) prehistory.

Jewish life—even *Orthodox* Jewish practice—had existed in this village since (at least) the 16th century, with Jewish residents earning their livelihood as cattle dealers or small merchants. Yet the social climate changed drastically when the antisemitic Böckel Movement gained popularity, especially among the small landholders in the region. By 1905, the Jewish population had declined by 33 % to approximately 8 %; in 1925, it was less than 5 %. Despite their enthusiastic support of Germany in World War I, the Jews of Rauischholzhausen were never really integrated.

Against this backdrop of traditional rural antisemitism, the situation for Jews in the village changed abruptly after Hitler’s rise to power. Their exclusion was more rapidly implemented and radicalized “thanks” to the terror spread by a group of local Nazis. Junge thus describes an appalling drama of isolation and leave-taking. There was also the danger posed by the District Administrator’s need for control, as well as the totalitarian perception that comprehensive surveillance was needed of the (rapidly) declining number of Jewish persons still living in the village. Just three years and five days after the beginning of World War II, the remaining Jews of Rauischholzhausen were loaded onto trucks at the marketplace and deported to Theresienstadt. There was one non-Jew in the village — Wilhelm Seip — who could not sleep in the night before the deportation: “He came [...], without shoes, bringing us cold cuts and bread.” And just one non-Jew who said farewell: “Deubel’s Lisbeth, she stood there at the corner. She cried.”

Anna Junge has traced the history of persecution in this village in an unparalleled manner. She has comprehensively reconstructed the sources on the subject, expanding our knowledge in a distinctive manner, specifically by juxtaposing the memories of Jewish and non-Jewish villagers in accordance with an “integrated history” (Saul Friedländer). And, in the process, she has already had an impact — a significant one — both in Rauischholzhausen and beyond. Certainly, this study does not claim any general application, but in the case of this particular village, Junge reveals the potential force of the political religion of redemptive antisemitism. Here, in this locale, things happened both faster and much earlier than the Nazis could legislate them. Junge has insisted on taking

advantage of all conceivable sources, assessing them prudently and scrupulously. That is what makes her study of a particular place so special: it examines the monstrous process of the humiliation and murder of the European Jews in a small village, where parts of the population were desensitized to the annihilation of Jews under the sway of a regime of severe antisemitism, and many even became sympathizers and collaborators by resorting to isolation, contempt and everyday sadism.

And all that took place in a small village that today is so normal and looks so lovely.

*Hajo Funke, Touro College Berlin,
Berlin, February 2012*

Notes

1 Until 1934, Rauischholzhausen was actually called *Holzhausen*. It was given its present name (or *Rauisch-Holzhausen*) in order to differentiate it from other villages of the same name in that *Landkreis*; see Hessisches Landesamt für geschichtliche Landeskunde (ed.), *Historisches Ortslexikon*, vol.3, p. 136. Others date the renaming as of 1933; Deuker/Dienstbach, *Der Schloßpark*, p. 4. To help my readers avoid confusion, particularly in relation to birthplaces or events in 1933, the village will be referred to as *Rauischholzhausen* even before that date.

2 I understand the term *survivor* as characterizing those individuals who survived after having been persecuted between 1933 and 1945 by the Germans or their allies.

3 In references to the singular in the present study, the use of feminine or masculine forms is to be understood as exemplary; it does not follow any firm rule. While prioritizing the feminine term might have an empowering effect in a particular case, it would not adequately describe—indeed, it might even *disguise*—the actual gender ratio, i.e., the multiple exclusion of women in the masculinist social order of National Socialism. The possibility that both (gender) forms are appropriate in a particular instance should always be considered.

4 My non-Jewish interlocutors are anonymized here using the letters A through H. The alphabetical sorting corresponds to the year of their birth. Hence, “non-Jewish witness A” signifies the oldest of my interviewees. Interviewees of the Geschichtswerkstatt Marburg e.V. (“History Workshop of Marburg”) have remained anonymous. They are indicated by the letters I through O. One of the collections of sources I have used was anonymized as a private collection of documents of the “P family.”

5 Jeggle, *Nachrede*, p. 411.

6 The category of *perpetration* is used here to understand the acts of persecution against the persecuted, whether as a representative of the state or party (i.e., by the creation or implementation of positive law) or as an individual exercising physical violence or initiating new forms of psychological violence. The large group of observers thus had three options for action: the possibility of active collaboration in the sense of becoming perpetrators or assisting the perpetrators; the possibility of active non-participation in the sense of consciously looking away and adapting actively to the changed circumstances; and the possibility of not adapting, i.e., of helping the persecuted, which could potentially turn the helpers—depending on the significance of their actions—into the persecuted. On this, see also Sofsky, *Traktat über die Gewalt*, p. 101ff.; Abram/Heyl, *Thema Holocaust*, p. 314.

7 Arbeitsgemeinschaft für die Erforschung der Geschichte der Juden im süddeutschen und angrenzenden Raum (“Working Group for Research on the History of Jews in Southern German and Neighboring Regions”) Alemannia Judaica, <http://www.alemannia-judaica.de>.

8 Fritz-Bauer-Institut, *Vor dem Holocaust* (“Before the Holocaust”), <http://www.vor-dem-holocaust.de>. In addition, the Digital Archive of Marburg (DigAM) at the Marburg State Archives provides an immense and ever-growing online collection of relevant sources on this subject. See the Digital Archive of Marburg (DigAM)—an archival-pedagogical internet project at the Hessian State Archives in Marburg, headed by Reinhard Neebe. <http://www.digam.net>

9 Exceptions to this rule include expanded documentation on the sale of the synagogue site as well as research on the birth dates of perpetrators. Lastly, the search for old photographs was primarily undertaken in 2011.

10 A review of denazification court records in the Wiesbaden State Archives could very likely serve to better clarify questions on who the perpetrators were in Rauischholzhausen—issues that, however, were not the main focus of my limited research.

11 Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, SFI, p. 11f. Precise information on the interviews used can be found in the list of references at the end of this study. Interviews by the History Workshop of Marburg are designated in the following by the abbreviation “GWM”; interviews by the USC Shoah Foundation Institute are designated by “SFI.” The interviews I used from the History Workshop of Marburg were conducted in the framework of an oral history research project. Together with a number of additional interviews, these formed the basis of the Workshop’s 1995 publication, *Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim*. Since I was permitted to use the interviews themselves, my citations of these sources refer to the respective interview transcripts, even when the same information is also quoted in part in *Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim*. In the case of direct quotations, when I have omitted something, I have uniformly marked it with “[...]”, regardless of length and at times including statements by others. Insertions of letters or words that have been omitted as well as commentaries by other persons present are enclosed in square brackets. The symbol “- -” denotes sudden breaks within a narrative. The designation “[sic]” emphasizes the veracity of statements that are inaccurate or unexpected in the original; in addition, misspellings have not been corrected. Words I wished to emphasize are italicized and supplemented by “[emphasis added]” at the end of the quotation. Notes I have made in order to make a quote more understandable have been inserted within square brackets. Lastly: for the sake of better legibility, endnote marks have mostly been placed at the end of complete sentences, even in cases of literal quotations.

12 The use of the term *Jew* is not unproblematic. Under the Nazis, it derived from a racist construct and thus referred at times to people who did not even consider themselves Jewish. In the current study, the term is therefore placed in quotation marks (i.e., “Jew”) whenever it is not clear whether the persons in question understood themselves as *Jewish*.

13 This shift of perspective toward absences and empty spaces (or “voids”) is inspired by: Hechler, *Wer fehlt?*, p. 171f.; Hechler, “Unsere Gemeinde ist jetzt vollkommen judenfrei”, p. 1f.

14 Cf. Libeskind, *trauma/void*, p. 4; Hechler, “Unsere Gemeinde ist jetzt vollkommen judenfrei”, p. 14.

15 Libeskind, *trauma/void*, p. 9, 18; cf. Hechler, “Unsere Gemeinde ist jetzt vollkommen judenfrei”, p. 1f. In his “architectonic answer to a history out of ashes”, Libeskind is attempting, with the help of empty spaces (or “voids”), to make those “present absences” visible; Libeskind, *trauma/void*, p. 18, 26.

16 Libeskind, *trauma/void*, p. 9.

17 Even though founding member Friedel Rülff is listed among those to be honored with a special pin in the commemorative volume for the 50th anniversary of 1980, his name is missing from the same list of honorees ten years later; on this, see *Spielvereinigung 1930 Rauischholzhausen e.V. (ed.), Festschrift zum 50-jährigen Jubiläum*, p. 29, 31, especially *Festschrift zum 60jährigen Bestehen*, p. 45f. That Rülff was a co-founder of the association is mentioned in both of the commemorative volumes. According to Rülff, he was invited to the 50th anniversary but did not accept the invitation: “I wrote them back point blank: ‘If you send me the money, I’ll come, but otherwise I won’t’” (Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 15f.). According to the current chairman of the association, after checking with the 1990 board of directors, he was told that Rülff also had been invited to the 60th anniversary celebration. Rülff himself, however, maintains that he was not invited back in 1990. He suspects the reason to have been that a member of the 1990 board was a relative of a major local perpetrator of the 1930s. Yet that person, while having served as the first association chairman in 1980, only served as an honorary chairman in 1990. It thus remains unclear why Rülff was honored in 1980 but not again in 1990. See also Dieter Grün, report of conversation with Grün, 2 July 2011.

18 Cf. Hechler, “Unsere Gemeinde ist jetzt vollkommen judenfrei”, p. 2.

- 19 For a very convincing analysis of what is required for a critique of antisemitism, see Adamczak, *Antisemitismus dekonstruieren?*, p. 227ff.
- 20 In 1934 the family von Stumm sold its large agricultural estate to the William G. Kerckhoff-Stiftung in Bad Nauheim, which subsequently leased it as an experimental farm to the University of Gießen; cf. Kaiser, *Rausch-Holzhausen*, p. 151f.
- 21 Non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 9.
- 22 Cf. Hoffmann, *Verfolgung und Alltagsleben*, p. 375f.
- 23 In German scholarly discourse, the term “seizure of power” (or *Machtergreifung*) is a propagandistic word coined by the Nazis and implying a revolutionary takeover of power. However, Hitler’s appointment as Reich Chancellor on 30 January 1933 was legal, according to the Weimar Constitution. In fact, his cabinet enjoyed the support of 43 % of the parliamentary deputies. With respect to Hitler’s appointment as chancellor, it would be more appropriate to speak of a “transfer of power”. Only after his appointment took place were important steps undertaken by the Nazis to consolidate power and co-opt (*Gleichschaltung*) the state, specifically the “Decree of the Reich President for the Protection of the People and the State”, of 28 February 1933 (the so-called “Reichstag Fire Decree” that superseded the civil rights guaranteed by the Constitution) as well as the “Law to Remedy the Distress of the People and the Reich” of 23 March 1933, the so-called “Enabling Act”. On all of these, see Wippermann, *Hat Hitler die Macht ergriffen?*, p. 66, 72ff.; and Benz, *Geschichte des Dritten Reiches*, p. 19ff.
- 24 On this, see especially *Kommission für die Geschichte der Juden in Hessen* (ed.), *Neunhundert Jahre*.
- 25 On this, see especially Richarz/Rürup (ed.), *Jüdisches Leben*.
- 26 Schneider, *Die jüdischen Familien*, p. 336ff.; Arnsberg, *Die jüdischen Gemeinden*, vol. 2, p. 204ff. I also made use of recordings made by Franz Kaiser, the former local chronicler of Rauschholzhausen: Kaiser, *Jüdische Familien*; Kaiser, *Leben und Treiben der Juden*.
- 27 For the most part, these supplements were added to website *after* I had done the relevant research myself. Hence, I hardly made use of them in this study. This website is nonetheless highly recommended for every new researcher. See *Arbeitsgemeinschaft für die Erforschung der Geschichte der Juden im süddeutschen und angrenzenden Raum*, Rauschholzhausen, at: <http://www.alemannia-judaica.de>.
- 28 See, above all, Friedländer, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*; Hilberg, *Die Vernichtung*; Benz (ed.), *Die Juden in Deutschland*.
- 29 On this, see especially Wildt, *Volksgemeinschaft als Selbstermächtigung*; Hoffmann, *Verfolgung und Alltagsleben*.
- 30 On this, see especially Kropat, *Die hessischen Juden*. On individual aspects, see (among others) Kropat, *Kristallnacht in Hessen*; Meinel/Zwilling, *Legalisierter Raub*; and Kingreen, *Die gewaltsame Verschleppung*.
- 31 Händler-Lachmann/Händler, *Purim*, is a volume based on research done by the History Workshop (*Geschichtswerkstatt*) of Marburg. Rehme/Haase, mit Rumpf und Stumpf *ausrotten*, includes an edited volume of sources (*Quellenedition*), providing over one-hundred pages of materials on the Nazi era in Marburg and its vicinity. Yet the collection of sources in Rehme/Haase was not used for the present study on account of my own extensive research in the archives. Besides that, there are two published recollections by Jewish survivors of the district: Spier-Cohen (aus Momberg): *Aus den Erinnerungen*; and Stern (aus Nordeck): *Warum hassten sie uns eigentlich?*.
- 32 In the following, then, there is some overlapping content on Rauschholzhausen, especially because I used the interview transcripts of the History Workshop of Marburg created for its aforementioned work, Händler-Lachmann/Händler, *Purim*. The antisemitic persecution in Rauschholzhausen is also referred to in lexicons and encyclopedic works, such as Arnsberg, *Die jüdischen Gemeinden*, vol. 2, p. 207; and, with some edited sources, in Schneider, *Die jüdischen Familien*, p. 340f., 355ff.

- 33 Händler-Lachmann/Schütt, “unbekannt verzogen” oder “weggemacht”, is a volume based on research conducted by the History Workshop of Marburg.
- 34 Kaiser, Rausch-Holzhausen, p. 119.
- 35 Examples in which inaccuracies were repeated include: Hessisches Landesamt für geschichtliche Landeskunde (ed.), *Historisches Ortslexikon*, vol. 3, p. 138; Arnsberg, *Die jüdischen Gemeinden*, vol. 2, p. 207. Arnsberg was corresponding with the local chronicler Franz Kaiser, so that Arnsberg already received the same erroneous information before Kaiser’s chronicle of Rauschholzhausen was published; cf. JMF Archiv, Sammlung Paul Arnsberg, Hessen, no. 413.
- 36 For instance, on the destruction of the synagogue, there is no information recorded in Zacharias, *Synagogengemeinden 1933*. There are only details about 1938 in: *Der Kreisausschuß des Landkreises Marburg-Biedenkopf* (ed.), *Die ehemaligen Synagogen*, p. 154. Significant but partially inaccurate details are provided in: Schultheis, *Die Reichskristallnacht*, p. 289.
- 37 In the context of the Hessian Territorial Reform of 1974, Rauschholzhausen and ten neighboring villages were combined into the municipality of Ebsdorfergrund.
- 38 Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim; Händler-Lachmann/Schütt, “unbekannt verzogen” oder “weggemacht”.
- 39 This is especially true in the case of the finding aids (*Findbücher*) on the holdings HStAM 327/1, which are the files of the Marburg Nazi District Leadership.
- 40 Among the holdings missing are: in HStAM 180 Marburg, no. 4829 (*Ausschreitungen gegen Juden [Allg. u. Bes.], 1934–1948*) and no. 3871 (*Verwaltung der jüdischen Gemeinden [vol. 1: Allg.], 1897, 1926–1948*) as well as in HStAM 327/1 (NSDAP), no. 5561 (*Auswanderung von Juden, Widerruf für Zulassungen für den Viehhandel*). In particular, the files in the holdings of HStAM 327/1 (NSDAP)—especially file no. 5637 (*Auswanderung von Juden 1937–1939*)—are in a miserable state.
- 41 This is the case, for instance, in the holdings of HStAM 180 Marburg, no. 4826 (*Judenangelegenheiten [Allg. Erlasse, bes. Angelegenheiten], vol. 4, 1941–1947*).
- 42 This similarity was not only limited to the surnames. In the town and district of Marburg, this included two Jewish cattle dealers named Abraham Spier, two men named Kurt Israel and two women named Rosa Schaumburg. In the small village of Schweinsberg, there were two residents named Moritz Katz. In each case, one of the persons lived for a time in Rauschholzhausen or its neighboring village Wittelsberg. On the non-Jewish side, there were just as many affinities of name. Hence, in Rauschholzhausen, there were two Heinrich Ottos, one of them a mayor during the Nazi period.
- 43 The Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education of the University of Southern California (in Los Angeles), founded in 1994 by the American director Steven Spielberg, has conducted approximately 52,000 video-recorded interviews with witnesses to Nazism, principally Jewish survivors. These videotestimonies can be accessed by others through the Foundation’s Visual History Archive.
- 44 *Hachshara* designated a *kibbutz*, i.e., an agricultural training school that is managed collectively (without private property).
- 45 Mentioned in: Arnsberg, *Bilder—Dokumente*, p. 180; Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 235.
- 46 Methodological guidelines can be found particularly in: Jureit, *Erinnerungsmuster*. A less detailed work is Grele, *Ziellose Bewegung*, p. 199ff. Somewhat greater detail can be found in Niethammer, *Fragen—Antworten—Fragen*, p. 406f., 411ff.
- 47 Cf. Jureit, *Erinnerungsmuster*, p. 28. See the references to Vorländer, *Mündliches Erfragen*, p. 15, as well as to Stöckle, *Zum praktischen Umgang*, p. 154.
- 48 For a detailed consideration of the problem of transcription, see Niethammer, *Fragen—Antworten—Fragen*, p. 405f.; Jureit, *Erinnerungsmuster*, p. 29ff., 92f.
- 49 Cf. Jureit, *Erinnerungsmuster*, p. 32f.
- 50 Cf. Jureit, *Erinnerungsmuster*, p. 14, 43f. Aleida Assmann differentiates between neuronal, social, and cultural dimensions of memory; Assmann, *Der lange Schatten*, p. 31ff.

- 51 Cf. Hagemann, "Ich glaub' nicht, daß ich Wichtiges zu erzählen hab'...", p. 40f.
- 52 For a detailed account, see Jureit, *Erinnerungsmuster*, p. 43ff., 46.
- 53 Edith Baumann, Interview of Baumann/Spier, pt. 2, p. 3.
- 54 Walter Spier, Interview of Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 1, p. 2.
- 55 On the theory of collective memory, see Halbwachs, *Das Gedächtnis*; and *ibid.*, *Das kollektive Gedächtnis*.
- 56 On the space of the sayable, see Foucault, *Die Ordnung des Diskurses*.
- 57 Non-Jewish contemporary witness D, Interview D/E, p. 6.
- 58 This was particularly the case in interviews with non-Jewish contemporary witness B and non-Jewish contemporary witness C.
- 59 The interviews conducted by the History Workshop of Marburg were less open-ended. Those of the USC Shoah Foundation Institute were more akin to narratives, by contrast. On the methodology of "oral history interviews" (*Erinnerungsinterviews*), see Niethammer, *Fragen—Antworten—Fragen*, p. 401ff. On the social-scientific method of the "problem-centered interview", see Witzel, *Verfahren der qualitativen Sozialforschung*.
- 60 The background of the research project is of significance. Thus, it likely made a difference to the Spier brothers, in their willingness to speak about their experiences, whether the interview was being carried out by the USC Shoah Foundation Institute in the framework of a comprehensive commemorative project or whether the interview was being used for a research thesis reconstructing what had taken place in their former place of residence.
- 61 On this, see Jureit, *Erinnerungsmuster*, p. 89f., 96f.
- 62 On this, see Friedländer, *Eine integrierte Geschichte*.
- 63 Friedländer, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*, pt. 1, p. 12; cf. Friedländer, *Eine integrierte Geschichte*, p. 10.
- 64 Cf. Friedländer, *Eine integrierte Geschichte*, p. 10f.; Friedländer, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*, pt. 1, p. 16.
- 65 On this, see Fey/Heinl (ed.), *1200 Jahre Rauischholzhausen*. The village previously known as "Holzhausen" did not receive its present name of "Rauischholzhausen" until 1934. The districts of Marburg and Biedenkopf were amalgamated as part of the Hessian Regional Reform of 1974.
- 66 Cf. Hessisches Landesamt für geschichtliche Landeskunde (ed.), *Historisches Ortslexikon*, vol. 3, p. 136; telephone conversation with the municipal director of Rauischholzhausen, 13 Nov. 2009.
- 67 Cf. Kaiser, *Rauisch-Holzhausen*, p. 18.
- 68 Cf. Schneider, *Die jüdischen Familien*, p. 336; Hessisches Landesamt für geschichtliche Landeskunde (ed.), *Historisches Ortslexikon*, vol. 3, p. 137. According to other information, the fief was already transferred in 1330; Fey/Heinl (ed.), *1200 Jahre Rauischholzhausen*, p. 21.
- 69 Cf. Schneider, *Die jüdischen Familien*, p. 336.
- 70 Cf. Hessisches Landesamt für geschichtliche Landeskunde (ed.), *Historisches Ortslexikon*, vol. 3, p. 136f.
- 71 According to the local chronicle, Rauischholzhausen was one of the few last "free imperial villages" that could sustain itself up to the 1803 Final Recess of the *Reichsdeputation* (German: *Reichsdeputationshauptschluss*); Kaiser, *Rauisch-Holzhausen*, p. 92ff. This information can also be found in: Hessisches Landesamt für geschichtliche Landeskunde (ed.), *Historisches Ortslexikon*, Volume 3, p. 137. But the source for the information in *Historisches Ortslexikon* is once again the (unreliable) village chronicle authored by Kaiser. According to other information, the "Holzhausen" referred to in the Final Recess was the village that later became Burgholzhausen (in Friedberg); see *inter alia* Kobler, *Historisches Lexikon*, p. 278. However, it must be assumed in any case that Rauischholzhausen was able to sustain itself for a relatively long time as a free imperial village. More detailed investigation on when its mediatisation took place would have exceeded the scope of this study.
- 72 Marburg itself became a "district-free" municipality (a "Stadtkreis" as opposed to "Landkreis") in 1929.

- 73 Cf. Kaiser, Ebsdorfergrund, p. 139; Fey/Heinl (ed.), 1200 Jahre Rauschholzhausen, p. 21.
- 74 Cf. Deuker/Dienstbach, Der Schloßpark, p. 6; on this, see also Marianne Junge, Interview Junge, p. 17.
- 75 Non-Jewish contemporary witness H (and non-Jewish contemporary witness G), Interview G/H, p. 15.
- 76 On the evidence for 1553, see: Dettmering/Limit (ed.), Marburger History, p.290; see also Rohrbacher /Toch (ed.), Germania Judaica, pt. IV, vol. 2, p. 44. Paul Arnsberg believes that Jewish settlement dates from the first half of the 17th century; Arnsberg, Die jüdischen Gemeinden, vol. 2, p. 205. Several Rauschholzhausener or their descendants became well-known rabbis; see Arnsberg, Die jüdischen Gemeinden, vol. 2, p. 206f. In particular, one should mention Isaac Rülff (born in 1831 in Rauschholzhausen, died in 1902 in Bonn) who was the son of a cattle dealer. In 1854, he passed his rabbinic examination; in 1865, he received his doctorate. He served as a rabbi in Memel, edited the liberal newspaper *Memeler Dampfboot*, participated in the first Zionist Congress of 1897, and was a formative teacher of the Zionist leader David Wolffsohn.
- 77 The Landgraviate of Hesse was a principality within the Holy Roman Empire. The division of the estate of the Landgrave Philip the Magnanimous (born in 1504, died in 1567) in 1567 caused a separation into the andgraviates of Hesse-Kassel (the later Electorate of Hesse) and Hesse-Darmstadt (the later Grand Duchy of Hesse).
- 78 Cf. Mack, Otto Böckel, p. 378. More specifically on Rauschholzhausen, cf. Rohrbacher/Toch (ed.), Germania Judaica, pt. IV, vol. 2, p. 44; and Kaiser, Rausch-Holzhausen, p. 118.
- 79 Cf. Schneider, Die jüdischen Familien, p. 337; Kaiser, Rausch-Holzhausen, p. 117.
- 80 Cf. Mack, Otto Böckel, p. 378.
- 81 Cf. Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 11 (as recounted by Heinemann Stern, born in 1878 in Nordeck; Stern, Warum hassen sie uns eigentlich?, p. 41). The designation as “Jewish breadbasket” was probably introduced by the Jewish residents.
- 82 Cf. HHStAW, Abt. 365, no. 452-454, which is the birth, death, and marriage registry of the Jewish Community of Holzhausen-Wittelsberg from the 19th century.
- 83 Today there are 129 graves; the last funeral took place in 1954; Arnsberg describes the cemetery as “pretty old”; Arnsberg, Die jüdischen Gemeinden, vol. 2, p. 207.
- 84 Cf. Schneider, Die jüdischen Familien, p. 340.
- 85 Cf. L. Horwitz, Ein Mann der Tat. Zur Erinnerung an einen aus Kurhessen stammenden Rabbiner, in: *Jüdische Wochenzeitung für Cassel, Hessen und Waldeck*, 11 Feb. 1927; copy in: JMF Archiv, Sammlung Paul Arnsberg, Hessen, no. 413. It is not clear what the sources are for local chronicler Franz Kaiser’s decision to give the date of construction as 1850; Kaiser, Rausch-Holzhausen, p. 118.
- 86 Information on the birth dates of the teacher Jakob Rothschild, as well as all the other Jewish residents of Rauschholzhausen in the 1920s, can be found in the section below entitled “Family Descriptions.”
- 87 Cf. Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 146, with a copy of the obituary for Jakob Rothschild issued by the (official) Jewish community of Holzhausen-Wittelsberg (*Oberhessische Zeitung*, 11 April 1921); cf. also Arnsberg, Die jüdischen Gemeinden, vol. 2, p. 206; Siegfried Bachenheimer’s daughter Brunhilde North, Interview Transcript North.
- 88 Cf. letter of the District Administrator in Kirchhain to the Regional Administrator in Kassel, 12 Jan. 1927: “In this county, there is one teacher of religion who is sponsored by Israelite communities in Kirchhain, Allendorf, and Mardorf”; HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4837, p. 49; Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, 10f.; Martin Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 7. See also: letter of the Jewish communal office (*Israelitischer Vorsteheramt*) in Marburg to the District Administrator in Kirchhain, 9 March 1930: “In the meantime, religious instruction in Holzhausen and Schweinsberg is provided by a visiting teacher”; HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4837, p. 68. N.B.: “Regional administrator”, or *Regierungspräsident*, was a type of “head of government”, a “chief” Regional Administrator; in the following book, “Regional Administrator” is the preferred term.

- 89 "Riße zu einer neu zu Erbauenden Synagoge mit Lehrerwohnung und Schulstube" and "Situationsplan von dem Bauplatz und dessen Umgebung für die neu zu erbauende Synagoge der Judengemeinde zu Holzhausen", both of them undated; HStAM, Best. 180 Kirchhain, no. 2549.
- 90 The basis for this claim is: Schneider, *Die jüdischen Familien*, p. 340.
- 91 Cf. the decision by the Jewish community of Holzhausen-Wittelsberg, 22 Apr. 1849, HStAM, Best. 180 Kirchhain, no. 2549.
- 92 Cf. the following advertisement (newspaper unknown, undated): "The 21st of this month, at 9 a.m. is the scheduled time when reliable craftsmen will be hired for the necessary work of excavation, masonry, carpentry, cabinetry, glassmaking, plastering, and metalworking in constructing a synagogue (with teacher's residence) in Holzhausen [...]. Kirchhain, 5 November 1851, District Office of the Elector"; HStAM, Best. 180 Kirchhain, no. 2549.
- 93 "There is no object to the Israelite community here building a synagogue, either formally or from the standpoint of the police [...]"; letter of the Holzhausen mayor to the Jewish community of Holzhausen, 4 Jan. 1858, HStAM, Best. 180 Kirchhain, no. 2549. It is not clear what the sources are for local chronicler Franz Kaiser's decision to give the date of construction as 1872; Kaiser, *Rausch-Holzhausen*, p. 119. Despite that, his dating has been adopted repeatedly in encyclopedic overviews that make (explicit) reference to Kaiser's local chronicle of Holzhausen; see, among others: Händler-Lachmann/Händler, *Purim*, p. 25; Hessisches Landesamt für geschichtliche Landeskunde (ed.), *Historisches Ortslexikon*, p. 138.
- 94 Cf. Alfred Spier, *Interview Alfred Spier*, p. 11. A *mikveh* is an immersion bath used by Jewish communities for ritual purification.
- 95 Cf. the castratal fire map (*Brandkataster*) of 1884, HStAM, Best. 224, no. 308; Edith Baumann, *Interview Baumann/Spier*, pt. 1, p. 1. On the interior furnishing of other former synagogues in the Marburg district, see: Händler-Lachmann/Händler, *Purim*, p. 111ff.
- 96 Walter Spier, *Interview Martin and Walter Spier*, pt. 2, p. 7; non-Jewish contemporary witness F, *Interview F*, p. 1f., 12. On how realistic the sketches found might have been, see also: Martin Spier, *Interview Martin and Walter Spier*, pt. 2, p. 6.
- 97 *Shekhtn* (derived from *shochet*) is the Yiddish term for slaughtering animals according to Jewish religious belief.
- 98 On who held the respective offices, cf. Friedel Rülff, *Interview Rülff*, GWM, p. 29; Alfred Spier, *Interview Alfred Spier*, p. 10; Arnsberg, *Die jüdischen Gemeinden*, vol. 2, p. 204; Händler-Lachmann/Händler, *Purim*, p. 25; Kaiser, *Leben und Treiben der Juden*, p. 1.
- 99 The difference in religions and languages did not permit close relationships in the Christian surroundings "to really emerge" (recounts Rabbi Isaak Rülff, born in Rauschholzhausen); Isaak Rülff, *Entstehung und Bedeutung des Antisemitismus in Hessen*, in: *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*, no. 19, 1890, p. 264, quoted in: Toury, *Antisemitismus auf dem Lande*, p. 177.
- 100 This was consistent with the general tendency throughout Hesse; cf. Mack, Otto Böckel, p. 379. For an extensive treatment of legal equality, see: Kropat, *Die Emanzipation der Juden*, p. 325ff.
- 101 Otto Böckel was born in 1859 in Frankfurt a.M.; died in 1923 in Michendorf (near Potsdam). The movement was especially strong in the districts of Marburg, Kirchhain, and Frankenberg within the province of Hessen-Nassau; it later expanded to large portions of the province of Oberhessen (of the Grand Duchy of Hessen-Darmstadt); cf. Mack, Otto Böckel, p. 404, note 3, p. 383ff.
- 102 Mack, Otto Böckel, p. 385f., 388.
- 103 Precise election results can be found in: Mehnert, *Der Verein zur Abwehr des Antisemitismus*, p. 215.
- 104 Cf. Mack, Otto Böckel, p. 389.
- 105 Cf. Kroll, *Geschichte Hessens*, p. 73; Mack, Otto Böckel, p. 399f.
- 106 Cf. Toury, *Antisemitismus auf dem Lande*, p. 174ff.
- 107 In the following, I have assumed that all of the Jewish cattle or horse traders were men since

I am not aware of any information (from any period) that indicates that Jewish women also dealt in livestock in the Marburg district.

108 Isaak Rülff, Entstehung und Bedeutung des Antisemitismus in Hessen, in: *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*, no. 19, 1890, p. 264, quoted in: Toury, Antisemitismus auf dem Lande, p. 185. It is not known whether this account is referring specifically to Rülff's birthplace of Rauschholzhäuser.

109 In 1861, Rauschholzhäuser still had 78 Jewish residents; in 1905, there were only 52; cf. Arnsberg, Die jüdischen Gemeinden, vol. 2, p. 205.

110 Results of my own evaluation of data, using in particular the genealogical results in: Schneider, Die jüdischen Familien, p. 342ff.

111 Cf. letter of the non-Jewish village resident Johannes Pfeiff to Paul Arnsberg vom 3 Mar. 1966, p. 3, JMF Archiv, Sammlung Paul Arnsberg, Hessen, no. 413; Arnsberg, Die jüdischen Gemeinden, vol. 2, p. 206. For an extensive treatment of Jewish life in village communities of the Marburg district before 1933: Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 31ff. (On the memberships and participation in local clubs and associations by Jews of the district, see p. 50ff., 53f., 54ff.; on the everyday life of Jewish children in schools, see p. 59ff.)

112 Names included on the memorial plaques mounted today in the church for Jewish soldiers from Rauschholzhäuser who were killed in action are: in 1813, Meier Bachenheimer; in 1871, David Löwenstein.

113 Cf. Arnsberg, Die jüdischen Gemeinden, vol. 2, p. 206.

114 Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 44.

115 Lawsuit of Friedel Rülff against a restitution assessment of the Regional Administrator in Kassel, 3 July 1958, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 41866, vol. 1.

116 Cf. Brunhilde North, "Report of Conversation with North." When the wife of a rabbi asked, "Why did you give her such a German name?" North's mother responded, "But, we are German, aren't we?"

117 A very similar analysis can be found in: Hoffmann, Verfolgung und Alltagsleben, p. 374.

118 Martin Spier, Interview Martin Spier, SFI, p. 4.

119 Cf. Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 31; for details on the religious life of Jews in the Marburg district before 1933: Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 102ff.

120 Non-Jewish contemporary witness B, Interview B/C, p. 2f.

121 Cf. Arnsberg, Die jüdischen Gemeinden, vol. 2, p. 206. On the former businesses of Jews in the Marburg district, see: Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 83ff.; on the former butcher trade of Jewish residents in the Marburg district, see: Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 92ff.

122 Non-Jewish contemporary witness H, Interview G/H, p. 14.

123 "They had a certain language. [...] had certain expressions, [...] Yiddish expressions. [...] They had their own *Viehhändler*-talk [i.e., "cattle-dealer talk"]." Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 5. Other particularities are recalled by Anna-Katharina Tögel, Interview Tögel, p. 4f. On the cattle trade as an important industry for Jewish families in the Marburg district, see details in: Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 70ff. (A photo of some cattle dealers at the entrance to the Marburg slaughterhouse around 1930 can be found on p. 78 of that text.)

124 Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, GWM, p. 5.

125 Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, GWM, p. 34.

126 In 1938, an uncompensated confiscation took place of a piano, a glass cabinet, and a gramophone with records belonging to the Mendels (the Jewish couple) for a Hitler Youth camp in Amöneburg; cf. letter of the Marburg tax office to the Hessian Finance Minister, 1 Sept. 1950, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902. On the decision of the restitution chamber (*Wiedergutmachungskammer*) at the regional court (*Landgericht*) of Gießen in the case of Sara Mendel, 13 April 1951, see HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 505. On Christian domestics and the weekly reading of newspapers by the parents in the Spier home, cf. Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, GWM, p. 24, 12. For general

information on the Christian employees of Jewish family in the Marburg district, see Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 43ff.

127 Walter Spier, Interview Walter Spier, SFI, p. 3f.

128 Cf. Martin Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 1, p. 25.

129 Cf. Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, p. 7. Many non-Jewish village residents still remember the *matzah* (unleavened bread, that is eaten in the context of the Jewish Passover festival) given them by their Jewish neighbors; non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 6; non-Jewish D, Interview D/E, p. 7; non-Jewish contemporary L, Interview L/M, GWM, p. 11; cf. also Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 97ff.

130 Bruno Tögel, Interview Tögel, p. 18f.

131 Three members of the Jewish community, Moses Rülff, Isidor Rülff and Leopold Reiss, were killed in action in World War I. Leopold Reiss' brother Moritz was severely injured in the war; cf. letter of the non-Jewish village resident Johannes Pfeiff to Paul Arnsberg, 3 March 1966, p. 2, JMF Archiv, Sammlung Paul Arnsberg, Hessen, no. 413.

132 Theodor Korff was a Lutheran pastor in Rauischholzhausen, 1911–1925; cf. Kaiser, Rauischholzhausen, p. 116.

133 Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 31f. Cf. here as well: Letter of the non-Jewish village resident Johannes Pfeiff to Paul Arnsberg, 3 March 1966, p. 3; JMF Archiv, Sammlung Paul Arnsberg, Hessen, no. 413.

134 The memorial plaque for the Jewish soldiers killed in World War I probably did not survive the Nazi period. A photo of the plaque can be found in Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 54. Only the names of non-Jewish soldiers who were killed in the First (and Second) World War are recorded on the war memorial that is still located today in front of the Rauischholzhausen church. That memorial includes a large crucifix and the phrase “Blessed are the dead who from now on die in the Lord” (Revelation 14: 13).

135 Non-Jewish contemporary witness A, Interview A, p. 7.

136 *Shabbos* (Yiddish for “Sabbath”) denotes the weekly day of rest in Judaism, on which no work should be done. It begins at sunset on Friday and ends with the onset of darkness on Saturday.

137 Non-Jewish contemporary witness G (and non-Jewish contemporary witness H), Interview G/H, p. 11f.

138 Non-Jewish contemporary witness B, Interview B/C, p. 22.

139 “After Hitler’s accession to power, it was only about 4,000 Marks per year; in 1934 and 1935, it was about 2,500 to 3,000 Marks per year.” Notarial transcript of an affidavit by former horse trader Friedel Rülff in New York City, 3 January 1957, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 41866, vol. 1.

140 Quite often one finds contradictions in the dates of birth provided in memorial books, genealogical databases, memory interviews, and archival sources, e.g., in the censuses (*Bevölkerungsverzeichnisse*) of the Marburg District Administrator or in the files of restitution cases. The information on the birth dates of Jewish people living in Rauischholzhausen between 1933 and 1942 are therefore the result of an extensive comparison of data. Yet such a comprehensive data comparison of the birthdates of all persons referenced in this study would have gone beyond the scope of this research framework. To prevent too much unreliable information from entering this study, I have generally abstained from indicating the dates of birth of minor figures. In cases where providing such dates of birth was regarded as necessary, references to the sources involved are provided. However, readers should know that in such cases, the data provided have not been verified extensively (if at all).

141 On the date of Jakob Rothschild’s death, cf. Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 146, with a copy of the obituary by the official Jewish community of Holzhausen-Wittelsberg (*Oberhessische Zeitung*, 11 April 1921). On the birth dates of the Rothschild family, cf. Schneider, *Die jüdischen Familien*, p. 351.

142 Cf. Kaiser, *Leben und Treiben der Juden*, p. 2.

- 143 It is also possible that Herz Reiss moved to Neu-Ulrichstein together with his children in 1923 and took charge of selling off the Rauischholzhausen property himself; cf. Kaiser, *Jüdische Familien*, p. 1. He was nonetheless buried at the Jewish cemetery in Rauischholzhausen in 1926. On the birth dates of the Reiss family, cf. Schneider, *Die jüdischen Familien*, p. 349; and cf. grave-stones at the Jewish cemetery of Rauischholzhausen.
- 144 Cf. Kaiser, *Leben und Treiben der Juden*, p. 2.
- 145 On the membership of Emanuel Bachenheimer in the society, cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness L, Interview L/M, GWM, p. 16.
- 146 Cf. Kaiser, *Jüdische Familien*, p. 1. On the birth dates of the family of Ida and Emanuel Bachenheimer, cf. Händler-Lachmann/Schütt, “unbekannt verzogen” oder “weggemacht”, p. 73.
- 147 Cf. Händler-Lachmann/Schütt, “unbekannt verzogen” oder “weggemacht”, p. 73.
- 148 Cf. the decision by the Regional Administrator in Kassel in the case of Jenny Bachenheimer, 3 June 1958, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 40929, vol. 2.
- 149 Cf. North, “A Mostly Serious Week”, in: *Aufbau*; Kaiser, *Jüdische Familien*, p. 2. On the birth dates of the family of Siegfried Bachenheimer, cf. North, *The Last Gift*, in: *Newsweek*; North, “A Mostly Serious Week”, in: *Aufbau*; Schneider, *Die jüdischen Familien*, p. 343.
- 150 Cf. Brunhilde North, née Bachenheimer, “Report of Conversation with North”; North, *The Last Gift*, in: *Newsweek*; restitution application of Jenny Bachenheimer to Regional Administrator in Kassel, 23 Feb. 1956, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 40929, vol. 1.
- 151 Cf. letter of a Rauischholzhausen police officer named Weber to the District Administrator in Marburg concerning the expatriation case of Simon Frenkel, 3 April 1941; HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4826, p. 7 (on both sides of the page). See also the marriage certificate of the Frenkels from the registry office (*Standesamt*) of Roßdorf, 9 Jan. 1908, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 57705. I am not aware what the local functions were of policeman Weber, who in the letter referenced above characterizes himself (and his rank) as “Gend[arm] Oberwachtm[eister] d[er] R[eserve]”, the German term for a type of “reserve staff sergeant of gendarmes.” Nor am I aware whether or when he acted on behalf of Seipel (who was the gendarme for the entire *district*) during the Nazi years.
- 152 Information on his participation in World War I is found in: preliminary note of Simon Frenkel to his “List of Items to be Relocated” sent to the (official Nazi) Foreign Exchange Office (*Devisenstelle*) in Kassel, 16 Dec. 1938, HHStAW, Abt. 519/3, no. 36149. See also the letter of the non-Jewish village resident Johannes Pfeiff to Paul Arnsberg, 3 March 1966, p. 2, JMF Archiv, Sammlung Paul Arnsberg, Hessen, no. 413. In connection with Simon Frenkel’s imprisonment in Buchenwald in 1938, this fact is not mentioned in contrast to the other Jews from the district who were detained at that time.
- 153 Cf. Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 11.
- 154 Cf. Letter of David Frenkel to Regional Administrator in Kassel, 26 July 1957, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 57705; non-Jewish contemporary witness D, Interview D/E, p. 3.
- 155 Cf. Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 1, p. 24f.; Friedel Rülff also remembers: “We always had good times there in that arbor in the garden [...]” Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 12.
- 156 Cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness E, Interview D/E, p. 6f.
- 157 Resi Frenkel was thereby one of the three (from a total of 180) Jewish schoolgirls at the Elisabethschule, who began university studies; cf. Ernst/Hatscher (ed.), *Experiment-Sonderheft*, at: <http://www.elisabethschule.de>.
- 158 Cf. letter of Simon Frenkel to the (official) Foreign Exchange Office in Kassel, 29 Aug. 1935, HHStAW, Abt. 519/3, no. 36149; Ernst/Hatscher (ed.), *Experiment-Sonderheft*, at: <http://www.elisabethschule.de>. The birth dates provided for Salomon Cohen are the result of an extensive comparison of data.
- 159 Cf. transcript of an affidavit provided by David Frenkel to the Regional Administrator in Kassel, 20 June 1955, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 57704.
- 160 Cf. questionnaire filled out by Sara Mendel for the Marburg Support Centre (*Betreuungsstelle*)

- for the Politically, Racially, and Religiously Persecuted, undated (but probably composed in 1946); HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 1953/07.
- 161 Cf. Kaiser, *Jüdische Familien*, p. 1. On the birth dates of David and Karoline Löwenstein, cf. Schneider, *Die jüdischen Familien*, p. 349.
- 162 Cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness E, Interview D/E, p. 2; file note by the Regional Administrator in Kassel, 14 Sept. 1951, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902.
- 163 Cf. letter of the Roßdorf Police to the District Administrator in Marburg, 15 Dec. 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3593.
- 164 Cf. the decision of the restitution chamber (*Wiedergutmachungskammer*) at the regional court (*Landgericht*) of Gießen in the case of Sara Mendel, 13 April 1951, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902.
- 165 Cf. handwritten summary of the files of auctioneer Karl Schott, author unknown, 9 Dec. 1947, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4934.
- 166 Cf. Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, p. 5.
- 167 Interview Alfred Spier, p. 17. "Itzig" was a name originally derived from "Isaac" and was still used as a personal name in Frankfurt am Main, for instance, until the end of the 19th century. Yet, in the region of Hesse (and elsewhere), it evolved from an antisemitic defamation into a general term of abuse; see Althaus, *Mauscheln*, p. 257ff.
- 168 Cf. transcript of a declaration by Julius Rülff to the German embassy in Argentina, 18 March 1957, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 2035/15.
- 169 Cf. handwritten summary of the files of auctioneer Karl Schott, author unknown, 9 Dec. 1947; HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4934. See also transcript of a witness interrogation at the Regional Police Station Cölbe, 28 Aug. 1962, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 2035/19, vol. 1.
- 170 On the birth date of Moses Rülff, cf. Schneider, *Die jüdischen Familien*, p. 346. On that of Selma Rülff, cf. transcript of a declaration of her brother Julius Rülff at the German embassy of Argentina, 18 March 1957, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 2035/15. According to different information, Selma had been born earlier, on 8 October 1903; Schneider, *Die jüdischen Familien*, p. 346. An earlier estimate of the date is also given by Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 3.
- 171 On Selma Rülff's date of death, cf. transcript of a declaration of her brother Julius Rülff at the German embassy of Argentina, 18 March 1957, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 2035/15. According to different information, she died already on 13 Sept. 1919; Schneider, *Die jüdischen Familien*, p. 346. An earlier estimate of the date is also given by Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 3.
- 172 On the club or association memberships of the Rülff siblings, cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness A, Interview A, p. 16. On the takeover of the business, cf. the letter of the Rauischholzhausen mayor to the Regional Administrator in Kassel, 7 Feb. 1958, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 2035/19, vol. 1.
- 173 Written declaration of Julius Rülff as "Enclosure to Restitution Application", July 1955, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 2035/19, vol. 1. On this, cf. also: written affidavit of a witness in the restitution case of Julius Rülff, 16 Feb. 1956, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 2035/19, vol. 1. The witness in question transported meat every week for the brothers, including to hotels in Bad Nauheim, Gießen, and Marburg.
- 174 Cf. affidavit of Julius Rülff, 14 Dec. 1961, as well as the report of the Regional Police Station Cölbe, 29 Aug. 1962, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 2035/19, vol. 1.
- 175 Non-Jewish contemporary witness J, Interview J/K, GWM, p. 23.
- 176 Non-Jewish contemporary witness N, Interview N/O, GWM, p. 37.
- 177 Cf. Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, p. 16.
- 178 The brother of Juda's father Moses was the well-known rabbi and Zionist Isaak Rülff; cf. Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 1f.
- 179 Cf. gravestone at the Jewish cemetery of Rauischholzhausen. Lina was the sister of Emanuel Bachenheimer, cf. Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 18f., 36.
- 180 A very nice group photo of the four children of the Rülff family, taken shortly before the beginning of World War I, can be found in: Händler-Lachmann/Händler, *Purim*, p. 52.

- 181** On the birth dates of Lina Rülff and her son Isidor as well as Julius Meier, cf. Schneider, *Die jüdischen Familien*, p. 345.
- 182** Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 9.
- 183** Horses that could not be sold in the region were then sold at the Frankfurt horse market: “[...] that was the first Monday of every month, my father travelled every four weeks to Frankfurt [to sell]. And to Dortmund to buy”; Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 12.
- 184** On the employees of the Rülff family, cf. Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 15. On the family’s real estate, cf. personal registries deriving from an assessment of Marburg tax office files made on 24 Aug. 1948 and of the files of auctioneer Karl Schott by the Marburg Office for Property Control and Restitution, undated, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4938. On the family’s farming activities, cf. attorney’s letter for Friedel Rülff to the Regional Administrator in Kassel, 2 Feb. 1965, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 41866.
- 185** Cf. Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 23; Arnsberg, *Die jüdischen Gemeinden*, vol. 2, p. 206.
- 186** On Friedel Rülffs friendships, cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness B, Interview B/C, p. 16. On his membership in the choral society, cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness A, Interview A, p. 5; and Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 16. On Friedel Rülffs role in the sports club, cf. Spielvereinigung 1930 Rauschholzhausen e.V. (ed.), *Festschrift zum 50-jährigen Jubiläum*, p. 17, 29; Händler-Lachmann/Händler, *Purim*, p. 51f.
- 187** Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 15.
- 188** Non-Jewish contemporary witness B, Interview B/C, p. 25.
- 189** It is likely that Isak and Minna Spier already lived in Rauschholzhausen when their youngest son Siegfried was born in 1886; cf. Klein/Pettelkau, *Genealogy of the Schaumberg Family*, at: <http://www.jinh.site50.net>; Schneider, *Die jüdischen Familien*, p. 350. On the birth dates of Isak, Minna, and Siegfried Spier, cf. Schneider, *Die jüdischen Familien*, p. 350.
- 190** Cf. Martin Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 1, p. 12.
- 191** Cf. written affidavit of a witness from Rauschholzhausen, 25 Nov. 1959, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 2039/18; the witness regularly helped Abraham Spier in herding animals.
- 192** Cf. Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, p. 5. Isak Spier died in 1910, and Minna Spier died in 1927, cf. gravestones at the Jewish cemetery of Rauschholzhausen.
- 193** Cf. Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, GWM, p. 11f.
- 194** Cf. personal registries deriving from an assessment of Marburg tax office files made on 24 Aug. 1948 and of the files of auctioneer Karl Schott; Marburg Office for Property Control and Restitution, undated, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4938. See also the handwritten summary of the files of the auctioneer Karl Schott, author unknown, 9 Dec. 1947, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4934. Cf. as well the overviews signed by the District Administrator in Marburg in 1947/48 on the assets of former Jewish residents in the district; HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4979.
- 195** Cf. Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, p. 4. Memories of the forest, the loss of which was never formally “compensated” in: Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 2f.
- 196** Martin Spier, Interview Martin Spier, SFI, p. 2f.
- 197** Martin Spier, Interview Martin Spier, SFI, p. 3.
- 198** Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 24.
- 199** Cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness C, Interview B/C, p. 5.
- 200** Non-Jewish contemporary witness L, Interview L/M, GWM, p. 18.
- 201** Cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness L, Interview L/M, GWM, p. 17.
- 202** Cf. handwritten summary of the files of the auctioneer Karl Schott; author unknown, 9 Dec. 1947, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4934. See also the personal registries deriving from an assessment of Marburg tax office files made on 24 Aug. 1948 and of the files of auctioneer Karl Schott; Marburg Office for Property Control and Restitution, undated, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4938.
- 203** The so-called *Assessorexamen*; cf. draft of the Regional Administrator in Wiesbaden for an assessment in the case of Herbert Stern, 19 January 1956, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 57048.

- 204 Cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness B, Interview B/C, p. 5; non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 2.
- 205 In the entire region of the Marburg district, there were still 850 Jewish individuals living in thirty localities at the beginning of 1933; cf. Händler-Lachmann/Schütt, “unbekannt verzogen” oder “weggemacht”, p. 12.
- 206 Voting result percentages calculated using the numbers in: Klein (ed.), *Die Hessen als Reichstagswähler*, vol. 2, pt. 1, p. 747ff.; Klein (ed.), *Der Regierungsbezirk Kassel*, vol. 2, p. 880.
- 207 It is especially impressive in view of a district-wide comparison: While 9.6 % still voted Communist in Rauischholzhausen even in March of 1933, just 3 % actually did so in the area of the former district of Kirchhain. Cf. Klein (ed.), *Die Hessen als Reichstagswähler*, vol. 2, pt. 1, p. 775ff.; Klein (ed.), *Der Regierungsbezirk Kassel*, vol. 2, p. 880.
- 208 Cf. Martin and Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 29.
- 209 Cf. Friedländer, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*, pt. 1, p. 29.
- 210 Non-Jewish contemporary witness E thus expressed herself when asked about resistance: “No, I wasn’t aware of that. [...] No. Nope. [...] I wasn’t aware of that; well, not here. But at least I wasn’t aware of it.” Interview D/E, p. 10.
- 211 Cf. letter of a gendarme named Weber from Rauischholzhausen to the District Administration in Marburg, on the expatriation case of Simon Frenkel, 3 April 1941, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4826, p. 7 (on both sides).
- 212 Cf. transcript of an affidavit of Sara Mendel submitted to District Court of Kirchhain, 14 Apr. 1950, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902.
- 213 Letter of Daniel Scheld to the mayor of Rauischholzhausen, 1 Nov. 1951, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902.
- 214 Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, p. 25.
- 215 Non-Jewish contemporary witness N, Interview N/O, GWM, p. 39.
- 216 Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, GWM, p. 42f.
- 217 Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, p. 25.
- 218 Prince Philipp von Hessen (born 6 Nov. 1896, died 25 Oct. 1980): as of 15 June 1933 (and since 7 June 1933, the acting regional governor (*Oberpräsident*) of the province of Hessen-Nassau; discharged on 8 Sept. 1943 because he was related to the Italian royal house; cf. Klein, *Leitende Beamte*, p. 142.
- 219 E. Konrad G. G. von Monbart (born 13 Aug. 1881, died 24 May 1945 [suicide]): as of 1 Apr. 1933 (and since 22 Feb. 1933, the acting) Head Regional Administrator (*Regierungspräsident*) of the district of Kassel. Released from government service on 1 July 1944 in the wake of the dissolution of the province of Hessen-Nassau; cf. Klein, *Leitende Beamte*, p. 27, 176.
- 220 Ernst A. Schwebel (born in 1886, died in 1955): became a judge in the Higher Administrative Court (*Oberverwaltungsgericht*) of Berlin in 1934; cf. Klein (ed.), *Der Regierungsbezirk Kassel*, vol. 2, p. 880.
- 221 Hans T. R. Krawielitzki (born 26 Nov. 1900, date of death unknown) took over the office of District Administrator (*Landrat*) as a replacement on 25 June 1934. On 20 Feb. 1935 he was named acting District Administrator, and on 23 Apr. 1936 he was appointed permanently to the office, which he held until 1945; cf. Klein, *Leitende Beamte*, p. 157f.
- 222 Krawielitzki ignored physical assaults against Jewish persons, choosing not to prosecute them; cf., for instance, his letter to the district school inspector (*Kreisschulrat*) in Marburg, 1 May 1936, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4174, p. 15. He took a strong position against looting by the SS; cf., for instance, letter of Krawielitzki to the Leader of the 35th SS Unit, Kassel, 15 Mar. 1939, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4174, p. 106ff.
- 223 Cf. *Ortsvorsteher* (“municipal director”) of Rauischholzhausen, report of conversation with municipal director.
- 224 Cf. *Ortsvorsteher* (“municipal director”) of Rauischholzhausen, report of conversation with municipal director; various correspondence on budgetary matters of the mayor of Rauischholz-

- hausen with the District Administration in Marburg, 1933–1952, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4725.
- 225 In March 1934 Heise still held office; cf. the census records that Heise produced as gendarme at the gendarmerie in Roßdorf, at the District Administration in Marburg, 6 Mar. 1934, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4823.
- 226 Karl O. P. Weinrich (born in 1887, died in 1973): joined the Nazi Party in 1922 and was as of September 1928 the Nazi Party *Gauleiter* [i.e., regional leader] of Hessen-Nassau-Nord, which was renamed *Kurhessen* in 1934. After the bombing of Kassel, Weinrich was relieved of his office in November 1943; cf. Weiß (ed.), *Biographisches Lexikon*, p. 482f.
- 227 Immediately after joining the Party in September 1927, Hans Krawielitzki became leader of the Nazi Party *Ortsgruppe* (“local branch”) in Marburg. After a Party reorganization of 1 Oct. 1932, he eventually became the Nazi Party *Kreisleiter* (“district leader”) for the (municipal and regional) District of Marburg. In 1937 Krawielitzki resigned and Rudolf von Löwenstein (born in 1905, died in 1952) took over the district leadership. Between 1940 and 1945, Krawielitzki once again held the position. Cf. Klein, *Leitende Beamte*, p. 157f.; Stockhorst, *5000 Köpfe*, p. 250.
- 228 Initially, the Nazi Party *Ortsgruppe* (“local branch”) in charge was called the “*Ortsgruppe Heskem*”; cf. letter of the Nazi Party *Kreisleitung* in Marburg to the Nazi Party *Gauorganisationsleiter* of the District of Kurhessen in Kassel, 31 Jan. 1934, HStAM, Best. 327/1, no. 5658. This branch probably had its main office in Wittelsberg as of 1934, at the latest after June of 1935, at which point it was renamed. Cf. letter of the Nazi Party *Ortsgruppen-Leitung* of Heskem, from Wittelsberg to the Nazi Party *Kreisleitung* in Marburg, 16 June 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4175; the various summaries in HStAM, Best. 327/1, no. 5637; the addressing of various letters in HStAM, Best. 327/1, no. 5639. On the swearing in of Johannes Preiß from Wittelsberg as leader of the local Nazi Party branch (or *Ortsgruppenleiter*), cf. letter of the Nazi Party *Kreisleitung* in Marburg to the personnel office of Nazi Party *Gauleitung* of Kurhessen in Kassel, 17 Oct. 1934, HStAM, Best. 327/1, no. 5658.
- 229 Cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness C, Interview B/C, p. 41f.; non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 19.
- 230 Non-Jewish contemporary witness E, Interview D/E, p. 10. Pastor Francks was therefore not a supporter of the “German Christians”, — the political church movement within German Protestantism that aimed to synthesize Nazism and Christianity and that professed “positive Christianity” and demanded “racial purity” of all church members. From 1932 to 1946, Heinrich W. J. Francks was the Protestant-Lutheran pastor of Rauischholzhausen; cf. Kaiser, *Rauisch-Holzhausen*, p. 116.
- 231 Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, p. 22.
- 232 Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, p. 18.
- 233 Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, p. 18.
- 234 Section 2 of the 1st Order on the Implementation of the Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service, Reich Ministries of the Interior and Finance, 11 Apr. 1933, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 13, no. I 54.
- 235 Cf. Friedländer, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*, pt. 1, p. 40.
- 236 Cf. letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 5 May 1933, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4824. The District of Marburg reported to the State Police Office in Kassel, which was responsible for the Regional Administrative District of Kassel as a local representative of the Secret State Police (*Gestapo*). The Kassel office was led briefly by *Regierungsrat* (“government councilor”) Dr. Fritz Elze and *Regierungsrat* Dr. Walter A. Lindenborn, and then from July 1933 to July 1936 by the Kassel Police Chief and SA *Gruppenführer* (i.e., “major general”) Fritz Pfeffer von Salomon (known as “Fritz von Pfeffer”). Between 1936 and 1939, the same office was headed by SS *Obersturmbannführer* (“senior battalion leader”) and *Regierungsrat* Günther Hermann, who was succeeded briefly by SS *Sturmabführer* (“junior battalion leader”) Rudolph Korndörfer. Between 1939 and 1943, including the phase of deportations, the office was led by SS *Sturmabführer* (“junior battalion leader”), *Regierungsrat* and *Kriminalrat* Dr. Karl Lücke. Cf.

here Meinel/Zwilling, Legalisierter Raub, p. 482f. On 11 July 1933, the *Geheimer Staatspolizeiamt* ("Secret State Police Office", i.e., the main office of the Gestapo) in Berlin reported that a *Nachrichtenstelle* ("central intelligence office") for Jews and (Masonic) lodges had been established. After that, all transactions relating to "Jews" and lodges always had to be passed on to Berlin; cf. the highly confidential letter from the Gestapo (main office) in Berlin to the Gestapo in Kassel (and elsewhere), 11 July 1933, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4823. In addition, the directive was issued to produce lists of fluctuations in the Jewish population on a regular basis; cf. Rehme/Haase, *mit Rumpf und Stumpf ausrotten*, p. 18. Krawielitzki henceforth produced quarterly lists on the Jewish population in the Marburg district (encompassing both the urban and rural areas) that were passed on to the Gestapo in Kassel.

237 Cf. draft of the Regional Administrator in Wiesbaden for a decision in the case of Herbert Stern, 19 Jan. 1956, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 57048.

238 Cf. "Order concerning Suspension of Jewish Judges and Reduction in the Number of Jewish Lawyers", Reich Commissioner of the Prussian Judiciary, 31 Mar. 33, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 7, no. I 23.

239 Cf. "Edict concerning the Determination of Personnel in Bar Associations", Reich Commissioner of the Prussian Judiciary, 31 Mar. 33, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 8, no. I 25; "Circular Order concerning Prohibition on Representation by Jewish Attorneys", Reich Commissioner of the Prussian Judiciary, 4 Apr. 33, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 10, no. I 37.

240 Cf. "Law concerning Admission to the Practice of Law", Reich Chancellor/Ministry of the Judiciary, 7 Apr. 33, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 12, no. I 48. Exceptions were made for those already admitted as of August 1914 or who were formerly frontline soldiers in World War I; hence, there was no possibility for Jewish women to be exempted.

241 Cf. suit of Herbert Stern against a decision of the restitution authority (*Wiedergutmachungsbehörde*) of Wiesbaden, 21 June 1956, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 57048.

242 Cf. letter of the gendarmerie (*Landjägeramt*) of Roßdorf to the District Administrator in Marburg, 13 Nov. 1933, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4823, p. 18. Cf. also "List of the District Administration of Marburg on Jewish families in the district, who have relatives outside Germany"; undated but probably of January 1934, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4823.

243 Cf. affidavit of Herbert Stern, 23 Jan. 1957, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 57048.

244 It should be noted that, when analyzing antisemitism before 1933 or its changed manifestations after 1933, autobiographical memories as well as the views of scientific researchers are shaped by the watershed events of 1933 and their knowledge of the Holocaust. Consequently, the antisemitism of the era before and after 1933 and the description of that turning point might also be partially reconstructed by my interview partners in terms of a radicalization leading to the Holocaust, or these phenomena (alternatively) might be relativized in light of their knowledge of subsequent events. Cf. Bergmann/Wetzel, "Der Miterlebende weiß nichts", p. 174f.

245 Jewish survivor I, Interview I, GWM, p. 20f.

246 Cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness C, Interview B/C, p. 25; Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 41; Bruno Tögel, Gesprächsprotokoll Tögel, 17 June 2009. Heinrich Otto likely began his military service in the winter of 1940-41.

247 Cf. letter about the naming of Daniel Scheld as Nazi Party *Blockleiter* in Rauschholzhausen by the Nazi Party district leadership in Marburg, sent to the Nazi Party local branch (*Ortsgruppe*) in Wittelsberg, 6 June 1939, HStAM, Best. 327/1, no. 5639.

248 Heinrich Becker was a member of the SA as well as Hitler Youth leader (either a *Stamm-* or *Bannführer* by rank). His military service began in 1943. Cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness H, Interview G/H, p. 24f.; non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 9; Bruno Tögel, Gesprächsprotokoll Tögel, 2 Aug. 2009.

249 (Johann) Konrad Schweißguth was not conscripted into military service. He took on the office of Nazi Party cell leader in Rauschholzhausen by 1943 at the latest, probably immediately after Heinrich Otto was conscripted. Cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 17;

- non-Jewish contemporary witness C, Interview B/C, p. 41, 64; transcript of an official assessment on account of disputed claims to the property of Hedwig Stern, 22 Apr. 1943, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 522.
- 250 Johannes Deuker was a member of the SA and was not conscripted for the war. Cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 10, 17; non-Jewish contemporary witness C, Interview B/C, p. 41, 64.
- 251 Cf. Martin Spier, Interview Martin und Walter Spier, pt. 1, p. 20; Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 30; Walter Spier, Interview Walter Spier, SFI, p. 11.
- 252 According to the non-Jewish contemporary witness F Adam and Heinrich Dörr were members of the SA; cf. Interview F, p. 8f. According to Martin Spier, Adam Dörr was a member of the SS; cf. Interview Martin und Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 18.
- 253 Cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 11, 14.
- 254 Cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 9f.; and list providing information on political leaders within the seven party cells of the Nazi Party *Ortsgruppe* in Wittelsberg as an enclosure in a letter of the *Ortsgruppe* in Wittelsberg sent to the Nazi Party *Kreisleitung* ("district leadership") Marburg, 7 Sept. 1941, HStAM, Best. 327/1, no. 5639. Younger relatives of Else Schmidt were likely members of SS, cf. non-Jewish contemporary witnesses H and G, Interview G/H, p. 23; non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 9f.
- 255 Cf. Martin Spier, Interview Martin Spier, SFI, p. 6; Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 15f. According to Walter Spier, Ms. Vogel's first name was "Anna"; cf. Interview Martin und Walter Spier, pt. 1, p. 23.
- 256 Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, p. 20; Walter Spier, Interview Martin und Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 16; non-Jewish contemporary witness C, Interview B/C, p. 41f.
- 257 Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 16.
- 258 On the engagement party of Resi Frenkel, see also the similar portrayal in: Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 147ff.
- 259 Letter of Resi Helish, née Frenkel, to Barbara Händler-Lachmann, 18 Feb. 1990, GWM Archiv, Ordner Juden-Landkreis-Orte.
- 260 Non-Jewish contemporary witness G on the memories of her neighbor, Interview G/H, p. 2.
- 261 When the *Reichskulturkammergesetz* ("Law of the Reich Chamber of Culture") was promulgated, chambers were created for all branches of culture—writing, press, radio, theater, music and the visual arts. Belonging to a chamber became necessary for anyone to engage in cultural activities, and Jews were now excluded from belonging. Cf. *Reichskulturkammergesetz*, Reich Chancellor/Reich Ministry for National Enlightenment and Propaganda, 22 Sept. 1933, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 52, no. I 248.
- 262 *Das Judenbier von Holzhausen*, in: *Oberhessische Zeitung*, 5 Aug. 1933; partially reprinted and quoted in: Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 148.
- 263 Letter of Resi Helish, née Frenkel, to Barbara Händler-Lachmann, 18 Feb. 1990, GWM Archiv, Ordner Juden-Landkreis-Orte.
- 264 Exceptions were made for frontline soldiers and their (living) dependents. Cf. "Guidelines concerning the Exclusion of Jewish Gymnasts and Athletes", Reich Athletics Commissioner, 25 Apr. 1933, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 18, no. I 80. Friedländer give the date of this decree as 24 May 1933; Friedländer, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*, pt. 1, p. 50.
- 265 Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 16.
- 266 Non-Jewish contemporary witness N, Interview N/O, GWM, p. 22f.
- 267 Cf. Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 22.
- 268 Cf. Kropat, *Die hessischen Juden*, p. 424.
- 269 In Kirchhain there was a local branch of Reich League of Jewish Frontline Soldiers (*Reichsbund jüdischer Frontsoldaten*). Among its members were Moritz Katz of Schweinsberg (who lived in Rauschholzhausen after 30 July 1942) and Hermann Ehrlich from the neighboring village of Roßdorf. All members as of October 1935 had joined the local group on 20 June 1933. It must

- therefore be assumed that the local group was newly founded at this time; cf. membership list of the Reich League of Jewish Frontline Soldiers, Ortsgruppe Kirchhain, 1 Oct. 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4828. In Kirchhain, there was also a local chapter of the Central Association of German Citizens of the Jewish Faith (*Centralverein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens*), a Jewish charity association, a men's association and a women's association. One member, among others, of the women's association was Ester Bachenheimer, a native of Rauischholzhausen who lived in Kirchhain; cf. addendum to the membership list from the mayor of Kirchhain to the District Administration in Marburg, 30 Sept. 1936, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4177. Between 1935 and July 1938, there were also two Zionist youth clubs in the district: the local chapters of the *Habonim* in Neustadt and Halsdorf; cf. letter from the District Administration in Marburg to the Gestapo in Kassel, 15 Oct. 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4828. For details on the surveillance and monitoring of the Jewish associations, the special treatment of Jewish sports clubs, the state rejection of "assimilationist" associations such as the Reich League of Jewish Frontline Soldiers or the Central Association, as well as the promotion of pro-emigration organizations, especially Zionist ones, see Kropat, *Die hessischen Juden*, p. 424f.; Friedländer, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*, pt. 1, p. 76ff.
- 270 The "Law against the Overcrowding of German Schools and Universities" of 25 Apr. 1933 created a *numerus clausus* for Jewish students in secondary schools, based on the Jewish share of the population of the entire Reich. Access to compulsory education, however, was not initially restricted; cf. Kropat, *Die hessischen Juden*, p. 428f.
- 271 Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, p. 26.
- 272 Martin Spier, Interview Martin Spier, SFI, p. 4.
- 273 Martin Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 1, p. 23.
- 274 Martin Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 7.
- 275 Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, GWM, p. 9.
- 276 Cf. Kaiser, *Rauisch-Holzhausen*, p. 116.
- 277 Non-Jewish contemporary witness B, Interview B/C, p. 70.
- 278 Non-Jewish contemporary witness C, Interview B/C, p. 70.
- 279 Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 27.
- 280 Martin Spier, Interview Martin Spier, SFI, p. 4.
- 281 Martin Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 27.
- 282 Cf. the "Decree concerning Restraint toward the Jews", Deputy to the *Führer*, 16 Aug. 1934, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 89, no. I 436.
- 283 Order by Rudolf Hess, Deputy to the *Führer*, 11 Apr. 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4823, p. 207 (both sides), forwarded in strict confidence from the District Administrator in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 29 June 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4823, p. 209.
- 284 Photograph mailed anonymously to the District Administrator in Marburg, undated (probably May 1935), HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4823, p. 175. On the denunciation of Heinrich Otto, see also the portrayal in: Händler-Lachmann/Händler, *Purim*, p. 158f., including a copy of the wedding photo.
- 285 Cf. Martin and Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 19f., 23.
- 286 Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 41.
- 287 File note of the District Administrator in Marburg, 17 June 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4823, p. 176 (back side).
- 288 Non-Jewish contemporary witness C, Interview B/C, p. 31. There were no such signs mounted at the entrance to the village of Rauischholzhausen; cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness C, Interview B/C, p. 34.
- 289 Non-Jewish contemporary witness B, Interview B/C, p. 31.
- 290 Letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the SA Brigade 48 in Marburg, 14 Jan. 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4823, p. 143 (both sides of the page).
- 291 Letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the mayor of the towns and the gendarmes

- of the district, 17 Apr. 1936, HStAM, Best. 330 Kirchhain, no. 2268, p. 40; cf. also the circular by Rudolf Hess, Deputy to the *Führer*, 29 Jan. 1936, HStAM, Best. 165, no. 3982, vol. 16, p. 38.
- 292 According to Walter Spier, Ms. Vogel's first name was "Anna"; cf. Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 1, p. 23.
- 293 Martin Spier, Interview Martin Spier, SFI, p. 6.
- 294 Cf. Martin Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 1, p. 21.
- 295 Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, p. 21.
- 296 Cf. Martin Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 3, p. 20.
- 297 Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 27.
- 298 Copy of a letter from Gendarme Seipel to the chief prosecutor (*Oberstaatsanwalt*) in Marburg, by the hand of the District Administrator in Marburg, 9 Mar. 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4823, p. 168; with a cover letter, medical certificate and criminal complaint from the District Administrator in Marburg, forwarded to the Gestapo in Kassel, 22 Mar. 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4823, p. 171. On the assault of Wilhelm Nau on Simon Frenkel, see also the similar depiction in: Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 157f. The case was also mentioned in the daily report of the Gestapo in Kassel to the Gestapo (main office) in Berlin, 26 Mar. 1935, in: Klein (ed.), *Die Lageberichte der Geheimen Staatspolizei*, vol. 2, p. 818.
- 299 Letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the Gestapo in Kassel, 20 May 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4823, p. 174.
- 300 Cf. Hilberg, *Die Vernichtung*, vol. 1, p. 41f.; Friedländer, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*, pt. 1, p. 156ff.
- 301 Secret letter of Frick to the District Administrator in Kassel, 20 Aug. 1935, forwarded from the District Administrator in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 3 Sept. 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4824, p. 55.
- 302 Letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the mayors of the towns and gendarmes of the district; 4 Sept. 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4824, p. 56. According to Rauischholzhausen mayor Otto, the decree had to be read aloud to him by a gendarme, who had initially received the letter from the District Administrator in Marburg.
- 303 Cf. Kropat, *Die hessischen Juden*, p. 418.
- 304 Cf. the original call for a boycott, "The Eleven Points of the Nazi Party", HStAM, Best. 165, no. 3982, vol. 10.
- 305 Cf. letter of the District Administrator in Kassel to the attorney of David Frenkel, 22 Dec. 1959, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 57705.
- 306 Letter of David Frenkel to the District Administrator in Kassel, 26 July 1957, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 57705.
- 307 Cf. Kaiser, *Leben und Treiben der Juden*, p. 2. Other sources permit an alternate conclusion: that the business was only sold in 1935. See certificate of a Frankfurt *Auswandererberatungsstelle* ("emigration advising office") about Simon Frenkel, sent to the Foreign Exchange Office (*Devisenstelle*) in Kassel, 14 Sept. 1935, HHStAW, Abt. 519/3, no. 36149; and the "Questionnaire for Emigrants" filled out by Simon Frenkel, received on 19 Sept. 1935 at the Foreign Exchange Office (*Devisenstelle*) in Kassel, HHStAW, Abt. 519/3, no. 36149.
- 308 Cf. letter of the District Administrator in Kassel to the attorney of David Frenkel, 22 Dec. 1959, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 57705.
- 309 Letter of Simon Frenkel to the Foreign Exchange Office (*Devisenstelle*) in Kassel, 13 Aug. 1935, HHStAW, Abt. 519/3, no. 36149.
- 310 Cf. "Law concerning the Slaughter of Animals", Reich Chancellor / Reich Ministry of the Interior et al., 21 Apr. 33, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 15, no. I 62. Martin Spier related: "As soon as Hitler came on power, he stopped *schächten*, the kosher killing. And, of course, we never ate meat from 1933 on"; Interview Martin Spier, SFI, p. 11.
- 311 Cf. enclosure to an investigatory order in the restitution case of Julius Rülff, undated; HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 2035/19, vol. 1.

- 312 “The blood in the slaughterhouse stood several centimeters high”; transcript of a witness statement by Justus Seipel at the District Court of Kirchhain in the restitution case of Julius Rülff, 11 Aug. 1952, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 2035/19, vol. 1. On the timing of this action in the fall of 1934, cf. the written “Enclosure to Restitution Application” of Julius Rülff, 20 July 1955, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 2035/19, vol. 1.
- 313 Written “Enclosure to Restitution Application” of Julius Rülff, 20 July 1955, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 2035/19, vol. 1. “Jews” were prohibited from entering all slaughterhouses after 30 June 1935 (including those in Marburg); cf. Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 78.
- 314 Non-Jewish contemporary witness B, Interview B/C, p. 32.
- 315 Non-Jewish contemporary witness G, Interview G/H, p. 1f.
- 316 Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 22f.
- 317 Letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the Gestapo in Kassel, 15 Apr. 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4823, p. 178. Those affected would each have admitted to doing business with the Jewish residents at the point which the grievances had been formally made. The incident was mentioned in the daily report of the Gestapo in Kassel to the *Gestapa* (main Gestapo office) in Berlin, 17 Apr. 1935, in: Klein (ed.), *Die Lageberichte der Geheimen Staatspolizei*, vol. 2, p. 821; cf. auch Rehme/ Haase, mit Rumpf und Stumpf ausrotten, p. 25, fn. 76.
- 318 Transcript of a statement of an affected farmer to the District Administration (*Landratsamt*) in Marburg, 15 Apr. 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4823, p. 180.
- 319 Transcript of a statement of an affected farmer to the District Administration (*Landratsamt*) in Marburg, 15 Apr. 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4823, p. 182.
- 320 Letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 6 May 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4823, p. 184.
- 321 Cf. Adolf-Reichwein-Schule Marburg, Jüdische Geschäfte, 1933, at: <http://www.adolf-reichwein-schule.de>.
- 322 Cf. letter from the mayor of Kirchhain to the District Administrator in Marburg, 2 Nov. 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4824, p. 62.
- 323 Cf. “Regulation concerning Non-Exclusion of Non-Aryan Traders in Visiting Trade Fairs and Annual and Weekly Markets”; Reich Ministry of Economics, 23 Sept. 1933, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 52, no. I 250. See also “Order concerning the Termination of Constraints in Economic Life”; Reich Ministry of Economics, October 1933, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 58, no. I 280. On the Kirchhain cattle market, cf. letter from the mayor of Kirchhain to the District Administrator in Marburg, 2 Nov. 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4824, p. 62.
- 324 Cf. Kropat, *Die hessischen Juden*, p. 421. “I can remember that we repeatedly had an annual income at the end of the ‘20s that exceeded 10,000 Marks. In 1930, however, the Nazi influence had already become somewhat clearer [...]. After Hitler came to power, it was only about 4000 Marks per year; in 1934 and 1935 it was about 2500 to 3000 per year. [...] After the Nuremberg racial laws were decreed, one could no longer speak of a pensionable income, so I decided to emigrate.” Notarial record of an affidavit from Friedel Rülff in New York City, 3 Jan. 1957, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 41866.
- 325 Anna-Katharina Tögel, Interview Tögel, p. 3f.
- 326 Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 30.
- 327 Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 4.
- 328 Martin Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 1, p. 29.
- 329 Letter from the District Administrator in Marburg to the gendarmes of the district, 13 Aug. 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4175.
- 330 Letter from the gendarmerie in Kirchhain to the District Administrator in Marburg, 7 Nov. 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4824, p. 61.
- 331 Cf. Hoffmann, *Verfolgung und Alltagsleben*, p. 383.
- 332 Cf. Hoffmann, *Verfolgung und Alltagsleben*, p. 383; Klein (ed.), *Der Regierungsbezirk Kassel*, vol. 1, p. LXIII. On the co-optation (or *Gleichschaltung*) of the cooperatives, see also: Bludau, *Nationalsozialismus und Genossenschaften*, p. 68ff.

- 333 Cf. Hoffmann, *Verfolgung und Alltagsleben*, p. 383.
- 334 Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 22.
- 335 Letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the Gestapo in Kassel, 16 Nov. 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4824, p. 63.
- 336 Situation report of the District Administrator in Marburg to the Gestapo of Kassel and the District Administrator in Kassel, 26 Aug. 1935, in: Klein (ed.), *Der Regierungsbezirk Kassel*, vol. 2, p. 499, quoted in: Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 76.
- 337 Cf. letter from the gendarmerie of Roßdorf to the District Administrator in Marburg, 15 June 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4175. A directory of the District Administrator in Marburg of 11 July 1935 regarding all persons in public office who did business with “Jews” after 1 Aug. 1934, designates Franz Kaiser as a “party comrade”; HStAM, Order 180 Marburg, no. 4175. Franz Kaiser (1890–1988) — a longtime local politician and at times member of the Prussian *Landtag* (state parliament) for the German People’s Party (*Deutsche Volkspartei*) in the mid-1920s—was one of the few farmers in Rauischholzhausen and authored the local chronicle (*Ortschronik*) of Rauischholzhausen in 1975. In 1936, he gave Julius Rülff funds so that Rülff might escape Nazi Germany.
- 338 Letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the Gestapo in Kassel, 23 July 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4175. The file contains various letters about prohibited business dealings between Nazi Party members and “Jews.” Rauischholzhausen is quite conspicuously not mentioned here, having likely been classified as “unproblematic.”
- 339 Cf. Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 22.
- 340 Cf. Friedländer, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*, pt. 1, p. 144.
- 341 Monthly report of the District Administrator in Kassel to the Prussian State Ministry, 8 Aug. 1934, in: Klein (ed.), *Der Regierungsbezirk Kassel*, vol. 1, p. 72, quoted in: *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*, pt. 1, p. 144.
- 342 Overview of the Gestapo in Kassel on the political situation in May 1934, in: Klein (ed.), *Die Lageberichte der Geheimen Staatspolizei*, vol. 1, p. 111, quoted in: Hoffmann, *Verfolgung und Alltagsleben*, p. 384.
- 343 Cf. Friedländer, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*, pt. 1, p. 154f.; for more details, see Longerich, “Davon haben wir nichts gewusst!”, p. 75ff.
- 344 In March 1934, Heise was still in office. Cf. the census [*Bevölkerungsverzeichnis*] produced by Heise while a police officer at the gendarmerie in Roßdorf, for the District Administrator in Marburg, 6 March 1934, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4823.
- 345 Cf. Communal leader of Rauischholzhausen, report of a conversation along with diverse budgetary correspondence between the mayors of Rauischholzhausen and the District Administrator in Marburg, 1933–1952, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4725.
- 346 Cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness C, Interview B/C, p. 41f.; non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 19.
- 347 A few of the files of the Marburg Nazi district leadership were secured by the American army at the end of the war. They were brought to the U.S., where they became holdings of the World War II Records Division of the National Archives (in Alexandria, VA). Later they were moved from there to the Bundesarchiv in Koblenz. In 1969, the records were handed over to the Marburg Staatsarchiv (as “Bestand 327/1”). According to return arrangements, archives in Germany are obliged to give unrestricted access to these records to all German and non-German researchers. Cf. the explanations in the finding aids on the Bestand HStAM, Best. 327/1.
- 348 Non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 19.
- 349 Non-Jewish contemporary witness C, Interview B/C, p. 41f.
- 350 Cf. letter from the Marburg Nazi district leadership to Daniel Scheld, 12 January 1939, HStAM, Best. 327/1, no. 5639.
- 351 Early in 1934, Heinrich Otto was even in discussion to become the possible head of the Nazi local group in Heskem. That office was then given to Johannes Preiß from Wittelsberg, but it can

be assumed that by the mid-1930s Otto had become the leader of the local Nazi branch in Rauischholzhausen. On this, cf. letter from the Marburg Nazi district leadership to the Nazi Regional Leader of the Gau Kurhessen in Kassel, 31 January 1934, HStAM, Best. 327/1, no. 5658. After 1941, Preiß's position was taken over by Johannes Lorch from Dreihausen. Cf. names of those to whom diverse letters of the Marburg Nazi district leadership were addressed, in: HStAM, Best. 327/1, no. 5639.

352 With respect to Heinrich Otto and Daniel Scheld, the overview contains the comment "armed forces" [*Wehrmacht*], suggesting that both of them had been drafted and sent to the front at this point in time; a list of political leaders within the seven party cells of the Nazi local group of Wittelsberg as an enclosure in a letter of local Nazi group of Wittelsberg to the Nazi district leadership in Marburg, 7 September 1941, HStAM, Best. 327/1, no. 5639.

353 Cf. the transcript of an official assessment or inspection regarding disputed claims to the property of Hedwig Stern, 22 April 1943, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 522.

354 On the occasion of their *bar* or *bat mitzvah*, Jewish children are treated as adults in Judaism.

355 Martin Spier, Interview Martin Spier, SFI, p. 7.

356 Walter Spier, Interview Walter Spier, SFI, p. 4.

357 Under the eugenic "Law for the Prevention of Offspring with Hereditary Diseases" of 1 January 1934, approximately 400,000 people throughout the Reich, around 1% of those of reproductive age, were forcibly sterilized, until May 1945. On this issue, the relevant study remains: Bock, *Zwangsterilisation im Nationalsozialismus*, p. 230ff.

358 Letter of the gendarmerie in Schröck to the chief prosecutor in Marburg, 27 August 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4824, p. 24. On the proceeding against Hermann Mendel, see also the account in: Händler-Lachmann/Händler, *Purim*, p. 159f.

359 All citations are from: Letter of the gendarmerie in Schröck to the chief prosecutor in Marburg, 27 August 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4824, p. 24.

360 Cf. a duplicate of interrogation protocol of the accused, Hermann Mendel, by the gendarmerie in Schröck, 28 August 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4824, p. 25.

361 Letter of the gendarmerie in Schröck to district chief inspector Seuffer, 29 August 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4824, p. 26.

362 Letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the gendarmeries in Schröck and Roßdorf, 3 September 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4824, p. 28.

363 Being "lucky" is meant in relative terms.

364 Cf. Friedländer, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*, pt. 1, p. 158.

365 Adolf Hitler, on 15 September 1935, quoted in: Friedländer, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*, pt. 1, p. 159.

366 The First Regulation of the Reich Citizenship Law distinguished between "full Jews", "Jews by law", and "half-breeds"; cf. the First Regulation of the Reich Citizenship Law, by the Führer/Deputy Führer et al., 14 November 1935, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 139, no. II 46. All persons persecuted as "Jews" in Rauischholzhausen, were categorized as "full Jews."

367 Municipal Archive [*Gemeindearchiv*] of Rauischholzhausen, Residential Registry of Rauischholzhausen, 1933–1943.

368 There were no so-called "mixed marriages" in Rauischholzhausen; within the entire district, only five such marriages are recorded. Cf. Händler-Lachmann/Schütt, "unbekannt verzogen" oder "weggemacht", p. 15. Cf. also the Law for Protection of German Blood and German Honor, by the Führer / Deputy Führer et al., 15 September 1935, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 127, no. I 637.

369 Women were only threatened with imprisonment in case they married "Jews."

370 Cf. copy of a memorandum of the chief prosecutor in Marburg, 26 Sept. 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4824, p. 27.

371 Letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 27 Sept. 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4824, p. 30.

- 372 Memorandum of the District Administrator in Marburg, 2 Oct. 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4824, p. 28, reverse side.
- 373 First Regulation of the Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor, by the Führer / Deputy Führer et al., 14 Nov. 1935, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 139f., no. 47. A complete, age-independent ban on domestic employees of “German blood” at the home of “Jews” was not adopted until 1942: cf. the Order concerning Domestic Employees of German Blood in Jewish Homes, Reichsführer SS and Head of the German Police, 26 Aug. 1942, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 385, no. IV 416.
- 374 On the two employees in the Frenkel / Rülff and Mendel households, cf. letter of the gendarmerie in Roßdorf to District Administrator in Marburg, 15 Dec. 1935, HStAM, Best. 180, no. 3593. According to her own testimony, the Mendels’ domestic was employed until shortly before their deportation; cf. a later testimony of this former domestic referenced in a letter of the tax office in Marburg to the Hesse Ministry of Finance, 1 Sept. 1950, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902. Perhaps she was able to remain secretly in the household or was re-instated after her 45th birthday in 1936. Based on other statements, the Mendels were helped in the last years before their deportation by Bettchen Scheld; cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness A, Interview A, p. 11. On the employee in Spier household, cf. Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, GWM, p. 12. The employment of the domestic of the Spiers may possibly have ended at an earlier date, because her name is not mentioned in the correspondence between the gendarmerie in Roßdorf and the District Administrator in Marburg of 1935 on the implementation of Section 3 of the “Law to Protect German Blood.”
- 375 Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, GWM, p. 25f.
- 376 The “Torah scroll” (or *sifre torah* in Hebrew) signifies the roll of parchment wrapped around two staves on which the Five Books of Moses, the foundation of Judaism, are written by hand. The public reading from the Torah scroll is at the center of a worship service. It is kept in a shrine on the eastern wall of a synagogue (thus facing in the direction of Jerusalem for western Europeans).
- 377 Schultheis, *Die Reichskristallnacht*, p. 289, 395; the statement is based on a communication from the community in Ebsdorfergrund of 29 May 1984.
- 378 Martin Spier, Interview Martin Spier, SFI, p. 4f.
- 379 Letter from an attorney for the (official-legal) Jewish community of Rauschholzhausen to the Regional Administrator in Kassel, 17 Aug. 1937, HStAM, Best. 165, no. 3982, no. 16, p. 506; quotation marks found in the original.
- 380 Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, p. 31.
- 381 Cf. Martin und Walter Spier, Interview Martin und Walter Spier, pt. 3, p. 26.
- 382 The Baum family emigrated to the U.S. on 13 Feb. 1936; cf. the notes from a registry of the District Administrator in Marburg on the “Jews” residing in the municipality of Wittelsberg, dated 1 Nov. 1938, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4173. Following their emigration, there was only one other Jewish person remaining locally, in the neighboring village of Wittelsberg. That was Rosa Schaumberg, née Rülff born in 1878 in Wittelsberg. Her sister and her husband died before 1934; here cf. Händler-Lachmann/Schütt, “unbekannt verzogen” oder “weggemacht”, p. 228.
- 383 In Orthodox Judaism, a *minyán* is the quorum of ten male worshippers that is required to hold a prayer service.
- 384 Cf. Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, p. 31.
- 385 Cf. attorney’s letter for the Jewish community of Rauschholzhausen to the Regional Administrator in Kassel, 17 Aug. 1937, HStAM, Best. 165, no. 3982, vol. 16, p. 506.
- 386 Letter of the Regional Administrator in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 6 Mar. 1936, HStAM, Best. 330 Kirchhain, no. 2268, p. 39.
- 387 “[...] understood as ‘individual actions’ [are] all measures taken that are not based on an explicit decree of the national government or leadership of the Nazi Party. Such individual actions continue to be strictly forbidden”; letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the mayors and gendarmerie officials of the district, 3 Jan. 1936, HStAM, Best. 330 Kirchhain, no. 2268, p. 35.

- 388 Attorney's letter for the Jewish community of Rauischholzhausen to the Regional Administrator in Kassel, 17 Aug. 1937, HStAM, Best. 165, no. 3982, vol. 16, p. 506f.; quotation marks in the original.
- 389 Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, GWM, p. 10.
- 390 Non-Jewish contemporary witness O, Interview N/O, GWM, p. 24f.
- 391 Non-Jewish contemporary witness C, Interview B/C, p. 38.
- 392 Non-Jewish contemporary witness G, Interview G/H, p. 16.
- 393 Non-Jewish contemporary witness C, Interview B/C, p. 57.
- 394 *Tisha B'av* is a Jewish memorial and fast day that particularly commemorates the destruction of the First Temple in Jerusalem by the Babylonians and the destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans, among other events, such as the massacres perpetrated by the Crusaders on the population of Jerusalem in 1099 and the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492. The day is preceded by three weeks of mourning.
- 395 Walter Spier, Interview Martin und Walter Spier, pt. 3, p. 23.
- 396 Friedländer, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*, pt. 1, p. 197; on the entire issue, cf. p. 196ff. The general radicalization was also manifested in personnel changes: Himmler became the head of Police, and Göring the head of new Office of the Four-Year Plan.
- 397 Cf. Friedländer, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*, pt. 1, p. 197.
- 398 Cf. Kropat, *Die hessischen Juden*, p. 421. Regarding the district of Marburg, Krawielitzki remarked near the end of 1937: "In the markets of this district, Jewish dealers are no longer represented"; see handwritten note of the District Administrator in Marburg, 9 Dec. 1937, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4175.
- 399 Analysis of public opinion or sentiment [*Stimmungsbericht*] for the month of February 1937 by the Marburg Nazi district leadership, sent to the Kassel Nazi Regional Administration [*Gauleitung*] for Kurhessen; chapter 40: Judentum, HStAM, Best. 327/1, no. 5657. In Marburg there were also horse markets on a regular basis; cf. letter of the mayor (as local police office) in Marburg to the Regional Administrator in Kassel, 19 Sept. 1935, HStAM, Best. 165, no. 3954, p. 51; it is not known when the Jewish merchants were excluded from Marburg's cattle markets.
- 400 Cf. Hoffmann, *Verfolgung und Alltagsleben*, p. 385. The *Reichsnährstand*, which replaced the Chamber of Agriculture [*Landwirtschaftskammer*], co-opted in September 1933 all persons, businesses, cooperatives and marketing associations that were engaged in agriculture. The Reich territory was divided into 26 regional *Landesbauernschaften*, which in turn were divided into district and local farming communities; cf. Benz, *Geschichte des Dritten Reiches*, p. 46; and Klein (ed.), *Der Regierungsbezirk Kassel*, vol. 1, p. IIff. On the monitoring and repression of "Jews" from the cattle trade in the Marburg district, see also Händler-Lachmann/Händler, *Purim*, p. 76ff., which contains some same quotations from the same sources.
- 401 Cf. Händler-Lachmann/Händler, *Purim*, p. 77.
- 402 Letter of the Livestock Industry Association [*Viehwirtschaftsverband*] of Kurhessen, in Kassel, to Isidor Wertheim, 12 Oct. 1937, HStAM, Best. 327/1, no. 5589.
- 403 Monthly report of the District Administrator in Marburg to the Gestapo in Kassel and the Regional Administrator in Kassel, 26 Aug. 1935, in: Klein (ed.), *Der Regierungsbezirk Kassel*, vol. 2, p. 500f.
- 404 Cf. the Regulation on the Trade in Cattle, by the Reich Ministry for Nutrition and Agriculture, 25 Jan. 1937, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 181, no. II 255.
- 405 On the numbers of business concessions withdrawn, cf. Hoffmann, *Verfolgung und Alltagsleben*, p. 385.
- 406 Cf. excerpt of Abraham Spier's account books for the period between January and October 1936, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. A 1759; his profit per cattle sale fluctuated in this time between 5 and 60 RM, averaging 20 to 30 RM.
- 407 "By 1937 my father had no more business left"; Martin Spier, Interview Martin Spier, SFI, p. 6.

- 408 Copies of letters of the Livestock Industry Association of Kurhessen, in Kassel, to Abraham Spier, 22 Dec. 1937, as well as to Adolph Wertheim, 22 Dec. 1937, sent from the Nazi district personnel department head in Marburg to the local Nazi group in Wittelsberg, 20 May 1938, HStAM, Best. 327/1, no. 5589.
- 409 Cf. letter of the Livestock Industry Association of Kurhessen, in Kassel, to the Nazi district leadership in Marburg, 16 May 1938, HStAM, Best. 327/1, no. 5589.
- 410 "Abraham Spier has an itinerant trader's license to sell manufactured goods; [but he has] very low turnover"; letter of the gendarmerie in Roßdorf to the District Administrator in Marburg, 19 July 1938, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3593, p. 256.
- 411 Cf. Law on the Amending of the Trade Regulations Code for the German Reich, by the Führer / Reich Ministry of the Interior et al., 6 July 1938, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 232, no. II 500.
- 412 Handwritten memorandum beneath a letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the Regional Administrator in Kassel of 2 Sept. 1952; the author is presumably the Regional Administrator in Kassel, 4 Sept. 1952, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902.
- 413 Cf. report of an affidavit of Sara Mendel at the district court in Kirchhain, 14 Apr. 1950, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902; retroactive certificate of business closure by the mayor of Rauischholzhausen, 20 Mar. 1950, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902. See also letter of the Rauischholzhausen mayor to the Regional Administration in Kassel on the information obtained from Sara Mendel, 1 Nov. 1951, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902. Elsewhere, Sara Mendel indicates that her business was prohibited as early as 1936: report of a statement by Sara Mendel at the Police Commission of Marburg, 22 May 1954, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902.
- 414 Letter of Justus Seipel to the Regional Administrator in Kassel, 20 July 1952, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902.
- 415 Cf. transcript of a meeting of the Restitution Chamber [*Wiedergutmachungskammer*] of the State Court in Gießen quoting a statement of Sara Mendel, 16 Mar. 1951, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902.
- 416 Cf. letter of the gendarmerie in Roßdorf to the District Administrator in Marburg, 19 July 1938, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3593, p. 256; cf. also the registry of the Marburg District Administrator on Jewish business enterprises, September 1938, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4175.
- 417 Friedel Rülff, who in 1934 had taken over his father Juda's horse business and who in 1936 was only able to earn a monthly income of 130 to 200 RM, succeeded in emigrating to the U.S. in 1937. "After the Nuremberg racial laws were decreed, one could no longer speak of a [minimal] taxable income; so, I decided to emigrate." Notarial transcript of a sworn statement by Friedel Rülff in New York City, 3 Jan. 1957, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 41866. On Friedel Rülff's income, cf. the excerpt from his account books between 1 Jan. 1936 and 21 Oct. 1936; HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. A 1759; reprinted in: Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 74. On 26 Sept. 1940, the office of the Rauischholzhausen mayor replied to a request of the District Administrator in Marburg: "With respect to your letter on overleaf, I am informing you that the Jews here are no longer active in business. *Heil Hitler!*" HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 2925.
- 418 Report of the District Administrator in Marburg, reproduced in parts in an analysis of public opinion or sentiment [*Stimmungsbericht*] for the month of November 1937 by the Marburg Nazi district leadership, sent to the Nazi Regional Administration [*Gauleitung*] of Kurhessen in Kassel, chapter 40: Judentum, HStAM, Best. 327/1, no. 5657.
- 419 Letter from Abraham Spier to Friedel Rülff (who had already emigrated to the U.S. in 1937), quoted in Martin Spier, Interview Martin Spier, SFI, p. 4.
- 420 Martin Spier, Interview Martin Spier, SFI, p. 5.
- 421 Cf. Edith Baumann, Interview Baumann/Spier, pt. 1, p. 1; Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, GWM, p. 6; on the dates here, cf. Walter Spier, Interview Baumann/Spier, pt. 1, p. 1.
- 422 Cf. Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 10; on the dates here, cf. Martin Spier, Interview Martin Spier, SFI, p. 3.

- 423 Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, p. 27. There was no secondary Jewish school in Marburg. The Marburg synagogue was destroyed in the November 1938 pogroms. Alfred Spier's teacher Salomon Pffifferling (born on 8 Feb. 1882 in Marburg) was deported on 8 Dec. 1941 from Marburg to Riga, where he was then murdered; cf. the page of testimony of 28 Mar. 1993, Yad Vashem, Central Database, at: <http://www.yadvashem.org>. A photo of Salomon Pffifferling as a young cantor and teacher in Aurich in 1911 can be found in: Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 135. On the Jewish primary school in Marburg, see Rehme/Haase, mit Rumpf und Stumpf ausgerottet, p. 20ff, p. 79 (document 16), p. 84 (document 22).
- 424 Cf. Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, SFI, p. 1; on the Jewish boarding school in Bad Nauheim, see Kropat, Die hessischen Juden, p. 429f.; and Kingreen, Israelitische Kinderheilstätte, p. 7ff., p. 17–23.
- 425 Cf. Martin Spier, Interview Martin und Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 27f.; Martin Spier, Interview Martin Spier, SFI, p. 4f.
- 426 The Samson Raphael Hirsch School of Frankfurt was founded in 1853 and located at Am Tiergarten 8. For details, see Kommission zur Erforschung der Geschichte der Frankfurter Juden (ed.), Die Samson-Raphael-Hirsch-Schule.
- 427 Cf. Martin Spier, Interview Martin und Walter Spier, pt. 1, p. 21f. The private school dormitory Beth Neorim, located at Hölderlinstr. 10, was founded in 1935 by the banker Josef Mayer (who was rendered professionless by the Nazis). It was established for Orthodox children from outside of Frankfurt who attended the Samson Raphael Hirsch School. The children's home of the Israelitische Waisenanstalt was located at Röderbergweg 87; cf. Kingreen, "Ihr in Frankfurt habt's gut!", p. 63f.
- 428 Walter Spier, Interview Martin und Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 27f.
- 429 Cf. Stiftung Jüdisches Museum Berlin / Stiftung Haus der Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (ed.), Heimat und Exil, p. 178.
- 430 The Dominican Republic was the only country to make some concessions at the Évian Conference, an action motivated by the racist objective of "whitening" its population by encouraging the settlement of European refugees. On the conference itself, which took place from 6 to 14 July 1938, see Diner, Vom "Anschluss" zur "Kristallnacht", p. 23f.
- 431 The transcript of the History Workshop [*Geschichtswerkstatt*] of Marburg reads: "And his father was sitting right next to him" [my emphasis]. In the context of the statement, however, it is very likely that there was a transcribing error or that Friedel Rülff made a mistake.
- 432 Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 23. Abraham Spier, too, was warned by a person nicknamed "Priest" from the neighboring town of Heskem and who was a friend of the Spier family; cf. Martin Spier, Interview Martin und Walter Spier, pt. 1, p. 13.
- 433 Cf. Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 2, 44.
- 434 Letter from Friedel Rülff to the Regional Administrator in Kassel, 6 July 1955, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 41866.
- 435 Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 9.
- 436 Juda Rülff, quoted by non-Jewish contemporary witness L, Interview L/M, GWM, p. 6. On 17 June 1938 Juda Rülff reported to the Foreign Exchange Office in Kassel: "I, the undersigned, Juda Rülff, intend to emigrate to America on 14 July 1938. Along with me, my daughter Rosa Rülff, age 36, will be emigrating. I myself am a widower and have not been in business for many years now. My son, who took over the horse business I formerly ran, emigrated in 1937. My only assets for a long time have been real estate, which I gave away little by little and now have used up in contributing to the costs of my son's emigration, my own maintenance, and to pay off my banking obligations"; introductory remarks to his own "statement of assets", provided to the Foreign Exchange Office in Kassel, 17 June 1938, HHStAW, Abt. 519/3, no. 37236.
- 437 The family was presumably able to take a large part of their household goods with them; cf. the "List of Moving Effects" written by Juda Rülff for himself and Rosa; 17 June 1938, HHStAW, Abt. 519/3, no. 37236. Juda sold off his real estate at extremely low prices between June 1937 and

- March 1938 to four villagers; one month before Juda's departure, the buyers still owed him a great deal; cf. various correspondence, copies of sales contracts and a statement of assets of 17 June 1938, HHStAW, Abt. 519/3, no. 37236.
- 438 Walter Spier, Interview Walter Spier, SFI, p. 15; cf. also Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 23f.
- 439 Cf. letter of attorney Dr. Bruno Schönfeld for the Jewish community of Rauschholzhausen, sent to the Reich Deputation of the Jews in Germany [*Reichsvertretung der Juden in Deutschland*], 30 Apr. 1939, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 635.
- 440 Section 2 of the "Law on the Revocation of Naturalization and Denial of German Citizenship", by the Führer / Reich Ministry of the Interior et al., 14 July 33, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 36, no. I 172. Cf. also the "Law on the Confiscation of Assets Unfavorable to the People and the State", by the Reich Chancellor / Reich Ministry of the Interior, 14 July 1933, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 38, no. I 177. If at first those affected were prominent dissidents and opponents of the regime, many of them Jews, wealthy "Jews" were specifically targeted for expatriation in 1935; cf. Meinel/Zwilling, *Legalisierter Raub*, p. 88. A secret March 1937 decree of Heydrich made the practice of expatriation of means of "continuous confiscation" of wealthy "Jewish" emigrants; Meinel/Zwilling, *Legalisierter Raub*, p. 90f.
- 441 On the general tax discrimination against "Jews", see Meinel/Zwilling, *Legalisierter Raub*, p. 37ff., 124ff.
- 442 Cf. Hilberg, *Die Vernichtung*, vol. 1, p. 140.
- 443 The Reich's tax revenue from the Reich Flight Tax rose steadily from 1935 on, reaching more than 342 million RM for the fiscal year 1938-39, a sum that surpassed even the revenue from the tax on assets [*Vermögenssteuer*] in the Reich; cf. Meinel/Zwilling, *Legalisierter Raub*, p. 41f.
- 444 Cf. Meinel/Zwilling, *Legalisierter Raub*, p. 42. The district of Marburg was subordinate to the Foreign Exchange Office for the district of Kassel in the state tax office [*Landesfinanzamt*] of Kassel. It was headed between 1935 and 1945 by Hermann Schultze (born 1 June 1894; date of death unknown); cf. Meinel/Zwilling, *Legalisierter Raub*, p. 437.
- 445 Cf. Meinel/Zwilling, *Legalisierter Raub*, p. 42.
- 446 Cf. Meinel/Zwilling, *Legalisierter Raub*, p. 42.
- 447 Cf. Meinel/Zwilling, *Legalisierter Raub*, p. 43f.
- 448 On the emigration (or escape) of Julius Rülff, see also the depiction in: Händler-Lachmann/Händler, *Purim*, p. 196.
- 449 Letter of Mayor Otto to the District Administrator in Marburg, 29 Feb. 1936, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3593, p. 137.
- 450 Letter of the gendarmerie in Roßdorf to the District Administrator in Marburg, 29 Feb. 1936, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3593, p. 138.
- 451 Cf. the written "Supplement to Compensation Application" of Julius Rülff, 20 July 1955, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 2035/19, vol. 1. In another place, Julius Rülff suggests that he emigrated via Freiburg im Breisgau; cf. a written affidavit of Julius Rülff, 14 Dec. 1961, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 2035/19, vol. 1.
- 452 Cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness O, Interview N/O, GWM, p. 36f.; letter of Franz Kaiser to the Regional Administrator in Kassel in the compensation proceeding of Julius Rülff, 12 Dec. 1963, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 2035/19, vol. 2.
- 453 Letter of Julius Rülff to Franz Kaiser, from Buenos Aires, 5 Jan. 1983; GWM Archiv, Ordner Juden-Landkreis-Orte; spelling mistakes have been corrected.
- 454 According to Franz Kaiser, Berta and Louis Rülff were not granted entry permits due to health reasons; cf. letter of Franz Kaiser to the Regional Administrator in Kassel in the compensation proceeding of Julius Rülff; 12 Dec. 1963, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 2035/19, vol. 2. In Argentina, family reunification was only legally possible after two years of residency. The efforts of Berta and Louis Rülff to emigrate, which can be verified for the period at the end of 1938, may also have failed because in the summer of 1938, by a secret, encrypted anti-Jewish order, the Argentine Foreign

- Minister had instructed all Argentine diplomats to refuse visas to persons wanting to immigrate if they were considered undesirable persons in their country of origin or were forced into exile. Decisions of whether to grant entry permits were henceforth centralized in the immigration office in Buenos Aires; cf. Goñi, *Odessa*, p. 48ff.; and correspondence between the District Administrator in Marburg, the Marburg Nazi district leadership, and the Nazi local group of Wittelsberg on the emigration proceeding of Berta and Louis Rülff, December 1938 to January 1939, HStAM, Best. 327/1, no. 5589.
- 455 Letter of the gendarmerie in Roßdorf to the District Administrator in Marburg, 27 Aug. 1936, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3593, p. 106.
- 456 Letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the gendarmerie in Roßdorf, 2 Sept. 1936, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3593, p. 106, reverse side.
- 457 Letter of the gendarmerie in Roßdorf to the District Administrator in Marburg, 4 Sept. 1936, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3593, p. 106, reserve side.
- 458 Letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the gendarmerie in Roßdorf, 29 Sept. 1936, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3593, p. 108.
- 459 Letter of the gendarmerie in Roßdorf to the District Administrator in Marburg, 1 Oct. 1936, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3593, p. 108, reserve side.
- 460 Written affidavit of Herbert Stern, 23 Jan. 1957, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 57048; cf. correspondence between the Gestapo in Kassel, the District Administrator in Marburg and the mayor of Rauschholzhausen, July–August 1937, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3593, p. 184ff.
- 461 Cf. the written affidavit of Herbert Stern, 23 Jan. 1957, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 57048. His sister Franziska also survived the Holocaust. According to her sister-in-law, she emigrated via France to South Africa, where she died some time later due to illness. The time and circumstances of her emigration are not known; cf. email of Renee Stern, daughter-in-law of Franziska Stern's sister-in-law Annie Stern. The information in Händler-Lachmann/Schütt, "unbekannt verzogen" oder "weggemacht", p. 181, that Franziska had emigrated via the Netherlands to the United States in 1937 is probably not correct. Franziska was apparently still living in Frankfurt a. M. on 10 June 1938. According to a late court judgment, she was that day at a Frankfurt notary, letting her portion of an inherited house (registered in the name of her father) be transferred to her mother Hedwig; cf. judgments of the local court of Kirchhain against Hedwig Stern, 10 Dec. 1941, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 522.
- 462 Cf. letter of the gendarmerie in Roßdorf to the District Administrator in Marburg, 20 Dec. 1936, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3593, p. 38, reverse side; and the personal information form on Irene Cohen, née Frenkel, undated, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3593, p. 40.
- 463 Cf. letter of the gendarmerie in Roßdorf to the District Administrator in Marburg, 2 June 1936, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4824, p. 132.
- 464 Cf. Law on the Revocation of Naturalization and Denial of German Citizenship, by the Führer / Reich Ministry of the Interior, et al., 14 July 1933, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 36, no. I 172.
- 465 Cf. reference to a related order by the Gestapo in Kassel of 18 June 1934, in a letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 3 July 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4823, p. 198f.
- 466 Instructions of the Gestapo in Berlin to all Gestapo offices, 28 Jan. 1935, quoted in: Drobisch/Wieland, *System der NS-Konzentrationslager*, p. 200. On this issue, cf. also Gruchmann, *Justiz im Dritten Reich*, p. 608. The imprisonment of all "criminal elements" among the returning emigrants had already been ordered in January 1934; Decree Concerning German Emigrants Returning from Abroad, Prussian State Governor / Gestapo, 15 Jan. 1934, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 67f., no. I 326.
- 467 Letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 3 July 1935, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4823, p. 198f.
- 468 Letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 6 Aug. 1935, for-

- warded (according to a note) to the gendarmerie officials of the district, et al. on 14 Apr. 1936 (an dem Tag erfolgte die Weiterleitung), HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4823, p. 235.
- 469** Letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg 8 Apr. 1936, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3593, p. 23.
- 470** Letter of the gendarmerie in Roßdorf to the District Administrator in Marburg, 2 June 1936, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4824, p. 132.
- 471** Memorandum of the District Administrator in Marburg, 3 June 1936, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4824, p. 132.
- 472** Letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the administrators of the district, et al.; 11 June 1936, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4824, p. 134.
- 473** Transcript of the appearance of Mayor Otto at the District Administrator in Marburg, 4 Nov. 1936, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3593, p. 34.
- 474** Letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the gendarmerie in Roßdorf, 25 Nov. 1936, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3593, p. 35. Cf. the letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the tax office in Marburg, 11 Nov. 1936, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3593, p. 34, reverse side; letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 12 Dec. 1936, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3593, p. 37.
- 475** Letter of the gendarmerie in Roßdorf to the District Administrator in Marburg, 15 Dec. 1936; HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3593, p. 39. The letter was in reply to an inquiry by the District Administrator in Marburg, 9 Dec. 1936; HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3593, p. 36.
- 476** "I was very attached to my former fatherland and would never have thought of emigrating if I had not been forced to do so in order to save the lives of my family and myself [...]"; letter of David Frenkel to the Regional Administrator in Kassel, 14 June 1956; HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 57704. Cf. transcript of an affidavit provided by David Frenkel at the Regional Administrator in Kassel, 20 June 1955, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 57704.
- 477** Letter of David Frenkel to the Regional Administrator in Kassel, 14 June 1956, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 57704.
- 478** Cf. a written affidavit of David Frenkel, 17 July 1953, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 57704.
- 479** Cf. Letter of Simon Frenkel to the Foreign Exchange Office in Kassel, 10 Aug. 1935; see also the letter of the local savings bank [Kreissparkasse] in Marburg to the Foreign Exchange Office in Kassel, 15 Aug. 1935, HHStAW, Abt. 519/3, no. 36149.
- 480** Letter of Simon Frenkel to the Foreign Exchange Office in Kassel, 13 Aug. 1935, HHStAW, Abt. 519/3, no. 36149.
- 481** Letter of Simon Frenkel to the Foreign Exchange Office in Kassel, 29 Aug. 1935, HHStAW, Abt. 519/3, no. 36149.
- 482** Letter of the Foreign Exchange Office in Kassel to Simon Frenkel, 6 Nov. 1936, HHStAW, Abt. 519/3, no. 36149.
- 483** Letter of the Foreign Exchange Office in Kassel to Simon Frenkel, 12 May 1937, HHStAW, Abt. 519/3, no. 36149.
- 484** Freezing order of the Foreign Exchange Office in Kassel on the accounts of Simon Frenkel, 8 Aug. 1938, HHStAW, Abt. 519/3, no. 36149; cf. letter from Simon Frenkel to the Foreign Exchange Office in Kassel, 16 Dec. 1938, HHStAW, Abt. 519/3, no. 36149.
- 485** Letter of the Foreign Exchange Office in Kassel to Peter Deuker, 8 Aug. 1938, HHStAW, Abt. 519/3, no. 36149. As early as 1934, the former general store of the Frenkel family was transferred to Peter Deuker; cf. Kaiser, Leben und Treiben der Juden, p. 2. Based on formulations in a certification by the Frankfurt emigrant counseling office of September 1935, an alternative conclusion might be drawn that the business was not sold until 1935: "Mr. Frenkel *has until now* operated a store in R.-Holzhausen. On account of conditions, the income from the business has declined such that he *can* no longer make a living from it and *must* sell it [emphasis added]"; certification of an emigrant counseling office to the Foreign Exchange Office in Kassel, 14 Sept. 1935, HHStAW, Abt. 519/3, no. 36149; cf. also the "Questionnaire for Emigrants" filled out by Simon Frenkel, re-

- ceived on 19 Sept. 1935 at the Foreign Exchange Office in Kassel; HHStAW, Abt. 519/3, no. 36149. It is not known to what extent the business was continued by the purchaser Peter Deuker.
- 486 The purchase price was additionally lowered to 8,500 RM; cf. letters from Peter Deuker to the Foreign Exchange Office in Kassel, 12 Aug. 1938 und 2 Nov. 1938; HStAW 519/3, 36149. The fact that the contract was authorized in June 1939 supports the presumption that the purchase price had still not been paid at this point; the Frenkels left Germany in January 1939 and likely never saw any of the money; cf. the authorizing letter of the Regional Administrator in Kassel to an attorney in Kirchhain, 15 June 1939, HHStAW, Abt. 519/3, no. 36149.
- 487 In the entire area of the Marburg district, there were still 388 Jewish persons living in 25 locations on 1 Nov. 1938, according to the population registries of the District Administration. Their numbers had declined since 1933 by 54 %; cf. Händler-Lachmann/Schütt, "unbekannt verzogen" oder "weggemacht", p. 12; cf. also the overview of the District Administrator in Marburg on the decline of the Jewish population in the district between 1 Jan. 1936 and 1 July 1938, undated; HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4822.
- 488 Walter Spier, Interview Walter Spier, SFI, p. 15.
- 489 Cf. Kropat, Kristallnacht in Hessen, p. 21f.
- 490 Cf. Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 165ff.; on the pogroms of the following day, 9 Nov. 1938, in the district of Marburg, see Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 175ff.
- 491 Cf. files on the preliminary judicial proceedings inquiring into looting in Kirchhain and on preventive detention orders against those accused of participating: HStAM, Best. 330 Kirchhain, no. 3492. The Jewish residents of Kirchhain were so seriously mistreated that the Nazi regional court in Kassel opened proceedings against thirteen Nazi Party members in the spring of 1939 "on account of particularly blatant mistreatment." The suspects were nonetheless acquitted; cf. Wildt, Volksgemeinschaft als Selbstermächtigung, p. 321f.
- 492 Cf. Kropat, Kristallnacht in Hessen, p. 27; judgment of the regional court in Marburg of 16 Sept. 1952; in: Kropat, Kristallnacht in Hessen, p. 39ff., document 5. On the pogrom night in Marburg, see also: Rehme/Haase, mit Rumpf und Stumpf ausrotten, p. 34ff., p. 105ff. (document 46), p. 108ff. (document 47).
- 493 Cf. Kropat, Kristallnacht in Hessen, p. 30.
- 494 Goebbels did not enter anything that day in his diary about "Kristallnacht", instead writing about musicology on 7 Nov. 1938; cf. Steinweis, Kristallnacht, p. 23f.
- 495 Telegram from the Regional Administrator in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg (confidential), 9 Nov. 1938, 1:25 pm, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4827, p. 1. On 8 November, the Marburg criminal police had already inquired by telephone with the District Administrative office to what extent (if at all) riots had taken place in the district on account of the assassination; cf. memorandum of the District Administrator in Marburg, 8 Nov. 1938, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4827, p. 2.
- 496 Cf. Friedländer, Das Dritte Reich und die Juden, pt. 1, p. 293.
- 497 Cf. Friedländer, Das Dritte Reich und die Juden, pt. 1, p. 293.
- 498 Joseph Goebbels, 9 Nov. 1938, quoted in: Friedländer, Das Dritte Reich und die Juden, pt. 1, p. 293.
- 499 Kropat, Kristallnacht in Hessen, p. 51.
- 500 Research to date has assumed that the Gestapo had already made contingency plans for future pogroms; cf. Kropat, Kristallnacht in Hessen, p. 53f. Favoring such a premise is the circumstance that barracks were built in the concentration camp of Buchenwald as early as September 1938 in accordance with the idea of having a provisional "special zone" that would allow speedy, significant increases in the absorption capacity of the camp ; cf. Stein, Das Sonderlager, p. 23. On the implementation of mass arrests in the district of Marburg, see Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 179ff.
- 501 Secret telex of the Gestapo head Heinrich Müller to all Gestapo offices, 9 Nov. 1938, 11:55 pm; in: Kropat, Kristallnacht in Hessen, p. 74f., document 11 A.

- 502 Cf. Express telex [*Blitzfernschreiben*] from Heydrich to all Gestapo offices and all SD higher and lower sections, 10 Nov. 1938, 1.20 am, in: Kropat, *Kristallnacht in Hessen*, p. 75f., document 11 B. In the course of that day, Heydrich, in concert with the Reich Ministry of Justice, arranged that there would be no investigations against the perpetrators of the pogroms; cf. Kropat, *Kristallnacht in Hessen*, p. 55; Express telex to all Gestapo offices and all SD higher and lower sections, 10 Nov. 1938, in: Kropat, *Kristallnacht in Hessen*, p. 78, document 14.
- 503 Radio message of the Gestapo in Kassel to all District Administrators, recorded by telephone in the Marburg District Administrative office on 10 Nov. 1938 at 5.03 am, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4827, p. 5. It was transmitted in an abridged version at 9.05 am to all mayors of district villages and towns with Jewish residents; cf. memorandum of the District Administrator in Marburg, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4827, p. 6.
- 504 Cf. Stein, *Das Sonderlager*, p. 26.
- 505 Some others assume a restriction of ages between 16 and 60, cf. Kropat, *Kristallnacht in Hessen*, p. 57, without citation. On the limitation between 18 and 60 years of age, cf. Stein, p. 26; the source there is also Kropat, *Kristallnacht in Hessen*, p. 171, document 60 (message radioed from the Gestapo head office in Frankfurt a.M. to the District Administrative offices, 10 Nov. 1938).
- 506 Secret order of Kurt Daluege as head of the order police to the Regional Administrator in Kassel by means of radio message, 10 Nov. 1938 at 6.30 am. Shortly thereafter, it was forwarded to the District Administrator in Marburg, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4827, p. 9.
- 507 According to statements by the survivor Walter Spier, the riots occurred in the evening and only after his brother Julius had already been arrested. Julius Spier was arrested according to reliable sources on 10 Nov. 1938.
- 508 Walter Spier avers that his brother was removed to a transit camp in Marburg; cf. Walter Spier, *Interview Martin und Walter Spier*, pt. 2, p. 10ff. However, the surviving files on perpetrators reveal fairly clearly that those arrested were brought to Kirchhain; cf. (inter alia) the list of arrested Jews of the local police authority of Kirchhain, 10 Nov. 1938, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4827, p. 63; and the transcript of the appearance of Rosa Frenkel at the District Administrator in Marburg, 18 Nov. 1938, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4827, p. 23.
- 509 Cf. radioed message of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 10 Nov. 1938, 9 pm, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4827, p. 8.
- 510 There were two transports out of Kassel to Buchenwald, one on 11 Nov. 1938 with 258 prisoners and an additional one on 12 November with 435 prisoners; cf. Stein, *Das Sonderlager*, p. 28f. On the basis of the early arrests on 10 November, it should be assumed that the inmates of the Marburg transport to Kassel on 11 November were assigned to the earlier transport that day to Buchenwald.
- 511 The attempt to describe their detention of 10.-14 Nov. 1938, designated as “murder week”, in addition to the unspeakable conditions and torture conditions in the so-called “special camp” of Buchenwald, is undertaken in Stein, *Das Sonderlager*, p. 19–54.
- 512 The term *Kristallnacht* first emerged in Berlin after 10 Nov. 1938, as a way to describe all the streets cluttered with crystal glass and fragments of shop windows from demolished apartments and shops of Jewish owners, particularly in the streets of the western part of Berlin. Yet the term glosses over the fact that, during the November Pogroms, people were persecuted, abused, murdered and/or imprisoned. This term is therefore not used in the present work or I placed it in scare quotes when used by my interviewees.
- 513 Jenny Spier was born in Hatzbach in 1890, but spent her childhood in Kirchhain.
- 514 Julius Spier was picked up and arrested directly while he was working in the fields. He could not even go home to tell his family what had happened or to take something with him.
- 515 Cf. the list of arrested Jews by the local police authority in Kirchhain, 10 Nov. 1938, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4827, p. 63. In addition, the arrest order of the Gestapo was not issued until 10 Nov. 1938.

- 516 Walter Spier, Interview Walter Spier, SFI, p. 6f.; cf. also Martin and Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 10ff.
- 517 Martin Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 11. Martin Spier, in contrast to his brother Walter, was not present in Rauschholzhausen, but he was in Frankfurt a.M., before and during the November Pogroms. His statements are therefore based only on information he had received elsewhere.
- 518 Cf. Studienkreis Deutscher Widerstand 1933–1945 (ed.), Heimatgeschichtlicher Wegweiser, vol. 1, pt. 2, p. 148; cf. also Paul Arnsberg, Rausch Holzhausen, provisional text for book publication, p. 4, JMF Archiv, Sammlung Paul Arnsberg, Hessen, no. 413. Information about attacks on individuals has not survived.
- 519 Cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness C, Interview B/C, p. 40; non-Jewish contemporary witness A, Interview A, p. 9f.; non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 11ff. “The synagogue was damaged inside and out in 1938 by Nazi activities”; letter from the Rauschholzhausen mayor of 16 May 1946 to the District Administrator in Marburg, based on an inquiry by the Regional Administrator in Kassel of 30 April 1946, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4837, p. 150f.; cf. also Der Kreisauerschuss des Landkreises Marburg-Biedenkopf (ed.), Die ehemaligen Synagogen, p. 154. Rauschholzhausen is missing from a listing of the District Administrator in Marburg for the American military government of April 1947 about the former synagogues in the district and the extent of their devastation; cf. overview of the District Administrator in Marburg to the Regional Administrator in Kassel, 10 April 1947, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4826.
- 520 Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, p. 13.
- 521 Non-Jewish contemporary witness A, Interview A, p. 10.
- 522 Non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 11.
- 523 Walter Spier, Interview Walter Spier, SFI, p. 6f.; cf. also Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 11.
- 524 Martin Spier, Interview Martin Spier, SFI, p. 10. According to Martin Spier’s brothers, Alfred and Walter, their parent’s house was to a large extent spared damage; cf. Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, GWM, p. 45; and Walter Spier, Interview Walter Spier, SFI, p. 7. Nonetheless, the two statements must not be read as contradictory: Martin’s assessment was made supposedly as a pure description of conditions. By contrast, Alfred’s and Walter’s assessments were related to the more serious destruction of residences.
- 525 Non-Jewish contemporary witness M, Interview L/M, GWM, p. 8f.
- 526 As early as the evening of 10 November 1938, Goebbels had ordered that the actions cease; cf. the appeal of Goebbels to the populace, a broadcast of the German Press Agency in Berlin, 10 Nov. 1938, in: Kropat, Kristallnacht in Hessen, p. 135f., document 41. In actuality, the wave of violence continued that evening and not only in Rauschholzhausen. Instead, the riots did not reach their highpoint in many places until 10.11; cf. Kropat, Kristallnacht in Hessen, p. 135.
- 527 Non-Jewish contemporary witness L, Interview L/M, GWM, p. 8f.
- 528 Walter Spier, Interview Walter Spier, SFI, p. 7f.; cf. also: Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 10ff. On 17 Nov. 1938, the order was giving to end the arrest action; cf. letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 17 Nov. 1938, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4827, p. 19.
- 529 Cf. Stein, Das Sonderlager, p. 45; Kropat, Kristallnacht in Hessen, p. 169.
- 530 On the release of the front-line soldiers, see order of 28 Nov. 1938. On the release of those who were over 50 or under 18 years of age, see the orders of 12 Dec. 1938 and 21 Jan. 1939, cf. Stein, Das Sonderlager, p. 45.
- 531 Transcript concerning the visit of Rosa Frenkel at the District Administration in Marburg, 18 Nov. 1938, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4827, p. 23.
- 532 Letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 22 Nov. 1938, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4827, p. 34. see also: letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the gendarmerie in Roßdorf, 25 Nov. 1938, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4827, p. 33.

- 533 Transcript on the visit of Sara Mendel at the District Administration in Marburg, 19 Dec. 1938, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4827, p. 73. Sara Mendel had already applied for the release at the end of November 1938, and the District Administrator had already forwarded a request to the Gestapo for the release on 7 December of front-line soldiers, naming Hermann Mendel by name; cf. letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the Gestapo in Kassel, 7 Dec. 1938, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4827, p. 65.
- 534 After about six weeks, Julius Spier was released; cf. Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, p. 23. Simon Frenkel was no longer in custody on 16 Dec. 1938; cf. letter of Simon Frenkel to the Foreign Exchange Office of Kassel, 16 Dec. 1938, HHStAW, Abt. 519/3, no. 36149.
- 535 Evidently, Simon Frenkel was also a front-line soldier in World War I; cf. preliminary note of Simon Frenkel to his "list of household effects" to the Foreign Exchange Office in Kassel, 16 Dec. 1938, HHStAW, Abt. 519/3, no. 36149; cf. also the letter of Johannes Pfeiff to Paul Arnsberg, 3 Mar. 1966, p. 2, JMF Archiv, Sammlung Paul Arnsberg, Hessen, no. 413. Within the framework of petitions for release from Buchenwald, his experience as a front-line soldier goes strangely unmentioned; cf. transcript on the visit of Rosa Frenkel at the District Administration in Marburg, 18 Nov. 1938, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4827, p. 23. Cf. also petition for release of those front-line soldiers affected; letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the Gestapo of Kassel, 7 Dec. 1938, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4827, p. 65.
- 536 "And after a couple of weeks, my brother came back from Buchenwald. And he got a notice that he has to leave Germany within a certain time"; Walter Spier, Interview Walter Spier, SFI, p. 7f.
- 537 Letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 26 Jan. 1939, forwarded confidentially to the mayor of Kirchhain, 4 Feb. 1939: "[F]or your information, it is requested that you, for your part, are most meticulous in ensuring that the Jews released from custody carry out their emigration as quickly as possible. Until March 15, 1939 (precisely) you are to report on the state of emigration within your area of service. The gendarmerie officers should report through their superiors"; HStAM, Best. 330 Kirchhain, no. 2268, p. 82. Apparently, the same letter was also sent to the gendarmerie in Roßdorf.
- 538 This kind of order was given for releasing—on the grounds of emigration—Jews detained in Frankfurt a.M.; cf. Stein, *Das Sonderlager*, p. 48.
- 539 Letter of Simon Frenkel to the Foreign Exchange Office in Kassel, accompanied by a detailed list of assets and a "list of household effects" [*Umzugsgut*], 16 Dec. 1938, HHStAW, Abt. 519/3, no. 36149.
- 540 "15/1/39, State Police Memo [*Nachricht*] 24/1/39", a handwritten note about Mr. and Mrs. Frenkel on a list of the "Jews" still residing in the district as of 1 Nov. 1939 compiled by the District Administration in Marburg, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4173; cf. also the letter of the gendarmerie in Roßdorf to the District Administrator in Marburg, 18 Jan. 1939, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4176, p. 100.
- 541 Cf. Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, p. 23. Cf. also the "List of the Contents of the Hand Baggage of Alfred Spier, member of a *Kindertransport* to England on 6 June 1939", author unknown, received at the Foreign Exchange Office in Kassel on 1 June 1939; HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 520. Under the impression of the November pogroms, Great Britain agreed that it would accept 10,000 persecuted "Jewish" children, in response to pressure from the British Council of German Jewry. The Jewish community had to commit itself to providing secured sums deposits of £ 50 per child; it then undertook the task of distributing the children to foster families. Until the start of World War II—the official end of these *Kindertransporte* ["transports of children"]—9,347 children were successfully rescued; cf. here Krohn, "Holt sie raus, bevor es zu spät ist!", p. 106ff.
- 542 On the dating of Julius Spier's emigration, cf. letter of Mayor Otto to the District Administrator in Marburg, 4 Feb. 1939, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4176, p. 105. His brother Alfred joined him on 6 June 1939; cf. Municipal Archive [*Gemeindearchiv*] of Rauischholzhausen, residential registry of Rauischholzhausen 1933–1943.

- 543 Martin Spier, Interview Baumann/Spier, pt. 1, p. 1.
- 544 Cf. Gutmann/Jäckel (ed.), *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust*, vol. I, p. 579.
- 545 On the stay of Alfred and Julius in Scotland, their internment on the Isle of Man and in Australia, see the detailed report of Alfred Spier in: Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 204f.
- 546 Alfred Spier initially remained in England, working in the technical military unit of the "Royal Electrical Mechanical Engineers." In early 1945 he was stationed in Belgium. Julius was assigned to the "War Middle East Command" and was sent to Egypt; in 1945 he was stationed for a time in Austria; cf. Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, SFI, p. 6.
- 547 Martin Spier, Interview Martin Spier, SFI, p. 9.
- 548 Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, p. 32.
- 549 Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, p. 32.
- 550 Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, SFI, p. 5.
- 551 Cf. Martin Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 7. The Samson Raphael Hirsch School in Frankfurt, located at Am Tiergarten 8, was officially closed on 30 Mar. 1939. The Philanthropin School, founded in 1804, had been located at Hebelstr. 15–19 since 1908. In 2006, the I. E. Lichtigfeld School of the Frankfurt Jewish Community was dedicated in the same building; cf. I. E. Lichtigfeld-Schule im Philanthropin, *Die Geschichte*, at: <http://www.lichtigfeld-schule.de>.
- 552 Exceptions were granted for the payment of taxes, penalties, attorneys' fees, etc.; cf. security order of the Foreign Exchange Office of Kassel with respect to Abraham Spier, 25 Sept. 1939; HH-StAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 520. For the same reason, his account at the Dresdener Bank was already frozen in July 1939 because any access had been made dependent on the authorization of the Foreign Exchange Office in Kassel; cf. copy of a notice of authorization regarding the sale of a field, from the Department of National Culture of the Chief of the Tax Office [*Oberfinanzpräsident*] in Kassel to the Foreign Exchange Office in Kassel, 8 July 1939; HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 520.
- 553 Within the entire district of Marburg, there were still 253 Jewish persons living in 23 towns on 1 Oct. 1939, according to the population registries of the District Administration in Marburg; cf. Händler-Lachmann/Schütt, "unbekannt verzoogen" oder "weggemacht", p. 12.
- 554 Cf. Third Proclamation on Compulsory Identity Cards, Reich Ministry of the Interior, 23 July 1938, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 233, no. II 506.
- 555 Cf. applications for name changes as well as various correspondence between the persons concerned and the registry office in Kirchhain, December 1938 until April 1939, HStAM, Best. 330 Kirchhain, no. 2319. Cf. also the Second Regulation on the Implementation of the Law on Changing First and Last Names, Reich Ministries of the Interior and of Justice, 17 Aug. 1938, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 237, no. II 524.
- 556 "The same goes for the duplicates [...] and all synagogue books [...] of disbanded Jewish religious organizations, of former synagogue congregations [...]. Hereafter, the Jews should only be allowed access to the synagogue registries that they are currently using, provided that there are no entries in them from the time before 1 Jan. 1876"; letter of the Regional Administrator in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 15 Dec. 1938, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3872, p. 226.
- 557 Letter of the gendarmerie in Roßdorf to the District Administrator in Marburg, 10 Feb. 1939, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3872, p. 262.
- 558 Cf. "First Regulation on Excluding Jews from German Economic Life", the Commissioner for the Four-Year Plan, 12 Nov. 1938, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 254, no. III 8. "Through this regulation [...] the Jews are finally to be eliminated from business activities in retail, the crafts, and commerce from 1 January 1939 onward. As far as Jewish retail stores and workshops have been closed as a result of the events of 8, 9, and 10 November, they should not in principle be re-opened as Jewish businesses. [...] *Jewish wholesale and manufacturing businesses are [...] for the interim not affected*" [emphasis added]; letter from the Reich Economics Ministry to the Regional Administrator in Kassel, 18 Nov. 1938, forwarded to the District Administrator in Marburg, 23 Nov. 1938, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 2939, p. 55f.

- 559 On the mandatory disclosure of assets, cf. “Regulation on the Registration of Jewish Assets”, the Commissioner for the Four-Year Plan / Ministry of the Interior, 26 Apr. 1938, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 223, no. II 457. A letter from the Reich Economics Ministry on implementing the regulation and an order issued on the basis of it clarifies that the regulation and order “have the purpose of communicating to the national leadership a [...] detailed overview of the scope and the influence of the Jewish capital on the entire German economy and the ability, if necessary, to direct the use of this Jewish capital in the economy so that it does not run counter to the interests of the German people”; letter from the Reich Economics Ministry to the Regional Administrator in Kassel, 5 July 1938, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 2939, p. 46ff. On the penalty tax, cf. “Regulation on Atonement Payment [*Sühneleistung*] by Jews of German Citizenship”, the Commissioner for the Four Year Plan, 12 Nov. 1938, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 255, no. III 13.
- 560 Cf. Meinel/Zwilling, *Legalisierter Raub*, p. 46.
- 561 Cf. report on conversation accompanying the transcript, Interview Alfred Spier, GWM.
- 562 Cf. “Regulation on the Use of Jewish Assets”, Reich Economics Ministry / Reich Ministry of the Interior, 3 Dec. 1938, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 262, no. III 46.
- 563 A letter outlining the new legal situation from the Regional Administrator in Kassel of 3 Dec. 1938 contains the vague indication notice that authority over transfers of Jewish assets will be granted to the District Administrators subordinate to that administrator: “First Jewish factories and commercial buildings, and then all other real estate of Jews should be transferred into Aryan ownership as soon as possible. To this end, it is expected that authorization will be in the hands of the District Administrators and mayors in the future”; letter of the Regional Administrator to the District Administrator in Marburg, 3 Dec. 1938, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 2939, p. 62f. It is not known to what extent this transfer of authority took place. In the surviving proceedings on real estate in Rauischholzhausen, all of the authorizing decisions were made by the Kassel Regional Administrator.
- 564 Implementation decree of the Reich Economics Ministry, 6 Feb. 1939, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 2939, p. 94ff., 96f.
- 565 The letter summarizing the previously released decrees, sent from the District Administrator in Marburg to the mayors of the district, 2 Feb. 1939, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 2939, p. 107f. Here Krawielitzki advised the mayors—with respect to the approval fees to be paid—to entrust information to the “Aryan” buyers and to “try to shape the contract with the Jewish seller so that he will have to pay all the fees in cases of non-approval.”
- 566 The wife within the couple purchasing the field was a former domestic in the Spiers’ household, who was clearly selected as a buyer by Abraham Spier. Cf. copy of the authorization decision; Department of National Culture of the Chief of the Tax Office [*Oberfinanzpräsident*] in Kassel to the Foreign Exchange Office in Kassel, 8 July 1939, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 520. In September 1939, the freezing of accounts that limited their use was expanded by a security directive [*Sicherungsanordnung*] to record the entirety of assets; cf. security directive of the Foreign Exchange Office in Kassel with respect to Abraham Spier, 25 Sept. 1939, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 520.
- 567 See the clarifications on Section 14 of the “Regulation on the Use of Jewish Assets” in an express letter from the Reich Economics Minister to the Regional Administrator in Kassel, 25 Jan. 1939, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 2939, p. 93f. On the requirements of delivery, cf. Third Order Based on the Regulation on the Registration of Jewish Assets; Commissioner for the Four Year Plan, 21 Feb. 1939, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 283, no. III 146. An exception was made for a precisely designated supply of used silverware, wedding rings, and artificial teeth; cf. express letters from the Reich Economics Minister to the Regional Administrator of Kassel, 24 Feb. 1939 and 1 Mar. 1939, forwarded to the District Administrator in Marburg, 4 Mar. 1939, HStAM, Best. 330 Kirchhain, no. 2268, p. 84.
- 568 Cf. decision of the reparations chamber [*Wiedergutmachungskammer*] of the district court in Gießen vis-à-vis Sara Mendel, 13 Apr. 1951, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 505.
- 569 Martin Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 3, p. 22.

570 Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 3, p. 22.

571 Decree of the President of the Reich Institute for Labor Placement and Unemployment Insurance, 20 Dec. 1938; quoted in Kwiet, *Nach dem Pogrom*, p. 574. Cf. the circulars [*Runderlasse*] concerning the labor assignments of Jews, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 246, no. II 568 sowie p. 270, Nr III 82.

572 In the framework of the general military buildup two dynamite factories were constructed by Dynamit Nobel AG (DAG) and Westfälisch-Anhaltische Sprengstoff AG (WASAG) in 1938 and 1939 in the Herrenwald near Allendorf. In all, approximately 17,500 people were displaced and forced to labor at the Allendorf Works. Early in 1942 the Nazi regime decided to step up the use of such labor, including concentration camp inmates, in the arms industry. Consequently, there were soon hundreds of laborers forming external detachments of the large concentration camps near factories; in the Allendorf Works, there were also concentration camp inmates deployed. On 19 Aug. 1944, 1,000 Hungarian Jewish women arrived from Auschwitz in the camp of Münchmühle near Allendorf. As an "external camp", it was affiliated with the concentration camp of Buchenwald; cf. Documentation and Information Center of Stadtallendorf, Informationen über die Sprengstoffwerke, at: <http://www.diz-stadtallendorf.de>.

573 Cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness C, Interview B/C, p. 39.

574 The precise period of time in which Hermann Mendel was required to do forced labor is not known.

575 Non-Jewish contemporary witness J, Interview J/K, GWM, p. 9f.

576 Cf. secret order regarding the use of Jewish labor, Reich Ministry of the Interior, 26 Oct. 1939, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 308, no. IV 30.

577 Cf. letter of the Mardorf local chronicler, Karl A. Müller, to Paul Arnsberg, 11 Aug. 1966, p. 6; JMF Archiv, Sammlung Paul Arnsberg, Hessen, no. 114. See also the information in the Mardorf local chronicle: Müller, *Rund um Wall and Wehrturm*, p. 189.

578 Cf. Kreisauusschuß des Landkreises Marburg-Biedenkopf (ed.), *Die ehemaligen Synagogen*, p. 78; written information from the mayor of Mardorf to the District Administrator in Marburg, 16 May 1946, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4837, p. 155f.

579 Letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 7 Dec. 1938, HStAM, Best. 330 Kirchhain, no. 3492.

580 Letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 14 Nov. 1938, HStAM, Best. 330 Kirchhain, no. 3492.

581 Letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the Regional Administrator in Kassel, 25 Nov. 1939, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4837, p. 95.

582 "In general, an expropriation of properties on which there are [such] buildings [i.e., synagogues] should be avoided, so as not to encourage the impression that the racial policies of the Third Reich aim to render Jewish religious activities impossible. On the other hand, reconstructing [synagogues] should not be considered an option. [...] A plan should be developed by which the demolition of ruins will be brought about by building inspectors. For, according to the building laws in each district, it is the task of the building authority to see to it that buildings do not fall into a condition that endangers the public interest, namely the safety or health of the occupants or others." In this sense, the municipalities were to be engaged to clear away rubble and otherwise to force the sale of real estate according to the "Regulation on the Use of Jewish Assets" of 3 Dec. 1938. The cost of the demolition work should be included in the purchase price; see letter of the Reich Ministry of Churches to the Regional Administrator in Kassel, 24 Mar. 1939, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4825, p. 82f.

583 On the sale of this land, cf. letter of the Mardorf local chronicler, Karl A. Müller, to Paul Arnsberg, 11 Aug. 1966, p. 6, JMF Archiv, Sammlung Paul Arnsberg, Hessen, no. 114; see also: Müller, *Rund um Wall and Wehrturm*, p. 189.

584 Cf. copy of the deed of sale for the synagogue land between the combined membership of the Jewish community of Holzhausen-Wittelsberg and Andreas Peil, 20 July 1938, HHStAW,

- Abt. 519/2, no. 635; Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, p. 28ff. On the sale of the Rauschholzhausen synagogue, see also the account in: Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 113ff. Around the time the contract was finalized, the sixty-year-old Rosa Schaumberg, née Rülff, was the only Jewish person still living in Wittelsberg; she relocated to Adelepsen, district of Northeim, in 1940; cf. Händler-Lachmann/Schütt, “unbekannt verzogen” oder “weggemacht”, p. 228.
- 585 Cf. Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 28; Martin and Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 1, p. 18f.; Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, p. 34.
- 586 “The unit value is lower than the purchase price”; copy of the deed of sale regarding the synagogue real estate between the combined membership of the Jewish community of Holzhausen-Wittelsberg and Andreas Peil, 20 July 1938, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 635. The actual transfer was supposed to take place following payment. Perhaps the partial payment to Hermann Mendel did come through, since the Mendels evidently had few or no plans to emigrate. It is nonetheless also possible that the account of Hermann Mendel was merely being used in this instance so that the funds could be received by the Jewish community.
- 587 Copy of a letter from the Regional Administrator in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 25 Aug. 1938, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4837, p. 85. The following remark was added to the copy to the attention of attorney and notary Georg Pfeiffer in Kirchhain: “It is nonetheless recommended that you try to influence in an appropriate manner the sale of the land and buildings of the Israelite community.”
- 588 The attorney in question was likely Bruno Schönfeld, born in Lappienen, district of Labiau, East Prussia, on 22.9.1888. He resided in Berlin, Kassel, and Marburg. On 29 June 1943 he was deported from Berlin to Theresienstadt, and from there on 12 Oct. 1944 to Auschwitz, where he was murdered; cf. Bundesarchiv, Gedenkbuch, <http://www.bundesarchiv.de/gedenkbuch>.
- 589 Founded in September 1933 in response to the Nazi regime, the independent “Reich Deputation of German Jews”—after 1935, the “Reich Deputation of Jews in Germany”—was supposed to take over political representation of German Jews as an umbrella federation of Jewish organizations. In July 1939 the Reich Deputation, now called the “Reich Association of Jews in Germany”, was co-opted and became fully dependent on Nazi decrees. Subordinated to the “Reich Main Security Office” (“RSHA” in German), the Association was comprised of everyone designated under the Nuremberg Laws as “Jews.”
- 590 Letter from attorney Schönfeld for the Jewish Community of Rauschholzhausen to the Reich Deputation of Jews in Germany, 30 Apr. 1939, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 635.
- 591 Letter from attorney Schönfeld for the Jewish Community of Rauschholzhausen to the Reich Deputation of Jews in Germany, 2 May 1939, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 635.
- 592 Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 28ff.
- 593 That purchase agreements were made a long time before notarial certification was finalized is supported by the fact that the mayor of Wittelsberg already replied on 6 Sept. 1939, when asked by the District Administrator in Marburg, whether the municipality wanted to consider acquired the synagogue land: “[T]he land in question was sold *some time ago* as far as I know” [emphasis added]; letter from the mayor of Wittelsberg to the District Administrator in Marburg, 6 Sept. 1938, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4837, p. 87.
- 594 Letter of the Rauschholzhausen mayor of 16 May 1946 to the District Administrator in Marburg, to the inquiry by the Regional Administrator in Kassel of 30 Apr. 1946, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4837, p. 150f.
- 595 Letter of attorney Schönfeld for the Jewish Community of Rauschholzhausen to the Regional Administrator in Kassel, 15 May 1939, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 635.
- 596 Copy of the authorizing decision of the Regional Administrator in concerning the sale of the synagogue property, forwarded to Andreas Peil and Abraham Spier, 19 Sept. 1939, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 635.
- 597 Cf. letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to Heinrich Wagner, 28 Oct. 1939, private document collection of family P.

- 598 Cf. non-Jewish contemporary witnesses H and G, Interview G/H, p. 17f.; non-Jewish contemporary witness E, Interview D/E, p. 21. The demolition likely took place in two stages, in which the building's base initially remained standing as a ruin and was only removed some time later.
- 599 Cf. the notarized acknowledgement receipt of Andreas Peil for a payment received from Heinrich Wagner in the amount of 329 RM, 29 May 1940, as well as the invoice letter of attorney and notary Georg Pfeiffer (in Kirchhain) to Mr. and Mrs. Wagner regarding the purchase contract with Peil, 30 May 1940; private document collection of family P. Then, a portion of the land was transferred in the land register to the Wagner couple. Cf. a certificate of property transfer and registration by the local court in Kirchhain, 21 Feb. 1941; private document collection of family P.
- 600 Cf. the excerpted copy of the purchase contract on the cemetery land between the municipality of Rauschholzhausen and the Jewish Community of Holzhausen-Wittelsberg of 28 Mar. 1939, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 520. See also the summary of the contents of the contract by attorney Schönfeld for the Jewish Community of Rauschholzhausen to the Reich Deputation of Jews in Germany, 2 May 1939, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 635.
- 601 Cf. copy of a letter from the Regional Administrator in Kassel to mayor Otto of 2 June 1939, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 635.
- 602 "Further, I am informing you that the cemetery is leased to a decent man [, who] will pay 10 RM every year and additionally keep the cemetery in order [...]; letter from Abraham Spier to the Reich Association of Jews in Germany, Hessen-Nassau District Office, 16 Apr. 1940, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 635. According to consistent details in interviews, this man named here was already known as the mason Johannes Pfeiff, who was living near the cemetery; later, on 5 Oct. 1943, Pfeiff signed the lease with the Reich concerning the property. The Pfeiff family was said to have always taken care of the cemetery; cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness N, Interview N/O, GWM, p. 18f. In one disclosure to the Reich Association of Jews in Germany, Abraham Spier provided different information in November 1941 when asked who was maintaining the cemetery, "Konrad Bauer, from here. He has use of the grass and the yield of the fruit trees and pay annually 10 RM rent"; questionnaire filled out by Abraham Spier for the Reich Association of Jews in Germany, Hessen-Nassau District Office, 11 Sept. 1941, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 635; the statement was made by hand and is difficult to read.
- 603 Letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the mayors of the towns and the gendarmerie officers of the district, 21 June 1940, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4831, p. 5.
- 604 The gendarmerie in Allendorf made the proposal to convert the gravestones into grinding stones; cf. letter of the gendarmerie Allendorf II to the District Administrator in Marburg, 15 July 1940, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4831, p. 15.
- 605 Letter of the gendarmerie in Roßdorf to the District Administrator in Marburg, 2 July 1940, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4831, p. 18.
- 606 Cf. circular of the District Administrator in Marburg (precise addressees unknown), 10 Sept. 1940, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4831, p. 34. On 23 Dec. 1940, the closing orders were issued for the Jewish cemeteries in Kirchhain, Rauschenberg, Halsdorf, Fronhausen, and Roth, cf. letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the mayors of these towns, 23 Dec. 1940, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4831, p. 43.
- 607 However, an official reclassification did not likely take place at least until 1943 since there was no change in ownership until that point.
- 608 According to the entries in the surveys signed by the District Administrator in Marburg in 1947–1948, Abraham Krämer was buried in the Jewish cemetery of Rauschholzhausen on 9 June 1941, after having been moved from Niederklein to Mardof on 28 Apr. 1941. Yet David Ehrlich, who previously had lived in Roßdorf and thus within the appropriate radius for burial in the Rauschholzhausen cemetery, was buried in the collective cemetery in Marburg on 18 Feb. 1942. Cf. surveys of the former Jewish population in the district of Marburg, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4979.

- 609** Letter of the Reich Association of Jews in Germany, Hessen-Nassau District Office, to the mayor of Rauschholzhausen, 12 Feb. 1943, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 635.
- 610** Letter of the Reich Association of Jews in Germany, Hessen-Nassau District Office, to the mayor of Rauschholzhausen, 12 Feb. 1943, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 635.
- 611** A letter that provides information on the process, from the Hessen-Nassau District Office to the Berlin administrative department of the Reich Association of Jews in Germany, 24 Apr. 1943, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 635.
- 612** Cf. letter of the Reich Association of Jews in Germany, Hessen-Nassau District Office, to Johannes Pfeiff, 27 May 1943, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 635.
- 613** Cf. letter of Johannes Pfeiff, not addressed, but likely to the Reich Association of Jews in Germany, Hessen-Nassau District Office, 15 May 1943, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 635.
- 614** Even if the previous lessee was not actually Johannes Pfeiff, by summer 1943 (at the latest) a lease had materialized between the Reich Association and Johannes Pfeiff. For Pfeiff referred to himself as the tenant on 15 Aug. 1943. Cf. letter of Johannes Pfeiff, not addressed, but likely to the Reich Association of Jews in Germany, Hessen-Nassau District Office, 15 Aug. 1943, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 635.
- 615** The confiscation of the assets of the Reich Association, Hessen-Nassau, District Office, took place on 10 June 1943; cf. Meinel/Zwilling, *Legalisierter Raub*, p. 468. On the leasing of the cemetery property, cf. lease between the Reich Treasury, represented by the Marburg tax office, and Johannes Pfeiff, 5 Oct. 1943, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 635; cf. also Händler-Lachmann/Händler, *Purim*, p. 25.
- 616** A list of "Foreign Civilian Workers" in Rauschholzen (undated, without an author's name) includes twenty-four Polish, three French and three Italian laborers; HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4173. Since the file contains documents from 1939 particularly, the list was probably not produced after 1940. Presumably, the Italian citizens were not forced laborers. There were a number of French and Italian workers at the Stumms' manor house. Cf. the written notice of the departure to Heidelberg of a French governess to the Stumms, sent by Mayor Otto to the District Administrator in Marburg, 5 April 1938, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3495; the written notice of the departure of an Italian farm worker at the Stumms to Italy, sent by the gendarmerie in Roßdorf to the District Administrator in Marburg; 4 December 1938, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3495. My grandmother, Anna-Katharina Tögel, former cook at the university experimental farm, has detailed memories of the Polish forced laborers deported to Rauschholzhausen; cf. Interview Tögel, p. 13ff.
- 617** The transition from one mayor to another took place between 24 November 1940 and 25 January 1941. Cf. the completed census of "Jews" residing in the district of Marburg, sent by Mayor Otto to the District Administrator in Marburg, 24 November 1940, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4822. See also the signatures of Otto and Wahl in budgetary correspondence with the District Administrator in Marburg from the period 1940–1941, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4725.
- 618** Cf. transcript of an official on-site inspection resulting from disputed claims to the real property of Hedwig Stern, 22 April 1943, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 522.
- 619** Cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness D and non-Jewish contemporary witness E, Interview D/E, p. 16.
- 620** Cf. Deuker/Dienstbach, *Der Schloßpark*, p. 10.
- 621** Browning, *Die Entfesselung der "Endlösung"*, p. 254.
- 622** There was no official prohibition on "Jewish" emigration until 23 October 1941, when the Reich Main Security Office issued a decree; in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 353, no. IV 256.
- 623** Cf. Händler-Lachmann/Händler, *Purim*, p. 211.
- 624** Cf. Browning, *Die Entfesselung der "Endlösung"*, p. 254.
- 625** Cf. the timeline on Jewish policies of the Nazi regime in: Benz (ed.), *Die Juden in Deutschland*, p. 747. *Zionism* designates the political ideology and movement that intended to establish and safeguard a Jewish state. The idea was formed at the end of the 19th century, having been instigated

by rising antisemitism, especially in Russia. It was also influenced by other national movements and social struggles, such as the workers' movement.

626 Friedländer, *Das Dritte Reich and die Juden*, pt. 2, p. 84; cf. also: Meinl/Zwilling, *Legalisierter Raub*, p. 464.

627 Cf. Friedländer, *Das Dritte Reich and die Juden*, pt. 2, p. 85.

628 Letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 21 September 1939, HStAM, Best. 330 Kirchhain, no. 2268, p. 93; forwarded from the District Administrator in Marburg to the mayors and gendarmes of the district, accompanied by the note "Very urgent!" and the instruction to mark the receivers and "deliver them here", 22 September 1939, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4825, p. 63.

629 Yom Kippur, as the "Day of Atonement", is the most important Jewish holy day.

630 Written notice of the District Administrator in Marburg, 23 September 1939, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4825, p. 61.

631 Martin Spier, Interview Martin Spier, SFI, p. 7. In November 1938 the ban on the "Jewish press" was promulgated. All "Jewish" publishers and booksellers were suspended by the end of December 1938. In 1942 "Jews" were prohibited from buying newspapers and magazines. Cf. the "Ordinance concerning the Liquidation of Jewish Publishing Houses", Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, December 1938, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 272, no. III 97; and Browning, *Die Entfesselung der "Endlösung"*, p. 256.

632 Cf. letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the Gestapo in Kassel, 28 September 1939, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4825, p. 71. In 1940 the ordinance was given to confiscate private telephones. In 1941 came the prohibitions on using public telephones and lending libraries; cf. Browning, *Die Entfesselung der "Endlösung"*, p. 256.

633 Letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 4 October 1939, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4825, p. 73. Cf. also the acknowledgement of receipt by the Main Office of Broadcasting [*Hauptstelle Rundfunk*], 5 October 1939, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4825, p. 74.

634 Cf. radio message of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 10 September 1939, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4837, p. 87.

635 Cf. letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 16 May 1940, HStAM, Best. 330 Kirchhain, no. 2268, p. 99. "The Jewish communities have been informed accordingly. This ordinance shall not be announced in the daily newspapers or in public decrees"; letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg on a "curfew for Jews", 16 May 1940, HStAM, Best. 330 Kirchhain, no. 2268, p. 99. "All the local police authorities in the Reich followed these instructions, claiming that it frequently occurred that Jews had used the cover of darkness to harass Aryan women"; confidential statement to the German press to justify the curfew for Jews (author unknown, 15 September 1939), reproduced in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 305, no. IV 12.

636 Letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 17 September 1939, HStAM, Best. 330 Kirchhain, no. 2268, p. 94. "The assignment of specific grocery stores will be processed separately." "No hoarded goods have been found, except in the case of one Jew in Alendorf [...]"; file notations by the District Administrator in Marburg, 22 and 23 September 1939, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4825, p. 40, verso.

637 On this matter, see Friedländer, *Das Dritte Reich and die Juden*, pt. 2, p. 75f.

638 "In Kirchhain Jews are only allowed to shop on Mondays or Thursdays between 8 and 9 am"; file notation by the District Administrator in Marburg, 23 September 1939, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4825, p. 66. Cf. also Händler-Lachmann/Händler, *Purim*, p. 216.

639 Non-Jewish contemporary witness C, Interview B/C, p. 8f.

640 Non-Jewish contemporary witness C, Interview B/C, p. 39.

641 Martin Spier, Interview Martin Spier, SFI, p. 11.

642 Martin Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 14.

- 643 Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 14.
- 644 Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 20f.
- 645 Walter Spier, Interview Walter Spier, SFI, p. 11; cf. also Martin Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 1, p. 20.
- 646 Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, GWM, p. 11.
- 647 Non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 17.
- 648 On Andreas Peil and Wilhelm Seip, cf. Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, p. 6, 21. On Bettchen Scheld, cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness A, Interview A, p. 11. On the inhabitant of Roßdorf with the village name of Kaske Hannes (or Kaskanisse), cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness B and non-Jewish contemporary witness C, Interview B/C, p. 45; Martin Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 3, p. 19.
- 649 Cf. Martin Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 1, p. 15; non-Jewish contemporary witness C, Interview B/C, p. 45.
- 650 In Kirchhain a cafe owner named Emil Noll helped Jews to flee, regularly escorting them across the Dutch-German border; cf. Martin Spier, Interview Baumann/Spier, pt. 2, p. 3.
- 651 On the 25th and/or 26th of April 1941, the arrests took place of Moritz Katz and Emma Feibelmann of Schweinsberg as well as of Moses Schirling of Mardorf: "The aforementioned Jews were [...] arrested because they still maintain close contacts with members of the German nation [*Volksgenossen*]. They should be transported to the state employment institution [*Landesarbeitsanstalt*] of Breitenau. [...] The Jews were brought today to the Court Prison in Marburg (on the Lahn) by the gendarmerie in Allendorf"; letter from the Gestapo in Kassel, by the Special Unit for Allendorf, to the District Administrator in Marburg, 26 April 1941, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4822 and/or 4826, p. 36. (The latter is reprinted in: Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 219). Cf. also: Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 35f. There are no known cases of people from Rauschholzhausen being arrested on such grounds. Breitenau served as a "concentration collection camp" [*Konzentrationsammellager*]. If the "educational" purpose of the arrest had not been achieved after two months, the detainee would be taken into protective custody and assigned to a concentration camp. Cf. Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 218. Emma Feibelmann, née Simon (born on 1 July 1884 in Schweinsberg) was then deported to Ravensbrück where she was murdered. Moritz Katz (born on 20 May 1891 in Schweinsberg) and Moses Schirling (born on 18 April 1860 in Mardorf) were freed after two months. One year later, they were forced to resettle in Rauschholzhausen; cf. Händler-Lachmann/Schütt, "unbekannt verzogen" oder "weggemacht", p. 124, 198, 201.
- 652 Non-Jewish contemporary witness C: He [...] had always said how they made the big box for Jews [i.e., the village name for Juda Rülff and his children]. [...] When they [i.e., the Rülffs] took off for America, someone did it on their stairs! [...] Left something for them in front of the stairs!" Non-Jewish contemporary witness B continues: "Someone relieved himself on their stairs! Right in front of the door! [...] Why, it was his place [...] the one who made boxes for the Jews. [Someone] took a crap in front of his door!"; Interview B/C, p. 56f.
- 653 Letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 7 September 1939, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4825, p. 35.
- 654 Non-Jewish contemporary witness H, Interview G/H, p. 5.
- 655 Non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 29.
- 656 Non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 14. He dates the attack as having happened in 1939. Subsequent to it, neighbors helped Hedwig Stern to nail the windows shut.
- 657 Non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 10f.
- 658 Cf. the letter of thanks from Louis' brother Julius Rülff, sent from Buenos Aires on 5 January 1983 to Franz Kaiser on his 93rd birthday in gratitude for his financial help that enabled Julius to emigrate illegally; GWM Archive, in the binder labeled "Juden-Landkreis-Orte."
- 659 Non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, GWM, p. 38.
- 660 Non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 8.

- 661** Letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the mayors of the cities and the gendarmes of the district on 9 September 1941; HStAM, Best. 330 Kirchhain, no. 2268, p. 108. "In connection with my administrative circular [...] I am informing you that it is important to verify in each individual case whether someone has an urgent need to leave their area of residence. [...] No one may be certified to travel on days with the greatest traffic, such as weekends, festival days, the start and end of holidays"; letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the mayors of communities with Jewish residents; 14 October 1941, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4822. The "Jewish stars" could be obtained for 10 pfennig each from the Reich Association of Jews in Germany; on this, cf. Kwiet, *Nach dem Pogrom*, p. 616.
- 662** File notation by the District Administrator in Marburg, 13 March 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4822.
- 663** Letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the mayors of communities with Jewish residents; 25 April 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4822.
- 664** Letter from Mayor Wahl to the District Administrator in Marburg, 3 May 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4822.
- 665** The term *ghettoization* is an appropriate description for the coerced accommodation of Jews in certain streets or houses, and it was used that way during the Third Reich by those whom it impacted. Nevertheless, one must also realize that the fatal living conditions in the ghettos the German occupiers established for Jews in Eastern (-Central) Europe after 1939 represent a different dimension of exploitation and isolation.
- 666** *Sukkot*, i.e., the "Festival of Tabernacles" is one of the three Jewish pilgrimage festivals. It commemorates the biblical Exodus from Egypt while showing gratitude for a successful harvest; the festival lasts for at least a week.
- 667** On the dating of the information, cf. Martin Spier, *Interview Martin and Walter Spier*, pt. 1, p. 15; pt. 2, p. 27. On the relatives of Hedwig Stern, cf. the letter from the tax office in Heidelberg to the tax office in Marburg regarding the forced sale of real property in Wiesloch (Baden), 13 June 1942, HHStAW, Abt 519/2, no. 522. This document mentions the deportation of Gustaph and Regina Kaufmann on 22 October 1940. The plot of land in question was a joint inheritance between the deportees and Hedwig Stern, née Kaufmann, each possessing a third; presumably the parties named were Hedwig Stern's siblings. On the night of 21 and 22 October 1940, the so-called Wagner Bürckel Operation took place, i.e., the deportation of more than 6,000 German Jews from Baden and the Saarpfalz to the unoccupied part of France. The planning for the operation was top secret; hence, the victims were informed just before they were arrested and deported. Cf. here, Friedlander, *Das Dritte Reich and die Juden*, pt. 2, p. 91. Hedwig Stern's relative Regina (born on 13 May 1874 in Wiesloch) and Gustaph (born on 6 September 1876 in Wiesloch) Kaufmann were murdered in late 1941 or 1942 in France; cf. Bundesarchiv, *Gedenkbuch*, <http://www.bundesarchiv.de/gedenkbuch>.
- 668** The first deportations of "Jews" from the so-called "Old Reich" (*Altreich*) had already occurred in February and March 1940, from Stettin and the municipality Schneidemühl in the province Grenzmark Posen-Westpreußen to the district of Lublin in the General Government.
- 669** Walter Spier, *Interview Walter Spier*, SFI, p. 9.
- 670** Walter Spier, *Interview Walter Spier*, SFI, p. 10.
- 671** On this training in carpentry, cf. Martin Spier, *Interview Martin Spier*, SFI, p. 12. The training institute referred to was probably the Jewish Schooling and Retraining Center in Frankfurt, Fischerfeldstrasse 13, founded in April 1936. Cf. Kingreen, "Ihr in Frankfurt habt's gut!", p. 64f. Concerning a Frankfurt training institute for Jewish young adults, cf. also: Kropat, *Die hessischen Juden*, p. 431.
- 672** Walter Spier, *Interview Walter Spier*, SFI, p. 10.
- 673** On 18 February 1941, a secret circular was issued by Goering, that all employable "Jews" would be enlisted for work assignments in the future. Cf. the reference in the Decree Concerning Labor Deployment of Jews, Ministry of Labor, 4 March 1941, reproduced in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*,

p. 336, no. IV 174. It is not possible to put a precise date on the Spiers' return. Martin Spier avers that his return to Rauschholzhausen took place in autumn 1941; cf. Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 7. Walter Spier maintains that he returned in early 1942; cf. Interview Walter Spier, SFI, p. 10. On a list dated 2 December 1941, produced by Mayor Wahl for the District Administrator in Marburg and concerning the "Jews" residing in the village, Walter and Martin Spier are documented as living in Frankfurt; HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3593, p. 348. In the Rauschholzhausen village registry of residents, their registration is dated as having been renewed on 20 April 1942 (Walter) and 13 May 1942 (Martin); cf. Municipal Archive Rauschholzhausen, registry of residents in Rauschholzhausen 1933–1943. Since Walter Spier speaks of their returning together and Martin Spier was required to do forced labor for about a year after his return to the village, their joint return is nonetheless presumed to have been in the autumn of 1941. Perhaps at the time the Jewish Orphanage closed in Frankfurt, where the two were residing. In June 1942 the *Philanthropin*—the school that Walter Spier attended until he went back to Rauschholzhausen—became one of the last Jewish schools to close up; cf. Kropat, *Die hessischen Juden*, p. 430.

674 Martin Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 7. According to information from his father, Martin Spier was not employed until May 1942 at the Marburg Municipal Works; cf. two letters from Abraham Spier to the Foreign Exchange Office in Kassel, 20 and 29 June 1942, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 512. Prior to that, Martin Spier had probably had another forced labor posting.

675 The regulations issued by the Reich Main Security Office regarding the requirement to hand over bicycles, typewriters, cameras etc. of 13 November 1941 (exceptions were allowed for objects necessary for one's work) and 12 June 1942 (see Walk [ed.], *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 355, no. IV 264 / p. 377, no. IV 373) were evidently only implemented in the administrative district of Kassel for those already deported on the first transport in December 1941 or separately before the individual transports. Cf. letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 22 January 1942: "The Jews *deported to the East* from the administrative district of Kassel [...] were instructed to hand over for safekeeping all of their typewriters [...] [,] bicycles [...] and cameras [...] and binoculars that they possessed for safekeeping at their respective local police offices prior to their deportation. Please inform me of the degree to which the Jews *evacuated to the East* have complied with this requirement [...]" [emphasis added]; HStAM, Best. 330 Kirchhain, no. 2268, p. 115. We do not know anything about the implementation of these regulations in Rauschholzhausen.

676 Martin Spier, Interview Martin Spier, SFI, p. 13f.

677 Letter from Abraham Spier to the Foreign Exchange Office in Kassel, 20 June 1942, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 512.

678 Letter of the Foreign Exchange Office in Kassel to Abraham Spier, 1 July 1942, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 512.

679 On the process of deciding, preparing, and implementing the Holocaust—the destruction of European Jews—see especially: Browning, *Die Entfesselung der "Endlösung"*; Hilberg, *Die Vernichtung*, vol. 2; Friedländer, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*, pt. 2, p. 289ff.

680 Cf. Kingreen, *Die gewaltsame Verschleppung*, p. 223. By contrast, one can assume that a total of 2,283 people were deported based on Kingreen's summaries, cf. p. 237ff. On the planning and course of the three deportations in the Marburg district, see: Händler-Lachmann/Händler, *Purim*, p. 227ff.

681 Cf. Kingreen, *Die gewaltsame Verschleppung*, p. 224.

682 Cf. Händler-Lachmann/Händler, *Purim*, p. 227; Kingreen, *Die gewaltsame Verschleppung*, p. 237. Kingreen assumes a figure of 85 people. According to a summary of the District Administrator in Marburg on the "movements of the Jewish residents" from 1 October to 31 December 1941, 76 Jewish persons were "deported [on] the orders of the Gestapo", HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4822.

683 For a detailed account on the course of this deportation, see: Kingreen, *Die gewaltsame Verschleppung*, p. 223ff. On the figure of 1,024 people: cf. Kingreen, *Die gewaltsame Verschleppung*, p. 223; on p. 237, she cites instead a figure of 1,034 persons.

- 684 Cf. Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 227. From the entire transport, only 137 persons survived; cf. Kingreen, Die gewaltsame Verschleppung, p. 228. On the entire transport, see p. 227f.
- 685 Cf. Kingreen, Die gewaltsame Verschleppung, p. 228. According to Kingreen's summary, however, 494 persons is a more accurate figure; cf. p. 238. Originally, 844 people were planned for on this transport; in the intervening period, their number was reduced to 522: "According to the guidelines provided, only 522 Jews from the Administrative District of Kassel are deemed appropriate for the forthcoming operation, not 844. I am including in the enclosure a preliminary list drawn up separately for each district that is unlikely to change. These Jews are to be deported on [1 June 1942] from Kassel to the East. The transporting of these Jews for evacuation from the Administrative District of Kassel for the purpose of first concentrating them in Kassel is to be undertaken in passenger and/or express trains, in consultation with the competent *Reichsbahn* managers. For these trains, the following departure times have been set: from the station at Marburg/Lahn on 31 May 1942 at 10.16 am. These timetables are absolutely binding."; letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 22 May 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3593, p. 376.
- 686 "I hereby inform you that the Jewish family Ehrlich in Roßdorf relocated to an unknown address on 31 Mar.>"; letter from the mayor of Roßdorf to the District Administrator in Marburg, 1 June 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4176, p. 304. Cf. also deportation list, entitled "Corrected List of the 2nd Emigration Transport from the District of Kassel", according to its status on 15 May 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3593, p. 378f. On the birth dates of the Wertheim and Ehrlich families, cf. Händler-Lachmann/Schütt, "unbekannt verzogen" oder "weggemacht", p. 103f., 188f.
- 687 For a detailed account on the course of this deportation, see: Kingreen, Die gewaltsame Verschleppung, p. 228ff.
- 688 Cf. Kingreen, Die gewaltsame Verschleppung, p. 231.
- 689 Cf. Kingreen, Die gewaltsame Verschleppung, p. 224, 228.
- 690 Cf. Kingreen, Die gewaltsame Verschleppung, p. 232.
- 691 Cf. letter of the non-Jewish villager Johannes Pfeiff to Paul Arnsberg, 3 March 1966, p. 3, JMF Archiv, Sammlung Paul Arnsberg, Hessen, no. 413.
- 692 Cf. Municipal Archive Rauischholzhausen, the register of residents in Rauischholzhausen 1933–1943; Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 2. The review of Sannchen Wertheim's dates of birth is the result of a comprehensive comparison of the data.
- 693 Martin Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 1, p. 15.
- 694 11th Regulation to the Reich Citizenship Law, Reich Ministry of the Interior / of Finance (and others), 25 November 1941, in: Walk (ed.), Das Sonderrecht, p. 357, no. IV 272.
- 695 Order for Implementation of the 11th Regulation to the Reich Citizenship Law, Reich Ministry of the Interior, 3 December 1941, in: Walk (ed.), Das Sonderrecht, p. 358, no. IV 279.
- 696 Cf. Order concerning Utilization Restrictions on Personal Property for Jews, Reich Main Security Office, 27 November 1941, in: Walk (ed.), Das Sonderrecht, p. 357, no. IV 274.
- 697 Letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to district mayors, 15 May 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3593, p. 361.
- 698 Martin Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 3, p. 20.
- 699 Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, p. 37.
- 700 Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 30.
- 701 Non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 15.
- 702 Decision of the District Court of Kirchhain regarding Hedwig Stern, 10 December 1941, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 522; emphasis added.
- 703 Copy of the sales contract for Hedwig Stern's residential property, between Hedwig Stern and Anna Schwarz ("acting on her own behalf and representing her husband"), 28 April 1942, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 522. The tax office in Marburg speculated that Mr. and Mrs. Schwarz were intending to enlarge their real property as well as having Hedwig Stern's house torn down. Cf. letter of the tax office in Marburg to the District Administrator in Marburg, 29 January 1943, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 522.

- 704 Letter of the Reich's Ministry of Economics to the Regional Administrator in Kassel, 16 May 1942, forwarded to the District Administrator in Marburg on 26 May 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4826.
- 705 Cf. Decree Concerning Collection Campaign for the Eastern Front, Reich Main Security Office, 5 January 1942, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 362, no. IV 296. Cf. also the reference to a corresponding Gestapo circular of 10 January 1942, in the letter from the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 31 July 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4826. Mr. and Mrs. Mendel delivered two fur cloaks. Cf. letter from the tax office in Marburg to the Hessian Ministry of Finance, 1 September 1950, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902, as well as the Decision issued by the Restitution Chamber of the Regional Court of Gießen regarding Sara Mendel, 13 April 1951, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 505.
- 706 Letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 13 June 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4826.
- 707 Letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 13 June 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4826.
- 708 Cf. Letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 13 June 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4826.
- 709 Abraham Spier's list of clothing items handed over; 17 June 1942, forwarded by Mayor Wahl to the District Administrator in Marburg on 1 July 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4826.
- 710 Letter from Abraham Spier to Mayor Wahl, 5 August 1942, forwarded to the District Administrator in Marburg on 12 August 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4826. The delivery of these furs was made on the orders of the Gestapo, who were double-checking whether there were any furs there. Cf. Letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 31 July 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4826.
- 711 File notation by the District Administrator in Marburg, undated, likely in August 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4826.
- 712 Cf. the handwritten notes on the files of the auctioneer Karl Schott, author unknown, 9 December 1947, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4934. Walter Spier, however, can only recall that his own home became a collective lodging for those forced to relocate; cf. report of conversation with Walter Spier, 8 May 2011.
- 713 Cf. Kingreen, *Die gewaltsame Verschleppung*, p. 225.
- 714 Cf. the questionnaire from the tax office in Marburg filled out by Peter Otto, 3 November 1942, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 505. The entries there allow one to conclude that the assignment of living quarters took place without the approval of the Mendels: "The rent has been paid until now to the mayor's office in R.Holzhausen, and has been settled through the month of September 1942" [emphasis added].
- 715 Letter from the Reich Deputation of Jews in Deutschland, District Office for Central Germany, to Hermann Mendel, 24 July 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4822; reprinted in: Händler-Lachmann/Händler, *Purim*, p. 223. "The Jewish family of Hermann Israel Mendel in R.-Holzhausen was relocated last Monday into the home of the Jew Abraham Israel Spier in R.-Holzhausen. The Gestapo has been informed of this. On the matter of a future sale of their furniture, the approval of the Gestapo in Kassel must be obtained by way of the Reich Association"; file notation of the District Administrator in Marburg, 3 August 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4822.
- 716 Walter Spier, Interview Walter Spier, SFI, p. 10.
- 717 Letter of the mayor of Schweinsberg to the District Administrator in Marburg, 30 July 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4830, p. 4.
- 718 Cf. Letter of the mayor of Schweinsberg to the District Administrator in Marburg, 30 July 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4830, p. 4.
- 719 Rosa Schaumberg was the daughter of Betti Schaumberg, née Rülff (born 12 March 1860 in Rauschholzhausen), who had already died in 1940 in Schweinsberg; Betti was the sister of Juda

- Rülf and Abraham Spier's mother Minna; cf. Händler-Lachmann/Schütt, "unbekannt verzogen" oder "weggemacht", p. 205f.
- 720 Johanna and Moses Schirling had moved from Mardorf to Schweinsberg in 1937; cf. Händler-Lachmann/Schütt, "unbekannt verzogen" oder "weggemacht", p. 124.
- 721 Pauline Stern had already been forced to relocate on 28 April 1941 from Nieder Klein to Mardorf; cf. Händler-Lachmann/Schütt, "unbekannt verzogen" oder "weggemacht", p. 166.
- 722 Draft of the corresponding certification of the District Administrator in Marburg for Abraham Spier and Louis Rülf, 29 July 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4822.
- 723 Cf. handwritten notes on the files of the auctioneer Karl Schott, author unknown, 9 December 1947, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4934.
- 724 Cf. handwritten notes on the files of the auctioneer Karl Schott, author unknown, 9 December 1947, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4934. It is also possible that the Schirlings and Rülfs were likewise quartered in the house of the Spier family, for Walter Spier does not recall the collective lodging in the neighboring house. Cf. report of conversation with Walter Spier, 8 May 2011; cf. also what is recollected by non-Jewish contemporary witness E: "At Mines [i.e., the village name for the Spier family], I think, is where they ended up [...] Yes, all of them at Mines."; Interview D/E, p. 13.
- 725 Cf. handwritten notes on the files of the auctioneer Karl Schott, author unknown, 9 December 1947, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4934. It could not be determined whether Pauline and Hedwig Stern were relatives.
- 726 Non-Jewish contemporary witness G, Interview G/H, p. 20.
- 727 Letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the Gestapo in Kassel, 3 August 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4830, p. 1 (front and back).
- 728 Cf. letter with directions on the planned deportation from the District Administrator in Marburg to the mayors of Kirchhain, Roth, Lohra, Wetter, Momberg, R-Holzhausen [emphasis added], 30 August 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4830, p. 14. File notation of the District Administrator in Marburg, that the planned forced relocation of a Jewish family from Wetter to Roth was "no longer necessary" since their deportation was going to take place on 6 September 1942, 2 September 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4830. On the "concentration" of the Jewish residents in the Marburg District, see also Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 222ff.
- 729 Letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 25 August 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4830, p. 5ff.; the letter contained an enclosure with a deportation list including names.
- 730 The cash was then taken away from the deportees in Kassel. Cf. the accounting sheet for Albert Feibelmann of Schweinsberg, undated, in the files to the Restitution Proceeding of the Jewish Restitution Successor Organization concerning Albert Feibelmann (who was murdered in the Holocaust), HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 3028.
- 731 Letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 25 August 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4830, p. 5ff.
- 732 Letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the mayors of Kirchhain, Roth, Lohra, Wetter, Momberg, R-Holzhausen, 28 August 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4830, p. 9f. On the same day Krawielitzki consulted with the relevant district lieutenant to have a gendarme released (from normal duty) to accompany deportees to Kassel. He also sent the tax office in Marburg information about the current state of planning, together a list of those to be deported "for your attention"; file notation of the District Administrator in Marburg, 28 August 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4830, p. 9f.
- 733 Cf. Letter of the Gestapo in Kassel to the District Administrator in Marburg, 28 August 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4830, p. 11ff.
- 734 Letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the mayors of Kirchhain, Roth, Lohra, Wetter, Momberg, R-Holzhausen, 30 August 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4830, p. 14.
- 735 Letter from Mayor Wahl to the District Administrator in Marburg, 1 September 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4830, p. 18.

- 736 Non-Jewish contemporary witness N, Interview N/O, GWM, p. 11.
- 737 Walter Spier, Interview Walter Spier, SFI, p. 18; cf. also Martin and Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 1, p. 2; Martin Spier, Interview Martin Spier, SFI, p. 14.
- 738 Martin Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 1, p. 14f.
- 739 Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 3, p. 23.
- 740 The interview partner additionally reports, "And old [...] Abraham [i.e., Abraham Spier] told them: 'Go ahead and laugh; you'll be crying later on!'" ; non-Jewish contemporary witness C, Interview B/C, p. 35.
- 741 Non-Jewish contemporary witness G, Interview G/H, p. 3. Cf. also Bettina Decke on the information from her parents; Interview Decke, p. 14f. For a similar account, see also the letter from Johannes Pfeiff to Paul Arnsberg, 3 March 1966, p. 4, JMF Archiv, Sammlung Paul Arnsberg, Hessen, no. 413: "From here they were transported away on trucks with some of their luggage, amid the jeers of onlookers." The survivors Martin and Walter Spier do not mention such a public throng. Rather, they emphasize just the opposite: that *no one* came to say goodbye. By *no one* here, however, they presumably mean those who had acted in solidarity with Jewish residents up to the end. With this in mind, there is likely not a contradiction between the accounts of the villagers and the memories of the survivors.
- 742 Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 32.
- 743 Martin Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 32.
- 744 Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 32f.
- 745 Martin Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 33.
- 746 Martin Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 33.
- 747 Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 20.
- 748 Letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the Gestapo in Kassel, 7 September 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4830, p. 25.
- 749 The transport was designated by the Nazi bureaucracy as "Transport XV/I."
- 750 His name is sealed in a list originally created by Mayor Wahl on 2 December 1941 (concerning "Jews" living in Rauschholzhausen), HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3593, p. 348.
- 751 Municipal Archive of Rauschholzhausen, registry of residents in Rauschholzhausen 1933–1943. In March 1943 the Sinti of the region were also deported to Auschwitz, particularly from Dreihäuser. According to our present state of knowledge, no one in Rauschholzhausen was a victim of antiziganistic persecution; on the persecution of Sinti from Dreihäuser, see Meyerding (ed.), *Geliebte Zigeunerkinder*.
- 752 Cf. letter from Sara Mendel to the Marburg Support Center for the Politically, Racially, and Religiously Persecuted, 21 September 1948, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 1953/07; Bundesarchiv, Gedenkbuch, <http://www.bundesarchiv.de/gedenkbuch>.
- 753 Cf. Bundesarchiv, Gedenkbuch, <http://www.bundesarchiv.de/gedenkbuch>; Händler-Lachmann/Schütt, "unbekannt verzogen" oder "weggemacht", p. 178.
- 754 Cf. Bundesarchiv, Gedenkbuch, <http://www.bundesarchiv.de/gedenkbuch>; Händler-Lachmann/Schütt, "unbekannt verzogen" oder "weggemacht", p. 178.
- 755 "Transport Eb" from Theresienstadt to Auschwitz, arrived on 18 May 1944, cf. the detention certificate of the ITS (International Tracing Service), 17 March 1969, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 1700/22; cf. also the Page of Testimony of 13 September 1994, in: Yad Vashem, Central Database, <http://www.yadvashem.org/wps/portal>; Walter Spier, Interview Walter Spier, SFI, p. 19; Martin Spier, Interview Martin Spier, SFI, p. 18.
- 756 "Transport Eb" from Theresienstadt to Auschwitz, arrived on 18 May 1944, cf. the detention certificate of the ITS (International Tracing Service), 17 March 1969, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 1700/22; cf. also the Page of Testimony [*Gedenkbuch*] of 13 September 1994, accessed from Yad Vashem, Central Database, <http://www.yadvashem.org/wps/portal>; Walter Spier, Interview Walter Spier, SFI, p. 19; Martin Spier, Interview Martin Spier, SFI, p. 18.
- 757 Cf. Institut Theresienstädter Initiative, Theresienstädter Gedenkbuch, accessed from Yad

Vashem, Central Database, <http://www.yadvashem.org/wps/portal>; Page of Testimony of 13 September 1994, accessed from Yad Vashem, Central Database, <http://www.yadvashem.org/wps/portal>; Bundesarchiv, Gedenkbuch, <http://www.bundesarchiv.de/gedenkbuch>.

758 Cf. Institut Theresienstädter Initiative, Theresienstädter Gedenkbuch, accessed from Yad Vashem, Central Database, <http://www.yadvashem.org/wps/portal>; Bundesarchiv, Gedenkbuch, <http://www.bundesarchiv.de/gedenkbuch>.

759 "Transport Bs" from Theresienstadt to Treblinka, cf. Institut Theresienstädter Initiative, Theresienstädter Gedenkbuch, accessed from Yad Vashem, Central Database, <http://www.yadvashem.org/wps/portal>; cf. also Bundesarchiv, Gedenkbuch, <http://www.bundesarchiv.de/gedenkbuch>.

760 Cf. Page of Testimony of 5 January 2007, accessed from Yad Vashem, Central Database, <http://www.yadvashem.org/wps/portal>. According to details in the online *Gedenkbuch* (or "Memorial Book") of the Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, Hedwig's daughter Franziska Stern was also murdered in Auschwitz in 1944, at the age of 41 or 42. Cf. Bundesarchiv, Gedenkbuch, <http://www.bundesarchiv.de/gedenkbuch>. However, according to reliable information from Franziska's sister, Annie Stern, she emigrated via France to South Africa where she survived the Holocaust. Cf. Email from Renee Stern, daughter in law of Annie Stern.

761 Cf. written disclosure of the information office of the Dutch Red Cross, undated, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 57705; Bundesarchiv, Gedenkbuch, <http://www.bundesarchiv.de/gedenkbuch>.

762 Cf. Jewish Historical Museum, Digital Monument, <http://www.joodsmonument.nl>; written disclosure of the information office of the Dutch Red Cross, undated, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 57705.

763 Cf. Jewish Historical Museum, Digital Monument, <http://www.joodsmonument.nl>.

764 Cf. Jewish Historical Museum, Digital Monument, <http://www.joodsmonument.nl>; written disclosure of the information office of the Dutch Red Cross, undated, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 57705.

765 Cf. Bundesarchiv, Gedenkbuch, <http://www.bundesarchiv.de/gedenkbuch>; Jewish Historical Museum, Digital Monument, <http://www.joodsmonument.nl>.

766 Cf. Jewish Historical Museum, Digital Monument, <http://www.joodsmonument.nl>; written disclosure of the information office of the Dutch Red Cross, undated, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 57705.

767 Cf. Page of Testimony of 18. May 1955, accessed from Yad Vashem, Central Database, <http://www.yadvashem.org/wps/portal>; Jewish Historical Museum, Digital Monument, <http://www.joodsmonument.nl>.

768 Cf. Jewish Historical Museum, Digital Monument, <http://www.joodsmonument.nl>; written disclosure of the information office of the Dutch Red Cross, undated, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 57705.

769 Cf. Bundesarchiv, Gedenkbuch, <http://www.bundesarchiv.de/gedenkbuch>; Jewish Historical Museum, Digital Monument, <http://www.joodsmonument.nl>.

770 Cf. Institut Theresienstädter Initiative, Theresienstädter Gedenkbuch, accessed from Yad Vashem, Central Database, <http://www.yadvashem.org/wps/portal>.

771 Cf. Institut Theresienstädter Initiative, Theresienstädter Gedenkbuch, accessed from Yad Vashem, Central Database, <http://www.yadvashem.org/wps/portal>; Bundesarchiv, Gedenkbuch, <http://www.bundesarchiv.de/gedenkbuch>.

772 Cf. Institut Theresienstädter Initiative, Theresienstädter Gedenkbuch, accessed from Yad Vashem, Central Database, <http://www.yadvashem.org/wps/portal>; Bundesarchiv, Gedenkbuch, <http://www.bundesarchiv.de/gedenkbuch>.

773 Cf. Institut Theresienstädter Initiative, Theresienstädter Gedenkbuch, accessed from Yad Vashem, Central Database, <http://www.yadvashem.org/wps/portal>; Bundesarchiv, Gedenkbuch, <http://www.bundesarchiv.de/gedenkbuch>.

774 Cf. Institut Theresienstädter Initiative, Theresienstädter Gedenkbuch, accessed from Yad Vashem, Central Database, <http://www.yadvashem.org/wps/portal>.

775 On deportation to Treblinka, cf. Institut Theresienstädter Initiative, Theresienstädter Gedenkbuch, accessed from Yad Vashem, Central Database, <http://www.yadvashem.org/wps/portal>. On Minsk as a site of death, cf. Bundesarchiv, Gedenkbuch, first printed edition, accessed from

Yad Vashem, Central Database, <http://www.yadvashem.org/wps/portal>. If the latter information is correct, it remains unknown whether she was murdered directly in Minsk or in nearby Maly Trostinets.

776 On deportation to Treblinka, cf. Institut Theresienstädter Initiative, Theresienstädter Gedenkbuch, accessed from Yad Vashem, Central Database, <http://www.yadvashem.org/wps/portal>. On Minsk as a site of death, cf. Bundesarchiv, Gedenkbuch, first printed edition, accessed from Yad Vashem, Central Database, <http://www.yadvashem.org/wps/portal>. If the latter information is correct, it remains unknown whether he was murdered directly in Minsk or in nearby Maly Trostinets.

777 Non-Jewish contemporary witness C, Interview B/C, p. 37.

778 Inquiry to the non-Jewish contemporary witness C: "And then? [...] Everybody went inside and took something for themselves?" Contemporary witness C: "That's how it was. Yes. *Not all* [Question: "But weren't there auctions, too?"] There were also auctions [Question: "That wasn't until later? First, everyone took something for themselves?"] Yes. *Oh, not everyone. Not everyone. No, no.*" [emphasis added]; Interview B/C, p. 37f.

779 Cf. Meinel/Zwilling, *Legalisierter Raub*, p. 135.

780 Cf. Meinel/Zwilling, *Legalisierter Raub*, p. 135, fn.14 (p. 594), p. 188f.

781 Cf. the inventory on Berta Rülff assets created by Karl Schott, undated, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 510. Berta Rülff's assets were seized on 7 September 1942; cf. draft of a letter from the tax office in Marburg to the Finance Ministry of Hessen, 20 April 1949, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 510.

782 Cf. transcript of a deposition in the examination of a witness at the regional police station of Cölbe as part of the restitution case regarding Julius Rülff, 28 August 1962, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 2035/19, vol. 1.

783 Non-Jewish contemporary witness B, Interview B/C, p. 46f. Other sources lead to the alternative conclusion that the bedroom set of the Rülff family came into possession of Chief District Inspector Jacob Schneider. Cf. letter of the District Administrator in Marburg to the Mayor [*Oberbürgermeister*] tax office in, Registration Office for Jewish Property, dated as 13 August 1946 but should read 13 August 1945, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3594, p. 35.

784 Senior government councilor Max von Brincken (born 5 October 1884, date of death unknown) was a member of the Nazi Party as 1933 and directed the tax office in Marburg from 1934 until (at least) the end of 1942. Cf. Meinel/Zwilling, *Legalisierter Raub*, p. 189f., 380.

785 Cf. Kingreen, *Die gewaltsame Verschleppung*, p. 226. Cf. on this issue also the excerpts from an investigatory report in the *Spruchkammer* proceeding [i.e., a type of de-Nazification trial] of Waldemar Kämmerling, quoted in Meinel/Zwilling, *Legalisierter Raub*, p. 189.

786 Cf. note on an inventory of Berta Rülff's assets created by Karl Schott, undated, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 510.

787 Cf. letter of the tax office in Marburg to the Federal Office of Public Property [*Bundesvermögensstelle*] in Gießen in the restitution proceeding of the Jewish Restitution Successor Organization concerning Albert Feibelmann (who was murdered in the Holocaust), 20 February 1954, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 3028.

788 This unusual two-stage alternative is supported by the fact that auctioneer Schott's original *estimate* of the value of the household contents of Mr. and Mrs. Mendel was 1430 RM, and the fact that tax office in Marburg later noted almost exactly the same amount (1433 RM) as *auction proceeds*, although auction proceeds will otherwise rarely agree with a previous estimate. Cf. decision of the Restitution Chamber [*Wiedergutmachungskammer*] of the District Court of Gießen in the case of Sara Mendel, 16 March 1951. Cf. also the letter of the Marburg tax office to the Finance Ministry of Hesse, 6 June 1950, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902.

789 Cf. also Sparkassen-Kulturstiftung Hessen-Thüringen (ed.), *Legalisierter Raub*, p. 61.

790 Non-Jewish contemporary witness A, Interview A, p. 8f.; emphasis added.

791 Non-Jewish contemporary witness A, Interview A, p. 12; emphasis added.

792 Non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 15.

- 793** Non-Jewish contemporary witness G, Interview G/H, p. 3f. For demonstrative photos of an auction in the region of Hanau around 1942, see Sparkassen-Kulturstiftung Hessen-Thüringen (ed.), *Legalisierter Raub*, p. 60f.
- 794** Cf. Letter of the tax office in Marburg to the District Administrator in Kassel, 6 June 1950, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902.
- 795** Letter of the Dresdner Bank, Gießen Branch, to the Chief Finance President in Kassel, 23 September 1942, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 520. As if it had completely forgotten recent history, this bank attempted to pursue its “claims” against those who had been murdered—even after 1945: “As before, we are sending you in the enclosure an account statement for Mr. Abraham Spier [...], yielding a debit balance of 2806 RM, and we hereby request kindly [...] that you inform us whether it is not possible for you, to pay off Mr. Spier’s debt with us either completely or in part, either from existing or incoming deposits. This ought to be in the interest of Mr. Spier, because the balance of his debt with us has increased due to the interest that continues to accrue [...]”; letter of the Dresdner Bank, Gießen Branch, to the tax office in Marburg, 31 January 1946, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 520.
- 796** Exceptions were made for former frontline soldiers and “Germans who were forced to flee [into the Reich]”; Circular regarding the suspension of sales of real estate deriving from assets garnished by or acceding to the Reich; Reich Ministry of Finance, 22 April 1942, in: Walk (ed.), *Das Sonderrecht*, p. 370, no. IV 340.
- 797** Meinel/Zwilling, *Legalisierter Raub*, p. 146.
- 798** On the preference given to members of the Party, cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness N, Interview N/O, GWM, p. 17. See also various leases in the files of the Foreign Exchange Office in Kassel, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2: no. 505 (real property of Mendel); no. 510 (real property of Berta Rülff); no. 512 (real property of Spier); no. 522 (real property of Stern). On the preference granted to families who were needy, had many children, or had had to flee from bombings, cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness E, Interview D/E, p. 13. The house of the Spier family was leased in March of 1943 to several families which had had to flee bombings in March 1943, cf. the letter from Mayor Wahl to the tax office in Marburg, 5 March 1943, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 512. In particular, there was a strong influx of people to the region from Kassel due to the heavy bombing of the city in the fall of 1943; cf. Bruno Tögel, Report of Conversation with Tögel, 23 June 2009. For further details about the procurement policies employed by the tax inspector Waldemar Kämmerling at the Marburg Foreign Exchange Office, see: Zwilling, *Legalisierter Raub*, p. 188ff.; Sparkassen-Kulturstiftung Hessen-Thüringen (ed.), *Legalisierter Raub*, p. 55ff.
- 799** Letter from Elisabeth Dörr to the tax office in Marburg, 4 November 1942, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 510.
- 800** Cf. two letters from Franz Kaiser to the tax office in Marburg, dated 22 April 1943; these also document that he was taking care of the maintenance of the house; HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 510.
- 801** Cf. file notation of the tax office in Marburg, 29 May 1946, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 510.
- 802** File notation of the tax office in Marburg, 29 May 1946, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 510.
- 803** Cf. copy of the sales contract for Hedwig Stern’s residential property between Hedwig Stern and Anna Schwarz (acting for herself as the representative of her husband Johannes Schwarz); 28 April 1942, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 522.
- 804** The Otto family had lived on the ground floor of the former home of Sara and Hermann Mendel since September 1941; cf. the questionnaire completed by Peter Otto at the tax office in Marburg, 3 November 1942, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 505. “I [...] presently [am living] with my family of 7 in the former Jewish house of Mr. Israel Mendel. [...] In the long term, the residence is too small for me. For this reason, I am asking to rent the Jewish house of the deported Jew, Hedwig Sara Stern, in R.-Holzhausen”; transcript of a declaration by Peter Otto at the tax office in Marburg, 7 November 1942, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, No. 522; cf. also the rental contract to the real property of Hedwig Stern, between the German Reich (represented by the Chief Finance

President of Kassel) and Mr. and Mrs. Otto, for three years starting on 1 December 1942; November 17 1942, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 522.

805 Mr. and Mrs. Schwarz were also not successful despite having engaged on their behalf the “Reich Union of the German Family, League Fighting for the Abundance of Hereditarily Strong Children” (*Reichsbund Deutsche Familie, Kampfbund für den Kinderreichtum der Erbtüchtigen*); cf. the letter of the Reich Union of the German Family to the tax office in Marburg, 10 December 1942, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 522; cf. also the letter of the tax office in Marburg to the District Administrator in Marburg, 29 Jan. 1943, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 522.

806 Cf. transcript of a declaration by Peter Otto at the tax office in Marburg, 30 Jan. 1943, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 522.

807 The garden plot provided to the Schwarz family was to be fenced off by the Schwarzes and secured from unauthorized entry from the Otto’s property; transcript of the agreement made subsequent to the on-site inspection, 22 April, 1943, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 522. In the state’s rental contract with Mr. and Mrs. Otto in November 1942, it had already been established that they would have to permit the “neighboring Schwarzes to continue to dry their laundry in the garden of the ‘Stern’ house”; letter of the tax office in Marburg to the District Administrator in Marburg, 29 January 1943, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 522. Mr. and Mrs. Schwarz had supposedly had access to Hedwig Stern’s yard “for years” from their property; letter of Mayor Wahl to the tax office in Marburg, 15 April 1943, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 522.

808 Cf. Rinde, “Ab 8 Uhr verstummt Kirchturmuh”, in: *Oberhessische Presse*.

809 Cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness C, Interview B/C, p. 46.

810 Cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness A, Interview A, p. 17f.; Anna-Katharina Tögel, Interview Tögel, p. 11.

811 “Well, Koch’s house was [...] hit once; that I know. I don’t know where the other two shots went.” Non-Jewish contemporary witness A, Interview A, p. 17.

812 Cf. Anna-Katharina Tögel, Interview Tögel, p. 11.

813 Cf. non-Jewish contemporary witnesses G and H, Interview G/H, p. 27.

814 Cf. Bruno Tögel, Interview Tögel, p. 11.

815 Cf. Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 7.

816 Despite visiting Rauschholzhausen several times, Friedel Rülff never again entered his parents’ house; cf. Schmidt, “Alltag zwischen 30er und 50er Jahren”, in: *Grundblick*; Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 6.

817 Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 30.

818 No new information on Rauschholzhausen was uncovered in the research on the 2008 exhibition “Es brennt” [It’s Burning]; see here Nachama/Neumärker (ed.), “Es brennt!“. That means that there were probably no prosecutions undertaken with respect to the November Pogroms (the so-called “Kristallnacht”) in Rauschholzhausen. Or, if there were any, they had already been discontinued by the 1950s or 1960s; cf. information received via telephone from the Institute for Contemporary History in Munich, 21 July 2009.

819 On the imprisonment of Gade, the teacher, cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness B, Interview B/C, p. 70. On Wahl’s continuing to hold office as mayor, cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 18. However, non-Jewish contemporary witness H relates that she had heard that the Americans had wanted to have Wahl shot; cf. Interview G/H, p. 19f. In addition, non-Jewish contemporary witness E recalls there being a new mayor after the American occupation had begun; cf. Interview D/E, p. 6. Nonetheless, contemporary witness F seemed to be quite certain of his claims on the matter.

820 Cf. non-Jewish contemporary witnesses G and H, Interview G/H, p. 8.

821 On the tensions between Nazis and Social Democrats in the village, cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness G, Interview G/H, p. 32f.; Bettina Decke, Interview Decke, p. 5f. On the issue of assistance being given in the de-Nazification proceedings [*Spruchkammerverfahren*], cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness H, Interview G/H, p. 32f.

- 822 Cf. the assessment of Bruno Tögel, Interview Tögel, p. 15.
- 823 At night, they slept at their family homes in the village; cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 23. According to a different contemporary witness—one who was only eight or nine years old at the time—only one villager hid in the woods after the war was over; cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness H, Report of conversation H, 9 May 2011.
- 824 Cf. Bruno Tögel, Report of conversation with Tögel, 23 June 2009. For another very vivid account, see also the transcript of a district conference of “refugee representatives” [*Flüchtlings-vertrauensmänner*] and mayors of the Marburg District, which took place on 25 June 1949 in the Kurhaus in Marbach. Among the participants, in addition to the new Marburg District Administrator Eckel, was also the representative for the “forcibly displaced ethnic Germans” [*vertriebene Volksdeutsche*] in Rauschholzhhausen, undated, HStAM, Best. 330 Amöneburg, no. F 464. In Roßdorf, 154 households took part in a fundraising drive for an “ethnic German” from the Ukraine who was living there and had fallen ill; appeal for donations and signature lists, undated, HStAM, Best. 330 Amöneburg, no. F 463.
- 825 Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 1, p. 2.
- 826 Walter Spier, Interview Walter Spier, SFI, p. 21f.
- 827 Walter Spier, Interview Walter Spier, SFI, p. 22.
- 828 Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 1, p. 3.
- 829 Walter Spier, Interview Walter Spier, SFI, p. 22.
- 830 Walter Spier, Interview Walter Spier, SFI, p. 24f.
- 831 Sara Mendel is thought to have left Theresienstadt in July 1945 and to have resided a few weeks in an American DP camp for Jewish survivors in Deggendorf (Bavaria), from which she was released on 24 August 1945. Cf. transcript of an affidavit of Sara Mendel for the District Court in Kirchhain, 14 April 1950, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902. Her place of residence is designated here as “Deckendorf/Niederbayern.” Elsewhere, her date of release from the DP camp is given as 28 August 1945. Cf. the questionnaire filled out by Sara Mendel at the Marburg Support Center for the Politically, Racially, and Religiously Persecuted [*Betreuungsstelle für politisch, rassistisch and religiös Verfolgte*], undated, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 1953/07.
- 832 Walter Spier, Interview Walter Spier, SFI, p. 25. On the return of Jewish survivors to the Marburg District, see also Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 235ff., containing a photo of Sara Mendel in the early 1950s in front of her home in Rauschholzhhausen.
- 833 Sara Mendel, for one, got nothing back as the result of this order. Cf. witness testimony of the provisional Mayor of Rauschholzhhausen, Gerold, summarized in a letter of the tax office of Marburg to the Hessian Ministry of Finance, 1 September 1950, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902. Cf. here also non-Jewish contemporary witness A, Interview A, p. 12. On 21 September 1945, an order was decreed for the town of Marburg (albeit not for Rauschholzhhausen) requiring citizens to declare all real estate or personal assets that had been taken away from their legal owners from 1933 onward. These possessions were to be reported by 1 October 1945 at the municipal social welfare office [*Sozialamt*]. To ignore this declaration would subject one to criminal prosecution; cf. the official declaration on recording expropriated Jewish assets, in: *Oberhessische Presse*, 21 September 1945, GWM Archiv, folder Juden – Maccabi – jüdische Gemeinde Marburg.
- 834 Cf. written affidavit of Sara Mendel, 25 October 1948, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 1953/07.
- 835 After April 1945, Leo von Boxberger served as Marburg District Administrator, until he was replaced in October 1945 by August Eckel who held the office until June 1966. Some of the written statements of District Administrators reflect a lack of will to help out survivors: “The objective I have pursued since taking over my office has been to hinder any involvement of the military government in handling daily business of administration; only in such a way could the uniformity of administration be guaranteed [...] Any possible interference by the occupying power [...] will have to be addressed in an appropriate manner”; letter of the District Administrator of Marburg to the mayor of Kirchhain, 14 September 1945, HStAM, Best 330 Kirchhain, no. 3500. Another example: “Around November 1945, the American administrative officer for the District of Marburg, Capt.

Tedick—who shared office space with the District Administrator—ordered that those who had returned from concentration camps would be provided with the items essential to maintaining their households and occupations. The implementation of this order was left to the District Administrator. In such actions taken by the military government, [...] the German authorities were only to be *the enforcing organ*” [emphasis added]; letter of the District Administrator of Marburg to the District Court of Kirchhain, 28 May 1948, HStAM, Best. 330 Kirchhain, no. 2659.

836 Letter of the District Administrator of Marburg to the Tax Office of Marburg, 1 August 1945, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 512.

837 This note is a further indication that the assets of the Jewish residents were first taken over by the municipality and only then auctioned off by the municipality itself.

838 Draft of a letter from the Tax Office of Marburg to the District Administrator of Marburg, 11 August 1945, sent according to a note on 13 August 1945, HHStAW, Abt. 519/2, no. 512.

839 Letter of the District Administrator of Marburg to the (Lord) Mayor of Marburg, Registry Office for Jewish Property, dated as 13 August 1946 (but it must have been 13 August 1945), HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3594, p. 35. However, non-Jewish contemporary witness B is convinced that the brothers Spier were given the bedroom set of the Rülff family that was taken in 1942 by District Administrator Krawielitzki; cf. Interview B/C, p. 46f. Possibly a bed was supplied that had not (as planned) belonged to Schneider but came from the belongings of Krawielitzki. But it would also be possible that the Rülffs’ bed, unlike the majority of sources suggests, did not come into the possession of Krawielitzki in 1942 but ended up instead with Jacob Schneider.

840 Letter of the District Administrator of Marburg to the Mayor of Kirchhain, 30 November 1945, HStAM, Best. 330 Kirchhain, no. 2659. A few days later the District Administrator noted: “Until now, Walter Spier has taken possession of [...] a buffet and [...] a sofa”; file notation of the District Administrator of Marburg, 7 December 1945, HStAM, Best. 330 Kirchhain, no. 2659.

841 Letter of the District Administrator of Marburg to the Mayor of Kirchhain, 7 November 1945, HStAM, Best. 330 Kirchhain, no. 2659.

842 With reference to an unnamed Kirchhain resident, from whose household a sewing machine had been confiscated, the District Administrator put it like this: “Just how far he had let his misconduct lead him to do wrong in his activity as a member of the Party, is presently under investigation by the military government [...]. As long as this issue is not resolved properly, [...] [he] cannot be treated without qualifications as a Nazi activist. [...] I therefore ask you to refrain from further confiscations at [...] [his place], and to pick out the [...] necessary items at the homes of other Nazi activists, of which there is probably a certain number there in Kirchhain”; letter of the District Administrator of Marburg to the Mayor of Kirchhain, 15 November 1945, HStAM, Best. 330 Kirchhain, no. 2659.

843 “Please charge the auxiliary police [...] to seize furniture, etc. for the concentration camp prisoners who have returned, thoroughly and immediately. According to the information I have received, Mr. Heilmann is proceeding too mildly and indecisively in the confiscations. I am alerting you that furnishing of the residences of the concentration camp prisoner—in a manner befitting their station—must now be concluded within a few days. In particular, I would point out that the military government is proceeding with exceptional rigor against administrative officials who prove to be hesitant and indecisive in implementing measures that favor concentration camp prisoners”; letter of the District Administrator of Marburg to the Mayor of Kirchhain, 22 November 1945, HStAM, Best. 330 Kirchhain, no. 2659.

844 According to Walter Spier, Mrs. Vogel’s first name was *Anna*; cf. Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 1, p. 23.

845 Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 1, p. 23.

846 Cf. Bruno Tögel, Report of conversation with Tögel, 17 June 2009.

847 Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 3, p. 22.

848 Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 3, p. 23.

849 Walter Spier, Interview Walter Spier, SFI, p. 27.

850 Cf. Brunhilde North, Report of conversation with North. The cemetery is also the site of the grave of Friedel Rülff's mother Lina.

851 Even in 1949, after the repairs of the damage at other Jewish cemeteries had begun under pressure from the Jewish Community of Kassel in the District of Marburg, the Marburg District Administrator complained about the company that had been commissioned by the Jewish Community (*Gemeinde*) with authorization from the Hessian Ministry of the Interior: "The company Hobach, of Neukirchen am Knüll, has repositioned, straightened, and restored the inscriptions on the gravestones in various cemeteries in the district. According to figures from the municipalities, the company is reportedly taking instructions from a superior office. *The costs incurred by the municipalities are in no way consistent with the work that has been requested from here.* To the extent that gratuitous or malicious damage was done to the cemeteries in the period from 1933–1945, it should be repaired. It is primarily a matter of straightening the overturned gravestones and fixing the damages brought about by violence. However, it does not mean at this point repairing the damage caused by the weathering of the stones. Incidentally, there is also no reason to entrust this work to *out-of-town companies* [...]. I ask for caution to be exercised when awarding such contracts to non-local companies and to first assess whether a *local company* or a suitable stonemason can perform such work" [emphasis added]; letter of the District Administrator of Marburg to the mayors of the district, 11 February 1949, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3872, p. 292.

852 Pfeiff was the "lessee" of the cemetery and responsible for maintaining it (perhaps being paid by the state). After his death, his son took on the responsibility for the cemetery.

853 Cf. Martin and Walter Spier, Interview Martin and Walter Spier, pt. 3, p. 14f.

854 In the 1950s, the cemetery was once more in an utterly neglected condition. Its border areas were used by local farmers to unload their agricultural waste: "So in any case, I somehow never got the impression that it [i.e., the cemetery] had been recovered by the village, or whatever you call that"; Bettina Decke, Interview Decke, p. 16.

855 "Everyone knew about it. You didn't need to ask anyone, you know, [...]"; non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 28; Cf. as well non-Jewish contemporary witness E, Interview D/E, p. 17.

856 Cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 23.

857 On their indignation and the construction of victimhood, cf. for instance, non-Jewish contemporary witness B and non-Jewish contemporary witness C, Interview B/C, p. 28ff.

858 Cf. Alfred Spier, Interview Alfred Spier, p. 36f. He might have meant Friedel Rülff who returned to the village in American uniform in 1945. Yet since the brothers Spier did not leave the village until 1946, an assault on Friedel Rülff could clearly not have made the brothers emigrate.

859 Non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 23f.

860 Cf. Walter Spier, Report of conversation with Walter Spier, 22 November 2011.

861 Walter Spier, Interview Walter Spier, SFI, p. 39.

862 Cf. Königseder/Wetzels, Lebensmut im Wartesaal, p. 7.

863 Cf. Brenner, Nach dem Holocaust, p. 24.

864 This number has been contested; cf. Anthony, *Ins Land der Väter oder der Täter?*, p. 21f.

865 Cf. Brenner, Nach dem Holocaust, p. 26.

866 In a survey completed by the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) in 1946, 18, 072 out of 19,311 adult Jewish DPs named Palestine as their preferred country to emigrate to; cf. Anthony, *Ins Land der Väter oder der Täter?*, p. 32.

867 Cf. Dewell Giere, *Wir sind unterwegs, aber nicht in der Wüste*, p. 126.

868 A *kibbutz* is a rural collective settlement with no private ownership and grassroots decision-making structures; the *kibbutzim* played a significant role in the settlement of Palestine by Jews.

869 Cf. Dewell Giere, *Wir sind unterwegs, aber nicht in der Wüste*, p. 115.

870 While the number of *hachsharot* residents remained relatively constant in this period, the

number of Jewish DPs doubled; cf. the statistics in Dewell Giere, *Wir sind unterwegs, aber nicht in der Wüste*, p. 102.

871 The kibbutz of Rauschholzhausen is not mentioned in Hyman, *The Undefeated*, nor in other standard works such as Königseder/Wetzel, *Lebensmut im Wartesaal*, or Baumel-Schwartz, *Kibbutz Buchenwald*. However, it is referenced in Arnsberg, *Bilder—Dokumente*, p. 180; and Händler-Lachmann/Händler, *Purim*, p. 235.

872 The American Joint Distribution Committee (also known as the “Joint”) was a US-based Jewish aid organization that was active since 1914 especially in Europe. After 1945, it was particularly involved in the American Zone of Occupation. Cf. Königseder/Wetzel, *Lebensmut im Wartesaal*, p. 180.

873 The Jewish Relief Unit (JRU) was a Jewish aid organization from Great Britain that originated in Jewish Committee for Relief Abroad (JCRA) founded in 1943. After 1945 it was especially active in the British Zone of Occupation. Cf. Königseder/Wetzel, *Lebensmut im Wartesaal*, p. 179f.

874 As a result, the kibbutz of Rauschholzhausen does also not appear in the DP camp directories produced by the Joint. Cf. information received via telephone from the Nuremberg Institute for Nazi Research and Jewish History of the 20th Century, 8 July 2009.

875 Cf. report by the “Kibbutz in Memory of the ‘United Fighting Organisation in the Vilna Ghetto,’” 30 July 1946, Hashomer Hatzair Archive, (2).8.13.2; cited in Mankowitz, *Life between Memory and Hope*, p. 149.

876 Polish Jews in the Soviet Union were permitted to repatriate after February 1946; they also joined the movement to flee from Poland. Cf. Dewell Giere, *Wir sind unterwegs, aber nicht in der Wüste*, p. 108ff.

877 Cf. Mankowitz, *Life between Memory and Hope*, p. 149.

878 Cf. Mankowitz, *Life between Memory and Hope*, p. 149.

879 Cf. unknown author, “Jüdische Landwirtschaftsschule in Holzhausen”, in: *Der Weg*, vol. 1, no.23, 2 August 1946, p. 6, JMB Library; certified copy of a directory of the agricultural apprentices supervised by the UNRAA in Rauschholzhausen “from the end of 1945 to June or August 1947 and later, “produced by the mayor of Rauschholzhausen for the Regional Administration in Darmstadt, 29 March 1961, ITS Archive, Best. 3.1.1.2, no. 268.

880 Notation on a list of residents, sent by Toby Barback (JRU) to the World Jewish Congress, Search Department, date illegible, probably 9 June 1947, received on 15 July 1947; ITS Archive, Best. 3.1.1.2, no. 268. On “infiltrates”, cf. Dewell Giere, *Wir sind unterwegs, aber nicht in der Wüste*, p. 21ff.

881 Higher-level representatives of the Hashomer Hatzair frequently took part in the activities on the kibbutz; cf. the report on detailed activity of Jewish Community of Marburg and of Kibbutz Rausch-Holzhausen, Toby Barback, 2 April 1947, JMB / Wiener Library, Coll. Post-War Europe, no. HA21-5/10, p. 25. Documents of the Hashomer Hatzair provide reports on the situation in “Kibbutz Fareinigte Partisaner Organisationsye in Holzhausen (*Marburg*)” [emphasis added]; cf. the Report to Leadership, 2 July 1946, Haganah Archives; quoted in Patt, *Finding Home and Homeland* (according to information from the Nuremberg Institute).

882 Non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 27.

883 The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), founded already in 1943, viewed its main objective as observing, supporting, and repatriating the DPs who were from UN Member States, as well as the survivors of the concentration camps. On 15 November 1945, the UNRRA assumed the official administrative responsibilities of the DP camps in the American-occupied zone, yet was subject to the American military government on all essential issues. Cf. Königseder/Wetzel, *Lebensmut im Wartesaal*, p. 31ff.

884 In the Second District of the American Army, the number of Jewish DPs was 38,770 in January 1947 38,770 and 45,431 in April 1947; cf. Summary of DP Population, UNRRA, 11 January 1947, JMB / Wiener Library, Coll. Post-War Europe, no. HA5-4/8, p. 41. See also the summary of “Displaced Persons on hand in Assembly Centers”, based on information of 19 April 1947, UNRRA, 2 May 1947, JMB / Wiener Library, Coll. Post-War Europe, no. HA5-4/8, p. 73. In the UNRRA Area

- of Bad Hersfeld, there were other kibbutzim in Gersfeld and in Hattenhof (today a district in the village of Neu Hof near Fulda)—besides the Jewish DP camps in Wetzlar and Bad Salzschlirf. Cf. here Summary of DP Population, UNRRA, 11 January 1947, JMB / Wiener Library, Coll. Post-War Europe, no. HA5-4/8, p. 18f.
- 885** Cf. the address list of the UNRRA, 10 March 1946, JMB / Wiener Library, Coll. Post-War Europe, no. HA16-4/5, p. 7; station list No.11, UNRRA Assembly Centers in the U.S. Zone, UNRRA, 20 November 1946, JMB / Wiener Library, Coll. Post-War Europe, no. HA20-3/1, p. 7.
- 886** “This worker should never have been sent to an individual job, and is probably the most misplaced person in the J.R.U.” Tour report of the U.S. Zone (18 April – 26 April 1946), JRU, according to a notation of 20 May 1946, JMB / Wiener Library, Coll. Post-War Europe, no. HA6A-1/2-0001, p. 19.
- 887** “Mr. Allsop [i.e., the UNRRA Director for Allendorf, Region Marburg] speaks most highly of Toby Barback whose energy, drive and initiative is much appreciated”; summary of a conversation with T.W. Allsop, author unknown, 4 April 1946, JMB / Wiener Library, Coll. Post-War Europe, no. HA6A-3/3, p. 134.
- 888** Cf. list of volunteers and their qualifications, author unknown, presumably JRU, undated, JMB / Wiener Library, Coll. Post-War Europe, no. HA5-4/6, p. 46.
- 889** Tour report of the U.S. Zone (18 April – 26 April 1946), JRU, according to a notation of 20 May 1946, JMB / Wiener Library, Coll. Post-War Europe, no. HA6A-1/2-0001, p. 19.
- 890** Report by members of Hashomer Hatzair on the situation in “Kibbutz Fareinigte Partisaner Organisatsye in Holzhausen (Marburg)”; Report to Leadership, 2 July 1946, Haganah Archives; quoted in Patt, Finding Home and Homeland (according to information from the Nuremberg Institute).
- 891** Cf. letter from Toby Barback to Mrs. Peiser, “Regional Director” (probably of the Joint), undated, stamped on 5 August 1947, JMB / Wiener Library, Coll. Post-War Europe, no. HA7-5/19, p. 3.
- 892** Non-Jewish contemporary witness H, Interview G/H, p. 29f.
- 893** “Up here, across from the barn, I know, they were picking peas back then. In any case, they came here and were supposed to be trained a bit to do farming”; a recollection of Bruno Tögel on the period after May 1947, Interview B/C, p. 51.
- 894** Letter from Toby Barback to District Administrator Eckel of Marburg, 20 June 1946, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3594, p. 31 (English original), p. 32 (German translation).
- 895** “Dr. Eppstein in Wiesbaden, from the Ministry of Reconstruction, gave us his verbal assurance on 5 July of this year that he wants to provide funds for the kibbutz in R-Holzhausen. Could you be so kind and urge Dr. Eppstein to take care of this matter soon?”; letter of the District Administrator of Marburg to Toby Barback, 9 July 1946, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 3594, p. 34.
- 896** Unknown author, “Jüdische Landwirtschaftsschule in Holzhausen”, in: *Der Weg*, vol.1, no. 23, 2 August 1946, p. 6, JMB Library.
- 897** Israel Blumenfeld and Oscar Berger, chairmen of the Jewish Relief Committee [*Jüdisches Hilfskomitee*] for the Town and District of Marburg (established at the end of 1945) founded the Jewish DP newspaper *Jüdische Rundschau* in January 1946. Until it stopped appearing in July 1948, it published nineteen issues in twelve editions. Its main subjects were: Jewish contributions to culture, art, and politics; Judaism, history of Jewish men and women in Germany; Jewish life in DP camps, in the U.S. and especially in Palestine. The Holocaust was rarely discussed. Only the first edition focused on the Marburg region; on this, see Dewell Giere, *Wir sind unterwegs, aber nicht in der Wüste*, p. 302ff.
- 898** The closed circular form of the *hora* gives all the dancers the same status; their interconnected arms symbolize community, according to the Israel Foreign Office, Culture: Dance, accessible under: <http://www.mfa.gov.il>.
- 899** Report on “Dedication of the Jewish *Landwirtschaftsschule* in Rauisch/Holzhausen”, author not named (but most likely the JRU), 15 August 1946, JMB / Wiener Library, Coll. Post-War Europe, no. HA6B-2/24, p. 3.

- 900** Cf. Summary of DP Population, UNRRA, 11 Jan. 1947, JMB / Wiener Library, Coll. Post-War Europe, no. HA5-4/8, p. 11. Directory of residents, sent from Toby Barback to the World Jewish Congress, Search Department, date illegible but likely 9 June 1947, received on 15 July 1947, ITS Archive, Best. 3.1.1.2, no. 268. One person, Faiga Golub from Rovno, had been born as early as 1884; the directory of residents suggests that she was the mother of three other kibbutzniks. There were likewise four children born between 1944 and 1947; that figure reportedly increased to six by August 1947. Cf. letter from Toby Barback to Mrs. Peiser, "Regional Director" (probably of the Joint), undated, stamped on 5 August 1947, JMB / Wiener Library, Coll. Post-War Europe, no. HA7-5/19, p. 2.
- 901** Report by members of Hashomer Hatzair on the situation in "Kibbutz Fareinigte Partisaner Organisatsye in Holzhausen (Marburg)"; Report to Leadership, 2 July 1946, Haganah Archives, quoted in Patt, *Finding Home and Homeland* (according to information of the Nuremberg Institute).
- 902** Cf. the captions to the photos in (author unknown) "Die jüdische Landwirtschaftsschule in Holzhausen", in: *Jüdische Rundschau*, vol. 1, no. 7/8: August/September 1946, p. 45, JMB Library; copies of the photos can be found among the holdings of the Collection Paul Arnsberg, Hessen, JMF Archives, no. 413, F 87 G 564-566.
- 903** *Obshestwo Remeslenofa zemledelcheskofo Truda* (ORT, translated as "Society for Trades and Agricultural Labor") was founded in Russia in 1880. In its beginnings, it sought to help Russian Jews in the struggle against poverty and social exclusion. In the 20th century, ORT extended its activities virtually worldwide.
- 904** On the assistance from ORT, cf. monthly report for November 1946, JRU, JMB / Wiener Library, Coll. Post-War Europe, no. HA6A-2/4, p. 48.
- 905** Report on detailed activity of Jewish Community of Marburg and of Kibbutz Rausch-Holzhausen, Toby Barback, 2 April 1947, JMB / Wiener Library, Coll. Post-War Europe, no. HA21-5/10, p. 25. The way the report is formulated suggests—but does not clearly acknowledge—that the workplaces specified (the *dairy*, the tailor shop, the hairdresser, the woodshop, and the pipe repair facility) were run by the kibbutzniks and not the Jewish residents of Marburg whom Barback was assisting. If that sentence truly refers to Rauschholzhausen, the kibbutzniks there would have been working at the dairy of the former mayor Karl Wahl.
- 906** Non-Jewish contemporary witness H, Interview G/H, p. 29f. "We were all able to sing that." Both non-Jewish contemporary witnesses H and G even remember the melody of one of the songs frequently sung by the kibbutzniks; Interview G/H, p. 29, 31.
- 907** Non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 27.
- 908** Non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 26f.
- 909** "Sports club. Meets twice weekly and in conjunction with the Kibbutz which is half hours journey away have had splendid sports practice and games." Report from Toby Barback on the DPs in the town of Marburg to Mrs. Peiser, "Regional Director", (probably of the Joint), undated, stamped on 5 August 1947, JMB / Wiener Library, Coll. Post-War Europe, no. HA7-5/19, p. 2. For information on the Jewish athletic club *Makkabi Marburg*, see Hillebrecht, "Holocaustopfer erlebten den Sport", in: *Oberhessische Presse*.
- 910** The local residents describe the kibbutzniks in unflattering terms, as lazy people who needed to be taught how to work. They were depicted as having mainly lounged in the sun in the park and conducted business on the black market; they were said to have had access to an abundance of food; cf. non-Jewish contemporary witnesses G and H, Interview G/H, p. 28ff.; non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 25ff.
- 911** Report on detailed activity of Jewish Community of Marburg and of Kibbutz Rausch-Holzhausen, Toby Barback, 2 April 1947, JMB / Wiener Library, Coll. Post-War Europe, no. HA21-5/10, p. 25.
- 912** Cf. Summary of D.P. population, UNRRA Assembly Centers in the United States Zone, UNRRA, 19 April 1947, JMB / Wiener Library, Coll. Post-War Europe, no. HA20-3/5, p. 25.
- 913** Letter from Toby Barback to Mrs. Peiser, "Regional Director" (probably of the Joint), undated, stamped on 5 August 1947, JMB / Wiener Library, Coll. Post-War Europe, no. HA7-5/19, p. 3.

- 914** Letter from Toby Barback to Mrs. Peiser, “Regional Director” (probably of the Joint), undated, stamped on 5 August 1947, JMB / Wiener Library, Coll. Post-War Europe, no. HA7-5/19, p. 3.
- 915** Cf. Summary of D.P. population, UNRRA Assembly Centers in the United States Zone, UNRRA, 20 September 1947, JMB / Wiener Library, Coll. Post-War Europe, no. HA20-3/5, p. 169.
- 916** For an evaluation of her work as less than demanding: “I think that Miss Barback ought to be with-drawn from the Marburg area because it is my opinion that she does not have a full time job”; travel report (1–14 June 1947) by Simon Bloomberg, European Director, JCRA, undated, likely June 1947, JMB / Wiener Library, Coll. Post-War Europe, no. HA6A-1/5, p. 19. For an assessment of her work as very demanding: “[She is] [...] doing [a] colossal [...] [job] of work with the very minimum of outside assistance (JCRA, JRU, UNRRA). Therefore, what I have seen during the past week only re-affirms my previous claims that if we are unable to give every possible aid to our workers in this zone, we should withdraw and concentrate on the one [British] zone only”; letter from Sydney Rose, Senior Representative JCRA, to Leonard Cohen, Chairman JCRA, London, 3 March 1947, JMB / Wiener Library, Coll. Post-War Europe, no. HA21-4/10, p. 9f.
- 917** “I am still of the opinion that the work at Marburg does not justify a full time worker and I suggest that when she [i.e., Toby Barback] goes on leave next month you seriously consider the termination of her appointment”; extract from Mr. Bloomberg’s report (excerpter unknown but likely JRU), 18 July 1947, JMB / Wiener Library, Coll. Post-War Europe, no. HA6B-2/13, p. 10.
- 918** Friderike Bein, née Löwenstein (born on 15 August 1883 in Rauischholzhausen), lived in Beelitz near Potsdam and was deported on 13 June 1942 from Berlin to the extermination camp Sobibór, where she was murdered; cf. Federal Archive, *Memorial Book*, <http://www.bundesarchiv.de/gedenkbuch>. According to different information, Sara Mendel’s second sister was named *Rebekka* Bein: Schneider, *Die jüdischen Gemeinden*, p. 349.
- 919** Sara Mendel’s nephew David Frenkel was living in 1954 in Southern Rhodesia; her niece Resi Helish, née Frenkel, in Israel; and her niece, Hanne Lotte Noy, née Bein, in London. Cf. will and testament Sara Mendel, issued on 7 March 1954, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902. In 1950 Sara Mendel visited Resi Helish in Israel; cf. letter to the Regional Administrator of Kassel regarded the continuance of a “restitution pension” for Sara Mendel, unknown author, 12 June 1950, HH-StAW, Abt. 518, no. 1953/07.
- 920** For the Holocaust had made it literally impossible for Sara Mendel (and other survivors) to “continue” their old lives; cf. Jeggle, *Nachrede*, p. 402.
- 921** Cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness A, Interview A, p. 21; Bettina Decke, Interview Decke, p. 8, 15f.
- 922** Cf. findings of a medical examination of Sara Mendel, 12 April 1950, at the District Health Office of Marburg, 28 July 1950, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902.
- 923** Cf. Bettina Decke, Interview Decke, p. 7.
- 924** Cf. letter of the Marburg Support Center for the Politically, Racially, and Religiously Persecuted to the District Housing Office of Marburg, 7 June 1947, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 1953/07.
- 925** Letter from Sara Mendel to the Marburg Support Center for the Politically, Racially, and Religiously Persecuted, 25 January 1947, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 1953/07. In November 1947, the American military government issued a Restitution Law [*Rückerstattungsgesetz*]. In September 1949 it was followed by the first so-called “Compensation Law” [*Entschädigungsgesetz*]. However, the “compensation payments” to survivors—who were required to provide proof of their status—were made only after a series of tedious procedures. Moreover, to a large degree, they were initially dependent on the whims of the relevant German officials. Even after the first pertinent German laws were decreed in 1953, the disbursements of the payments took place at a rather deliberate pace. Many of the survivors did not receive their first disbursements until the end of the 1950s. Cf. Brenner, *Nach dem Holocaust*, p. 91ff.
- 926** Letter from Sara Mendel to the Marburg Support Center for the Politically, Racially, and Religiously Persecuted, 21 September 1948, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 1953/07.

- 927 Letter from the Marburg Support Center for the Politically, Racially, and Religiously Persecuted to Sara Mendel, 5 March 1949, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 1953/07.
- 928 Letter of the District Administrator of Marburg to Sara Mendel, 25 February 1949, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 1953/07. On the demand that Sara Mendel give back the radio, see also the portrayal in: Händler-Lachmann/Händler, Purim, p. 237.
- 929 Letter from Sara Mendel to the District Administrator of Marburg, 2 March 1949, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 1953/07.
- 930 Cf. application of Sara Mendel for a continuance of the “restitution pension”, 15 August 1950, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902. Cf. also Decke, “Aus Frau Mendels Dorf”, in: *taz*.
- 931 Cf. letter of the Regional Administrator of Kassel, Main Support Center for the Politically, Racially, and Religiously Persecuted, to Sara Mendel, 23 November 1948, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902. Mendel’s application for a continuation of the pension was not granted since “the awarding of pensions [...] is now made according to the stipulations of the EG [i.e., the “restitution law” or *Entschädigungsgesetz*]”; letter of the Regional Administrator of Kassel to the Municipal Authority of the town of Marburg, 24 August 1950, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902.
- 932 Cf. letter of the Regional Administrator of Kassel to the Hessian Ministry of the Interior, Department for Restitution [*Wiedergutmachung*], 1 August 1952, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902.
- 933 Cf. letter of the Regional Administrator of Kassel to the Hessian Ministry of the Interior, Department for Restitution [*Wiedergutmachung*], 1 August 1952, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902.
- 934 “Apart from that, I am drawing your attention to the deduction plan specified in the HE notice [i.e., *Haftenschädigungs-Bescheid* or “imprisonment restitution notice”] of 12 September 1952, your agreement with which you have confirmed in your waiver of 25 September 1950. Of course, no one can receive more than is permitted by the EG [*Entschädigungsgesetz*, or “compensation law”].” Letter of the Regional Administrator of Kassel to Sara Mendel, 21 April 1952, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902.
- 935 Letter from Sara Mendel to the Regional Administrator of Kassel, received on 25 August 1951, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902.
- 936 Letter of the Regional Administrator of Kassel to the Hessian Ministry of the Interior, Department for Restitution [*Wiedergutmachung*], 1 August 1952, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902.
- 937 Letter of the Regional Administrator of Kassel to the District Administrator of Marburg, 21 August 1952, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902. On Sara Mendel’s claim for compensation due to loss of business: “Despite serious investigation, nothing could be determined about the business closure alleged to have taken place in 1937. There are no extant files concerning this matter. In addition, the registrar at the time, who is still in service today, does not remember events of this kind. [...] I agree with the view of the mayor that Gendarmerie-Master Seipel is the most convincing source for reporting on events from that time”; letter of the District Administrator of Marburg to the Regional Administrator of Kassel, 2 September 1952, HStAW 518, 5902. In the compensation proceedings concerning Sara Mendel, the witness statements of Daniel Scheld, the former Nazi block leader, and Karl Schott, the auctioneer, were likewise granted significant weight. Cf. HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902.
- 938 Cf. decision regarding Sara Mendel at the Restitution Chamber of the Regional Court of Gießen, 16 March 1951, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902.
- 939 “After my return [...] I had established a small business in order to feed myself. But I do not have the funds to continue it. I have made a claim to the German Reich for 4000 DM, by means of a decision by the Restitution Chamber, [...] for furniture and other movable property [...]. I am asking you, Mr. Chancellor Dr. Adenauer to help me in getting an advance disbursement from this claim. I have already contacted several agencies but always received a negative response. Please excuse me for having bothered you, Mr. Chancellor; I was at my wit’s end”; copy of a letter from Sara Mendel to Konrad Adenauer, 25 June 1952, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902.
- 940 Letter from Sara Mendel to the Regional Administrator of Kassel, 22 February 1954, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902. He answered her thus on 26 February 1954: “Unfortunately I am not in a

position to assist you in obtaining a payout of the fixed amount of 4000 DM awarded by the WiK in Kassel [i.e., the Restitution Chamber at the Regional Court in Kassel] as your RE claims against the German Reich. The state of Hesse does not have to pay for these claims. A law is supposedly being prepared by the Federal Government for fulfilling these claims. The case of someone who owns a house and land assessed at a value of 8000 DM cannot be acknowledged as an emergency that would justify an application for a benefit from the HF [i.e., *Härtefonds* or Hardship Fund]. I regret that I am not able under these circumstances to provide you with favorable news"; letter of the Regional Administrator of Kassel to Sara Mendel, 26 February 1954, HHStAW, Abt. 518, no. 5902.

941 The Decke family lived since 1953 in Rauschholzhausen, have moved there from Marburg where Ludwig Decke had been in medical practice. Until the close of the 1940s he had been a member of the VVN [i.e., the *Vereinigung der Verfolgten des Naziregimes*, or "Association of those Persecuted by the Nazi Regime"]. The mother of Dorothea Decke, who passed away in 1944, was a Polish Jew. In the village, the Decke family was regarded as Jewish even though they all were Lutherans and the daughters had been confirmed in the village church.

942 Bettina Decke, Interview Decke, p. 7.

943 Bettina Decke, Interview Decke, p. 5.

944 Cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness A, Interview A, p. 3f.; non-Jewish contemporary witnesses G and H, Interview G/H, p. 8f.; non-Jewish contemporary witness E, Interview D/E, p. 18.

945 Cf. non-Jewish daughter of contemporary witness A, Interview A, p. 3f.; Marianne Junge, Interview Junge, p. 7f.

946 Marianne Junge, Interview Junge, p. 7f.

947 Cf. Decke, "Aus Frau Mendels Dorf", in: *taz*; non-Jewish contemporary witness A, Interview A, p. 11.

948 Cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness H, Interview G/H, p. 10.

949 Bettina Decke, Interview Decke, p. 5.

950 Non-Jewish contemporary witness A, Interview A, p. 22.

951 Cf. the quite similar analysis in: Hoffmann, *Verfolgung und Alltagsleben*, p. 386f.

952 It is unknown whether Sara und Hermann Mendel ever planned to emigrate.

953 Cf. the similar depiction of events in: Hoffmann, *Verfolgung und Alltagsleben*, p. 395.

954 Cf. Hilberg, *Täter, Opfer, Zuschauer*, p. 123ff., 233ff.

955 Emphasizing this circumstance should not conceal the fact that National Socialist policy intended to create an absolutely masculinist social order.

956 Nothing is known about the political orientation of Heinrich Amend, who served as mayor between 1919 and 1935.

957 In the group of all known perpetrators, there were six persons born between 1890 and 1900, three born between 1903 and 1907, and two born between 1912 and 1914. In 1933, the average age of perpetrators whose ages are known was 31.

958 While the Nazi Party recorded remarkably few working men and women among its new members between 1925 and 1933, the proportion of working-class men within the SA was consistent with the proportion of such men within the German labor force at the time. With respect to research on rural areas, one finds that agricultural workers were underrepresented within the SA; cf. Reichardt, *Faschistische Kampfbünde*, p. 311ff., 314, 323.

959 Cf. Reichardt, *Faschistische Kampfbünde*, p. 324.

960 Cf. Bergmann/Wetzel, "Der Miterlebende weiß nichts", p. 192f.

961 Cf. for details on the position of the bystander/observer: Sofsky, *Traktat über die Gewalt*, p. 101ff., 115ff.

962 "Deubel's Lisbeth" was the only one watching the deportation in tears, although she was some distance away. Cf. Martin Spier, Interview Martin und Walter Spier, pt. 2, p. 33.

963 Walter Spier, Interview Martin und Walter Spier, pt. 1, p. 13.

964 Non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 20f.

- 965 Cf. Friedländer, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*, pt. 1, p. 98.
- 966 On this, see: Postone, *Antisemitismus und Nationalsozialismus*, p. 165ff.
- 967 Cf. Walkenhorst, *Der "Daseinskampf des Deutschen Volkes"*, p. 131ff.
- 968 Cf. Moreitz, *Judenfeindschaft*, p. 124f., 129, 132.
- 969 Cf. Hoffmann, *Der Antisemitismus als Baugerüst*, p. 46ff., 49ff.
- 970 Cf. Holz, *Die antisemitische Konstruktion*, p. 54, for a general account of how national anti-semitism was constructed: p. 43ff.
- 971 Adolf Stoecker, 1879, quoted in: Holz, *Die antisemitische Konstruktion*, p. 57.
- 972 Adolf Hitler, 1920, quoted in: Holz, *Die antisemitische Konstruktion*, p. 55f.
- 973 For a detailed account of the ideology of redemptive antisemitism, see: Friedländer, *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden*, pt. 1, p. 101ff.
- 974 Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, p. 434, quoted in: Wildt, *Volksgemeinschaft als Selbstermächtigung*, p. 358.
- 975 Cf. Wildt, *Volksgemeinschaft als Selbstermächtigung*, p. 361.
- 976 In his summary of village conditions as of 1933, Christhard Hoffman portrays the normal state of the Hessian province until 1935, which included pogrom-like riots in a few of the smallest Hessian communities. His presentation reads in part like a page out of the history of Rauschholzhausen in the same period, thus casting this village in a less exceptional light; cf. Hoffmann, *Verfolgung und Alltagsleben*, p. 374ff.
- 977 Sofsky, *Traktat über die Gewalt*, p. 116.
- 978 Cf. Wildt, *Volksgemeinschaft als Selbstermächtigung*, p. 364.
- 979 Ernst Fraenkel, quoted in: Wildt, *Volksgemeinschaft als Selbstermächtigung*, p. 369.
- 980 Cf. Wildt, *Volksgemeinschaft als Selbstermächtigung*, p. 373.
- 981 Cf. Wildt, *Volksgemeinschaft als Selbstermächtigung*, p. 367.
- 982 Cf. Wildt, *Volksgemeinschaft als Selbstermächtigung*, p. 371f.; Sofsky, *Traktat über die Gewalt*, p. 115f.
- 983 Cf. Sofsky, *Traktat über die Gewalt*, p. 116.
- 984 By using the term "rule" (also translatable as *domination*), I am alluding conceptually to the work of Michel Foucault. Foucault distinguishes between *power relations*, which are ubiquitous relations that are in principle reversible and changeable, and *states of rule*, in which the social relations of power have been permanently stabilized. While human relations cover a wide spectrum of power relations, states of rule emerge "[when] an individual or social group manages to block the field of power relations ... to prevent all reversibility of movement [...]; Foucault, *Die Ethik der Sorge*, p. 878
- 985 Cf. Sofsky, *Traktat über die Gewalt*, p. 186f.
- 986 Cf. Wildt, *Volksgemeinschaft als Selbstermächtigung*, p. 374.
- 987 Wildt, *Volksgemeinschaft als Selbstermächtigung*, p. 370, 372.
- 988 Letter of the District Administration in Marburg to the Gestapo in Kassel, 7 Sept. 1942, HStAM, Best. 180 Marburg, no. 4830, p. 25.
- 989 Martin Spier, Interview of Martin und Walter Spier, pt. 3, p. 30.
- 990 Non-Jewish contemporary witness F, Interview F, p. 1.
- 991 Non-Jewish contemporary witness E, Interview D/E, p. 14.
- 992 Cf. the similar analysis in: Jeggle, *Nachrede*, p. 399, 401f.
- 993 Cf. Libeskind, *trauma/void*, p. 3; Hechler, *Wer fehlt?*, p. 171.
- 994 Friedel Rülff, Interview Rülff, GWM, p. 15f. While he was invited in 1980 and also listed in the commemorative publication for on that 50th anniversary of the association as a member to be honored with a special pin, his name was missing from 1990 list of honorees; cf. Spielvereinigung 1930 Rauschholzhausen e.V. (ed.), *Festschrift zum 50-jährigen Jubiläum*, p. 29, 31; as well as *Festschrift zum 60jährigen Bestehen*, p. 45f. By contrast, according to information obtained from the current association chairman (after an enquiry with the board of directors from 1990), Friedel Rülff was invited to the 1990 celebration; cf. Dieter Grün, *Gesprächsprotokoll Grün*, 2.7.2011. Hans

Vogel was the official chairman in 1980 but only an honorary chairman in 1990 — which contrasts with Rülff's assessment. This means the invitation of 1980 was issued while Vogel was the chairman. It is nonetheless worth noting that Friedel Rülff explained the 1990 circumstances in the way he did. Rülff died on 13 August 2000 at the age of 94 in New York City.

995 Cf. Hechler, "Unsere Gemeinde ist jetzt vollkommen judenfrei", p. 15.

996 Cf. non-Jewish contemporary witness C, Interview B/C, p. 18.

997 Non-Jewish contemporary witness A, Interview A, p. 27; she even presumed that the memorial only commemorated those who had died in World War II. This war memorial, a site for commemoration on the annual *Volkstrauertag* (German version of the American "Memorial Day") also contains the name of Heinrich Becker, my biological grandfather, under the caption "Selig sind die Toten, die in dem Herrn starben" [blessed are the dead who died in God's name].

998 For a detailed account of collective memory, see: Assmann, *Der lange Schatten*, p. 29ff., 205ff.; for a differentiation of its cultural and communicative forms, see: Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis*, p. 56.

999 In the meantime, the "administrator of the keys" for the gated cemetery is the great-grandson of the former "leaseholder" Johannes Pfeiff.

1000 Jeggle, *Nachrede*, p. 409.

1001 The village dialect still contains Yiddish terms like "meschugge" (crazy) and "Reibach" (profit). In addition, there are also some village-specific idioms that allude to the former Jewish residents, such as, for example, "Gott der Gerechte, nun wollen wir schächte" (God is just; now let us start the slaughtering [of animals]). At least the older generation in Rauischholzhausen today still uses what was once an antisemitic insult, "Itziger", as a general term of abuse.

1002 Cf. Jeggle, *Nachrede*, p. 410.

1003 Non-Jewish contemporary witness N, Interview N/O, GWM, p. 3; on this, cf. the corresponding information provided in the official local chronicle (or *Ortschronik*): Kaiser, *Rauischholzhausen*, p. 119.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Oral History Sources

Jewish Survivors and their Descendants

- Baumann, Edith (*1920); Spier, Martin (*1925) and Walter (*1927), Interview conducted by author, in two parts, 18 August 2009, New York City, USA.
- I, Jewish survivor, Interview by Barbara Händler-Lachmann and Ulrich Schütt, History Workshop of Marburg, 5 March 1990, Marburg (anonymizing abbreviation of the History Workshop: I.F.).
- North, Brunhilde (*1929), conversation led by author, 15 June 2009, Rauschholzhausen.
- Rülf, Friedel (*1905), Interview by Barbara Händler-Lachmann and Ulrich Schütt, History Workshop of Marburg, 25 July 1990, Bad Nauheim.
- Spier, Alfred (*1924), Interview by Barbara Händler-Lachmann and Ulrich Schütt, History Workshop of Marburg, 18 February 1990, Bielefeld (transcript of the interview includes the log of a conversation).
- Spier, Alfred (*1924), Interview by Pia Riese, Code 18683, Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation Institute, © 2009, accessible at: <http://www.vha.fu-berlin.de> (last accessed on: 1–2 July 2009), 19 August 1996, Bielefeld. Transcript compiled by author.
- Spier, Alfred (*1924), Interview conducted by author, 6 August 2009, Bielefeld.
- Spier, Martin (*1925), Interview by Rita Davis, Code 27711, Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation Institute, © 2009, accessible at: <http://www.vha.fu-berlin.de> (last accessed on: 3–6 July 2009), 16 March 1997, New York City, USA. Transcript compiled by author.
- Spier, Martin (*1925) and Walter (*1927), Interview conducted by author, in three parts, 18 and 20 August 2009, New York City, USA.
- Spier, Walter (*1927), Interview by Brian Cohen, Code 7040, Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation Institute, © 2009, accessible at: <http://www.vha.fu-berlin.de> (last accessed on: 7/8 July 2009), 7 January 1996, New York City, USA. Transcript compiled by author.
- Spier, Walter (*1927), conversations led by author after completion of actual research: 8 May 2011 in Rauschholzhausen and 22 November 2011 in New York City, USA.
- Stern, Renee, Email received by author, 31 December 2009.

Non-Jewish Interlocutors

- A, non-Jewish contemporary witness, Interview conducted by author, 30 July 2009, Rauischholzhausen.
- Aktueller Ortsvorsteher [*municipal manager*] of Rauischholzhausen, conversation conducted by author, 4 June 2009, Rauischholzhausen.
- B, non-Jewish contemporary witness and C, non-Jewish contemporary witness, Interview conducted by author, 30 July 2009, Rauischholzhausen.
- D, non-Jewish contemporary witness and E, non-Jewish contemporary witness, interview conducted by author, 31 July 2009, Rauischholzhausen.
- Decke, Bettina (*1944), Interview conducted by author, 22 July 2009, Bremen.
- F, non-Jewish contemporary witness, Interview conducted by author, 31 July 2009, Rauischholzhausen.
- G and H, non-Jewish contemporary witnesses, Interview conducted by author, 29 July 2009, Rauischholzhausen.
- Grün, Dieter, present board chairman [*Vorstandsvorsitzender*] of the Spielvereinigung [i.e., *soccer club*] 1930 Rauischholzhausen e.V., conversation conducted by author after completion of actual research: 2 July 2011, Rauischholzhausen.
- H, non-Jewish contemporary witness, conversation conducted by author after completion of actual research: 9 May 2011, Rauischholzhausen.
- J, non-Jewish contemporary witness, and K, non-Jewish contemporary witness, Interview by Barbara Händler-Lachmann and Ulrich Schütt, History Workshop of Marburg, 6 March 1990, Ebsdorf (anonymizing abbreviation of the History Workshop for J: H. H.).
- Junge, Marianne (*1945), Interview conducted by author, 24 July 2009, Berlin.
- L, non-Jewish contemporary witness and M, non-Jewish contemporary witness, Interview by Barbara Händler-Lachmann and Ulrich Schütt, History Workshop of Marburg, 11 December 1989, Rauischholzhausen (anonymizing abbreviation of the History Workshop for L: E. O.).
- N, non-Jewish contemporary witness and O, non-Jewish contemporary witness, Interview by Barbara Händler-Lachmann and Ulrich Schütt, History Workshop of Marburg, 28 November 1989, Rauischholzhausen (anonymizing abbreviation of the History Workshop for N: H. P.).
- Tögel, Anna-Katharina (*1915), Interview conducted by author, 2 August 2009, Rauischholzhausen.
- Tögel, Anna-Katharina (*1915) and Bruno (*1925), conversation conducted by author, 17 June, 18 June, 23 June and 2 August 2009, Rauischholzhausen.

Autobiographical Reports by Survivors

- Spier-Cohen, Gisela: Aus den Erinnerungen an Kindheit und Konzentrationslager, 2nd ed., Marburg 1998.
- Stern, Heinemann: Warum hassen sie uns eigentlich? Jüdisches Leben zwischen den Kriegen, Erinnerungen herausgegeben und kommentiert von Meyer, Hans C., Düsseldorf 1970.

Private Collections

All accessed in 2011–12

Private photo collection of Steven L. Bachenheimer, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

Private photo collection of Edith Baumann, New York City.

Private photo collection of Hajo Bewernick, Dreihäusen (Ebsdorfergrund).

Private photo and document collection of Ingrid Binot, Rauschholzhausen.

Private photo collection of Steve North, Roslyn Heights, New York.

Private document collection of Family P, Rauschholzhausen.

Private photo collection of Alfred Spier, Bielefeld.

Private photo and document collection of Martin Spier, New York City.

Private photo and document collection of Walter Spier, New York City.

Archival Sources

Archive of the History Workshop of Marburg (GWM Archive)

Letters of Jewish survivors from the district of Marburg.

Transcripts of interviews with Jewish and non-Jewish contemporary witnesses from the district of Marburg.

Newspaper collection, *Oberhessische Presse* of 1945.

Jewish Museum of Berlin (JMB)

Dependance Wiener Library, Collection Post-War Europe. Refugees, Exile and Resettlement, 1945–1950.

Library holdings of Jewish DP newspapers.

Archive of Jewish Museum in Frankfurt a. M. (JMF Archive)

Collection of Paul Arnsberg, Hessen.

Free University of Berlin

Access to the Visual History Archive of the USC Shoah Foundation Institute.

Archive of the International Tracing Service in Bad Arolsen (ITS Archive)

Collection 3.1.1.2, listed record of DPs in DP camps.

Municipal Archive of Rauischholzhausen (“Gemeindearchiv RH”)

Residential registry [*Melderegister*] of Rauischholzhausen 1933–1943.

Unpublished writings [*Nachlass*] of the local chronicler [*Ortschronist*] Franz Kaiser.

Hessian State Archive in Marburg (HStAM)

Collection 165, Prussian Government of Kassel, Department I (Department of the Interior), Presidential Department.

Collection 180 Kirchhain, district office of Kirchhain.

Collection 180 Marburg, district office of Marburg.

Collection 224, Hessian Fire Insurance Institute in Kassel.

Collection 327/1, Nazi Party [*NSDAP*].

Collection 330 Amöneburg, Municipal Archive of Amöneburg, sub-collection F: Communal files of Roßdorf.

Collection 330 Kirchhain, Municipal Archive of Kirchhain.

Main Hessian State Archive in Wiesbaden (HHStAW)

Department 365, Registry of Jews in Hessian communities.

Department 518, Regional councils as indemnification authorities.

Department 519/2, State office for asset control and restitution in Hessen, tax office files.

Department 519/3, State office for asset control and restitution in Hessen, currency files.

Internet Archives and Databases

Arbeitsgemeinschaft für die Erforschung der Geschichte der Juden im süddeutschen und angrenzenden Raum: Alemannia Judaica, accessible at: <http://www.alemannia-judaica.de>.

Bundesarchiv [*Federal Archives*], Koblenz: Gedenkbuch für die Opfer der Verfolgung der Juden unter der nationalsozialistischen Gewaltherrschaft in Deutschland 1933–1945, accessible at: <http://www.bundesarchiv.de/gedenkbuch>.

Deutsche Nationalbibliothek [*German National Library*]: Exilpresse digital. Deutschsprachige Exilzeitschriften 1933–1945, accessible at: <http://deposit.ddb.de/online/exil/exil.htm>.

Fritz-Bauer-Institut, Frankfurt am Main: Vor dem Holocaust – Fotos zum jüdischen Alltagsleben in Hessen, accessible at: <http://www.vor-dem-holocaust.de>.

Jewish Historical Museum, Amsterdam: Digital Monument to the Jewish Community in the Netherlands, accessible at: <http://www.joodsmonument.nl>.

Klein, Hans-Peter; Pettelkau, Hans: Projekt Juden in Nordhessen, accessible at: <http://www.jinh.site50.net>.

Yad Vashem, Jerusalem: Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names, accessible at: <http://www.yad-vashem.org/wps/portal>.

Edited Sources and Legal Compendia

- Klein, Thomas (ed.): Der Regierungsbezirk Kassel 1933–1936. Die Berichte des Regierungspräsidenten und der Landräte, Darmstadt 1985.
- Klein, Thomas (ed.): Die Lageberichte der Geheimen Staatspolizei über die Provinz Hessen-Nassau 1933–1936, Köln 1986.
- Klein, Thomas (ed.): Die Hessen als Reichstagswähler. Tabellenwerk zur politischen Landesgeschichte 1867–1933, Band 2: Provinz Hessen-Nassau und Waldeck-Pyrmont 1919–1933, Teilband 1: Regierungsbezirk Kassel und Waldeck-Pyrmont, Marburg 1992.
- Walk, Joseph (ed.): Das Sonderrecht für die Juden im NS-Staat. Eine Sammlung der gesetzlichen Maßnahmen und Richtlinien – Inhalt und Bedeutung, 2nd ed., Heidelberg 1996.

Secondary Sources

Literature

- Abram, Ido; Heyl, Matthias: Thema Holocaust. Ein Buch für die Schule, Reinbek bei Hamburg 1996.
- Adamczak, Bini: Antisemitismus dekonstruieren? Essentialismus und Antiessentialismus in queer und antinationaler Politik, in: A.G. Gender-Killer (ed.): Antisemitismus und Geschlecht. Von „effeminierten Juden“, „maskulinisierten Jüdinnen“ und anderen Geschlechterbildern, Münster 2005, pp. 223–238.
- Althaus, Hans P.: Mauscheln. Ein Wort als Waffe, Berlin 2002.
- Anthony, Tamara: Ins Land der Väter oder der Täter? Israel und die Juden in Deutschland nach der Shoah, Berlin 2004.
- Arnsberg, Paul: Die jüdischen Gemeinden in Hessen. Anfang, Untergang, Neubeginn, Frankfurt am Main 1971.
- Arnsberg, Paul: Die jüdischen Gemeinden in Hessen. Bilder, Dokumente, Darmstadt 1973.
- Assmann, Aleida: Der lange Schatten der Vergangenheit. Erinnerungskultur und Geschichtspolitik, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, Bonn 2007.
- Assmann, Jan: Das kulturelle Gedächtnis. Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen, München 1992.
- Baumel-Schwartz, Judith Tydor: Kibbutz Buchenwald: survivors and pioneers, New Brunswick (New Jersey) 1997.
- Benz, Wolfgang (ed.): Die Juden in Deutschland 1933–1945. Leben unter nationalsozialistischer Herrschaft, München 1988.
- Benz, Wolfgang: Geschichte des Dritten Reiches, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, München 2000.
- Bergmann, Werner; Wetzell, Juliane: „Der Miterlebende weiß nichts“. Alltagsantisemitismus als zeitgenössische Erfahrung und spätere Erinnerung (1919–1933), in: Benz, Wolfgang; Paucker, Arnold et al. (ed.): Jüdisches Leben in der Weimarer Republik, Tübingen 1998, pp. 173–196.
- Bludau, Kuno: Nationalismus und Genossenschaften, Hannover 1968.

- Bock, Gisela: Zwangssterilisation im Nationalsozialismus. Studien zur Rassenpolitik und Frauenpolitik, Opladen 1986.
- Brenner, Michael: Nach dem Holocaust: Juden in Deutschland 1945–1950, München 1995.
- Browning, Christopher: Die Entfesselung der „Endlösung“. Nationalsozialistische Judenpolitik 1939–1942, München 2003.
- Der Kreisausschuß des Landkreises Marburg-Biedenkopf (ed.): Die ehemaligen Synagogen im Landkreis Marburg-Biedenkopf, Marburg 1999.
- Dettmring, Erhart; Grenz, Rudolf (ed.): Marburger Geschichte: Rückblick auf die Stadtgeschichte in Einzelbeiträgen, Marburg 1980.
- Deuker, Hermann; Dienstbach, Ingo u.a.: Der Schloßpark von Rauischholzhausen, 2nd ed., Gießen 1986.
- Dewell Giere, Jaqueline: Wir sind unterwegs, aber nicht in der Wüste – „Mir sajenen unterwegs, ober nischt in midber“. Erziehung und Kultur in den jüdischen Displaced Persons-Lagern der amerikanischen Zone im Nachkriegsdeutschland 1945–1949, published dissertation, Frankfurt am Main 1993.
- Diner, Dan: Vom „Anschluss“ zur „Kristallnacht“ – Das Krisenjahr 1938, in: Stiftung Jüdisches Museum Berlin, Stiftung Haus der Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (ed.): Heimat und Exil. Emigration der deutschen Juden nach 1933, Frankfurt am Main 2006, pp. 22–25.
- Drobisch, Klaus; Wieland, Günther: System der NS-Konzentrationslager 1933–1939, Berlin 1993.
- Fey, Heinrich; Heinel, Karl (ed.): 1200 Jahre Rauischholzhausen. Festschrift aus Anlaß der 1200 Jahrfeier des Ortsteiles Rauischholzhausen der Gemeinde Ebsdorfergrund. Festwoche vom 13. bis 22. Juni 1981, Rauischholzhausen 1981.
- Foucault, Michel: Die Ethik der Sorge um sich als Praxis der Freiheit, in: *ibid.*: Schriften in vier Bänden. Dits et Ecrits, ed. Defert, Daniel; Ewald, François, vol. IV: 1980–1988, Frankfurt am Main 2005, no. 356, pp. 875–902.
- Foucault, Michel: Die Ordnung des Diskurses, 10th ed., Frankfurt am Main 2007.
- Friedländer, Saul: Das Dritte Reich und die Juden. Verfolgung und Vernichtung 1933–1945, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, Bonn 2006.
- Friedländer, Saul: Eine integrierte Geschichte des Holocaust, in: *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, no. 14–15, 2007, pp. 7–14.
- Goñi, Uki: Odessa: Die wahre Geschichte. Fluchthilfe für NS-Kriegsverbrecher, 3rd ed., Berlin 2009.
- Grele, Ronald J.: Ziellose Bewegung. Methodologische und theoretische Probleme der Oral History, in: Niethammer, Lutz (ed.): Lebenserfahrung und kollektives Gedächtnis. Die Praxis der „Oral History“, Frankfurt am Main 1985, pp. 195–220.
- Gruchmann, Lothar: Justiz im Dritten Reich 1933–1940. Anpassung und Unterwerfung in der Ära Gürtner, München 1988.
- Gutmann, Israel (chief ed.); Jäckel, Eberhard et al. (ed. German edition): Enzyklopädie des Holocaust. Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden, vol. I: A–G, 2nd ed., München 1998.
- Hagemann, Karen: „Ich glaub’ nicht, daß ich Wichtiges zu erzählen hab’ ...“. Oral History und historische Frauenforschung, in: Vorländer, Herwart (ed.): Oral History: Mündlich erfragte Geschichte. Acht Beiträge, Göttingen 1990, pp. 29–48.
- Halbwachs, Maurice: Das Gedächtnis und seine sozialen Bedingungen, Frankfurt am Main 1985.
- Halbwachs, Maurice: Das kollektive Gedächtnis, Frankfurt am Main 1991.
- Händler-Lachmann, Barbara; Schütt, Ulrich: „unbekannt verzogen“ oder „weggemacht“. Schicksale der Juden im alten Landkreis Marburg 1933–1945, Marburg 1992.
- Händler-Lachmann, Barbara; Händler, Harald u.a.: Purim, Purim, ihr liebe Leut, wißt ihr was Purim bedeut? Jüdisches Leben im Landkreis Marburg im 20. Jahrhundert, Marburg 1995.

- Hechler, Andreas: Wer fehlt? Voids in Reinhardtsdorf-Schöna, in: Blask, Falk (ed.): Ein Dorf voller Narren. Karneval – Idylle – Rechtsextremismus, Münster 2007, pp. 171–196.
- Hechler, Andreas: „Unsere Gemeinde ist jetzt vollkommen judenfrei“. Voids in Reinhardtsdorf-Schöna. Effekte des deutschen Antisemitismus, unpublished masters thesis, Berlin 2008.
- Hessisches Landesamt für geschichtliche Landeskunde (ed.): Historisches Ortslexikon des Landes Hessen, vol. 3: Marburg, Marburg 1979.
- Hilberg, Raul: Täter, Opfer, Zuschauer. Die Vernichtung der Juden 1933–1945, Frankfurt am Main 1997.
- Hilberg, Raul: Die Vernichtung der europäischen Juden, 9th ed., Frankfurt am Main 1999.
- Hoffmann, Christhard: Verfolgung und Alltagsleben der Landjuden im nationalsozialistischen Deutschland, in: Richarz, Monika; Rürup, Reinhard (ed.): Jüdisches Leben auf dem Lande. Studien zur deutsch-jüdischen Geschichte, Tübingen 1997, pp. 373–398.
- Hoffmann, Lutz: Der Antisemitismus als Baugerüst der deutschen Nation, in: Arbeitskreis Kritik des deutschen Antisemitismus (ed.): Antisemitismus – die deutsche Normalität. Geschichte und Wirkungsweise des Vernichtungswahns, Freiburg 2001, pp. 43–58.
- Holz, Klaus: Die antisemitische Konstruktion des „Dritten“ und die nationale Ordnung der Welt, in: von Braun, Christina; Ziege, Eva-Maria (ed.): „Das ‚bewegliche‘ Vorurteil“. Aspekte des internationalen Antisemitismus, Würzburg 2004, pp. 43–61.
- Hyman, Abraham S.: The Undefeated, Jerusalem 1993.
- Jeggle, Utz: Nachrede: Erinnerungen an die Dorfjuden heute, in: Richarz, Monika; Rürup, Reinhard (ed.): Jüdisches Leben auf dem Lande. Studien zur deutsch-jüdischen Geschichte, Tübingen 1997, pp. 399–411.
- Jureit, Ulrike: Erinnerungsmuster. Zur Methodik lebensgeschichtlicher Interviews mit Überlebenden der Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslager, Hamburg 1999.
- Kaiser, Franz: Jüdische Familien in Rauisch-Holzhausen nach dem ersten Weltkrieg, unpublished, undated. (*Used in the original version as well as in the revised one by Helmut Vogler [Rauischholzhausen 2008]; located [among other places] at the Municipal Archive of Rauischholzhausen, among the unpublished writings of Franz Kaiser.*)
- Kaiser, Franz: Leben und Treiben der Juden (Jerre) in Holzhausen (ab 1934 Rauischholzhausen) von der Kaiser- bis zur Hitlerzeit, unpublished, undated. (*Used in the original version as well as in the revised one by Helmut Vogler [Rauischholzhausen 2008]; located [among other places] at the Municipal Archive of Rauischholzhausen, among the unpublished writings of Franz Kaiser.*)
- Kaiser, Franz: Rauisch-Holzhausen, das ehemals freie Reichsdorf, Marburg 1975.
- Kaiser, Franz: Ebsdorfergrund. Geschichtliche Aufsätze aus dem Gemeindeblatt „Ebsdorfergrund-Nachrichten“ erschienen in den Jahren 1976–1980, Marburg 1980.
- Kingreen, Monica: Israelitische Kinderheilstätte und Jüdische Bezirksschule, in: Frankfurter Straße 103, 1899–1999. Kinderheilstätte, Berufsschule, Sonderschule, Waldorfschule... Grundschule. Festschrift aus Anlaß der 100jährigen Nutzung des Gebäudes Frankfurter Straße 103, Bad Nauheim 1999, pp. 7–33.
- Kingreen, Monica: Die gewaltsame Verschleppung der Juden aus den Dörfern und Städten des Regierungsbezirks Kassel in den Jahren 1941 und 1942, in: Burmeister, Helmut; Dorhs, Michael (ed.): Das achte Licht. Beiträge zur Kultur- und Sozialgeschichte der Juden in Nordhessen, Hofgeismar 2002, pp. 223–242.
- Kingreen, Monica: „Ihr in Frankfurt hab't gut! Ihr habt Euch gegenseitig. Wir auf dem Land sind allein.“ Jüdische Menschen aus dem weiten Umland suchten Zuflucht in Frankfurt am Main, in: Jüdisches Museum der Stadt Frankfurt am Main (ed.): „Und keiner hat für uns Kaddisch gesagt...“ Deportationen aus Frankfurt am Main 1941 bis 1945, Frankfurt am Main 2004, pp. 51–77.
- Klein, Thomas: Leitende Beamte der allgemeinen Verwaltung in der preußischen Provinz Hessen-Nassau und in Waldeck 1867–1945, Marburg 1988.

- Köbler, Gerhard: Historisches Lexikon der deutschen Länder. Die deutschen Territorien vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart, 7th ed., München 2007.
- Königseder, Angelika; Wetzel, Juliane: Lebensmut im Wartesaal. Die jüdischen DPs (Displaced Persons) im Nachkriegsdeutschland, Frankfurt am Main 2004.
- Kommission für die Geschichte der Juden in Hessen (ed.): Neunhundert Jahre Geschichte der Juden in Hessen. Beiträge zum politischen, wirtschaftlichen und kulturellen Leben, Wiesbaden 1983.
- Kommission zur Erforschung der Geschichte der Frankfurter Juden (ed.): Die Samson-Raphael-Hirsch-Schule in Frankfurt am Main. Dokumente – Erinnerungen – Analysen, Frankfurt am Main 2001.
- Krohn, Helga: „Holt sie raus, bevor es zu spät ist!“ Hilfsaktionen zur Rettung jüdischer Kinder zwischen 1938 und 1940, in: Kingreen, Monica (ed.): „Nach der Kristallnacht“. Jüdisches Leben und antijüdische Politik in Frankfurt am Main 1938–1945, Frankfurt am Main 1999, pp. 91–118.
- Kroll, Frank-Lothar: Geschichte Hessens, München 2006.
- Kropat, Wolf-Arno: Die Emanzipation der Juden in Kurhessen und in Nassau im 19. Jahrhundert, in: Kommission für die Geschichte der Juden in Hessen (ed.): Neunhundert Jahre Geschichte der Juden in Hessen. Beiträge zum politischen, wirtschaftlichen und kulturellen Leben, Wiesbaden 1983, pp. 325–349.
- Kropat, Wolf-Arno: Die hessischen Juden im Alltag der NS-Diktatur 1933–1939, in: Kommission für die Geschichte der Juden in Hessen (ed.): Neunhundert Jahre Geschichte der Juden in Hessen. Beiträge zum politischen, wirtschaftlichen und kulturellen Leben, Wiesbaden 1983, pp. 411–445.
- Kropat, Wolf-Arno: Kristallnacht in Hessen: Der Judenpogrom vom November 1938. Eine Dokumentation, Wiesbaden 1988.
- Kwiet, Konrad: Nach dem Pogrom: Stufen der Ausgrenzung, in: Benz, Wolfgang (ed.): Die Juden in Deutschland 1933–1945. Leben unter nationalsozialistischer Herrschaft, München 1988, pp. 545–659.
- Libeskind, Daniel: trauma/void, in: Bronfen, Elisabeth; Erdle, Birgit R. u.a. (ed.): Trauma. Zwischen Psychoanalyse und kulturellem Deutungsmuster, Köln 1999, pp. 3–26.
- Longerich, Peter: „Davon haben wir nichts gewusst!“ Die Deutschen und die Judenverfolgung 1933–1945, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, Bonn 2006.
- Mack, Rüdiger: Otto Böckel und die antisemitische Bauernbewegung in Hessen 1887–1894, in: Kommission für die Geschichte der Juden in Hessen (ed.): Neunhundert Jahre Geschichte der Juden in Hessen. Beiträge zum politischen, wirtschaftlichen und kulturellen Leben, Wiesbaden 1983, pp. 377–410.
- Mankowitz, Zeev W.: Life between Memory and Hope. The Survivors of the Holocaust in Occupied Germany, Cambridge 2002.
- Mehnert, Gottfried: Der Verein zur Abwehr des Antisemitismus in Marburg 1891/92, in: *Zeitschrift für hessische Geschichte und Landeskunde*, no. 108, 2003, pp. 215–230.
- Meinl, Susanne; Zwilling, Jutta: Legalisierter Raub. Die Ausplünderung der Juden im Nationalsozialismus durch die Reichsfinanzverwaltung in Hessen, Frankfurt am Main 2004.
- Meyerding, Mirko (ed.): Geliebte Zigeunerkinde. Das Tagebuch der Agnes Blanke, Marburg 2008.
- Moreitz, Michael: Judenfeindschaft in der deutschen Geschichte. Über den Antisemitismus im deutschen Nationalbewusstsein, in: Arndt, Susan (ed.): AfrikaBilder. Studien zu Rassismus in Deutschland, Studienausgabe, Münster 2006, pp. 121–136.
- Müller, Karl A.: Rund um Wall und Wehrturm. Das 1200jährige Mardorf in Geschichte und Gegenwart, Mardorf 1955.
- Nachama, Andreas; Neumärker, Uwe u.a. (ed.): „Es brennt!“ Antijüdischer Terror im November 1938. Exhibition catalogue, Berlin 2008.
- Niethammer, Lutz: Fragen – Antworten – Fragen. Methodische Erfahrungen und Erwägungen

- zur Oral History, in: Niethammer, Lutz; von Plato, Alexander (ed.): „Wir kriegen jetzt andere Zeiten“. Auf der Suche nach der Erfahrung des Volkes in nachfaschistischen Ländern, Berlin 1985, pp. 392–445.
- Patt, Avinoam J.: Finding Home and Homeland, unpublished dissertation, New York 2005. (*Generously provided in excerpted form by the nonprofit Nuremberg Institute for Research on the Nazis and Jewish History of the 20th Century, in a letter of 8 July 2011. In the meantime, Patt's dissertation has been published in book form as: Finding Home and Homeland. Jewish Youth and Zionism in the Aftermath of the Holocaust, Detroit (Michigan) 2009.*)
- Postone, Moishe: Antisemitismus und Nationalsozialismus, in: *ibid.* Deutschland, die Linke und der Holocaust. Politische Interventionen, Freiburg 2005, pp. 165–194.
- Rehme, Günter; Haase, Konstantin: ... mit Rumpf und Stumpf ausrotten ...: Zur Geschichte der Juden in Marburg und Umgebung nach 1933, Marburg 1982.
- Reichardt, Sven: Faschistische Kampfbinde. Gewalt und Gemeinschaft im italienischen Squadrismus und in der deutschen SA, 2nd ed., Köln 2009.
- Richarz, Monika; Rürup, Reinhard (ed.): Jüdisches Leben auf dem Lande. Studien zur deutsch-jüdischen Geschichte, Tübingen 1997.
- Rohrbacher, Stefan; Toch, Michael u.a. (ed.): Germania Judaica. Historisch-topographisches Handbuch zur Geschichte der Juden im Alten Reich. Part IV (1520–1650), vol. 2: Landgrafschaft Hessen-Marburg, Tübingen 2009.
- Schneider, Alfred: Die jüdischen Familien im ehemaligen Kreise Kirchhain. Beiträge zur Geschichte und Genealogie der jüdischen Familien im Ostteil des heutigen Landkreises Marburg-Biedenkopf in Hessen, Amöneburg 2006.
- Schultheis, Herbert: Die Reichskristallnacht in Deutschland nach Augenzeugenberichten, Bad Neustadt an der Saale 1986.
- Sofsky, Wolfgang: Traktat über die Gewalt, Frankfurt am Main 1996.
- Sparkassen-Kulturstiftung Hessen-Thüringen (ed.): Legalisierter Raub. Der Fiskus und die Ausplünderung der Juden in Hessen 1933–1945, Katalog zur Ausstellung, 2nd ed., Frankfurt am Main 2005.
- Spielvereinigung 1930 Rauischholzhausen e.V. (ed.): Festschrift zum 50-jährigen Jubiläum. Vom 24. Mai bis 26. Mai 1980, Rauischholzhausen 1980.
- Spielvereinigung 1930 Rauischholzhausen e.V. (ed.): Festschrift zum 60-jährigen Bestehen. Festtage vom 1. bis 4. Juni 1990, Rauischholzhausen 1990.
- Stein, Harry: Das Sonderlager im Konzentrationslager Buchenwald nach den Pogromen 1938, in: Kingreen, Monica (ed.): „Nach der Kristallnacht“: Jüdisches Leben und antijüdische Politik in Frankfurt am Main 1938–1945, Frankfurt am Main 1999, pp. 19–54.
- Steinweis, Alan E.: Kristallnacht 1938, Cambridge (Massachusetts) 2009.
- Stiftung Jüdisches Museum Berlin, Stiftung Haus der Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (ed.): Heimat und Exil. Emigration der deutschen Juden nach 1933, Frankfurt am Main 2006.
- Stockhorst, Erich: 5000 Köpfe: wer war was im 3. Reich, 3rd ed., Kiel 1998.
- Stöckle, Frieder: Zum praktischen Umgang mit Oral History, in: Vorländer, Herwart (ed.): Oral History: Mündlich erfragte Geschichte. Acht Beiträge, Göttingen 1990, pp. 131–158.
- Studienkreis Deutscher Widerstand 1933–1945 (ed.): Heimatgeschichtlicher Wegweiser zu Stätten des Widerstandes und der Verfolgung 1933–1945, vol. 1, part 2: Hessen II, Regierungsbezirke Gießen und Kassel, Frankfurt am Main 1996.
- Toury, Jacob: Antisemitismus auf dem Lande: Der Fall Hessen 1881–1895, in: Richarz, Monika; Rürup, Reinhard (ed.): Jüdisches Leben auf dem Lande. Studien zur deutsch-jüdischen Geschichte, Tübingen 1997, pp. 173–188.
- Vorländer, Herwart: Mündliches Erfragen von Geschichte, in: *ibid.* (ed.): Oral History: Mündlich erfragte Geschichte. Acht Beiträge, Göttingen 1990, pp. 7–28.
- Walkenhorst, Peter: Der „Daseinskampf des Deutschen Volkes“: Nationalismus, Sozialdarwinismus

- und Imperialismus im wilhelminischen Deutschland, in: Echternkamp, Jörg; Müller, Sven O. (ed.): Die Politik der Nation. Deutscher Nationalismus in Krieg und Krisen 1760–1960, München 2002, pp. 131–148.
- Weiß, Hermann (ed.): Biographisches Lexikon zum Dritten Reich, Frankfurt am Main 1998.
- Wildt, Michael: Volksgemeinschaft als Selbstermächtigung. Gewalt gegen Juden in der deutschen Provinz 1919 bis 1939, Hamburg 2007.
- Wippermann, Wolfgang: Hat Hitler die Macht ergriffen? In: Sösemann, Bernd (ed.): Der Nationalsozialismus und die deutsche Gesellschaft. Einführung und Überblick, Stuttgart 2002, pp. 66–77.
- Witzel, Andreas: Verfahren der qualitativen Sozialforschung. Überblick und Alternativen, Frankfurt am Main 1982.
- Zacharias, Sylvia: Synagogengemeinden 1933. Ein Wegweiser zu ihren Spuren in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Berlin 1988.

Internet and Press Publications

- Adolf-Reichwein-Schule Marburg: Jüdische Geschäfte in Marburg 1933–1938, Präsentation der Ergebnisse eines Schülerprojekts von 2007, in the Internet at: <http://www.adolf-reichwein-schule.de/315.o.html> [Date last accessed: 13.12.2009].
- Arbeitsgemeinschaft für die Erforschung der Geschichte der Juden im süddeutschen und angrenzenden Raum: Rauschholzhausen (Gemeinde Ebsdorfergrund, Kreis Marburg-Biedenkopf). Jüdische Geschichte/Synagoge, in the Internet at: http://www.alemannia-judaica.de/rauschholzhausen_synagoge.htm [Date last accessed: 13.12.2009].
- Decke, Bettina: Aus Frau Mendels Dorf, in: *taz, die tageszeitung*, 14 March 1987.
- Dokumentations- und Informationszentrum Stadtallendorf: Informationen über die Sprengstoffwerke der Dynamit Nobel AG und Westfälisch-Anhaltische Sprengstoff AG in Allendorf 1938 bis 1945, in the Internet at: <http://www.diz-stadtallendorf.de/index.php?menuid=12> [Date last accessed: 13.12.2009].
- Ernst, Reinhard; Hatscher, Peter u.a. (ed.): Experiment-Sonderheft. Zweites Sonderheft der Schulzeitung Experiment, Elisabethschule Marburg, November 1992, in the Internet at: http://www.elisabethschule.de/alte-internetseiten/schueler/schuelerzeitung/experiment_sonder.html#Die_juedischen_Schuelerinnen [Date last accessed: 13.12.2009].
- Hillebrecht, Michael: Holocaustopfer erlebten den Sport als befreiendes Erlebnis, in: *Oberhessische Presse*, 16. März 1992 (*Befindlich im Archiv der Geschichtswerkstatt Marburg e.V., Ordner: Juden, Maccabi, Jüdische Gemeinde Marburg*).
- I. E. Lichtigfeld-Schule im Philanthropin: Die Geschichte des Philanthropin seit 1804, in the Internet at: <http://www.lichtigfeld-schule.de/geschichte/philanthropin> [Date last accessed: 13.12.2009].
- Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Culture: Dance. Folk Dance, in the Internet at: <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFADE/Facts%20About%20Israel/KULTUR-%20Tanz> [Date last accessed: 13.12.2009].
- Klein, Hans-Peter; Pettelkau, Hans: Genealogy of the Schaumberg family, in the Internet at: <http://www.jinh.site50.net/index-gene.htm> [Date last accessed: 13.12.2009].
- North, Steve: "A Mostly Serious Week" in Germany, in: *Aufbau*, 28 November 2002, pp. 13.
- North, Steve: The last Gift, in: *Newsweek*, 7 September 2005.
- Rinde, Michael: Ab 8 Uhr verstummt Kirchturmuh. Heute vor 60 Jahren verstarben mehr als 40 Menschen bei Kämpfen um Kirchhain, in: *Oberhessische Presse*, 29 March 2005.

Photo Credits

These illustrations have been selected with the intention of foregrounding the perspective of the Jews of Rauschholzhausen. Hence, the photographs and documents chosen derive largely from *their* collections. Instead of presenting their correspondence with the state authorities, much of which is preserved in archives, I attempt to provide documentation based on sources that are private or internal. As a result, I have deliberately refrained from publishing photographs of Jewish Rauschholzhauseners that were made by German state authorities or by National Socialist agencies or party organs.

Cover, Illus. 01, 02, 27, 28: Private photo and document collection of Ingrid Binot.

Illus. 03, 05, 07, 12, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24, 34, 35, 38, 39, 40, 42, 44: Private photo and document collection of Martin Spier.

Illus. 04: Handmade drawing, Royal Land Registry of Kirchhain, 2 Sept. 1903, private document collection of Family P.

Illus. 06, 13, 14, 15, 17, 25, 26, 29, 30, 31, 36, 41, 43: Private photo and document collection of Walter Spier.

Illus. 08: Photo by Franz Kaiser, Rauschholzhausen, 1965, in: JMF Archive, collection of Paul Arnsberg, Hessen, no. 413, F87-G563.

Illus. 09, 10: Private photo collection of Steven L. Bachenheimer.

Illus. 11: Private photo collection of Steve North.

Illus. 16, 22, 23, 32, 45, 46, 51: Private photo collection of Edith Baumann.

Illus. 33: Private photo collection of Alfred Spier.

Illus. 37: German National Library, Exilpresse digital, <http://deposit.ddb.de/online/exil/exil.htm>.

Illus. 47: Invitation card of the Jewish Aid Committee for the town and district of Marburg, undated; stamp impression of 15 August 1946, JMB / Wiener Library, Coll. Post-War Europe, no. HA6B-2/24, p. 2.

Illus. 48, 49: Photographs by Dr. Bormuth / A. Sonnenwirth for: unknown author, Die jüdische Landwirtschaftsschule in Holzhausen, in: *Jüdische Rundschau*, vol. 1, no. 7/8, Aug./Sept. 1946, p. 45; available as copies in: JMF Archive, collection of Paul Arnsberg, Hessen, no. 413, F87-G564, -G565.

Illus. 50: Photo by Hajo Bewernick, Rauschholzhausen 2011, private photo collection of Hajo Bewernick.

Illustrations 01, 02, and 19 are all postcards.

