

Udo Bayer

Vignettes

The Legacy of Jewish Laupheim



UNIVERSITÄTS-
BIBLIOTHEK
HEIDELBERG

Vignettes

Udo Bayer

Vignettes

The Legacy of Jewish Laupheim

Translation edited by
Robynne Flynn-Diez



UNIVERSITÄTS
BIBLIOTHEK
HEIDELBERG

Originally published as

Udo Bayer: Jüdisches aus Laupheim. Prominente Persönlichkeiten einer Landjudengemeinde, erschienen beim Verlag Hentrich & Hentrich Berlin, ISBN 9783955651220

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available on the Internet at <http://dnb.dnb.de>.



This work is published under the Creative Commons License 4.0 (CC BY-SA 4.0).

The online version of this publication is freely available on the ebook-platform of the Heidelberg University Library heiBOOKS <http://books.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/heibooks> (open access).

urn: urn:nbn:de:bsz:16-heibooks-book-229-6

doi: <https://doi.org/10.11588/heibooks.229.301>

Original Text © Udo Bayer / Gabriele Bayer

Translation © 2017

Cover image: Elizaveta Dorogova

ISBN 978-3-946531-51-7 (PDF)

ISBN 978-3-946531-52-4 (Softcover)

Introduction

In honor of Dr. Udo Bayer this translation project was initiated by the *Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Gedenken* in collaboration with the University of Heidelberg, Germany. Master's students from the Institute of Translation and Interpreting spent five months researching and translating the biographies of the personalities presented by Bayer in this brief collection of stories. Each chapter of *Vignettes* serves as a portrait of one of the distinguished figures, relating their family history, career, and how they were affected by the historical context in which they lived. It is only through Bayer's extensive research and the resulting comprehensive archive that the narratives of the Laupheim German-Jewish community have been preserved for future generations; and *Vignettes* extends these narratives to an English-speaking readership.

As clarity and fluent readability was requested by Gabriele Bayer in her translation brief, the ensuing chapters have followed the qualitative expectancy norms for English with a focus on cohesion. As well the translators were mindful of the accountability norm, "concerning professional standards of integrity and thoroughness", and the social-communication norm addressing "the translator's role as a mediator of the intentions of others and as a communicator in his/her own right" (Chestermann 2016: 66–67). As such, the chapter covering Friedrich Adler underwent rewriting prior to the translators'

efforts to produce a target text; and feminist translation practices were applied to the chapter on Gretel Bergmann.

Chronicling more than a century of history, this booklet serves first and foremost as a memorial to the German-Jewish citizens of Laupheim whose 200-year history there came to an end with the Shoah.

To my students, for their enthusiasm, diligence and professionalism, I extend my utmost gratitude.

Robynne Flynn-Diez

Table of Contents

Introduction	5
Kilian von Steiner (1833–1903)	9
Moritz Henle (1850–1925)	19
Friedrich Adler (1878–1942)	31
Hertha Nathorff (1895–1993)	43
Gretel Bergmann (Margret Lambert) (1914–)	57
Siegfried Einstein (1919–1983)	75
Illustrations	89
Glossary	91

Kilian von Steiner (1833–1903)



Kilian of Steiner, the first of the six personalities introduced in this book, was born in 1833 and ennobled in 1895. He worked his entire life dedicated to the advancement of his native region of Württemberg in southern Germany and had a profound influence on the development of its finance sector. His family is the most impressive example of intergenerational social advancement within the Jewish community of Laupheim. Their willingness to assimilate into the cultural, religious and social surroundings played a significant role in their ascension. It is as well interesting to compare Steiner with Carl Laemmle, who was born a generation after him and in different social and economic conditions, yet also experienced great commercial success.

Kilian of Steiner's grandfather and his father both worked as peddlers. In 1836, Viktor Steiner, Kilian's father, and his brother Heinrich, opened a corner store selling leather goods. With their new business, they were able to rise above the class of Jewish small merchants to which they had belonged and to build a house and work beyond the confines of Judenberg, a Jewish district in Laupheim. The next step in their social advancement was to acquire the Grosslaupheim Castle from the state in 1843. Though the Jewish Emancipation Act of 1828 had conceded Jewish people more rights, the Steiner family nonetheless needed non-Jewish business partners in order to complete the purchase. Jewish people at that time were still not

allowed exclusive property rights to such estates. Viktor Steiner eventually became the sole proprietor of the castle. Kilian of Steiner then acquired the castle from his siblings in 1894, modernized the castle and redesigned its grounds.

Leather goods, the hops trade and tool production were the three main branches of industry introduced by the Steiners to Laupheim. The Steiner family also supported the construction of the railway in Laupheim. This contribution even brought Heinrich Steiner, who was a reform-driven community leader for more than 40 years, recognition from the king.

Kilian of Steiner attended the Laupheim Jewish primary school from 1846 to 1851 and afterwards secondary schools in Stuttgart and Ulm. His schooling is an illustrative example of the way Jewish members of society obtained social advancement through education. Nonetheless, this was unique for the Jewish community of Laupheim in the 19th century. Kilian of Steiner was the only one of his 12 siblings to receive a higher education. In 1853, he began studying law in Tübingen (which later led him to Heidelberg), where he eventually received his law degree in 1876, having defended a dissertation with the title “Acquisition and Amortization of Private Shares”. He had already been working as a lawyer in Heilbronn in 1859 and was able to use this experience to complete his dissertation. While in Heilbronn he developed a lifelong friendship with the family of Professor Schmoller, who

taught economics. In 1869 he married Clotilde Goldschmidt, a widow, whose father was a court Jew in Hechingen.

In 1865 Kilian of Steiner and his wife moved to Stuttgart, which became the focal point of their life and work. The time in Stuttgart is also closely linked to a circle of friends, who were to play a significant role in his career. These friends included paint manufacturers and traders Heinz Mueller and Gustav Siegle, textile trader Lorenz Chevalier, publisher Alfred Kroener, gunpowder manufacturer Max Duttenhofer and the director of the *Koenigliche Hofbank*, or Royal Bank, Eduard Gotthilf Pfeiffer, who was also the first Jewish delegate in the *Landtag* in Württemberg. Steiner and his friends were supporters of the national liberal Party (Deutsche Partei), the strongest in Württemberg, a political orientation that separated them from the local upper-class as well as from the Jewish banking tradition.

What was the economic environment of the late 19th century, the time in which Steiner lived and worked? Württemberg was confronted with industrial development much later than most other territories because of its lack of natural resources. Around the middle of the 19th century and over the course of a decade, one-tenth of the population emigrated. Stuttgart was neither a banking center, nor a trading center, in a time when business was financed with bills of exchange. State funding had to come from

foreign financial centers, which increased dependence on foreign central banks and the banking house of Rothschild. *Königlich Württembergische Hofbank* was founded in 1817, originating from the *Hofbank* of the Kaulla family. A central bank was only established in 1870. The capital needed for founding and merging firms could not be provided by private banks in sufficient amounts, thus, concentration of capital by creating joint-stock banks would become vital to modernizing Württemberg's economic structures.

The first joint-stock bank in Württemberg – *Württembergische Vereinsbank*, was founded in 1867 and was directed by Steiner until his death in 1903. During this time, Steiner initially held the position of a deputy chairman and later until 1897 became chairman of the central bank. The *Vereinsbank* was a universal bank, which focused on investment banking. Instead of being created as an initiative of already existing banks, the *Vereinsbank* was established by private enterprises. Besides its role in opening and merging firms, the *Vereinsbank* was the leading bank of state financing in Württemberg. The *Vereinsbank* was thus involved in the founding of the Deutsche Bank. The *Vereinsbank* group, which later became *Deutsche Vereinsbank*, was also founded in Stuttgart in 1924. In 1873, Steiner and the bank played a decisive role in making *Wiener Bankverein* (Bank Association of Vienna) profitable

again. Until he passed away, Steiner was also a member of the supervisory board of directors at the *Rheinische Kreditbank*.

The improved banking situation in turn influenced industrial financing. The industrial branches of machine construction and textile manufacture, as well as gunpowder production by *Koeln-Rottweiler-Pulverfabriken* in Württemberg were in need of investment and restructuring. Gunpowder plants in Rottweiler were also the cornerstone upon which the gunpowder and dynamite trust later developed. Steiner as head of the board of directors was also involved in founding a consortium for the salt-works in Heilbronn. At that time making use of recent inventions and putting together the patents for small firms played a significant role in machine industry. The *Vereinsbank* later off-loaded its holdings in companies such as Mauser Oberndorf. Steiner became a deputy chairman of the board of directors during the restructuring of WMF (*Württembergische Metallwarenfabrik AG*) in Geislingen. The *Vereinsbank* was also involved in funding SBI (*Sueddeutsche Baumwoll-Industrie AG*) in Kuchen. The bank additionally became involved in the publishing industry in 1890, when it financed the founding of the German Union Publishing Society and bought a part of its shares. The *Vereinsbank* further participated in two railway projects. Its broad range of commercial involvement along with the fact that many of those companies still exist today shows

that the bank's endeavors were oriented towards financial sustainability and stability. It also emphasizes the effectiveness of the independent economic organization created and supported by market participants. Steiner's authority ensured effective optimizing of entrepreneurial organizations. Among his operations abroad, two are especially worth mentioning: the Anatolian Railroad in 1889 and the Baghdad Railway.

One of the most peculiar alliances Steiner and the *Vereinsbank* developed was with Gottlieb Daimler. It seems that Daimler was anything but an easy-going partner, which led to conflict. He had brought with him the talented engineer Karl Maybach from *Deutzer Gasmotorenfabrik* with whom he agreed to found a joint-stock company in 1890 upon recommendation by Duttenhofer and Lorenz. Officially, Kilian of Steiner was a co-founder of the company, but he left the supervisory board as early as 1893. Thus, during the ten-year long war between Daimler and his financiers, Steiner no longer had any business ties to him. Their differences were based on conflicting approaches to the further development of the light petrol engine as well as Maybach's tendency to work contrary to the terms of the contract. In 1894, the *Vereinsbank* recalled the loans, thus obligating Daimler to sell his shares.

In addition to his professional activity in the business world, there is another reason Steiner still deserves recognition in the 21st century. He played a key role in the

founding of the most important literary archive in Germany, which is located in Marbach. As early as 1895, the Swabian Schiller Society had been founded and given the task of collecting and making accessible the legacy of other famous authors and men of letters. One member, a secondary educator from Stuttgart, Otto Güntter, was inspired by impressive collections during his stay in London. Güntter, Mayor Traugott Haffner and Steiner together planned the Schiller Museum. They even managed to gain support for the project from Württemberg's King William II. In 1901, the groundwork for the Schiller Archive and Museum was laid. In 1934 Steiner's son had to discontinue his work for the institution for "racial reasons". Steiner was also friends with a number of contemporary writers, including Berthold Auerbach, Hermann Sudermann, Paul Heyse, Joseph Victor of Scheffel and Wilhelm Raabe.

Gustav Schmoller's funeral oration extolled the lifetime achievement of his friend: "he was a leading force in the transition of the German economy from the narrowness of the petite-bourgeoisie to a global power, to a large-scale industry, to an economic system with an independent finance and credit system". According to Schmoller, Steiner also possessed a rare intuition for "precise and quick assessment of balances of power, of people, and of circumstances". Among the honors he received were the Order of the Crown of Prussia, the honorary title

for businessmen *Geheimer Kommerzienrat*, and years later, in 1895, the Cross of the Order of the Crown of Württemberg.

Kilian of Steiner was laid to rest in a family tomb in the vicinity of Laupheim in Oberdischingen. The first public commemoration of Kilian of Steiner in Laupheim was the installation of his bust in the garden of his former castle, which also houses the Museum of Christian and Jewish History. In 1993, a professional school was named after him. During the same year, the name Steiner visibly disappeared from Laupheim's industrial history when the company Hopfen-Steiner relocated to Mainburg after almost 128 years. The hop-drying facility and Steiner's birth house have already been torn down.

*Translated from the German by Elizaveta Dorogova,
Kateryna Pavlenko, Olha Zelenska and Ruonan Zhang*

Works Cited

<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/Landtag>

<http://myefe.com/transcription-pronunciation/gymnasium>

Moritz Henle (1850–1925)



Some of Laupheim's German-Jewish families, such as the Henles and Laemmlers, had family connections in the nearby town of Ichenhausen, roughly 40 kilometers away. One such connection was forged when Klara Adler, of Laupheim, married highly respected glazier Elkan Henle, a member of Ichenhausen's German-Jewish community. Examples of Elkan Henle's works in Laupheim include the design of the cemetery gate as well as the small prayer room in the castle, which was the first meeting place of the town's small Protestant community. The couple's son Moritz, the third of their eleven children, was born on August 7, 1850.

The stages of Moritz Henle's life were defined by his education and work. At twelve he began studying at the conservatory in Stuttgart, where he took lessons in piano, violin, and singing. For the son of a Jewish craftsman, such an artistic path was certainly unusual and most likely posed a financial burden on his parents. Fortunately, Henle's musical studies were made possible partly through the financial support of Simon Heinrich Steiner, a Laupheim businessman. In 1864, Henle went on to study at the evangelical teachers' college in Esslingen, which had begun accepting Jewish students in 1821. He was drawn to the teaching profession by the strong economic footing it offered.

According to Geoffrey Goldberg, an expert on Jewish music, the training to become a cantor, or *hazzan* in Hebrew, at this time marked a radical change in the world of choral music during the period of Jewish emancipation in Germany. The traditional oral system of apprenticeship was replaced by a highly-organized training system and under the influence of hazzan Maier Levi a large choral compendium reflecting these changes was developed. There was also an upheaval in the training of rabbis beginning in 1828 in Württemberg and elsewhere. Jewish religious authorities began requiring young teachers-in-training to be qualified as hazzanim, making them a mixture of teacher and musician. This measure was also meant to improve the income level of Jewish teachers. The hazzan had a wide range of duties. He was responsible for performing the Jewish liturgy and the Torah recitation according to the respective musical tradition of the synagogue; following reforms in Württemberg, the hazzan was also commissioned by the rabbi to preach and carry out rituals. Despite these independent developments, Württemberg still fell under the influence of Salomon Sulzer, the head hazzan of Vienna. He represented this new liturgical model and a new style of connecting western musical forms with traditional synagogal singing.

In 1868 at the young age of eighteen, Moritz Henle began his work as a teacher and hazzan in Laupheim,

helping to organize the worship service. He was the leader of a Jewish choir called *Frohsinn* and founded a mixed-gender choir for the synagogue. In addition to other liturgical innovations, Rabbi Abraham Walder of the Reform Movement also introduced the organ to the worship service around this time. Incidentally, Henle's work in Laupheim coincided with that of Abraham Rosenthal as a volunteer prayer leader (Rosenthal's grandson, the great religious philosopher Schalom Ben-Chorin, then, also has roots in Laupheim). One prayer leader sat among the congregation, while the other stood on the Bimah with his face turned to Jerusalem.

Henle also began working with secular compositions. At the end of the Franco-Prussian War in 1871, the city council notably commissioned the young cantor with the composition of a peace hymn with lyrics by Victor Heinrich Steiner to be performed by the city's three male choirs. This commission shows the favorable reputation enjoyed by the then 21-year-old. In 1873, Henle took a position at the new synagogue in Ulm and concentrated on choral direction as well as religious and music education. He also participated in the musical life of the city and was able to resume his composition and singing studies at the Stuttgart conservatory. In 1876 and 1877, he successfully passed the second teaching examination and the second cantor examination.

Larger German-Jewish communities evidently embarked on national searches for candidates when filling open positions. For instance, a Hamburg rabbi called Dr. Sanger invited Moritz Henle to a trial run in 1879 with the prospect of a permanent position; Henle even received a similar invitation from the distant East Prussian city of Konigsberg. He accepted the position in Hamburg, where he served as head hazzan for 34 years. He formed a mixed-gender choir and used an organ as accompaniment – both revolutionary developments at the time. Still today, Reform synagogues can be recognized by the presence of an organ. It was in Hamburg that Henle met his wife, Caroline Franziska Herschel, whose family could be traced back to the Enlightenment philosopher Moses Mendelssohn. They married in 1882. Henle became chairman of the German cantors’ association and was also active as a music critic.

It was a time of rapid change in Jewish musical traditions. According to Goldberg, there were two main traditions in Germany, roughly divided by the Elbe River, though these overlapped in certain areas like Berlin. Southern Germany was at the center of the western musical tradition – songbooks differentiated between the “German” and “Polish” musical styles. Henle found himself directly at the crossroads of these traditions in Hamburg, a city whose musical alignment highlighted the complex intersections of the two styles. The Israel-

itischer Tempel, which opened in 1818 as Germany's first Reform synagogue, was unique in that its congregants were Ashkenazim, but its liturgy and music were strongly influenced by Sephardic traditions. Reform Judaism in general was strongly rooted in the Sephardic model of worship associated with Amsterdam at that time. The services even sporadically included German choral music in the Protestant style. Here Henle first got to know the Sephardic tradition of Portuguese origin and its influence on Hebrew pronunciation. He reinstated the use of Ashkenazi pronunciation, which caused tension with some traditionalists. As a result, the Temple's liturgical pronunciation of Hebrew shifted over time. Henle drew on the traditions of his South German homeland and the compositions of Salomon Sulzer – the same influences evident in the rich musical tradition of the Laupheim synagogue, parts of which were recorded by Laemmle after Henle's death and are available on CD today. Goldberg considers Henle both a transitional figure in the musical history of the Hamburg Temple and a representative of the new type of cantor being formed in Western Europe in the 19th century that combined the functions of choir leader and composer. As in Ulm, his musical activities were not limited to the synagogue; he also worked as a music teacher and served on the board of directors of the local musicians' association.

Liturgische Synagogen-Gesänge for hazzan, choir, and organ – sheet music of which is included in Goldberg’s collection – is considered to be the most important of Henle’s works to have been released. Henle’s *Sechs Hebräische Gesänge* draw on the tradition of the German art song and are based on a cycle of poems by Lord Byron. Seligmann, a leading personality of liberal Judaism in Germany, commissioned Henle to create arrangements and original compositions for a *Haggadah*, a prayer book for Passover. In the work *Eine Deutsche Kedeschah*, Henle entered into a sort of compositional rivalry with Louis Lewandowski, who overshadows him somewhat in the modern imagination. This is confirmed by how difficult it has been to have Henle’s works performed outside Germany, particularly in North America. His great-granddaughter Barbara Levy had tried to achieve this in New York. Goldberg sums up Henle’s music as being multicultural, at home in the world of classical music as much as in the tradition of synagogal music – an archetype of the modern German hazzan whose further development was curtailed by the tides of history.

Moritz Henle died in Hamburg on August 24, 1925. The tragic fate of his wife, who was deported to Theresienstadt and died there in 1943, shows that the world in which he lived, though very much anchored in the 19th

century, extended all the way to the Shoah, ending ultimately with the emigration of his children.

It is remarkable that all three areas of the arts are represented in the German-Jewish community of Lauheim: music by Moritz Henle, visual art by Friedrich Adler, and literature by Siegfried Einstein – it would be misleading to say that Carl Laemmle represented the cinematic arts, since he expressly rejected the idea of film as art, though his son would later have artistic ambitions. It is highly unlikely to find such a diverse array of talents in such a small group. The preservation and transmission of art through times of crisis is dependent on its medium; prints and manuscripts are easier to safeguard than paintings or sculptures. Local research into Henle's work has been led by local historian Rolf Emmerich and the choirmaster Ludwig Schwedes, whose choir held the first concert of Henle's compositions in 1990. In 1998, a CD of Henle's choral arrangements was released, ensuring the preservation of his music. Through these efforts, contact was established among Henle's grandchildren, who lived scattered across the United States, Spain, and Denmark as a result of Nazi persecution. In the year 2000, this culminated in a multi-day event celebrating sacred music in Lauheim, where the different branches of Henle's family were brought together again.

Fortunately, Emmerich's research in foreign archives has brought many traces of Henle's work to light. In German archives of synagogal choir music, on the other hand, he found almost nothing. In 2003, Geoffrey Goldberg held a historical presentation in Laupheim honoring the works of Moritz Henle. The house where Henle was born now boasts a commemorative plaque, and the street where it stands was renamed *Moritz Henle Straße* in 2001. He is also honored in a special room of the Museum of Christian and Jewish History in Laupheim. In this way, the case of Moritz Henle shows that modern action can revive decades of forgotten history.

*Translated from the German by Sara Cavicchi,
Zachary Hunter, Jana Mozzhukhina and Yi Liding*

Works Cited

- Emmerich, Rolf. "Synagogale Musik von Moritz Henle, Laupheim-Ulm-Hamburg". *Christen und Juden in Laupheim*, edited by Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Gedenken e. V., 2/1999, pp. 3–5.
- . "Musica Sacra in Synagoge und Kirche. 150 Jahre Moritz Henle". *Kehillah – Laupheimer Spuren: gesammelte Studien (1997 -2012)*, edited by Freundeskreis des Museums zur Geschichte von Christen und Juden in Laupheim und Haus der Geschichte Baden-Württemberg in Stuttgart, Laupheim 2013, pp. 67–80.

Golberg, Geoffrey. “Moritz Henle (1850–1925) – a model German-Jewish hazzan in his cultural context”. *Jüdische Künstler und Kulturschaffende aus Südwestdeutschland – Laupheimer Gespräche 2013*, edited by Haus der Geschichte Baden-Württemberg, Heidelberg 2009, pp. 69–88.

Recordings

Henle, Moritz. Lieder und liturgische Synagogengesänge sung by Ludwig Schwedes and his Laupheimer Singkreis, Gesellschaft für Geschichte Gedenken e.V, Laupheim 1998.

Synagogengesänge aus Laupheim, Haus der Geschichte Baden-Württemberg, Laupheim 2012.

Friedrich Adler (1878–1942)



What remains of Friedrich Adler's artwork has been collected and restored by Ernst Schäll in cooperation with the Adler family. As a result of Schäll's efforts Adler's art has gradually found its way back to the realm of historical research being conducted on *Art Nouveau*. In 1994, Schäll's remarkable undertaking even culminated in exhibitions of Adler's paintings in different German cities, among them Laupheim. Thanks to the tombstones commissioned by Carl Laemmle for his family and the Jewish cemetery memorial designed by Adler, Laupheim's citizenry has long been surrounded by his artistic achievements, just without conscious awareness of it. In addition to these works Adler drafted a new home for his family which was built in 1905. His parents' house, built by his father in 1876, counts as another memento of Adler and was later converted into a café and pastry shop in 1989.

After attending the *Kunstgewerbeschule* in Munich for four years, Friedrich Adler studied at the Atelier for Teaching and Experimenting in Applied and Free Art in Munich, where he also worked as a lecturer from 1903 to 1907 before accepting a position at the School of Applied Arts in Hamburg. From 1910 to 1913 while still working in Hamburg, he taught master classes at the *Gewerbemuseum* in Nuremberg. During World War I, he served as a deputy officer and subsequently received several medals for his service. After the war, Adler re-

turned to the *Kunstgewerbeschule* in Hamburg. In 1927, he was appointed to the rank of professor and continued to teach until 1933.

Adler's first defining artistic environment was Munich's Jugendstil, which combined two different ideas: nature as the original form and the return to the abstract line. Especially significant for Adler's first works was the artistic circle led by Hermann Obrist, an important representative of this art movement originating in Munich. Adler was influenced by the forms of nature and focused on general construction principles rather than on superficial visual appearances. Examples of these construction principles were joints, gear wheels, rib structures and forms of tension and compression. Unfortunately, Adler's theoretical position on Jugendstil, which definitely influenced his teaching, was never recorded in detail.

In the 19th century criticism grew of products being manufactured by machines, owing to, among other points, the perceived disconnect with the spirit of stylistic patterns of past epochs. This led to the birth of the Arts and Crafts movement in the second half of the 19th century, which influenced decorative arts and is considered to be the precursor for Jugendstil. This English countermovement incorporated the technical developments of the time and yet created a counterbalance to soulless mechanization with its orientation towards prac-

ticality and utility. Jugendstil later added new aspiration to this artistic volition: the connection of the arts to each other and the desire to unify art and life. The art magazine *Jugend* (Youth) gave the art movement its German name, whereas the French equivalent *l'Art Nouveau* better emphasizes the movement's aspects of novelty and modernity.

In retrospect, it becomes clear that the repertoire of forms of *Art Nouveau*, which later developed into *Art Déco*, is defined by surprisingly divergent influences, which nevertheless form a unified whole. The first influence, which emerged at the end of the 19th century, is Symbolism. This movement replaces profanity with the unknown and unusual, an aesthetic position, which also incorporates the myth of femininity and eroticism. This aspect can clearly be observed in Adler's statuette *Inspiration*. Japanese color woodcuts with their dynamic lines and penetrations in a weightless space which describe the floating world (*Ukiyo-e*), were another source of inspiration for Adler, as was the application of organic forms of nature.

Adler experimented with different techniques over the years. He created wonderful batik prints, though his attempt to develop a machine for printing batik was less successful. He was also in demand as a furniture and interior designer. After 1933, Adler worked under a pseudonym and presumably designed a series with 30

items made from thermosetting plastic for Bebrit, a former German brand for household supplies. These objects are considered antithetical to his early works in Munich and as such illustrate the wide range of his creativity.

At the turn of the century, international exhibitions played a central role in the field of applied arts. Adler's participation in three of them (Turin in 1902, Nuremberg in 1906 and Cologne in 1914) was crucial to his career. The exhibition in Cologne, which included a synagogue design by Adler, was the biggest art exhibition in Germany at the time and helped him gain substantial recognition. Today, the museum in Laupheim exhibits a significant collection of Adler's work. His most impressive design shown at the museum is his replica of a synagogue window, depicting the twelve tribes of Israel. When compared to the original version from 1914, which can be found in Tel Aviv, Adler's design shows serrated and clearly delineated singular shapes in black outline which point to a close connection to Expressionism. Adler was also well-known for the objects he created for Jewish rituals. Thanks to the preservation of usable molds by the Wiedemann Company located in Regensburg, a number of exemplary pieces survived. In addition, a Jewish collector had sent some of Adler's works to Chicago, where they can now be seen at the Spertus Museum.

As a reaction to Jewish citizens being excluded from all aspects of cultural life in 1933, Adler took part in the founding of the *Jüdischer Kulturbund* in Hamburg. He was in amicable contact with Paul Henle, a painter and sculptor, who was able to emigrate in 1939. Adler did not consider himself to be in danger, although he did support his children's plans to emigrate. Walter Gropius, who knew Adler through the *Deutscher Werkbund*, urged him to move to the United States with him. Zionist artist Hermann Struck wanted him to leave Germany for Palestine as early as 1933, but Adler returned to Germany after a stay in Cyprus in 1936, probably due to private reasons. Back in Hamburg, Adler did not own an atelier anymore and had to move into increasingly smaller apartments, which limited his ability to work. Despite continuing efforts, by the Steiner family in New York, to help him emigrate and after an unsuccessful attempt to get a visa for the United States, Adler was deported from a compulsory housing facility to a concentration camp in 1942. Due to his age, Friedrich Adler was most likely executed upon arrival in Auschwitz on July 11, 1942. His son Paul Wilhelm was deported to Theresienstadt in 1943, and then to Auschwitz, where he died in 1944. Although the Third Reich ended Friedrich Adler's life in 1942 and severely impacted the survival of his work, his legacy is once again flourishing.

*Translated from the German by Mariana Castelli Rosa,
Ilenia Ferrari, Fenna Mackschin and Elsapaola Zizzi*

Works Cited

- Adler, Friedrich, et al. *Spurensuche: Friedrich Adler, zwischen Jugendstil und Art Déco*. Stuttgart: Arnoldsche, 1994.
- Bayer, Udo. *Friedrich Adler – Kontexte des Werkes*. G. G. G. E. V., n. d. Web. 23 Jan. 2017.
- Gombrich, Ernst H. *Ornament und Kunst: Schmucktrieb und Ordnungssinn in der Psychologie des dekorativen Schaffens*. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1982.
- Fahr-Becker, Gabriele. *Jugendstil*. Köln: Könemann, 2004.
- Hiesinger, Kathryn B. *Art Nouveau in Munich: Masters of Jugendstil from the Stadtmuseum, Munich, and Other Public and Private Collections*. Munich: Prestel, 1988.
- Haeckel, Ernst. *Kunstformen der Natur*. Leipzig: Verlag des Bibliographischen Instituts, 1904.
- Meyer, Michael A. *Deutsch-Jüdische Geschichte in der Neuzeit*. München: C.H. Beck, 1996.
- Schäll, Ernst, Peter Schneider, and Friedrich Adler. *Friedrich Adler: Leben und Werk*. Bad Buchau: Federsee-Verlag, 2004. Sembach. *Jugendstil: die Utopie der Versöhnung*. Köln: B. Taschen, 1996.
- "Stolperstein Helgolandstraße 3." *Berlin.de*. Berlin.de, 02 Oct. 2015. Web. 28 Feb. 2017. <https://www.berlin.de/ba-charlottenburg-wilmersdorf/ueber-den-bezirk/geschichte/stolpersteine/artikel.179311.php/>.
- "The History of the Bauhaus-Universität Weimar." *Bauhaus-Universität Weimar: The History of the Bauhaus-Universität Weimar*. Bauhaus-Universität Weimar,

n. d. Web. 28 Feb. 2017. <<https://www.uni-weimar.de/en/university/profile/portrait/history/>>.

"*Ukiyo-e*." Britannica Academic, *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 7 Feb. 2012. Accessed 23 Jan. 2017.

Hertha Nathorff (1895–1993)



Almost twenty years separate Gretel Bergmann and Hertha Nathorff, both from Laupheim. They serve as examples of two completely different ways of coping with and adjusting to the new and unknown circumstances of life after emigrating from Germany. The German Emigration Center in Bremerhaven highlights the biographies of Hertha Nathorff and her relative Carl Laemmle as remarkable examples of the emigration process.

Hertha Nathorff's father, Arthur Emil Einstein, owned a tobacco shop. However, the increasing discrimination and deprivation of rights under the Nazi regime after their takeover in 1933 put an end to the wealthy, middle-class lifestyle of the Einstein family. Their fate is portrayed in Hertha Nathorff's diary, which represents an important source of information for us today. The efforts of Hitler's small profiteers to take possession of the Einstein family home, as part of the process of "de-jewification of business establishments and land property", are also recorded in municipal council registers. This aspect of the prosecution of Jews is an inherent example of that time and affected every person portrayed in this book. The following excerpt from the Mayor's report to the municipal council addresses precisely this issue.

13th December 1938:

Einstein's tobacco shop represents another ongoing Aryanization case. Initially, Einstein had allegedly

leased his shop and his house to F. N. The authorized committee, however, held the opinion that the Jewish tobacco shop should be closed down. Hence, no act of Aryanization was carried out. Nevertheless, N., resp. his father-in-law A. B., still intends to buy the property. Another prospective buyer for the property is H. R. who would like to move his cigar shop from Radstrasse to Einstein's property, which is located much more conveniently. The authorized committee will most likely not prevent him from doing so, as this would be a mere case of business transfer within the same sector. O. Sch., the owner of a shoe shop, has also shown interest... Sch. has already been assured support in this matter by local Reich party officials, as well as the Mayor. Since there are several other prospective buyers for the Einstein property, the Mayor has explained to Einstein, that the city will buy it. The city will then still be entitled to resell the house. The Mayor was also convinced that Sch. would then have a chance in becoming the next owner of the house...

Through her publications after emigrating, Einstein's daughter was considered one of the well-known surviving representatives of Laupheim's Jewish community in New York. The constantly changing course of her life is exemplary of the fate of the German-Jewish bourgeoisie and intellectual elite. Her recollections of Berlin (1933–1939) and New York (1940–1945), reflect her personal

impression of the crucial years that caused radical changes in her life.

Born in 1895, Hertha Einstein spent her childhood in her family home. Her social environment was typical for the wealthy, Jewish middle-class who was willing to assimilate and prioritized education and the cultivation of culture. There are almost no memories of Laupheim noted in her journal, except for the occasional visits to the city while she resided in Berlin, which is why her childhood memories can only be found in later reports. She renewed her connection to Laupheim in 1986, when she sent a letter to the Mayor expressing her intention to set up a scholarship for the highest achieving student. The scholarship has been awarded since 1987.

In her letter from 1986 she describes her recollections of the difficulties of getting permission to attend Laupheim's *Lateinschule*. This letter is an important document that serves as evidence of the ambition of women to acquire a higher education, despite gender inequality:

Therefore, I was completely surprised when my father told me at the end of the summer break that I would have to go to the Lateinschule. He had organized the change of schools without saying a word ..., but when people found out that a girl was attending a boy's school, a big furor

arose among the citizens of Laupheim. Many people were enthusiastic about this progress. However, even more were outraged that a girl was sent to a boys' school. So the days went by monotonously until we unexpectedly received a letter from the school authorities in Stuttgart. 'The girl must leave the school. Coeducation is not permitted.' Everybody was shocked: my professors, my father, classmates and, of course, me. In a flood of tears, I packed my books and had to say good-bye with a heavy heart. Back to my former school... My classmates visited me almost every day and told me what they had learnt at school. We did our homework together and usually started with the Latin exercises that I was so fond of.

A year later Hertha Nathorff was readmitted to the *Lateinschule*. Even at the *Gymnasium* in Ulm she was the only girl in the class.

In 1914, her classmates enrolled in the military service as the First World War began: "It was heartbreaking to say good-bye and it deeply grieved me. Suddenly I heard one of my classmates say 'See, you're just a simple gal.' These words hit me like a slap in the face. I was just another gal, unable to keep up with the boys."

As she saw a lot of seriously wounded soldiers and since her father's cousin was a head doctor at a military hospital, a great desire to become a doctor awoke inside of her.

In a remembrance book she wrote in America for her husband, Hertha Nathorff expresses her attitude towards other religions; she would never deny her Jewish roots, but subscribing to a particular religion or accepting a different God for each religion was impossible for her. The strong identification of the educated German-Jewish middle-class with German culture, particularly with the literary tradition of Classicism, is reflected in her affectionate description of her bookshelf as a "home altar with a precious Weimar collection of Goethe's works in many volumes, and other pieces of literature that my husband and I have been carefully selecting and collecting with love all these years."

During her years as a medical student in Heidelberg and later in Freiburg, Hertha Nathorff was for the first time confronted with the increasing anti-Semitism in Germany. In 1920 she obtained her doctorate in Heidelberg. Three years later she became the chief physician at the Red Cross maternity hospital in Berlin and in the same year married. Together with her husband, Dr. Erich Nathorff, she also ran their private medical practice. As early as April 1933, the newly elected Nazi government began their policies of discrimination, when all Jewish

businesses, law offices, and medical practices across the Reich were boycotted. These tragic occurrences and their repercussions are depicted in Hertha Nathorff's diary entries.

In the years that followed, the lives of Jewish people in Berlin were marked by state-imposed mistreatment and harassment. However, it was positive experiences and pleasant recollections of her childhood that counteracted a dark and one-sided image of Germany and the Germans during the period of her emigration, and intensified her touching and ever so slightly embarrassing attachment to Germany.

In 1938, all Jewish doctors were deprived of their medical licenses. Only Erich Nathorff, who was a doctor at a hospital in Berlin at that time, was allowed to continue his work treating the Jewish population as a so-called *Krankenbehandler*. In August 1938, the Nathorffs sent a request for their emigration to the Consulate General of the United States.

The family's decision was reinforced by Erich Nathorff's arrest during the pogrom in November 1938, which was euphemistically called "Crystal Night". His wife and son feared for his life during his five-week long imprisonment in Sachsenhausen, until he was finally released and returned home, albeit in ill health. Hertha Nathorff's sick father was also imprisoned in Laupheim.

When the family moved to New York in 1940, Hertha Nathorff was 45 years old. After Laemmle's death, the Nathorffs no longer received any financial support, neither from relatives nor organizations. Erich Nathorff's German medical license was not recognized in the USA, and so he was compelled to prepare for and take the American exam. During this time, his wife had to earn the money needed to live on and to eventually set up a new medical practice, by doing odd jobs as a charwoman or a bar pianist.

Erich Nathorff managed to open a medical practice again; his wife however did not succeed in gaining a medical license in the US as she had dedicated herself to providing for the family all those years. As her husband's idea of traditional roles did not include Hertha Nathorff's ambitions for professional self-fulfillment, she had to give up her beloved occupation. Her deep regret is openly expressed in her diary entries. Wolfgang Benz who presented Nathorff's diary in Laupheim in 1987 recognizes in this loss "the core of her self-confidence" and a "quintessential cause of her misery". In 1940, she entered a Harvard competition with the manuscript "My Life in Germany" and received an award for it.

Hertha Nathorff possessed an admirable power for engaging in a wide range of social activities as part of the *New World Club*, an organization that took care of

immigrants. She worked as a psychologist, was a member of the *Alfred Mental Hygiene Clinic*, the *Virchow Medical Society* and the *Association for Advancement of Psychotherapy*. She also wrote newspaper articles and gave radio lectures in German. On the occasion of her 60th birthday in 1955, *Aufbau*, a newspaper established by Jewish immigrants in New York, published an article in which her double-life was concisely but fittingly described as “Charwoman by day, chairwoman by night”. The family had hardly managed to get back on its feet again, when Erich Nathorff passed away in 1954.

Thanks to pension payments from Germany, Hertha Nathorff’s financial situation was not as bad as one would infer from visiting her apartment. One possible explanation for the disarray is that over the years, she got used to rather meager living conditions and was therefore no longer interested in changing anything about it. Hertha Nathorff never saw Germany again. No German institution ever invited her to come back. From 1942 until her death in 1993, she resided in the same apartment near Central Park and her husband’s office. Her son’s death in 1988 made her realize that she was left alone in a place that would never become her home. As she was bound to her wheelchair, she was unable to leave her apartment. It was only through extensive correspondence that she managed to stay in contact with the outside world.

After her death we fulfilled her wish and installed a memorial plaque in honor of her family at the Weisensee cemetery in Berlin. A similar plaque was installed on her parents' gravestone at the cemetery in Laupheim by her former school. Wolfgang Benz, publisher of Hertha Nathorff's diary, wrote about her life in his anthology "German Jews in the 20th century", using the unfortunately appropriate title "The Common Misfortune of Exile". The following poem from her booklet "Voices of Silence", which was published in 1966, evokes important milestones of her life and her memories:

Three cities

When I dream: LAUPHEIM

It is the land of childhood, the land of youth;
Swabian soil, fragrant and sweet, spicy and heavy.
And an old, familiar folk song: Rosenstock, Holderblüt...

And when I think: BERLIN

It is the land of my heart,
With the air of big cities, whirlwind
A woman's love, a mother's happiness, fulfillment.

Success

A sparkling, rushing, chiming melody
It is Beethoven and Mozart all at once.

And then when I feel: NEW YORK,

It is a mixture of people
Hustling and chasing through weather and storm
Sorrow and hardship –
And sometimes, dissolving in a babble of voices
Melodies in major and minor.
Gershwin it is, and Sousa and Jitterbug –

*Translated from the German by Olga Alirzaeva,
Sofia Baldarelli, Tatiana Jung, Alice Klassen.*

Works Cited

- Bayer, Udo. "Auswanderung und Emigration: Drei Laupheimer." *Schwabenspiegel*, Biberbach, 2006.
- Benz, Wolfgang. "Deutsche Juden im 20. Jahrhundert".
Munich: C. H. Beck, 2011.
- Benz, Wolfgang. "Deutsch-jüdische Frauenschicksale im
20. Jahrhundert. Hertha Nathorff und Ruth Körner."
BC – Heimatkundl. Blätter f. den Kreis Biberach,
Munich: C. H. Beck, 2013/2.
- Hörl, Patrick. "Traumspuren." Documentary film, BR, 1993.
- Maunz, Melanie. "Die weibliche Emigration während des
Nationalsozialismus in die USA am Beispiel von
Gretel Bergmann und Hertha Nathorff." Master's
Thesis, Munich, 2006.
- Nathorff, Hertha. "Das Tagebuch der Hertha Nathorff. Berlin-
New York; Aufzeichnungen 1933 bis 1945." Ed.
Wolfgang Benz. Munich: Fischer, 1987.
- Nathorff, Hertha. "Stimmen der Stille." Solingen: Suppan,
1966.

Gretel Bergmann
(Margret Lambert) (1914–)



Through correspondence spanning two decades and a successful effort at negotiating the belated public recognition of Gretel Bergmann's sporting achievements, Burkhard Volkholz helped her find a way to reconcile with the country of her birth. He thus initiated, as Margaret Lambert has called it herself, a psychological healing process. In spite of her considerable apprehension, this made it possible for her to visit her former home 62 years after her athletic career had gotten her entangled in politics.

“I have tried very hard for the past 43 years to forget everything pertaining to Germany, including the language. I was not at all sure whether I wanted to answer your letter, but in all these years, you are the first person to contact me. None of my so-called friends I grew up with deemed it necessary to ever get in touch with me to maybe say: ‘I am sorry for what happened then.’” Almost two decades separate the sentiments of her first letter to Volkholz in June 1980 and her acknowledgment, during her visit to Laupheim in November 1999, of the essential role her hometown played in the inner healing process she went through. This short biography endeavors to trace that development. Needless to say, her visit to Germany was only the visible sign of a complex emotional process, one experienced in a similar manner by every emigrant of that time who had been willing to

reconnect with her or his former home, despite the shadows of the past.

Volkholz's initial research was inspired by a newspaper article in 1980 commemorating Gretel Bergmann's formal induction into the International Jewish Sports Hall of Fame in New York. His attention was drawn to a comment made in the article, that the only drawback to her commemoration was that the German sports community had not contributed. He therefore decided to get in touch with her and naturally, having been longstanding chairman of Laupheim's Gymnastics and Sports Club, athletics provided them with common ground. Thanks to his many contacts, he was eventually able to set in motion a number of tributes to Gretel Bergmann in Germany, which certainly influenced a change in how she felt.

A look into her formative years may help to shed light on why she felt the way she did towards her former home. Her father, Edwin Bergmann, was a co-owner of the family's hair company; having been one of the most important Jewish businesses in Laupheim, it still exists today under the same name. From an early age, Gretel was an active and enthusiastic member of Laupheim's Gymnastics Club. At the age of ten, she participated in her first competition. In a speech to be read on her behalf at the 125th anniversary celebration of the sports club, she wrote:

“Nothing, nobody can take away the wonderfully warm memories I have of growing up in a small town, of growing up in Laupheim. A large degree of credit of a much-enjoyed childhood has to go to the *Turnverein* where I spent so many hours. My parents, although bewildered by my passion for sports, allowed me to join while I was quite young.”

As schools in Laupheim only taught up to the tenth grade, Gretel had to transfer to a secondary school in Ulm, where she practiced as many as six sporting disciplines. Increasingly however, she began to refine her high jump, for which she had shown a particular aptitude, and was therefore invited to special training courses. In 1931, she reached a personal best of 1.5 meters in the high jump, securing her the fourth spot in the German rankings and separating her from the national champion by only two centimeters. This performance is all the more impressive, considering the scissor jump was standard practice at the time, while today the record only lies at over 2 meters as a result of a refinement in technique. After finishing school in the spring of 1933, her plan was to study at the Berlin Academy for Physical Education to become a PE teacher, but the rapidly changing political landscape shattered her dreams.

Initially she was accepted to the university, but after she alluded to her Jewish background, Gretel was advised to wait “until it is all over”. But when sporting

organizations began introducing the Aryan Paragraph, she could no longer enter national competitions nor use sports facilities for training purposes. The depiction of Jews as incapable of physical exercise was, as is well known, one of the many fanatical and racial stereotypes and defamatory statements of National Socialism. Since the existence of Jewish sporting organizations was not permitted, the Jewish community was robbed of any possibility to participate in sport – part of the social ostracism and isolation to which they were increasingly subjected. In the aforementioned speech of 1987, Gretel addressed this with the following statement: “Almost overnight I, together with so many others, was an outcast, an undesirable, and my idyllic life started to collapse. I will never forget those who tried to stay with us, like our good friend, Eugen Brunner, who sneaked into our house many a night, sometimes wearing his SS uniform. But neither can I forget those who turned away from us so easily, one of them being my best friend who lived right next door to us and who did not want to know me anymore.” In this general atmosphere and on Gretel’s initiative, an old potato field was leveled and used as a provisional training ground for football and field handball. Here she also stood in as a trainer.

The progressive deterioration of conditions for the Jewish community in Germany however, forced the search for an alternative. As Edwin Bergmann had busi-

ness connections in England, he suggested looking for an institution there at which his daughter could study to become a Physical Education teacher. Yet their search proved unsuccessful. And so, in the fall of 1933, Gretel enrolled at the London Polytechnic (now The London Metropolitan University) to learn English. There she had the opportunity to train with the polytechnic's team and made quite the impression with her performances in the high jump. In June of the following year, with a height of 1.55 meters, she became the women's national high jump champion. As he was on a business trip at the time, her father was able to witness her triumph and tell her in person that she had been ordered to immediately return to Germany to qualify for the national Olympic core team. She asked herself: "A year ago they threw me out because I'm Jewish – why do they now want me in the Olympic team?" One possible reason for this was apprehension on the German side that she might start for Great Britain.

The most decisive political motivation however, was without a doubt the threat on the part of the United States Olympic Committee to boycott the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games, should Jewish athletes be excluded from qualifying for the German team. The Nazis did not want to risk the United States' participation in the Games.

In correspondence with a US embassy official, the Chairman of Germany's Olympic Organizing Committee, Theodor Lewald, denied that there were German-Jewish athletes of Olympic quality and claimed that this was, contrary to the hostile attitude of the American Jewish population who falsely assumed racial prejudice as the reason, why German-Jewish athletes had been excluded from the Olympic Games. Lewald furthermore provided false information regarding Gretel's position in the rankings, stating her to be sixth and thus denying her right to a place on the Olympic team. Seeing as the high jump team would not have stood a chance without her, he suggested giving *Fräulein* Bergmann a place on the team to appease public opinion in Great Britain and the USA. He also made reference to the (ultimately successful) efforts to bring fencer Helene Mayer, whose father was Jewish, back from the USA to ensure that at least one "non-Aryan" athlete would compete for Germany. Attached to this written statement was a letter from IOC member Ritter von Halt to the Reich's Association for Physical Training, referencing the training logs of the Reich's Association of Jewish Front Fighters from June 1935 in Ettlingen, Germany. These confirmed that, of the female high jumpers, Gretel alone came into consideration for participation in the Olympic Games. Her recorded performances were 1.55 meters in Ulm and 1.53 meters in Ettlingen, which came very close to the

German record of 1.60 meters. She knew she was to assume the role of the “token Jew”.

Her only option to train was to do so alone and in poor conditions at the grounds of the lone Jewish sports association *Der Schild* in Stuttgart. Over the course of the next two years, she only managed to log sixteen days of training. Despite her use of the grounds, Gretel had no inner connection to the ideology of the Jewish sports movement, which had developed under increasing discrimination and incorporated some Zionist elements. She was also able to continue her studies at a sports academy in Stuttgart, which the children of Jewish former front-line soldiers were permitted to attend, already a rare exception at the time. Up until May 1936, Gretel was able to visit the school and train in an environment that was still relatively free from personal discrimination. Although she had to leave the school prematurely, she was nonetheless still able to receive her diploma. It was in 1935 at trials in Ettlingen, organized for the best German-Jewish athletes, that Gretel first met her future husband, Bruno Lambert. Born in 1910 and from the town of Andernach, he was a professional long jumper. Gretel had had to sign the declaration of commitment as early as February 1935, which at the time read: “...I accept the call of the Reichssportführer of my own free will, to join the ranks of the German youth, who is determined to train and commit to the German cause, which is also

mine...” Her recollection of the atmosphere at the Olympic training camp is one of conciliation.

A month before the Olympic Opening Ceremony, the regional Athletics Championships for Württemberg in southern Germany took place and even the *Ulmer Sturm*, a Nazi newspaper, reported on Gretel’s jump of 1.60 meters under “Bergmann, Stuttgart”. Extremely poor training opportunities, verbal abuse from the crowd and sodden lanes made for very unfavorable external conditions. Nevertheless, what was certain was that the three qualifying female Olympians were set for the Games (two years later, it emerged that one of the three, Dora (Heinrich) Ratjen, was actually male). The National Championships of July 11, 1936 served as the qualifying heats for the Olympics, however, because of her Jewish heritage Gretel was not allowed to participate. Being excluded from the qualifications did not necessarily mean she would be denied participation in the Olympics.

Then Gretel received a letter, dated July 16, 1936, sent on behalf of Reichssportführer Tschammer-Osten stating that he had not been able to include her on the team, which would represent Germany in the Olympic Stadium from August 1 to August 9. As the letter read, based on her recent performances, it was doubtful she had even expected to qualify. She was “rewarded for her efforts and enthusiasm” with a standing ticket. When later questioned about the events of 1936, Gretel wrote:

“Had I been allowed to compete, I would have given it my utmost to win. That would have without a doubt corroded Hitler’s theories of Jewish inferiority.” And in another conversation: “The more outraged I became, the higher I jumped, and had I been able to see Hitler’s face, I would have jumped like never before.” It was because of this anti-Semitic propaganda, that she justifiably saw herself as “the great Jewish hope. People were hoping a Jewish athlete would take part in the Olympic Games. Many German Jews knew my name. Although nobody really understood how I came to be selected for the national team, they all hoped I would take part.” Yet this hope was accompanied by a considerable fear of the consequences a prospective win would bring. She remembers doubting ever having a real chance to participate: “I was familiar with the Nazi mentality and it was clear to me that they could never let me go to the Games. They had to get rid of me – the only question was how.”

She did not respond to the “invitation” for a standing ticket at the Games. “I wouldn’t have gone! Not for a million dollars!” Given that the letter of refusal was sent just a day after the US team had departed for Europe, the humiliation resided in the instrumentality of her as a “token Jew” to prevent the impending boycott. Germany could have entered three athletes of each gender in every discipline, but only two women were nominated for the high jump. The German Athletics Association would

rather have lost a sure medal than have an athlete of Jewish heritage compete and possibly win in Hitler's presence. Gretel was falsely reported as injured to the members of the German team.

On May 16, 1937, the time had come for Gretel to leave Germany. With only ten Reichsmark in her pocket, she said goodbye to her parents and eleven-year-old brother in Ulm. It was uncertain whether they would ever see each other again, and in that fateful moment, Gretel swore to herself to never return to Germany.

Life in the United States was hard for her, as it was for almost every German refugee, considering very few were able to reestablish themselves in their learned professions. It was not until a year later that Gretel managed to start working as a physiotherapist. With great difficulty, she put together enough money for an affidavit of support for Bruno Lambert, who arrived in New York in 1938. They married shortly afterwards. It was during this time that she stopped using her given name and began presenting herself as Margaret. Adapting to society in the country of her exile led to Margaret forging a new identity. Alongside her job, Margaret continued to pursue her sporting career until the outbreak of the war. She did not become a US American citizen until 1944. Until then, she had been classified as an "enemy alien". After Edwin Bergmann had been deported to Dachau for four weeks in 1938, Gretel's parents and brother succeeded in

fleeing to England in 1939 and arrived in the US a year later. In New York, Edwin managed to establish himself to some extent in his line of work, but passed away in 1949. His wife lived until 1979. Her parents-in-law were murdered in a concentration camp; wealthy relations had denied them an affidavit. Her brother, Rudolf, who had worked at Universal Pictures in Berlin, was saved thanks to an affidavit from Carl Laemmle.

Exclusion and malice from the people closest to a person can traumatize them for the rest of their life. “Compared with the murder of six million innocent Jewish people, my fate was of little significance,” but nonetheless “the way in which I was excluded from the Olympic Games will stay with me until my very last breath.” This shows that the severity and weight of traumatic experiences can never be fully comprehended by an onlooker.

As already mentioned, Volkholz reached out to Margaret in 1980, which elicited the gradual change in her attitude towards Germany, and most importantly led to the belated recognition of her sporting achievements in the country in which she grew up. On Volkholz’s initiative, Margaret received an official tribute in 1983, in the form of a badge of honor presented on behalf of the German Athletics Association. During a ceremony, she was decorated with a “belated, but nevertheless prestigious and well deserved distinction” by the Consul Gen-

eral of New York. In her speech, Margaret said: “It would be dishonest to say that this award makes up for all the suffering I had to endure in 1936. Being able to participate in and possibly win a medal at the Olympic Games is the thrill of a lifetime – to have this opportunity taken away from you is not easy to forgive or forget. The idea and initiative for this tribute came from a man (Burkhard Volkholz), whom I have never met in my life. I find such a level of empathy from a complete stranger quite remarkable.” Yet at the same time, she admitted that hearing the enthusiastic reports about the former Jewish citizens of Laupheim having been invited, made her feel nauseated.

In her acceptance speech for the next honor in 1995, which included the naming of a sports hall after her in Berlin-Wilmersdorf and the mounting of a commemorative plaque there, she once again mentioned the role Laupheim had played in her change of heart and stressed “that it would be more than unjust to ignore the spirit which now exists in Germany.” In justifying her decision not to attend the event herself and instead send her sons, Gary and Glenn, in her place, she did not point out her oath from 1937 but made specific reference to her anxiety: “my heart said yes but my brain said NO. I am afraid the emotional impact might prove to be too much for me.”

As Margaret wrote in her letters to Burkhard Volkholz, the gesture made the following year by the German National Olympic Committee had done “more for the healing process than all the years gone by.” The NOC, together with the then president Walther Tröger, had invited her and her husband to the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta, as she would not accept any invitations to Germany for understandable reasons. In an interview for the New York Times, Margaret opened up about the intensity with which painful memories come back to her whenever she attends sporting events. In the same year, her former hometown held an exhibition in her honor at the town hall, for which Volkholz had once again laid the necessary groundwork. Margaret, in the welcoming speech she sent for its opening, wrote: “Please do not misunderstand my bitterness, which was not caused so much by my exclusion from the 1936 Olympic Games, but by the fact that I was forced to leave the country I had loved with all my heart. It is said that time heals all wounds but, without going into details, some of the scars will remain forever. [...] May I just tell you that your efforts to keep the Laupheim Jewish tradition alive is a most praiseworthy undertaking and undoubtedly appreciated by the former Jewish population.”

Receiving the Georg von Opel Award in Frankfurt in 1999 and then visiting Laupheim constituted the pinna-

cle of these tributes. It was also the first time Margaret and her correspondent met in person. As early as April, she had indicated that she had reached a point where she could no longer say “never” to an invitation to Laupheim. In 2009, the events of 1936 were finally adapted into a film entitled *Berlin '36*.

During her short stay in Laupheim, she remembered: “when the country I had loved with all my heart responded to my love with hatred towards me and all Jewish people, I was forced to leave. And I myself became filled with a hatred for everything German – a feeling that wouldn’t leave me for many years... In many speeches that I have held all over the US, I have stressed the fact that it is mostly due to Laupheim that an inner healing process could take place. I finally felt ready to return for a visit...” For others who were forced to emigrate, the process may have been less painful and difficult, but it is much more likely that they hid their pain from onlookers. Nevertheless, it is, if anything, representative of the ambivalent relationship of former German-Jewish citizens to Germany, to their childhood hometowns there and to their neighbors from that time.

Translated from the German by Ana Isabel Azúa Becker, Nadezhda Mileva, Barbara Nava and Ameera Rajabali,

Works cited

- Bayer, Udo. "Margret Lambert oder der lange Weg zur Ausöhnung". *Jahresheft der Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Gedenken e. V.* 4/2001 [n.d.]: 18–26.
- Bergmann, Gretel. *Ich war die große jüdische Hoffnung: Erinnerungen einer außergewöhnlichen Sportlerin*. Karlsruhe: Der Kleine Buch Verlag, 2003.
- Dick, Jutta, and Sassenberg, Marina. *Jüdische Frauen im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*. Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1993.
- Diederix, Claudia. *Die Judenfrage im Sport. Eine Untersuchung am Beispiel des Lebenswegs der jüdischen Sportlerin Gretel Bergmann*. [s.l.]: [s.n.], 1993.
- Mayer, Paul Yogi. *Jüdische Olympiasieger: Sport – ein Sprungbrett für Minoritäten*. Kassel: Agon-Sportverlag, 2000. Print.
- Hitler's Pawn*. Dir. George Roy. HBO, 2004. Film.

Siegfried Einstein (1919– 1983)



Siegfried Einstein, the youngest of the personalities in this booklet, was a writer of poetry and prose. Because of the great difficulty he encountered in publishing his works, it is not surprising that in his own hometown he remained relatively unknown until his death in 1983. No commemorative plaque marks his birthplace; only the Museum in Laupheim keeps his memory alive.

After the war, Einstein's family kept in touch with but a few people in Laupheim – among them Agnes Nothelfer, the family's Christian housekeeper. The announcement of her death, published by the Einsteins in the local newspaper *Schwäbische Zeitung* in 1963, was more than a simple obituary: 18 years after the end of the NS-era, it was a public denouncement of their former hometown and its people, most of whom were all too quickly inclined to leave their past behind them. It read as follows:

She became our diligent housekeeper on January 24, 1915: when Jewish people had yet to be led toward their death in cattle wagons, when the proud and respected Jewish community of Laupheim was yet to disappear. Our Agnes Nothelfer, whom we all called 'Anna', was there in both our bright and dark days. She embodied all those qualities one would otherwise only hear about in the most beautiful fairy tales. She was

kind and full of love; she was pure of heart and faithful until the end. Faithful – back then: when in a small town only a few people still dared to shake hands with a Jew... (“Unsere Agnes Nothelfer”).

When the National Socialist Party rose to power, Siegfried Einstein was a 14-year-old student of Laupheim’s *Real- und Lateinschule*. This is how he described his family environment: “As it was custom among well-to-do people of the time, my family voted for the Centre Party. This meant Catholic – the opposite of left-wing. In addition, my father was a council member of the Jewish parish of Laupheim. He was the biggest taxpayer... My mother came from a great banking family of Bavaria ... she, too, was bourgeois.” On April 1, 1933, during the boycott of Jewish businesses, the big shop windows of the Einsteins’ clothing store were smashed – there is still a photograph showing members of the SA proudly posing at the scene. The boy’s consequent trauma was only natural, as was the humiliation caused by an episode during his school days that would leave a permanent scar on his psyche. This is how he recalled it even shortly before his death in a 1983 interview:

To a fourteen-year-old boy like me, it was something so outrageous that I was still in shock

when I came back to school two days later. I will never forget how my mathematics teacher, who until 1933 had been a welcome guest in my parents' house, said to me: 'Now, little Siegfried, come to the board.' And I went without suspicion. He said I should hold my head against the blackboard for him to outline my skull with chalk. Then he did. As I stood back from the board, I was appalled at the sight of my profile: Indeed, I had such an enormously long nose ... my ears were so dreadfully oversized ... and he told the entire class, who was laughing and sneering at me, they now knew what a Jewish boy was supposed to look like. What followed was, to a sensitive, sometimes oversensitive boy like me, the most horrible of all things: Apart from one friend of mine, the whole class was laughing and yelling – as was probably happening in similar places all over Germany – that this was the Jew..." (S. Levinson 17)

A few days after January 30, 1933, Einstein's father received a summons from the Gestapo administration in Ulm. The chauffeur and window dresser of the family's store had falsely stated that he had publicly insulted the *Führer*. Einstein's mother fortunately found out the

charge could be dismissed upon an immediate payment of 5,000.00 Reichsmark. Then a few months later Einstein was pelted with stones – a physical and emotional injury he later recalls in his poem “In meine Heimat nur im Tod” (1975). After this incident, his parents decided to send him to relatives in Switzerland. Here he initially attended a boarding school, but then was forced to work in labor camps for more than four years. Such could be the fate of an immigrant. Despite the laudable fact that many German refugees owed Switzerland their lives, Swiss refugee policies were notoriously ambivalent. For the just over 8,000 refugees hosted, there were about 4,500 who were rejected and it was only in 1944 that Jewish people were granted the life-saving status of a political refugee.

After the forced sale of their business and his father’s internment in Dachau following *Kristallnacht*, Einstein’s parents were finally able to flee. Still, the name “Einstein” stubbornly remained on the façade of their department store for years to come. In 1940, Siegfried Einstein met the Nathorffs in England to discuss possibilities to emigrate. He kept correspondence with Hertha Nathorff until his death.

Einstein’s first collection of poems, *Melodien in Dur und Moll* (1946), even brought him some recognition and praise from Herman Hesse and Thomas Mann. This

collection also includes his most famous poem, “Schlaflied für Daniel”, which deals with the theme of the Holocaust, the focus point of all of his writing. It begins as follows:

We’re travelling through Germany, my child
heading through the night.

Windows creaking in the wind so wild
to wake the dead to claim their right

...¹ (Einstein, *Das Wolkschiff* 70)

In 1953, Einstein came back to Germany. He first went to Lampertheim where he was still met with great hostility, as when, according to his own words, somebody broke his windows and yelled, “Die, Jew!” He then moved to Mannheim where he was a lecturer of German literature. In those years, he worked primarily as a journalist, exploring above all the West German public’s attitude toward the crimes committed by the National Socialists. Since this was a notoriously unpopular topic up until the late sixties, the publication of his articles was mostly limited to left-wing oriented newspapers and periodicals such as the *Simplicissimus*, the *Neue Zeitung* in Munich and the *Andere Zeitung* in Hamburg. This meant that – especially in the post-war era – those newspapers only reached a small audience. In some way, Einstein was ahead of his time.

¹ Unofficial translation from the German original by Markus Ganser.

His book *Eichmann – Chefbuchhalter des Todes*, written in 1961, was printed by a small publishing house that closed shortly thereafter. A new publisher could not be found, even though the book had been translated into many languages. It was his last work to be published in his lifetime. As with Hannah Arendt’s report, Einstein’s work was inspired by Eichmann’s trial in Jerusalem. The latter however – which can hardly be assigned to a definite literary genre – combines documentation and quotes, with accusation dressed up in a literary fashion, and a personal recollection of victims with a blend of family histories and contemporary history. Einstein dedicated the book to the memory of his father: “The man who had to kneel with all his fellow Jews before the burning synagogue in Laupheim ... and scream, ‘We set the synagogue on fire!’” Another passage says: “Eichmann alone would not have been able to force a single helpless person into the gas chamber or before the *Genickschussanlage*” (Einstein, *Eichmann* 11). With this, Einstein reveals his real targets: the people behind Eichmann who now belonged to the West German ruling elite. The book’s last chapter, “Ich klage an”, expresses vehement opposition to the mentality of suppression during this era, which mainly endorsed severing all bonds with the past; an attitude that hardly helped the author garner public empathy: “Your words of democracy and freedom are nothing but smoke and mirrors. You served under

Hitler and Eichmann. In the time of greatest need, you had no heart for the ones who were mistreated, tortured or scourged in this Europe – and you, dear Sirs, now want to talk about ‘democracy’? Your words are nothing but lies” (177).

In 1962, Einstein was invited to the World Peace Council in Moscow and two years later he was awarded the Kurt-Tucholsky-Award. As he was frequently holding lectures, he spent less and less time dedicated to his work as a journalist. Two small volumes of poems and essays, partly taken from his literary estate, were published only posthumously: *Meine Liebe ist erblindet* (1984) and *Wer wird in diesem Jahr den Schofar blasen?* (1987). The latter’s cover story evokes memories of the cantor of Laupheim, but also circles back to a life-long topic of interest for Einstein: authors who were, just like him and most German-Jewish poets, outsiders. In some way, what he wrote about Else Lasker-Schüler also pertains to his poems: “She knew, as it was rarely seen in a poet who ... lived with Job’s prophetic knowledge, how to give shape to the looming horror: the depth of the humiliation, the prediction of endless sorrow, the cold sweat of death...” (Einstein, *Wer wird in diesem Jahr* 101). In his afterword, former Chief Rabbi of Baden-Württemberg Nathan Peter Levinson remembered Einstein with admiration: “He was too honest and straightforward to only have friends, and many feared his

tongue. He was one of those men who tell people what they need to hear and not what they want to hear..." (140).

Strikingly, even his late poems were not affected by two dissimilar authors whose influence in the post-war era could not be overlooked, Benn and Brecht. It is equally conspicuous that he did not establish any connection, not even of a personal kind, with the so-called *Kahlschlagliteratur*. Nor did his lyrical work try to pursue the formal boldness of a poet like Paul Celan, even though they were only one year apart and shared a similar political and biographical background. With the suffering self and a damaged life at the center of his poems, especially in his last years, together with the experience of sickness, it is not surprising that there is no trace of what we would usually relate to a left-wing political view. Evidently, "left" meant essentially the same to him as "antifascist". Politically, his poems only deal with the theme of persecution; his purpose surely was not to proclaim any sort of social utopia. His political commitment fed mainly on the hope for an alternative political concept to fascism as he had experienced it, and so it is certainly defined by its negation. Surely, one reason for his relatively small audience was his avoidance of West Germany's flourishing literary scene and its publication forums with all their snobbery, where there was no place for an outsider like him.

The political events that characterized his life left him stateless and rootless, even after 1945, even in West Germany. The poem “In meine Heimat nur im Tod” looks back once again on Einstein’s traumatic youth and at the same time it delineates his relation to his birthplace with the acerbity he himself felt it deserved. By evoking the image of the little piece of land which was home to his ancestors, the poem links this return to death – reconciliation may not be the appropriate name for it. Siegfried Einstein was buried in the Jewish cemetery of Laupheim – as were other former members of the German-Jewish community after 1945. The circle of his life, then, closes with this dual image of the stone:

I have no wish at all to go back home,
not to the place from which they cast me away.
All my life I have felt the cold, hard stone
the jeering crowd bequeathed me that day.

“Let’s punish the Jew,” I heard them howl in pride;
my forehead was their goal: they took good aim
and as I wavered I just saw a light:
it brought a flying dream of death and brain.

I have no wish at all to go back home,
as long as this ill heart carries me through.
But look, men of Laupheim, look for the stone
that hit my body once so straight and true.

Let someone throw that stone at me at last
before I am given three shovels of ground.
The piece of land my ancestors loved and found,
only in death will grant me eternal rest.²

(Einstein, *Meine Liebe* 65)

A commitment to the Jewish faith and the memory of his childhood religion can be felt even in his later works. This is a fundamental difference between Einstein and other left-wing authors of German-Jewish origin in the post-war era. It is important not to forget the role played by Israel as “the enemy” within the politically correct anti-imperialistic view of the time. Einstein did not share this attitude – another reason why he was an outsider. The only place that felt like home, like it did for his brother-in-spirit Heinrich Heine, was the fatherland of Literature. He could not feel at home in Germany.

The interplay of German language and Jewish culture was the main characteristic of a majority of the authors about whom he wrote, and who are more widely acknowledged nowadays than during the time in which Einstein recalled them. Einstein’s work therefore represents a late example of a probably unique and irreversibly lost era of German-Jewish unity.

² Translation in cooperation with Markus Ganser.

*Translated from the German by Michele Benforti, Denise
Franz and Alessia Rabasca*

Works Cited

- Bayer, Udo. "Auswanderung und Emigration: Drei Laupheimer." *Schwabenspiegel*, vol. 2.2, OEW, 2006, pp. 889–899.
- Demuth, Volker. "Ewig anders sein zu müssen: Der Lyriker und Publizist Siegfried Einstein." *Von der Lateinschule zum Carl-Laemmle-Gymnasium*. Carl-Laemmle-Gymnasium. 1994.
- Einstein, Siegfried. *Das Wolkenschiff*. Beer, 1950.
- . *Eichmann – Chefbuchhalter des Todes*. Röderberg, 1961.
- . *Meine Liebe ist erblindet*. Quadrate-Buchhandlung, 1984.
- . *Melodien in Dur und Moll*. Carl Posen, 1946.
- . *Wer wird in diesem Jahr den Schofar blasen?* Focus-Verlag, 1987.
- Levinson, Nathan Peter. Afterword. *Wer wird in diesem Jahr den Schofar blasen?*, by Siegfried Einstein, Focus-Verlag, 1987.
- Levinson, Sharon. "S. Einstein." *Karlsruher Ketchup*, 1983.
- "Unsere Agnes Nothelfer." *Schwäbische Zeitung*, 24 Jan. 1963.

Illustrations

1. Kilian von Steiner, (page 9). (Photograph of bust). (1987). Bust from Barbara von Kalckreuth, 1987, Schlosspark Laupheim, Museum Laupheim
2. Moritz Henle, (page 19). Retrieved from: http://museum-laupheim.de/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Moritz_Henle.jpg
3. Friedrich Adler, (page 31). Museum zur Geschichte von Christen und Juden, Laupheim
4. Hertha Nathorff, (page 39). Retrieved from: https://www.aerztekammer-berlin.de/50ueberUns/55_Auszeichnungen/06_Hertha-Nathorff-Preis/
5. Gretel Bergmann, (page 53). Bilderkammer Museum Laupheim
6. Sigfried Einstein, (page 71). Retrieved from: <https://sites.google.com/site/siegfriedeinstein/>

Glossary

Der Schild – (Eng. The Shield) a sports association, sponsored by the Jewish Association of War Veterans, whose existence was permitted by the Nazis as a denial of anti-semitic sentiment, 60

Deutscher Werkbund: German Association of Craftsmen, 37

Eichmann – Chefbuchhalter des Todes: Eichmann – Death’s Head Accountant, 77

Fräulein – a title or form of address for an adult unmarried woman; used in a joking or derogatory manner in the 19th century, 60

Frohsinn = cheerfulness, 22

Genickschussanlage: Special facility for shooting people in the back of the head in concentration camps, 78

Gewerbemuseum: Museum of Applied Arts, 33

Gymnasium – a school for advanced secondary education that prepares pupils for university entrance, 18, 44, 84

“Ich klage an”: I Accuse, 78

“In meine Heimat nur im Tod”: Only in Death will I Go Back Home, 80

Israelitischer Tempel = Hamburg Temple, Germany's first Reform synagogue, 24

Jüdischer Kulturbund: Cultural federation of Jewish artists born after the promulgation of a law that expelled non-Aryans from the German national civil service. As a result, many Jewish artists became unemployed and decided to get together and form this federation, 36

Landtag – The legislative assembly of many German-speaking polities, including most German states / A diet or assembly in some German states in the 19th century, 13, 18

Liturgische Synagogen-Gesänge = *Liturgical Songs for the Synagogue*, 25

Sechs Hebräische Gesänge = *Six Hebrew Songs*, 25

Eine Deutsche Kedeschoh = a German version of the main prayer central to Jewish liturgy, 26

Kahlschlagliteratur: Clear-cutting literature, a literary movement concerned with the experience of destruction both in a physical and a moral sense in post-World War II in Germany, 80

Kunstgewerbeschulen were schools of applied arts in German-speaking countries from the mid-19th century until the end of the World War II. After 1945, they were replaced by modern secondary schools. The idea of *Kunstgewerbeschulen* was to connect trade and industry with the arts, 33

Krankenbehandler – a discrediting title used by the Nazis to define a Jewish medical practitioner, literally: “carer for the sick”, 46

Kristallnacht: Night of Broken Glass, the night of November 9, 1938 when the Nazis attacked Jewish businesses and religious sites throughout Germany, 76

Meine Liebe ist erblindet: My Love has Turned Blind, 79

Melodien in Dur und Moll: Melodies in Major and Minor Keys, 76, 83

Real- und Lateinschule: German secondary school with a special focus on Latin, 43, 44, 74, 83

“Schlaflied für Daniel”: Lullaby for Daniel, 76

Turnverein – Gymnastics and Sports Club, 57

Wer wird in diesem Jahr den Schofar blasen?: Who will Blow the Schofar this Year?, 79, 83

Ukiyo-e: “(...) (Japanese: “pictures of the floating world”) one of the most important genres of art in (...) Japan, [which flourished from 1603 to 1867]. The ukiyo-e style also has about it something of both native and foreign realism. Screen paintings were the first works to be done in the style. These depicted aspects of the entertainment quarters (euphemistically called the “floating world”) of Edo (modern Tokyo) and other urban centres. Common subjects included famous courtesans and prostitutes, kabuki actors and well-known scenes from kabuki plays, and erotica.

More important than screen painting, however, were wood-block prints, ukiyo-e artists being the first to exploit that medium.” (Britannica), 35, 38

A great number of notable personalities who achieved extraordinary success in a wide variety of fields came from the rural community of Laupheim in Württemberg. They were not only remarkable for a small town like Laupheim, but also unique in all of Germany.

Among these eminent personalities are, for example, co-founder of the Württembergische Vereinsbank and art-enthusiast Kilian von Steiner, artist and designer Friedrich Adler, composer Moritz Henle, author Siegfried Einstein, and last but not least world-class high jumper Gretel, from the entrepreneurial family Bergmann, who was the inspiration for the movies ›Berlin 36‹ and ›Hitler's Pawn‹.

For the first time, Laupheim expert Udo Bayer combines a concise historical overview of the former German-Jewish community of Laupheim with six vignettes of these distinguished people.



**UNIVERSITÄT
HEIDELBERG**
ZUKUNFT
SEIT 1386

ISBN 978-3-946531-52-4

