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## **In View**

*A Photo Essay by Arno Gisinger*

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[Israelitengasse in Hohenems, Fritz and Paul Tänzer (foreground), c. 1900. Photograph by Arnold Sueti, Erwin and Uri Taenzer Collection, USA]

**At Home: Diaspora. The Jewish Museum Hohenems**

*Edited for the Jewish Museum Hohenems by Hanno Loewy | Hohenems 2008*

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*“Now I have to ask you something.  
With what do you want to install a Jewish Museum in Vorarlberg.  
The people their habe to bring the stuff in the dark.”  
Jenny Bollag-Landauer in an interview, February 1987*

## Cross-border dimensions

*Foreword by Dr. Claudia Schmied, Federal Minister for Education, Art and Culture*

If we inquire about the meaning of museums today, we receive many different answers that all go far beyond their basic tasks as holders and active imparters of cultural heritage. Often the added value made possible by the museums' work that can be of great economic significance is mentioned; sometimes the function of museums in the sphere of cultural tourism is emphasized; the importance of museums for our social development is almost always named.

For the Jewish Museum Hohenems these answers are all equally valid, as they are for many other museums too. But in addition many other parameters should be mentioned, quite clearly illustrating the socio-political relevance of this institution:

For one thing, the importance of the Hohenems museum for Austrian treatment of its Jewish past and present should be mentioned. Along with the Jewish museums in Vienna and Eisenstadt, Hohenems is the institution that is best placed and therefore also best suited to communicate the cross-border dimension of its contents in a truthful way.

Likewise the Jewish Museum Hohenems is significant as a place of discourse, as a place where even experimental thinking about social and sometimes also uncomfortable questions relating to migration and intercultural communication, Diaspora and networks, can take place, questions that transcend national, religious and cultural boundaries.

Finally the role the Jewish Museum Hohenems can play in the formation of social awareness and its function as a model are of exemplary importance for the entire Austrian museum scene as it conveys the opportunities and potential that migration and cultural transformation have inherent in them.

I would like to thank the director and his staff as well as the whole museum team for their great dedication, their courage in introducing innovations and their willingness to look far beyond the museum at the bigger picture. I wish the Jewish Museum Hohenems every success in the future!

## Provocative questions—Exemplary stories

*Foreword by Markus Wallner, Deputy Head of the State Government of Vorarlberg*

In the Vorarlberg magazine of August 2007 our museums were described as “places for treasure seekers and time travelers”. In his article with that title, Hanno Loewy wrote that museums are places of the present where people satisfy their curiosity in their search for themselves. In museums we can embark on journeys through time and plunge into the often overlooked corners of our world in which so much that will enrich our everyday lives and our perception can be discovered.

Since it was founded, the Jewish Museum Hohenems has lived up to this high ambition to an amazing extent. And with its completely newly devised permanent exhibition it has yet again provided powerful inspiration in various respects to the museum world—and not only in Vorarlberg.

With this conception the museum asks productive, multi-layered, sometimes even provocative questions in the form of a narrative, but at the same time always leaves room for subjective memory. The permanent exhibition highlights the role that an intelligent exploration of questions of migration and acculturation can play in society and the present, for our province in particular.

The Jewish Museum is making a considerable contribution towards our now being able to deal more openly with the position National Socialism occupied in Vorarlberg, and recognizing that there may be no taboo on accepting responsibility. The new permanent exhibition offers no final answers, it tends rather to ask questions, and tells exemplary stories.

The Jewish Museum Hohenems has long been highly regarded as a place mediating between regionalism and global development. The permanent exhibition—made possible by a high degree of private fund-raising—will undoubtedly lend particular power to these aims and attract new sectors of the public.

## Openness to bridge-building

*Foreword by Mayor Richard Amann*

If we look at Hohenems and its development over the centuries, it is evident how much cross-border relationships and migration have influenced the town's history from time immemorial. An important component of the town's "European" identity is its Jewish history that started in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. The counts of Hohenems at that time favored the formation of a Jewish community to enliven the market site—and the imperial county of Hohenems.

In the coming centuries—in the face of much resistance—a remarkable coexistence developed that embraced many spheres of life, culture, education, business or even everyday communal life in clubs and associations. Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century increasing emigration by Jewish Hohenemsers to larger towns began. And in the 1930s National Socialism was to mean the end of the small remaining Jewish community—and at the same time the end of an important and typical part of Hohenems history.

The history of Jewish Hohenems continued, albeit fragmentarily, in stories, finds and the places that were no longer associated with their former meaning and function. Restoring that association required the founding of the Jewish Museum—and the beginning of the wide-ranging, continuously conducted discussion process inextricably associated with it. It thus became possible to bring that history in all its facets back to mind, to make people aware of it and make it the content of a public debate.

Many demands are made of a modern museum institution such as the Jewish Museum Hohenems: It is a port of call for those interested in culture and for historians, as well as families and schoolchildren of all ages. As well as the conscientious processing of historical facts and exhibits and their presentation, there is one thing that may well have contributed to the international renown of this institution: a basic openness and willingness to use their theme also as a point of departure for building bridges, to deal with fundamental questions of integration and immigration, of coexistence, to dare constantly to look at "the bigger picture" and stimulate others to do so. Thanks to the outstanding work of the Jewish Museum—and this entails a huge responsibility—Hohenems has also become a point of reference for a constantly growing number of descendants of Jewish Hohenems families throughout the world. In the case of this museum it is quite possible to speak of an archive of a collective memory shared by many people.

All this is reflected in the new permanent exhibition of the Jewish Museum, inaugurated in 2007. In it we find amazing information about how individual life stories are imbedded in

larger scenarios, it shows everyday life as well as important historical turning points that meant happiness or suffering. History is revealed in small things as well as in large, it is local and international; it must be recorded matter-of-factly and correctly, but at the same time may not be stripped of its emotional quality, and above all of its significance for the present and the future. I can only most warmly recommend everyone to get to know this piece of Hohenems history, as well as history ranging far beyond the town, by visiting the Jewish Museum.

## Nicht bloß Aufbewahrung von Vergangenen

*Foreword by Dr. Eva Häfele, President of the Association of Friends of the Jewish Museum Hohenems*

Looking back, it was a fortunate juxtaposition of circumstances in 1990 and 1991, what might be called a “window of opportunity”, that made the founding and development of the Jewish Museum in Hohenems possible, involving the interaction of historians looking at civilian society, Hohenems citizens and local politicians, and the cultural and financial departments of the province of Vorarlberg. The imbedding of the museum in Vorarlberg civilian society by the then Verein Jüdisches Museum Hohenems (Jewish Museum Hohenems Association) and the current Verein zur Förderung des Jüdischen Museums Hohenems (Association of Friends of the Jewish Museum Hohenems) was an important prerequisite for the consolidation of this ambitious project—even at times of no doubt inevitable crisis and changes of direction. From the start the museum did not see itself as a place for the mere preservation of the past, but as a living and thoroughly controversial factor in the cultural landscape of Hohenems itself, Vorarlberg and the wider region. And that very tendency was always decisively supported by the museum’s Association of Friends.

Over the course of several centuries, but particularly from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> to the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, the Jewish community of Hohenems was a touchstone of how the majority community dealt with the challenges of immigration and the cultural and political diversity associated with it. The questions of migration, integration and assimilation thrown up at that time again need to be addressed today, even if the answers will be new and different. The museum’s new permanent exhibition takes up these questions. At the same time things will not stop at just what is on display: as well as offering documents and artifacts, a museum lives primarily from how they are discussed and talked about, i.e. from the ongoing public exploration of the themes it presents.

Contacts with descendants of earlier Hohenems Jewish families have developed into a special aspect of the museum’s work, meanwhile renewing ties with Hohenems from all corners of the world through the museum. Touching personal contacts and intensive links have grown out of this, which have also influenced the shaping of the museum and added completely new dimensions of range, international collaboration, support and publicity to its external impact. These descendants—members of many different professions, subscribers to a variety of faiths, and representatives of diverse views of the world—are themselves an expression of the migration experiences of the bygone 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century. They reflect our diverse modern world back into the museum in Hohenems. They should also be thanked for their uninterrupted ideological and financial commitment.

In addition there are many other friends, supporters, donors and sponsors who have come from Hohenems as well as the immediate and further vicinity. They now make a considerable contribution to the financial outlay of the museum, and hence to the diversity of its activities, with the main burden of funding being borne by the town of Hohenems and the province of Vorarlberg. As President of the Association of Friends of the Jewish Museum Hohenems I would like to thank them all for their ongoing commitment and interest.

Thanks are likewise due to the museum staff, to the permanent employees as well as the many temporary workers and volunteers. From outside people do not generally see how much effort—and this often entails working in the evenings and at weekends—the staff invest in exhibitions and events, but also in what is matter-of-factly referred to as “routine business”.

The Association of Friends of the Jewish Museum wants to continue to be a supporting element in the social structure of the museum, and will do so. It anchors the museum in the minds of the Vorarlberg public, it maintains a dialogue with individuals and institutions that are important for the museum, and it supports contact with the descendants of the Hohenems Jewish families. Moreover, so that these tasks can be carried out, new members are always invited to join us and commit themselves to the museum.

## Reflections on the New Permanent Exhibition

*Foreword by Susan Rosenthal-Shimer*

*American Friends of the Jewish Museum Hohenems*

My father, Carl August Rosenthal, tried many times to share with me stories about our heritage, specifically about the small town of Hohenems where our ancestors first settled in the early 1600s and where our forefathers built a textile factory. Hohenems always remained in the Rosenthal family blood even after we were forced to leave Austria and settled in America. But I did not want to visit Hohenems. Austria had bitter memories for me even though I left there as a young child. Finally, in 1998, I learned about the Jewish Museum in Hohenems and came for what I anticipated would be a short one-time visit. My visit was not traumatic; indeed, it was wonderful and thus I have been happy to return many times. How delighted my father would be if he could come here now and see that not only I and other descendants remember Hohenems, but that the people of Hohenems remember us and that they have created a Museum that tells our story.

Of course, the history that the Museum recounts is not one of unending joy. We cannot forget that Clara Heimann was taken from here, from what is now the home of the Museum, and only her house and her furniture remained; she could never return. From my visits here, I have come to realize that as horrible as the Nazi era was, there are many good people in Hohenems, people who have shown that this community cares for its past, for us the descendants, and for our history. This new Permanent Exhibition has made that history clear- the good and the bad, the difficulties and the successes. The Permanent Exhibition shows our heritage; it tells about the lives of our ancestors and how those changed over time. It highlights the changes in the community and the lives of the descendants of the Jewish families who lived here. There are so many stories in the new Permanent Exhibition; every time I view it, I learn more. I see the life of our ancestors, I learn about the schools, open to Jews and Christians, which our forefathers formed, the architects they brought to Hohenems to build their fine homes, some of which are still here, the synagogue, which is now a gathering place for the community, and the hospital they funded, which though modernized, still serves Hohenems. I see from the Permanent Exhibition and from a stroll through town many signs of our ancestors' interest in Hohenems, I also have learned that it was home to Jewish families who were not factory owners or bankers, but were peddlers, traveling far and wide, or servants in the homes of the well-to-do. I have learned about the people who did not survive the Holocaust; the town and the Museum have not hidden the tragic facts, and the Permanent Exhibition makes this horror very clear. I have learned about the Displaced Persons who lived here after the Nazi era and are now dispersed throughout the world.

The Museum's displays, permanent and temporary, have brought the stories of the Jewish families of Hohenems to life. But the wonderful people I have met here, people who have been instrumental in creating this Museum and who have helped it strengthen, grow and thrive, also have brought modern Hohenems to life for me. In writing about the Museum today, one cannot forget that the creation and development of the Museum did not come easily. It could not have happened without people whose roles should never be forgotten: from Otto Amman and Eva Grabherr to Hanno Loewy and Eva Haefele, to the staff of the Museum throughout the years, to the current residents of the community, who have made contributions both financially and with their ideas and labor. All of these people have made and will continue to make the Museum a very special place in this region and, indeed, in the world.

I have had the opportunity to observe struggles for historic preservation in other parts of the world and, as I have done so, I have increasingly appreciated what the people of Hohenems have done. They have preserved and restored a physical space; they have worked on telling a story of a community and, perhaps most importantly for me, they have created a centrum, a focus point for those who live here now and for those whose ancestors once lived here. They have brought together from far and wide people with diverse interests, from North and South America, Israel, Australia, and other parts of Europe, people whose stories started in Hohenems. We have all been enriched. In bringing us together, the Museum and Hohenems have made a big difference in many lives, particularly my own.

Now there is a catalog that permits us to bring the Permanent Exhibition and our families' history into our homes- wherever they might be. We still will return to Hohenems to visit with our new friends, to study the Permanent Exhibition, to listen to the wonderful audios and to see new temporary exhibitions. This catalog will serve as a reminder wherever we might be, of the Museum, of what is here now and of Hohenems as once was. It serves us all well.

## Foreword

*Hanno Loewy*



The Jewish Museum Hohenems, which opened its doors in 1991, has developed its own critical history of the Heimat (local history) and its own manner of representing Jewish heritage, thus setting an internationally respected example. An open-minded historical culture of Vorarlberg and the Lake Constance area has been provided with an institutional setting, a space that is used widely and diversely.

But history does not stand still. The story of the Jewish community of Hohenems, founded by a letter of protection in 1617 and forcibly disbanded in 1938-40, has both a prologue in the Middle Ages and a kind of disrupted continuity that ranges from the short-lived community of Displaced Persons after World War II to the beginning of a new Jewish presence in Tyrol and Vorarlberg, from the long-tabooed past to the establishment of the museum and, last not least, to the Hohenems descendants throughout the world.

Since 2007 the museum presents the history of the Hohenems Jews in a new permanent exhibition that takes into account the new questions asked by a now international audience—and that considers the history of the Hohenems Jews in its European, international dimension: the exemplary story of a self-confident Jewish Diaspora.

Our visitors today ask their questions about Jewish history and culture in the context of a present characterized by new Jewish life in Europe, but also by immigration and globalization, new conflicts surrounding cultural differences, and the search for common ground.

A changing relationship between history and the present makes new demands on our work. Jewish museums are modern places for discussion about the future of Europe and they have become places of an open-minded Jewish discourse about questions of culture, history, and contradicting identities. These museums question our society's ability to integrate divergent traditions and experiences, differing cultural influences, and social tensions on a global scale. [Left: Briefcase of Anton Rosenthal; JMH]

The Jewish Museum is now an established component of the cultural landscape of the Lake Constance area. Beyond its function as a critical Heimatmuseum, it today attracts visitors from throughout the world, including many Jewish visitors from Switzerland, Austria, and Germany as well as from overseas. Generally, museums have a heterogeneous public. But the topics covered in a Jewish museum inevitably turn such diversity of origin and languages, generations and world views into the subject of a discussion where the participants themselves are challenged, their views, and their perceived identity. This applies to the educational work of the Jewish Museum just as to everyday life in the museum café, to events as to spontaneous conversations at the museum ticket office. Jewish museums are communicative spaces of a special kind—even when, perhaps especially when, you are in a place that is somewhat remote from the institutions and communities of major conurbations.

At the same time, lively contact with the descendants of the Hohenems Jews worldwide and a collection that has expanded in fifteen years have enhanced our ability to communicate Jewish experience in an appealing and zestful way.



**Center of a Virtual Community—Center of New Discourses.** The museum’s wide and varied contacts with the descendants of the Hohenems Jews have enabled the museum to become a center of a virtual community, a community whose cohesion develops in networks that exist beyond national and cultural borders and that deals openly with its own Jewish heritage, in a way characterized by curiosity about its heterogeneity and diversity. And by an encouraging readiness to engage with the experiences of other migrants as well as with sensitive themes of the Jewish past and present that tend to be explosive in many an institutional community, whether they are questions of interfaith marriages or conversion, religious pluralism or of today’s Middle East.

The Jewish Museum has become a custodian of the legacy of a Hohenems Diaspora, which today extends from Australia to California, from St. Gallen to Graz, from Trieste to Frankfurt, from Brussels to Geneva, from New York to Jerusalem. This is a great responsibility—but also a great opportunity.

This custodianship also means that numerous new items have entered the museum's collection that enable new narrative approaches, including many privately owned objects, which can open up a more vivid access to the Jewish Lebenswelt (lifeworld) in Hohenems. Thus, the focus of the exhibition is not on the relics of religious practice, which in many Jewish museums direct the gaze of those interested in Jewish history almost ethnographically to the alien cultic features, but on experiences, life's contradictions, self-perception and perception by outsiders. In this connection audiovisual media now also have their place in the exhibition, widening our perception of Jewish everyday life with subjective views—in a way that does not call on any morally motivated need for identification, but appeals to our curiosity about the experiences of others, and which does not conceal our own individual viewpoint but reflects it.

These are not primarily sources found in official records that document the relationship between minority and society from the point of view of dominion and the need for rules, but sources of history in its personal dimension—in all its contradictions and subjective nuances. Numerous studies undertaken since 1991 on sources, biographies, and important themes have meanwhile opened up the plural internal world of the community and the lives of individual players in a more differentiated way, enabling the museum to offer a complex presentation of Jewish history.

Thus, the new exhibition tells not in the least stories about people: people like Nanette Guggenheimer. In her 1933 memoirs she describes how in 1889 as a young woman she independently planned her emigration from Switzerland to America, without informing her parents, then made the great crossing to New York, only to end up in Hohenems as the wife of the baker Josef Landauer and to become landlady of the "Zur Frohen Aussicht" inn, a pub which even in 1930 was still popularly referred to as "Bi dr Schanet", after the name of the first landlady, Josef's grandmother. Or Harry Weil, the last cantor and synagogue caretaker of the Jewish community in Hohenems: [Left: Harry Weil's photograph album, 1930s-1960s, Harry Weil Jr., Albuquerque, New Mexico]

From him we learn not only how he helped influence musical life in Hohenems and Bregenz in the 1920s, but also how as a Radical Socialist in the 1930s he explained the difference between Trotsky and Stalin to a policeman in Bregenz; not only how he left Hohenems in despair in 1938, but also about the fruitless efforts he made in 1949 to return to Hohenems.

We meet Jewish merchant families like the Levis, who changed their name to Löwenberg in 1813 in the course of the Bavarian reforms and sent their daughter Wilhelmine to Munich to be turned into a "well-educated young lady", transforming the girl into a "tamed shrew". This was obviously a successful move for the eleven-year-old's letters (dating from 1819), found as part of an extensive cache of papers in the attic of a house in Hohenems, are in perfect handwriting and politely phrased, initially still in German written in Hebrew script, before Roman letters became the norm in her correspondence too. Education in these families was certainly motivated by more than mere class superiority. In her parents' library there was secular literature of every description, from Kant to Schiller. And her uncle Josef Löwenberg even read Voltaire: *Zadig. An Oriental Tale*, a satire on religious arrogance, inhuman traditions, and despotism.

We follow careers in Europe, between Hohenems and Southern Germany, Switzerland and Italy, and also to Southern Tyrol where the Schwarz family flourished as railway pioneers, bankers, and brewers. In 1809 the founding father was still traveling in a coach to Bolzano as a business traveler—narrowly escaping a rockslide near Landeck, a "miracle" that he recorded in

his prayer book. And Rabbi Aron Tänzer appears to us not only in the light of a scholar, but as a moralist who believed in the self-betterment of man—and because of his modern views came into conflict not only with anti-Semites in Vorarlberg, but also with Jewish Orthodoxy. His lecture at the Association of Foremen and Industrial Functionaries on life and science swelled into a public dispute about belief in Creation and the theory of evolution and into a debate about Judaism's self-understanding, between religion and ethics, tradition and present. He had to accept being cursed by the peddler Nagelberg who had migrated from Poland as a godless preacher of a "community descended from apes". But the religious Nagelberg had long since been regarded in the more secular Hohenems community as a grumbler.

Ultimately, his daughter Frieda was the "last Jewess in Vorarlberg" whom a zealous mayor, Josef Wolfgang, succeeded in driving out of Hohenems in 1942 after tireless efforts—sending her into annihilation.

Finally the exhibition tells the stories of those on both sides of the Austrian-Swiss border who helped Jews to escape. We learn in the exhibition of smugglers and policemen, of people like Paul Grüninger and Ernst Kamm who at times were both (when they personally brought the belongings of Jewish refugees to Switzerland after having helped them), of "minor" people and individuals with functions that could become onerous, that civil courage was possible even at a time when it could not be taken for granted.

Then at the end we meet those people who landed in Hohenems or Bregenz as survivors of the destruction, as Displaced Persons, between a traumatic past and an uncertain future, with no chance of a "return" to the devastated communities of Eastern Europe, on their way to a new world in the USA or in Belgium—or to Israel, across the Tyrolean mountains to the refugee ships on the Mediterranean.

The museum's social context has changed dramatically: Jewish life in the German-speaking area has again started to expand since 1990 as a result of immigration from the former Soviet Union, a process that is accompanied by many unanswered questions.

Precisely the immigration and integration of those people previously exploited and excluded as "guest workers" are now being debated with greater controversy than ever—since it has become clear that the migrants with their own cultural characteristics, their own history, and their own religious traditions too have arrived here not just as "guests" but on a permanent basis and are claiming their own space as well as respect for them in our society.

Thus, the museum, located at the meeting point of three countries, stands in the context of a European development that is marked by "closer European ties", but at the same time also by growing tensions around questions of migration and immigration. Against this background dealing with the Jewish present becomes an exemplary theme for Europe's self-perception. The Jewish history of Hohenems does not end at the town's boundaries. It embraces a far-reaching geographical, political, and cultural space that extends beyond Vorarlberg and Tyrol to Switzerland and Italy, as well as to Southern Germany and Vienna, influenced by a complex network of migration through marriage and of commercial links, of socio-cultural and biographical tracks. In Hohenems the Diaspora is not presented as a theme from the past, but as a current and future Jewish experience with all its partly real, partly speculative associations with the great contentious themes of the present.



**The Exhibition.** In conjunction with the architects Erich Steinmayr and Friedrich Mascher (Feldkirch and Vienna), the stecher id design office (Götzis), and the exhibition curator Hannes Sulzenbacher (Vienna), we have rethought and redesigned the museum's permanent exhibition. In doing so, careful handling of the historical substance of the building was a primary concern—but also sensitive handling of the history of the house as a museum and the contradictions that marked its opening.

[Three generations: Regulation pistol issued to Adolf Burgauer by the Swiss army, 1882 / Willi Burgauer's British Bulldog revolver, for self-defense on business trips to the Baltic, c. 1900 / Werner Burgauer's "Model 9" Walther Pistol, acquired in 1939 so that he could defend himself in the event of the National Socialists invading Switzerland; Pierre Burgauer, Rehetobel]

Within the first exhibition team of 1990 considerably diverging views had coexisted on what a Jewish Museum could and should be, from Kurt Greussing by way of Karl Heinz Burmeister to Bernhard Purin and Eva Grabherr: Eva Grabherr eventually took charge as the first director. The intensity and thoughtfulness they invested in developing a museum concept had a quality to it to which the museum owes its potential to this day.

They struggled with the issue of how to deal with the fact that “Jewish life” after the Shoah cannot really be seamlessly reconstructed in a museum and certainly not in exhibits that—like the Hohenems Torah ornaments—had probably been melted down by the Nazis 50 years earlier. Even if individual Jews like Erik Weltsch, Felix Jaffé and Kurt Bollag became involved in the project: it seemed clear that a “Jewish Museum by non-Jews for non-Jews” was being built.

Through the restoration of villa and garden by Roland Gnaiger and the implementation of the interior design by Elsa Prochazka, “little Hohenems” had set standards with one of the first Jewish museums in the German-speaking area. Despite all the conflicts surrounding the first permanent exhibition, which right from the start admitted its provisional nature—and was essentially based on written records from the provincial and municipal archives—the museum was opened in 1991 and created an international echo that surprised not least the local protagonists. The institution also proved its quality by rendering disputes about history productive, allowing it to set impulses among a growing international scene of Jewish museums. And it has also long since become a meeting place of Jewish and non-Jewish viewpoints.

Today the museum is no longer a “guest” in a residential house. The house itself is part of the story and we have to assimilate it as a museum exhibit. This restructured tension between the house and the exhibition forms a great part of the museum’s charm and its power to inspire. From the entrance into the old garden room which is and remains both the museum’s foyer and living-room, a place for meeting and communicating, we are now led into a modern museum architecture that does not infringe on the historic villa, but offers the villa itself as an object to be looked at. Thus, the new exhibition shows Jewish life that was in no way characterized only by bourgeois grandeur, but by work and social hardships too, not only by successful careers, but also by everyday privation and human conflicts, not only by tradition, but above all by contradictions and departures.

The new permanent exhibition shows life in tension with religious tradition, neither totally absorbed in it, nor completely able to break free of it. Rather than exhibiting it as separate from history and the protagonists—as is done in so many Jewish museums—Hohenems presents its attempts to interpret religious tradition and the Jewish calendar, the cycle of holidays and rituals of life’s turning points as an integral component of everyday life and of the historical processes. The museum presents religion as an expression of the lives of concrete individuals that is sometimes important and indispensable, sometimes expendable or superficial, sometimes fundamental to society and identity, and sometimes in conflict with people’s individual lives and hopes—but always in the process of change.

Thus, the new permanent exhibition of the Jewish Museum Hohenems unfolds the story of the Hohenems Jews in the context of the tensions between tradition and modernity, assimilation and cultural exclusiveness, integration and exclusion, identity and prejudices. Thematically and chronologically it unfolds the story of the “Hohenems Diaspora” throughout the



world based on simple questions: “Why are we here?”, “Who are we?”, “What is our world?”, “Who am I?”, and finally: “Do we belong?” Greater attention is now paid to 20th-century history. The relations between Hohenems and St. Gallen and other Swiss communities come into play here, just as the role of Hohenems as an escape hub to Switzerland between 1938 and 1945, the situation of the Jewish survivors after the war, communication with the descendants of the Hohenems Jews throughout the world—and, not least, the actual history of memory and its taboos, which arises as a theme in objects and interviews.

[Seder plate that belonged to the Bollag-Seder plate Lilian Bollag inherited from her grandmother Leonie Adler. Her husband Kurt Bollag was born into the inn-keepers Landauer family from Hohenems, c. 1900. Porcelain, French manufacture; Liliane Bollag, Widnau]



The design of the exhibition consciously plays with the relationship between inside and outside, safety and insecurity, warmth and coldness, mirroring and reflection, self-perception and perception by others, closeness and distance. We, as visitors, are invited to move with self-confidence and self-awareness through transparent layers of a history whose traces challenge us, but whose full reality we can only approach if we too become aware of such contrasts. [Left: Ivan Landauer, the last Jewish inn-keeper of the "Happy Prospect Inn" in Hohenems; JMH]

The visitors to the museum are supported by an audio system in several languages, which will render easier access to the sources and reveal subjective experiences—and will make the exhibition accessible to English- and French-speaking visitors too. Conversations with escape helpers and refugees as well as with Jewish Holocaust survivors who lived in Hohenems and Bregenz as DPs after the war open up a new perspective on memory of the Nazi period and the postwar period, for a long time a taboo area or one associated with many feelings of resentment.

And the video installations set up by Arno Gisinger and Niko Hofinger, in conjunction with Martin Beck, show us interviews that bring to life the significance of Hohenems as a stopping place on the escape route between 1938 and 1945—and the present of the descendants of the Hohenems Jews who now reflect on what Hohenems means to them, their present, their lives. [Notice of a "Schlachtpartie" (butcher's party) at the "Zur frohen Aussicht" inn. Hohenemser Gemeindeblatt, 27 February 1938 (reproduction); JMH]

Finally, also to children and young people this new exhibition opens up a different perspective on their own world. The children's exhibition developed by the writer Monika Helfer and the artist Barbara Steinitz is an integral component of the new display and accompanies the entire exhibition itinerary. In lively scenes from Jewish history, poetically narrated and converted into silhouette images, our youngest visitors pursue their own interests in the museum—producing associative links with the objects and documents, questions and themes in the "big" exhibition. The children encounter human situations requiring decisions and conflicts that seem simultaneously foreign and familiar to them—sufficient reason to ask further questions, to want to find out more details about many things, to exchange ideas and pictures, to enter into a dialogue with other children and with the adults, who often do not know any better.

Sometimes this is a beginning.

Carefully and consistently modernized, the Jewish Museum Hohenems will remain a place of lively encounters, remote from the major conurbations—but quite close to the pulse of the times.

Numerous are the people we would like to thank for helping us to succeed in renewing the house and the exhibition—and we shall do so at the end of this book. But at this point, I would like to express my special gratitude to the museum's team in charge of this not always simple project: Gerlinde Fritz, Eva-Maria Hesche,



Helmut Schlatter, and Birgit Sohler as well as Hannes Sulzenbacher for his collaboration as curator. [Children's exhibition in the Jewish Museum Hohenems; JMH]

Together we invite you to discover a history that is exemplary of others and that keeps challenging us.



# The History of the Jews of Hohenems

*Hannes Sulzenbacher*



**“Old Freedoms of Ems”**. The history of the Jews in Hohenems begins with a charter of protection permitting them to settle there. Many different versions of it have been preserved for between January and July 1617 Count Kaspar of Hohenems and his chancellor, Christoph Schaeck, negotiated with Wolf von Langenargen, a protected Montfort Jew, living at Lake Constance, the conditions for the founding of a small Jewish community in the imperial county of Hohenems, which at that time extended from Lake Constance to Vaduz in modern-day Liechtenstein. The correspondence reveals that Wolf was still trying at the last moment to extend the validity of the charter of protection also to the children and children’s children of the Jews settling there. But the chancellor’s office firmly rejected that. Nonetheless, in the context of its time the charter of protection contained a whole series of attractive provisions, from the right to establish a cemetery to the permission to set up a synagogue. [Left: Seal of Wolf von Langenargen, 30 June 1617; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv]

Not only the traces of history, but also those of historiography can be seen in the charters of protection that have been handed down. The charter of protection in the permanent exhibition of the Jewish Museum Hohenems is adorned not only with the count’s seal. On the reverse, probably in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a note in Hebrew script was added: “Old Freedoms of Ems”. When Aron Tänzer, the community’s last great rabbi and its first historian, was studying the documents in the count’s archives c. 1900 for his *Geschichte der Juden in Hohenems und im übrigen Vorarlberg* (*The History of the Jews in Hohenems and elsewhere in Vorarlberg*), he noticed that the charter of protection itself had been altered as far back as 1648. He wrote and signed the relevant footnote right on the document itself.

1. *Jews, like Christians, may deal in most goods, hence in cloth, silver, cereals, or wine.*
2. *They may lend money, but may charge no more than five percent interest.*
4. *They may keep horses and livestock like Christian subjects. They may also have a share in communal assets. (...)*
6. *They shall behave towards the Count in the same way as his other subjects.*
7. *They are not to practice their religion outside their homes so that Christian subjects are not led astray and no offence is caused. A site of their own will be assigned to them for burials. They must pay the authorities two Gulden for the burial of an adult, one Gulden for that of a child.*
8. *They may build a synagogue and a school in accordance with their religion. They are also permitted to employ Christians to do housework on the Sabbath and their holy days. In disputes relating to their religion, their rabbi shall decide in accordance with their laws.*
9. *Each household is to pay the Count an annual protection fee of 10 Gulden and supply him with two fattened geese.*
10. *Because there is no vacant accommodation in Hohenems, the Jews are to build themselves houses. They will receive building material at reasonable prices from the Count, building plots will be allocated to them free of charge.*
11. *They may slaughter livestock in their houses for their own purposes. Any meat they are not allowed to eat because of their religious commandments, they can sell to Christians.*
12. *They do not have to pay any money on moving in or moving out. (...)*

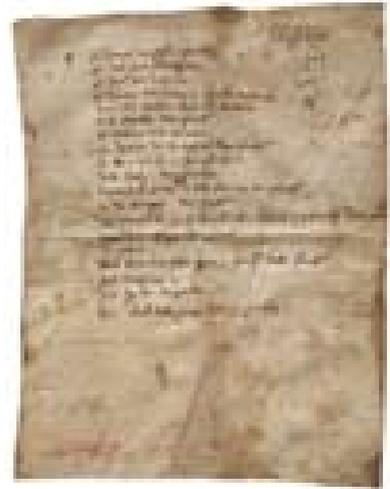
[Next page: Charter of protection issued by Count Kaspar of Hohenems, 3 April 1617; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz]



**Previous History: in Medieval Vorarlberg.** Jews have been living in the territory of modern-day Vorarlberg, in Feldkirch and Bregenz already 300 years before the Hohenems charter of protection. The “Feldkircher Stadtrecht”, a rich collection of decrees, contains clear references to a Jewish settlement in the medieval town: A provision promulgated between 1346 and 1359 rules that Feldkirch Christians who strike Jews are to receive the same punishment as Feldkirch Jews who strike Christians. A good start based on equal rights, we might say. Three further provisions relate to inheritance and pawn broking as well as to the oath to be taken by Jews, who, of course, were not to lay their right hand on the New Testament to swear on it, but “*jn die fünf buch Moysi*” (on the Five Books of Moses).

The first Jew known by name in Vorarlberg was a certain Eberlin. As early as around 1300, Eberlin’s old and new house as well as the obligation for three cartloads of manure a year are quoted in a list of dung deliveries to be made (a form of tax at that time). [Tax list (Mistrodel) mentioning the Jew Eberlin, Feldkirch 1300; Bayrisches Hauptstaatarchiv, Munich]

While there is no record of an even earlier Jewish settlement in the area, it is verified that the Counts of Montfort have been regularly borrowing money from Jewish moneylenders in Lindau or Constance from as early as 1286. Christians had long been forbidden by ecclesiastical law to lend money although the developing trade in the Middle Ages inevitably brought with it a growing need for loans. A Christian credit system emerged only in the 13<sup>th</sup> century in upper Italy. From there, the “Lombards” established a dense network of successful but also controversial credit businesses in the Rhineland and France, Switzerland and Flanders. Elsewhere money dealing was left to Jewish families, who at the same time were barred from most other professions—and because of their uncertain status in society they could be kept in especially hazardous relationships of dependency.



An up-and-coming town like Feldkirch needed Jews to enliven trade and to raise capital for construction work, so the Counts of Montfort, the rulers of Feldkirch, granted Jews the right to reside in their town. The first arrivals probably came from Constance, and others also from the area occupied by the large “Medinat Bodase” (Lake Constance district) Jewish community, an accumulation of many small communities in the region around Lake Constance with, Überlingen as its center. The cemetery here, whose existence can be traced back to 1226, was also used by the Feldkirch Jews.

From the turn of the millennium, there is evidence of Jewish settlements along the major trade routes on the territory of the Holy Roman Empire. Jews settled in the towns as merchants, formed communities, and worked as intermediaries in the trade with silk, spices, and medicines as well as providing for local needs with food, wine, livestock, materials, and clothes. Lending also proved lucrative, though hugely risky. Large communities developed in Cologne, Mainz, Speyer, and Worms, which were largely able to live at peace with those around them and developed into important centers of rabbinical scholarship.

Yet, life of Jews in medieval Christian Europe was precarious. The Church assigned them a thankless role on the margins of society: as witnesses to the Biblical prehistory of Christendom, contemporary Jews were both to live and to suffer, on the one hand, awaiting the return of the Messiah, and on the other, atoning for having failed to recognize him.

The Crusades, however, changed the situation fundamentally. Christianity wanted to triumph not only over Islam in the Near East, but also over God's supposed enemies in its own territory. This resulted in massacres in many Jewish communities.

Since the late Middle Ages, the relationship between Jews and Christians had above all been characterized by their different social position. The "Worms Privilege", granted in 1090, constituted a trailblazing legal statute that guaranteed the Jews protection of their lives and property, freedom to engage in commercial activity and practice their religion, as well as the community's legal autonomy in internal Jewish affairs. The right to employ Christian domestic staff was established as were the rules of procedure for disputes between Christians and Jews. In 1236, Emperor Frederick II extended the privilege to all Jews under his rule; the territorial powers-that-be gradually regained the extremely lucrative provisions only after his death. The influential Jews under imperial protection ensured that the authorities generally approved and also implemented Jewish settlement—they collected the special taxes after all. Everyone else—clergy, administrators, business competitors—was opposed to it. In Vorarlberg, the Counts of Montfort undoubtedly profited the most from Jewish settlements.

In Feldkirch the number of Jews at the time of the "Feldkircher Stadtrecht" was estimated at 30 to 40 individuals. But by 1343 there must have been already considerably more as several Jewish families applied to emigrate to Bludenz that year. Permission was refused: or at least their goods and chattels were to remain in the town. And just five years later fortune turned completely against the small number of Jews in Vorarlberg: in 1348/49 the "Black Death" traveled through Europe.

The great plague spread at a rapid pace and because of defective hygienic conditions in the crowded towns of the Middle Ages, it carried off large parts of the population. But people looked elsewhere for the culprit: the Jews were to blame. They were supposed to have poisoned the wells' drinking water. For those who, according to the old accusation, had crucified Jesus, were forever regarded as enemies of the Christians. Right across Europe Jews were imprisoned, forced under torture to make confessions, then expelled or killed. A wave of pogroms completely eradicated many Jewish communities: people were burnt at the stake throughout the Lake Constance area, and in Feldkirch too on 21 January 1349 all Jews living there, in any case those that could not save themselves by fleeing, were burnt. The sizeable medieval communities in St. Gallen and Zurich came to just as violent an end around this time.

The great chronicler of the Hohenems Jewish community, Rabbi Aron Tänzer, vehemently disputed the Feldkirch pogrom in his book: "Vorarlberg was never a fertile ground for the wretched accusations of water poisoning and ritual murder." Although the martyrology of the *Nürnberger Memorbuch* designates Feldkirch as "a murder town" first place below the heading "Medinat Bodase", Tänzer identified the Hebrew-script place name as Waldkirch im Breisgau. But that place had no political associations whatsoever with the Lake Constance region. Was he simply mistaken or did he not want to admit the truth? In any case at the time he was ignorant of important sources that have meanwhile become known to more recent historians of the prov-

ince and that leave no doubt as to the violent end of Jewish settlement in medieval Vorarlberg.

The town of Feldkirch, however, met with misfortune that very same year: a major fire broke out and many houses were lost. Once again people needed loans for the reconstruction of the town. Should they bring in “new” Jews who under the pressure they could be made to feel at any time would again procure large sums? Presumably they should be offered inducements or at least protection from the violent attacks that had imperiled their insecure existence since time immemorial.

A small number, who had apparently succeeded in escaping at the time, returned and tried to rebuild their lives, and in 1354 a Jewess by the name of



Toltza was even able to bring proceedings against the Count of Montfort at Rankweil district court regarding her expropriated inheritance. But the townspeople of Feldkirch were not successful in their efforts since the Jews stayed away for quite a long time to come. Another 30 years would pass before Jews again settled in largish numbers in the region around Lake Constance, but that did not last long either. That settlement too came to an end around 1440 when the Jews were again driven out of all towns in the Lake Constance area. [Lawsuit of Toltza against the knight Hermann of Montfort, 1354; Tiroler Landesarchiv, Innsbruck]

Pogrom-thirsty mobs were on the rampage throughout Europe—spurred on by plague epidemics or accusations of ritual murder. In 1421 also Jews in Vienna were burnt at the stake in Erdberg. Thus, the largest, flourishing community in the Austrian patrimonial lands was destroyed.

**16<sup>th</sup> Century: Expulsions and New Settlements throughout Europe.** The 16<sup>th</sup> century was characterized by a relatively fast-paced change in the view of the world. As well as new discoveries and scientific inventions, religious uncertainty arising from the Reformation was the primary influence on the everyday lives of ordinary people. The faithful clinging to popular beliefs and unquestioning devoutness were drawn into the ideological battlefield of the now competing denominations, without really being accorded freedom of choice. Their rulers decided about their faith.

As an excluded minority the Jews were made to feel this loss of certainty particularly harshly. They became the plaything of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation and the subsequent religious wars. The “true Christian faith” was now associated with the idea of a final overwhelming of Judaism, which would often enough be pursued with violence. Jews were persecuted, their urban communities eradicated. In 1559 Emperor Ferdinand I issued an edict forbidding the presence of Jews in the domain of Bregenz. Jews from the towns were scattered around the country, wherever they were allowed to settle, depending on the legal situation and subject to the ruler’s mercy in each case.



This policy of eviction and settlement at first turned out to be rather stable since only toward the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century the first Jews were again able to become established in Vienna. Yet, the capital like many other cities with German and other European ruling houses was reserved to a thin Jewish upper class, people who were tolerated as procurers of money and materials. They wanted to benefit from the trade routes of the Jewish upper class, their connections throughout the whole of Europe and the Holy Land; a lot of money could be made out of them, if only they were put under sufficient pressure.

**1617: Count Kaspar Brings Jews to Hohenems.** Hohenems was under the temporal rule of the imperial knights of Hohenems, who from 1560 were allowed to call themselves imperial counts. [Below: Imperial Count Kaspar of Hohenems, engraving by Lucas Kilian; Vorarlberger Landesmuseum, Bregenz] The rulers of Hohenems had already received imperial knight status from the Staufers three centuries earlier. Their elevation to the rank of imperial counts by Emperor Ferdinand I in 1560—as a reward for successful war services—and Count Wolf Dietrich’s marriage to Chiara de Medici, was the onset of a short heyday lasting three generations for the counts of Ems: Wolf Dietrich was followed first by Jakob Hannibal and then by Kaspar. Wolf Dietrich’s brother-in-law was Pope Pius IV and Jakob Hannibal’s brother Markus Sittikus III became one of the most influential Renaissance cardinals in Rome (“Cardinal Altemps”). The “Palazzo Altemps” still attests to his power. Meanwhile Jakob Hannibal’s brother-in-law, Archbishop Charles Borromeo of Milan, violently persecuted the Protestants in Graubünden (Grisons). Those who refused to return into the fold of the Church were burned for witchcraft, women in particular.

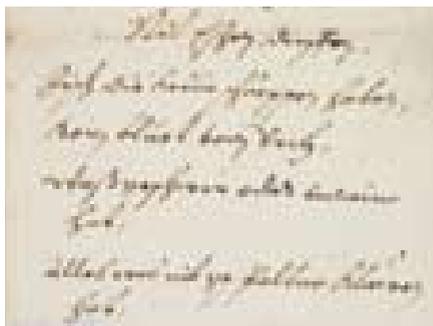
The Hohenemsers made their mark in Salzburg too. Kaspar’s brother, Markus Sittikus IV, followed Prince Archbishop Wolf Dietrich of Raitenau (who was also a Hohenemser on his mother’s side) onto the throne of Salzburg. With this enthusiastic advocate of the Counter-Reformation, to whom the city is indebted for the building of the Salzburg Cathedral and the Hellbrunn Palace, the prince bishopric continued to prosper. His death in 1623 and that of Count Kaspar in 1640 mark the end of the great period of the Counts of Ems. [Left: View of Hohenems from the *Emser Chronik* (Ems Chronicle) by Johann Georg Schleh, printed by Bartholomäus Schnell in Hohenems, 1616]



Even so, it was a heyday with a big impact. Count Kaspar had the splendid Renaissance palace at the foot of the Schlossberg, started by Cardinal Markus Sittikus III, completed by newly settled craftsmen and looked for opportunities to enhance the importance of his domain. To ensure that Hohenems, which had been elevated to become a market in 1605, was linked to the German-Italian trade and the international credit system, Christian merchants and tradesmen were to be settled there by royal charter—and eventually in 1617 Jewish traders too. Market and economy in Hohenems were to be revived by stimulating both supply and demand. A “Judengasse” (Jews’ Lane) and a “Christengasse” (Christians’ Lane) were laid out and at the count’s tavern, the present-day Gasthaus Engelburg, they joined to form a single street leading to the church and the palace.

In these plans Kaspar was advised by the Jewish merchant Wolf from Langenargen at Lake Constance. The importation of a few Jewish families was intended to bring economic benefit to the count and the market town: They would pay taxes and special taxes, bring goods to the Hohenems market that had hitherto not been available there, and get sales going. In case still greater sums were needed for the urban development of up-and-coming Hohenems, then the Jews would surely be able to organize credit. This was the line of thought guiding this project.

In the charter of protection, issued in 1617, Jews settling there were assured of the development of a community, of a trade in cloth, garments, cereals, wine, and silver as well as of the selling in open shops. In addition, money lending was permitted to them at interest rates set at a low level. They were allowed to build houses on ground made available to them, to lay out a cemetery, and to set up a synagogue and a school, indeed, even to resell meat from kosher butchering. Of course, they were to pay for all this. Protection money was initially set at five Thalers and two fattened geese annually. The count's chancellery also remarks on the Jewish dietary laws: "They are not allowed to eat fish without scales. Any blood of an animal. That, which is ill or unclean. All that is not cloven-hoofed." [Left: Note about the the Jewish dietary laws and the first Jews interested in settling in Hohenems, 1617; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz] In times of rising tensions between Catholics and Protestants - the Thirty Years' War was imminent—anything possibly causing disquiet among the faithful was observed with suspicion. Accordingly, the letter of protection prohibited any public display of the Jewish religion.



Whether Kaspar's calculations initially worked out is not known. Wolf of Langenargen was murdered in 1625. His death had also brought to a halt a project that accentuated the ambition of the Jewish community's founder. In 1624 he had commissioned a Hebrew prayer book from Bartholomäus Schnell, who ran the count's printing press founded in 1616. Hohenems could have become a Hebrew printing center, for Schnell had Hebrew letters cast; he then apparently found himself saddled with them, which led to a drawn-out legal dispute with Wolf's

heirs—and a physical assault on them in front of Hohenems church. After all, the boisterous Schnell brothers and their companion, Waibel, were sentenced to tower imprisonment for extorting a six-batz coin as "dice tax" from the Jew Lazarus and spending it on booze. "Dice tax" was a popular anti-Jewish trickery insinuating that Jews had allegedly wagered the garments of the Crucified.

Only in 1632 reliable evidence emerged of the presence of four Jewish families in Hohenems, both in the center and the "Schwefel" district, and a little later in the town of Eschnerberg in present-day Liechtenstein, then Vaduz and Schellenberg, which at that time belonged to Hohenems.

Things, however, were not too bad for the Jews in Hohenems: they were neither assigned a particular residential area (even if Markus Sittikus IV had advised his brother Kaspar to do so), nor were they subject to the obligation to wear special distinguishing marks or clothes. They were allowed to practice their religion unimpeded—albeit not in public, so that Christian

Hohenemsers would “not be led astray”, which is an eloquent expression of the suspicion and insecurity of Christians at the time of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation. In addition, the young Jewish community required a certain infrastructure for the exercise of its religious worship, as it had, indeed, been guaranteed in the charter of protection. Evidence can be found of the first rabbi in 1640—and until 1676 the only one—by the name of Herz Abraham. The election of a chairman, known as a “Juden-Amann”, soon became necessary since a wide range of matters had to be settled between Jews and Christians or between Jews and the count. The first chairmen who are recorded for 1659 were Josle Levi and Mayer (Maierle) Moos.

Despite the names passed down, little information about early community life exists. While the cemetery established on the slope of the so-called “Schwefelberg” was not ideal because of its damp position that contributed to the sinking and toppling of the gravestones, it was not abandoned, but later merely enlarged when the need arose. “The dead too were supposed to be together, a picture of cohesion beyond death, although more of ideal than practical value,” was Aron Tänzer’s opinion in this connection.

Jews were pacesetters in commerce. Since they remained largely excluded from agricultural occupations, crafts, and the manufacturing of goods, they were leaders in the field of money- and credit brokerage. In the Christian-influenced mainstream, the credit system—also because of religious prohibitions—continued to be controversial for a long time. With the spreading of early capitalism through both urban and rural economic development, which went hand in hand with investments in goods and equipment, credit became increasingly important and the traditional reluctance about lending and borrowing vanished: the early Christian banking system came into being, with names like the Fuggers of Augsburg standing for it even today.

Paradoxically it was that very social exclusion and those professional restrictions that created preconditions for the later success of many Jewish merchants. When movement of capital became increasingly important with industrialization, successful well-to-do Jewish entrepreneurs were prepared for it and on the scene. Even if extremely uncertain conditions often prevailed in these positions because of the arbitrariness of rulers or the hostility of competitors, they retained the know-how from one generation to the next, just as they had learned over generations to cope with special risks. Furthermore, Jewish merchant families, as would soon be demonstrated for Hohenems too, were more mobile and could call on a network in a larger geographical area that was based on reciprocal support. In addition, they were the only religious group in pre-modern Europe to have at their disposal an intellectual resource not to be underestimated: adult male (and many female) members of the widely ramified families were all literate and in command of two or several languages. Their writing ability at a time when even the social elites were only very poorly educated represented a major exception. Hebrew as a holy language was reserved primarily for worship and study of the Torah and the Talmud. In everyday life they spoke a Western Yiddish dialect, which as well as Hebrew words also had traces of French; it was widespread in South Germany and Alsace. Very few sources telling us about everyday life have been preserved from these early years other than those that come from official records and, therefore, mainly report about issues that were settled by the authorities. Only by chance a Yiddish love letter dating from around 1675 has been preserved, to be



more precise: the draft or a copy for it names neither the addressee nor the sender. In poetic lines a man swears eternal love for his “benefactress” with references to the ingredients of a Jewish wedding cake.

„Fizaant, ich hin dos klane briwlain,  
dos mir nit in main hartz liber kon gesain.  
Un kum du zu mir, ich lahen,  
as du bis hundert johr solst main sain.  
Un ouch, sou lang solst du mir lebn,  
bis es sich der himl wert varkern.  
Un ouch, sou lang solst du mir sain gesund,  
bis aan feder wert wegn hundert fund.  
Un ouch, sou lang solst du mir sain frisch,  
bis as der fisch wert schpringn  
vun der erden bis ouf den tisch.  
Un ouch wunsch ich dir a hous vun zimerent  
un a dach vun muschkotn  
un di tir vun neglen  
un schaibn vun krischtel.  
Un as du imer un ejbig nit faln vun mir,

sai dir befouln vun main gesund.  
Des glaichen sol ich hern vun dir  
zu aler zait un shtund.  
Sag, main libe gut ginern,  
sol ich dir schraibn,  
wie es mir gaat?  
Ich dank, ha-schem-jisbourech,  
um gesund, ouch so bin ich raich genug.  
Waitr waas ich nisch mejn zu schraibn.  
Ha-schem-jisbourech, sol dich un  
di noch dir fregn,  
le-touwe, frisch un gesund losn blaibn.“

“Forgive me. I have received the note  
That could not be dearer to my heart,  
And „come to me“, I read,  
Then you shall be mine until you are a hundred,  
And you shall live for me as long  
As till the heavens change.  
And you shall be healthy for me as long  
As till a feather weighs a hundred pounds.  
And you shall be blooming to me as long  
As till the fish jumps from the floor onto the table.  
And I also wish for you a house made of cinnamon  
And a roof made of nutmeg  
And the door made of cloves  
And windowpanes made of sugar crystals.  
And you are commanded on my health  
Not ever ever  
To leave me .  
I would like to hear the same from you  
At all times and hours.  
Tell me, my dear kind benefactress,  
Shall I write and tell how I am?  
I thank, may His name be blessed,  
For my health,  
And I am rich enough as I am.  
I cannot think of anything more to write.  
May His name be blessed, shall cause you and  
those who look after you,  
To prosper, and remain blooming and healthy!”

[Draft of a love letter in Yiddish, c. 1675; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz]

**17<sup>th</sup> Century: Coexistence and Animosity.** While the burdens imposed by military service and war contributions during the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648) were relatively high for Vorarlberg, the losses in terms of human life, compared with the rest of Europe, were low, for “only” five to ten percent of the population were war casualties. But the province had been afflicted by serious plague epidemics, which in Dornbirn, for example, had carried off more than half of the population.

Even if Jews and Christians lived at close quarters in 17<sup>th</sup> century Hohenems, the Hohenems Jews were repeatedly met with hostility, slandered, and confronted with outbreaks of violence such as in 1647 when Christian Hohenemser looted three houses belonging to Jewish neighbors. In addition, restrictive provisions were issued ultimately forbidding Jews from selling meat to Christians, after initially being permitted to do so. Where did this animosity come from? For the local tradespeople the connection to the European trade routes meant unwelcome competition: and there was an inexhaustible supply of apparently disinterested arguments for fighting against them. They were rooted for one thing in the Christian churches' strong hostility towards Jews: Jews had not recognized Jesus as the true Messiah and had, therefore, handed him over to be crucified. So the murder of the Christian Messiah was blamed on them. Frequently Jews were described in popular Catholic piety as “murderers of God”. Jews had peculiar customs, looked different, and spoke a foreign language. Christian legends of Jewish “ritual murders” preceded them, bloodthirsty fantasies about the abduction and killing of Christian children. And, of course, people knew: as shopkeepers they would be lying and deceitful, just as they were enemies of all Christians.

On the part of the Christians a popular belief prevailed in which fear of witchcraft was deeply anchored and which viewed every life-threatening as well as commonplace occurrence either as a punishment by God or the work of dark forces. This is how epidemics and illnesses, bad harvests and bad weather, sheer coincidences and social deviations were explained. This obsession with witches left a trail of blood right across Europe, and Vorarlberg too experienced a wave of witch trials at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century: for the victims conviction meant being burnt at the stake. In the Vorarlberg area the last “witch” was burnt in Hohenems in 1677.

Jews organized themselves in closed communities with their own traditions, spiritual leadership and courts, yet, they were also part of the overall society: they lived as neighbors in the same district, met other people as traders, beggars, or vagrants in front of their doors, at the market, or on the meadow, people borrowed money from them, set their seal on business deals, or talked with one another on the street. Nevertheless, foreignness remained a reason for constant rejection because it was perceived as threatening. Thus, the Vorarlberg provincial diet complained to Emperor Leopold I in 1685 that through daily contact the Christian children were learning “to talk and sing Jewish” from the Jewish children.

**1676–1744: Jews in Sulz—Protection and Expulsion.** After Kaspar’s death the dream of a principality of Hohenems as a buffer state between Switzerland and Austria collapsed: maintaining a court had already cost considerable sums, and now financial problems grew to the same degree as extortion attempts on Jews increased. The expulsion of the Jewish community was first threatened in 1663, which caused two of its leading members, Josle Levi and Mayer Moos, to move to Altenstadt for two years, paying protection money to the Feldkirch authorities. When they returned to Hohenems for unexplained reasons, it took just another three years for the count to consider expulsion once again. The petition draft to him drawn up in Yiddish has survived: probably it was heeded because a few years went by in which the Jews were apparently able to live in Hohenems without the threat of expulsion. In January 1676 Count Franz Karl still confirmed the valid charter of protection.

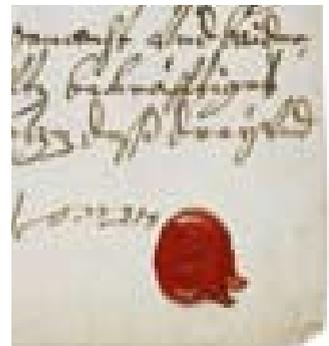
*“We poor subjects living here as protected residents learned with a heavy heart a few days ago from a decree that we must leave and vacate the county of Hohenems in three months. Your Excellency the Count might graciously recall that when we moved here from Altenstadt we paid an entry fee of 100 Gulden to cover six years, but since then only three years have elapsed. Therefore, we most humbly and imploringly request Your Excellency the Count to have the kindness and mercy to allow us to live in favor for the promised six years, and at least for God’s mercy to extend the period of notice by a year so that we can collect our debts and also again use this time to endeavor to find another opportunity so that we, our wives, and children may find gracious authorities.*

*If, God forbid, we are not granted mercy by Your Excellency the Count, we would have to leave the territory empty-handed, as part of our property has been lent out for a year.” (Petition by the Hohenems Jews against the threat of expulsion, Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz)*

But even the count’s charter of protection, constantly extended for a short period, offered no lasting security. On Whit Sunday 1676, a few months after it had been confirmed, the Hohenems Jews were expelled as a purely arbitrary decision by Count Franz Karl. A few Hohenems families settled for several years in neighboring Sulz, which was the center of a large community in Austrian Vorarlberg and, therefore, was under direct Habsburg rule.

[Seal of the horse-dealer Abraham Levi from Sulz, 1693; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz]

There again they became the target of protests by the Vorarlberg provincial diet, who exploited anti-Jewish prejudices to take action against unwelcome economic competition. “Now it is known”, thus complained the provincial diet in 1676, “that Jews by nature are nettlesome to Christians, all the more so since they have a religion that may evoke considerable aggravation in simple farmers and peculiar young people.” Especially vexing to the diet was the fact that Jewish households were growing. Of course, they accused them once again of malicious wile. But for a few exceptions, like Rankweil and Sulz, Jews were forbidden to engage in commerce in Vorarlberg outside the imperial county of Hohenems, even if the mayor of Hohenems confirmed to the Jews that they had always conducted themselves honorably.



Sulz was a village of farmers, who also engaged in highly risky viticulture on the side as their fields had been divided into too small plots. Together with the clergy, officials, and landlords, the farmers formed an upper stratum that faced a far larger number of day laborers, servants, beggars, and peddlers. Jews and others whose status was often subject to arbitrary decisions remained outside of corporative society: these others included the sick and disabled, beggars and itinerants, former soldiers and minstrels.

Jews in Sulz, however, were soon able to form a community of their own that was based on the principles of Jewish religion and way of life. At its center was the synagogue, accommodated in a farmhouse that probably had belonged to Josle Levi. Rabbis and butchers were employed, instruction was given, and the religious feasts were celebrated. To the annoyance of Catholic priests and the provincial diet, contacts also developed between the Jewish and Christian population of Sulz: they played cards, conducted business, or simply had good neighborly relations. The Sulz Jews lived as dealers in horses, wine, or goods that had been transported from a nearby or distant market into the dominion of Sulz.

However, the Austrian administration finally yielded to the provincial diet, which was constantly protesting against the Jews, and it too now expelled the majority of Jews from Sulz. From 1688 only the three richest families of Salomon, Abraham, and Wolf Levi were still tolerated in Sulz, while the less well-off had again to look around for somewhere to live. They found a sympathetic ear in the count of Hohenems, who was once again vexed by money worries.

The small number of Jews now remaining in Sulz grew in the following decades to ten families, who were closely related to one another, occupied four houses, and had a synagogue, a rabbi, and the staff needed for the practice of the Jewish religion. In the almost 70 years of its existence, the small community in Sulz had just two chairmen: Salomon Levi and his son Josle, who—like his grandfather of the same name before the expulsion—later again became chairman of the community in Hohenems. For even the diminished and reestablished Sulz community came to a violent end. Hardly anything remained of it, only the fragment of a Torah scroll that would later be found in the Sulz municipal archives and can today be seen in the Jewish Museum Hohenems. Like so many of the early traces of the history of the community, this Torah scroll poses more riddles than it answers. According to Jewish tradition it would really have been proper for it to be interred or kept in a genizah.

[Fragment of a Torah scroll from the Sulz community; [Gemeindearchiv Sulz](#)]

During the War of the Austrian Succession the Vorarlberg Landsturm (home reserves) had been called up in 1744 and demobilized again. Under the leadership of the Landammann (top local official) the unemployed soldiers several times threatened, plundered, or damaged Jewish houses in Sulz. Their occupants took refuge in Hohenems and Liechtenstein, returning to their houses at the start of winter and carrying out makeshift repairs. On the evening of 23 December they were attacked yet again—by about a hundred men who had foregathered in Rankweil, led by the *Landammann*. They now brought the first eviction of the Sulz Jews to a violent end: the houses were looted and largely destroyed and their occupants threatened with guns. The last Sulz Jews escaped to Liechtenstein, where they were taken in by Christians. Years later they were compensated for the damage done, which they had meticulously listed in an inventory of damages, at least with a small sum.



1855

Eintrag

1855

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1855

**Back in Hohenems.** The Hohenems exchequer had meanwhile suffered greatly from the repeated expulsion of its Jewish residents. Not only did the regular tax revenues decrease, but the tax on Jews disappeared as well. Franz Karl who had gotten into financial straits as a result of mismanagement in the Vaduz and Schellenberg domains again admitted Jews to Hohenems in 1688, initially, however, only ten families from Sulz, who by 1710 had grown to around twenty families. The economic power of the returning families was at first rather limited as the three wealthiest families had remained in Sulz.

In 1725 the rich merchant Jonathan Uffenheimer immigrated from Innsbruck. He was given a special charter of protection, which apart from the obligatory St Martin's Day goose obliged him to pay more protection money than his fellow believers. Together with Jacob Moos, Uffenheimer bought himself a house with a garden. The imperial count appointed Uffenheimer as his court factor, which meant exemption from the tax on Jews and still closer economic ties with the count's family. His business connections extended to Stuttgart, Vienna, Trieste, and Venice. His son Maier also earned his money as the count's court factor. Jonathan Uffenheimer became chairman of the community. [Left: Business ledger of Hoffaktor (court factor) Maier Jonathan Uffenheimer, 1761/1763; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz]

When the Hohenems Jews were banned from all trading within Vorarlberg in 1750, which hit the livelihood of most of them, Uffenheimer did not remain affected by this for long: because of his great services, Maria Theresa did not listen to the protesting Vorarlberg provincial diet, but gave him a "forwarding and court factor's patent" that increased his importance and economic capacity still further.

They procured, they bought and sold, they lent and borrowed money. In the shadow of Europe's ruling houses a layer of rich Jewish merchants was able to establish itself: constant availability, daredevil enterprises, and unconditional loyalty were demanded of them. The policy of the ruling houses aimed at attracting the richest Jews from other countries to their own court and preventing everyone else from doing so. Again this tolerance was always dependent on sudden changes of mind, whims, or arbitrary decisions on the part of the Emperor and the court administration.

In 1748 the Jews expelled from Sulz submitted a petition to Franz Rudolph for acceptance in Hohenems, also describing the sufferings of their exile since their violent expulsion from Sulz. Only Josle Levi, already an old man, had been readmitted to the town before them, no doubt because of his great services to the count. He came into a community with Jonathan Uffenheimer as its chairman, which led to openly expressed rivalries between the two men. After proper proceedings before the count in 1749, Jonathan Uffenheimer conceded the office of chairman to Josle Levi.

Josle Levi was highly regarded by the imperial counts; while still living in Sulz, he had served them well in business matters. His successor as chairman was Jonathan Uffenheimer's son Maier, who was followed by Maier Moos. Thus, the office of chairman seems consistently to have been in the hands of the wealthiest families. The synagogue of the small community, the center of religious life of the Hohenems Jews, had also been located in Uffenheimer's

house. When he lost the office to Josle Levi, he also refused permission for service to be held in his house.

One of the community's important tasks was dealing with welfare for the poor: on the one hand, the poor of the community had to be cared for and, on the other, many Jewish beggars and paupers traveling through the Rhine valley not only needed shelter for the Sabbath when no work was done, but also had to be provided with some money from the community funds and food. With the exception of the small number of rich families, most Jews suffered from the widespread poverty resulting from the Thirty Years' War that had left the entire Vorarlberg middle class in acute economic difficulties.

While the majority of Jewish tradesmen, unlike the small number of well-placed court factors, lived from peddling outside Vorarlberg, the other members of the community earned their money as dependent employees. They managed somehow or other as employees of the community, from the rabbi down to the community servant, teacher or kosher butcher, but most as menservants and maids, sometimes also as tutors and secretaries within the Jewish households that had a registration number giving them rights of residence as a family. For these domestic employees the founding of a family of their own was almost impossible, in any case not in Hohenems where the number of families remained restricted.

Every family, according to its social position, had to take in poor people and give them board; the community chairman allocated those passing through and sent them to the relevant houses. In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century Rabbi Samuel Ullmann, the son of Rabbi Löb Ullmann, founded the "*Chevra Dovor tov*" ("Association of good causes") charitable society, which devoted itself to procuring fuel for poor people. The first women's charitable association also came into being at about the same time.

Everywhere refugees or demobilized soldiers from warlike confrontations were simultaneously on the move, looking for means of transport, a bit of food, or lodgings for the night. Their considerable numbers were added to those who in any case lived on the street, whether as beggars, day laborers, or musicians. It was also possible to get by as a mountebank or a petty criminal—people earned and organized whatever they needed to survive. They traveled around alone or in groups and also encountered robbers and robber bands en route: some were purely Christian, some purely Jewish, some mixed. The image of the pauper was often hard to distinguish from that of the criminal. At the same time being on the road and living there was commonplace: merchants and peddlers were on the road a lot, as were itinerant craftsmen or travelers—they all led a risky life.

**1765: Hohenems in Habsburg Austria.** In those years the Hohenems palace was to acquire great significance one last time: in 1755 the Lindau doctor Jakob Oberreit found a manuscript of *"The Nibelungenlied"* in the Hohenems palace, and soon afterwards a second one was found. The important medieval poem had admittedly not been written in Vorarlberg, but the two manuscripts formed the basis for the first complete edition.

From the return of the Jewish families from Sulz at the latest, community life in Hohenems began to stabilize, even if it was once again fundamentally threatened out of the blue. Count Franz Wilhelm III peremptorily ordered a repeat expulsion from Hohenems. His Christian subjects thereupon addressed a petition to him asking him to withdraw the decree. The count then formulated a new, milder variant whereby only poor Jews would have been expelled. In 1759 the expulsion order finally came into force, but was no longer acted upon. For Count Franz Wilhelm III died on 6 November 1759, which meant that the Hohenems imperial counts' family "died out in the male line". Regardless of this, his 17-year-old daughter Maria Rebekka took over as ruler under the guardianship of her mother and was able to continue for six years, marrying the Austrian Field-Marshal Franz Xaver Count von Harrach-Rohrau. In 1784 their daughter Maria Walburga was to marry Count Clemens von Waldburg-Zeil, who founded the new line of counts at Hohenems palace. But in 1765 Emperor Franz Stephan I had confiscated the county as an imperial fief that had served its time, and incorporated it into Austria. Hohenems and its Jews were now under the emperor's rule in Vienna.

With the 18<sup>th</sup> century Austria had put behind a period filled with wars and crises. The Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle that ended the War of the Austrian Succession in 1748 showed that Austria could even withstand a threat from a large European coalition. The country under Maria Theresa, Joseph II, and Leopold II asserted itself as a major European power, though perhaps not of the first order.

Enlightenment met with only a hesitant response in the Emperor's residence in Vienna. Quite the opposite: the efforts of her son and co-regent Joseph to introduce reforms were regularly torpedoed by Maria Theresa. Maria Theresa did not feel at home in the intellectual sphere of the Enlightenment and distrusted the intellectual and political developments taking place elsewhere. Demands for freedom to practice one's own religion were always an abomination to the strictly Catholic and bigoted ruler.

Skeptical of all ideas of tolerance, Maria Theresa, who would grant Jews an audience only from behind a screen, wrote a few lines just three years before her death in 1777 that summarized all her prejudices against Jews: "In future no Jews should be given permission to be here without my written consent. I know no worse plague for the State than this nation because of deceit, usury and money contracts, reducing people to a state of beggary, carrying out every evil action which any other honest man would shrink from; therefore, as far as possible, keep them away from here and reduce their number."

The fact that Joseph von Sonnenfels, a Jew who had converted to Christianity, was her closest confidant could not prevent this invective and the Empress's brutal Jewish policy—such as the expulsion of the Jews from Prague and Bohemia in 1744, for example. The Empress's personal judgment determined policy in Austria with its absolutist rule. The development of the modern bourgeoisie took place belatedly and more in the civil service field than in the

sphere of economics. In comparison with the rest of Europe, the economy of the Habsburg empire was lagging because the authorities prevented reform that would have placed the aristocracy's long established rights in contention. Questions about the relationship between State and Church as well as about tolerance towards those of other faiths were discussed in closed circles, but only with the accession of Joseph II would they become part of Habsburg policy.

Contrary to her Jewish policy elsewhere, Maria Theresa issued a charter of protection to the Hohenems Jews in 1765, which, however, introduced clear deteriorations. The Empress wanted to reduce the number of Jews for by 1773 there were 227 Jews living in Hohenems (113 men and 114 women) in 24 houses, which with around 2000 Christians represented 10% of the total population. Jews were permitted to trade only in the confined districts of Hohenems and Lustenau, while in the rest of Vorarlberg the prohibition on trading was rendered even stricter.

**The establishment of the Jewish community in Hohenems.** As early as 1760 Juda Löb Ullmann became rabbi in Hohenems. He was regarded as a pious, wise scholar and still occupied the rabbi's traditional position as an arbiter in internal Jewish legal questions, as a spiritual and organizational leader of the community. He was the community's representative and the intermediary between state authorities and individual members of the community. At that time the rabbi was still responsible for the laborious collection of the protection money as well, a task that later passed to the chairman of the community.

On taking up his office Juda Löb Ullmann founded the Hohenems "Chevra Kadisha" (Burial Fraternity) and numerous other associations, instructed his community in the evening about the Torah and the Talmud, and answered a great many rabbinical inquiries from near and far, which soon earned him the title of a "gaon", i.e., an important religious scholar.

Ullmann was born into a rabbi's family at Ichenhausen in 1716; as the Hebrew written form of the name, "Ulmo", implies, the family did in fact come from Ulm—all Jews had been expelled from there at the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. He occupied the office of rabbi until his death in 1796 and was responsible for the upturn in the community's fortunes and for many innovations. The building of the synagogue and the founding of the German school happened during his term of office. Moreover, Rabbi Löb Ullmann still acted as judge in disputes among Jews in business and contractual matters. The imperial and royal administration referred these cases to him and he decided them on the basis of his generally recognized, renowned Talmudic scholarship and informed the relevant authority in the form of protocols.

After the imperial county had passed to the house of Austria as an "expired fief", the still existing synagogue was erected in 1770–1772 under the rule of Maria Theresia, far from friendly towards Jews. By way of comparison: the first public synagogue in Vienna could only be opened as late as 1829. As Aron Tänzer emphasized, this was primarily the doing of Count Franz Xaver von Harrach, the head of the imperial and royal administration in Hohenems at the time, who was obviously favorably inclined toward the Jews. He supported the lavish building, which placed a heavy financial burden on the small community of 48 families, also

by making carters available free of charge to bring in the building materials. [Interior view of the synagogue, c. 1900. Photograph by Arnold Sueti; Erwin and Uri Taenzer collection, USA]

The Christian architect Peter Bein from the Bregenzerwald designed the centrally-planned building derived from Baroque architectural forms, its vaulted ceiling being decorated with “middling-quality paintings” (Tänzer) that no longer exist. Tänzer explained the fact “that these pictures, an otherwise unusual practice among Jews, were introduced into the synagogue” as the work of benefactor von Harrach. Tänzer described them laconically: “The powerful, vaulted ceiling has three middling-quality paintings: the one above the cantor’s desk, on the east side, depicts the creation of light, with a rainbow in the corner, similar to the title picture in Doré’s illustrated Bible, which as we know was created much later. Next there is a large-scale depiction of the revelation on Mount Sinai that occupies almost the whole central area of the ceiling,; then the picture of a choppy sea with flashes of lightning forms the end.”



In contrast to the unusual use of paintings, the rest of the furnishings of the synagogue corresponded to the then still traditional orientation of the community: “The Almemor or cantor’s desk moved towards the middle of the men’s area, surrounded in a circle by rows of movable stands or prayer desks, the sanctum sanctorum, the ark with the Torah scrolls [...] on the east side, to its left the cantor’s desk, to the right the rabbi’s seat. For the women a spacious gallery fitted with benches was installed on the west side of the synagogue.” The rabbi strictly supervised the observation of religious rules. The House of God had to be visited three times a day, he meticulously watched over adherence to complete rest from work on the Sabbath and other holy days, as well as the keeping of all fast days. Ullmann also introduced an additional fast day: to commemorate the great fire in 1777.

On 15 November 1777, after the Sabbath had ended, fire had broken out on Christengasse, which quickly spread to Judengasse and resulted in a major conflagration. The majority of houses were considerably damaged or completely destroyed, their inhabitants were homeless and had lost their possessions. The just five-year-old synagogue, however, remained almost untouched. Damage to the Jewish houses alone was calculated at 80,000 Gulden. The Jewish traders then addressed a petition to the Austrian ruler asking to be allowed to ply their trade in Vorarlberg too as they could not embark on journeys while new houses were being constructed. But Maria Theresia remained adamant, even when a short time later Jews were also forbidden from trading in the jurisdictions of Rankweil and Sulz. The protection money of 800 Gulden had to be paid annually in spite of extreme hardship.

**1782: Patent of Tolerance.** Whereas Maria Theresia's attitude towards her Jewish subjects is generally inferred less from her policy and much more frequently from anecdotes, her son Joseph is consistently thought of in the context of the epochal Edict of Tolerance. Where writers of history are concerned, this may have to do with the fact that Joseph was first of all a man, and—unlike his mother—the crowned Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. But even his contemporaries took trouble to commemorate the emperor and his enlightened policy.

What was known as the "Patent of Tolerance for Jews in Vienna and Lower Austria" was one of a series of edicts by Joseph II that relaxed or ended state discrimination towards non-Catholics in all Austrian provinces and redefined the relationship of the authorities to their subjects of different creeds. Issued on 2 January 1782, it furthermore signaled the beginning of numerous decrees relating to the Jewish population living in Habsburg territories. Some kindred but less far-reaching rules for Bohemia, Galicia, Moravia, and the small remaining part of Silesia had already been issued before that. No doubt, the announcement of the new freedoms in Vienna gave rise to the suspicion that it would attract poor Jews from those regions of Austria to the imperial capital. An alleviation of their living conditions was granted to those who would have needed it most belatedly and to a lesser degree than it was to the Viennese Jews, whose circumstances were reasonably settled in any case.

The patent not only established the relationship of Jews to the surrounding Christian world, it also adapted the Jewish community's own institutions to the circumstances of society as a whole. Its intention was to make the resident Jews useful to the economy of the state by partially integrating them. This partial integration took advantage of the special social and economic position of the Jews. For the patent lifted those very economic discriminations whose existence were inhibiting the lagging Austrian economy, thereby giving a targeted boost to the economy.

The steadily and steeply rising population numbers at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century meant new professions were urgently needed: agricultural property was too unevenly distributed, the social gap within the population too large, farming techniques were underdeveloped, and transport routes insufficiently opened up. The backwardness of industrial development also had to be remedied. The founding of manufacturing plants and the resulting factory or home work contributed toward combating poverty, even if starvation wages were paid and inhumane working conditions prevailed for men, women and children. Above all considerable tax revenue as well as an increase in domestic production could be expected if the building of factories, already advanced in other countries, could now be accelerated in Austria too.

Initially the changes were not really perceptible for the individual. Thus, at first the ban on trade remained in place for Jews in Vorarlberg, in spite of repeated petitions. Only from 1786 trading patents valid for two years were issued to individual Hohenems Jews, allowing them to sell certain goods throughout Vorarlberg. With the relaxation of the general laws, the promotion of the incipient textile industry was obviously of special importance for the patents related to trade in satin, loden cloth, leather, and printed cotton goods. Ownership of real estate continued to be forbidden to Jews. [Certificate of apprenticeship of Salamon Landauer (1804-1870), 1825; Edwin Oberhauser, Götzis]



Only step by step were Jews also permitted to join the craft and trade guilds, starting in the food sector in professions they had exercised since time immemorial. An apprenticeship letter for the Jewish butcher Salomon Landauer from Hohenems is one of the oldest proofs of this gradual recognition.

The provision to abolish Hebrew as a business and legal language was of primary relevance for the discussions about the impact of the patent that took place among the Jews. Within two years “all instruments written in the Hebrew language or only written with Hebrew and Jewish letters [were to be] declared null and void after the expiry of the deadline “. The Jews were merged into society by largely abolishing their linguistic and social peculiarities and independence: their own language, religion, and self-government were repressed, rabbinical jurisdiction was forbidden.

The Patent of Tolerance triggered unanimous rejoicing among Viennese Jews, but not among the strictly Orthodox Jews in the eastern provinces of the Habsburg monarchy. The beginning of the emancipatory policy in Central Europe was seen by the Viennese Jews as a favor from the emperor, by the devout in the provinces as the beginning of the end of Jewish independence.

In Hohenems Emperor Joseph II’s innovations met with no noteworthy resistance from Rabbi Löb Ullmann, despite the still traditional orientation of his community. On imperial orders the Hohenems Jews now also assumed German forenames; the general order relating to German family names was only introduced here under Bavarian rule in 1813. Of course, a number of families already had German names, generally derived from their ancestors’ places of birth: Burgauer, Brettauer, Uffenheimer, or Ullmann.

Joseph’s Patent of Tolerance required the setting up of a “school based on the *Normalschule* model”, which was, however, to be introduced “without the slightest discouragement of their service to God and faith”. Although it would have been possible for the Hohenems Jews to attend the local school, in 1784 they decided to found a “German school” of their own where the children were not only taught arithmetic and German language: it also promoted the switch from Hebrew to Latin script, a revolution in the day-to-day culture of the community. Religion and Hebrew became separate subjects in addition to the “normal” lessons and initially were taught in a separate religious school.

Learning had a long tradition in Jewish communities, for religious law, its canon of commandments and prohibitions, and the handing down of the Talmud had constantly to be related to the contemporary world and life, and, therefore, reread and discussed. Here the educational ideals of a new upwardly mobile Jewish middle class and its social ambitions could link up at the very time when they were beginning to question tradition itself.

Tänzer went so far as to assert that all Hohenems Jews were able to read and write German as early as in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. But that reflected more the scholar’s attitude, the expression of his hope for a successful assimilation into society whose beginnings he already saw in the Hohenems Jewish community. Until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the Hohenems Jews spoke and wrote a form of Western Yiddish—which step by step was drawing closer to contemporary German –, admittedly with Hebrew characters. That was to change only with the turn to the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

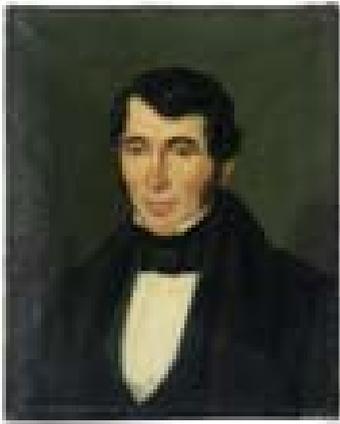
Mastery of the written and spoken language was a prerequisite for the distant trading expeditions into the surrounding German territories. But already in the first charter of protection of 1617, a school and schoolmaster were recorded as an integral component of the Jewish community. Until 1650 there is evidence of a certain Seligmann from Nuremberg as schoolmaster, while his successor was called Jekosiel and had previously worked in Innsbruck.

In the founding year of the Jewish community's German "Normalschule" (covering grades 1 to 8), 34 children—18 boys and 16 girls—attended lessons that were given in the home of the first teacher, Lazar Levi (from 1813 Lazar Wälsch), located right behind the synagogue. While Levi, like his successor from 1813, the Bavarian teacher Jakob Bamberger, was the highest rewarded official in the community, he was poorly paid nonetheless. As Bamberger was dismissed when Bavarian rule ended, the teacher's post could now pass to a Hohenemser. Maier Reichenbach, a great-grandson of Maier Moos, was initially appointed temporarily and later on permanently: "an exemplary teacher, skillful, enthusiastic, and active, only a bit too fiery occasionally"—the then district inspector's opinion about the young teacher.



The Jewish school became the center of an ongoing dispute within the community itself and at the same time with the authorities since for a long time many well-to-do families preferred private education for their children. As a result, the school suffered from financial hardships and a low educational level, much to the annoyance of reform-minded members of the Jewish community, who were placing their hopes on the school's educational remit. At the same time the relationship between Normalschule and religious school had not been clarified yet. A court decree of 4 February 1820 even threatened the school's continued existence. To bring about "complete conformity" of Austria's Jews with the state's subjects of other creeds, according to Tänzer "Jewish youth [was to receive] lessons, apart from religious school, in Christian schools". From 1824 general attendance at a public, regulated school for the Jewish community was implemented. Five years later, the new Normalschule building completed, dispute around the religious school's affiliation continued. Only in 1831 a decree ordained that the religious school was to move into the ground-floor rooms of the school building. [Jewish school, c. 1900. Photograph by Arnold Sueti; Erwin and Uri Taenzer collection, USA]

**Jewish Patricians and Benefactors c. 1800.** From the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century administrative communications about the organization of the community have been preserved. A community meeting held in the winter of 1791 presided over by Rabbi Juda Löb Ullmann with the two chairmen Lazarus Josef Levi and Nathan Elias established important rules governing community life. Thus, the office of treasurer was merged with that of the chairman, who was in charge of the separate community and poor-relief funds. These are an indication of the importance of welfare in the community. Detailed provisions were laid down on who had to pay which taxes and dues and what was to happen if they were overdue. A few years later a community code

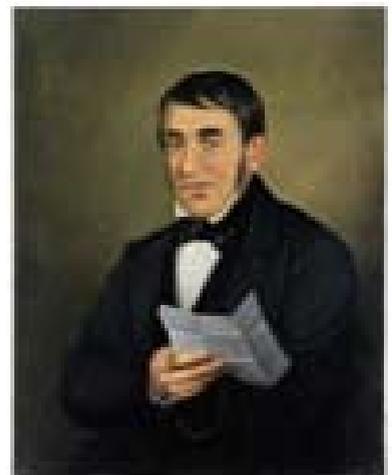


was issued by the authorities on 6 October 1795, which can be regarded as the birth date of modern community administration, even if to some extent it referred back to earlier decrees. The central offices, their tasks, and taxation were laid down in it. Lazarus Josef Levi, who had occupied the office since 1785 and continued to lead the community until his death in 1806, was confirmed as chairman.

Lazarus Josef Levi, born 1743 in Hohenems as the son of Josef Wolf Levi and of the sister of the community chairman Maier Moos, originated from one of the leading Jewish families. Eventually, he became one of the most successful Hohenems merchants of his day.

In recognition of his supply services to the imperial army during the wars with France, Lazarus Josef Levi bore the title of court factor, an imperial privilege that made it considerably easier for him to trade on Austrian territory. His wife Judith Daniel-Levi (1746–1810) came from Frankfurt, gave birth to nine children, and, like her husband, devoted herself to charity. Even hundred years after Levi's death Aron Tänzer praised his "extremely versatile activity" as "great, noble, tolerant, beneficent—i.e., genuinely Jewish in everything he undertook". After 1813 his children called themselves Löwenberg. His brother-in-law Löb Moos became the founding father of the Reichenbach manufacturing family. His own brothers were to become the founding fathers of a number of Jewish "dynasties", the Hirschfelds and Neumanns, the Löwenbergs and Löwengards. In his old age Lazarus's younger brother Wolf Josef Levi would assume the name Benjamin Löwengard. As an imperial and royal court factor and founder of the then widely ramified trading firm Wolf Josef Levi & Co, he purchased the count's old bathhouse in the early 1800s. There his descendants set up a cotton-spinning factory in 1815, from which the cotton-printing works of Philipp and Josef Rosenthal, the "Fa. Gebrüder Rosenthal", would arise in 1841. Benjamin Löwengard's son Naphtali, on the other hand, founded banks in Mannheim and Frankfurt am Main—and would henceforth call himself Hohenemser. [Above: Portrait of Philipp Rosenthal; JMH / below: Portrait of Josef Rosenthal, Anton Boch 1866; JMH]

Benjamin Löwengard too was involved in charitable work. In his will he put part of his fortune into a charitable foundation for the religious education of poor children. Charitable opportunities abounded. Infectious diseases, incurable at the time, were also part of the struggle for day-to-day survival. In the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century smallpox claimed many victims in Vorarlberg, especially among small children. Around 1800 about ten percent of those affected by smallpox would die of the disease. Survivors remained marked lifelong by deep, pitted scars, and in extreme cases went blind. In 1802 the daughter of a Lustenau innkeeper, Maria Franziska Jussel, became the first child in the monarchy to receive a smallpox vaccination.



Nathan Elias, an immigrant from Bavaria who had married a daughter from the Uffenheimer family, emerged as the first textile manufacturer. In a petition dating from 1805, in which the Hohenems Jews asked for permission to buy land and real estate, his services to Hohenems were particularly emphasized because with his “manufacture of cotton goods [he had created] a new livelihood for many in spinning and weaving”. Elias’s family would later become the Brentanos.

In 1805, 84 Jewish families were living in the Hohenems community in 56 houses. Many houses had been rebuilt from scratch after the great fire of 1777, some much more splendid and sophisticated than they had been before. An optimistic atmosphere of departure must have prevailed among the Hohenems Jews for they built imposing town houses, which formed a closed town square in the center of the district. They no longer served merely to meet the families’ living requirements, but also displayed their owners’ economic affluence and need for representation.

All of them, the Löwenbergs and Löwengards, Hirschfelds, Reichenbachs, and Brentanos, were soon to transcend with their enterprises not only the traditional Jewish world, but also the boundaries of the European continent. But by then radical changes had occurred.

**1792–1805: War against France.** Since 1792 a war was raging against France and the whole of Vorarlberg suffered from the three-year-long presence of Austrian soldiers. During the Napoleonic Wars there were countless war refugees throughout the province, as well as many French clerics and nobles who had fled from Switzerland. An embargo was imposed on exports and seasonal migration, of vital importance to many people, forbidden.

The War or the First Coalition ended with the Treaty of Campo Formio in October 1797. Austria lost its possessions in the Netherlands and Lombardy. The French troops advancing towards Vorarlberg had been repelled at Lustenau. But the war damages became an onerous burden for the population. The next peace treaty of 1801 only confirmed the losses of Campo Formio, and, yet, the Vorarlberg population celebrated in festive decorations in Austrian and French colors.

Hohenems was affected several times in the course of the French wars when looting and marauding troops occupied the town. Providing for the imperial troops, an imposition on all Vorarlbergers, and the higher tax burden arising from the war made it particularly hard for the poorer members of the Jewish community to cope. But even rich merchants like Löb Moos had to accept considerable financial sacrifices.

In Austria hardly anyone had reckoned with the spillover of the French Revolution on to other countries, far less their own. Though aware of the threat from the Revolution, both the imperial house and the political elite were not actually engaged in calculating its risks. When the Austrian budget, notoriously suffering from financial shortfall, had to come to terms with the fact that the provinces were not in the least adequately prepared for a military threat, a domestic political crisis ensued.

After Emperor Leopold II had died unexpectedly after only two years in office, Archduke Francis ascended the throne at the age of just 24. “Good Emperor Francis”, as he tended to be called, was born in Italy and learned the Viennese dialect instead of German, which further

reinforced his image as an emperor close to the people. Francis himself wanted to be the first citizen of the State and as such supported the middle classes at both the economic and symbolic level. The overriding dictate of his controversial policy was to maintain the Habsburg realm and keep it together. Yet, with the 1805 Peace of Pressburg Austria was compelled by France to cede Vorarlberg and Tyrol to Bavaria.

**1805–1814: Bavarian Rule.** In spring 1809 soon after Austria's declaration of war on France that triggered the Fifth War of the Coalition, the Tyroleans under Andreas Hofer used armed force to rise against Bavaria, which was a French ally. In Innsbruck the uprising began with the looting of five dwellings and three shops belonging to Innsbruck Jews. A little later the Vorarlbergers under the leadership of the lawyer Dr. Anton Schneider joined the movement. In the initial phase no fighting occurred because Vorarlberg had no Bavarian occupation forces. When Bavarian and Württemberg units advanced into the Rhine valley in May, the Vorarlberg local defense force succeeded in defeating them near Hohenems. And in Hohenems too the Jews were now openly threatened into supporting the uprising financially. Manufacturer Nathan Elias paid 10,000 Gulden, from Vienna reasonable support came from the bankers Arnstein & Eskeles. Other Hohenems Jews donated smaller sums, while the Jewish community provided loans to the diet, which they themselves had to borrow in Switzerland at high interest rates, and assumed a fifth of the Christian community's military costs.

Since 1788 Austrian Jews were subject to compulsory military service just like Christian subjects, and well over 30,000 Jews served in the army in the following three decades. The anti-Jewish accusation that Jews were cowards and malingerers with no patriotic ties who would shirk national defense poisoned the atmosphere. And to prove the opposite, many Jewish recruits sacrificed their lives, though not in Vorarlberg for there were no great battles there.

Faced with superior French-Bavarian power, the Vorarlbergers soon capitulated. Napoleon demanded Anton Schneider's execution, but the Württembergers did not carry out this order. To prevent future uprisings, 177 Vorarlberg hostages were taken away. At times Napoleon even played with the idea of annexing Vorarlberg and Tyrol to Switzerland, as a way of tempting the confederates out of their neutrality. Instead, Vorarlberg and Tyrol became part of the new kingdom of Bavaria. The new regime brought a far-reaching modernization of administration and social legislation, following French models. But the Bavarian rulers deliberately ignored historical ties and traditional "identities", or even worse: they accelerated their crystallization, while Vorarlberg was appended to the newly formed Illerkreis, i.e., the Allgäu.

It was above all powers-that-be that both the Jewish and Christian population perceived compulsory military service for the new rulers as particularly oppressive. Many Vorarlbergers avoided conscription by escaping to Switzerland, while some resorted to more drastic measures: in 1807 angry mothers stormed the Krumbach conscription office and destroyed their sons' call-up records. On the other hand, in March 1812 a private association was set up among the Hohenems Jews for the support of Jewish youngsters who were personally doing military service or had obtained permission to send a replacement. For example, the Hohenems Jew Wolf Bikard did his military service in 1817 and—winning several commendations—completed his period of service.

The new regime fundamentally altered life for the Jews in Hohenems—and confronted the Hohenems Jews with an insoluble paradox: the Napoleonic and Bavarian reforms corresponded to their hopes for civil liberties and emancipation—but their loyalty was with the rebelling Vorarlbergers and Vienna. Nonetheless: the Bavarian Edict of 10 June 1813 became a milestone of legal equality for them. With the 1813 edict many of the discriminating provisions were abolished and—as Aron Tänzer wrote—“a new and blessed period for the Hohenems Jews” began. Merely tolerated protected Jews became subjects of King Max Joseph of Bavaria with almost equal rights to Christians: restrictions on trade disappeared and it became possible to buy land and houses. However, two restrictions were to be extremely important for the lives of the Hohenemsers in the following decades. Item 11 of the decree forbade the immigration of “foreign” Jews, item 12 the enlargement of the “number of families of Jews currently living in one place”. This “normal number” laid down in item 12 also led to restrictions in marriage regulations. Only the first-born son was allowed to marry, and then only after a registration number had become available, which of course resulted in discrimination in the right to marry. The long tradition of arranging transregional marriages with the help of a marriage broker remained essential to the existence of the Hohenems Jews—despite all their civic liberties—as it was hardly possible for a son or a daughter to be married in the town itself. And the nearest Jewish communities were far away.

The edict also got serious about the provision on the adoption of German names, which—at least for the Jews of Vienna and Lower Austria—had been issued almost twenty years earlier in the Patent of Tolerance.

[Next page: [List of name changes in Hohenems, 1813; The Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People, Jerusalem](#)]

The butcher Henle Wolf became Heinrich Brunner, Josef Hirsch Levi became Josef Hirschfeld, and Simon Ullmann became Simon Steinach. Often—as with Steinach—people took the traditional name of the cadastral unit of their house in Hohenems as a starting point, and if they lived in a house by a stream (Bach), they chose the name Bachmann. However, more frequently they opted for a surname that indicated the family’s place of origin: the Brettauers originally came from Bretten in Baden, Benjamin Burgauer had immigrated from Burgau, and the ancestors of Michael Moos had already added to their name the fact that they came “aus Menz” (from Mainz). The majority of Hohenems Jews had, in fact, been called “Levi” or even “Levi Levi”. Many Levis had already taken the surname Weil, as an anagram of Lewi. And the Levi Levis now became the Bernheimers, a very important family later on. One branch of Levis, who had come to Hohenems from Sulz, had always been called the “Sulzer Levis” for the sake of distinction. That name now simply became Sulzer.

With the removal of the imperial and royal Austrian administration a further question arose, central to the future of the Jewish community in Hohenems. As long as that authority had existed in Hohenems, the Jews had formed a community of their own, as in the times of the imperial counts, which governed its affairs independently, was directly responsible to the imperial administration, and settled the few common matters with the Christian community according to the provisions of the charter of protection. For the future, therefore, two options became possible: either everything would remain as it was and the Jews would form a com-

stammes und verzweigt  
1853

1. Johann Baptisten fische Lamm Weinland 1848 aus Berg
2. Valerius Bergmann fische Lamm Weinland
3. Oswald Bergmann fische Lamm Weinland
4. Oswald Bergmann fische Lamm Weinland
5. Albert
6. Simon
7. Albert
8. Simon
9. Valerius Bergmann fische Lamm Weinland
10. Oswald Bergmann fische Lamm Weinland
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54. Oswald Bergmann fische Lamm Weinland

munity of their own with a new contractual status vis-à-vis the Christian community, or else they would form a community only in the confessional respect, but administratively would come under the Christian community or a local community to be newly formed. As neither the Christians nor the Jews had any great interest in a change in their relations, this question did not become a major issue. The incorporation of the Jewish community into the local community, decided upon in the Bavarian Edict and explicitly spelt out in regulations dated 19 June and 29 October 1813, was practically ignored by both communities. The Christians did not want to recognize the Jews as equal citizens of a joint community, and at first the Jews saw a more prosperous future for their own community in autonomy.

At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century economic life in Hohenems was already considerably influenced by its Jewish citizens. An official comparison between the Christian and the Jewish community in 1819/20 showed that there were 79 Christian and 51 Jewish tradesmen. Of those, almost half were peddlers of piece goods, six were butchers, three innkeepers, and three manufacturers.

The embargo on peddling, extended to Vorarlberg with the start of Bavarian rule in 1806, hit the poorer members of the community hard, but was broadly welcomed by the well-to-do members of the Jewish community aiming to come to terms with the authorities. Moreover, this measure was accompanied by the lifting of other centuries-old prohibitions on commerce and trade. A census dating from 1802 shows that the major families had developed a Europe-wide trading network: fairs in Bolzano, Munich, Passau, Leipzig, or Innsbruck were regularly attended. They had business partners in Switzerland and Italy. Others engaged in exchange transactions. The next social stratum below them earned their daily bread as butchers, ironmongers, running bars dispensing drinks, and from the sale of bread; Jakob Kitzinger ran a coffee bar with billiards. Like the poor in the Christian community, the bottom layer got by as hired hands, day laborers, domestic servants, helpers at the harvest, or else as peddlers, who were badly hit by the ban and now had to try and ply their trade at still greater distances.

Peddling had long been surrounded by contention. Peddlers were those who brought goods, hitherto obtainable only at large markets and not at all in the country, to the smallest villages: manufactured and early industrial goods, which were becoming increasingly important to farmers and tradesmen, be it industrially produced nails or tools, inexpensive household items, or colored fabrics and haberdashery that could satisfy modest "needs for luxury". They all meant a move toward modernization, competition for local producers, and a cultural exchange between town and country, all things that could be a thorn in the flesh of traditional forces for the widest variety of reasons. And if the peddler was Jewish, prejudices were in the air that were sometimes present even when customers eagerly awaited his arrival.

For Jewish peddlers, their job entailed not only the difficulties of traveling over large distances in all weathers or of storing and transporting their wares, but also the strain of observed tradition, which included resting during their travels on the Sabbath, praying, and finding shelter in a Jewish community.

A surviving passport belonging to the Jewish peddler Samuel Josef from Hohenems dating from 1815, one year after the end of Bavarian rule, shows not only his arduous travel



routes, which in the six months documented allowed him only twice to briefly rest at home, but also an itinerary that always kept him near existing Jewish communities.

[Left: Passport of peddler Samuel Josef, 1815; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz]

**1814/1815: Back with Austria—the Congress of Vienna.** From 3 June 1814 Vorarlberg was again part of Austria, and in the Hohenems synagogue a special service was held in celebration. All of Vorarlberg organized a big reunification feast: the houses in Bregenz were decorated with banners and on the door of the Kapuziner church an inscription from the Song of Solomon could be read: “My beloved is white and ruddy”.

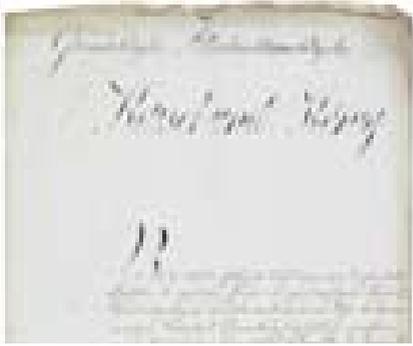
European monarchs meeting in Paris agreed on a peace congress, which was to create no less than a new order in European power relationships in the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars. Prince Metternich invited them to the “Congress of Vienna”: everything was to revert to the way it used to be before Napoleon, with Vienna becoming the capital of European reaction. Metternich turned himself into the “Coachman of Europe”. In the following years he was able to substantially strengthen Austria’s position, in particular in the German Confederation and in Italy. The rest of Europe was reorganized. The deliberations at the Congress, held on the great stage of Vienna without much structure or organization, lasted until 9 June 1815.

For the Jewish communities in the Habsburg monarchy the new political situation gave little cause for rejoicing: emancipation of the Jews, spurred on by the revolutionary developments in Europe, was largely reversed. Through articles in the Act of German Confederation, Jewish rights were almost entirely subordinated to provincial sovereignty. A petition from the Austrian Jewish communities for recognition of equality before the law in principle addressed to Emperor Francis I and to Metternich in 1815 produced no results. One of the few reforms that Austria left in force was the Bavarian Edict—or at least a major part of it.

Hence, people in Hohenems still had quite positive feelings when Emperor Francis I came to Vorarlberg on Monday 14 October 1815, Yom Kippur of all days, a few weeks after the closing of the Vienna Congress. He accepted the homage of the Vorarlberg Diet in Bregenz, and the Hohenems Jewish community had been invited as well. For religious reasons, however, they were unable to attend: they sent an address of homage, but celebrated their most important holiday in the synagogue at home. In any case, he came to Hohenems two days later on Wednesday, and that day the community went out of their way to display their loyalty. Rabbi Ullmann bore a Torah scroll to the first of the three triumphal arches decorated with eagles that had been built along Judengasse, the teacher Meier Reichenbach stood ready with the schoolchildren, while the entire community gathered to proclaim “Long live Franz, our Emperor!” [Next page: Homage paid by Hohenems Jews to Emperor Franz I, 1815; Stadtarchiv Hohenems]

The Hohenems community also had good reasons to rejoice. They were the only community in the entire former “Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation” to which Article 16 of the 1815 Act of the German Confederation was not applied. After subtle editing to the detriment of the Jews, this article did away with the emancipation already achieved in many states in the Confederation, leaving it to them to decide individually what they were willing to do for the “civic improvement of those who adhere to the Jewish faith”. And that was not much.

Of course, the Hohenems community was distressed by the observance of the “Normalzahl” (permitted number), which had been set at 90 families under Bavarian rule. They fought against the restriction, but to no avail. The Austrian authorities also confirmed the order whereby only the firstborn son was permitted to enter matrimony and then only if a registration number was available. Their question in an appeal addressed directly to the Emperor, “What is to become of our younger sons?” remained unheeded. Francis I was not ready for any reinterpretation of the rules of marriage. In hindsight, Rabbi Tänzer wrote a few decades later about the period after Bavarian rule in Jewish Hohenems: “The entire historical period from 1815 to 1848 is not only the most complex in the life of the Hohenems Jewish community, but also the richest in contradictions. The authorities speak of a Jewish community and the law declared that such a community was no longer in existence as the Bavarian Edict of 1813 had several times been confirmed in all its substance; for this very reason every trade is open to the Jews, the authorities refuse to grant every Jewish craftsman the necessary concession; for this very reason the purchase of real estate for their own use is permitted to Jews with no further ado, the authorities refuse to approve purchases.”



In 1816, 458 male and female Jews were living in Hohenems in 80 families—by family the “whole household” including servants should be understood, a number that is definitely comparable with the settlement in the capital, Vienna.

Theoretically, adherence to the registration system should have kept the number of Jews in the market town always at the same level, but the discriminatory law was repeatedly circumvented, thus losing a little of its sting. The decades ahead would be marked by many opportunities and much success for the Jews in Hohenems.

**Secular Education, Religious Reform.** Simultaneously with the Enlightenment that shattered the foundations of popular faith and the position of all religions, starting in Germany, a small number of Jews began to engage in a new interpretation of the Torah and the Jewish traditions. In the face of Enlightenment calls for universal natural or human rights, any claims to validity of no matter which religion had to be qualified if not completely negated. questioned As a result of insights into the natural laws, many dogmas were questioned or at least put into perspective as was the religious claim to be the sole authority, by new models explaining the world—a development that did not stop short at Judaism.

Based on the writings of Moses Mendelssohn, the founder of the Jewish Enlightenment, the Haskalah, a small intellectual elite within Jewish society began to deal with an ever growing number of secular questions in and addressed to Judaism. Secular education was on increasing demand: Jews should no longer read and interpret only the Torah and their own books of religious laws, but become intellectually engaged with the world they lived in. The number of these maskilim, as the followers of the Haskalah were called, never exceeded 200 in the initial period. And yet they had started the ball rolling within Judaism.

Mainstream pressure to adapt and fit in also increased. Gradual emancipation came with a price: the new legal position and its implicit demand for Jews “to better themselves” allowed Jews for the first time to join the *Zeitgeist*. Now, according to public demand, they should disregard their “obdurate” religion in favor of enlightened ideals, be guided by reason and the prevailing ideals. The educational ideal at the beginning of the century drew them to literature and theater, people venerated Lessing and Schiller, and, in the literary salons, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Admittedly, Austria on the whole lagged far behind Protestant Northern Germany and Switzerland: there, hundreds of reading societies had been founded from 1760 on, and the salons of rich and smart Jewish women like Rachel Varnhagen and Henriette Herz had become intellectual centers for an upper middle-class public. In Austria not much importance was attached to “reading habits”, and even in the famous Viennese salon of Fanny von Arnstein, participants preferred to devote themselves to the enjoyment of music rather than to more demanding literature.

The Hohenems Jews, in total contrast to the majority of “Landjuden” communities (Jews living in country districts) in Southern Germany, were open to secular developments. Already in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century enlightenment ideas had been able to gain access here. Not least as a result of economic success and increasing affluence in the community, the Hohenems middle classes had also become more self-confident, they were aware of their position in the economic structure of the day, and gradually also demanded a political say, though this was, of course, still a long way off. For after the final defeat of France, Austria under Metternich was a dominant European power alongside Russia. Austria was given the presidency of the German Confederation, and Metternich tried to counter democratic aspirations by retaining the old social order. Internally, Austria was governed in a restoration-minded absolutist way, using police state methods. There was an attempt to shut the door on those very aspirations for a voice in decision-making. The beginnings of the bourgeois public marked by such ventures as the founding of coffee houses, newspapers, or associations were viewed with mistrust by the Viennese government and its network of informers.

But the rise of such institutions, which the middle classes had created for themselves to exchange ideas, criticize prevailing conditions, or, indeed, clear up internal problems, could no longer be halted—not in Hohenems either. For example, Vorarlberg’s first coffee house opened here before long: Herz Jakob Kitzinger, who had immigrated to Hohenems from Pfersee near Augsburg in 1797, opened a coffee bar with billiards. At the home of Babette Menz, who a short time later ran the “Zum Schwert” inn, a billiard table was set up. Groups and associations met in the “Kitzinger”, newspapers were read, and later on plays performed as well. A middle-class public emerged, which exchanged opinions about politics and innovations, about ideals and grievances.

In addition, in Bavarian-ruled Hohenems—like in Bregenz and Feldkirch— a middle-class and, in this case, Jewish reading society was founded in 1813, its purpose being introduced in great detail in the constitution:

1848

Statuten  
der  
Bese. Gesellschaft  
in  
Friedenems.

*“Every active person longs for recreation after a full day’s work. It does not matter in the least which means are chosen to achieve this purpose. Both body and spirit call for it. Therefore, it is necessary to care for both and guard against either one or the other being short-changed, or even running the danger of having the opposite effect by resorting to wrong means. It is equally true that every physical or moral pleasure, enjoyed alone, soon ceases to be one, and only communal participation keeps its charm fresh and greatly enhances it. Therefore, all people seek solace in some social circle or other. But if a society is to guarantee true recreation, it has to strive to combine the pleasant with the useful, it must alternate enjoyment with education. Fraternal harmony, cheerfulness, love of truth and of the sciences along with innocent pleasures and benevolence towards all people must be the main features of such a circle.”*

[Constitution of the Hohenems Reading Society, 1813; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz]

Those foregathered there made their purpose known: “to enrich their minds with knowledge through useful reading as well as the reciprocal communication of edifying ideas“, to cultivate discourse, as they put it then. Thanks to the community’s openness and interest in the world, the Hohenems Jews were able to join in a European development that Austria grasped only hesitantly. They shared the ideals of education and knowledge and acted in the spirit of advancement and participation. Thus, the Jewish community sent a boy to secondary school and to study medicine and funded his training as a general practitioner to ensure medical care for its own members later on. Wilhelm Steinach, born in 1796, graduated from the University of Vienna in 1829 and then devoted himself to his Hohenems community. Ludwig Ullmann also studied in Vienna at the expense of the community, first became a medical doctor in the Bregenzerwald, then moved back to Hohenems.

Thanks to a fascinating find in an attic, we know a little more about the reading habits and communication, educational horizons and language of typical protagonists of this period. In 1986, during renovation work at one of the big court factors’ houses that had belonged to the Levi-Löwenberg family, a large number of letters and other written material was found, as were a few everyday objects, used as insulating material under the roof: they attest to a remarkable change in the everyday lives of the Jews of their time. What at the very first glance suggested a genizah find, i.e., a depository of religious writings, told, on the contrary, the story of a secular culture, of the change in language and writing, the switch from Hebrew and Yiddish to German in Roman script, the impact of assimilation that both the Patent of Tolerance and the Bavarian Edict had demanded.

[Next pages: Portraits of Lazarus Levi and Judith Daniel-Levi, H. Kraneck 1795; Vorarlberger Landesmuseum, Bregenz]

The letters that have been preserved range from the Yiddish business letters of Lazarus Josef Levi to the upper middle-class everyday lives of his children and children’s children. His son Moritz Löwenberg had married Klara Ullmann of Augsburg, who now corresponded with her women friends in her native town, but also with her daughter Wilhelmine (or Mina), born in 1808, who in 1819, aged eleven, was sent to live with relations in Munich, to be turned into a “well-educated young lady“. The move towards secular education was also particularly noticeable as a linguistic change, generally leading from the traditionally spoken Western Yiddish, by way of contemporary German still written in Hebrew script, to German in Roman script.







*"Dear Mother,*

*On his arrival here my dear father handed me your precious little note dated the 6<sup>th</sup> of the month which reassures regarding your well-being, and in my turn I have the honor of being able to assure you of mine. The dress you were kind enough to send me is very beautiful and I thank you for it most warmly. Purim here passed very quietly for me, without any ball, but all the same very pleasantly. We were all together at the house of the Wertheim brothers until late into the night and had a really nice time.*

*Dear mother, I am very flattered by your wish to see me very soon, but I assure you that I too can think of nothing more delightful than being granted the joy of being able to embrace you, the best of mothers. Meanwhile my dear parents have directed that I should stay here for my own good, and the happiness and joy of your grateful loyal daughter lie in fulfilling your good intentions, Wilhelmine Löwenberg*

*Dear brothers and sisters,*

*I greet you with all the affection of a loyal sister and the warmest wishes for your wellbeing. I owe my sincerest thanks to you, dear Eduart, for the treasure you sent me. Oh, you kind-hearted brother! You part with your favorite toy to give me proof of your affection. I know how to value it, and remain with purest love, Your loyal sister."*

[Letter from Wilhelmine (Mina) Löwenberg to her mother Klara Löwenberg, Munich 13 March 1819; Helen Waibel, Hohenems]

Business moves, pieces of advice, and items of gossip were exchanged as were requests for the procurement of clothing accessories or special foodstuffs (especially goose fat that was obviously hard to come by in Hohenems), family news or news of cultural and everyday life, comments on family celebrations like the bar mitzvah of their son Efraim, or reminders to take care of health. The letters were sent with relations and acquaintances who were on the move, given to travelers, or sent to the addressee via the almost prohibitively expensive stagecoach. While the men were continually traveling on business, family members had to keep one another informed of their whereabouts and wellbeing.

The papers also provide information about the library in the Löwenbergs' house. Thus, a piece of paper has been preserved from the Löwenbergs' possessions on which they noted down "vos wir fir bicher hobn" (the books in our possession), initially in Yiddish, then later, in different handwriting, in German. And what kind of books did the Jewish educated elite in the country have? As well as Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell* they read the great writers of the Enlightenment and the Haskalah, Kant and Moses Mendelssohn, but also entertaining books for edification and instruction.



*"The books in our possession, as follows!*

*Richard the Third, a tragedy in 5 acts*

*Rudolf von Mohelli or Passion and Deception. A tragedy*

*Who is deceived now? Or the Spanish bridegroom. A comedy*

*William Tell. A play by Schiller*

*On a discovery whereby any new critique of pure reason shall be made superfluous by an earlier one. By Kant.*

*Kant's minor writings*

*Israel! Or the noble Jew. A true story by Witte*

*On Dealing with People. By Knigge*

*Fatherly Advice for My Daughter. Counterpart to my Theophron, Dedicated to Young Adult Women.*

*By Campe*

*Ritual Laws of the Jews Regarding Inheritance. By Moses Mendelsohn and Hirschl Levin, Chief Rabbi from Berlin*

*2 French Grammars*

*Geographical-Statistical Description of All States and Nations. Has 2 parts, 1 source book*

*Munich and Its Surroundings. 1 book*

*Characteristics of German Courage and Hope accompanied by a Few Poems. By Sommerlatt"*

*(Excerpt from the list of books in the possession of the Löwenberg family, JMH Archives. The surviving review lists 46 titles. The first 35 in Yiddish, the rest in German in Roman script.)*

[Machzor (prayer book) of Josef Lazarus Löwenberg, printed in Venice 1719; JMH / Voltaire, *Zadig oder das Schicksal. Eine morgenländische Geschichte* (Zadig or destiny. An oriental tale), owned by Josef Lazarus Löwenberg, 1762; Leonhard Glatthaar]

On the other hand, two actual books from the library of Josef Löwenberg, Moritz's brother, have been preserved: the contrast could hardly be greater. A machzor, a traditional prayer book, printed in Venice in 1719 and cleansed by a Christian censor from the Serenissima by erasures of passages that contemporaries, alarmed by Protestant accusations against the Church, no doubt felt to be particularly dangerous: remarks about serving false idols and other sensitive issues. But an early German edition of Voltaire's *Zadig oder das Schicksal. Eine morgenländische Geschichte* dating from 1762 has also been preserved, a satire of bigotry, religious arrogance, and fanaticism, of sticking to empty traditions and rituals, set in the Orient of the past, the manifesto of a religion of reason. In Hohenems too, tension between tradition and Enlightenment was in the air.

A guest taking a cure at the Hohenems sulfur baths in 1811, witnessed a burial at the nearby Jewish cemetery. In his diary he wrote: "The rabbi with a long gray beard gave a speech, now in German, now in Hebrew; he was dressed in black, with a tricorn hat." Apart from the Hebrew prayers, Samuel Ullmann probably spoke Western Yiddish, the language in which his community still mostly communicated in



1811. Pragmatically, Samuel Ullmann had succeeded his father, Juda Löb Ullmann, as rabbi of the Hohenems community. In his “Droschen” or derashas, the special sermons delivered on the high holidays, his father still mixed Yiddish and Hebrew, which suggests that many in the Hohenems community still had some knowledge of Hebrew then—a situation that was to alter radically in the following decades. By 1818, when the Hohenems community wished to employ a new cantor and, therefore, applied for a marriage—and settlement permission for its candidate, this question had become critical. The provincial government in Innsbruck wanted to know this exactly, and the police headquarters interrogated two Jews in Innsbruck whether, indeed, someone from the outside with special qualifications was required for this position. Both community members questioned in Innsbruck emphasized the knowledge of Hebrew, particularly in order to be able to “translate the prayers into German, if somebody asks for”, something that was obviously more and more frequently the case. The rabbi’s position within the community was changing just as much as religion itself. Ultimately, Reformation and Enlightenment had created turmoil in all religious beliefs, not only among the Christian confessions, but now in Judaism as well.

One important reformer of the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was Israel Jacobson, whose ideas on religious renewal were initially implemented hesitantly and only in the small Berlin circle. The first Reform liturgy was published in 1819: organ music and choral singing were to shape divine service in a similarly edifying and sublime way as they did in Christian churches. Discipline and order were to make the service more dignified and serious—in accordance with the criteria of the then prevailing taste. The introduction of a German-language sermon was also guided by pulpit sermons in the Christian tradition.

With the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the term “Orthodoxy” became the label for the movement that refused any religious reform and argued in favor of retaining the old rules and norms. Between the strict positions of the Reformers and the Orthodox, the moderate Reformers, concerned for the unity of Judaism, sought a compromise between the increasingly diverging movements. While Vienna was almost excluded from important rabbinical debates until well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century as a result of the ban to found a community, in force since the second expulsion of 1670, Hohenems was a center of reform-friendly tendencies from an early stage, quite against the trend in smaller and rural communities, which generally remained tied to tradition and, therefore, became Orthodox. The rabbi’s position within the community had been greatly changed by the Edict of Tolerance and other laws, Jewish self-administration had been undermined, for example, by revoking civil jurisdiction and the rabbis’ prerogative.

In Hohenems Rabbi Abraham Kohn, transferred from Vienna to the remote western province, became in 1833 one of the first pioneers of the reform, which was to radically change the community’s religious practice in just a few decades. But before that one of 19<sup>th</sup> century’s most important protagonists in the reform of the service was to go from Hohenems to Vienna. And his emergence on the Viennese scene had many consequences, first and foremost in the field of synagogal music.

**1826: Salomon Sulzer Goes to Vienna.** Salomon Sulzer, born in Hohenems in 1804, completed his training at the age of sixteen after serving an apprenticeship in Alsace and Karlsruhe and returned home to live with his parents in the Hohenems community. No information exists on the reason why the Vorarlberg cantor was appointed to the new Viennese City Temple by Isak Noa Mannheimer, the preacher from Copenhagen, “Director of the Jewish Religious School” and de facto Chief Rabbi of the Viennese Jewish community. For Sulzer it meant the beginning of a heady career: when the city temple, built on the site of the demolished Dempfingerhof, was inaugurated in 1826, he was already functioning as cantor. After many long years the Vienna community again had a representative synagogue, at least from the inside. Not before 1852 was the Jewish congregation in Vienna allowed to be properly constituted.

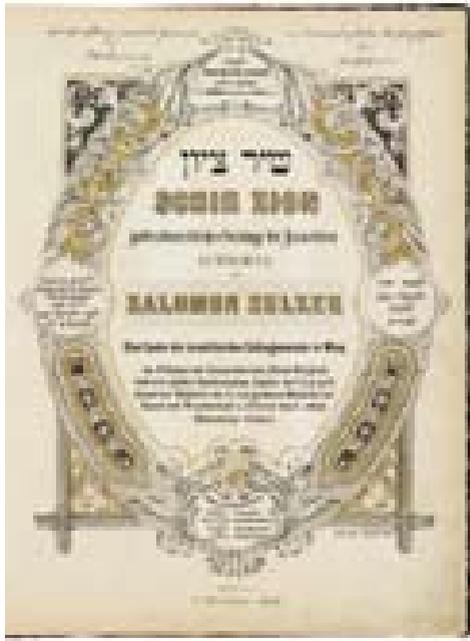
Both the liberal Mannheimer and his cantor successfully worked together to achieve unity in the congregation and, thus, they prevented the kind of rift between Orthodoxy and Reform that had occurred in Germany or Hungary. The moderate “Vienna Ritual” served as an intermediary between the increasingly hostile camps.

In Hohenems Salomon Sulzer had still practiced traditional liturgical singing in the synagogue the way he himself had learned as an eleven-year-old “boy singer” in Eendingen in the Surb valley in Switzerland. As a boy soprano he had accompanied the cantor before the whole community joined in laggingly and generally out of tune. The “chazan”—the traditional designation for the cantor—led the service as the reader. And from time to time many a cantor was criticized for ornamenting his music too much and improvising for the sake of effect, indeed, for getting carried away in great emotions and gestures in the process, and then forgetting his stock of tunes, which he had learned only orally. [Scores manuscript by Salomon Sulzer; JMH]

In the capital city of Vienna, which was also the Emperor’s official residence, Sulzer encountered a different musical world. There, excellent music was nurtured even on an everyday basis; the aristocratic and upper middle-class households arranged house concerts in their drawing rooms like public musical events in a grand style. And the great virtuosi were venerated with still greater devotion. Against this backdrop, word of Sulzer’s inspired baritone soon made the round, he was celebrated and became known throughout the city as a “distinguished notability” in musical life. Shortly after arriving in Vienna, Salomon Sulzer married Fanny Hirschfeld, a Hohenems girl. Fanny’s mother, Jeanette, had been the eldest daughter of the wealthiest family in Hohenems, that of Josef Veit Levi, who in 1813 had changed his name to Rosenthal. Fanny’s father was Carl Hirschfeld (before 1813 Moses Hirsch Levi) from a less successful branch of the Hirschfeld family. Salomon Sulzer had 16 children with Fanny Hirschfeld. At the age of just 46, she died in Vienna giving birth to their sixteenth child.



Sulzer’s fame was not based solely on his musical renditions. At the center of his activities, the city temple, he reformed the tradition of synagogal singing, and did so radically. He now rejected what he himself had still learned, namely, to lead the singing community as the



“chazan”. For one thing, his masterpiece as a composer, *Shir Zion*, was written down in a score, which meant a departure from the purely oral tradition.

[Salomon Sulzer: *Schir Zion*, Vol. II, Wien 1865; JMH]

Then again, the singing now consisted of a solo voice that was accompanied by a four-part choir made up of soprano, contralto, tenor, and bass voices, with the two higher parts, of course, still being sung by boys for a long time to come. The community’s role was confined to attentive listening. Catholics and Protestants too were discussing the disadvantages of congregational singing in the liturgy at that time. After a general decline in ecclesiastical compositions, there was again an increase in the writing of church music, above all for choirs and not so much for the congregation in the pews.

Sulzer commissioned various composers for the first part of *Shir Zion*, for example Franz Schubert; again we know that he described Sulzer as the finest interpreter of his well-known song “Allmacht”. For Sulzer’s collection of songs, Schubert set the Hebrew text of Psalm 92 to music. The result of Mannheimer’s and Sulzer’s reform was soon in widespread use. The “Vienna Ritual” created the type of cantor Sulzer was, that is, more “priest” than mere leader of the singing, who raised his voice to the honor of God and the profoundly moved community. Apparently, Mannheimer and Sulzer complemented one another in the best possible way for Eduard Hanslick, the famous critic of the *Neue Freie Presse*, wrote: “Old Mannheimer (...) preached what Sulzer sang. It was the most incandescent eloquence from a pulpit I ever experienced, here in words, there in notes.” Sulzer himself, assessing his own impact, was hardly more modest. “Only when,” he wrote in 1880 to the publisher of the monthly magazine *Der jüdische Kantor*, “*Shir Zion* has entwined the hearts of all our fellow believers like a bond of love, and Sulzer’s liturgical songs have virtually formed a language for all zones,—only then will my objective have been achieved, then I will have found justification before God and my fellow men.” [Homage to Salomon Sulzer, 1879, Lithograph by Ferdinand Teweke; Jüdisches Museum Wien]

In many ways reform of the Jewish service was based on the Protestant model, whether in the gradual introduction of the organ in the synagogue, which was described by many contemporaries as “melodious Christianity”—and which, of course, also raised a Halachic problem about the prohibition to work on the Sabbath, or else by the introduction of a German sermon. Although Hebrew was retained as a liturgical language in the service, many prayers were now spoken only in a curtailed form. But instead of the “Drosche”, the derasha on the high holidays, which as a rule consisted of a Talmudic discussion of a Halachic commandment or prohibition and corresponding passages from the Torah, a German sermon was now regularly delivered on the Sabbath as well—with a moral or edifying content that also related to the events of the day. In Hohenems the German sermon, initially still reserved for the high holidays, was introduced by Rabbi Kafka. His successor, Abraham Kohn, would begin to preach weekly on the Sabbath too.



**1833: Abraham Kohn Comes to Hohenems.** Abraham Kohn was born to poor parents in Bohemia on New Year's Day 1807. He was largely an autodidact. Further studies with the Chief Rabbi of Prague, Samuel Landau, but also with Herz Homburg, attest to his thirst for learning. One anecdote recounts how he was caught by an employer, for whom he was working as a private tutor, in his tallith and tefillin reading Montesquieu's *De l'Esprit des lois*. This shows that besides his rabbinical education, he was also interested in radical (and banned) Enlightenment texts. [Rabbi Abraham Kohn, Lithograph; JMH]



Although neither “an empty title nor a pack of certificates”—Aron Tänzer’s own words—could impress him as he emphasized in a letter to his stepbrother, the Viennese piano manufacturer Bernhard Kohn, he applied for the eagerly sought-after position of rabbi in Hohenems. He was also highly recommended by his predecessor, Angelus Kafka, and by Salomon Sulzer. His keenest competitor in the application was Samuel Holdheim, who later became a Reform rabbi in Berlin.

Teacher Mannheimer described the outer appearance of his friend as not particularly prepossessing: apparently, people observed each other to see whether their features matched the then current local prejudices: “An almost oriental complexion with prominent not quite regular features along with eyes very badly affected by night-time studies and a bent posture almost suggesting an old man, could not make a pleasant impression.” He marveled at his Bavarian fiancée, Magdalena Kahn, who chose Kohn as her bridegroom despite these physical shortcomings. Young Magdalena Kahn was the daughter of Koppel Kahn, the chairman of the Fellheim community, and his wife Friedericke Brentano, the sister of Nathan Elias/Brentano, the chairman of the Hohenems community.

Kohn introduced the “Vienna Ritual” at the Hohenems synagogue, no doubt one of the reasons why Salomon Sulzer had recommended him to Hohenems. For the Viennese celebrity’s native community was still dragging along in the service and did not hear the harmony of a trained Sulzer choir—a situation the music reformer must have disliked. Kohn also endeavored to reorganize the Jewish school and played a prominent part in founding the trademen’s association, which as a charitable society supported poor members of the community in learning a useful skill.

After eleven years, Abraham Kohn left Hohenems in 1844 for Lemberg (now Lviv), where he assumed leadership of the community’s Reform forces. But right from the start, he encountered rejection from a powerful Orthodoxy. In contrast to the enlightened Hohenems community, the old elites rooted in tradition put up violent resistance to Kohn’s plans for reform. The success of the “Normalschule” opened by Kohn aroused envy, not to mention his project of founding a journal with which he wanted to support and promote his reform-oriented work. In 1846, after the de facto split of the community, he was able to consecrate the new Reform synagogue in Lemberg, known as the “temple”. In line with the revolutionary mood of 1848 he went on to demand the abolition of the tax on candles (on the Sabbath) and on kosher meat, which had hitherto been a particular burden on the poorer Jews. Not only the Austrian

authorities had profited from these taxes, and in the summer of 1848 Kohn was poisoned and died. Reform was not just a dispute about doctrines and traditions.

**Family Ties, Networks.** Already at the turn to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the wealth of the Hohenems community was in the hands of just a few families. The Löwengards, Löwenbergs, Rosenthals, Hirschfelds, and Brentanos did business with one another and married their children to one another. The names Bernheimer and Brettauer also featured, a patrician class after the model of the great Jewish banking families, but, of course, in much tinier dimensions—spreading from Hohenems right across the world.

[Business ledger of the Hohenems businessman Albert Hirschfeld, 1st half of 19<sup>th</sup> c.; JMH]

Thus, a kind of Hohenems Diaspora came about. One of the reasons were, of course, the discriminatory provisions regarding residence and trade, which still continued to restrict the number of Jewish families in Hohenems and their professional options. A further cause was the indigence of the poorer families, whose children's only chance was elsewhere, and for whom family networks could be crucial. International connections were also part of the cultural self-concept of the economic elite of the time. They spawned economic success. Thus, daughters were married to business partners, or at least in places with business ties. Sons were sent away for education or even to found subsidiaries of their father's firm. Being linked up and mobile in the economic, transportation, or communication network of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, was an invaluable advantage against one's competitors. The legendary rise of the Rothschild family is only the most glaring example of this.

However, emigration was a phenomenon not only among the social elites: America in particular exerted a tremendous attraction, promising adventure and success. Thus, the Christian artist Franz Martin Drexel (1792–1865), for instance, left Dornbirn and founded the Drexel bank in Philadelphia. Johann Joseph Ganahl, also from Dornbirn, became a cotton dealer in Savannah, Georgia, and the church architect Franz Saler (1808–1893) from Montafon became a newspaper editor in St Louis. In the course of the following decades the descendants of Arnold Brunner left the Hohenems Jewish community for New York, and Louis Bernheimer went to Alabama. Samuel Hermann Reichenbach became a mine owner in the United States and Jacques Kahn a manufacturer of mirrors.

The majority of Jewish Hohenemser, of course, stayed in Europe and tried their luck here, whether in France or—like the Hirschfelds—at the Austrian trading posts in the Ottoman Empire, in Smyrna (now Izmir) and Constantinople. Many visited Northern Italy, which was still part of the Habsburg Empire, not only for trade fairs or on business trips; they actually settled in Livorno, in Venice, in Ancona—but by far most often in Trieste, which as a port provided a link to overseas trade. The four wealthiest families in the Trieste Jewish community, the Bernheimers, Brettauers, Brunners, and Menzes, influenced Jewish life, but also the economic development of the striving port city. The dimensions of the Trieste migration become especially clear in the case of the Brunner family: five sons and one daughter out of nine children from the marriage of Heinrich Brunner to Helene Marx relocated to the seaport.





[Company plaque of Riunione Adriatica di Sicurtà, late 19<sup>th</sup> c.; JMH]



They had arrived to sell on the goods acquired in St. Gallen or at other trade fairs and markets and worked their way up to the top of the social ladder, not least in the insurance business. They were joint founders of both the Generali insurance company and the Riunionie Adriatica di Sicurtá. Trieste's population had increased more than fivefold over the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the splendid town promised its immigrants social advancement as well as a combination of the Imperial Austrian and Mediterranean lifestyles. The city's Jews came from all over the place, though those from Hohenems stuck together. They surrounded themselves with Hohen-emers and married Hohenemers. Toward the end of the century it would be the name Brunner that could be most frequently found among those paying the highest taxes to the Trieste Jewish community. A Palazzo Brunner and a Via Brunner attest to the family's immense economic and cultural importance.

The connections of the Hohenems Jewish "patriciate" to Tyrol had begun decades earlier: Josef Abraham Levi (who took the name Schwarz in 1813) already had good business relations in Tyrol and for more than 50 years attended the markets in Hall, Innsbruck, and Bolzano. The hardships he had to contend with on his business trips are recorded in a prayer book in which he described his miraculous escape from a rockslide near Landeck in 1809. A rock, weighing 24 pounds, hit and killed a colleague sitting beside him on the coach box,.

*"In memory*

*Of the great miracle that He, His name be blessed, performed for me on Sunday 9 Nissan 5569 (26 March 1809) -*

*namely—on my return journey from Bolzano on the road known as the Alenzoll near Landeck where I had traveled on a coach from here in the company of Baruch bar Benjamin— without seeing or hearing anything, a stone weighing about 24 pounds fell, and from a side where it could have struck me first, and by a special chance I was saved thanks to the almighty goodness and mercy of God—as the horse that same moment had started to pull unusually strongly and as a result the leading rope escaped from my hand and as I bent forward to take hold of it again, the aforesaid stone passed over my head and split the cranium of the late Baruch bar Benjamin with such a crack that it resembled a rifle shot—and he instantly dropped down dead from the coach before anyone could rush to his aid."*

[Right: Machsor (prayer book) of Rickle Schwarz, printed in Sulzbach 1766; JMH]

His son Ernst Schwarz who was born in 1805 and died at an advanced age in Bruneck in 1897, further developed the business in South Tyrol. When the town of Bressanone was destroyed by fire in 1840, it was he and his younger brother Jakob who played a considerable role in supporting the population of Bressanone with their charity. The entry of the grain-dealers' dynasty into the brewery business (Gossensass near Vipiteno, Vilpian, Bolzano) produced the decisive upturn. [Next page: Beer bottles from the Schwarz Brewery; Markus Ange-  
rer, Terlan]





Another of Josef Abraham's sons, Wilhelm Schwarz, became the founding father of the Bolzano branch of the family, who also ran a brewery there. His brother Ernst had founded the "Gebrüder Schwarz" banking and exchange business in Hohenems, which was later transferred to Feldkirch. Ernst Schwarz also founded the Bolzano subsidiary of the bank, which existed until 1904 when both subsidiaries of the "Gebrüder Schwarz" bank were merged into the "K.k. Priv. oestr. Creditanstalt für Handel und Gewerbe" in Vienna. His successful son, Siegmund Schwarz, promoted tourism and economy in the region through railroad construction in South Tyrol, from the Mori-Arco-Riva railway to the Überetsch railway, from the Mendel railway to the Vinschgau railway. Finally, as the backer of the Dornbirn-Lustenau tramline, his bank also contributed to the industrial development of Vorarlberg.

[Below: Postcard of the „Mendelbahn“ (The Mendel funicular); JMH]

Other Jewish families from Hohenems had similar economic success in those years: the Bretttauers founded their major trading business with branches in St. Gallen, Ancona, and Trieste, and after 1837 became involved in banking. Decades later, in 1904, the Bretttauers' prosperous bank was incorporated into the newly founded "Bank für Tyrol und Vorarlberg". A descendant of the ramified families, Dr. Josef Bretttauer, embarked on a scientific career, became a specialist in ophthalmology and together with his childhood friend Dr. Simon Steinach laid the foundations of Hohenems's reputation as the cradle of important physicians, the most famous in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century being Eugen Steinach, who did research into hormones. People dispersed and returned, married outsiders and visited their native town, sent friends and business partners home to make use of existing contacts. Not only the rich families, but Hohenems as a whole profited from the successful diaspora of the local Jews. Even the Jewish school could now hire its teachers from abroad. Moritz Federmann came from Bohemia to Hohenems and turned the Jewish school into one of the leading educational institutions in the entire province.



**St. Gallen: a Trading Partner.** “Some went to St. Gallen, others to Vienna and Paris, my grandfather to Italy, one uncle to New York, and this international contact gave them more polish, a wider outlook, and also a certain family arrogance,” this is how Stefan Zweig described the history of the ancestors of his mother, née Brettauer.

Shuttling to St. Gallen, however, posed ongoing problems for the Hohenems Jews that impeded longer-term professional prospects. Thus, special provisions targeting Jewish traders were repeatedly issued at the St. Gallen market. In 1817 the first version of an “Order on trade and dealings of Jews” was put in circulation. The final version of 1818 was valid until the admission of Jews into St. Gallen in 1863. The order was directly aimed at the Hohenems merchants. They were continually denounced by their competitors in St. Gallen, who claimed that they destroyed the market, earned money in Switzerland that they then spent in Hohenems, and other such things.

The order excluded Jews from settling there and buying land and forbade peddling. Already in 1817 the “Hohenems Jewry” raised an objection and—presumably suspecting its futility—resorted immediately to the next best option: a petition dated 1818 was no longer signed only by the Hohenems Jews, but mentioned—without signatures—another 53 unspecified “tradesmen of St. Gallen and vicinity” as supporters. With this petition they gained a limited right of residence. In 1822 already five Jewish merchants were no longer listed in lodging houses, but as tenants with staff in offices, warehouses, and residences, two of them from Hohenems: Isaak Löwengard and Lemann Guggenheim. Yet, major difficulties still existed: in 1832 Benjamin Guggenheim from Lengnau wanted the right of residence there for two years, but failed and rented several rooms and a warehouse in the “Zur Sympathie” inn in St. Gallen in 1839. However, the residency law prohibited him to settle permanently, and he, therefore, moved to Hohenems, where his wife Clara’s family lived. Thus, Hohenems initially benefitted from the obstacles in St. Gallen and Hohenems merchants established local factories.

**Manufacturers and Paupers.** For many Vorarlbergers Austrian imperial policy represented a source of constant irritation. Not only censorship and control measures of Metternich’s informer state provoked continual discontent, but, above all, high taxes, harassing customs procedures as well as a state monopoly on trade that threatened the local business community. The political hopes of the 1809 uprising and of the further events up to the Vienna Congress had hardly been fulfilled. The exuberant joy at reunification with Austria had given way to bitter disappointment. In 1817 bad harvests caused widespread starvation throughout Vorarlberg.

The majority of Hohenems Jews could not share in the prosperity of the elite, hence for example, the almost constant number of 30 peddlers, who often lived in great poverty. They were generally dependent on the St. Gallen market. From there they sold their goods, cloths and fustian, tableware and copper utensils, on their long, arduous itineraries. The authorities had long since declared war on peddling. Mobility was perceived as dangerous; the Feldkirch district court put it like this: “Experience has shown that peddlers usually lead ... an uncertain life, provided with travel documents, they roam around the province, and by being here today and there tomorrow, they do not accord their customers the least security.”

Especially peddlers and their families were often dependent on outside help in old age. The social image of the poor had greatly changed as well: while in the 18<sup>th</sup> century many people were simply “on the road”, moving from place to place, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century they became a fixture in the cityscape. The Enlightenment had a concept for the improvement of the poor—the same as for Jews: work and education. The widespread use of child labor in industry and agriculture involving children as young as six called this concept, of course, into question. Only in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century child labor was limited in many places, but only for the industrial sector, not for the agrarian, commercial, and private sectors. Many children were excused from lessons in the summer as they had to help their parents in the workshop, in the fields, at home, or in textile processing. As a result of industrialization the number of impoverished persons had risen sharply, which caused an ever increasing call for genuine social welfare provided by the state.

In addition, there was the large group of vagrant beggars, who until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century were looked after via the so-called “Bollettensystem”: the needy applied to the chairman of the community, who handed them a “Bollette” (voucher), which entitled them to eat at the house of a specified family in the community. The local poor also benefited from this system. In Jewish communities administration of the poor had always been a core duty. Thus, Aron Tänzer wrote: “school sets the standard for the intellectual development, care of the poor for the moral development of a community. And school and care of the poor form true gems in the historical adornment of the Hohenems Jewish community.” Evidence of the community’s social activities exists since 1760. With the founding of the “Chevra Kadisha” (Burial Fraternity) by Rabbi Juda Löb Ullmann, the groundwork was laid for many other charitable institutions. In 1826 the decision was made to set up a poor fund, which undid the direct link between the “benefactors” and the “needy” and which provided an institutional basis for the support of the poor.

From 1845 to 1847 potato blight was rife throughout almost all of Western and Central Europe, dramatically worsening the living conditions of large parts of the population. Furthermore, the social tensions in the country had sharply increased: reports came from all regions about an increase in serious misdemeanors like brawls, offences, and thefts as well as a rise in smuggling. The seething social unrest became palpable, but instead of courageous reforms the policy emanating from Vienna focused on suppressing and ignoring trouble. It was thought that a firm hand would prevent any revolution.



**Happy Prospects—Christians and Jews.** At that time the Landauers were also among the poorer members of the community. Henriette Landauer, born in 1787, worked as a maid for Isak Löwengard. In 1814 her cousin Josef, who up to then had to make a living as a peddler, applied for a bakery license, the trade he had been trained in. Many difficulties were put in his way, and only the argument that matzos were needed for religious reasons on Passover finally brought him the necessary consent. Since he could not make ends meet, he applied for a bar license and opened the “Zur Frohen Aussicht” (Happy Prospect) inn, which was to remain a Hohenems institution up to the Nazi period. [Above: Silver spoon („halav”—milky) that belonged to Jeanette Winkler-Landauer; Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau / Right: Gift list for the marriage of Jeanette Winkler and Josef Landauer, 1824; Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau]

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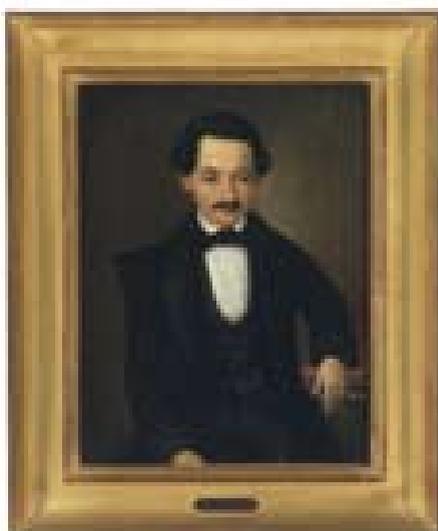
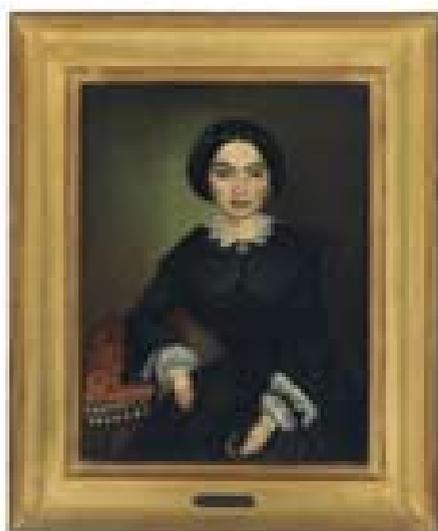
His wife, Jeanette, was the first innkeeper of the “Frohen Aussicht”, known in the Vorarlberg dialect as “Bi d’r Schanet” (At Jeanette’s) after her, a name that was still used in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Born in 1798 in the Franconian “Landjuden” community of Schnaittach, she married into Hohenems at the age of 26. Jeanette Landauer’s surviving wedding list shows that she mainly received household objects as wedding gifts, including many silver spoons of which the Jewish Museum Hohenems owns one: on it the word “dairy” (chalav) is engraved in Hebrew letters, which meant that it must never come into contact with meat or blood. Observation of the Jewish dietary laws was still an obvious religious tradition in Hohenems—and the women in particular were charged with the laws’ observance. The division of foods into “dairy” and “meaty” affected preparation, cutlery as well as consumption. Kashrut and its dietary laws also lay down exactly which animal may be eaten and how it may be slaughtered according to the rules of ritual purity. But in the Landauers’ inn, kashrut was not always strictly observed. Emancipation, reform, and adaptation to the non-Jewish environment also led to a laxer interpretation of the religious laws over the course of time—or else to their complete disregard.

Jeanette’s youngest daughter, Julie, took over the inn, and later on Julie’s daughter-in-law Nanette. They were not rich, but they were nonetheless a proud innkeeper’s family. Therefore, the Landauers all had small oil paintings made of themselves, which today can be seen in the Jewish Museum Hohenems. On the Landauers’ premises the distinctions were blurred: at their inn it did not matter whether you were Jewish or Christian. A decent guest was decently served and he did not mind whether he enjoyed his beer in a Jewish or a Christian inn.

[Right above: Portraits of Jeanette and Josef Landauer, c. 1830; Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau / Right below: Portraits of Julie and Ludwig Landauer, c. 1855; Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau]

**1848: Revolutionary Events and Literary Idylls.** Conditions in Europe were to shift not only in the inns. In the wake of the French February Revolution of 1848 came a revolution also in Vienna, sparked by a speech by Adolf Fischhof, a Jewish member of the Lower Austrian Diet. Many Jews supported the fight against the authorities, spread liberal and democratic ideas, and participated in the fights and street battles. The lifting of the tax on Jews in the new Pillersdorff constitution resulted in violent protests in 1848, e.g., by the Viennese shoemakers, incited by pamphlets full of anti-Jewish propaganda and supported by the developing anti-Semitic Catholic press.

Salomon Sulzer too subscribed to the bourgeois ideals and like many Jews sided politically with the Liberals. He wrote a song for the revolutionary “Totenkopf” (Skull) legion, which severed links to the imperial troops in July. And together with Catholic and Protestant clergymen he took part in the funeral of those who died in the March fighting. Metternich, a hated figure, had to flee, a liberal constitution for the non-Hungarian provinces was issued and the convocation of a parliament forced. At the same time a civil war erupted in Hungary between the Croats, loyal to the emperor, and the Magyars. In Italy the cities of Milan and Venice had rebelled, in Prague the Czechs. Prince Windischgrätz suppressed the uprising in Vienna, Emperor Ferdinand I abdicated, and Franz Joseph I took over as ruler. Several popular leaders were shot after being court-martialed.



In Vorarlberg occurred what Kaspar Ratz, judge of the Dornbirn provincial court, described as an “extraordinary sensation”: by early March word had spread of the uprisings in many parts of Europe, by 18 April things had reached the point where the provincial diet in Feldkirch was blown up. Liberal democrats and factory workers under the leadership of the factory owner Carl Ganahl demanded participation in power and a more democratic provincial parliament. Of course, where the Vorarlberg population was concerned, completely different fears and hopes were associated with the revolutionary events, depending on each person’s social position. The well-to-do were fearful for their possessions, the less privileged hoped for an improvement in their situation. Peddlers and probably also the St. Gallen migrant workers who came from Hohenems were concerned about their work and their possibility to cross national borders.

Vorarlberg once again demanded separation from Tyrol, but by as early as March 1849 this proved to be an illusion. With the victory of reactionary forces in Tyrol, Vorarlberg also came under what was termed neo-absolutism, which brought some fifteen years of rigorous police-state rule. On 4 March 1849 a constitution was issued that reversed much of the progress achieved. Yet, at least on paper it preserved the equality of the Jews, which was only restricted by the addition that no disruption of civic duties toward the state might occur as a result of religious persuasion. The Hungarians were subdued with Russian assistance; in Italy Count Radetzky suppressed the uprisings.

The Hohenems Jewish community was thrilled at the supposed equality of status and patriotically donated money to the Austrian army fighting the rebels in Hungary. They wanted to show gratitude, but they also wanted to make immediate use of the new legal position: when David Moos applied to the authorities for permission to marry, the Innsbruck provincial executive, to which the request had been forwarded, replied completely according to the old regulations by asking for the number of Jewish families currently living in Hohenems. Wilhelm Steinach then turned to Josef Wertheimer in Vienna, a banker and champion of Jewish emancipation, who for his part lodged a complaint with the Ministry responsible. The resulting edict from the Dornbirn provincial court found to the complete satisfaction of the Hohenems Jews: “As a result of the patent by His Majesty of March of this year regarding political citizens, the enjoyment of civil and political rights is independent of religious persuasion.” David Moos was able to marry Henriette Brunner and had ten children by her.

At a memorable meeting of the community on 10 May 1849, representatives of the Christian and Jewish community of Hohenems, which then comprised 521 members, agreed that the Jewish community should retain its independence and an agreement on shared community matters would be reached subsequently. Thereby, the separation of the administration of the Christian and Jewish communities, which had existed *de facto*, albeit illegally, since 1813, was legalized. After 232 years of existence, Aron Tänzer rejoiced in 1904, the Hohenems Jewish community was allowed to call itself politically independent.

A committee of Hohenems Jewish men now elected their own mayor, and on 21 June 1850 Philipp Rosenthal was elected in Hohenems. Samuel Menz and Emanuel Brettauer became municipal councilors. The Jewish community now had the duty of issuing residence certificates, granting marriage consents, but, above all, of representing the Jewish Hohenem-  
sers as equal citizens of the monarchy. But this did not last long and the rejoicing seemed pre-



mature. Through individual laws and edicts in the following years, almost all the rights acquired were either curtailed or even completely revoked. Again and again disputes arose about the respective share in taxation, communal duties, and rights of usufruct. [Residence certificate from the Jewish community of Hohenems for Adolf Burgauer, 23 August 1875; Pierre Burgauer, Rehetobel]

In an 1854 inquiry the Feldkirch district commissioner's office required the Christian and the Jewish communities to state their views on the success or failure of the granting of basic rights to the Hohenems Jews. Both sides expressed exclusively positive views on this question. The Christian community concluded their comments with the sentence: "If finally the always peaceful and helpful collaboration of both communities in suffering and joy, in tribulations of

every description, is also emphasized, then in truth the verdict can be given that the year 1849 has exercised no unfavorable, but rather only favorable influences on the lively relations." As the Hohenemser were in any case already better placed in many respects than Jews in other parts of the monarchy because of the "Bavarian Edict", some revocations of rights received in 1849 passed them by, with the sole exception that the granting of marriage consents once again had to pass through the district office. The Hohenems Jews enjoyed a privileged position within the empire. When Philipp Rosenthal died in 1859, Samuel Menz became the Jewish mayor of Hohenems. He still had many a fight with the Christian community, who at times proved to be less noble-minded than faint-hearted, but on the whole the period between 1849 and 1867 was one between two bodies on an equal footing—and setbacks could either be prevented or coped with.



The quaint division between Christengasse and Judengasse had also found literary expression in 1857. Wilhelm Frey, a descendant of Josle Levi, the first Hohenems Jewish community chairman, had initially applied for the vacancy as teacher at the Jewish school in 1854 and then chosen to enter the service of the Kaiser-Ferdinand-Nordbahn in Vienna, as head of the railroad's personnel office. Before becoming a music critic in 1867 and later joining the editorial team of the *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, Wilhelm Frey

had tried his hand as a writer for young people. His two stories, *Das bunte Haus* and *Die Freunde*, are among the few literary "memoirs" of Hohenems in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. They draw the picture of a Christian-Jewish idyll that cannot be shattered even by a looting raid planned by a band of drunken rowdies (a Jewish "traitor" among them).

**1863/1867 Civic Rights—Civic Commitment.** The attainment of equal legal status of 1867 was expressed in Hohenems symbolically too: the most visible sign of this was the redesigning of the synagogue, which had been entrusted to the St. Gallen architect Felix Wilhelm Kubly as early as 1863. A new Torah ark was built and the cantor's desk moved from the center of the room to the east. The synagogue was given a tower complete with clock and striking mechanism, an unusually far-reaching approximation to church architecture. A harmonium donated by Salomon Sulzer was installed in the new choir gallery, thus, organ music also entered the Hohenems synagogue.

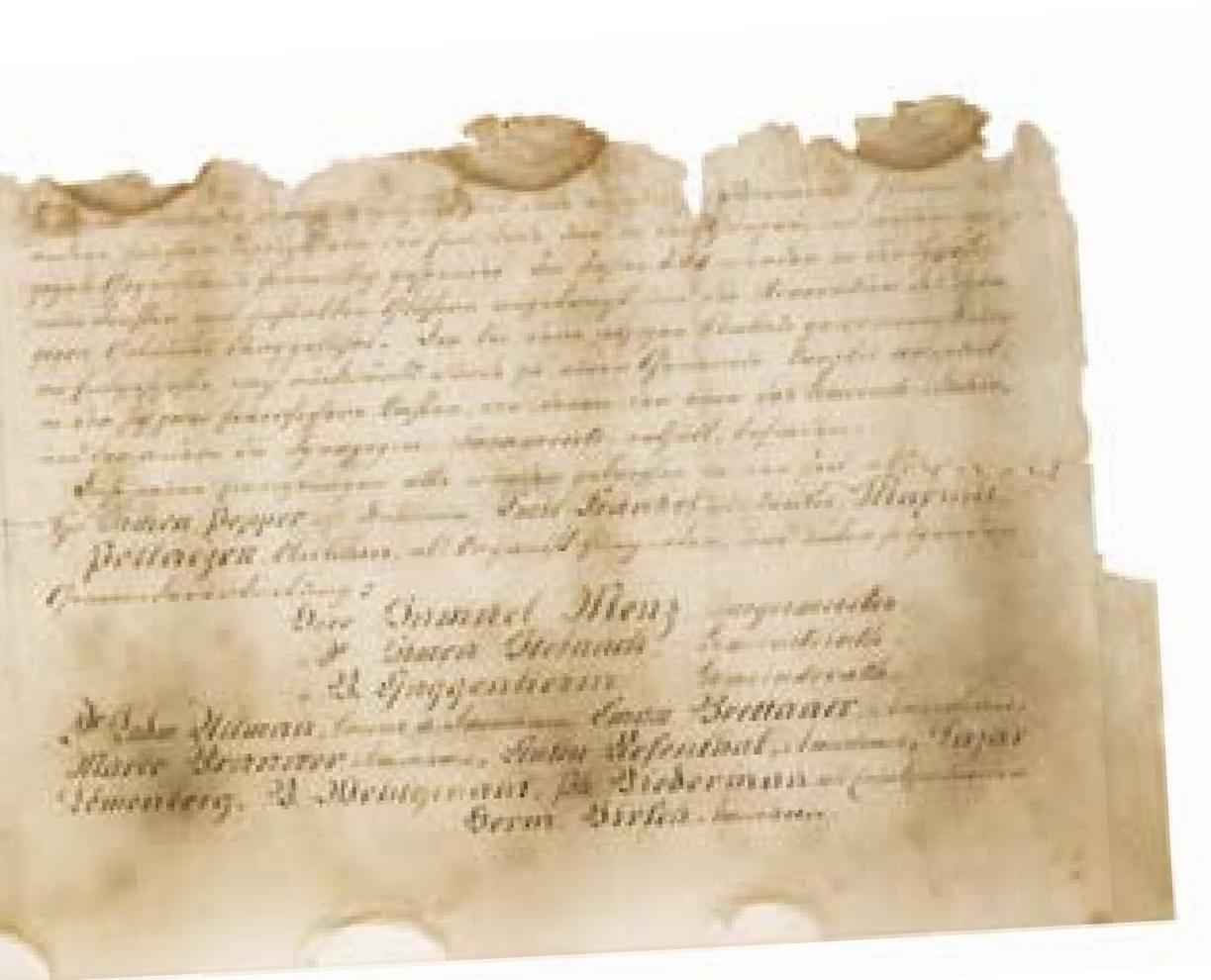
[Above: Hohenems synagogue, c. 1900. Photograph by Arnold Sueti; Erwin and Uri Taenzer collection, USA / Right: Clockworks of the synagogue clock; JMH]





*"Recorded!*

*In the year of the world 5627, calendar year 1866, under the glorious reign of His Imperial and Royal Apostolic Majesty Emperor Franz Josef I, under the then community representatives named below, alterations to the interior of the synagogue in keeping with the spirit of the time were undertaken, a harmonium donated by Professor Salomon Sulzer, Senior Cantor, living in Vienna but a citizen here, was brought in, and in addition a singers' hall was built for the volunteer mixed choir formed for the glorification of the service, a pulpit was placed in it for the preacher and a new holy shrine made of imitation marble with rich gilding, designed by the famous architect Felix Kubly of St. Gallen, was built, and a suitable altar (reading desk) was procured as well. (...) The mixed choir in the synagogue consists of the members of the "Frohsinn" (= Merriment) singers' association cur-*



rently conducted by Mr. Friedrich Rosenthal, the girls' choir, conducted by Mr. Leopold Reichenbach, and young people of both genders who are able to sing.

After the service was arranged and enhanced in this way, completely in accordance with the wishes of all members of the congregation, at a community meeting after the autumn holidays in 1866 the building of a tower and the procurement of a striking clock were proposed by Mayor Samuel Menz, with the added statement that he would endeavor to cover the cost through voluntary contributions."

[Tower document inside the brass sphere at the top of the synagogue clock tower, written by the council of the Jewish Community in Hohenems, 1867; JMH]

Thus, beginning and end of the years of the synagogue renovation coincide with the most substantial legal progress for the Hohenems Jews: in 1867 equality in legal status was to become a political reality in Austria. And already in 1863 the Jews in St. Gallen had received the right to settle there—and with support from Hohenems they founded a Jewish community, which became one of the most important Jewish centers in Switzerland. The East Swiss textile center was still the main hub for economic relations outside Vorarlberg. The very first Vorarlberg peddlers had bought their wares at the St. Gallen market. Now the town became the most important emigration and commuting destination for Hohenems Jews. What was lacking up to then, had been the general right to settle there for even the Jewish merchants already de facto living in town did so basically without any legal footing: in 1860 only one person from Austria was resident in St. Gallen; while twelve married and four single individuals had a business there, but stayed in town only intermittently.

[Left: Award of citizenship to Adolf Burgauer in St. Gallen, 19 November 1876; Jüdisches Museum der Schweiz, Basel, Burgauer family deposit / Below: Law tablets. Top piece of a small Torah ark from the St. Gallen community, c. 1900; JMH]



The majority of these commuters came from Hohenems—the Brunners or Reichenbachs, for example, had already been running successful businesses for years and were on good terms with St. Gallen business-people. A group of Jewish merchants was formed who now openly opposed any discrimination, among them Marco Brunner. They wished to obtain a kind of certificate of good conduct, which they wanted to use as an argument for the freedom to settle there. Twenty-six merchants living in St. Gallen applied for permission to settle. And despite Christian-conservative opposing voices, criticism of the Swiss anti-Jewish policy coming from trading partners in France, the USA, and the Netherlands was heeded, indeed.

With legal equality granted at cantonal level on 22 March 1863, the Jewish merchants' scope of action expanded. With the new constitution of 1866 legal equality came in the other Swiss cantons too. In 1876 Adolf Burgauer from Hohenems was the first Jew to receive citizenship in St. Gallen, and he founded a factory for curtains and curtain fabrics. Like him, some Hohenems Jews moved to St. Gallen for good. The Gebrüder Reichenbach factory founded soon after, was one of the largest embroidery manufacturers in East Switzerland and operated numerous business branches in Europe and overseas. Finally, the Hirschfeld family became also successful in St. Gallen: the "Gebrüder Hirschfeld" textile firm produced embroidery, fashion goods, and curtain materials. They all profited from St. Gallen's rapid rise to become a textile center and contributed substantially to it.



[Above: Nameplate from Albert Hirschfeld's chair in the St. Gallen synagogue; Jüdische Gemeinde St. Gallen / Below: Advertisement by the Hirschfeld company, c. 1910; JMH, Madeline Dierner-Hirschfeld deposit]

Legal equality in Austria was to be preceded by a war. The rivalry between Prussian and Austrian interests in South Germany, Silesia, and Galicia led to the Austro-Prussian War of 1866.

The minutes of the meeting of the Jewish municipal committee in Hohenems of 24 June 1866—as Tänzer writes—were “imbued with a love of the fatherland and a readiness for sacrifices”. Again they vied with one another in willingness to make donations and be of assistance.

Simon Steinach founded an aid committee for ill and wounded soldiers, Mayor Menz collected donations, and in return was honored with the “Golden Medal”—later also with the “Golden Cross of Merit”, Wilhelm Eggmann fought as a rifleman in a Dornbirn unit.

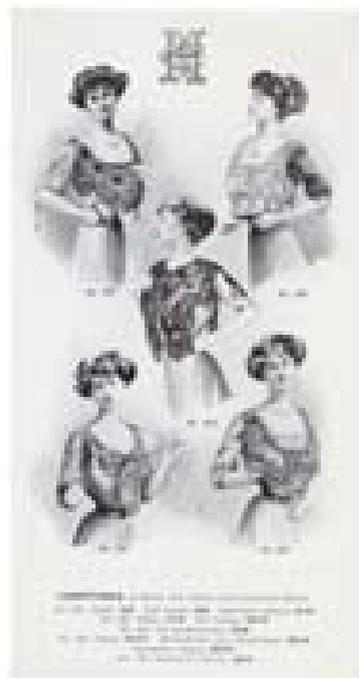


As a result of the 1866 Treaty of Vienna, Austria had lost its Italian territories and following the establishment of the North German Confederation by Prussia, it had lost its dominant position in Germany. Therefore, Austria was also forced to reach a compromise with Hungary. The Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary came into being in 1867. Each of the two states—Transleithania (Hungary with its tributary states) and Cisleithania (the Austrian crown territories)—was given a constitution, and the Austrian Emperor became also the King of Hungary. Foreign policy, finance, and warfare were shared matters.

The basic state laws, passed in December 1867, provided among other things for the long desired equality of all Austro-Hungarian citizens of all creeds.

As early as 1849 Emperor Franz Joseph I spoke for the first time—presumably inadvertently—of a Jewish “community” in Vienna. In 1852 a provisional statute was approved, which became final in 1867. Now the Viennese Jews had at last a legally recognized community that allowed them to act independently. In the wake of legal equality obtained by Austria's Jews in 1867, new Jewish communities also sprang up elsewhere in Austria—for example in Innsbruck—and mass Jewish immigration to Austria, in particular to Vienna, began.

Clubs and associations served as the social center of civic self-confidence. And Jewish Hohenemser were especially active in this field, whether in choral societies or sports clubs, from the ice skating to the swimming club, in charitable work, in the fire service, or in cultural life, or—later on—in the veterans' association. The Vorarlberg Provincial Museum Association, founded in 1856 to promote the development of a Vorarlberg “provincial identity” with the project of a provincial museum, also included many Hohenems Jews among its first members and donors: like Samuel Menz who made many





donations to the museum's holdings from his private collection of items of regional interest.

[Plate with a Hohenems ibex, part of the donation made by Samuel Menz to the Vorarlberger Landesmuseum Association; Vorarlberger Landesmuseum, Bregenz]



In the 1860s the Jewish choral society "Frohsinn", whose members at the same time formed the synagogue choir, even joined forces with the Christian male voice choral society. For the first Vorarlberg choir festival was to be held in Hohenems in 1864, and obviously people wanted to be well prepared. Admittedly, the Christian members left soon thereafter and founded a choir of their own, but musical life in Hohenems right up into the 1920s remained a meeting place for Jews and Christians. Thus, for many years the Christian organist and choirmaster Theodor Weirather also led the synagogue choir and played the harmonium. Moreover, in 1865 women were also admitted to the Jewish choral society, in particular, to sing in the synagogue. The four-part choral setting that had been learned from Sulzer was no longer performed with boys' voices only.

[Above: Festival committee of the 1st Vorarlberg choir festival in Hohenems, 1864; Archiv des Männerchors, Hohenems / Below: Synagogue choir of the Jewish community, c. 1900 (front left: Moritz Federmann); Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau]

Yet, the history of the associations also contains the history of social exclusion. Like in Vienna, the Alpine Club had many Jewish members, indeed, in Hohenems it had essentially been founded by Jews. Ludwig Kahn was the chairman of the club in 1885 before emigrating to New York, like his three brothers and sisters. Years later the Alpine Club, as a major civil organization, made racist anti-Semitism programmatic. Already at the beginning of the new century German nationalistic provocations aiming at Jewish members started in many places. In 1921 the club's largest Austrian section, the "Austria" in Vienna with more than 6000 members, introduced an Aryan article that anticipated the Nuremberg Laws. It established Jews as a "race" on the basis of the religious origin of their parents and grandparents and excluded more than 1500 Jewish members. While they, along with non-Jewish friends, founded their own Alpine Club section "Donauland", little by little, all 100 Austrian sections introduced their own Aryan articles. Already in 1924 "Donauland" as a whole was expelled from the German-Austrian Alpine Club.



**Hostility towards Jews and Anti-Semitism.** From the mid-12<sup>th</sup> century on, Jews had been accused ever more frequently of a range of “Satanic” crimes that always remained the same: ritual murder of Christian children, theft and desecration of the host, blasphemy, and well poisonings. Again and again this led to local pogroms, often triggered or spurred on by Christian business competitors or low-level clerics who wanted to stir up their followers. Torture and show trials helped make the untruth “right”.

As a result of economic exploitation, Crusades, and epidemics, wide swathes of the population lived in poverty; conjuring up danger from the Turks, the Inquisition, and widespread superstition favored the persecution of the Jews. Reformation continued the denigration of the Jews and Judaism as well. Here the assumption was that Reformed Christianity, cleansed of its Catholic “perversions”, could now finally take over the Jewish heritage and thereby extinguish Judaism. In 1543 Martin Luther recapitulated all the anti-Jewish stereotypes of the Middle Ages, and demanded a ban on their religion, forced labor, and the expulsion of “obdurate” Jews.

Outwardly, Enlightenment put an end to many myths held by popular belief—and put religions under pressure to let reason prevail. Ecclesiastical power was perceptibly restricted. For the Jews—like, for example, for social minorities,—the catchword “usefulness” became decisive: they were allowed to free themselves from their oppressive living conditions if they “improved themselves” and became a productive part of the state. They were expected to found factories, enhance trade, and communicate with those around them in the language of the country. Their religion too should be “cleaned up” and subordinated to the spirit of the times.

But this hope was only short-lived: the change in the attitude to the Jewish question was brought about by those who originally adhered to the liberal and humanitarian ideas of the Enlightenment. But a “romantic awakening” supplied society with new ideas: the concept of “Volk” (nation, people) was filled with religious-metaphysical content, national characters were dreamed up, which supposedly had remained—and would remain—unchanging over the centuries. With the development of the modern nation states and their national languages and cultures, “ethnic” identity became the battleground of affiliation and exclusion. This resulted in the difficult definition and jealous preservation of “one’s own kind” and the rejection of the alien. And in the case of the Jews, it was possible to find a whole arsenal of “alien” aspects.

Already at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the revival of defamatory legends from the Middle Ages, hostility towards Jews became spread among the wider public. People turned to the so-called folk life, collected songs and fairy tales, and began to write in the vernacular—also in Vorarlberg, where the physician Franz Josef Vonbun from Nüziders put together the first collection of Vorarlberg sagas and fairy tales, among them also one about the “Eternal Jew” in Lustenau. This time the old anti-Jewish legend had the eternally wandering Jew stop in Vorarlberg. In South Germany in particular, popular anti-Jewish propaganda was endemic and the first anti-Jewish play since the Passion plays, Karl Borromäus Alexander Sessa’s *Unser Verkehr* (1813), was performed on all the major stages of Germany.

From 1819 South German Jews feared the so-called "*Hep-Hep-Krawalle*" (riots), Jewish pogroms carried out by the populace, which had their foundation in the unresolved problems of early capitalist and early industrial development in the field of food supplies and minimum social standards. But even if these riots did not occur in Austria, a common anti-Jewish feeling could be assumed just as much in this country. As early as 1802 the Hohenems Jews saw a notice from the Vorarlberg provincial diet warning the public against purportedly dishonest Jewish business practices. In it five Hohenems businessmen, in an allusion to their status as "*Schutzjuden*" (protected Jews), were disparaged by being referred to as "*Schmutzjuden*" (dirty Jews). But no "Jewish" characteristic from the arsenal of later anti-Semitic propaganda is as yet particularly emphasized in this text. A new kind of hostility towards Jews was emerging that in the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century would spread disastrously: "racial", or actually, racist anti-Semitism, the declared objective of which was the reversal of Jewish emancipation. Parallel with the emergence of an identity "as a people", this new form of hostility towards Jews developed as the expression of a "healthy national sentiment", which in the course of the century became something to be taken as a matter of course.

In pursuit of "arguments", a social question was turned into a scientific one. The 19<sup>th</sup> century, distinguished by the triumphant progress of the sciences with their claim to interpret the world and to truth, found in anthropology and above all genetics the longed-for key for a supposedly irrefutable inequality between human beings. The "Jew", who could previously be religiously converted and, therefore, no longer be a Jew, was redefined, not according to his religious and cultural origin, but according to his genetic material, which was now supposed to contain everything negative that purportedly emanated from him. Racism as a science unmasked the "Jew" behind the human being who could no longer be recognized as a Jew, having only just been allowed to look and live like other people. The term "anti-Semitism", however, only arose as a synonym for "hatred of Jews" in the 1870s and quickly spread as it gave the age-old hatred a seemingly objective veneer.

In Austria the new developments had many diverse aspects: as early as 1848 the Jews had been held responsible both for stirring up the revolution and for its failure. Thousands of pamphlets circulated in Vienna accusing Jews of the widest variety of misdeeds for or against the revolution.

Christian hostility towards Jews shifted increasingly toward economically motivated accusations leveled at Jews, according to which they were to blame for capitalism and widespread human poverty, but at the same time for Socialism too. Particularly in the final decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century this economically motivated anti-Semitism was mixed with the "traditional" Christian hatred of Jews, as well as with the rapidly spreading racist anti-Semitism. What was known as the Kaplan movement was at the forefront in this connection with brochures and other literature, but also with sermons, church interiors, and public trials. But the Austrian Catholic clergy were still completely split regarding these questions: while the lower-ranking clergy followed the anti-Semitic movement, in 1891 the Austrian bishops issued a pastoral letter in which they rejected racial hatred. The sensational ritual murder trial in the Hungarian town of Tisza-Eszlar—the most momentous in a number of new accusations of ritual murder—resulted in a wave of publications denigrating the Jews right into the 20<sup>th</sup> century as ritual murderers of Christian children. As late as 1953 (reprinted in 1982), in a collection of Vorarl-



berg folk tales based on Vonbun's and expanding it, Richard Beitzl records a legend of ritual murder as something quite normal, under the title *"Das stumme Kind"*.

"A mother had a little daughter who could not speak, therefore, the child was not dear to her. The heartless woman sold her poor child to a Jew who opened the child's veins with needles to use the Christian blood. While the poor creature was tormented in this way, the cruel mother had to be present, that was the agreement. All of a sudden the dumb girl could speak and called out: „Mother, it hurts!“ After the Jew had tortured the Christian child to death in this way, the woman went off and entered an inn where she ordered white wine. But scarcely had the landlord brought what she had asked for when the wine suddenly turned red. Angrily the woman said to the landlord she had ordered white wine, not red. The landlord really thought he had made a mistake and brought another white wine. As soon as he put it on the table, the wine again turned red. That really seemed strange to the landlord and he voiced his suspicion, saying to the bad woman: "You must have done a wicked deed for such a miraculous sign to happen." Thereupon the woman confessed her crime and was handed over to the court along with the Jew." (Richard Beitzl, *Im Sagenwald*, Feldkirch 1953, reprinted 1982)

Some places turned into downright pilgrims' destinations as a result of such legends of ritual murder. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, in the Tyrolean village of Rinn near Hall, Hippolyt Guarinoni, physician and spearhead of the Counter-Reformation from Trent, had "discovered" the 15th-century-story of the missing boy "Anderl" and turned into a veritable cult of popular belief, entirely following the example of "Simon of Trent". [*„Anderl von Rinn“, wooden figure; JMH*]

The story was that the child had been murdered and slaughtered by Nuremberg Jews in 1462 so that his blood could be used to make matzo, the ritual bread of the Passover feast. On the location known as "Judenstein" a pilgrimage chapel was built with ceiling paintings and altar figures depicting these bloodthirsty fantasies. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the cult was revived, and Catholic anti-Semites did their best to promote it, as the large-scale sale of so-called Anderl figures representing the "martyr" who had been beatified by the church shows. Only in 1994 would the then diocesan bishop of Innsbruck, Reinhold Stecher, prohibit the official Anderl cult in the name of the church. Yet even today its followers, Catholic fundamentalists and right-wing extremists, celebrate it annually on 12 July.

Concurrently, the Catholic church, which had to fear for its power to shape society following the 1867 constitution, supplied the ideological foundations for an emerging political party. Jews became the ideological and political concept of the enemy that was called "Jew": a concept that could combine the oldest Christian fairytales about Jews with the scapegoats of contemporary grievances. The Christian Social Party of Vienna under its leader Karl Lueger demonstrated to the Vorarlberg conservatives how anti-Semitism could be integrated into the program of a modern party, indeed, could basically constitute its program. All that was necessary was to be against capitalist exploitation, against the "immorality of the city" and the disorderliness and godlessness of Liberalism. Wide swathes of society felt overwhelmed by the rapid succession of impenetrable processes that went hand in hand with the emergence of modern Capitalism and of the urban mass society. The Jews as a secret power were made responsible for everything negative.

In 1896 the Catholic Conservative Party of Vorarlberg was officially transformed into the "Christian Social Party". That same year Lueger—according to the *Vorarlberger Volksblatt* a "shining meteor in the political sky"—embarked on a triumphal round of appearances in Bregenz, Götzis, and Dornbirn. Through the *Volksblatt*, which as the first modern mass media organ in Vorarlberg had been run from the very beginning by Catholic clergymen as editors-in-chief and had followed Karl Lueger's political rise with euphoria, new/old anti-Semitism reached the wider Vorarlberg public. An anti-Semitism that was, of course, still far too hesitant for the writers in the *Volksblatt*, for—as the *Volksblatt* explained—a fundamental foreignness threatened "our own ways": "Anyone who looks at Hohenems and sees what has become of the flourishing community as a result of the forced admixture of the hard-to-tolerate Jewish element, will understand how people in the north and south, the east and west of Europe are rebelling against the Jews. The Jews will not be able to do otherwise, perhaps they do not even lack the best of intentions, only they are and remain a foreign and alien element, and both large and small communities founder, with or without the intention of the Jews, as soon as the latter are mixed up with the Christian inhabitants even in very small percentages, with no distinction being made."

[*Vorarlberger Volksblatt*, 3 Januar 1896, „Christian Socialism and Anti Semitism“; *Vorarlberger Landesbibliothek, Bregenz*]



*“Heimat”* had become the rallying cry. The nationalistic ideas of the outgoing 19<sup>th</sup> century pitted the idea of *“Heimat”* against modernity—at a time when industrial development was also attracting the first foreign-speaking immigrants to Vorarlberg in large numbers. New business sectors, like the emerging tourism, lived off the evocation of rural idylls and of a native population with ancestral roots, served up for an urban and foreign public.

While *“Christian Social”*, Catholic anti-Semitism turned towards Vienna and supported the Austrian monarchy, racial anti-Semitism in Austria spread primarily among German nationalist circles, which had often emerged from liberal parties and associations. Many middle-class Jews who were active—like in Hohenems too—in the liberal parties of the 19<sup>th</sup> century now saw themselves with no political refuge. Combined with the racist definition of the *“Jew”*, anti-Semitism had developed into an ideology of nationalist mobilization and justification, which charged the Jews with all negatively assessed modern phenomena of the day, like Liberalism and parliamentarianism, democracy, capitalism, but also Marxism and Communism. In Hohenems itself, as a result of the fundamentally liberal attitude of Mayor August Reis, this development took a certain time to gain ground.

While the differences and rivalry between the various anti-Semitic tendencies did not lose their political importance, they became increasingly less relevant for those suffering under them. The accusations leveled at Jews always remained the same, only the justifications for them separated the equally anti-Semitic civil camps, yet, they increasingly blended. Austrian Jews did not put up with these developments in any way: already the *“Union of Austrian Jews”* founded in 1885, opposed Christian-colored anti-Semitism dressed up as a criticism of Liberalism, but individuals and associations too stood up against the smears and calumnies.

And if Christian Social anti-Semitism showed a slight decline until the collapse of the monarchy, this came as a result of the rise of the German Nationalists. Yet, within the Christian Social camp too radical voices could be heard again and again, like that of the member of the Lower Austrian provincial diet, Ernst Schneider, who in 1898 and 1899 as a supplement to the law on the killing of birds of prey proposed premiums for the shooting of Jews, while Christian Social delegate Josef Gregorik spoke out in Parliament in favor of the expulsion of Jews from Austria.

### **Alongside One Another or with One Another? The Jewish Community 1860–1900.**

The constitution of 1867 had filled the vast majority of liberal Hohenems Jews with confidence. Of course, there were disputes with representatives of the Christian community, but they seemed to have more to do with administrative and economic interests than with everyday association. Yet, the last two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were to be characterized by the withdrawal of the Jews from community politics. They involved themselves in public welfare, but ever less in politics. What had happened?

After equality had been achieved, the politically autonomous Jewish community had really become obsolete. But while up to then the Hohenems Jews were able to make a crucial contribution to the economic development of Hohenems, the community, which had reached its peak in the 1860s with over 500 members, now began to decline and lose its economic importance.

Because equality granted by the laws of 1867 brought freedom of movement as well, Jewish Hohenemser could now settle wherever they wanted, and many of them moved away, to Trieste or Vienna or some other place in the huge Habsburg empire. Also the new Swiss constitution now permitted many Hohenemser merchants to end their commuter existence and to finally move to St. Gallen with their families. The community rapidly became smaller: in 1876 only 165 Jews were still living in Hohenemser as against 4400 Christians.

In this way the division of the tax burden originally agreed upon, soon proved to be unfair: the Jewish community was still paying 30% of the taxes, but now represented only 5% of the Hohenemser population. The Jews pressed for a reduction in taxation— and, in line with their liberal attitude, for incorporation into an interdenominational community, by rights long overdue. The Christian representatives who benefited from the unequal treatment that had arisen put up a defense: neither did they want Jews in their “own” community council where they would only have strengthened the liberal faction nor did they want to pay more taxes. Anti-Semitism had also meanwhile become widespread among the Christian community representatives.

Both sides turned to ever higher authorities within the Austrian bureaucracy and judiciary. In 1878 the decisive verdict of the imperial and royal administrative court was delivered whereby the Jewish community now became part of the market community of Hohenemser and hence fully incorporated. No kind of special taxes or special arrangements were any longer applied to the Jewish Hohenemser or their representatives, even if there was still inequality of treatment with regard to lumbering and grazing rights.

Implementation was characterized by loud expressions of displeasure from the Christians and by open anti-Semitism. The *Vorarlberger Volksblatt* spoke of the “oriental fantasies” and “fanatical wrath” of the Hohenemser Jews. Only it was to no avail. For the next ten years after incorporation Jews were part of the community representation, and with four to five members even constituted almost half of the municipal council (even if a Jewish Hohenemser never became mayor of entire Hohenemser). They were constantly embroiled in fights with part of the Christian council members, whenever it was about the division of community property that had become necessary because of the consolidation, about surpluses from charity funds, or any other rights or monetary issues..

In 1887 the highly regarded physician Simon Steinach resigned from the municipal council for health reasons. Upon termination of the legislative period no further Jewish Hohenemser stood for election: in February 1888, only Christian delegates were candidates for election to the Hohenemser municipal council. The reason for this may have lain in one of the first decidedly anti-Semitic attacks on the Hohenemser Jews: a month before, on the morning of 15 January, posters could be read on several houses, which had been affixed during the night: “Death to the Jews” was their message.

A drawn-out quarrel had also broken out relating to the highly prestigious school: because of its high standard, it was attended not only by Jewish, but also at times by quite a few Christian children. The school employed Jewish and Christian teachers and paid them well, made high-quality teaching material available, and educated the children in an interdenominational and cosmopolitan way, including subjects as foreign languages and book keep-

ing. In 1851 this was the first Hohenems school to be upgraded to a "Higher Civic School".

[Pupils at the Jewish school (including Louis Bollag, Erna Flora Bollag, Harry Weil, Jenny Landauer, Hans Elkan and Ivan Landauer), c. 1910; Horst Jäger, Hohenems]



From 1861 children from Catholic or Protestant families were also accepted. That was a thorn in the flesh of both the clergy of Hohenems and the Catholic conservatives, who proceeded to oppose the move using all means of publicity. The *Landbote für Vorarlberg* fulminated against the "schoolmaster from Judah", as did the *Volksblatt*, which as late as March 1896 wrote: "Whereas throughout almost the entire world the population is trying to break free of the bonds of Jewish servitude, here we experience the repulsive spectacle of Catholic parents sending their children to the Israelite school." That same year attendance of the last ten Catholic children became a thing of the past when the Catholic conservative majority in the Vorarlberg provincial diet decided on a new school inspection law that prohibited Catholic children from attending the Jewish school.

A few Protestant parents, often committed to liberalism, hesitated for a little longer and stayed with the interdenominational "Jewish civic school". The end for the school came soon afterwards, in 1913, following the rapid decline in the number of Jewish children because of demographic developments and emigration.

**The Rise of the Rosenthal Firm.** With the loss of the Upper Italian provinces as a result of the military defeats of the Austrian armies in 1859 and 1866, the Vorarlberg textile industry had also lost one of its main marketing areas. The companies looked for new markets, but were also contending with a dramatic rise in the price of cotton as a result of the American Civil War. Competitive pressure in the textile industry was also heightened by the fact that new machines were replacing hand printing.

[Rosenthal factory in Hohenems-Schwefel, c. 1900; JMH]

The Rosenthal firm in Hohenems, whose production concentrated on cotton prints, had expanded its business in the preceding years and installed a weaving mill with 121 looms. As early as 1845 the Rosenthal brothers had given up their Dornbirn spinning mill and moved almost all of their production to Hohenems. Tulle embroidery was taken up instead, which sold well in Lombardy and Venice. The Rosenthals' firm prospered; as well as a branch in Vienna they now set one up in Verona too. The Vienna subsidiary was mainly concerned with the lucrative export of Rosenthal goods to the crown lands of the monarchy, Russia, and the Balkan states.





[Left: Rosenthal Bros. cotton printing plant, c. 1900; JMH / Below: Printed cotton cloth with instructions on how to use a new Austrian repeating rifle, Rosenthal Bros. 1888; JMH]

The firm's founders Philipp and Josef died in 1859 and 1862, and their wives Regina, née Bernheimer, and Clara, née Löwenberg, followed soon after. Of the twenty-five children born from these two marriages, eighteen survived infancy. Their marriages were a strategic component of the family business. Karoline had married Carl Brunner in Trieste, a marriage that promoted the firm's economic prosperity as did the marriage of Philipp's daughter Sophie to David Bles in Manchester. Her sister Jeanette was married to Abraham Polak in Rotterdam, thereby improving trade links with the center of European transportation business. The children were also related to one another directly or through marriage.

From the multitude of heirs, three to five male family members functioned as partners in the business, who generally also presided over individual business branches. And the firm continued to expand: in 1883 a bleaching plant was opened in Hohenems and a factory in Rankweil. They withstood the American cotton crisis as well as the reorganization of Austrian economic policy after the compromise with Hungary. Thanks to early investment they also handled a change in fashion, which confronted the Vorarlberg textile companies with completely new challenges: the fashion industry dispensed with popular cotton prints and made embroidered materials the central focus of their designs. From the mid-1880s demand for printed headscarves decreased and the Vorarlberg businesses had to adapt.

Anton Rosenthal, who was in charge of the original Hohenems head office, had married his cousin Charlotte, and in 1864 they moved into a new, elegant mansion in town. It was designed by the Swiss architect Wilhelm Kubly who at the same time was also responsible for the conversion of the synagogue. A few years earlier Kubly had already built a similar, even larger mansion in Hard for the most important Vorarlberg textile industrialist Jenny. Apparently, this seemed to be a good recommendation to the Rosenthals. The late classicist style was intended to represent sophisticated middle-class status—and their two children, Clara and Rudolph, represented the future.

In 1891 Clara was to marry Josef Heimann, a Jewish merchant from Antwerp, an alliance obviously arranged not without ulterior strategic motives. He was obviously seen as a promising link to new markets at a time when things were becoming economically more difficult. The wedding was celebrated with great pomp at the Bayrischer Hof Hotel in Lindau, at that time the most prestigious establishment on the east shore of Lake Constance. To this day the thick album of telegrams that was put together after the marriage and the congratulations contained in it, tell of a web of contacts and of a family network that by then extended from New York to Vienna, from Rome to Hamburg, from Brussels to Trieste—and of the optimism of an outstandingly successful generation.





[Left: Album with congratulations on the occasion of the marriage of Clara Rosenthal and Josef Heimann, 1891; Dolores Purtscher, Hohenems / Right: Silk cushion commemorating the marriage of Clara Rosenthal and Josef Heimann, 1891; JMH]



Anton's younger brother, Iwan Rosenthal, was responsible for running the Liechtenstein "Firma Iwan Rosenthal", which through acquisitions in recent years had become an independent business. He married Franziska Brettauer in 1874 following a long, intense correspondence with her. Their splendid mansion at the northern edge of Hohenems, in the middle of a large garden, with its leather wall coverings and a plethora of dark carvings and turned woodwork, designed by the architects Chiodera and Tschudy, replaced two older buildings. But Iwan and Franziska had no children.

The Rosenthals kept expanding while the Jewish community constantly lost members. Hohenems withstood the first economic crises certainly not least thanks to the Rosenthal company. From 1872, after the construction of the "k. k. priv. Vorarlberger Bahn" (Vorarlberg railway), the town finally had a station and a connection to the railway network. On 4 February 1881, by decision of the municipal council, the Franz Martin Hämmerle company in Dornbirn was granted permission to put up the monarchy's first telephone line, and thus, letters and telegrams gave way to the faster medium. Transportation and modern communications had become the prerequisites of economic success.

Factory owners and rich businessmen dominated political life in the communities. Many were the main employers in their communities and hence the largest tax payers. Also the Rosenthal firm in Hohenems often became the target for the accusation that it exploited its workers and provided unreasonable working conditions. The *Vorarlberger Wacht* and other Social Democratic papers criticized the poor working conditions, while the Christian Social *Vorarlberger Volksblatt* denounced the Jewish owners.

Factory owners everywhere tried to raise their standing by providing visible facilities for their workers and through philanthropic commitment. The Rosenthals too built a residential estate and a pool for their workers and set up a library. They also proved to be tireless patrons of cultural life in the province, well beyond Hohenems.

Thanks to two major donations in the 1860s, it was possible to convert Maier Burgauer's house into a poorhouse: in their will Josef and Clara Rosenthal had put a lot of money into a foundation named after them, which gave the poorhouse its new name. On 1 January 1872 the official opening took place of the "Israelite charitable institution for the poor donated by the late Mr. and Mrs. Josef and Clara Rosenthal". Also around the turn of the century when the Hohenems community began to disperse and more and more of its members were leaving the town, the Rosenthals again gave a donation towards the building of the hospital, sat on committees and helped make collections, supported the town band, or, when necessary, gave large sums for disaster relief. Indeed, they themselves paid for social facilities that were not



even accessible to Jews, like the province's deaf and dumb institute in Hall, for which they had donated substantial sums as early as 1829. When they were asked to contribute again in 1858, the Jewish community, by then politically independent, now made its support conditional on Jewish children too being allowed to attend the institution, only promptly to have it pointed out to them that "the nature of the foundation is Catholic".

[Jewish poorhouse, c. 1900. Photograph by Arnold Sueti; Erwin and Uri Taenzer collection, USA]

**Christians and Jews: Happy Prospects?** The land of unlimited opportunities promised to live up to its name, and thousands upon thousands of Europeans followed its call: unlimited land, an economy and society growing at a headlong pace, social advancement and personal fulfillment. People left their own social context to be free of it and entered a country where they could become rich, but also easily go to the wall. Like in Southern Germany, a great wave of emigration had already started in Vorarlberg around 1850 and continued in the following years. Around 300 emigrants from the province left Europe for America each year.

A second great wave of emigration was triggered by the embroidery crisis from about 1885. Again people left their native land to "make something of themselves" overseas or to make their way somehow or other. Nanette Guggenheim too, who grew up in Emdingen in Switzerland, had quite different plans from becoming a landlady in Hohenems.

After this Swiss Jewish girl from a poor home had attained her majority, she decided without hesitation to emigrate to America. She had a great-uncle in Philadelphia who opened his house to her. Decades later she wrote in her memoirs: "Then I told my mother, learned how to cook in Constance with Johann Levy in the Deutsches Haus, and got ready for the journey. I shall never forget how frightened my mother was when I told her of my decision. I had saved up a tidy little amount in Constance for the journey. Uncle Salomon bought me the ticket. Who can describe the pain when I now bade my home farewell, when my mother prayed and laid her hands on her child's head."

She embarked on the exciting journey, marveled at the Statue of Liberty in New York and at the wealth of her great-uncle in Philadelphia. Her memoirs, which she wrote down for her children Jenny and Ivan in 1933, describe her further adventures in the USA. But Nanette soon returned to Switzerland because of her mother's health, though there was nothing she longed for more than to go back to America. She describes quite laconically how everything suddenly turned out differently: "Another year went by like this. In me there was always a slumbering desire to leave my old home country again, and my friends wrote asking when I was coming back. But things were destined to turn out differently. I was never to see America again! By chance I got to know Josef Landauer from Hohenems in spring '96. He had his old mother living at home, and he asked me to marry him. I was not keen at all, I wanted to go back to America—but my mother thought that if she was not near me and my brothers got

married, I would be completely abandoned and alone, and they did not want to let me travel anymore; so I followed my mother's advice, as so many Jewish daughters do, and in spring 1896 I got engaged." Nanette Landauer's happy prospect in Hohenems: a house, admittedly encumbered by debts, but nonetheless with "no electric light, no water, no drains". On the other hand, the "Frohe Aussicht" (Happy Prospect) finally had a landlady again.

[Above: Nanette and Josef Landauer, c. 1900. Photograph by Alb. Winsauer; JMH / Below: The „Zur Frohen Aussicht“ (Happy Prospect) inn, 1910; JMH]



The inn had developed into the meeting point for Christians and Jews in Hohenems and was well known beyond the boundaries of the municipality. Like most Jews in Hohenems, they worked on the Sabbath and were no longer particularly strict about kosher food. Many Jews worked on Sundays too, which they were not forbidden to do by their religion, and it quite often upset their Christian competitors. If there was such a thing as a joint Jewish-Christian Hohenems, then it certainly happened at the "Frohe Aussicht". But how deceptive was this idyll even then, at the turn of the century?

We do not know how the budding anti-Semitism was discussed in the Rosenthals' drawing-rooms. The *Volksblatt*—as Vorarlberg's central organ of anti-Semitism—mentioned only the Jewish peddlers against whom it tirelessly inveighed by name. When it fulminated about conditions in the capitalist factories, though referring only to Protestant or Jewish firms, it very rarely named old-established owners. Perhaps it was, after all, their philanthropic activities, their commitment to the town that kept anti-Semites relatively quiet here? Franziska Rosenthal organized bazaars and ladies' circles at which money was collected for the construction of the Hohenems hospital. She was also involved in organizing the celebration of Moritz Federmann's 40<sup>th</sup> professional jubilee. They donated to clubs and to people in need, for instance, when the Rhine flood of 1890 seriously damaged Hohenems.

Indeed, philanthropy had restrained Christian Social anti-Semitism on occasion. After all, the Catholic conservatives too wanted to benefit from the flow of money from Jewish donations to interdenominational or Christian organizations. For example, when the Hohenems catechist spoke disparagingly about the Jews at a meeting in 1897, the flow of donations to the town band from Hohenems Jews, presumably from the Rosenthals, dried up. The Hohenems correspondent of the *Volksblatt* had very little understanding for this move, wrote about "Jewish vengeance", and recommended the brochure: "Why are you anti-Semitic?"





How much of this atmosphere were the ever fewer Jews remaining in Hohenems willing to apprehend? The image of peaceful coexistence, indeed, the dream of symbiosis, had long been contradicted by reality. Yet, in later recollections of this time, such experiences are largely ignored. The Jewish community was living from its heritage, a great history, which soon found its historian in Aron Tänzer.

**Legacies and Clashes.** In 1890 Salomon Sulzer died and left an important legacy behind. The cantor's office had changed during his lifetime, just as the liturgy of the synagogue service had. He had endowed the office with the dignity of artistic existence, surrounded it with the aura of genius, and at the same time demanded respect and his rights as a citizen. His two-volume collection of liturgical songs, *Shir Zion*, was used in many synagogues throughout the world, as his pupils had taken Sulzer's music everywhere with them and disseminated it. There was now a cantors' association with its own *Österreichisch-ungarische Cantoren-Zeitung*. In almost every issue tribute was paid to "Papa Sulzer", as the newspaper once called him. An era also came to an end with the passing of Sulzer for with the mass emigration of Jews from Eastern Europe to America and elsewhere, the improvised, melodramatic singing of the traditional cantors, the chazanim, once again became widespread in the Jewish world. In the face of their opposition, Sulzer's musical reforms could not be implemented in eastern Europe. He was interred in a grave of honor by the Jewish Community Vienna at the Central Cemetery in Vienna, even if he himself had wished to "let my mortal remains rest and repose in my native soil with my forefathers!! There at the top in the middle of the wall, there would be a suitable spot with a pretty view, a place of pilgrimage for my descendants, and perhaps for many admirers of the one-time bard of Jehovah..."

Just ten years after his death the Jewish Museum Association in Vienna called for "Sulzer relics" to be handed in for a commemorative exhibition. [[Bust of Salomon Sulzer, c. 1880; Israelitische Kultusgemeinde, Wien](#)]

The few Jews left in Hohenems also preserved Sulzer's legacy. Aron Tänzer wrote: "Sulzer's bust adorns the choir stairs in the Hohenems synagogue, Sulzer's songs resound there accompanied by the harmonium he donated, Sulzer's spirit prevails in the orderly, uplifting service, and Sulzer's blessed memory lives in all hearts." And a large bronze plaque on a little house near the synagogue proclaimed both solemnly and tersely: "Sulzer's birthplace".

Around 1890 there were still some 100 Jews living in Hohenems. Most of them interpreted the religious laws extremely liberally, probably for the most part no longer ate kosher food, and no longer strictly observed the Sabbath either. Since 1848 there had been several rabbis in the town who generally led the modern community with circumspection and care. Daniel Ehrmann from Mattersdorf in Burgenland had been appointed on the recommendation of Abraham Kohn, with no advertisement of the vacancy. However, he left the market town after just two years and later became the editor of the liberal Jewish journal *Abendland*. The post was taken over by his brother-in-law Simon Popper, who devoted his almost twenty-year tenure—in the words of Aron Tänzer—to "the sound development of the already existing". As the number of members had declined further after him and only the Sabbath service was now held in the synagogue, the community then looked for someone who could assume



the role of both rabbi and cantor and found such a person initially in young Daniel Einstein from Bavaria, but in 1876 he too gave up the post after just four years.

[Above: Commemorative plaque for Salomon Sulzer from the house where he was born; Rossmannith family, Hohenems / Below: Postcard „Sulzer’s Birthplace“; Jüdisches Museum Wien]

The Jewish community in Hohenems was losing its members and its importance. It would also lose its status as a rabbinate before its 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary. At the same time in the last years before the turn of the century there were interesting personalities in Hohenems, such as, for instance, Adolf Guttmann, the rabbi who took up office in Hohenems after Einstein. He had studied at various universities, finally in Vienna, where he had practiced with Adolph Jellinek to be a rabbi. From 1877 to 1883 he was rabbi in Hohenems and instituted courageous reforms. During his term the women, who up until then had attended service on the women’s gallery of the synagogue, were allowed to sit in the main room, now separated from the men only by the central aisle. The order of prayer was simplified through considerable cuts.

After brief tenures by Samuel Grün, Aron Gordon (the community had considerable differences with him), and Heinrich Berger, Aron Tänzer finally became rabbi in Hohenems. With him the community acquired a modern preacher, a liberal and pugnacious contemporary, and lastly its own chronicler, who later dedicated his *Geschichte der Juden in Hohenems* to his own community “with love”.

With the appointment of Aron Tänzer as rabbi in Hohenems the little community again gained importance. But after arriving in the community in 1896 with his wife Leonore Rosa Handler, he too had to witness its declining numbers: even if it was still the seat of the rabbinate controlling Tyrol and Vorarlberg, thus providing Tänzer with a large sphere of influence. That was not to remain undisputed for long. In the 1880s an initially still small immigrant community had formed in Innsbruck. The congregation members came mainly from Vienna, Bohemia, and Galicia and were able to establish themselves in the up-and-coming provincial capital mostly as traders and merchants. But the crucial thing was: the Innsbruck community was expanding.



Aron Tänzer, who had been born in Bratislava, then Hungary, in 1871, came from an old family of rabbis and was considered a child prodigy. Throughout his lifetime he was attracted to the theater as an actor, but also as a dramatist: *Borgen macht Sorgen* was the title of his first play, published in Berlin in 1894. However, he studied at the yeshiva in Pressburg (now Bratislava) and at Berlin University, where he was influenced primarily by his teachers Moritz Lazarus, Wilhelm Dilthey, and the Orientalist Hermann Strack. A year after completing his studies and being awarded his rabbi's diploma in Obornik, in what was then the Prussian province of Posen (now Poznań), he acquired Austrian citizenship, married, and moved to Hohenems.

[Aron Tänzer, 1896; JMH]

Like the Vorarlberg economy as a whole, the market town of Hohenems was also flourishing economically at this time, which caused many Trento artisans and farmers to leave their province and look for work there, mostly in the textile sector. The Rosenthal firm employed around 770 workers in their plants. The small workers' estate built for them was soon popularly referred to as "Polenta Lane", just as it would become "Turks' Avenue" in the 1970s. And the widespread use of home workers in the textile sector was further expanded by the founding of the Raiffeisen Savings Bank in 1890: Raiffeisen gave many people the necessary credit to enable them to buy an embroidery machine, resulting in the creation of many jobs.



In the years around the turn of the century electricity came to Hohenems, and a high-pressure water pipeline, the hospital, and the gymnasium were built. The public building works created jobs and connected Hohenems to the modern age. But only a small number of members of the Jewish community, which had been so heavily involved in the building of the hospital, were able to be treated there. The synagogue had become too big, the clubs were decimated. The Hohenems Jewish community had to contend with emigration, not immigration.

[Worker's housing provided by the Rosenthal Bros. Company, c. 1900; JMH]

The beginning mass immigration from Eastern Europe to many European communities, brought Joel Nagelberg, his wife, and daughter, Frieda, to Hohenems. Nagelberg was a peddler, a profession that had by then become less common, but which still supplied sections of the rural population with goods of all kinds. The rounds had become smaller and perhaps Joel Nagelberg spent more time with his wife and daughter than just on the Sabbath. The hatred, which newspapers directed particularly at Jewish peddlers, remained undiminished: "The Hohenemser should just keep those hawkers up there, we want to celebrate Sunday. If that is of no avail, there are perhaps other means," the *Vorarlberger Volksblatt* wrote in 1898.

The Nagelbergs were Orthodox Jews, which quickly made them outsiders in the worldly and pragmatically minded Jewish community. In connection with a conflict in September 1903 Rabbi Tänzer wrote to the district court in Dornbirn regarding Joel Nagelberg's religious fundamentalism: "Now one day a peddler arrived in the province, from Galicia, from an altogether different, fanatical world in which education and progress are still contested." A conflict between Tänzer and Nagelberg had already been smoldering since 1901. When the position of prayer leader and cantor at the synagogue had become vacant, Joel Nagelberg had inquired about it, but Tänzer would not even accept him as a candidate because of his "previous moral

life". Shortly after the grocer and toy merchant Jakob Weil had been given the position, several anonymous postcards and letters were received by the Jewish Community in which the new cantor and the rabbi of the synagogue were maligned as unqualified and heretical. Moreover, a weighty accusation denounced the Hohenems Jews with eating pork. In October 1902 an



article appeared in the *Vorarlberger Volksblatt*, purportedly supported by a group of Hohenems Jews, but naming only Nagelberg: in it Nagelberg repeated his complaints about the unsuitable people employed by the community.

[Below: Jakob and Rachel Weil, c. 1920; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz]

During the following Feast of Booths, the quarrel between the parties to the conflict escalated: as Joel Nagelberg had seriously offended Anton Rosenthal and Michael Menz in the synagogue, he was passed over at the ritual practices of the Succoth service, and from then on he no longer took part in the Hohenems services. However, he continued to voice his criticism in noisy scenes in and in front of the synagogue and with imprecations on the open street and in inns. He threatened Tänzer with slaps in the face and publicly declared that the rabbi should be whipped. Thereupon Tänzer lodged a charge against Nagelberg on account of insulting a recognized religious community. Nagelberg tried to obtain opposing expert religious opinions supporting his behavior, but in February 1904 he nonetheless had to go to prison for two weeks.

Because of this sentence, Joel Nagelberg's peddling license was not renewed, which deprived him of his livelihood. His wife Scheindel then ran a general store in Hohenems for a time. In 1906 Joel again described himself as a peddler: presumably the ban on him had meanwhile been lifted.



**A Question of Identity: Judaism c. 1900.** The Jews of Hohenems were part of Hohenems society—or at least were involved. They were liberal—yet loyal to the monarchy. They were accustomed to seeing the good and ignoring anything else.

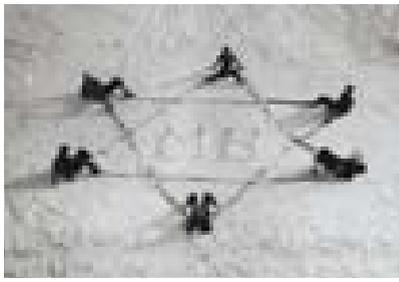
In 1898 the Empress, Sisi, who had traveled to Lake Geneva under the pseudonym “Countess of Hohenems”, was murdered by an anarchist. In the Hohenems synagogue a service of mourning was held in September—and in December a service of celebration for the golden jubilee of the reign of Emperor Franz-Joseph, who would go on to complete 66 years as emperor. Franz-Joseph had grown old and had lost his son Rudolf, the heir to the throne, through a sensational suicide in Mayerling—and now his wife, in Geneva. Once, in 1881, he had even been in Hohenems for a stay set to last thirteen minutes, had inspected lines of schoolchildren, and been assured of the loyalty of both his Christian as well as his Jewish Hohenems subjects. Sophie Rosenthal (who would later go to Vienna at times and in old age, as Sophie Steingraber-Hauser, would be compulsorily resettled there again) had handed the emperor a bunch of flowers.

But this idyll had long been deceptive. Not only trust in the monarchy, but also in the progress of middle-class society had become fragile under the combined pressure of economic crises, the developing workers’ movement, and the growing conflicts between nationalities. And these conflicts found obvious expression in the west of the empire too. Not only Polish-Jewish peddlers like Joel Nagelberg became the target of Christian Social agitation in Vorarlberg. Samuel Spindler, a journeyman shoemaker from Galicia who had immigrated to Bregenz via Switzerland in 1907, converted to the Protestant faith in 1912 and became involved in the union, was soon to come into the firing-line of anti-Semitic outbreaks of hatred.

The capital city and imperial residence of Vienna in particular experienced a tremendous influx from the eastern parts of the monarchy. At first mainly Jews from Bohemia and Hungary went to Vienna. Independent communities also came into being in Graz, Linz, Innsbruck, and a number of other towns. The textile trade in particular made social ascent possible, but increasingly academic careers did too. To a certain extent the first-generation Jewish immigrants had been able to integrate really quickly—the fact that the Bohemian, Moravian, and Hungarian immigrants had been of middle-class origin was crucial in this.

After the first waves of immigration, towards the end of the century mass immigration from Galicia got under way. The new wave of Jewish immigration consisted predominantly of poor people, and the socially advanced Viennese Jews wanted to have nothing to do with them. They moved into Leopoldstadt and Brigittenau and lived there, often in great poverty and with no prospects. “Matzo Island”, as the two Viennese districts were soon nicknamed, was hopelessly overcrowded with Jewish refugees, workers, small-scale dealers, beggars, and impractical dreamers, wanted by no one in Vienna. The hygienic conditions were appalling as were the infant mortality rate and the spread of epidemic diseases. Even if they had known what would await them in the capital, Jews from the easternmost edge of the monarchy would certainly have left their homes for they were fleeing from bitter poverty and anti-Semitic pogroms. In any case, Vienna offered a chance of escape from this situation.

Yet, this was also the Vienna of Mayor Lueger and the Vienna of which Adolf Hitler later wrote that it had turned him into a true anti-Semite. The Viennese Jews found themselves



faced with an increasingly hostile environment. The Christian Social Party and the German Nationalists vied with one another in hostility towards Jews, the so-called “Jewish question” became an everyday issue, to which the most unfathomable and banal answers were given. Being a Jew had turned into a new kind of challenge. And even the Jews were not free of the nationalistic spirit of the time. Thus, Jews were members of German Nationalist associations (as long as those associations did not expel them) or in patriotic orga-

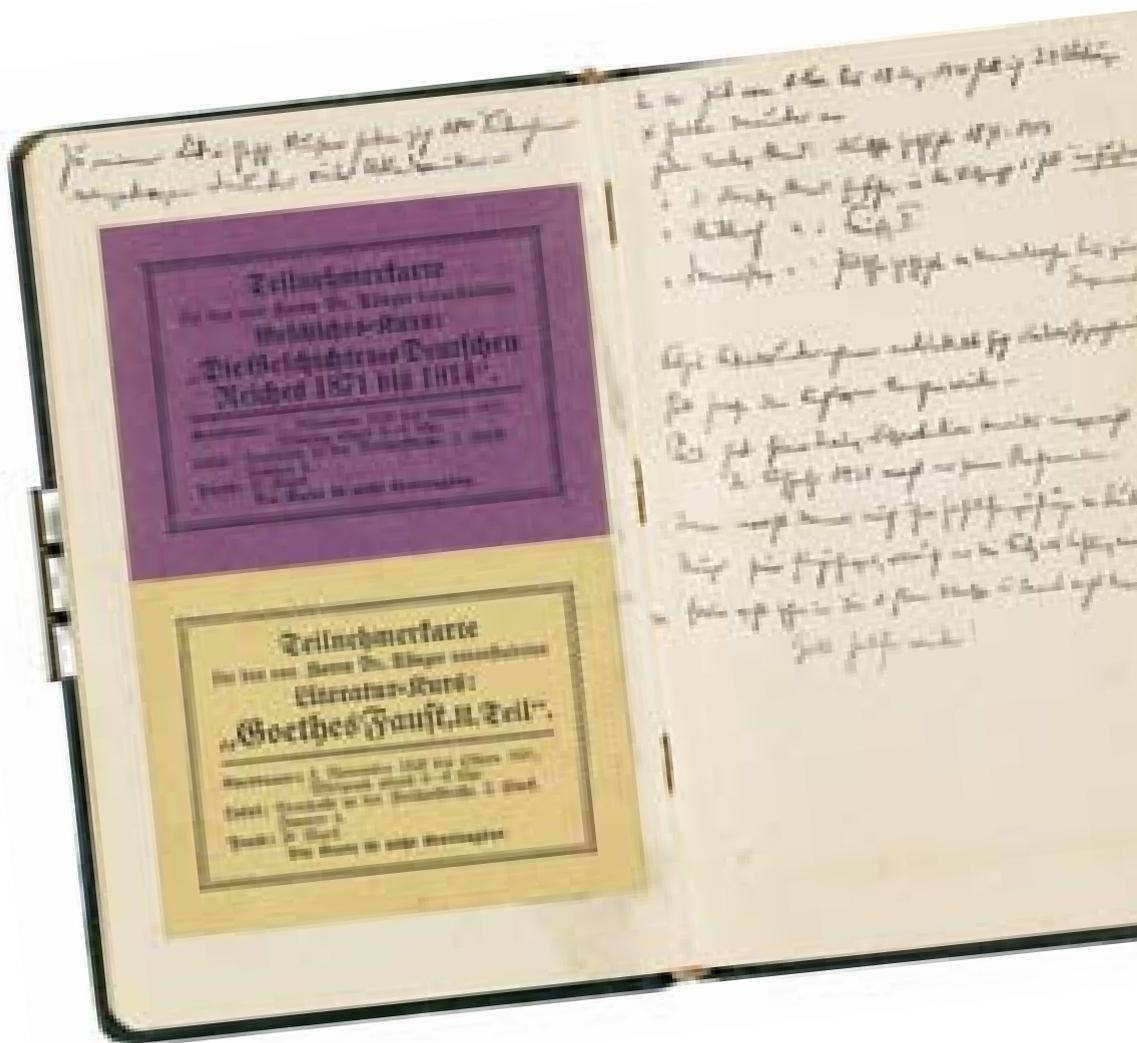
nizations. They were active in the workers’ movement as well as among the anarchists and Communists—but a Jewish nationalism without a state also came into being that propagated a Jewish national identity and culture in the diaspora. Even a Jewish National Party, in which also Zionist influences became effective, was formed to prevent assimilation. In 1882 a Jewish National students’ society, Kadimah, had been founded. Jewish liberals like Lucian Brunner, who was successful both in business and socially as a banker operating between St. Gallen, Hohenems, and Trieste, before publicly emerging as a politician in Vienna against Lueger and growing anti-Semitism, were becoming isolated in the political landscape. When he died, he bequeathed, among other things, a legacy to the market town of Hohenems with which a “secular school” was to be founded. The municipal council utterly refused this endowment in 1920.

Not in Hohenems, but in Vienna and all other urban communities, thousands converted or rejected religion as they no longer felt they belonged to Judaism or saw it as an obstacle on their path in life. But many of them now came to realize that for numerous contemporaries, influenced by racism, even a converted Jew still remained a Jew.

The Viennese columnist Theodor Herzl had published the pamphlet *“Der Judenstaat”* (The Jewish State) in 1895, and through it he was able to raise spiritual trends like the religious “longing for Zion” and the atmosphere of departure prevailing among a section of European Jews onto a political level. In subsequent years he devoted himself tirelessly to campaigning for the Jews to have their own state in Palestine. At that time few western European Jews followed him, regarding his plan as a pipe dream: the middle-class journalist was smiled at as the “Moses from Pelikangasse”. Among the broader Jewish population of Eastern Europe, on the other hand, his idea fell on fertile ground. In St. Gallen, for example, where many Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe were now living, founding their own Orthodox community in 1917, especially the younger immigrants, looked at with suspicion by Christian as well as established Jewish citizens, turned to Zionist organizations.

[Skiers from the Maccabi Hazair Zionist youth organization in Tyrol, c. 1931; Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Innsbruck]

In Hohenems, by way of contrast, obviously nobody was thinking about the ancient “Promised Land” as a destination for emigration: Trieste and St. Gallen were closer. In Merano too the Jewish community was constantly growing, and Aron Tänzer considered moving his office to Merano, where he had consecrated the newly built synagogue in 1901 as the rabbi in charge. Rabbi Tänzer was also a fierce opponent of Zionism and as early as 1901 spoke out against the “artificial generation of a stillborn national sentiment”.



As an ardent educator of the people, Tänzer did not speak only in his community, but gave public lectures on the themes of his day, ethics and literature, Nietzsche and shorthand, Goethe, Schiller and German history. And he followed his teacher Moritz Lazarus in the studies of so called “people’s psychology”, a discipline that soon would fall into the gravity of racism. [Aron Tänzer's diary 1911-1921; Erwin and Uri Taenzer collection, USA]

When he gave a lecture on life and science in 1903 to the liberal “Association of Foremen and Industrial Officials” in the “Alte Post” inn in Hohenems and expounded Darwin’s theory of evolution, Joel Nagelberg once again saw red. In a furious postcard to the community committee he accused the “godless” rabbi of asserting that human beings were descended from

Freunde aufrichtig erwünschten rühmlichen Freund  
mit Herzlichen Glückwünschen Anton Rosenthal in Hohenems  
mit dem Rückblicke in den letzten Jahre mit  
Vorfriedung Meran, den 19. Sept. 1895 Dr. Josef W. J.

Die  
Geschichte der Juden in Tirol und Vorarlberg.

Teil 1 und 2:

# Die Geschichte der Juden in Hohenems

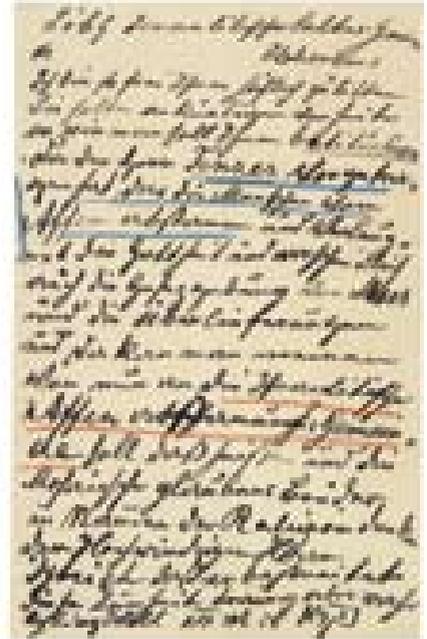
und im übrigen Vorarlberg.

Von  
Dr. phil. A. TÄNZER  
Koblenz.

apes and asked polemically whether they would now be called Israelite ape descent community. [Right: Postcard from Joel Nagelberg, 31 August 1903; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz]

Tänzer tackled historical subjects just as much as themes from the present, he researched and published, and he organized the archives. He was fascinated by the history of Judaism in general—and the history of the Jews of Hohenems in particular. History and progress seemed to him to be a law of nature: “The train of development of humankind is omnipotent, no power whatever it may be called can any longer stop it permanently. And its compelling force will one day cause even the last shadows to disappear from the history of the Jews.”

Already in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century history had become established alongside religion and philosophy as a meaningful major value in Jewish society. The “Wissenschaft des Judentums” (science of Judaism) was devoted to exploring Jewish history, together with religion and the history of Jewish thought, and in doing so interpreted them as historically changeable and dependent on the circumstances. Thus, history had produced the argument for modern reforms: what could be changed once, would continue to remain alterable. In the course of the century the first Jewish historical associations were founded and important publications appeared. In 1895 the world’s first Jewish museum had been founded in Vienna, and it embarked on a comprehensive collecting activity.



Aron Tänzer’s passion for history and for the ethical challenges of his day was expressed in publications on the widest variety of historical themes, from the history of book printing in Vorarlberg to the Jews of Württemberg, from the history of the Karlskirche in Hohenems to the problem of mixed marriage. Mayor Reis had entrusted him with setting up the Hohenems municipal archive. And Aron Tänzer proved to be a pedantic archivist who devised a painstaking system for use of the archive.

His groundbreaking *Geschichte der Juden in Hohenems und im übrigen Vorarlberg* was published in Merano in 1905, 800 pages long. This book is still an invaluable source today even if Aron Tänzer, following his liberal hopes, wrote it primarily as a success story of Jewish assimilation into the majority society—even where we can sense his disappointment at how little that assimilation had been appreciated by society. [Aron Tänzer: *Die Geschichte der Juden in Hohenems und im übrigen Vorarlberg* (The History of the Jews in Hohenems and elsewhere in Vorarlberg), with a handwritten dedication to his fatherly friend Anton Rosenthal, Merano 1905; JMH]

For Tänzer history and progress remained the crucial key to the development of what Judaism essentially meant to him: a universal system of ethics. And for him that required first of all self-knowledge and self-education.

Shortly before New Year's Eve 1904, "on a silent night" (by which he presumably meant Christmas Eve), Rabbi Tänzer began to write an autobiography, a notebook with the strange title: "I as the object. Observed by myself". He wanted to "hold up an impartial mirror" to himself, he wrote, and "present to myself all the mistakes I have made in life so far and in gaining knowledge of them, in gaining knowledge of my own guilt, find peace. And I am in need of it."

His good friend, Mayor Reis, had died that year. In Hohenems Reis's adherence to the social and political ideals of liberalism had doubtless been able to delay some of the intellectual and political developments that in Vorarlberg and elsewhere had long since turned liberals into German Nationalists and anti-Semites. Tänzer had, of course, participated in the memorial service for August Reis and had given a lecture there. This was apparently not to everyone's liking for on a newspaper cutting from the *Vorarlberger Landeszeitung* preserved in the Feldkirch Diocesan Archive there is a surviving handwritten note in an unknown hand, presumably that of a Hohenems clergyman, saying: "A rabbi among the people, sad but true". The following year Aron Tänzer left Hohenems.

**From the Turn of the Century to World War I.** In the Austrian crown territories animosity between the various nationalities had already increased enormously in the final decades before the turn of the century. After the compromise with Hungary, the Czechs had demanded statehood for the territories under the Bohemian crown, and the Poles of Galicia were soon represented in the government by their own ministry. The Balkan territories too gradually demanded severance from the empire, as did the Serbs for those in the southern Slav regions. The position in the Balkans came to a head after the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria in 1908 and continued to simmer after the Balkan Wars, while tensions with Italy were also growing. Serious differences between the European powers led to fragile political alliances and a wild arms race: a war was on the horizon. When Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the Austrian throne, was assassinated in Sarajevo on 28.6.1914 by Serb-Bosnian nationalists, Austria issued an ultimatum that was not observed. "War, there was to be war with Serbia, the band processed through the town. Silly women and children ran after them, down with Serbia, they shouted, that was the start. How many troubles and worries assailed us," Nanette Landauer, the landlady of the "Frohe Aussicht", wrote in her memoirs.

The governments sent the men from their countries into a terrible war in which millions of them died on the battlefields. Millions of women, men, and children with no shelter, no food, and no heating struggled for survival. Many men from Hohenems were taken to the battlefields of the World War: like other soldiers, they too began the war full of patriotic optimism, many of them as voluntary recruits. Many more were conscripted as war seemed never-ending.

Harry Weil, the son of the old toy vendor and synagogue cantor Jakob Weil and his wife Rahel, who lived in a flat in the rabbi's house, enlisted in a battalion of the Tyrolean Kaiserjäger



(Imperial Riflemen) and fought in the Dolomites. Josef Landauer returned from the war sick and careworn in 1915, and died with his next marching orders in his pocket. Ivan Landauer too came home from Zurich to carry out his war service and, as his mother Nanette remembered, “so as not to be regarded as a coward in his native community”. His sister Jenny enthusiastically sang “hier san’s die Kaiserjäger vom 3. Regiment” (here are the imperial riflemen, from the 3. regiment).

[The „Zur Frohen Aussicht“ (Happy Prospect) inn. In the back Jenny Landauer, 3 November 1915; Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau]

And Aron Tänzer, who had moved away from Hohenems almost ten years before, was gripped by patriotic fervor and voluntarily went to Russia as a Württemberg medical orderly and field rabbi. Things had not worked out as he had planned: the move to Merano in 1905 had failed because of resistance from the Austrian authorities, but also from the communities in Innsbruck and Hohenems. He had eventually been able to take over the office of rabbi in Göppingen near Stuttgart when it became vacant in 1907, and he was to die there in 1937, bereft of his illusions. In his last will he forbade any prayer in German at his grave.



Only in 1906, almost a year after Tänzer had left Hohenems, did the Jewish community decide on a successor. With Josef Link, a man joined the community who was as young as Tänzer had been in his time, again coming from an Orthodox community in Hungary. Like Tänzer, Link had studied in Berlin and Berne. When he moved with his wife to Hohenems, only about 70 Jews were still living there. Since with the decrease of members the community's financial position had also deteriorated, they had initially even asked the long-serving teacher Moritz Federmann whether he could take over the position of rabbi.

As had been the case even before the turn of the century, the Hohenems community was primarily concerned with the question of the seat of the rabbinate, which Innsbruck now laid claim to. In Merano, where now about a thousand Jews were living, the spirit of independence had also stirred. The Merano Jews finally agreed to Innsbruck breaking away from the union, provided they themselves were not affected. In April 1913 Hohenems abandoned its resistance and the ministry approved the setting up of an independent religious community for North Tyrol. But both communities were to share Josef Link as rabbi. The Hohenems community ceased to be the seat of the rabbinate for Link moved to Innsbruck with his family in 1914. There were soon open differences with Link because the rabbi sided with Innsbruck on the difficult legal and financial issues involved in separating the community. In 1916 the Hohenemser wrote in a report to the governor's office that "all confidence in Link as rabbi" had gone.

A final attempt by the Hohenemser to again establish a rabbi of their own during the war years failed. Ignatz Hauser, who like Tänzer was from Pressburg, came to Hohenems in 1914. But he even failed to obtain citizenship although the widowed Sophie Steingraber, née Rosenthal, married him in 1915. And that was not the only problem: Hauser had only attended a yeshiva, but the authorities required completed studies at university level. Thus, the Hauser episode ended in 1917 and after that there was no further rabbi in Hohenems. When in 1918 Ivan Rosenthal and Theodor Elkan had the brass roof of the synagogue's clock tower removed to donate it to the Austrian war effort, all they had left was a wistful look back in a final document, which because of the general paper shortage they drew up on the back of a sheet of paper from Elkan's insurance business.

*"Memorandum*

*The cruel war that has been raging in Europe since 1914 causes us to make the copper on the synagogue tower available to the Fatherland, and have the tower covered with lead.*

*On this occasion we unroll the documents in the historic tin box and look sadly at our melt down congregation which used to be so numerous and splendid.*

*Since 1886 the following members of the Religious Board have died: Hermann Hirsch, Michael Menz and Anton Rosenthal. At present we are without a rabbi and struggle on in the name of God until the longed-for peace comes. The continued existence of our religious community depends on whether some Jewish families take up residence in Hohenems and want to live in the Jewish spirit. If this is not the case, then we will be faced with merger with another community or dissolution.*

*Hohenems, 14 March 1918"*

[The last tower document of the Jewish community, 1918; JMH]

**The Interwar Period in Hohenems.** In August 1918 the German and Austrian army was for all intents and purposes militarily defeated. The old Europe was gone and with it the great monarchies in Russia, Germany, and Austria. The multiethnic states of Austria and the Ottoman Empire now consisted only of their bankruptcy assets, which were divided up into new nation states.

Already on 21 October 1918 the German-speaking delegates in the Chamber of Deputies in Austria elected in 1911 had constituted themselves as a Provisional National Assembly. After the collapse of the Habsburg monarchy and the abdication of Emperor Karl I, on 12 November 1918 it declared German Austria a democratic republic as part of the "German Republic". Under pressure from the victorious powers the Austrian delegation, led by State Chancellor Karl Renner, had to accept the harsh terms of the Treaty of Saint-Germain in 1919: surrender of South Tyrol and the Sudeten German territories, recognition of the new states of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, and Yugoslavia, unification waiver with Germany, assumption of responsibility for the outbreak of war and war damages, payment of high reparations.

Meanwhile Vorarlberg itself voted to split away from the former multiethnic state. They were neither interested in the new democratic forces in Vienna nor in the workers' movement, the constitution, or even the new small Austrian state. At the end of November 1918 the *Vorarlberger Volksblatt* wrote quite unambiguously: "Against the Viennese basic law we propose a different one, short, clear, and easily understood: 'Vorarlberg for the people of Vorarlberg!' And we respond to the Viennese dictate: 'Hands off our beautiful province, damned Jew!'"

In a popular plebiscite on 15 May 1919 almost 80% of the Vorarlberg population voted in favor of starting negotiations with the Swiss federal government regarding a possible entry of the province into the Confederation—which, of course, was a political non-starter. A very wide variety of political groups pursued unification with Germany and did so for the most varied reasons. The peace treaties of St Germain with Austria and of Versailles with Germany in 1919 brought an end to all these separatist movements, imposing a ban on any unification.

In Germany too the World War had ended with a revolution in November 1918, starting with a mutiny by sailors and ending with the creation of workers' and soldiers' councils. Germany lost its colonial empire and was no longer a great power, but a democratic, albeit politically unstable, republic where nationalism was visibly spreading. The Vorarlberg economy was in ruins, many business people, particularly artisans, had debts in Swiss francs and now lost their assets. The entire Austrian rump state under Federal Chancellor Ignaz Seipel was catastrophically weakened economically and financially, but little by little economic ruin was successfully averted by means of a reconstruction program.

In Hohenems the Rosenthal firm had changed hands in 1916 during the war, and was now called "M.B. Neumann's Söhne". This had been preceded by the rapid decline of a once flourishing company that had controlled branches in Vienna and Prague and had representatives in Budapest, London, Paris, Brussels, Munich, and New York. In the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the firm faced increasing economic difficulties and was converted into a stock corporation. As early as 1912 production in Hohenems had to be partly discontinued. With the sale in 1916 only the firm which Arnold Rosenthal had founded in Vienna and in Böhmisches-Leipa (eská Lípa) remained in the possession of the family. In 1938 it too would be lost in the course of Aryanization. Arnold's widow and her children, Paul and Helene, managed to escape to England and then on to the USA.

Yet, sooner or later the consequences of World War I had to be overcome. From Hohenems 210 soldiers were missing or dead. Austrian Jewish soldiers who had died in the military hospital found their last resting-place at the Hohenems Jewish Cemetery.

Harry Weil returned with a gunshot wound from the endless fighting in upper Italy. With his legendary drive he was to be the engine that kept the small community alive until the "Anschluss" of Austria in 1938. He was now also the congregation's organist, choirmaster, and religious instructor—all without having any real command of the Hebrew language. The holiday prayers were led by Theodor Elkan, who had already been chairman of the community before. Siegfried Landauer had taken over the post after him, but his family too would shortly turn their backs on Hohenems. Theoretically Rabbi Link continued to minister to the small number of Hohenems Jews from Innsbruck, but they rarely saw him. Occasionally they now also turned to St. Gallen from where a rabbi was brought in for funerals of community members. From 1923 Harry Weil was regularly elected a member of the now smaller congregational committee. He worked as an insurance representative and eventually also took over the general store and toy's shop of his father who died in 1934. [Next page: Harry Weil's pocket watch from World War I. The engraving says: „Harry Weil, Hohenems, Vorarlberg, III. regiment of the Tyrolean Imperial riflemen; Harry Weil Jr., Albuquerque / Below: Harry Weil (center), Ivan Landauer (second from left) and the Hohenems popular music „Schrammel“ band, 1919; JMH]

Two years previously Harry Weil had married Angelina Tavonatti, the daughter of a Merano master shoemaker who had moved to Vorarlberg, in a Catholic service. They had their son, Harry Jr., baptized. This did not have the slightest impact on Harry Weil's commitment to the Hohenems community, any more than his hectic round of club activities did. Along with Ivan Landauer he played in a Hohenems "Schrammel" (popular Austrian music) quartet at the widest variety of events, whether as an accompaniment to silent films at the cinema or as part of the Hohenems carnival music. Whether as the founder of the Social Democratic "Nibelungenhort" choral association or a member of the Bregenz string orchestra, as secretary of the "Hohenems Society of Friends of Music" or conductor of the Bregenz-Lindau town choral society, as a member of the "Free Association of Friends of the Theater in Hohenems", the gym club, or the Hohenems chess club, he could be found all over the place.

Clara Heimann-Rosenthal had returned to Hohenems in 1906 after her husband had committed suicide in Belgium in the wake of financial difficulties. From an upper middle-class life in Brussels she returned home to her parents, to a villa that slowly started to deteriorate. Her father died in 1912, and in the 1920s mother and daughter began to rent out the ground floor. In 1927 her mother died on a trip to Munich. By then Clara Heimann had herself become an elderly lady who was locally respected: people would run an errand to the baker's for her or greet her politely if she was sitting in her magnificent, wild garden. The distance people kept from her was





less because she was Jewish than because of the respect they felt for her. Since there were no widows' rights in Belgium, she now had neither Austrian nor Belgian citizenship—a fact that was not important at the time: Clara Heimann-Rosenthal had no intention of leaving Hohenems ever again.

[Clara Heimann-Rosenthal, Laure Heyman, Jean Heyman, Charlotte Rosenthal and Jacqueline Heyman in the baby carriage, c. 1925; Jacqueline Heyman-Pelseener; JMH]

Because of the surrender of Austria's eastern European territories, many of the former immigrants were also without citizenship or competent authority. In Hohenems this affected only the Nagelberg family whose place of origin, Stryi in Galicia, after the war belonged first to the Ukraine, then from 1921 to Poland. Scheindel, Joel and their daughter Frieda, soon to be 30, now applied for Austrian citizenship, which either dragged on or was delayed, for when Joel Nagelberg died of a stroke in 1924, he was entered in the community records as a Polish citizen. The family had obviously righted itself financially to some extent for Joel Nagelberg was described in 1921 as the owner of their home at Sulzer Straße 14. Frieda worked as a seamstress in a poorly paid subordinate job.



In 1928 Frieda Nagelberg tried to obtain Austrian citizenship once more, but she got again rejected and remained a Polish citizen. She too

left Hohenems: in 1929 she moved to Dornbirn where in the following seven years she had various jobs as a domestic servant. Her mother Scheindel was still living in Hohenems. But Frieda took a step that distanced her from her parental home: she joined the Adventists. In 1935 she was incapacitated by a serious illness and returned to Hohenems completely destitute.

Jewish life in Hohenems had long been crippled; with the exception of the Elkans, the Landauers and the other remaining families were not very religious. With the de facto end of political Liberalism the last members of the Jewish upper middle class had also become politically homeless. Harry Weil as well as Ivan Landauer, and no doubt also the last Sulzer descendant living in Hohenems, Sara Fränkel, aligned themselves with the workers' movement and Social Democracy. Jenny Landauer was in charge of a room full of female workers at the Bol-lags' embroidery works: they had installed their business right beside the palace. The Elkans had grown old and lived in retirement. Their son Hans had also meanwhile left Hohenems: he studied philosophy and history with Martin Heidegger in Freiburg im Breisgau and elsewhere. In 1927 he obtained his doctorate under Edmund Husserl with a thesis on Platonic dialectics. His dissertation was printed in Bregenz, and with subsequent pedagogy studies in Innsbruck he then tried to carve out a career for himself. [Next Page: Hans Elkan's record of studies, Innsbruck 1929; Dolores Purtscher, Hohenems]

Bild des Inhabers



Ergänzende Unterschrift des Inhabers

*Karl Eder, Dr. phil.*

Innsbruck, den 29. Oktober 1929

Wir, Rektor der Universität Innsbruck und Dekan  
der *Philol.* Fakultät beehren Sie hiermit, das  
Herrn *Karl Eder, Dr. phil.*  
ehren zu *Hochw.*

in *Freiburg*  
nach Ablegung des entsprechenden Gelübdes in  
die Matrikel der *Leontine-Platz*-Universität zu  
Innsbruck einzutragen wurde.

INNSBRUCK, am 29. Oktober 1929



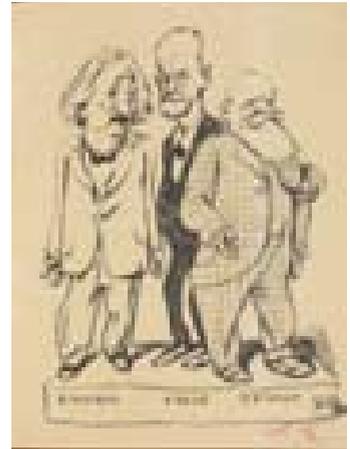
Der Rektor der Universität

*H. Löffler*

Der Dekan der *philol.* Fakultät

*Karl Eder*

The once lively participation in art and social life seems to have moved out of Hohenems along with the Jews themselves, who became successful elsewhere. But were people in Hohenems interested in them? Did they know that Jakob Kahn's son, Ely Jacques Kahn, had become one of New York's most important Art Deco architects and was building skyscrapers on Broadway? Did they follow the rise of the Hohenems physician Eugen Steinach to become one of the first important researchers in endocrinology and sexology? He became a legendary figure in the Vienna of the interwar period, no doubt not least because of his—admittedly unsuccessful—attempts to slow down the aging process by surgical means. However, his medical discoveries were to enable the first effective hormone preparations, e.g., Progynon, which was used to alleviate menopausal effects and later also as an accompaniment in sex changes—and which paved the path for the development of the birth control pill.



[Above: Contribution to the Concordia ball with caricatures on Steinach, Freud and Einstein, 1931; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz / Below: Progynon, 1937; Schering-Stiftung, Scheringianeum Berlin]



**The Rise of the Nazis.** After the separation of Vienna and Lower Austria into two independent federal provinces in 1922, the political differences came to a head. On one side “red Vienna” (with the participation of many Jewish Social Democrats), on the other the black, Catholic province. Anti-Socialism and anti-Semitism formed an unholy alliance. Under pressure from anti-Semites, Ignaz Seipel, himself not opposed to Jews, included in 1926 the fight against “Jewish influence in the intellectual and economic field” into the new Christian Social Party program.

In Vorarlberg the Christian Social Party won all provincial diet elections with 53 to 63% of the votes. The short-time Federal Chancellor Otto Ender (1930/31) was a long-term head of provincial government (1918–1930 and 1931–1934), who also from time to time indulged in an anti-Semitic attack. For instance, on 24 February 1928 his words could be read in the *Volksblatt*:



*blatt*: “The Jews are a separate race, a separate nation, and can hardly be mixed with other nations. (...) For a Jew is and remains a Jew, and by rights should be a citizen only in Jerusalem.”

In this climate of absolute power there were repeated attacks on political opponents from the Social Democratic camp. Thus, Samuel Spindler, by then a member of the workers’ council in Bregenz and secretary of the Union of Vorarlberg Textile Workers, of Polish-Jewish descent, but a practicing Protestant, was again and again defamed as a Galician—an anti-Semitic code word for Jew. His eldest daughter Fanny Vobr (named after her mother) eventually moved politically to join the Communists.

[Samuel Spindler at a trade union training event in Dornbirn, c. 1925; JMH]

Initially, the success of the National Socialists at the elections was meager. Thus, at the Innsbruck municipal elections in April 1929 the NSDAP achieved just 202 votes, less than a half percent. Protected by the laws of the First Republic, the Innsbruck Jews were, therefore, able to lead an unmolested community life up until the 1930s. On the Sabbath they met in the annex of the house at Sillgasse 15. Several attempts to build a synagogue failed because of money problems.

At the national parliamentary elections in 1930 the National Socialists in Hohenems gained only 103 votes out of 4524 valid votes cast. This changed with the rise to power of the NSDAP in Germany on 30 January 1933, when the German President Paul von Hindenburg appointed Hitler as Chancellor. In Austria Engelbert Dollfuß banned the NSDAP, whereupon the National Socialists’ terror tactics intensified. In the first week of January 1934 alone, 140 NS bomb attacks were counted throughout Austria. In January 1934 presumably up to 25 fire-crackers would explode daily in Dornbirn. In the night between 10 and 11 November 1933 the Lochau Heimwehr- militiaman Edwin King was shot by an illegal National Socialist while patrolling along Lake Constance.

Though banned in Austria since 19 June 1933, the NSDAP practically dominated public debate in Dornbirn, the biggest town in the province. This was embarrassing for Ludwig Bechinie, director of security in Vorarlberg, who eventually was instructed by the Federal Chancellor’s office to send in a report to Vienna about the background to this situation. The

leading industrialist families in town, as Bechinie finally reported in May 1934, had “almost entirely [crossed over] into the National Socialist camp” and had forced “almost all of Dornbirn and the surrounding area in that direction”, as “workers, landlords, and business people of every description were dependent on them”. This predominance had created an atmosphere “in which the population hardly even dared to breathe any more”, therefore, the authorities’ fight against the Nazis had been “defensive and ineffective”.

On 9 June 1934 illegal Vorarlberg National Socialists blew up a penstock from the Spullersee power plant. The following day two high-voltage towers of the Ill power plant were blown up in Dornbirn and Hohenweiler. At the end of June an explosive device blew up in Lustenau near the gymnasium of the Catholic gymnasts’ association. In the Feldkirch district alone, with the “brown nest” of Dornbirn at its center, almost 1400 individuals were detained or sentenced before 1938 because of illegal activity for the NSDAP.

The briefly erupting civil war in Linz, Vienna, and a few workers’ strongholds was followed on 12 February 1934 by the banning of the Social Democratic Party by the Dollfuß government. In Vorarlberg that affected a party with a few thousand members and a few dozen Social Democratic associations. The assets of the Social Democratic Party and its associations were confiscated by the state. Real estate was sold as far as possible, valuables such as the gym equipment at the workers’ gymnasiums and sports clubs were transferred to the Catholic gymnasts’ associations in the province.

On 1 May 1934 a “corporate state” constitution was proclaimed. However, a few dozen Vorarlbergers, especially from the Marxist camp, rejected the corporate state and campaigned against it with flyers and handbills. Thus, the later provincial diet deputy and district secretary of the SPÖ (Socialist Party of Austria), Josef Greussing, was detained for several weeks in 1937/38 for distributing illegal Revolutionary Socialists pamphlets, and the short-term provisional mayor of Klösterle, Richard Kolar, was sentenced to three months in prison because of his role as provincial head of the illegal KPÖ (Communist Party of Austria) in 1937/38. On 25 July 1934 Dollfuß was murdered in the course of an attempted putsch by the NSDAP. But the putsch failed because of the threatening stance of Benito Mussolini.

**The Community Living on Memories.** “A very small community that now lives only on memories,” Theodor Elkan wrote of his Jewish community in 1931. Four years later the community consisted of only sixteen people. Who was still there? The Vorarlberger Volksblatt reported in February 1935 on the “strong decline of the only Jewish community” in the province. The synagogue stood empty and deserted, and Landauer, for many years chairman of the community, had moved away. Old Theodor Elkan took over as chairman in his place: his second wife Hedwig and his son Hans, Sara Fränkel in the Sulzer house, and the two cousins, Sophie Steingraber-Hauser and Clara Heimann-Rosenthal. Harry Weil was still there, his wife Angelina and their son, Harry Junior. Of the Landauers only Jenny and Ivan were still in town. Frieda Nagelberg and Gisela Figdor lived destitute in the former poorhouse. At the end of the 1920s the chemist Franz Pilpel came to Hohenems to work for the Neumann company, which had taken over from Gebr. Rosenthal. In Hohenems he emerged as an active member of the chess club. Edmund Turteltaub was also a chemical engineer. He had settled in Dornbirn in 1930, had joined the Hohenems community and founded a family. Originally from Galicia, his parents and brothers and sisters had lived in Vienna and Salzburg, then settled in Innsbruck in 1905. A



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ואשתו היקרה סלמה זאב

אינשבורג תרפ"ו



Torah mantle that they donated to the Innsbruck community has been preserved. [Left: Meil (Torah mantle) of the Turteltaub family, 1926; Jüdisches Museum Wien / Below: Edmund and Eva Turteltaub in Salzburg, c. 1905; Avram Gafni, Israel]

The Jewish poorhouse no longer existed; it had been given to the market community by the Jewish community in 1924, with the proviso that Jews would continue to be accepted there and the Rosenthals' endowment plaque would remain above the door. Frieda Nagelberg was now able to live there. As an Adventist she did not receive any allowance from the Jewish community, even if the Elkan family helped her privately: she did light housework for them, thus earning herself a little pocket money.

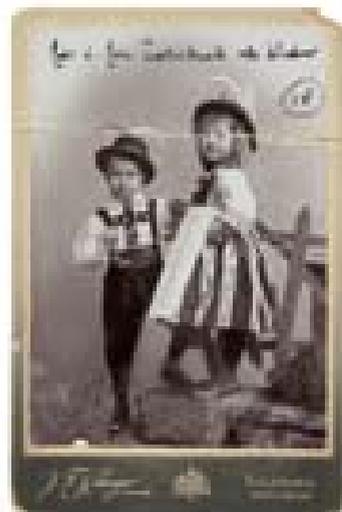
In 1936 Clara Heimann-Rosenthal sold her villa to the Hohenems doctor's family by the name of Burtscher, but continued to live on the ground floor of the house once built for her. She still painted and played the piano. The gramophone also appealed to her. She was on friendly terms with Oskar Burtscher and his sister Katharina, known as Kätherle, whose son Hans, a little stamp collector, she could every so often present with a rare, in any case foreign stamp. And they sat together in the garden, which was still adorned with palm trees. Sophie Steingraber-Hauser was often a guest in the Rosenthal villa, just as Clara Heimann-Rosenthal liked to visit her cousin in her flat in the Elkans' house.

[Second next page: Letter-opener Clara Heimann-Rosenthal left to the young stamp collector Hans Burtscher as a present; JMH, Hans Burtscher collection]

Harry Weil who now lived with his family in Bregenz had taken over as cantor in the synagogue and also led the service. The Friday evening service was no longer celebrated in the main synagogue hall, and it was held without anyone knowing Hebrew—presumably with the exception of Theodor Elkan. In any case, they knew the necessary prayers and songs by heart.

By this time Harry Weil was active in more than just the musical field. In October 1934 he was arrested for Communist activities and sentenced to two weeks in prison. He had, as he stated, typed the stencils for a Communist leaflet on "Greussing's typewriter", calling for resistance to Austrian Fascism. In October 1937 Harry Weil once again had to be interviewed at the police station in Bregenz. This time he provided information as a witness about why he as a Radical Socialist saw the future of Socialism in Trotsky and not in Stalin.

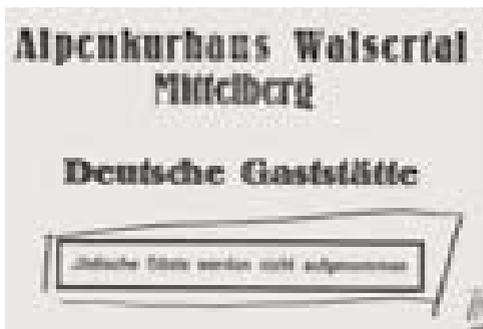
Hans Elkan had long endeavored to get his German doctorate recognized in Austria and he only succeeded in 1931. By 1937 he had not passed the stage of a candidate for a teaching post. In the 1937/38 school year, therefore, he could only teach at the Federal Realschule (secondary school) in Dornbirn as an unpaid student teacher. Whether it was Hans Elkan's difficulties with pupils without much interest in philosophy or whether his surroundings' growing hostility towards Jews was already causing him problems can hardly be ascertained today. In any case, the firecrackers of the illegal Nazis were also detonated in front of the Elkans' house in Hohen-



ems. Elkan returned to join his father and stepmother in Hohenems, where he tended the garden opposite the Elkan house on a daily basis.

In January 1938 Harry Weil's mother died, and he began to prepare his move to Hohenems to at last take over his parents' shop. At the beginning of March he applied to the district head office to enlarge the shop, an application that was approved and accepted on 11 March. On 28 February he applied to the St. Gallen Jewish community for the position of cantor and choirmaster. Well-versed in all "Sulzer hymns", as he wrote, he asked to be allowed to work without salary as a commuter, to be able to indulge in his passion for Jewish music. He was no longer able to participate in Vorarlberg musical life because of the "Nazi trouble-making".

[Announcement in the „Walser Heimatbote“, saying no Jews are allowed in the „German inn Alpenkurhaus Walsertal“, 31 December 1937; JMH] On 12 March Harry Weil again played the organ in the Hohenems synagogue. On 13 March his letter was read by the community committee in St. Gallen, but not answered. And on 14 March he received approval for the extension of his shop in the rabbi's house at Sulzergasse 2. In the night of 16 to 17 March, SS men on behalf of the Director of Security for Vorarlberg searched all dwellings of "incriminated Jews", including the home of the Weil's at Staudachgasse 11 in Bregenz. The National Socialists had assumed power in Austria.



**1938.** With the annexation of Austria to the German Reich ("Anschluss"), Austria ceased to exist and now belonged—initially under the name "Ostmark", and from 1942 as the "Donau- und Alpenreichsgaue"—to the "German Reich". A majority of Austrians rejoiced at the annexation when Adolf Hitler entered his old native country in triumph.

The population was exposed to a flood of propaganda and hoped for jobs, economic growth, and, no doubt, personal benefits too. "Anschluss" meant both the takeover by indigent National Socialists and sympathizers as well as the Wehrmacht's entry—and the Gestapo took up its work in the "Ostmark" too. The Anschluss was deliberately staged as a takeover "from below"—with threatening marches by men in uniform, effective street demonstrations, and highly symbolic actions.

In Vorarlberg the swastika flags were flying and a sense of departure and of major change had gripped the province. Max Schnetzer, a Swiss citizen who as a young scamp visiting the Rhine valley had learned to "curse roundly", in an interview about the "Anschluss" in Vorarlberg later put it this way: "But the curtain is down, the Austrians have become different people"—an experience that Jewish Austrians throughout the country could share. The hour had come for people like Josef Wolfgang. The Hohenems merchant, just over forty, had already progressed to become the local group leader of the Hohenems NSDAP in 1933. Now he became mayor and a zealous wielder of the powers entrusted to him.



[Report by Mayor Josef Wolfgang about the elimination of „Jewish“ street names, 14 September 1938; Stadtarchiv Hohenems]

From May the Nuremberg Laws also applied in what was now the “Ostmark”, and like in Germany, a lengthy exchange of letters began with the Jewish communities and parishes throughout the entire former monarchy and beyond, to discover who was now to be considered a Jew and who not. The dismissals, expropriations, and disenfranchisements carried out up until then happened at random, on suspicion, or as a result of denunciation. With the introduction of the “Nuremberg Laws”, the legalized disenfranchisement of the Austrian Jews, their exclusion from almost all professional sectors, from schools and universities, the taking away of their property and finally of their lives began. As early as Good Friday 1938, SA gangs in Innsbruck tore through the streets and besmirched the shops that belonged to Jews. “Don’t buy from Jews!” was the motto, but first many people had to be informed where these shops were.

People believed that everything was dictated by the Jews and everything belonged to the Jews. And now things would change. In May 1938 the Steinhauser shoe shop in Dornbirn published an advertisement in the *Hohenemser Gemeindeblatt* telling people that it was not a



“Jewish shop”. Shortly before that Sara Fränkel had announced her departure from Hohenems. Now no Jews were living anymore in Salomon Sulzer’s house of birth. A short time later an ad by the Mohren-Bräu brewery appeared saying that the “Frohe Aussicht” was for lease, and soon another one announcing that the new tenant was “Aryan”.

The Viennese National Socialists took especially brutal action against the Jews, and not only the staunch party members, but also “perfectly normal” neighbors, who suddenly stood at the door and claimed for themselves the Jewish flat, the Jewish shop, or the job held by a Jew. People began to escape, with Switzerland as their main destination, and took the Westbahn (railway) to Feldkirch and Buchs. Ernst Kamm, a policeman in St. Gallen, later told of the nice Austrian colleagues with whom he used to ride together on the train along the border to check travelers’ passports. This ended after the “Anschluss”: there had been a few “Nazi fanatics” among the border police. And he also tells of thousands of mainly Viennese Jews who left the “Ostmark” for Switzerland as early as March. As the National Socialists at this time were still pursuing the policy of expelling Jews from the German Reich, no obstacle was put in their way on what had been the “Austrian” side, indeed, the Nazis acted as “abettors to the escape” and showed the fleeing Jews the way, after they had been robbed of their possessions. While this was not a large-scale business, all in all it was a profitable one.

In the following months Austria experienced a hitherto undreamed-of flood of laws, which were mainly directed against Jews. They related to bans on professions and schools as well as absurd public order laws, in which, like in Salzburg, Jews were forbidden, for example, to wear local costumes or dirndl dresses. They had to do with disenfranchisement, expropriation, singling out, and humiliation. The wave of escapes did not cease, but after the pogrom on 10 November 1938 it reached another peak. On that day, especially in the early hours of the morning, synagogues and houses of prayer were set alight, Jewish shops and homes were plundered or laid waste throughout the “German Reich”. More than 25,000 Jewish men were detained and deported to the concentration camps of Dachau, Buchenwald, and Sachsenhausen. In Vienna, 42 synagogues and houses of prayer were destroyed in the course of the pogrom. SS men dressed in civilian clothes were particularly brutal in their attacks on the Innsbruck Jews. The chairman of the community, Richard Berger, as well as Wilhelm Bauer and Richard Graubart were murdered, and numerous other people were seriously injured. The small house of prayer on Sillgasse was destroyed.

The Hohenems Jews were spared from the organized wave of pogroms. And initially the Hohenems synagogue was also untouched. But as early as 11 November, Mayor Wolfgang laid claim to the synagogue building, which was presumably the reason for its protection. Various new uses were discussed, from a gymnasium for the school to a cinema for Nazi propaganda. The municipal authorities decided in favor of the project that would use the building as a new facility for the Hohenems firefighters, following an agreement with the Reich, to which all the community’s possessions had passed in the wake of its forced dissolution. In any case, to Josef Wolfgang it was important that “the characteristics of a synagogue would be removed from this building, the sooner the better, and that this monument of Jewish domination in the fine market town of Hohenems would disappear.”

[Inventory of the religious objects and fittings of the Hohenems synagogue, 17 November 1938; Stadtarchiv Hohenems]

Just one week after the 1938 pogrom Josef Wolfgang had the synagogue inventory seized: Torah scrolls, Torah ornaments, the library, and many objects used in everyday religious life. Theodor Elkan had tried without success to get the Torah scrolls in particular taken to the community in St. Gallen to keep them safe from the Nazis. He had probably sold a small number of items in the final years: for example, a Torah pennant, which he had sold to the Munich collector Heinrich Feuchtwanger who had established an important collection of Jewish objects from the Southern German area. No more than a handful of old cult objects from the once important holdings of the Hohenems synagogue has managed to survive, one way or another. Scattered across various museums and collections in the world, they today bear witness to the community's former splendor. Twenty-nine precious Torah scrolls (fourteen of them had certainly been in Innsbruck since 1914), more than 400 Torah pennants, as well as all the ornaments, of intangible and often also material value, from the embroidered Torah mantles and curtains to the Torah crowns, finials and shields, books, the bronze bust of Salomon Sulzer and the community archives with the community's charters of protection from the year of its foundation, 1617: they all are missing to this day, have been given to the metal donation, stolen, or destroyed.

**Escape and Annihilation.** Harry Weil and his wife Angelina had already escaped to Switzerland in the summer of 1938, followed by Ivan Landauer. Ivan Landauer stayed at first with his sister Jenny in Heerbrugg, where she had settled with her husband Jakob Bollag in 1936, just a few kilometers from the border and Hohenems. In 1939 Harry and Angelina Weil brought their son, Harry Jr., out after them and with the help of Harry's brother Jules they were able to emigrate to Chicago, USA. Louis Weil, the third brother, was less fortunate. Arrested as a Communist and deported to Dachau, he was murdered in September 1938. In the first six months of 1939 the last Jews fled from Hohenems. Franz Pilpel and his family left the town on 18 February.

After the war Harry Weil wrote that even in their last months there they still helped to get refugees over into Switzerland and also supported them financially. The wave of escapes from Vienna did not let up in the summer and autumn of 1938 either. By then it was no longer possible to get out into Switzerland by train. The Old Rhine near Hohenems and Lustenau became the most important escape route since here the border was harder to control—and easier to cross. But above all, in 1938 the police in the canton of St. Gallen had begun to adopt a more humane attitude towards the refugees. While there were debates in the Swiss newspapers about the threat of "foreignization" and the asylum policy, step by step the government in Bern made it harder to enter the country, and the head of the immigration authorities, Heinrich Rothmund, even intervened with the German authorities to have an identification mark for Jews added into their passports. A suggestion that was gratefully taken up and implemented on 5 October 1938. From then on every Jew in the German Reich had a large "J" stamped into his passport, which reduced his chances of escape.

Abdruck.

INHALT

Über die Innenrichtung der Sprache in Schweden, Friedrich  
 Thunbergens Nr. 24 aufgenommen am 17. November 1916.  
 Anwesende: Bürgermeister Josef Helfing, Ortsgruppenleiter Gerhard  
 Finkert, Kulturreisender Theodor Elms.  
 Schriftführer Alfred Wolf, als Schriftführer,  
 Mitglied Kurt Jäger, als Übersetzungsorgang und  
 Mitglied Richard Hump, als Helfer.

I. Tagesordnung

1. Öffnung des Beschlusses

2. Vortrag

3. Beschlüsse

4. Beschlüsse

5. Beschlüsse

6. Bericht für Beschlüsse

7. Beschlüsse vor dem Hl. Schwab

8. Beschlüsse vor dem Hl. Schwab

9. Beschlüsse

10. Über einen Bericht für Beschlüsse

11. Bericht über Beschlüsse

12. Beschlüsse

13. Beschlüsse

14. Beschlüsse mit allen Beschlüssen und Beschlüssen

15. Beschlüsse

16. alle Beschlüsse

Veranschaulichte Beschlüsse

Beschlüssen

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[Paul Grüninger (center) with police colleagues in St. Gallen 1934; Ruth Roduner-Grüninger, Heerbrugg / Below: Diepoldsau refugee camp, 1939; Archiv für Zeitgeschichte, Zürich]

The police chief in St. Gallen, Paul Grüninger, on the other hand, started to support the refugees, at first by interpreting the regulations in their favor, then by frequently forgetting about them, and finally by deliberately overriding them. Wherever possible he encouraged the border guards, in any case those who were answerable to him and not to the

federal police, to let pity prevail over the law. The moment the refugees had managed to wade or swim through the Old Rhine past the guards or to make their way along a drainpipe near Lustenau, he organized accommodation for them and backdated their entry papers to circumvent the tightening up of the provisions. He ordered Ernst Kamm to Diepoldsau to supervise a refugee camp that the police had been running since June 1938 together with the Jewish refugee aid in St. Gallen. And he personally began to smuggle valuables, which the refugees had left behind in Vorarlberg, into Switzerland, past both the German and the Swiss border guards. When the Gestapo discovered a little packet left behind by a refugee family for "Captain Gr." in 1939 while searching the Zehbäck inn in Bregenz, Grüninger's position in Switzerland had already become precarious.

[Packaging of a parcel of valuables deposited for Grüninger, 1939; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz]

Ernst Kamm reports about Jews from all social classes who in the course of 1938 tried to reach on foot Diepoldsau in Switzerland across the Old Rhine near Hohenems, whose water level was low in summer. An account of the events at the Rhine border in the crisis years 1938 and '39 handed down in the documents of Saly Mayer, the St. Gallen president of the Swiss Federation of Jewish Communities, tells of a constantly growing stream of refugees. They generally came at night, with backpacks or parcels, and also gave the Swiss who helped them escape a few francs. These were young men like Jakob Spirig from Diepoldsau who out of a combination of sympathy, youthful arrogance, and business acumen showed those escaping the safest routes through the Old Rhine. Many refugees hidden in hay and turf carts were smuggled across the border by Swiss peasants who owned land on the Vorarlberg side. But Vorarlberg "smugglers" too helped those fleeing, for example, Edmund Fleisch from Altach, who collaborated in particular with a network of Orthodox Jews in St. Gallen around Recha Sternbuch.



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[Above: Search at the border between Hohenems and Diepoldsau, c. 1940; Johann-August-Malin-Gesellschaft, Bregenz / Center: Border post at Bangs, c. 1940; Johann-August-Malin-Gesellschaft, Bregenz]

The Swiss border officials received ever stricter instructions from Berne not to let in anymore refugees. Many were caught and sent back, many kept trying time and again, like Jakob and Ida Kreutner, who had been beaten up in the November pogrom in Vienna and who along with their 19-month-old child Robert made four desperate attempts to flee across the Old Rhine. Until finally the wife of the border guard Alfons Eigenmann intervened and persuaded him to help the refugees. Many years later Jakob Kreutner remembered their escape in an interview: "It snowed, the Rhine was flooding, and we had to get across the stones. I don't know, they were smugglers' stepping stones, etc. And there was the little boy with the guide... he took the boy because the boy cried, then he slipped once, and then hell broke loose. The baby yelled so much that they must certainly have heard him as far away as St. Gallen. And then he says: 'You have to go up there!' There was a hill there, or let's say an embankment, and he says: 'On you go, now it's up to you.' And he vanished. And let me stress that the man who led us was an Austrian. Wasn't he from Lustenau... no, Hohenems, from Hohenems. And off he went. And then we went up and there were the border guards, the Swiss border guards. With their cloaks and weapons at the ready. Of course, they'd had instructions. And then my wife said (...): 'If



you're sending us back, then I'd rather you shoot us here.' And then Herr Eigenmann intervened, then we didn't know he was called Eigenmann. 'No, even if I lose my job. I'll take you to the police, we can't send you back like that.'"

Those who succeeded in being accepted in Switzerland were awaited by years of degrading internment in countless billets and work camps. Among them Ivan Landauer who had escaped to join his sister Jenny and her husband Jakob Bollag in Heerbrugg in the summer of 1938—only to be put under pressure again and again by the "Fremdenpolizei" (Immigration Office) to arrange to emigrate to another country.

[Ivan Landauer (left) in the work camp of Gordola, 1941; Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau]



*"Dear Mr. & Mrs. Elkan,*

*After receiving my passport on Wednesday, I left immediately for Switzerland and bid you farewell as I travel. I certainly hope that there will be another opportunity when we can talk together, but it was no longer worthwhile for me to stay there any longer as I no longer had any life there, and now I'll have to see how I get on here.*

*I didn't say goodbye to anybody there as I would have found it too hard, so I left my home country without any fuss or ado.*

*My mother-in-law is still there and is getting things ready to come to Switzerland too. My sister will, of course, visit you from time to time, and then I'll hear how you are.*

*Please give my regards to all members of the congregation, and I hope you keep well. This is my heartfelt wish.*

*Yours,*

*Ivan Landauer*

*A special hello to Hans."*

*(Ivan Landauer to Theodor and Helene Elkan, Heerbrugg, 26 August 1938, JMH)*

*"Dear Harry,*

*By now you've no doubt had time to get properly accustomed to America, and here I am with a request to you, and perhaps you can help me in some way. As my stay here in Switzerland is for a limited period only, I must look into emigrating to another country. At present there is no question of going home, so I'd like to ask you to look around and see if you could help me too to get to the country where human beings are still treated as human beings.*

*I once read a book called *The Eternal Jew*, and it seems to me as if I'll soon be suffering the same fate. We are chased from one country to another, and what crime have we committed??*

*Our parents were just "Jews", that word is enough.*

*So dear Harry, be so good as to look around and see if I can find something suitable and whether there is any chance of me coming to the Promised Land.*

*All the best to you, your wife & little boy,*

*Your old friend"*

*(Ivan Landauer to Harry Weil, Heerbrugg, 15 October 1939, JMH)*

Ivan Landauer was not allowed to stay with his family in Heerbrugg. His desperate efforts to obtain an entry visa for the USA, Palestine, or South America all failed. He was taken to the Gondola camp in Tessin where he worked as a cook; finally he became seriously ill. In 1943 he died at the home of his sister Jenny in Heerbrugg, just a few kilometers away from Hohenems.

Tobias Müller, a furrier from Vienna who originally came from Romania and was now stateless, had escaped across the border at Hohenems in November 1938 and was one of the soon to be several thousand refugees in St. Gallen; he also became a cook—at Diepoldsau camp, wholly funded by Jewish refugee aid. His journal of the kosher camp kitchen has been preserved and reveals details of everyday life in Diepoldsau, for example, about the donation of a Gugelhupf cake, which sweetened the breaking of the fast at Yom Kippur in 1939. Former internees like his son Heinz Müller or Paul Pivnik tell of the importance Jewish tradition took on even for the many refugees, most of whom were hardly religious, and who now had to worry about being able to remain in Switzerland and about the development of the war.



[Left: Tobias Müller's kitchen book from Diepoldsau, 1939; Heinz Müller, Basel / Above: Tobias, Heinz and Martha Müller (from left to right) in Diepoldsau, 4 January 1939; Heinz Müller, Basel / Below: Schawuoth in the Diepoldsau refugee camp, 1939; Heinz Müller, Basel]

The internees were not allowed to work, even if many of them did so illegally nevertheless. They were not allowed to go out in the evening. Apparently though, such prohibitions could be circumvented. The camp inmates condemned to inactivity were eyed with certain mistrust by the population, but sometimes also supplied with food in a friendly way. After all, the modest kosher food in the camp was not to everyone's taste.



Proceedings were taken against Paul Grüninger in St. Gallen in 1939. Because of his humane attitude in refugee matters, his boss, the Social Democrat Valentin Keel, had become a political target in a climate hostile to refugees—and had dropped Grüninger. The Jewish communities in Switzerland, who also became a target because of Grüninger's "falsification" of documents, maintained a low profile—wanting neither to damage their own position in Swiss society nor to imperil the help they were still providing to the refugees. Grüninger was "dishonorably" discharged from service, with no benefits and pension entitlement, and sentenced to pay a fine. His successor pitilessly closed the borders to the refugees. Grüninger would not be rehabilitated until 1995, twenty years after his death.

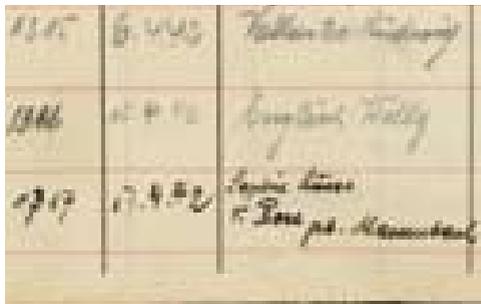
The song "In Hohenems am Bahnhof, da kann man Juden sehen" (At Hohenems station you can see Jews) could be written then as the refugees gathered here and looked for a way to enter Switzerland (even if it was supposedly widely circulated as a Vorarlberg postwar hit only in 1951, as a result of what was known as the "Darmschmuggelaffäre"—a notorious case involving Jewish smugglers). Many initially found accommodation at Hohenems inns and hotels, though with time only a few of them still dared to put up refugees or later even to hide them. Hildegard Schinnerl recounts how her parents, Amalie and Michael Frei, concealed refugee families in their farm even during the war and used the young girl as a courier to collect news. The Jews could spend the night in their house after arriving by the Westbahn railway; they were given food and lodgings, and exchanged their much too conspicuous and bulky cases for home-sewn bags that could be carried on the body. And the name of the landlady Anna Mathis of the "Habsburg" inn was passed around among the refugees even in Vienna as a secret tip. Today it is almost inconceivable how Anna Mathis, who ran the "Habsburg" inn, could protect herself in the face of constant surveillance, how she contrived to provide shelter to so many in such a small place. For the border at Hohenems was soon virtually watertight, and only a small number of people still dared to undertake the dangerous journey on foot.



As of 1 September 1939 the situation had radically changed for during the night the "German Reich" had invaded Poland without issuing a declaration of war. Two days later Ger-

many received an ultimatum from Great Britain for the withdrawal of German troops from Poland. The ultimatum had no effect: Great Britain and France declared war on Hitler. World War II had begun.

For the Turteltaub family from Dornbirn, 2 September should have been the day they started their journey from Trieste to Bolivia. Edmund and Gertrud Turteltaub and their sons, Hans and Walter, had left Dornbirn for Vienna to prepare their escape from the German Reich, then went on to Italy to board the ship to freedom from there. But now they were stuck. They were interned together in various camps. In 1943 they were eventually sent to Roccadeterighi and Fossoli, deported to Auschwitz in 1944 and murdered there.



Some were also deported from Bregenz: Sophie Matzner and her daughter Elsa as well as Julius Bachner, who had long been Protestant, were dragged off and murdered, in Lodz or Chelmno, Theresienstadt (Terezin) or the Krakow ghetto. Their precise fate is just as uncertain as that of the Iger family from Bludenz, who as early as October 1938 were forcibly deported during the so-called “Polish campaign”.

Hermine Ernst from Bregenz was compulsorily resettled in Vienna and died there in 1942, while her husband Robert, just like very few other Jews from Vorarlberg, succeeded in escaping to the United States .

In 1941 mass deportations had started from Vienna too, initially to Lodz and other sites of murder. From summer 1942 to Theresienstadt, and from there on to other concentration and extermination camps. Now the German guards fired at escapees at the Hohenems border too. Escape and aiding escape had become life-threatening. Now only a few youngsters and a couple of rare brave people like Anna Mathis helped the Jews to the border in return for pocket money. Still, isolated cases are on record or have left traces behind:

The well-known philosopher and art theorist Gertrud Kantorowicz signed into the guest book of the “Habsburg” inn at the age of 65 under the name Sophie Luise v. Rose.

[Above: Guestbook of the „Habsburg“ inn; Rosa Mathis, Hohenems]

From there she attempted to escape to Switzerland, together with four women from Berlin: Gertrud Kantorowicz and her Aunt Clara, Paula Hammerschlag—who was the sister of the philosopher Margarete Susman then living in Switzerland—Marie Winter and Paula Korn. Jakob Spirig and other Swiss helpers had prepared the escape at the Diepoldsau swimming pool, but the German border guards heard the escapees and opened fire. One of the women was caught in the entangled barbed wire, and only Paula Korn escaped successfully. The other women were taken to the guardroom at the rural police station in Hohenems where Paula Hammerschlag took her own life by swallowing Phosphor. The other three women were deported to annihilation. Jakob Spirig was taken to court in Switzerland and sentenced to prison. He did not live to see his rehabilitation in 2004 either.

In 1945 the Jewish Socialist resistance fighter Hilda Monte tried to cross the border as a messenger yet again, this time via Feldkirch-Tisis to Liechtenstein. Arrested with false papers, she attempted to escape and was shot by border officials. It was 17 April. The war would last only another three weeks. Hilda Monte was one of the people who regularly risked their lives

to report on crimes from the German Reich for English radio stations and resistance newspapers, about the persecution of the Jews, deportations, and mass murder. She carried out her last intervention on behalf of the Austrian resistance group O5.

[Portrait bust of Hilda Monte; Birute Stern, Jerusalem]

**Mass Crimes.** Besides the Jewish population, the physically and mentally handicapped along with people with socially deviant behavior were murdered from as early as autumn 1939. in the course of the systematic destruction of "life unfit to live", the so-called euthanasia program. From both the Valduna mental hospital in Vorarlberg and the provincial mental hospital in Hall in Tyrol, as well as from many smaller institutions in the province, victims were taken to establishments like the one at Schloss Hartheim in Upper Austria where they were systematically murdered.



ZURÜCK  
an Absender

12. Jan 54  
ZURÜCK  
an Absender



~~Anschrift~~

inschreiben

6438

2179

**R** **779**

ZURÜCK  
an Absender

Bitte die Rücksendung  
nicht zu verzögern.

As war progressed the National Socialists' Jewish policy also hardened. The areas of Poland already occupied were now searched by units from the SS and regular army troops to brutally liquidate all possible groups of individuals who stood in the way of the Nazi regime. As well as Jews, this was first and foremost a question of intellectuals. On the territory of the German Reich itself too, the population had been "cleansed" of all potential undesired elements. Thus, from the start, political opponents, above all Socialists and Communists, were the target of persecution, from Austria also many Austro-Fascists who had opposed the Nazis. Critical clergyman and Jehovah's Witnesses were among the victims, as were homosexuals, criminals, and social drop-outs.

Forced labor became a substantial component of the economy, from industry to agriculture. In Vorarlberg too thousands of prisoners of war and concentration camp detainees had to do forced labor, sometimes under tolerable conditions on farms, but mostly as slave labor of industry committed to war production. The building of the Ill power station in the Montafon valley relied almost exclusively on forced labor: even in 2008 a lot is still unknown about its dimensions because of the long-term blocking of the company archives.

The mass annihilation of European Jews began in 1941. The Jews were deported both from the German Reich and the ghettos and from the occupied territories to the camps where the killing, organized increasingly on the basis of division of labor, was carried out in the gas chambers. With the help of the Wehrmacht (German armed forces) mass shootings and gasings in lorries continued to be practiced, especially in the east. At the so-called "Wannsee Conference" in January 1942, the plans had only to be coordinated throughout the Reich with all the involved authorities, from the health offices to the housing administration.

Descendants of the Hohenems Jews were deported from many towns in Europe that were conquered by the Germans to concentration and extermination camps where they were murdered.

[Left: Envelope of a letter from Leopold Baum, a descendant of the Burgauer family who was emigrated to Liechtenstein, to his brother Paul Baum, who was deported from Southern Germany to Auschwitz. The letter from 28 December 1943 was sent back on 12 Januar 1944, with a stamp on its back „Concentration Camp refuses acceptance“. Paul Baum was already murdered; Heinz Baum, Liechtenstein]

**The End of Jews in Hohenems.** In 1940 the Hohenems Jewish community was compulsorily dissolved, more than 300 years after it had started and just 70 years after Austria's Jews had obtained legal equality. One by one the last Jews in Vorarlberg were compulsorily resettled in Vienna and deported from there. Eight people, who at this time were categorized as "Jews" according to the Nuremberg Laws, were still living in Hohenems: Clara Heimann-Rosenthal and her cousin Sophie Steingraber-Hauser, the Elkan family, and the two women in the poorhouse, whom many people took to be sisters: Gisela Figdor and Frieda Nagelberg. At some point around this time young Markus Silberstein from Lemberg (Lviv) had also moved to Hohenems. None of them would survive the next few years. [Next Page: Application for an identity card by Theodor Elkan, 1938; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz]



Das für Falschgeklärte anzuführen!



### Personenbeschreibung

Gebort: 1888 - 1888 - 1888  
 Geburtsort: 1888 - 1888 - 1888  
 Größe bei Messung: 1888 - 1888 - 1888  
 Größe bei Messung: 1888 - 1888 - 1888

Unwesentliche Merkmale: gelb

Wesentliche Merkmale: haar



Die Besondere Merkmal ist die nach den Tabellen angegebene Daten.  
 Die Merkmale auf Seite 1 ist von dem Besondere Merkmal - von dem anderen Merkmal -  
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Das Merkmal ist die nach den Tabellen angegebene Daten.



Marktgemeindeamt  
Hohenems

Hohenems 14.07.1919  
Der Bürgermeister  
*[Signature]*

Das für Falschgeklärte anzuführen!



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Hohenems am 11. Januar 1919  
*[Signature]*  
 Gebil. siehe  
 H. 11/19

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Unfortunately, no record of how the young Pole ended up in Hohenems exists: Markus Silberstein was the son of a Lemberg textile manufacturer. Trained as a photographer, he described himself as an "agent" in Hohenems, so he probably worked as a representative. He used his stay there to transfer some not too sizeable valuables into supposedly safe Swiss accounts. He was then arrested for "smuggling". Theodor Elkan still visited him in detention in Bregenz, indeed, even in Innsbruck. On 20 March 1940 the commander of the Sachsenhausen camp sent Silberstein's aunt Reli Lambert, who was living in Vienna, a telegram informing her of his death as well as of a probably falsified cause of death, as was usual. The Shoah data bank of the Documentation Center of Austrian Resistance, on the other hand, indicates Groß-Rosen and 20 January 1942 as place and date of death.

On 21 May 1940 Theodor Elkan as chairman of the community received the letter in which he was informed that all Jews from the two former Austrian federal provinces of Tyrol and Vorarlberg had to be relocated to Vienna by 30 May 1940, i.e., nine days later. Thus, in an extremely short space of time households had to be dismantled, packed up, and the journey for the mostly elderly people, three of them over 70, had to be organized. But they were unable to get seats on the train to Vienna, and the departure date for Theodor and Helene Elkan, their 40-year-old son Hans, and the cousins Sophie Steingraber-Hauser and Clara Heimann-Rosenthal was postponed by one day to 1 June 1940. For Clara Heimann there was still a bureaucratic obstacle on the way: as Belgium did not recognize widows' rights, she was not a Belgian citizen, however, formally she had not become an Austrian upon her return to Hohenems. Engaged in the battle against the last Jews in his domain, Mayor Josef Wolfgang and the Nazi authorities proved cooperative and unbureaucratic: one day before her forced transfer, he issued a replacement identity card for Clara Heimann-Rosenthal in his own hand.

In Vienna they were housed in so-called "Jews' flats", mass accommodations in flats that belonged to Jews or had belonged to them. They suffered from cold and hunger. Clara Heimann-Rosenthal, who occasionally sent her son and Belgian relations a postcard as a sign of life, wrote the last card received from her on 3 April 1942: "Fortunately, the weather is curing my chilblains, it's so nice with the window open! (...) Soon we'll have to take precautions against moths! So far I've been keeping well for I hope to see you again this year in good health, thinner, but that doesn't matter, the main thing is to be reunited." Two months later, on 11 July, she was deported from Vienna to Theresienstadt, to Terezin. The Theresienstadt Death Book indicates that she died on 20 November 1942. A final postcard from her daughter-in-law, Laure, from Brussels dated 16 July failed to reach her and was returned marked "emigrated" on 2 August.

Sophie Steingraber-Hauser was not allowed to remain in Vienna much longer: on 28 July 1942 she too was deported to Theresienstadt, and two months later to the extermination camp of Treblinka. Presumably she was killed there immediately. All three Elkans died in Theresienstadt under unclear circumstances, from a camp illness or debilitation. Many went hungry or thirsty in Theresienstadt, which had originally served as a "showcase camp". Theodor Elkan died soon after his arrival in 1942, Helene two years later, and finally Hans on 23 July 1944. Gisela Figdor spent her last years in Hohenems in the former Jewish poorhouse. In 1940 she tried to avoid forced relocation to Vienna, but did not succeed. She probably died on 18 January 1942 in a Viennese "Jewish flat" at 16 Malzgasse.

[Left: Replacement for an identity card for Clara Heimann-Rosenthal; JMH / Above right: Last postcard from Clara Heimann-Rosenthal from Vienna, 3.4.1942; Jacqueline Heyman-Pelseneer, Brussels / Below right: Last postcard to Clara Heimann-Rosenthal from Laure Heyman, 2.8.1942; Jacqueline Heyman-Pelseneer]

**Der Bürgermeister des Marktes Jochenau**

Zeit 27-1942

Verf. Heymann Clara Bern; Jochenau.

Geheim, bis 31.10.1940  
 (Ausgabe verboten)

Personalkarte



Es wird bescheinigt, daß das nebenstehende  
 Lichtbild Frau Clara Bern Heymann geboren  
 Rosenthal, geb. am 3.11.1886 in Jochenau dar-  
 stellt. Dieselbe ist Polin und hatte ihren  
 ständigen Wohnsitz seit 1906 in Jochenau,  
 Vörsulberg. Dieser Ausweis wird zum Zweck  
 der Controlierung nach Wien ausgestellt, nach-  
 dem Gemahle von Frau Heymann, welche  
 besitzt. Der Verstarbene kann nur nach den  
 hiesigen Aufzeichnungen nach Ansuchen, Zul-  
 gung unbeding.



Der Bürgermeister:

*[Handwritten signature]*

3206/10  
**Defforté** mit Postmark  
 Carte postale avec réponse possible  
 1115

**31**

**31**

31/10/1912

Monsieur  
 Heyman  
 58 Chemin de l'Hayman  
 Belvaux  
 Belgique

Cher Monsieur Heyman  
 J'ai eu votre lettre du 15/10/12  
 et j'ai été très heureux de  
 vous lire. Je suis  
 content de vous savoir  
 bien portant et de  
 vous dire que je suis  
 aussi bien. Je vous  
 embrasse très affectueux-  
 ment et vous prie de  
 dire bonjour à votre  
 famille. Je vous  
 prie de m'écrire  
 quand vous en  
 aurez l'occasion.  
 Je vous prie de  
 croire, Monsieur  
 Heyman, à  
 mes sentiments  
 très affectueux  
 et dévoués.  
 Votre dévoué  
 et affectueux  
 ami  
 Louis Heyman

3206/10  
**POSTALE**  
**POSTKAARTE**  
 ansgespondet

**31**

31/10/1912

Monsieur  
 Heyman  
 58 Chemin de l'Hayman  
 Belvaux  
 Belgique

Cher Monsieur Heyman  
 J'ai eu votre lettre du 15/10/12  
 et j'ai été très heureux de  
 vous lire. Je suis  
 content de vous savoir  
 bien portant et de  
 vous dire que je suis  
 aussi bien. Je vous  
 embrasse très affectueux-  
 ment et vous prie de  
 dire bonjour à votre  
 famille. Je vous  
 prie de m'écrire  
 quand vous en  
 aurez l'occasion.  
 Je vous prie de  
 croire, Monsieur  
 Heyman, à  
 mes sentiments  
 très affectueux  
 et dévoués.  
 Votre dévoué  
 et affectueux  
 ami  
 Louis Heyman

adame  
 Claire Heyman  
 15/4  
 Allemagne

In autumn 1940 Frieda Nagelberg was still living in the poorhouse or had already been transferred to the hospital from which she was finally to embark on her journey to Vienna. She had no income of any kind. In numerous letters and submissions Mayor Josef Wolfgang energetically pushed for the compulsory relocation of Frieda Nagelberg, so that “the last Jewess leaves the province of Vorarlberg”, even stating his willingness to the provincial council in Feldkirch to pay for her travel costs personally.

When on 1 September 1941 the law was passed ordaining that all Jews should sew a Yellow Star onto their clothing so that they would always be recognizable in public, Mayor Wolfgang ordered that Frieda Nagelberg had to wear the “Jewish Star” and had it delivered to her at the hospital. The last Jewess of Vorarlberg, destitute and without any prospects, now had to wear the humiliating sign in public, clearly sewn onto her outerwear. On 25 February 1942 Wolfgang finally succeeded in completing his work when Frieda Nagelberg had to embark on her journey to Vienna. On 9 April she was deported from Vienna to Izbica in the Polish “Generalgouvernement”. From there most of the deported Jews were taken to the Belzec extermination camp where they were immediately murdered. Not one of the 4000 Austrian Jews who were dragged off to Izbica survived.

No more Jews were left in Hohenems. The synagogue stood empty, bereft of its congregation and its decoration, and the Hohenems Hitler Youth had already started to despoil the cemetery in a “spontaneous” action in 1938.

An attempt by Mayor Wolfgang to effect the removal of the Jewish cemetery in 1940 as an administrative act was unsuccessful, even if he obviously chose his words to the provincial council with deliberation: “The existence of this cemetery in Hohenems in our day is a shameful blot on the community and intolerable from the National Socialist standpoint .”

**World War, Liberation.** At the end of April 1945 the French Army had reached Lake Constance. The surrender of Bregenz failed because of the fanaticism particularly of the local SS. Two soldiers, Anton Renz and Helmut Falch, who wanted to prevent the bridge across the Ach near Lauterach from being blown up were maltreated by the SS and shot. The French Finally, on 1 May, the center of Bregenz was shelled by French artillery to force the city’s surrender. After just five days of fighting Vorarlberg was liberated. But behind St. Anton am Arlberg the French already met up with Americans who together with the Red Army conquered the major part of Austria. The US troops also liberated the Mauthausen concentration camp: they could not believe their eyes when they saw these emaciated people and mounds of corpses, witnesses to the industrial-scale murder.

From the end of 1944 rumors of a National Socialist “Alpine fortress” in Tyrol and Vorarlberg flitted among the population, whose willingness to fight to the end had become scant. However, in spring 1945 Vorarlberg became the retreat for thousands of refugees from every point of the compass—and with the widest variety of reasons for escaping—rather than for the Nazi elite.

And thousands of forced laborers and concentration camp detainees were—unlike elsewhere in the German Reich—finally deported from Vorarlberg across the border into Switzerland shortly before the end of the war, not so much for humanitarian reasons as to get rid of their presence and of the need to provide for them after the liberation.

Only after the liberation stock could gradually be taken of seven years of National Socialist rule: with over ten percent of the population, Vorarlberg had achieved the second highest proportion—after Tyrol—of party members in the “Donau- und Alpengauen” (Danube and Alpine districts, i.e., Austria). The NSDAP had even had to put a stop on accepting them, as too many candidates from Austria had applied to the bodies responsible for party membership.

In total, the names of over 800 victims of persecution and resistance from Vorarlberg are known, Socialist and Communist workers, deserters, combatants in Spain, and “traitors”, people who helped forced laborers or tried towards the end of war to curtail acts of war. The majority got off with prison sentences of various lengths or were abused in punishment battalions as cannon fodder. At least 80 of them were executed for political or racist reasons or murdered in concentration camps. Among them were people as diverse as 60-year-old Karoline Redler, who was taken into Gestapo custody in Bregenz in 1943 and executed in 1944 for “demoralizing the troops”, the Hohenems locksmith Johann Seewald, who was imprisoned in Silvrettendorf on suspicion of listening to foreign transmissions among other things, or Johann August Malin, who had brought together various resistance movements in Feldkirch and was executed in Munich as early as 1942.

On 10 November of that same year, Samuel Spindler in Bregenz had also put an end to his life. The Socialist union activist and politician, repeatedly vilified as a “Galician Jew”, could no longer withstand the oppression and detention by the Gestapo, which tried to blackmail him with the threat of deportation and force him to betray other people. In his farewell letters to his daughters, Fanny and Emilie, he tried to leave them with some consolation where nothing but despair prevailed.

[Samuel Spindler in his office, c. 1930; Herbert Pruner, Bregenz]





*"My dear Fanni,*

*This is the hardest letter I have to write for it means farewell for ever: why do I have to end my own life? (...) If I was in good health, for the love of you and the family I would take on the struggle with this life, but with my sick body among total strangers, I can no longer summon up the courage to carry on living. What concerns me most is uncertainty about your fate, in which I must leave you behind. But what am I to do, there is no other way out than the one I'm taking. Don't reproach yourself, even if you had been here, I would have had to take care of matters myself. Perhaps it would then have been easier for me, or even harder, because I would not be as worn out as I am now. (...) Admittedly, I could have remained in Bregenz if I had provided the Gestapo with information about the activities of former acquaintances. Is suicide not more honorable? (...) I kiss you in spirit and wish only that you will soon be set free. Now things will be hardest for Milli, who as well as worrying about Ernst must take on this added burden too. But what am I to do? I have searched day and night for a way out, but have found none.*

*Therefore, I have to spend my final hours quite alone in pain and worry.*

*Farewell Fanni, may life bring you nothing but good.*

*Your unfortunate father"*

[Left: Last letter from Samuel Spindler to his daughter Fanny Vobr, bidding her farewell, 10 November 1942; Herbert Pruner, Bregenz / Samuel Spindler's blotter; Herbert Pruner, Bregenz]



At least 300 people had fallen victim to the murder of “sufferers of hereditary diseases and the mentally ill”, having been transported from the Valduna or other institutions to Hartheim to be killed. Of the approximately 1.2 million Austrians who were deployed as soldiers in the Wehrmacht or the Waffen-SS at the notorious war sites of World War II, 7800 Vorarlbergers had died. About 200 civilians lost their lives in the bomb attack on Feldkirch and the air raids of the last days of war. Vorarlberg had comparatively little material damage to register as—with the exception of Feldkirch and Bregenz—it was largely spared the destruction wrought by the war. Thousands of men had been taken prisoners of war and often returned only years later.

On 20 November 1945 the main war crimes proceedings started in Nuremberg. Twenty-four individuals were accused. It was an international tribunal and the judges came from Great Britain, France, the USA, and the Soviet Union. On 30 September and 1 October 1946 the verdicts were announced and twelve of the Nazi criminals, including Hermann Göring, Arthur Seyß-Inquart, and Julius Streicher, were condemned to death. Seven of them, including the Gauleiter of the “Ostmark”, Baldur von Schirach, were sentenced to terms of imprisonment of various lengths. On 16 October those sentenced to death were executed. Hermann Göring had committed suicide by taking a cyanide capsule the previous day. Vorarlbergers too had made a career in National Socialism or at least had tried to do so, many in the province itself and many in the service of the National Socialist extermination authorities.

These included physicians like Irmfried Eberl from Bregenz, who had joined the NSDAP in 1931 and by way of collaboration in the “euthanasia” program had eventually risen to become the commander of the Treblinka extermination camp in occupied Poland in 1942. Jews from the Warsaw ghetto in particular were murdered at Treblinka since 1942. Eberl evaded conviction when in Allied custody through suicide in 1948. Josef Vallaster, an SS man from the Silber valley, who had been in the NSDAP from 1933 and moved to the German Reich in 1934, supervised gassing and the incineration of corpses in the killing establishment at Hartheim. From 1942 he was deployed as a supervisor in the extermination camp of Sobibor and collaborated in the killing of Jews from all over Europe. During the revolt of the detainees and their attempt to free themselves, he was killed at the camp in 1943.

Bruno Amann, a National Socialist philosopher from Hohenems, was more successful after the war, as the cofounder and later spokesman of the Dornbirn trade fair. However, his anti-Semitic propaganda book *Das Weltbild des Judentums*, published in 1939, was placed on the proscribed list of the Central Commission for Combating Nazi Literature in 1949. He himself was not prosecuted and died in Dornbirn in 1963. Josef Hämmerle from Lustenau rose to be the second deputy to the commander of the Litzmannstadt ghetto in Lodz. The proceedings initiated against him in Dortmund were dropped in 1975. Elmar Grabherr, a provincial official for many years, was to be assigned a key role after the war. Incriminated as a close associate of Nazi Gauleiter Hofer and as an NSDAP member, he swiftly rose after the war first to be director of the executive department under Ulrich Ilg, the provincial head of government and was, therefore, in charge of denazification in Vorarlberg. By 1947 his own name disappeared from the relevant lists of former party members. In 1955 he crowned his career by becoming the highest official in the province.

The “little Nazis”, sidekicks of the authorities who had forged their careers through party membership, were rarely held to account. Local party elites, supported by the provincial government, were frequently able to bring their denazification procedures to a lenient end. And this despite the fact that in the first postwar years action was initially taken right across the board against former party members and officials, in the context of people’s court proceedings and under the supervision of the Allies. In 1946, for example, of 4600 public servants 41% were categorized as needing to be registered and checked. Only in Tyrol the percentage was a bit higher still. In the entire Tyrol-Vorarlberg administrative district the percentage of NSDAP members had been the highest in the German Reich.

The Allied authorities’ intention to implement denazification was now subverted not only in the civil service but in business too. From the Dornbirn textile manufacturers to ski instructors, from lawyers to landlords, the law on purging the economy was applied rather laxly, with the lack of specialized or skilled workers being put forward as an argument, which in view of the number of incriminated individuals was quite valid.

Often all that was done amounted to rather symbolic actions; for instance, presumably under pressure from the French occupying power, former party members had to restore the Jewish cemetery in Hohenems in 1945. Mayor Wolfgang himself had been conscripted to the Volkssturm (militia), and after the war was lost he returned to Hohenems a sick man. Here they obviously had nothing to charge him with and nothing to pardon for because Wolfgang was hidden in Ebnit by Hohenemser out of reach of the French occupying power. He died in October 1948 before it would have been possible for him to be held to account,

Meanwhile first letters were arriving in Hohenems from people inquiring about the deported Jews. Someone who had studied with Hans Elkan wrote to the new mayor, Hanni Amann, and Jean Heyman applied to Oskar Burtscher with a request for news of the whereabouts of his mother, Clara Heimann-Rosenthal, and his aunt, Sophie Steingraber-Hauser. A little later Jean Heyman visited Hohenems and the Burtschers were handed the property his mother had left behind, stored in the house. The Heyman and Burtscher families kept in touch and remained on friendly terms.

**Austria and Responsibility.** Since the Allies had described Austria as the first victim of the German war of expansion in the Moscow Declaration of 1942, the Second Republic could settle into a convenient victim role. Of course, “the Germans”, who had overrun their innocent neighboring country were to blame. In this way it was initially possible to ignore all demands for the return of property, homes, and jobs, and the denazification of the country could be reduced to “a very few miscreants”. Nobody invited those driven out seven years before to return to Austria, indeed, it was even said that the emigrants had had an easy time of it, because they did not have to live in a war zone. Decades went by between the utterance made in 1948 by the Socialist Party Minister for the Interior, Oskar Helmer, in view of the demands for compensation, “I’d be in favor of drawing things out”, and the setting up of the Austrian Historians’ Commission in charge of restitutorial affairs.

Nonetheless, many Jewish survivors and later their descendants too tried to retrieve their possessions in the course of restitution proceedings. While they were often comparatively successful with real estate, in the case of movable property this frequently meant drawn-out court proceedings, some extending into the present. Not everyone took the trouble.

*When Harry Weil applied to the district court in Feldkirch in June 1949 to reclaim the property stolen from him in 1938 and with the intention of moving back into his home, the community curtly decided he had “left voluntarily”. Nor did they know anything about stolen property, and in any case it had been worth nothing. The flat was required for the needy. However, Harry Weil not only wanted his belongings back, he also wrote that he wished to return to his job as choirmaster of the Jewish community. Evidently he was quite seriously thinking about coming back. The market community’s reply was not encouraging.*

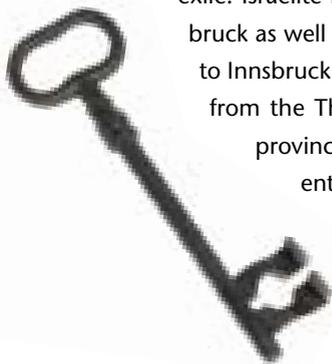
*“Harry Weil has the right of domicile in Hohenems. No one will oppose his returning to Hohenems with his wife and son if he wants to do so. The idea that he has to continue serving as the organist and choirmaster of the Israelite religious community is certainly illusionary for there is no longer an Israelite religious community in Hohenems. Apart from the Jewish concentration camp prisoners (KZler), who frequently change, there are no Jews living in Hohenems. In 1939, six Jewish people were still living in Hohenems, but none of them is here anymore. If Harry Weil wishes for a flat in Hohenems, like all other people seeking accommodation, he will have to make an application to the housing office and it will be considered on the basis of urgency and availability. But the market municipality of Hohenems definitely refuses to make the flat in the former rabbinate house available as requested in the application for restitution or to pay Harry Weil compensation for any reason whatsoever as it has caused him no damage or disadvantages in any way.”*

*(Position adopted by the market community of Hohenems in response to Harry Weil’s application for restitution, 1949)*

In Vienna Aryanization cases were far more numerous, but here too Vorarlbergers were occasionally involved. Thus, in 1948 F.M. Hämmerle and Franz M. Rhomberg had to give up the Jewish Herzmansky department store in Vienna “acquired” by them in the course of Aryanization.

About 1000 Jews from Austria returned from concentration camps and countries of exile. Israelite religious communities were formed in Graz, Linz, Salzburg, and Innsbruck as well as Vienna. Only a handful of the community members had gone back to Innsbruck either. Among them was Rudolf Brüll, who returned to his native town from the Theresienstadt concentration camp in 1946. He was appointed by the province of Tyrol as the contact for Jewish affairs and carried out the tasks entrusted to him with great zeal. He also looked into the possibility of new Jewish life in Tyrol and Vorarlberg and attended to any restitution proceedings that arose. As the former seat of the rabbinate overseeing both federal provinces, Innsbruck was now also responsible for the handling of Hohenems legal matters.

[From the Innsbruck synagogue only the key remained; Israelitische Kultusgemeinde für Tirol und Vorarlberg, Innsbruck]





Soon Rudolf Brüll began the search for the Innsbruck and Hohenems synagogue inventories. Since at first the religious communities had to contend with financial difficulties that threatened their existence, this was not only a question of the spiritual value of the Torah scrolls and Torah ornaments, but also of their material value. Soon he received a letter about this from Harry Weil, who had remained in Chicago with his wife and child and had also taken up the search for the missing objects. Both now wrote to every conceivable place, but they were completely unsuccessful. The ritual objects from Innsbruck and Hohenems are still missing to this day.

**Displaced Persons.** The advancing troops of the Allied armies of the four liberating nations, USA, Great Britain, France, and the Soviet Union, met millions of people on the move in the former “German Reich”. They were fleeing, searching: former forced laborers, liberated concentration camp prisoners, refugees from air raids, prisoners of war, people who had been driven out of their homes—Displaced Persons. For tens of thousands of them Vorarlberg and Tyrol became a transit station. The number of Jewish Displaced Persons in Austria alone is estimated to have been a quarter of a million.

[First wedding of Jewish survivors in Bregenz with Rabbi Robert Monheit (left), 1946; JMH]

Jewish survivors had returned to their eastern European countries of origin, but once there often had to recognize that little in the anti-Semitic hostility of their environment had changed. There were no longer any Jewish relatives; their houses and former property had either been destroyed or were in the hands of others. After the inconceivable events and experiences of mass annihilation and of the arbitrariness of the terror, many of them did not want to return to their place of origin or decided after their return on emigration. Eastern European Jews in particular endeavored to emigrate to the USA or Palestine. The United Nations aid organization, UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration), and the occupation forces organized the repatriation of the DPs, as all those refugees and travelers were collectively summed up. Jewish aid organizations such as the American Joint Distribution Committee, known as the "Joint", organized clothing and relief supplies for the refugees. The organization "Bricha" (Hebr. escape), set up to assist escapes, tried to get those willing to emigrate to a port on the Mediterranean coast illegally, and from there the Jewish underground army was to transfer them onto ships to Palestine. The survivors had become a political plaything in the fight for the founding of a Jewish state in the Near East. [Efraim Landau and his wife, c. 1947; JMH]



A group of Jewish survivors reached Bregenz as early as the summer of 1945: the young Orthodox Jews, freed from Mauthausen and originating from Eastern Europe, initially wanted to go to Palestine. But as Saul Hutterer, the later chairman of the DPs in Hohenems, recounted, in Italy they had decided otherwise. En route to Switzerland they got stuck on the border in Vorarlberg. Other groups, mainly from Hungary, Poland, Romania, or Czechoslovakia, met up. Most of them were devout Jews who had heard that in Bregenz there was a young, Orthodox French army rabbi, Robert Monheit from Strasbourg, who was looking after the refugees—and that quite nearby there had been a little old "Jewish town", Hohenems. Altogether between 1945 and 1954

more than a thousand Jewish survivors from Eastern Europe lived in Hohenems and Bregenz as DPs. Since the refugee accommodations in the provincial capital Bregenz had soon been filled to overflowing, in the autumn of 1945, Monheit and the French occupying authorities endeavored to find accommodation in Hohenems, supported by Jenny and Jakob Bollag in Heerbrugg.

During the war no money had been available to implement the Hohenems plans to destroy the synagogue. Thus, the building was still standing. And the first DPs were accommodated there shortly before Christmas. A little later the Brunner house and the Elkan house, and apparently at times the rabbi's house too, were compulsorily vacated on the orders of the French occupying authorities. [Right above: Rabbinical seminary Beth Shmuel in the former Brunner house, c. 1947; JMH] The majority of DPs in Vorarlberg were Orthodox, and they built up a complete infrastructure in Hohenems, from the mikvah and kosher slaughter to the Talmud school and the Beit Shmuel rabbinical seminary in the Brunner house. Well-known Orthodox rabbis came to Hohenems. Supporters of the religious Zionist Mizrachi movement, on the other hand, founded the "Af-Al-Pi" ("In spite of everything") kibbutz at the "Einfirst" inn in Hohenems and saw Vorarlberg as a short stop on their journey to Palestine or "Eretz Israel", as the Zionists called Palestine.



[Kibbutz Af-Al-Pi in the Hotel Einfirst, 1947; JMH]

In 1946 and 1947 the young Mizrachis left Hohenems as did Abraham and Esther Kopolovits, who tried to reach Palestine aboard the Exodus in 1947 and after a long odyssey found themselves back in Pöppendorf, a British internment camp near Hamburg. The British still blocked Jewish immigration to Palestine by force. Only in May 1948, with the end of the British mandate and after the 1947 UN resolution on partition had been rejected by the Arab



neighbors, did the founding of the state of Israel become a reality. The “War of Independence” began. But the majority of the DPs in Hohenems and Bregenz felt no enthusiasm for a life in Palestine and Israel—and later moved to the United States or Antwerp.



But they were all self-confident and did not shrink from conflict with the locals— for they felt they were morally in the right. They made no secret of the fact that they held the local authorities jointly responsible for the Nazi crimes and did not always feel bound by their rules and decrees. And they paraded their “Jewishness” in public, with festivals and demonstrations. The native population’s attitude to them, the “foreign”-seeming Jews from the East, was one of aggravation and frequently of hostility. They were completely different from the “old” assimilated Hohenems Jews: through their sheer presence they offended the taboo that had developed with respect to the Nazi period, they were a “reminder” of the anti-Semitic clichés, they spoke Yiddish and Polish, and they were not always friendly in their attitude, especially if they met with resentment. And that frequently happened. When garbage accumulated in front of the houses crammed with 60 and more people, neighbors protested at the Jews’ lack of cleanliness. When the Joint sent them old clothes, they also cut “a poor figure”, which they themselves perceived as a huge humiliation. And when they celebrated Jewish festivals in their houses, demonstrating their will to survive and joy at living until far into the night, then protests were lodged with the police that the Jews were celebrating strange rituals, leaping around in a circle, and shouting out incomprehensible words. In spite of everything, in their own memories the time in Vorarlberg remained a period of resurgent good living: in the former Jewish houses there were again celebrations and prayers, life and marriages, and many children were born.

*“As established, between 30 and 40 Jews live in each of the houses listed who apparently not only observe their ritual events at night, but hold parties. In both cases the most incredible noise is made by the Jews for hours, always until very late at night. At their supposedly ritual events at night time, 20 and more people foregather in one room where they stand in a circle holding hands, jumping in the air, and then thumping and stamping on the floor with their shoes. In the course of these exercises they move round in a circle, shout loud incomprehensible words, and clap intermittently with their hands.” (Report of the Hohenems rural police about nocturnal disturbances of the peace, 8 June 1946)*

[Above: Members of Kibbutz Af-Al-Pi from Hohenems at a Zionist protest in Bregenz, c. 1946; JMH / Left: Kosher wine from the DP community: Best Alicante wine from Rishon leTzion and Zikhron Yaakov, Palestine (left), Streit’s New York State Concord Grape Wine (right), Very finest wine for Kiddush and Havdala, bottled at the Ebelsberg DP camp by „Grün, Barracks 5, room 130“ (center); JMH, Gerhard Lacha deposit, Elkan house]



The DPs were well organized: under the supervision of the French occupying authorities they formed committees in Hohenems and Bregenz. Indeed, in Hohenems they formed a postwar community, though it was never formally recognized as such by the authorities. Over time they learned to supplement their constantly reduced food and clothing rations by smuggling across the Swiss border. On the basis of mass-purchased charitable gift vouchers, they organized together with Austrian companies and authorities

“imports of foodstuffs” from Switzerland to Austria, e.g., the first deliveries of coffee for Meinel in Vienna. Later still they (and their passes) were used by others for large-scale currency transfers. The Hohenems population, who had sufficient experience of their own, showed no understanding, certainly not when the economy slowly recovered and people looked for scapegoats for the black-marketeering of the postwar years who could easily be gotten rid of. With some exceptions, for many a friendly relationship arose nonetheless, people wanted to have nothing to do with these foreigners and looked sideways with envy at their supposed privileges, which could be ascribed to their position as liberated concentration camp prisoners. Hardly anyone was interested in the suffering behind those privileges, on the contrary, the DPs’ lack of gratitude was constantly deplored for after all they were living on the welfare of the province. The DPs for their part were amazed at the lack of any sense of guilt among the perpetrators and followers.

[Above: The Kohn family, c. 1949; JMH / Below: Jewish survivors and their children in Hohenems, c. 1949; JMH]

When after the heartwarming return of a Torah curtain the Hohenems DPs published an appeal for objects that had belonged to Jews and ritual objects from the synagogue to be given back, the Hohenemser offered them many items for sale. Some people in town had



definitely enriched themselves. There were also isolated violent attacks: after stones had been thrown at the Elkan and Brunner houses, the DPs asked Mayor Hanni Amann to intervene. But after initial cooperation, he began to do all he could to get rid of the unwelcome guests. And his language was revealing.

But the DPs were no longer defenseless victims. When the former Viennese rabbi Samuel Flesch saw himself described in a document written by the mayor in June 1946 as “the Jew Samuel Flesch” and yet again saw himself degraded to a “specimen”, he self-confidently

protested to the Vorarlberg provincial government. “I permit myself to stress here that I in no way find it derogatory and, therefore, am not ashamed of being a Jew: the sacrifices in my family, which I have had to attribute to this circumstance in the past, conjure up the opposite feeling in me. However, there is no doubt that this deliberate terminology on the part of an official body was never customary in Austria, far less today; but it certainly was in former National Socialist Germany and Ostmark. (...) I permit myself to make this objection in my quality as a citizen.” Mayor Amman refused to understand what Flesch was talking about,

innocently offering only to speak of “Israelites” in future. Furthermore, the Jews housed in Hohenems were those who “cold-bloodedly disregard the customs and habits of our people”.

The Jewish refugees in Switzerland also continued to be under pressure from the immigration office, which urged them to emigrate. The authorities issued extensions of their residence permits only reluctantly. And the Jewish communities themselves were reserved in their attitude towards the refugees. The political maxim “just don’t be conspicuous” was still applied. Thus, the majority of refugees left Switzerland quite soon in the first postwar years. Those who wanted to remain permanently in Switzerland, like the Kreutner family, were faced with a laborious naturalization process. As late as February 1949 Jakob Kreutner was informed by the Swiss immigration office in all due form: “You are at an age at which emigration to Israel may be expected of you. Furthermore, you may not draw the conclusion from the fact that you are currently allowed to work that this will continue to be the case. Rather you must reckon with the fact that the work permit issued will be withdrawn due to the currently declining labor market.”

In Austria welfare provisions became increasingly restrictive, which deteriorated the supposedly privileged position of the DPs still further: from 1949 support continued to be paid only to those who could not earn their own living. When a group of Jewish DPs got arrested smuggling foreign currency into Switzerland at the German customs in Lindau in 1951, the trial was widely publicized as the so-called “*Darmschmuggelaffäre*” and there was no shortage of anti-Semitic clichés in the reporting. The trial itself was conducted fairly, but shed no light on the real beneficiaries of the trade.

The exceptional state of affairs had almost turned into a permanent one: even when the State of Israel was founded in 1948, international regulations and immigration restrictions in the USA—the destination of most DPs in the province—kept many people stuck in Vorarlberg. With the “*Darmschmuggelaffäre*” the tone became harsher when the departure of the uninvited Jews was under discussion. At this point there were still 48 Jewish DPs in Hohenems, while two years later seven were left in the whole of Vorarlberg. In 1954 the formerly Jewish houses in Hohenems were again devoid of Jews.

Many a message-in-a-bottle from this time will still be washed ashore. In 2005 a cardboard box labeled “Valueless (probably Jewish) church ornaments” was found in the exhibits storeroom of the Bregenz district court with the signature of an appraiser dating from 1955. It could no longer be established to which preliminary proceedings, seizure, or criminal case the silver cult and everyday objects in the box had been linked. The Torah ornaments (a crown and two Torah finials), Elijah’s cup and the “Besamim” containers, as well as the spoon and the sugar tongs date from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and were made in the Ukraine, Russia, and Poland. But who brought them to Vorarlberg? To whom did they belong? A refugee trying to get to Switzerland in 1938? A survivor who lived in Vorarlberg as a DP after 1945? Or did a National Socialist perpetrator bring them back from his looting?

[Next Page: Finds from the exhibits room of Bregenz district court, provenance unknown; JMH]



**Not/Remembering.** As “Hitler’s first victims” the Austrians had settled down nicely in the young republic; which until 1955 remained divided into four occupation zones. The country was under Allied rule, but increasingly more responsibilities were assigned to the provisional Austrian federal government. In 1947 it granted an amnesty to the “less incriminated” former Nazis, parliamentary elections were finally held, and all parties competed for votes. The VdU, “Verband der Unabhängigen” (Union of Independents), which openly represented the interests of former National Socialists was founded as early as 1949. The Freiheitliche Partei (Freedom Party) of Austria would later emerge from it.

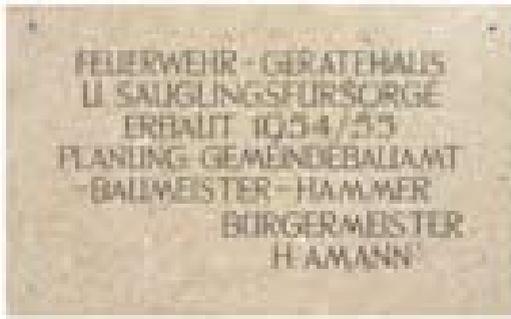
Traditional anti-Semitism, which had been further fomented in the years of National Socialism, continued to remain socially acceptable and was openly expressed. The occupying forces had great problems in denazifying the country at least superficially. Public film showings about the mass extermination of the Jews were disrupted by shouts of “Sieg Heil!”. Perpetration of the National Socialist crimes was attributed to the Germans. And the myth of the “Lagerstraße”, in which the shared sufferings of Socialists and Austrian Fascists in the resistance and in concentration camps were invoked, soon replaced any public coming to terms with Austria’s step-by-step path into National Socialism. The proceeds from the property of 120,000 expelled and more than 60,000 murdered Jews were quietly pocketed, many proceedings for restitution were made difficult, dragged out, or impeded. Newspapers did not write about the injustice, which was now being extended into the postwar present, they wrote—daily and almost openly—about the question of when the occupying forces would finally leave the country. But the negotiations over the Austrian State Treaty were protracted, and people were waiting until they would again be “masters in their own house” and be finally able to forget everything.

Hohenems too wanted to shake off its Jewish past. They viewed the Jewish presence of the DPs as an interim problem at most, an undeserved punishment for the crimes of the Nazis, the Germans, and they no longer wanted to have anything to do with them.

Not even the “great Hohenemsers” had any longer a place in the market community’s collective memory. In 1951 senior cantor Magnus Davidsohn, until 1938 president of the German Association of Cantors, approached the Hohenems municipality from his exile in London, suggesting the transformation of the former synagogue into a memorial to Salomon Sulzer. No answer to him is on record.

Meanwhile negotiations were under way with the newly founded Jewish community in Innsbruck regarding the purchase of the synagogue and the remaining real estate belonging to the Hohenems Jewish community. The plan of converting the synagogue into a fire station was still on the table. The Innsbruck community, the re-establishment of which as the “Innsbruck Jewish Community for the Federal Provinces of Tyrol and Vorarlberg” only came into effect legally in 1952, was in dire financial straits right from the start as the first compensation payments were made only irregularly and went mainly to the Vienna community.

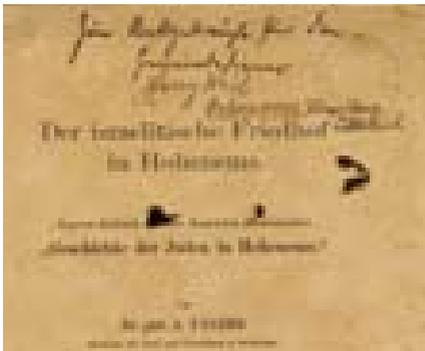




And only after a protracted legal dispute was the Innsbruck community able to establish itself vis-à-vis Vienna as the legitimate successor to the real estate property of the Hohenems Jewish community. There was no longer any need for a synagogue or other real estate in Hohenems. In Innsbruck it was only in 1961 that it became possible to rent a small prayer room and an office on Zollerstraße, allowing the community to run its affairs in a relatively organized way.

In 1954 the sale of the synagogue in Hohenems was settled, although there were also opposing voices from the Jewish community in St. Gallen. After all, many Hohenems descendants were living there. The conversion of the synagogue into a fire station could no longer be prevented. And the market town staged the conversion as a symbolic clean break. From then on the stone dedication panel on the building would read: Built 1954/55 as an infant welfare center and fire department depot.

At first, the Jewish cemetery in Hohenems also came under Innsbruck administration until the rumor got round that they were planning to lease it to a pencil factory that had its eyes on the cedars in the cemetery. By 1954 Hohenems descendants, in particular the Burgauer and Bollag-Landauer families, succeeded in founding the “Association for the Preservation of the Jewish Cemetery in Hohenems” and in taking over the cemetery. Harry Weil too committed himself from far-away Chicago to the care and safeguarding of the graves.



After the cool rejection of his attempt at reinstatement by the market community, Harry Weil and his family decided to stay in the United States. Of course, he did not allow contact with Hohenems and his old friends to be taken away from him. As early as 1948 he had given the “Nibelungenhort” choral society,

which he had founded in 1924, a choral setting of “Glaube, Liebe, Hoffnung”. And he himself as well as his son, Harry Weil Jr., began to travel to his old home country from time to time.

In the 1950s Harry Weil took over the American import representation of the Vorarlberg Josef Rupp cheese factory. This connection was certainly no accident since Josef Rupp had put up resistance to National Socialism.

[Last page: The Jewish cemetery of Hohenems, before 1938; JMH / Above: Plaque at the Hohenems synagogue mounted after its conversion into a fire station, 1955; JMH / Below: Aron Tänzer: Der jüdische Friedhof von Hohenems (The Jewish Cemetery of Hohenems), 1901, used by Harry Weil; Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau / Right: Conversion of the synagogue into a fire station, 1954/55; Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau]



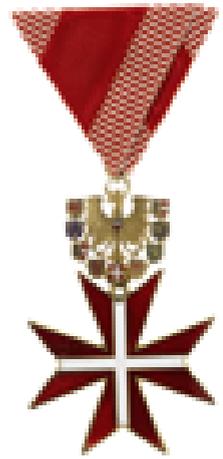
And Harry Weil again and again sent letters and photographs to his friends in Hohenems, about Christmas celebrations in Chicago and holidays in California, about his visits to Vorarlberg, about his house in the United States, and about his wife Angelina and Harry Jr.—and, of course, about the award of the Golden Order of Merit of the Republic of Austria at the consulate in Chicago, an honor he received in 1965 for his services to the Vorarlberg economy in the USA.

For any resumption of Jewish life in Austria, in Vorarlberg, in Hohenems—such as Harry Weil had still imagined in 1949—there was a lack of willingness on the part of those responsible and of interest on the part of postwar society. The return of the expelled Jews remained limited, they were not invited, even if many of them as politically active re-migrants played a public role on the margins of Austrian postwar society. Until the 1970s the number of Jews in Austria constantly declined through emigration and as a result of aging. Austrian anti-Semitism, on the other hand, proved to be rather stable, even if the Jewish presence in Austria was now only marginal.

[Below: Harry and Angelina Weil visiting their „home country“ in 1967; Otto Amann, Hohenems / Right: Harry Weil’s Gold Medal from the Republic of Austria, 1965; Harry Weil Jr., Albuquerque]



The waves of refugees from Eastern Europe—in the fifties from Hungary, in the sixties from Prague, finally from the late seventies from the Soviet Union—who again brought immigration to the postwar Jewish community. Thus, since the eighties the number of members of the Jewish communities has remained relatively stable at around 10,000. In Vienna a diverse Jewish life evolved in community institutions and schools, influenced by a wide spectrum of contrasting experiences and orientations, contradictions that found expression in an increasing pluralization involving secularism, Reform, conservative tradition, and neo-Orthodoxy. Many Jews in Austria are no longer even formally members of a Jewish community; for them Judaism is primarily a cultural or family inheritance, a common but in no way an identical religious or secular experience. And that is true of Vorarlberg too, where meanwhile more Jews are living than in 1938, whether with an Israeli, American, Austrian, Swiss, or Russian background.



The first wave of Russian immigration was, among other things, due to the diplomacy of Bruno Kreisky, who had been elected Federal Chancellor of the Republic of Austria in 1970. Kreisky was a singular figure in Austrian politics; as a Social Democrat and a Jew he had fled to Sweden from the Nazis and returned after the liberation of Austria. His premiership is still associated today with a push towards modernization in Austria, with reforms of the school system and the universities, women's and minority policies, health care and the social welfare. As the federal chancellor of a small state, he made foreign policy on a grand scale, and was severely criticized also in the Jewish community for his critical stance towards Israel. Of course, it was generally true of Kreisky's policy that he omitted few opportunities to extinguish ostentatiously any suspicion of having a political agenda as a Jew. Thus, he had absolutely no fear of contact with the indigenous Nazis, indeed, he brought Friedrich Peter, a former SS Obersturmbannführer (Senior Storm Command Leader), into the federal government as FPÖ (the right wing "Austrian Freedom Party") Minister of the Interior and altogether strengthened the "Third Camp" to weaken his main political adversary, the conservative Volkspartei (People's Party). He went so far as to publicly disown Simon Wiesenthal. This lone fighter, of all people, who had chosen "Recht, nicht Rache" (Justice, not revenge) as his principle and whose sole aim was the conviction of murderers as befits a constitutional state, was accused by Kreisky (and many other Austrians) of vindictiveness, intransigence, and inequity.

In Vorarlberg too the seventies were a period of first critical departures, as a cultural movement of young people, which found expression with the "Randspiele" festival in 1972. Until the eighties, no critical history of the National Socialist period existed in Vorarlberg—or in Austria—. In 1980 the historian Harald Walser had broken the most potent taboo with a publication on *Die Hintermänner der NSDAP in Vorarlberg* (The NSDAP backers in Vorarlberg), reminding people of the involvement of the German- Nationalist industrialists in the province on behalf of the illegal NSDAP in the thirties. With the founding of the "Malin Society" in 1982 a new generation of researchers into contemporary history came together to deal with the suppressed history of National Socialism and resistance, forced labor and racist persecution.

With the anthology *Von Herren und Menschen* the group around Walser and Gernot Kiermayr-Egger, Meinrad Pichler, Kurt Greussing, Werner Dreier, and Werner Bundschuh laid the foundations for a historiography that at least shattered the myth prevailing up until then and well into the eighties of National Socialist foreign rule forced from the outside on the idyll of Vorarlberg and of Austria. Such a breaking of taboos, albeit less politically explosive, also came from another quarter. From the seventies it again became possible to speak publicly in Vorarlberg about the suppressed Jewish history.

Karl Heinz Burmeister, who had been director of the Vorarlberg Provincial Archives since the sixties, published the first works on the Jews in the Lake Constance area and the community in Hohenems. In the new edition of Aron Tänzer's *Geschichte der Juden von Hohenems* published in 1982 he supplied proof—correcting Tänzer himself—of the pogrom of Feldkirch in 1348, and Norbert Peter for the first time pointed out anti-Semitic continuities in history. Part of this process also involved recovering this history from the space of private individual memories and putting it back into the public arena, in tentative steps that would offend no one. In 1976 it was Gerd Nachbauer who together with Hermann Prey put up a commemorative plaque on the house where Sulzer was born in the context of the first Schubertiade, and a little later opened an exhibition about Sulzer's son Josef, a member of the Philharmonic Orchestra, in the "Burtschers' house", the former Rosenthal villa.

Elsewhere too memory of the past generally remained in the hands of committed individual campaigners. Only in 1981 a plaque was publicly installed in Innsbruck commemorating the horrors of the November pogrom in Sillgasse, the site of the synagogue destroyed in 1938. A few kilometers away in Tyrol, the cult centered on "Anderl von Rinn" still continued to be celebrated. Right up to 1998, in spite of the church prohibition, "commemoration" of the invented ritual murder was celebrated with processions attended by up to 30,000 Catholics. People did not want to have their "Anderl" taken away from them.

In many respects 1986 represented a turning point in the recent history of the Second Republic. The election for the Federal Presidency had brought the Nazi past of the ÖVP candidate Kurt Waldheim to the attention of the media, and the former General Secretary of the UN wriggled, took refuge in half truths, and then took the stance that he had only "done his duty" in the Wehrmacht. Of any regret, any expression of shame about the crimes of the mass organization he had belonged to, crimes in which he was admittedly not directly involved, but of which he undoubtedly knew, of any recognition of a problem with this past, there was no trace. While Waldheim was stubbornly silent, other politicians in Austria, especially those in the Volkspartei, were all the more liberal with the anti-Semitic accusation that the whole thing was a conspiracy by "Jewish circles" in the USA—although Austrian journalists had, in fact, started the debate. In 1986 the general secretary of the ÖVP and spokesman on justice, Michael Graff, jovially expressed the opinion that Waldheim's guilt would be proved only if evidence was produced that he had personally killed six Jews—and had to resign from his post. Such tones, but also the increasingly acerbic statements in Austria, made it clear that this had long ceased to be about Waldheim or the horse he had lent to an SA cavalry echelon: it was about the relationship of Austria to its anti-Semitic heritage, a coming to terms for which Waldheim played the unfortunate role of catalyst.

In Vorarlberg too where up until that time every post-1945 election to the provincial diet had produced absolute majorities for the conservative Volkspartei, the defiant reaction fomented against the World Jewish Congress, the USA, and “the Jews” got under way. “Jetzt erst recht!” (a defiant message suggesting “All the more reason to vote for me”), the second series of Waldheim’s election posters proclaimed—and the controversial candidate attracted a bit over seventy percent of the Vorarlberg votes, and just under seventy percent of the Hohenems votes in the second ballot. The election result had serious consequences: the country was isolated in terms of foreign policy, there were no state visits, no invitations were issued to the federal president: Waldheim was “the lonely man in the Hofburg”, who realized only at the end of his life that not his past, but the way he had dealt with it was the reason for his isolation. At the same time the scandal had led to the belated breaking open of wounds relating to contemporary history and to a wave of historical and political initiatives.

[Leaflet from a Vorarlberg Action Committee opposing Kurt Waldheim, 1988; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz]



There were decisive changes in domestic politics: after Waldheim’s election victory Federal Chancellor Sinowatz resigned. His successor, Franz Vranitzky, dissolved the existing SPÖ-FPÖ coalition that autumn. Jörg Haider had taken over leadership of the populist right-wing Freedom Party in a putsch-like fashion. The new elections resulted yet again in a grand coalition between the SPÖ and the ÖVP. For the first time the Greens were also represented in Parliament. The FPÖ under Haider moved further to the right, and in view of a government perceived as lame received more and more votes supporting its policy that was charged with resentment and hostile to foreigners. With occasional anti-Semitic references he ensured the loyalty of the party’s most right-wing fringe. All the same, after his approving reference to Hitler’s “sound employment policy” he lost his office as head of the province of Carinthia for a time.

This defiant refusal to come to terms with their own history could not continue along these lines. A “culture of remembering”, which had long since been established in Germany, had by then—disputed in fierce exchanges—become part of the political mainstream. The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the “year of the Anschluss”, 1938, was the occasion, also in Austria, for a “year of reflection” in 1988, when many events and projects relating to contemporary history were initiated or publicly promoted. Federal Chancellor Vranitzky took an epoch-making step: he admitted Austria’s joint responsibility for the Nazi crimes. 1988 was also the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the November pogrom, commemoration of which—ten years after the broadcast of *Holocaust* on television—was central to many events and since then also to some museum projects.

In Hohenems there had been talk of a Jewish Museum even earlier. In 1973 Kurt Greussing—taking up a suggestion by the Hohenems Socialist Party politician Arnulf Häfele—had asked in a newspaper article that the forgotten history of the Hohenems Jews should be made public in a museum. But in 1978 Michael Guggenheimer in a report for two Swiss news-



papers was able to write only of the absence of public memory in Hohenems—and about the fact that the Jewish quarter was dilapidated and inhabited by Turkish migrants. As a result of deliberate overcrowding, the indigenous owners did quite nicely out of this use of the then largely rundown buildings, in Hohenems like in many other towns. The old houses were no longer regarded as suited to the times and were awaiting demolition. In 1980 the idea of a Hohenems Jewish Museum again cropped up in the newspapers. Elisabeth Rüdissler suggested that the former Jewish

school should be restored for that purpose, which was at least owned by the market municipality—and was also inhabited by migrant workers. It would take until 1986—by which time the first Jewish Museum of Austria had been created at the opposite end of Austria, in Eisenstadt in Burgenland—for an association for the founding of a Jewish Museum to be formed in Hohenems. [Above: Villa Heimann-Rosenthal, 1986; JMH]

The protagonists in the founding of this museum could hardly have been more different from one another and the process that ultimately led to the opening of the museum in 1991 was marked by friction. In 1983 the market community, by then elevated to town status, had purchased the Villa Heimann-Rosenthal, the now rundown, but still stately and elegant building, which Clara Heimann-Rosenthal had sold in 1936. From there she had been compulsorily resettled in 1940 and then, after an interim period in Vienna, deported to her death. Thus, the dream of a museum gained real substance—in any case, once Mayor Otto Amann had been successfully convinced of that dream. The idea of turning the house into a half-hearted conglomeration consisting of a civil registry office and a cultural office, a Museum of the Alpine Economy:—and two modest rooms commemorating Salomon Sulzer and the Rosenthal family was abandoned. Individual Jews like Erik Weltsch, Kurt Bollag or Felix Jaffé likewise began to engage with the project. [Erik Weltsch, Betram Jäger and Otto Amann, 1994 (from left to right); JMH]

With Otto Amann's authority and his decisive commitment to the project, unexpected alliances could finally be formed and tested to their limits. Local SPÖ and ÖVP politicians had to overcome, often subliminal, resistance from right across the board. Local historians who wanted to remember how good Christian-Jewish coexistence had been in Hohenems had to deal with a generation of critical historians who were keen on showing that history in Hohenems had not in any way been an idyll, but also characterized by rivalry and anti-Semitic prejudices.

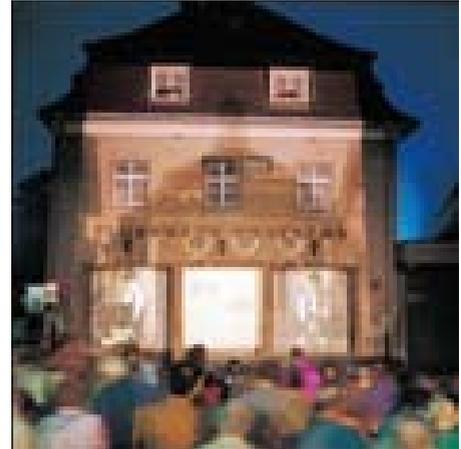


This is not the place to recount how those contradictions could be settled, withstood, and rendered productive. In any case, the impact made by the museum surpassed all expectations. Its establishment was accompanied by a greater attention to the former Jewish quarter, which has begun to change the town itself. The first symbol of this process was a new commemorative plaque on the “fire station”, the former synagogue, put up in 1991. And the museum itself has since played an active role in the public sphere. With the “*Belichtete Häuser*”

(Illuminated Houses) and *“Blickstationen”* (Viewing Positions) projects Jewish history returned into public awareness, not at all in a museum-like manner, as a projection and a transparent image, as a foil and a perspective of view, as well as an occasion for present-day dispute. [Jewish museum’s project *„Belichtete Häuser“* (Illuminated houses), 1995. Photograph by Robert Fessler; JMH]

The new attention paid to it also meant that Hohenems became more attractive as a town and an economy. Most of the surviving houses in the quarter have been gradually renovated, privately or as investments, a process that is still incomplete in the publication year of this new museum catalogue.

The museum is not just a forum for the constantly to be renegotiated balance between remembering and forgetting ; it has also become the focus of a Hohenems diaspora, formed by descendants of the Hohenems Jews who have long since become part of the widest variety of nations and religions. In 1998 more than 160 descendants of Jewish Hohenemsers from throughout the world gathered here for a meeting, which Felix Jaffé-Brunner in particular, with his commitment and persistence, had worked to bring about. Those were four days that further changed the museum, making it, in fact, the custodian of a global community, the archive and meeting point, the site of a self-confident diaspora and of a critical history of *“Heimat”* (homeland) that tells of global networks and intercultural exchange.



In 2000 the Hohenems fire department moved into a new building at the railway station, and the *“fire station”* was turned into a music school and the *“Salomon Sulzer Hall”*. In a lavish process of partial reconstruction, the façade and the prayer room of the former synagogue regained their cubic dimensions and something of their original dignity, a dignity that, admittedly, can also be felt as a void, as something that is absent. The shameful foundation plaque of 1955 as well as the commemorative plaque of 1991 have now become exhibits in the museum: memory and overwriting, forgetting and rediscovery of history have themselves become the subject of memory.



[Descendants reunion 1998 in the court of the Hohenems palace  
Photograph by Arno Gisinger; JMH]



## Museum für Kinder: Geschichte und Geschichten

Das Museum für Kinder ist ein Ort, an dem die Geschichte lebendig wird. Hier können die Kinder die Vergangenheit erleben und verstehen. Die Ausstellung zeigt die Entwicklung der Menschheit von den ersten Menschen bis zur Gegenwart. Die Kinder können die Geschichte der Menschheit entdecken und erleben. Die Ausstellung ist für Kinder ab 6 Jahren geeignet. Die Eintrittspreise sind: Erwachsene 10,-, Kinder 5,-, Familien 25,-. Die Öffnungszeiten sind: Montag bis Sonntag, 10:00 bis 18:00 Uhr. Die Adresse ist: Museum für Kinder, 10117 Berlin, Unter den Eichen 101.

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# Die Geschichte der Juden von Hohenems

Die Juden von Hohenems lebten in der Gegend um Hohenems, die heute ein Ortsteil von Lustenau ist. Sie waren eine kleine, aber bedeutende Gemeinschaft, die sich über Jahrhunderte hinweg in der Region etablierte. Ihre Geschichte ist eng mit der Entwicklung der Region verbunden.

Die ersten Erwähnungen der Juden in Hohenems datieren auf das 13. Jahrhundert zurück. In dieser Zeit waren sie oft als Händler und Geldverleiher tätig. Ihre Anwesenheit wurde durch verschiedene Dokumente und Aufzeichnungen bestätigt. Die Juden von Hohenems spielten eine wichtige Rolle in der lokalen Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft.

Die Geschichte der Juden von Hohenems ist ein Zeugnis für die Vielfalt und Toleranz der Region. Ihre Beiträge zur Entwicklung der Gegend sind unvergesslich.







## Salomon Sulzer

Salomon Sulzer (1804-1890) war ein österreichischer Komponist und Organist. Er war einer der bedeutendsten Musiker seiner Zeit und hat viele Werke für Orgel und Klavier komponiert. Er war auch ein wichtiger Vertreter der Reformbewegung in der Musik.

Wie kann ich, 'ich bin Zion' sein und trotzdem...  
Wissen über unsere Glaubensgemeinschaft  
Sulzer's Beispiel: Courage für alle Zionisten  
die Sprache sprechen haben werden, - die  
zu verstehen, dass alles ist von Gott und  
Wahrnehmung gegeben."



# Integration und Ausschluss







# Tradition und Aufklärung

Textual content on the main wall panel, including a small circular emblem at the bottom.



1820

Übersicht

Table with multiple rows and columns, likely a list or index.







Bei einem Unfall wurde eine der Außenbojen  
mit dem Boot verschleppt. Die Bojenboje  
wurde erst im Jahr 1900 wieder gefunden.  
Aber wichtige Informationen über die  
Schiffswrack sind bis heute nicht gekommen.  
Im Jahr 2014 wurde wieder eine Boje  
gefunden und es wurden weitere Informationen  
über das Schiff erhalten.

### Die Begräbnis der Märzgefallenen, 1848

Das Grabmal der Märzgefallenen in Berlin

Die Totenkapelle war während der Revolutionen  
1848/49 ein Ort der Trauer und des Gedenkens.  
Sie wurde in der Zeit der Revolutionen zerstört.

### Julius 1848: Letztes Opfer des Aufstandes

Das Grabmal des Julius 1848











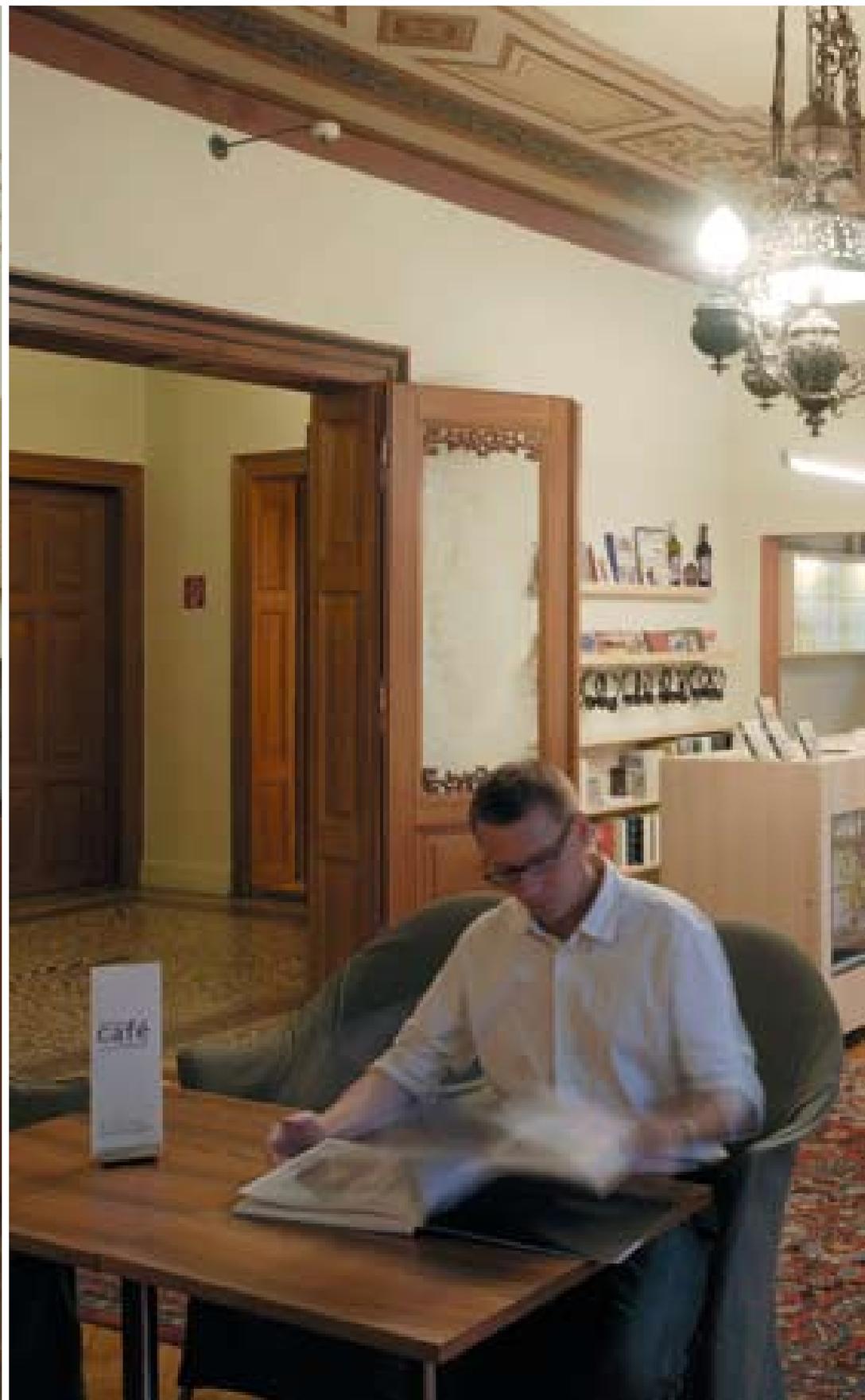
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# Christians' Lane and Jews' Lane

*Wilhelm Frey*



The little town of H. in southern Germany has only two proper streets; but this does not mean that H. is as small as all that, for if you walk for half an hour to the south or north, to the east or west, you will still find boundary stones on which you can read: H. parish, and houses or rather cottages whose inhabitants are proud to belong to the combined parish of H. But let us get back to our two streets. One of them is called "Christengaß" (Christians' Lane), the other "Judengaß" (Jews' Lane). The former is unusually long for a market town with two streets, and regularly laid out, and even if most of the buildings are unsightly, decrepit and sometimes even roofed with thatch or wooden shingles, even if individual houses, like the "Gerb", the "Krone" and the "Tavern", stand out as a rarity because of their solidity and pretty exteriors and regard their brothers to the right and left with disdainful pride, nobody can say that one of these houses stands further forward by as much as an inch, an inch I say, than the others. The picture is quite different in Judengaß. The majority of the houses there are spacious in appearance, the shingle roofs have long since been eradicated root and branch, and at night-time their successors, the tiled roofs, whisper stories to one another about how there was once a time when people lived under wood and thatch. Indeed, some houses even have three floors, which is certainly a rare asset in a small market town with two streets. However, to be truthful, I have to admit that things do not look as regular, as dead straight as they do over in Christengaß. It seems as if individual houses through an overweening ambition had been led into pushing their weaker fellows back, which is why it may have come about that the "Metzg" (butcher's shop) stands right in the corner, which admittedly is not to be regretted, for the Metzger was, is and always will be a blot on the builders' record.

Right in the middle of the lane is an attractive house which was originally painted yellow. Through some chance it was a building belonging to two owners, the upper storey belonging to one, the lower storey to the other. The man "upstairs" was a perverse gentleman. Suddenly he had the idea of having his part painted green. Unfortunately the contemporaneous owners did not live in great harmony, and the gentleman "downstairs" did not feel inclined to have his storey repainted, nor could anybody force him to. The gentleman upstairs refused to be dissuaded from his whim, instructed two masons and had his part painted green, while the lower half remained yellow.

After just a few weeks the eye was able to delight in a splendid display of color, for the rain made its contribution and brought a few stripes of the green color down into the yellow so that the house looked as though it could be tattered wallpaper or a Carnival jester. I have presented this certainly remarkable building to my readers because it has a not inconsiderable role to play in our story, and because anyone who is led to H. by good fortune is recommended to go and see it. And this house, not exactly remarkable for its past -- no robber knight, no lord of the castle, in brief nothing of the kind, performed his mischief here --, was remarkable for its then owners, for its gentleman "downstairs" and its gentleman "upstairs", for they were such sworn enemies, they quarreled with one another so often, that once in a rage the upstairs one threatened to set fire to the whole place, then use it to light his pipe of tobacco.

*From: Wilhelm Frey, Das bunte Haus, Hecht-Verlag, Hard 1996 (1857), pp. 6-7. With friendly permission by Hecht Verlag, Hard.*

[Left: Postcard showing Israelitengasse (Jews' lane, to the left) and Christengasse (Christians' lane, to the right), c. 1900; JMH]

Reminiscences of my Life, 1933

*Nanette Landauer*



They were difficult years. My brother Josef was in Alsace, Sämi had to do his last year at school. The idea of emigrating to America came into my head. Quietly I looked round to find out the address of Uncle Pollack in Philadelphia. My dear mother knew nothing about it.

I'll never forget how horrified my mother was when I told her about my decision. I'd saved up a tidy little sum in Constance for the journey. Uncle Salomon bought me the ticket. Who can describe the grief when I then bade my home farewell, when my mother laid her hands on the head of her child and prayed? From the attic window she looked at the train carrying her child off into the wide world. It was on 17 April 1889 that I traveled to the agency in Basel. There were already a lot of emigrants there, a great many 3<sup>rd</sup>-class passengers wanting to try their luck in the New World.

Then when I stepped on to the great ship later on, I was filled with an odd sensation and I felt very big –

Then we traveled across the stormy North Sea. The ship rolled quite heavily and on the very first day I was seasick. It is really horrible, you feel ill enough to die and the smell of any food makes you want to throw up. When you are young, you make friends easily, and so I soon found pleasant company, and after I'd got over the seasickness, the voyage was a pleasure. And the stewards always slipped in something nice for me! (...)

Once there was a storm at sea. Our ship tossed on the waves like a nutshell. I found it dreadful, when we were playing in the dining-room, people thought the ship would inevitably sink.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> day we saw land. The shore lay ahead of us like a green carpet and soon we saw the metropolis of New York and the giant Statue of Liberty. That had a profound effect on me and moved me to tears. Will I find people who are kind to me? I could only carry on crying. I can still see how they unloaded my trunk from the ship. And as I was standing there at the harbor, two gentlemen came up and said, You must be Miss Nanette. You see, I'd arranged with a school friend to be picked up. She was married to a German American. His name was Mr. Reuther.

The next day he showed me a lot of New York and in the evening I went with my friend's brother to the Eden Museum and was in a constant state of wonder. Mr. Reuther wanted to arrange a job for me with his brother in an embroidery shop, but I'd have been frightened of New York. I wouldn't have wanted to live there. (...)

So when I traveled alone from New York to Philadelphia, I felt really strange when I no longer heard a word of German spoken. The guard called out the stations so quickly that I of course couldn't understand a thing. On the journey I already saw so many colorful little houses belonging to black people. I felt as if I was traveling "to the end of the world"!

When we entered my uncle's house, I was astonished. White marble staircases and windowsills. And when I went into the drawing-room there was a big oil painting of my great-grandmother from Endingen. My uncle was a dear, good-looking old gentleman of seventy, still very upright in his posture. He thought I was not at all green, as the Americans describe new immigrants. I was completely dressed for winter, back home there had been snow and here it was spring everywhere. That night I was amazed when I went for the evening meal, the table was so magnificently laid and the food was so fine. I said quite naively that they shouldn't have gone to so much trouble on my account. Indeed, said Mrs. Pollack, this is how we eat every day. (...)



When we arrived in Washington, there were a lot of black people on the station who hired out little three-wheeler vehicles. A black man helped me get in. Then I rubbed my hands really well, I felt they would turn black from touching him. (...)

Throughout America there had been a major slump in business and at that time there was a huge demonstration in Washington which I find unforgettable. It was a huge workers' movement, a general from Jasonville collected up all the workers from the street. They wanted to get into the Capitol and speak for the workers. There was an enormous procession of workers and at the front there was the general's daughter on a little white horse. In front of the Capitol the police were guarding the entrance and there were many arrests. My friend Miss Rey and I ran full speed to the tram and went home. It was laughable. We leapt on like little children. (...)

I intended to go back home until the autumn, then travel back to America, so I set off in the Belgian steamer "Rheinland". My friends were quite certain that I'd be back in a few months.

To start with I froze in Zurich. The change in climate is enormous. By and large I no longer liked the way things were done in Zurich. The food, everything was different. I'd really have liked to go back to America after the first weeks. I simply didn't want my trunk to be taken up to the attic. I thought I'd be getting back down again soon. I was very happy when I received my savings at the bank and then that money became my dowry, which I'd saved up myself—but there will seldom have been a girl who saved up the way I did in America. (...)

Another year went by like this. In me there was always a slumbering desire to leave my old home country again, and my friends wrote asking when I was coming back. But things were destined to turn out differently. I was never to see America again! By chance I got to know Josef Landauer from Hohenems in spring 96. He had his old mother living at home, and he asked me to marry him. I wasn't at all keen, I wanted to go back to America—but my mother thought that if she wasn't near at hand and my brothers got married, I'd be completely abandoned and alone, and they didn't want to let me travel any more; so I followed my mother's advice, as so many Jewish daughters do, and in spring 1896 I got engaged.

My marriage was celebrated on 26 August 1896 in the family circle at Günther's restaurant in St. Gallen. It was a beautiful wedding. I was dressed in white with a wreath and a veil, and I was married by Rabbi Lissman from Zurich. My sister and my brother Josef had spared no pains, and made sure we lacked for nothing. Only my mother-in-law and Herr Leonhard Landauer and his wife were there from Hohenems. All the other wedding guests were Swiss. Afterwards Josef and I had a little trip round Lake Constance, then it was on to Hohenems. I felt awful. As if I'd had some inkling of what lay in store for me there.

When we arrived in Hohenems in pouring rain, the streets and the old station were awash with muck. That really showed me how far away I was from lovely Zurich.—Then it was on to my future home where my mother-in-law was waiting, and had kept supper ready for us. (...)

War, there was to be war with Serbia, the band processed through the town. Silly women and children ran after them, down with Serbia, they shouted, that was the start. How many troubles and worries assailed us. Those long years from 1914 to November 1918. After a few

weeks my husband came home because he was ill. He looked so neglected I'd scarcely have known him. He could hardly speak when he entered the home of his loved ones, but he wasn't allowed to stay for long. He had to report back for duty. How hard he found it to take leave of me and Jenny. Ivan was still in Zurich. I've never seen Jenny cry as she did when her father had to report back. She was at the station when the train carried her father and all the Vorarlberg men away. For us at home hard times started too. Food was increasingly rationed. Disgusting bread. Uneatable.

Jenny was working for the Bollag Brothers and was always pleased when she drove with the pony to Switzerland and could eat something there. In May 1915 Josef returned home. He didn't think he'd have to report back again. He was so thin and emaciated. He always took care to buy a kid in Gaissau so that we had something to eat, and was pleased when he was able to sell something again and so earned a bit. He thought he was finished with the military—then all at once he was called up again. Two days before he was due to go Josef died of a heart attack. The day we buried her Dad was Jenny's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

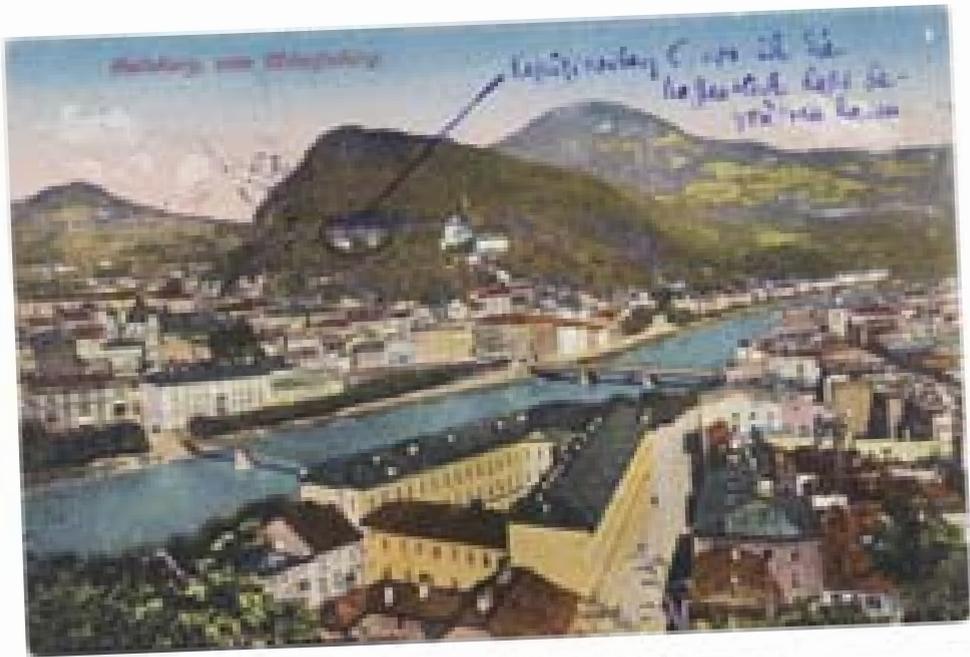
*From Nanette Landauer's Reminiscences of her life, written for her children Jenny and Ivan in 1933. JMH*

[Left: Kurt Bollag (right) and Otto Amann; JMH / Below: Envelope of "Bollag & Co", with a four-leaf clover, c. 1930. Jenny Landauer had married Kurt Bollag in 1921; Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau]



# This Kind of Nobility

Stefan Zweig



My mother whose maiden name was Brettauer was of a different, international descent. She had been born in Ancona, in southern Italy, and Italian was as much her childhood language as German; always when she was discussing something with my grandmother or her sister that the servants should not understand she switched to Italian. Risotto and artichokes which were still a rarity at the time as well as the other specialties of Mediterranean cooking were familiar to me from my earliest childhood, and whenever I later went to Italy, I immediately felt at home.

But my mother's family were by no means Italian, rather they were consciously international; early on the Brettauers, who originally owned a banking business, had spread out across the world from Hohenems, a small place on the Swiss border—following the model of the great Jewish banking families, but of course on a much more modest scale. Some went to St. Gallen, others to Vienna and Paris, my grandfather to Italy, one uncle to New York, and these international contacts gave them more polish, a wider outlook, and a certain family arrogance into the bargain. (...)

As a large-scale industrialist my father was certainly respected, but my mother, though very happily married to him, would never have tolerated his relations being put on a par with hers. This pride in coming from a "good" family was ineradicable in all the Brettauers, and when in later years one of them wanted to show me special goodwill, he would say condescendingly, "But you really are a true Brettauer", as if wanting to say in recognition: "You came down on the right side."

This kind of nobility which many a Jewish family assumed on its own authority amused me and my brother even as children, and soon annoyed us too. Again and again we got to hear that these people were "refined" and those "unrefined", enquiries were carried out into every friend to see if he came from a "good" family and checks were made down to the last detail about the origin both of his relations and their fortune. This constant classification which actually formed the main topic of every family and social conversation at that time struck us as extremely ridiculous and snobbish, because when it came down to it, in the case of all Jewish families, they had emerged from the same Jewish ghetto by only a matter of fifty or a hundred years earlier.

(...)

It is generally assumed that becoming rich is the real and typical life ambition of a Jewish person. Nothing could be more wrong. For him becoming rich means only an intermediate stage, a means towards the true purpose and in no way the inner goal. (...) Even the wealthiest man will prefer to give his daughter to a desperately poor intellectual than to a merchant. (...) even the poorest pedlar dragging his wares through wind and bad weather will try to let at least one son study, making the most extreme sacrifices, and it is regarded as an honorific title for the whole family to have someone in their midst who is visibly highly regarded in the intellectual field, a professor, a scholar, a musician, as if he ennobled them all through his achievements.

*From: Stefan Zweig, Die Welt von gestern. Bermann-Fischer Verlag, Stockholm 1944, pp. 23-25. With friendly permission by S. Fischer Verlag, Frankfurt am Main.*

[Left: Postcard from Stefan Zweig to his aunt Erna Brettauer, 1919; JMH, Beatrice Weber deposit]

## An Atmosphere Hostile to Customs

*Moritz Julius Bonn*



The journey to Hohenems was inconvenient. It went via Stuttgart and Ulm to Lake Constance, and at that time took almost a day or an entire night: there were no sleeping cars on that stretch of the line. From Friedrichshafen the train went to Bregenz, where we passed through Austrian customs. In Austria the duty on sugar, coffee and the like was very high at that time. It was customary to smuggle a little sugar, coffee or embroidery in from Switzerland. With the many petticoats worn by the ladies, it was always possible to slip in an extra set without it making you conspicuous. I grew up in an atmosphere hostile to customs and I've never been clear in my own mind whether my attitude to free trade derived from this, or from textbooks about traditional national economics. The train journey from Bregenz to Hohenems took another hour. At the station we were greeted by Herr Weil, the porter, with a long, flowing white beard. He had such a kind smile that one of my little cousins once went straight up to him and asked: "Are you dear God?" Then we were packed into a roomy landau pulled by two ponderous white horses, and four weeks of bliss lay ahead of us.

The Brunner house still stands on the main street of the town: before the rise of the Nazis it had been called Marco-Brunner-Straße after my grandfather. It was built in 1770, and looks like a superior townhouse, with three and a half storeys.

The highlight of the house was our playroom. It faced south and west, overlooking the courtyard and the garden. We had to go through the kitchen with its gleaming copper saucepans, and at least twice a week the smell of freshly roasted coffee wafted through. In Austria as it was then nobody talked about coffee beans. All coffee was coffee—with a little fig coffee and half a teaspoon of chicory added for flavor.

The playroom had a strawberry-colored tiled stove, and in its vents we cultivated silkworms. They needed an even temperature, and the greedy little creatures always kept us busy as we had to pick mulberry leaves for them. Grandmother had brought the love of rearing silkworms with her from her home town of Bolzano.

From the south-facing windows we looked out on the Säntis, the Churfürsten and the Drei Schwestern in nearby Switzerland; even on the hottest summer days the mountaintops were covered in snow. Behind the house there was a large square courtyard paved with cobblestones, enclosed on two sides by stables and the woodshed. Facing the street, there was a small front garden adjoining the house; on the west side was the start of a big orchard and vegetable garden, and a passageway covered with vines led to an arbor. Then there were meadows where a garden house with a beautiful garden room stood. That is where I used to put my first literary efforts down on paper.

Grandfather was a small-scale farmer. We kept a few cows that supplied the household with milk; butter and cheese we bought. We had enough hay for the cows and horses. Oats, bran and turnips had to be bought in. In the early spring Grandfather took on a couple of young oxen which were disposed of again in the autumn. In the courtyard, beside the woodshed—we had a little spinney—, the hens cackled and sometimes a few ducks waddled. An itinerant pedlar came regularly with a pack basket and brought us chicks, and every week a fisherman appeared carrying a small container on his back with live trout; we put them into the trough by the fountain, which bubbled day and night. Life was simple, but richly varied. The local shops made a poor impression, and delicacies were unobtainable.

[Left: Brunner house, c. 1920; JMH]

The contrast to my life in Frankfurt could not have been more complete. Grandfather was not sociable and wanted to be left alone with his family. His only regular intercourse was his daily visit to a little café where he went after lunch—we ate at twelve—and played “tarock” (a card game using tarot cards) for an hour with old acquaintances.

The holidays in Vorarlberg strengthened my Austrian inclinations which memories of Frankfurt had aroused.

Grandfather hated the Prussians and particularly Prussian compulsory military service, like every good Austrian. He had spent the greater part of his working life in Switzerland and wanted me to emigrate there to escape the hated military conscription. I often went to St. Gallen, where my Uncle Luzian Brunner had taken over from my grandfather. There from my earliest youth on I had “living democracy” before my eyes. Of course I hated the playing at soldiers aspect of Prussian militarism. But in St. Gallen I learnt that the weapon can be a pledge of freedom, and does not have to be a tool of suppression. It often amused me when my north German friends discussed Austria or Switzerland from the viewpoint of summer holiday-makers. For many of them Swiss hotels and democracy were the same thing. The expertise of the Swiss hotel director of course made a deep impression on them. If ever someone somewhere were to want to set up a perfectly functioning socialist state, they would in fact be well advised to put it under Swiss hotel management.

The Jewish community in Hohenems had an elementary school which was highly reputed throughout the province. It was so good and so liberal that an administrative objection was required to close its doors to the non-Jewish population.

(...) It is in itself a social disadvantage to belong to a small, unpopular religious community. However, the consciousness of being somehow different from most of your contemporaries offers a certain compensation. You are forced to look at nations and times from a broader perspective. It prevents you from letting yourself be swept along by the passion of the crowd that you would like to be part of, yet cannot quite be part of; but it gives you a kind of inner inviolability. You can easily break away from outmoded traditions and do not have to purchase personal freedom through breaking with the society you are born into; you see no obstacles in front of you that you might not have the strength to overcome; you do not hover between heaven and hell, between sin and salvation, and can become free without having to wear a martyr’s crown.

*From: Moritz Julius Bonn, So macht man Geschichte, Paul List Verlag, Munich 1953, pp. 26-29. With friendly permission by List Verlag, Munich.*

I as the Object. Studied by Myself

Aron Tänzer



New Year's Day 1905 is imminent. Like a good businessman—only like one, not as one, for in fact in practical life I have never understood how to count—before this day of remembrance which always has a deeply serious mood for me in the eternal passage of time I want to some extent to draw up a balance, a balance of the course of my life so far.

I hope that the New Year now beginning will bring a turning point in my life's destiny. And for that reason I have first cast a look back at the past, at the joy and suffering experienced.

I want to face myself objectively, want to recognize my development so far, and observe my future development.

I want to hold a non-partisan mirror up to myself, present to myself all the mistakes I have made in life so far and in recognizing these, in recognizing my own guilt, find peace. And I am in need of it.

Perhaps I myself will learn from this unvarnished account of my life, perhaps, indeed I hope, my dear children will at some time derive the necessary lessons for their own lives. (...) Can one consider oneself objectively? I think so. The mature, serious-minded human being who regards his individual development as the supreme objective of his existence can do everything, everything that relates to himself, i.e. is dependent only on his own thought. Everyone can look at themselves without spectacles, has to be able to do so. Including me.

It is silent night as I write these lines. They say that night is nobody's friend. Nor shall any friend wield the pen here.

Five portraits stand in front of me on my desk. My dear little children look out at me from two of them.

And from the other three?

The heads of three women who have had the most lasting influence on my life up to now. S. Kr. wanted me, but stupidly I ultimately did not want her.

I wanted I. Abr., but stupidly in the end she did not want me. Though this is only an assumption on my part.

The third is my wife, the mother of my children.

But an individual does not begin with his own adventures in life, and especially if they are innocent, as is the case here. Earlier on, even much earlier on, before any of these three female figures crossed my path, the direction it would take had already been decided, and so emphatically that so far, in spite of my gradually awakened better insight, I have not been able to abandon it. But I will.

My earliest memories take me back to Pressburg [Bratislava] in Hungary and the Judengasse there—at that time it still bore that name which meantime has had to make way for a modern one: Vartelek utca, in German: Schlossgrundgasse. Two old, dark yellow houses stood there not far from one another. One today is number 29, the other 33. (...) My mother lived

[Last page: Aron Tänzer: *"Ich als Objekt. Von mir selbst betrachtet"* (I as the Object, Studied by Myself), 1904; Erwin and Uri Taenzer collection, USA / Right: Aron Tänzer in German Uniform at his desk, c. 1915; JMH]

in the house at no. 29, my grandmother at no. 33. At no. 29 I received blows, and in spite of all her tender love generally strict reproachful words, at no. 33 food and a great many kind, friendly words. No. 29 represented the wild boy's prison, at 33 his freedom. At no. 29 reason educated him, at 33 feeling. But I am anticipating.

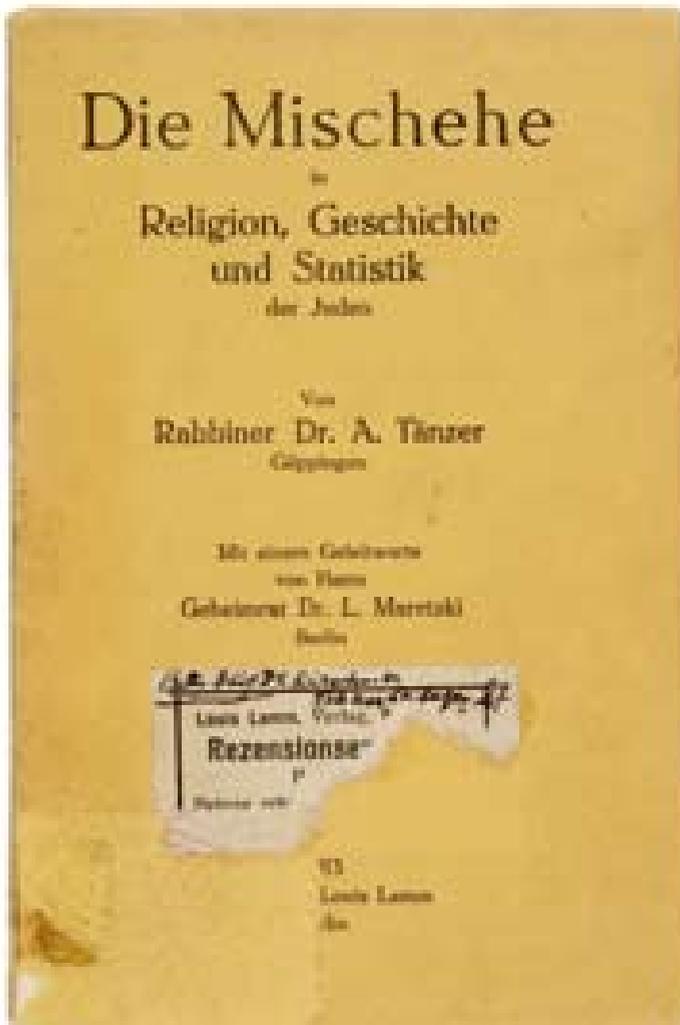
I have a father, as everyone has and yet not everybody should have. I never knew him, never saw him. Nor did he me. The marriage entered into very young by my parents lasted only a few years and was ended in all due form by mutual consent, shortly after my birth. Apparently shortly afterwards my father got married and took up a post as a rabbi in Hungary. He is supposed to have had a good knowledge of the Talmud, as well as a not inconsiderable general education. I know no more about him.

(...) For me and the whole course of my upbringing, indeed the course of my life so far, this parental split had the most adverse consequences. I recognize this today completely clearly. There was my mother, 24 years old, fairly indigent, with no breadwinner, with a little boy a few months old. (...)

When I was two and a half years old and was not yet quite dry not only behind the ears but also at a certain other part of my anatomy, my mother took me with her daily, summer and winter, leaving at about 7 a.m. when she went to work, and delivered me for the day to the supervisor of the Israelite child care institution. There at barely two and a half years of age my tiny little body learnt to sit on the school bench. And before I was three years old I already had a dozen or so little poems in my little head. There were few games there, and then only on rare occasions.

*From: Aron Tänzer, "Ich als Objekt. Von mir selbst betrachtet", Autobiographical sketch, Hohenems, December 1904"; JMH, Erwin and Uri Taenzer collection, USA.*





I long for a space in time, be it only a few hours, which are only and solely there for just me. A period during which I feel completely lifted out of myself. Am taken out of my narrow shell subject to everyday influences, so that virtually alone I can examine myself through a magnifying glass

I need a time which I can spend both critically and solemnly. One day, just one.

And today which is Yom Kippur is to be that day for me. Considering it completely logically, I have decided that Yom Kippur and no other should be that day of scrutiny.

For one thing because on this day I don't experience my body as an inhibiting burden on my mind, which has always appeared to me a pleasant concomitant phenomenon of fasting.

Here in Vienna I have the choice between many places that carry the solemnity of the day within them. Temples of every conceivable design. Magnificent with imposing organ music, simpler with only a boys' choir, and all the warmer for that. In cinemas, in hostelries, in concert halls, the spirit of the day of atonement can be found squeezed in everywhere today.

We Jews are Germans, French, Hungarians, Russians and everything else under the sun. Perhaps we are even better nationals than all the others because in us there is always only the will to develop and never the rage to destroy. And for all that on a day to day basis we think in our language of use and have accepted the relevant culture, we know we are fraternally bound together. Can so happily and easily forget that the other person in fact comes from a different "culture".

Granted, we think: Jews.

Is it such a big step to think: human beings?

The temple discharges me, so I turn towards home to finish the evening in my little room.

Once I reach home, I build myself my private temple. In doing so I am imitating something inherited from my father who also takes a fetishist delight in family pictures.

So today I put up these pictures for myself, in a completely new mood of recognition.

In my room there is a little table and on it I group all these pictures. One of each of my loves. It is undoubtedly connected with my Jewish pleasure in tracing my own suffering that now of all times when I am already burdened with a longing heart I place all who are so very dear to me before my eyes.

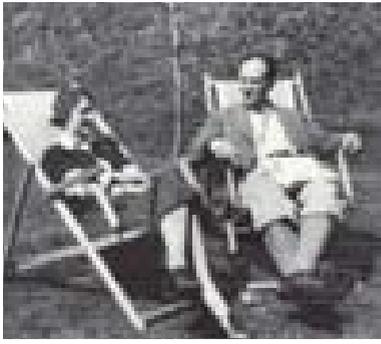
But today I do not want to let myself repine in longing, but I want to come to a decisive recognition.

So I put my parents in the middle and to the left of them all my brothers and sisters.

On the other side I put the woman who has all my love and round whom this decision is to revolve.

Here on the left my whole family, all people with whom I am most closely intertwined. My family to whom I am anchored with the last roots of my being. All that I regard as most valuable lies here. The supremacy of selfless love; here each person is endowed with the so rare gift of being able to see and feel everything from the other's point of view.

[Left: Aron Tänzer: *Die Mischehe* (Mixed marriage in the religion, history and statistics of the Jews), 1913; JMH]



[Hugo Tänzer and his wife Emilie Kozak, who converted to Judaism, before they married, c. 1935; JMH]

And here you, my Emmy, in whom I have found everything I've been looking for throughout my life.

Love, happiness, a comrade.

That I feel primarily as a Jew I already knew as a child. But perhaps I would have remained religious even if I had not as a boy already received a disruption in my belief—unconditional belief in all the commandments, I mean. Therefore I have myself experienced how deep the effect of such childhood disappointments can be.

And this is how it was:

A friend bought a piece of sausage for his parents' servant. It wasn't kosher. Today it sounds almost too childish to me myself, but my belief was so profound that I thought I would inevitably die if I ate any of that food. But I let myself be led astray and ate a bit of the sausage. The so certain death didn't happen.

From that day on I became a doubter. I was still very young, I didn't yet go to school and no longer believed everything people told me. Later on I looked for the humanly comprehensible explanation for the commandments. But it was never again possible for me to believe in the absolute necessity and rightness of every rule.

It would be better for me to go to sleep. In sleep I will forget this worry, as I've already done so often.

This eternal question:

Is it so impossible to be fair to everyone in order to be happy?

I'd better sleep.

Refreshed by deep sleep I go to the temple.

My sadness of yesterday evening has given way to a certain self-confidence.

So much so that today I make my way again quite hopefully.

No other wish fills me as I now enter the House of God than this:

to ask for clarity over this one question, whether I am doing wrong in requesting consent to my marriage to Emmy from my family, especially my dear father.

Thus I walk into the temple, with the big question on my lips:

tradition and love

or

tradition or love.

*Hugo Tänzer at Yom Kippur 1932, handed to his father Aron Tänzer on his 62<sup>nd</sup> birthday on 30 January 1933. JMH, Erwin and Uri Taenzer collection, USA*

On the Necessity and Impossibility of Being a Jew

Jean Améry

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Not infrequently when someone I am talking to breaks into a plural—i.e. as soon as he has taken in my person in an arbitrary connection and says to me: “We Jews ...”—I feel a not exactly tormenting, but certainly deep-rooted discomfort. For a long time I have tried to get at the reason for this perturbing psychological disquiet, and it was not very easy for me to do so. Is it that I, the one-time Auschwitz detainee who has really not lacked the opportunity to recognize what he is, what he has to be—was it conceivable that I still no longer wanted to be a Jew, like decades ago when I wore white half stockings, short leather trousers and anxiously eyed my image in the mirror to see if it did in fact show me a respectable German boy? Of course not.

(...)

About the impossibility first. If being a Jew means sharing religious faith with other Jews, participating in Jewish cultural and family tradition, cultivating a Jewish national ideal, then I am in a hopeless position. I do not believe in the God of Israel. I know very little about Jewish culture. I see myself as a boy trudging through a snow-covered village at Christmas to midnight mass; I do not see myself in any synagogue. I hear my mother calling on Jesus, Mary and Joseph when a small domestic misfortune occurred; I do not hear any Hebrew entreaty to the Lord. The picture of my father—whom I hardly knew for he remained where his Kaiser had sent him and his fatherland knew that he would be most safely cared for—did not show me a bearded Jewish sage, but a Tyrolean Kaiserjäger [Imperial Rifleman] in First World War uniform. I was nineteen years old when I heard of the existence of a Yiddish language, although on the other hand I very well knew that my religiously and ethnically extremely mixed family was regarded by the neighbors as Jewish, and nobody in my home thought of wanting to deny or disguise what could not in any case be hidden. I was a Jew, just as one of my fellow pupils was the son of a bankrupt landlord: when the boy was on his own, the business failure of his family might have meant virtually nothing to him; when he mixed with the rest of us, he took refuge in resentful embarrassment, as we ourselves did.

(...)

I already anticipated at the start that it is a non-relationship. I share virtually nothing with the Jews as Jews: no language, no cultural tradition, no childhood memories. In the Austrian Vorarlberg there was once a landlord and butcher and I am told that he spoke fluent Hebrew. He was my great-grandfather. I never saw him, and it must be close on a hundred years since he died. My interest in things Jewish and Jews before the catastrophe was so slight that with the best will in the world I would not be able to say of my former acquaintances which of them was a Jew, and which not. And however I tried to find my history in Jewish history, claim Jewish culture as my own, or see my personal memories in Jewish folklore, it would inevitably be to no avail. The environment I had moved in during the years when one discovers oneself was not a Jewish one, and the clock cannot be turned back. But the fruitlessness of the search for my Jewish self does not in any way stand as a barrier between me and the solidarity with all the threatened Jews throughout the world.

[Application for a "Heimatschein" in Hohenems (residence certificate) by Jean Améry (Hans Maier), needed for "accelerated emigration" 1938; Stadtarchiv Hohenems]

(...) The fact that some Arab statesman demands that Israel should be wiped off the map strikes me to the marrow, although I have never visited the state of Israel and feel not the slightest inclination to live there. Solidarity with all Jews jeopardized in their freedom, equal rights or even physical existence is *also*, but *not only* a reaction to anti-Semitism, which according to Sartre is not an opinion, but a disposition and readiness to commit the crime of genocide: it is part of me as a person and is a weapon in the fight to regain dignity.

(...)

Anti-Semitism which has engendered me as a Jew may be a delusion: that is not what is being discussed here. But in any case, delusion or not, it is a historical and social fact: I really was once in Auschwitz, and not in Himmler's imagination. And it is still a reality: only total social and historical blindness could deny that. It is true in its heartlands, Austria and Germany, where the Nazi war criminals were not condemned or were sentenced to ludicrously short prison terms, of which they generally served barely a third. It is a reality in England and the United States, where Jews are tolerated, but people would not be unhappy to be rid of them. In the form of national anti-Zionism it is a reality in the Arab states. It is a reality, and one with heavy consequences, in the spiritual cosmos of the Catholic church; the complexity and confusion surrounding the Council deliberations relating to the so-called Jewish Declaration, in spite of the honorable behavior of many a prince of the church, were a painful disgrace.

It may be—but in view of the given circumstances it can in no way be counted on—that the last act of the great historical drama of the persecution of the Jews was played out in the death factories of the Nazis. I believe that the dramaturgy of anti-Semitism is still continuing. (...)

Jean Améry, "Über Zwang und Unmöglichkeit, Jude zu sein" (*On the Necessity and Impossibility of Being a Jew*), in: J.A., *Jenseits von Schuld und Sühne. Bewältigungsversuche eines Überwältigten* (*Beyond Guilt and Atonement. Attempts to Come to Terms With by One Who Has Been Overcome*). Klett-Cotta, Stuttgart 1977, pp. 130ff. (Jean Améry. *Werke in neun Bänden*. Ed. by Irene Heidelberger-Leonard. Vol. 2: *Jenseits von Schuld und Sühne. Unmeisterliche Wanderjahre. Örtlichkeiten*. Ed. by Gerhart Scheit. Klett-Cotta, Stuttgart 2002). With friendly permission by Klett-Cotta Verlag, Stuttgart.

[Jean Améry (left) interviewed by Leo Haffner at the ORF broadcast studio in Dornbirn, February 1977; JMH]



## **„Die Engel haben mitgetanzt mit uns...“**

*A Conversation with Saul Hutterer about Jewish DPs in Hohenems after 1945*

*Saul Hutterer was born in Oswiecim in 1920 and was living in Antwerp from 1955 till he passed away in 2007. The conversation with him was conducted by Hanno Loewy in Antwerp in September 2006.*



Hanno Loewy:

How did you get to Vorarlberg? You were liberated in Mauthausen.

Saul Hutterer:

We were liberated in Linz—that was it. I must tell you about it in detail. I weighed 37 kilos. Others weighed even less. We got out; there was a group of ten of us; I held on to my colleagues, and then we set off. We went through a farming village; there was a farm with cows and horses; first of all we had to find clothes; we came to a house; nobody was there. Fine, so I took great care; I said “Listen, you lot, don’t eat!” The unfortunate thing was that after the war the Americans had flung canned food at us; and what we had to do was eat like little children; milk, a small piece of bread. Just imagine, after years when we hadn’t eaten, hadn’t slept. We were full of lice. The first thing we did was washing ourselves and each of us put on clothes. Then one of us knocked at a door; opened the door—how shall I put it? A storeroom full of food; bread, ham—I said “Lads, stop—we mustn’t eat ham, mustn’t eat any meat—nothing at all.” One fellow, he weighed perhaps 28 kilos; he stuffed himself; and contracted typhoid fever; the only one of us. Hundreds of thousands of refugees died of typhoid fever. The Americans flung fatty foods at us. He went to the hospital in Linz. He was running a temperature of 40°, 41°C. The nurse said, “Ephraim”—there’s a picture of him, his wedding photograph. (Points to a photograph lying in front of him). “Ephraim will probably die today.” It’s an interesting story. I asked: “Why does he have to die?” She said: “He’s barely alive now.” Then the doctor came in and I asked: “Are things that bad?” “Yes, it’s bad, but you can save him if you bring me cocoa and chocolate.” I brought him the chocolate and cocoa. “Where did you get that from?” The doctor fed it to him slowly, like to a child. We saved him and carried him to Hohenems on our back.

How did I get to Hohenems? In Linz there were thousands of us who wanted to go to Israel—illegally, in the boats. Every few months, they gathered up two thousand. Then we got onto the train, all of us without a mother or a father. Two thousand people and they took us to Italy. As far as Modena. They put us up in a synagogue there. I saw how hot it was in Italy... endless heat. You could not even go out onto the street. It was sweltering. So what would it be like in Israel? Then I went back to Innsbruck with my group. Two weeks before the Jewish New Year. At some point I heard about the border to Switzerland. My father had been in Switzerland in 1933. I thought we’d go to Switzerland, so we came to Bregenz. We met a rabbi, his name was Monheit. He introduced himself saying, “I’m a French rabbi”. And he put up the whole group in the Hotel Post. Two days before the New Year.

H. L.:

What was it like celebrating New Year for the first time in Bregenz?

[Left: Saul Hutterer with his violin in Hohenems, c. 1947; JMH, Saul Hutterer collection]

S. H.:

We saw a Jewish prayer book for the first time. We hadn't seen that in years. I met a rabbi and a group who all wanted to travel to Switzerland, but in Bregenz there was no way to go on. A few people traveled illegally to St. Gallen by train. A kibbutz group was formed that way. We celebrated Sukkoth, the Feast of the Tabernacle,... and then Monheit came and said, "Bregenz is of no interest to you. I hear there's an old Jewish town, Hohenems, and the Allies have occupied it. Let's go and make a nice home there." He had the old houses, like the Elkan house, cleared, and Hotel Einfirst, and he lodged us there, with the permission of the French administration, and that's how we started out in Hohenems. A few people still remained in Bregenz.

H. L.:

How did you begin to build a life for yourself there?

S. H.:

One day I traveled to the border. When I wanted to go back, I asked a man if I could travel with him. "Yes, sure." On the way he asked me: "Where are you from?" "We were in the concentration camp." "And what are you living on?" "What we get from the Joint Distribution Committee, from ration cards." For at that time money was worthless. A Dollar was 150 Austrian Schilling, and 220 German Marks were worth one Dollar. And you couldn't get anything in the shops.

So the man asks me: "What are you living on?" We had bread and milk; you just lived off what you had. We didn't have any meat. And he asks me: "Are you a dealer?" "I've just gotten out of the camp." Then he says: "Listen, I like the look of you. I'll bring you watches." At that time a watch was worth a lot. "And you'll sell them." I sold the watches and paid him. Then he brought Dollars. At that time the Dollar in Switzerland was only freely available up to 20-Dollar notes. 50 and 100-Dollar notes were already currency. "Bring me only 50 and 100-Dollar notes!" And so I started out as a dealer.

One time Rubinfeld from Lugano said: "I want to see you." The first time he met me in St. Margarethen, St. Margarethen on the border. We met by the bridge. I came from Austria, he came from Switzerland. He gave me a few Dollars. The second time we met in Diepoldsau. Rubinfeld asked if we could go into the Customs House, and the customs officer looked at Rubinfeld closely: "Is that you, Herr Rubinfeld? Don't you know me? I worked for you in your shop for eight years." Just imagine.

H. L.:

And the customs officer carried on working there for a few years?

S. H.:

Yes.

H. L.:

Did he help you?

S. H.:

Yes, he did. I could go to and fro. So then I became president of the committee. People earned money through dealing.

H. L.:

How were things among you: the large number of displaced persons (DPs) who lived in Hohenems? How did you get on with one another?



S. H.:

Like brothers and sisters. We participated in every wedding. For we were all orphans, we were all alone. And then there were small children, circumcisions. There was just one group. Of course, one came from Hungary, one from Romania, another from Russian Poland, but in spite of that we lived as a community. We had a very good life. We didn't forget holidays. We remembered the holidays back then at home. I have a talent for writing. This is how it was: those who got married first, helped those who followed. I was one of the first. We had great rabbis, after the war the preeminent rabbis from Romania came to us. [Wedding of Eugen and Irene Stern, Bregenz, 1951; JMH]

H. L.:

How did it come about that actually only religious Jews came to Hohenems and Bregenz? For there were many others.

S. H.:

The first group came with a rabbi, they were religious people. And even those who'd forgotten that they had once been religious, recollected how it had been at home back then, and so slowly we all became religious.

So a very nice group formed in this way. We studied with the rabbi, we prayed a lot together. Although one person was from here and another from there, we grew together. That's how it was. Right up to the present day, if someone from a former Hohenems family gets married, you send a wedding card. We're still part of a community today, you know.

H. L.:

How did you manage to develop the whole infrastructure for your religious needs? For you need a mikvah, a kosher butcher, a Torah, and all those things—how did you manage to organize that?

S. H.:

What happened with the Torah is very interesting. For the first three years we didn't have a Torah scroll. My aunt, my father's sister, lived in Zurich. I wanted to get to know her. So I went to Zurich. I told her a bit about my time in the concentration camp, then my aunt said, "He's making it up." She didn't believe me. The Swiss didn't believe any of it. It was incredible what we'd gone through together all those years.

In Zurich there was a great rabbi from Budapest, one of the greatest. At some point a man



from Hungary came with a parcel and said to the rabbi, "I've brought a Torah to sell." I said, "I'd like to buy it; we don't have a Torah." He showed me the Torah and the way it's done with us is this: if you write a Torah, you leave the last page empty; each person writes a letter from the prayers. This was actually a brand new Torah. And so I brought a Torah to Hohenems. That was just the parchment. We went to a carpenter and had the two poles made. The women embroidered a mantle for the Torah, and so on. And once, on a Saturday night we celebrated a great ceremony with a chuppah, a canopy. What can I say? After three years we had a new Torah scroll. We danced and we wept. We went at night with the Torah to the synagogue. The angels danced along with us. You have no idea of what it was like. To experience such a celebration after six years in the concentration camp and another three years after that. For 25 years we read from that Torah

scroll. [Simchat Torah celebration in front of the Brunner house, 1948; JMH, Saul Hutterer collection]

H. L.:

The Torah then went to Antwerp? What became of it?

S. H.:

It got old. Now it's in Israel. I took it to Israel.

H. L.:

There was one occasion when citizens from Hohenems brought you a Torah mantle.

S. H.:

Yes, they gave us an old one. But it was too big. The Torah scroll was small, but the girls sewed everything. It was splendid.

H. L.:

At that time you made an appeal and asked people in Hohenems if they wouldn't perhaps return other objects that had disappeared. Did people return some things back then?

S. H.:

Absolutely nothing. There were only a few things we could buy. The glasses, the Hanukkah lights. They sold everything. I bought various things. I've got a few of them here.

H. L.:

Where had the people gotten them from?

[Right: Chanukiah (Chanukah candle holder), Saul Hutterer bought in Hohenems c. 1947, provenance unknown; JMH, Saul Hutterer collection]





S. H.:

From places where people had lived. They'd deported the people, many left earlier on their own free will, or unfortunately... they were kicked out and weren't allowed to take anything with them, and so the people of Hohenems got hold of Jewish assets. Cushions, bedcovers.... You could buy everything. For nothing. One Dollar was 150 Schilling.

H. L.:

So what were relations like with the people of Hohenems overall? The people of Hohenems had, of course, lived together with Jews for a few hundred years. How did it go?

S. H.:

Very well. The ones who'd been chucked out of the houses were, of course, a bit.... And to be frank, they were a bit frightened. First of all the French occupation was there. They were very strict. They kept the population in check, so to speak. We lived quite freely, like at home, but, unfortunately, not really at home, we never had that. But we earned money, we crossed over to Switzerland, took a few watches with us and sold them, struck deals. We survived. And meanwhile, in 1948/49, people were permitted entry into America, it wasn't simple, so that the last people stayed on in Hohenems until 1952.

[Above: Rabbinical seminary Beth Shmuel in the Brunner house, c. 1947; JMH, Saul Hutterer collection]

H. L.:

Very few remained in Hohenems, they died there, Mordechai Chaim Orlinsky, for example.

S. H.:

It was the Feast of the Tabernacle, Sukkoth. It lasted eight days. At night we sat in the sukkah (booth). Occasionally we could buy schnapps. We made wine from the grapes. We sat, we sang, and Mordechai was a great scholar, one of the greatest rabbis. He was a bit of a joker as well. It was already very late, eleven, half past. He lived on the second floor of the Brunnerhaus and all at once his wife called: "Mordechai, it's late, come upstairs." He says: "Yes, when there's a call from above, you have to go." Despite that, he went on drinking, went on singing. A quarter of an hour later his wife shouts again: "Mordechai, come on up." Says he: "When you're called from above a second time, you have to go." The man stands up and goes, gets to the first floor and has a weak turn and collapses. My wife calls me, quick, I have to come. Mordechai lay down on my sofa and five minutes later he was dead.

H. L.:

Did he have a weak heart?

S. H.:

Yes. That was the first burial we had.

H. L.:

And you buried him in the Jewish cemetery in Hohenems?

S. H.:

His wife was pregnant then, she had a son who has the same name as his father.

H. L.:

In 1951 there was a great conflict, known as the smuggling affair?

S. H.:

At that time they nabbed the people. We lived off the Joint Distribution Committee for a time, as long as it worked. At some point they stopped sending anything any longer. We had to look out for ourselves and they smuggled only the 100-Dollar and 50-Dollar notes; it was currency. The exchange rate in Switzerland was good, if you took 1000 Dollar across, you could keep 100 Dollar. The border was virtually open. People were very kind to us former concentration camp detainees. We got documents allowing us entry for one day or for two. We traveled across the border. We took the money to Munich. We had to buy clothes to wear too, here we got absolutely nothing.

H. L.:

Where was it organized, these larger sums that were smuggled?

S. H.:

Word had gotten around in Munich that we were there in Hohenems. They asked me too, but I didn't take part. Of course, we came out of the concentration camps with nothing. Do you



know, for my fiancée—she didn't have a vest—I had to go shopping in St. Gallen. You couldn't get any clothes—they wanted to give us old stuff, charity. People wanted to live after all those years. There was hardly any bread, any flour. The ration cards were worthless. We got a little milk from the farmer.

**H. L.:**

Many people went to Palestine, many to the United States—where did you go?

**S. H.:**

With us Palestine was something sacred. The people said: "To Israel, to Israel", there it was still called Palestine, the older people went to America, the rabbi went to America, but I didn't want to go to America. I've heard that you have to work very hard there until you earn a Dollar. You have to work on the Sabbath too. I stayed put and went to Vienna. First of all I lived in Switzerland, in 1952. Then I went from Switzerland to Vienna. And from Vienna my brother-in-law and sister took me to Antwerp.

**H. L.:**

Is there such a thing as a "Hohenems Community" here in Antwerp?

**S. H.:**

Yes! Unfortunately, a few of them have died. We've stuck together up to now. If two Hohenemers meet ... There are still a lot in America, a great many.

**H. L.:**

What did it mean for you to live in that place, in that Jewish quarter? The old synagogue, the mikvah, the school?

**S. H.:**

I saw a synagogue again for the first time in a long time; they had destroyed the others. There was a Judengasse (Jews' Lane). We learned that there was a mikvah, we looked for it, then built one ourselves. We saw a Jewish town for the first time, with a Judengasse. We saw the cemetery. We started to live.

After the six years we'd endured together, the town of Hohenems was a salvation for us. Do you know what it means to live for years without anything, without a prayer book? In Mauthausen they undressed us, I thought we were going to the gas.

[Left: Jewish women in Hohenems, c. 1947; JMH, Saul Hutterer collection / Below: Swiss charity vouchers for groceries; JMH, Gerhard Lacha deposit, Elkan house]

H. L.:

What was the most important thing for you in your time in Hohenems?

S. H.:

It was the salvation after six years of German occupation. For us it was a salvation. We lived there together very well, we studied, we sang, celebrated the Sabbath communally. Just imagine, I saw a rabbi with my own eyes for the first time. Don't forget, we lived there, without anything. While we didn't forget that we were Jews, we were slaves just the same. Do you know what it means to weigh 37 kilos?



## Charity Parcels

Monika Helfer / Barbara Steinitz



## Charity Parcels

Parcels were sent from America that were known as "charity parcels". They contained coffee, tobacco and sugar. The senders were Jews who had fled to America in good time before the war. Unfortunately the parcels didn't include any warm coats. Ever since being in the concentration camp Herschel had felt freezing cold, he turned up the collar of his jacket indoors when other people were outside wearing just a shirt. The gifts were piled up against the wall, but they didn't keep him warm.

One day a woman came walking up Schweizerstraße. She had a coat over her arm. It looked nice and warm. She stopped outside Herschel's window. She knocked on the window pane. Herschel didn't understand what the woman wanted. A young man who shared the room with him and could speak a bit of German translated. She wanted to exchange the coat for coffee.

"It's my husband's coat," she said.

Herschel wanted to know what had become of her husband.

"He was killed in the war," the woman told him.

Herschel gave her two packets of coffee in exchange for the coat. It was a good coat, a soldier's coat, Herschel had already seen men wearing such coats.



# The Silver Spoon

*Michael Köhlmeier*

A meeting had taken place that evening. At the inn on the town's outskirts a separate room had been reserved. As far as I can remember, this was the first public get-together of Hohenems citizens and interested parties from throughout the province with the purpose to set up an association that would promote the establishment of a Jewish museum. After the meeting had broken up and I had paid for my beer and a small plate of goulash, a man put his hand on my shoulder and asked whether he could accompany me part of the way home. I knew him from elementary school days; he had been two classes above of me and had been admired by everyone for his dexterity in knife throwing. He was my friend, and I had been proud of that. He now lived in Switzerland, had business interests in the Eastern Bloc, and had—as he put it—“started to feel homesick for Hohenems some time ago”. We walked up the main street, past the dilapidated Villa Rosenthal, and over through Harrachgasse to Schweizerstraße, past the rundown Elkan house and down to the railway. He was speaking very loudly—too loudly and, as it seemed to me, too loudly on purpose. It was close to midnight. He told me that for some years now—as a kind of hobby—he has been taking an interest in the history of the Jews in general and the history of the Hohenems Jews in particular; that he had been to Jerusalem several times; that—albeit very cautiously—had researched Jewish history in Lithuania; that he had a considerable library of Judaica, including a signed first edition of *Die jüdische Mystik* by Gershom Scholem.

Finally—we were then level with Mathis's saddlery—he shouted out: “This evening I felt as if I were at a meeting of anti-Semites!”

I startled. I asked him to please lower his voice. I inquired what he meant by that. I said that I had not heard a single word that could be interpreted in that sense.

He explained to me what he meant. Had I not noticed how all those present—all of them!—had looked sideways or stared at the ceiling or the floor and sucked in their cheeks when he had suggested that it should be announced through the local newspaper that from now on objects that had belonged to Jews could be sent to the town hall anonymously.

“I probably looked sideways or at the ceiling or the floor myself,” I said.

“And why did you?” he asked.

I said he should answer that question for me.

“I'll be glad to,” he said, but first he had to find the right words.

We continued in silence. There was no reason for me to be offended; but I acted as if I were.

\*

An acquaintance who herself did not come from Hohenems, but was interested in the history of the Hohenems Jews, had asked me to accompany her to the meeting. I would not have gone on my own. As a “stranger” she would feel uncomfortable, she had said, no doubt the Hohenems people would think she wanted to interfere in their internal affairs. I had replied that the people of Hohenems did not own the Jews, but from how I felt myself, I recognized that this idea was really not as absurd as I tried to make it seem. “Apart from that,” she said, “I don't think the back room of an inn is the right place to establish a Jewish museum association or whatever may come of it.” I too would have preferred somewhere other than the inn. But I did not tell her that. Nor did I tell her why. She would have interpreted the story symbolically and put it in a context that could have turned it into an indictment. She would have been delighted by the story, and, therefore, I did not tell it to her.—One night when I was sixteen, the landlord

of the inn had pressed me against the whitewashed wall near the entrance for no good reason, torn off my collar, and laughing and cursing hit me in the face a dozen times with his fist. Afterwards my eyes were so swollen that I was unable to see anything, my lip was cut, and blood spread over my shirt like a wide tie. When my friends and I went to the police to report the incident, we were reviled and threatened by the officials.—“You’re not a Jewess, I’m not a Jew,” I said to my acquaintance, “and both of us were born after the war.” And I wanted to add that it would be better for us and our heroes and our martyrs if they started their careers only after 1945. Instead, I pressed her hand and did not let go of her, and like Hansel and Gretel we entered the room. Nobody took any notice of us. But then, when somebody from the proposal committee tapped with his signet ring against the wine glass so that people would be quiet, she got up and without a word to me left the room, gesturing vaguely to everybody, indicating she just had to go quickly to the bathroom. Thus, she never heard my friend’s suggestion that people should return stolen Jewish property in a discreet collection campaign toward a possible museum.

\*

At Mathis’s bakery my friend halted and held his arm in front of me like a barrier. “For example, what is in your house that belonged to the Jews?” he asked.

“A silver spoon,” I answered promptly.

“Are you joking?”

“It’s in the laundry room. My mother used it to put washing powder into the machine.”

“And how do you know that it belonged to Jews?”

“There are initials engraved on the handle.”

“But that doesn’t prove anything.”

“But once I asked my father and my mother where the spoon came from.”

“And?”

“They looked sideways and at the ceiling and the floor and sucked their cheeks in.”

He took a step back so that the light from the street lamp fell onto my face. “I know you,” he said, “I know you quite well. Even now. Is that story true?”

“No,” I said, looking frankly into his eyes. “There’s no silver spoon in our family.”

“You’re a funny fellow,” he said slowly, “perhaps even a miserable wretch, do you know that? I’ve thought so before at times. Why do you invent a story like that?”

Again I said that *he* should answer that question for me.

“You want to latch on to a destiny,” he said. “That’s what I think of you.”

He left me standing there and went.

At home I looked for the silver spoon. I could not remember the initials that were etched into the handle. I imagined I had seen the spoon that afternoon—or the previous day—or the previous week... It was no longer there. The following day I asked my wife whether she remembered a silver spoon with an engraving on it; it had always lain around in the laundry room. She did not remember. Had she never put the washing powder into the machine with a silver spoon then? No, she had not.



The Folk Lore of Anti-Semitism  
On the Intonation and Use of Certain Words

Kurt Greussing

Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften

**Vorarlbergisches Wörterbuch**

mit Einschluß des Fürstentums Liechtenstein

Herausgegeben von der  
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Bearbeitet von  
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We all beat about the bush when we speak. We don't say, at least in public: "He's a Jew" or "She's a Jewess". We evasively say: He/she is Jewish, of Jewish origin, and so on. Because we treat this word as if we were stepping on to a minefield, along with the individual referred to as a "Jew" or "Jewess". There is no neutral, innocent use of this concept.

It took a long time before we Vorarlberg historians and social scientists could say, at least in a scholarly professional conversation: "Mr. So-and-so is a Jew." We realized that back in 1990 at discussions about the setting up of the Jewish Museum. The museum was to become a place where Jewish experiences, Jewish history, but also in fact *Jews* would be spoken about differently, un-ashamedly. At that time we could easily say: "the Hohenems Jews", later also adding, to be politically correct to gender: "... and Jewesses", but found it much harder to say: "Mr. Bollag is a Jew." And also we often did not want to say it at all, in order not to label yet again those who had been made into Jews by the racism of the National Socialists.

We had to learn how to handle the word "*Jude*" (Jew). We certainly could not—and still cannot—use the dialect form, "*Jud*". For saying "*Der Herr Bollag isch an Jud*" is unequivocally disparaging, and it is quite categorically anti-Semitic. But if, as a well-meant alternative, you say in dialect: "*Der Herr Bollag isch Jude*", then a non-dialect word hangs around like an awkward foreign object in your mouth and in communication—just like the words "arbeiten" or "Arbeiter" that would not exist in the (High) Alemannic dialect of Vorarlberg either. For in the traditional dialect "*schaffa*" stands for "arbeiten" (to work) and "*Fabriklar*" for "Arbeiter" (worker). Admittedly there is the noun "Arbat" (for "Arbeit", work)—"*wart a klä, i ho gad an Arbat*" (wait a bit, I've got work to do)—but a verb "arbata" corresponding to this noun "Arbat" or an agent noun "Arbatar" does not exist in dialect. Likewise, there is no such dialect word as "Jude": the word used is "*Jud*".

The fact that the replacement of "*Jud*" by "*Jude*" does not work in dialect and therefore only "*Jud*" is available exposes the whole problem: the disparaging, venomous meaning of the word used in everyday communication to describe a Jew, deeply anchored in our linguistic preconscious.

**Short and dull.** "*Jud*" can immediately be recognized as a swear word. "*Jud*" crops up in dialect communication in many, different connections that all have a single basis: the description of avarice, rapacity, excessive business acumen, money-grubbing, such as "*gizigar Jud*", "*bisch an Jud*", "*Du Jud*", "*an richtiga Jud*" (avaricious Jew, you're a Jew, you Jew, a proper Jew)—the last said also to characterize a price regarded as extortionate. "*Es goht zua wia i dr Judaschul*" (it's like a Jews' school) is a stereotype that describes noise, unruliness and everyone talking at once in an undisciplined way (with the original reference of the word "Judenschule" to the Yiddish "Schul", i.e. the synagogue, where people also studied and debated, having been lost from our linguistic consciousness).

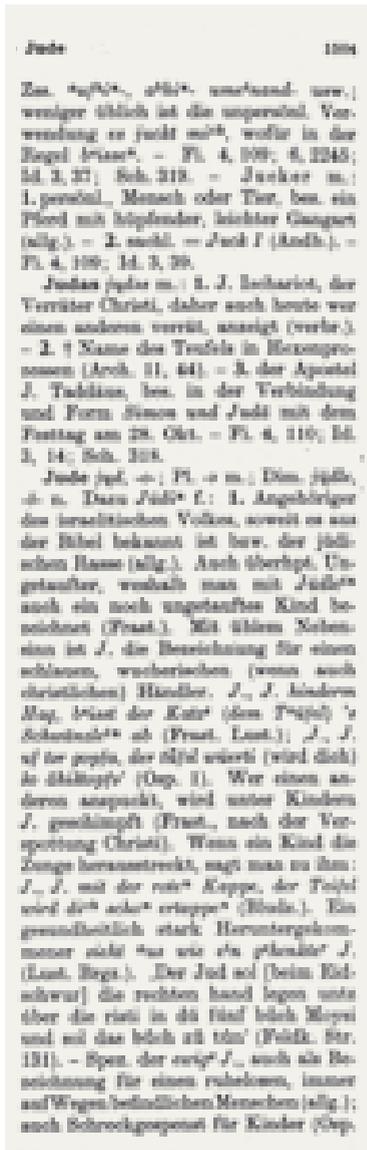
In the Vorarlberg vernacular there is not a single positive association with the word "Jew". Other minorities that have experienced discrimination have from time to time got somewhere, at least metaphorically: the "Zigeuner" (gypsy) for instance - as an ironically acknowledging description for the people of Lustenau in the form of "*Rhin-Zigüner*" (Rhine River Gypsies), as "*Zigünerle*" (little gypsy) for a sweetly adventurous child, or as a theme for a romantic song in

popular music. Also in children's and grown-ups' carnival the gypsy - and above all the female gypsy as a reflection of a hot-blooded opera figure—enjoys considerable popularity, which even carnival during the Nazi period could not damage. The “*Jud*”, however, is different: Here,

there is no trace of ambivalence. It cannot be used as a friendly diminutive (“*Jüdle*”) for our dear offspring, or as a figure of fun at carnival, where a “*Jud*” would only be conceivable as an ugly caricature, to which today, in the light of officially taboo anti-Semitism, people prefer to give a wide berth.

In the Alemannic of Vorarlberg and Switzerland there is another crucial aspect: It is not only the pejorative shortened form that marks the “*Jud*” as something to be rejected, of less worth (while “*Jude*” in High German could be a little freer of any such connotations, and therefore rose in status, at least to the level of a less disparaging use), but above all the intonation: In the High Alemannic of Vorarlberg and Switzerland “*Jud*” is pronounced with a closed, dull “u” at the back of the mouth, quite distinct from the High German “*Jude*” with its open round “u” (oo). Thus the dull sound in “*Jud*” in our region makes not only the word, but even more its music.

Admittedly, there are no empirical studies on this, not even on the frequency of the use of the word “*Jud*” as a commonplace cultural pejorative (it might have been largely replaced by “*Türk*”, while at the same time “*Yugo*” {Yugoslav} has already lost some of its negative connotative charge). But the fact that no empirical data have been collected does not mean that we do not know anything empirically. For we all have our everyday knowledge of discourse. Like all everyday things, it is not consciously reflected, but is deeply imbedded in our routines, in non-language and pre-language behavior (like the weekend walk to church, or rather today to the football match, the unspoken division of men's and women's labor, clothing routines or eye attitudes in conversation), i.e. in the preconscious-emblematic. There it is decided who “we” are and who “they”, the “others”, are. Just quietly try it out, as an experiment. Just say to a neighbor: “Are you a Protestant?”, or if you're braver: “Are you Jewish?”, and some time ask: “Sind S' an *Jud*?” (Ain't ya a Jew?)—and wait for the reaction.



... how does a person become a “*Jud*”? A glance at the *Vorarlbergische Wörterbuch* by Leo Jutz, the “Webster” of Vorarlberg vernacular, posthumously published in 1965, brings to light the generally accepted panorama of the word “*Jude/Jud*”, therefore containing little to surprise us. The entry begins in a scientific attitude by informing us that it describes a “member of the Israelite people ... or the Jewish race”, as if the National Socialists’ concept of race continued to exist in all innocence. Yet at the same time the author thereby divulges what is consistently fundamental to the word “*Jud*” in the Vorarlberg dialect: the categorization of something profoundly Other, which just like race cannot be escaped.

With the exception of a few plant names, the large number of examples found and listed all point in one direction: It is a concept of something denigrated, to be morally rejected, and of usurious, dishonorable dealings. Some of the examples have meanwhile gone out of fashion because the appraisals of the underlying circumstances have disappeared. Thus an as yet unbaptized child in the village of Frastanz would surely no longer be described as a “*Jüdle*” (little Jew), as it still was fifty years ago. But other things have survived and flourished, the “*Judaschul*” (Jewish school) of course, “*jüdale*” (to behave in a Jewish way) for usurious dealings, “*Judapries*” (Judenpreis—Jew’s price) for overpriced goods, and naturally “*Jud*” as a ubiquitous designation for a usurious dealer or anyone at all who seems to ask too high a price for something. An inferior, bad schnaps in Montafon is described as a “*Judner*”, and while “*Judafurz*” (Jew’s fart) as a firecracker has not yet found its way into Jutz’s dictionary, it is used by young people at New Year’s celebrations right across the province.

Now how do three or four innocent letters—“*Jud*” and “*Juda*” (Jew and Jews)—come to have such a meaning? How does the mere word become a negatively charged concept? Or to put it another way, because the concept refers to concrete people: What has language to do with social action? So how political is the word “*Jud*” in dialect?

Since the mid-1950s modern linguistics, as represented by John L. Austin and John Searle for instance, or the theory of symbolism, as exemplified by Susanne Langer, have provided a good basis for an understanding of the everyday speech of Vorarlberg men and women. For one thing it has been recognized that concepts—even the most abstract—are always linked to pictorial ideas. For another the direct “speech act”—a word, a sentence—always also has a meaning beyond itself. For example, someone entering a room in a pub who says to a companion: “This place stinks of smoke” is not only describing the content of olfactory substances suspended in the air, but may also mean: “I’ve got no desire to lay out my precious money on buying a schnitzel here.” Thus meanings can change depending on the circumstances to which the act of speaking relates, they are not unequivocal, they can be reinvented and gradually agreed about in discourse.

But often they have already been agreed on—and indeed very firmly. In the case of “*Jud*”, it is no more the analytical function of the concept that is predominant—as it possibly still is with the High German word “*Jude*”—which would convey a purely factual meaning: a “*Jude*” being someone who belongs to the Jewish religious community (for others: a person of Jewish origin). Rather, the synthetic function of the concept is completely dominant: namely as the conveyer of images that provide the staging and dramatization of the spoken or read word, bring it to life and couple it with strong emotions. Some of these images have become fixed over the centuries in the discourse of Christian societies—they are the stereotypes of the



usurious, incorrigible “eternal” Jew refusing a rest to Christ carrying his Cross that forms the substratum for the eternal anti-Semite.

Other more recent factors, but weighing all the more heavily—here in Vorarlberg too—were added to this: the images of Jews promulgated by political Catholicism in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century—Jews held responsible for capitalism and liberalism as well as social democracy and Bolshevism, perceived as importunate pedlars and exploitative entrepreneurs, as lecherous women’s doctors and charlatans in the banking sector. There was no aspect of the industrial modern age where Jews did not bear the main responsibility in a sinister way, with non-Jewish liberals and social democrats as “Judenliberale” or “Judensozi”, as well as journalists and writers as “Pressejuden” or “Tintenjuden” (ink Jews) being in their pay. From the 1880s the Vorarlberger Volksblatt, the Christian Social Party newspaper, became the playbill in Vorarlberg for the public spectacle of anti-Semitism, from provincial politics down to the smallest villages, and the Catholic clubhouses there. The anti-Semitism of the German Nationalists and later on of the Nazis, which employed “race science” and biology rather than the Christian story of Redemption, could avail itself without further ado of the fund of Christian Social images and words expressing hostility towards Jews.

The hysterical overall picture of Jews getting the whole world in their grasp by and large disappeared in this country with the end of Nazi rule (and the resultant vacuum was filled in some heads even by a militaristic infatuation with Israel). After the crimes of National Socialist rule, anti-Semitism ceased to be an ideology with which it was possible to succeed publicly by proclaiming it openly—so that when in doubt it is better to use code words, such as talking of the “East Coast establishment”. And anyway since 2001 Moslems—at all events on the readers’ letter pages of the local daily and weekly papers—seem to occupy the place that had been reserved for the Jews from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century until almost the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, in a panoramic scenario of a threat of historical dimensions. This shift has admittedly meant a diminution of the signficatory charge attached to the word “Jude”, but it has by no means disappeared—because the negative meanings that are associated with the word right down to its intonation continue to be firmly imbedded in the plausibility structure of our society, i.e. in everyday knowledge and everyday behavior. A person who says “Du Jud!” (“You Jew!”) to someone else knows what he means, and who is meant by it. There is no friendly excuse for it.

**The “Jud”: vanished without trace?** On the reference date of 17 May 1939 there were altogether 104 “Jews and people of mixed blood” living in Vorarlberg, according to a list painstakingly drawn up by the National Socialist authorities. Only some dozen men and women who were regarded as “Jews”, “half” or “quarter Jews” according to the racist criteria of National Socialism, and therefore came into the official machinery of segregation and persecution, were still (or again) living in Vorarlberg when the Nazi regime came to an end. That had nothing to do with any oversight on the part of the authorities or with benevolent National Socialist neighbors, as many of those affected assumed after the war, and former Nazis liked to believe, but with an officially calculated deferment of the killing: Anyone who lived in what was called a “protected marriage”, i.e. with an officially non-Jewish partner, or with a non-Jewish parent, for the time being—but by no means for ever—avoided deportation to the extermination camps.

Nonetheless discriminatory rules were the bureaucratic order of the day: a ban on radio, a ban on bikes, a ban on travel, no ration cards for meat, milk or clothes, a ban on taking refuge in air-raid shelters when there was an air-raid alarm, compulsory labor, for example in the Michel-Werke armaments factory in Bregenz. This discrimination was omnipresent, as was fear. Fear could be fear of death, as in the cases of Samuel Spindler in Bregenz who committed suicide in November 1942 because he was about to be sent to a concentration camp, Regina Sagmeister, née Guggenheim, who survived, but had already written a letter of farewell while in prison in Bregenz in May 1943 before being deported to Innsbruck, or Gisela Fagner, née Brandeis, in Lauterach, who was frightened each time she heard a step on the outside stairs of the house that she was going to be taken away, and died of angina pectoris in February 1943—a heart complaint that is triggered by great fear, and causes great fear. It was possible for the fear to be alleviated from time to time by a courageous doctor offering free treatment, for example Dr. Fritz Divischek who had moved from Vienna to Lauterach, or by visits from a local priest like Martin Tschavoll, who at burials at Lauterach cemetery in the presence of Nazis willingly and loudly conjured up divine vengeance and the end of time when the thunder of bombing raids on Friedrichshafen floated across Lake Constance. These were the—noteworthy—exceptions. Neighbors who looked the other way, held their tongues, shrugged their shoulders, down to those who grinned foolishly or claimed to have no idea, were the norm.

After the war, how did these people, to the extent that they survived, and their families deal with what the National Socialist bureaucrats, often also their neighbors, had done to them? Through silence. In the small number of Vorarlberg families affected, after the war there was mostly a taboo on what one of their parents or grandparents had suffered because he or she had been classified by the National Socialists as a “Jew” or “Jewess”. This reaction was understandable: Children were not to be troubled by the suffering of their parents or grandparents. But above all the reason for this suffering and persecution was to be kept from them, or if mentioned at all, only very quietly—so that they did not become outsiders in everyday relations that continued to be hostile to Jews and contaminated by language.

And when the children were nonetheless told one day, they were generally horrified: Grandmother, grandfather was Jewish? And the way people talked at school—for example the jolly German teacher at the Gymnasium (grammar school) in Bregenz who was always up for a brutal rap on the head and a cheerful anti-Semitic remark—and even more the way people talked outside on the street—*du Jud, gizig wie an Jud, siascht us wie an ghänkta Jud, as goht zua wie i dr Judaschual* (you Jew, avaricious as a Jew, you look like a hanged Jew, it’s like a Jewish school): was all that then linked to your own grandmother or grandfather, and consequently to yourself? Therefore for a long time silence was preserved regarding such family histories, and generally it was only the grandchildren who started to talk about them as adults.

The placing of the Jewish part of family histories under a taboo of course corresponded to the general approach to resistance and persecution after 1945. The majority of “honest citizens” tended to take the view that those who had been persecuted had indeed been up to some mischief, and those who “behaved properly” had not been troubled. The shamelessness of the way the brutality of the Nazi regime was subsequently dealt with evoked shame among those who had endured that brutality. In the farewell letter of the Bregenz woman Karoline Redler who was executed in November 1944 because of an anti-Nazi remark there is the sentence: “You don’t need to be ashamed of me...”—it says everything about the atmosphere, after 1945 too, in which not the officially legitimized criminals, but their victims were morally condemned.

But perhaps it was also the very monstrousness of the National Socialist crimes that prevented the surviving victims of the regime and their children from calling the Nazi spokesmen and fellow travelers, who were of course neighbors, business partners or fellow Vorarlbergers in other ways, to account. The incomprehensibility of these crimes becomes all the greater because of the sheer numbers of victims; only on a small, private, personal level does the situation become comprehensible. And then people often simply did not want to put it to the Nazis, and confront them face to face with what they had done—and no doubt they also wanted to spare themselves those faces.

On the other hand Nazis, old and young, did all they could to put this part of their very own history behind them: Hadn't it been people from outside who had had responsibility for the persecution and handing over to concentration camps, and then had there really been that many who died, and had the sufferings of those who had been drawn into the war not been much worse? "*Die fürs Vaterland gefallenen Helden*" (Heroes who fell for the Fatherland)—that is the inscription on the Lauterach war memorial for those who died in the First and Second World Wars, i.e. also in that war during which the Fatherland had extended from Narvik to the Don. In popular parlance and people's everyday consciousness, *they* were soon the true victims of the Nazi period.

And after all had there not perhaps been some reasons for the persecution of the Jews, if so much energy and bureaucratic effort had been invested in it? In the case of the euthanasia victims anyway, for many people such a justification was obvious: useless mouths during a harsh war in which nothing less—see the Lauterach war memorial—than the Fatherland had been at stake. And the relatives of the victims made this justification all too easy because even after the war they too kept secret the suffering of their mother, father, sister, brother or child who had been gassed or allowed to starve as lives not fit to live, and did not want to publicize it. Having someone mentally impaired in the family was regarded as shameful, or at least as a good reason for keeping quiet.

As late as 23 December 1983 a death notice appeared in the regional daily *Vorarlberger Nachrichten*: 42 years after she had been killed the urn of a woman suffering from depression and therefore murdered by the National Socialists had been found in Constance, and was then buried in Vorarlberg. The Bregenz family wanted to make neither the place of the interment nor the name of the victim of euthanasia public in this announcement: "In view of the many helpless victims from this calamitous period of tyranny who have remained nameless let her name go unmentioned. May her memory be an admonition to us who are living."

Understandable as this wish by those left behind may be, just like the silence of the descendants of the Vorarlberg women and men persecuted as Jews—memory of those victims did not in any way have to be an admonition to the former and present-day National Socialists. As the victims had no names, of course the question came up for every halfway normal Vorarlberger: Had they really existed at all?

## Memories, Knowledge, Longings: Museum Stories

*Sabine Offe*



When I traveled to Hohenems in 1992 to visit the Jewish Museum there for the first time, I knew neither Hohenems nor Austria—apart from a few brief visits as a tourist and on transit. Of course, this does not necessarily promote an unprejudiced thirst for knowledge, but does initially generate a willingness to fill the gaps, with the clichés associated with the country, the “souvenirs” in mind: from Bremen, situated in the North German Lowland, I traveled to Hohenems by train and expected mountains, high pastures, wooden balconies with geraniums, and similar backdrops. In fact, that was not so mistaken for all of those things are present in and near Hohenems. However, my first walk from the inn to the Jewish Museum, along the access road that runs through the middle of the town and past the museum and not so much masters as puts up with the truck traffic of the industrial Rhine Valley region in Vorarlberg, did not in any way match that image. Rain was falling, the mountains were shrouded in mist, the façades of the houses did not strike me as at all decorative, many being in urgent need of renovation: in short, my impression could best be summed up by the color gray. Now anyone who like me has studied “memory” professionally for a long time will be skeptical of such recollections. Was it really raining? Or is “gray” only the color that contrasts with the impression made on me by the then very newly restored, still new and already widely praised Jewish Museum, the Villa Heimann-Rosenthal? However that may be, the first visit was the beginning of wonderful friendships, many more visits have since followed, and the “gray” has given way to other brightly colored images of place and region.

Before the opening of the Jewish Museum there was neither a museum nor any other public cultural institution in Hohenems. That is surprising, as it is a town, albeit a small one. On the other hand, this faces us with the question of the purpose of museums. Would we miss them if we did not have them? Studies show that many more people say of themselves that they would like to go to the museum and that they regard museums as important and necessary than there are people who actually visit museums—the idea that one could take advantage of such an offer at any time seems to be enough for many people, without having the need to implement the idea. But it obviously remains as a wish, and perhaps that wish is an important clue to the importance of museums: they are not only real places, but imaginary and imagined ones in wish form.

Admittedly, in the field of educational institutions such as museums there is a persistent conception that they are primarily places for the production, communication, and assimilation of knowledge, here in the narrower sense: knowledge of history. But particularly in the case of museums, it can, in fact, be shown that the communication of history always also gives rise to wishes and fears, both among the visitors and those involved in exhibitions. Countering this misconception of themselves, namely that museums are primarily places of knowledge and of knowledge communication, Jewish museums, in particular, provide numerous examples where wish-motivated histories resisting any insight into their less rational motives have led and still lead to museums being set up in the first place. They enable us to reflect on how the desire to know is superimposed, thwarted, and even charged by wishes, they point out to us the exclusions, suppressions, and blockages that accompany our knowledge of history and our certainties, unless we try to understand the intrusion of wishing and the linkages between knowledge and wish in the museum as in life.

[Last page: Museum's project "Blickstationen" (Viewing positions), September 1995. Photograph by Nikolaus Walter; JMH]



So does it make any difference whether a museum exists in the place or not? In one of his both entertaining and brilliant meditations on museums, Stephen Weil, the former director of a major museum in the United States at the Smithsonian Institution, suggested imagining two islands, completely identical but cut off from one another, “fantasy islands”, the only difference between them being that the inhabitants of one suddenly start setting up museums and everything that goes with them. What consequences would that have after two, three, or four generations? Stephen Weil does not want to answer that question in any way, and he refrains from any suggestion that would allow us to come down on the side of the museum island, for, as he says, would we still be of the same view if doing without museums promoted the improvement of the welfare services and we were actually in urgent need of them?

[Above: Jewish museum's project "Belichtete Häuser" (Illuminated Houses), June 1995. Photograph by Robert Fessler; JMH]

The openness of his questions is not going to be cancelled out here by answers: readers can work out the possible scenarios for themselves. I found one such scenario on the absence of museums in Dubravka Ugresic's book *The Museum of Unconditional Surrender*: with regard to a Berlin exhibition of everyday items in the former GDR and the former FGR, war refugees and emigrants from former Yugoslavia discuss how they risk losing their everyday memories unless they again and again fix the lost things of their childhoods and everyday lives in conversations, or in texts (as the author does with her book). Those items have disappeared along with the country they grew up in, and gradually even the shared memory of them is disappearing too. They have no museum other than the museums in their heads. What remains for the refugees is to turn themselves into "walking museum exhibits", for as long as the stock of shared memories holds out, for as long as these memories—of the first Yugoslav washing powder, of a popular meat pie, of the first television program—bind them together. But ultimately, they fear, there "will no longer be anything that we can remember", and "everyone will then remember something that wasn't there". The individual passing on of cultural experience and history does not ensure their preservation for long; it is susceptible to wear and tear and forgetfulness, is distorted, submerged, and overlaid by new, different experiences with a different history.

Museums, as this scenario shows, are the result (among other things) of the desire for a place for memories of a history that was destroyed, has been lost, or is at risk of being forgotten. While a museum can do nothing to counter real history, the result of which has been the disappearance of things and memories in the first place, it can be a reminder of that history and of the fact that there was something important to remember—the objects themselves, perhaps, or only their loss and irretrievable status.

But the scenario also shows that the absence of a museum can in no way be equated to the absence of memories, and the question of what distinguishes a place with a museum from a place without a museum cannot be adequately explained by the desire or need for memories. The fact that no *Jewish* museums were set up either in Hohenems or elsewhere in Germany or Austria in the postwar decades has less to do with the "forgetting" and "suppression" of Nazi history than with the fact that that history had definitely not been forgotten, and, of course, also with the fact that public and official memory, private and family recollections, forgetting and remembering, formed complex mixtures that could as yet barely be expressed in language, that were too diffuse and controversial for agreement on them, a necessary prerequisite for an institution like a museum or a monument. The horror of the Nazi crimes and knowledge of the sweeping participation, support, or indifference that had made them possible led to a denial of guilt and responsibility, but they could also be linked up only gradually and with difficulty to the limited range of experiences and memories of local history between 1938 and 1945, much less so to individual memories of the previous long history of Hohenems Jews and non-Jews. Such memories resisted history being understood only as the prehistory of National Socialism and retained elements of a different potential history, of things shared by Jews and non-Jews in everyday life of Hohenems, in schools, associations, and neighborships.

[Jewish museum's project "Belichtete Häuser" (Illuminated Houses), June 1995. Photograph by Robert Fessler; JMH]

Remembering and forgetting are marked by time shifts, ambivalences, and conflicts that reach into the behavior and perception of the individuals concerned. Before the museum was founded, many people, not always consciously and intentionally, behaved like "walking museum exhibits". Even if they did not talk about it, as their actions, their interventions in the history of place show, they were preoccupied with their memories and came to terms with them in a publicly visible way. Memo-



ries of the Nazi past of the place, their own guilt, or the guilt of others were hard to endure, but they were in no way hidden. Their traces and consequences could not be overlooked in Hohenems any more than anywhere else, they were revealed in the way the Jewish history of the place was treated. Perhaps precisely those who undertook the conversion of the synagogue into a fire station in the 50s, or voted in the 80s for the demolition of a house that had belonged to a Hohenems Jewish family, or against the preservation of the former Jewish quarter, best remembered the Jewish and Nazi history of Hohenems. But traces of memory were not only eliminated, but from the 70s they were also sought and found. Local researchers and historians began to take an interest in the history of the Jews of the region, and the idea of founding a museum also goes back to that time. But at first the interests and motives of those involved could not yet be amalgamated to support a common project: the differences were too great.

The negotiation processes that finally resulted in the forming of a Jewish Museum were always complex, sometimes anarchic, involving players at different levels of the town and the region, committed citizens, politicians, entrepreneurs, scholars, non-Jews and Jews, experts and lay people. As happens everywhere, conflicts between generations, conflicts involving party political and economic interests and many other things became mixed up in the conflicts that preceded the Jewish Museum in Hohenems. Against images of a past local community that tended to be glorified by nostalgia, there were demands for the uncovering of the local Nazi history; in both, the sugarcoating and accusatory scenarios that were outlined, individual wishes, projections, and longings were intermingled, resentments against Jews and pro-Semitic phantasms were expressed, but also feelings of shame and sorrow.

Therefore, in my opinion these conflicts cannot properly be described as differences between those who wanted to remember and those who wanted to forget, even if those involved in them at the time might have seen things differently. The fact that they ultimately succeeded in developing a museum in Hohenems despite much resistance, a museum whose work found and finds wide resonance and recognition, was a consequence not of compromises, but of the public negotiation of these conflicts. Literally and metaphorically, the museum forms a center of the town; from the very start it did not, in fact, see itself as an island, a "fantasy island", but as part of the history and present of the town and the region. And at all levels, but always using the museum's own resources, it has engaged in local and regional debates,

e.g., over the protection of monuments, the integration of migrant workers, anti-Semitism, and other topical questions. And it has become a Jewish museum that not only remembers the history of coexistence and destruction, but with its invitation to the descendants of Hohenems Jews and the network that has arisen from that invitation, it directs its gaze also at a global Jewish present and future.

The existence of the museum in Hohenems and its importance for the community have not only brought to light forgotten stories and memories, but have also led to objects, documents, and photographs being unearthed from attics that bear witness to the coexistence of Jews and non-Jews, so that the way visitors and locals view the place, its history, and its houses and streets has changed.

As is also shown by the story of the museum in Hohenems, Jewish museums are to a high degree places of fears and of stories of longing that strive to counter them. When confronted with museums' intention to enlighten and inform, unpredictable links with life stories and local histories often arise in which, beyond the knowledge of crime and guilt that is intrinsic to Jewish museums in Austria and Germany, yearnings for a nostalgic transfiguration of the history of the place and for the senseless catastrophe of real history never to have happened can be discerned. The ambivalence, in particular, of Jewish museums between desired history and knowledge of history, between the wish to save and conserve and the knowledge of violence and destruction, permits many a story. In them, longings for security such as emanates from the upper-class domesticity of the Villa Heimann-Rosenthal are expressed. But as a museum, it does not confirm the wishes for exoneration and pardon or for the "idyllification" of local history, but points out that these wishes cannot be fulfilled and are futile. In the new exhibition the naturalization certificate is displayed that the National Socialist mayor issued to 76-year-old Clara Heimann-Rosenthal, the last Jewish occupant of the villa, on the day of her deportation so that the woman who had become stateless as a result of marriage and widowhood could be deported and killed in accordance with the new Nazi standards of justice. The document is evidence that the images of the house's domesticity and privacy, of security and "Heimat" are deceptive.

But even deceptive wishes show a path to the understanding of what museums can make possible. Stories of longing are necessary, for hidden in them, sometimes hard to recognize, there is always a protest against the real story, a moment of critical coming to terms with the past. Without museums many such stories would remain unnoticed and untold. As public places, museums create framework conditions that help such stories to be expressed in the first place. Objects, exhibitions, museums can trigger such stories of longing, can become a screen for projecting them, but they ensure that such stories do not remain private, but can be translated into publicly accessible museum stories.

The founding exhibition of the Jewish Museum in Hohenems was a good, thoughtful, well-informed and successful one. At the start of discussions about the new conception I wondered whether everything could not simply be left as is. But I soon realized that the question was being framed wrongly for in 2007 the "old" that was new in 1991 is no longer what it was: like all memories, the past of an exhibition too changes from the standpoint of our pres-



ent at the time. The new conception still accepts the guidelines of the earlier one, and where it rejects them, the two remain in dialogue. There are many important and appropriate reasons for update the exhibition: new state of research, new media, new collection holdings, and new generations of visitors who direct different wishes at history and ask different questions that the museum may not be able to answer, but can help to reframe time and again as necessary and never fully answerable questions. And so the new permanent exhibition too will continue to work on the memories, knowledge, and wishes it triggers in all those involved.

[The first permanent exhibition of the Jewish Museum Hohenems, 1991-2006. Photograph by Margherita Spillutini; JMH]

## Wilful Sophie

Monika Helfer / Barbara Steinitz

## Wilful Sophie

Once upon a time there was a little Jewish girl called Sophie. Her parents had trouble with her because she refused to do as she was told. Sophie always knew best, she always had the last word, and if something didn't suit her, she pulled horrible faces. "She's just too difficult for our little school here," her father said, leaning his forehead in his hands.



"How will she ever make a good match!" her mother sighed.

Sophie was sent to Munich to learn how to behave and be educated. And she did in fact turn into a well-mannered young woman. She no longer wanted to have the last word, and she no longer thought she always knew best. She secretly became engaged to a man who was far less clever than she was, and he

certainly wasn't a good match. What's more, he carried on working on the Sabbath, he was a coachman and no more.

Then Sophie's parents said: "Now we've sent her to Munich to be educated, and now because of her education she no longer pays attention to our customs. Oh, if only we had our wilful child back!"



## Letters to Hohenems

### On the Fascination of the Hidden, on Objects of Museological and Historical Interest, and on the Rural Jewish Bourgeoisie in the Early 19<sup>th</sup> Century

*Eva Grabherr*



I have not entered this room in a long time. By that I mean a room in my head where there are many letters - letters that were a riddle at first.

In the “old” permanent exhibition of the Hohenems Jewish Museum, opened in 1991, they could be found in a large showcase on the top floor, the attic, positioned slightly in a slant and mounted just above the floor: the “letters to Hohenems” that I would like to write about here. Museum visitors were especially struck by the bundles of used, dirty leather shoes reminiscent of archaeological finds and by the piles of paper into which the documents had been arranged for the exhibition to reproduce the situation in which they had been found. Many visitors also recounted the emotion that had overcome them at the sight of the small shriveled doll fragment without arms. They associated it with “Auschwitz”. To them the museum arrangement was another link to the numerous published pictures of personal items piled into heaps— such as shoes, bags, spectacles, and other things - of those murdered.

Yet, others initially concluded from the staging of the material in disorganized paper piles almost leading to the disappearance of the individual document that it was a genizah find, thereby displaying a more specific familiarity with Jewish tradition (and Jewish museums). Spectacular genizah finds like the one in Fustat near Cairo in the 19<sup>th</sup> century have fired and excited the imagination of researchers for decades. We are indebted to the letters contained in it for extensive knowledge above all of medieval Jewish life in the eastern Mediterranean area. And the genizah finds discovered in recent decades in the former communities of southern German *Landjuden* (rural Jews) have given us insights into the material everyday culture of Jews in these regions that “rulers’ archives” would never have enabled us to obtain. [Left: Letters of the Levi-Löwenberg family; Helen Waibel, Hohenems]

The showcase in the old permanent exhibition was labeled “A Find from the Löwenberg House”. The letters from and to Hohenems, which constitute the greater part of the find, entered the museum archives as the “Löwenberg Find”: named after the former Jewish owners of the house at Schweizerstraße 4 where the material came to light in 1986 during roof repairs. It was discovered by the granddaughter of the Christian purchaser of the house in the former Judengasse, who had bought it from the great-grandson of the original Jewish builder and owner of the house, Levi (whose family later adopted the last name Löwenberg), in 1884. Lots of paper, a few dozen worn shoes, and a few disparate objects, wrapped in thin transparent nylon, were handed to the dumbfounded creators of the exhibition in autumn of 1990 as a find from the former house of the Jewish Löwenberg family. The fact that the woman who discovered it in 1986 did not consign the material spilling out from behind the boards to the waste container but saved it, verges on a small miracle. Its later established cultural-historical significance could have hardly been perceived at first glance. An initial assessment of the find was only possible after the creators of the exhibition—equipped with dust masks and gloves—had undertaken a first cursory cleaning of the material. The woman who had found it in 1986 had grown up in the former Jewish quarter when Jewish families were still part of everyday life there and the synagogue was still used as a house of prayer. No doubt, her awareness of the Jewish history of her parents’ house and the resulting sense for its “hidden treasures” can ultimately be attributed to that experience.



[The first permanent exhibition of the Jewish Museum Hohenems, 1991-2006. Photograph by Margherita Spillutini; JMH]

The specific staging of this find in a showcase on the museum's top floor in heaps and bundles, behind which the historical significance of the individual documents and objects vanished, had at least two sources of inspiration: on the one hand, there was the desire to exhibit this find even before it had been processed in thorough scholarly manner for which there was not enough time left before the opening of the museum.

On the other hand, this arrangement was indebted to the fascination of the find in itself. That fascination can be described on two levels. One relates to the evaluation of the source: "Usually," so we were informed by the 1991 exhibition text on the showcase, "documents relating to Jewish life in Hohenems from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century have been handed down only as official records in the public archives. Following their scientific assessment, these documents, predominantly written in Hebrew script, will allow new conclusions about the everyday lives of the Hohenems Jews in the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century." The second level related to the "hidden" aspect this find represented, which in the years when the Jewish history of southern German villages and small towns was being discovered moved anybody dealing with history and memory, not only in Hohenems—from volunteer local historians to professional scholars and exhibition creators—and was likely to cause heated debates and conflicts. The showcase text written in 1991 clearly shows this aspect when it refers to religious objects from the former Hohenems synagogue that have been missing since 1945 and "the hope that there may be more 'discoveries' in the attics, under the floorboards, and in the cellars of houses in the old Hohenems 'Jewish quarter'".

Above all, the possible "hidden treasures" in the former "Jews' houses", which preoccupied local historians, laymen with an interest in history, and scholars alike, were an important—and often contentious—element in the bunch of themes that accompanied the museum's run-up to its opening and its first years of existence and tied people's interest, especially those from the local vicinity to the house. Exhibition projects, such as "*Geschichten von Gegenständen*" (Stories of objects) in 1994 and "*... für kurze Zeit*" (... for a short time) in 1996, related essentially to these debates and tried to process local history in a constructive manner.

The new permanent exhibition of the Hohenems museum is based on different sources from the 1991 exhibition. Even if there have been no comparably large and spectacular finds since, a fair number of objects relating to the towns' Jewish history have meanwhile found their way into the museum's collection from houses in the former Jewish quarter and can now be seen in the new exhibition. Nor should the contact with the descendants of Hohenems Jewish families worldwide, which has constantly expanded in recent years, be forgotten, and it too has been reflected in the collection's holdings. All this now allows for an exhibition narrative from an internal Jewish perspective as well and for history to be narrated at the level of sources that show people not only as objects of social dynamics and processes, but bring into

view their perception and self-perception as well as their scope of action. The “Löwenberg Find” that has meanwhile been scientifically processed, takes its place in this development of historical sources. No longer is it presented just in bundles, as it had been in 1991, referring to the situation in which it was found, but is present through individual documents in its cultural and historical significance: in its power to bear witness to the life of rural Jewish upper-class families in the outgoing 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century, to the bourgeoisification of the Jews in these decades of emancipation, and to the change in script and language of the Jews in the German-speaking area that accompanied this process.

The unfolding of the cultural- historical significance of the find is based on its description and disclosure in the context of a dissertation that I was able to write at the Department for Hebrew and Jewish Studies at University College, London between 1997 and 2001. My initiation into this work was the fascination I felt for a pile of dirty papers of which a document had fallen into my hands in the winter of 1990 in the run-up to the opening of the museum; on closer inspection it turned out to be an inventory of a bourgeois German library written in Hebrew script. I published my first scholarly essay on this “bourgeois library” from the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century in 1991. With the completion of my dissertation, titled *“Letters to Hohenems. A Microhistorical Study of Jewish Acculturation in the Early Decades of Emancipation”* in 2001, I left the field of Jewish Studies and turned to work that was not so much academic as political and pragmatic in direction: to integration politics, whose structures are currently evolving. Acculturation and language change and the wrestling of smaller groups with a majority society over the question of how much cultural autonomy on the one hand and pressure to adapt on the other is tolerable or justified: these are the issues I now come across daily in the everyday life of an immigrant society whose roots reach far back into the past.

But what does this “Löwenberg Find” actually consist of? As well as the shoes already mentioned and a few realia, to an overwhelming extent it consists of hundreds of mostly handwritten documents: generally letters of a business or private nature, exchanged between members of the large court factor’s family, the Levi-Löwenbergs from Hohenems, and families related to them by marriage in a geographical area defined by St. Gallen, Metz, and Blamont to the west, Frankfurt am Main and Augsburg to the north, Vienna to the east, and Bolzano to the south. Chronologically, they cover the decades from 1760 to c. 1850. In terms of family biography the find unites the correspondence of three generations. It includes letters from the last third of the 18<sup>th</sup> century from and to Lazar Josef Levi, whose descendants later adopted the family name Löwenberg, as well as letters from his granddaughter, Wilhelmine (also known as Mina, Hebrew name: Miriam) to her parents Moritz and Klara Levi-Löwenberg dating from the second third of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

From the aspect of linguistic history the documents represent both the multilingualism of the Jewish communities who—alongside their internal Jewish languages, Yiddish and Hebrew—always had to be competent in the language of the country for their official and business contacts as well as the change in language and script associated with the “entry” of Jews into the emerging bourgeois nation-state societies, which took place in the outgoing 18<sup>th</sup> century and throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In short, this was a language shift from Yiddish, previously the Ashkenazi Jews’ “own” everyday language, to German.

Up until then German had been (from a Jewish perspective) the language of the “Others”. In the era of emerging nation states, however, it became the language of the nation that transcended the religious factionalism of the premodern period and, therefore, (at least ideally) included Jews. This linguistic development occurred via a kind of linguistic transitional variation. Here the change in script, which is also part of the acculturation process, enters the picture. This transitional variation can be described as German with relics of the Hebrew-Aramaic component of Yiddish written in Hebrew script, and it was in use until well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century in internal Jewish communication. All these languages and variations can be found in the Löwenberg letters. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, German in Latin script was still used exclusively for business letters to Christian business partners, later on, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was already used as the language of correspondence within the family. Western Yiddish can still be found in 18<sup>th</sup>- century internal Jewish business and private correspondence, but in 19<sup>th</sup>- century documents it no longer exists.

[Business letter from Hirsch Levi to his brother Lazarus Josef Levi, 22 October 1774; Helen Wai-bel, Hohenems]

Repeated evidence of the above-mentioned German with Hebrew-Aramaic linguistic elements in Hebrew script, described as a transitional variation, is found mainly in the find’s family correspondence from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Of course, French too as an important prestige-enhancing language among the 19<sup>th</sup>-century bourgeoisie could not be absent from the heritage of a rural Jewish upper-class family such as the Levi-Löwenbergs. In the “Löwenberg Find” there are some letters in that language, a workbook with writing and language exercises, and a language textbook. The Hebrew language is only present in two letters dated 1805 as well as in a fragment of a prayer book.

However, the “Löwenberg Find” does more than provide an insight into the process of change in language and script, which the Jews accomplished in these decades as a result of legal emancipation, bourgeoisification, and entry into the nation-state society. The everyday life of a well-to-do Jewish family with geographically ramified connections and the features made visible at this level of an early bourgeois lifestyle can be described precisely and fully on the basis of these documents. To be able to better follow the letters as a source at this level, the protagonists in this internal family correspondence will now be introduced. On the one hand, they are members of two Jewish families, related by marriage, with court connections, the Ullmanns in Augsburg and the Levi-Löwenbergs in Hohenems. This correspondence starts with the marriage of Klara Ullmann (Yiddish name “Kile”) and Moritz Levi-Löwenberg (Hebrew: Moshe) in 1807 and Klara’s move from Augsburg to Hohenems. Dozens of letters from her siblings, women friends, and servants from Augsburg to Hohenems from the ensuing decades as well as Klara’s letters from Hohenems to Augsburg have been preserved. In addition, letters between the married couple Klara and Moritz from these decades have been preserved. After the death of his father, the court factor Lazarus Josef Levi, in 1806, Moritz had taken over his business and spent a large part of the year traveling. Contact between the married couple was maintained via an intensive exchange of letters, entirely reflecting the description by Franz Kobler, the great collector of Jewish letters, that “the letter gave human beings their first wings”. Then from as early as 1819 there is also correspondence between Klara and Moritz and their children: exchanged between Hohenems and urban centers in





southern Germany like Augsburg and Munich, where the children stayed on visits to relations or also to complete their education.

The themes strongly present in the Löwenberg letters relating to an early 19<sup>th</sup>-century bourgeois lifestyle are sociability, mobility, and travel along with cultural activities and fashion. Then there is the exchange of courtesies that takes up a lot of space in communication, with the writer enquiring after the well-being of the other person, saying how he/she is and informing his/her correspondent how much he/she is longing for the other person's letter and excusing the lateness of his/her own letter: stylistic elements that relate to forms of oral conversation and reveal the Löwenberg letters as typical of the early 19<sup>th</sup>-century bourgeois family letter. From reading them we obtain the picture of a constant coming and going in the households of Levi-Löwenberg in Hohenems and Ullmann in Augsburg. Moritz Löwenberg was away on business, but also Klara and the children regularly traveled to Augsburg. The Ullmann siblings in Augsburg also frequently report in their letters that they had returned safely from Hohenems. In addition, there is hardly any letter that does not convey news about and greetings from individuals who have just arrived or just left. Again not only are the correspondent and perhaps his closer family greeted in a letter, but messages are conveyed well beyond that: to the cook, the nanny, the private tutor, secretary, or clerk in these houses belonging to the Jewish upper class, in which people outside the close family circle lived. Quite often even specific notes for these individuals are enclosed in the letters.

[[Gratulations from Ber and Sofie Ulman to Moritz and Klara Löwenberg on Efraim Löwenberg's bar mitzvah, 7 November 1826](#)]

Celebrations of milestones in life are frequently named as convivial occasions: marriages and "Bris Mile" (circumcisions) or bar mitzvah celebrations. Not every Ullmann felt in his element at these. On 16 November 1809, Josef Henle, just 18 years old, told his older sister in Hohenems that while he had been invited to the inn for the wedding of "Binswanger's (daughter) Bile", he had not taken part: because of the expenses, but also because not many young people would be there and, furthermore, he could not dance. His younger sister Henriette was spared this problem: for on 14 November 1813, Zirle Weil, Klara's woman friend in Augsburg and housekeeper at Ullmanns', invited Miriam (also known as Wilhelmine or Mina), the eldest daughter of Klara and Moritz, to Augsburg to attend dance lessons together with Henriette. Josef Henle derived more pleasure from the "very lovely, nice" house concert at the Binswangers', which he told Klara about in June 1812. Zirbele had sung and Leo had played the piano. A lot of people had been there, and both had attracted a lot of "koved" (lit. honor; admiration).

Social occasions outside the home are a favorite and a theme frequently brought up in this correspondence. A lot of writing space is devoted to revelries and festivities. In 1816 Josef Henle tells of the masked balls he has attended. At one ball, 1200 people had been present. Klara's sister Nina reports on her visits to the casino in Augsburg and her frequent participation in masked and musical balls, both in Munich and Augsburg. She is never at home in the evening, she writes to her elder sister in Hohenems in 1824, and says she is happy to hear from Klara that she too is doing everything possible to amuse herself. Zirle again reports from Augsburg how much approval Klara's daughter Mina is attracting at the "balls here". By living with

her maternal relations in the “big city” she not only learned to dance, but also became familiar with the culture of balls and social life.

The frequent visits to theaters and museums also attest to the Ullmanns’ and Löwenbergs’ zeal for culture and refinement. In a letter dated 30 September 1816 Peppi Ullmann-Wertheimer tells her sister-in-law that this year she and Josef Henle would not attend any more evenings at the theater. In 1824 Nina writes that she has heard from her brother Efraim that Klara has been to the theater in Lindau. She herself reports on museum visits with her sister Fani in Munich. Moritz Löwenberg too was an assiduous theatergoer on his travels. In 1812 Zirle reports that last time Moritz had not traveled home via Augsburg and, therefore, had unfortunately been unable to visit the new theater. In 1817 Moritz writes from Vienna that he has been to the Burgtheater there. In the capital city of the Habsburg monarchy Moritz visited not only its famous theater, but also attended the “*rotite*” (redoutes/masked ball) and frequented the best Jewish houses: the Wertheimer, Wertheimstein, Königswarter, and Biedermann families. He even made the acquaintance of Baron von Eskeles at the house of Moritz Königswarter, he reports to his Klara in 1817 from Vienna. The fact that Jews in the 19<sup>th</sup> century became staunch visitors to theaters, concerts, and museums counts as an important feature of bourgeoisification. In doing so they became part of that “general public” (no longer fragmented according to religious or class boundaries) that had developed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century in the public debates about art and that represented a prolific part of the bourgeois public discourse. This “new” public contested the primacy in these matters of State and Church as the carriers of public discourse until then. In this sense the early bourgeois public was also political, even if it did not yet debate politics in the narrower sense, e.g., state rule, but rather literature, theatrical productions, painting, or music.

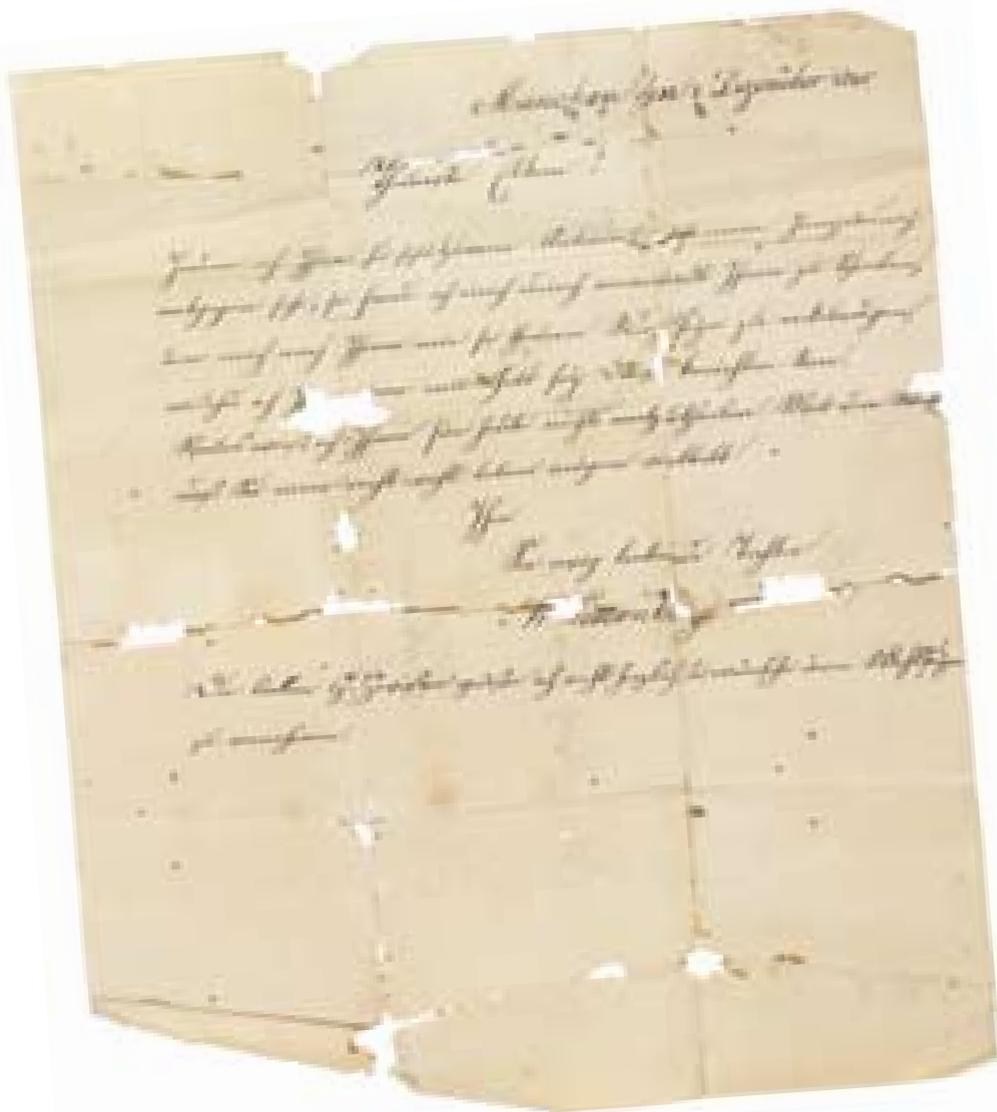
Moritz Löwenberg as a theatergoer in Augsburg, Munich, and Vienna, Klara at the theater in Lindau and at the imperial ball in Bregenz, or Nina and Fani as museum visitors in Munich reflect yet another facet of bourgeois culture: its focus on the city. Since the 18<sup>th</sup> century the city had increasingly become the center of public discourse, which had previously been occupied by the court; and precisely those new institutions of bourgeois culture such as the theater, the museum, or the concert hall consolidated the dominance of the city in Modernity. The Jewish families we know from the letters in the Löwenberg collection willingly and enthusiastically availed themselves to what the city had to offer culturally and socially: even those who—like the Löwenbergs—(still) lived in the country. Via their supraregional family network they had privileged access to the city, which benefited not only the men on business, but also the women and children. The children were also sent to the city to be educated, as shown in the example of Wilhelmine Löwenberg, who received her educational finishing touch in Munich in 1819/20 from a lady by the name of Theres Rothschild, where she also played the piano, for example, though she probably had already taken lessons in Hohenems. In view of all this, we get the impression that while these Jews did live in the country, with their “heads” they had already arrived in the city long since. The road to the urbanization of Jews in Central and Western Europe, which took place at breakneck speed in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, had been paved in the early decades of that century. While only legal equality would enable them to choose their place of residence freely and thus to complete the transition from country to city, that step had already been introduced decades earlier.

Klara—as we know from the correspondence—also procured a considerable part of her wardrobe from the city—that is, from Augsburg and from her husband’s business and travel destinations. So the “beautiful Jewish women from Hohenems” (Ludwig Steub writing in 1839 about Jewish women from Hohenems at the Reuthe spa in the Bregenzerwald) certainly owed their smart appearance to the urban sources of their clothing, wigs, and accessories. The correspondence between Klara and her friend Zirle Weil, the Ullmanns’ housekeeper in Augsburg, is particularly characterized by this exchange. Not only does Zirle have “overskirts” made for Klara in Augsburg in the “newest fashion”, a tulle dress, veils with lace, beautiful and expensive bonnets and hats (a black velvet hat, currently the latest thing), but she also procures shoes and materials (a yellow merino, batiste, velvet for “patching”, muslin). In addition, she regularly takes bonnets, veils, and lace to the cleaner’s for Klara. Moritz too frequently procured clothes, materials, and accessories for Klara and the children on his business trips.

As Zirle kept emphasizing, she did everything possible to obtain things in the latest fashion for Klara. Thus, in 1821 she reported to Hohenems that she had received the merino from Rambacher half an hour ago and after lunch would immediately take it to tailor “Krä”. While he often made you wait a long time for the work, in compensation it would then turn out all the more beautiful. And “Krä” needed no instructions on the desired “cut” because every week he obtained a different “Journal” and was thus always up to date. In 1813 Zirle also busied herself as a “setter of pearls” for her friend in remote Hohenems. She had set the remaining pearls from the string into a brooch in the shape of a rose. Klara could wear it on a turban, just as the Crown Prince’s *Obersthofmeister* (Imperial High Steward of the Household) did. So our Zirle was not lacking in presumption, even taking court fashion as her model for Klara’s outfit. To what extent Klara had opportunities to wear these items in her rural surroundings in Hohenems and what impression she made with them there, can, unfortunately, no longer be reconstructed. However, for us it once again becomes clear how strongly not only business and cultural life of this rural Jewish upper class was guided by the city, but their behavior as consumers too.

[Next page: [Wilhelmine Löwenberg to Klara Löwenberg, 8 December 1820; Helen Waibel, Hohenems](#)]

An assessment of the Löwenberg-Ullmann correspondence regarding all the aspects of Jewish everyday life that are covered in it would far exceed the scope of this contribution. I would like to conclude these observations with one aspect of Jewish everyday life to which—like to sociability—a lot of space and attention is devoted in this correspondence: mobility, or more concrete, travel. Men in rural Jewish communities, who worked primarily in commerce and money-lending, had been traveling a lot even before 1800; and the Jewish upper class, namely court factors, covered great distances even in the premodern period to make use of and maintain the supraregional network on which their business lives were based. Moritz Levi-Löwenberg’s professional everyday life would not have been very different in this respect from that of his ancestors. There is hardly any letter from one of the Ullmanns in Augsburg in which there is not a report that Moritz has dropped in there on one of his business trips to Vienna, Munich, etc. And the correspondence from Moritz to Klara (from Metz, Vienna, Innsbruck, etc.) consists of letters that he wrote to her on business trips. He repeatedly promises her that he will write regularly and announces in each letter already the next one. In 1817 he has to



reassure her in a letter that she need not worry if she does not hear from him; he might simply be prevented from writing for once. Klara's disappointment or even complaints over too few letters from Moritz and the punctiliousness with which he announces his next letters on every occasion is understandable if we consider how long the couple was sometimes separated by these business trips: in one letter, its date has, unfortunately, been destroyed, but was written before 1813, Klara asks her Moritz to come home before the Sabbath. After all, he has now been traveling for over two months and on a boring "jomtev" (holy day) she misses him especially. Klara's longing for her absent husband is also a frequent theme in her siblings' letters to Hohenems.

But there are not only reports of the men's professional travels; women and children are also on the move, traveling a great deal and often. This served not least to maintain the family network. Klara and her children, especially her eldest daughter—of all the Löwenberg children we learn most about her—were often in Augsburg and in Munich too. There they would have visited the family of Klara's mother, descended from the Wertheimers, a Jewish court family. Munich was also frequently mentioned as a travel destination for the Ullmann siblings from Augsburg. Mina also traveled with her father. In 1821, for example, she traveled with him from Augsburg to Baden in southern Germany. In 1824 Nina writes to her sister Klara in Hohenems that she had been told in Darmstadt, while the horses were being changed, about a Mina Löwenberg from Metz who was staying in the house of "Madame Ansbach". Unfortunately, we do not learn from this letter whether Mina was staying with this family for educational or for other purposes. But then in 1827 she married Abraham Lehmann from Blamont, a relationship that might be traced back to that stay.

This high mobility, also of women and children for the purpose of recreation and pleasure (or to conform to the bourgeois ideas of status), reflects a general trend of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Western and Central Europe: the increasingly expanding accessibility of territories through enhanced transportation infrastructure within the borders of the emerging nation states. Opening up access in this way was, of course, motivated by primarily economic, political, and administrative considerations, but also made travel possible for an ever expanding group for other than purely professional reasons. Just as innovations in communications technology represented a precondition for the development of the bourgeois culture of letter writing at the close of the 18<sup>th</sup> and in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the opening up of territories through transportation technology in these decades was a precondition for a travel culture that included more groups than before and represented an important aspect of the bourgeois way of life.

However, we learn hardly anything from the letters about the religious life and practices of these families. The frequently mentioned (religiously based) celebrations of life's milestones in the social circle of the letter writers are mentioned as occasions for social get-togethers and as outstanding events in family life. The feasts of the Jewish year are also important occasions for the exchange of letters. However, details of religious practices or even any comment about the religious meaning of these feasts are not a theme in these letters. At most, we learn from an incidental remark by Josef Henle in a letter to his sister that the Ullmanns in Augsburg observe the "*yohrzayt*" (anniversary) commemoration for their deceased father. But not a single word about the religious education of the children or young men beyond their bar mitzvah preparations can be gleaned from all the letters. As against this, education (private tutors for learning to read and write, women teachers for handiwork, dancing masters, governesses, etc.) is very much a topic. We may thus assume that the young men of these families no longer received a really fundamental religious education in the traditional Jewish sense. However, the prohibition on working on the Sabbath was still properly observed: thus, in 1817 Moritz writes to Klara that he had to wait for the Sabbath to end to be able to write to her, and, therefore, was now in a great hurry as the post was about to go. And we also learn something about the entry of a "new" ritual into the habits of these families: in 1810 Josef Henle Ullmann complains to his older sister in Hohenems that his work burden is currently so great that he cannot even find time for his "Sunday walk". Moritz's observation of the ban on writing on the Sabbath

together with this casual mention of the bourgeois institution of the Sunday walk shows us how naturally elements of a Jewish and a bourgeois way of life could coexist in these families already in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

What prompted me to follow these Jewish traces of early bourgeois life? And what traces has this concern left behind in my work today, work that has to do with social forms of a migration that is apparently very far removed from the bourgeois idylls of the Ullmanns and Löwenbergs? That is, in case they truly were idylls at the time. Perhaps my fascination with the emancipatory and integrative potential of the bourgeois society, seeing itself ideally as universalistic, a society that was evolving in the decades of "my" letters? My fascination with the evolving self-perception of a society that wanted to allow individuals to be determined in their status and rights not so much by their origin, over which they had no control (status, later class, religion, gender)? Even if in the history of this bourgeois society, from the start, this did not apply to all, and even if to this day each group has to stake a claim to the promise of equality and recognition.

A short time ago a history student from Vienna with a Turkish family name who had grown up in Vorarlberg contacted me. She painstakingly researches the history of the Ullmann family in Augsburg for her thesis. Perhaps in conversation we will both find out what so interests us in these traces. In any case, it is exciting to enter the room with the letters to Hohenems once again, this time in company.

## Where Have they Gone?—"Jewish Houses" and Turkish Citizens

*Michael Guggenheimer*



I first came across Hohenems a little over thirty years ago on a visit to the Vadiana Cantonal Library in St. Gallen: in the reading room, the rabbi of St. Gallen at the time, Hermann Schmelzer, a regular user of the library, pointed out to me Aron Tänzer's black-bound book on the history of the Jews in nearby Vorarlberg. In the course of a conversation Rabbi Schmelzer encouraged me to visit Hohenems—in particular, the former synagogue, the Jewish cemetery at the southern exit of the town, and the Jewish houses in the town center. I went to Hohenems for the first time in the summer of 1977 in search of the houses he had told me about



where Jews had lived until the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. I can still recall my initial disappointment on that visit. Hohenems seemed a small forgotten market place, not a proper town. The castle on the threatening-looking slope of a rocky elevation seemed neglected, and only a confectioner's on the Schlossplatz looked inviting with its rich cakes. When the waitress told me that the confectionary's founder had previously been court pastry cook to King Farouk of Egypt, Hohenems acquired a slight touch of exoticism, even though I could not tell whether the story was just pretty or true as well.

At that time Hohenems had no Jewish Museum yet. I still remember how after leaving the confectioner's, I walked around the place rather at a loss, with Aron Tänzer's heavy book in my hand: the synagogue was then used as an unsightly fire station. I could hard believe that a synagogue could have been turned into a garage for a fire engine and a store for fire hoses. The former Jewish school was now just a rundown dwelling for several Turkish families. The Jewish ritual bath looked as if it would shortly cave in, the Elkan house, the former Jewish inn "*Zur Frohen Aussicht*", the former Jewish poorhouse, two factory owners' houses: this Jewish Hohenems, this former Jewish part of the town, looked dilapidated and forgotten. Nobody was there who could tell me anything about the Jewish presence in former times. I had spent the first years of my life in Tel Aviv, and the remains of the former Jewish houses of Hohenems reminded me of stories I had heard at school in Israel: after the Nazi era the former Jewish districts were left abandoned and destroyed, the once flourishing Jewish life in Poland, Germany, and Austria was annihilated once and for all. At the time I felt confirmed in my acquired prejudices: the Austrians had permanently and systematically eradicated the Jews. In my wildest dreams I could not have imagined then that years later, thanks to a Jewish Museum, Hohenems could again become a center where Jewish presence was assigned a dignified and stimulating place.

What did I look for in Hohenems and what did I find? I looked for traces of Jewish life: for instance, could a mezuzah still be found at the entrance to any house? Would I still find the name of a Jewish shopkeeper above a shop window?

Would there be any mention in the town hall of the Jews of Hohenems? At the time I found nothing: the Jews of Hohenems now featured nowhere but in Tänzer's book. In front of the former Jewish school I spoke to a young Turkish couple pushing a pram, occupants of two

[Last page: Former Jewish school. Photograph by Michael Guggenheimer, 1977; JM / Above: Former synagogue / fire station. Photograph by Michael Guggenheimer, 1977; JM]

rooms in the former school that had been converted into a collection of small temporary flats for guest workers from the Balkans and Turkey. I took several photographs of an older Austrian woman who was talking to the couple and of a young girl. They did not wish to hear that Jews had once been living here. Other residents of the surrounding houses, again Turks, women with headscarves and long skirts, dressed in dark clothes, smiled at me in a friendly way and were happy to be photographed in front of the former Jewish houses. We could barely communicate with one another, for their knowledge of German was sketchy, and I do not speak Turkish. I came across houses that no longer bore any visible traces of Jewish life.

After my visit to the former Jewish quarter I went to the Schwefel district and collected from the local inn the key to the Jewish cemetery. Some of the graves on the steep slope were askew and in disrepair. Many gravestones had sunk deeply into the soil and others were broken: no doubt, troublemakers had been up to mischief here. About a year after my visit to Hohenems I published in several Swiss newspapers a rather long article about the loss of Jewish Hohenems. The photographs accompanying the article showed the cemetery, the forsaken synagogue, and the old Jewish houses: however, the photographs of the Turkish occupants did not interest the newspapers' editorial departments at the time. My summary: a place where Jewish residents were once present, a place that had lost all signs of earlier days, that no longer showed any references to Jewish life, except in the cemetery.

Almost thirty years later in spring 2004 I retraced the walk I had made then. In my hand I held the photographs, now twenty-seven years old; I questioned occupants of the district about the history of their houses and about the occupants I had photographed almost three decades earlier. Hanno Loewy, the new director of the Jewish Museum that had been established in the meantime, was looking for photographic and written contributions for an exhibition on the Turkish residents of Hohenems. He wanted to know: what had become of the Turks who had been here nearly thirty years ago? Where were they living? What could they tell us about that period in Hohenems? The exhibition was prompted by the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the agreement between Turkey and Austria on the settling of Turkish workers in Austria. That the theme was topical particularly in Vorarlberg quickly became apparent: the presence of the immigrants from Turkey had become even more visible. *Döner kebab*, *lahmacun*, and *börek* were now available at several food stands here. And like in every German city there were Turkish grocery stores and Turkish newspapers in the kiosks.

I set out in search of the Turkish women and men who had lived in the Jewish houses. But there was no longer anyone living in the damp houses that had not been renovated for many years. The entrance to the former Jewish school was boarded up as was the old Jewish ritual bath. Hohenems had expanded in the years since 1977, and the good residential areas were now in other parts of the town. Many Turks who had been taken on to work in the Vorarlberg textile industry in the sixties had lost their jobs. The textile industry had either closed down its operations or transferred them to Hungary and Southeast Asia because a cheaper

[Next page left: Jewish cemetery of Hohenems. Photograph by Michael Guggenheimer, 1977; JMH / Next page right: Immigrants in front of the former Jewish school. Photograph by Michael Guggenheimer, 1977; JMH]





labor force could be found there. The Turkish families who had stayed in Hohenems had left the tumbledown houses in the former Jewish quarter to settle nearby in what had been Christengasse or in newer houses in other districts. Others moved on: back to Turkey, to Dornbirn or Feldkirch, and to nearby Switzerland. Over the years Turks opened their own businesses and shops, bought real estate in Hohenems and elsewhere in Vorarlberg, changed their jobs or retired. Their children and grandchildren spoke German with an Alemannic accent and had become Austrian citizens. The Jewish school had been standing empty for years. The Jewish ritual bath was a ruin. Restoration of the synagogue began only now: the fire station was to be turned into a music school whose structure was to be reminiscent of the former synagogue. Other Jewish houses had been restored in the meantime; offices had moved in or else families with Austrian names. On the other hand, the large *Gründerzeit* villa (1890s) of Iwan Rosenthal with its spaciouly laid-out garden immediately behind the dividing wall to the Jewish school still looked dilapidated; its owner, a dentist, who had in the meantime moved to Latin America, spent only a few weeks or months of the year in Hohenems.

What had become of those Turkish women and men I had photographed in 1977? And who were the anonymous people in my pictures? I had to go to Hohenems several times to be able to approach step by step the people who could be seen on my pictures. Ahmet Korkmaz, a thirty-year-old Hohenems man of Turkish origin, took me to a Turkish family who had come to Austria from Anatolia in the 70s. Through them I was able to follow the tracks. The people were quite astonished to see themselves and their relations on photographs so many years later. Little by little I was for the first time able to give names to all the people in my pictures. I learned from where they had come to Vorarlberg, what they had done in all those years, and what had become of them since. And I was amazed that the people I now showed the photographs to were fully aware that they had once lived in former Jewish houses. The history of the Jews of Hohenems had in the meantime become general knowledge to local residents. But not all those I had photographed almost three decades earlier were happy to see themselves again on the pictures. The young mother who had been taking an infant for a walk in the pram with her husband in 1977, I tracked down indirectly in Switzerland. During my visit her husband was visibly pleased with the pictures from long ago where he could be seen as a young man with his wife and the pram, but his wife reacted with irritation. For the Turkish woman who had once worn a headscarf, had now become a Western-looking Swiss woman who was in no way different from the women around her. And the then baby in the pram—who could not be seen in the picture—was in the process of completing his university education. A day after my visit to the couple, the wife called me and forbade me to publish the old picture. A few days later a letter from a lawyer followed. The Anatolian of 1977 had become a Swiss woman who no longer wanted to be identified with the woman living in a damp and cramped flat in Hohenems. Lawyers from Austria and Switzerland had to consider whether the pictures taken almost thirty years ago represented an intrusion into the personal privacy of the immigrants from Turkey, or whether they could be regarded as historical documents. The exhibition poster on which the couple with the pram could be seen was withdrawn. But the exhibition leaflets featuring the same picture had already long been in circulation in Austria and Switzerland. Had I any reason to have a bad conscience, had I infringed on individual rights? Or only touched on taboos that could themselves be destructive? The exhibition that also displayed pictures of the Turkish occupants of the Jewish houses was visited by Hohenemers of Turkish

origin. Nobody objected to the pictures. The domestic and foreign media's response to the exhibition was extraordinarily positive. The museum had succeeded in going past popular expectations of what a "Jewish Museum" should or should not do. Instead of taking only the past as its theme, the Jewish Museum in Hohenems also tackles current social issues. Based on the history of the Jews in Vorarlberg, but also of the 20<sup>th</sup>-century migrant workers and their families, it clarifies how exclusion and integration of migrants and minorities take place and what contribution the immigration of foreigners has made and is still making to coexistence as well as to the economy and culture of a region.

What a difference to visit Hohenems today. Anyone interested in the former presence of Jews in Vorarlberg has the opportunity to visit a museum that is now offering a completely new display in which questions about the history of the Jews are raised in an up-to-date manner. Unlike in other Jewish museums where the focus is time and again on Jewish rituals, holidays, commandments, and prohibitions bathed in a nostalgic light, the Jewish Museum in Hohenems displays regional history in which life stories, economic life, migration, integration, and exclusion are taken up as themes. An exciting accompanying program with lectures, readings, and concerts attracts visitors from Vorarlberg and Switzerland. And because the museum is so different in the way it presents things, many newspaper reports in foreign media have led to the museum attracting visitors from Germany and overseas as well. Many places in Germany where Jewish presence was extinguished in World War II are looking for new uses for their empty synagogues. Dynamic associations in these places collect ritual objects, which they display in showcases and which always look forlorn. Hohenems today demonstrates how such museums could be elsewhere too.

**The Exemplary in the Particular.**

**A Journey to Hohenems**

*Vladimir Vertlib*



I always like going back to Hohenems. I visited the town for the first time in 1991 and was impressed by the concept of the Jewish Museum. The exhibition was less about Jewish customs and rites than about the everyday lives of Hohenems Jews, whose life stories were deliberately viewed in a local historical and cultural context. This was a modern approach, which at the time was unique in Austria. However, what was significant for me was the fact that this interesting Jewish Museum had been opened, of all places, in a town where there had long ceased to be any Jews and that, furthermore, was not typical of the history of Austria's Jewry. In addition, it is located in a province not typical of Austria, while the place itself is again atypical of that province. It seemed to me as if the ambivalence of Jewish existence in general (and in Austria in particular) had been revealed here in a highly symbolic way in a chain of coincidences: the perception of the supposedly foreign takes place primarily at the periphery, in the border regions, and also only in retrospect, when it no longer exists.

[Left: Former Jewish poorhouse. Photograph by Michael Guggenheimer, 2004; JMH]

In Stefan Zweig I read: "The Brettauers, who originally owned a banking business, had spread out across the world from Hohenems... As a large-scale industrialist my father was certainly respected, but my mother, though very happily married to him, would never have tolerated his relations being put on a par with hers." This feeling of being something special is described by Zweig, from whose book *The World of Yesterday* the above quotation is taken, as a "kind of nobility", a form of snobbishness that had always amused him because when it came down to it all Jewish families—some earlier, some later—had come from the same Jewish ghetto. We may concede that Zweig is right in that point. Yet, we must not forget how very much Hohenems, that "little place on the Swiss border" from which Zweig's mother's family came, had differed from other Jewish centers in the Habsburg monarchy. The position of the Jews in this town was unique. For a long time they formed the only relatively large Jewish enclave in an otherwise largely "Jew-free" Western Austria; and within the monarchy, Hohenems was the only major non-Eastern-Jewish community, and a liberal one as well, to have a rather long historical tradition.

The history of the Hohenems Jews is a special case in Austria, and Vorarlberg, the province they lived in, is today like then a border region. In atmosphere and language closer to Switzerland than to Austria, belonging more to Western than Central Europe (many natives of Vorarlberg are proud of the fact that the distance from Bregenz to Paris is shorter than to Vienna), industrialized at an early stage, and dependent on trade, for centuries Vorarlberg has been an area characterized by transit and immigration.

Personally, I feel drawn to border regions (as well as to special cases), perhaps because I see my own identity in a kind of in-between or crossover area. When I was five years old, my parents had to emigrate from the Soviet Union. A ten-year odyssey via several places of exile, including Israel, Italy, the Netherlands, and the United States, finally led my parents and me to Vienna. As an adult I moved yet again, but this time "only" to Salzburg. Border regions interest me because in them the ambivalences and ambiguities of identities (also my own) are more sharply defined than elsewhere. As well as the matter-of-fact manner with which one crosses over to the other side of the border and feels at home in a different cultural, political, and often also linguistic space, there is the tendency to emphasize one's own affiliation, to see the in-between area as the center, the margin as the middle. This attitude can liberate creative

potential, but on the other hand it can also—as ambiguity always also means threat—tempt us to retreat comfortably behind all too clear classifications and ideas.

Regional identity in Vorarlberg is associated with many (positive) clichés that are often used as a demarcation against eastern Austria, perceived as Balkan and slovenly, and above all against the “hydrocephalus” Vienna, while its own self-image can be conveyed by the concepts “hard-working”, “down-to-earth”, “thrifty”, “West European” and “modern”. Thus, one might say—somewhat exaggerated—that many Vorarlbergers consider themselves to be “a bit better” than the other Austrians. Accordingly, the fact that Stefan Zweig’s mother’s family saw itself as “a kind of nobility” might also, so I believe, have had something to do with their Vorarlberg origin, with Vorarlberg exclusiveness, in this case reinterpreted in a reinforced and internally Jewish way by the exclusiveness experienced by the Hohenems Jews as an isolated minority in

a non-Jewish environment. [Bus stop "Synagogue". Photograph by Michael Guggenheimer, 2004; JMH]



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The Jewish inhabitants of Hohenems made efforts to be good Vorarlbergers. They met the Eastern Jews who migrated sporadically to Hohenems at the end of the nineteenth century with the same feelings of resentment as their non-Jewish neighbors. “Now one day a peddler comes into the province from Galicia, from a contrasting, fanatical world in which education and progress are still widely opposed,” Dr. Aron Tänzer, the Hohenems rabbi, wrote to the Dornbirn district court in 1903, for example.

When I read that letter, I have to think of my relatives and friends who emigrated from Russia to Germany in the 1990s as so-called “quota refugees”. They too are sometimes—although in appearance and lifestyle no longer “Orthodox”—confronted with the prejudices and the latent disdain of indigenous Jews. At times I myself had to endure a similar experience as a “Russian” in Vienna. Ironically, along with many other things, we are nowadays blamed, above all, for our lack of religiosity. While over the space of one hundred years many ascriptions have been turned on their head, the basic tendency to perceive the “East” as inferior has survived.

When I look at old photographs of Hohenems Jews in the Jewish Museum, I imagine that I would probably have had more in common with these people where mentality and attitude to life are concerned than with my forebears living in White Russia and the Ukraine at the same time. I can empathize with how ambivalent life was between exclusiveness and adaptation, between loyalty, attachment to the homeland, provincial narrowness and the matter-of-fact acceptance of border crossings, marriage-related migrations, and international contacts. As a writer who has to travel a lot, as an immigrant with several identities, and as a Jew living in a place where there are hardly any other Jews, my life is also—of course, in only a partly comparable way—“exclusive”. Nevertheless, the former East Jewish “shtetl” of Mattersburg (another border town, by the way, only situated in the outermost east rather than the west of Austria) is emotionally closer to me than Hohenems. Perhaps the imparted family stories going back to the “Shtetl time” of my forebears, which for me as an emigrants’ child were some kind of substitute for a homeland, have had a stronger impact on me than I was aware of for a long time. Maybe I can also imagine all too well how my great-grandfather would have been treated if chance had led him to Hohenems.

As the site of a former count's residence, Hohenems occupies a special position in Vorarlberg that is primarily characterized by villages and small towns. On Schlossplatz (Palace Square) you can sense a little of the elegant aristocratic aura the small town may once have had. In the past it used to be an important regional center that for a long time had owed its prosperity to its Jewish population and their international business connections. Nowadays, on the other hand, Hohenems—as a friend living in Bregenz assured me—is no longer well-thought-of. Hohenems, in fact, has a gloomy charm, so that you might be inclined to believe you were not five hundred kilometers west, but at least three hundred kilometers east of Vienna. Vorarlberg reminds me of Switzerland, and if Switzerland had been a Socialist people's democracy, three years after the *Wende* (the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989) some districts of St. Gallen would probably have looked like Hohenems does today. Crumbling façades, neglected backyards, some houses that look as if they might collapse at any moment—a small piece of fictitious GDR-Switzerland in the middle of Vorarlberg. Soon all this will be a thing of the past, I am assured, and the through traffic is also to be diverted from the center's narrow lanes to a bypass.

The former Villa Rosenthal where the Jewish Museum is housed, the former synagogue, and a few other buildings in the former Jewish quarter have meanwhile been exemplarily restored—in contrast to the houses in the former “Christengasse” (Christians' Lane). On an information board exhibited in the middle of the former “Israelitengasse” (Jews' Lane) the importance of the Jewish quarter for the “development of bourgeois culture in Vorarlberg” is pointed out. The first coffee house in the province was opened here. In the former Jewish quarter where once open-mindedness and sophistication would have been possible amidst rustic provincialism, a new cultural center could arise. Admittedly, there is as yet little sign of it.

For me, as an observer coming from outside, the atmosphere of this place has an esthetic dimension. My feeling is that it reflects the Austrian narcissistic love affair with the illusion of its own past.

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The history of the Hohenems Jews seems to me—in spite of its specific local aspects—to be an exemplary instance of the history of European Jewry in the modern period.

Other places too that have at one time been centers of Jewish life (or still are today) always have something exemplary about them. But in Hohenems the exemplary—this is my impression—is particularly obvious, and, in fact, precisely because on closer inspection the typical can again be recognized in what appears at first glance to lie outside the norm. Here, the many discriminations, persecutions, and expulsions that the Hohenems Jews (like Jews from most other regions of Europe) were exposed to might also play a role. But the fact that they lived in a border- and transit region, what can loosely be described as a “marginal region”, which many of them again left at a later period to move to centers and cities, is much more significant. This was no different in Galicia, there was a similar picture in Poland, White Russia, Ukraine, or Romania. These districts to which Jews along with other immigrants were brought were in their time also located “on the margin”, or rather at the interface of political and cultural areas. Just like the descendants of the Hohenems Jews, other Jews who at some point had to emigrate, nurture the memory of their countries of origin. The backward look may some-

times be angry, wistful, or glorifying, but memory of one's own origins is nonetheless passed on from one generation to the next. And so in Hohenems too, as in many other places, the Jewish minority was "re-discovered" decades after the Jews had emigrated or been expelled. As elsewhere, here too memory serves for many as a surface onto which they can project their own yearnings for the foreign as well as for a world that is contained within their own experience. Ideally, this can be a pointer to one's own hidden multiple identity. In any case, it is more comfortable to engage with Jews from times past than with today's immigrants. Dead Jews or their descendants who pay the town a brief visit are less annoying than living Moslems, who have been a feature of the old town center for many years and with whose attitudes and customs people have to come to terms on an everyday basis. We tend to be more inclined to form a positive judgment of yesterday's than today's foreigners. Does studying the past really provide an opportunity to see the present in a more nuanced light? All those who would like to get to know Hohenems and its people a bit better will have to answer that question for themselves...



## A Museum and its Present

*Zafer Şenocak*



Wherever is Hohenems? This question shot through my head when I received the invitation to give a reading from my novel *Gefährliche Verwandtschaft* (Dangerous kinship) at the Jewish Museum. What is more, the occasion for the invitation was the fortieth anniversary of the recruitment agreement inviting Turkish guest workers to Austria. A similar agreement had been concluded between Germany and Turkey three years earlier. So I would travel to the Alps: a glance at the map completely enlightened my ignorance. My destination was Vorarlberg, the western edge of Austria, most easily reached via Switzerland. An area you are happy to travel to on holiday.

But a Jewish Museum? Had such a noteworthy Jewish community really existed there, in the seclusion of the province? Seclusion? Province?

While Hohenems today is situated just a few kilometers from the Austrian state border, there can be no possible talk of it having occupied a marginal position historically. I became aware of that after a tour around the imposing building in the heart of the small town; the town center with its many impressive town houses had once been the Jewish quarter. The clearly laid-out exhibition, housed in a villa that seemed almost like a private house, opened many interesting windows, not only onto the life and work of the Jewish community, but also onto the town's history, which from the eve of the Thirty Years' War had stood increasingly at the hub of European trading and economic activity, more important than I had assumed. Many merchant families had forged links to places as far as Constantinople and had in the following centuries introduced an upper-middle-class lifestyle and cosmopolitanism to the little town. [Left: Former Jewish school. Photograph by Michael Guggenheimer, 2004; JMH / Below: Turkish supermarket in Hohenems. Photograph by Michael Guggenheimer, 2004; JMH]

European history can best be understood in places like this that do not have a resounding name. The vanity and egocentricity of the large cities are absent. Instead, connections and journeys become the central considerations.

A museum that is dedicated not just to the past, but is also concerned with the present, can achieve something at a time when the burden of history cannot simply be cast off—indeed, it does not diminish with the passage of time—but increasingly becomes an inseparable part of our own existence: the point of departure and reference for many questions that preoccupy us today.

When I visited the museum, one exhibition was devoted to forty years of labor migration, which had brought Turkish guest workers as far as Vorarlberg. In Germany the process of settling down was, in fact, swifter in smaller places than in the cities with their confusion and indifference. And perhaps the leap from Anatolian provincial life to the industrial cities was also bigger than the step into the rural European environment. How had it been in Hohenems?

Before my reading, prizes were awarded to texts written by schoolchildren. The museum had advertised a writing competition with the title: *"Fremd in der Heimat—Heimat in der Fremde"* (Foreign in the homeland—homeland in a foreign country). Just a few years after the extinction of Jewish life in Hohenems, a fair number of Turkish guest-workers' families had taken up residence here. Now their children not only spoke German, they also successfully took part in writing competitions.



But the theme of the competition and what they had written gave me pause for thought. Was Hohenems their homeland? Or was homeland a place that they as Hohenemser with parents who come from Turkey would never get to know in their own lifetime? Were the Turks who had taken up residence in the Jewish quarter of Hohenems and taken jobs in the surrounding factories the “protected Jews” of today? Had they not immediately been described as guests as a precaution to preclude any misunderstandings about the length of their stay, right from the start?

Misunderstandings arose nevertheless and preoccupy us today throughout Europe, but especially in Germany and Austria, and will no doubt also be of concern in the future. Comparisons between the Jews of Europe and the Turks who were brought to Europe as migrant workers, comparisons of this kind are inadmissible and also historically misleading. But they keep cropping up just the same. No doubt, that has more to do with the societies absorbing them than with the Jews or the Turks. For there never was a Jewish question, any more than there is a Turkish question today. But there certainly was a German question that fills entire bookcases.

This question is directed at the concept of “*Heimat*” (homeland/home) and belonging and at the structure defining them. Anyone who comes to us has to be like us, would have to be added as a motto to every invitation issued from Central Europe. But not only for reasons of politeness do we nowadays forgo making any such remark. For the question of who we are can in no way be answered so simply. We Germans, we Austrians? What are the mechanisms that unmistakably define these nations or, should we rather say, peoples? Is it the distance between them and the foreigners? But does that not also exist elsewhere? The foreigners, especially if they come from Turkey, feel their foreignness. The art of making foreigners feel

their foreignness is the reverse side of the identity medal. If this feeling of foreignness is accepted and cultivated, then it straightaway means: foreigners do not want to integrate. But what happens if they are born into these circumstances? [Immigrants from Turkey. Photograph by Michael Guggenheimer, 2004; JMH]



On my visit, the girl with the headscarf whose entry to the writing competition won a prize left a deep impression on me. Here was a Hohenems girl who read aloud the text dealing with the difficulties of existence as a foreigner

and who spoke with the distinctive local accent—a foreign Hohenems girl.

If, as some German politicians would have it, this were a question of “migration background” (a fashionable concept for foreigners who are no longer foreign), in Germany at least, this girl would always remain a foreigner. “Take your headscarves off and arrive in Germany” was the wording of a recent appeal they directed at women with a “migration background”. And you can make it that simple for yourself. A piece of material is to decide who belongs and who does not.

All these attempts to define indigenous people and foreigners, homeland and identity end up in reductions, awkward constructions. If you can go about your business somewhere without let or hindrance, you are at home there: that is what I would say in this connection. But what happens when things do not work out? Well, then you go somewhere else. Last year

there were more people leaving Germany than there were immigrants. Interestingly enough the people in question, the many unemployed among the migrant workers, are the last to complain. "They're living at our expense" is the popular opinion, deliberately or unconsciously misjudging the situation. These people—who tend to be accustomed to privation and harsh circumstances—are much more adaptable than many an indigenous person. Small family businesses spring up, they work at all hours, many Turks in Germany ignored the law restricting shop opening hours even when it was still effective. But a piece of material obviously outweighs all that. The motives are probably rooted rather in emotions than in rational arguments. In times of a dwindling sense of community and global communication, symbols of affiliation are again on the rise. Symbols like the Pope, the German flag, the headscarf?

I must admit that the visit to Hohenems also saddened me. But I am always overcome with sorrow when I visit a place of what is referred to as former Jewish life. Should a middle-class Jewish quarter with little Turkish shops in a small town in the Vorarlberg Alps not rather raise hope? Should a Jewish Museum that is also concerned with the present not also be seen as a place of communication and understanding? Yes and no. No, because the Turks in Hohenems today cannot fill the space the Jewish community, eradicated by the Nazis, left behind. They have a different history, their own history. And it is doubtful whether they are even aware of where they have taken up residence.

Indeed, in present-day Muslim culture a dangerous anti-Semitic demagoguery is becoming widespread. Even the Turks are not impervious to this sinister development. Not only must it be decisively contradicted, it must also be met emotionally. This can be achieved not only through rhetorical distancing, but also by moving closer, uncovering, making visible. Here a pioneering role can be assumed by the Muslims in Europe who have moved so close to the tragic history of Judaism in this part of the world. A place becomes a homeland, a home only if the path leading into its history is not missed.

At this point the museum becomes important, not only for the indigenous Hohenemser as a place of necessary recollection, but also as a mediator, as a signpost for the immigrants. Just imagine if the Villa Heimann-Rosenthal did not exist and the former synagogue had not been reconstructed, but was still a fire station today (in the 1950s, a decade after the Holocaust, diverting the purpose of a Jewish house of God in this way was seemingly nothing remarkable): who would have ever been able to find their way in the history of Hohenems again? Least of all the Hohenemser themselves.

## My Ties to Hohenems—A Life Long Quest

*Felix Jaffé-Brunner*



Around 1850 Hirsch later named Karl Brunner, a young man from a poor Jewish family living in Hohenems, went to join his brothers in the up-and-coming town of Trieste, at that time the Austro-Hungarian Empire's only seaport. It is even said that he covered the ground on foot.

His son Philip, my grandfather, did what is generally expected of grandfathers. He talked to his young grandson about Hohenems, so that his origins would not be completely forgotten. And he succeeded. And of course my mother's thoughts were also often with Hohenems.

My grandfather had not been in Hohenems often, except perhaps as a child when he visited his Uncle Marco who had risen to become the Jewish mayor of the small town. He was proud that his family still owned the old Brunner-Haus, which was sold by the family's descendants some time in the 1950s - and unfortunately was largely destroyed by fire some years later. The insignificant building that it replaced was torn down recently, in order to build a new apartment house that the owner has decided to name "*Brunner Haus*".

[Philipp Brunner (center right) and his family in front of Villa Brunner in Trieste, c. 1920; Michele Faraguna, Trieste]



But my grandfather's lessons took root, and year after year since 1950 I visited Hohenems, traveling there from Switzerland. My friendly companion was frequently Norbert Peter, one of the few people who still knew and cared a lot about Jewish Hohenems. I showed it to my children too who—as is the way with children—retained only faint memories of that first visit. But today I can proudly see how my daughter Luisa is beginning to take an active interest in Hohenems.

There were then still many traces of the Mesusoth on the doors of the old Jewish houses. Today they have become rare. And for a long time the key to the Jewish cemetery was deposited at the Otten textile factory, which stands at the same place as the original factory founded by the brothers Philip and Joseph Rosenthal. Philip was my grandfather's grandfather. Today he has over 180 living descendants, scattered right across the world.

I saw the synagogue as it was after the war, filled with rubbish and looted in the days following the Kristallnacht when Hohenems and the whole of Austria were part of the German Reich. Later on the municipality turned it into a desolate, ugly and tasteless fire station. But today it stands restored in the middle of the town, used by a first-class music school. An almost ironic, living memory of old times: the bus stop in front of the door is today known by the name "synagogue". Thus my personal ties to Hohenems are considerably older than the museum which now exists and flourishes in the former villa of Clara Heimann-Rosenthal, yet another of my grandfather Philip's cousins. After the "Anschluss" (annexation) of Austria she was deported and murdered in Theresienstadt.

When the museum opened in 1991, the Chief Rabbi came from Vienna and fixed a new Mesusah to the doorpost of Clara's villa. Even the count took part, and the countess in her smashing yellow suit. And I had written to many of my Brunner cousins. Seven finally came to the opening ceremony, but nobody took any notice of them. For as yet no-one had understood the concept and significance of the community of descendants.



But ultimately our presence had a positive impact in an unforeseeable and strange way. My Austrian cousin Teddy Reitlinger and I talked about the possibility of a Brunner family reunion.

[Above: Felix Jaffé- Brunner, Franco Brunner and Mark Brunner (from left to right) at the opening of the Jewish Museum in 1991 / Below: Lisette Brunner, Felix Jaffé-Brunner, Lilly Reitlinger, Teddy Reitlinger and Hedwig Wahle (from left to right), 1991; JMH, Felix Jaffé-Brunner]

I suggested Hohenems, but he preferred to invite us to his house in Kienberg in Lower Austria. Thus a few years later we were happily reunited there, young and old, even including Doodie Reitlinger-Leroy, Karl Brunner's last surviving granddaughter. Again thanks to Teddy, the Brunner family has meanwhile developed close bonds, and we have met up again, in Trieste and Rome: and now in Malaga too.

**The Jewish cemetery.** Eva Grabherr, the first director of the museum, was right when she recognized that the Jewish cemetery basically forms the center of Jewish Hohenems. And she did not just say so: she published a book about it. Of course this cannot prevent many of the graves in the cemetery—in spite of the commitment of the Burgauer and Bollag (Landauer) families and the Jewish Cemetery Association who have owned the cemetery since the 1950s—from falling into decay over time. Acid rain and other “cultural factors” do their bit. Teddy Reitlinger and I ensured that the graves of our common ancestors Philip Rosenthal and his wife Regina Bernheimer were restored, and other families too—not many unfortunately—take care of some of the graves. Later on, with the support of my relatives, I was successful in preserving all the seven Brunner graves from falling into decay. Thus the Brunners today are members of a proud and closely knitted family.

**The reunion of descendants in 1998.** But what has become of the descendants of the 50 to 60 families that are so meticulously listed in the book by Aron Tänzer, the last important rabbi of Hohenems?

I had the idea of tracing them and inviting them to a joint reunion at the old place, a reunion that actually came about in 1998, at the end of last century, as I have accustomed myself to saying. Of course I also have to thank Otto Amann, the former mayor of Hohenems and President of the Jewish Museum, and staff at the museum itself, for the fact that this difficult undertaking could finally be realized.

The reunion turned out to be an overwhelming success, with 170 participants from 12 of the old Hohenems families who had traveled from all round the globe to be there, even from Australia. 70 were from my own Brunner family.

Before that many of them did not even know where Hohenems was, and had difficulty finding it on the map (that was in pre-Google days). At the end we were all photographed together, in the courtyard of the palace. An impressive family portrait. And an excellent book by the museum brings together memories and impressions of an unusual, but happy reunion.



At the end of the meeting I spoke with Stephan Rollin (Rosenthal). “Stephan,” I said, “you’ll see, this reunion will have absolutely no consequences, and over time its memory will drift away.” He simply replied: “Wait till I get back to the States and leave the rest to me.” And a short time later he did in fact found the “American Friends of the Jewish Museum Hohenems”. Thanks to the untiring commitment of Uri Tänzer (Aron Tänzer’s grandson) and Sue Shimer (Rosenthal)—another direct descendant of Philip Rosenthal—the Friends today is a living organization which for years now has formed the most active group of descendants to have lively ties with the museum; their newsletter regularly provides information worldwide about Hohenems (family) history and current activities at the museum. [Uri Tänzer, Eva Grabherr and Marlena Tänzer, 1998; JMH]



**The search for descendants.** For me Hohenems is a complex concept, an idea that encompasses both old memories but at the same time activities in the present: a small town where you can still see today which family lived over 100 years ago, the cemetery with my ancestors, a dynamic Jewish museum and finally above all the many descendants, wherever in the world they live today. Many of them, the young ones too, are looking for their roots, sometimes without realizing it.

So I began to look out for them, a sometimes lonely but often amusing undertaking which sometimes reminds me of Chichikov’s adventures in Gogol’s *The Dead Souls*. After a while I received invaluable help from Eva Maria Hesche, the museum’s efficient historian and archivist, and from many other descendants who had been gripped by the same genealogical “bug” as me.

The search for descendants is certainly not a Cartesian undertaking, but a sequence of assumptions, chance and persistence, countless letters and luck. And a whole lot of pointless misunderstandings which one after the other have to be patiently resolved. The whole enterprise has had its highs and its lows, and led me to a not inconsiderable number of friendly but clueless people who could not tell the difference between Hohenems and Honduras. Other reactions were amusing too:

“Aunt Eulalia,” I heard back for example, “lives in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, but I don’t have her address.” (That sentence too dates from those pre-Google times...)

Or: “I won’t have anything to do with my Uncle Isidor—he stole the slippers my grandmother had left to me.”

But on the other hand I have met many interesting and charming people, Kristina Schennen (Hohenemser) for example and her daughter Beryl, Stephan Rollin or Louis Bernell (Bernheimer) who even visited me in Jerusalem.

[Next page: Stephan Rollin and Otto Amann, 2001; JMH]

I came across Louis’s trail by a complicated route: everything started with a short newspaper cutting my son sent me from New York where he was living while doing his doctorate. It was a report about a new little museum for the history of Jews in the southern States. I remem-



bered that a Hohenems Bernheimer had emigrated to Alabama c. 1850. At my request the director gave me the address of his direct descendant, Louis Bernell, from Houston in Texas. We were both very happy about the link so forged, and at the descendants' reunion in 1998—which he attended with his family—we got to know one another and became good friends.

Finally I also met Jacqueline Heyman, Clara's granddaughter and a descendant of Philip Rosenthal, like myself. Now every time I visit my daughter in Belgium, I go and see her again. And as we became friends, she eventually showed me the moving correspondence her father had still maintained with his mother Clara during the war when she was detained in a "Jews' residence" in Vienna before being deported to Theresienstadt. Later

the correspondence could be translated and it appears in books on the Rosenthal family published by the museum.

My search for descendants and that of others was successful. Some 1000 living descendants are now known, coming from 20 families. And what had started as a lonely search at a time when the museum had not yet recognized the importance of the descendants—and was not yet equipped in terms of staffing for an archive—is now pursued by many people, and taken seriously. So the next reunion of descendants in 2008 will probably see many new faces, happy to be present there.

**The search is not over!** Yet so far fewer than half the Hohenems families have been "rediscovered". But new and more accurate studies in various directions can now start from a base of 1000 living descendants throughout the world.

And what exactly is such a descendant? I have thought up my own definition: descendants are individuals, as many as possible and of course including their children and their children's children, brothers and sisters, cousins of whatever degree, near and distant and very distant relatives with no distinction as regards age, religion, origin, nationality, color, etc., whether you know them well or hardly at all, whether you like them or can't stand them, whether they are interested in family history - or not in the slightest. Only wives and husbands, relations by marriage and unmarried partners are not included.

Family trees will help in the search. As yet there are only a few among which of course the Brunner and the Rosenthal. But the museum's link with Thomas Albrich and Innsbruck University is motivating young students to explore more family history and genealogies.

Most of the Hohenems Jews 150 to 200 years ago were poor "Landjuden" (country Jews), working in a small number of professions, the few that were open to them: pedlars, dealers in livestock, a small number Hofjuden (court Jews) and poor innkeepers. The expansion of their professional fields in such a short time as a result of middle-class advancement and worldwide emigration is absolutely staggering. Here are just a few examples shown alphabetically in a far from exhaustive list: Accountant, actor, archaeologist, architect, artist, astrophysicist, banker, businessman, CEO, chemist, children's book publisher, computer engineer, consul, curator, Dalcroze eurhythmics teacher, dentist, disco owner, doctor, ecologist, economist, engineer, estate agent, film producer, geneticist, geologist, government official, graphic

artist, healer, health professional, Hellenist, historian, hotel manager, insurance representative, judge, kindergarten teacher, language teacher, lawyer, management consultant, manufacturer, market researcher, mathematician, mechanic, museum guide, oceanographer, office manager, owner of a llama farm, painter, pastor, photographer, printer, psychiatrist, psychoanalyst, psychologist, publicist, Renaissance dance teacher, social worker, software adviser, stockbroker, surgeon, teacher, textile merchant, theater director, therapist, university professor, veteran cars expert, violinist, writer, zoologist...

And when I look at where the Hohenems Jews have ended up, I can understand Mark Brunner, my cousin in California, who in a family history he has written himself confidently speaks of a "Hohenems Diaspora", even if its members today are often no longer Jews.

The following list is just a small excerpt from the imaginary Hohenems map of today:

Albuquerque, Flushing, Hawaii, Houston, La Jolla, Moorestown, Naples, New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Seattle or Washington in the USA; Aarau, Basle, Berne, Geneva, Lausanne, Lugano, Ober-Erlinsbach, Rehetobel, St. Gallen or Zurich in Switzerland; Cernobbio, Como, Florence, Milan, Rome, Trieste, Udine, Venice or Verona in Italy; Givataim, Jerusalem, Kiryat-Ganim, Rishon Lezion or Tel Aviv in Israel; Beaumarais, Bellevue Hill, Glen Iris, Victoria or Wombarra in Australia; Bad Reichenhall, Berlin, Frankfurt am Main, Isny, Mannheim or Munich in Germany; Brussels and Halle in Belgium; Calgary in Canada; Abcoude, Amsterdam or Noordwykerhout in the Netherlands; Eschen in Liechtenstein; Bishops Stortford, East Sussex, Edinburgh, Hastings or London in Great Britain; Antibes, Boulogne-Billancourt, Le Lilas, Lyons, Paris or Vaugneray in France; Malaga in Spain; Kienberg, Graz or Vienna in Austria; Hornbaek and Vedbaeck in Denmark; Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, Santiago in Chile...

Were my ideas sensible and fruitful? Reaching the end of my journey, have I achieved what I wanted to?

My mother made up her mind not to visit Hohenems again after the Second World War during which her best friend Nora Richetti had been deported by the Germans and disappeared. She quite simply refused to set foot on German (and Austrian) soil ever again. What does she think of her son, who deep in his heart fully shares her point of view, yet has transgressed the old, strong family taboo?

Sometimes it worries me that I will never know.

## Some Episodes of a Hohenems Diary from 1979 to 2006

*Luisa Jaffé-Brunner*

*"Own only what you can carry with you; know language, know countries,  
know people. Let your memory be your travel bag."*

*Alexander Solzhenitsyn*



Traveling has been a passion from a very early age and a family habit. Today depending on my destination, I carry my Swiss, American, German or Belgian passport. How come Hohenems—a small Austrian border town - continues to be on my travel route?

**A father tours Europe with his teenage daughter.** Early in my teenage years, my father decided to take me on a trip across Europe to show me where my ancestors had lived and to introduce me to relatives in Trieste. To me, this meant adding a few more countries to a precious list of those I had visited. At the time, a girlfriend and I were competing over such lists and I was sure to win after the trip. Our journey would take us through Austria, Lichtenstein, Italy and Yugoslavia. I was most interested in visiting Lipizza—now in Slovenia - where the renowned Lipizzaner horses are bred.

On a glorious summer day, I took the train from Geneva to St-Gallen to meet my father who was returning from a geological trip. We crossed the Swiss border and went to Hohenems just across the River Rhine. We first visited the old Jewish cemetery, which was at the time in a pitiable state, and looked in vain for the tomb of his great-great-grand father. My father showed me the Jewish ritual of placing a stone on a tomb to honour the deceased, a grave being chosen at random to perform the ritual. We then went into town to look for the Brunner house, which was an insignificant modern building, renovated after having been partially burned down after World War II. On the long main street, my father spoke to a passer-by who informed us that the Brunnerstrasse (Brunner is the name of my Hohenems ancestors) had been renamed Schweizerstrasse after World War II. We also walked around the city in search for traces of mezuzot on houses, which would indicate that they had once belonged to the Jewish citizens of Hohenems. Of course, he made a point of showing me the synagogue or what was left of it. It was an ugly building, then used as the local fire station. Much later, when I attended a lecture about the renovation of the synagogue at the Leo Baeck Institute in New York, I learned that the local authorities had placed a plaque at the entrance that stated that the building was built in 1955 when it was inaugurated as a fire station. Is it so easy to obliterate the past?

After some cultural stops in Padua, Verona and Venice, we arrived in Trieste, my father's home in his youth, where I met numerous Brunner descendants, many of them for the first time.

A visit was made to the cemetery in Trieste to place a stone on the gravestone of his maternal grandparents (descendants of Hohenems Jews). The Jewish cemetery sits on a hill surrounded by cemeteries of many faiths: Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican, Greek and Russian Orthodox, Armenian and Muslim. During the time of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Trieste had been a prosperous city with diverse communities living side by side in harmony. Even today, it still has its peculiar Austrian "K und K" flavour and charm coupled with a complete sense of tolerance, so unusual in the modern world.

[Left: Interview with Luisa Jaffé-Brunner in the video installation "in the words of descendants" in the permanent exhibition; JMH]

My father had grown up in Trieste. His mother, Carolina Brunner, was born there; I suppose one could call her a “true European”. Born to an English mother, Fanny Bless, and a descendant of Hohenems Philip Brunner, she was by birth Austrian, became Italian for a few days after the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire when Trieste became part of Italy in 1918. She then took the German citizenship of her husband Richard Jaffé. In the fifties, she was granted the Swiss nationality. At the same time, she finally took back her Italian passport to which she was entitled by law.

The following summer, we took another trip across Europe. We were on our way to visit our relatives in the Netherlands but paused in Frankfurt to find my father’s paternal grandparents tomb. A kind cemetery manager located their tomb on the map, helping us find it. Once there we each placed a stone on their graves.

My own paternal grandparents are buried in Sorengo, near Lugano, Switzerland, where they lived during World War II and happily thereafter until they passed away.

I could still be taking pilgrimages to Germany, Italy or the former Prussian part of Poland to find out where my roots are and to grasp the complex genealogy of my family. Or I could cross the Atlantic to look for my mother’s ancestors. Their origins, Scottish Highlanders and German, a number of generations back and English as they travelled to America as settlers. So inevitably, I am brought back to Europe for this quest. Yet I prefer to travel to meet the living.

**The descendants’ meeting in 1998.** Apart from the very short visit I made to Hohenems to attend the opening of the Jewish Museum, nineteen years passed before I came back for the

descendants’ reunion. The four-day programme combined cultural excursions, tours of the museum, the cemetery and the city as well as evening gatherings. There was little free time; we seemed always to be running from one event to the next.

One day, as we had a free lunchtime, a small group Brunners decided to eat at the Brunner house. The building was still looking pretty much dishevelled from the outside and now housed a Turkish restaurant. There must have been ten of us who initially entered the restaurant, sat down and ordered what seemed appealing from the menu. Others had heard about our

plan and soon started joining us there. In no time, we occupied the whole restaurant. The restaurant personnel were soon overwhelmed by the Brunner clan. Pretty soon, they ran out of many dishes proposed on their menu and just kept bringing large plates of what they had. The plates travelled from table to table, children played and ran around, people walked around tasting the food on their neighbour’s tables. This improvised lunch turned out to be a feast with Brunners attempting to communicate in four languages!

[Lisette Brunner, Lilly Reitlinger, Felix Jaffé-Brunner and Luisa Jaffé-Brunner (from left to right), 1991; JMH]

During the guided tour of the Jewish quarter our guide, Eva Grabherr, the first director of the museum, talked about the eight Jews who had been “deported and assassinated” by the



Nazis after the Anschluss in 1938. Up till then, I had only heard the term “deported” used. Perhaps it makes the mass murders sound even more deliberate. Deportation is by and large synonymous of death, and each individual was assassinated consciously and intentionally.

Coming back home to Geneva, I meditated on the phrase of Eva Grabherr in *“Hohenems Revisited”*: “Hohenems has become a place of generations”. Location, past, present and future are encompassed in just a few words and are undeniably integrated.

The remote city of Vorarlberg, which is renowned abroad for its Schubertiade, had become for four days a “Global Village” temporarily populated by people of different cultures, origins and creeds with a common—and albeit remote - heritage. [Above: Marjorie Wormser-Brettauer and Tara Gutmann-Brettauer, 1998; JMH / Below: Paul Wollner-Rosenthal, Renée Rollin-Rosenthal, Zachary Shimer and Susan Rosenthal-Shimer, 1998; JMH]



**The turn of the century—a yearly visit to Hohenems since 2003.** In all likelihood, Hohenems would have remained no more than a set of memories, for I did not have definite plans to go back there. Then, in 2003, the museum asked me to participate in the exhibit *“So Einfach war es”* for which they were gathering written recollections from children who grew up after World War II in Austria, Germany and Switzerland.

At the same time, there was also much discussion amongst a few descendants to organise a second descendants’ reunion, but due to lack of time for appropriate planning, the event originally planned for 2005 was postponed to 2008.

By then, I had taken an interest in Hohenems. Both for what it represents today and for what it can bring in the future to us, the descendants.

I then had to ask myself the question; “Why is this particular place important for me more than other places of my dispersed roots?” Of course, more questions arouse.

*“My home is not a place, it is people.” Lois McMaster Bujold.*

I was born in Kenya to an American mother and a naturalized Swiss father, German by birth. Indeed, I grew up in Geneva, Switzerland, where both my parents were “foreigners”. My parents were also of different faiths, one Christian and one Jewish. I now live in Belgium, a country that is also foreign to me, with Jan, my Flemish husband. Yet I have all four of those nationalities: American, Swiss and German by birth and Belgian by marriage. And what do I feel? Mostly European.

Nearly all of the Hohenems Jews left their birthplace in hope of a better life or were forced to leave on their last voyage; deportation. The contemporary “Hohenems Diaspora” lives abroad, in most cases in a non-German speaking country. As for me, after having



studied German in high school, I can still have a simple conversation or read a newspaper. The memories of children stories read by my grandmother such as “Max und Moritz” remain very vivid.

Now that over a thousand descendants of Hohenems have been identified, I wish to contribute to perpetuating ties amongst us through other encounters, reunions and sharing of information. Modern communications and ease of travel enables the building of entire new networks of people who often have only one thing in common.

Being a melting pot myself, I enjoy experiencing diversity. Instead of travelling to distant countries as a tourist I travel to Hohenems. Hohenems provides a natural forum for a collective introspection into the importance and significance of our roots in this fast-moving world. When you have something in common with one another, and it might be only “a place”, then you have the ability to co-create a space for the exchange and sharing of knowledge and to contribute to a natural continuity, passed on through generations.

Finally, the Jewish Museum of Hohenems has an essential role to play in Austria where the greater part of the Jewish community was murdered. Yet, it is not a Holocaust museum. With the exception of Salomon Sulzer, it depicts the everyday life of rather ordinary people bound by their faith. Perhaps that is why I keep travelling to Hohenems year after year, to better understand how in this modern world one can preserve spiritual beliefs, moral standards and a sense of community.

*“Live your questions now, and perhaps even without knowing it,  
you will live along some distant day into your answers.” Rainer Maria Rilke*



**The Historic Borderline Principle  
Swiss Jews and the Liminal Experience**

*Yves Kugelmann*



The borderline, the Rhine, between 1939 and 1945: end of the road for many, salvation for a few. Traveling to Hohenems sixty years later, Europe's great, still young river gleams splendidly in the sun as the view of the Swiss, Liechtenstein, Austrian, and German Alpine foothills unfolds in the morning light. The Rhine flows from the south, peacefully entering Lake Constance and then continues on towards Basel and Amsterdam. Where at one time before World War II the border stood for inspiration, innovation, trade, meeting one another, today in a Europe that is growing together hardly anything can still be perceived of the challenges it once represented and nothing at all of what used to mean a decision over death and, rarely, life during the catastrophe. The sun is dazzling, a few more minutes to Hohenems after crossing the Rhine and then to the center where the Hohenems Jewish Museum recalls what the idyll gives no inkling of: the family and trading histories of the Rosenthal and Hirschfeld families, the Brettauers, Burgauers, and Reichenbachs, whose influence could be felt at the beginning of last century in the area extending as far as St.Gallen. All this would never come to life again after the war, so the museum now is a reminder of one of the few transborder economic areas of Europe: to start with, at that time its borders meant for Jews opportunity rather than exclusion, even if that opportunity was only short-lived.

Borderline experiences have been a decisive factor of Jewish existence since time immemorial. Exclusion, boundaries, fencing off, but also the crossing of borders—all this led to attitudes towards borders being stylized in many sources into a Jewish archetype, an image of the ambiguity that also always stood between Jews and non-Jews: Jews—the “nomadic people from the desert” who wandered or had to wander in foreign lands in the Diaspora through centuries and worlds. But the image is still there and plays with the reality. Jews would know no borders and if they did, only through the experience of flight—as they had to cross borders to survive, as they were excluded into the ghetto, or turned away at borders. Jews equals borderline experience: an irreversible equation with many unknowns, contradictions, and bloody axioms, of which Swiss Jews are a particularly striking example.

**Psychogram of a Community.** Borders seldom offered protection; rather they represented an insuperable dimension, even in places where they constantly had to be crossed physically. For millennia the dispersed people experienced the paradox of being (having to be) borderless everywhere, yet again and again coming up against borders. Crossing borders as a self-evident matter of course imposed by circumstances that was time and again to end at the barbed wire, those borderlines that frequently marked, influenced, changed, contaminated, or permeated existential, psychological, historical, cultural self-perception, or simply that real border that shaped the internal borderline experience to the point of excess: always at the limit, on the narrow ledge above the precipice, or beyond, at the border of delusion or madness—always senseless, unless one, in fact, saw oneself as Job.

[Left: Border post between Hohenems and Diepoldsau, July 1940; Finanzlandesdirektion Feldkirch]

**The Dialectic Prison that is Switzerland.** What had antecedents going back thousands of years, was explicitly manifested when over sixty years ago only one border in Central Europe failed to fall: the one around Switzerland. A border that became ambiguous itself. A “safe” island or solitary confinement amidst the catastrophe, the horror, always afraid of the impending danger. A national-psychological white-knuckle ride that ultimately left a deeper mark on the motley crowd of Swiss than many may even be aware of. In an epoch-making speech on the occasion of the award of the Gottlieb-Duttweyler Prize to Vaclav Havel in 1990 Friedrich Dürrenmatt finally brought up the point nobody wanted to hear: Switzerland as a prison in which the prisoners are free and the guards are prisoners.

Switzerland, a grotesque prison of freedom, where no one knew how to cope with freedom and drowned it in myths: Switzerland—and this applies to Swiss Jews too—which to this day claims to be the only country in Europe with a history without any breaks, with continuity, with no trauma. This privilege, which was not thanks to themselves but to chance or the logic of destiny, remained for a long time the uncut diamond that ultimately only immigrants, and since the 1950s predominately Italian and later on other guest workers, knew how to cut. Only they began to generate awareness of a country that Swiss women and men themselves had misjudged for too long. Yet, earlier had been those years that the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* called the “shadow of World War II”. A shadow that would long continue to have an impact, one that also hovered over the Jewish community of Switzerland.

**The Swiss Sting.** In October 1938, some 35 years after the introduction of the ban on kosher slaughtering, with the initiative for the “J-stamp”, Switzerland showed the borders it wanted to put in place with regard to Nazi Germany and the fleeing Jews. The time was not right for pitching David against Goliath again. The Swiss went along with the kind of pragmatism that some find easy to criticize and others easy to embrace: cooperation with the enemy. Admittedly, an enemy with whom many also sympathized, some only temporarily, as in the case of Friedrich Dürrenmatt, to annoy their own authorities. But above all: an enemy with whom good business could be done.

What the Yellow Star would be in Germany was already signaled in 1938 by a big “J” in the passports of Jews trying to escape: a Swiss invention. Not only in 1942 when the *Bundesrat* (Federal Council of Switzerland) hermetically sealed the Swiss borders to Jewish refugees did the Swiss Confederation become for those inside and outside its borders above all one thing: a borderline experience. The border, the barbed-wire fences, became the ubiquitous authority that resonates to this day. Some people came to grief at them, others overcame them. Of course, they were not the barbed-wire fences of Auschwitz. But not long after seeing those of Switzerland, quite a few people also saw those of Auschwitz, even if far more refugees had actually made it into fenced Switzerland, legally or illegally, than many critical minds could for a long time perceive. But in the end, there were far less of them than Swiss patriots claim today in defense of Helvetia’s good name. Only in the final weeks of the war and in the first postwar weeks did those masses of refugees, gladly conjured up today, in fact enter the country, generally for a short period. And only quite a small proportion of them were Jews.

**Swiss Jews, Jewish Refugees.** The ambivalent non-relation to the border divided many Jewish women and men in the 1940s also in Switzerland when thousands of refugees were turned away at that Swiss border and sent to certain death, a border that for the Swiss Jews was ultimately the frontier to survival. For one group the border meant life, for the other death. Yet, again the border became the imposed parameter for life and death, essentially for Jewish women and men, who, but for a few exceptions, defined their relationship to borders by rejecting them.

The fact that even Jewish Swiss soldiers had to guard the Swiss border during mobilization, indeed, even carry out customs duties, showed on the one hand their readiness to serve and obey their fatherland, but also the perversity of a situation in which it was now only possible to decide between wrong and wrong. A decision that could ultimately be answered by many Swiss border police quite simply: not every one of them placed his supposed "duty" ahead of the lives of the refugees. For a long time the Swiss border remained completely porous. Not everyone tried to stand out with excessive zeal when merely looking the other way could save a life.

The clash between Swiss Jews and those Jewish refugees who were still able to get across the border in time, rarely legally and generally illegally, always with the help of the small number of Swiss heroes, Paul Grüninger, Carl Lutz, Sebastian Steiger, and other less well-known escape helpers (honored and recognized by Yad Vashem), still has an impact today.

**2008 Begins in 1938.** Anyone wanting to understand Swiss Jews in 2008 cannot avoid discussing their attitude to the borderline experience and realizing that from 1938 at the latest there was no longer such a thing like *the* Swiss Jews, that there is not one Swiss Jewry, one Jewish way of thought in Switzerland. This is also the reason why since World War II at the latest, the Swiss Federation of Jewish Communities (-SIG), which right up to this day is bobbing along in prewar structures, has in no way always represented the majority of Swiss Jews in their concerns and needs. As early as 1882 after the pogroms in Eastern Europe and in the following decades, East European Jews reached Switzerland and had to learn how unwelcome they were. The Swiss Jews allowed hardly any integration, and slowly but surely a two-class Jewish society developed, which was further reinforced by the influx of refugees during World War II. A two-class society that to this day is present in many family stories as a characteristic of that time.

In the wake of the 1996 debate surrounding the unclaimed assets of Jews in Swiss banks, not only the state, but also Swiss industry and business, which had sought to survive Hitler and to make money from him at the same time, found themselves confronted with a shady past. Exploration of the past not only overturned many myths of Swiss honesty and willingness to put up a fight during the war years, it finally also confronted Swiss Jews with the retrospectively posed question of whether the Jewish community had done everything humanly possible for refugees, for persecuted, rejected, and accepted Jewish women and men.



[Common room in the Diepoldsau refugee camp. The mural painting expresses gratitude for the Swiss people for their reception of refugees; Heinz Müller, Basel]

Nothing comparable can be found in the present for the answer to this question. The attempt to determine what official Swiss Jewry and their associations had done between assistance and powerlessness (just read the book *Macht and Ohnmacht* [Power and Powerlessness] by Stefan Mächler), between saving others and endeavoring not to expose themselves, between possible self-sacrifice and self-

less assistance, divides to this day those who were once victims, saved, or rescuers. Looking at the escalating danger of those years from today's perspective does not absolve us from permitting the question of how easy it obviously still was at the time to not want to perceive that danger for yet one more day. At the same time that danger was used to justify one's own siege mentality. Just because we know today that the Nazis had absolutely no intention of invading neutral Switzerland, that is, their own bank—and endangering their own bomb-free link to the south this does not mean the Swiss knew that for sure at the time. The arriving refugees often received too little—and at the same time many people, private Jewish and Christian citizens in Switzerland, gave more than they could afford. Everything is a question of perspective when viewed from today, but at the time one that could not only decide over life and death. On the side of those who found refuge in Switzerland, it aroused the profoundest gratitude, while on the other side, suspicion and accusations that often remain unexpressed between people today. On one side there were Swiss Jews who closed their eyes to the realities, descended into provincialism, and were primarily disturbed by the fact that during the war only kosher chicken and no other kosher meat could be obtained; on the other side were those who had narrowly escaped with their lives, the refugees facing the void, who would have longed to have chicken.

**The Jewish Conflict.** For all of them it was once again a matter of borderline experiences: however, in the case of officials, their attitude was primarily psychologically or morally motivated, but at the same time prompted by the fear of catapulting themselves once again out of their painstakingly elaborated Swiss affiliation, out of the illusion of invisibility, by taking on a special role in relation to the refugees. At the same time, there was also the fear of not being able to control the streams of refugees, and perhaps of endangering everyone else with each new refugee. In the case of the refugees it was a question of day-to-day survival, and in the case of the helpers a question of both: of rescuing and of avoiding endangering themselves. It was a border situation that viewed from today cannot be judged easily, just accepted and described as a given, but which was epitomized in the person of the then SIG President Saly Mayer. He was the person who performed the tightrope act between the authorities, the Swiss Federal Council, the refugees, the Swiss Jews, and the international Jewish organizations until he had to give up his office in 1942 because of criticism from the SIG management, though he continued to operate as the contact with the Joint Distribution Committee. Mayer's behavior has repeatedly been the starting point for debate in recent years. The recently published book *Saly Mayer (1882 - 1950)—Ein Retter jüdischen Lebens während des Holocaust* (A Savior of Jewish Life

during the Holocaust) by Hanna Zweig sheds new light on Mayer's ambivalent position, and on the basis of new documents shows a more complete and more contradictory picture of this official trying to operate between the fronts.

He was a successful and internationally active manufacturer from St.Gallen, and in the 1930s and 1940s he devoted himself entirely to the service of Jews threatened by National Socialism—at first as secretary or president of the umbrella association of Jewish communities in Switzerland, then from 1940 as the representative of the “American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee” (JOINT) for Jews in the regions occupied by the German Reich. In this office he took on a central, but ultimately impossible task in combating the Holocaust. In Switzerland he became a controversial figure because of his pragmatic attitude and his attempts to do what could be done under the prevailing circumstances. His work soon became possible only with “semi-legal” or illegal methods, while behind the façade of good civic observance of the law he circumvented the Swiss and American authorities, and finally in direct negotiations with the SS in 1944 duped them too. In the final year of the war and after its end, working for the JOINT, he became an intermediary in the funding of the illegal immigration of European Jews into British-administered Palestine. On the basis of new documents Hanna Zweig describes exhaustively how Mayer—hardly up to the task—operated as a tactician between the powers, trying to save Jews and collect money, but at the same time without adding the final straw that would break the camel's back. Some people still reproach him today of having prevented the rescue of still more Jews and cooperating too much with the authorities, while others credit Mayer with developing a widely ramified international aid network in the background while masquerading as an official loyal to the authorities and making rescue or financial assistance possible for many. These are the words from the 1960s of a long-term colleague of Joe Schwartz, the person responsible for the JOINT operations in Europe from 1941: “If there is any one person in modern Jewish history who is misjudged, then it is Saly Mayer.” Even today Mayer as an individual stands for the ambivalence of a situation that can hardly be judged retrospectively and over which there is still no consensus today.

**Grüninger as a Case in Point.** In 1941, for instance, when the Basel citizen Albert Falk reacted in a circular, on display in Hohenems, calling on people to support Paul Grüninger, the St.Gallen police officer who had been suspended from service, disgraced and punished because he was rescuing Jewish men, women, and children across the border, this resulted in the person then in charge at the SIG taking a stance that reveals the situation the Jews believed themselves to be in at the time. Falk knew exactly what he was writing about: he himself, along with Grüninger, had opened up the way into Switzerland for refugees, and it was no longer a secret that this was only possible by rules being ignored and documents “re-dated”. However, the secretariat of the SIG was in no way willing to have all these facts known in such detail and certainly not in public: no euphoria over the heroic deeds no matter what, no publicly visible support for the suggested donation calls for Grüninger, who was now unemployed and destitute -- instead, formal distance with a hint of legalistic hedging. “It is very imprudent of Mister Falk to write that G. had made entry possible for Jewish refugees, that he had brought a Jewish lady out of Austria to her husband and children living in Switzerland, etc. In fact, that would have been an offence and is better not given undue publicity, apart from the fact that we now



have to bear the consequences financially, by having families and relatives around our necks that we did not bring out, whereas we would have long since been able to have the people move on individually. Despite that, the undersigned is also of the opinion that G. should be helped with a post in the sense of Falk's letter, but there is no need to tell the whole world about it." [Left: Paul Grüninger's officer's sword; Ruth Roduner-Grüninger, Heerbrugg]

**Swiss Bureaucrats, Jewish Officials.** Officials like, for instance, the then SIG President had to perform the internally lacerating splits between submission to the authorities and providing help, protection of Swiss Jews and saving refugees, ingratiation and daily collection of money. The fact that this was often condemned to failure lies in the asymmetrical nature or starting position of the affair. The taboos that arose as a result would keep afflicting and deforming the Jewish community in Switzerland from then on, welling up from what had been suppressed.

After the Shoah the Jewish community, consisting of old-established Jewish families and Swiss Zionists who lived and sustained themselves from looking towards Israel, and of refugees and migrants who had come from Eastern Europe before, during or after the war, of people of contrasting origins and with different living patterns, never again became an entity: not a community, but a border society. All at once they collided: those who had done service in labor camps and those who had cooperated with the authorities and made decisions about the others; those who had survived the war by escaping and those who had tried to come to terms with the refugees and to somehow control the flood of people; those who had earned quite good money with the Jewish refugees and those who had paid and donated it; those who had suffered deprivation and those who had exploited the deprivation of others; those who were traumatized and those history had spared; those who had lost everything and those who could not comprehend what that really meant; those who spoke a foreign language, came from a different cultural background, represented Jewish ways of thought that were foreign to others who were unwilling to concede any space to them. And finally also the isolated examples of Swiss Jews who were denouncers and those refugees who were betrayed, principally by non-Jews, but sometimes, in fact, also by brothers and sisters. Yes, many things were not good at that time and that became rooted, well beyond the war and right into the present, in the unconscious memory of a supposed community. Yes, many things were also good at that time, and that too has often sunk into the unconscious, because it touches on taboos, well beyond the war and right into the present. Both statements are true, both have influenced and shaped the present, most was left unspoken.

**A Heterogeneous, but not Pluralistic Crowd.** Those referred to as "Swiss Jews" progressed to become a heterogeneous crowd that had to be lumped together in the existing institutions. But biographical and ideological Jewish discrepancies remained. Old-established Jews only all too often excluded others, and for a long time there could be no talk of equal entitlement. One lot expected gratitude and the other could not come to terms with the lack of understanding of their situation: a deep gulf opened up.

While refugee aid that was linked to the SIG did everything humanly possible (which again was not always seen in that light by everybody), by collecting money for the refugees (in accordance with instructions from the Federal Council), providing assistance, running soup kitchens, or organizing accommodation, rabbis were primarily concerned with the question of whether the Swiss ban on kosher slaughter could be circumvented so far as to allow for animals to be stunned before the cutting ritual. An incidental necessity in times of war, but one that at the same time showed the somewhat detached priorities in a country where cattle trade was characteristic of Swiss Jews. Just as the action taken by officials was at times provincial and clumsy, so people like the Basel lawyer Marcus Cohn, the young Zionist Veit Wyler, the jurist and journalist Benjamin Sagalowitz, or, say, the Socialist David Farbstein were courageous, clear-eyed, and farsighted. They all exerted themselves on behalf of refugees and unlike the majority of official flunkeys tried to find ways and means of coping with the situation that seemed to be so hopelessly blocked.

**Criticism of Jewish Officials.** Again it was Veit Wyler who sharply criticized the SIG and its institutions even while the war was still raging. Wyler admittedly recognized the SIG's achievement when he stated in a lecture: "In no way do I fail to appreciate the extensive work that was carried out in matters relating to refugee welfare, nor do I wish to omit to mention that we were confronted with a problem without having even the least experience." But at the same time he saw that the Jewish officials played the game involving the lives and deaths of human beings, Jewish brothers and sisters, in an excessively naive, reticent, and provincial way, he saw the failure of the institution and its officials, accusing them of self-satisfaction and self-praise: "The very industrious Jewish bureaucracy is very complacent. (...) I note, and I can prove it through many examples, that our Jewish representatives have no influence on the authorities. Nor do they enjoy any great respect for the authorities have been warned and know how to despise the undignified compliance of our heroes." And then Wyler launches a frontal attack, such as nobody today in times when there is no threat would even begin to dare to express, however justified it might be: "Our Jewish representatives are most bereft of ideas, for throughout the entire time they have been unable to make a single constructive suggestion to the authorities. (...) Out of intellectual puniness and moral righteousness there arose a practice that will leave a dreadful memory behind. (...) But the Swiss Jewish population is far from knowing everything that is being done in its name." And then: "The Swiss Jew cares for himself and contents himself with giving alms to a poor man who is standing before his eyes. If a Swiss citizen distinguished himself only through such virtues, he would still not be a patriot. Patriotism, after all, requires concern for the community and the capacity to make sacrifices. To what extent does the Swiss Jew in Switzerland fulfill this general duty towards the rest of the Jews? Indeed, he is not even exhorted to do so by our representatives." A single voice, admittedly, which many people would have countered in some way, but a voice that ultimately tried to stir up the soul of the Swiss Jewish population. Not unjustly.

Words such as these only few people ventured to utter. Paradoxically, the longer after the war, the less so. For Jewish Swiss officials established a mentality of servility inwardly and outwardly such as cannot be simply explained by provincial behavior and a lack of civil courage in state politics or social sensitivity. Instead of making it a priority to support and export

the pulsating life in communities, organizations, and clubs and instead of promoting and representing the countless cultural, political, economic, social and other activities and achievements, recognizing, internalizing, and taking on board the change in a quite new generation of Jewish people who were born after the war, and recognizing the opportunities of Jewish immigration, Jewish officials identified more and more with Swiss bureaucracy and formalized, empty debates and barricaded themselves off. The fight against anti-Semitism became a fetish and the legitimation for anything and everything, while heterogeneous and in a positive sense pluralistic Jewish life moved in a quite different direction. Anyone going through the minutes of the SIG management or its committees from the most recent decades, will time and again observe an attitude that would not be out of place in the preambles of a funeral parlor, and ultimately can only be traced back to wartime, though that does not make it any easier to understand. Any more than the lack of courage to change, the exclusion of liberal Jews from political committees, the denial of an independent Jewish self-confidence that can no longer be discerned in the SIG structures of the founded in 1904 or in those officials who without Jewish knowledge want to represent Jewish women and men, yet, are unable to do so.

**The Silent Swiss Jews.** The end of World War II was followed by years that never properly addressed and processed the unspoken, the chasms between German Jews, Ashkenazi, and later also Sephardic Jews, which already had been present and were deepened by the war experience. Immigration, emigration, and return migration to and from Israel were intermixed in the development of a community that was not to be reconciled with itself, whose community structures remained stuck in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, that appears virtually paralyzed, and that is incapable of coping with developments, changes, and challenges. Led by officials and rabbis who wanted to preserve what has long since ceased to exist and who have excluded, simply not allowed in, and often frightened off many pioneers of Jewish life. Years of stasis, years of bureaucratization of Judaism, years of powerlessness in the face of silence that finally brings up time and again reminiscences in the back of many people's minds of the status as it had been sixty years ago. It is their different borderline experiences that could not weld the community together. A community that came together at the existential and historical limit and has not found its way. Meanwhile, however, often alongside so-called official Swiss Jewry, a pluralistic Jewish community has evolved that is developing with great dynamism and across frontiers, establishing and successfully shaping new Jewish life independently of outmoded structures in communities or the SIG.

Thus, the evening journey back across the Rhine from Hohenems, past St.Gallen and Zurich to Basel on the bend of the Rhine, is a journey through the dusk of a present that shies away from confrontation with the future and avoids reappraisal of the past—yet, time and again there is rebellion against its taboos. The present of a split pseudo-community, divided into the reality of a community and into the individual lives of Jewish women and men living in an unorganized way, the latter group now in the majority. This has created new borders, even if they are now only those of the communities.

# Diaspora. Hohenems and the Renaissance of Jewish Self-Awareness

*Isolde Charim*



In a recent interview the Austrian filmmaker Ruth Beckermann expressed the opinion that the third Jewish generation could no longer derive its identity from the Shoah and was, therefore, taking recourse in tradition. Such statements are indicative of the change that occurs among contemporary Jewry in search of identity. However, the alternatives suggested are inadequate. The current development takes a different course—beyond Shoah and tradition. With its new permanent exhibition the Jewish Museum Hohenems is now attempting to do justice to this fundamental shift.

The starting point of the exhibition is Jewish life, marked by migration (not always as a result of persecution, e.g., migration due to marriage) and the establishment of networks. These transcend borders in two respects: they are both transnational and intercultural—even going so far as conversion, as can be seen from the history of Hohenems. By no means was it a foregone conclusion that this history would become the object of a Jewish Museum. Yet, the significance of this new definition can be measured by that very fact. Focusing on a mobile network existence with all its schisms—i.e., on a community that is kept alive by its very opposite, by mobility—indicates what represents the “core” of Judaism: its enduring “counter-present” identity (Jan Assmann). Accordingly, the fundamental distinguishing mark of Judaism would be not its visible, explicit rites and customs, but its “*reservatio mentalis*”, its reservation against any *Lebenswelt* (lifeworld), against any present. Perhaps this can best be described as follows: in the 15<sup>th</sup> century under the rule of the Inquisition the forced baptism of Spanish Jews took place. Those converted in this way, referred to as *marranos*, then developed a kind of double life, outwardly following the Catholic rites, but inwardly remaining bound to Judaism—which they often practiced secretly. Over time the content of their inner belief was frequently lost, but what remained was a split that never allowed the Jews to be at one with the world they lived in. Accordingly, Judaism would consist in keeping such a difference open, in what could be described as structural *marranism*. Rid of its religious connotation, the “chosen status” of the Jewish people was nothing more than such an otherness that even in successful assimilation keeps a difference open, has reservations—whether religious in nature or not. As a structure, “chosen status” does not aim at redemption elsewhere, but is fulfilled performatively in the here and now: through the assertion of a difference, which is ultimately not specified. In this sense the new permanent exhibition necessarily undertakes a redefinition of the concept of the Diaspora. Rather than banishment from a homeland, or exile with the prospect of a return, the Diaspora is a final condition. The Diaspora presented here thus becomes the living model for a European identity: it is exemplary both for European society as well as for a genuinely European Judaism, a Judaism that does not miss an Israeli existence. The Diaspora Jew we meet in the museum is not a defective Israeli. He has an identity of his own.

But that is—as Marx says—a “tricky thing”. If identity is about recognizing oneself in the image of the Same, that is, in a mirror image, then European-Jewish identity means “recognizing oneself” in the picture of the Other, in the stranger. The paradoxical, impossible aspect of this “recognition” shows that this cannot be about an identity at one with itself. Hohenems dismisses the phantasmagoric notion of a full Jewish identity in two ways: both inwardly and outwardly.

Inwardly the point at which a full Jewish identity is established is tradition—here first and foremost Halacha, the Jewish law that determines who is a Jew. The museum does not adhere to this traditional standardization. By embracing the long since converted descendants of the Hohenems Jews too, the Hohenems definition is to a large degree secular. The new European Judaism is secular—in the sense that it is primarily structurally Jewish—that is, it resides in a difference. It does not draw upon faith, but upon experience, not upon the law, but upon memory. That is why a museum can also turn into its central institution.

All the same, it can only be a museum that renounces any claim to represent a full Jewish identity to the outside world. This renders it necessary to avoid two dangers. On the one hand, it may not tell the story of a common Jewish-Austrian culture. The museum has to resist the appeal of the “politics of idyll”, which disastrously misunderstands the “successful” integration of the Jews as an elimination of the difference. But on the other hand, it also has to avoid the opposite (greater) danger, that of folklorization. Folklorization not only stresses the difference between Jews and Austrians, it also confirms their foreignness. Through folklorization the Other gets firmly pegged in his full identity, which can be demonstrated by colorful signs, such as, for instance, in the presentation of cult objects. Here the exhibition of foreign objects becomes the proof of the Otherness of a social group. Thus, folklorization means understanding the objects as evidence of an unambiguous identity. Resisting the temptation to present full signs, the museum in Hohenems is now setting itself the intricate and precarious task of reconstructing Jewish life based on the traces it leaves behind. Traces then rather than full signs to sketch both the ambiguity as well as the mutability and not least also the dispersed nature of what makes Judaism what it is: a distinct, different experience. This crucial point has to be strongly emphasized: non-religious Judaism is not determined by its culture as popular platitudes suggest—even if it likes to see itself in a kind of self-folklorization as the carrier of that Jewish culture. No, the content of its difference, that which constitutes secular Judaism, is a different collective experience. Therefore, nothing that would close this difference—such as an identity founded in culture –, but rather those very memories that hold the counter-present structure open even if the suitcases have been unpacked long since. The collecting of their traces, the ingathering of what is dispersed, makes the museum quite a unique place: it becomes a junction, the eccentric center of a “virtual community” whose cohesion is determined by the mutuality of memory. In this respect it is logical to put it in a place where there are no—or at least only few—Jews. Precisely for this very reason the museum is not, strictly speaking, a community museum: it does not present a homogeneous group guaranteeing viewers an all too simple confirmation of themselves. After all, an established foreignness would enable to reassure oneself—affirmatively or negatively—as to one’s own identity. Thus, the representation of an internally split Other affects non-Jewish visitors as well.

However, here the Holocaust is not a fixed point from which an unequivocal Jewish identity could be inferred any more than are religion and tradition. The message conveyed is that Judaism cannot be understood solely as a commemoration of the dead, as a “narrative of lost life” (James Young). A museum, of all places, denies itself the task of being just an archivist. In the emphatic sense that too is secular, since in Judaism commemoration, self-definition based on catastrophe, represents a religious obligation. Remembering is taking place here rather than commemoration. The distinction is visible in the form of presentation: in a showcase,

shoes and papers of those deceased become a staging of the Holocaust, that is, a consecration. For the showcase charges objects presented in this way: they become insignia of the inner treasure, signifiers of the “soul” of those murdered. They are the full signs of a gap. Presented in such a way, the things tell the story from the point of view of the end, of extinction. Not that this might be unjustified, but the Hohenems museum definitely does not see itself as a Holocaust memorial. Moreover: its aim forbids just that. Here a self-confident European Judaism is reasserting itself. This requires its own way of dealing with the Shoah, treating it not as a negative teleology, not as the founding experience of the current Jewish identity. Therefore, the Holocaust appears here as a break: there is a Before, but also an After. Hence the permanent exhibition is about the concrete memory of concrete people, and not about symbolic commemoration. It has something of a collective *mémoire involontaire*, which associates a past from a thousand slivers of reality.

By depicting the Before, before the Shoah, as life in all its concretion, the possibility opens up of an After that is once again a life. Not as a continuation, not as a further narrative—the story of the Hohenems Jews ends with their annihilation –, but as a life that starts from this break. In a double sense: it has to start with the Shoah, but it also has to go on from there.

In the context of the Austrian situation this is a bold and at the same time self-confident approach. This attitude is bold if measured, for instance, against the discussion of 2000/2001 that indignantly demanded the Holocaust should be forgotten. The apologists of forgetting assigned the “admonishers”, the “commemorators”, the role of the troublemaker who would impede final pacification of Austrian society. But in Hohenems we learn that this dichotomy has become obsolete. If it used to be a question of intervening against the denial of the Holocaust (or against its negation, the repudiation of one’s own share in it), today a completely different way of coming to terms is necessary.

Where Jewish museums are concerned, the altered situation can be summed up more or less like this: as to the conflict around the Holocaust, today the issue is no longer that there are Jewish museums, but what they are. This requires to assuming a delicate position: on one hand, commemoration may not prevent anything—including anti-Semitism—but on the other hand, suppression does harm. This means that commemoration does not have any political, but only moral added value. Remembering fulfills that function. Therefore, the political concept of such an institution has to start elsewhere: precisely at that suggestion of a new identity. Just this, just the assertion of a difference, the presentation of a not-full, not-identical identity really challenges “Fortress Europe” today. If the exclusion of the Jews used to be the subject of accusation and their inclusion was demanded, the political message today is: Judaism is the non-integrable aspect of the integrated. And that should be respected.

It is in the nature of things that such a “matter” is also promoted by its presentation. In this sense the Hohenems approach means above all: the return of a Jewish self-awareness.





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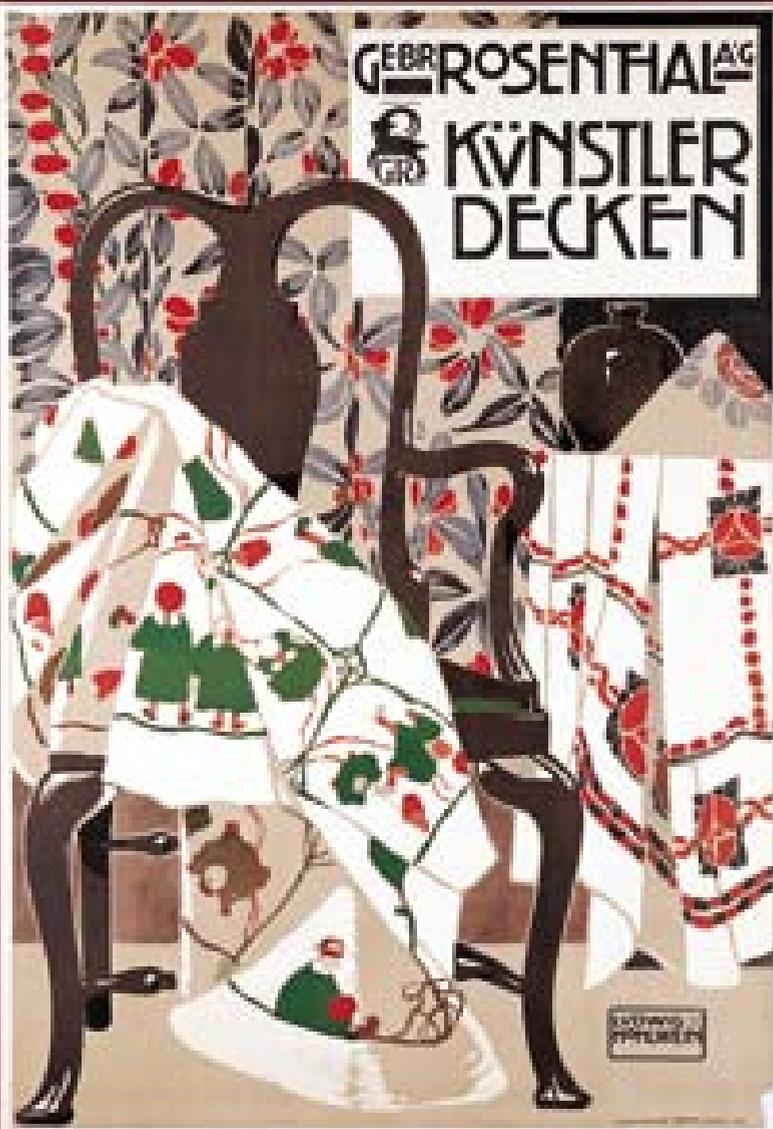
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## Exhibits in the permanent exhibition

### First floor

#### Room 1

“Why are we here?”

#### Settlement

**110**

Jewish communities and settlements round Lake Constance 1200-1500  
Graphic art; JMH

**111**

Tax list (Mistrodel) mentioning the Jew Eberlin, Feldkirch 1300  
Manuscript (reproduction); Bayrisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Munich

**112**

Lawsuit at Rankweil provincial court by a Jewish woman called Toltza against the knight Hermann von Montfort because of claims relating to the bequest of a kid, 1354  
Manuscript (reproduction); Tiroler Landesarchiv, Innsbruck

**113**

Nuremberg Memorial Book with a reference to the massacred Feldkirch community under the heading *Medinat Bodase*, 1296-1392  
Manuscript (reproduction); Jewish National and University Library, Jerusalem

**114**

View of the Palazzo Altemps in Rome, the property of Cardinal Markus Sittikus III from Hohenems, c. 1980  
Photograph by G. Carniel and R. D'Agostini; Soprintendenza Archeologica di Roma

**115**

Charter of protection issued by Count Kaspar of Hohenems, 3 April 1617  
Manuscript with the count's seal and audio; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

**116**

Seal of the horse-dealer Abraham Levi from Sulz, 1693  
Sealing wax on paper; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

**117**

Imperial Count Kaspar of Hohenems, 1617  
Engraving by Lucas Kilian (reproduction); Vorarlberger Landesmuseum, Bregenz

**118**

Letter from Markus Sittikus IV, Prince Bishop of Salzburg, to his brother Count Kaspar of Hohenems, 7 June 1617  
Manuscript; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

**119**

Register of protection payments made by Hohenems Jews, 1651/1652  
Manuscript (reproduction); Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

**120**

View of Hohenems from the *Emser Chronik* by Johann Georg Schleh, printed by Bartholomäus Schnell in Hohenems, 1616  
(Reproduction); JMH

**121**

Letter from Wolf von Langenargen to Count Kaspar, Buchau 30 June 1617  
Manuscript with seal and audio; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

**122**

List of the first Jews interested in settling in Hohenems, 1617  
Manuscript; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

**123**

Business ledger of Hoffaktor (court factor) Maier Jonathan Uffenheimer, 1761/1763  
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**124**

Court records of the case of the Jew Lazarus v. Schnell and Waibel, 1641  
Manuscript (reproduction) and audio; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

**125**

Letter from the Hohenems Jews appealing against their threatened expulsion, c. 1670  
Yiddish manuscript and audio; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

**126**

Court proceedings regarding looting from Josle Levi in Hohenems in 1647  
Manuscript (reproduction); Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

**127**

Letter of complaint from the Vorarlberg provincial estates regarding Jewish competition, 1676  
Manuscript and audio; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

**128**

Request by the Jews of Sulz for equal status, 1685  
Manuscript; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

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Inventory of losses by the Jews of Sulz after the looting and destruction in the “Sulz Raid”, after 1744  
Manuscript; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

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Fragment of a Torah scroll from the Sulz community  
Manuscript on parchment; Sulz municipal archives

**131**

Consent from the authorities in Bregenz for the building of a synagogue, 1770  
Manuscript (reproduction); Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

**132**

Mezuzah from the former Brettauer House in the Jewish quarter, c. 1825  
Manuscript on parchment in a metal case; Hildegard Nachbauer, Hohenems

**133**

Torah pennant of Josef Friedmann from Innsbruck, 1855/56  
The embroidered inscription says: “born under a lucky star on Sunday, 2nd Av [5]616, may the Lord let him grow up in the spirit of the Torah/ that is the Torah which Moses commanded / and get married/ and perform good deeds, Amen Sela.” Below the year is the word “Innsbruck”  
White linen, embroidered with bright silk thread; Jüdisches Museum Wien, Stern collection

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List of boys born in 1844, taken from the circumcision register  
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Draft of a love letter in Yiddish, c. 1675  
Manuscript (reproduction) and audio;  
Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz
- 136**  
Printing block from the Rosenthal Bros.  
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- 137**  
Briefcase of Anton Rosenthal  
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- 138**  
Poster advertising designer tablecloths  
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Color lithograph by Ludwig Hohlwein  
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Instructions on how to use a new Aus-  
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Printed cotton cloth, JMH
- 140**  
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- 141**  
Cash voucher from the Rosenthal Bros.  
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Rosenthal Bros. cotton printing plant, c.  
1900  
Photograph; JMH
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Workers' housing provided by the  
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Rosenthal factory in Hohenems-  
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Notebook from the apprenticeship of  
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Portrait of Clara Rosenthal (born  
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Portrait of Judith Daniel-Levi  
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Synagogue choir of the Jewish community, c. 1900  
Photograph; Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau
- 246**  
Das Begräbnis der Märzgefallenen (The Burial of Those Who Died in March), 1848  
Wood engraving by Vincenz Katzler (reproduction); JMH
- 247**  
Salomon Sulzer, "Das Lied der Totenkopfpflege" (The Song of the "Death's Head" Legion)  
Audio, ORF-Landesstudio Vorarlberg
- 248**  
Silver spoon that belonged to Jeanette Winkler-Landauer with the inscription "halav" (milky), early 19<sup>th</sup> c.  
Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau
- 249**  
Notice of a "Schlachtpartie" at the "Zur Frohen Aussicht" ("Happy Prospect" inn)  
Hohenemser Gemeindeblatt, 27.2.1938 (reproduction); JMH
- 250**  
Note made by the count's officials regarding Jewish laws about food, 1617  
Manuscript (reproduction); Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz
- 251**  
Portrait of Josef Landauer (1783-1834), c. 1830  
Oil on wood; Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau
- 252**  
Portrait of Jeanette Landauer (1789-1867), c. 1830  
Oil on wood; Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau
- 253**  
Gift list for the marriage of Jeanette Winkler and Josef Landauer, 1824  
Manuscript; Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau
- 254**  
Portrait of Julie Landauer (1831-1917), c. 1855  
Oil on canvas; Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau
- 255**  
Portrait of Ludwig Landauer (1825-1868), c. 1855  
Oil on canvas; Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau
- 256**  
Certificate of apprenticeship of Salomon Landauer (1804-1870), 1825  
Manuscript on pre-printed form; Edwin Oberhauser, Götzis
- 257**  
The "Zur Frohen Aussicht" inn  
Photograph; Leonhard Glatthaar, Hohenems
- 258**  
A procession of the Catholic Workers' Association passing the house of Leonhard Landauer, butcher, 1920  
Photograph (reproduction); Horst Jäger, Hohenems

**259**  
Seder plate that belonged to the Bollag-Landauer family , c. 1900  
Porcelain, French manufacture; Liliane Bollag, Widnau

## Room 3

### “What is our world?”

#### Diaspora and migration

**311**  
Passport of the pedlar Samuel Josef, 1815  
Manuscript entries and stamp; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

**312**  
Three itineraries followed by Samuel Josef as a pedlar  
Graphic art; JMH

**313**  
Jacob Picard, “Das Los” (Fate), in *Werke in zwei Bänden* (Works in two volumes), vol. 1., Constance 1991  
Audio; JMH

**314**  
Pedlar’s permit for Mina Weil, 1858  
Manuscript on pre-printed form; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

**315**  
Announcement by the carrier Leopold Weil, 18.5.1884  
Hohenems Gemeindefest (reproduction); JMH

**316**  
Moritz Julius Bonn (1873-1965), “So macht man Geschichte. Bilanz eines Lebens” [How history is made. Taking stock of a life], Munich 1953  
Audio; JMH

**317**  
List of servants, 1814  
Manuscript; Stadtarchiv Hohenems

**318**  
Jewish poorhouse, Hohenems, c. 1900  
Photograph by Arnold Sueti; Erwin and Uri Taenzer collection, USA

**319**  
Salomon Sulzer, “Lecho Dodi”  
Audio, Cantor Lawrence Fine, The Zemel Choir, 1997  
from: *Viennese Synagogue Music in the Age of Schubert*. Salomon Sulzer and his Contemporaries. Jewish Heritage Music Recordings.

**320**  
Nameplate from Albert Hirschfeld’s chair in the synagogue at St. Gallen  
Metal; Jüdische Gemeinde St. Gallen

**321**  
List of Jews entitled to trade in St. Gallen, 1817  
Manuscript (reproduction); Staatsarchiv St. Gallen

**322**  
Adolf Burgauer’s military service book  
Manuscript on pre-printed form; Jüdisches Museum der Schweiz, Basel, deposited by the Burgauer family

**323**  
Award of full citizenship to Adolf Burgauer (1837-1904), 1876  
Manuscript on pre-printed form; Jüdisches Museum der Schweiz, Basel, deposited by the Burgauer family

**324**  
Letter from the Hohenems community to the St. Gallen Fellowship of the Jewish Religion regarding the donation of a Torah scroll, 1881  
Manuscript; jüdische Gemeinde St. Gallen

**325**  
Invitation to the 50<sup>th</sup> jubilee of the Frongartenstraße synagogue in St. Gallen, 1931  
Printed matter (reproduction); Jüdische Gemeinde St. Gallen

**326**  
Advertisement by the Hirschfeld company, c. 1910  
JMH, Madeline Diener-Hirschfeld deposit

**327**  
Die Reichenbach-Fabrik in St. Gallen (The Reichenbach factory in St. Gallen)  
Martin Lazarus and Philipp Reichenbach Company’s commemorative publication, 1914 (reproduction); St. Gallen cantonal library

**328**  
Cushion commemorating the marriage of Clara Rosenthal and Josef Heimann, 1891  
Silk, printed; JMH

**329**  
Clara Rosenthal and Josef Heimann on their wedding day, 1891  
Photograph (reproduction); Jacqueline Heyman-Pelseneer, Brussels

**330**  
Rosenthal family (standing on the left, Anton Rosenthal; sitting on the left, Charlotte Rosenthal; standing on the right, Clara Rosenthal; sitting at the front, Rudolf Rosenthal), c. 1885  
Photograph (reproduction); Jacqueline Heyman-Pelseneer, Brussels

**331**  
Album with telegrams offering congratulations on the occasion of the marriage of Clara Rosenthal and Josef Heimann, 1891  
Manuscript on pre-printed telegram forms, bound; Dolores Purtscher, Hohenems

**332**  
Clara Heimann-Rosenthal’s letter-opener  
JMH, Hans Burtscher collection

**333**  
Postcard from Clara Heimann-Rosenthal to Jean Heyman in Brussels, Hohenems 2 May 1940  
Manuscript (reproduction) and audio; Jacqueline Heyman-Pelseneer, Brussels

**334**  
Postcard from Rick Pollack to Laure Heyman, Lausanne 2 November 1941  
Manuscript (reproduction); Jacqueline Heyman-Pelseneer, Brussels

**335**  
Last postcard from Clara Heimann-Rosenthal, Vienna 3 April 1942  
Manuscript (reproduction) and audio; Jacqueline Heyman-Pelseneer, Brussels

**336**  
Postcard from Laure Heyman to Clara Heimann-Rosenthal, Brussels 16 July 1942, returned with the mark “emigrated” dated 2 August 1942  
Manuscript (reproduction); Jacqueline Heyman-Pelseneer, Brussels

**337**  
Contemporary translation of a Hebrew marriage contract between Judas Wolf and Maria Schlesinger, 1796  
Manuscript; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

**338**  
Complaint lodged by Sybilla Bikard against her husband, 1807  
Manuscript; Stadtarchiv Hohenems

**339**  
Rickle Schwarz’s mahzor (prayer book)  
Printed matter (Sulzbach 1766) with handwritten notes, c. 1809, and audio; JMH

- 340**  
"Die Mendelbahn" (The Mendel funicular), c. 1900  
Postcard; JMH
- 341**  
Aron Tänzer, "Festpredigt. Bei der Einweihung des israelitischen Tempels 1901 in Meran in Südtirol gehalten" (Celebratory sermon. Delivered at the dedication of the Jewish temple in Merano in South Tyrol, 1901)  
Printed matter; JMH
- 342**  
Poster for the Mori-Arco-Riva railway, c. 1900  
(Reproduction); Zeughaus Innsbruck
- 343**  
Beer bottles from the Schwarz Brewery  
Markus Angerer, Terlan
- 344**  
Poster for the Brüll furniture store, Innsbruck c. 1900  
Printed matter (reproduction); Zeughaus Innsbruck
- 345**  
Shoe-tree from the Pasch shoe shop  
Metal; Thomas Albrich, Innsbruck
- 346**  
Julius Pasch in his Innsbruck shoe shop in Maria-Theresien-Straße, 1903  
Photograph (reproduction); Valerie Neal, Cambridge
- 347**  
Siegmond Schwarz (1849-1919), c. 1910  
Photograph by Hans Pohl, Bolzano (reproduction); Martin Sölva, Kaltern
- 348**  
Cap of the conductor's uniform of the Dornbirn-Lustenau Electric Railway  
Stadtmuseum Dornbirn
- 349**  
The inaugural journey of the Dornbirn-Lustenau Electric Railway, 1904  
Photograph (reproduction); Stadtarchiv Dornbirn
- 350**  
Signaling whistle of the Dornbirn-Lustenau Electric Railway  
Stadtmuseum Dornbirn
- 351**  
Stefan Zweig, Die Welt von Gestern (The World of Yesterday), 1942  
Book (1st edition, Stockholm 1942) and audio; JMH
- 352**  
Postcard from Stefan Zweig to Erna Brettauer, 1919  
Manuscript; JMH, Beatrice Weber deposit
- 353**  
Bill of exchange of the Brettauer Bank, 1876  
Manuscript on pre-printed form; Leonhard Glatthaar, Hohenems
- 354**  
Company plaque of Riunione Adriatica di Sicurtà, late 19<sup>th</sup> c.  
Metal; JMH
- 355**  
Letter to Lothar Sulzer from the office of the royal and imperial governor, Trieste, 10 November 1908  
Manuscript; JMH, Roberto Woynar collection
- 356**  
Filippo Brunner and his family in front of their villa in Trieste, c. 1920  
Photograph (reproduction); Michele Faraguna, Trieste
- 357**  
Brentano's Catalogue of French Books, 1904  
Prospectus, New York; JMH
- 358**  
Paul and Arnold Rosenthal with their riding teacher in the Prater in Vienna, c. 1910  
Photograph (reproduction); JMH, Stephan Rosenthal-Rollin collection
- 359**  
Business ledger of the Hohenems businessman Albert Hirschfeld (1791-1859), 1st half of 19<sup>th</sup> c.  
Manuscript; JMH
- 360**  
The Bernheimer furniture store in Abbeville, Alabama, c. 1910  
Photograph; JMH
- 361**  
Memoirs of Nanette Landauer, 1933  
Manuscript and audio; JMH
- 362**  
Ely Jacques Kahn, Architect  
Book (W. W. Norton, New York, 2006); JMH
- 363**  
Law tablets. Top piece of a small Torah ark from the St. Gallen community  
Painted wood, c. 1900; JMH
- 364**  
Regulation pistol issued to Adolf Burgauer by the Swiss army, 1882  
Pierre Burgauer, Rehetobel
- 365**  
Willi Burgauer's British Bulldog revolver, for self-defense on business trips to the Baltic, c. 1900  
Pierre Burgauer, Rehetobel
- 366**  
Werner Burgauer's "Model 9" Walther Pistol, acquired in 1939 so that he could defend himself in the event of the National Socialists invading Switzerland  
Pierre Burgauer, Rehetobel

## Room 4 "Who are we?" Identities

- 411**  
Aron Tänzer, "Ich als Objekt. Von mir selbst betrachtet" [I as the object. Studied by myself], memoirs, 1904  
Manuscript and audio; Erwin and Uri Taenzer collection, USA
- 412**  
Aron Tänzer, diary 1911-1921  
Manuscript; Erwin and Uri Taenzer collection, USA
- 413**  
Aron Tänzer on taking up office in Hohenems, 1896  
Photograph (reproduction); Stadtarchiv Göppingen
- 414**  
Aron Tänzer with medals on his chest in World War I, 1914-1918  
Photograph (reproduction); Erwin and Uri Taenzer collection, USA
- 415**  
Rabbi's house in Hohenems, c. 1900  
Photograph by Arnold Sueti; Erwin and Uri Taenzer collection, USA
- 416**  
Aron Tänzer's sons Fritz and Paul in Israelitengasse, c. 1900  
Photograph by Arnold Sueti; Erwin and Uri Taenzer collection, USA

417

Aron Tänzer, Die Geschichte der Juden in Hohenems und im übrigen Vorarlberg (The History of the Jews in Hohenems and elsewhere in Vorarlberg), Merano 1905  
Printed matter with a handwritten dedication by the author to Anton Rosenthal; JMH

418

Classification and advice on using the archives of the market town of Hohenems, written by Aron Tänzer, 1903  
Manuscript; Stadtarchiv Hohenems

419

Invitation from the Association of Foremen and Industrial Executives to the lecture by Aron Tänzer on the topic "Leben und Wissenschaft" (Life and science), 22 August 1903  
Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

420

Postcard with a complaint by Joel Nagelberg regarding Aron Tänzer to the Jewish community of Hohenems, 31 August 1903  
Manuscript and audio; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

421

Aron Tänzer, "Die Ethik des Judentums" (The ethics of Judaism)  
Dr. Adolf Brülls populärwissenschaftliche Monatsblätter, Year 18 (1898), no. 12  
Printed matter; Erwin and Uri Taenzer collection, USA

422

Letter to Lotario Sulzer from the "Magistrato Civico" regarding his conversion to the Catholic faith, 12 March 1905  
Manuscript; JMH, Roberto Woyнар collection

423

Hugo Tänzer, Collected thoughts at Yom Kippur, 1932  
Typescript and audio; Erwin and Uri Taenzer collection, USA

424

Note from Aron Tänzer on receiving Hugo Tänzer's typescript, 1933  
Manuscript; Erwin and Uri Taenzer collection, USA

425

Aron Tänzer, Die Mischehe in Religion, Geschichte und Statistik der Juden (Mixed marriage in the religion, history and statistics of the Jews), Berlin 1913  
Printed matter; JMH

426

Hugo Tänzer and Emilie Kozak Photograph (reproduction), c. 1935; Erwin and Uri Taenzer collection, USA

427

Shofar  
Ram's horn; JMH

428

Meil (Torah mantle), donated to the Innsbruck synagogue by the Turteltaub family, 1926  
The inscription reads: "A heartfelt gift from member R. Meir Sev Turteltaub and his wife, dear Malka, may she live, Innsbruck 686"  
Jüdisches Museum Wien

429

The last tower document, written by Theodor Elkan and Ivan Rosenthal, 1918  
Manuscript and audio; JMH

430

Invitation to an award ceremony honoring Moritz Federmann, 1904  
Printed matter; Stadtarchiv Hohenems

431

Award of the Silver Cross of Merit with Crown to Moritz Federmann, 1904  
Photograph (reproduction); Bernhard Babutzky collection, Hohenems

432

Constitution of the German Progressive Citizens' Association of Hohenems, 1903  
Printed matter (reproduction); JMH

433

Report on the commemorative ceremony for August Reis, 1904  
Vorarlberger Landeszeitung, 18.4.1904, with handwritten, anti-Semitic addition; Diözesanarchiv, Feldkirch

434

Malwine and Lucian Brunner (1850-1914), 1900  
Photograph (reproduction); JMH, Mark Brunner collection

436

Minutes of Hohenems municipal council regarding the rejection of a bequest by the late Lucian Brunner for the creation of a non-denominational school, 14 May 1920  
Typescript (reproduction); Stadtarchiv Hohenems

437

Samuel Spindler (1881-1942) at a trade union training event in Dornbirn, c. 1925  
Photograph (reproduction); JMH

438

Public statement by Samuel Spindler countering anti-Semitic calumnies, 3 January 1919  
Vorarlberger Wacht (reproduction); Vorarlberger Landesbibliothek, Bregenz

439

Minutes of the interrogation of Harry Weil regarding Communist activities, 25 October 1934  
Typescript; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

440

Flysheet of the illegal Communist Party, 1934  
Printed matter; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

441

Minutes of the interrogation of Harry Weil, 21 October 1937  
Typescript; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

442

Invitation to the Hanukkah party of the Jewish Sports Club of St. Gallen, 27 December 1919  
Printed matter (reproduction); Jüdische Gemeinde St. Gallen

443

Skiers from the Maccabi Hazair Zionists youth organization in Tyrol, c. 1931  
Photograph (reproduction); Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Innsbruck

444

"Theodor Herzl at the 1st Zionists' Congress in Basel, 1897"  
Postcard; JMH

445

Progynon (a hormone preparation developed by Eugen Steinach), 1937  
Scheringstiftung, Scheringianeum, Berlin

446

Eugen Steinach (1861-1944), c. 1930  
Photograph (reproduction); JMH

447

"Steinach-Rummel-Foxtrott" by Willy Kaufmann, 1920  
Printed matter and audio; JMH—  
Recording, ORF 1990; arrangement and production, Rolf Aberer; singer, Peter Lampeitl

448

Contribution to the Concordia ball with caricatures on Steinach, Freud and Einstein, 1931  
Printed matter; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

**452**  
Advertisement for the premiere of the "Steinach film" on 8 January 1923 at the UFA-Palast am Zoo cinema in Berlin  
Reproduction; Humboldt-Universität, Berlin

**449**  
Doctoral certificate of Hans Elkan (1900-1942), Freiburg 1927  
Printed matter with seal; JMH, Edelinde Spiegel, Dornbirn

**450**  
Hans Elkan's record of studies, Innsbruck 1929  
Manuscript on pre-printed form; Dolores Purtscher, Hohenems

**451**  
Hans Elkan's membership card of the Academic Historians' Club, 1929  
Manuscript on pre-printed form; Dolores Purtscher, Hohenems

## Room 5 "Do we belong?" Integration and exclusion

**511**  
"Anderl von Rinn"  
Wooden figure, late 20<sup>th</sup> c.; JMH

**512**  
Halsmann family on a trip to Europe, 1924  
Photograph (reproduction); Nicole Emanuel, Overland Park, Kansas

**513**  
Newspaper report on the Halsmann trial in Innsbruck, 14 December 1928  
Printed matter (reproduction); Nicole Emanuel, Overland Park, Kansas

**514**  
Nazi poster about the Halsmann trial in Innsbruck, 1929  
Printed matter (reproduction); Nicole Emanuel, Overland Park, Kansas

**515**  
Bruno Amann, Das Weltbild des Judentums. Grundlagen des völkischen Antisemitismus (The global picture of Judaism. The foundations of popular anti-Semitism) Vienna/Leipzig 1939  
Printed matter; JMH

**516**  
Vorarlberger Volks-Blatt with a profession of anti-Semitism, 3 January 1896  
Printed matter (reproduction); Vorarlberger Landesbibliothek, Bregenz

**517**  
Founding of the local German National Südmark group in Hohenems, 1905  
Typescript and list of signatures (reproduction); JMH

**518**  
Notice: "Jüdische Gäste werden nicht aufgenommen" (Jewish guests not accepted), 1937  
Walsler Heimatbote, 31 December 1937 (reproduction); JMH

**519**  
Notice: Election rally of the "Völkisch-sozialer Block" (folkish-national social league) in Hohenems, 1927  
Hohenemser Gemeindeblatt, 24 April 1927 (reproduction); JMH

**520**  
Christengasse (Christians' Lane) and Israelitengasse (Jews' Lane) in Hohenems  
Two postcards, c. 1900; JMH, Leonhard Glatthaar, Hohenems

**521**  
Record of livestock owned by the Christian and Jewish community in Hohenems, 1864  
Manuscript; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

**522**  
Brunner house in Hohenems, c. 1920  
Photograph (reproduction) and audio; JMH

**523**  
Residence certificate from the Jewish community of Hohenems for Adolf Burgauer, 23 August 1875  
Manuscript on pre-printed form; Pierre Burgauer, Rehetobel

**560**  
Festival committee of the 1st Vorarlberg choir festival in Hohenems, 1864  
Photograph and manuscript (reproduction); Archiv des Männerchors, Hohenems

**561**  
Notice from the Jewish school about the ban on Catholic pupils attending the school, 1896  
Manuscript; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

**524**  
Bazaar by the support committee for the building of the hospital, 1904  
Photograph (reproduction); Horst Jäger, Hohenems

**525**  
Ladies' committee for the support of the hospital building, c. 1908  
Photograph (reproduction); Horst Jäger, Hohenems

**526**  
Ex-servicemen's Association, Hohenems, 1908  
Photograph (reproduction); Leonhard Glatthaar, Hohenems

**527**  
Hohenems Ice-skating Club, 1887  
Photograph (reproduction); JMH

**528**  
Swimming club in the open-air pool on the Old Rhine, 1926  
Photograph; Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau

**529**  
Envelope from the "Bollag & Co" company with a four-leaf clover, c. 1930  
Printed matter; Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau

**530**  
Plate with a Hohenems steinbock (ibex), part of the donation made by Samuel Menz to the Vorarlberger Landesmuseum Association  
Faience; Vorarlberger Landesmuseum, Bregenz

**531**  
List of the Jewish Hohenemser in the Vorarlberger Landesmuseum Association, 1857  
Manuscript; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv Bregenz

**532**  
Walking sticks belonging to the teacher Moritz Federmann, late 19<sup>th</sup> c.  
JMH

**533**  
Hannes Schneider, Rudolf Gomperz, Skiführer für das Arlberggebiet und die Verwallgruppe (Skiing guide for the Arlberg region and Ferwall Gruppe), Munich 1931  
Printed matter; JMH

**534**  
Rudolf Gomperz at the Arlberg youth ski-jumping event, 1910  
Photograph (reproduction); Hans Thöni, Ludesch

**535**  
Rudolf Gomperz, c. 1930  
Photograph (reproduction); Hans Thöni, Ludesch

- 536**  
Edmund and Eva Turteltaub in Salzburg, c. 1905  
Edmund Turteltaub and his family in Dornbirn, 1937  
Hans and Walter Turteltaub, c. 1937  
Photographs; Avram Gafni, Israel
- 537**  
Invitation from the Hohenems Alpine club to a Carnival party  
Hohenemser Gemeindeblatt, 25 January 1885 (reproduction); JMH
- 538**  
Aron Tänzer, Der israelitische Friedhof in Hohenems (The Jewish Cemetery in Hohenems), 1901  
Self-published by the author, with handwritten entries by Jakob and Harry Weil; Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau
- 539**  
The Jewish Cemetery in Hohenems, before 1938  
Photograph; JMH
- 540**  
Kaddish (prayer for the dead) written out by a member of the Reichenbach-Bernheimer family, c. 1910  
Manuscript; JMH
- 541**  
Harry Weil's photograph album, 1930s-1960s  
Harry Weil Jr., Albuquerque, New Mexico
- 542**  
Harry Weil's pocket watch from World War I  
The engraved inscription reads: "Harry Weil, Hohenems, Vorarlberg, III. Rgt. der T.K.J.M. (? (illegible)), 10. Juni 1918"  
Harry Weil Jr., Albuquerque, New Mexico
- 543**  
Memoirs of Nanette Landauer, 1933  
Manuscript (reproduction) and audio; JMH
- 544**  
Nanette and Josef Landauer, 1900  
Photograph (reproduction); JMH
- 545**  
Nanette Landauer, 1935  
Photograph (reproduction); Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau
- 546**  
Ivan Landauer, c. 1920  
Photograph (reproduction); Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau
- 547**  
Jenny Landauer, c. 1912  
Photograph (reproduction); Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau
- 548**  
Interview with Jenny Bollag-Landauer, 1990  
Audio; JMH
- 549**  
Jenny Landauer and guests in the "Zur frohen Aussicht" inn, 1915  
Photograph (reproduction); Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau
- 550**  
Cantor Jakob Weil and his wife Rachel, c. 1920  
Photograph (reproduction); Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz
- 551**  
Advertisement for Jakob Weil's toy shop, 1900  
Hohenemser Gemeindeblatt, 16 September 1900 (reproduction); JMH
- 552**  
Advertisement for Harry Weil's bicycle insurance policies, 1928  
Hohenemser Gemeindeblatt, 6 May 1928 (reproduction); JMH
- 553**  
Social Democratic "Nibelungenhort" choral society, 1924  
Photograph; JMH
- 554**  
In the garden between the synagogue and the rabbi's house: Rachel Weil, Johanna Jäger, Horst Jäger and Jakob Weil, c. 1930  
Photograph (reproduction); Horst Jäger, Hohenems
- 555**  
Application by Harry Weil for the post of the cantor to the Jewish community of St. Gallen, 18 February 1938  
Manuscript; Jüdische Gemeinde St. Gallen
- 556**  
Harry Weil, Ivan Landauer and the Hohenems "Schrammel" (popular music) band, 1919  
Photograph; Harry Weil Jr., Albuquerque, New Mexico
- 557**  
Harry Weil and his orchestra in Bregenz, c. 1930  
Photograph; Harry Weil Jr., Albuquerque, New Mexico
- 558**  
Letter from Ivan Landauer to Theodor and Helene Elkan, 26 August 1938  
Typescript and audio; Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau
- 559**  
Letter from Ivan Landauer to Harry Weil, 15 October 1939  
Typescript and audio; Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau

## Sulzer Room

- 951**  
Bust of Salomon Sulzer, c. 1880  
Plaster; Israelitische Kultusgemeinde, Vienna
- 952**  
House in Hohenems where Salomon Sulzer was born, c. 1900  
Photograph (reproduction); Jüdisches Museum Wien
- 953**  
Commemorative plaque for Salomon Sulzer from the house in Hohenems where he was born  
Copper; Rossmann family, Hohenems
- 954**  
Homage to Salomon Sulzer, 1879  
Lithograph by Ferdinand Teweke (reproduction); Jüdisches Museum Wien
- 955**  
Salomon Sulzer with his deceased wife Fanny, 1857  
Crayon lithograph (reproduction) by Eduard Kaiser; Wien Museum
- 956**  
Letter from the head cantor Magnus Davidsohn suggesting the conversion of the synagogue in Hohenems into a Sulzer memorial, 1951  
Typescript; Stadtarchiv Hohenems
- 957**  
Invitation to a commemorative celebration of Sulzer in San Francisco, 1904  
Printed matter; Stadtarchiv Hohenems
- 958**  
Program of a synagogue concert in Berlin with Albert Einstein and compositions by Sulzer, 1931  
Printed matter (reproduction); Salomon-Ludwig-Steinheim-Institut, Duisburg
- 959**  
Manuscript scores from Salomon Sulzer's estate  
Manuscripts; JMH

960

„dedicated to his Majesty Sultan Muhammed V. Ghazi“  
Joseph Sulzer: The Turkish people's anthem, about 1910  
Print (reproduction)

961

Salomon Sulzer, “Ma Towu”  
Audio, Cantor Lawrence Fine, The Zemel Choir, 1997  
from: Viennese Synagogue Music in the Age of Schubert. Salomon Sulzer and his Contemporaries, Jewish Heritage Music Recordings.

Salomon Sulzer, “Etz Chajim”  
Audio, Senior Cantor Shmuel Barzilai, Vienna Boys' Choir, 2000  
from: Salomon Sulzer, Synagogue Compositions. Conductor, Günter Theuring. ORF Landesstudio Wien, Shmuel Barzilai

Salomon Sulzer, “Schma Israel”  
Audio, Senior Cantor Shmuel Barzilai, Vienna Boys' Choir, 2000  
from: Salomon Sulzer, Synagogue Compositions. Conductor, Günter Theuring. ORF Landesstudio Wien, Shmuel Barzilai

## Stairwell

971

Request for a resident's certificate for Hans Maier (Jean Améry), 1938  
Manuscript (reproduction); Stadtarchiv Hohenems

## Second floor

### 1. National Socialism

610

Newspaper article about the end of the Jewish community, 5 September 1940  
Vorarlberger Tagblatt (reproduction) and audio; Vorarlberger Landesbibliothek, Bregenz

611

Instruction to Helene Elkan-Neuburger from the Bookau am Federsee Registry Office to apply for the additional forename Sara, 30 January 1939  
Typescript on pre-printed form; Dolores Purtscher, Hohenems

612

Report about the elimination of “Jewish” street names, 13 September 1938  
Typescript (reproduction); Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

613

Request from Mayor Josef Wolfgang to the district administrator of Feldkirch district for permission to get rid of the Jewish cemetery, 10 May 1940  
Typescript and audio; Stadtarchiv Hohenems

614

Announcement of the film Der ewige Jude and an address by the NSDAP district leader Anton Plankensteiner, 1940  
Vorarlberger Tagblatt, 18 December 1940 (reproduction); Vorarlberger Landesbibliothek, Bregenz

615

Key of the Innsbruck synagogue, destroyed in 1938  
Reproduction; Israelitische Kultusgemeinde für Tyrol und Vorarlberg, Innsbruck

616

National Socialist attacks on the Pasch shoe shop in Innsbruck, April 1938  
Photograph (reproduction); Stadtarchiv/Stadtmuseum Innsbruck

617

Gisela Maria Fagner, c. 1940  
Photograph (reproduction); JMH

618

Birth and baptism certificate of Gisela Brandeis-Fagner, 1910  
Manuscript on pre-printed form (reproduction); JMH

619

Identity card of Gisela Fagner with “J” stamped on it, 1939  
Manuscript on pre-printed form; Fritz Greussing, Heidelberg

621

Samuel Spindler with friends and his daughters Emilie and Fanny, c. 1931  
Photograph (reproduction); JMH

622

Samuel Spindler at the desk of his Social Democratic Textile Workers' Union office, c. 1930  
Photograph (reproduction); Herbert Pruner, Bregenz

623

Letter from Samuel Spindler to his daughter Fanny bidding her farewell, 10 November 1942  
Manuscript and audio; Herbert Pruner, Bregenz

624

Samuel Spindler's blotter  
Herbert Pruner, Bregenz

### 2. What did not survive

625

Letter from Harry Weil to the Vienna Jewish community, 22 April 1949  
Manuscript; Israelitische Kultusgemeinde für Tyrol und Vorarlberg, Innsbruck

626

Inventory of the religious objects and fittings of the Hohenems synagogue, 17 November 1938  
Typescript; Stadtarchiv Hohenems

627

Plans for the conversion of the Hohenems synagogue into an arsenal, 1942  
Blueprint; Helen Waibel, Hohenems

628

Letter from Theodor Elkan to the St. Gallen Jewish community asking them to save the Hohenems Torah scrolls, 4 January 1940  
Manuscript (reproduction); Jüdische Gemeinde St. Gallen

629

Letter from Josef Löwenherz, the head of the Vienna community, to the municipality of Hohenems asking them to hand over the Hohenems Torah scrolls, 3 November 1940  
Manuscript (reproduction); Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Allgemeines Verwaltungsarchiv, Vienna

630

Letter from the Innsbruck Jewish to the municipality of Hohenems inquiring about the whereabouts of the Hohenems synagogue property, 20 June 1949  
Typescript; Israelitische Kultusgemeinde für Tyrol und Vorarlberg, Innsbruck

### 3. Escape

#### Not numbered

Interview with Jakob and Ida Kreutner: Pogrom in Vienna and escape to Switzerland (1997)  
Video station; Schweizer Fernsehen DRS, Hansjürg Zumstein

#### Not numbered

Interview with Jakob Spirig: Helping with escapes and smuggling across the border (2002)  
Video station; ORF Landesstudio Vorarlberg, Markus Barnay

#### Not numbered

Interview with Ernst Kamm: Border police and refugees (2000)  
Video station; Association Archimob, Lausanne, David Bernet

710

Advertisement by Sarah Fränkel from Hohenems saying goodbye  
Hohenemser Gemeindeblatt, 10.4.1938 (reproduction); Stadtarchiv Hohenems

711

Advertisement for the "letting" of the "Zur Frohen Aussicht" inn, 3 April 1938  
Hohenemser Gemeindeblatt (reproduction); Stadtarchiv Hohenems

712

Hans Elkan's certificate stating that he has participated in a retraining course for locksmiths, 1940  
Manuscript on pre-printed form; Dolores Purtscher, Hohenems

713

Application by Harry Weil to the Vienna Jewish community for support in helping him emigrate, 1938  
Manuscript on pre-printed form and audio; Archiv der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde Wien, Jerusalem deposit

714

Permit from the Swiss immigration authorities to Ivan Landauer with a date limit for leaving Switzerland, 19 August 1939  
Preprinted form with typescript; Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau

715

Ivan Landauer at Gordola Labor Camp, 1941  
Photograph (reproduction); Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau

716

Supervising the border between Vorarlberg and Switzerland, 1938-1945 (account by Feldkirch Head Customs Office)  
Photographs (reproductions); Archiv der Johann-August-Malin-Gesellschaft, Bregenz

752

Border posts on the Old Rhine between Hohenems and Diepoldsau, 1940-1943  
Photographs (reproductions); Finanzlandesdirektion, Feldkirch

717

Official statement about the ban on helping Jews to escape, 1938  
Hohenemser Gemeindeblatt, 11 December 1938 (reproduction); JMH

718

Interview with Hildegard Schinnerl: Assistance for Jewish refugees from Vienna, 1999  
Audio; JMH

719

Communication from the district administrator of the Feldkirch district regarding the "undesired" presence of Jews in Vorarlberg, 30 July 1940  
Typescript (carbon copy); Stadtarchiv Hohenems

720

Diepoldsau refugee camp, 1939  
Photograph (reproduction); Archiv für Zeitgeschichte, Zurich

721

Paul Pivnik in Diepoldsau, 1939  
Photograph; Paul Pivnik, Zurich  
Interview with Paul Pivnik: Escape to Switzerland, 2005  
Audio; JMH

723

Labor camp pass for Paul Pivnik, 1942  
Preprinted form; Paul Pivnik, Zurich  
Interview with Paul Pivnik: Yom Kippur at the refugee camp, 2006  
Audio; JMH

725

Jakob, Robert and Ida Kreutner after their escape to Switzerland, c. 1940  
Photograph; Robert Kreutner, Zurich

726

Border patrolman Alfons Eigenmann anonymously makes his role in helping the Kreutner family to escape public, letter dated 30 November 1938, published in the Berner Tagwacht  
Typescript; Robert Kreutner, Zurich

727

Letter to Jakob Kreutner from the Swiss immigration authorities asking him to emigrate to Israel, 1949  
Typescript (carbon copy); Gemeinde St. Peterzell, St. Gallen

728

Paul Grüninger as a young officer, 1917  
Photograph (reproduction); Ruth Roduner-Grüninger, Heerbrugg

729

Paul Grüninger (1891-1972) with police colleagues in St. Gallen, 1934  
Photograph (reproduction); Ruth Roduner-Grüninger, Heerbrugg

730

Packaging of a parcel of valuables deposited for Grüninger by Jewish refugees with "Hptm. G." (Capt. G.) written on it in pencil, 1939  
Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

731

News regarding the money transfer "in favor of Mr. S. Braunschweig or Capt. G.", 8 February 1939  
Manuscript; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

732

Paul Grüninger's officer's sword  
Ruth Roduner-Grüninger, Heerbrugg

733

Letter from Albert Falk to the St. Gallen Jewish community on supporting Paul Grüninger, 3 January 1941  
Typescript (reproduction); Archiv für Zeitgeschichte, Zurich

735

Appeal by the Swiss Federation of Jewish Communities for assistance for refugees, June 1941  
Printed matter (reproduction); Archiv für Zeitgeschichte, Zurich

736

Heinz Müller with his parents Tobias and Martha after their escape to Switzerland, Diepoldsau 4 January 1939  
Photograph (reproduction); Heinz Müller, Basel  
Interview with Heinz Müller: Escape to Switzerland, 2006  
Audio; JMH

**738**  
Tobias Müller's kitchen book from the Diepoldsau refugee camp, 1939  
Manuscript; Heinz Müller, Basel  
Interview with Heinz Müller: Cooking at Diepoldsau, 2006  
Audio; JMH

**740**  
Common room at Diepoldsau camp, 1939-40  
Photograph (reproduction); Heinz Müller, Basel  
Interview with Heinz Müller: Traumatic survival, 2006

**742**  
Shavuot (the feast of weeks) at Diepoldsau, 1939  
Photograph (reproduction); Heinz Müller, Basel

**743**  
Guest book of "Gasthof Habsburg" with Gertrud Kantorowicz entered as "Sophie Luise v. Rose" in May 1942  
Manuscript on pre-printed form; Rosa Mathis, Hohenems

**744**  
Interview with Isabella Aberer: Failed attempt to aid an escape, 1999  
Audio; JMH

**745**  
Gertrud Kantorowicz, c. 1940  
Photograph (reproduction); Michael Landmann, Figuren um Stefan George. Zehn Portraits. Castrum Peregrini Press, Amsterdam 1982

**746**  
Poem by Gertrud Kantorowicz, Theresienstadt 1944  
Manuscript (reproduction); Leo-Baeck-Institute, New York

**747**  
Portrait bust of the resistance fighter Hilda Monte (1914-1945)  
Clay sculpture; Birute Stern, Jerusalem

**748**  
Hilda Monte, c. 1940  
Photograph (reproduction); Birute Stern, Jerusalem

**749**  
Report by the criminal police to the mayor of the town of Feldkirch on the shooting of Hilda Monte at the Tisis border post, 18 April 1945  
Typescript (reproduction); Standesamt Feldkirch

**750**  
Hilda Monte, Where Freedom Perished Book, London: Gollancz, 1947; JMH

**751**  
Manuscript by Hilda Monte, "Judenverfolgung" (Persecution of the Jews), 15 December 1942  
Typescript; Birute Stern, Jerusalem

## 4. Annihilation

**753**  
Applications for the issue of identity cards for the Turteltaub family, 1939  
Manuscript on pre-printed form; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

**755**  
Last message from the skiing pioneer Rudolf Gomperz from the Sperlschule holding center in Vienna, 1942  
Manuscript (reproduction); Hans Thöni, Ludesch

**756**  
Application for the issue of an identity card for Sophie Steingraber, 1939  
Manuscript on pre-printed form; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

**758**  
Application for the issue of an identity card for Theodor Elkan, 1938  
Manuscript on pre-printed form; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

**759**  
Application for the issue of an identity card for Helene Elkan, 1938  
Manuscript on pre-printed form; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

**760**  
Application for the issue of an identity card for Hans Elkan, 1938  
Manuscript on pre-printed form; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

**761**  
Markus Silberstein, 1934  
Photograph (reproduction); Margaret Davon, Boca Raton, Florida

**762**  
Reporting the death of Markus Silberstein at Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp, 20 March 1940  
Telegram (reproduction); Margaret Davon, Boca Raton, Florida

**763**  
Application for the issue of an identity card for Clara Heimann-Rosenthal, 1939  
Manuscript on pre-printed form; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

**764**  
Replacement identity card for Clara Heimann-Rosenthal, 31 May 1940  
Typescript with photograph; JMH

**765**  
Application for the issue of an identity card for Gisela Figdor, 1939  
Manuscript on pre-printed form; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

**766**  
Application by Frieda Nagelberg to the Jewish community of Vienna for support in helping her emigrate, 1938  
Manuscript on pre-printed form; Archiv der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde Wien, Jerusalem collection

**767**  
Application for the issue of an identity card for Frieda Nagelberg, 1939  
Manuscript on pre-printed form; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

**768**  
Letter from Mayor Josef Wolfgang to the District Administrator of Feldkirch district for the purpose of speeding up the compulsory resettlement of Frieda Nagelberg, 12 July 1940  
Typescript and audio; Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

**769**  
Confirmation that the "Star of David" has been sent to Frieda Nagelberg, 3 October 1941  
Typescript (reproduction); Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

**770**  
Robert Rosenthal, c. 1920  
Photograph (reproduction); Susan Rosenthal-Shimer, New York

**771**  
Leopold Baum to Paul Baum in Oswiecim (Auschwitz), 28 December 1943  
Envelope; Heinz Baum, Eschen, Liechtenstein

## 5. Displaced Persons

**810**  
Confirmation of liberation from Dachau for Eugen Stern, 26 June 1945  
Typescript on pre-printed form; Eugen Stern, Antwerp

**811**  
Founding of the Committee of Jewish Displaced Persons in Hohenems, 30 November 1946  
Typescript; JMH, Saul Hutterer collection

- 812**  
Certification of the Communauté Israélite Hohenems for its chairman, Saul Hutterer, 8 January 1949  
Typescript; JMH, Saul Hutterer collection
- 813**  
Saul Hutterer playing the violin in Hohenems, c. 1947  
Two photographs; JMH, Saul Hutterer collection
- 814**  
Interview with Saul Hutterer: From liberation to Hohenems, 2006
- 815**  
Military chaplain Rabbi Robert Monheit (left) at the first DPs' wedding in Hohenems, 1946  
Photograph; Saul Hutterer collection
- 816**  
Jewish DPs in Bregenz with a Jewish-Moroccan soldier, 1945  
Photograph (reproduction); JMH
- 817**  
Plank from a transport crate sent by the American Joint Distribution Committee Wood; JMH, Gerhard Lacha collection, Elkan house
- 818**  
International Committee for Jewish concentration camp detainees and refugees, 1 April 1947  
Typescript; Stadtarchiv Bregenz
- 819**  
List of 43 DPs who were lodged at the Elkan house in Hohenems in February 1947  
Typescript; Stadtarchiv Hohenems
- 820**  
List of 83 registered DPs in Bregenz, 1 May 1947  
Typescript; Stadtarchiv Bregenz
- 821**  
Streit's New York State Concord Grape Wine  
Empty bottle with label; JMH, Gerhard Lacha collection, Elkan house
- 822**  
Best Alicante wine from Rishon leTzion and Zikhron Yaakov  
Empty bottle with label; JMH, Gerhard Lacha collection, Elkan house
- 823**  
Very finest wine for Kiddush and Havdala Bottled at the Ebelsberg DP camp, "bei Grün, Baracke 5, Raum 130" (at Grün's, Barracks 5, room 130)  
Empty bottle with label; JMH, Gerhard Lacha collection, Elkan house
- 824**  
Invitation to the wedding of Irene Schwarcz and Eugen Stern in Bregenz, 1 April 1951  
Printed matter; Eugen and Irene Stern, Antwerp
- 825**  
Wedding of Irene Schwarcz and Eugen Stern in Bregenz, 1951  
Photographs; Eugen and Irene Stern, Antwerp
- 826**  
Eugen Stern's identity card, c. 1947  
Printed matter; Eugen Stern, Antwerp
- 827**  
Interview with Irene and Eugen Stern: Wedding, and coffee dealing with the businessman Grün in Ebelsberg and Meinel in Vienna, 2006  
Audio; JMH
- 828**  
DP weddings and the founding of families in Hohenems and Bregenz, 1946-1950  
Photographs in media station; Eugen and Irene Stern, Antwerp; JMH. Saul Hutterer collection
- 829**  
Sporting event held by the Af-AI-Pi religious Zionist kibbutz in Hohenems, c. 1946  
Photograph (reproduction); JMH, Erik Weltsch collection
- 830**  
Jewish women and their children at the Harrachgasse-Schweizer Straße intersection, c. 1947  
Photograph; JMH, Saul Hutterer collection
- 831**  
Interview with Saul Hutterer: The Hohenems DP community, 2006  
Audio; JMH
- 832**  
The Bet Shmuel rabbinical college at the former Brunner house, c. 1947  
Photograph; JMH, Saul Hutterer collection
- 833**  
Talmud pupils and DP representatives at the Bet Shmuel rabbinical college, c. 1947  
Photograph; JMH, Saul Hutterer collection
- 834**  
Informing the Bet Shmuel rabbinical college about the return of an ark curtain, 18 April 1946  
Typescript and audio; Stadtarchiv Hohenems
- 835**  
Simchat Torah festival in Hohenems, 1946  
Photograph; JMH, Saul Hutterer collection
- 836**  
Interview with Saul Hutterer: The first Torah in Hohenems 1946, 2006  
Audio; JMH
- 837**  
Cover of Siddur. Tefilat Jisrael. Aschkenas prayer book, 1950  
With dedication by Rabbi Moshe Tepfer to Mendel Landau-Perl  
Printed matter; JMH
- 838**  
Report by the Hohenems police about disturbances during the night of Shavuot, 8 June 1946  
Typescript and audio; Stadtarchiv Hohenems
- 839**  
Eugen Stern at a Purim party in Bregenz, c. 1948  
Photograph; Eugen Stern, Antwerp
- 840**  
American greeting card sent for rosh ha-shana (New Year), c. 1948  
JMH, Mordechai (Martin) Davidovits collection
- 841**  
Order by the mayor of Bregenz to the Rupp bakery instructing them to bake matzes for the DPs, 5 April 1946  
Typescript; Stadtarchiv Bregenz
- 842**  
Invitation from the Af-AI-Pi kibbutz to the mayor of Hohenems to the Purim party, 15 February 1946  
Typescript; Stadtarchiv Hohenems
- 843**  
Best wishes for the Jewish New Year celebrations sent to the mayor of Bregenz, 25 September 1946  
Telegram; Stadtarchiv Bregenz
- 844**  
Interview with Erwin Nachbauer: Experiences with the DPs as a teacher in Hohenems, 1990  
Audio; JMH
- 845**  
Interview with Hubert Amann: The DPs and the old Hohenems Jews, 1990  
Audio; JMH
- 847**  
Swiss charity vouchers for groceries  
Printed matter; JMH, Gerhard Lacha collection, Elkan house

**848**  
Report on the currency smuggling affair, 1951  
Stern, no. 34/1951 (reproduction); JMH

**849**  
Interview with Saul Hutterer: Smuggling, 2006  
Audio; JMH

**850**  
Interview with Irene and Eugen Stern: Currency smuggling trial and imprisonment in Lindau, 2006  
Audio; JMH

**851**  
Request from the Hohenems Communauté Israélite to Mayor Hanni Amann asking him to intervene to prevent violent attacks on houses occupied by DPs, 2 September 1947  
Typescript; Stadtarchiv Hohenems

**852**  
Threatening letter to Mayor Hanni Amann, 25 October 1946  
Manuscript; Stadtarchiv Hohenems

**853**  
Af-Al-Pi ("Despite everything") kibbutz of religious Zionists at the "Gasthof Einfeld", 1946  
Photograph; Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau

**854**  
Zionist demonstration in Bregenz, c. 1946  
Two photographs (reproduction); JMH, Erik Weltsch collection

**855**  
Certificate confirming Esther Kopolovits was a refugee on the "Exodus", 1947  
Reproduction; JMH, Abraham and Esther Kopolovits, Antwerp

**856**  
Interview with Esther and Abraham Kopolovits: The refugee ship "Exodus", 2006  
Audio; JMH

**857**  
Receipt for a donation ("Schekel") to the "Zionist World Organization", 1947  
JMH, Mordechai (Martin) Davidovits collection

**858**  
Receipt for a donation by Hohenems DPs to Irgun  
Manuscript on pre-printed form; Eugen Stern, Antwerp

**859**  
Scenes from the film *The Illegals*, a docudrama by Meyer Levin, USA 1947  
Survivors celebrating at the DP camp; the coordinating center of illegal emigration in Gnadenwald (Tyrol); the crossing of the Alps; and the interception of a refugee ship by the British  
Video installation; Mikael Levin & Teresa Torres-Levin

**860**  
Letter from Canadian lawyers to Martin Davidovits regarding his request for an immigration permit, 17 November 1948  
Typescript: JMH, Mordechai (Martin) Davidovits collection

**861**  
Greetings from the Friedman family in New York to the Reis family in Hohenems, 1952  
Postcard; JMH

## 6. Remembering/Not remembering

**910**  
Enquiry from Alois Meermann to the Hohenems municipal authorities about the fate of his fellow student Hans Elkan, 1949  
Manuscript (reproduction); Stadtarchiv Hohenems

**911**  
Letter from Jean Heyman to Oskar Burtscher, 20 February 1946  
Manuscript; Hans Burtscher, Hohenems

**912**  
Application for restitution from Harry Weil in Chicago, 30 June 1949  
Typescript (reproduction); Stadtarchiv Hohenems

**913**  
Rejection of restitution or compensation by the Hohenems municipal authorities, 1949  
Typescript (reproduction) and audio; Stadtarchiv Hohenems

**914**  
Harry and Angelina Weil with their son Harry Jr. in the USA, 1948  
Photograph; JMH

**915**  
Harry and Angelina Weil in Chicago and visiting the "home country" in Vorarlberg, 1966/67  
Photographs; Otto Amann, Hohenems

**916**  
Harry Weil to Gebhard Klien, 19 July 1967  
Postcard and audio; JMH

**917**  
Harry Weil's Gold Medal from the Republic of Austria, awarded for his services in promoting the import of Vorarlberg cheese to the USA, 1965  
Harry Weil Jr., Albuquerque, New Mexico

**918**  
Burial of Harry Weil, 1970  
Photograph; Horst Jäger, Hohenems

**919**  
Letter from the "Association for the maintenance of the Jewish cemetery in Hohenems" to the Jewish community of Innsbruck, 2 February 1956  
Typescript; Israelitische Kultusgemeinde für Tyrol und Vorarlberg, Innsbruck

**920**  
Desecration of the Jewish cemetery in Hohenems, 2001  
Photograph; JMH

**921**  
Plaque on the Hohenems synagogue mounted after its conversion into a fire station, 1955  
"Fire service equipment store and infant welfare. Built 1954-55".  
Stein; JMH

**922**  
Commemorative plaque on the former Hohenems synagogue, 1991  
Stein; JMH

**923**  
Conversion of the synagogue into a fire station, 1954/55  
Photograph; Kurt Bollag collection, Widnau

**924**  
The Hohenems fire station, 1977  
Photograph by Michael Guggenheimer; JMH

**925**  
"Belichtete Häuser" (Illuminated houses), installation by the Hohenems Jewish Museum, 1995  
Photograph by Florian Ebner; JMH

**926**  
Partial reconstruction and conversion of the fire station into the Salomon-Sulzer-Saal, 2003  
Photograph by Robert Fessler; JMH

**926**  
Uri Tänzer at the opening of the Salomon-Sulzer-Saal, 2006  
Photograph; JMH

927

Leaflet from a Vorarlberg Action Committee opposing Kurt Waldheim, 1988  
Printed matter (reproduction); Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz

928

Interview with Hubert Amann: "The young historians", 1990  
Audio; JMH

929

Design for a population statistics display in the permanent exhibition at Hohenems Jewish Museum, 1990  
Elsa Prochazka, Vienna

930

The opening of Hohenems Jewish Museum, 1991  
Kultur. Zeitschrift für Kultur und Gesellschaft, May 1991; JMH

931

Reunion of Hohenems descendants, 1998  
Photograph by Arno Gisinger; JMH

932

Finds from the exhibits room of Bregenz district court

In 2005 a cardboard box was found in the exhibits storeroom of Bregenz district court containing Torah ornaments, two silver spoons and sugar tongs of unknown origin. The box was labeled only with the comment of a valuer dating from 1955: "Valueless (probably Jewish) church ornaments". According to information from the district court, the court document relating to them has not been preserved.

The objects were badly damaged and dirty, and bear the traces of amateur repairs. The East European origin of the items (from Ukraine, Poland and Russia) and the fact that they were connected with criminal proceedings or a criminal investigation in 1955 are all we know about them.

Did someone try to save the Torah ornaments from his home synagogue in 1938?

Did a Jewish survivor bring the ornaments to Vorarlberg after 1945?

Did someone hide them in 1938/39?

Did a Nazi bring them back from East Europe as loot?

Did someone want to smuggle the ritual objects into Switzerland?

Was the material value or the religious value of the objects at stake?

The only thing that can be ruled out is that they are the Torah ornaments from the Hohenems synagogue. We may wonder whether the synagogue the ritual objects come from still exists, and whether they could be returned to it.

933

Keter Torah / Torah crown  
The inscription on the central part reads: "Meir Ben Rav Juda Leb (Löw) Rotmann gave this Torah crown to the 'light of life' (or haim) synagogue in 667" (=1907).

There are three inscriptions on the lower part: keter kohona (crown of priesthood), keter malchut (crown of kingship), keter tora (crown of the Torah). Silver-plated brass, engraved hallmarks indicating Kiev as the place of origin and 1881 as the year of manufacture.

Two "rimmonim" / silver pomegranate Torah ornaments

The Russian hallmarks indicate Kiev as the place of origin and 1891 as the year of manufacture.

Two spice containers / "Besamim" containers

Small tower, silver, hallmark indicating Poland as the country of origin.

Small box, silver, made from mock filigree, Moscow, hallmark indicating 1856 as the year of manufacture

Elijah's cup

The inscription reads: "This is the cup of Elias of blessed memory. Baruch son (bar) of Jakob, 640" (= 1880).

Niello, hallmark indicating Poland as the country of origin.

Havdala plate

Silver, hallmarked AK 1879, the master's engraving indicating Kiev as the place of origin.

Two silver spoons

Both with etched or impressed ornaments on the back of the bowl, turned spoon handle.

Sugar tongs

Silver, the stamp refers to the well-known Warsaw silversmiths "Norblin & Co".

Restoration was made possible by the Ars Rhenia Stiftung zur Förderung von Kunst und Kultur, Triesen.

934

Descendants of Hohenems Jewish families visiting Hohenems  
Photographs; JMH

**Not numbered**

"In the words of descendants"

Interviews with Laure Aberant (Tänzer), Heinz Baum (Burgauer), Kurt Bollag (Landauer), Jacqueline Heyman-Pelseener (Rosenthal), Felix Jaffé (Brunner), Luisa de Winne (Brunner), Stephan Rollin (Rosenthal), Susan Rosenthal-Shimer, Uri Tänzer:

Family and memory, shoah and migration, religion and Hohenems (2002-2006)

Video installation (Interviews by Markus Barnay and Arno Gisinger); JMH



## Contributors

**Isolde Charim**, born 1959 in Vienna, PhD, studied philosophy in Vienna and Berlin, many years as a teacher, a freelance journalist (*Der Standard*, *Falter*, taz-columnist), winner of the City of Vienna journalism award for 2006, curator of the "Diaspora. Erkundungen eines Lebensmodells" series at the Kreisky Forum in Vienna. Her publications include: *Der Althusser-Effekt. Entwurf einer Ideologie-Theorie* (Vienna 2002), *Österreich. Berichte aus Quarantänen* (ed. Doron Rabinovici, Frankfurt am Main 2000), *Der Fall des Intellektuellen* (ed. Georg Hoffmann-Ostenhof, Vienna 1996)

**Eva Grabherr**, born 1963 in Dornbirn, PhD, studied history and Jewish studies in Vienna, Jerusalem and London. From 1990 to 1996 she was the first Director of the Jewish Museum Hohenems. Doctorate thesis: "Letters to Hohenems: A Microhistorical Study of Jewish Acculturation in the Early Decades of Emancipation". From 1999 to 2006 she was on the steering committee of the International Summer Academy for Museology. Since 2001 she has been running the "okay. zusammen leben" immigration and integration project center in Dornbirn. Her publications include *Geschichten von Gegenständen. Judaika aus dem Beziehungsraum der Hohenemser Juden* (Hohenems 1994), the first Museum Catalogue of the Jewish Museum Hohenems (Hohenems 1996) and *Das Dreieck im Sand. 50 Jahre Staat Israel* (Vienna 1997).

**Arno Gisinger**, born 1964 in Dornbirn. Studied photography at the École Nationale Supérieure de la Photographie in Arles (France) and history / German studies at Innsbruck University. Works and publishes on questions relating to the representation of history and memory in the visual media, with an emphasis on photography, most recently *Hotel Jugoslavija* (with Martin Sexl, Innsbruck/Vienna/Bolzano 2008) and *Konstellation. Walter Benjamin en exil* (with Nathalie Raoux, Paris 2008) and *L'ordinaire de l'oubli* (Paris 2001). Arno Gisinger lives and works in Paris as a freelance artist photographer, author and exhibition organizer, and is a professor at the École Supérieure d'Art in Épinal.

**Kurt Greussing**, born 1946 in Lauterach/Vorarlberg, PhD, studied Iranian studies and political science at the Freie Universität Berlin, worked in a leading role for various museums, e.g. on the development of the *Museum der Arbeit* (Museum of Labor) in Styria and the Jewish Museum Hohenems, as an academic fellow at the Institut für Religionswissenschaft at Bremen University and as a manager of development projects in southern Africa. Lives in Dornbirn/Vorarlberg as a freelance author. Publications on the history of migration in Vorarlberg, the history of the ideology of anti-Semitism and various themes from the history of the Islamic religion, including *Vom ‚guten König‘ zum Imam. Staatsmacht und Gesellschaft im Iran* (Bregenz 1987), *Die Erzeugung des Antisemitismus in Vorarlberg um 1900* (Bregenz 1992).

**Michael Guggenheimer**, born 1946 in Tel Aviv. Author and photographer, grew up in Tel Aviv, Amsterdam and Zug in Switzerland. Studied contemporary history and social psychology, until 2003 spokesman for the Swiss “Pro Helvetia” cultural foundation. Lives and works in Zurich as a freelance journalist and author. In his book *Görlitz. Schicht um Schicht. Spuren einer Zukunft* he looked at the divided town on the German-Polish border. A volume of stories about people in Tel Aviv is in preparation.

**Monika Helfer**, born 1947 at Au in Vorarlberg, writer. Her best-known novels include *Die wilden Kinder* (Munich 1984), *Der Neffe* (Munich 1991), *Oskar und Lili* (Munich 1994), *Wenn der Bräutigam kommt* (Munich 1998) and *Mein Mörder* (Munich 1999). Since 2002 she has also written children’s books. *Rosie in New York* was published in 2002, *Rosie in Wien* in 2004. Monika Helfer has received many awards, most recently the Austrian State Prize for Literature for Children and Young People (2005). Together with Barbara Steinitz she prepared the new children’s exhibition for the Jewish Museum Hohenems in 2007. Monika Helfer lives in Hohenems with her husband, the writer Michael Köhlmeier.

**Felix Jaffé-Brunner**, born 1924 in Berlin, moved with his family first to Trieste, then in 1938 to Lugano. After studying geology in Zurich and Geneva he worked as a geologist at mineral deposits in Turkey, North and South America and Africa—and finally for 20 years as a full Professor of Applied Geology at the University of Geneva. In this position he encouraged and guided numerous students in their field research in California, France, Greece, Italy, Switzerland and particularly in Scandinavia. His vision and his tenacious initiative made the first 1998 meeting of the descendants of Jewish families from Hohenems a reality. His efforts to track down the present-day descendants of the Hohenems Jews, look into their genealogy and ensure global communication with them have made a crucial contribution towards the fact that the Museum today has a living international community and owns a constantly growing collection. In 2001 he is has been appointed as Honorary Fellow of the Museum’s association. Felix Jaffé now lives in Jerusalem and Geneva.

**Luisa Jaffé-Brunner**, who was born in Kenya in 1964 and grew up in Geneva, worked for multinational companies in human resources. In 2001 she completed her training as a therapist and married a musician in Belgium, where she has lived ever since.

**Michael Köhlmeier**, born 1949 in Hard., Vorarlberg, is a writer. His best-known novels include *Der Peverl Toni und seine abenteuerliche Reise durch meinen Kopf* (1982), *Spielplatz der Helden* (Munich 1988), *Die Musterschüler* (Munich 1989) and finally *Abendland* (Munich 2007). Among his many distinctions are the Rauriser Prize for Literature (1983), the Johann Peter Hebel Prize (1988), the Manés Sperber Prize (1993), the Anton Wildgans Prize (1996) and being on the shortlist for the German Book Prize (2007). Michael Köhlmeier lives in Hohenems with his wife, the writer Monika Helfer.

**Yves Kugelman**, born 1971 in Basel, is a journalist. From 1999 to 2001 he was chief editor of *Jüdische Rundschau*—an independent weekly newspaper for Switzerland and abroad. Since 2001 he had been chief editor of JM Jüdische Medien AG, which publishes the weekly magazine *Tachles*, the *Revue Juive* and since 2005 the Jewish monthly magazine *Aufbau*.

**Hanno Loewy**, born 1961 in Frankfurt am Main, PhD, is a scholar of literature and film, exhibition curator and author. Since 2004 he is the Director of the Jewish Museum Hohenems. From 1995 to 2000 he was the founding director of the *Fritz Bauer Institut* in Frankfurt. He is a visiting fellow at the University of Constance. Publications on Jewish history and contemporary Judaism, film theory and photography, and on the impact of the Holocaust on literature and film, e.g. *Taxi nach Auschwitz. Feuilletons* (Berlin 2002), *Béla Balázs: Märchen, Ritual und Film* (Berlin 2003), *Before they Perished. Photographies found in Auschwitz* (ed. together with Kersten Brandt and Krystyna Oleksy, Munich 2001), *Gerüchte über die Juden. Antisemitismus, Philosemitismus und aktuelle Verschwörungstheorien* (Essen 2005).

**Friedrich H. Mascher**, born 1949 in Linz, architect, since 1993 in joint practice with Erich G. Steinmayr. Has worked as a lecturer since 1987, at time present at Kunstuni Linz. As well as joint projects with Erich Steinmayr such as the expansion and general renovation of the Grafische Sammlung Albertina in Vienna, he has done various spatial environments in Italy. In 2006/7, in collaboration with Erich G. Steinmayr, architecture for the new permanent exhibition of the Jewish Museum Hohenems.

**Thomas Matt**, born 1966 in Lustenau (Vorarlberg), grew up in Rankweil. Graphic design training at the HTBLA-Graz Ortweinplatz. He has collaborated with Roland Stecher (stecher id) as a designer for 20 years.

**Zafer Şenocak**, born 1961 in Ankara, has lived in Germany since 1970, currently in Berlin. As a freelance author he writes prose, poetry and essays in German and Turkish, including writing for various daily newspapers (*Die Welt, tageszeitung, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*) and radio stations (WDR, Deutschlandfunk and Deutschlandradio). His published works include: *Gefährliche Verwandtschaft* (Munich 1998), *Übergang. Ausgewählte Gedichte 1980-2005* (Munich 2005), *Das Land hinter den Buchstaben* (Munich 2006), and *Alman Terbiyesi* (A German education, Istanbul, 2007).

**Roland Stecher**, born 1962 in Götzis. Freelance designer and artist. Set up his own office in 1988 with an emphasis on identity design. As well as art installations ("1740 ichs" for the parish rooms in Sulzberg, 2006) in recent years he has designed themed exhibitions such as the traveling exhibition "Lichtstärke" about current trends in research into light, the "So einfach war das" spatial installation for the Jewish Museum Berlin, or the new permanent exhibition at the Jewish Museum Hohenems. Roland Stecher has been awarded the Austrian State Prize for Design. Stecher id is also responsible for the design of this book.

**Barbara Steinitz**, born 1978 in Freiburg im Breisgau, studied communication design and illustration at Saarbrücken and Barcelona. After graduating from the Hochschule für Bildende Künste Saar in 2004/2005 she worked for several months as a volunteer at the Casa de los Tres Mundos cultural institute in Granada/Nicaragua, where as the leader of courses in art and crafts she began to work with shadow theater, and to use and develop this theatrical form herself as an illustration technique. She provided her first book illustrations for *Die Blume und der Baum* by Gioconda Belli, published in 2006 in Wuppertal. In 2007 she prepared the new children's exhibition at the Jewish Museum Hohenems in conjunction with Monika Helfer. Barbara



1/2 or 1/3 of black fabric  
1/2 - black fabric



1/2 or 1/3 of black fabric



Eye 1200 or 1/3 of black fabric 7/8 7/8



Eye 1100 or 10%  
black fabric



Eye 1100. black fabric 10%



Eye 1/2 or 10%  
10%

Steinitz lives and works in Berlin.

**Erich G. Steinmayr**, born 1946 in Feldkirch in Vorarlberg, architect, in joint practice with Friedrich H. Mascher since 1993. Their best-known joint projects include the expansion and general renovation of the Grafische Sammlung Albertina in Vienna, the historical museum of the Mohrenbrauerei (Mohren Brewery) in Dornbirn, and many renovations and conversions of historical buildings, such as the new adaptation of the building for the permanent exhibition of the Jewish Hohenems in 2006/7. Has worked as a lecturer since 1979. Erich Steinmayr lives and works in Feldkirch.

**Hannes Sulzenbacher**, born 1968 in Innsbruck, studied history and literature in Vienna, 1995-1998 exhibition curator at the Jewish Museum Vienna, since then a freelance exhibition curator and organizer of cultural events, including the festival "Wien ist andersrum", and various exhibition projects, e.g.: "Der neue Mensch" (Deutsches Hygiene-Museum Dresden, 1999), "Kantormania. Von Salomon Sulzer bis zum Jazz-Singer" (Jewish Museum Hohenems, 2004), "Geheimsache Leben. Schwule und Lesben im Wien des 20. Jahrhunderts" (Neustiftshalle Vienna, 2005), permanent exhibition of the Jewish Museum Hohenems (2007) and "Typisch! Klischees von Juden und anderen" (together with Felicitas Heimann-Jelinek, Jewish Museum Berlin, Spertus Museum Chicago, Jewish Museum Vienna, 2008/9).

**Vladimir Vertlib**, born 1966 in Leningrad, now St. Petersburg, emigrated to Israel with his parents in 1971. Later the family moved to Austria, after that to the Netherlands, then back again to Israel, to Italy, the USA and finally in 1981 back again to Austria. Vertlib studied economics in Vienna and today lives in Salzburg as a writer and journalist. In 2001 he was awarded the Adalbert von Chamisso Sponsorship Prize and the Anton Wildgans Prize. His first book, the story *Abschiebung*, was published in 1995. This was followed by the novels and volumes of short stories *Zwischenstationen* (1999), *Das besondere Gedächtnis der Rosa Masur* (2001), *Letzter Wunsch* (2003) and *Mein erster Mörder* (2006).

**Sabine Offe**, born 1945 in Hamburg, PhD, has been teaching and carrying out research at the Institut für Religionswissenschaft of Bremen University since 1989 on subjects such as history of memory, museology, and Jewish-German cultural history. Publications on Jewish and other museums, on exhibition theory and practice, on memory and trauma, as well as European rivalries over victims, including *Ausstellungen, Einstellungen, Entstellungen. Jüdische Museen in Deutschland und Österreich* (Berlin 2000).

[Notebook from the apprenticeship of Arnold Rosenthal in Manchester, with samples of fabrics and dying recipes, 1877; JM]

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Curator: Hannes Sulzenbacher

Architects: Erich G. Steinmayr & Friedrich H. Mascher, Feldkirch/Wien  
Exhibition design: stecher id—Roland Stecher, Thomas Matt, Götzis

Archives: Eva-Maria Hesche  
Education: Helmut Schlatter  
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Assistant: Helen Waibel  
Secretary: Gerlinde Fritze  
Research: Julia Dür, Niko Wahl, Petra Zudrell, Helen Waibel

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Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Vienna  
ORF Landesstudio Vorarlberg  
ORF Landesstudio Vienna  
Paul List Verlag, Munich  
Paul Pivnik, Zurich  
Elsa Prochazka, Vienna  
Herbert Pruner, Bregenz  
Dolores Purtscher, Hohenems  
Ruth Roduner-Grüniger, Heerbrugg  
Stephan Rollin (Rosenthal)  
Susan Rosenthal-Shimer, New York  
Edith Runge-Witzemann, Dornbirn  
S. Fischer Verlag, Frankfurt am Main  
Salomon-Ludwig-Steinheim-Institut, Duisburg  
Scheringstiftung/Scheringianeum, Berlin  
Schweizer Fernsehen DRS  
Martin Sölva, Kaltern  
Soprintendenza Archeologica die Roma  
Edelinde Spiegel, Dornbirn  
Staatsarchiv St. Gallen  
Stadtarchiv Bregenz  
Stadtarchiv Dornbirn  
Stadtarchiv Göppingen  
Stadtmuseum Dornbirn  
Standesamt Feldkirch  
Birute Stern, Jerusalem  
Eugen und Irene Stern, Antwerp  
Gemeinde St. Peterzell  
Gemeinde Sulz  
Erwin Tänzer, New Jersey  
Uri Tänzer, New Jersey  
Hans Thöni, Ludesch  
Tiroler Landesarchiv, Innsbruck  
Vorarlberger Landesbibliothek, Bregenz  
Vorarlberger Landesmuseum, Bregenz  
Helen Waibel, Hohenems

Harry Weil Jr., Albuquerque  
Beatrice Weber  
Erik Weltsch, Bregenz  
Wien Museum  
Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv  
Roberto Woynar, Milan  
Zeughaus Innsbruck



[Above: Greeting card for Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year) from a Displaced Person in Brengenz, c. 1947; JMH, Mordechai (Martin) Davidovits collection / Next page: View of the Jewish quarter from the Emsbach after the construction of the Hannibalstreet, c. 1925; JMH]





























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