
ShUM SITES OF SPEYER, WORMS AND MAINZ

ShUM SITES OF SPEYER, WORMS AND MAINZ

Nomination for the UNESCO World Heritage List

Appendices

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Project Management:

Dr. Stefanie Hahn
Ministry for Science, Further Education and Culture Rhineland-Palatinate

Project Coordination:

Nadine Hoffmann

Participants:

Dr. Christoph Cluse
Florence Fischer
Thomas Kollatz
David Schnur
Ellen Schumacher
Prof. Dr. Matthias Untermann

With the Involvement of:

Sebastian Alber
Stefanie Fuchs
Lola Graziani
Nelly Janotka
Marzena Kessler
Mark Leibman
Ferhat Neptun
Simon Neuberg
Ursula Reuter
Shulamit Rom
Hanna Rost
Anne Sophie Schneider
Anna Marlene Steinbach
Michelle Stoffel

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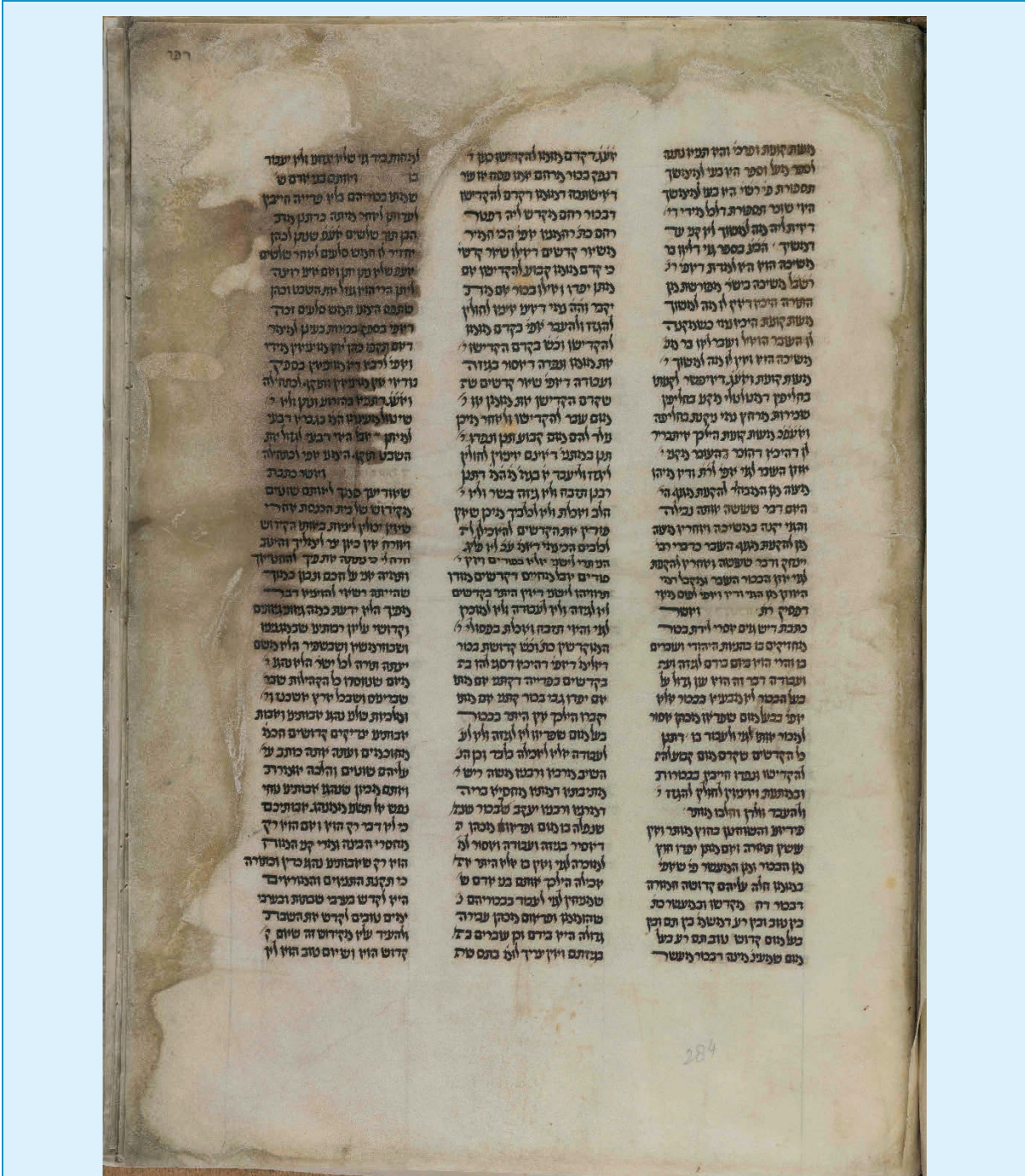
Dr. Christoph Cluse
Florence Fischer
Ellen Schumacher
Prof. Dr. Matthias Untermann

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“Do you not know how many highly esteemed scholars and holy men, our teachers of Mainz and Worms and Speyer, have sanctioned this custom? It is from there that Torah has emanated for all Israel! For this is the custom since the time of their establishment of all the communities in the Rhineland and in all of *Ashkenaz* and in our lands, and this is the practiced custom of our fathers and our forefathers, the righteous, the illustrious, the saints and the wise.”

R. Yişhaq ben Moshe of Vienna (mid-13th century)

Yiṣḥaq ben Moshe, *Sefer 'Or Zaru'a*, Amsterdam, Universiteitsbibliotheek, Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana, ms. 3, fol. 284r.

Written Sources

on the History of *ShUM Sites of Speyer, Worms and Mainz* 10th to 17th Centuries

The following dossier surveys written sources that were used in the creation of the Nomination File for *ShUM Sites Speyer, Worms and Mainz*. It can by no means claim to represent a full image of the extensive literary and documentary heritage of the ShUM communities and their relations with the surrounding society. Rather, it is a selection focused on the community centres and cemeteries and on the unique relationship between the three Jewish communities of Speyer, Worms, and Mainz.

Also, the dossier cites only passages and aspects relevant for the proposed Outstanding Universal Value of *ShUM Sites Speyer, Worms and Mainz* and is not meant to replace full editions of the documents in question. Exception is made for building inscriptions, which are given and translated *in extenso*. For comparative purposes we have also included sources on the lost community centre of Mainz and the lost Jewish cemetery of Speyer. Unless otherwise specified, dates are according to the Common Era (CE).

A key to the bibliographic references is provided at the end of this dossier.

1 917 (?), from Lucca to Mainz

In a legal expertise (*responsum*) that touches on the genealogy of Jewish learning in medieval Ashkenaz, R. Shlomo ben Yehi'el Luria (1510–1573) relates that “King Charles” (המלך קרלא) had brought R. Moshe the Elder, son of Rabbi Qalonymos (the earliest representative of the Qalonymos family in Ashkenaz) with him “from the city of Lucca” (ממדינת לוקא) in the year 849 after the destruction of the (Second) Temple (i.e., 849 years after 68 CE = 917 according to the common era).

A more extensive version of the Qalonymid genealogy is provided around 1220 CE by R. El'azar ben Yehuda of Worms (cf. no. 31), himself a scion of this important family. El'azar also says of *Rab-benu* Moshe ben Qalonymos that

he was the first who left Lombardy (שיצא מלומבארדי"אה), he and his sons, R. Qalonymos and R. Jequti'el, and his relation R. Ithi'el, and other important persons; for King Charles (המלך קרלא) brought them with him from the country of Lombardy and settled them in Mainz (והושיבם במגנצ"א).

Other than Luria, El'azar gives no date.

The precise interpretation of these sources rests a matter of debate, both because they are late and because there was no “King Charles” ruling in 917. Other evidence for the presence of Jews in during Carolingian times does not relate to permanent settlements. Hollender (2004) shows that “King Charles” was a generic term for a benevolent ruler presiding over the beginnings of European Judaism, in Hebrew sources since the 12th century (a time when Charlemagne also became a hero figure of Christian historiography and hagiography).

There is, however, a consensus that the beginnings of the Jewish community in Mainz must date to the 10th century. Grossman (1988, p. 46) provides a plausible genealogy of the Qalonymos family in 10th to 11th century Germany.

Ed.: Neubauer (1884/85), pp. 112–13; Shlomo Luria, *Responsa* (Lublin

1574), no. 29. – Lit.: Grossman (1988), pp. 29–48 (texts on p. 31); Hollender (2004) (with German translations on pp. 196–97); Dan (2007), p. 748 (English translation); Raspe (2009), p. 19; Raspe (2013), pp. 318–19; Hollender (2015), pp. 20–22.

(c.1000), Mainz

A *responsum* attributed to R. Gershom ben Yehuda of Mainz (d. c.1028, cf. no. 32) relates that a lawsuit between certain Jewish merchants was decided by an assembly of “the communities”. The case concerned a shipwreck. Part of the shipload was stolen by non-Jews, and it was feared that they would sell their booty to Jewish merchants:

The communities that gathered there (והקהלות שהיו נקבצים שם) exerted themselves on behalf of their brethren and enacted a solemn decree (וגזרו גזירה), by oath and ban, requiring that every Jew who obtained any valuables from the wrecked ship restore them to the original owners. This was done in accordance with the custom current in most Jewish communities (ברוב קהלות ישראל) that whenever someone loses anything, whether in a robbery or in any other way, a decree is issued on his behalf to the effect that whoever will obtain that lost property shall be obliged to return it to that man [...].

If the attribution to R. Gershom is justified, this is the earliest reference to an assembly of several communities in Mainz and to a decree they jointly issued (cf. no. 38).

Ed.: Müller (1881), no. 97, pp. 54b–55b. – Trans.: Hoffmann (1910), no. 18, pp. 142–43 (German); Agus (1968), no. 11, p. 71–73 (English); Mutius (1984), pp. 118–23, at p. 120 (German).

(c.1000), Mainz

A *responsum* attributed to R. Gershom ben Yehuda of Mainz (d. c.1028, cf. no. 32) relates how the members of the “holy yeshiva” were asked to decide on a ritual question. It is likely that they were gathered in the local synagogue:

An inquiry was made of the saints of the land, namely, of R. Gershom son of R. Yehuda, the Light of the Exile; of R. Shim'on the Great, son of R. Yiṣḥaq; of R. Yehuda ha-Kohen the author of *Sefer ha-Dinim*; of R. Yehuda the Great, the first martyr; and of the other members of the holy yeshiva ('ושאר בני הישיב' הקדוש').

Following dissent among those consulted, Rabbi Gershom decided the question.

According to Kanarfogel (2013), the episode is "a suggestive example of the significance of the academy and its locale over and above the presence of a particular rabbinic scholar."

Ed.: *Sefer Or Zaru'a* (1862), no. 275, vol. II, p. 125; Gershom, *Responsa* (1955), no. 32, pp. 98–100. – Lit.: Agus (1968), no. 156, p. 486; Kanarfogel (2013), p. 96 (with further references in n. 215).

4 1012 November/December, Mainz

The Quedlinburg Annals mention an expulsion of the Jews in Mainz, decreed by the king: *Expulsio iudaeorum facta est a rege in Moguntia*.

This note constitutes the earliest indisputable written evidence of a Jewish community in Mainz in Christian sources. The king in question was Henry II (d. 1024). It is assumed that the Jews returned to the city soon afterwards, as on 16 Shevat [4]773 = 5 February 1013 CE, R. Gershom ben Yehuda issued a new marriage contract for his wife because the original had been lost.

Ed.: MGH SS III (1839), p. 89 (Quedlinburg Annals); Agus (1968), no. 217, pp. 646–49 (R. Gershom). – Lit.: Aronius (1902), no. 144, pp. 61–62; Ziwes (1994), pp. 222–23; Schieffer (1998), p. 79; Lotter (1999).

5 (1012/13?), Mainz

The opening passage of the Ashkenazi *Memor-book* tradition, which contains prayers for the souls of the benefactors and teachers of Israel, commemorates Mar Shlomo and his wife Raḥel,

"who averted persecutions (שבטלו גזרות)" and "who concerned themselves for the communities (אטרחו עבור קהילות)".

According to a version first attested in the late 14th century, "R. Shlomo and Mrs Raḥel" were also remembered "for buying [a plot of land for] the cemetery of Mainz" (ר' שלמה ומרת רחל) (בעבור שקנו בית הקברות במגנצא). This passage was included in numerous later books of this genre. The benefactors are named along with the early Jewish sages of the Mainz community (for example, R. Gershom ben Yehuda). The dating of the events in question is commonly associated with the "expulsion" mentioned in no. 4.

Ed.: Salfeld (1898), pp. 85, 289, 426–27. – Lit.: Aronius (1902), no. 145, p. 62; Bondi (1927), p. 23; Vest (2000), pp. 16–17; Barzen (2005), p. 7.

1034 August/September (Elul, [4]794), Worms

6

Inscription concerning the building and embellishment of a synagogue.

יתב[רך לעד שו]מע תחינות
 אשר מילא לב עבדו באמונות
 מר [יעקב בר דוד] איש תבונות
 לשמו הגדול בית לבנות
 ול[ו]תו מרת רחל [ח]שובה בין שאננות
 כיבדו את יי מהונם ליהנות
 יפו מקדש מעט בתכונות
 והושלם בירח אלול בת'ש'צ'ד' לחשבונות
 יוטב לבוראם [מ]העלאת קרבנות
 זכו שם עולם לקנות
 יד ושם ותשואות חנות
 טוב מבנים ומבנות
 יזכרו בטו[ב]ות זכרונות
 יזהר הקורא אמן לענות

Praised forever be He who hears the supplication | Who has filled the heart of His servant with faith, | of Mar Ya'aqov bar David, a man of insight | To build a house for His great name, | And his consort, dame Raḥel, distinguished among the tranquil ones. | They respected and rejoiced in the

LORD, with their assets | To adorn the lesser sanctuary with implements, | And it was completed in the month of Elul, 794 according to the reckoning. | To their Maker it was better than offerings of sacrifices | They achieved everlasting fame, | A memorial and graceful acclamations | Better than sons and daughters. | They shall be held in good remembrance, | And whoever reads this should be mindful to answer "Amen!"

The Hebrew text follows Böcher (who provides emendations from older copies). The translation of this highly poetic inscription (Lewysohn 1855) can only be approximate. Biblical quotations: line 1: 1 Kgs 8:30; line 2: 1 Kgs 8:30; line 4: 1 Kgs 8,17; line 7: Ez 11:16 (cf. bMeg 29a); line 12: Is 56:5. The synagogue is called a "lesser sanctuary" (*miqdash me'at*), and other allusions to the biblical Ark of the Covenant abound.

Already in the mid-19th century the inscription could be seen on the outer western side, to the right of the synagogue portal. The lines of the two slabs are to be read in sequence. Contemporary images show that next to it was inscription no. 28 over the door leading to the synagogue garden and *mikveh*, which is why Mannheimer (1842) and Lewysohn (1855) erroneously considered no. 6 to be a sequel to no. 28.

Relating to the 11th-century predecessor of the Romanesque synagogue (see below, nos 26–27), this is the oldest known dated Hebrew text in Europe anywhere north of the Alps. The forms of the letters resemble those of the earliest epitaphs preserved in Mainz and Worms. However, the inscription does not feature the characteristic ruling of lines, and the letters are chiseled, not scratched into the stone.

Worms, Synagogue. Yellow sandstone, H = 54 cm, W = 180 cm, D = 6 cm. – Lit.: Mannheimer (1842), p. 9; Lewysohn (1855), pp. 104–06; Epstein (1896), pp. 512–13; Krautheimer (1927), pp. 268–69; Rothschild (1929), pp. 15–16; Böcher (1961), no. I, pp. 97–98; Reuter (1987), pp. 18 ff.; Böcher (2001), pp. 4 ff.; Rodov (2003), pp. 25–26 n. 28; Speyer Exhibition (2004), pp. 128–29; Paulus (2007), p. 98.

(11th Century), Worms

Fragment of a Synagogue inscription

...אורך ימ...
...בימונת...

... (*name*) ... (may he) live long ... |
... on the right side (?) (or: in happiness?) ...

Böcher took the first line to be a fragment of שיחיה לאורך ימים טובים, according to a common formula. Line 2 is unclear.

The fragment was found in the eastern wall foundations of the synagogue during the recovery work of 1957–61, and dated by Böcher to the 11th century on stylistic grounds.

Worms, Jewish Museum. Yellow sandstone fragment; H = 20 cm, W = 29 cm. – Lit.: Böcher (1961), no. II, pp. 98–99; Paulus (2007), p. 98.

(11th Century), Worms

Undated commemorative inscription for a certain Mar Ya'aqov, placed on the inside of the eastern wall of the synagogue, south of the Torah Ark.

הא[בן הזא]ת שבצד הארון
עד[נה למר יע]קב איש כשרון
[בכל שבת] ושבבת בזכרון
[להזכיר]ו עם ישיני חברון

This stone, which is placed next to the Ark (*'arōn*), | Is witness for Mar Ya'aqov, a gifted man | On every single Sabbath to commemorate him | And to remember him along with th[ose who] s[leep] in Hebron.

Rhymed quatrain. Those who "sleep in Hebron" are the biblical patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The fragment was dated by Böcher to the 11th century on stylistic grounds. The original had once been replaced by a copy, which was *in situ* until 1942. A fragment of the original was found during the recovery in September 1959 (the extant letters of the original fragment are given in brackets). Böcher (1961) suggests that the in-

scription relates to the same Ya'aqov who is named in no. 6 as the synagogue's founder. This benefactor was memorialized on every Shabbat (except for the Shabbat preceding a new moon) before the *musaf* prayer, as part of the prayer for the souls of the departed (הזכרת נשמות).

Note that the position next to the Torah Ark is emphasized in the text (even though it was obvious to see), to the extent that the word *Aron* dominates the rhyme.

Worms, *Jewish Museum*. Red sandstone; H = 38,5 cm, W = 72 cm (copy); H = 38,5 cm, W = 33 cm, D = 13 cm (fragment of the original, damaged by fire). – Lit.: Eli'ezer b. Shmu'el Braunschweig, ms. Frankfurt a.M., Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek, heb. 8° 256, fol. 57r (1559 CE); Mannheimer (1842), p. 19; Lewysohn (1855), no. 1, p. 104; Epstein (1896), no. 2, p. 513; Krautheimer (1927), p. 163; Böcher (1961), no. III, p. 99; Rodov (2003), p. 26 n. 30; Paulus (2007), p. 98.

9 (11th Century), Worms

Inscription placed on the inside of the eastern wall of the men's synagogue, north of the Torah Ark, probably as a counterpart of no. 8.

[זכר] עדות ה[צוואה ביד הקהילה]
[הייפ]וי והקירו[ני לבית התפילה]
על יורשי [הביתים הכל תלה]
[זכר צדיק לברכה ולתהלה]

Remember the endowment in the hands of the community: | To embellish and keep in good state the house of prayer. | Unto the heirs of his houses he has entrusted all this. | May the memory of the righteous serve as a blessing and a praise.

This piece only returned to Worms in 1957 from Cologne. Its previous history is unknown, but it is possible that it was taken away from the synagogue after the demolitions of 1615 or 1689. Eli'ezer ben Shmu'el Braunschweig saw and copied it in Worms in 1559. Only parts of lines 1–3 are preserved in the fragment, the rest [in brackets] is supplied from Eli'ezer's copy. Dated by Böcher to the 11th century on stylistic grounds.

Worms, *Jewish Museum*. Red sandstone fragment; H = 25 cm, W = 28 cm. – Lit.: Eli'ezer b. Shmu'el Braunschweig, ms. Frankfurt a. M., Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek, heb. 8° 256, fol. 57r (1559 CE); Epstein (1896), p. 513 (from a copy of Eli'ezer's ms. by N. Brüll); Krautheimer (1927), p. 163; Böcher (1961), no. IV, pp. 100–01; Rodov (2003), p. 27, n. 30; Paulus (2007), p. 98.

1049 March 29 (23 Nisan [4]809), Mainz

10

Headstone for Yehuda, son of Shne'ur, from the Jewish cemetery of Mainz.

בכג בני(ס)ן ב(ת)ת-ט לפ(ר)ט
[הלך | נפטר] לעולמו יהו(דה) ב(ר) שני(ו)ר
[ש]לום על משכבו ינוח ובצר[ו]ר
החיים נפשו במנוח

On the 23th day in [the month of] Nisan in 809, according to the reckoning | (passed away) to his eternity Yehuda bar Shne'ur | May he lie peacefully on his resting place, and in the bundle | Of life may his soul find rest.

The reading follows Cuno (2012), who offers the most recent analysis of this epitaph. Following Levi (1926) and Rapp (1977), some authors have dated the stone 1049 April 2 (27 Nisan).

The stone was rediscovered in 1922 during construction work on the late-medieval *Brückenturm* tower, where Jewish gravestones had been used to stabilize the arches.

This is the oldest dated epitaph from the Jewish cemetery of Mainz and in Ashkenaz as a whole. In all, ten Hebrew headstones dating from the 11th century Hebrew have survived from *Old Jewish Cemetery Mainz*, four of which have only been recovered recently.

Mainz, Landesmuseum, inv.-no. DL1997/59. Red sandstone, H = 84 cm, W = 65 cm, D = 23 cm. – Lit.: Neeb (1924), p. 56; Salfeld (1922/24), no. 1; Levi (1926), no. 4; Rapp & Böcher (1961/62), no. 1; Rapp (1977), no. 1; Vest (2000), no. 1; Cuno (2012), pp. 142–277; 506; Hüttenmeister (2015), no. 2302; Lehnardt (2015), p. 180.

11 1058/59 ([4]819), Worms

Headstone in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* for an unknown young man.

... של ...
[?] הבחור ...
נפטר בתתיט
לפרט ... כבוד

... *shel* ... | ... the youth [?] | He passed away in
819 | Of the reckoning ... honour

This headstone in was only recently deciphered and identified as the oldest in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* (Brocke 2013). In all, eight headstones of the 11th century are preserved *in situ* here.

The epithet *bahur* 'youth/young man' usually designates an unmarried young man or a student.

Worms, Old Jewish Cemetery, inv.-no. 9008. – Ed.: Sommer & Brocke (2015), no. 24. – Lit.: Brocke (2013), pp. 118–19.

12 1080, Worms

Bishop Adalbert of Worms confirms a ruling of his predecessors, Burchard and Arnold, concerning the limits of the four parishes in the city. The description of the parish of St Paul extends to the "gate of the Jews or *Friesenspitze*" (*usque ad portam ludeorum sive ad Frisonum spizam*). The Jewish quarter had formerly been inhabited by Frisian merchants. (On the situation of the quarter, see also no. 25 of 1157.)

Darmstadt, Hessisches Staatsarchiv, A 2 no. 255/10. – Ed.: Boos (1886), no. 57, pp. 49–50. – Lit.: Aronius (1902), no. 167, p. 69; Battenberg (1995), no. 1, p. 3.

13 1084 September 13, Speyer

Bishop Rudiger Huozman of Speyer extends a charter of liberties to a group of Jews whom he settled in a suburb of his city. The charter deals with their living quarters and cemetery and lists their basic religious and economic liberties:

Rudiger speaks of transforming the *villa* of Speyer into a major urban centre (*urbem*) and of his intention to increase the value of his place "thousandfold" (*putavi milies amplificare honorem loci nostri*) by also congregating Jews there. The Jews were settled apart from the other citizens (*extra comunionem et habitationem ceterorum civium*) and surrounded by a wall for their safety (*ne a peioris turbe insolencia faciele turbarentur, muro eos circumdedi*). The place Rudiger accorded them included a "hill" (*clivum*) and a "valley" (*vallem*), on grounds that he himself had inherited or bought. The Jews were free to change gold and silver and to do other trade in their own quarter (*ambitum habitacionis*) and from there down to and including the harbour (*et eregione extra usque ad navalem portum et in ipso navali portu*), as well as in the whole city (*per totam civitatem*). From grounds belonging to the cathedral church of Speyer, Rudiger also gave them a plot for their burials (*locum sepulture*) in hereditary lease (*sub hereditaria condicione*). Their duties of watch, defence, and fortification only pertained to their own living quarters (*ambitum*).

These details should be read in conjunction with those provided by a Hebrew source on the inauguration of Speyer's synagogue in 1104 CE (cf. no. 18). Most scholars have taken them to indicate an initial settlement in the suburban village of *Altspeyer*, later integrated into the city of Speyer as part of the building programme the bishop was conducting in close co-ordination with the crown (cf. Hirschmann 1998).

Thus there were two Jewish neighbourhoods for a number of years (for a dissenting view see Porsche 2003). This reading is confirmed by later references to a *Judengasse* and Jewish houses in *Altspeyer* (cf. no. 78). After the work on the synagogue in the city centre was completed in 1104, the focus of Jewish settlement shifted to the area around *Speyer Jewry-Court*. The Jewish cemetery in *Altspeyer* is attested in numerous later sources. Rudiger's words underline the importance (*honor*)

attached to the presence of a Jewish community in the urbanization process of the high middle ages. His charter constitutes the earliest codification of a local Jewry-law in medieval Ashkenaz, touching on issues that were vital for the existence of the religious minority group in a non-Jewish environment: In particular, the Jews were granted jurisdiction among Jews and against Jewish defendants under an *archisynagogus*. They were allowed to employ Christian servants and could sell meat that was unfit for them according to Jewish law.

Rudiger's charter, which was certainly based on detailed negotiations with the Jewish immigrants, became extremely influential through its confirmation and extension by Emperor Henry IV in 1090. That same year, the Jewish community of Worms received a similar charter, later confirmed by Frederick Barbarossa (1157, cf. no. 25) and extended over "all the Jews of Germany" by Emperor Frederick II (1236).

Karlsruhe, Generallandesarchiv, 67, no. 448 (= *Codex minor Spirensis*), fol. 26r-v. – Ed.: Remling (1852), no. 57, pp. 57–58; Hilgard (1885), no. 11, pp. 11–12; Altmann & Bernheim (1920), no. 78, pp. 158–59; Diestelkamp (1967), no. 47, pp. 75–76. – Lit.: Simonis (1608), p. 51; Zeuss (1843), pp. 8–9; Aronius (1902), no. 168, pp. 69–71; Müller (1994), p. 142; Ziwes (1994), p. 65; Mentgen (1996), pp. 46–48; Hirschmann (1998), pp. 337, 346, 350–51, 353–56; Porsche (2003); Engels (2004), pp. 93, 95–96; Haverkamp (2013).

14 1093 ([48]53), Mainz

An incident occurred on a Sabbath in the synagogue of Mainz: Two newly-married men (*ḥaṭanim*), both of priestly descent, appeared with their respective entourage of young men. It was *Shabbat Ḥaṭan* for both of them, and the question was who was to take precedence in the honour of reading from the Torah on this occasion. "This caused an open debate in which great scholars participated", probably on the spot. It was the *ḥazzan*, R. Yehuda, who resolved the situation: He "found clarification in the books of R. Eli'ezer the

Great, of blessed memory" (i.e., R. Eli'ezer ben Yiṣḥaq of Mainz, d. c.1060).

The incident may indicate a relatively sizeable synagogue, as even medieval Jewish wedding companies could comprise large numbers of guests and as some of those present suggested sending the two companies to different private houses. It also shows that the synagogue was as much a place of social competition as of scholarship and religious service.

Ed.: *Ma'ase ha-Geonim* (1909), p. 52, trans. in Agus (1968), pp. 491–92. – Lit.: Paulus (2007), p. 72.

1096 May 18–25, Worms

15

Persecution in connection with the First Crusade. The Hebrew sources on the events in Worms note that the surviving Jews were concerned that the victims might not receive a decent burial.

1. The *Mainz Anonymous* chronicler mentions that some of the Jews who survived the first onslaught in the bishop's palace sent clothes so that "those who had evaded" might dress those that had died (שגרו בגדים להלביש את ההרוגים על ידי אותן), "for there were such as were wont to do deeds of mercy (גומלי חסידים) among them".

2. An early-12th century *piyyuṭ* by R. Me'ir ben Yiṣḥaq Shaliaḥ Ṣibbur of Worms also laments the fact that some victims remained unburied.

Both the Hebrew reports on the persecutions as well as the *piyyuṭim* were written during the 12th century and reflect the concerns of the survivors. Thus, the term "those who had evaded" (שהוצלו, *read* שהוצלו) may refer apologetically to Jews who had undergone forced baptism.

Ed.: Haverkamp (2005), pp. 284–85; Fraenkel & Gross (2016), pp. 98; Sommer & Brocke (2015), no. 1214. – Lit.: Raspe (2011); Fraenkel & Gross (2016), pp. 32, 38.

The synagogue building of Mainz is mentioned on various occasions in the Hebrew reports on the persecutions during the First Crusade, composed by the mid-12th century.

1. R. Yehuda ben Yiṣḥaq and his son-in-law Yehuda, whose house lay next to the synagogue (הבית סמוך לבית הכנסת), said they had heard the souls of the dead praying there on the night of the last Sabbath before the persecution.

2. In a haunting passage of Shlomo bar Shimshon's "Chronicle", the pious Mar Yiṣḥaq, son of David the community leader, who had survived the first onslaught by accepting baptism, took his children on the eve of *Shavuot* from his house "through the [synagogue] courtyard" (דרך החצר) into the synagogue (בית הכנסת). Here he slaughtered them in front of the Holy Ark (ארון הקדש), "in sanctification of the great [divine] Name" (על קידוש השם הגדול). He then "sprinkled of their blood on the pillars of the Holy Ark" (על עמודי ארון הקדש). Later Mar Yiṣḥaq laid fire to his own house and came back to burn down the synagogue, where he died in the fire. According to this report there were rumours among the Jewish survivors that the Christian citizens intended to turn the synagogue into a church (lit. "a house of idolatry", בית ע"ז) or a minting house.

The second episode is deeply infused with allusions to the Temple service in Jerusalem and to the mass suicide of the priests at the time when it was destroyed (cf. Yuval 1996), and the closing passage, citing Ps 50:23, aligns Mar Yiṣḥaq's deed with a thanksgiving sacrifice. The holiness of the community is a constant theme in the Hebrew Crusade chronicles and in the liturgical *piyyuṭim* commemorating these events (cf. Fraenkel & Gross). Latin reports confirm that a fire raged in Mainz in 1096.

Ed.: Haverkamp (2005), pp. 306–07, 378–8; cf. *ibid.*, pp. 346–47. – Lit.: Aronius (1902), no. 186, p. 88; Yuval (1996), pp. 94–97; Woolf (2015), pp. 185–86; Fraenkel & Gross (2016), pp. 56, 162, 164, 278, 368; cf. also Reuter & Schäfer (2013), pp. 60–63.

The Jewish cemetery of Mainz is mentioned on various occasions in connection with the massacres of the First Crusade.

1. According to Shlomo bar Shimshon's "Chronicle", nine mass graves were dug out "in the (Jewish) cemetery" (בבית הקברות) of Mainz, and "young and old, men and women, fathers and their sons, mothers and their daughters, servants with their masters, maids with their mistresses" were buried together there. The emphasis might indicate that on other occasions care was taken to separate certain groups. The burials were commissioned by the (Christian) citizens with money the Jews had deposited with them. However, the bodies were left naked. The passage ends with the prayer for divine retribution and a variation on the blessing often found on Jewish epitaphs, "may their souls rest in the Garden of Eden and be bound up in the bundle of life – Amen" (ונשמתן אמן, בגן עדן צרורה בצרור החיים, אמן, cf. I Sam 25:29).

2. Some of the leading members of the community around R. Qalonymos had survived the first onslaught and fled to Rudesheim. However, Archbishop Ruthard was unable to save them there for long, and they were eventually killed one by one, some of them on their way back to Mainz: "For they had decided to return to the city of Mainz, so that their foes might kill them there and they would be buried in the cemetery (בבית הקברות) together with their pious, righteous and perfect brethren (עם אחיהם החסידים הישרים והתמימים)". This passage, too, ends with the above blessing, typical of Jewish epitaphs.

Jews of the generation after 1096 were troubled as some of the victims had not received a decent burial. This is also expressed in 12th-century *piyyuṭim* composed by Qalonymos ben Yehuda and Eli'ezer ben Yo'el. In one *piyyuṭ* Qalonymos mentions the "mourning place" (שדה בוכים), i.e., the spot at the entrance of the cemetery where eulogies for the dead were spoken.

Ed.: Haverkamp (2005), pp. 388–89, 396–97; Fraenkel & Gross (2016), pp. 147, 149, 154, 354. – Lit.: Aronius (1902), no. 185, pp. 86–88.

An anonymous Hebrew narrative, found in one manuscript of Shlomo bar Shimshon's "Crusade Chronicle", relates the beginnings of the Jewish community of Speyer. Its final passage deals with the inauguration of the synagogue on the Eve of the New Year.

According to this report, the Jews of Speyer had arrived from Mainz, which is here called "our mother city" (עיר מולדתינו), "the place of our fathers" (מקום אבותינו), "the oldest, most famous and most illustrious of all the communities of the kingdom" (קהילת הקדומה ומהוללה ומשובחה מכל) (קהילות מלכות). In Mainz a fire had raged in the Jewish quarter (possibly the fire of 1081, which devastated the whole city, as mentioned in a Latin chronicle). Relations with the Christian majority were tense, and plans were made to leave Mainz and look for a more peaceful "fortified city" (עיר מצבר). Then Bishop Rudiger welcomed a group of Jews in Speyer. He gave them "an outer district of the city" (ירכתי העיר) and promised to surround them with "a wall with gate and bolt" (להקיפנו חומת דלתים ובריה) (cf. 5 Mos 3:5) for protection.

Following the events of 1096, when eleven Jews were killed, the survivors "returned to the city, each to his house and to his place" (חזרו לעיר), (איש איש לביתו ואל מקומו). Due to their fear, however, "those who lived in the upper quarter" (בני שכונה העליונה) were still unable to go to the "lower" quarter (התחתונה). They therefore prayed in the upper quarter, "in the study house" (בבית מדרשו) of R. Yehuda ben Qalonymos, while those in the lower quarter prayed "in the prayer house" (בבית התפילה) there. This state of affairs lasted for several years and only ended when the synagogue building was completed in the month of Elul, [4]864. On the eve of the New Year holiday, "one of the elders" (אחד מן הזקנים) came and invited the community "to bring up the Ark" (ונעלה את הארון) into the new building. The community elders, the *Kohanim* and the Levites accordingly took the Torah scrolls and "brought" them "up" (ועלו) into "the Ark that was there in

the synagogue" (הארון שאר שם בבית הכנסת), where they have remained "until this very day" (עד היום הזה).

Note that different terms were used to denote a house of prayer. While the house used by the Jews in the "lower quarter" is called a "house of prayer" (*bēt ha-Tefila*), the synagogue, which is marked by the Ark containing the Torah scrolls, is termed "house of (the) congregation" (*bēt ha-Kneset*), indicating a more important status for the community.

The narrative relates to Bishop Rudiger's charter of 1084 (cf. no. 13) when speaking of an "outer district of the city" where a first, fortified settlement was established. Relating to Speyer's topography along the Rhine river, this was the "lower quarter", while some Jews, including R. Yehuda ben Qalonymos, soon settled in the main part of the city, i.e., the "upper quarter". The verbs used regarding the inauguration of the synagogue in 1104 also indicate that it was situated in the "upper" part of Speyer, which means that it can be identified with the earliest phase of the synagogue extant today in *Speyer Jewry-Court*.

The expression "to bring up the Ark" (ונעלה את הארון) is biblical (1 Sam 6:21, cf. 2 Sam 6:2); we should not take it literally to imply a moveable Torah shrine. Indeed, the text implies that only the scrolls were transferred, and explains that there was already an Ark "there in the synagogue" (שם בבית הכנסת).

Ed.: Haverkamp (2005), pp. 490–93. – Lit.: Epstein (1896/97), pp. 30–33; Hirschmann (1998), pp. 355–56; Engels (2004), pp. 95–96; Paulus (2007), p. 86–89, 91–92, 96; Heberer (2012), p. 44.

1128 or late-1129, Speyer

A *mikveh* in Speyer is mentioned in a 12th-century rabbinic discussion concerning the death of R. Qalonymos ben Yiṣḥaq the Elder. According to accounts transmitted by R. Eli'ezer bar Nathan (d. 1170) and R. Yiṣḥaq ben Moshe 'Or Zaru'a

(d. c.1250), R. Qalonymos died in Speyer and could not be buried immediately because “the city was under siege”. His body was therefore laid in a coffin and placed “in the *mikveh* building” (בבית המקוה) for some time (presumably for keeping it cool). Later, Qalonymos was buried in his home city of Mainz (this detail is only given by R. Yiṣḥaq and not in the earlier source by Eli’ezer b. Nathan).

Speyer was besieged twice by King Lothair in the late-1120s: While the first siege between August and November 1128 was unsuccessful, the city surrendered in late-December 1129 following a second siege which had begun in July (cf. Ehlers 1996). On the importance of Mainz for the early community of Speyer, cf. no. 18.

Lit.: Wiener (1863), pp. 164–65; Epstein (1895), p. 448; *Germania Judaica*, I (1963), p. 337; Ehlers (1996), pp. 284–86; Bruno (2004), p. 50; Härtel (2017), pp. 157 n. 22, 306–07; cf. Fuchs (2012), p. 67.

20 (c.1128), Worms

The story of the conversion of Yehuda ben David ha-Levi of Cologne, later known as Herman the Premonstratensian, includes an episode set in the synagogue of Worms, where Yehuda/Herman engaged in a disputation with the Jews present there:

Coming to Worms, where I had a brother named Samuel, I entered the synagogue of the Jews on the day when they usually gather there (*Iudeorum sinagogam die, qua illo convenire solebant, introivi*). I heard them reading the superstitious comments of their Gamaliel on the Old Testament. Soon, incensed by divine fervour and with great confidence and grace of speech, I entered into a debate over prophecy with them [...] Taking up single-handed combat of debate also against the president of the synagogue (*archisynagogum*) named David and the brother whom I mentioned above, I took a long time reviewing, in opposition to them, the pages of the Law and the Prophets.

The historicity of Herman’s conversion narrative, which is embellished with hagiographic motifs, has been debated by scholars. An *archisynagogus* in Worms named David is known from no other source. There is little doubt, however, that the convert Yehuda/Herman is a historical figure. The Latin account clearly indicates that in this early period the synagogue was the place of Talmud study (here symbolized by the name of Gamaliel, an early sage of the *Mishna* known to Christians through Acts 5:23 and 22:3). It is not necessary to assume, as Epstein (1901) did, that the synagogue was reserved for prayer and that there must have been another building assigned to study.

Ed.: MGH *Quellen zur Geistesgeschichte*, IV (1963), pp. 112–13; trans. Morrison (1992), p. 104. – Lit.: Epstein (1901), p. 66; Aronius (1902), no. 224, p. 104; Schmitt (2003).

1139/40, Worms

Headstone in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* for a young man who was murdered.

ציון הלז על(?)
הבחור ר' יח.
הנהרג בר"ה(?) ... תת"ק
לפרט מנוחת עירנו
בעדן גן

This sign above ... | the youth, R. Yeh ... |
who was slain on the New Moon (?) of ... 900 |
of the account. The peace of our angel [shall be] |
in Eden, the garden.

As no headstones remain for the victims of the 1096 massacres (cf. no. 15), this is the earliest surviving example for an epitaph commemorating a Jewish martyr in Worms.

Veneration of those who were killed in pogroms or other anti-Jewish incidents was deeply ingrained in Ashkenazic culture after 1096. Numerous headstones mark out those who were killed for their faith. By the 14th century the word ‘slain’ (*neherag*) was replaced by the more honorific

“holy” (*qadosh*). Already the headstone for Yo’el ben Me’ir ha-Kohen dating from the same year (15 Adar I, [4]900 = 5 February 1140) honours Yo’el’s family as a “seedbed of martyrs” (מטע של קדושים) (inv.-no. 122).

Further headstones set for Jewish martyrs in Worms date from 1170 (inv.-no. 45), 1184 (inv.-no. 79), 1212 (inv.-no. 316), 1225 (inv.-no. 231), 1233 (inv.-no. 239), 1260 (inv.-no. 1101), 1301 (inv.-no. 424), 1307 (inv.-no. 785) and 1343 (inv.-no. 598). Even stones set for children of martyrs commemorate the martyrdom of their fathers; cf. inv.-nos 9 (1210), 37 (1412), 43 (1341), 91 (1144), 115 (1172), 433 (1381), 524 (1301), 652 (1417), 935 (1302), and 936 (1314). A simple stone for the “Twelve community leaders” (י"ב פרנסים) reportedly killed in 1096 was set into the eastern wall of the cemetery at a later date.

The medieval headstones on *Old Jewish Cemetery Mainz* also include at least five epitaphs for Jewish martyrs. The earliest, dating from 1147, was set for a woman who was drowned “for the unity of the (divine) Name” (על יחוד השם) (section VIII, no. 11), possibly in connection with the Second Crusade. Further examples date from 1252 (section II, no. 53), 1281 (section X, no. 74, cf. below, no. 54), 1384 (or 1387) (section IX, no. 146), and an undated stone (section VII, s.n. 12). Martyrs commemorated on the headstones of their children appear here on at least five occasions, in 1227 (section IX, no. 45), 1263 (section II, no. 60), 1294 (section VI, no. 77), 1301 (section VIII, no. 88), and on an undated fragment (section IX, no. 203).

Of the fifty medieval headstones preserved in Speyer, one appears to commemorate a victim of persecution in 1382 (inv.-no. 28); two commemorate martyrs on the epitaphs of their children: inv.-nos. 21 (1372) and 44 (undated fragment).

Worms, *Old Jewish Cemetery*, inv.-no. 22, red sandstone, 74 cm x 111 cm x 18 cm. – Ed.: Sommer & Brocke (2015), no. 22. – Lit.: Rapp (1970/71); Brocke (2005).

Headstone in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* for Rivqa, daughter of Yiṣḥaq. Rivqa is praised for keeping the commandments regarding the ritual purity of vessels, by accommodating guests and “in works of mercy” (בגמול חסדים).

From antiquity, the concept of *gemilut ḥasadim* (lit. ‘giving pieties’) was accorded a central function in Jewish ethics (see also above, no. 15). Good works were regarded as having even greater value than the Temple service, in accordance with Hos 6:6 (*For I desire mercy [ḥesed], not sacrifice*). A related concept was that of *ṣedaqa* (lit. ‘righteousness’), usually equated with poor relief (see, for example, no. 46).

The “works of mercy” appear on several headstones in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms*, though most are from the early modern period, when the term was related to the burial brotherhood. Of the medieval examples cf. inv.-no. 801 (1287, below, no. 58).

Worms, *Old Jewish Cemetery*, inv.-no. 8. Sandstone, 51,5 cm x 88 cm x 23 cm. – Ed.: Sommer & Brocke (2015), no. 8. – Lit.: Barzen (2011).

1144/45 ([4]905), Speyer

Headstone for Yosef ben Ḥakim ha-Kohen from the medieval Jewish cemetery in Speyer.

תתק"ה לפרט
נפטר הבחור
יוסף בן מר
חכים הכהן
נוחו עדן

[In] 905 according to the reckoning |
the youth passed away, |
Yosef, son of Mar |
Ḥakim ha-Kohen |
May his rest be in Eden.

This is the oldest surviving epitaph from the medieval Jewish cemetery of Speyer. The designation of Yosef’s father by the Aramaic title *Mar* is in line

with the custom in the early Ashkenazic communities. It was later replaced by the title *Rav* (which is generally represented as “R.” and means no more than our English “Mr.”, to be distinguished from *ha-Rav* “master”, designating a rabbi).

Speyer, Museum SchPIRA, grey sandstone stele, H = 51 cm, W = 47,5 cm, D = 11,5 cm. – Ed.: Fuchs-Maul & Bondy (2013), no. 4. – Lit.: Kober (1944), no. 2, p. 192; Rapp & Böcher (1959), no. 29, pp. 68–69 and fig. 11; Rapp (1960), no. 4, p. 160; Rapp & Böcher (1961/62), no. 4, p. 178.

24 (before 1152), Cologne and Mainz

A controversy arose over certain decorations “in the synagogue in Cologne on the northern wall, on the windows of which they formed images of lions and serpents”. R. Elyaqim ben Yosef of Metz, one of the “elders of Mainz” (d. 1152), wrote a letter in protest:

They changed an ancient custom, which the earlier ones were not accustomed to do in any of the places of their exile. ... Even though their intention was for Heaven, to be pleasing to their Creator, the second commandment warned them not to do this, as it is written, “You shall not make for yourself a graven image” (2 Mos. 20:4).

The letter suggests that there were no such images in the windows of the synagogues of the ShUM Communities. (Later renditions of the incident in rabbinic discussions speak of images painted on the walls, not of stained glass.) The source may relate to the synagogue of Cologne prior to the destruction of 1096 (as suggested by Shoham-Steiner 2017) or to the renovations after 1096. It indicates certain cultural differences between Cologne and Mainz and underlines the ShUM communities’ claim to authority in the Rhineland as a whole.

Ed.: Eli’ezer b. Yo’el ha-Levi, *Sefer Ra’vayah* (2005), no. 1049, vol. IV, pp. 5–6. – Lit.: *Germania Judaica*, I (1963), p. 199; Kern-Ulmer (1990), pp. 120, 141; Ta-Shma (2006), p. 21; Paulus (2007), p. 51 n. 170; Shoham-Steiner (2017).

1157 April 6, Worms

Emperor Frederick I confirms the charter of rights and liberties for the Jews of Worms first granted by Emperor Henry IV (c. 1090), with safeguards for their possessions and personal safety as well as rulings concerning their economic activities and status in court. Frederick’s charter was confirmed and extended to all the Jews of Germany by his grandson, Frederick II, in 1236 (copies of this charter were later confirmed by the bishop of Worms in 1260 and by the archbishop of Cologne in 1360).

In this context, a detail concerning the Jewish quarter’s topography in Worms was transmitted to a broad audience: “Nobody shall stop the Jews from using the buildings in the city wall, be it from within or from without” (*In comoditate, quam habent in edificiis in muro civitatis infra vel extra, nullus eos impediat*). On the situation of the quarter, see also no. 12 of 1080.

Cologne, Historisches Archiv der Stadt, HUA 2283 (copy of 1360). – Ed.: MGH *Diplomata*, X, no. 166, p. 285–86.

1174/75 ([4]935 AM), Worms

Dated inscription concerning the establishment or renewal of the synagogue in Worms:

מקראות הצבתי ציונים
נאמן עד לימים הנמנים
חשבון ת'ת'ק'ל'ה נבנו הבנינים
מפתיחת שער מוכיח לשנים
ויבוא גוי צדיק שומר אמנים

Readings have I set up as signs | Steadfast, until the days are counted. | In the year 935 of the reckoning the buildings were erected. | When the gate is opened the [meaning of the] year is confirmed: | “The righteous nation may enter, [the nation] that keeps faith”.

Line 5 (Is 26:2) must be read as a chronogram, with the numerical values of the Hebrew letters adding up to 935. Böcher (1961) read חצבתי instead of הצבתי in line 1. He suggests reading “as

long as there will be an earthly reckoning of time” in line 2. Rodov (2003) suggests that line 5 may relate to a commentary by R. El’azar ben Yehuda of Worms (d. c.1230) on the *Haggada* and that it alludes to the liberation at the end of times (cf. Ps 118:20). Note that the word **הבנינים** implies more than one building (though the plural form may also be due to the rhyme scheme). The initials of the first four lines (**מנחם**) reveal the name of the composer. A likely candidate is the community leader and rabbinic scholar Menaḥem ben Ya’aqov (cf. below, nos. 33 and 34).

This commemorative inscription was once displayed above the main entrance to the synagogue and is today lost. However, Eli’ezer b. Shmu’el Braunschweig copied the text in 1559. His manuscript version renders the inscription in three lines; the rhyme suggests that there may have been five, and this is supported by the acrostich. According to Eli’ezer, the original was written “on the lintel of the entrance to the synagogue [...] in a circular way” (**על משקוף פתח בית הכנסת כתוב**) (דרך עגול) – i.e., it probably followed the semi-circular tympanon above the portal.

Eli’ezer b. Shmu’el Braunschweig, ms. Frankfurt a.M., Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek, heb. 8° 256, fol. 55v (1559). – Lit.: Epstein (1896), no. 4, p. 514; Krautheimer (1927), p. 268; Böcher (1961), no. V, p. 101; Rodov (2003), pp. 35, 39–40, 158; Paulus (2007), pp. 99–100 with n. 165.

27 1174/75 ([4]935 AM), Worms

Inscription commemorating the building of the synagogue in Worms:

פ'א'ר'י [ה'ע'מ'ו'ד'י'ם] ש'ת'י'ם' N
 ע'ש'י'ה' ב'ל'י' ע'צ' [ל'ת'י'י'ם] E
 ג'ם' ג'ז'ל'ת' ה'כ'ת'ר'ו'ת' S
 ג'ם' [ת'ל'י'ה'] ה'נ'ר'ו'ת' W

[North] The splendour of the two pillars |
 [East] He made without idle hands |
 [South] Also, the bowl-shaped capitals |
 [West] Also, he hung up the lamps.

The quartraine is rhymed (*aabb*), and biblical references to 1 Kings 7:41 (north), Qohelet 10:18 (east), 1 Kings 7:41–42 (south), and 1 Kings 7:49 (west) allude to the Temple of Solomon. All of the inscription must be read as a chronogram; the letters add up to the Jewish year [4]935.

The rhyming inscription is located on the abutment of the capital of the synagogue’s eastern column. The original was destroyed in the fire of November 1938, but fragments are still extant. This important inscription is so well-documented, however, that a local stonemason in 1959 was able to produce a high-quality copy. The letters of the extant fragments are given in brackets.

Other than Krautheimer and Böcher, who thought that the allusions to the Temple should not be overemphasized, recent research has highlighted the importance of the inscription as a way of marking the holiness of the synagogue, in line with religious developments among Ashkenazic Jews in the wake of the 1096 persecutions. The two pillars of the synagogue are read as a reference to *Yachin* and *Bo’az*, the two pillars at the entrance of the Jerusalem Temple named in verse 21 of 1 Kings 7, the same chapter from which the inscription is citing. Rodov (2003) notes that the cathedral of Worms, too, “made use of the symbolism of Jachin and Boaz in the two free-standing decorative Romanesque columns with large capitals that are placed on corbels above the north portal”.

Fragments in Worms, *Jewish Museum*, Inv.-Nr. 203, 1–3: 10 x 27 x 5 cm, 13 x 25 x 4 cm, 8 x 14 x 3 cm. – Photographs: (1) Worms, Fotoarchiv, M10179 (fragments), printed in Böcher (1961), fig. 74, and Speyer Exhibition (2004), p. 128; (2) M7870 and M9949 (south and west); (3) Worms, Stadtarchiv, 203/04, no. 10 (Kiefer’s inventory), p. 104 (east), unpublished; (4) Fotoarchiv Marburg, image file no. fm20841 (west and north, c.1910–1922), printed in Krautheimer (1927), fig. 46; Böcher (1961), fig. 14, and Shalev-Eyni (2014), p. 164; (5) Fotoarchiv Marburg, image no. 20.840; (6) Worms, Fotoarchiv, M10176 (= Stadtarchiv 170/49, Gustav Nonnenmacher estate) (sketches towards the copy of 1959). – Lit.: Wörner (1887), p. 261; Epstein (1896), pp. 5–6; Krautheimer (1927), p. 110; Landsberger

(1941), p. 350; Böcher (1961), no. VI, pp. 101–03; Reuter (1987), pp. 35–36; Böcher (2001), pp. 7 ff.; Rodov (2003), pp. 35–37; Speyer Exhibition (2004), p. 128; Paulus (2007), pp. 99, 102, 273–74; Weber (2013), pp. 44–49; Shalev-Eyni (2014), pp. 164–65; Woolf (2015).

28 1185/86, Worms

Dated inscription commemorating the building of a ritual bath (*mikveh*):

The text follows Brocke (2019). Variants: line 1a להקם *M, L*. – line 2a ק"ר *M*. – line 2b *Eli'ezer* read two more letters at the beginning; תועק *Ep*. – line 2c וכפוס *L, Ep*. – line 3c וקיר *all previous editions*. – line 5b להציליו *Ep* („*L. liest falsch*"); בסכות; *M; L omits* לו. – line 5c סכרוהו *M*; יכרוהז; *L*; חציו; *M*. On the circular signs that mark the internal division of the verses, cf. Böcher (1961), pp. 104–05.

Biblical references in line 1: Ps 78:5 and 81:6, Ps 84:3, Is 51:1; line 2: Hab 2:11; line 3: Is 40:3 and Jdg 5:17; line 4: Qoh 7:12, 1 Sam 22:6; line 6: Jonah 4:5; line 6: Ps 36:9 and Is 11:5. – Böcher found the same quotation from Isaiah on two epitaphs of the same year 1175 (cf. Sommer & Brocke 2015, no. 178; Lewysohn 1855, no. 9).

Inscribed on two stone slabs, this inscription was once placed in the western wall of the synagogue courtyard, above the door leading to the *mikveh*, until the wall was taken down in 1879. *Eli'ezer*

ben Shmu'el Braunschweig (1559) noted: וסמוך לו על המשקוף פתח שער אחורי בית הכנסת כתוב על הכיור שרוחצין בו הידים, והיה מטושטש ומה שעלה בידי העתקתי (cf. Epstein 1896, p. 554). His complaint over its legibility is however not confirmed by later observers. Both Mannheimer (1842) and Lewysohn (1855) were able to read the inscription clearly. They both took the text as immediately preceding no. 6.

The text is highly elliptic. Line 5 is marked by references to the banquet of the saints in the world to come, when God shall feast his elected with meat from the Leviathan – the primeval beast of the watery world mentioned in Job 41 and in Jewish post-biblical legend. The elect shall rest under a tabernacle made of the Leviathan's skin and thus be spared from the glaring light of God's justice. The Leviathan was created on the fifth day of creation, and it seems fitting that it appears in line 5 of the inscription.

Worms, Synagogue Compound, two slabs of red sandstone; right part: H = 40 cm, W = 77 cm; left part: H = 40 cm, W = 97 cm; Eli'ezer b. Shmu'el Braunschweig, ms. Frankfurt a. M., Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek, heb. 8° 256, fol. 56r (1559 CE); Mannheimer (1842), p. 9; Lewysohn (1855), no. II, pp. 104, 105–06; Epstein (1896), no. V, pp. 554–56; Krautheimer (1927), p. 269, n. 162 (Hebrew) and p. 163 (paraphrase); Rothschild (1929), pp. 16–17; Böcher (1961), no. VI, pp. 103–05; Fuchs (2012), pp. 61–62; Brocke (2019). – Lit.: Weber (2013); Shalev-Eyni (2014); Brocke (2019).

לה[ק]ם עדות ביהוסף • נעש לחצרות כוסף • הביטו אל צור חוצב
 יראי יי כתוב לפני • ומעש מוכיח תזעק ויענה • אבן מקיר וכפיס מעציו
 באר חפר ועלייה קירה • ושם דרך מסילה ישרה • יקיר שכן על מפרציו
 תמור [מצות] כספו • בצל חכמה עשות חופו • תחת האשל ברמה נצב
 כצאת שמש זרוע [אורו] • לה[צל] לו בסוכת עורו • יכרוהו חברים ובנכבדים יחציו
 ירוהו [מדשן עדניו] • ו'ה'י'ה' צ'ד'ק' א'ז'ו'ר' מ'ו'ת'נ'י'ו' • והאמונה אזור חלציו

- 1 To set up a testimony in Yehosef • built by one who longeth after the forecourts: • Look up to the rock hewn out,
- 2 Ye faithful of the LORD, which is inscribed before me, • to the work that confirms: *Cry out and answer* • will the stone of the wall and the wooden beam.
- 3 A well he dug out, and an ascent between walls • and there made a way, a straight path • to refresh whoever dwells in its coves.
- 4 He directed the obligation of his money • in the shadow of his wisdom to make for himself an harbour • under the tamarisk on the height
- 5 So that when the rising sun spreads his light • he may have shadow under a shelter of his skin • shared among the companions and those that are noble.
- 6 He will take his fill of delights • and justice shall be the belt of his waist • and faith the belt around his loins.

29 1188 February 13 (13 Adar I, 4948), Mainz

First mention of a synagogue in Mainz after its destruction in 1096, in a Hebrew report by R. El'azar ben Yehuda of Worms on the unrest in Mainz during the preparations for Emperor Frederick's Crusade (1187–1190):

Following the afternoon prayer on Shabbat, 13 Adar, when the Torah scroll had been rolled up, the narrator's father, R. Yehuda ben Qalonymos, spoke to the community assembled in the synagogue from the "wooden platform" (מגדל עץ), with words of admonition.

The expression *migdal eš* is biblical; in Neh 8:4 it relates to the location where Ezra the Scribe read out the Law to the people. Its Greek equivalent, *βῆμα* (בימה), often עץ של עץ, "a *bēma* made of wood"), is the term more frequently used for the reading platform in the synagogue, which is also known as *almemar* (from Arabic, *al-minbar*).

It is not certain that the platform in Mainz was indeed made of wood, as specimens made of stone are known from as early as late antiquity, and the allusion to Ezra's actions may have been no more than symbolic in this passage.

Ed.: Neubauer & Stern (1892), p. 77. – Lit.: Salfeld (1908), p. 106; Krautheimer (1927), p. 121; Elbogen (1931), pp. 473–74; *Germania Judaica*, I (1963), p. 200; Paulus (2007), p. 73, 535 n. 88; *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, III (2007), cols 701–02.

30 1196 (February/March) (Adar 4956), Speyer

Destruction of the synagogue in Speyer during a pogrom, mentioned in the contemporary "Book of Remembrance" (ספר זכירה) by R. Ephraim bar Ya'akov of Bonn.

According to Ephraim's report, "the people of the city" (אנשי העיר) first surrounded "the Rabbi's house" (בית הרב), dragged him out and killed him along with eight other Jews; then they laid fire to "all the houses of the community" (את כל בתי הקהלה). The other Jews fled "to the attic above the synagogue" (אל העליה אשר על בית הכנסת) and

pulled up the ladder behind them. There they survived in hiding until help came. The enemies plundered "everything that was in (their) houses" (את כל אשר בבתיים), threw the books and Torah scrolls into the water and "burned the synagogue with fire" (ואת בית הכנסת שרפו באש).

Upon hearing this news, Duke Otto, Emperor Henry's brother, laid siege to the city and fire to the surrounding villages, destroying vineyards and fields. When the Emperor came back from Italy, he had the murderers imprisoned, only to release them for a ransom of 500 marks. The citizens were forced to rebuild the Jews' houses (את בתיהם) "and the lesser sanctuary" (ואת מקדש מעת), i.e., the synagogue, cf. no. 13), "like it was before" (כאשר בתחלה).

The report goes on to say that the Jews of Worms showed great piety towards the living and the dead (in Speyer), until the survivors were able to return "to their city" (לעירם). R. Ḥisqiya ben Re'uven of Boppard and R. Moshe b. Yosef ha-Kohen (of Mainz) exerted themselves on behalf of 'all the communities' (כל הקהלות).

The expression "all the houses of the community" probably relates to the houses owned privately by community members and not those which served the needs of the community as a whole.

It is unlikely that the burning of the synagogue happened when the Jews were still hiding in its upper room. Nor do we need to assume that the burning related to an old prayer house in Alt-speyer (as Müller, Transier, and Bruno suggest). Indeed there is archaeological evidence that the wooden roof of the synagogue in the city was destroyed by fire before its late-Romanesque renewal, i.e., before 1200: Heberer (2012) was able to identify a layer of charred material between the old and the new parts of the gable in the east wall.

The west wall, rebuilt after 1196, features a stone slab that once contained an inscription. Recent research on the building history (Wendt & Schö-

neweis 2012) confirms that the slab is part of the original construction. Remains of paint indicate that the inscription was later painted over.

Ed.: Neubauer & Stern (1892), pp. 74–75 (Hebrew), 211–12 (German). – Lit.: Aronius (1902), no. 338, pp. 152–52; *Germania Judaica*, I (1963), pp. 200; Müller (1994), p. 144; Transier (1995), p. 89; Porsche (2001); Bruno (2004), pp. 60–62; Paulus (2007), p. 93; Heberer (2012), p. 44; Wendt & Schönewis (2012), no. 15, p. 22, and photographs nos. 85–92.

31 1196 November 15 (22 Kislev 4957), Worms

Attack (possibly by crusaders – “signed men”, **מסומנים**) on the family of R. El’azar ben Yehuda ben Qalonymos *ha-Roqeah* of Worms, one of the leading scholars of his generation. The rabbi’s wife Dolce and his two daughters Bellette (aged 13, cf. no. 51) and Hanna (aged 6) were killed, the rabbi and his son wounded.

The incident is commemorated in a prose account by R. El’azar himself as well as in poetic elegies he composed for his wife and daughters. The famous elegy for his wife Dolce, based on the biblical praise for the “woman of valor” (Prov 31:10–31), is focused on her piety and religious activities – providing sustenance for her husband “so that he might immerse himself in Torah”, producing thread for religious objects and bookbindings, caring for the poor and for the dead, mending students’ garments and torn books. Her attachment to the synagogue is expressed as a comment to Prov 31:18:

... She knew the order of morning and evening prayer; she came early to the synagogue and stayed late.

She stood throughout the Day of Atonement and chanted; she prepared the candles. She honoured the Sabbaths and festivals for those who devoted themselves to the study of Torah. ...

As emphasized by Baumgarten (2013), Dolce would have visited a synagogue without a separate annex for women.

According to a later tradition, reflected in *Mayse Nissim*, a collection of narratives published in Yiddish in Amsterdam 1696 and ascribed to Yuspa Shammes (cf. no. 204), R. El’azar lived in the house named *Zum Hirschen* near the lower gate of the Jewish alley (Raspe 2016).

Oxford, Bodleian Library, ms. Opp. 757, fol. 25(ii)r–v, ed. in Raspe (2016), p. 247 (prose account); Haberman (1945), 164–67; Meiseles (1993), pp. 227–30 (poetic lament). – Translations: Marcus (1986), pp. 34–45; Baskin (2001), pp. 429–437. – Lit.: Baumgarten (2013), p. 67; Raspe (2016); Brocke (2018), pp. 33–35.

(12th or 13th Century), Mainz

Commemorative stone for R. Gershom b. Yehuda in the Old Jewish Cemetery of Mainz.

צור
חוצב לזכר
ר' גרשום בר
מאור

Rock | Carved out to the memory of | R. Gershom, son of [...] | The Light [of the Exile]

The undated stone is one of several commemorative stones probably set to replace lost headstones, to mark the position of the graves of rabbinic luminaries. The script is certainly younger than that of the 11th-century headstones preserved in Mainz and Worms, but hard to date with precision.

Rabbenu (“our teacher”) Gershom bar Yehuda (d. 1028 CE) was the most eminent talmudic scholar of the founding period of Judaism in Ashkenaz. He probably came from Metz and headed the Mainz *yeshiva* around the turn of the millennium. Gershom’s fame is bound up with a number of path-breaking legal decisions (*taqqanot*) ascribed to him, most notably (1) the ban (*herem*) against any Jewish man to enter into a bigamous or polygamous marriage, and (2) the ban against divorcing a wife against her will.

Other rulings of lasting influence that were

ascribed to R. Gershom concerned, for example, the protection of tenants and the prohibition against reminding a person (or their family) of their former apostasy. It is possible that these *taqqanot* were communal enactments, just as the talmudic commentaries of his school, also known as *perushē Magensa*, were the result of a collective endeavour.

Gershom is known to have presided over early gatherings of “the communities” to pass legal decisions (cf. above, no. 2). He also composed ten *seliḥot* (liturgical laments).

Mainz, Judensand, Denkmalfriedhof, section XI, no. 205. – Ed.: Salfeld (1898), no. 29; Levi (1926), no. 164; Rapp (1977), no. 205; Vest (2000), no. 33, p. 21; Schwaighofer (2014), no. 145. – Lit.: On R. Gershom, cf. Zunz (1865), pp. 238–39; *Germania Judaica*, I (1963), pp. 189–91; Agus (1968), pp. 71, 486, 499–501, 646–649, 798–99; Mutius (1984), p. 56; Grossman (1988); Elon (1994), pp. 673–674, 686, 783–86, 811, 813; Ta-Shma (2006), p. 2; Lehnardt (2009), pp. 97–99; Kanarfogel (2013), pp. 97, 382.

33 1201 February 10 [4 Adar], Worms

The city of Worms is besieged by King Otto IV in connection with the struggle over the throne. The Jews take part in its defense, probably in the section of the town wall forming the northern perimeter of their living quarter.

A rabbinic decision by El’azar ben Yehuda (see no. 31) allows them to bear arms on the Sabbath, and a *piyyuṭ* composed by R. Menaḥem bar Ya’aqov (see no. 34) relates how Jews climb onto the roof(s) (עלות לגג כלנו) of their houses to ward off the enemy. According to the same tradition, the defenders were successful and the siege was lifted on 13 February (7 Adar).

On the position of the Jewish quarter in Worms, see also nos. 12 and 25.

Ed.: Fischer (1931), pp. 188–92. – Lit.: Aronius (1902), no. 358a, p. 159; *Germania Judaica*, I (1963).

Headstone in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* for R. Menaḥem bar Ya’aqov.

In rhyming language R. Menaḥem is praised as a righteous (צדיק) figure “unique in his generation” (יחיד בדור) in learning – “a father of wisdom” (החכמה), “a teacher, exegete and poet” (תנא דורשן ופוייטן) versed in Talmud and Mishna (בתלמוד רב ובמשנה ידיו הרימה).

R. Menaḥem was a community leader and “senior member of the Worms rabbinical court in the late 12th century”, known both as an expert in Jewish law and a “prolific *payyetaṅ*” (Kanarfogel 2013). He composed often-copied elegies for the martyrs of Boppard and Blois as well as a liturgical poem on the siege of Worms in 1201 (see no. 33). Some of his compositions are printed in the Ashkenazi *Maḥzor*, and Brocke (2019) has suggested he might have been the poet who composed inscriptions nos 26 and 28.

Menaḥem’s name is prominently mentioned in the local *Memorbuch* tradition of Worms, and his epitaph is a prime example of the ways in which community affairs, scholarship, and memory intersect in the monuments of the ShUM communities.

Worms, *Old Jewish Cemetery*, no. 181. – Ed.: Sommer & Brocke (2015), no. 181. – Lit.: On R. Menaḥem see Zunz (1865), pp. 294–98; Aronius (1902), no. 358a, p. 159; Fischer (1931), 188–92; *Germania Judaica*, I (1963), p. 452; Fraenkel (1993), pp. 349–59; Kanarfogel (2013), pp. 423, 425–26, 461; Fraenkel & Gross (2016), pp. 25, 417.

Dated inscription commemorating the foundation of a *women's shul* by Me'ir ben Yo'el ha-Kohen.

[בנה הבית] הזה [ל]שם יי
 [ר] מאיר ב[ר] יואל [מזרע כהני
 בת'ת'ק'ע'ג' [ליצירה] למנין חשבוניי
 יזכר בזכ[רון טוב ל]פני יי
 ובבוא [ל]בית יי
 יען ויא[מר] אמנן יי
 [והבית הזה] אשר בנה להתפלל בו
 [לנשים הבו]ן טחות אל יי ואל טובו
 [לזכרון בעט]ן ברזל נכתב מכת בו
 [למען ירוץ ה]קורא בו

This house was built in honour of the LORD | by R. Me'ir ben R. Yo'el of priestly descent | In [the year] 973 from the creation, according to the usual count. | May he be remembered for good before the LORD! | And upon entering the House of the LORD, | One shall answer and say "Amen, Lord" | And that he built this house to pray in it | For women who confide in the LORD and his benevolence | A memory of this shall be engraved with iron | For anyone to read.

Line 4 quotes the New Year's liturgy. Other citations: line 6: Jer 11:5; line 9: Jer 17:1 (Job 19:24); line 10: Hab 2:2. – Eli'ezer ben Shmu'el Braunschweig copy replaced the divine name יי with the word *adonai* (אדוני). Böcher (1961) was the first to offer a complete reading based on the extant fragments and Eli'ezer's copy.

The inscription was apparently first placed on the northern wall of the *women's shul*, where Eli'ezer saw the text in 1559. He writes that he found it "on the wall of the synagogue which is for the women, beside the courtyard of the men's synagogue" (בכותל בית הכנסת אשר לנשים לצד חצר) (בית הכנסת לאנשים) and goes on to describe inscription no. 36: "and on the other stone underneath it is written ..." (ועל אבן אחת תחתיו ממש) (כתוב זה). The original inscription was perhaps removed in the 1620s when the new entrance to the *women's shul* and Jewish council chamber was built on this side, and survives in two fragments.



Fragment 1 was found by Lewysohn c.1855 and moved to the "Rashi chapel" (*yeshiva*). It was re-covered (in two pieces) in 1959. Fragment 2, which was probably used as building material in a post-1689 restoration of the synagogue, was recovered from its ruins in 1957. It disappeared in c.1960 and was given "by a stranger" to R. Kurt Wilhelm (1900–1965), only to be returned to Worms from Sweden in 2013.

The two inscriptions commemorating Me'ir ben Yo'el and his wife Yehudith were thus placed one above the other. This is reflected in the Jewish community's decision in 1890 to unite the two inscriptions, reconstructed on the basis of the recently-found copy by Eli'ezer (cf. no. 169), on one stone slab.

On the epitaph for Me'ir ben Yo'el in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* cf. no. 40.

Worms, Jewish Museum. Reddish-brown sandstone, two fragments.

Fragment 1: H = 67 cm, W = 40 cm; Fragment 2: H = 33 cm, W = 20 cm (the sides showing traces of mason's work). – Photographs: (1) Worms, StadtA, Fotoarchiv, 01190, printed in Böcher (1961), fig. 38 (Fragment 1 before 1938; cf. Fotoarchiv, no. CH 247, with a similar arrangement); (2) F1062_44 (Fragment 1 in 1952); (3) F1073_20 (Fragment 1 in 1952); (5) F6298_60 (Fragment 1b in 1988); (6) Sommer (2014), p. 12 (Fragments 1a, 1b, and 2). – Lit.: Eli'ezer b. Shmu'el Braunschweig, ms. Frankfurt a. M., Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek, heb. 8° 256, fol. 56v (1559); Lewysohn (1855), no. VIII, pp. 110–11; Epstein (1896), No. VIa, pp. 556–57; Krautheimer (1927), p. 269, n. 163a; Rothschild (1929), pp. 14–15; Böcher (1961), no. VIII, pp. 105–06; Germania Judaica, I (1963), p. 452; Paulus (2007), pp. 103–05; Sommer (2014), p. 12.

36 1212/13 ([4]973), Worms

Commemorative inscription on the foundation of a women's shul by Yehudit, the wife of the Me'ir ben Yo'el mentioned above, no. 35.

בת מלך ובת נדיב כבודה ◦ פנימה נכנסה בית מנוחה
לבית חבר סגן כהן חמודה ◦ לשם עזר מאיר [לעזר] נלקחה
שמה מרת יהודית החסידה ◦ בידה לקחה צידה [ארוחה]
[אשר אנה אלוה] כל בידה ◦ להכין בית נו'ה' ז'ה' [לו למנחה]
[להשלים בו עד] ערב עבודה ◦ תפילה ועתירה ורון ושיח[ה]
[חכמה בנתה] בית החמדה ◦ בכך תיהיה כאס בנים [שמחה]
[אלהים זכרה לה זאת לתודה] ◦ ולעדה סגולה [ולשמחה]

A king's daughter, the noble daughter of a benefactor, ° she went inside her resting place | Into the house of the learned leader and *kohen*, the sweet one! ° There to aid Me'ir (*Lezer*) she bound herself. | Mrs Yehudith was the name of the pious woman ° Into her hand she took the sustenance | All that her God had given into her hand, ° to make this beautiful building as an evening offering for Him | So that the service be done therein in the evening ° of prayer and petition, singing and learning. | Wisely she built this delightful house ° thus to become a rejoicing mother of children. | May God remember it thankfully, | as a precious witness and to her joy!

Böcher, who had not seen Eli'ezer's manuscript (= E), tried to reconstruct the text on the basis of Epstein's copy of E and Lewysohn (= L). His brackets indicate those parts no longer legible by Lewysohn's time. The 14 verses of the inscription were arranged in seven lines. Variants: line 1: **ובת מלך** instead of **ובת מלך בת** E. – line 2: **אמודה** instead of **חמודה**, L. – line 2b: the byname **לעזר** (*Lezer*) only appears in L, but his reading is plausible in view of the verse. The chronogram in line 4b amounts to 73 (the following words are not marked by dots in E, other than L thought). – line 6a: for **החמדה**, E read **בחמדה**, following a deleted **נחמודה**.

The inscription was placed above the northern entrance to the *women's shul* just below no. 35 until the 1620s, when the entrance hall to the *women's shul* and Jewish council chamber were built on this side. In the mid-19th century it was situated above the entrance for the council chamber, as Lewysohn reports (*über der Thüre der Gemeindestube*). It must have been very time-worn and was replaced by a copy in 1890/91. The original was moved to the Jewish community's museum, where it was lost in 1938/39.

Yehudit was probably identical with Yehudit bat Yosef, who was buried in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* in 1240 (headstone no. wrm-1132).

Original lost; for the renewed plaque of 1890/91 (H = 100 cm, W = 120 cm, red sandstone) cf. the Nomination Dossier, ch. 2, figs 233–34. – Photographs: (1) Worms, StadtA, Fotoarchiv, CH375 (before 1938); (2) M0715a (depot with salvaged inscriptions, 1959). – Lit.: Eli'ezer b. Shmu'el Braunschweig, ms. Frankfurt a. M., Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek, heb. 8° 256, fol. 56v (1559); Lewysohn (1855), no. III, pp. 107–08; Epstein (1896), no. VIb, pp. 10–11; Krautheimer (1927), pp. 168 and 269, n. 163; Rothschild (1929), p. 15; Böcher (1961), no. IX, pp. 107–08; Paulus (2007), p. 103.

Fragment of a commemorative inscription for a certain Bellette, a young woman of high lineage:

[The] blessed [one]	מאושרת
Mistress	מרת
Bellet[te]'	בלט
the Lady	הגברת
For good	לטובה
Shall she be remembered	וזכרת
Among the company	במספר
Of the young women.	העלמות

The stone is ornamented on all four sides: Left of the inscription it shows a Romanesque zig-zag pattern, on the right we find a Tree of Life; the reverse side is shaped as a semicolumn with base. It can be associated with another fragment bearing no letters (Fuchs 2011, pp. 270–71, and cf. Irene Spille's remarks in Brocke 2018, pp. 37–38).

These features suggest that it was used as a central element in a late-Romanesque window. Below the inscription the stone features a palm-like plant, also to be found on the associated fragment. The inscription was recovered in 1957 from the ruin of the synagogue, where it had been used as building material in an earlier restoration. Brocke (2018) notes epigraphic similarities with tombstones from Worms dating from the late 12th and early 13th centuries.

The text follows Brocke (2018). Variants: Böcher (1961) read מאוצרת in line 1 and translated "concealed as a treasure" ("als Schatz geborgen"); הזכרת line 4. Rodov (2003) follows Böcher, translating "From the treasures | of Mistress | Belette", in the sense of "from *her* treasures". Brocke's recent reading has established the allusions to Ps. 1:1 and Cant. 6:9 in line 1, and to Cant. 6:7 in lines 7–8. The Tree of Life ends in thirteen lily-type leaves (some of which are lost today). The palm is a common symbol of victory and martyrdom.

Taking account also of the peculiar mixture of praise and commemoration, Brocke relates the inscription to Bellette, daughter of R. El'azar ben

Yehuda, who was killed at the age of 13 in November 1196 (cf. no. 31).

Worms, *Women's Shul* (= *Jewish Museum*, inv.-no. 2009_110); yellow-brown sandstone with pebbles; fragm. (with traces of fire), H = 75 cm, W = 24 cm, T = 16,5 cm., possibly related to the fragment inv.-no. 2009–111 (with no inscription). – Photographs: Worms, Fotoarchiv, M10020_01 to 04 (1957); *ibid.*, F2599_47 and 57 (1959); Fuchs (2011), nos 110–11. – Lit.: Böcher (1961), no. XXXVI, p. 123; Rodov (2003), pp. 54–55 (and cf. p. 50 n. 125); Fuchs (2011), pp. 11, 16, 267; Fuchs (2013), pp. 100–02, with figs. 12 and 13; Brocke (2018).

1220, Mainz

Gathering of Jewish community leaders in Mainz, who confirm and pass a number of joint statutes or regulations (*taqqanot*), reflecting a broad set of religious and communal issues.

The practice of adopting *taqqanot ha-Qahal*, i.e., rulings that were binding upon all members of a given community, was customary in the communities of Ashkenaz and Northern France (*Şarfāt*) from their very beginnings. The earliest rulings of this kind were ascribed to R. Gershom ben Yehuda "Light of the Exile" (*Me'or ha-Golah*) of Mainz (cf. no. 32) but are likely the outcome of communal majority decisions.

From the mid-12th century on, the leaders and sages of Mainz, Worms and Speyer (plus a small and varying number of leaders from nearby towns) convened on various occasions, usually in Mainz, to pass decisions in legal cases and to confirm or emend (Hebr., *letaqen*) statutes.

The *Taqqanot Qehillot ShUM*, as they came to be known, constitute the most comprehensive set of Jewish community statutes known from medieval Ashkenaz. They testify to the degree of internal autonomy enjoyed by the Jews of ShUM. Until the 15th and 16th centuries they were also the only regulations that extended beyond the sphere of the local community, in a rare instance of effective regional co-ordination. In effect, the

three communities thus constituted a joint legal space. For example, a ban issued in one of the three cities was effective in all three cities; public penance had to be performed in all of the three communities; a bill of divorce needed their joint consent. At the same time, the *Taqqanot Qehillot ShUM* manifest the three communities' claim to leadership in all of the Rhineland and the neighbouring regions.

Various collections are known. The one that can be dated to c.1220 found a substantial echo in the Jewish legal literature of the medieval and modern periods. Other gatherings are known to have taken place in the ShUM communities, including those of c.1000 (Mainz, cf. no. 2), c.1120 (Mainz), during the second half of the 12th century (Mainz), in 1223 (possibly Speyer), c.1250 (Mainz), after 1286 (Mainz), after 1298 (Worms), 1381 (Mainz, cf. no. 109), before 1426 (Mainz), and 1514/15 (Worms).

Some of the regulations throw light on the role and function of community buildings – especially the synagogue as a focus of community life. For example, they mention the custom of interrupting the prayers (and “seating the community”) by an individual appealing for a court decision. They also deal with the Jews of the surrounding villages who come to celebrate Yom Kippur in the synagogue of the main *qehilla* and bring candles for the liturgical commemoration of their dead. At the same time, they offer a glimpse into the religious life of those smaller congregations who had a synagogue of their own but did not enjoy the status of *qehilla*. These details also underline the central role of Jewish cemeteries and memorial culture for the structure of the regional settlement network.

Ed.: Finkelstein (1964); Barzen (2005); Barzen (forthcoming); cf. also the German translation in Schoeps & Wallenborn (2001), no. 72, pp. 154–57. – Lit.: Zimmer (1978); Grossman (1988); Elon (1994), pp. 788–89; Barzen (2002, 2004, 2013).

1222 June/July (Tammuz, 982), Mainz

39

Headstone in *Old Jewish Cemetery Mainz* for Rivqa, the young daughter of R. Moshe the *ḥazzan* (synagogue cantor) (ר[ב]קה הב[חורה] בת ר' משה) (הכהן החזן).

It is noteworthy that Moshe's function was named in the epitaph for his daughter. For a cantor's headstone in Mainz see also no. 42.

Mainz, Judensand, Denkmalfriedhof, field X, no. 39. – Lit.: Salfeld (1898), no. 58; Levi (1926), no. 151; Rapp (1958), no. 36; Avneri (1970), no. 13; Rapp (1977), no. 39; Hüttenmeister (2015), no. 2013.

1224 November 15 (2 Kislev [4]958), Worms

40

Epitaph in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* for R. Me'ir ben R. Yo'el ha-Kohen “the community leader” (הפרנס), founder of the women's shul in Worms.

While the inscription makes no explicit mention of his generous gift (cf. no. 35), the shape of the tombstone recalls the design of the gate leading into the women's shul.

The inscription ends in an exhortation to “everyone passing by” (כל העובר), to speak a blessing for the soul of the deceased. This expression is indicative of the role of the Jewish cemetery as a public communal space.

Worms, *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms*, inv.-no. 243. – Ed.: Brocke & Sommer (2015), no. 243 (with photographs). – Lit.: Brocke (2009); Brocke (2010), p. 13; Brocke (2013), p. 134.

1228 March 10 (2 Nissan [4]988), Worms

41

Epitaph for Malka, daughter of R. Ḥalafta, in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms*. In rhyming language, Malka is praised for her gracious (melodic) singing in praise of her Creator (כי היתה שבח בוראה) (בנועם ח[י]נה) and for having “stood up in the night and prayed until the morning blessing” (ותקם בעוד לילה ופיללה עדי ברכה). The epitaph also features a rare ornament, resembling the shape of a bird's head.

Brocke (2009) has argued that Malka may have been a prayer leader in the newly-built women's shul of Worms, even if her epitaph only alludes to this activity in general terms. At any rate, Malka is portrayed as showing a great attachment to the synagogue service.

For a more explicit reference to a woman singing "before the women", see no. 51.

Worms, *Old Jewish Cemetery*, no. 264, trapezoid stele, H = 58 cm, W = 61 cm, D = 12,5 cm, yellow sandstone with yellowish-brown stratification. – Ed.: Brocke & Sommer (2015), no. 264. – Lit.: Brocke (2009), pp. 33–35, 37.

42 1238 April/May (Iyyar, [4]998), Worms

Headstone in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* for Avraham, son of Me'ir the community leader (perhaps Me'ir ben Yo'el, cf. nos 33, 38). Avraham is praised as a "faithful delegate" (ציר נאמן) who delivered hymns of praise, which probably means that he was a cantor (*hazzan*, or *shaliaḥ ṣibbur* "envoy of the congregation")

This is the earliest example of a Jewish epitaph relating to this important synagogue function in Worms. Further gravestones concerning singers or cantors in Worms date from the years 1240 (below, no. 42), 1266 (inv.-no. 1066), 1283 (no. 850), 1300~1310 (no. 398), 1314 (no. 1006), 1535 (no. 7), 1590 (no. 47), 1604 (?) (no. 1152), 1651 (no. 346), 1659 (no. 1226). A cantor in Mainz is commemorated on extant gravestones from 1321 (section VII, no. 106). Many epitaphs for sons and daughters of cantors also relate to their fathers' duty (for an early example in Mainz, cf. no. 39).

Cantors (*hazzanīm*) are also called *meshorer* ("singer") on several occasions (Worms, inv.-nos. 7, 346, 398, 711, 850; see also below, no. 51 of 1275, for the daughter of a *rosh ha-Meshorerīm*). Avraham ben Menaḥem, who died in 1266 (inv.-no. 1066), is styled an "envoy of the congregation" (*shaliaḥ ṣibbur*), as was the famous 11th-

century poet Me'ir ben Yiṣḥaq. The title *hazzan* appears three times in Mainz (cf. below, no. 71) and twice in Worms.

The office of the cantor is rarely mentioned on headstones outside the ShUM communities. In the rich repertory from Würzburg we find only allusions to one person's beautiful voice (Reiner 2011, pp. 251–52). Another rare – and early – example (1203 CE) comes from Wrocław (Wodziński 1996, pp. 167–70), an undated fragment, from Paris (Fellou 2019, pp. 204–05).

Worms, *Old Jewish Cemetery*, inv. no. 373. – Ed.: Brocke & Sommer (2015), no. 373. – Lit.: Kanarfogel (2009); Kogman-Appel (2012), pp. 62–82; Brocke (2013), p. 130.

1240 June 15 (24 Sivan 5000), Worms

Headstone in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* for R. Moshe ben Aharon. In elaborate rhymes, Moshe is praised as a man of rabbinic erudition, a learned man "who extolled both the written and the oral law" (מסלסל ושונה שבכתב ושבעל). Moreover, he served as synagogue cantor (*hazzan*), "who supplicated for the remainder" (להפגיע) "so that they be remembered before God" (והיתה להם לזכרון לפני האלקים).

Brocke has noted the many references to the biblical figures of Moses and Aaron as well as the eschatological overtones relating to the end of the (Jewish) millennium in 1240 CE. These millennial expectations, known from a variety of written sources, are also reflected in other epitaphs from Worms.

Biblical and talmudic erudition was a particular hallmark of *hazzanīm* in the ShUM communities. See, for example, headstone no. 1066 of 1266 for Avraham ben Menaḥem, "*shaliaḥ ṣibbur*, circumciser, and scholar", שליח ציבור מוהל ותלמיד.

Worms, *Old Jewish Cemetery*, no. 297. – Ed.: Sommer & Brocke (2015), no. 297. – Lit.: Brocke (2009); Brocke (2013), pp. 149–50.

43

44 1243 April 19 (27 Nissan 5003), Worms

Headstone in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* for R. Yiṣḥaq ben El'azar ha-Levi. He is praised for his generosity (נדיבה), his charity towards the needy ("to strengthen the hands of the poor", להחזיק ידי עניים), and his piety – he stood up early in the morning and late at night to go "to the house of prayer" (לבית התפילה).

Worms, *Old Jewish Cemetery*, inv.-no. 271, reddish sandstone. – Ed.: Sommer & Brocke (2015), no. 271.

45 Mid-13th century, Worms

According to a scribal note in a manuscript copy of a prayer commentary, the text was copied in Regensburg based on a prayer commentary found around the mid-13th century "in the study house (*bēt midrash*)" of the mystic, R. El'azar of Worms (i.e., R. El'azar ben Yehuda, cf. no. 29).

זה הועתק במדינת ריגנספרוק בבית הר"ר יהודה בר' משה בן בנו של רבינו אפרים אשר מצא בבית מדרשו של הר"ר אלעזר מוורמיישא הנקרא סוד שכל.

This was copied in the city of Regensburg in the house of Rabbi Yehuda the son of R. Moshe, who was the grandson of Our Teacher (*rabbenu*) Ephraim and who had found it in the study house of R. El'azar of Worms called "secret mind".

The manuscript dates from the 14th century, its first part was copied by Ḥayyim ben Berakhya Yisra'el. Yehuda ben Moshe probably lived earlier. His father Moshe would have lived in the 13th century, given that he was a grandson of R. Ephraim of Regensburg, who died around 1175. This would provide a possible date for the reported finding of a commentary in the *bēt midrash* of R. El'azar (d. c.1230) in Worms.

It is possible that there was such a place in Worms (see also no. 112). However, the term *bēt midrash* may also mean his "schoolroom" in a generic sense, and later tradition suggests that he was teaching in his private house (cf. no. 204.6). The ascription to R. El'azar, who was known for his

esoteric teachings, may have been made in order to underline the authenticity of the commentary in question.

Moscow, Russian State Library, ms. Guenzburg 511, fol. 1r. – Ed.: Neubauer (1884/85), p. 111; Neubauer (1891), p. 235; Epstein (1901), p. 49 n. 1 (Gross and Epstein erroneously attribute the passage to ms. Guenzburg 614, fol. 60b, also cited by Neubauer but containing a different text). – Lit.: On El'azar as a *piyyuṭ* commentator see Hollender (2008), pp. 49–50, 124–26.

(1253) May 5 (Shavuot, [5]013), Worms

46

Headstone in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* for Yiṣḥaq ben Ḥayyim (Eiziq Rothenburg), who cared "for the concerns of the congregation faithfully" and continuously, "day and night". He was "with the *parnassim* of the city". In particular, he served as *gabbai ha-Ṣedaqa* (גבאי הצדקה), which means that he was entrusted with the poor chest (of the community).

Some of the inscription, including the date, is difficult to read. Yiṣḥaq died on the first day of the feast of *Shavuot*.

Worms, *Old Jewish Cemetery*, inv.-no. 453. Yellow sandstone, 75 cm x 95 cm x 16 cm. – Ed.: Sommer & Brocke (2015), no. 435. – Lit.: Barzen (2009).

1256, Mainz

47

First mention of *Old Jewish Cemetery Mainz* in a Latin document:

John the Dean, Simon the Custodian, and the whole chapter of Mainz cathedral declare that they have given 3 acres of meadows, situated "close to the cemetery of the Jews" (*iuxta cimiterium judeorum*), to Volprecht, citizen of Mainz, in hereditary lease for an annual due of 12 ounces in return. Volprecht may build on the plot.

Old Jewish Cemetery Mainz is mentioned in numerous similar documents relating to gardens,

orchards, vineyards, fields and meadows in the vicinity (see, for example, nos 72, 99 and 103). These documents usually refer to it as a landmark and rarely give details concerning its appearance or use. They do, however, convey the impression that the area was a busy scene of gardening and viticulture.

Copy (early 18th century) by V. F. von Gudenus. – Ed.: Falck (2014), no. 370, p. 267. – Lit.: Härtel (2017), pp. 87–88.

48 1258 March 3, Worms

The town wall near *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* is damaged by flooding, as reported in the Annals of Worms. Two people died “on the bridge of St Andrew’s Gate”:

Anno 1258 dominica Letare, que fuit 5 nonas mensis martii, de abundantia nivis tanta venit abundantia aquarum et tam vehementi torrente processit, quod vallus civitatis Wormatiensis prope cimiterium Iudeorum in maxima quantitate rumpebatur, ita quod super ponte porte sancti Andree duo submersi fuerint.

It is likely that the waters also affected the Jewish cemetery itself, which is situated outside (and below) the wall. Three years later the Jewish community contributed 230 pounds towards repairing the town walls (*ad refectioem muri*), plus 30 lb. in wine tax.

See also no. 62.

Ed.: *Annales Wormatienses*, ed. Boos (1893), p. 155, and cf. p. 158. – Lit.: Mone (1855), pp. 19–20 n. 17; Aronius (1902), no. 677, p. 283.

49 1269 April 4 (1 Iyyar [5]029), Worms

Headstone in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* for “the benefactor” (*ha-Nadiv*, הנדיב), Ya‘aqov ben Yiṣḥaq.

The precise nature of Ya‘aqov’s generosity is hard to establish. A survey of the headstone inscript-

ions in Worms reveals that the epithet *nadiv* was used exclusively for men. See inv.-nos. 921 (1281), 1080 (1289), 941 (1292), 556 (1296), 526 (1299), 579 (c. 1300), 957 (1301, a *nadiv* and circumciser), 831 (1303), 905 (1305), 793 (1307, cf. below, no. 68), 803 (1307), 936 (1314), 614 (1319), 562 (1320), 610 (1321), 750 (1323), 443 (1323), 605 (1340), 471 (14th century), 739 (14th century), 635 (1389), 3002 (1401), 677 (1451), 448 (1481, a *parnas* and *nadiv*), 684 (1495), 8134 (1552), 208 (1555), 1152 (1604, a *nadiv* who raised orphans and cared for strangers; he also gave for the cemetery), 683 (1607, a *nadiv* “in whose shadow the miserable would hide”, ובצללו חס רש).

The title *ha-Nadiv* probably honours particular expenses on behalf of the community and is not generally associated with the concept of charity. For exceptions see inv.-nos 471 (14th century, a *ṣadiq* and *nadiv*), 683 (1607, a *nadiv* “in whose shadow the miserable would hide”). It is perhaps no coincidence that *nedivim* were rarely also eulogized for their learning.

It was possible to be called the son or daughter of a *nadiv*; cf. inv.-nos 905 (1305, a *nadiv*, son of a *nadiv*), 8207 = 771 (1328, several fragments, the daughter of a *nadiv*), 754 (1330, the daughter of a *nadiv*), 636 (1348, the daughter of a *nadiv*), 8104 (1357, the daughter of a rabbi and *nadiv*), 619 and 642 (1386 and 1392, two daughters of a *nadiv*, for whose headstone see no. 635), 1190 (1553, the daughter of a *nadiv*), 634 (1728, the daughter of a *parnas* and *nadiv*).

In this sense, Yehudit, founder of the *women’s shul* in *Worms Synagogue Compound* (cf. no. 36), was a “daughter of a *nadiv*”, as was Dolce, the murdered wife of El’azar ben Yehuda (cf. no. 31).

Women themselves were not honoured with this title, though from the 17th century on there are headstones for women who acted “in the spirit of *nediva*” or “of *nedivim*”; cf. inv.-nos 1050 (1684), 1078 (1686), 1220 (1703), 1125 (1703), 988 (1709), 1180 (1732), 1049 (1735). The same expression is also sometimes used for men in that

period, cf. inv.-nos. 1048 (1722), 232 (1722), 829 (1751).

Worms, Old Jewish Cemetery, inv.-no. 395. Red sandstone, 59 cm x 94,5 cm x 13–16 cm. – Ed.: Sommer & Brocke (2015), no. 395.

50 1269 July 30, Worms⁴⁷

The Jews of Worms have extended their cemetery by procuring the ownership of adjacent houses and demolishing them. The neighbouring monastery of St Mary Magdalene, to which the parish rights of the said houses pertained, transfers its legal claims against the Jews to the collegiate church of St. Andrews:

... cesserunt decano et capitulo ecclesie sancti Andree predicte actionem, que eis competebat contra judeos Wormacienses ex eo quod domos in parrochia ipsi conventui attenente dicti judei ipsorum dominio quoquomodo titulo adtrahentes et ad ampliandum eorum cimiterium edificia destruentes, oblationes et alia iura parrochialia, que ab hominibus, qui in ipsis domibus vel edeficiis morari solebant, competebant. ...

The problem, which recurs in countless documents from medieval Europe, was that parochial dues were paid only by Christian homeowners.

We know nothing concerning the outcome of the (intended) legal proceedings against the Jews of Worms in this case, but the tensions remained (cf. no. 53; on the development of the Jewish cemetery in this period, see also nos 48 and 58).

Heidelberg, Universitätsbibliothek, Urkunden Lehmann, no. 315. – Ed.: Wattenbach (1872), no. 7, pp. 156–57; Boos (1886), no. 349, pp. 227–28. – Lit.: Aronius (1902), no. 736, p. 310; Reuter (1987), p. 44; Bönner (2013), p. 274.

51 1271 Nov./Dec. (Kislew 5031), Mainz

Fragment of a (lost?) inscription relating to donations towards the synagogue in Mainz:

I will record [...]	אכתומן
As a memorial [...]	לזכרון
For the c[oming] generation [...]	לדור א
Those who come [...]	להבא
synagogue ([bēt] ha-Knesset) [...]	הכנסת
That they give [...]	שנותן
With all their h[earths ...]	בכל לן
The sanctuary [...]	הקדוש
Synagogue ([bēt] ha-Knesset) [...]	הכנסת
31 K[islew (?)]	ל'א' כ

Lehnardt (2015) omits line 3. His dating to the month of Kislew (November/December) is conjectural, resting on the identification of the last letter as כ, whereas Salfeld (who had seen the stone) read ל, perhaps for [ל]פרט, “according to the reckoning”.

The stone was found in the 19th century in the course of sewage construction work in front of the city hall (the area is today covered by a department store). Salfeld studied it in the local museum before 1908 and published a transcription and drawing.

Mainz, Landesmuseum (lost). Light grey sandstone, H = 41 cm, W = 12 cm, D = 41 cm (according to Salfeld). – Lit.: Salfeld (1908), p. 4; Mainz Exhibition (1978), p. 135; Paulus (2007), p. 73; Lehnardt (2015), p. 193.

1275 February 4 (6 Adar I 5035), Worms

52

Rhyming epitaph for Orgiya (אורגיא), daughter of Avraham, on *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms*.

Herself the daughter of a *rosh ha-Meshorerim* (lit. “head of the singers”, ראש המשוררים) with a splendid voice (בהוד קולו בעד עמו בנעימת), Orgiya is praised for her chanting “with a melodious voice” (בקול זמרה) “before the women” (לנשים). The epitaph expresses the wish that she may live to bring *piyyuṭim* and supplications before God (ל"ה). The abbreviation ל"ה is marked as a chronogram (= 35), giving the year of her death.

On women prayer leaders in Worms in the medieval period, see the epitaphs inv.-no. 264 (1228; above no. 41) and 523 (1308). The only medieval evidence for a woman cantor outside the ShUM communities comes from Nuremberg (1298).

Worms, *Old Jewish Cemetery*, inv.-no. 903. – Ed.: Sommer & Brocke (2015), no. 903. – Lit.: Lewysohn (1855), no. 50; Krautheimer (1927), p. 134; Böcher (1961), p. 53; Keßler (2007), p. 56; Brocke (2013), p. 130.

53 1278, Worms

The Jews of Worms pay 400 pounds *haller* to the citizens for certain rights of way and for their cemetery, as the citizens had threatened to destroy its walls.

Anno 1278 Iudei dederunt Wormatiensibus civibus quadringentas libras hall. pro almenda, quam ipsi in duobus vicis apud eos occupaverant, et pro cemeterio eorum, cuius munitionem cives frangere voluerunt.

It is likely that the two reasons given both relate to the cemetery: As early as 1269 the Jews can be observed enlarging it, and erecting a wall (*munitionem*) around the extended area would seem like a logical conclusion (cf. nos 50 and 58). It could also “occupy” the non-Jewish citizens’ customary rights of way on (or towards) the commons (*almenda*) in this area.

Annales Wormatienses, ed. Boos (1893), p. 162. – Lit.: Reuter (2005a), p. 666; Bönner (2013), p. 274.

54 1281 June 15 (27 Siwan [50]41), Mainz

Headstone in *Old Jewish Cemetery Mainz* for R. Me’ir b. Avraham ha-Kohen. Me’ir was killed “on the day when the synagogue was set on fire”:

זה קבר של הרב ר' מאיר
בר אברהם הכהן הזקן
הנהרג על יחוד השם

במ"א לפרט כ"ז בסיון ביום
שנשרף בית הכנסת ונקרעו
סיפרי תורה מנוחתו כבוד

This is the grave of the master R. Me’ir | Son of Avraham ha-Kohen, the old man | Who was killed for the unity of the (divine) Name | In (the year) 41 of the reckoning, 27 of Siwan, on the day | When the synagogue (*bēt ha-Kneset*) was set on fire, and when torn apart | Were the books of Torah. May his resting-place be glory.

According to Salfeld, this stone was found in 1899 during excavation works in the cellar of the public house *Zur Stadt Mainz (Große Bleiche, Mainz)*.

Mainz, *Old Jewish Cemetery*, memorial cemetery, field X, no. 74.. – Ed.: Hüttenmeister (2015), no. 2203. – Lit.: Salfeld (1902), no. 70; Salfeld (1908), p. 109; Levi (1926), no. 148; Bondi (1927), p. 28; Rapp (1958), no. 70; *Germania Judaica*, II (1968), p. 518 n. 2; Rapp (1970/71), p. 15; Rapp (1977), no. 74; Vest (2000), no. 19 and p. 26; Ziwes (1994), p. 228; Schwaighofer (2014), no. 88; Mentgen (2015), no. 15.

1283 April 19 (21 Nisan 5043), Mainz

55

Following allegations that they had committed a ritual murder, ten Jews are killed in a pogrom against the Jewish community of Mainz. The Jewish quarter is plundered.

The date (the seventh day of Passover, [50]43, which in this year coincided with Easter Monday) and the names of the victims are given in the Nuremberg *Memorbuch*.

The date (*feria secunda Pasche*) is confirmed by the Latin *Annales breves Wormatienses*, which go on to state that “this calamity shocked all the Jews in all over Germany” (*que plaga omnes Iudeos per totam Alemaniam percussit*).

The allegations of (ritual) murder are mentioned in the annals of Colmar: The wetnurse minding a certain nobleman’s boy child had reportedly sold the boy to the Jews so that they might kill him.

A letter by Archbishop Werner written on Friday, 23 April, gives other details: The Jews of Mainz had approached him asking for protection against false accusations. Later the nobleman (*miles*) Herbord of Niederolm had denounced the Jews for the death of his relative and brought the dead boy before the gates of the city but was refused entry. The Archbishop was heading towards to the city in person to sit in judgment, but while he was still under way the citizens attacked his Jews and their properties (*insultas graves facti fuerunt in personas et res Judeorum nostrorum*). The solemn messengers he had sent were denied the chance of proclaiming his intention of doing justice before the people.

According to the Hebrew martyrologies, 26 Jews died on the same day in Bacharach; on the following Friday, 13 were killed in Rockenhausen. On the preceding 31 March (2 Nisan) four Jews were killed in Mellrichstadt (lower Franconia) and one in Kreuznach. The persecutions of 1283 are commemorated in a Hebrew *piyyuṭ*, the *qina* איכה אל אישי composed by R. Mordekhai ben Yosef of Worms (d. 1294).

The baseless myth of Jewish ritual murder was spreading in the Rhineland in the 13th century. In 1287 it sparked another, even more extensive wave of pogroms (cf. Lotter 1993).

Sources: Mainz, StadtA, U 1283 April 23 (Archbishop Werner's letter); Salfeld (1898), pp. 20, 144–45, cf. pp. 145–46; MGH SS XVII, pp. 78 (*Annales breves Wormatienses*), 210 (*Annales Colmarienses maiores*); Haberman (1945), pp. 195–97 (Mordekhai's *Qina*). – Lit.: Zunz (1865), pp. 486–87; Fischer (1931), pp. 62–63, 74, 178–80; *Germania Judaica*, II (1968), pp. 44, 513, 702; Lotter (1993), pp. 66; Ziwes (1994), p. 229; Müller (2004), p. 263; Mentgen (2015), no. 18 (Mordekhai's *Qina*) no. 19 (*Annales breves Wormatienses*); no. 20 (*Annales Colmarienses maiores*), no. 23 (Archbishop Werner's letter).

56 (after 1281 or 1283), Mainz

Undated inscription commemorating repairs in the synagogue complex in Mainz:

הניח זה הגבר ר' דוד בר
אברהם ה[חבר] ופתח] והבה
וציבר ח' ז[קוקי] כסף לבנין
זה לסדר [ולחזק] בדקי הגגות
והשער בית כ[נסת אנשים
ונשים נדבתו יהי לו לתקוה
וסבר וזוגתו מר[ת] בונא ◦
[הרב ר' יוסף
ליוים בגן עדן א' ס'

This is the heritage of a man, R. David, the son of | Avraham the learned, he began and united [donors?] | and collected 8 m[arks] of silver for building this | That is to set right [and emend] the damage to the roofs | And the gate of the synagogue for men | and for women. His gift may turn into the fulfilment of his hope | and his wife, Mrs Bona, daughter of Rabbi Yossef | [May God] lead them into Paradise, Amen, Sela!

The text follows Salfeld, who had seen parts of the inscription that are lost today (double brackets indicate parts that Salfeld was already unable to decipher). – Lehnardt (2015) has the following variants: line 1, הנה for הניח. – line 2, החכם for זהובים (gold coins, i.e., florins) for זקוקי (marks). – line 4, ברח for בדקי (but see Salfeld's reference to 2 Kgs 6 and 22:5), and הגגית for הגגות. None of these variants seem warranted. A circle with a dot in the middle following בונא in line 7 was read by Lehnardt as o (*samekh*) (thus 'Bonas' for 'Bona'), although such signs appear frequently on Hebrew headstones and in other inscriptions.

The inscription was found in 1907 during excavation works on the site of the medieval synagogue in *Schusterstraße* 41/43. It possibly relates to the destruction during the pogroms of 1281 and 1283 (cf. nos 54–55). David ben Avraham, who raised the funds for repairing the synagogue roofs and entrance, was the son-in-law of one Rabbi Yosef, whom Salfeld tentatively identified as R. Yosef ben Yisra'el Thann (Mainz, d. 1349).

Line 6 provides the earliest evidence of a *women's shul* next to the synagogue of Mainz.

Mainz, Landesmuseum, UKH2007/18a. Yellowish limestone. Found in three fragments in 1907 and assembled to measure H = 45 cm, W = 58 cm, D = 8 cm (Salfeld). The stone later broke in two pieces again, of which only the left is extant (H = 47 cm, W = 30 cm, D = 8 cm). – Photographs: Salfeld (1908), cover (Ernst Neeb, Mainz); Mainz Exhibition (1978), p. 98; Lehnardt (2015), p. 195 (Landesmuseum Mainz). – Lit.: Salfeld (1908), pp. 4–6; Exhibition catalogue Mainz (1978), pp. 98, 135–36 (Kat. Nr. 2); Paulus (2007), pp. 73–74; Lehnardt (2015), pp. 194–95.

57 (after 1281 or 1283), Mainz

Fragment of a building inscription from the medieval synagogue or another community building, marking its completion or renovation and its embellishment by an exquisite pavement floor.

צור ח[ן]וצב לגולה הוצב ° לסיום
 נקצב[להסיע מעצב ° אבני מחצב
 לישיב[נט]עים גדרה לרצף ° ר' יצחק
 בר אברהם[ם] בצדקו ועוצב ° ואשתו
 מרת שרה[.]. נדבתם ג' זקוק' לרצה כצב
 ור' ואברהם ב[ר] יצחק בגן עדן מוצב נתן ג'
 זקוק' והרב ר['] יוסף נתן זקוק' א' לטב
 ידטו נתון[רם] נסצב

Rock was hewn out for the exile(d), and erected as a capstone | Designed [to declare] how hard it is to hew out and chisel stones | For the settlers in the plantations and enclosure a pavement. R. Yiṣḥaq | son of R. Avraham, in his piety and in mourning, with his wife | Mrs Sara: their gift was 3 marks for the exquisite floor | And R. Avraham son of R. Yiṣḥaq, in the garden of Eden is his abode, gave 3 | marks, and Rabbi Yosef gave one mark. For good | let us name the donor.

The text, mainly following Salfeld, is hard to reconstruct. Lehnardt (2015) has the following variants: line 1, לחיזם for לסיום. – line 2, מעצבי for מעצב. – line 3, גדרה for גררה. – line 4, ועוצבי for ועוצב and אשתו for ואשתו. – line 5, נ' זהוב (50 gold coins) for ג' זקוק' (3 marks). – line 5 לרצפה for לרצה; and line 6, ואברהם for אברהם.

Salfeld had himself read 50 (נ) instead of 3 (ג) in line 5 first but corrected his reading in the offprint edition of his article in 1908. In any case, the letter is the same as the one at the end of line 6.

The central function of the building for a wider regional Jewish settlement may be indicated by the term “settlers in the plantations” (cf. 1 Chr 4:23). For their generosity, Yiṣḥaq ben Avraham and his wife, the late Avraham ben Yiṣḥaq, and Rabbi Yosef are commemorated. The inscription bears no date and is commonly dated to the reconstruction phase following the pogroms of 1281 and 1283.

The slab was found in 1907 in *Schusterstraße* 18b during groundwork for the new department store. The right half was later lost.

Mainz, Landesmuseum, UKH2007/18b. Reddish sandstone, H = 43,4 cm, W = 58 cm, D = 18.5 cm (extant fragment). Original measures according to Salfeld: H = 43 cm, W = 75 cm, D = 17.5 cm. – Photographs: Salfeld (1908), cover page (Ernst Neeb, Mainz); Mainz Exhibition (1978), p. 135; Speyer Exhibition (2004), p. 129; Lehnardt (2015), p. 197 (Mainz, Landesmuseum). – Lit.: Salfeld (1908), pp. 6–8; *Germania Judaica*, II (1968), p. 516 with n. 42; Mainz Exhibition (1978), pp. 136; Speyer Exhibition (2004), p. 128 (dating to 1271); Paulus (2007), pp. 73–74 (following Salfeld); Lehnardt (2015), pp. 196–97.

1287 July 15 (2 Aw 5047), Worms

58

Headstone in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* for Yokheved, daughter of R. Yeḥi'el ben Efrayim.

Yokheved's father, who was a “community leader” (ראש), is praised for his generosity expressed in “building synagogues and cemeteries” (בבנין בתי) “in many communities” (כנסיות ובתי עלמות) (בקהלות רבות) and other generous deeds such as “the enclosure of the cemetery ... with a high wall, here in W(orms)” (בית החיים והיסדות) (שהקיפו חומה גבוהה פה וועת[?]).

The epitaph is hard to decipher. Some emendations adopted by Sommer & Brocke are based on

the 19th-century reading by David Kaufmann. Baumgarten (2018) gives an interpretation based on Grünwald's (1938) reading of the epitaph. According to her version, it was Yokheved herself who financed the community institutions. It appears significant, however, that the epitaph conveys the names of both the father and grandfather, i.e., that Yehi'el appears with his full name, including his patronym.

On the enclosure of the cemetery in Worms, see also nos. 50 and 53.

Worms, *Old Jewish Cemetery*, inv.-no. 801. – Ed.: Grünwald (1938), p. 107; Sommer & Brocke (2015), no. 801; Härtel (2017), pp. 98–99; Baumgarten (2018), p. 95.

59 1290 September 15, Worms

Bishop Simon gave out the island of *Lamparter Aue* to three citizens of Worms in return for an annual rent of 40 pounds. Payment of this sum is secured by regular incomes the three have in the city and surrounding region. One of the three, Conrad Holderbaum, and his wife offer the rent they obtain annually “from the men’s synagogue” (*uff der mannen Jueden schoule*) in Worms.

Selling a rent, i.e., the right to receive a regular (mostly annual) payment on a piece of real estate, was a very common form of long-term credit in medieval towns (usually at an interest rate of around 5 per cent p.a.). It is interesting that the men’s *shul* is mentioned specifically, as distinct from other Jewish community properties.

After the persecutions in Mainz (nos 54–55), the failed emigration attempt and arrest of R. Me’ir (cf. no. 67) and a wave of pogroms in the Middle Rhine area in 1287, numerous Jewish communities were struggling to meet extraordinary costs.

Worms, Stadtarchiv, Abt. 1 A II, no. 75 (copy on paper, 15th century). – Ed.: Boos (1886), no. 446, pp. 204–05. – Lit.: Cluse (forthcoming), at n. 26.

1291 November 26/27 (4 Tevet 5052), Worms 60

Headstone in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* for Mrs Golda, daughter of R. Shmu’el – “the honoured lady” (הגברת הכבודה) “who handed over her soul in the synagogue” (אשר השלימה נפשה בבית הכנסת).

The epitaph shows that the attachment Jewish women were showing towards the synagogue (cf. no. 31) was honoured by the community.

The idea of the synagogue’s holiness – i.e., that Golda died in a sanctified space – may also have played a role in the phrasing of this epitaph. The women’s section is not specified; rather, the text simply speaks of the *bēt ha-Knesset*.

Worms, *Old Jewish Cemetery*, inv.-no. 537, red sandstone, H = 110,5 cm, W = 89 cm, D = 14 cm. – Ed.: Sommer & Brocke (2015), no. 537. – Lit.: cf. Baumgarten (2013), pp. 74–75.

1292 July 24 (9 Av 5052), Mainz 61

Epitaph for Mrs Ḥanna, daughter of Rabbi Yehuda “the lion in the company” (הארי שבחבורה). She is praised for her charitable deeds. Her death fell on the day of mourning when the destruction of the Second Temple is commemorated (ביום חורבן).

While the association of the name Yehuda with the “lion” is a traditional motif, the symbolism of the Temple is not. In this case it was prompted by the day when Mrs Ḥanna died.

The stone is also remarkable for its material – a recycled Roman gravestone still showing parts of its former inscription. It was found in 1952 in the section of the cemetery then built over with the farming college.

Mainz, Landesmuseum, inv.-no. S1111. – Ed.: Hüttenmeister (2015), no. 2209; Lehnardt (2015), pp. 188–89. – Lit.: Rapp (1957), no. 5; Rapp (1958), no. M 81; Rapp & Böcher (1959), no. 20; Rapp & Böcher (1961/62), no. 8; Rapp (1977), no. 84; Vest (2000), no. 10, p. 9; Cuno in Mentgen (2015), no. 42.

62 1294 March 18, Worms

Mention is made of a piece of land near *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms*.

Before the judges of Worms, Gudelman, who lives in the court of the late David the knight, declares that he has rented out a piece of ground (*quandam aream*) outside the St Andrew's Gate (*extra portam sancti Andree*) next to the mire (*iuxta lutum*) near the cemetery of the Jews (*apud cimiterium Judeorum*) in Worms, to a priest Henry named *de Sygin*, for a rent of 1 lb. *haller*.

The term *lutum* may refer to a swamped piece of terrain but also a sewer or, generally, a ditch. Other evidence (cf. no. 48) also indicates that this area was subject to occasional flooding.

Darmstadt, Hessisches Staatsarchiv, C 1 A, no. 160 (15th cent. copy).
– Ed.: Boos (1886), no. 458, p. 304.

63 1295 September (Tishrī 5056), Worms

Headstone in two parts in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms*, for a boy named Shne'ur (הנער שניאור) and a girl and virgin named Yenta (נער' בתולה יינטא), son and daughter of R. Me'ir.

This double headstone, worked in Gothic style with two rounded arcades, is the earliest extant example in the medieval ShUM communities for a stone dedicated to the memory of more than one individual and reflecting that purpose in its design. (An earlier example in Mainz from 1200 CE [Jewish Cemetery, section X, no. 19] has the two names of a father and son in sequence but does not devote individual inscriptions to each in a separate field.) The following stones of this type have survived in Worms:

Inv.-nos 935 (1302 CE); 811 (1323), 468 (1326/27), 715 (1324/46), 43 (1341/43), 787 (1343), 598 (1343), 467 (1344), 840 (1375/77), 23 (1381), 625 (1389/90), 786 (second half of the 14th century), 542 (1412), 644 (1413/14), 649 (1418), 645 (1418/19), 691 (1438), 761 (1450), 747 (1451), 748 (1451), 671 (1454), 684 (1467), 703 (1483),

696 (1484), 839 (1493), 693 (1501), 665 (1504), 439 (c.1519), and many more dating from the modern period. One stone of 1376 (no. 429) commemorates the three children of R. Moshe *Yafeh*, another, of 1418, the four children of R. Yeshayahu (no. 806).

In 1756 J. F. Moritz published the German translation of a double epitaph for two brothers in Worms, which he erroneously dated to the years 605 and 581 BCE (!) but which may in fact date to [5]133 AM, i.e., 1372/73 CE. The stone is not among those we find today.

In Speyer, double epitaphs survive in inv.-nos 24 (1380, possibly for a married couple), 26 (also of 1380), and 41–42 (undated fragments). In Mainz the double epitaph for Bella and Ester from 1311 (formerly no. 95 of the memorial cemetery) is probably lost or sunk into the sand. Salfeld (1898, no. 134) mentions another stone for the two martyrs, Ya'aqov ben Moshe and Avraham ben Me'ir, killed in the 1390s.

Other headstones of this type are rarely attested for the medieval period. The large corpus of spolia from Würzburg features only one, dated 1327.

In Erfurt six are extant, the oldest dating from 1316/17, while others – including one with a triple inscription for three siblings (1381) – are lost. Rothenburg o. T. preserves three, all dating from 1379, and three were found also in Regensburg (1380). The Old Jewish Cemetery in Frankfurt had nine medieval double headstones, of which all but two (one from 1363/65 and one from 1379) were destroyed by the Nazis; another double epitaph (pre-1349) was discovered in St. Bartholomew's church. Individual examples were uncovered in Augsburg (1446); two (1416, 1438) were found in Nordhausen.

Old Jewish Cemetery Worms is thus the only place in central Europe where a significant number of double epitaphs from the medieval period can still be found in situ. We also find the oldest examples here.

Medieval double epitaphs often reflect family tragedies in years when an epidemic had broken out in the city. Many of them commemorate children. It was only later, mostly in the early modern and modern periods, that Jewish double epitaphs were more regularly set for married couples.

Worms, *Old Jewish Cemetery*, inv.-no. 781. – Ed.: Brocke & Sommer (2015), no. 781. Cf. also Moritz (1756), pp. 71–74; Fuchs-Maul & Bondy (2013); Hüttenmeister (2015). – For double epitaphs from other Jewish cemeteries cf. Förstemann (1855), pp. 147–48 (Nordhausen); Härtel (2017), p. 59 n. 22 (Regensburg); Kwasman (1993), pp. 133–40 (Rothenburg); Brocke et al. (1998), nos 7002, 2256, 34, 3012, 7019, 5324, 7034, 4047, 3729 (Frankfurt); Müller et al. (2011), no. 398, pp. 635–37 (Würzburg), Stoffels (2012), pp. 104–05 (Frankfurt pre-1349), 152 (Regensburg), 173 (Augsburg); Boockmann, Fuchs & Stürzebecher (2013), pp. 100, 129, 130, 136, 177, and 179 (Erfurt).

64 1296 May 11 (the eve of *Shavuot*, 5056), Worms

Headstone in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* for Mrs Yenta, daughter of R. Moshe, from Oppenheim.

This stone is the earliest surviving example of an epitaph giving a name of origin outside the city of Worms inscribed as an additional headline on the frame outside (and usually above) the field with the personal details and eulogies for the deceased. In the present case, the headline reads '[M]rs Yenta from Oppenheim' (מרת יינטא מאופמהיים).

Often, as here, the headline is chiseled in a different hand. Headlines such as this one may have been added to guide outside visitors on the cemetery. They show that the Jewish cemetery of the traditional communities served a wider region (see also no. 109), and indicate instances of migration or family relations across space. In medieval Worms the following place-names appear in such headlines:

Ansbach (inv.-no. 471, 14th century) Basle (inv.-no. 807 of 1312), Esslingen (inv.-no. 445 of 1307, no. 522 of 1308), Göttingen (inv.-no. 799, before

1340), Heidelberg (inv.-no. 628 of 1340), Huppenheim (inv.-no. 587 von 1323), Kaiserslautern (*Lutra*) (inv.-no. 500 of 1318), Meiningen (inv.-no. 790 of 1394), Neuburg am Rhein (inv.-no. 512 of 1309), Neumark(t) (inv.-no. 3002 of 1401), Nienburg (inv.-no. 637 of 1404), Oppenheim (the present example of 1296 and inv.-no. 153 of 1320), Turckheim (inv.-no. 527 of 1296), Wimpfen (inv.-no. 475 of 1307; no. 481 of 1316). One stone bears this information on the lower frame (inv.-no. 325, 'a Frenchman', of the 13th or 14th cent.); another has it on the reverse side (inv.-no. 442 of 1319 for Shmu'el ben Eliyaqim from Turckheim). These headstones all feature frames according to the Gothic style typical of the 14th century.

Indications of a person's origin can of course also appear as part of the epigraphy proper.

Worms, *Old Jewish Cemetery*, inv.-no. 930, W = 89 cm, H = 126 cm, D = 17 cm; red sandstone with white grain. – Ed.: Sommer & Brocke 2015, no. 930. – Lit.: Brocke (2013), pp. 130–31. On the regional function of Jewish cemeteries in medieval Ashkenaz, see Ziwes (1994), pp. 77–84; Cluse (2006), pp. 292–94.

(13th century?), Worms

Undated inscription (*sgraffito*) in a stone block on the south-western corner of the men's synagogue,

בעשה
בר נתן

Ba'esa, | son of R. Nathan (or: Ba'esa bar Nathan)

Böcher's suggestion that the bearer of this rare name (cf. 1 Kings 15 and 16) may have earned some merit in connection with the synagogue building appears unwarranted. The inscription is not situated on a plaque of its own but on a block that forms part of the structure. The letters are executed with little care and may be interpreted as a *sgraffito*, even if they are deep.

The text is disturbed by one of the two holes in the stone. The left hole was filled with lead until 1960 and the right hole served to hold a handrail.

65

Worms, Synagogue, south-western corner. – Photographs: (1) Worms, Fotoarchiv, F1141_39 (1953, showing this block in the uppermost layer of the synagogue remains); (2) M9860 (1938, showing the metal railing reaching into this block). – Lit.: Böcher (1961), no. X, pp. 108–09.

שנת חמשים ושלוש ולא ניתן
לקבורה עד ארבע ימים לירח
אדר שנת ששים ושבע לאלף
הששי תהא נפשו צרורה
בצרור החיים עם צדיקי עולם
בגן עדן א' א' סלה

66 1306, Mainz

Mention is made of a *teatrum ludeorum*, possibly indicating the wedding hall of the Jewish community in Mainz. Bodmann refers to an otherwise unknown register of rents, according to which the house was situated near St Walburg's chapel in the rear part of the house *Zum Gensfleisch* (today situated between *Pfandhausstraße*, *Emmeransstraße* and *Klarastraße*), west of the Jewish quarter.

Salfeld thought the *teatrum ludeorum* might be identical with the house *Zum Judentanz*, named in sources from 1314 onwards, but the identification is doubted by Salmen (1995) and refuted by Schneider (2016). In fact, *Zum Judentanz* was situated further away from the Jewish quarter and its name has a different etymology possibly relating to a place where Jewish cattle was fed.

Darmstadt, Hessisches Staatsarchiv, C 1 no.82, fol. 290r (modern copy by F. A. Bodmann). – Lit.: Salfeld (1918), p. 19; Salmen (1995), p. 113; Mentgen (2015), no. 94; Schneider (2016), pp. 29–30.

67 1307 February 7 (4 Adar 5067), Worms

Headstone in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* for Rabbi Me'ir ben Barukh of Rothenburg (d. 19 Iyyar 5053 = 27 April 1293).

מהר"ם רבנא מאיר מ"ע
ציון הלז לראש מרנא
ורבנא מאיר בן הר' רבי
ברוך אשר תפשו מלך רומי
בארבע ימים לירח תמוז שנת
ארבעים ושש לאלף הששי
ונפטר בתפישה י"ט באייר

MaHaRaM. Our master Me'ir, may his rest be [in] Eden. | This sign is at the head of our teacher | And our master Me'ir, son of the master, R. | Barukh, whom the King of Rome took captive | On the fourth day of Tammuz of the year | forty-six of the sixth millennium | And he passed away in prison on 19 of Iyyar | Of the year fifty-three; and he was not given | For burial until the fourth of the month | Of Adar of the year sixty-seven of the sixth millennium. May his soul be bound up | in the bundle of Life, together with the righteous of the world | in the garden of Eden. Amen, amen, Sela!

Line 1 is a headline (cf. no. 64) carved on the upper frame of the epitaph, with 'MaHaRaM' (= *Morenu ha-Rav Me'ir*) in larger letters.

The sober style of the inscription is in stark contrast to Rabbi Me'ir's importance and fame. He was the leading scholar and rabbinic authority of the 13th century in Ashkenaz, styled *supremus magister* in Christian sources.

The story of R. Me'ir's imprisonment by King Rudolf of Habsburg (on 4 Tammuz 5046 = 28 June 1286), of his death in prison (19 Iyyar 5053 = 27 April 1293) and the release of his remains (4 Adar 5067 = 7 February 1307) is complemented by what is said on the neighbouring headstone for R. Alexander Wimpfen (no. 68), who ransomed Me'ir's body and secured his burial on the Jewish cemetery of Worms (where Me'ir's father, Rabbi Barukh ben Me'ir, also rests). The two epitaphs of R. Me'ir and Alexander Wimpfen occupy a prominent position at the northern end of the Jewish cemetery, only a few paces behind the entrance.

Numerous narratives relate to R. Me'ir's life-story, to the two gravestones, to visiting them,

and to praying at the graves. R. Shlomo Luria (16th-century Poland, cf. no. 1) is the earliest source to claim that the MaHaRaM refused to let himself be ransomed for pious as well as political reasons. “This became a hallmark of Jewish steadfast resilience to extortion and a benchmark for a moral practice of Jewish communities” (Shoham-Steiner 2016; for a critical revision of this tradition, see Emanuel 2017).

R. Yehuda Löw (Liwa) Kirchheim relates that he found the story of R. Me’ir’s imprisonment on “an old and worn-out piece of paper” in 1616 (Kirchheim 1987), and Liwa’s successor as community clerk (*shammash*) in Worms, R. Yuspa, wrote that he “saw the tombstones on many occasions, and read what was written on Maharam’s tombstone” (Eidelberg 1991).

In the early 19th century the inscription was hardly legible. R. Aharon Worms, who relates how he came to pray at the grave, writes that he could not read the writing, and Ludwig Lewysohn (1855) apparently commissioned some retracing of letters, both on this stone and on no. 68. Lewysohn and David Kaufmann (1896) were however able to produce good transcriptions.

Worms, *Old Jewish Cemetery*, inv.-no. 794, yellow sandstone, 68,5 cm x 96 cm x 24 cm. – Ed. Lewysohn (1855), no. 21, pp. 35–39; Kaufmann (1896), p. 128; Kirchheim (1987), pp. 252–53; Eidelberg (1991), p. 80; Sommer & Brocke (2015), no. 794. – Lit.: Böcher (1992), pp. 6–7; Ziwes (1994), pp. 216–17. – On R. Me’ir and his work cf. Zunz (1865), pp. 359–62; Zimmels (1926); Yuval (1988); Elon (1994), pp. 419, 761–63; Kanarfogel (1997); Kanarfogel (2013), pp. 51, 436, 438; Emanuel (2014), pp. 10–11; Lifshitz (2016); Shoham-Steiner (2016); Emanuel (2017).

68 1307 September 7 (11 Tishrī 5068), Worms

Headstone in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* for Alexander b. Shlomo, who ransomed the body of R. Me’ir and was buried beside him.

המצבה הזאת הוצבה
והוצבה לראש הנדיב

ר' אלכסנדר ב"ר שלמה הנפטר
ביום צום כיפור ביו' ה' ונקבר יום
אחד עשר בתשרי ששים ושמונה
לאלף הששי ואשר מלאו לבו
והשם אינה לידו לעשות מצוה רבה
ולפדות את מורינו רבנו מאיר
בן הרב ר' ברוך מכלאו אשר היה תפוס
אחרי מותו כמה שנים {עד שנא[נ]ה}
הנדיב ופדאו וזכה להקבר בצידי
הימנית יהי רצון שישב בצידי
בישיבת גינת ביתן עם צדיקי
עולם א' א' א' סלה

This funerary stele was erected | And hewn out [to stand] at the head of the benefactor | R. Alexander, son of R. Shlomo, who passed away | On the day of the Kippur fast | On Thursday, and was buried on 11 Tishrī [of the year] sixty-eight | Of the sixth millennium | Who dared presume in his heart | and God delivered into his hands a great deed | To redeem our teacher and master R. Me'ir | Son of master Barukh from the captivity in which he was incarcerated | After his death for several years, until the benefactor was inspired | And he redeemed him. He was honoured to be buried beside him | On his right side. May it be [God's] will that he may have him seated by his side in the garden of your palace among the righteous | Of the world. Amen, Amen, Amen, Sela.

Line 7 alludes to Est. 7:5, line 8 to 2 Mos. 21:13. As Lewysohn (1855) already noted, the shape and quality of the two epitaphs for R. Me’ir (no. 67) and Alexander Wimpfen are very similar.

Aside from what is inscribed on this stone, the life-story of Alexander b. Shlomo comes more from later narrative tradition than from contemporary documents. His profane name was Süskind of Wimpfen, son of Zalman, and he probably lived in Frankfurt am Main, though later narrative tradition ascribed him to the *Hoheneck* family whose descendants still lived in Worms. According to tradition, Alexander Wimpfen “spent not only a large sum, but in fact all his money, to bring

R. Me'ir's remains to the Jewish burial ground in Worms" (Shoham-Steiner 2016). Lewysohn (1855) and later scholars have claimed that he had no heirs.

Alexander's wish to be buried next to the venerated rabbi reflects the cemetery's function as a mirror of medieval Jewish society. It may also be read as an effort to seek the saintly rabbi's protection. Until today, the two graves of R. Me'ir and that of Alexander Wimpfen are the goal of numerous Jewish visitors, who leave their prayer requests and candles here. The practice of praying at the graves of the righteous dates back to the medieval period.

Worms, Old Jewish Cemetery, inv.-no. 793, yellow sandstone, 67 cm x 96,5 cm x 20 cm. – Ed.: Lewysohn (1855), no. 22, pp. 39–41 (with errors); Kaufmann (1896), pp. 128–29; Sommer & Brocke (2015), no. 793. – Lit.: *Germania Judaica*, II (1968), p. 244; Böcher (1992), p. 7; Raspe (2011), pp. 158–59; Reuter & Schäfer (2013), p. 34; Shoham-Steiner (2016) (with translation on p. 137).

69 1312 July 25, Worms

Arbitration of a legal conflict between the Bishop and Chapter of Worms, on one part, and the Jewish community, on the other, concerning the appointment of the Jewish community's representative (*Juden bischofe*) and the election into the "Jewish Council" (*Judenrat*). Bishop Emmerich and the cathedral chapter had claimed the right to appoint *Juden bischöfe und ratlude* (lit. "Jews' bishops and councilmen"), against which the Jews had protested. The two parties had called upon an arbitration commission of five men, including clerics and lay citizens of Worms, who now give their verdict:

(1) There shall never be more than twelve members on the Jewish council, whose duty is to judge according to Jewish law. Among these, the bishop of Worms shall appoint one to be *Juden bischof*. Notwithstanding, the office of the head of the Jewish council (*dez Juden bischofes ampt*) shall

alternate among the twelve members of the Jewish council on a monthly basis, to ensure the Jewish council's functions as a court of law (*ume daz, daz sie die baz gerihten mogen*). When the *Juden bischof* dies the bishop of Worms shall appoint a successor from among the members of the Jewish council.

(2) When a member of the Jewish council dies, the remaining eleven shall appoint a successor according to majority vote. The new member shall have no bad record among the Jews and be neither a *Krieheim* nor a *Drifzan* nor a *Walich*. The latter terms probably relate to French-speaking Jews (*walich* 'one who speaks a Romance language') and specifically to the northern French rabbinic family of Trèves (*Drifzan* = "Trevisan", i.e., "from Troyes"). The meaning of *Krieheim* has never been clarified. The bishop of Worms shall confirm the new member, who will swear to keep the usual oath incumbent on a member of the Jewish council. If no new candidate is appointed within three months, the bishop may appoint one himself. In case the see of Worms is vacant, the cathedral chapter may act in his stead.

(3) A member of the Jewish council may live outside the city for up to three years without losing his claim to membership. His position will become vacant if he does not return and inhabit a house in Worms by the end of that three-year period.

The precise nature of the conflict solved by this compromise is unknown. It is possible that the arrival of French-speaking exiles after 1306 had led to social and political conflicts in the community and that this had given occasion for outside interference on the part of the bishop and chapter. Similar conflicts over access to the Jewish council are recorded for Speyer in 1333. The compromise reached in Worms in 1312 was in effect at least until the 17th century, when Yuspa Shammash recorded the custom of installing new Jewish councillors in very similar terms. The document is one of the most extensive sources concerning the constitution of a

Jewish community council in medieval Ashkenaz. It attests to the importance given to the Jewish community representative (*Judenbischof*) by the Christian authorities.

The Jewish community leaders (*parnassim* in Hebrew), here organized as a council, were responsible for representing the Jewish community's interests before the non Jewish authorities and for raising the necessary funds towards this purpose. It is noteworthy that in Worms the community council also acted as a court of Jewish law.

The number of *parnassim* could vary from two to twelve (as in Worms and Speyer) or thirteen. No rabbinic learning was needed for the office, but the statutes (*taqqanot*) and other decisions of the council must remain in accordance with Jewish law. Many communities appointed further officers (*gabba'im*), e.g., to manage the poor chest (cf. no. 46) or for assessing the tax shares of the community members. From the 17th century onwards the members of the Jewish council in Worms met in the Jewish Council chamber (*Kahalstube*) above the entrance of the *women's shul*.

Darmstadt, Hessisches Staatsarchiv, A 2, no. 255/674 (notarial copy of 1363 December 23). – Ed.: Wolf (1862), pp. 29–34; Boos (1890), no. 74, pp. 45–47. – Lit.: Kisch (1961); Holzer (1961); Battenberg (1995), no. 135, p. 41; Bönnen (2004).

70 1315 (January–March), Speyer

During the struggle for the German throne, King Louis IV ('the Bavarian') is besieged in the Jewish cemetery of Speyer.

1. The chronicler Mathias of Neuenburg relates that Duke Leopold of Austria (brother of Louis's rival Frederick the Fair) gathered a large army against the King. The latter retreated "into the cemetery of the Jews" (*in cimiterium ludeorum*). Leopold thereupon burnt and plundered the surrounding villages and then moved on south.

2. In a letter dated 18 March to the city council of Konstanz, Frederick the Fair reports on the incident: After moving his camp several times, Louis had finally fled "to the Jewish cemetery next to the walls of the city (*ad atrium ludeorum muris Spiren[sibus] contiguum*)", which was "enclosed by moats and secured by other means of fortification" (*firmatum fossatis et aliis roboratum fortificiis*), "so that he could not be pulled or driven out from there" (*ita quod abinde erui et evelli non poterat*).

It is possible that King Louis retreated to the cemetery because it was enclosed by some sort of fortification even before the events (see above, no. 13 of 1084, for Bishop Ruodger's promise to enclose the Jewish settlement in this area with a wall).

Note that Louis, after his victory over Frederick, extended various charters to the cities of Worms and Speyer between January 1315 and March 1316 to indemnify them for damages they had incurred in connection with his struggle for the throne. These grants included the right to take in Jews as citizens as well as rights over certain sums of royal income from the Jews.

Ed.: Mathias von Neuenburg (1924–40), pp. 99, 357 (chronicle); MGH Const. v (1909–13), no. 242, pp. 209–10 (letter). – Thomas (1993), pp. 69–71; Lit.: Müller (1994), p. 294; Härtel (2017), pp. 95–96.

1321 Nov. 20 (28 Mar eshwan 5082), Mainz

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Headstone in *Old Jewish Cemetery Mainz* for Me'ir ben Yiṣḥaq the cantor (*ḥazzan*). Perhaps with reference to his singing, Me'ir is characterized as "amiable and endearing" (נעים ונחמד).

On epitaphs for synagogue cantors in Worms, cf. above, no. 42.

Mainz, Memorial cemetery, section VIII, no. 106. – Ed.: Hüttenmeister (2015), no. 105. – Lit.: Mentgen (2015), no. 144.

72 1324 June 27, Mainz

Mention is made of certain garden plots on what is called the “Jews’ Sands” (*Judensand*) in Mainz:

The secular court of Mainz, represented by the treasurer (*camerarius*), reeve (*sculthetus*) and four judges, decides that the Abbess and convent of Oldminster in Mainz (*abbatissa et conventus cenobii sanctimonialium Veteris Monasterii in Moguntia*) have won the right over various annual payments. One of these payments was due from three plots of garden situated in the place called the “Jews’ Sands” (*super tribus peciis ortorum in loco dicto ufme Judensande sitorum*).

This document and numerous similar pieces suggest that the name *Judensand* refers to the whole area on which *Old Jewish Cemetery Mainz* was situated, not just to the cemetery as such.

Mainz, Stadtarchiv, U / 1324 Juni 27 / I (original charter). – Ed.: Flug (2006), no. 201, pp. 172–73. – Lit.: Dertsch (1962), no. 722, p. 248; Mentgen (2015), no. 151.

73 1330 May 24, Worms

Emperor Louis confirms that he assigned to Henneman *zũ dem Rade*, citizen of Worms, the 58 pounds *haller* of income derived from the synagogue and community of the Jews in the city of Speyer, serfs of his imperial chamber (*super synagoga et universitate iudeorum in civitate Spirensi conmorantium, imperialis camere nostre servorum*). Louis had once granted this income to a certain *Biggenbach*, citizen of Speyer, whose widow had married Henneman.

The term *synagoga* may here denote either a building or an organized Jewish community or both.

During the reigns of Louis IV and his successor, Charles IV, rights over taxes from the Jews were handed out to followers of the king with increasing frequency.

Speyer, Stadtarchiv, 1 U 49 (original charter). – Ed.: Hilgard (1885), no. 389, pp. 318–19; Boos (1890), no. 238, p. 167.

1331 April 10, Mainz

Mention is made of a house on or near *Old Jewish Cemetery Mainz*:

The secular court of Mainz, represented by the treasurer (*camerarius*), reeve (*sculthetus*) and four judges, declares that a certain Heilo, son of Crafto the tanner, has vindicated his right over two acres of vineyard situated below the Jewish cemetery (*iuxta aream iudeorum*) on the corner (*in cono*), extending towards “yonder house” (*ad domum illam se protendentibus*). The rent, to be paid between 15 August and 8 September includes the regular tithe and three quarts of wheat, to be paid to the convent of Oldminster (cf. no. 72).

The document does not give a clear reference concerning the house in question, nor do we have more context. However, a house on the cemetery is also mentioned in later sources (cf. nos 103, 122, 130 and 138) and can be seen on early modern maps (cf. no. 201).

Mainz, Stadtarchiv, U / 1331 April 10 / I (original charter). – Ed.: Flug (2006), no. 219, pp. 190–91. – Lit.: Dertsch (1963), no. 853, pp. 12–13; Mentgen (2015), no. 188.

1333 October 4, Worms

Headstone in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* for R. Natan ben Yiṣḥaq, a rabbinic scholar and member of the Jewish community’s leading council.

R. Nathan, who died at the age of 71, is praised as a “great one of his generation” (גדול הדור) and a “counsellor highly honoured” (יועץ ונשוא פנים), an elder (זקן) who “sat in the gathering of the Taḥkemonites’ (ויושב בשבת תחכמונים) (cf. 2 Sam. 23:8). He was also a rabbinic scholar who taught eminent students (ולימד תלמידים הגונים). He concerned himself with the needs of many, to the extent that “his house stood as open as the desert” (וביתו היתה כמדבר) (cf. bSanh 49a) for the poor and the destitute (for this expression, see also below, no. 104).

In a uniquely condensed and poetic way, this epi-

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taph sums up the ideals of a Jewish community leader current in Worms at the time – rabbinic learning, political leadership, and charity. On the community council in Worms, cf. no. 69).

Worms, *Old Jewish Cemetery*, inv.-no. 190. – Ed.: Sommer & Brocke (2015), no. 190. – Lit.: Böcher (1992), p. 8.

76 1334 November 1, Bamberg

Emperor Louis declares that he has confirmed the assignment of an annual payment of 60 marks of silver in royal income from the Jews of Speyer (*of unser und des richs luden ze Spire*) to Henry of Cologne the Elder, citizen of Speyer (*Hainrichen von Kolle dem alten von Spire, unserm lieben wūrte*), according to the grant once made by Emperor Henry VII, for a loan of 600 marks. He specifies that the payment rests not just on all the Jews of Speyer (*alle unser und des richs luden, unser liebe kamerknechte ze Spire, die ietzund sind oder hernach komend*) but also on their synagogue, synagogue courtyard, bakery, bathhouse (possibly the *mikveh*), cemetery, and on all property owned collectively by the Jewish community (*ir schül, schülhof, bakhus, bat, kirchof und anders, was sie in gemeinschefte hand mit einander*). The 60 marks of silver (or 120 pounds *haller*) shall be paid on St Martin's day (11 November) or within the week following, according to the settlement reached between Henry's family, the Jewish community, and the civic council of Speyer. Other claims for annual payments, which Henry may have based on royal grants, shall be void.

The document, which marks the settlement of a legal dispute (cf. Stadtarchiv Speyer, 1 U 50 of 6 October 1331), is an important source on the extent of Jewish community property at this time in Speyer.

Speyer, Stadtarchiv, 1 U 53 (original charter, missing). – Ed.: Hilgard (1885), no. 430, pp. 378–80; Winkelmann, II (1885), no. 563, pp. 351–52.

1335 March 3, Mainz

Salman the treasurer of Mainz declares that he has entrusted to the honourable Jew Hasseman of Oppenheim, citizen of Mainz (*dem bescheiden iuden Hasseman von Oppenheim, burger zu Mentze*), the seat on the Jewish council of Mainz which Gumprecht of Speyer had given up into his hands (*daz iuden ratampt, daz uns uf gab Gumprecht von Spire der iude*). Hasseman may confer the office to Gumprecht or another honourable Jew (*eime andern ersamen und bescheiden iuden*) within one year and Salman will confirm the transfer. Once the year is over, however, explicit confirmation from the treasurer will be needed.

This document is preserved in a certified copy drafted and sealed by the aldermen of Oppenheim and the knight, Emmerich of Trechtingshausen, on 29 April 1335. Salman, notwithstanding his Jewish-sounding name, was a Christian official.

The document provides additional evidence for the fact that each of the three ShUM communities was led by a body of representatives (*Judenrat*), and that Christian authorities exercised a limited amount of influence over them by confirming the appointment of Jewish community leaders (cf. nos 69 and 80).

Wien, Universität, Institut für Österreichische Geschichte, s.d. 1335 April 19 (*vidimus*). – Ed.: Schunck (1797), no. 90, pp. 215–16. – Lit.: Schaab (1855), pp. 72–73; *Germania Judaica*, II (1968), pp. 516, 778; Mentgen (2015), no. 214.

1337 January 22, Speyer

Mention is made of Jewish houses in the suburb of Altspeyer, in connection with the sale of rents from a property on the opposite side (*gegen der juden huser uber ze Altspire*) not far from the Jewish cemetery (*bi der juden kirchoue*). The rent is sold by Gottschalk Helfant, whose neighbours are also named (Heilo of Rinkenberg and Birk).

While the precise location of all these houses cannot be established (for an approximation cf.

the map in Engels 2004), the document is valuable evidence to the fact that Jews still owned property in this part of Speyer, where they had first settled in 1084 and where the community had its cemetery.

München, Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Rheinpfälzische Urkunden, no. 178 (original charter). – Lit.: Zeuss (1843), pp. 8; Porsche (2003), p.33; Engels (2004), p. 93–94; Härtel (2017), p. 84, n. 193.

79 1338 January 17, Mainz

Salman the treasurer of Mainz reports that several Jews living under Count John of Sponheim (John II of Sponheim-Kreuznach) had come to him requesting that he send him written information on the Jewry-law of Mainz. His sealed response contains certain rules on legal disputes over loans and pledges. In this context, the procedure for administering a “Jewish oath” is explained:

The Jew shall enter the synagogue and bring “his book” (*da sal der Jude in die Schule geen vnd sal sei[n] boch mit yme brengen*). The Christian shall bring the prompter (*und sal der Cristen dem Juden den Steber brengen*) whom he has to pay six *haller*, plus one shilling *haller* to the judge overseeing the procedure (*dem Richter, der da bi ist*).

Thus, the “Jewish oath” is administered in the synagogue, in the presence of the Christian plaintiff, prompter and judge. The “book” brought by the Jew is the Hebrew Pentateuch on which (or into which) he had to place his hand. The oath formula was in German: The prompter read it out to the defendant, who had to repeat it line by line. The oath formula and procedure in Mainz was devoid of the ignominious details found in some of the other German formulae. A copy of it is found in a collection of legal formulae for the secular court of Mainz written between c.1427 and 1440 (cf. no. 120).

The original is lost. – Ed.: Schaab (1855), pp. 78–79. – Lit.: Mötsch, I (1987), no. 675, p. 411; Ziwes (1994), pp. 72, 115; Mentgen (2015), no. 228.

1338 September 8, Speyer

Bishop Gerhard of Speyer (1336–1363) declares that he has come to an agreement with the Jews of Speyer concerning how the Jewish community may appointment a council, judges, and a community leader (*irn raht, ir richter unde iren bischofe*). He will respect the present elections and appointments as well as future ones (*und als sie die vorbaz allezit besetzint unde machent*), and he will support the Jews against anyone who might try to interfere in their affairs.

This confirmation of the Jewish community’s constitutional independence follows some time after a dispute over external interference solved in December 1333 (see no. 69 for a similar conflict in Worms). In 1344 the civic community of Speyer also declared its support for the Jewish council.

Speyer, Stadtarchiv, 1 U 260 (original charter). – Ed.: Hilgard (1885), no. 450, p. 398.

1340 January 5, Speyer

In order to raise an extraordinary levy imposed by the Emperor, the Jews of Speyer loan money from the civic authorities. The loan is secured by their community property – the synagogue, cemetery, bakery, bathhouse, and all else they may possess:

The ecclesiastical judges of the court of Speyer certify that before them and before the reeve (*schultheizen*) of Speyer, the tax assessors of the Jews and the Jews of Speyer (*der Juden geschozser und die Juden zû Spire*, 21 named individuals) have appeared and declared the following: As far as the 1,200 pounds *heller* are concerned, which Emperor Louis had imposed on them during his recent stay in Speyer, the Jewish community was unable to raise this sum. They therefore had to sell annual rents to be paid from the internal current income (*phennig gelt*) of the Jewish community. They declare that they have sold to the council, the city, and the citizens of Speyer (*den ersamen wisen luten, dem Rate, den Burgern gemeinliche und der Stat von Spire*) a perpetual rent of 100 pounds *heller* for the price of 1.100 pounds *heller*. The

rates have to be paid annually between Christmas Day (25 December) and 6 January (*bis uf den zwolften tag*), starting next Christmas.

The Jews have secured the loan, in the name of the Jewish community, with their synagogue (*ir schûle*), cemetery (*kirchof*), bakery (*baghus*), bath-house (*badestoben*), and all other possessions that the community may presently own or own in future within the city and district (*burgbanne*) of Speyer. In case a yearly payment is delayed the rate will be doubled. If a Jew leaves the city the others will still be bound to the full annual rate. The rate may be redeemed any year until St George's day by payment of 1,100 pounds (or half of it with 550 pounds). The city is also entitled to demand full repayment when it needs the money; in this case the Jews will have to pay within two months. The deed is witnessed by the two mayors of the city and sealed by the court and by the city.

The "bath-house" (*badestoben*) is most probably the *mikveh*. It is likely that the Jews came to a settlement with the Emperor soon afterwards, as Louis granted them confirmation of their "good customs and liberties" on 31 July 1340.

Speyer, Stadtarchiv, 1 U 263 (original charter). – Ed.: Hilgard (1885), no. 461, pp. 403–10. – Lit.: Ziwes (1994), p. 125 n. 140.

82 1343 April 26 (1 Iyar [5]103), Germersheim

Reference is made in the martyrology of the Nuremberg *Memorbuch* to a Jewish leper-house in or near Germersheim:

In the year 103 of the account, on Shabbat, 24 Nisan, the members of the community of Wachenheim, in the same week the community of Lamsheim and the community of Neustadt near Speyer, and on Shabbat, the New Moon of Iyar 103, the sick people (החולים) who were housed in Germersheim were burned to death, along with all the healthy ones there, 103 [victims in all]. May God avenge their blood!

Apparently this institution had been under the protection of the Archbishop of Mainz, who on 21 September 1343 granted the building to his cathedral chapter "in case the Jews would give it up and fail to continue paying their taxes" for it.

The house was apparently abandoned after the pogrom: On 6 September 1344 Emperor Louis granted to Engelhard of Hirschhorn the protection of the "leprous Jews (*malatschen iuden*) in the leper-court (*in dem malatschhoffe*), wherever that may be and under whose authority they may live (*wo der ist oder hinder weme die geseszen sint*)".

The Jewish house for lepers (Hebr. חולים, lit. 'the sick') in Germersheim was the only known institution of its kind in Ashkenaz. The house was administered by a Jew of Speyer, who died in the attack of 1349 (below, no. 88).

Nuremberg *Memorbuch* (private collection; photocopy at Jerusalem, Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts, no. 2828 P), fol. 105a.; Darmstadt, Hessisches Staatsarchiv, C 1 A, no. 16, fols 77v–78r. – Ed.: Salfeld (1898), pp. 60 and 218–19; Barzen (2011), no. 79. – Lit.: *Germania Judaica*, II (1968), pp. 277, 464, 544, 858; Ziwes (1994), pp. 91–92, 245; Barzen (2008); Mentgen (2015), no. 284.

1343 October 17 (28 Tishrei, [5]104)

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Before a Jewish court, three Jews – Ya'aqov ben Moshe, his son Moshe and his son-in-law Yeḥi'el ben Ya'aqov – pledge to personally appear before the archbishop of Mainz [Henry III] on 16 Ḥeshvan 104 (4 November 1343), in either Bingen or Eltville. Should they fail to keep their promise, they accept excommunication "in the three communities ShUM – Speyer, Worms and Mainz" (ב'ג קהילות שו"ם שפירא וורמשא מגענצא).

The Hebrew charter, issued by Me'ir ben Shmu'el, Ḥayyim Kohen and Shmu'el ben Moshe, is indicative of the influence of the ShUM communities in the whole archbishopric of Mainz and of their legal rulings, set down in the *Taqqanot ShUM* more than a century earlier. See also nos 84–86.

Würzburg, Staatsarchiv, Mainzer Urkunden, no. 4218 (original charter). – Ed.: Grünfeld (1905), p. 67. – Lit.: Salfeld (1916), pp. 151–52; *Germania Judaica*, II (1968), pp. 83, 208, 768; Kneib (2009), pp. 110–11; Barzen (2013), pp. 29–30; Barzen in Mentgen (2015), no. 285.

84 1343 Oct. 22 {3 Marḥeshvan 5102}, Eltville

Me'ir ben Avraham and Me'ir ben Shim'on Ḥayyim ha-Kohen witness and record the following declaration made before them by Qalonymos ben Avraham and Gedalya ben Ya'aqov ha-Levi:

Qalonymos and Gedalya confirm that they have reached an agreement with Archbishop Henry [III] of Mainz. According to this agreement they will pledge a deposit of 5,000 florins each to the Archbishop for the time of their settlement in his lands. Should they fail to keep their promises, they take on themselves "the threats of the minor (*nidduy*) and major ban (*herem*) as well as excommunication (*shamta*) of the ShUM Communities' (וגזר' נ'ח'ש מקהלות ש'ו'ם).

The Hebrew charter is indicative of the influence of the ShUM communities in the whole archbishopric of Mainz and of their legal rulings, set down in the *Taqqanot ShUM* more than a century earlier. See also nos 83 and 85–86.

Würzburg, Staatsarchiv, Mainzer Urkunden, no. 3990 (original charter). – Ed.: Barzen in Mentgen (2015), no. 286. – Lit.: Grünfeld (1905), p. 8; Salfeld (1916), pp. 152–52 (dating 25 November); *Germania Judaica*, II (1968), p. 208; Ziwes (1994), p. 183 (dating November); Barzen (2013), pp. 29–30.

85 1343 November 25 (7 Kislev [5]104)

Before a Jewish court, Gedalya ha-Levi and his brother-in-law Qalonymos [cf. no. 84] declare that they have reached an agreement with Archbishop Henry [III] of Mainz concerning their taxes and set down in a Latin deed. Should they fail to keep their promises they take upon themselves

"the major ban (*herem*) of the communities ShUM" (בחרם חמורה של הקהלות ש'ו'ם).

The Hebrew deed, issued by Yosef ben Yisra'el Thann, Ḥayyim ben Eli'ezer and Yiṣḥaq ben Shmu'el *Lorch*, is indicative of the influence of the ShUM communities in the whole archbishopric of Mainz and of their legal rulings, set down in the *Taqqanot ShUM* more than a century earlier. See also nos 83–84 and 86.

Darmstadt, Hessisches Staatsarchiv, Best. A 2, no. 17/56 (original charter). – Ed.: Salfeld (1916), no. 2, pp. 335–36. – Lit.: Grünfeld (1905), pp. 7–8; Róth (1963), p. 90; Battenberg (1995), no. 68, pp. 22–23; Barzen (2013), pp. 29–30; Heinemann (2014), pp. 133, 155; Barzen in Mentgen (2015), no. 287.

1343 November 25, [Eltville]

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Ya'aqov ben Moshe, his son Moshe and his son-in-law Yehi'el ben Ya'aqov (cf. no. 83) declare that they have undertaken to move away from Eltville to settle in Bingen and not to leave the latter town without the archbishop's permission. They have pledged with all their belongings that they will keep their obligation. Should they fail to keep it, they take upon themselves "the ban (*herem*) of the three ShUM Communities" (חרם שלשה הקהילות ש'ו'ם). – Witnesses: Yosef ben Yisra'el Thann, Ḥayyim ben Eli'ezer and Yiṣḥaq ben Shmu'el *Lorch*.

The Hebrew charter is indicative of the influence of the ShUM communities in the whole archbishopric of Mainz and of their legal rulings, set down in the *Taqqanot ShUM* more than a century earlier. See also nos 83–85.

Darmstadt, Hessisches Staatsarchiv, Best. A 2, no. 17/55 (original charter). – Ed.: Salfeld (1916), no. 1, p. 335. – Lit.: Salfeld (1903), p. 90; Grünfeld (1905), pp. 7–8; *Germania Judaica*, II (1968), pp. 80 (illus.), 83, 280, 493, 516; Battenberg (1995), no. 67, p. 22; Burgard (1992), pp. 50–51; Ziwes (1994), p. 184; Kneib (2009), p. 111; Barzen (2013), pp. 29–30; Barzen in Mentgen (2015), no. 288.

In recompense for their service, King Charles IV donates to the citizens of Worms the Jews and Jewry of Worms, their persons and possessions and all the proceeds and rights over them. The city may henceforth do as they please with their Jews, with no further intervention of the crown.

Dar umb so han wir den selben bürgirn zû Wormezen die . . Jûden und die Jûdescheit zû Wormeszen mir irme libe und gûde und mit allen nûtzen und rehten, gesuht und ungesuht, die wir und unsere vorfarn an dem riche Romesche . . keisere und kûnege an den Jûden und zuû der Jûdescheide zû Wormeszen biz her hant gehabit oder vorbasz haben möhten mit gerihte oder ane gerihte, vergiftet und vergeben, geben und giften an diesem briefe ûnwiederrûffelichen, also daz die stat und die bürgere zû Wormeszen mit den Jûden und der Jûdescheide zû Wormeszen mogent dûn und laszen, brechen und bûszen, als mit irme gûde nû und allewege, ane allen unsirn zorn und wyderrede.

Earlier obligations of these Jews, granted by the kings to other individuals, remain valid.

The grant is characteristic of Charles's policies in the years during his struggle for the German throne (1346–49), when he needed political support and ready cash. This particular grant, however, is more inclusive than earlier charters issued by Charles IV, by his late rival, Emperor Louis IV (d. 1347, cf. nos 70 and 74), or by their predecessors. It notably includes the Jewish properties. When Jews resettled in Worms in 1353 following the pogrom of 1349, they had to rent these properties from the city. Notwithstanding, later German kings continued to address the Jews of Worms as “serfs of the royal chamber”.

Worms, Stadtarchiv, U 153 (A) and (B) (original charters), U 228 (confirmation by King Wenceslas on 1378 Agust 28); Darmstadt, Hessisches, C 1 A, no. 147, fol. 9r (copy); *ibid.*, A 14, no. 2846 (copy of 1500 July 7). – Ed.: Boos (1890), II, no. 370, pp. 258–59; MGH Const. VIII, no. 459, pp. 492–93. – Lit.: Wigand (1845), no. 6, pp. 103–05; Battenberg (1995), no. 80, p. 26; Holtz (2013), p. 106.

Against the background of a major plague outbreak in Europe since 1347/48, the Jews are wrongly accused of well-poisoning. From 1348 the accusations lead to intense persecution, affecting most of the Jewish communities in eastern France and Germany.

1. One contemporary chronicler, Henry of Diesenhoven, provides a list of places and dates for the persecutions. According to him the Jews of Speyer were killed on 24 January (*viii. kal. febr.*) 1349.

2. Another well-informed contemporary, Mathias of Neuenburg, provides a different date and also other details:

In Speyer the Jews convened in their houses and burned themselves [to death]. Some of them were killed by the populace on the Saturday after Epiphany of the same year [= 10 January] and lay dead in the streets. Some escaped the fire; they were taken and baptized. The people of Speyer, fearing that the air would be infected by the stench of the bodies, had these bodies placed in empty wine-barrels and dumped in the Rhine.

Without naming specific places, Neuenburg goes on to say that

the cities, however, built new towers from the stones of the killed Jews's houses they had broken down, from those set over their graves (*lapidibus super sepulcris constitutis*) and of their cemeteries (*et cimiteriorum suorum*) and from the treasures they had found. They repaired the town walls with the stones (*cum lapidibus muros refecerunt*) and turned the treasures they found to public uses.

Early modern local historians of Speyer took this passage to imply that headstones were used for building purposes in their city in 1349. Thus, Lehmann (1662) offers a German paraphrase of Neuenburg's medieval Latin chronicle:

Aber die Stätte haben von den Steinen der abgebrochenen Judenhäuser / Judenkirchhöfen / und Mauren darumb / deßgleichen den Grabsteinen /

neue Thürn erbauet / und die Stattmauren
verbessert und erhöht / und die gefundene
Schätze zu ihrer Stätte Nutzen verwendet.

There is, however, no independent confirmation that the said course of events unfolded here in 1349. (Another date given by Lehmann for the appropriation of the headstones is 1353, but this relates to the return of the Jews.)

The headstones preserved today date from the 12th to 15th centuries and there is no indication as to when they were taken away from the Jewish cemetery (cf. Engels 2004).

3. The persecution of Jews in Speyer (שפירא) in 1349 is also mentioned in a *piyyuṭ* by the contemporary scholar Yisra'el (Suesslin) ben Yo'el. R. Yisra'el records the series of pogroms until the end of May or early June 1349. He notes that Speyer was “head of the three” (היא ראש בהשלישה), meaning the first of the three communities of Speyer, Worms and Mainz to be attacked (Bernfeld 1924).

4. The martyrologies in the *memorbooks* of Nuremberg and of Deutz list the martyrs of Speyer and the surrounding Jewish settlements (Salfeld 1898; cf. Barzen 2002).

Heinrich von Diessenhoven (1868), p. 70; Mathias von Neuenburg (1924–40), pp. 423–24, 426; Lehmann (1662), pp. 788–89 (on 1349), 804 (on 1353); Bernfeld (1924), II, pp. 121–42, at p. 125; Salfeld (1898), pp. 69, 81, 246, 280. – Lit.: *Germania Judaica*, II (1968), p. 779; Haverkamp (1981), pp. 56, 78–79; Müller (1994), p. 145; Barzen (2002), pp. 312, 315–16; Cluse (2002), pp. 225 nn. 10–12; Debus (2004), pp. 33–37; Engels (2004), pp. 97 n. 20.

89 1349 Februar 11, Speyer

King Charles IV grants to his follower, the nobleman Engelhard of Hirschhorn, “the synagogue (*die Juden shul*) and all the houses of the Jews of Speyer, which they had left behind (*und aller Juden huser czu Spier in der stat, die sie hinder in gelaßen haben*)”, in exchange for a loan of 2,000

gold florins and for as long as the loan is not fully paid back.

Engelhard of Hirschhorn is known to have provided refuge to several Jews of Speyer at the time of persecution, and it is possible that he was acting on their behalf. However, his demands were opposed by the city council, who sealed off the Jewish quarter and successfully petitioned the king to hand over the Jews’ properties to the city (cf. no. 91). For Charles’s policy of granting rights over the Jews in the German cities, see also nos. 87 and 92.

Darmstadt, Hessisches Staatsarchiv, C 1 A, no. 16, fols 61r–v (15th-century copy). – Ed.: MGH Const. IX (1974), no. 167, p. 131. – Lit.: Eckhardt (1973), no. 81, p. 71; Battenberg (1995), no. 83, p. 27; Holtz (2013), p. 219.

1349 March 1 (10 Adar [5]109), Worms

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On this day the Jews of Worms fell victim to the persecutions in connection with the advent of the “Black Death” plague (cf. above, no. 88). The date is ascertained by the fact that the Jewish community later instituted a day of fasting in commemoration of the victims.

1. The contemporary Latin chronicler Mathias of Neuenburg claims that “the Jews of Worms, like those of Speyer, Oppenheim and Mainz, burned themselves [do death]” (*se ipsos combusserunt*). In another recension of his chronicle he specifies that “in Speyer and Worms the Jews congregated in one house and set themselves on fire” (*Spire autem et Wormacie Iudei in una domo congregati combusserunt se ipsos*). The practice collective suicide in “sanctification of the [divine] Name” (*qiddush ha-Shem*) is known from earlier persecutions (cf. no. 16) and from other sources of the plague year. The charter by Charles IV issued on 29 March 1349 (cf. no. 92) confirms that the Jews were killed by fire.

2. The persecution in Worms is commemorated in numerous Hebrew sources – for example, in

R. Yisra'el's *piyyuṭ* (above, no. 89) and in the *memorbooks* of Nuremberg and Deutz. A memorial list of the martyrs of Worms killed in 1349, with c. 480 names, is preserved in the local memorbooks as well as in a manuscript copied in Reichshoffen (Alsace) in 1631.

3. A *piyyuṭ* written for the 10th of Adar by a certain R. Me'ir describes the persecution with great emotion but does not give historical details.

The later custom, attested in the 17th century, for this day included visiting the cemetery, where special attention was given to the graves of the "twelve *parnassim*". The twelve community elders, who allegedly stood a fight against the Christian councilmen before they died, are the heroes of a local Jewish legend (cf. no. 204.10).

The pogrom of 1 March 1349 occurred fourteen months after King Charles had granted the rights over the local Jews away to the citizens of Worms (no. 87). The king repeated the donation of the Jewish properties in connection with his charter of pardon, issued four weeks later (no. 92). The persecution thus marked a significant break in the history of both the Jewish community and of its properties in Worms.

Mathias von Neuenburg (1924–40), pp. 266, 424–25, 535; Salfeld (1898), pp. 69, 67–68, 73–77, 79, 81 (Hebr.), 246, 254–55, 259–66, 272, 280 (German translation); Berliner (1900), pp. 110–12 (Me'ir, German translation); Bernfeld (1924), II, pp. 106–08 (Me'ir), 121 (Suesslin). – Lit.: Zunz (1855), pp. 42–43; Haverkamp (1981), pp. 48, 78–79; Graus (1987), pp. 162, 260, 342; Bönnen (2005), pp. 216–17; Raspe (2004); Roemer (2010), p. 27.

91 1349 March 29, Speyer

King Charles IV waives all claims against the citizens of Speyer regarding the death of the local Jews (cf. no. 88). He grants them the properties the Jews had left behind and allows them to accept new Jewish settlers and tax them. In particular, he allows them to make use of the Jewish individual and collective properties:

so hand wir von unserme küniglichen gewalte für uns unde alle unser nachkomen den selben burgern der statd unde der gemeinde gemeinlichen zû Spire zû irre stetde nütz geben unde gebent mit disem brieve die Juden hüsere, hofstetde, boden unde bu unde allez, daz der selben Judescheite zû Spire gemeinlichen oder sûnderlichen zû gehorte, wie die gût genant sint, in der statd oder in der vorstat zû Spire gelegen, also, daz sie die selben burgere unde die statd zû Spire daran irre stetde nutz gemeinlichen furwenden sollent unde mögent unde mit dem selben gûten allen dún unde laßen nach allem irme willen ane alle irrunge unde wider rede unser unde eyns ieglichen, an alle geverde.

A similar grant was issued for the city of Worms on the same day (no. 92).

Speyer, Stadtarchiv, 1 U 75 (original charter, lost); 1 U 172 (*vidimus* of 1393 October 22). – Ed. Hilgard (1885), no. 519, pp. 456–57; MGH Const. IX (1974), no. 197, pp. 153–54. – Lit.: Lehmann (1662), pp. 789–90; Battenberg (1990), no. 88, pp. 61–62; Debus (2004), pp. 35–37; Holtz (2013), p. 232.

1349 March 29, Speyer

92

King Charles IV waives all claims against the citizens of Worms regarding the death of the local Jews by fire (cf. no. 88). He grants them "all the properties they may have come into their hands at the time of the fire or afterwards" (*alles daz gût daz in den selben burgern von Wormeszen in dem brande unde nach dem brande worden were oder noch werden möhte, ez si ligende oder varennde*) and allows them to accept new Jewish settlers and tax them.

In particular, he allows them to make use of the Jewish individual and collective properties (*die juden hüsere hofestetde boden unde bu unde alles daz der selben Judescheit zû Wormessen gemeinlichen oder sunderlichen zû gehörete*). The wording largely corresponds to that of the charter granted to Speyer on the same day (no. 91).

Worms, Stadtarchiv, 1 A, Nr. 156/2 (original charter); *ibid.*, U 228 (confirmation by King Wenceslas, 1378 July 28); Darmstadt, HSA, C 1, no. 142, fols 9r-v (copy). – Ed.: Wolf (1862), no. 3, pp. 36–37; Boos (1890), II, no. 385. – Lit.: MGH Const. IX (1974), no. 198, p. 154; Battenberg (1990), no. 87, pp. 61; Battenberg (1995), no. 86, p. 28; Holtz (2013), p. 232.

93 1349 August 23 [8 Elul 5109], Mainz

Unrest is sparked by a minor incident in the city of Mainz, and the Christian populace invades the Jewish quarter.

1. According to the contemporary chronicler Mathias of Neuenburg the Jews first defend themselves but then set the Jewish quarter ablaze:

In fine autem Augusti Moguntie flagellantibus se multis advenis, facto rumore ex abscisione burse et credente populo, quod rumor esset contra Iudeos, ecce omnis populus irruit in Iudeos. Et occisis multis Christianis per eos, videntes se non posse evadere combusserunt domos suas et se ipsos cum rebus.

2. The date is given by Heinrich von Diessenhoven (*x. kal. septembris*); it corresponds to 8 Elul in the Jewish calendar, for which the Jewish community of Mainz later instituted an annual fast day in commemoration of the victims.

3. Chroniclers from nearby Frankfurt date the pogrom to 24 August. The author of the *Annales Francofurtani* confirms that the Jews died both from the fire they had caused themselves and from external violence (*tam per ipsorum ... ignem proprium quam eciam aliunde*), whereas the late-15th century Dominican Peter Herp writes that they were burnt to death by the citizens (*a civibus eiusdem civitatis igni traditi et combusti fuerunt*).

Local tradition has it that the bell of the nearby church of St Quentin was smelted by the fire, and the glass windows destroyed.

4. Yet another version, told by Henry “the Deaf” of Selbach (d. 1364), claims that 300 armed Jews

took up arms and killed 200 unarmed Christian attackers before they were overwhelmed by the citizens and “about 12,000 Jews” were killed. In this report, not only the numbers are unreliable.

5. The pogrom is memorized in the *memorbooks* of Nuremberg and Deutz as well as in other Jewish sources.

The likely destruction of the synagogue and other community facilities can no longer be traced archaeologically.

Mainz, Stadtbibliothek, Hs. 4° 84, add. p. 39; Heinrich von Diessenhoven (1868), p. 70; Mathias von Neuenburg 269, 424–25; *Annales Francofurtani* (1868), p. 395; Froning (1884), pp. 59 (Peter Herp); Heinrich Taube von Selbach, MGH SS rer. Germ. n.s. 1 (1922), pp. 92–93; Serarius (1624), 856–57. – Lit.: Schaab (1855), pp. 86–87; Salfeld (1908), p. 13 n. 25; *Germania Judaica*, II (1968), p. 517 an n. 64 on p. 520; Haverkamp (1981), pp. 38; Cluse (2002), pp. 234–35.

1353 May 9, Worms

The mayor and councilmen of Worms decide to reaccept Jews into the city under certain conditions, to their own advantage, as the chronicler Frederick Zorn reports:

anno eodem donnerstag vor pfingsten haben burgermeister rath und sechzehner gemeiniglich zu Woirms mit wißen willen und rath der hußge- noßen und der zunft um ihrer nutzen willen mit gewissen beding und conditionibus wieder ein- genommen die juden, welche vorhin zum theil erschlagen und gar vertrieben waren worden.

The move was based on a broad consensus and ostensibly motivated by the fact that many outside lords had significant financial claims that the city representatives feared they would have to pay themselves (*damit die stadt die lehen nit entrichten dürft*) (cf. no. 95).

Arnold (1857), p. 139; Schudt (1714), I, p. 405. – Lit.: Mone (1858), p. 270 n. 1; Littmann (1928), pp. 584, 588; *Germania Judaica*, III/2 (1995), p. 1672; Ziwes (1994), p. 128 n. 157; Bönnen (2005), p. 217; Schlachter (2018), p. 42 with n. 33.

94

95 1354 May 28, Worms

The councilmen of Worms declare that in due consideration of the feudal claims resting on the Jews, due to obligations entered before they were slain (*umb semeliche lehen, als sie hatten uff den Juden in unsere . . . stat, ee dan sie herslagen wûrden*), they had found no other solution but to take possession of the properties left behind by the Jews and sell them (*daz wir griffen an der Juden husere und die vorkeuften*) in order to satisfy the claimants. They had therefore sold to their citizen Reinhold of Sinsheim a bakery situated near St Martin's Gate between the house named *Zur Steige* and the Canons of St Martin's (*ein bachus hinder sante Martin gelegen by sancte Martins porthen, als ez gelegen ist hinden und vornen uff eine site beneben deme huse, daz man nennet zû der Stegen, und uff die andern site den herren zû sante Martin*), for 80 pounds *heller*.

The bakery behind St Martin's Gate is named in various deeds of rent since 1294. According to a document of 18 August 1324 it was situated next to the Jews' Gate (about 100 m east of St Martin's Gate). The city council had sold off Jewish properties in this area as early as 16 March 1352. It is significant that they were outside the *Juden-gasse* of the late-medieval/early modern periods. Later, a Jewish bakery was situated within the Jewish quarter.

Darmstadt, Hessisches Staatsarchiv, A 2, no. 255/568 (original charter). – Ed.: Boos (1890), II, no. 472, p. 317. – Lit.: Battenberg (1995), no. 100, p. 32; Ziwes (1994), p. 128; Müller (2018), p. 61.

96 1354 August 18, Speyer

The mayor and council of Speyer declare that together with the guilds of Speyer they have taken the Jews under their protection, for the Jews belonged to the city with their persons and properties (*mit libe unt gûte*). For the common benefit of the city (*durch unserre stetde nucz unde notdurft*) they have specified the neighbourhood between Weavers' Street and the synagogue courtyard, where all Jews present and future shall settle

without exception (*eine wonunge, da sie seshaft unde sedelhaft sin sollent unde anderswo niht . . . unde ist daz in dem begriffe zwûschent der woebergassen unde dem schûlhove hie zû Spire*).

The Jews may build and live in this area under condition that the buildings shall belong to city (*also daz der bu unserre stat eigenlichen zû gehoeren sol*). Should this area prove insufficient in the future due to the immigration of further Jews, the council may decide to let them live elsewhere, provided that the ownership of the houses be always in the council's hands (*daz die eigenschaft dez buwes alle zit unserre stat zû gehoeren sol*).

The charter is sealed with the municipal seal. According to a note preserved with it, the document was handed over to Anselm and various other Jews when they were congregated in the synagogue courtyard (*in loco dicto der Juden Schulehoff Anselmo et quam plurimis aliis Judeis protunc ibidem generaliter congregatis*).

Speyer, Stadtarchiv, 1 U, no. 280 (original charter). – Ed.: Stern (1889), no. 2, pp. 247–48. – Lit.: Voltmer (1981), pp. 108–09; Debus (2004), p. 39; Müller (2018), p. 65; Schlachter (2018), p. 42.

1354 December 24, Speyer

97

The city council of Speyer declare that they have rented out to the Jews the synagogue on condition that the Jews shall present accounts of their expenses for securing and roofing the building and will be reimbursed by the council:

Anno domini M^oCCC^oLIIII in vigilia nativitat^{is} Christi han wir der Rat durch unße stetde nûtz geluhen den Juden zu Spire die Juden schûle also, ist daz sie eyn Rat davon wise[n]t hernach so sol man yn gelten solichen bû als sie daran getan hant an befridende und an deckende.

Furthermore the council have assigned them a place for burial, namely, that part of the Jewish cemetery which is situated between the city gate (*berfrid*) and the *Waltgasse*:

Dar zû han wir yn ouch bescheiden zu eynre begrebede da man sie begraben sol, daz teil dez Juden kyrchhofes zwuschent dem berfride da man ußget und der Waltgassen als daz underscheidet ist.

The *Waltgasse* is probably the same as the *Lange Gassel* later attested as the southern boundary of the Jewish cemetery; the northern boundary and the precise location of the city gate (*berfrid*) are hard to establish (Engels 2004). The cemetery area returned to the Jews was extended in 1358 to cover everything that was not rented out to Christians in the meantime (cf. no. 100).

Speyer, Stadtarchiv, I A no. 694, fol. 46r (copy). – Ed.: Müller (2018), p. 65 n. 48. – Lit.: *Germania Judaica*, II (1968), p. 780; Engels (2004), pp. 97–98, 104; Härter (2010), p. 55, no. 88; Müller (2018).

98 1357 September 17 [2 Tishri 5118], Mainz

For the first time after the persecution of 23 August 1349, we hear of a Jewish burial in *Old Jewish Cemetery Mainz*.

On New Year's day, [5]108, R. El'azar (Zalman) b. Shmu'el ha-Levi, also called *der gut rabi Zalman* (דער גוט רב"י זלמן), passed away (הלך לעולמו) (בראש השנה קי"ח לפרט ביום ראשון). He was buried on the second day "in the holy community of Mainz" (בקה"ק מגנ"צא, *only in ms. F*).

A quotation from El'azar's (lost) headstone, praising him as a "pious (*hasid*) and decent person" (אדם חסיד והגון) is conveyed, together with the ethical will of R. El'azar, in two slightly differing autograph manuscripts written by his grandson, R. Zalman (El'azar) of Sankt Goar. In ms. *F* Zalman presents a genealogy of his learned family reaching back into the founding years of the Jewish community of Worms.

In his ethical will, R. El'azar had given precise instructions concerning his burial:

I beg of you, my sons and daughters, my wife, and all the congregation male and female, that no

funeral oration be spoken in my honor. Do not carry my body on a bier but on a cart. Wash me clean, comb my hair, trim the nails of my hands and feet, as I was wont to do in my life-time, so that I may go clean to my eternal rest, as I went clean to Synagogue every Sabbath day. If the *metaharim* [i.e., those who ritually clean the dead] dislike the duty, let adequate payment be made to some poor man who shall render this service carefully and not perfunctorily.

At a distance of thirty cubits from the grave, they shall set my coffin on the ground, and drag me to the grave by a rope attached to the coffin. Every four cubits they shall stand and wait awhile, doing this in all seven times, so that I may find atonement for my sins. Put me in the ground at the right hand of my father, and if the space be a little narrow, I am sure that he loves me well enough to make room for me by his side. If this be altogether impossible, put me on his left, or near my grandmother, Yuta. Should this also be impractical, let me be buried by the side of my daughter.

Other documents indicate that Jews were returning to Mainz around 1356. On 12 November Archbishop Gerlach ordered the city council to pay the annual tax of 112 marks due from the Jews, and on 27 December King Charles IV took the Jews of Mainz under his special protection.

Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. Mich. 292, fol. 166r (Cat. Neubauer, no. 907/4) (O); Frankfurt a.M., UB, ms. hebr. 8° 94, fol. 239r–v (F). – Ed.: Steinschneider (1869), pp. 23–24 (F); Ta-Shma (1969/70), pp. 140–41. For R. El'azar's ethical will see Abrahams (1926), pp. 207–18. – Lit.: *Germania Judaica*, III/2 (1995), pp. 803, 808 n. 57 and 827 n. 487 (O); Raspe (2009), pp. 46–48; Schlachter (2018), pp. 37–38 n. 20 (erroneously dating to 8 September 1356).

1358 January 5, Mainz

John (*Hennekin*), Katzmann's son, and his wife Irmgard (*Irmel*) have given to certain nuns of the Oldminster nunnery an annual rent of one pound in perpetuity. The rent is secured by various pieces

99

of real estate, including two plots of vineyard situated in the Jewish cemetery, one next to the possessions of Agnes Wosten and the other near those of Henry Spielman:

Auch sint diz die underphant, die do horent vor diz phunt geldis, von erst eyn halp morgē wintgartis, der ist gelegin in dem judin kirchoŭve bi Nesen Wosten, der git eyn halbe fernzal korns zŭ zinse dem pastor, eyn zweyteil wintgartis, auch in dem judin kirchove, daz liget bi Heynen Spilmanne, daz git zwen engelsin zu zinse Kobelin Krazborgers sone.

The deed is significant for mentioning that at this time parts of *Old Jewish Cemetery Mainz* were used for growing wine. While viticulture and fruit-growing trees are frequently attested on the (larger) area of the *Judensand* on many occasions, the use of the cemetery itself for such purposes appears exceptional. It is possibly a result of the persecution of 1349. See also no. 111.

Mainz, Stadtarchiv, Urkunden Altmünster 1358 Januar 5 (original charter); Wiesbaden, HHStA, 47/1, fol. 2r (register). – Ed.: Flug (2006), no. 334, pp. 282–84. – Lit.: Dertsch (1963), no. 1608, p. 267.

100 1358, Speyer

The mayor and council of Speyer declare that they have sold to sixteen named Jewish individuals and to their heirs the Jewish cemetery in Altspeyer (*den Juden kirchhoff zu Altspire gelegen*), including the thoroughfare where the well is situated and the little house in the middle of the cemetery (*mit der hofereyde, da der bronne innestet, und daz husel mitten in dem selben Judenkirchove*), extending as far as the Jews had formerly possessed it (*in aller der maŕe als vormals von alter her Juden den selben kirchhoff gehabet hant*) but excluding those adjoining houses and plots which the city council had meanwhile rented out to Christians and which shall forever remain the city's properties (*uŕngenomen der andern huser und hofe, die dar an stoŕsent, die der Rat*

zu Spire Cristen luden verluhen hat, die sollent alle unŕe stat eigentlichen zugehoren eweclichen).

The sale is in hereditary lease for an annual payment of 30 florins. Payment of the rent is secured with the community properties: the cemetery and its appurtenances (*der vorgeant Judenkirchoff und daz dar zuhoret*) as well as the synagogue (*der Juden Schul*), synagogue courtyard (*schulhoff*), bathhouse (*Badehuŕ*, probably meaning the *mikveh*), bakeries (*Baghusere*), barns (*Schuren*) and gardens (*Gerthen*) and everything else that they have in common (*mit allem dem daz dar zu horet daz sie gemeynes habent*).

The sixteen Jewish individuals, men and women, probably represent the whole Jewish community of Speyer at this time. They are addressed as “our citizens” (*unŕe burgere*). If further Jews settle in Speyer, the Jewish community may assess their share in the rent payment. The rent may be redeemed at a rate of 100 fl. for every five florins of annual rent. No additional payments for the cemetery will be charged.

Speyer, Stadtarchiv, 1 A 50/1, fol. 17r–v (manuscript copy). – Ed.: Müller (2018), no. 1, pp. 75–76. – Lit.: Debus (2004), pp. 40–41, 45; Voltmer, p. 110; Transier (2004), p. 428; Engels (2004), p. 93, 98; Härtel (2017), p. 60; Müller (2018), p. 65.

1360 May 12, Speyer

101

The mayor and council of Speyer declare that they have sold to Henry of Kirspach, prebendary of the cathedral, and his brother John, clerics, and to their legal successors a piece (*ein stŭckel*) of the plot (*hovestat*) situated between the Jewry-Court (*der jŭden schŭlhove*) and the stone houses owned by the two buyers.

The piece consists of a strip 14 shoe (c. 4.90 m) wide before their stone houses and as long as these (*vierzehen schuhe breyt von iren steinhusern zŭ messen, und als lang als die selben ire zwj steinhŭsere sint*), from the corner of their back wall straight to the wall on the streetfront (*von*

der ecke irre hindern muren snürslecht biz an die müre die vornan an der straßen stet) opposite the property of a certain Falk (*gein hern Valken gesesse über gelegen*), on condition that the two brothers erect a wall from the said corner of their back wall to the wall on the streetfront at their own expense (*mit solchen fürworten und rehten, daz sie, die vorgen. gebrüdere ein müre von der ecke irre hindern müren snürslecht biz an die vorder müre an der straßen ufrihten und machen sóllent mit ir selbes kosten*). The wall shall be as high as the wall in front (*in der höhe der vordern müren*), and the brothers shall not have or make openings or windows in it (*also daz sie kein lieht noch venster dar in noch da durch haben noch machen sóllent*).

According to Engels (2004) the new wall later served as the eastern boundary of *Speyer Jewry-Court* (see below, no. 100). The court *Zum Kirschbach* can be identified on the present spot of *Kleine Pfaffengasse 18*.

Mainz, Dom- und Diözesanarchiv, *Speyerer Offizialatsurkunden*, no. 38. (original deed) – Lit.: Debus (2004), p. 45; Engels (2004), pp. 105, 112.

102 (1361) December 24, Speyer

The mayor and council of Speyer declare:

In consideration of the fact that the Jews who now live here or will in the future live here, their citizens, are under their protection and render great service to the city, and in order to encourage them (*und darumb daz sie deste gerner bij uns verlibent und verliben mogent*), they have given them for the sake of peace and well-being as well as for the common benefit of the city “the large synagogue courtyard, called the Jews’ dancing hall” (*den Großen Schulhoff, den man nennet der Juden dantzhus*), which had previously belonged to their synagogue (*die hie fur zu irer Schule gehorte*), situated between the property of Henry of Kirspach and bordering on the new wall (*bisz an die nûwen muren, die der selbe Herr Heinrich*

zwusschen sime husze und dem großen Schulhofe gemacht hat, cf. no. 101), and the little synagogue courtyard opposite Henry of Brackenheim’s plot (*an dem Cleinen Schulhofe gein Herrn Heinrichs von Brackenheim gesesze uber*).

The sale is in hereditary lease for an annual payment of 8 florins. The individual shares in the annual payment will be assessed by the Jewish community or by those they appoint to the task (*von der Judischeit oder von den an die ez die Juden hie zu Spire danne gesetzt han*). The Jews may not sell further rents on the same greater synagogue courtyard.

Speyer, Stadtarchiv, 1 A 50/1, fol. 18r (manuscript copy). – Ed.: Müller (2018), no. 2, pp. 77–78. – Lit.: Mone (1858), pp. 268–69 n. 7; Debus (2004), p. 45; Engels (2004), p. 104 n. 57.

1364 June 26, Mainz

103

Mention is made of a vineyard in the *Judensand* area and a house nearby which is owned by the Jews:

Before the secular court in Mainz the priest Nicholas (*Clas*), attorney for the nuns of St Agnes, enforces claims over a number of free rents, including 9 shillings annually from four acres of vineyard situated ‘on the Jews’ Sands’ (*uff dem Judensande*) and called ‘the old vineyard near the Jews’ house’ (*der alte Wingarte by der Judden hus*).

The house is again mentioned in 1432 (cf. no. 120), in 1462 (when it was set on fire, cf. no.) as well as in 1465, 1488, and 1525. It is likely that it was the *tahara* house used for ritually cleaning the dead before burial.

Darmstadt, Hessisches Staatsarchiv, B 19, no. 35 (original charter); Mainz, Stadtarchiv, U / 1364 Juni 26 (copy in U / 1482 January 21). – Ed.: Baur (1863), no. 1354, pp. 439–40 (faulty). – Lit.: Dertsch (1963), no. 1742, pp. 326–27; Clemm et al. (2006), p. 9.

104 1365 March 11 (16 Adar I, [5]125), Speyer

Epitaph for Barukh ben Eli'ezer in Speyer, a benefactor (*nadiv*) of the community praised for his efforts "in times of wrath" (ובעת הזעם):

Through him the Holy One, blessed be He, sent deliverance to the people who evaded the sword (ובו נתן ה' ית' לעם שרידי חרב תשועה) (cf. Jer. 31:1); he accorded food and grain to the needy (וימן לאביונים מזון ובר) (cf. 1 Mos. 45:23), ... his house was as open as the desert (וביתו פתוח) (cf. bSanh 49a).

The inscription is an outstanding example of the ways in which Jewish communities honour their benefactors after death. While Barukh could not boast much learning (he is called neither *rav* nor *haver*) his skilled diplomacy and generosity in the years following the pogrom of 1349 is commemorated on his headstone from the former Jewish cemetery of Speyer. The headstone is today preserved in the ShPIRA Museum on the grounds of *Speyer Jewry-Court*.

Barukh's precise identity is unclear. His Hebrew name does not appear among those of the sixteen Jewish community members addressed in the city council's charter of 1358 (cf. no. 100). However, the common names of Jewish men used in everyday conversation rarely correspond to their "sacred" names, used for calling a person up to read the Torah as well as on their epitaph.

Speyer, Museum SchPIRA. Yellow sandstone, 89 cm x 125,5 cm x 17 cm. – Ed.: Fuchs-Maul & Bondy (2013), no. 16. – Lit.: Kober (1944), pp. 197–98; Kober (1945), p. 87; Rapp (1960), pp. 169–70; Härtel (2017), pp. 252–53; Cluse (2019), p. 155.

105 1365 December 30, Speyer

Epitaph for Blume, daughter of the learned (*haver*) R. Ya'aqov, in Speyer. Blume is characterized as an "upright and pious" woman (הצדקת והחסיי).

The headstone is exceptional for its floral design element, a large five-leaved flower executed in high quality relief, below the inscription. The

flower echoes the woman's German name, *Blume*. Smaller designs – a star (or the Sun?) and the Moon – are chiseled on the upper left and right corners of the frame. The headstone is today preserved in the ShPIRA Museum on the grounds of *Speyer Jewry-Court*.

Speyer, Museum SchPIRA, in two parts. Yellow sandstone, 83,5 cm x 165,6 cm x 11 cm. – Ed.: Fuchs-Maul & Bondy (2013), no. 17. – Lit.: Kober (1945), p. 87; Rapp (1960), pp. 159, 170–71; Künzl (1999), pp. 75–76.

1375, Speyer

106

In the course of a feud between Count Emicho of Leiningen and the cities of Mainz, Worms and Speyer, the city of Speyer is expecting an attack from the count and his ally, the Count Palatinate Ruprecht. The council gathers troops who assemble partly within the walls of the Jewish cemetery and partly in a clay pit (*der Rath zu Speyr versahe und bestellt die Stadt zur Nothdurft mit Kriegsvolck, deren theils uff den Juden Kirchof, theils auf die Leimengruben, gehalten*).

The episode shows that the Jewish cemetery was still the only sizeable area in the northern suburb secured by a wall (cf. no. 70). In fact the village of Altspeyer was burnt down by Archbishop Adolf one year later.

Lehmann (1711), p. 723 (cf. 726). – Lit.: Wiener (1863), p. 429; Müller (1994), p. 297.

1377, Baghdad

107

R. David ben Hodiya, supreme authority (*exilarch*) of the Jews in Baghdad, issues a solemn decree (*herem*) in favour of R. Shmu'el ben Aharon Schlettstadt, who had suffered violence in his home region on account of a sentence he passed against Jewish informers. The decree is addressed to the scholars of the ShUM Communities:

יתברכו באלהי עולם, עיר ועיר מדינה ומדינה יודע

מדע ואנשי תבונה, קהלות שו"ם אשר בידם מקל
ורצועה נתונה. יסדו ק"ן רבנים משפטם לכוננה, כן
ספר לנו הרב הזה והגדיל שבחם כהנה וכהנה.

Blessed be you by God eternal, in every city (*ir*)
and every land (*medina*), you prudent and dis-
cerning ones, the communities ShUM, in whose
hands the staff and the strap is given. 150 rabbis
have founded their law, as this rabbi [i.e., the
bearer of the letter] has reported, extolling their
praise manifold.

An additional note written by a representative
of the Jewish community in Jerusalem, where
Shmu'el Schlettstadt had passed on his way back,
attests to the veracity of his reports concerning
the events back home, for he had shown written
documents from the ShUM Communities (קהלות
שו"ם) bearing the signatures of specific rabbis.

Ed.: Coronel (1864), p. 107. – Lit.: Reiner (1984), pp. 48–49; *Ger-
mania Judaica*, III/2 (1995), pp. 1320–21; Barzen (2013), pp. 23–24.

108 1381 early August, Mainz

An assembly of rabbis, scholars and lay leaders
convenes in Mainz and passes ordinances on
aspects of marital law. The local representatives
include R. Moshe ben Yekuthi'el ha-Levi Molin
(father of the famous MaHaRIL, on whom cf. no.
119), R. Avraham ben Gamli'el ben Pedazur
(MaHaRIL's father-in-law), R. Samuel Bonfant
(son of El'azar ben Shmu'el ha-Levi, cf. no. 98).
Rabbis from abroad were also present (Menlin of
Rothenburg and Meir of Nordhausen, who may
have lived in Cologne at the time).

The ordinances were adopted by most of the
Rhenish communities (but not by Cologne). Bar-
zen (2013) notes that the resumption of regional
taqqanot in Mainz coincides with the revival of
the regional town league (the association of the
Christian city communities).

Lit: Finkelstein (1964), pp. 252–53; Zimmer (1978), p. 21; Elon
(1994), p. 792; *Germania Judaica* III, II (1995), pp. 796–97; Barzen
(2013), pp. 28, 32.

King Wenceslas extends a royal charter of pro-
tection and liberties to "his chamber servants"
(*unsern camercknechten*) the Jews of Cologne,
Mainz, Worms, Speyer and Frankfurt as well as all
those living in other towns who "belong in the
cemeteries situated near or in the aforement-
ioned cities" (*gesessen in den steten Colne, Meintz
und Wurmes, Speyer und Frankenfurt und allen an-
dern iuden in andern steten und merkten gesessen,
die in die vreythöfe gehoren, die bey und in den vor-
genannten steten gelegen sind*).

The charter is important evidence of the fact that
the administration of a cemetery was a factor
elevating a Jewish community over the Jewish
settlements of the surrounding area: According to
Jewish customary law those Jews from outside a
city who buried their dead in the city's cemetery
were also obliged to appear before the rabbinic
courts there. The same regional relations of au-
thority were also used to define the areas of tax
collection. In fact, the Jews living in the wider
urban *hinterland* often formed part of the city's
Jewish community.

On the same day the king issued mandates to the
civic councils of Cologne and Worms to protect
the lives and properties of local Jews against in-
justice. The move follows after two rounds of
"debt cancellations" the king himself had author-
ized, the second of which had also affected the
Jews of the said cities in the Rhineland.

Köln, *Historisches Archiv der Stadt*, 2/4353 (original charter). – Ed.:
Ennen & Eckertz, VI (1879), no. 18, pp. 32–34; Boos, II (1890), no.
959 p. 628; Kracauer (1914), I, no. 389, pp. 157–58. – Lit.: Mencil
(1932), p. 87, n. 242; Battenberg (1983), II, no. 941a, pp. 496–97;
Ziwes (1994), pp. 82–83; Schnur (2017), p. 133 n. 475 and p. 317.

1393, Speyer

A windmill is erected in the Jewish cemetery of
Speyer. Christoph Lehmann, the 17th-century
civic chronicler, reports: *Anno 1393: Die Wind-
mühl auffm Judenkirchoff erbawet*.

Johann Melchior Fuchs, editor of the 4th edition of Lehmann's chronicle, adds that the masonry was done by the city's stonemasons and the mechanism constructed by a master from Mainz (*selbige hat ein Meister von Maintz um 67 fl., das Mauerwerk aber der Stadt Steinmetzen umb 36 fl. gemacht, und man über das dem Zimmermann vor 10 fl. Tuch geschenckt*). The first grain was processed here in 1394, by a miller who came from the Low Countries.

The windmill is mentioned again in 1545 but went out of use in the 16th century. It was demolished in 1614, but a few remains were visible on the spot until the 18th century.

Lehmann (1662), p. 847; Lehmann (1711), p. 767. – Weiss (1875), pp. 17–18; Klotz (1952); Klotz (1956); Stromer (1978), p. 100.

111 1402 January 10, Mainz

Mention is made of a piece of vineyard within *Old Jewish Cemetery Mainz*.

Before the court of (Gau-)Algesheim a perpetual rent of 1 fl. annually is recorded, payable to the prior and brothers of the Carmelites (*unser lieben frauwen brüder ordins*) in Mainz. The rent is secured by three plots of vineyard, one of which is situated "in the Jewish cemetery" (*in dem Judenkyrchoffe*), between the plots of *Hasen's* (?) heirs and of Jacob (*Jeckel*) Smyd.

This is one of the few mentions in which *Old Jewish Cemetery Mainz* itself is explicitly referred to (as opposed to the *Judensand* area as a whole) (cf. also no. 97).

Mainz, StadtA, U / 1402 Januar 10 (original charter).

112 1406, (Worms)

A prayer book (*siddur*) completed, according to Brüll (1879), in 1406 features short notes on two of the *piyyuṭim* it contained. They were allegedly found in the study house (*bēt ha-Midrash*) of

R. El'azar ben Yehuda (cf. no. 30) in Worms:

אחד מי יודע פיוט זה וגם חד גדיא אמרו שמצאו גנוז
בין כותלי בית המדרש בגרמיזא ולא נידע מי הוא
המחברו וקבעי לאומרו בליל שמורים

The *piyyuṭ Eḥad mi yode'a* and also *Ḥad gadiya* were found, as they say, stowed away in the walls of the *bēt ha-Midrash* in Worms. Their author is unknown, and they are performed on the watch-night. ...

הנה פיוט זה מזמרין בכל תפוצות ישראל ושמעתי
שמצאו זה הפיוט ואחד מי יודע גנוז וכתוב על הקלף
בבית המדרש הרוקח בגרמיזא וקבעו אותו לזמר
בליל פסח

This *piyyuṭ* here is chanted all over the Jewish diaspora. I have heard that this *piyyuṭ* and also *Eḥad mi yode'a* were found hidden and written on parchment in the *bēt ha-Midrash* of the *Roqeaḥ* in Worms. They are to be sung on the night of Passover.

The manuscript from which Brüll quoted could not be determined. The veracity of the claim that the *piyyuṭim* in question were found hidden in a study house in Worms cannot be ascertained. It is possible that the narrative, based on the renown of the *Roqeaḥ* (R. El'azar ben Yehuda), was meant to give a noble origin to a popular *piyyuṭ*.

Epstein (1901), however, proposed that the note may refer to an early *yeshiva* building in Worms. See also above, no. 45.

Unidentified ms., fols 43a and 47a. – Ed.: Brüll (1879), p. 97 (extracts). – Lit.: Epstein (1901), p. 49.

1412, Speyer

113

A fosse is dug out behind the Jewish cemetery (*der Graben hinder dem Judenkirchhof aufgeworfen*), in connection with the extension of the urban walls under way since c.1380. No more precise information is available.

Lehmann (1711), S. 797. – Lit.: Müller (1994), p. 153.

114 1413 January 25, Speyer

The city council of Speyer rents out to John Kopf (*Hans Kopphen*) the Jewish cemetery and the house thereby (*den Judenkirchoff und das huß daran*) for four years. He may take all the proceeds thereof, excepting the cemetery of the Jews as far as it extends (*ußgenommen der Juden begrebde als wyt die begriffen hat*). He is obliged to repair the fence around the rented grounds (*die zune umb und umb die selbe bestentnisse*) and keep it in customary repair (*in gewonlichen buwe*). If the fence is damaged by citizens he may take them to court before the council.

Speyer, StadtA, 1 A 845, fol. 32r. – Lit.: Engels (2004), p. 98 (“fol. 52r” is erroneous).

115 1415 June 27, Speyer

The mayor and council of Speyer rent out a stretch of land including the Jewish cemetery to a weaver named John of Lommer for an annual rent of 15 florins. John had proposed to them a plan to set up a business for weaving fustian (*barchant*) in Speyer in return for certain rights. The mayor and council allows him to exert his trade under the following detailed conditions:

John and his wife Margaret (*Metze*) as well as their heirs and successors, inasmuch as they become citizens of Speyer and exert the trade of weaving fustian, will receive the city’s “plot or garden called the Jews’ cemetery” (*unser flecken und garthen genant der Judenkirchoff*) as a bleach, as far and wide as the city’s ownership of the Jewish cemetery extends (*als verre und wijt wir und unsere stat den selben Judenkirchoff inne gehabt hant und begriffen ist*), in hereditary lease.

Excepted from this contract is the area with Jewish graves and the stones therein (*ußgenommen der Juden begrebde und der steyne dar inne*), as far and wide as the burial site extends (*als wijt und lang die selbe begrebde begriffen hat*). It shall not be subject of the present lease until the stones and coffins have been taken away (*als lang biß das*

die selben steyne und sercke von dannen kommen und gefuret werden); from then on, however, the whole Jewish burial site shall be included in the lease (*so sol alßdanne die selbe Judenbegrebde und flecken gantz und gar miteinander ouch in die vorgeschriben bestentnisse und erbeschafft gehoren*). The lease shall be in effect from Easter 1416. The annual rent amounts to 15 florins, payable in two instalments.

Following detailed provisions concerning the business of fustian weaving in Speyer, the deed finally specifies the council’s prerogative concerning the defence of the city:

The mayors and council reserve the right to build town walls, including towers, fosses and other defence works, around the cemetery (*unsere stetde müren umb den vorgeschriben kirchoff gende mit tornen, mit graben und andere festnunge*).

In times of war they may also use the cemetery for gathering soldiers and armour, day and night (*so mogen wir unser folk mit geschütze und andern notdurfftigen dingen tages und nachtes in den vorenantent Judenkirchoff legen*).

The document shows that the city council was making extensive use of the Jewish cemetery after the (temporary) expulsion of the Jews in 1405. The city officials were even removing, or planning to remove, the remaining gravestones. It is notable that coffins (*sercke*), too, are named. It is unclear how far they had proceeded by the time when, in 1428, Abraham of Miltenberg bought back the cemetery from John’s son (cf. no. 121).

The extension of the town walls to include the northern suburbs was as yet unfinished. As on earlier occasions, the Jewish cemetery with its surrounding walls still served as a fortified assembly-place for the city’s armed militia in times of feud or war (cf. nos. 106 and 131).

Speyer, StadtA, 1 A 4b, fol. 280r–281v (contemporary copy). – Lit.: Stromer (1978), pp. 98–99, 185–88; Engels (2004), p. 98; Härtel (2017), p. 158.

116 1420 June 6, Speyer

Conrad, Archbishop of Mainz, declares that he has passed a sentence of arbitration in the conflict between the Dean and Chapter of Speyer cathedral and the whole clergy of Speyer, on the one hand, and the mayors, council and citizens of Speyer, on the other. One of the three issues at stake was “the rent from the synagogue and the embankment” (*Item von des zinses wegen uff der juddenschüle und dem spijche*).

The details of the quarrel and the sentence of arbitration itself are not provided. It is possible that the city had appropriated the synagogue after the (temporary) expulsion of the Jews in 1405 and failed to pay the rent the Jews were wonte to pay to the clerics of Speyer from their synagogue.

Speyer, Stadtarchiv, I U, 1420 Juni 6 (original charter). – Lit.: Härter & Stolleis (2010), pp. 66–67.

117 1423 November/December, Worms

Dispute between John, Bishop of Worms, and the city council over the burial of a Jew from a settlement outside Worms: On 16 November Bishop John complained that the city had stopped a Jewish burial, despite the fact that the ordinary toll for such burials had been paid to his official:

Uns ist vorkumen, das kurzlich ein doter Jude gen Wormeß bracht sy, den man da in dem Judenkirchoff begraben wolt haben, vnd man habe vnsern keller den zolle davon geben, als von alter her gewonlich vnd unß friheit und Recht ist. Da habent Ir die betrenget, den Juden wieder enweg zufuren, vnd vns vnseres zolles und friheit entwert, das vns vnbillich vn uch nynt.

The city council replied on 26 November that the King had outlawed the city’s Jews for disobedience and told them to leave the city, which is why they were unwilling to allow Jewish burials at this time:

uwere gnaden lassen wir wissen, daß unser allernedigster Herre der romsche Konig die Juden by

vns umb vnghehorsamkeit in die Achte getan hat vnd deshalben die Juden von vns heißen ziehen vnd darum ist vns nit bequemlich, zu diesser zyt Juden by vns lassen zu begraben.

On 3 December the Bishop countered that indeed the city was allowing Jews to go in and out, and asked for an explanation why he was being impeded in his rights:

Laßen wr uch wießen, daß uns vorku(m)men ist, das Ir die Juden bij uch uß und In laßent wandeln und Ire wesen in der Stat laßent haben, und understent uns doch an unsern Czöllen, ffrriheiden und Rechten zu hindern.

In February 1425, King Sigismund entrusted Margrave Bernhard with confiscating the houses of those Jews in Worms who had left the city, asking the magistrate to assist the Margrave in claiming these properties and selling them off.

Worms, Stadtarchiv, 1 B 2025/1–2. – Ed.: Levy (1911), pp. 11–12 (November 16). Lit.: Reuter (1983), p. 44; Ziwes (1994), pp. 81–82.

First quarter of the 15th century, Mainz

118

Description of a wedding ceremony in Mainz, written by Zalman of Sankt Goar, student and secretary of Rabbi Ya’aqov ben Moshe Molin (cf. nos 97 and 119). The festivities focus on the synagogue and synagogue courtyard. The following is a paraphrase, focusing on these places:

When a wedding was held in Mainz during the summer, the wedding meal was on Thursday [...] Very early on Friday the sexton (*shammash*) would call out the people for prayer in the synagogue and for feasting (המאן, cf. German *meyen*). The rabbi would lead the bridegroom before him, and the whole congregation followed, with torches and musicians, to the synagogue courtyard (לחצר בה"כ). Then the bride and her (female) friends were also brought there. When she arrived at the entrance of the synagogue courtyard (פתח חצר בה"כ), the rabbi and the

honourable (חשובים) members of the community would lead her to the bridegroom. The latter took her by the hand, and those around them threw grains of wheat over them, crying out "Be fertile and increase" (1 Mos. 1:22). Together the bridal couple would go to the entrance of the synagogue (פתח בה"כ) and sit down there for a while. Then the bride was brought home again. [...]

The bridegroom was led into the synagogue. He wore his Sabbath clothes and a mitre (מטרון), fastened to his neck according to the custom in the Rhineland (כמנהג בריינוס), in remembrance of the destruction (of the Temple in Jerusalem) (זכר לחורבן). When the bridegroom was seated next to the Holy Ark (התיבה), on the northeastern side, the morning prayer would begin. In Mainz the wedding ceremony would follow right after the morning service. The relatives of the bridegroom and bride had their Sabbath clothes on. R. Ya'aqov ha-Levi (מהר"י סג"ל) would recite the blessings.

The bride would be led before the synagogue entrance (פתח בה"כ) with music. While she was there the rabbi led the bridegroom onto the *migdal* (i.e., the *bēma*) of the synaoguge (על המגדל) (בה"כ). He would strew some ashes under his mitre, on where the phylacteries (*tefilin*) are worn, in remembrance of the destruction (of the Temple). Then the rabbi and the honourable members of the community (חשובים) with him would go and fetch the bride. The rabbi took her by her coat and led her to the bridegroom, to stand on his right (cf. Psalms 45:10); the couple were looking southwards. Their mothers would stand on the *migdal* (על המגדל), i.e., on the *bēma*) during the ceremony (or other relatives if necessary).

It was customary to place the tail of his mitre on her head, thus to form for them a *huppa* (bridal canopy). [...] If the bride lacked ritual purity [i.e., during her menstrual period] the head covering was removed again at once. Two cups were provided, one for the blessing of betrothal and one for the marriage blessing. When the bride was a

virgin, a beaker with a narrow neck was used [...]. When a widower married a widow, the ceremony was performed in the synagogue courtyard at the entrance of the synaogogue (בחצר בה"כ אצל) (פתח בה"כ). [...]

After the betrothal blessing he would call two witnesses and show them the wedding ring, asking whether the ring was worth (at least) one *pruta*, and the two said "yes". If the bride was young he would also ask whether she was of marriageable age. Then he called on witnesses to ascertain whether the bridegroom spoke the marriage formula correctly. [...]

After speaking the formula the bridegroom would put the ring on her finger. If she was ritually impure, he would merely let the ring slip down onto it. Then R. Ya'aqov would ask two other witnesses to read out the betrothal document (*ketubba*) and the marriage accords. If something was amiss, he would leave it to the witnesses to amend, turning his head away eastward. At the words "Be joyful, etc.", he would turn to the couple again.

At the end of the ceremony the rabbi would reach the cup of wine first to the bridegroom and then to the bride, keeping it in his hands. He would then hand it over to the bridegroom, who turned northwards and smashed the glass on the wall (אל הכותל). As soon as this was done, the bridegroom was hurried towards the "bridal house" (לבית חתונה) before the bride.

The lively description offers valuable details, first, concerning the functional proximity of the synagogue courtyard (and its entrance), the synagogue (and its entrance) and the "bridal house" (community hall) in the leading community of the ShUM association.

Secondly, it throws light on the presence of women in the synaogogue on the special occasion of weddings. The mothers of the bridegroom and bride are honoured to watch the main ceremony from the *bēma*, here called *migdal* (מגדל, cf. no. 28). The bride is allowed into the

synagogue even if she is in a state of ritual impurity, and special provisions apply for this case during the ceremony.

The rule that a wedding ring must be worth at least one *pruta* (a copper coin of very low value) has led to the creation of magnificent Jewish wedding rings, as preserved, for example, from Cologne and Erfurt.

The customs (*minhagim*) of Rabbi Ya'acov ben Moshe Molin (known as the MaHaRIL) were recorded by his student and secretary, Zalman of Sankt Goar (El'azar ben Ya'acov, c.1385–c.1470), in several recensions, at least two of which Zalman finished in Northern Italy. They make frequent reference to Mainz and relate numerous religious customs that were specific for the Rhenish Jews or exclusive for the ShUM communities.

Ed.: Sefer Maharil, ed. Spitzer (1989), pp. 463–67. – Lit.: Róth (1963), pp. 117–18 (German translation); *Germania Judaica III*, II (1995), pp. 803–04; Raspe (2018), pp. 178–80.

119 1427 September 14 (22 Elul [5]187), Worms

Headstone in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* for R. Ya'acov b. Moshe Molin (known as the MaHaRIL). This tombstone is situated in the middle of the so-called “Vale of the Rabbis” at the southern end of the cemetery, so named on account of the highly renowned scholars buried here.

The rhyming epitaph, which presumably feature an acrostich (the first letters of each line reading **משה בנו הלוי**) is full of praise for R. Ya'acov's “immaculate soul” (**נפש תמה**) and his teaching, calling him not only a “teacher and master” (**מרנא**) but a leader (“great one”) of his generation (**גדול הדור**).

Under R. Ya'acov's leadership the *yeshivot* of Mainz had flourished again, and numerous highly-esteemed scholars studied here. The students were supported by the community and by charitable foundations. The MaHaRIL's teachings are

conveyed in the responsa and customs collected by his student and secretary, Zalman of Sankt Goar (cf. no. 116). It is known that the MaHaRIL convened a rabbinical 'snyod' of the leaders of ShUM (Speyer, Worms and Mainz) at an unknown date in the second or third decade of the 15th century, possibly in 1421. At this time, when the “Crusade” against the Hussites of Bohemia was endangering the safety of the Jewish communities, he sent missives to all the surrounding communities asking for special prayers, and he decreed that only a shofar made from a ram's horn (and not from another animal) was ritually appropriate. In 1426 King Sigismund nominated three rabbis to represent the Jewish community of the Empire (and to collect their taxes); one of them was R. Ya'acov Molin.

The stone is exceptional in that it shows an eastward orientation, in contrast to all other graves in Worms, which are facing north. It seems that this followed the practice in Mainz, where R. Ya'cov had served as community rabbi for almost three decades, before moving to Worms towards the end of his life (he is known to have stayed here briefly before 1421). Tradition also has it that R. Ya'acov had stipulated that no other burial was to be placed within four cubits around his grave.

The stone was damaged at an unknown point in time before the mid-19th century, so that the top with the first four lines is missing.

Worms, *Old Jewish Cemetery*, inv. no. 1253 (red sandstone, 94 x 102,5 x 16 cm). – Ed.: Sommer & Brocke (2103), no. 1253. – Lit.: Lewysohn (1855), p. 28; Stern (1935), p. 158; Böcher (1992), p. 8; *Germania Judaica III*, II (1995), pp. 797, 798–800; Lehnardt (2009); Keil (2012).

Between 1427 and 1440, Mainz

120

Mention is made of the “Jews' well” and a gallows near the Jewish cemetery of Mainz.

A formulary to be used in the secular court of the city of Mainz contains among its sample deeds

one that pertains to a vineyard "situated near the Jews' well at the gallows" (*bei dem Judenborne an dem galgen gelegen*) as well as fields, now also turned into vineyards, situated "beyond the gallows on the Jews' sands" (*genesitze des galgen uf dem judensand*).

In all likelihood the well was part of the Jewish cemetery's infrastructure, as access to water was necessary for preparing the deceased for burial as well as for the rite of purification after visiting a cemetery.

The proximity of the gallows, which pertained to the archbishop's high court, is not so exceptional (we also find it in 13th-century Cologne, for example). The fact may be coincidental, as both the gallows and the Jewish cemetery had to be outside the inhabited city. In Mainz the gallows near the "Jews' well" is mentioned again in 1438, 1439, 1440, 1443, 1594, and 1615, but no longer in the survey of 1657.

The book of formulae also contains a copy of the "Jewish oath" common in Mainz (cf. no. 79).

Mainz, Stadtarchiv, Formel 1427/28. – Ed.: Hallein (1891), nos XVIII c–d, pp. 77–79. – Lit.: Schaab (1855), p. 38; Schrohe (1930), pp. 284–87, 290; Menczel (1932), p. 122; *Germania Judaica* III/2 (1995), p. 787; Heuser (2008), p. 284; Härtel (2017), pp. 47–48, 86–87.

121 1428, Speyer

Henry, son of the late fustian weaver John Lommer, sells off the Jewish cemetery he had inherited from his father, to Abraham of Miltenberg, who buys it on behalf of the Jewish community.

Item Heinrich Johann Lommers civis Barchenwebers seligen son vendit Abraham von Miltenberg ementi der judischeit gemeinlich als lange die hie ist und wonet, das gehuse und den flecken allen genant der Judenkirchoff, als der danne von sime vatder an yn kommen ist, pro precio vii. gul. census, prius xii. gul. gelts dem rate, und wanne dei Judischeit nit mee hie wonet etc.

Note that the sale includes a building (*gehuse*) as well as the plot (*flecken*). Abraham was buying them on behalf of the Jewish community (*der judischeit gemeinlich*). Provisions for the case that "the Jews no longer live here" probably reflect the conditions of the original sale to John Lommer (cf. no. 115), which specified that the plot should revert to the city in case Lommer's family would leave Speyer. The short register note, however, gives no details. The city was to receive a priority rent of twelve florins, while the seller received seven. Receipt of rents by the city are recorded from as early as 1428.

Speyer, Stadtrchiv, 1 B 14, 1420-1438, fol. 114v (contemporary register). – Lit.: Voltmer (1981), pp. 115, 117; Porsche (2003), p. 32; Debus (2004), pp. 47–48; Engels (2004), p. 98.

1432, Mainz

122

A list of the rents the city of Mainz was receiving from the so-called *Judenerben* ("inheritance from the Jews", i.e., the properties confiscated after the pogrom of 1349) indicates that some of the houses were currently inhabited by Jews, others by Christians. (*Diss sint der stede judden erbe und waz auch davon zum gantzen jare geburt zu geben in der massen, als dan hernach geschriben stet*).

The list also includes an income of 6 lb "from the Jews' house on the sands" (*von dem Juddenhuse uff dem Sande*), i.e., the house on or near the Jewish cemetery which probably served for the funeral rites.

Würzburg, Bayerisches Staatsarchiv, Mainzer Bücher verschiedenen Inhalts 2, fol. 78r–v. – Ed.: Salfeld (1918), pp. 6–8 (p. 8). – Lit.: *Germania Judaica*, III/2 (1995), p. 787; Schneider (2018).

1435 Juli 4, Worms

123

Konrad of Weinsberg, imperial archchamberlain, appoints Rabbi Anselm of Cologne (R. Asher ben 'Uri ha-Levi/Anshel Segal), residing in Worms, as

Chief Rabbi over the western territories of the Empire. Konrad's letter of appointment is based on an imperial authorization (*majestatbrief*).

Konrad was informed by "honourable faithful Christians and many Jews who are firmly considered faithful and honourable" (*von erbern frommen Cristen und viel Juden, die man vaste fur fromme und erber heldet*) that Anselm of Cologne, residing in Worms, was "truly of great learning and piety" (*wie daz Anshelm von Coln, rabi, gesessen zu Würmß, vast ein wolglerter und ein frommer Jude sey*).

He has therefore appointed him "supreme master and chief rabbi" (*zu einem obersten meister und rabi*), giving him authority to judge the Poor and the Rich impartially (*zu richten dem armen als dem richen weder umb gabe, myette forcht och fruntschaft, nyeman zu liebe noch zu leyde, alle geverde und argeliste ussgescheiden*) and to enforce and collect the rents, dues, and fines (*und auch des heiligen richs gülte, flle und buss, wo er daz weyss und erferet, getruwelichen inzefordern*).

Wherever Anselm as chief rabbi declares a ban, be it over a Jew or Jewess, one or several, according to Jewish law (*den bane verkundiget, er sey uber Juden oder Judin, ir sey einer oder mere, nach Judischem rechten und gescze*), other rabbis shall also declare their ban over those individuals. When he lifts a ban, they shall lift it too.

Anselm's authority extends over the archbishops and bishops of Mainz, Cologne, Bremen, Besançon, Lausanne, Worms, Speyer, Hildesheim, Basle, Strasbourg, Metz, Münster, Utrecht, Konstanz and Verden, as well as over the territories of Alsace, Jülich, Guelders, Berg, Cleves, Savoy, and the Mark of Cleves.

Anselm, who had lived in Cologne and then in Frankfurt, Regensburg and Mainz before moving to Worms. He later moved to Oppenheim and Andernach and probably lived in Regensburg towards the end of his life. He had already been appointed chief judge over the Jews of Lower

Bavaria by Duke Louis in 1429. Stern (1935) notes that the main purpose for appointing him Chief Rabbi in 1435 was Sigismund's impending "coronation tax". In Worms Anselm conducted a *yeshiva*, served on the community council, and presided over the Jewish court of law.

Anselm's authority rested more on his personal renown than on the fame of the community in Worms. However, Worms was the residence of German Chief ('Imperial') Rabbis more than once: In 1521 Shmu'el ben Eli'ezer (*Schmoel zum Wolff*) was appointed by Maximilian, and in 1559 Ya'acov ben Hayyim became Chief Rabbi under Emperor Ferdinand. In Mainz, R. Ya'acov Molin was appointed one of the four Imperial Rabbis in 1426 (see no. 119).

[Neuenstein, Hohenlohe-Zentralarchiv, E 39. – Ed.: Güdemann \(1888\), pp. 265–67; Stern \(1935\), pp. 160–61. – Lit.: Stern \(1935\); Germania Judaica, III/2 \(1995\), pp. 1679–80; vol. III \(2003\), p. 2132; Guggenheim \(2002\).](#)

1437 March 10, Mainz

124

The account books of the city council of Mainz record expenses for digging a new fosse below the "Jewish Sands".

Dominica Letare [...] Item han wir geben Huszhenne, als der in dieser wochen salb dritte in dem nuwen graben under dem juddensande gearbeit hat, vor 17½ tagelone 1½ lib. 4 heller.

[Würzburg, StaatsA, Rechnungen Nr. 40577, fol. 62r.](#)

1437, Mainz

125

The city council of Mainz have apparently appropriated the synagogue. They bought back a rent that rested on it (*item hatt man betzalt IIII^c gulden umb die gult off der judenschulen*).

[Frankfurt a. M., Institut für Stadtgeschichte, Reichssachen I no. 3610, fol. 4r.](#)

Following the expulsion of the Jews from Mainz at the hands of the city council, a long and complex legal dispute arises between the Archbishop Dietrich von Erbach and the city. The desecration of the Jewish cemetery forms part of the issue. The Archbishop demands payment of damages for the various transgressions, including the following:

1. After the expulsion the city had desecrated the *Judensand* “where the Jews had their cemetery” (*da die Juden ir begrpniss gehabt han*), breaking down and carrying away the headstones (*Juddensteyne usziehen und ussbrechen und von dannen furen lassen*), converting part of the terrain into vineyards, causing damages of 20,000 florins.

The city denies that any headstones were stolen from the Archbishop. Rather, the *Judensand*, “where the Jews of Mainz once had their cemetery” (*da die Judden zu Mentze zuzyten ir begrebde gehabt han*) was the council’s property and the Archbishop and the bishopric had no rights in it, excepting only the gallows (*eynen galgen*) nearby.

The Archbishop replies that not only did the Jews pertain to the bishopric by right but also their properties. The cemetery and its stones thus still belonged to the Jews of his bishopric (*unsers Stiftes Judden zu Mentze*). They were illegally dug out, embezzled, damaged and caused to perish (*verandert, verfurt, verterpt und vergenglich ... gemacht*). He demands that the headstones be restored.

The city claims that the Jew had erected the cemetery by favour of the council and its officials; customary dues had been paid for it to the mayors. It therefore belonged not to the Jews but to the city (*der gemelt flegk und grunt nit den Judden sunder uns zugestanden hat und doch zusteet*) (article v).

2. The Archbishop argues that city had used the stolen headstones for building a bulwark on the Rhine (*eynen ernsten großen trefflichen buwe am Ryne*), damaging the Archbishop’s and his bishopric’s authority and rights of safe-conduct (*geleydete und herlichkeit*) along the river.

The city council’s answer does not respond to the matter of the headstones (article vi).

The gallows near the Jewish cemetery (cf. no. 118) is also discussed in article cvi. From the finds of spoliated Jewish headstones made in the late-19th and early 20th century it appears that the *Mittlere Gaupforte* tower was built at this time (Heuser 2008). See also no. 130.

Würzburg, Bayerisches Staatsarchiv, Mainzer Urkunden geistlicher Schrank 25. – Ed.: Mencil (1932), pp. 110–32 (excerpts). – Lit.: Ziwes (1994), pp. 164, 264–65; Heuser (2008), pp. 151–52; Cluse (2013); Ringel (2019), *passim*.

1440 August 15, Speyer

127

By this time, the Jewish cemetery is rented out to Leonard Greffe and his family for 12 florins.

Item xii. gulden gelts geben Lenhart Greffe und Else sine husfrauwe und ire kindere die sie itzünd hant und noch gewinnen mogent. Und derselben kinder kindere als vil der nachenander komen, die dann weltlich und unsere ingesessene burgere und der stat mit eyden verbunden sint, ierlich vom Judenkircheffe zu Altspire nach lute solicher bestentniße brieff daruber sagende.

In the same year, the council of the city of Speyer had rented out parts of *Speyer Jewry-Court* around the synagogue: One Conrad Eyerer paid 1 florin for a “garden” there annually on 15 August. The city reserves the right to revoke the contract.

Item i. gulden gelts git Conrad Eyerer vom garten im Juddenhoffe, und wert daz biß off des Rats abesagen. Ist gescheen im xl. jare.

Speyer, Stadtarchiv, 1 A 842, fol. 44r, 12v (contemporary register). Further payments are recorded in 1443 (fol. 37r), 1444 (fol. 29r).

1441, Mainz

128

At this time the synagogue of Mainz is used by the city officials for storing coal. This appears

from a scrap of paper inserted in the city council's account books of 1436/37:

Item <...> und lygent in der juden schuln.
Summa zu hauff umb die koln 26 lib. 2 sol. 6
heller. Anno 41 jar in den selben buch findet man
dis geschrebin ibidem.

Würzburg, Bayerisches Staatsarchiv, Rechnungen Nr. 40577, fol. 20a
(added slip of paper between fols 20 and 21).

129 1441 December 27, Speyer

The city of Speyer receives a annual rent of 1 lb *haller*, paid by Hans Helle, for the smithy on the Jewish cemetery and the small garden thereby (*Item i. lb. heller von dem Symdhuse uff dem Juddenkirchoffe und von dem gertel daranne gelegen*).

Speyer, Stadtarchiv, 1 A 842, fol. 34r. – Lit.: Weiss (1875), p. 18.

130 before 1442, Mainz

The collegiate church of St Peter in Mainz receives a rent "from a vineyard situated behind the Jews' house near what is called the Jewish Sands" (*de vinea sita retro domum judeorum dicto an dem judensandte*). Cf. nos. 103 122, and 138.

Darmstadt, Hessisches Staatsarchiv, C 1 A, no. 114 (Cartulary of the collegiate church of St Peter, vol. 1), fol. 258v.

131 1442 September 28, Speyer

The mayors and council of Speyer rent out to Siegfried Grefe and his family their plot called the Jews' cemetery (*unsern flecken genant der Judenkirchoff*) with the house, shed, and fence, situated in Altspeyer, as far as the city's ownership extends, for an annual rent of twelve florins, under certain conditions:

1. The leaseholders shall erect sufficient fences around it, from the gate near the Holy Sepulchre chapel to the garden formerly owned by the late Jost Eman on the narrow way (*vom Tore vom heiligen grabe an bis an Jost Emans seligen garthen hinten in dem langen gessel*) as it used to be fenced and secured before (*als derselbe kirchoff alsdan vormals umbzûnet und befriedet ist gewest*), and they shall henceforth keep the fence in good order.

2. The mayor and council also reserve the right to fortify the town wall around the cemetery with towers, fosses, and other defence works (*unsere mûre umb den selben flecken und kirchoff gende mit thornen, greben und ander festenunge zu buwen und zu befestennen*) at any time, and they may keep soldiers and armour there whenever needed.

3. They reserve for themselves a plot of one acre (*eynen flecken und morgen ackers breit und lang*), to be specified, wherever they deem fit. The little house in which a blacksmith presently lives (cf. no. 129) and the garden plot belonging thereto (*daz husel, darin itzt ein smyt wonet mit dem flecken eins garthen darzu begriffen*) shall also be exempt from the present lease.

Moreover, if other people want to settle and build on the cemetery, the city reserves the right to lease out further plots of land between the Holy Sepulchre gate and the house and shed of the present leaseholders (*vom tore an Heiligen Grabe an bis an der gemelten bestendere gehuse und schûren*). In that case the rent shall be reduced proportionally.

The conditions of lease are adapted from those first specified in 1415 (cf. no. 115). It is apparent, however, that the city council are now aiming at turning the whole area of the Jewish cemetery into house and garden leaseholds.

Speyer, Stadtarchiv, 1 U, no. 376 (original charter). – Lit.: Engels (2004), p. 99.

In a long document addressed to Count Philipp of Katzenelnbogen, the city council of Mainz lays out its position in the legal dispute with the Archbishop (cf. no. 126), asking Count Philipp and the other arbitrators to confirm it.

One of the main points addressed is the dispute over the Jews (jurisdiction, expulsion, the cemetery, the Jewish headstones used for building on disputed ground). The city councillors reject the Archbishop's claims to exclusive jurisdiction and taxation over the Jews. They try to justify the expulsion on the grounds that the Jews had "blasphemed the Christian name" by practicing usury.

Regarding the Archbishop's demand for restitution over the desecration of the Jewish cemetery, they dispute the Archbishop's claims of territorial jurisdiction in this area. According to them, both the cemetery and the gravestones had been on city ground. The fact that the Archbishop had a gallows nearby did not constitute evidence to the contrary:

Item als er vns zuspricht, wie das wir von Menze an den enden, da er vnd sin stifte überkeit geriecht vnd recht haben – mit namen yßwendig syner statt Menze, da die Jüdden ir begrebnisse gehabt han – die Jüddensteyne, die an denselben enden gelegen vnd gestanden sin, ußziehen vnd vßprechen vnd von dannen füren laßen haben etc., wie dann doselbst vort geschriben vnd durch yen geforderz worden ist, – dagegen seczen vnd antwürten wir, wie das wir von dheinen steynen wissen, die wir yen oder synem stifte wydder recht oder auch yene zû hoene oder smacheit entwant haben; wir gesteen yem auch keyns rechten, das er oder sin stifte zû den steynen, die wir hienweg hann lassen füren, gehabt haben oder noch hann. Wir wissen auch von keynen flecken den wir verluhen oder zû wingarten gemacht haben, der da yem oder synem stifte züstee: sünd der flecke, da die Jüdden zû Menze zûzijten ir begrebdde gehabt hann, der steet vns vnd vnser gemeynen statt zû. Darzu sagen wir,

wie das wir yem an den obgemelten enden keyner überkeit gericht oder recht erkennen, sünd er vnd sin stifte hant dabij eyne Galgen gehabt, alsferre es domit vnd durch synen walpoden gehalten wirdet, inmaßen vnd als das von alter herkommen ist, wolten wir yem vngern dorin tragen, vnd hoffen und trûwen, das wir yen vnd synem stifte darûmb in dem rechten nit plichtig noch auch eyne kosten oder schaden zukeren oder vfzûrichten schuldig sin, nach dem wir yen dheynen kosten oder schaden verschen oder versprochen hann, und das daz in recht erkant werden solle.

As far as the city's building project along the Rhine between *Fischpforte* and *Kranenpforte* was concerned, the council denies that they had built on archiepiscopal grounds or interfered with the towpath along the river.

Item als er vns zuspricht, das wir von Menze mit den egenant steynen eyne ernsten großen treflichen bûwe am Ryne für syne statt Menze zwischen der Fische vnd Kranen porten in synes stiftes geleydt vnd herlichkeit gemacht haben, wie dann dieselbe sin forderunge mit mee Worten dauon ußwiset vnd inheldet etc. – Darzû antwürten wir, wie das wir vor vnser statt Menze an dem Ryne off vnserm eygenthûm do wir zûgepieten vnd zuverpieten hann nach gelegenheit vnd notdorft derselben vnserer stedte, vnsern vnd der vnsern gepûwet hann, als wir das wole macht gehabt vnd auch viel zijt und jar vnd lenger dann yemandts gedencken mag herbracht hann, vnd gesteen yem vnd syme stifte keynes lypades geleyds oder herlickeit an den enden. Derhalben wir doselbst nit pûwen sollen oder zupûwen macht gehabt haben. Darumb so meynen wir yen vnd syme stifte vmb soliche sine zûsprüche nit plichtig zû sin, vnd das auch soliches in recht erkant werden solle.

Mainz, Stadtarchiv, U / 1443 December 4, pp. 21–25. – Lit.: Mencil (1932); Ringel (2019).

133 1443 September 25, Speyer

Henry (Herman?) Lederbach pays a rent from his house near *Speyer Jewry-Court*.

Item III. gulden und II. lb. heller gelt gijt Hr. Lederbach von sime huse am Juden Schulhoffe zu zinse uff geirn [?] sinen leptagen und nit lenger. Und darzu sol er itzt an und zuschen sant Georgen tag nehstkompt dem rate viertzig gulden geben. Actum feria quinta post Mathei apostoli et ewangeliste, anno etc. XL. tertio. Fur die XL. gulden ist Conrad Eyerer bürge.

Conrad Eyerer, who warrants for him, also lived here (cf. no. 127).

[Speyer, Stadtarchiv, 1 A 842, fol. 37v.](#)

they also record 5 florins from half of the Jewish community's annual tax (*Item v gulden von dem juddengelt disz halb jar*).

On 25 May, dues for two further child burials and one adult burial are recorded (*Item von zweyn judden kinden lichen II gulden, Item von eyn alden judden liche II gulden*); on 19 October another child burial (*Item von eyns judden kindes leiche wegen I gulden*).

Over the same year, the city officials also note various taxes from individual Jews and dues for safe-conducts.

[Würzburg, Bayerisches Staatsarchiv, Rechnung 40578, fol. 12v \(April 27\), 13r \(May 25\), 14r \(19 October\); cf. ibid., fols 8v, 9r, 10r–v, 12v, 13r–v, 14r, for various other entries concerning the Jews.](#)

134 1449 February – June, Mainz

The city council's account books record expenses of 47 florins paid to Bartholomew the dyer for a formerly Jewish house (*Judenerbe*) known as the "Great Ape" (*zum groszen Affen*) situated opposite from the synagogue on its rear side (*hinden gein der judden schulen ubir gelegen*). The seller used to pay a rent of 14 lb to the city from the same house, which were duly booked to the account of city's official, Hermann Sterrenberger.

On 29 June the same house is sold to Adam of Schiersteyn for 100 gold florins (*Item han wir ingnomen C. gulden an golde von Adam von Schiersteyn von des huses wegen genant zum groszen Affen, daz wir yem verkaufft han*).

[Würzburg, Bayerisches Staatsarchiv, Rechnung 40578, fol. 56r, 58r, 13v.](#)

135 1449 April – October, Mainz

The city council's account books record income for two dead Jewish children buried in Mainz, proving that the Jewish cemetery was again used by the community at this time (*Item von zweyn judden kinden lichen II gulden*). On the same day

1458 October 15, Mainz

136

The city council's account books record income of 57 florins from the synagogue and Jewish cemetery, in arrears until Michaelmas (29 September) of the preceding year:

Item die judden hant geben LVII. gulden an golde von er juden schulen und juden sant, von alter schult, bisz of Michaelis nest vergangen.

Over the same year, they also record various taxes from individual Jews as well as dues for students (paid on two occasions by Simon the Jew) and "parnassim money", possibly a kind a recognition due for the exercise of authority within the community.

item XLVIII gulden an golde von der judescheyt antreffen daz barnosze gelt.

The fines handed over by Jacob of Epstein the Jew were probably first collected by the Jewish court:

xII gulden frevel gelts, die Jacob von Eppensteyn der jude geben hat.

These records indicate that there was again a functioning Jewish community in Mainz during

these years. The old tax of 112 marks to the Archbishop was also collected by the city officials and passed on to the cathedral chapter.

Würzburg, Bayerisches Staatsarchiv, Rechnung 40579, fol. 10v. See also fols 10r–v, 12r, 13v, 14r–v, 27r.

137 1460 November 9, Mainz

The city council's account book record income of 18 gold florins "from the synagogue and the Sands" (i.e., the Jewish cemetery) for the current year:

Item die judden hant bracht von der judden schul und von dem sande XVIII gulden an golde von diesem jare.

Another 13 gold florins are recorded for burials (*Item von judden lichen XIII an golde*).

As in 1458, further income from individual Jews and the Jewish community are recorded (for *schuler*, i.e., *yeshiva* students, and *barnoszen*, i.e., Jewish community councillors).

Würzburg, Bayerisches Staatsarchiv, Rechnung 40580, fol. 13r, and cf. fols 9r, 10r, 10v, 13r–v. Expenses are noted on fols 26r, 33v, 35v.

138 1462 October 28/29, Mainz

The city of Mainz is conquered by the troops of Archbishop Adolph II of Nassau. As a sign for Adolph's troops on the other side of the Rhine, his followers set the Jews' house in or near the *Judensand* cemetery on fire.

Die Ringawer aber warten zu Walluff, die hatten eine losung, wan sie fewer sehen, sollen sie alsbaldt uff Meinz zu eillen: und man zündt das Judenhäußlein uff dem Judensandt ahn; daß war ir losung. Da fuhren sie so baldt zu Walluf über Rein undt kamen auch zu dem andern volck.

Apparently this was the *Tahara* house used by the community for their burial rites (cf. nos 103, 122 and 128).

On the fateful day the conquerors fought down the citizens in a drawn-out and bloody street battle. More than 350 citizens were killed and about 150 houses in the town centre were destroyed or damaged by fire. The Jews were plundered and "taxed" (*es wurden auch die Juden geplündert undt gescheczt*).

On 30 October all citizens were expelled from Mainz, only to be allowed back by and by. They had to redeem their possessions from the troops. The houses of Jews and of those clergy who had supported Adolph's rival, Diether of Isenburg, were given over to looting:

Es wurden, beneben der burger haab undt baarschafft, auch die Juden- und Pfaffenheuser preyß gemacht undt die feindt fielen hinein, plunderten alles was sie fanden, haussrath undt anders undt trugens uff den Diepmarckt uff einen hauffen.

It is known that Rabbi Moshe Mintz, Rabbi of Mainz at the time (cf. no. 144), lost most of his books on this occasion (cf. Emanuel 2006).

The decisive battle in the struggle over the see of Mainz between Diether of Isenburg (whom the city had supported) and Adolph of Nassau put an end to the short period of municipal independence in Mainz.

Ed.: Hegel (1882), pp. 52–53, 55, 58. – Lit.: Schaab 1855, p. 127; Sprenger (1998), pp. 205–225; Heinig (2000), pp. 536–40; Emanuel (2006), p. 14; Dobras 2008, p. 22–24; Marzi & Hausmann (2010), p. 77; Marzi (2018), p. 43.

1465 December 27

Archbishop Adolph (II) of Mainz declares that he has granted the Jews of Mainz and in the surrounding Rhine region (*unsern juden, in unser stadt Mainz und im Rheingau wohnhaftig*) the right to use his "Jewish Sands" outside Mainz near Oldminster Gate (*unsern juddensand uszwendig Mentze fur Altmunster porth gelegen*) for their burials according to Jewish law and custom as they were wont to, and to enter it at any time:

139

also daß die gemelte judischeit ... die sich von alter solichs sandes gebrucht haben, ire lichen nach irem gesetz und gewonheit darin begraben und darauf gehen und stehen mogen, welche zeit ... innen das eben ist.

These rights are accorded for the three subsequent years, and the archbishop will receive burial fees of 2 florins for every adult and 1 florin for every person under 13 years of age.

While burial fees were already customary during the time before the conquest of 1462, when the city was still claiming rights over *Old Jewish Cemetery Mainz*, the archbishop was now asserting his renewed control over “his” Jews and “his” *Judden-sand*.

As the deed was issued three years after Adolph’s conquest of Mainz, it is possible that it followed upon a first three-year contract with the Jewish community. The rights are extended for another three years in a charter dated 1467 October 12, i.e., before two more years had passed. The new charter adds a “customary” tax of 20 florins annually for the safe-conduct of Jewish burials. The next extension, again for three years, was issued in 1469.

Würzburg, Bayerisches Staatsarchiv, Mainzer Ingrossaturbuch 31, fol. 60v. – Lit.: Schaab (1855), p. 124; Menczel (1932), p. 101–02, § 47; Marzi (2018), p. 43–44. – For the renewal of 1467 October 12, see Würzburg, BSA, Mainzer Ingrossaturbücher 30, fol. 392v, and 36, fol. 168v, as well as the 18th-century copies in Darmstadt, HSA, C 1 A, no. 70m, fols 240v and 292v–293r, noted in Battenberg (1995), no. 1064, p. 282, and printed in Schaab (1855), pp. 124–26. The renewal of 19 November 1469 is documented in Würzburg, BSA, Mainzer Ingrossaturbücher 31, fol. 129r; Darmstadt, HSA, C 1 A, no. 70, fol. 132r–v; cf. Schaab (1855), pp. 128–29; Menczel (1932), p. 102, § 48, and Battenberg (1995), no. 1069, p. 284.

140 1466 February 12, Mainz

For the first time after its destruction in October 1462 (cf. no. 138) the Jews’ house at *Old Jewish Cemetery Mainz* is mentioned again.

Before the civic judge of Mainz, Herman Sternberger, gardener, declares that he owes 8 florins of redeemable rents to Gerlach Knoderer, vicar of Mainz Cathedral acting for the late Diether Knubel, member of the cathedral chapter. The rents are secured by eight pieces of real estate, including one acre of cabbage garden, called the *Smalenmorge* (lit., ‘narrow acre’) opposite from the “Jews’ house” (*Juddenhuße*).

Mainz, StadtA, U / 1466 Februar 2 (inserted in U / 1466 März 3).

1466 March 7 and 19, Speyer

141

John Herbort, a vicar in the cathedral church of Speyer, buys a house from John (*Hans*) Keye of Kirlach. The house is situated near the synagogue (*Judenschule*) in Meischergasse (*Meynchergassen*) and next to the barn of John Benedict the apothecary. Twelve days later he gives the same house to Ebalt von Bohel, custodian of the cathedral.

Speyer, LandesA, D 21, nos 586 and 587 (original charters).

1468 October 24, Udenheim

142

Matthias of Ramnung, Bishop of Speyer, publishes a comprehensive mandate and legal proceedings against the Jewish community of Speyer. In fact it is a decree with numerous restrictions, some of which relate to the synagogue in Speyer and its surroundings.

(1) All Jews above the age of five must wear a special sign; (2) their clothes shall differ from those of Christians; (3) Jews must refrain from any kind of social intercourse with Christians; (4) they are not allowed to establish a synagogue nor use one without special permission, on pain of a fine of 50 pounds (*das ir one unser sunder laube und wissen keyn Synagoge oder Judden Schule uffrichtent, und ob die uffgericht werent ucher nit gebruchen by der pene funfftzig pfundt geldes*), according to Canon and Roman Law

(nach ußweisung geistlicher und keiserlicher recht); (5) they must live in one neighbourhood together where there is little likelihood of meeting Christians (*das ir dan uwer husere unnd wonung byeinander habent zu Spire an den enden, da die mynste wandelung der Cristen pflegt zu sin*); (6) they shall not do business on sundays and public holidays; (7) they shall not take interest upon interest; (8) they shall not go out from their houses during Holy Week and close the doors and windows; (9) according to the bishops' privileges granted by the Holy Church and especially by Emperor Charles IV, the Jews must appear before the bishop's court (a copy of the Emperor's charter will be handed over to them).

According to Bishop Matthias, all these rules were by no means newly invented but rested on papal and imperial rulings which establish the bishop's jurisdiction over the Jews of his diocese. Any objections should be brought before the bishop's commissioners in Udenheim on the eighth court day after the publication of these decrees.

Matthias of Ramnung, formerly the chancellor of Prince-Elector Frederick the Victorious of the Palatinate, is known as a proponent of ecclesiastical reform and a fervent devotee of the Virgin Mary. His mandate corresponds to the efforts of various imperial bishops who since the late-1460s were claiming rights over the Jews in their dioceses by means of their ecclesiastical jurisdiction. In Speyer the scheme largely failed (see no. 144) but served to erode the Jews' social and legal position within the city.

Speyer, Stadtrchiv, 1 U 393 (original charter), with references to the relevant passages in the legal codes in the margin. – Lit.: Mentgen (1998), p. 19; Debus (2004), pp. 44–46; Härter & Stolleis (2016), p. 406.

143 1468 November 28, Speyer

Marcus Momensohn, public notary in the service of the bishop of Speyer, reads out the decree of

1468 October 24 (cf. no. 142) as well as a certified copy of the imperial privilege mentioned therein, “word by word, in a loud and intelligible voice”, before the Jewish community convened in the synagogue courtyard (*in loco dicto der Juden Schulehoff*). Among those present, the Jew Anselm is named (*Anselmo et quamplurimis aliis iudeis protunc ibidem generaliter congregati*), as well as two Christian witnesses, Gyso of Miltenberg and the physician and cleric, John of Erfurt.

Speyer, Stadtarchiv, 1 U 393v (signed notarial note on the verso of the original charter).

Mid-15th Century, Worms

144

A separate “prayer house of the students” is mentioned in the Jewish community centre of Worms.

A rabbinical responsum by Rabbi Moshe Mintz (R. Moshe ben Yiṣḥaq ha-Levi) relates that on a certain occasion two members of the Jewish community in Worms quarrelled over the honour of reading out a particular portion of the Torah for almost two hours, while the Torah scroll lay open on the desk. Eventually almost all members of the congregation (קהל) left the synagogue:

They took a Torah scroll from the Holy Ark with them and went to the house of prayer of the students, which is also called *Zum Rash* [or: *Zum Ross*] ולקחו עמהם ס"ת מתוך ארון הקודש וחלכו (לב"ה של בחורים שקורים צומרש).

Only four or five members of the congregation (i.e., the two disputants and their retinue) were left in the synagogue.

The existence of prayer rooms aside from the community synagogue is widely attested in late medieval Jewish communities, and there are various references to a prayer room for the *yeshiva* students in early modern Worms. From 1745 a separate synagogue (called *Klaus*) is attested in the community hall.

The vernacular name (צומרש) given here is hard to interpret: *Zum Rash'* may indeed relate to an honourific attribution to Rashi (R. Shlomo b. Yīṣḥaq of Troyes, who spent some of his student years at Mainz and Worms). It is however also possible to take it as the name of a house sign somewhere else in the Jewish quarter. In this case the most likely reading would be *Zum Ross* ("At the sign of the Horse"). A house of this name is indeed attested in the *Judengasse* in 1500 (no. 11 in Reuter 1985).

R. Moshe ben Yīṣḥaq ha-Levi Mintz lived in Mainz until 1462, then in Landau, Bamberg, and finally (from 1474) in Poznań.

Lit.: Güdemann (1888), p. 97; Epstein (1901), p. 67; Zimmer (1970), pp. 16–17; Reuter (1987), p. 92–93 no. 11.

145 1469 July 9, Speyer

Bishop Mathias Ramnung of Speyer revokes his mandate and proceedings against the city's Jews of 24 October 1468, in favour of the mayors and council of Speyer (*uß zijtiger furbedachtunge und gutem rate den ersamen wisen unseren lieben getrewen Burgermeister und Rate zu Spier zu eren und umb irer flissigen bet willen*):

(1) He allows the Jews to use their synagogue and its appurtenances (*die Judenschule und sinagoge mit irem begriffe*) in the way they presently use it (*als sie sich der itzunt gebruchen*) for as long as they live in Speyer (*hinfur und further so lange sie zu Spier sin und wonen werden*), according to Jewish law and custom (*nach irem judischen gesetze, herkomen und gewonheit*). (2) The Jews may continue to live in the houses they have had in the past (*in massen wie sie von alter und in vergangen jaren, da sie auch daselbst zu Spier gewest sint*). (3) Bishop Mathias waives his claim to the fine of 50 gold florins he demanded in 1468 for using a synagogue against his will. (4) He also waives his claims to jurisdiction over the Jews for the next ten years and will let them alone in the way that

his predecessors have let them alone. (5) He nullifies his mandate and proceedings of 1468.

The bishop's retraction was apparently bound up with a financial "settlement" (cf. no. 146).

Speyer, Stadtarchiv, 1 U 394 (original charter).

1469 August 18, Heidelberg

146

Bishop Matthias of Speyer declares that he has reached a settlement with the Jews concerning the synagogue (*berurende die Synagoga und Judenschule daselbst*) and other issues (cf. no. 142). According to a compromise (*verschribunge*) reached by the mayors and council of Speyer (cf. no. 145), the Jews shall give him 100 florins annually this year and in the two years following. He acknowledges receipt of the first 100 florins.

The charters of 9 July and 18 August mark the end of the bishop's attempt to proceed against the Jews of Speyer by means of his ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The mayors and council of the city were responsible for this U-turn, probably because they held rights of jurisdiction over the Jews granted to them by King Charles IV in 1350. The city in 1473 reached another compromise with the bishop to the effect that they would not tolerate the Jews after the expiry of the ten-year contract of settlement of 1467, i.e., after 1477. The precise end of the Jewish community in Speyer is not known.

Speyer, Stadtarchiv, 1 U, no. 395 (original charter). – Lit.: Engels (2004), p. 99; Härter & Stolleis (2010), p. 91. For the bishop's renewed accusations of 1472 December 22, cf. Speyer, LandesA, F 1 no. 71, fols 82v–86r (contemporary copy); the city's answer and the compromise of 1473 is recorded *ibid.*, fols 101v–103r.

1470 August 12

147

Archbishop Adolph (II) of Mainz decrees that all his Jewish citizens must leave his bishopric by Michaelmas (29 September). Only seven Jewish

taxpayers are allowed to remain for another year, provided that they lend no money on interest and do no business transactions. The seven, who live in various towns of the *Rheingau* district, as well as others whom they allow it, may bury their dead on the “Jewish Sands” cemetery in Mainz during this period:

auch so mogen die benannten Juden und ir iglich sich, ir kynde, gesinde, und wem sie das furter gunnen wllen, ob und was darinnen der obbestimpten zyt todes abegen wurde, uff den Judensand by unser Stat Mentze gelegen, begraben lassen.

Würzburg, Bayerisches Staatsarchiv, Mainzer Ingrossaturbuch 31, fol. 128v (contemporary copy); Darmstadt, Hessisches Staatsarchiv, C 1 A 70, fols 132v–133r (18th-century copy, dating to 5 September). – *Lit.*: Bodmann (1819), II, p. 715; Schaab (1855), p. 129; Menczel (1932), pp. 32–33, 103, § 59; *Germania Judaica*, III/2 (1995), p. 806; Battenberg (1995), no. 1072, pp. 284–85; Marzi (2018), pp. 43–44.

148 1473 October 12, Trier

Archbishop Adolph (II) of Mainz issues a mandate to the effect that the former synagogue of the Jews in Mainz shall be converted into a Christian chapel.

Referring to the example of Pope Boniface who had turned the Roman *Pantheon* temple into a church, Adolph announces that he will consecrate the “school or synagogue of the Jews in our said city, where until the time of our expulsion the infidel Jews conducted their ceremonies according to their rite” (*scolam sive sinagogam Iudeorum in prefata nostra civitate, in qua usque ad idem tempus nostre evictionis perfidi iudei eorum ritu ceremonias suas agebant*) into a chapel dedicated to All Saints, so that “where once a people walking in darkness blasphemed against the true God and his saints, now the sons of light may glorify and venerate the true light and His saints” (*ut, ubi olim populus in tenebris ambulans verum Deum et eius sanctos blasphemabat, ibi nunc filii*

lucis veram lucem et illius sanctos ... glorificent et venerentur).

In order to found a perpetual benefice for one secular cleric, the archbishop assigns to it two houses and a number of small gardens next to the chapel in the direction of St Quentin’s parish church (*duas domos supradicte capelle contiguas, sitas versus ecclesiam parochialem S. Quintini ... cum nonnullis hortuculis adiacentibus*), excepting however the small house and the place where the hospital and the butchery of the Jews were once situated (*exceptis domuncula et loco ubi olim Hospitale et macellum Iudeorum erat*).

According to Schaab (1855), the former synagogue was situated in the house of the auxiliary bishop, owned in the mid-19th century by a certain Mr Bögner (*im damaligen Weihbischofshaus, jetzigem Bögner’schem Haus*). In 1484 the altar in the chapel was entrusted to Louis Keßler.

Ed.: Gudenus IV (1758), pp. 412–14, no. 195. – *Lit.*: Serarius (1624), p. 874; Würdtwein (1787), IX, p. xxvii; Schaab (1855), pp. 59–60, 130–31; Busch (1927), p. 49; Ziwes (1994), pp. 87–88, Marzi (2018), p. 44. – The All Saints’ chapel in the (former) Jewish quarter is later mentioned in Mainz, StadtA, U / 1477 September 6.

1480 March 28, Worms

149

Reinhard of Sickingen, Bishop of Worms, declares that he has mediated a compromise between John Hultzengelt, vicar of St Andrew’s collegiate church, and the city of Worms concerning the right over a rent of 30 shillings *haller* and one pound of pepper from the Jewish cemetery before St Andrew’s Gate (*uff dem Juden kirchoff vor sant Endris portel*). The vicar had referred to certain deeds, books and registers supporting his church’s claim, while the council argued that this was unknown in human memory. The two parties had entered legal proceedings before the cathedral provost but agreed to look for a compromise.

Bishop Reinhard decides that the city council shall pay 20 shillings to John Hultzengelt by St

George's day (April 23) and that the vicar shall hand over any charters concerning the said rents, while the references to them in books and registers shall be void henceforth. The compromise was reached with the consent of Dr Peter of Clopp (*meister Peters van Clapis*), cathedral cantor and provost of St Andrew's.

The mention of pepper paid by the Jews in rent is noteworthy, since such dues often date back to the high medieval period. Considering the fact that the existence of the vicar's documents was not in doubt, it may indicate an old relationship between the Jewish community and the church of St Andrew's regarding the Jewish cemetery.

Worms, Stadtarchiv, 1 A II-0531 (original charter); Darmstadt, Hessisches Staatsarchiv, A 2, no. 255/1644 (second original), and *ibid.*, 1 C, no. 153, fols 117v–118v (16th-century copy). – *Lit.*: Battenberg (1995), no. 1088, p. 290.

150 1482 May 9, Mainz

In connection with a legal dispute over the use of a carriageway, mention is made of the boundary stones of the Mainz city commons, two of which border on the "Jewish sands" (*Juddensande*).

The dispute was between the Oldminster monastery and the Vicar of St Stephen's. According to the monastery's representative, the carriageway was situated *between* the Vicar's holdings and those of "Young Henry" (*Jungehenne*) the gardener, and were marked off with four boundary stones showing the arms of the city – two of them on *Mombacher Weg* touching on the *Juddensand*, and two on the other side along the meadow of the late *Sultzehenne*. The vicar denies, claiming that the carriageway was on his grounds, and that he was paying a rent of 16 shillings haller to the archbishop for it. – A commission of four laymen decides in favour of the monastery.

The boundary stones mentioned here are significant. They also appear on a map of c.1779 showing the Jewish cemetery. The source also indicates

that today's *Mombacher Straße* marks a very old boundary of *Old Jewish Cemetery Mainz*.

Mainz, StadtA, U / 1482 Mai 9 / I (original charter). – For the map of 1779 see fig. 261 of the Nomination Dossier.

1490 November 24, Linz

151

Mandate by the Roman Emperor Frederick III to the mayor and council of Speyer demanding the handover of the synagogue in the city (*die Jůden schul bey Euch zů Speyer*) and its appurtenances (*mit irer zugehorung*), which according to Frederick pertain directly to the Empire (*so unns und dem heiligen Reiche on mittel zůgehoret*).

The Emperor had recently commissioned Heinrich Martin, the fiscal proctor of the imperial chamber, to make the same demand. The latter had reported that the city had refused to comply, referring on certain charters, which however do not refer to the city (*in craft ettlicher vermeinten brief, die doch auf eũch nit zeygen*). The city is to hand over the synagogue within one month to the fiscal proctor and also pay damages to the Empire. Otherwise its representatives shall appear before the court of the Imperial Diet.

The mandate is evidence that the Jews of Speyer had been forced to give up their synagogue. They probably emigrated some time after 1473 (cf. no. 146). In their answer, the mayors and council refer to the royal grant of 1349 concerning the Jews (cf. no. 91).

Speyer, Stadtarchiv, 1 U, no. 129 (original charter); no. 417 (the magistrate's answer, lost), and 1 B, no. 29/38, fol. 21v–22r (contemporary copy of the answer). – *Lit.*: Debus (2004), pp. 45, 58–59; Engels (2004), p. 106.

1492 March 26, Mainz

152

Archbishop Berthold declares that he has received the Jew Isaac as a Jewish citizen of Mainz, on condition that Isaac and his household shall live in

the *mikveh* building (*im judenbade*). Isaac may offer up to two nights' accommodation for Jews coming from the surrounding territories (*uß den landen*) to Mainz, as long as they have paid their tolls and safe-conducts. His guests must pay an overnight due, which Isaac will pass on, together with the register of names, to the archbishop's official.

Isaac and his family are allowed to use the *mikveh* (*der kaldenbade*) according to Jewish law (*nach iren gesetzen*). If other Jews wish to make use of it, they shall pay him two pennies for every visit of the *mikveh*. Every quarter year this income, too, shall be given to the archbishop's official.

Isaac may conduct business, including moneylending, and pay the city's customs like other citizens. Business contracts worth more than 1 florin must be registered with the city officials. Isaac shall not convene Jews for a wedding, a Feast of Tabernacles (*Leybroß*) or another gathering without express consent of the archbishop. He shall pay an annual duty of 6 florins for the Jewish cemetery and 3 florins for the miqweh.

Würzburg, Bayerisches Staatsarchiv, Mainzer Ingrossaturbuch 42, fol. 57r–v (contemporary copy); Darmstadt, Hessisches Staatsarchiv, C 1 A, no. 71, fol. 298r–v (18th century copy). – Ed.: Schaab (1855), pp. 134–37. – Lit.: Ziwes (1994), pp. 89–90; Battenberg (1995), no. 1116, p. 298; *Germania Judaica*, III/2 (1995), p. 806; Marzi (2018), pp. 50–51; Schneider (2018), p. 117.

153 1495 Jan./Feb. (Shevat [5]255), Worms

Headstone in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* for Yehuda ben Efrayim (R. Liva Bacharach), a *nadiv* (cf. no. 49), who placed his whole estate into the hands of a trustee (גזבר) ordering him to set up an “eternal light” (נר תמיד) “in all the communities of Ashkenaz” (בכל קהילות אשכנז), there to shine “before the *menora*” (מול פני המנורה).

It appears significant that R. Liva Bacharach made this donation at a time when many of the communities in Ashkenaz had already been expelled

from their homes and others were under threat of expulsion.

Worms, *Old Jewish Cemetery*, inv.-no. 684. Red sandstone, 75 cm x 95 cm x 12 cm. – Ed.: Sommer & Brocke (2015), no. 684.

1495, on or after April 30, Worms

154

The official daybooks of master Reinhard Noltz (d. 1518), mayor of the city of Worms, relate that around this time, Philipp, Prince Elector and Count Palatine, visited the synagogue in Worms together with his son, Duke Ludwig, and heard the Jews sing. He ordered his nobles and servants to behave and leave the Jews in peace.

Item uf diese zit gienc der pfaltzgraf Philips churfürst mit sinem son hertzog Ludwigen in die judenschule und hörten sie singen, und gebot der pfaltzgraf sinen edelen und dienern züchtig zu sin und die juden ungeirret zu lassen.

The visit occurred during the Imperial Diet of 1495 in Worms. To hear the Jews “singing” probably meant attending their service. Cf. below, no. 155.

Worms, Stadtarchiv, 1 B, no. 10 (copy of 1714, based on a lost manuscript owned by Zacharias Conrad Uffenbach). – Ed.: Boos (1893), p. 395. – Lit.: Reuter (1987), p. 66; *Germania Judaica*, III/2 (1995), pp. 1677–78.

1496 July 13, Worms

155

The official daybooks of master Reinhard Noltz, mayor of the city of Worms, relate that on this day (*an s. Margarethen tag*), Queen Bianca Maria Sforza visited the synagogue of the Jews and heard them sing. The Jews gave six silver cups to the Queen.

Item an s. Margarethen tag gienge die königin in die judengasz in die schul und höret sie singen, und schanckten die juden der königin sechs silbern bechern.

Cf. above, no. 154.

Worms, Stadtarchiv, 1 B, no. 10 (copy of 1714). – Ed.: Boos (1893), p. 401. – Lit.: Reuter (1987), p. 66; *Germania Judaica*, III/2 (1995), pp. 1677–78.

156 1496 February 2, Worms

On the occasion of the general tax known as the “Common Penny” passed by the Imperial Diet of Worms in 1495, the Jews of the city were subjected to a poll tax of 1 florin per head – men and women, old and young – over four consecutive years. Between August 1495 and 2 February 1496 (the first of the four payment dates) the tax officials drew up a list of the Jewish community’s members. In a second list they recorded the tax payments received from them. It is possible to relate these documents to a houselist of the Jewish quarter drawn up in 1500 CE (cf. no. 157).

Given the nature of the taxation, the lists of 1496 do not provide information about the synagogue and other community buildings. It is noteworthy, however, that they make mention of the synagogue sexton or *shammash* (*Schulklepper*), who lived in a house near the synagogue, and the cantor or *hazzan* (*Fursenger*). The “bath master” (*Beder*) was most probably responsible for the warm bathhouse, not for the *mikveh*.

Frankfurt, ISG, Reichssachen-Nachträge, no. 2449 IV b XV, nos. 1 (tax register) and 2 (list of Jews in Worms) (contemporary copies). – Ed.: Reuter (1983), pp. 63–70. – Lit.: Jung (1909) (dating the lists to 1497); Reuter (1983); Battenberg (1995), no. 1122, pp. 299–300.

157 c.1500, Worms

Register of houses in the Jewish quarter of Worms, drawn up on behalf of the city council following a visitation. Of the 42 inhabitable houses, 24 are identified by a name (house sign). The city’s officials were interested in the ownership of the houses and whether the inhabitants had rented them out from the council or from other Jews. The list offers rare information concerning the

surroundings of the synagogue, The numbers in brackets refer to Stern’s (1897) edition:

[15] Schmergo (Shemarya?) of *Oschenburg* (Aschaffenburg) lives in a small house in the rear part [of the Jewish quarter, as seen from the *Judengasse*] next to the synagogue (*hinden by der schulen*), belonging to the prayer room (*gehört zu der betstuben*) and rented out by the council.

[16] Behind the synagogue (*hinter der schulen*) in a house lives the sexton (*der schulklopper*), who has rented it from the Jewish community (*umb die Judischeit*).

[21] The deaf butcher (*der daub metzger*), next the Jews’ hospital (*neben dem Judenspital*). [Another butcher is named in house no. 38.]

A reconstruction of the situation, based on the lists of 1496 (above, no. 156) and 1500, is offered by Fritz Reuter (1983, summarized in Reuter 1984). It reveals that the topography of the quarter was not too dense, there were many empty plots and gardens, and access to the towers in the city wall was not blocked.

Worms, StadtA, 1 B 2042, 12 (original list). – Ed.: Stern (1897), p. 2. – Lit.: Stern (1897), pp. 9–11; Reuter (1983), pp. 63–73; Reuter (1987), pp. 91–93; Reuter (2012), p. 216.

1508 May 8, Worms

Blanck von Cadolzburg, Imperial notary, certifies that an (inserted) imperial mandate concerning the Dalberg family’s rights over the Jewish community of Worms was read out in front of the synagogue in Worms, in the presence of Wolf Kämmerer von Dalberg, representative of the Dalberg family, and Rabbi Abraham and Saul *Zum Affen*, representatives of the Jewish community. As the Jews had refused to accept a copy of the deed, the notary had nailed the copy on the synagogue.

The Dalberg (Kammerer von Worms) family held rights of safe-conducting the Jews on certain

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occasions such as weddings and funerals. These rights were granted by the bishops of Worms and were bound up with payments by the Jewish community. In 1508 the Jews had contested these demands, and Emperor Maximilian on 15 April decided in favour of the Dalberg.

As in Speyer (cf. no. 143), the synagogue courtyard was a place of public assembly and Jewish-Christian legal encounter in Worms.

Darmstadt, Hessisches Staatsarchiv, B 15 no. 514 (notarial instrument). Lit.: Battenberg (1995), no. 1154, p. 308; Battenberg (2006), no. 673, p. 210; Reuter (2012), p. 222, n. 85.

159 1509 August 19, near Padua

Emperor Maximilian I writes to the mayor and councilmen of Worms that he has provided his servant Johannes Pfefferkorn with a general mandate concerning certain frivolous, unfounded and evil books and writings of the Jews, which they keep in their synagogues and elsewhere, directed against the Christian faith. Since the Jews have “their highest synagogue” in the imperial city of Worms (*ir höchst sinagog in unnser unnd des reichs statt bey euch haben*) and such books are likely to be found there, he asks that the addressees pay attention to Pfefferkorn’s general mandate and implement it.

On Pfefferkorn’s campaign see also nos 160–61. The importance of the Worms community for the Jews of the Empire is also evidenced by the nomination of “imperial Rabbis” from Worms.

Worms, Stadtarchiv, I A no. 676 (original mandate); Darmstadt, Hessisches Staatsarchiv, A 14 no. 2878 (photocopy). – Lit.: Stern (1888), p. 156; Battenberg (1995), no. 1164, p. 311.

160 1509 Dezember 18

List of Hebrew books in the possession of the Jews of Worms, drawn up (by the city council?) in connection with Pfefferkorn’s campaign against

the Jewish books. Naturally, books of prayers account for the highest numbers (79). The list, however, also records no fewer than 40 *maḥzor* manuscripts and a further 24 books of *seliḥot* (penitential *piyyuṭim*), indicating the supreme importance of synagogue liturgy in this community.

Incidentally, the Jews denied owning any *Sefer Niṣṣaḥon*, a book of anti-Christian polemics Pfefferkorn was specifically looking for.

Ed.: Stern (1888), p. 158; Freudenthal (1931), p. 232.

1510

161

In one of his printed pamphlets, the convert and polemicist Johannes Pfefferkorn (cf. no. 159) speaks of the Jewish reverence for the graves of their ancestors. He relates that Jews from all over Germany and even neighbouring countries hold *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* in highest regard and go on pilgrimage there.

A particular headstone there, bearing no inscription, is held in greatest reverence. The Jews say that when the council once planned to expel the Jews from the city, this stone grew miraculously until it surpassed even the Cathedral’s towers. Intimidated by this portent, the councillors dropped their expulsion plans. Many Jews go on pilgrimage to Worms and visit this headstone. It is said to tell the time until the birth of the Messiah by slowly sinking into the ground. The Jews claim that whoever tries to dig out this stone will be struck dead. He (Pfefferkorn), however, would be willing to do it if only the authorities in Worms would let him.

Nun haben die Juden in der keyserlichen Stat Worms eine(n) erlichen kyrchhoff der gelichen nyet vyl in teuschen landenn gefundenn wyrnt. auff welichen steyt vntter andern eyn steyn sunder geschrift. Zu dem Steyn haben sie die Juden niet alleyn in teutschen su[n]der auch in anderen landen Ir czuflucht vnd hochsten troist

vnd halten yn vor eyn groiß heyligthumb. Vrsach deser heyligkait ist die, als die Juden sagen: Es hat sich in vorzeyten begrben [*sic*] das die von Wormbs haben die Juden auss der Stat verdreyben wolten. Derohalb die Juden all mit einander in groissez erschrecklichen und trauwren gefallen sein. und haben got ernstlich vnd mit hohem vleyß angeroyffen vnd gebeten das er sie beschryme und der stat wormß ein czeychen thun wel. damit sie vnuertreyben bleyben. Also ist der vorgebant stein in gestelnis einer dycken Seull auß der erden hoch vberlich in die lufft, byß vber das Munster gewachsen. So solichs die von Worms gesehen haben. sein sie erschrocken vnd gefunden das er auff der juden kyrchhoff seinen vrsprung gehabt hat. des sie nit wenig erschrocken seyn. Vnd haben die von wormß die Juden gebeten yn der Juden got zu byten solich grawsam gewachs ab zu stellen vnd sie von solichem steyn zu erledygen. haben ynen darneben czusag gethan sie nymermer auß zu treyben. Also auff beger vnd zusag der Stat wormß haben die Juden yren got gebeten welichs von got erhört. vnd ist der steyn weder nyder in die erdt gewychen vßgeschayden eyns mannes hoch ist er zu eynen czeychen ob der erden gebleben. doch so setz er sich, als die Juden sagen, taglich nyderer in die erde. Zu welichen steyn sie die Juden gar groissen troist haben vnd lauffen dar zu kyrchfart auß allen landen vnd seczen sich dairauff ganczer hoffnung yn dester eher in die erde czu bryngen. dan sie glauben wan er gancz in die erde gestygen sey. das dan yr messias geboren werden sol. Sie glauben auch ob sich ymant vnterstunde den gehorten steinn czu beschedigen oder außszugraben das der selb des gehen toczs sturben oder sunst geplagt werden solt. Doch hat sich Pfefferkorn horen lassen Solichen stein außszugrabenn vnd ist solichs auch czuthun noch erbutig. so sie yme anderst von der Obrigkait czu wormß gehenget oder czu gelassen wurde.

The tale told by Pfefferkorn reflects both the fact that, in contrast to most of the medieval urban Jewish communities in western Ashkenaz, the

Jews of Worms were not expelled during the 15th century, as well as the existence of a legendary tradition in the Jewish community which ascribed a messianic significance to Worms and to its *Old Jewish Cemetery* (cf. Voß 2013).

Pfefferkorn (1510), fol. C4r-v. – Lit.: Kirn (1989), p. 56; Voß (2013), pp. 343–44; Grözinger (2018), pp. 46–47 (modern German paraphrase).

1515 Januar 2, Mainz

162

Archbishop Albrecht of Mainz declares that he has appointed Samuel Leuchtenmacher (lit., “lamp maker”) the Jew to serve as undertaker for the Jews in the archbishopric of Mainz (*zu Unsern und Unseres Stifts todten Juden Greber*).

Samuel shall perform the burials of all Jews, from wherever they may be brought, in *Old Jewish Cemetery* (on the *Jews’ Sands*) at Mainz. He shall collect the customary dues therefore and forward them to the archbishop’s registrar in Mainz. In return he will be free from dues imposed by the archbishop as long as he serves as undertaker and lives at Weisenau (*dieweil er also Unser Todengräber sein und zu Weissenaw wonend ist*), just like his predecessors (*in aller massen sein Vorfarn die Todtengräber daselbst auch gewest sein*). Samuel has sworn an oath according to Jewish custom to keep his obligations.

Ü: Darmstadt, Hessisches Staatsarchiv, C 1 A Nr. 73, Bl. 233v (18th century copy). – Ed. Schaab (1855), p. 147; Cohen, I (1996), p. 147. – Lit.: Battenberg (1995), no. 1179, p. 315; Marzi & Hausmann (2010), p. 70.

1516 Juni 25, Mainz

163

Mention is made of the “Jews’ Well” in or near *Old Jewish Cemetery Mainz*.

Before the city court in Mainz, Henchin Loer has vindicated the claim to various rent payments on behalf of the St Agnes monastery. These include

1 pound heller from a vineyard near the "Jews's Well" (*Judenbrunnen*), bordering on the path owned by Albrecht Ostertag, as well as another payment of 1 pound, again from a vineyard in the *Judensand* area.

Mainz, Stadtarchiv, U / 1516 Juni 25.

164 1518 Januar 21, Aschaffenburg

Archbishop Albrecht of Mainz declares that he has accepted Mosse and Bulchen, the son and daughter of Seligman, Jewish citizen of Mainz in the house *Zum Kaltenbade*, as his "Jewish citizens" in Mainz for the duration of eight years. They shall pay an annual tribute of 12 florins.

The deed shows that the former *mikveh* building in Mainz, which was allotted to a Jewish undertaker in 1492 (cf. no. 152), continued to be used by individual Jewish households accepted in Mainz despite the general expulsion decree in effect since 1470.

Darmstadt, Hessisches Staatsarchiv, C 1 A no. 73, Bl. 232r–233v (18th century copy). – Ed.: Schaab (1855), pp. 169–70. – Lit.: Battenberg (1995), no. 1192, p. 320

165 1519, Worms

The Jewish community of Worms (*gemeyne Judischeit*) complain to the city council that municipal workmen had taken away a number of headstones from *Old Jewish Worms*. They argue that the Jewish community have been tolerated in Worms "for more than a thousand years" (*vor dausent jaren davor und da zwißhen*) for humanitarian reasons under the council's predecessors (*beij E. ersamen weyßheiten voralten alhie zu Wormß alwegen auß menschlicher miltikeit geduldet, und in schutze und schirm gewesen seyn*). They also remind the council that the Jews are included in the laws of the Holy Roman Empire (*under dem gesatze des heiligen Romischen Reichs*

begriffen sein). In particular, their synagogue, cemetery, houses and other property are protected by imperial and also ecclesiastical law against unlawful encroachment and damage (*das auch unser sinagog kirchhoffe heyser und andere unsere guter, nach vermoge angeregter des heilligen reichs, auch cristlicher geistlicher rechten, nit sollen vonn yemant beswerdt ader on rechtlich erlangung beschediget werden*). Thus it is forbidden by imperial law under pains of 10 gold marks that anyone should damage a grave or take any headstone, marble column or other item from there to use it for building purposes or to sell it (*und das sunderlich zu keyserlichen rechten bey sweren penen verboten ist, das niemant die begrebden beschedigen sol, und ob yemant von eynicher begrebdsteyn, marmoren seulen ader ychts anders hinweg neme, dieselben weyter zu verbauwen ader zu verkauffen, das der selb in pene zehen marck golts gefallen sein sol*).

Notwithstanding, they are sad to report that certain workmen of the council have taken away a number of headstones from the cemetery and thereby violated the graves of ancestors both local and from outside (*unserer voraltern heimschen und fremden begrebden*), all of which has sorely grieved them in their hearts (*das uns hoch zuherzen gehet*). The community hope that this has not happened on the magistrate's order.

As some of the graves of Jews from outside were also affected, it has to be feared that the relatives of those concerned might soon resort to outside noblemen and cause (legal) troubles for the magistrate (*dweyl etlicher fremden Judden begrebden in solchem mit beswerd worden sein, und noch taglich beswerd werden, die villeucht alß zubesorgen ubernacht sich an Eedelen und andere anhencken und E. W. unrugig machen mochten*).

The magistrate should therefore look into the matter and give out stern orders to their workmen to leave the headstones and other items of the cemetery alone (*beutlichenn und ernstlichen gebieten, sich unsere grabstein und anders so zu*

unsere begrebden gehorig ist, zu enthalten und mis-sigen, die steen aber lien lassen, und weyther ader hinfuran nit verseren oder uns abhendig machen).

The community's references regarding the protection of Jewish cemeteries in imperial laws as well as ecclesiastical (canon) law are correct. These stipulations in fact date back to the High Middle Ages.

The precise circumstances of the disturbances caused by the municipal workmen are unclear. Böcher (1992) thought that the headstones were embezzled for building the underground passage under *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms*. However, the list of headstones recovered from there in 1930 contains numerous items dating from after 1519.

Worms, Stadtarchiv, 1 B no. 2019/11. – Ed.: Levy (1911), pp. 15–17. – Lit.: Böcher (1992), p. 4–5. On the 26 headstones recovered from the underground passage in 1930, see New York, Leo Baeck Institute, AR 1894 (Isidor Kiefer Collection), Ser. II, box 1, folder 6.

166 1525 April 21

Mention is made of the “Jews' House” in or near *Old Jewish Cemetery Mainz*.

Before the civic court in Mainz, a legal representative of Johann zum Jungen, citizen of Frankfurt, accords various rent payments to the Abbess and monastery of St Claire in Mainz. One of these rents, amounting to 2½ pounds and 4 shillings, rests on 9 acres of land opposite “the Jews' House and the Jews' Sands” (*Judensand*). From the same land a prior obligation of 4 lb. *haller* is payable to the Archbishop.

Mainz, Stadtarchiv, U / 1525 April 21.

167 1529 July 23 – 1533 June 16, Speyer

Matthis Augsburgger, member of the city council of Speyer, had rented the area of the former Jewish cemetery (in 1524). However, he refuses to

pay the customary tithe to the cathedral chapter of Speyer because the grounds had “until recently been a Jewish cemetery and lain waste”.

In the course of the proceedings, the land is also once called a “vineyard”. The disputed area was measured. According to these records it extended over 10 to 12 acres (i.e., 3 to 4 hectares). A compromise was eventually reached on 16 June 1533.

Speyer, Stadtarchiv, 1 U no. 897. – Lit.: Engels (2004), pp. 99–100; Härtel (2017), pp. 70–71.

1554, Worms

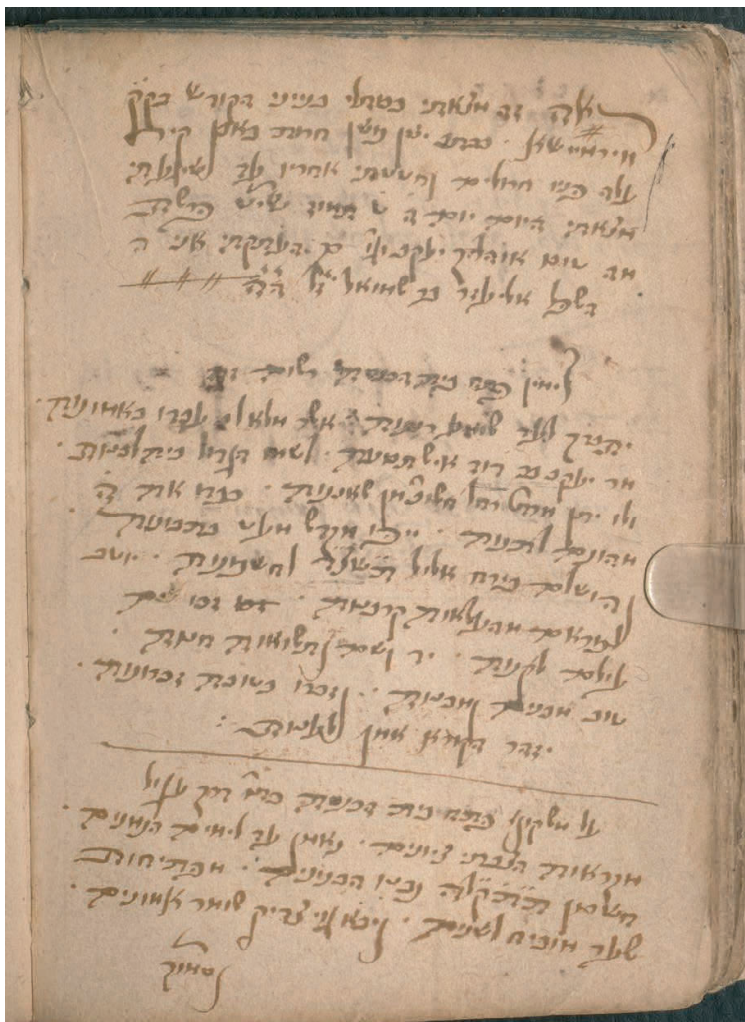
168

A Christian neighbour of *Worms Synagogue Compound* has brought a complaint against the Jewish community before the municipal council because the Jews were maintaining a cesspit behind their synagogue (*das cloack hinder unser schul*). The council imposed a fine of 50 florins on the Jews as the community had failed to replace the cesspit with a new one. The community argue that they had indeed closed the old cesspit and even made a contract with a Christian builder to have a new one built; however, its construction had been delayed by various reasons. In the meantime, “students from abroad and youths” (*frembde schulder und buben*) may have continued to keep the place in an unsavoury condition.

According to a related document the Christian neighbour had only recently acquired the garden behind the said cesspit from the municipality, which had formerly bought it from a Jew. The Jewish community argue that the old cesspit had “certainly been where it was long before this man's garden was sold to the honourable council for a small sum” (*sonder zweifel vil lenger da gewesen dan dißer sein garten von einem Juden von der gassen die dann e.e.w. ist verkauft worden umb ein klein gelt*).

StA Worms Abt. 1 B Nr. 2025/38, 2025/40. – Lit.: Reuter (2012), p. 219 with n. 64 (with citations).

Eli'ezer ben Shmu'el Braunschweig copies a number of dedicatory inscriptions in Worms Synagogue Compound into a notebook of his.



Frankfurt, Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek, ms. heb. 8° 256, fol. 55v

ראה זה מצאתי בכותלי בנייני הקודש בק"ק
 וירמייש"א בכתב ישן נושן ... מצאתי היום יום ה' ט'
 תמוז שי"ט פרשת מה טובו ... כך העתקתי אני
 השפל אליעזר בר שמואל זלה"ה

Behold, this is what I found on the walls of the sacred buildings in the holy community of Worms in very old script ... I found [it] today, Thursday, 9th of Tammuz in the year 319, of the weekly portion (*parasha*) "ma tovu" (4 Mos. 24:5) and copied it, I, the humble Eli'ezer, son of Shmu'el of blessed memory.

Eli'ezer's notebook contains copies of the following inscriptions (for details, see the relevant entries above): nos 8 and 9 (both of the 11th century), 26 (1174/75), 28 (1186/86), 35 and 36 (both of 1212/13).

In some cases, Eli'ezer's copies are the sole surviving evidence of these important testimonials to the medieval past of Worms Jewry; in others, his notes provide valuable additional information on inscriptions and fragments preserved until this day. The Jewish community of Worms in 1890/91 used his manuscript in order to restore the dedicatory inscriptions for the *women's shul*.

On Eli'ezer's identity little is known; he cannot be otherwise identified among the members of the Jewish community. Perhaps he was a visitor.

The initiative to record these monuments of the community's past probably has to do with the municipal council's plans, intensified since 1558, to expel the Jews from the city. It was only on 22 July 1559 that Emperor Ferdinand effectively forbade the city to go ahead with these plans.

Frankfurt, Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek, ms. heb. 8° 256, fols 55v–57r. – Lit.: Rothschild (1905), pp. 21–24; Roth & Prijs (1990), p. 181; Roemer (2010), p. 30. – It should be noted that 9th of Tammuz in 1559 did not fall on a Thursday but Wednesday. We thank Lucia Raspe for her help with this entry.

c.1560, Heidelberg

Paulus Staffelsteiner, a convert from Judaism and teacher of Hebrew at Heidelberg University, describes the customs of a Jewish wedding. Referring to the custom of smashing the glass from which the bridal couple have drunken, he makes mention of the "wedding stone" in the synagogue wall of Worms:

Vnd wann sie getruncken haben / ist zuvor ein zeichen gemacht / vnd sonderlich zu Wormbs ist ein Löwenkopff von einem steine mit auffgesperrem Rachen gemacht / vnd in ein maur gesetzt. Nach dem wirfft der Breitgam das Glas mit dem

Wein: Vnd wann er jm den rachen gerad trifft / so seint sie alle froch / vnd sprechen sie werden glück bey einander haben.

The wedding stone at Worms thus was shaped like a lion's head with open mouth. It has since been lost, presumably as a result of the riots of 1615 (cf. below, no. 183).

Wedding stones are frequently attested in written sources but rarely preserved. They were often star-shaped, perhaps in accordance with the traditional wish *mazal tov!* ("good luck!", *mazal* = 'star'). The oldest extant examples are from Weisenau (1691) and Bingen (1700), both in the archbishopric of Mainz.

Staffelsteiner (c.1560), p. 54. – Lit.: Feuchtwanger-Sarig (1993).

171 1562, Worms

The "Register of the Charitable Fund" of Worms Jewish Community, also known as the "Green Book", mentions a "contract with the gravedigger who lives in the house at the cemetery". He paid an annual rent of 2 pounds *heller*.

As is known from later documents, this gravedigger was a Christian. He lived in the predecessor building of the warden's house at the entrance to *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms*.

New York, Leo Baeck Institute, Berthold Rosenthal collection. – Lit.: Reuter (2012), pp. 229–30. On the lost "Green Book" see *ibid.*, n. 116.

172 1564 March 20, Worms

On this day, 23 Jews of Worms pledge themselves to raise the 20.000 florins demanded to bail out Abraham *Zum Bock*, who had been jailed on account of a charge of "ritual murder".

A notary precisely describes the place where the pledges were made: "in the Jews' Alley, on the courtyard covered with stone slabs, the stone-plastered place in front of the Jews' temple or

synagogue" (*uff dem, mit steinenen blatten belegten steinen und geplesteren blatz vor der Juden tempel oder sinagoga*).

The source offers a precise description of the synagogue courtyard and its public functions. The ritual murder charge against Abraham was later dropped.

Wonn, Stadtarchiv, 1 B, no. 2030, pp. 332–42. – Lit.: Reuter (2012), p. 223. On the "ritual murder" charge of 1562 see Hsia (1988), pp. 163–96; Roemer (2010), p. 36.

1568, Mainz

173

A detailed survey of the city of Mainz reveals that

1. the former synagogue, now a chapel (cf. no. 148) owned by the suffragan bishop, lay in the area of *Schusterstraße/Stadthausstraße*, at the corner next to the (former) Jews's bakery:

Die Suffraganey oder herrn weichbischofs behausung mit seim begriff, hof, garten, capellen und zugeherung, ans eck gegen dem Judenbackhaus und hindenaus gegen dem haus zum Risen ausgehent, hat der herr wichbischof in bewonung underhanden.

2. The house *Zum Kalten Bad*, i.e., the *mikveh* of the medieval Jewish community, was situated next to the bakery on the corner opposite the great convent. At this time it was inhabited by two Jewish households:

Das judenhaus zum Kaltenbadt zu zweien wonungen, bewont das ein Mänle, jud, das ander Lazarj Artzes witwe.

The latter entry is copied into the renewed survey of 1594 when, however, important changes had already been made to the house *Zum Kalten Bad* (cf. no. 176).

Schrohe (1930), no. 1429, p. 153. – Lit.: Schaab (1855), p. 132–33, 137, 210–11; Schrohe (1933), pp. 7–8; Marzi & Hausmann (2010), pp. 78, 83; Hausmann (2014), pp. 81–86; Schneider (2018), p. 117–17.

174 1572 (before June 25), Worms

Rabbi Ya'qov ben Ḥayyim defends himself on behalf of the Jewish community of Worms against the charge that he had held an unauthorised community gathering in the synagogue courtyard.

The conflict had erupted after two officials of the Palatine Prince Elector had appeared in the Jewish quarter on 15 February and demanded of Rabbi Ya'qov that he call the other Jews together. When some had gathered, the two officials read out a declaration that the Elector had cancelled all safe-conducts for Jews of Worms because one of them had failed to appear before the court of the burgrave of Alzey.

The municipal council saw the fact that the Jews had convened following a call by foreign officials as a breach of their sovereignty in the city and imposed a fine of 500 florins on the community, two days after the incident.

In his apology, Ya'qov argues that he had never been aware of any breach of the rules concerning the gatherings of the community, nor did he claim any authority (*Oberkeitt*) in this matter, which was exclusively vested in the municipal council and in God. Moreover, he argues that the gathering was by no means a formal one. Only some Jews had come. If a *kachell* (i.e., *qahal*) was convened, all the Jewish heads of households, be they men or widows, had to appear in the synagogue courtyard. In this case, however, neither the monthly *parnas* nor many others had in fact appeared.

Worms, Stadtarchiv, 1 B, no. 2019/32–33. – Lit: Reuter (2012), p. 222 with n. 18; Reuter (2013), p. 119–20.

175 c.1590, Worms

The Jewish community of Worms submit a supplication to the municipal council against having to pay house taxes for several houses which had always belonged to the synagogue, including “the little houses of our cantor and sexton, both of which are small and narrow, somewhat out of the

way, and of very low value” (*deß vorsengers und schulkloppers Häußlen, so doch beyde klein eng dem weg etwas entlegen und fast gering schetzig seint*).

The houses of the cantor (*ḥazzan*) and the sexton (*shammash*) had been the community's property of old and thus counted as part of the synagogue compound. They were situated east of the synagogue. For the sexton's house see no. 157.

Worms, Stadtarchiv, 1 B, no. 2042/27. – Lit.: Reuter (2012), p. 221 n. 75.

1594, Mainz

176

A renewed survey of Mainz offers important details on the old *mikveh* building and *Old Jewish Cemetery Mainz*.

1. The two habitations in the Jewish house *Zum Kaltenbadt* have now been changed into one, with a “Jewish well” and a synagogue:

Das judenhaus zum Kaltenbadt zue zweien wohnungen, bewont das ein Men(n)le, jud, das ander Lazari, artzes, witwe [= above, no. 172]. Ist nunmehr zusammengezogen, zue einem neuen haus gebauet sampt einem judischen bronnen und synagog durch Joseph, juden.

The said changes had occurred after the readmission of Jews in Mainz by Archbishop Wolfgang of Dalberg and the founding of a new Jewish community in 1583. In that year the said Joseph (Yosef of Cannstatt or *Zum Kalten Bad*, or *Juspamenz*) commissioned the writing of a new *Memorbook* for the community. Joseph was a prominent Jew who also kept a personal seal.

The community was small at first – in 1602 the rabbi appointed by the Archbishop lived in Bingen, and as late as 1614 there were only six households in Mainz.

2. For the first time, the outskirts of Mainz are also recorded in the survey, thus revealing new information concerning *Old Jewish Cemetery*

Mainz and its surroundings:

– There is an old boundary stone showing a wheel (the coat of arms of the archbishops) across the way from the “Jews’ house”, in a cabbage garden. The garden owner has encroached on the path:

Item gegen dem Judenhaus uber stehet ein alter gemarkstein mit einem rad in Hanß Kurtzen kappesport, dazwischen sollsein der wege breit funf ruden und ein schuch und hat überbauet 6 schue breit.

– A number of plots along the “way on the Jews’ Sands” are mentioned. Again, three boundary stones mark the (former) extent of what is here called the “commons” (*alment*). One of these stones features two wheels and a cross:

Item ein alter almentstein mit 2 redern, in der midt ein creuz, stehet unden in disem acker [...]
Item wiederumb in almentstein gegen den 9 morgen uber den wege [...]
Item ein alter almentstein mit einem rat, steht in den eckern an dem wege gegen den neun morgen uber im Wiesenfege, zeigt uf die andern stein des alments des Judensand, und befindt sich auch richtig.

– A number of “gardens and plots on the Jews’ Sands” are listed. They also feature old boundary stones, which indicates that this area was once considered a commons:

Item ein garten uf dem Judensand [...]
Item ein gemeiner wege unden an gemeltem garten, zeugt uf die wiesen, daran ein alter gemarkstein, zeigt das alment des Judensands. Dies alment ist durch Peter Martini seligen verbauet [...]
Item [...] Item in obgemeltem garten ein alter almentstein, zeigt obgemelten wege des Judensands [...]

– The “Jews’ well” (*Judenbrunen*) is an important landmark in the following section of the survey. Two paths meet at a vineyard on *Gonsenheimer Steg* (today’s *Fritz-Kohl-Straße*) at its lower end,

one leading to the well and the other to what is here called the “Jews’ gallows”:

Item 2 morgen weingarten, Jacob von Siegenhaussen, stost uf beide wege, ein zum Judenbrun, den andern zum Judengalgen, modo Heinrich Dutzell.

– The “Jews’ House” is named in this area. It had a small courtyard which once contained a well:

Item das Judenhaus mit einem höflin, darin vor zeiten ein brun gestanden.

– The two public footpaths leading to the gallows and the “Jews’ well” are described in detail. On one side of the upper footpath, leading to the gallows, again a boundary stone featuring two wheels is noted, the stone on the other side of the path was missing:

Item in diesem wege naher dem Judengalgen ein alten gemarkstein funden mit zweien retern, in der mitte ein kreuz, dargegen uber in Petr Martini witiben kirschgarten ein stecken geschlagen, ist durchaus einer halben ruten breit überbauet oben zue, den stein hat man nit können finden.

The many references to boundary stones reveal that the *Judensand* area was once contested between the archbishops (whose coat of arms features a single wheel) and the city of Mainz (two wheels). This may refer to the conflicts of the 15th century (cf. above, nos 126, 128, 138). In many cases the owners of gardens, orchards and vineyards had encroached upon the public paths and lanes.

The “Jews’ house” (possibly, the *tahara house* of the Jewish community) was situated in the lower part of the *Judensand* area. It had a small courtyard with a well that was no longer extant (and thus not identical with the “Jews’ well”). These findings are confirmed by a surveyor map of 1779, featuring both the boundary stones and the little house in the lower part of the Jewish cemetery. See also below, no. 201.

Schrohe (1978), pp. 153, 278–79, 282, 284–87, 290. –Lit.: Mainz Exhibition (1978), p. 145 (Joseph's seal). Decot (2006), p. 213; Lehnardt (2010), p. 51 (the *Memorbook* preserved in ms. New York, Jewish Theological Seminary, 8875); Marzi (2018), p. 101.

177 1601 October 14–November 21, Speyer

Following the death of the last leaseholder of the area that had been the medieval Jewish cemetery of Speyer, the municipal council hand over the grounds to the local hospice (*Elendenherberge*). In times of epidemics the hospice shall allow the neighbouring sickhouse to bury their dead here.

Transfer of the whole area of the cemetery to the *Elendenherberge* was finalised in 1617.

Speyer, Stadtarchiv, 1 A, no. 814 fols 23 ff., and 1 B 6, no. 2, fols 80 and 83. – Lit.: Engels (2004), pp. 100–02; Härter & Stolleis (2010), nos 1854 and 1861, pp. 275–76; Härtel (2017), pp. 70–71.

178 1608/09 (= 5769), Worms

Inscription on the upper rim of a silver goblet.

הקדש' קהל' וורמ' יישא' שנת' שסט' לפרט' קטן

Dedicated to the treasure of the Holy Community of Worms, in the year 369, according to the minor reckoning.

The goblet was wrought by Christoff Mendt in Frankenthal near Worms. It is the oldest surviving ritual object from the Jewish community and one of the oldest German Judaica generally (Weber 2002). It was apparently made for the Jewish Burial Society (*Hevra qadisha*), as it belonged to the Men's Charitable Society until 1938. It was recovered in Mainz in 1958 and is today displayed in *Jewish Museum Worms*.

Worms, *Jewish Museum*. – Lit.: Levy (1911), p. 20 (with plate on facing page); Böcher (1961), no. XII, pp. 109–10 and 92–93; Exhibition "Synagoga" (1960), no. C 317; Monumenta Judaica (1964), no. E210 with fig. 61; Hürkey (1995), no. 5, p. 286; Weber (2002), no. 39, p. 87, and fig. 44.

Municipal officials of the city of Worms conduct a visitation of the Jewish quarter, drawing up a census of the community. They record a total of 759 inhabitants living in 95 households plus a number of poor Jews living in properties held by the community:

"A total of 619 of those living in households (81.6%) belonged to the householders' own families while 140 (18.4%) were students, servants, or other nonrelatives. Households ranged in size from 1 to 21 inhabitants. The median household size was seven persons. One-third of the Jewish households of Worms included more than one conjugal unit, typically the householding couple plus one or more married children" (Friedrichs 2003).

In the rear part of the Jewish quarter, near the synagogue, there were several hospices for poor or wayfaring Jews. The cantor lived in the wash-house on the square, the sexton in the house *Zum Backofen* (which probably contained the communal oven needed for ritual reasons); next door lived a watchman. The Rabbi lived in the house *Zur Kette*. The synagogue complex as such is not recorded in the list, as its purpose was a detailed survey of inhabitants and rents.

Worms, Stadtarchiv, 1 B, nos 2024/11. – Lit.: Friedrichs (2003), *passim*; Reuter (2012), pp. 221–22.

1611, Speyer

Renewed inventory of the arms and ammunition stored in the municipal armory of Speyer (*Zeug-ambtsbuch, erneuert*), formerly the synagogue and *women's shul* in *Speyer Jewry-Court*.

The list distinguishes between the items found "in the synagogue" (*in der Judenschul*) and those "on the first floor" (*in der Judenschul uf dem ersten boden*), which corresponds to the findings made in recent building research: the city had an extra floor inserted in the former synagogue.

181 1615 April 10–24, Worms

Following years of civic quarrels between the guilds and the municipal council in Worms, and following the example of the “Fettmilch” uprising in nearby Frankfurt am Main (1612–1616), the populace, led by the guildsmen and their spokesman, Dr Christophorus Chemnitz, violently drive out the Jews of Worms from their quarter and the city and set out to demolish *Worms Synagogue Compound* and vandalise *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms*. The popular riots are soon suppressed by the troops of the Prince-Elector.

The damage done to the Jewish community’s assets during the two weeks between Easter Monday (which fell on the seventh day of Passover) and the arrival of the Palatine troops is hard to determine.

1. A contemporary pamphlet entitled *Wormb-sische Acta oder Aussmusterung der Jüden zu Wormbs*, which tells the events from the perspective of the insurgents, relates that on the very first day the roof of the synagogue was torn down (*noch selbigen Tags das Tachwerck an ihrem Tempel herunder gerissen*). On the next day it was “ordered that all the buildings wherein Jewish idolatry had been practiced should be demolished so that not a stone would rest on the other or on its foundation” (*verordnet, daß alle Gebewde, darinnen die Jüdische Abgötterey getrieben worden, sollen hernieder gerissen werden, der gestalt, daß kein Stein auff dem andern, oder im fundament verpleiben solle*). Up to 600 people had flocked together setting out to break down the “shul or temple” (*Schul oder Tempel*) of the Jews.

When the Jews saw that their synagogue, “which had stood there for more than 1.800 years” (*so uber die Achtzehen hundert Jahr gestanden*), was demolished “down to the ground” (*uff den Boden*

hinweg), they ripped their clothes, mourned and did penance and prayed.

2. The same pamphlet goes on to relate that meanwhile the Jewish cemetery was “completely destroyed” (*schon gantz zerstört*). The headstones, numbering in their thousands, were torn from the ground and smashed or torn to pieces (*alle Grabstein, deren etlich tausent, auß dem Boden gerissen, theils zu stücken geschlagen, theils zu stücken gerissen*): It was “quite unbelievable, but with great effort and concerted strength it did indeed happen” (*welches fast unglaublich, aber mit grossem Eyffer, und angelegten stärcke es warlich beschehen*).

The mayors tried in vain to stop the vandalism. When they came to the cemetery they argued that it was against imperial law to “act in such ruthless manner against the cemeteries” (*were wideder die Kayserliche Recht, so unbarmhertziger weisse, mit den Kirchffen umbzugehen*) (cf. no. 165). One of the insurgents answered that this was no Christian cemetery but a “blood field” (*Blut Acker*; cf. Matthew 27:7; Acts 1:19); the Jews buried here were “not worthy to have such state-ly and everlasting memorials” (*nit werth, daß sie solche stattliche und ewige Gedächtnûs haben*). They were indeed hoping to set up a crucifix here.

3. Liwa Kirchheim, the sexton of the Jewish community at the time, relates that on the seventh day of Passover the mob began destroying

our synagogue, the women’s synagogue and the *bēt ha-Midrash* of the men; also, the building in front of the women’s synagogue. [...] Then they went to the cemetery to dig out several hundred headstones and destroy them as well as some buildings there; also, the house where the *šidduq ha-Din* prayer used to be recited.

Kirchheim’s report is valuable in suggesting that there were predecessor buildings for the present *yeshiva*, the entrance hall to the women’s shul, and the *Tahara House* on the cemetery.

4. Kirchheim's successor Yuspa Shammash, in his collection of wonder tales from Worms (*Mayse Nissim*, cf. no. 204.9), relates that:

Immediately after the Jews had been expelled, the rioters, together with some of the burghers, went to the synagogue and destroyed it completely, both the men's and the women's sections, and they broke the *Menora*. The only remnants were the *Holy Ark*, the door of the men's section, and the lower portion of the wall that miraculously bent down in the time of Rabbi Judah the Pious (*Mayse Nissim*, no. 9)

Yuspa, however, did not live in Worms at the time; he recorded only what he had heard. It seems odd that he should name parts of the synagogue with a high symbolic significance among those which survived.

All these sources tend to stress the extent of the destruction. It should be kept in mind, however, that the insurgents were working with their bare hands and without support from the municipal leadership. They also had relatively little time.

It is very plausible that the roofs of the synagogue and *women's shul* were torn down and later had to be replaced. By contrast, building research has revealed that all the outer walls of the synagogue and *women's shul* survived the attack (Böcher 1961).

Kirchheim writes that it took until 1620 before the Jews of Worms could start rebuilding their synagogue. It then took 12 weeks until it was reinagurated (cf. no. 186).

From Kirchheim's report it appears that the annex buildings such as the *bēt ha-Midrash* and entrance hall to the *women's shul* were more completely destroyed, as was the *Tahara House* at the cemetery. In fact these were the buildings replaced in the 1620s by the endowments of David Oppenheim (cf. below, no. 190).

Worms, Stadtarchiv, 1 B, nos 2020–2022. – Eds.: *Wormbsische Acta* (1615); Yuspa (1696), no. 9; Pfeffinger (1706), pp. 547–48; Schudt

(1714), vol. 1, pp. 417–19; Kirchheim (1987), pp. 252. – Lit.: Epstein (1901), pp. 49–50; Böcher (1961), pp. 36, 58–59; Merkel (1979/81), p. 101; Friedrichs (1990), *passim*; Hsia (1997); Roemer (2010), p. 38; Reuter (2012), p. 219.

1615 April 26, Worms

182

Immediately after the suppression of the local revolt two Jews appear in the city and ask for permission to bury one of their brethren on the local cemetery. Their request is regarded as an attempt to create a legal precedent and turned down.

Kurtzer unvergreifflicher bericht (1615), p. 7.

1615 May 31 (3 Sivan [5]375), Alsbach

183

Headstone in the Jewish cemetery of Alsbach, c.23 km northeast of Worms, for R. Shmu'el Bacharach of Worms, who died in exile.

As nos 182 and 183 indicate, Jewish burials in Worms were interrupted until the time of re-admission into the city (cf. nos 184–85).

Böcher & Rapp (1970), pp. 318–19.

1616 Januar 7 (27 Tevet [5]376), Worms

184

Headstone in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* for Yutlen, daughter of Yosef Mainz (*Juspamenz*, cf. no. 176) and wife of the *parnas* Aharon Ginzburg. Her death occurred just two days before the Jews were officially readmitted into the city following the riots and expulsion of 1615 (cf. no. 181). The headstone was set by her son.

Worms, *Old Jewish Cemetery*, inv.-no. 60. – Ed.: Sommer & Brocke (2015), no. 60.

185 1616 January 9 (29 Tevet 5376), Worms

Following the expulsion of 1615 and exile, the Jews of Worms can return to their quarter.

1. A notarial instrument records that at about 9 in the morning, in the presence of the secretaries of the Palatine Prince-Elector and Bishop of Speyer, a number of Jews, escorted by soldiers (*durch ettliche Soldaten*), entered the newly opened quarter (*in die zuvor eröffnete Gassen*). In all, 58 heads of household are reinstated in their rights.

2. A municipal census of March 1616 shows that most of the local Jewish families had returned by this time. 69 heads of household swear the oath of allegiance (*iuramentum fidelitatis*) on the interim Jewry-Ordinance imposed by the Emperor.

2. Yuspa Shammash (cf. no. 204) in his book of religious customs relates that “on the eve of the month of Shevat, 5376, the Almighty, in his mercy and great kindness, returned us to our community in peace”. The day was established a fast day in the community.

3. Yuspa’s predecessor Liwa Kirchheim (cf. no. 181) relates that important old manuscripts were found in the debris of the synagogue, including in particular the accounts by R. El’azar ben Yehuda of Worms on the attack against his family in 1196 (cf. no. 31). He also contends that one of the fractured headstones in *Old Jewish Cemetery* turned out to be fifteen hundred years old.

4. A Yiddish song composed by Naḥman Eli’ezer Puch of Prague gives a short version of the exile and deliverance of the Jews of Frankfurt and of Worms but gives no further detail.

Worms, Stadtarchiv, 1 A no. 903; 1 B no. 2019/35; Kirchheim (1987), pp. 209, 252; Eidelberg (1991), p. 30. – Lit.: Böcher (1961), p. 59; Turniansky (2000), pp. 131–33; Reuter (2008), p. 12; Reuter (2010), pp. 125–26; Reuter (2012), pp. 214, 219; Roemer (2010), p. 40.

186 1620 September 12/22 (24 Elul 5380), Worms

More than five years after its demolition in the popular uprising of 1615, religious services are

resumed in the synagogue of Worms.

1. Liwa Kirchheim writes that the synagogue compound lay in ruins for more than five years, until 29 Sivan [5]380 = 30 June 1620. In fact the city’s guilds refused to have anyone help the Jews rebuilding it, as a complaint of 1619 reveals.

2. According to Kirchheim and Yuspa Shammash the restoration measures were completed on 29 Av (5)380 (= 18/28 August 1620). This means that they took less than two months.

3. Yuspa adds that the synagogue was then inaugurated on the Shabbat between *Rosh ha-Shana* and *Yom Kippur*, 5380, i.e., on 24 Elul (= 12/22 September).

4. The *Mayse Nissim* collection of tales, also ascribed to Yuspa Shammash (cf. no. 204.9), relates that all the community, from the highest to its lowest members, even the women and girls, helped in the reconstruction work.

Yuspa (1696), no. 9; Epstein (1901), pp. 49–50; Böcher (1961), pp. 58–59; Eidelberg (1991), pp. 30, 73, 75; Reuter (2012), p. 219.

(c. 1620), Worms

187

Inscription from the architrave of the Renaissance *Aron* (Holy Ark)

[כתר] תורה : כתר מלכות

[Crown of the] Torah – Crown of King[ship]

This fragment formed part of the *Aron* after the restoration of the synagogue in 1620. Renovation of the Holy Ark is credited to the generosity of David Oppenheim in the community *Memorbook* as well as in the dedicatory inscription of the new *yeshiva* (cf. no. 190).

The fragment was part of the left half of the architrave. It was reused when a new *Aron* in Baroque style was constructed between 1689 and 1704. In 1959 it was rediscovered in the rubble of the synagogue. Today it is found in a wall of the *Rashi House* basement.

Worms, *Jewish Museum*. Yellow sandstone fragment, H = 34 cm, W = 58 cm, D = 12 cm, with reddish traces of fire. The plate is finely charred, the letters are embossed. – Lit.: Böcher (1961), pp. 73–74, n. 328 (no. 35); p. 110, no. XIA; Fuchs (2011), pp. 278–79 and figs 114, 114a, 114b.

188 (c. 1620), Worms

Inscription fragment from the arch plate of the Renaissance *Aron* (Holy Ark)

הנני שולח
מלאכי

[Behold, I sen]d | my [messen]ger!

Böcher's reconstruction of the text according to Malachi 3:1 is plausible, but the fragment is very small.

Like the preceding fragment, this piece was part of the Holy Ark donated by David Oppenheim after the destructions of 1615 and reused when a new, Baroque *Aron* was constructed between 1689 and 1704. It was recovered in the *women's shul* during the recovery work of 1957–1961.

Worms, *Synagogue*, inv.-no. 2009_058A. Yellowish-grey sandstone, H = 43 cm (max.), W = 34 cm (max.), worked on three sides, the letters are embossed. – Lit.: Böcher (1961), no. XIII, p. 110; Fuchs (2011), pp. 140–41 and fig. 58g.

189 (c. 1620), Worms

Fragment of an inscription from the synagogue compound.

...עלה גב...

The letters may be an allusion to Jos 19,11 ('then their boundary goes up'), but the meaning and context are unclear.

Like nos 187–88, this fragment was probably from a piece reused after 1689. It was recovered in the Municipal Museum of Worms in 1960.

Worms, *Jewish Museum*. Yellow sandstone, H = 33 cm, W = 33 cm, the letters are 5,5 cm high. – Lit.: Böcher (1961), no. XIV, p. 111.

Inscription commemorating the building of a *yeshiva*.

דורש ומבקש דרך ב'הרה
רגש יהלך היכל ועזרה
שואב עמוד ימין ומורה
סגן פרנס זהיר לנדב מ'הרה
מ'כיסו שלם פ'אר ח'דר ת'ורה

א'ף ו'רד פ'רח נ'עים [ה'בימה]
י'סד י'קרה מ'אורה שנת [ב'נה]
י'ש'י'ב'ה ללמד בה כ[חמה ברה]

He inquired and searched for a clear path, | for an emotion that prevails in the Temple and forecourt | When he studied he was a right pillar, a teacher, | a community leader always ready to make rich sacrifice. | From his own pocket he paid for the embellishment of the Torah chamber | also, the lovely adornment of the *bēma*. | He arranged for the illumination. In 384 he built | a *yeshiva*, so that therein be taught what is 'pure as the sun'.

The marked letters form the following words:

דוד בר יחושע יוסף ז"ל ממשפחת אופנהיים בנה
ישיבה

David, the son of Joshu'a Josef – [may the] m[emory of the righteous be] f[or a blessing] – from the Oppenheim family built a/this *yeshiva*.

Moreover, the words בנה ישיבה 'he built a *yeshiva*' form the chronogram for the year 384. Quotations: line 2 probably refers to Ps 55:15 (Rodov), line 8 to Song of Songs 6:10.

The inscription was *in situ* in the southern wall of the *yeshiva* until 1942. It broke in five pieces, of which two larger ones were recovered from the rubble in 1946 and two smaller ones in 1957. As part of the recovery they were again placed in their former position in the wall. Böcher's reconstruction of the text could mostly draw on remaining parts, only the lower left part in lines 6–8 had to be taken from Lewysohn's edition (1855).

The text commemorates David Oppenheim's endowment for an new *Aron* (*heder ha-Tora*,

'Torah chamber', line 5, cf. above, nos 187–88), the *bēma* frame (line 6) and the *yeshiva* (line 8), where this inscription was placed.

The *Memorbuch* of Worms community relates in similar words that David Oppenheim (d. 1642) "gave 100 royal *taler* towards building the synagogue here, and from his own funds he built the *almemar* in the synagogue, as well as the *yeshiva* next to the *synagogue*, the *Tahara House*; moreover he gave ritual objects for the synagogue and the chandelier next to the Holy Ark".

Worms, *Synagogue Compound*, *yeshiva*. Red sandstone, H = 78 cm, W = 83 cm. – Photographs: Worms, StadtA, Fotoarchiv, no. CH247 (interior of the *yeshiva*, upper left wall); *ibid.*, no. M07105a (1953) (Lapidary in St. Andrews, a bigger fragment on the right-hand wall, a medium-sized one on the upper right of the left wall); *ibid.*, no. M09220 (the two fragments together). – Lit.: Lewysohn (1855), no. V, pp. 108–09; Epstein (1896), p. 557 (= offprint, p. 11); Epstein (1901), pp. 71–72 (= offprint, pp. 28–29); Krautheimer (1927), p. 174 (?); Böcher (1961), no. XV, pp. 111–12; Rodov (2003), pp. 24–25 with n. 24. – For the *Memorbuch* entry cf. Berliner (1887), p. 16, trans. in Reuter (2008), p. 19 n. 71, and Eidelberg (1991), pp. 71–75.

191 1626 (= [5]386) Worms

Inscription commemorating the building of the *Tahara House* on the Jewish cemetery of Worms.

הלא מקום לזהב ומוצא
לכסף נתן הנדיב הפרנס
כמר דוד בר יהושע יוסף
ממשפחת אופנהיים הוא
אשר אהב בהמון מצות
ובחפניו אסף לו תבואת
בנין בימת בית הכנסת והישיבה
ובית הזה לצידוק הדין כאשר
אדם אל עמיו נאסף . הוקם
בשנת ישיב בגיא יקיץ זרוע
קדשו יחשף ולעמו ונחלתו
יכסף

Has not for [his] gold given a place, an issue | for [his] silver, the benefactor and the leader, | The honourable David bar Yehoshu'a Yosef of the

Oppenheim family? He, | who loved to keep the commandments in full | And who with wide arms gathered for himself the harvest | of building the *bema* of the synagogue, and the *yeshiva* | and this house for the *Justification of Judgement* [spoken] when | A man is gathered to his people. Erected | In the year "they are sleeping in the valley", I will wake up and the splendour | Of His [= God's] holiness will be revealed, and to his people to and his inheritance | He [= Oppenheim] will be gathered.

Epstein (1898) offers a transcription in nine lines, with different punctuation to emphasise the rhyming words. He reads מוצא for ומוצא (line 1), תבואת for תבואת (line 6), בימה for בימת (line 7), הזה for הזה (line 8) and עמדו for עמיו (line 9).

Line 1 alludes to Job 28:1, line 4 to Qohelet 5:9. The letters of "they are refreshed in the valley" (line 8) are to be read as a chronogram and add up to the year [5]386 = 1625/26. The *Tahara House* is called the house for the *šidduq ha-Din* prayer in line 6. In fact this prayer is to be found outside the *Tahara House* on a plaque in the wall next to the cemetery entrance.

Worms, *Old Jewish Cemetery*, interior of the *Tahara House*. – Ed.: Lewysohn (1855), no. VI, pp. 109; Epstein (1896), pp. 557–58. – We are grateful to Lucia Raspe for her new reading of the inscription and her help in its translation.

1630 January 10 (7 Shevat [5]390), Worms

192

Headstone in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* for the community leader R. Zanwil Shmu'el Ginzburg.

R. Zanwil is praised for his energy in dealing with "the concerns of the congregation" (בצרכי צבור) in the few troubled days of his life (ימי מגורים), as in his duties of representing the Jews (כשתדלנת), in the regional associations (מדינות), and in learned circles he solved thorny and involved issues. R. Zanwil was a leader of/from the Holy Community of Frankfurt (הוא) (הפרנס מק"ק ורקבורת). It is noteworthy that he

was buried in Worms and not Frankfurt. The *Landjudenschaften* (*medinot*) were a new phenomenon in the Early Modern period. Following the expulsions from many cities and territories, regional associations became more important. Their spokesmen (*shtadlanim*, sg. *shtadlan*) interceded on their behalf with the authorities.

Worms, *Old Jewish Cemetery*, inv.-no. 21. Red sandstone, 80 cm x 125 cm x 16 cm.– Ed.: Sommer & Brocke (2015), no. 21.

193 1635 September 23 (Tishrei [5]396), Worms

Headstone in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* for R. Menaḥem (*Mendel*) Oppenheim, who died on the eve of *Yom Kippur* (21 September) and was buried on the day following the feast (23 September). He is praised for his wisdom among the learned companions (הכמתו בחבורה) and for being a *parnas* and leader of an illustrious community (פרנס ומנהיג קהילת מפוארה).

While the inscription gives his colloquial given name, *Mendel* (or *Mendlen*), the beginnings of lines 3 to 6 form the acrostich of his Hebrew name, Menaḥem.

The *Memorbook* of Worms records that on occasion of R. Mendel's death, his relatives donated one hundred imperial *taler* for erecting a fence and a wall around the Jewish cemetery in Worms.

Worms, *Old Jewish Cemetery*, inv.-no. 44 – Ed.: Sommer & Brocke (2015), no. 44 (headstone); Berliner (1887), p. 13.

194 1637 December 25 (8 Tevet [5]398), Worms

Headstone in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* for Eli'ezer Zussman, son of R. Yiṣḥaq Blin. "He was in the the company of those who took care of the burials" (והיה בחבורת עוסקי בקבורה), that is, a member of the burial society (*hevra qadisha*). Fittingly, the epitaph says that "his soul went out in purity (*tahara*)" (ונשמתו יצא בטהרה).

Worms, *Old Jewish Cemetery*, inv.-no. 1150. – Ed.: Sommer & Brocke (2015), no. 1150.

1638, Worms

195

For the first time, the Jewish council chamber in the newly-built annex over the entrance hall to the *women's shul* in Worms is described. It was situated "in the Jewish alley [...] with all its windows facing the said alley or, rather, the square before the synagogue" (*daselbsten in den Judengassen [...] mit den fenste[r]n allen auff die gedachte Judengassen oder latz vor der Schulen ziehendt*).

Jerusalem, National Library of Israel, Central Archives of the Jewish People, Worms community archive (microfilm copy in Worms, Stadtarchiv), 74p. – Ed.: Reuter (2012), pp. 222–23.

1661 July 21, Mainz

196

Mandate by Johann Philipp of Schönborn, Prince Elector and Archbishop of Mainz concerning the Jews: Their numbers shall be reduced and they shall live in a separate quarter, where they are to build a new synagogue within two years. All Jews above the specified number shall leave the territory.

The mandate was repeated on 8 December 1662. On this occasion the Archbisho specifies that the Jews shall build a synagogue and two residential houses in the new quarter and sell the houses and synagogue they presently use to Christians.

In effect, the Archbishop was trying to create a ghetto for the Jews of Mainz. A further mandate of 12 November 1671 shows that the Jewish community had still not fully complied with his orders. However, living in a ghetto became a fact for the Jews of Worms in the late-17th century.

Darmstadt, Hessisches Staatsarchiv, C 1 A, no. 75, fol. 231, and no. 76, fols 162r–163v. –Schaab (1855), pp. 224–31, 241–43; Battenberg (2008), nos 25–26; Hausmann & Marzi (2012); Hausmann (2014).

197 1661 August/September (Elul [5]421), Worms

According to the *Mayse Nissim* collection of wonder stories from Worms by Yuspa Shammash (cf. no. 204.12), parts of the cemetery wall were torn down this year by the municipality to use the stones for building the new ramparts of the city.

Yuspa claims that on this occasion a certain headstone was found on which the words **איש בחטאו נת** were inscribed, which in his opinion indicated that the Jew in question had been executed on the order of a Jewish tribunal. He (Yuspa) had even been shown the place for stoning when he came to the city in 1623 but the place had since been lost because “they had built so many ramparts there”.

Yuspa’s story is in line with the ideas current among his contemporaries that the Jewish community of Worms dated back to a very ancient past and that it was invested with great authority. In fact, the jurisdiction of the Jewish community over its members very rarely included the right to execute a malfactor.

Scholars since Mannheimer have proposed that the underground passage below *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* was constructed around this time. The stones found there in 1930, however, also include some that date later than 1661.

Yuspa (1696), fol. 19v–20r, no. 12; Mannheimer (1842), S. 7; Kiefer (1930); Böcher (1992), S. 5.

198 1661/62, Mainz

Statutes of the Jewish Burial Society (*hevra qadisha*) in Mainz.

Apart from the obligations involved in burials, the society also professed charitable aims in general. Thus, poor people should be given alms on certain holidays and female servants should be given a monetary gift when they married.

Darmstadt, C 1 A, no. 76, fols 133v–134r (translation of June 1662). – Schaab (1855), p. 223; Strauss (1998), p. 167; Drobner (2000), p. 267; Battenberg (2008), no. 3291.

1663 October 6 (23 Tishrei [5]423), Worms

199

In this year, as Yuspa Shammash (cf. no. 204) relates in his book on religious customs (*minhagim*), the Jews were so afraid of the Christian townspeople that they only lit a very small bonfire in the courtyard of the *yeshiva* on *Simḥat Tora*.

According to Yuspa, in 1669 they did not light a fire at all, as the Count Palatine had just lost a battle and was leading his troops back through the city.

The notes refer to a custom connected to this holiday, described by Yuspa in the following manner: On *Simḥat Tora* the honorary duties of the community (such as the readings from the Tora scroll) are auctioned off in the synagogue courtyard. At the end of the day they make a large bonfire in the courtyard in front of the bridal house (community hall).

Yuspa (1988–92), I, p. 219, 227–31; Eidelberg (1991), pp. 26–27, 41; Pomerance (1999); Keßler (2007), p. 161; Reuter (2012), p. 222

1666, Worms

200

Yuspa Shammash performs a circumcision in difficult circumstances. On this occasion, the functional division between the women’s and the men’s sections of the synagogue is mentioned:

The child was dressed in clean diapers. The godmother brought him from the women’s section of the synagogue, in accordance with the custom, and I circumcised him in the customary manner in the men’s section.

Other sources confirm that the plague hit the Jewish community severely in 1666/67.

Eidelberg (1991), pp. 31–32; Reuter (2012), p. 217 n. 50.

1676, Mainz

201

Old Jewish Cemetery Mainz is depicted on a plan showing the fortifications of the city of Mainz, drawn up by Giuseppe Spalla.

The “Jewish Sands” area (*Juden Sandt*) is shown in the crotch between *Gonsenheimer Weg* (today *Fritz-Kohl-Straße*) and *Mombacher Weg*. Right across from the junction there are two small adjacent buildings identified as “Old Jews’ Bath” (*Alte Juden Bad*). On the other side of *Mombacher Weg* there is a pond.

Destruction of the city of Speyer in the course of the *War of the Palatine Succession*. Following the evacuation of the population, the French troops set the whole city on fire for strategic reasons.

The fire also affects the *Jewry-Court* in Speyer, where the synagogue had been turned into a municipal armoury in the early 16th century. The roofs of the former synagogue and *women’s shul* are destroyed.

During the occupation of Speyer, the French troops had also dismantled the city walls. It is possible that headstones previously taken from the medieval Jewish cemetery were again scattered. The best building materials were transported to nearby Philippsburg, where they were used to build new fortifications.

[Gründliche und eigentliche Beschreibung](#) (1689), p. 8; [Litzel](#) (1759), pp. 9–10; [Kuhlmann](#) (1789), p. 105, 117.

1689 May 31 (12 Sivan 5449), Worms

Destruction of the city of Worms in the course of the *War of the Palatine Succession*. Following the evacuation of the population, the French troops set the city on fire for strategic reasons. Before the fire, the city walls had been dismantled.

[Merck-würdiger Anhang](#) (1689), pp. 13–16. – Lit.: [Soldan](#) (1889); [Boos](#) IV (1901), pp. 454–74; [Böcher](#) (1972–73); [Mahlerwein](#) (2005), pp. 299–303

The fire also affects the *Synagogue Compound* in Worms. The extent of the damage is difficult to assess. There are, however, a number of sources relating to the event.

1. According to a survey later conducted by the municipal council, 946 buildings in all were burned down. Those of the Jewish quarter were among them. Incidentally, the lists reveal that there was a horse-driven mill and a place for (kosher) slaughtering near the synagogue (*Judengaß*: *N.B. begreift samt der Rosmühl, Synaog, Kalt bad, Dantzhaus, Schlachthaus*).



Mainz, Stadtarchiv, BPSP 122 D, detail.

It is very unlikely that the houses in question were indeed a *Juden Bad* in the sense of a *mikveh*. Rather, the complex is the one referred to as the “Jews’s House” in earlier documents, i.e., the house used for ritually cleansing the dead. According to one source (cf. no. 176) that house used to have a well.

Mainz, Stadtarchiv, BPSP 122 D (copy of 1827). – Lit.:

Worms, Stadtarchiv, 1 B no. 377/4, fol. 19v, cf. no. 377/5. – Lit.: Boos IV (1901), pp. 454–74; Weckerling (1913), p. 71; cf. Reuter (2012), pp. 221–22. For a similar survey of the ecclesiastical properties in Worms, cf. Schwan (1987–91).

2. The engravings produced after 1689 by Peter and Johann Friedrich Hamman show that the roof structure of the entrance hall of the *women's shul* with the Jewish council chamber was preserved. The vaulting of the *women's shul* was destroyed while that of the (men's) synagogue appears to have lasted the flames. The latter impression is confirmed by the fact that the French troops used the synagogue as a stable in 1689–90 and, following their return to Worms, the citizens thereafter used it as a granary. Moreover, the fact that numerous Torah binders and documents were found in the attic of the synagogue in the 19th century appears to indicate that this part of the synagogue compound remained relatively intact.

Schudt, I (1714), p. 411; Rothschild (1929), pp. 32–33; Böcher (1961), pp. 63–64; Reuter (1989), pp. 39, 70–71.

3. R. David Oppenheim(er) (born 1664 in Worms, d. 1736 in Prague), Rabbi of Moravia from 1690 and Chief Rabbi of Prague from 1702, refers to the destruction of Worms in a handwritten note added to his copy of Shlomo Ibn Verga's *Shevet Yehuda*:

During midday, they [the French] burned the greatly exalted city filled with erudite scholars, the crowned glory of all communities, Worms, and they also burned the main synagogue with all its treasures. They also destroyed the synagogue which was named after Rashi, may his memory be blessed. The fire was unquenchable. In a short time the entire city, including the Jewish community which pre-dated the destruction of the First Temple, was consumed. My father and master, Abraham Oppenheim, was the leader of the Jewish community. He lost many of his possessions in the fires, including six houses in the Jewish quarter and other houses within the city of Worms. In addition, he lost gardens and wine orchards. His glorious house "Zur Kanne",

where he dwelt and which was always open to wayfarers, was also engulfed. [...] The entire house of Israel will bemoan the conflagration. In the Jewish street there were 110 great and distinguished homes, filled with gardens, and now the street is transformed into a wilderness.

On 14 June Oppenheim, who was staying in Hannover at the time, wrote a legal expertise (*responsum*), in which he also reflects on the recent news from Worms, "the gem of all the communities".

Oppenheim's writings reveal that at this time the *yeshiva* built in 1624 was already thought of as the *bēt Midrash* of Rashi.

Trans.: Eidelberg (1994), pp. 83–85. - Lit.: Teplitsky (2012), 56–58.

4. On at least two occasions, R. Ya'ir Ḥayyim Bacharach (1638–1702) relates to the destruction of his native Worms in his book of *responsa*. He dates the fire to 1 June 1689 (which is understandable since the fire was started "during midday" of 31 May and certainly lasted far into the following day):

In the course of time there came upon us a year of curses. In 5449, 13 of Sivan our city was destroyed, and because of our great sins our *bēt-ha-Miqdash*, our small temple, was desolate. The residents of our holy congregation left in terror and became wanderers and roamers. I too was among the unhappy who were exiled. After tribulations, I established my residence here, in this exceedingly great city of Frankfurt.

Bacharach refers to the synagogue of Worms as to a "small temple" and to the community as a "holy" one. On another occasion he speaks of Worms as "a mother-city in Israel".

Many of the religious artefacts of the synagogue, Bacharach reports, were evacuated to the Jewish community of Metz. The rabbi was among those who were able to return to Worms after 1699 and died there in 1702. He is buried in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms*.

Bacharach (1699), nos 126 and 134. – Trans.: Eidelberg (1994), pp. 79, 82–83, 88. – Lit.: Kaufmann (1894); Roemer (2010), pp. 46–47.

5. Yiṣḥaq (*Sekele*) ben Eli'ezer Liberman, grandson of Yuspa Shammash, composed a "New lament over the destruction of the holy community of Worms" in Yiddish (*ain ney klag-lid fun ḥurben q"q Wermeise*), which Eli'ezer Liberman published as an addition to *Mayse Nissim*, the 'wonder stories' from Worms collected by Yuspa (cf. no. 204).

In general terms the lament speaks of the arrival of the French troops, the demolition of the city walls including those along the Jewish quarter, the requisitions and plunderings, the forced evacuation from the city, the hardships of exile and the lament over the burning of "our holy synagogue" (*unsere hailege shul*) only a few days after the feast of *Shavu'ot*.

The destruction of Worms is explicitly likened to the destruction of Jerusalem (*unser ḥurben is yo geglikhen su ḥurben Yerusholayim*), and the poem contains numerous quotations (in Hebrew) from the biblical books of *Lamentations*.

Yuspa (1696), fols 40v–42v, no. 25 (we are grateful to Simon Neuberg (Trier) for sharing his transliteration of the text). – Lit.: Cannstadt (1889), pp. 147–48 (German paraphrase); Eidelberg (1994), pp. 79–82.

204 1696, Amsterdam

First publication of *Mayse Nissim*, the 'wonder stories' collected in Worms by Yiftaḥ Yosef (Yuspa) ben Naftali ha-Levi, better known as *Yuspa Shammash*, the sexton of the community (1604–1678). The tales are published in Yiddish by Yuspa's son, Eli'ezer Liberman.

Yuspa first studied in Fulda and came to Worms in 1623 to continue his education at the local *yeshiva*. Two years later he married here and subsequently served for forty years as the community's *shammash* (sexton), scribe and – sometimes – as *mohel* (circumciser) and *shoḥet*

(kosher slaughterer). He is best known for his work on the religious customs (*minhagim*) of the community. Yuspa died in 1678. His headstone on *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* was lost in the 20th century but the inscription survives in a historical photograph.

Mayse Nissim is noteworthy for the way in which local Jewish legends were associated with specific locations in the Jewish quarter (including *Worms Synagogue Compound*) and with *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms*. They also reflect on the presumed old age of the Jewish community.

Mayse Nissim, no. 1: As a young student in Fulda, Yuspa had heard from his teacher why there had been so many persecutions (*gzeres*) in Worms in the past. The reason was that following the destruction of the First Temple in Jerusalem (by Nebuchadnezzar II in 586 BCE) some Jews had also fled to Worms. When the Jewish people returned from the Babilonian exile, the Jews of Worms preferred to stay where they were, arguing that they constituted "a small Jerusalem" of their own. The later persecutions, thus, were a punishment for their pride.

Yuspa (1696), fols 2v–3v, no. 1. – Lit.: Reuter & Schäfer (2013), p. 2 Raspe (2019).

Mayse Nissim, no. 2: After his move to Worms in 1623, Yuspa heard from R. Eliya *Ba'al Shem* (Eliya ben Moshe Loanz, d. 1636) the reason for the special relationship between the Jewish community and Dalberg family: Long ago a member of the Dalberg noble house went to Jerusalem to learn Arabic but fell ill when he was in the city. Only a Jew from Germany understood his plight and helped him to recover. When the Dalberg nobleman had returned and assumed the position of his powerful father, he remembered the good deed and stipulated that his family should always treat the Jews in a good way. Another member of that noble house was among the (Roman) troops at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem (in 70 CE). He remembered his ancestor's wish and brought a number of Jews with him to Worms.

This (anachronistic) tale is told to explain why the Dalberg family still sent a military escort whenever the Jews of Worms were celebrating a wedding or holding a funeral procession.

Yuspa (1696), fols 3v–5r, no. 2. – Lit.: Reuter & Schäfer (2013), pp. 2–4; Raspe (2019).

Mayse Nissim, no. 3: Once the Christians were going in procession through the Jewish quarter. A Jew, not knowing what was going on, emptied his chamberpot from a window and by chance hit the crucifix they were carrying. The Christian authorities claimed that this was done on purpose and demanded that the culprit come forward. Should the community not deliver him within seven days, all were to die. While the community was still in fear, two strangers arrived at the gate of the Jewish quarter on the seventh day of Passover. When they heard of the impending catastrophe, they offered to step forward and take the punishment on them. They were indeed executed. The community commemorates them every year. Yuspa suggests that they might have been angels.

The tale is related to the two-branched “eternal light” (*ner tamid*) in the synagogue. In the 19th century the two lights were near the synagogue entrance and inscribed “eternal light of the two strangers” (נר תמיד של שני אורחים). Today they are found in a niche in the southern wall.

Yuspa (1696), fols 5r–v, no. 3 – Lit.: Mannheimer (1842), pp. 13–15; Reuter & Schäfer (2013), pp. 5–6.

Mayse Nissim, no. 4: A Jewish community leader (*parnas*) lived in the House *Zur Sonne*. This pious man had a beautiful daughter who fell in love with a (non-Jewish?) rascal, who had bribed the tailor to insert a magic root into the dress he was making for her. The house *Zur Sonne*, situated next to *Worms Synagogue Compound*, was the stateliest private house in the Jewish quarter. It is also mentioned in *Mayse Nissim*, nos 9 and 21.

Yuspa (1696), fols 5v–7v, no. 4. – Lit.: Reuter & Schäfer (2013), pp. 7.

Mayse Nissim, no. 6, tells of the attack on the family of R. El'azar ben Yehuda in 1196 (cf. above, no. 31). According to Yuspa's predecessor, Liwa Kirchheim (cf. no. 185), the Hebrew account, written by El'azar himself, was discovered after the riots of 1615 in the damaged synagogue. The Yiddish *Mayse Nissim* add that R. El'azar lived the house *Zum Hirschen* (*in des hirschen hous*) in the lower (eastern) part of the Jewish quarter. The narrative also speaks of students coming there to hear their master, who was teaching when the murderers entered his house and killed his wife and daughters.

Yuspa (1696), fols 9v–10v, no. 6. – Lit.: Rothschild (1905), pp. 47–48; Reuter & Schäfer (2013), pp. 11; Raspe (2013), pp. 322; Raspe (2016), pp. 229, 237–38.

Mayse Nissim, no. 8, gives a legendary explanation of the recess to be seen in the east wall of the women's shul known as the *Yehuda he-Hasid Wall*: When his mother was pregnant with R. Yehuda ben Shmu'el “the Pious” (*he-Hasid*), she once happened to stand in the narrow lane next to the women's shul (*in dem engen geskhen neben der vaiber-shul*) when a driver passed by with his coach, intent on running her over. The woman pressed against the wall of the women's shul, which at that moment receded to save her life.

The tale reflects the situation of the seventeenth century rather than that of the early thirteenth when the women's shul was built (cf. nos 35–36). Yehuda ben Shmu'el was probably born in Regensburg, where he died in 1217. The tale is indicative of the ways in which the heroes of early Ashkenazic Jewry were ‘adopted’ in Worms after their home communities had been destroyed by expulsion, as was the case in Regensburg in 1519.

Yuspa (1696), fols 14r, no. 8. – Lit.: Rothschild (1905), pp. 48–49; Böcher (1961), pp. 53–54; Reuter & Schäfer (2013), pp. 18.

Mayse Nissim, no. 9, tells of the events of 1615–16 in Worms. Yuspa confirms that the expulsion was ordered on the seventh day of Passover. His detailed report includes passages on the vandalism

committed in *Worms Synagogue Compound* (cf. above, no. 181.4) and the restoration of the synagogue after 1616 (cf. no. 186.4).

Yuspa (1696), fols 14v–17r, no. 9. – Lit.: Eidelberg (1991), pp. 73–75; Reuter & Schäfer (2013), pp. 21–26.

Mayse Nissim, no. 10, refers to the persecution of 1349 in Worms (cf. no. 90), turning it into “a powerful tale of Jewish resistance” (Raspe):

The citizens had planned to kill all the Jews on 10 Adar and an omen had confirmed to the Jews that their fate was inescapable. Their twelve leaders (*parnassim*), when summoned to the town hall early in the morning, therefore stood a fight and killed the members of the municipal council, while the other Jews fought the burghers in the streets. Eventually, however, all Jews were killed.

It is unlikely that this narrative gives an accurate version of the events of 1349 in Worms. The tale draws on a similar narrative set in Yuspa’s native town of Fulda. It moreover resembles an older tradition concerning the *twelve parnassim* who died in the persecution of 1096 and associated with a place in *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* marked by a memorial stone in the adjacent wall. This place was visited by the community annually on the fast-day instituted to commemorate the victims. It is remarkable that historical photographs show *two* memorial stones for the “twelve parnassim”. Yuspa’s tale was perhaps prompted by the existence of these two stones in his time and gave a narrative explanation for it.

Yuspa (1696), fols 17r–17v, no. 10. – Lit.: Raspe (2004); Raspe (2010); Raspe (2011), p. 160; Reuter & Schäfer (2013), pp. 26–29. For the historical photograph, cf. *Nomination Dossier*, ch. 2, fig. 243.

Mayse Nissim, no. 12, relates how the municipal workmen started to demolish part of the walls of *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* in 1661 (cf. no. 197).

Yuspa (1696), fol. 19v–20r, no. 12. – See above, no. 197.

Mayse Nissim, no. 13, goes on to tell that *Old Jewish Cemetery Worms* was once much larger, possibly by one-third (*is wol das drit-tail grosser*

gewest). In 1620, however, the commander of the (Swedish) troops had a Dutch officer who tried to harm the Jews of Worms by suggesting that the city lay open to enemies on this side and that a rampart needed to be erected here. Despite the efforts by the Jewish community the rampart was erected and numerous graves were lost. Yuspa specifically relates to the headstone for R. El’azar ben Yehuda ben Qalonymos *ha-Roqeah* (cf. no. 31). Then, however, the Dutch officer accidentally shot the pet dog of the commander, who was so irritated that he stopped the fortification.

Yuspa (1696), fol. 20r–v, no. 13. – Lit.: Böcher (1992), p. 5; Reuter (2008), pp. 7–8; Reuter (2012), pp. 231; Reuter & Schäfer (2013), p. 32.

Mayse Nissim, no. 14, speaks of R. Me’ir of Rothenburg and the wonder-working Torah scroll written on parchment made from a hart’s skin.

Yuspa further relates the story of how R. Me’ir was imprisoned by the German king and how Alexander of Wimpfen ransomed the body of the rabbi in 1307. He reports that he himself had heard the story from R. Eliya *Ba’al Shem* (Eliya ben Moshe Loanz, d. 1636) and seen it inscribed on the headstones (cf. nos 67–68) and that many visitors were coming to Worms specifically to see the two graves. He is the first who claims that R. Me’ir had refused to be ransomed while he was alive.

Yuspa (1696), fols 20v–22v, no. 9. – Lit.: Reuter & Schäfer (2013), pp. 32–34.

Mayse Nissim, no. 15, offers a narrative explaining the name of the city of Worms and the key in its coat of arms. The legend tells how the city was liberated from a dragon (*lint-worum*).

The symbolism the dragon is reflected in various sculptural elements in the synagogue; its association with the Jewish community of Worms is reflected, for example, in the (lost) wall-paintings of Eastern European synagogues.

Yuspa (1696), fols 22v–24r, no. 15. – Lit.: Rotschild (1905), pp. 51–53;

Böcher (1961), pp. 76–77; Reuter & Schäfer (2013), pp. 36–40; Weber (2014).

Mayse Nissim, no. 16, tells the story of a failed accusation of 'ritual murder' against the Jews of Worms: One day a citizen came to the Jews of Worms and offered them his own child for sale. The Jewish community inform the magistrate and two councilmen, disguised as synagogue wardens, came to the Jewish council chamber (*in qohols shtub*) where they arrested the evildoer.

Yuspa (1696), fols 24r–25r, no. 16. – Lit.: Reuter & Schäfer (2013), pp. 40–42. On a charge of 'ritual murder' in 16th-century Worms, see above, no. 172.

Mayse Nissim, no. 17, tells the story of Rashi (R. Shlomo ben Yīṣḥaq of Troyes) and Duke Geoffrey of Bouillon: The Jewish sage foretold that Duke Geoffrey would return with no more than "three men and a horse's head" from his crusade. While the two protagonists were indeed contemporaries of the First Crusade, their presumed meeting in Worms is unhistorical. In fact the story draws on various older versions and Duke Geoffrey only appeared recently (Raspe 2006).

The tale's importance is in reinforcing the local traditions concerning Rashi. According to Yuspa, Rashi had a *bēt ha-Midrash* with a synagogue of his own in Worms, so that he did not go into the community's synagogue (*in di qehile ir shul*). This synagogue was still called "Rashi shul" in Yuspa's own days. The students (*baḥurim*) used to go there even on *Ṣimḥat Torah*.

While the historical ascription to Rashi is doubtful, the existence of a separate synagogue for the students in Worms is plausible. In Yuspa's time it was situated either in the community hall or in the *yeshiva* of 1624.

Yuspa (1696), fols 25r–26v, no. 17. – Lit.: Rothschild (1905), pp. 43–45; Raspe (2006), pp. 199–241; Reuter & Schäfer (2013), pp. 42–45.

Mayse Nissim, no. 25, is an addition by *Sekele* ben Eli'ezer Liberman, a poetic lament on the fire of Worms in 1689 (cf. above, no. 203.5).

Register of donations for rebuilding the Jewish community of Worms after the fire of 1689.

A committee founded for this purpose sent emissaries from Frankfurt to all Jewish communities in Ashkenaz to collect donations. The title page of one of their registers specifies that it was to be used by the emissaries named in the letters of petition addressed to the respective cities, villages and countries. The latter are requested to aid in rebuilding the community of Worms and its sacred buildings – the synagogue (בית הכנסת), the *bēt ha-Midrash*, the house of the community gathering (בית ועד הקהל), i.e., the Jewish council chamber), the hospice (בית ההקדש).

There is evidence, for example, two such emissaries arrived in the Jewish community of Metz in the summer of 1698.

Mannheimer (1842), pp. 17–18; Epstein (1901), p. 59; Eidelberg (1994), p. 86; Roemer (2010), p. 55

1699, Worms

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Return of the Jews to the city of Worms from their exile after the destruction of the city by fire.

The Jews may rebuild their houses in the Jewish quarter. They exempted from the customary house tax for ten years.

The Jewish community and the municipal council also agree that the Jews were no longer to be regarded as "serfs" of the council (on the origins of this status cf. above, no. 87) as long as the Jews keep the conditions of the agreement.

Wolf (1862), pp. 95–99; Cannstatt (1889), p. 178; Reuter (2008), p. 23.

207 1699, Worms

Inscription in the synagogue in *Woms Synagogue Compound* commemorating the restoration following the fire of 1689.

תמוז תנט לפיק

[In the month of] Tammuz of [the year] 459
according to the minor account

The embossed inscription was to be seen on the base of the inscription for the *ha-Noten teshu'ah* prayer. This prayer asks for God's protection for the non-Jewish authorities. In the synagogue service the respective ruler or authority is named explicitly. Böcher suggests that in this case, the (lost) prayer inscription probably named Emperor Leopold I (1658–1705), who oversaw the return of the Jewish community to Worms after 1699.

Ed.: Lewysohn (1855), no. IV, p. 108. – Lit.: Kiefer (1929), p. 21;
Böcher (1961), no. XXIV, p. 115; Roemer (2010), p. 48.

208 1699, Worms

The Jewish community ask the bishop of Worms for a reduction of their tax for the two preceding years 1697 and 1698, because until the peace of Rijswijck in 1697 "no Jew had been allowed to

appear on the rubble of Worms" and their return had only been possible after the agreement with the magistrate regarding their personal status (*indem vor dem Friedensschluß im November 1697 sich kein Juden auf dem Wormbser Steinhauften habe erblicken lassen dürfen und in dem darauf gefolgten 1698 Jahr wir ebenso wenig uns hier einfinden konnten, bis der mit dem hiesigen löblichen Magistrat getroffene Vergleich der Leibeigenschaft halber zu Stand gebracht war*).

Lit.: Rothschild (1924), p. 11.

after 1699, Worms

Inscription in the synagogue of Worms opposite from the seat of the rabbi.

לא טוב אנכי מאבותי

I am no better than my fathers

The quotation from 1 Kings 19:4 was probably intended as an admontion for the rabbi. It was painted on the plaster, which is why it was lost in 1816 when the synagogue was whitewashed anew.

Mannheimer (1842), p. 19; Böcher (1961), no. XXIII, p. 114.

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