



Ressort: Special interest

The Forgotten Jews of Kelheim

Jerusalem, 10.11.2024 [ENA]

It was known that in Kelheim, a beautiful town in Lower Bavaria on the banks of the Danube river, a Jewish community existed during the Middle Ages. More precise details, such as the whereabouts of the synagogue, mikveh or cemetery, were unknown. In 1338, the town's Jews were massacred

In 1337 in Deggendorf, the Jews were accused of desecrating a Sacred host and the local Jews were murdered. The fabricated sacrilege of the Sacramental bread triggered a veritable wave of bloody persecution of Jews, which also affected Kelheim. The Bavarian Duke Henry XIV forgave the people of Deggendorf for the murder of the Jews. He allowed them to keep all stolen goods and declared all existing loans repaid. This reveals the motive: the pogrom was evidently connected to the high debts of the citizens of Deggendorf to the Jews. Two years later, the Duke died - rotting from leprosy - and the country fell into the hands of a more just ruler, Emperor Ludwig the Bavarian (this is the emperor from "The Name of the Rose")

Deggendorf became a place of pilgrimage that celebrated the murder of the Jews with a lie about the sacrilege of a sacred host until the end of the 20th century. The fictitious desecration as justification for mass murder remained in place for over 600 years. It was not until 1992 that the anti-Semitic pilgrimage was abolished by the then Bishop of Regensburg, Manfred Müller, with a request for forgiveness.

Back to Kelheim, where a medieval Jewish community existed that was buried for a long time under the dust of centuries.

A Jewish gravestone from 1249 is clearly visible in the home front in the town center on Donaustrasse. In the "Klösterl", a former hermitage outside the town, there are two more tomb stones that were stolen from Jewish graves. The head stones belonged once to the Jewish cemetery in Regensburg. After the Jews were expelled from Regensburg in 1519. The cemetery there was destroyed, and the gravestones have been brought to Kelheim.

It has not yet been determined whether all these gravestones were taken to Kelheim as souvenirs, i.e. randomly, or whether they had some connection to the Kelheim community that was wiped out.

The well-researched books by Johann B. Stoll from 1863 and 1868 are a real treasure.

Stoll noted, that during the reign of the Duke of Bavaria, Otto I, the ruler left the development of the city of Kelheim to the Jews.

Redaktioneller Programmdienst: European News Agency

Annette-Kolb-Str. 16
D-85055 Ingolstadt
Telefon: +49 (0) 841-951. 99.660
Telefax: +49 (0) 841-951. 99.661
Email: contact@european-news-agency.com
Internet: european-news-agency.com

Haftungsausschluss:

Der Herausgeber übernimmt keine Haftung für die Richtigkeit oder Vollständigkeit der veröffentlichten Meldung, sondern stellt lediglich den Speicherplatz für die Bereitstellung und den Zugriff auf Inhalte Dritter zur Verfügung. Für den Inhalt der Meldung ist der allein jeweilige Autor verantwortlich.



..... International Press Service.....

His notes show that many of the former Jewish houses were still standing in 1868, and they still had "signs" of their Jewish builders. In the footnote he remarked: "For example, niches carved in stone with a basin for purification". Nevertheless, his statement opens up a wider spectrum of relics, such as the remains of mezuzot on the front doors or the presence of a mikveh (ritual bath). He concludes that Jews also stayed longer in Kelheim than in other cities.

Johann Stoll further noted: "Even today in Kelheim, in house number 153, where the synagogue was, there are monuments of Jewish families - evidence of their wealth. A mocking image of the Jews can also still be seen in the hallway there." This reference could clarify the whereabouts of the synagogue. Of course, street names and house numbers have changed since 1868, but now the house in which the synagogue was located can be found.

After the pogrom of 1338, Jews seem to have settled in Kelheim again. In 1381, five are mentioned by name: the brothers Abraham and Valkh with their two housewives and Hester (presumably Ester), the widow of Jakob Popl.

A few years after Duke Albrecht III came to power in 1442, he expelled the Jews from his duchy of Bavaria-Munich. Immediately after taking office, the Lower Bavarian Duke Ludwig IX also banished all Jews in 1450.

Half a dozen names of members of the Jewish community from Regensburg are known in the second half of the 15th century, who either came or whose families came from Kelheim.

It is more than likely that Jews from Kelheim settled in the nearby Danube town, because Regensburg was a free imperial city.

A legal dispute from 1462 has been recorded between Jössel and his neighbor Abraham of Kelheim. Abraham of Kelheim installed a sewage pipe from his house in front of Jössel's front door. It is strange why the case was not heard before a Beit Din (Jewish court), but rather in the Watch Court. A later note on the verdict refers to the Watch Court's general jurisdiction in building matters.

Rabbi Josef ben Jona, known as Jossel of Kelheim, also lived in Regensburg, and his father Jona was also a Rabbi in the community. Jossel of Kelheim and other Jews fell victim to accusations of ritual murder. From the High Middle Ages onwards, accusations of ritual murder spread throughout Christian Europe. As was common in case of unexplained deaths to blame local Jews of the murder.

The fate of the Jews in Trent/Italy in 1475 shows how they were accused of ritual murder after a Christian boy was found dead. The Jews of Trent were collectively accused of ritual murder and from the beginning torture was not used to find out the truth. A key figure in the Trent drama was Israel, who converted to

**Redaktioneller Programmdienst:
European News Agency**

Annette-Kolb-Str. 16
D-85055 Ingolstadt
Telefon: +49 (0) 841-951. 99.660
Telefax: +49 (0) 841-951. 99.661
Email: contact@european-news-agency.com
Internet: european-news-agency.com

Haftungsausschluss:

Der Herausgeber übernimmt keine Haftung für die Richtigkeit oder Vollständigkeit der veröffentlichten Meldung, sondern stellt lediglich den Speicherplatz für die Bereitstellung und den Zugriff auf Inhalte Dritter zur Verfügung. Für den Inhalt der Meldung ist der allein jeweilige Autor verantwortlich.



..... International Press Service

Christianity and was given the name Wolfgang. His secret efforts to free the female defendants in the trial were later discovered and he was subsequently repeatedly tortured and executed.

Israel-Wolfgang's testimony contained a description of another ritual murder that he said had taken place in Regensburg in 1467 and in which he was allegedly involved. Under torture he confessed, that Rabbi Jossel of Kelheim had bought a Christian child from a beggar. The child was sacrificed for the upcoming Passover festival by Jossel of Kelheim together with Saidja Straubinger and at least 25 other Jews. Israel-Wolfgang's testimony triggered a separate investigation in Regensburg, which ended with the arrest of the rabbi and the other prominent Jews he had named. The fact that Rabbi Jossel of Kelheim was not even in the city at the time of the alleged ritual murder did not bother the court.

In Regensburg, too, the accused confessed under torture. The German Emperor Frederick III ordered their release for ruinous fees. To make matters worse, workmen who were repairing the rabbi's house discovered the skeleton of a small child while digging in his cellar. The Jews immediately protested that the bones had been planted to incriminate them, and Emperor Frederick demanded their release. It was not until 1480, four years later, that the seventeen accused were released from prison after a fierce intervention by the Emperor.

Although no verdict was passed, the city prosecutors forced the freedmen and their descendants to promise not to make any claims for the economic ruin they suffered as a result of their imprisonment.

The emperor imposed a fine of 8,000 guilders on the city for the offense against the Jews who were under his protection. In 1479, however, he granted the city of Regensburg that the Jews have to pay the fine themselves. It later turned out that the human remains found in the rabbi's basement were actually sheep bones.

The private library of Rabbi Josef ben Jona of Kelheim and Rabbi Saidja Straubinger contained 156 books.

After the Regensburg pogrom of 1519, the valuable books were used as cheap bindings for files and books in the Scottish monastery, in the episcopal administration and in the city until at least 1647. About a dozen fragments of the manuscripts were rediscovered.

As far as the history of the Jews of Kelheim is concerned, it seems possible to shed some more light into the darkness of a distant past. Finding long-forgotten names, stone witnesses and old documents allows us to gain insight into a lost world long before our time.

[Bericht online lesen:](#)

https://www.european-news-agency.de/special_interest/the_forgotten_jews_of_kelheim-89890/

**Redaktioneller Programmdienst:
European News Agency**

Annette-Kolb-Str. 16
D-85055 Ingolstadt
Telefon: +49 (0) 841-951. 99.660
Telefax: +49 (0) 841-951. 99.661
Email: contact@european-news-agency.com
Internet: european-news-agency.com

Haftungsausschluss:

Der Herausgeber übernimmt keine Haftung für die Richtigkeit oder Vollständigkeit der veröffentlichten Meldung, sondern stellt lediglich den Speicherplatz für die Bereitstellung und den Zugriff auf Inhalte Dritter zur Verfügung. Für den Inhalt der Meldung ist der allein jeweilige Autor verantwortlich.



..... International Press Service.....

Redaktion und Verantwortlichkeit:

V.i.S.d.P. und gem. § 6 MDSStV: Sharon Oppenheimer

**Redaktioneller Programmdienst:
European News Agency**

Annette-Kolb-Str. 16
D-85055 Ingolstadt
Telefon: +49 (0) 841-951. 99.660
Telefax: +49 (0) 841-951. 99.661
Email: contact@european-news-agency.com
Internet: european-news-agency.com

Haftungsausschluss:

Der Herausgeber übernimmt keine Haftung für die Richtigkeit oder Vollständigkeit der veröffentlichten Meldung, sondern stellt lediglich den Speicherplatz für die Bereitstellung und den Zugriff auf Inhalte Dritter zur Verfügung. Für den Inhalt der Meldung ist der allein jeweilige Autor verantwortlich.