**“That Jews and Christians may break bread together in peace…”**

**The anti-Jewish riots in Geseke and Störmede in 1844, the historical background of Else Lasker-Schüler’s play *Arthur Aronymus and His Forebears*.**

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**The play – a brief synopsis**

Much like a book of images, the play *Arthur Aronymus and His Forebears (From My Dear Father’s Childhood)* presents 15 scenes depicting the life of the Jewish landowner Moritz Schüler and his wife Henriette in a Christian milieu.

On Christmas day in 1840, Moritz Schüler tells his 23 children about a pogrom against the Jews in Paderborn that occurred during his childhood. Now his family is threatened by another catastrophe. His daughter Dora suffers from a neurological illness, and the inhabitants of Geseke view her with suspicion. They believe that she is a witch, and that she should be burned at the stake. Fanatical Christians roam the streets of Geseke singing derisive anti-Jewish songs.

A young chaplain in Geseke named Bernhard Michalski takes a particular liking to Arthur Aronymus, Schüler’s son. To dampen the agitated mood in the city, the chaplain suggests to his parents that Arthur be instructed in the Catholic faith and baptized. But even in the face of threat, the Schülers stand by their faith and reject the chaplain’s offer. This rejection does not offend Michalski, and that night he asks his uncle, Bishop Matthias of Paderborn, for help. Bishop Matthias had had a long friendship with Henriette Schüler’s father, the deceased chief rabbi of the Rhineland and Westphalia; in Paderborn they had engaged in numerous theological discussions. Thanks to the bishop’s pastoral letter, which the chaplain reads to the agitated community in the marketplace, the catastrophe is averted. In the letter, the bishop calls for reason and Christian charity. Dora is subsequently cured.

Thanks to the efforts of prudent men the danger passes. The pastoral letter had not been read in vain. The drama concludes on a conciliatory note: Bishop Matthias and Chaplain Bernhard are invited to the Schüler home on Passover. Mutual religious respect is viewed as the only path to religious peace. Frau Schüler underscores this thought: “And with a little love,it will come to pass thatJews and Christians may break bread together in peace….”[[2]](#endnote-1)

Else Lasker-Schüler’s[[3]](#endnote-2) *Arthur Aronymus – My Father’s Story* was published in 1932 as a story, as was her play *Arthur Aronymus and His Forebears*. The play was scheduled to premiere at the Darmstädter Bühne in 1933, but had to be canceled as a result of the Nazi seizure of power. However, it premiered three years later at the Zürcher Schauspielhaus, with Leopold Lindtberg directing an outstanding cast of émigré actors. Swiss theater critics largely ignored the play, however; [[4]](#endnote-3) Lasker-Schüler’s plea for tolerance went unheard.

*Arthur Aronymus* was never staged again during the poet’s lifetime. During her exile in Palestine she seems to have largely been ignored as well. She wasn’t “rediscovered” until the 1950s, when the poet began to be reclaimed in her homeland as a German literary figure.[[5]](#endnote-4)

The first attempt to make *Arthur Aronymus* known in its country of origin was not promising. Actors from the Städtische Bühne and students from the Folkwangschule, in Essen, read the drama before a small audience in the studio of the Volkshochschule, in Oberhausen. The newspaper *Die Welt* commented on the low attendance on May 28, 1958.[[6]](#endnote-5)

The German premiere of Lasker-Schüler’s play took place in her home city of Wuppertal on the occasion of her hundredth birthday, in 1969. This time the reviews were positive, and the play was broadcast on German television. Tours to Zürich and Berlin followed. However, it has never become a theatrical staple, not least because of the 32 children’s roles and frequent scene changes, which make it a difficult production to mount.[[7]](#endnote-6)

Lasker-Schüler claimed that she did not write *Arthur Aronymus* as a commentary on contemporary politics.[[8]](#endnote-7) Despite the rise in anti-Semitism in Germany, which would have furnished her with an abundance of material, especially while she was living in Berlin, she did not view her play as some sort of agitprop against the practices of the National Socialists, but rather as a plea for tolerance. In effect, she viewed it as her *Nathan the Wise*.[[9]](#endnote-8)

If we view her credo, which is evident in her poetic works, as “reconciliation among religions,” then *Arthur Aronymus* may be seen as a blueprint for a Utopia in which hatred makes way for tolerance, and persecution for reconciliation.[[10]](#endnote-9) Although such strivings are not bound to any particular time and are universal, they possessed a particular meaning for her as a Jew living in that particular era.

Lasker-Schüler availed herself of historical events in grappling with her chosen topic. The onesshe chose to dramatize took place in the small city of Geseke and the cathedral city of Paderborn, some 12 miles distant, which from 1808 to 1824 had also served as the seat of the district Jewish rabbinate. The timeframe of her drama was 1840.

For Lasker-Schüler this place represented not only rural tranquility and harmony, but also **a** threat to the Schüler family. On the one hand was the Biedermeier idyll of the Schülers’ household, on the other the resurgence of the witchcraft panic of bygone days, and of anti-Semitic resentment. She learned of the events described in the story and the play from her father, who was born in Geseke in 1825.

Lasker-Schüler furnishes her father’s life and origins with pseudobiographical details. The house that had belonged to her grandfather Moises Schüler served in the drama as the model for Moritz Schüler’s house, although **he** had been not a landowner, but a businessman and banker.[[11]](#endnote-10) We will not delve into whether Lasker-Schüler changed her family’s professional status to avoid the odium of dishonesty and anti-Semitic stereotypes that clung to business and banking, as Dieter Baensch[[12]](#endnote-11) hypothesizes, or is to be viewed as the aspirational dream of assimilated Jewish citizens, as Sigrid Bauschinger[[13]](#endnote-12) suggests. Nor will we deal further with the various hypotheses and presumptions regarding the authenticity and identity of the persons portrayed in the play.[[14]](#endnote-13) We will also forego a discussion of the anti-Jewish events that took place in the Paderborn area as portrayed by Baensch, except to say that the portrayal is in need of a few revisions.[[15]](#endnote-14)

A few words about the Schüler family: Moises Schüler was a wealthy man.[[16]](#endnote-15) His first marriage was to Rosa Cohen, the daughter of the assistant rabbi Hirsch Cohen from Geseke.[[17]](#endnote-16) After her death in 1833 he married her younger sister Nettchen.[[18]](#endnote-17) A total of 17 children issued from the two marriages.[[19]](#endnote-18) Hirsch Cohen is the model for Uriel in *Arthur Aronymus*, and in the story his great-granddaughter elevated him to the rabbinate of Rhineland and Westphalia. Lasker-Schüler never met either her paternal or maternal grandparents.[[20]](#endnote-19) She picked up the local color and dialect for the play when she visited relatives in Geseke.[[21]](#endnote-20)

The historical frame is the “excesses in Geseke and Störmede” that took place in 1844. The external cause of the “excesses” was the conversion of 14-year-old Abraham Löwenbach to Catholicism in 1843 against the wishes of his parents. Reactions to this led to the anti-Jewish riots in both cities that are the subject of this paper.

**The Historical Background**

**Abraham Löwenbach’s conversion**

Abraham (born January 24, 1829, in Geseke, died December 4, 1884, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin),**[[22]](#footnote-2)**

 the 14-year-old son of the Jewish businessman Emanuel Löwenbach,[[23]](#endnote-21) had undergone instruction by Mathias Bitter,[[24]](#endnote-22) the canon of the Stiftskirche in Geseke, and principal of the grammar school (*höhere Bürgerschule*) in the city. This was not unusual in Jewish families, as such instruction served as preparation for the gymnasium. However, since the age of 12, Abraham had in secret received religious training from Bitter.[[25]](#endnote-23) Under Bitter’s influence, the boy had absorbed Catholic teachings to the point that he wished to convert. His parents were understandably opposed to this wish, and in order to separate him from Bitter, they moved him in with Jewish relatives in Werl.

But as the *Magdeburger Zeitung* reported, “Even there the pastor from Geseke continued his soul-catching; he made an arrangement with a priest from that city, who seduced the Jewish boy, who then ran away from his relatives. Naturally, the matter arouses controversy, and this manner of proselytizing is criticized. Even the Bishop of Paderborn comes down on it, but his ban is ignored by the two clergymen, as is justice and law….”[[26]](#endnote-24) Like Bitter, Bernhard Alterauge,[[27]](#endnote-25) the Werl priest, pursued conversion, and with the consent of the government in Arnsberg, Löwenbach was baptized on Holy Saturday 1843, in the church in Werl.[[28]](#endnote-26)

After the boy had spent some time in Alterauge’s home, Christian friends sponsored him to attend the Gymnasium Theodorianum, in Paderborn, not least because, as provincial Oberpräsident von Vincke[[29]](#endnote-27) reported, his parents were supposedly not taking care of him. Although Emanuel Löwenbach had nothing against qualified schooling for his son, he did not want him to remain in Paderborn. He therefore appealed to the authorities in Paderborn to have his son returned to him. At first they responded by doing nothing, but they then referred him to the government in Minden. It decreed that a father, whether a Jew or a Christian, could not be deprived of his paternal powers and rights until he had been legally prevented from exercising them by the decision of a court that dealt with guardianship matters. On these grounds it granted the appeal. However, the local authorities were instructed to step in immediately if the father abused his rights.

Young Löwenbach was returned to his parents in Geseke on April 21, 1844, where he remained for all of two days. His father let it be known that his son would attend the gymnasium in Münster. But when residents of the city saw that Bernhard had disappeared, they came to believe the rumor that a relative of the Löwenbachs had “sent him to be among Polish Jews in order to lead him back to Judaism.”[[30]](#endnote-28) In fact, Bernhard’s parents had sent him, against his will, to Rabbi Salomon in Hamburg. Salomon did everything he could to bring Bernhard back to the faith “by forbidding him to make the sign of the cross and to visit Catholic clergy or the church.”[[31]](#endnote-29)

When it became clear that Bernhard was no longer in Geseke, the city council demanded information from the father about his son’s whereabouts. In the meantime tempers were rising in Geseke; the father’s behavior seemed insubordinate to the townsfolk.

Later, Georg Wilhelm Kessler, the district president [Regierungspräsident] in Arnsberg, would report to the minister of the interior that,

“the fanatical vehemence with which the Löwenbach parents had opposed their son’s conversion to Christianity, the threats and abuse that they had previously heaped on him, the last measure used to bring him back to Geseke, the sudden decision to remove Bernhard Löwenbach to an unknown location toward the east, the difficulty in getting the father to disclose the fate of the boy by legal means, and the presumed failures of the authorities have all aroused the indignation of the Christian population. The clergy has also contributed its part.”[[32]](#endnote-30)

An anonymous letter to Bitter, which contained “defamations and blasphemies” aimed at him personally and at the Catholic Church, is said to have escalated the situation. Although there was no evidence pointing to any specific author, the Jewish teacher Kaufmann[[33]](#endnote-31) was accused of having written the letter at the behest of a certain group of Geseke Jews. The *Magdeburger Zeitung* conjectured that “it cannot be proven that the soul-catcher did not write the letter himself for ill purposes.”[[34]](#endnote-32) Bitter received this letter from the post office at the lodging where he happened to be staying. The style and contents indicated that it had been written by an educated person. The contents were immediately spread about and became the subject of talk in the area.

“The Jews there must surely understand the hot ground on which they are living, because no sooner had the soul-catcher read the letter and shown it around than a reward of 200 thaler was offered for the identification of the author. The defamatory letter was spread from the lodging, thanks to the pastor’s efforts, and was intended to cause a commotion, and it did not fail in its sly and Jesuitically calculated purpose.”[[35]](#endnote-33)

The fact that Kaufmann disappeared from Geseke should not necessarily be viewed as an admission of guilt. He, too, must have known what the local populace was capable of.

**The anti-Jewish riots of May 9 and 10, 1844 in Geseke and Störmede**

The first assaults in this emotionally heated and belligerent atmosphere occurred on the evening of May 8, 1844, when windows at the home of Emanuel Löwenbach were smashed in by stones thrown from the street.[[36]](#footnote-3)

 The same happened at the home of Moises Schüler, whom the district president described in his report as a “rich Jew.” To protect the Löwenbach home, Mayor Werner Pieper[[37]](#endnote-34) dispatched a gendarme and two constables.[[38]](#endnote-35)

Next morning the mood in Geseke portended further violent incidents. During the day the inhabitants held back, but even before dusk the otherwise empty streets began to fill up with people. In front of Jewish houses more than 50 schoolchildren yelled “Hep, hep, Jud’ verreck.”[[39]](#footnote-4)

 It seemed as if the church bell ringing 9 o’clock was the signal for an attack. People came together and began to destroy the shutters at the Löwenbach house and then smashed the windows. The destructive frenzy increased from minute to minute until all Jewish houses – with the exception of the teacher Cohen’s and the synagogue – were damaged. “Doors and windows were smashed in with axes, windows destroyed, inventories and furnishings ravaged, mattresses cut open and their contents strewn about.” Amid the “wild cries of joy of the destructive mob,” the Jews fled to their cellars. The following morning they found stones weighing as much as 20 pounds strewn about their homes.[[40]](#endnote-36)

The nightmare went on for almost an hour and a half, with no interference by the city clergy or political authorities. The gendarme and the two constables testified that in the dark they were unable to recognize individuals among the mob. Whenever they approached everyone moved on to the next Jewish house. Only after everything had been destroyed did two members of the city council appear. During a later trial, the rumor that Mayor Pieper had left the city when the riots began turned out to have been false. Rather, he didn’t return to the city until after the end of the riot. Bailiff Schröder was drunk at the time and out of commission.[[41]](#endnote-37) Partly for fear of repeated assaults, partly because several houses were no longer habitable, Jewish men sent their wives and children to stay with relatives in neighboring towns.[[42]](#endnote-38)

Next evening, planned riots against the Jews were initiated in neighboring Störmede. A drummer from Geseke led a wild procession, signaling the residents and “they now abused, smashed, and plundered.”[[43]](#endnote-39) All the windows and shutters at the three Jewish houses in that city were smashed in, and after the mob entered the homes they destroyed everything that they could see. Inventory, especially from the manufactured goods store owned by Bendix Müller, was piled onto the two wagons that had been brought along from Geseke. Later, over a thousand pieces of drapery were returned to him anonymously; he estimated the value of the still-missing inventory at about 800 Reichsthaler.[[44]](#endnote-40)

In view of the violence that Emanuel Löwenbach had just experienced in Geseke, he let it be known that he would bring his son back within 14 days and put up no further resistance to his son’s conversion.[[45]](#endnote-41)

**The riots as reported in the press**

The city administration made efforts to limit to Geseke public knowledge of what had happened. It was not until the *Westfälischer Merkur* in Münster,[[46]](#endnote-42) the most-read newspaper in Westphalia, which had very few local and regional newspapers at the time, reported on the riots on May 14, 1844, did Mayor Pieper inform Oberpräsident [Prussian provincial supreme president] von Vincke that “during the night of May 9, I had the misfortune of observing the people’s rage against the Jews here.” A “mob” – mostly “women and children” – had attacked the houses of the Jews. The cause for the “mob’s hatred” had been the anticipated reconversion of Bernhard Löwenbach to Judaism and the defamatory letter to Canon Bitter. Pieperdenied that theft and attacks on persons had taken place in his city, and in any event since then the situation had supposedly normalized.[[47]](#endnote-43)

In the meantime, almost all newspapers in the western Prussian provinces had begun reporting on the events in Geseke and Störmede. As a result they came to the attention of the Prussian minister of the interior and the police, Count Adolph H. von Arnim-Boitzenburg. Although the king had decreed on January 31, 1843 that all of the district presidents and their subordinates were required to keep the minister informed of all important incidents, the government in Arnsberg had remained silent. Because of the political explosiveness of the incidents, the minister informed the king.[[48]](#endnote-44) At the same time, district president Kessler was ordered to give a report, and to decide, based on his understanding of the events, whether the descriptions in the newspapers were true or exaggerated.[[49]](#endnote-45) Oberpräsident von Vincke was also questioned about the truth of the reports, and instructedthatif he judged them to be false, to send a correction to the *Kölnische Zeitung* or to “another much-read newspaper in the western provinces.” This he did for the *Westfälischer Merkur*,[[50]](#endnote-46) the newspaper most read in the Geseke area. However, Kessler had not yet responded, and von Arnim reminded him impatiently that he, von Arnim, was under pressure to inform the king.

It took until May 27, 1844 for Kessler to submit his report. He excused his long silence saying that he had been on an official trip. He stated that he had been unable to submit a final report because the city council in Geseke was still developing measures to maintain the public peace. However, he stated it was clear that no “rebellion” against the law had taken place. The “exaggerated outcry” in the newspapers, according to Kessler, was due partly to the exaggerated fear on the part of the Jews, and partly to the “fanatical agitation of the parties.” In his opinion, this “fuss” in the newspapers was primarily the doing of the Jews, in order to draw attention and sympathy to themselves. In addition, the articles had largely been written by Jews and were therefore not free of exaggeration. Presumably it had all occurred because of the “frequent requests for military garrisoning by the Jews, who are generally acknowledged to be very fearful, a kind of punishment for the Christian population” had been the result.

Kessler dedicated only a few brief sentences to the actual events. He based his report on representations made by the city council in Geseke, Bailiff Schröder, and District Administrator [Landrat] Schade, in Lippstadt, and on the Jewish side by Lazar Hellwitz,[[51]](#endnote-47) the head of the community in Soest. None of these persons had actually been present during the riots.

He further denied any assaults on persons in either of the cities. Kessler attributed the riots to the purported reconversion of Bernhard Löwenbach to Judaism, and to the defamatory letter sent to Canon Bitter. In addition, he cited the “very large number of Jews in Geseke, who far surpassed the Christian population in industry and wealth,” and who had in recent times “behaved somewhat insolently and arrogantly.”[[52]](#endnote-48) Unfortunately, he failed to illustrate these findings.

Although District President Kessler did not accuse Mayor Pieper of dereliction of duty, he did accuse him of gross negligence and clumsiness, and he ordered a thorough investigation. “It seems to me, however,” he summarized in his report to the Minister von Arnim, “as if the mayor allowed himself to be paralyzed by the feeling that the entire citizenry and the entire Christian population was against him.”[[53]](#endnote-49)

The newspapers condemned the riots as a return “to the rough and dark times of the Middle Ages” – unthinkable in the 19th century. One Geseke resident felt it necessary to respond in the *Westfälischer Merkur* that the incidents had been exaggerated and had in reality been of negligible importance. On the other hand, an anonymous reader from Geseke replied that by reporting the incidents with the attribute “vandalism” they made them appear as harmless in comparison to what actually occurred. According to the latter’s description, one Jew in Störmede had lost half his assets as a result of the theft of his inventory, and all of the rest had had their entire household**s** including furniture, windows, and doors more or less destroyed. The author of that letter to the editor was the only one who mentioned that one Jewish woman had been blinded in the riot.[[54]](#endnote-50)

Just how much the persons involved and the responsible authorities tried to cover up or play down the true extent of the riots is evidenced by the already-cited exclamation by the district president that the exaggerations were largely a reflection of Jewish fears. As proof, he stated that Hellwitz, the head of the Jewish community, had dispatched a messenger to him on the evening of Pentecost, who conjured up visions of “the outbreak of imminent renewed, fearsome offenses,” and begged him to send a military garrison to Geseke, despite the official reports denying that there was anything to be feared.[[55]](#endnote-51)

Apparently, Kessler had forgotten his own report to the minister of the interior and the police dated May 27, which said that although there had been peace at the time, there were worries about the days surrounding Pentecost. According to the elder Löwenbach’s promise, young Bernhard was to be returned from Hamburg on one of those days. By giving assurances that Bernhard’s education would in the future be conducted by a guardian, Kessler believed that he had removed the flammable tinder. In addition, District Administrator Schade, in Lippstadt, had received special powers from the government should new riots break out.[[56]](#endnote-52)

**The convert Bernhard Löwenbach**

Let us turn briefly to the case of Bernhard Löwenbach:

It is known that during the riots in Geseke Bernhard’s father had promised the citizenry that he would return his son to Geseke from Hamburg. And in fact, Bernhard Löwenbach set out, accompanied by relatives, after about a 12-day stay at the home of Rabbi Dr. Salomon. However, when he had gotten as far as Minden he refused to continue – whether out of fear of the anticipated reactions, or because of the influence of his relatives, as von Vincke theorized, remains unclear.[[57]](#endnote-53) In any event, young Löwenbach returned to Hamburg, whereupon Dr. Salomon immediately sent him back. Bernhard arrived in Geseke on June 1, 1844, where he was taken in by Pastor Schenck.[[58]](#endnote-54) During his absence, the Royal Judiciary Commission had, in consultation with the Ministry of Justice and at the behest of the government in Arnsberg, appointed Court Clerk Philipp Thoholte, a city councilman and member of the board of the shooting club, as curator, to look after Bernhard’s rights in relation to his father, and to preclude a potential reconversion to Judaism. On June 5, 1844, Thoholte brought Bernhard Löwenbach to the Gymnasium Theodorianum in Paderborn. “Benefactors” paid for his education and room and board until a decision of the court ruled on who was responsible for these costs and whether his father could be compelled to pay. It was for this that Bernhard sued in Erwitte provincial and city court.[[59]](#endnote-55)

Even King Frederick William IV got involved. The government in Minden was required to justify to the king why it had subjected Bernhard to his father’s authority the previous year, even though his conversion had been completely voluntary. By royal decree, guardianship of the son of the businessman Emanuel Löwenbachwouldbe initiated, specifically to safeguard the ward from interference by his father in accordance with the law.[[60]](#endnote-56) Whereupon Thoholte sued to dissolve the paternal authority and to transform his curatorship into guardianship.

To what extent this suit touched on Bernhard Löwenbach’s already pending suit is unknown. What is known from the records is that Thoholte’s suit against the father to dissolve his authority and force him to pay the required educational costs was rejected by the district and city court in Erwitte on May 20, and by the high provincial court [Oberlandesgericht] in Arnsberg on November 26, 1844.[[61]](#endnote-57)

**Continued anti-Jewish agitation and abuses**

The anti-Jewish agitation in the city continued, but without overt attacks.

Then on the morning of May 26, 1844, a straw puppet, male, was hung on a gallows at the Jewish cemetery. One of the puppet’s hands held a garlic clove, the other a piece of paper with the words “The father has croaked, his forelimbs are stretched out, he hangs at death’s door.” The gathered mob then yelled out, “Hep, hep,[[62]](#endnote-58) Jew croak.”[[63]](#endnote-59)

Nighttime attacks were limited to individual Jewish houses. In some, the roof tiles were smashed, in others the windows smashed in and gardens destroyed. No perpetrators were ever identified. The city council then ordered nightly patrols by the civilian guard, set closing hours for taverns at 9 o’clock, and instituted a general curfew.[[64]](#endnote-60) In his so-called news reports[[65]](#endnote-61) to the government in Arnsberg for the months June and July 1844, the city council stated that the public mood was still very anti-Jewish. Their “tempers” had not yet been pacified.[[66]](#endnote-62)

Given this state of affairs, the city council and the government in Arnsberg forbade the shooting club from holding its traditional shooting meet and festival at the end of June 1844. However, Oberpräsident von Vincke, who often visited Geseke, was able to reverse this decision.[[67]](#endnote-63) In exchange, the shooters undertook to increase citizen patrols in the streets and in the taverns. However, they were unable to prevent damage to Jewish property at night: at one house, vegetables were cut down, in another peas and potatoes were ripped out of the ground.[[68]](#endnote-64) As a consequence, Kessler banned all festivities for the rest of the year and the shooting festival the following year. He made this ban contingent on the further behavior of the citizenry. The city council was also required to engage two outside watchmen and increase patrols by the civil guard.[[69]](#endnote-65)

But according to the minutes of the city council dated July 23, 1844,[[70]](#endnote-66) it is clear that the inhabitants of Geseke were very upset by the increased citizen patrols. As the city councilors declared, if the assets of the Jews are not adequately protected, they should ask for protection from the city at their own cost. The citizens of Geseke should not be expected to protect Jewish property at night after concluding their daily work, because this would render them unable to work the next day. And overall, the citizens of Geseke viewed the nightly patrols as a humiliation, all the more so because the Jews themselves did not participate. In the name of their fellow citizens, they then declared that they would no longer participate in nightly patrols. Even police patrols seemed unnecessary to them because of the costs involved, and should be stopped.

This hostile stance also became evident when names of perpetrators were sought. It had supposedly not been proven that the destruction had been committed by Geseke citizens, especially since some of their own gardens had been affected. As a result, the city councilors did not rule out the possibility that Jews had themselves become perpetrators out of revenge. They based this suspicion on a statement by the maid in the Stern household, according to which Aron Stern had cut down his own vegetables. They protested vehemently against being heldresponsible for these “outrages” by the authorities without evidence.

The citizens of Geseke viewed themselves exclusively as defending their honor; any alternative interpretation of these statements was rejected out of hand.

The nightly assaults and destruction continued unabated over the following months.[[71]](#endnote-67) On October 28, 1844 the grain dealer Rosenthal reported that he had been beaten up at about 8 o’clock in the evening in front of Cramer’s tavern. When he called out for help, no one moved to assist him. He later presented a threatening letter that read as follows:

“You, Jew Rosenthal, we want to tell you, you old scoundrel, you have done a lot of people wrong, and sworn many a false oath. But when we hear that you are accusing a person, no matter who it may be, your entire building will go up in flames. Beware, that’s what we’re telling you, you bad Jew.”[[72]](#endnote-68)

The city council repeatedly reported to the government in Arnsbergthat the populace was still agitated; the citizens simply avoided patrol duty. At his urging the police presence was increased by two gendarmes.[[73]](#endnote-69) On November 18 the windows of several Jewish houses were again smashed in. The cap-maker Legging, who had already been charged for participating in the riots of May 9 in Geseke was again caught in the act. He was immediately arrested.[[74]](#endnote-70)

**The Jew as “anti-symbol” – The religious, economic, and psychological causes of the riots**

As we have seen, anti-Jewish sentiment remained heated half a year after the riots, even though the consent of Bernhard’s father to have his boy undergo a Christian education should have removed further cause for animosity. In fact, the defamatory letter allegedly written by Jews to Canon Bitter and the presumed reconversion of young Bernhard to Judaism were probably merely triggers that inflamed long-standing hostility into riots. Even Minister von Arnim agreed that “unbridled zeal in proselytizing” was not the sole cause.[[75]](#endnote-71)

Even if the events of 1844 had not led to anti-Jewish riots in Geseke – Jews had lived in the city since the mid-17th century –, there would still have existed a great potential for aggression.[[76]](#endnote-72) This latent hatred of the Jews was not one-dimensional; it gained its force, and its arguments, from religious, social, and economic spheres. The assaults against Geseke and Störmede Jews in 1844 demonstrate the intertwining of religious and socioeconomic motives, even though they play only a minor role in *Arthur Aronymus* itself. Until the mid-19th century the majority of Geseke residents were engaged in farming. The proceeds from rural industries such as weaving were not sufficient to eke out a living from them. Because of agrarian crises and high taxes levied by the state, the growing population’s one-sided dependence on agriculture led to general impoverishment. For this population set upon by multiple crises, the Jews of Geseke played a well-nigh indispensable role in the rural economy as dealers, retailers, and peddlers of agricultural products, linen, and cattle. In addition to mediating the low level trade within the internal market, they also mediated the trade between the city and the countryside. In the absence of sources of credit, they lent farmers and day laborers small sums of money on pawn [*auf Pfand*]. In fact, it was the Jews who often made it possible for the rural population to survive – even though their continued existence meant living “in hock.” Many farmers had run up large debts with Jewish lenders. This dependence on the economically successful Jews thus generated a certain degree of hatred and envy in the Christian population, a reservoir of resentment that could break out into open hostilities at the slightest provocation.

In this already tense atmosphere in the early 1840s, open discussion of the emancipation of the Jews greatly intensified the polarization around the so-called “Jewish question.” Not infrequently, Protestant and Catholic clergy agitated openly against the Jews. The government ministries in Berlin were justifiably concerned about the influence of clergy in the anti-Jewish riots, which broke out not only in Westphalia, but also in other regions of the Prussian monarchy.[[77]](#endnote-73) As a result, Minister of Culture Friedrich Eichhorn felt it necessary to remind the clergy of both Christian faiths of the need to prevent “fanatical outbreaks against the Jews.” In a circular letter to all superintendents and bishops in Prussia, dated August 13, 1844, he therefore demanded that the clergy in the individual communities counteract “the angry mood.” According to Eichhorn, although the motives lay in the religious sphere, socioeconomic ones were crucial as well:

“In some regions of Westphalia, as a result of the peculiar circumstances of civil trade between the Jews and the poorer Christian inhabitants, the latter have been placed in a position in which they feel depressed, and that they have been delivered into the hands of the Jews. Disparities in their external situations, also probably indefensible self-interest on the part of Jewish traders and businessmen, have resulted in a tension that only too gladly combines with religious zeal, finding fresh nourishment and justification in it.”

Minister Eichhorn further noted that the cause of the increase in religious awareness had to a not inconsiderable extent been influenced by the relationship between the two faiths; in particular he pointed to attacks by non-religious Jews against the Christian faith. The “less clearly developed awareness of the masses” therefore ran the risk of deviating in a “fanatical direction against Jews generally.” The primary duty of the clergy was therefore to carefully cultivate religious feeling in the populace, while at the same time guarding against “error.”[[78]](#endnote-74) The bishop of Paderborn, Richard Dammers, then sent pastoral instructions to the clergy in his diocese in which he urged them to counter the “traces of an agitated mood against the Jews” in their communities “by suitable instruction on the nature of Christian love.”[[79]](#endnote-75)

However, this meant that the Jews were in no way released from their function as scapegoats. It was the simplest way of making them responsible for the calamity.

**Sentencing of the main perpetrators**

Immediately after the excesses of May 1844, criminal charges were initiated against 28 persons, 18 from Störmede alone. On November 19 and 20, 1844, the Senate for Criminal Cases of the Higher Royal District Court [Senat für Strafsachen des Königlichen Oberlandesgericht] in Arnsberg, headed by Privy Councilor Dr. Freusberg, announced the verdict,[[80]](#endnote-76) which included:

1. Three-year prison sentence with deprivation of the national cockade: journeyman tailor Johann Albrecht and journeyman blacksmith Theodor Vollmer from Störmede for their participation in the riots in Geseke and Störmede;

2. Two-year prison sentence and – with the exception of Joseph Legging – loss of the national cockade: farm worker Johann Marks, cap maker Christoph Legging, servant Joseph Legging, all from Geseke, as well as farm worker Theodor Vogt and day laborer Konrad Linnemann, both from Störmede;

3. Two-year deployment in a penal company with reassignment to 2nd class military status, loss of the national cockade and military insignia: journeyman carpenter, military reservist Wilhelm Wessel, and cartwright and militiaman Johann Schumacher, both from Geseke.

4. Provisionally exonerated: journeyman ropemaker Wilhelm Engels, journeyman tailor Johann Busch, farmhand Joseph Bornemann, from Geseke, servant Franz Troester from Ehringhausen, as well as farm worker Anton Brede, known as “Ricke,” from Esbeck. In Störmede: farmworkers Kaspar Schweins, Theodor Gockel, and Konrad Keuth, journeyman tailors Konrad Wernze and Franz Heers, carpenter’s apprentice Franz Marks and day laborer Joseph Kraes, known as “Schulte.”

5. Completely exonerated: food provisioner and purchaser Franz Broer and journeyman carpenter Joseph Kleine from Geseke. In Störmede: farmer Franz Sprincke, farmhands Bernhard Gockel and Franz Wüllner, carpenter Adam Lehmkühler, known as “Luigs,” and farmer Theodor Menke.

6. Chaplain Karl Zimmerbach from Geseke was also exonerated of the charge of not having prevented the chargeable crimes of property damage.

The reasons for the verdicts were not set down, so we cannot know the details. However, when the government in Arnsberg sent the verdicts to the minister of the interior, it noted that “the gross maliciousness of the perpetrators and the general dangerousness of the crime” seem to have moved the senate “to exercise the greatest possible strictness and severity without excessive fear regarding the consideration of proof.” The relative severity of the punishments was to have an intimidating effect in view of the continuing “malicious harassment” in the city.[[81]](#endnote-77)

After the evidence had been taken, no accusations were leveled at Mayor Pieper, who received “praise as a very effective official, solicitous of the well-being of his city.” Councilman Ackermann, on the other hand, was forced to retire, as it became known that he had been drunk and therefore incompetent. One of the constables was also punished for dereliction of duty due to drunkenness on the evening in question. Two other officials, whose incompetence was found to have been minor, were also replaced by competent outsiders.[[82]](#endnote-78)

In the opinion of the government in Arnsberg,

“The Catholic clergy in Geseke had secretly fed the hatred and fanaticism against the Jews, and after the initial outbreak of violence had done nothing to transform the animosity into an understanding that a highly unchristian and shameful crime had been committed, and to foster an appropriate reconciliation. It had seemed to them justified for the entire Jewish community of Geseke and Störmede to be punished as an example for the resistance of one member who had opposed the conversion of his son.”[[83]](#endnote-79)

Once again, the government underscored the absolute necessity for the clergy to contribute its best to mutual understanding between Jews and Christians.

The perpetrators had received very serious punishments – and their appeal was rejected. However, the verdict**s** must be viewed in light of the events of the time. Because it was feared that unrest of any sort could achieve a dynamic of its own and be directed against the draconian Prussian police state, any unrest had to be nipped in the bud by whatever means available, including intimidating punishments. During the period preceding the revolution of 1848, movements fomented by various groups and social classes had sought to reorder social, political, and economic relationships, and were therefore a danger to the state. In addition, 1844 was the year in which the uprising of the weavers in Silesia had been crushed by the Prussian military. This is presumably why Prussia reacted so sharply to the anti-Jewish unrest.

**One consequence: Shooting festival banned in 1845**

Although newspapers reported in January 1845 that everything had returned to normal,[[84]](#endnote-80) the emotions of the previous year returned to a high pitch when the Geseke shooting club began planning for the festival that accompanied its annual shooting meet. The government in Arnsberg had banned the festival scheduled for 1845 because of the anti-Jewish riots, and pleas by the citizenry to reinstate it fell on deaf ears. In response, on April 4, 1845 the shooting club sent a letter of complaint to the minister of the interior and the police.[[85]](#endnote-81)

The controversy surrounding these festivities once again throws into relief the anti-Jewish sentiment that predominated in the city, while at the same time demonstrating the citizenry’s growing desire for liberty, expressed in its forthright demand to have its rights respected. The resultant conflict between the shooting club and the authorities is directly connected with the events of the previous year and deserves a brief concluding examination.

In the previously-mentioned letter, the board of the shooting club based its request on its 300-year history and the importance of the festival in the lives of the people of Geseke. This festival was the only time in the year when respectable citizens could indulge in “merrymaking” and find relief from the “toils and cares of daily life.” The consequences of a ban could therefore not be predicted. The board further stated:

“Even with only a minimal knowledge of life, is it really not possible to recognize that because the Jews are excluded from membership in the shooting club the city will view the questionable decree as an insult to the Christians and a joy to the Jews? Can it be overlooked that where such a thorn is sunk into the side of the masses, an injustice can easily turn to rage? No one will be able to guarantee the feelings of the citizens, in particular of the less educated and easily excitable ones, during the days in which the shooting festival was quashed in the interest of the Jews. If it is the intention of the most praiseworthy government to maintain the peace, to settle the strife of yesteryear between Christians and Jews, at least follow the example of the reasonable mass in Geseke that has forgotten. Do not excite an entire city unnecessarily. Our times demand wisdom and circumspection of governments; citizens demand to be given reasons; mere arbitrariness will no longer find acceptance.”[[86]](#endnote-82)

Minister von Arnim forwarded this letter to the government in Arnsberg. The government there declared categorically that it wasn’t merely “the mob,” the lower classes of people, who had participated in the previous year’s riots, as the letter would have it, but rather hundreds of inhabitants – virtually the entire population of the city.

None of the citizens had done anything to prevent the tumult, and even later were of no help in identifying perpetrators. Such passivity could be interpreted only as approval. According to the government spokesman, the distancing taking place at the moment, and the attempt to shift blame onto the lower classes, werenot credible; a large proportion of the participants had been recruited from the ranks of the shooting club, even though none had been called to justice or punished. The government then enumerated the measures taken to maintain the peace and to protect the Jews. It was viewed as especially reprehensible that the assaults had continued up to pronouncement of the verdict in November, even though reinstatement of the festival was made contingent uponthe behavior of the citizenry. Because of the “dominant sentiment,” further assaults were not to be ruled out around the upcoming shooting festival. The tenor of the shooting club's board's complaint alone made it clear to the government in Arnsberg that the ban was appropriate. It thus recommended to the minister that “the best response to the gaps in the letter of complaint” was rejection: “An example must be made of the community commensurate with the spirit elicited by the outrageous antics, and that can only be to deny the shooting festival.”[[87]](#endnote-83) The ministry of the interior agreed and informed the club accordingly on June 28, 1845.[[88]](#endnote-84)

The club then turned immediately to the king. In its description of the triggering events of the previous year it broadly exonerated the inhabitants of Geseke and requested the reasons for the decision, declaring that:

“Arbitrary discretion cannot constitute a reason. The police may already arbitrarily forbid unauthorized communist, German-Catholic, Protestant-friendly gatherings on their authority, and that is their right. But to do so against an old-established club, they may exercise such prerogatives only if there are real reasons, and then those whose rights are infringed upon must be informed of these reasons so they may defend themselves.”[[89]](#endnote-85)

The city council added its voice in support of the shooting festival in this appeal to the king,[[90]](#endnote-86) the content and style of which both attest to the aggressive and tense mood in the populace. The council also referred to the long tradition of shooting clubs, whose ideals taught youth early the love of weaponry. It further pointed with pride to the fact that Baron von Stülpnagel of the neighboring 6th Ulan regiment was an honorary member of the club. Its view of the events of May 1844 is telling:

“The city was hit by a significant calamity on May 9, 1844. As a result of a disgraceful blasphemy against our Savior and Redeemer by the Jews – as it was generally believed --, a great ferment developed against these people who conducted their trade in a Jewish manner…. However, no citizens took part in these crimes…. The daily press, in which the Jews are fairly strongly represented, took the opportunity to enshroud the entire city with an aura of fanaticism.”

The city council again stated its opinion that the unjustified decree was punishing the majority, although only a few had been involved in the riots. In its final plea it wrote: “It gives the Jews, who are not allowed to participate in the festival, a triumph, and it could easily lead to further discord. We did not deserve this from the government. Citizens gladly comply when they see the reasons why.”[[91]](#endnote-87)

However, the king supported the decision and gave the city council to understand that the complaints submitted were not under its purview, and were therefore inappropriate per se.[[92]](#endnote-88)

It is not known to what extent these incidents hindered the emancipation process that the Geseke Jews were undergoing, nor how much latent anti-Jewish sentiment remained in the populace. In any event, by the early 1850s the shooting club had begun admitting Jews, and they could even lay claim to the title of King of the Meet. However, in 1858, new bylaws reinstituted restrictions, and Jews no longer took part in the shooting festival.[[93]](#endnote-89)

The violence that took place in Geseke in 1844 is a microcosm of the problems that have always beset German-Jewish life. Ever since their settlement in the city, the Geseke Jews had been branded as outsiders, a group with fewer rights, and viewed with suspicion. Nor did the Geseke Jews escape the conflicts that characterized the decades-long process of emancipation of the Jews, even after 1844. They suffered disproportionately during this transition period without any long-term gains. The Jews of Geseke were able to view themselves as (supposedly) integrated citizens for only a short period of time. That illusion was brutally destroyed at the latest in 1933.

**Footnotes**

Abbreviations:

StdtAGE Stadtarchiv Geseke

StAMS Staatsarchiv Münster

ZStA Zentrales Staatsarchiv, Dienststelle Merseburg

AZdJ *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums*

1. Margit Naarmann (1938-2016) was an independent scholar and historian based in Paderborn. She specialized in the history of the Jewish communities in and around Paderborn. Her works include, *Die Paderborn Juden* (1988), *Ein Auge gen Zion. Das jüdisch Umschulungs-und Einsatzlager am Grünen Weg in Paderborn 1939-1943* (1990), *Von ihren Leuten wohnt hier keiner mehr* (1998), and numerous journal articles. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Else Lasker-Schüler, *Gesammelte Werke in drei Bänden*, 2. vol., Prosa und Schauspiele,

Munich 1962, pp. 1059-1194, here p. 1187. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
3. Born February 11, 1869 in Wuppertal, died on January 22, 1945 in Jerusalem. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
4. According to Sigrid Bauschinger in *Else Lasker-Schüler - Ihr Werk und ihre Zeit*, Heidelberg 1980,

p 236, non-political reasons led to the withdrawal of the play. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
5. Cf. ibid., pp. 311-352 - Die Lasker-Schüler-Leser. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
6. Cited in: ibid., p. 336. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
7. The last staging as of this writing was probably at the Schauspielhaus, in Bonn, in October 1988 and the Studiobühne der Universität-Gesamthochschule, in Paderborn, in April 1989. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
8. Max Weltis, theater critic for the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, complained that Lasker-

Schüler had tried to beat religious tolerance into the Swiss with a wooden mallet

(Cf. Bauschinger [as in fn. 3], p. 237). To this the poet wrote to the editors that “I wrote the play, which has become dear to me, poetry that has sprung from heart to heart, from my father’s heart to mine, not as an exercise with a pedantic purpose, or with some political intent, or as a cautionary or educational, or even threatening tale. In this the critic has gone far astray! In poetry one composes and sheds light….” In: Else Lasker-Schüler, *Gesammelte Werke*, 3. vol., Verse und Prosa, Munich 1961, p. 48. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
9. Erika Klüsener, *Else Lasker-Schüler in Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten*, Reinbek bei

Hamburg 1980, p. 14. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
10. S. Bauschinger, Else Lasker-Schüler [as in fn. 3], p. 114. Dieter Baensch thinks otherwise, namely that the poet sketches out the possibility of reconciliation in the abstract, like an ethical dogma, as a programmatic item of good will. The ethos of love has never prevented a pogrom. This is the powerless concept with which she tilts against a world-spirit of hatred and persecution. *Else Lasker-Schüler - Zur Kritik eines etablierten Bildes*, Stuttgart 1971, p. 103. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
11. This is the profession that appears in his will, dated January 12, 1855, in: StAMS, Kreisgericht

Lippstadt II no. 437. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
12. Cf. Baensch, Else Lasker-Schüler [as in fn. 9], pp. 177, 189. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
13. Cf. Bauschinger, *Else Lasker-Schüler* [as in fn. 3], p. 25. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
14. In addition, see Baensch, *Else Lasker-Schüler* [as in fn. 9], pp. 176-189.

For more on Else Lasker-Schüler’s forebears, cf. the article by Bernhard Brilling, in: *Allgemeine Wochenzeitung der Juden in Deutschland*, no. XX/12, dated June 18,1965. Hirsch Cohen, Geseke assistant rabbi, was married to Bella née Guggenheimer, who probably did not come from Warburg (presumably a typographical error), but from Harburg in Bavaria.

Cf. Bernhard Brilling, *Zur Geschichte des Rabbinats von Paderborn* (1809-1869). Chapter 1

(1809-1826), in: *UDIM Zeitschrift der Rabbinerkonferenz* vol. VI (1975/76), pp. 19-32, here p.

22, fn. 17. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
15. Fresh waves of accusations of ritual murder in Paderborn and environs in the 1840s, as Baensch would have it [fn. 9], p. 186, cannot be verified. For more on incidents in Paderborn, see Naarmann, *Die Paderborner Juden 1802-1945, Emanzipation, Integration und Vernichtung*, Paderborn 1988, p. 106 f. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
16. In their joint will, dated January 12, 1855, Moses and Nettgen Schüler bequeathed their 14 still-living children from the first and second marriage inheritances of between 5,000 and 10,000 Reichsthaler each.

See StAMS Kreisger. Lippstadt II no. 437. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
17. Rosa Cohen, born 1793, died 1833 (March 14?) See Brilling, *Vorfahren* [as in fn. 13]. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
18. Nanette, called Nettchen Cohen, born February 19, 1810, in Geseke, died February 17, 1890, in Frankfurt. Cf. “Jahreszeitenstiftung no. 2458,” in: *60. Bericht über das Jüdische Waisenhaus zu Paderborn*, Rietberg 1930. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
19. Cf. “Else Lasker-Schüler und Wuppertal.” Wuppertal-Elberfeld 1962, related by Hermann

Hinteler, in: *Juden in Geseke - Beiträge zur Geschichte einer Minderheit*, Geseke 1988, p. 20. [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
20. Moses Schüler, presumably born in 1788, died on 21 Cheshvan 1859. Cf. “Jahreszeitenstiftung no. 2457.” According to the will, the interest from debt capital was to be placed in a fund to be used unto perpetuity to buy wax candles weighing 28 lot [old weight: 1 lot = approx. ½ ounce] that would burn in the synagogue during Yahrzeit. They expected their children to pray on these days, and if prevented from doing so, make it up in the synagogue on the next Sabbath. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
21. Cf. Alexander Ahrens, “Das Bild von Geseke im Werk der Else Lasker-Schüler,” in

*Juden in Geseke* [as in fn. 18], pp. 26-33. [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
22. Translator’s note: Abraham was his Hebrew name prior to leaving the Jewish community. When he was baptized he took the name Bernhard Franz Mathias, while retaining his family name. In 1851, after concluding a printing apprenticeship in Germany (apparently financed by his father), Bernhard emigrated to the United States, settling in Milwaukee. There he continued to work as a printer and later as a tobacco wholesaler. He founded his own press in 1870. He and his wife Julie Erdmann, from Braunschweig, had six sons and one daughter. (Heinrich Josef Deisting. “Die Bekehrungsgeschichte des Geseker Juden Bernhard Franz Mathias Löwenbach (1829-1884). Arnsberg: *SüdWestfalen Archiv*, 10/2010, pp. 169-225. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
23. Emanuel Löwenbach, born November 9, 1783 in Madfeld, died September 11, 1859 in

Gütersloh. Cf. Jahreszeitenstiftung no. 1548. Niederlassung in Geseke 1814/1818. Cf.

StdtA GE X, 60. [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
24. Bitter, Matthias Anton, born July 13, 1805 in Warendorf, died May 25, 1881

in Bausenhagen. Canon and rector in Geseke from 1832-1847. First

parish administrator, then pastor in Bausenhagen. Cf. W. Liese, *Necrologium Paderbornense*,

Paderborn 1934, p. 119, and *Festschrift Gymnasium Antoninum Geseke 1687-1987*. [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
25. *Westfälischer Merkur* no. 128 of May 29, 1844 – anonymous letter writer.

Mention is made in the 1847 application for approval by the city council to the government in Arnsberg regarding the hiring of the teacher Baruch Cohen (a son of the deceased teacher Süsser Cohen in Geseke) as cantor, that some of the Geseke Jews still harbored resentment toward the entire Cohen family because they blamed Süsser Cohen for young Löwenbach’s conversion to Christianity. The family would never be forgiven as long as a member still lived. (Information kindly related by Reinhard Marx.) [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
26. The *Magdeburger Zeitung* was a daily newspaper with a national-liberal perspective. Article dated May 19, 1844, in AZdJ no. 23, 3. June 1844. [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
27. Alterauge, Bernhard Joh., born March 26, 1802 in Drolshagen, died January 12, 1882 in

Werl. Pastor in Werl from 1833-1873. Cf. Liese, *Necrologium* [as in fn. 22], p. 88. [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
28. *Westfälischer Merkur* no. 121, May 21, 1844; Reader letter from Westphalia. – According to the provostry-clergy office in Werl, Löwenbach’s baptism is not recorded in the baptismal register for 1843. [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
29. Vincke to von Arnim July 10, 1844, ZStA Rep. 77 XXX no. 4, fol. 275-277, here fol. 275v. [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
30. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
31. Ibid. – For Konrad Pohlmeier’s explanation, “Die Ereignisse des Jahres 1844 in Geseke,” in: *Juden in Geseke* [as in fn. 18], p. 23: There is no evidence that Salomon allowed Bernhard to attend a Christian school. [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
32. Report by District President Keßler dated May 27, 1844, ZStARep. 89 tit. 2.2.1 no. 23.691, fol. 36-42, here fol. 37v.

The correspondence article in the Magdeburger Zeitung regarding the behavior off the two clergymen states that “All evil stems from that proselytizing, that soul-catching that has by now become a system…. Naturally, the matter arouses controversy, and this manner of proselytizing is criticized. Even the Bishop of Paderborn comes down on it, but his ban is ignored by the two clergymen, as is justice and law….”

Article cited in: AZdJ no. 23, June 3, 1844, p. 314 f. The personnel files of neither Bitter nor

Alterauge in the Archepiscopal Vicariat-General in Paderborn contain any mention of the events. [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
33. On June 6, 1843 the government in Arnsberg confirmed to the city council in Geseke that the teacher Aron Kaufmann from Lengerich was permitted to teach certain children in elementary school until recalled. The petition for this had been initiated by Kronenberg [probably either Meyer (1790-1850) or Bernhard (1800-1870), both of whom had children] and coreligionists. The rights of Süsser Cohen (son of the assistant rabbi), who had worked in this capacity since 1819, should not be infringed. In this connection the city council in Geseke responded, “Ever since Cohen had been installed, all Jewish children had attended Jewish schools until Cohen considered them to be “mature” in terms of the religion. They then transferred to Christian schools. That ended after the conversion of one Israelite boy who had attended a Christian school.” StdtA GE X 61 vol. 1, fol. 5 and 7v. [↑](#endnote-ref-31)
34. *Magdeburger Zeitung*, May 19, 1844, in: AZdJ no. 23, 3. June 1844, p. 315. [↑](#endnote-ref-32)
35. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-33)
36. Translator’s note: The Löwenbach family – minus Abraham/Bernhard – relocated to Gütersloh, a larger city in Westphalia. Emanuel Löwenbach became successful in the textile trade here as well, among other things, supplying cap makers. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
37. Werner Pieper, born March 25,1803 in Istrup near Brakel, died June 4,1867 in Geseke.

Mayor of Geseke from 1837-1849. [↑](#endnote-ref-34)
38. Report from Mayor Pieper to Oberpräsident von Vincke dated May 14, 1844,

StAMS Oberpräsidium no. 680, fol. 204. [↑](#endnote-ref-35)
39. Translator’s note: Invective that combined words used by farmers when herding cattle with “Jew croak.” [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
40. *Allgemeine Preußische Zeitung* no. 141, May 21, 1844, ZStA Rep. 77 XXX, no. 4, fol.

159a-160, and in: AZdJ no. 23, June 3, 1844, p. 315. The same artice was also published in the *Kölnische Zeitung*. The *Westfälischer Merkur* reported on May 14, 1844. [↑](#endnote-ref-36)
41. Cf. report from the government in Arnsberg to Minister von Arnim, December 6, 1844, fol 321. [↑](#endnote-ref-37)
42. *Allgemeine Preußische Zeitung*, in: AZdJ no. 23, p. 315. [↑](#endnote-ref-38)
43. *Magdeburger Zeitung*, in: AZdJ no. 23, p. 314, and Eleonore Sterling, *Er ist wie du. Aus*

*der Frühgeschichte des Antisemitismus in Deutschland (1815-1850)*, Munich 1956, p. 191. [↑](#endnote-ref-39)
44. AZdJ no. 23, p. 315, and report from Keßler, May 27, 1844, ZStA Rep. 89 tit. 2.2.1 no. 23.691, fol. 41r. [↑](#endnote-ref-40)
45. *Westfälischer Merkur* no. 138, 9. June 1844. [↑](#endnote-ref-41)
46. First published in 1822 by Verlag Coppenrath. Daily newspaper since 1830. Changed ownership in

1870. The liberal newspaper came out against the so-called Kulturkampf. [↑](#endnote-ref-42)
47. Pieper to Vincke May 14, 1844, StAMS Oberpräsidium no. 680, fol. 204. [↑](#endnote-ref-43)
48. Report from von Arnim dated May 23, 1844, ZStA Rep. 77 XXX no. 4, fol. 177-180r. [↑](#endnote-ref-44)
49. Ibid., fol. 161r. [↑](#endnote-ref-45)
50. V. Arnim to Vincke o. D., ibid., fol 162v. – “Correction,” Arnsberg, May 27, 1844 in:

*Westfälischer Merkur* no. 29, 30. May 1844. [↑](#endnote-ref-46)
51. Lazar Levi Hellwitz, born 1796 in Beverungen, died 1860, businessman, lived for a time in Werl and Soest. Adherent of Reform Judaism in Westphalia. For little compensation he served as honorary “Chairman of the Jewish Community in the Duchy of Westphalia” from 1825 until his removal in 1856. For more, cf. Brilling, *Zur Geschichte des Rabbinats von Paderborn* [as in fn. 13], pp. 23/24, fn. 21. [↑](#endnote-ref-47)
52. Keßler to v. Arnim, May 27, 1844, in: ZStA Rep. 89 tit. 2.2.1 no. 23.691, fol. 37/38r. [↑](#endnote-ref-48)
53. Ibid., fol. 41 v. [↑](#endnote-ref-49)
54. *Westfälischer Merkur* no. 128, 29. May 1844. Reply to reader letter in ibid. no. 121,

May 21, 1844: “First and foremost, the term ‘vandalism’ is undoubtedly too extreme because the incidents that took place there were certainly not so terrible that they should be branded with this horrible word.” [↑](#endnote-ref-50)
55. Keßler to v. Arnim am May 29, 1844, ZStA Rep. 77 no. 4, fol. 220v. [↑](#endnote-ref-51)
56. Keßler to v. Arnim, May 27, 1844, ibid. Rep. 89 tit. 2.2.1 no. 23.691, fol. 41r. [↑](#endnote-ref-52)
57. Vincke to v. Arnim, July 10, 1844, ibid. Rep. 77 XXX no. 4, fol. 275-277, here fol. 276v. [↑](#endnote-ref-53)
58. K. Pohlmeier, “Geschichte der Juden in Geseke (1644-1844),” in: *Juden in Geseke* [as in

fn. 18], p. 16. [↑](#endnote-ref-54)
59. *Westfälischer Merkur* no. 121, May 21, 1844, and ZStA Rep. 89 tit. 2.2.1 no. 23.691, fol.

59r. [↑](#endnote-ref-55)
60. Royal decree of June 9, 1844. Instructions from Minister of Justice v. Mühler to the

Higher district court in Arnsberg, June 28, 1844, ZStA Rep. 77 XXX no. 4, fol. 254r, and ibid.,

Rep. 89 tit. 2.2.1 no. 23.691, fol. 55-56. Arnim to King Frederick William IV on August 18,

1844. [↑](#endnote-ref-56)
61. Ministry of Justice to the Ministry of the Interior, March 18, 1846, ibid. Rep. 77 XXX no. 4, fol. 390. [↑](#endnote-ref-57)
62. The original reads “Jupp, jupp,” which was probably a transcription or typographical error. [↑](#endnote-ref-58)
63. This passage was contained only in the typewritten manuscript by Karl Pohlmeier “Geschichte der Juden in Geseke,” 16 pages, StdtA GE, which after the death of the former city clerk was published with a few omissions in the “Geseker Heimatblätter.”

None of the files regarding the riots, in particular the all-important file B XIII, 6

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Exist anymore, although they were still listed in the finding aid of the Geseke city archive as late as 1956. [↑](#endnote-ref-59)
64. Pohlmeier, *Geschichte der Juden* [as in fn. 54], p. 16 f. [↑](#endnote-ref-60)
65. News reports, originally: “Police.” And “news reports”: Not press publications but official reports to be filed by mayors or councilors, at first monthly, then later for each quarter for the district administrators. A particular format was to be followed , e.g., Weather, Mortality figures, Natural events, Trade and business, Public mood, Religiosity, Administrative matters, etc. There were a total of about 18 rubrics. [↑](#endnote-ref-61)
66. StdtA GEBI, 26 vol. 4, fol. 29. [↑](#endnote-ref-62)
67. Submission by the City Council of Geseke to King Frederick William IV, undated, ZStA Rep. 77 XXX no. 4 fol. 372-380, here fol. 376r. [↑](#endnote-ref-63)
68. Government in Arnsberg June 6, 1845 to v. Arnim, ZStA Rep. 77 XXX no. 4, fol. 344r. [↑](#endnote-ref-64)
69. Board of the shooting club in Geseke to v. Arnim dated June 6, 1845, ZStA Rep. 77 XXX no. 4, fol. 339-349, here fol. 345-347. [↑](#endnote-ref-65)
70. Decisions of the city councilors (minutes book) vom 23. July 1844, StdtA GE B 1/7 1844/45, vol. 12v-14r. [↑](#endnote-ref-66)
71. Government in Arnsberg to v. Arnim June 6, 1845, ZStA Rep. 77 XXX no. 4, fol. 346v. [↑](#endnote-ref-67)
72. Pohlmeier, “Geschichte der Juden” [as in fn. 59], p. 16. [↑](#endnote-ref-68)
73. Government in Arnsberg June 6, 1845 to v. Arnim, ZStA Rep. 77 XXX no. 4, fol. 347. [↑](#endnote-ref-69)
74. Government in Arnsberg December 6, 1844 to v. Arnim, ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-70)
75. v. Arnim to King Frederick William IV, June 3, 1844, ZStA Rep. 77 XXX no. 4, fol. 204r. [↑](#endnote-ref-71)
76. Cf. Pohlmeier, “Geschichte der Juden in Geseke” [as in fn. 54], pp. 1-18, esp. p. 3. [↑](#endnote-ref-72)
77. Cf. Arno Herzig, *Emanzipation und Judentum in Westfalen*, Münster 1973, pp. 83-89, and

E. Sterling, *Er ist wie du* [as in fn. 39], pp. 171-173. [↑](#endnote-ref-73)
78. StAMS Oberpräsidium no. 2627 vol. 2, fol. 263-265. ZStA Rep. 77 XXX no. 4, fol. 291-293, and ZStA Rep. 77 XXX no. 4, fol. 291r-293r. [↑](#endnote-ref-74)
79. Archepiscopal Archive Paderborn IV4, 270. [↑](#endnote-ref-75)
80. ZStA Rep. 77 XXX no. 4, fol. 318-331. [↑](#endnote-ref-76)
81. Ibid., fol, 319r. – It is surprising that the *Westfälischer Merkur* failed to publish the decision, as was evident from perusal of the volume. [↑](#endnote-ref-77)
82. Ibid., fol. 320-321. [↑](#endnote-ref-78)
83. Ibid., fol. 323-324r.

By contrast the reader letter from Aas in Westphalia the *Westfälischer Merkur* no. 121, May 21, 1844; on May 12, 1844 the clergy had supposedly preached to the flock that they must “do their duty.”. [↑](#endnote-ref-79)
84. Newspaper report dated January 24, 1845, StdtA GE B I, 26, vol. 4, fol. 33r. [↑](#endnote-ref-80)
85. ZStARep. 77 XXXno. 4, fol. 350-355. [↑](#endnote-ref-81)
86. Ibid.,fol. 354-355. [↑](#endnote-ref-82)
87. Government in Arnsberg to v. Arnim June 6, 1845, ZStA Rep. 77 XXX no. 4, fol. 339-348, here fol. 348r. [↑](#endnote-ref-83)
88. ZStARep. 77 XXX no. 4, fol. 356v. [↑](#endnote-ref-84)
89. Submission dated July 12, 1845, ZStA Rep. 77 XXX no. 4, fol. 382-386. [↑](#endnote-ref-85)
90. Undated submission: Most humble presentation by the City Council regarding the shooting festival that has been banned by the government, ZStA Rep. 77 XXX no. 4, fol. 372-380. [↑](#endnote-ref-86)
91. Ibid., fol. 374-375. [↑](#endnote-ref-87)
92. Ibid., fol. 370 – Royal cabinet decree Swinemünde September 6, 1845. [↑](#endnote-ref-88)
93. Cf. for more Hans Peter Busch, “Die Schützen und die Juden im 19. Jahrhundert,” in: *Juden in*

*Geseke* [as in fn.18], pp. 37-43, here pp. 40-41. [↑](#endnote-ref-89)