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Das mehrsprachige Webportal publiziert fortlaufend Informationen zur historisch-politischen Bildung in Schulen, Gedenkstätten und anderen Einrichtungen zur Geschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts. Schwerpunkte bilden der Nationalsozialismus, der Zweite Weltkrieg sowie die Folgegeschichte in den Ländern Europas bis zu den politischen Umbrüchen 1989.

Dabei nimmt es Bildungsangebote in den Fokus, die einen Gegenwartsbezug der Geschichte herausstellen und bietet einen Erfahrungsaustausch über historisch-politische Bildung in Europa an.

The History of the Jewish Cemetery of Schwarzhendorf

The Schwarzhendorf cemetery is one of the oldest and largest Jewish cemeteries in the northern Rhineland. Only the cemeteries of Brühl and Siegburg are older, originating in the fourteenth century. The first burial probably occurred in 1623, based on the inscription on the oldest tombstone of Schabtai bar David. All Bonn Jews were buried at Schwarzhendorf until 1872, although there were several exceptions – most notably when the flooding of the Rhine made burials impossible and other cemeteries had to be used.

In accordance with an old Jewish custom, the cemetery is located outside of the city boundaries. Since the location was not especially favorable, the cemetery was often flooded, and gravestones were washed away or sunk under topsoil. The cemetery was also seriously damaged by the Thirty Years War. Bonn was frequently besieged during the seventeenth century, causing new damage.

The straightening and relocation of the mouth of the Sieg River to the south in 1777, almost to its present-day location at the northern edge of the cemetery, had serious consequences. The river frequently overflowed and damaged the immediate vicinity. After 1850, this situation was improved with the construction of dikes.

We learned of recurrent complaints about the condition of the cemetery, for example, when the Beuel

synagogue – owners of this cemetery since 1818 – complained to the mayor of Vilich. In 1873, a new cemetery was consecrated at Augustusring in northern Bonn. After that date, members of the Beuel (Vilich) community were buried in the northern section of the Schwarzhindorf cemetery. The much larger southern section of the cemetery was the property of the Bonn community.

Under the Nazis, the condition of the cemetery deteriorated. It was partly destroyed by military installations: German searchlight units were posted on the cemetery's northern border, an anti-aircraft unit was stationed at its southern edge, and gravestones were used as protection from aircraft. After a dummy airfield was built in the zone around Geislar to deceive Allied bombers, the cemetery became the target of many air raids.

After the war, it took quite a while before the cemetery could be restored. During the 1950s, the city of Beuel renovated the cemetery, and today it is owned by the State Association of Jewish Communities, which is headquartered in Düsseldorf. From 1966 to 1968, the cemetery was extensively restored, and more than one hundred gravestones were reconstructed. A memorial stone was placed at the entrance to the cemetery on the dike. Its inscription reads:

"Sachor lo tischkach Remember – do not forget your murdered fellow Jewish citizens so that this time will never return again. Erected on 9 November 1968 by the city of Beuel."

Often gravestones were vandalized with swastikas and other graffiti, or headstones were overturned.

The cemetery received landmark protection from the city of Bonn in 1991.