

Heinz Schwarz



Heinz Schwarz enjoyed a typical German childhood until just before his sixth birthday in 1933. Everything changed when Adolf Hitler and the Nazi party came to power that year. In the following years, Heinz and his family embarked on an often frightening odyssey that would take them to Shanghai, China, and eventually to Seattle, Washington. Although Heinz survived, many in his family did not.

What is the cost of survival for a refugee?

Heinz Schwarz at age eight, 1935.
Heinz Schwarz Collection, Holocaust Center

Eight-year-old Heinz Schwarz is pictured here with a *Schultüte*, or school cone, a German tradition. Parents gave the cone, filled with sweets and school supplies, to their children on the first day of school.

This photo was taken just months before the Nuremberg Laws went into effect. The discrimination from these Laws, as well as other persecutory laws and actions perpetrated by the Nazis, would lead the Schwarz family to flee their homeland.



Heinz' parents, Walter and Elizabeth, with Heinz as an infant, pictured in front of Walter's clothing shop in Greifenhagen, May 1928.
Heinz Schwarz Collection, Holocaust Center

Heinz and his family identified as members of German society. Walter fought for Germany during World War I, the family followed German traditions, such as the school cone, and they operated a successful clothing business frequented by Jews and non-Jews alike.

In 1938, Jewish businesses were slowly being seized and transferred to non-Jews. On July 6, a Nazi decree called for the termination of all Jewish businesses by the end of the year. On July 29, Walter received a letter from the Mayor of Greifenhagen that forced him to 'give up his business.'

Walter Heinz' Iron Cross was awarded for his exceptional service to the German people during World War I.
Heinz Schwarz Collection, Holocaust Center



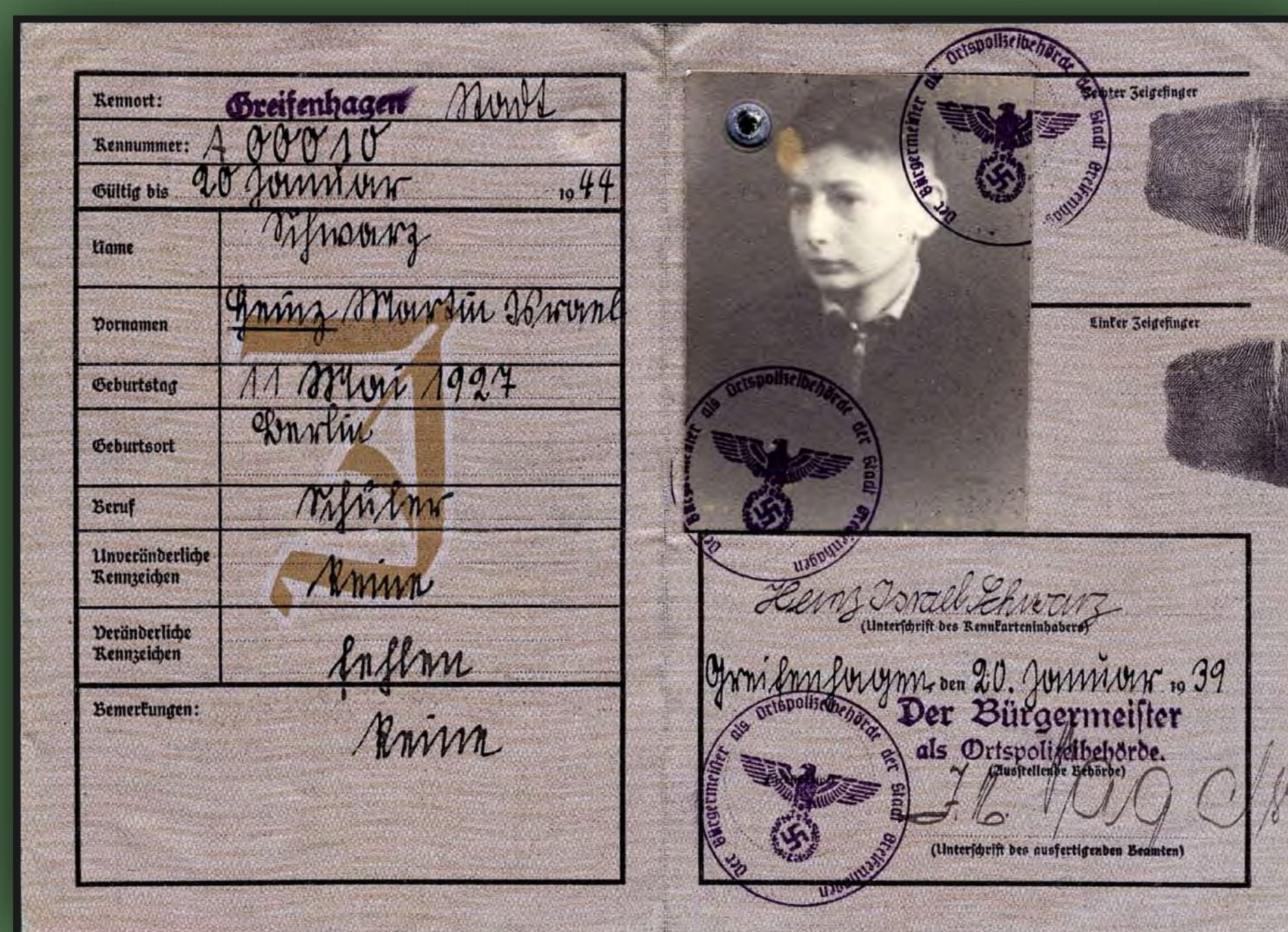
Heinz Schwarz in front of the Space Needle, February 1962.
Heinz Schwarz Collection, Holocaust Center

After World War II, Heinz and his parents discovered that extended family who had not been able to leave Germany had been exterminated in the Holocaust.

Heinz and his parents left Shanghai and immigrated to the United States. After their arrival in San Francisco on March 24, 1948, the Schwarz family immediately moved and settled into their new community of Seattle, Washington.

Heinz' Kennkarte, January 1939.
Heinz Schwarz Collection, Holocaust Center

Between January 19 and 20, 1939, the Nazis issued all of the Schwarz family members individual *Kennkarten*, or identification cards, each with a large, red 'J' stamp indicating that they were Jewish. The Nazis mandated the identification cards in order to gain greater control of the Jewish population in Germany.

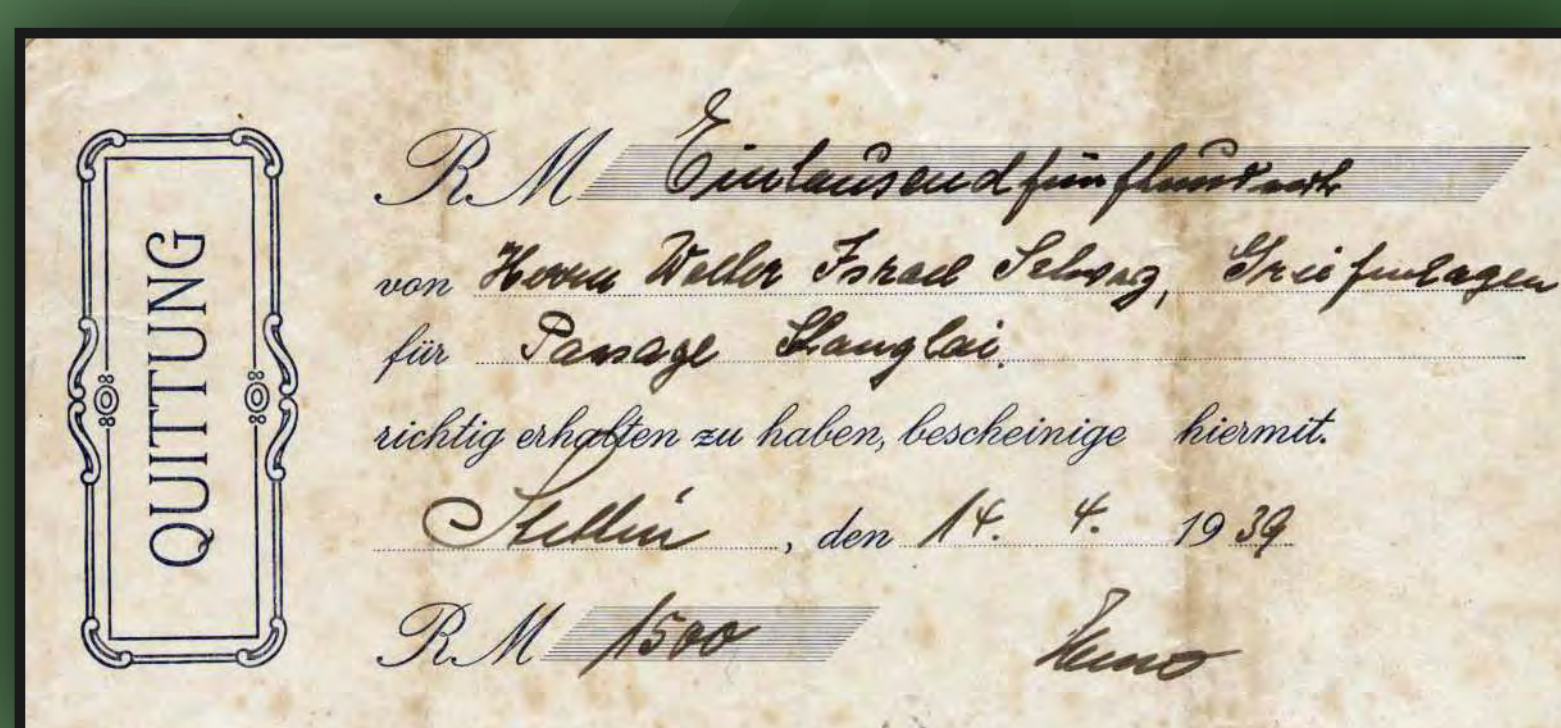


Receipt for passage to Shanghai, China, April 1939.
Heinz Schwarz Collection, Holocaust Center

In April 1939, Walter purchased passage to Shanghai, China, for himself, his wife, and Heinz.

The family left Germany on April 25th. They arrived in Shanghai more than two months later on June 29, 1939. Heinz, who celebrated a birthday during their voyage, was 12 years old.

As they arrived in Shanghai in 1939, Jewish refugees, including the Schwarz family, were in for a shock. They found themselves living in cramped quarters and unsanitary conditions, and they were forced to rely heavily on charitable relief.



Chinese workers unload a ship as German Jewish refugees disembark in the port of Shanghai, c 1940.
Courtesy of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York

REFUGEE

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