

**Chapter Six:  
The Reichskristallnacht and Its Aftermath until September 1939**

**The Prelude to the Pogrom**

The ‘*Polenaktion*’ – the deportation of stateless, Polish Jews from Germany sparked the incident that led to the November pogrom of 1938. Germany expelled between 16,000 and 18,000 Polish Jews between 27 and 29 October 1938,<sup>1</sup> forcibly transporting them to the Polish border. Poland denied them entry. They languished in a no-man’s-land between the two borders, in the cold and without food and shelter, while their families and communities became more and more desperate.<sup>2</sup>

In Magdeburg foreign-born Jews represented approximately 37.9% of the community’s population in 1933.<sup>3</sup> Whilst it is not possible to establish what percentage of Eastern European Jews had left by the time of the so-called ‘*Polenaktion*,’ the figure was definitely high. One report by a local businessman and Nazi Party member in August 1935 claimed that the majority of ‘the immigrant Galician Jews’ had already left the city long ago.<sup>4</sup> The closest statistic of the Jewish population at the time of the deportations is that of 1,256 in June

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<sup>1</sup> Estimates of the number of Jews deported range between these two figures. See Barkai, “Exclusion and Persecution: 1933–1938,” in Meyer, ed., op. cit., p. 220 and Friedländer, op. cit., p. 268.

<sup>2</sup> For a detailed account of the ‘*Polenaktion*’ see Sybil Milton, “The Expulsion of Polish Jews from Germany: October 1938 to July 1939 – A documentation,” *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*, vol. XXIX, 1984, pp. 169–199 and for an account of the events prior, during and after the expulsion see Friedländer, op. cit.

<sup>3</sup> Statistisches Reichsamt, *Statistik des Deutschen Reichs, Band 451, Volkszählung: die Bevölkerung des Deutschen Reichs nach den Ergebnissen der Volkszählung 1933, Heft 5, Die Glaubensjuden im Deutschen Reich*, Bestand R 3102, BAB, op. cit., p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> Correspondence from the Magdeburg businessman and Nazi Party member, Rellum, to the Reich Minister for the Interior, Dr Frick, 22 August 1935, Bestand Rep. C 20 I. I b, Signatur Nr. 1996, Band 4, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 321.

1937.<sup>5</sup> From this figure it must be concluded that the deportations would have potentially affected hundreds of Polish Jews in Magdeburg.

Hemmi Freeman's parents, Pinkas Frühman and Sprinec (Sabine) Frühman née Stern, were born in Sedziszow and Rymanow respectively.<sup>6</sup> Both places were Austrian at the time of their births. The married couple settled in Magdeburg shortly before the outbreak of World War One. In the wake of the war their respective birthplaces became Polish territory.<sup>7</sup> At the time of the '*Polenaktion*,' the couple were visited by the Gestapo, as their son recalled:

My parents were naturalised Germans from years back, but lost their naturalisation under the Nazis. So, when they came to our place to ask for their passports, they were stateless, and the Gestapo didn't know what to do with them, and they left them alone. So, they were saved temporarily.<sup>8</sup>

The Frühmans had never held Polish citizenship, only Austrian prior to their taking German citizenship. Clearly, the Gestapo assumed that as 'Polish'-born Jews, they would have held the same citizenship. Their statelessness at the time provided them with a temporary reprieve.

Some interviewees recalled the events of those few days and recalled how a number of members of the *Synagogen-Gemeinde* responded with assistance. The niece of the owners of the leathershop '*Taschen-Freiberg*' recalled the busy activity at the shop at the time of the deportations:

They had to leave in twenty-four hours – it was really horrible. This uncle had a business with suitcases, handbags and all leather goods. And I remember him all night open to sell suitcases. I remember we knew one of these families and we helped them to pack and we took them to the train.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Mitgliederzahl der Synagogen-Gemeinde zu Magdeburg, Stichtag 1937, Collection D/Ma3, File VIII.8, CAHJP, op. cit.

<sup>6</sup> Sonderaufbereitung der Volkszählung vom 17. Mai 1939, Listung der Erhebungsbögen für Provinz Sachsen, Stadtkreis Magdeburg, Gemeinde Magdeburg, BAB, p. 9.

<sup>7</sup> H. Freeman, op. cit., 13 May 1998.

<sup>8</sup> H. Freeman, op. cit., 3 June 1998.

<sup>9</sup> H. B., op. cit., 15 August 1997.

The majority of interviewees recalled that it was not until this event that they had had any real connection to the Eastern European Jews in the community at all. A number of them did know some of the children and youth from their association at school. These interviewees recalled their shocked reaction to the deportations.

Gerry Levy recalled the event:

My parents sent me in to the *Hauptbahnhof* [main railway station] with sandwiches, fruit and chocolate for those leaving. I knew some of them. But most of the people I had never had any contact with. It was the first time that I saw people being herded into railway cars. I spent a few hours there. It was probably *Rachmanit* [compassion or pity]; that feeling of being duty-bound.<sup>10</sup>

He further remarked that it was the only real occasion when he had had any interaction with Eastern European Jews as a group in the city.<sup>11</sup> Evidence does not indicate how many groups were deported and over how many days. However, Gerry Levy confirmed that the group he took food to consisted of approximately 150 Polish Jews.<sup>12</sup>

Some Jews did return temporarily after the mass deportations. One of the Polish-Jewish deportees who returned to Magdeburg was twenty-six-year-old Gertruda Litmanowitz née Schindler. She re-entered Germany on 17 February 1939 on a nine-day transit visa and lodged with her father-in-law.<sup>13</sup> On 13 February 1939, the German border police in Neu Bentschen advised the police in Magdeburg of her intention to re-enter the *Reich* and of her imminent immigration to Shanghai. The border police requested that she be placed under surveillance for

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<sup>10</sup> Levy, op. cit., 7 November 1996.

<sup>11</sup> For a discussion on the reactions of German Jews and the reaction of the Reichsvertretung der Juden in Deutschland to the 'Polenaktion' see Yfaat Weiss, *Deutsche und polnische Juden vor dem Holocaust. Jüdische Identität zwischen Staatsbürgerschaft und Ethnizität 1933–1940* München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 2000.

<sup>12</sup> Telephone interview with Gerry Levy AM, Sydney, 8 July 2005.

<sup>13</sup> Correspondence to and from the Deutsche Grenzdienststelle in Neu Bentschen and das Polizeipräsidium in Magdeburg, 13 February – 22 February 1939, Bestand Z.-Dok.001, Signatur Nr. 105, ASGM, p. 343.

the duration of her stay. Gertruda Litmanowitz left Magdeburg on 20 February 1939 and sailed from Hamburg to Shanghai.<sup>14</sup>

The ‘*Polenaktion*’ confronted the Jews of Magdeburg as it did all Jews throughout the *Reich*. Until that time they had endured ongoing exclusion, humiliation and financial ruin. However, this event marked a transition point in Nazi policy toward the Jews. The physical expulsion of Jews was not something that the Jews of Germany expected, despite the difficulty of their circumstances in Germany. The chain of events that followed cemented this watershed in the history of Magdeburg Jewry, and indeed for German Jewry.

Amongst the deportees who languished in the cold on the border, were the parents and sister of Herschel Grynszpan. Driven to despair over the course of events and as an act of protest, he shot Ernst vom Rath, a diplomat at the German Embassy in Paris. The Nazis then used the death as a convenient excuse to launch their largest pogrom to date. The Nazis presented the *Reichskristallnacht* as a spontaneous upsurge of violence by an enraged population. In reality, this event was a tightly controlled exercise that was government initiated and executed. The first ‘spontaneous demonstration’ of the night occurred in the provinces of Hesse and Magdeburg-Anhalt in the town of Dessau.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Correspondence to and from the Deutsche Grenzdienststelle in Neu Bentschen and das Polizeipräsidium in Magdeburg, 13 February – 22 February 1939, Bestand Z.-Dok.001, Signatur Nr. 105, ASGM, op. cit., p. 343.

<sup>15</sup> The events surrounding the assassination of Ernst vom Rath have been well documented by numerous historians. For detailed accounts of the assassination and its use as a pretext for the carefully planned and well-orchestrated events leading up to the pogrom of 9–10 November 1938, see Walter H. Pehle, ed., *Der Judenpogrom 1938. Von der ‘Reichskristallnacht’ bis zum Völkermord* Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1988; Hans-Jürgen Döscher, *Reichskristallnacht: Die Novemberpogrome 1938* Frankfurt am Main und Berlin: Ullstein Verlag, 1988; and Anthony Read and David Fisher *Kristallnacht: Unleashing the Holocaust* London: Michael Joseph, 1989.

### The Pogrom in Magdeburg

On the night of 9–10 November 1938, the Nazis unleashed the most violent pogrom against the Jews of Germany and Austria since the Middle Ages. Derisively belittling the terrible events that took place, they dubbed it the *Reichskristallnacht*, ‘The Night of Broken Glass.’ This pogrom revealed to the world the savagery and barbarism of the Nazi regime, yet that fateful night also laid bare the hollowness of the world’s indignation. Although German and, later, Austrian Jewry had experienced the intensification of the political disenfranchisement, economic strangulation and social segregation since 1933, no one expected the widespread violence – a pogrom of the sort connected only with Tsarist Russia. The execution of the pogrom in Magdeburg occurred with the same uniformity and in the same manner elsewhere.<sup>16</sup> This included the looting and destruction of the interior of the *Synagogen-Gemeinde*, initial attacks on a minimum of twenty-six businesses and the incarceration of 120 Jewish males in the early hours of the morning of 10 November.<sup>17</sup> The demolition of synagogues symbolised the end of Jewish public life in Germany and Austria and the image of broken glass symbolised the shattering of German and Austrian Jewry.

In the early hours of the morning of 10 November 1938, Ernst Levy was on his way home from a social evening with some friends and walked through the city centre to his home at *Gustav-Adolf-Straße* 29. On his way home he noticed a large amount of broken windows on shop fronts and that a number of these shops

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<sup>16</sup> Detailed accounts of the *Reichskristallnacht* have been well documented. See Pehle, ed., op. cit.; Barkai, “Exclusion and Persecution: 1933–1938,” in Meyer, ed. op. cit., pp. 216–230; Döscher, op. cit.; Friedländer, op. cit.; Kaplan, op. cit.; and Read and Fisher, op. cit.

<sup>17</sup> Funkspruch, 10. November 1938, Bestand Rep. C 20 I. I b, Signatur Nr. 1996, Band V, LHASA MD, p. 116.

had been plundered. He arrived home safely and thought nothing more of the damage until later that morning.<sup>18</sup> Prior to the mass arrests that morning, Ernst Levy was one of a small number of Jews who was informed by non-Jews that he was in imminent danger. His son, Gerry Levy, recalled this:

This Mr Plettig from the Magdeburg Gestapo was the one who tipped off my father. My father was known to him because of his activities with the *Reichsbund jüdischer Frontsoldaten*. One of his staffers contacted my father and informed him that arrests were to take place at six o'clock in the morning [of 10 November] and that he should get out [of the city].<sup>19</sup>

This same information was supplied to three other fathers of the interviewees. Joachim Freiberg received the same telephone call and departed for Berlin. He remained there for approximately two to three weeks, where he was hidden in the Jewish hospital. A personal friend of his, originally from Magdeburg, was a physician there.<sup>20</sup> Likewise Freiberg's brother and brother-in-law, Samuel Freiberg and Jakob Wurmser, were telephoned and told to 'go away as they [the Gestapo] are arresting all the [Jewish] men.'<sup>21</sup> Both men heeded the advice and fled in Freiberg's car. Returning to Magdeburg, both hid in the apartment of the Sorger family, who lived across the street from their respective homes.<sup>22</sup>

Whilst the Freiberg brothers and Jakob Wurmser evaded arrest, the Gestapo was persistent in its pursuit of Ernst Levy. Few Jewish males (aged between twenty-one and sixty-five years) evaded arrest in Magdeburg.

After being informed at approximately six o'clock that morning of the imminent arrests, Ernst Levy went to his parents' home for refuge. Some time later, his sister Hanna arrived at her brother's home to inform Levy's wife,

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<sup>18</sup> Levy, op. cit., 7 November 1996.

<sup>19</sup> Personal interview with Gerry Levy AM (recorded), Sydney, 1 October 1999.

<sup>20</sup> M. F., op. cit., 27 June 1999.

<sup>21</sup> H. B., op. cit., 15 August 1997.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

Marianne, and son, Gerhard (Gerry) that all was well, but that the Gestapo was arresting Jewish males between the ages of twenty-one and sixty-five years. They were relieved that at least both grandfathers had been spared. Marianne Levy's elderly father lived with them at that time.

When two men arrived from the Gestapo at the Levys' apartment, they sought 'Ernst Georg Levy.'<sup>23</sup> Marianne Levy replied that only an Ernst Levy lived there. The men left, somewhat confused. When they returned later they simply requested 'Ernst Levy.' Levy's wife replied that she did not know where her husband was. The two men inquired as to who the old man was and Marianne Levy's father proudly introduced himself and informed them that he was a war veteran, awarded the Iron Cross and that he had served three German emperors. They ignored the old man and made a number of derisive remarks, when the Levys' non-Jewish maid appeared. When the Gestapo officers asked her who she was, she declared: '*Ich bin Frau Lackomie und ich bin Arierin!* [My name is Mrs Lackomie and I am an 'Aryan'!]' Stupified as to why she was working there they told her to get out immediately, which she did. Gerry Levy recalled how shocked both he and his mother were at this woman's behaviour as she had been with the family for over twenty years, had always been very warm to them, even bringing them gifts and produce from her vegetable garden.<sup>24</sup>

By this stage the officers were becoming impatient and ordered that if Levy did not report to their offices by the next morning, then they would take Marianne Levy's father. Understandably, the old man became very upset. Fearing the telephone was under surveillance, Gerry Levy was then sent by his mother on his bicycle to his grandparents to inform his father. Gerry Levy then returned home.

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<sup>23</sup> Levy, op. cit., 7 November 1996.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

The next morning Marianne Levy contacted the Gestapo, indicating that she had no way of contacting her husband. The Gestapo reiterated the threat of taking her father into custody. After Gerry Levy went to his father for the second time to inform him of the situation, his father decided to report, as requested, and his wife contacted the Gestapo and informed them that her husband would, indeed, report to them the next day. At no stage of the process did the Gestapo question her as to why she could not contact her husband previously, but had been successful in contacting him quite suddenly. Nevertheless, the Gestapo accepted her explanation.

Gerry Levy recollected how both he and his mother parted with his father on 12 November 1938:

The three of us met near the *Dom* [cathedral] and we walked from there to the Gestapo headquarters in the *Altstadt* to say goodbye. I think we were fully aware that he would be sent to a [concentration] camp. It was very sad and very emotional for me. My father was very stoical; you know, he maintained a stiff upper lip attitude. And we said goodbye.<sup>25</sup>

As close to three days had elapsed since the actual pogrom, Levy was sent to the nearby political prison of Stendal, where he remained for approximately three weeks and was treated like a regular non-Jewish prisoner.<sup>26</sup> Thanks to the delay in his arrest, he had missed the group deportation with his fellow Jews to Buchenwald Concentration Camp on 11 November 1938.<sup>27</sup>

The Wurmser family lived on the corner of *Königgrätzer Straße* and *Straßburger Straße*. The Schetzers also resided in this corner building at *Königgrätzer Straße* 4. The families knew each other well and their daughters were close friends. Prior to Jakob Wurmser being informed of the imminent

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<sup>25</sup> Levy, op. cit., 7 November 1996.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> George Wilde, *Eleven Days in the Concentration Camp Buchenwald, 1938–1939*, File ME 687; MM82, LBIA NY, op. cit., p. 1.

arrests on 10 November, his wife arose very early that morning and standing on her balcony, Betty Wurmser noticed their friend and neighbour, Julius Schetzer, walking with two men. She remarked to her daughter: ‘Mr Schetzer, look how he goes already to business at six o’clock!’ The Wurmsers later learned that Julius Schetzer was not on his way to his shop, but had been arrested by the Gestapo.<sup>28</sup>

Julius Schetzer’s daughter, Sigrid Freeman, recalled her father’s arrest that morning:

At six o’clock in the morning two Gestapo men came and they arrested my father. We telephoned my aunt in Switzerland, who sent over a barrister. He went to the Gestapo and was assured that my father was going to Buchenwald and that he would come home on the first *Transport* [group deportation] out.<sup>29</sup>

My mother was completely finished. She was not even able to ring my aunt in Switzerland. I rang my aunt in Switzerland, but Mummy was completely finished!<sup>30</sup>

Sigrid Freeman recalled going to the main railway station that day when her father was sent to Buchenwald Concentration Camp and remembered the orderliness of the event:

People were upset naturally and we were puzzled as to what was going to happen. But the people who were taken, there was nothing else to do, but to be orderly with the Gestapo – there was nothing else.<sup>31</sup>

Sixty-one-year-old Rabbi Dr Wilde, arrested on that morning, provided a highly detailed account of the *Reichskristallnacht*. He, like the majority of the Jewish community, was detained in prison cells and then deported to Buchenwald Concentration Camp on 11 November. After being arrested, the rabbi was

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<sup>28</sup> H. B., op. cit., 15 August 1997.

<sup>29</sup> S. Freeman, op. cit., 13 May 1998.

<sup>30</sup> S. Freeman, op. cit., 3 June 1998.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

detained at the police prison, owing to overcrowding at the Gestapo prison. He described that morning in the following way:<sup>32</sup>

I met there many members of my congregation. One told me: “Our synagogue doesn’t exist anymore. This morning SA men came, took the Holy Scriptures, bibles, prayer books and all other movable things from the synagogue, made a great heap in front of the synagogue, poured on petrol and burnt it. But they took everything with them made of silver, candlesticks, cups and so on. They could not burn the synagogue in the same manner without endangering other houses belonging to ‘Aryans.’ So they laid powder over everything in the synagogue and lit it. The inside blew up.”

I was taken with five other men to a cell which was in normal times only for one man: one bed, one stool, one pail; that was all. But I was not unhappy. I thought this would last some days and then we would be free. We were a very mixed company: a worker, a doctor, a director of a great factory, a young shop assistant, a solicitor and I. At twelve o’clock we had a large cup of soup and in the evening a piece of dry bread. Then the guard threw in some mattresses and shouted: “The eldest of you into the bed, the others on the mattresses!” I was the eldest – sixty-one – and could lay on the bed, two men half under it and the three others covered the rest of the floor. In the morning we were allowed to go into the corridor to wash our faces and hands without soap or towel. We got a cup of coffee and again a large piece of dry bread. Suddenly the rumour spread round: We will be taken to the concentration camp Buchenwald! Five hours later, we thought that the day in this police prison was a peaceful holiday.

About eight o’clock we were taken to the railway station. A number of inquisitive people stood around. Their faces were serious. I saw only one boy grinning. When I stared at him he stopped. Some distance away I recognised a woman of my congregation. I threw a bunch of keys to her. She understood that she should take it to my wife, which she did. On the way to Buchenwald we were not allowed to leave the carriage. So I threw postcards addressed to my wife out of the window at three different stations, hoping someone would put them into post boxes. One of these cards arrived.

At Weimar, once the town of Goethe and Schiller, we had to leave the train...<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> George Wilde, *Eleven Days in the Concentration Camp Buchenwald, 1938–1939*, File ME 687; MM82, LBIA NY, op. cit. This five-page manuscript written in English provides a complete account of Rabbi Dr Wilde’s experiences from the time of his arrest up until the time of his return to Magdeburg. This manuscript was also translated into German in 1957 and entitled: *Elf Tage im Konzentrationslager Buchenwald*. This translation is located in the personal file on Rabbi Dr Georg and Mrs Martha Wilde, Bestand Pe, Signatur Nr. 50, ASGM.

Rabbi Dr Wilde along with the majority of the Jews arrested from Magdeburg remained in Buchenwald Concentration Camp for approximately eleven days.<sup>34</sup>

On the morning of 10 November 1938 a radio announcement issued by the police commissioner indicated that as a result of the ‘murderous act’ in Paris, spontaneous demonstrations by the outraged local population in Magdeburg had led to the damage of twenty-six Jewish businesses and the synagogue. Falsely, it declared that neither arson nor plundering had taken place. Both security staff and the owners of businesses were reported to have attempted ‘to protect’ the threatened properties, as police manpower was insufficient. The government declared that no lives had been endangered and that 120 Jews had been arrested.<sup>35</sup>

Later that day when Police Commissioner von Klinckowström further reported to the government, the description of the damage was more comprehensive. Twenty-six Jewish businesses and one office had had their windows smashed, the contents of their premises thrown onto the street fronts and the synagogue’s interior and its windows had been smashed. He remarked, nevertheless, that public law and order had not been disturbed, that there had been no plundering and that all premises affected would be protected against this occurrence.<sup>36</sup>

On the evening of 10–11 November a further three Jewish businesses and a Jewish tavern had their windows smashed and the interiors partially destroyed. The entire interior of the synagogue was destroyed by explosives and the dining room of the *Synagogen-Gemeinde*, situated in the adjacent building, was also

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<sup>33</sup> George Wilde, *Eleven Days in the Concentration Camp Buchenwald, 1938–1939*, File ME 687; MM82, LBIA NY, op. cit., p. 1.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Funkspruch, 10. November 1938, Bestand Rep. C 20 I. I b, Signatur Nr. 1996, Band V, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 116.

<sup>36</sup> Betrifft: Ereignismeldung. Schäden an jüdischen Geschäften, 10. November 1938, ibid., p. 118.

destroyed. He ended his report by reiterating the order from Berlin that the ‘demonstrations’ had now officially ended.<sup>37</sup> On the same day the Gestapo notified the provincial government that in the administrative region of Magdeburg that a total of ‘237 adult, male, German nationals of the Jewish race had been arrested.’<sup>38</sup> Of this figure, 113 Jews were residents of Magdeburg. The 237 men were sent by train at 11.18 a.m. on 11 November from Magdeburg to Buchenwald Concentration Camp.<sup>39</sup>

It is clear that there were three main aims during the pogrom in Magdeburg: the destruction of the *Synagogen-Gemeinde*,<sup>40</sup> attacks on Jewish businesses and the arrest of male Jews. None of the previously discussed property belonging to the Jewish community was destroyed, except for the *Synagogen-Gemeinde*. In this sense the act was a very symbolic one. Not only was this synagogue an architectural landmark on the cityscape, but it was the city’s biggest synagogue and was located in the centre of the city itself. In both a symbolic and in every practical sense, Jewish communal and religious life in this city had been demolished.

On the morning of 10 November Gerry Levy viewed the smouldering synagogue and the damaged and looted shops. *Große Schulstraße*, the street where the synagogue was located, was completely cordoned off. He also recalled that there were no demonstrations, but that the public was simply looking on in a passive manner. On his way home, he noticed a non-Jewish German wearing a

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<sup>37</sup> Betrifft: Ereignismeldung. Schäden an jüdischen Geschäften, 10. November 1938, Bestand Rep. C 20 I. I b, Signatur Nr. 1996, Band V, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 119.

<sup>38</sup> Correspondence from the Geheime Staatspolizei, Staatspolizeistelle Magdeburg, An den Herrn Oberpräsidenten in Magdeburg, 11 November 1938, *ibid.*, p. 120.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> Neither archival material nor oral history material indicates that the Shtiblech were attacked and destroyed during the pogrom.

shawl; when he realised it was in fact a *Tallit*, it made him feel very ill and hurt at this act of desecration.<sup>41</sup> Numerous other interviewees recalled the damaged synagogue and the shops.

By the time the interviewees felt it was safe to venture outdoors the majority of the street carnage had been removed, but shop fronts remained boarded up, awaiting the services of glaziers. Sigrid Freeman recalled the view of what remained of the synagogue's interior after explosives had been used to blow it up. She also recalled her feelings of sadness in the weeks immediately after the pogrom and the difficult process Jews faced in getting out of Germany. With the destruction of the synagogue, religious services were held in the *B'nai B'rith* Lodge next door.<sup>42</sup> A photographic record of the destruction confirms that explosives were used to destroy the interior of the synagogue and that the elegant gallery, which once housed female congregants and the choir, had collapsed. The main structures of the exterior walls remained.<sup>43</sup> However, the entire interior had been reduced to rubble. It had also been plundered and physically destroyed by hand, prior to the use of explosives. The synagogue's offices, conference room, music room and dining room suffered the same fate.<sup>44</sup> In the wake of the

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<sup>41</sup> Levy, op. cit., 7 November 1996.

<sup>42</sup> S. Freeman, op. cit., 13 May 1998.

<sup>43</sup> Four undated photographs detailing the interior of the Synagogen-Gemeinde zu Magdeburg after its destruction on 9–11 November 1938, Photos Archive Collection, Phot Registry Numbers 136BO3, 136BO7, 136BO8, 136CO1, YVA. Identical photographs from this collection are also located in Bestand Oa, Signatur Nr. 47a, ASGM and in Collection M96, File 22:18, Sydney Jewish Museum Archives (SJMA). From the images captured it is most likely that these photographs were taken immediately after the events of the pogrom.

<sup>44</sup> Four undated photographs detailing the conference room, the music room, an office and the dining room of the Synagogen-Gemeinde zu Magdeburg after their destruction on 9–11 November 1938, Photos Archive Collection, Phot Registry Numbers 136AO7, 136AO8, 136AO9, 136BO5, YVA. Identical photographs from this collection are also located in Bestand Oa, Signatur Nr. 47a, ASGM. From the

destruction of the *Synagogen-Gemeinde* a large crowd gathered in front of the building to view what remained. Amongst numerous Nazi Party officials was *Kreisleiter* Krüger, who appeared amongst the scores of bystanders, some of whom appeared indifferent whilst others were excited.<sup>45</sup>

An extensive photographic record also confirms the reports made about the damage to Jewish businesses. Scores of onlookers and passers-by filled the streets to view the damage. Some ignored what was around them and continued with their business commitments; others congregated around damaged shop fronts, discussing the events.<sup>46</sup> Businesses which had their shop front windows destroyed included 'L. Sperling & Co.'<sup>47</sup> and '*Kaufhaus Gebrüder Karfiol*'.<sup>48</sup> Evidence of the careful planning and co-ordination of the attacks is provided by the fact that only Jewish-owned businesses and property were ransacked. Property and businesses already 'aryanised' or in the process of 'aryanisation' remained untouched. This included Jakob Wurmser's leather and shoe repair business

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images captured, it is most likely that these photographs were taken immediately after the events of the pogrom.

<sup>45</sup> *Kreisleiter* Krüger and others view the destroyed synagogue in Magdeburg, undated photograph, Bestand Oa, Signatur Nr. 47a, ASGM, op. cit. From the image captured it is most likely that this photograph was taken immediately after the events of the pogrom.

<sup>46</sup> Twenty-six undated photographs detailing the exterior damage to the shop fronts of various Jewish businesses caused during the pogrom in Magdeburg, 9–11 November 1938, Photos Archive Collection, Phot Registry Numbers 135FO2-135FO9, 135GO1-135GO4, 135GO6-135GO9, 136AO1-136AO5, 136CO4-136CO8, YVA. Identical photographs from this collection are also located in Bestand Oa, Signatur Nr. 47a, ASGM and in Collection M96, Files 22:2-7, 9, 11-16, SJMA. From the images captured, it is most likely that these photographs were taken immediately after the events of the pogrom. A further six photographs detailing the same damage, but taken by a different photographer (from the previously cited photographs) are located in Collection AR 120, Files KR-1 F 13379, 13382-13386, LBIA NY.

<sup>47</sup> Photograph detailing the exterior damage to the shop front of 'L. Sperling & Co.' caused during the pogrom in Magdeburg, 9–11 November 1938, undated, Photos Archive Collection, Phot Registry Numbers 136AO1, 135GO6, YVA, op. cit.

<sup>48</sup> Photograph detailing the exterior of the damage to the shop front of '*Kaufhaus Gebrüder Karfiol*' caused during the pogrom in Magdeburg, 9–11 November 1938, undated, Photos Archive Collection, Phot Registry Number 136CO5, YVA, op. cit.

'Elsaß' and a paint and wallpaper shop owned by Samuel Freiberg.<sup>49</sup> All interviewees concurred that the Jewish population was so terrified that Jews avoided being outdoors as they feared for their safety. Many of the errands in the days after the pogrom were undertaken by children, as older community members were still in shock and traumatised by the events. It was generally in the course of such errands that Jewish youth viewed first-hand the damage and the plundering that had taken place.

Whilst community members were attempting to come to terms with the magnitude of what had occurred and of its ramifications, 113 Jewish males experienced the terror of concentration camp life at Buchenwald. Rabbi Dr Wilde recalled their arrival:

At Weimar, once the town of Goethe and Schiller, we had to leave the train. In the tunnel we had to stand facing the wall, one behind the other. "No turning round! Pack tight together." Then we were driven to the concentration camp at Buchenwald. We had to sit bending forward as low as possible. We arrived and stood crammed together with our hats in our hands in a large entrance to a mustering ground. Then we were ordered: "Run to the ground!" An SS man stood on a bank on the one side of the entrance and beat the heads of the running men with a stick. Everyone pressed to the other side. One man running before me fell to the ground. I tried to turn aside: I succeeded but I fell headlong on the ground which was covered with little stones. Blood streamed from a hole in my forehead, covering all of my face. I jumped up and ran further to the mustering ground.<sup>50</sup>

Soon after picking himself up he was beaten in the face by an SS officer. For the next eleven days the rabbi remained resolute and of a positive spirit and continued his pastoral relationship with many of his congregants, particularly with those who became convinced that they would not leave alive.

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<sup>49</sup> Personal interview with H. B. and R. Z. (recorded), Sydney, 19 November 1997.

<sup>50</sup> George Wilde, *Eleven Days in the Concentration Camp Buchenwald, 1938–1939*, File ME 687; MM82, LBIA NY, op. cit., pp. 1–2.

He witnessed the constant bestial violence of the guards, the public floggings, the suicides and the incidence of individuals completely losing their minds.<sup>51</sup> He related that behind his barrack was a 'wash house,' which was locked and that there 'were soon more than a hundred Jews in it, who had gone mad.'<sup>52</sup> Like all of the inmates he stood from morning to evening and each morning he assisted in carrying out the corpses of those who had died during the previous night.<sup>53</sup> He vividly described the appalling conditions of the barracks of an evening:

In the evenings we were driven in our huts, which had only one large door. Boards were fixed in three tiers one above the other at a distance of about three feet. Young people climbed to the upper tiers, old people took to the tiers below. About 1,600 men had to lie in this hut like sardines in a tin. I read about a saint who slept on a plank bed with a block of wood for a pillow. I think the Nazis wanted to make us still greater saints: they gave us plank beds without any pillow. They made our life easy, we didn't need to undress at night or dress in the morning, we were always ready. We didn't need to wash ourselves: we got no water either for washing or drinking. Not a drop of water touched my body in eleven days.<sup>54</sup>

Surviving a starvation diet and a fainting incident, which could have cost him his life, the rabbi was released on his eleventh day in the camp.

Two hundred men were to have been released in that first contingent. However, there were only 194, as five had died the night before and one man, 'was still a little mad and not on the spot, when the names were called.'<sup>55</sup> After a 'medical examination' certified that he had not suffered ill-treatment, the rabbi was sent to the barber. When the group had arrived from Magdeburg originally, the camp barbers, also Jewish prisoners, were so overwhelmed with the number of prisoners that this group did not have their heads nor beards shaven. However, this

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<sup>51</sup> George Wilde, *Eleven Days in the Concentration Camp Buchenwald, 1938–1939*, File ME 687; MM82, LBIA NY, op. cit., pp. 1–2.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., pp. 2–3.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

was to be completed prior to their release. The rabbi determined to retain his beard and asked the officer if he could do so.<sup>56</sup> To his surprise, he agreed, much to the horror of the barber, who feared for his life. The officer then telephoned the camp headquarters for approval. Wilde wrote:

All orders from the *Lager-Kommandantur* [office of the Camp Commander] were given by loudspeaker and so two minutes later about 16,000 German Jews in the camp and many other people could hear the decision of the Solomon in the *Kommandantur*: “The Jew, Chief Rabbi Dr Wilde, is allowed to keep his beard; his head has to be shaved.” And so I came home without any hairs on my head but with my beard.<sup>57</sup>

Prior to his release, he and his entire group were instructed that their release was contingent on their emigration. They were threatened with reprisals should they discuss their camp experiences. This fear instilled in the former prisoners was one factor why their experiences were not discussed for a time, if at all.

Sigrid Freeman recalled her father telling her at the time that he was not allowed to discuss what had taken place in the concentration camp. She also recalled her father’s return in the same group as the rabbi. Families of those incarcerated were somehow informed of the details of the forthcoming return of

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<sup>56</sup> Whilst it was standard practice to shave the beards and heads of all prisoners, this was a particularly degrading and humiliating act for a rabbi. Strict guidelines on shaving are set down in the Code of Jewish Law. As such, the majority of Orthodox Jews, and those from other Jewish traditions who choose to adhere to this law, refrain from shaving altogether. This act symbolically constituted a further attack on Judaism and Jewish practice.

<sup>57</sup> George Wilde, *Eleven Days in the Concentration Camp Buchenwald, 1938–1939*, File ME 687; MM82, LBIA NY, op. cit., p. 5. The quoted figure of approximately 16,000 German prisoners cannot be substantiated and Wilde provides no source for this. It was most likely based on anecdotal sources, when the account was written. Marion Kaplan cites the figure of 9,845 Jews incarcerated in Buchenwald Concentration Camp after the pogrom. See Kaplan, op. cit., p. 122. Kaplan’s figure is close to the figure cited by David A. Hackett, ed., *The Buchenwald Report* Boulder, Colorado and Oxford: Westview Press, 1995, p. 113. Hackett cites the following figures for November 1938: Admissions – 10,098; departures – 2,181; and camp population at the end of the month – 18,105.

their loved ones, as, at the appointed time, relatives assembled at the railway station. She remembered the scene that day:

The men came off the train like wild beasts. They didn't see us; they pushed us aside, because they had to be straightaway at the Gestapo to report, without talking to any of their relatives. We followed and picked them up from Gestapo headquarters in Magdeburg and then we came home. Daddy came back with a broken rib and a broken arm.<sup>58</sup>

Rabbi Dr Wilde also reported to the Gestapo in Magdeburg that day. The day after his return home he had to report yet again to the Gestapo. However, this time it was to sign an undertaking that he would emigrate 'voluntarily' by 15 April 1939.<sup>59</sup> He complied. Gerry Levy recalled the same requirement of his father, who was released from Stendal prison after he had signed documentation affirming the emigration of him and his family by the end of 1938 and after having signed over his business.<sup>60</sup>

The planned and temporary nature of the detention of the Jews was inadvertently conveyed to the rabbi on his departure from the city on 11 November. On that morning at the railway station the rabbi sighted a Gestapo official whom he knew. He asked the official to request that Walter Heinemann, the agent for Jewish emigration in Magdeburg, prepare his emigration papers. As the train pulled out of the station another Gestapo official advised the rabbi that he could do this himself when he returned in approximately eight days' time. At the time the rabbi thought that he must have misunderstood the official.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> S. Freeman, op. cit., 13 May 1998.

<sup>59</sup> George Wilde, *Eleven Days in the Concentration Camp Buchenwald, 1938–1939*, File ME 687; MM82, LBIA NY, op. cit., p. 5.

<sup>60</sup> Levy, op. cit., 7 November 1996.

<sup>61</sup> George Wilde, *Eleven Days in the Concentration Camp Buchenwald, 1938–1939*, File ME 687; MM82, LBIA NY, op. cit., p. 4.

The *Reichskristallnacht* was a critical turning point. The pogrom marked a transition in the escalation of persecution. What had occurred up until this point was a steady step-by-step process resulting in political powerlessness, economic strangulation and social segregation. The *Reichskristallnacht* had initiated a heretofore unknown level of violence. The realisation by Jews that such fearful events could have no limits was demonstrated for the first time on the *Reichskristallnacht*. It was also in some respects a blueprint, as concentration camps, which had originally been used to punish criminals and opponents of the regime, were now extended to include Jews, not because they were offenders but simply because they were Jewish. The Nazi leadership also learnt the lesson that public violence in the streets of Germany was difficult to limit. Ordinary Germans may have stood by, but rampaging violence and the destruction of property were offensive to their social norms. The violence had also disturbed on a large scale the administrative processes of official antisemitism. Henceforth, the persecution of the Jews reverted back once more to official decrees. Large-scale displays of public violence and damage to property were avoided.

The *Reichskristallnacht* represented the end of the first stage of the *Shoah*. The demolition of the synagogue and the destruction of Jewish businesses in Magdeburg symbolised the end of Jewish public life in the city. The second stage of ghettoisation began when Jews were excluded from all public venues and herded into '*Judenhäuser*.' After November 1938 most Jews abandoned the notion that they still had some rights as citizens of their German *Heimat*. The old discussions of the alternatives of 'homeland or exile' and the question of 'leaving

or not leaving' faded.<sup>62</sup> Most Jews no longer suffered any delusions about their future in Germany. Along with this, particularly for the older generation, came the brutal and stark realisation that Jewish life in Germany was no longer feasible.

### **Reactions of the Victims and the Perpetrators**

In Magdeburg, as elsewhere in the *Reich*, the situation became life-threatening. Given the events and the ensuing circumstances the majority of the Jews sought emigration at any cost and to almost anywhere. The pogrom had galvanised them into action. For those in concentration camps, the only way out was proof of readiness to emigrate. For those not in camps, the magnitude of the violence influenced their decisions. It was only after the pogrom that Jews were finally convinced that they faced physical danger. The realisation that Jewish life in Germany and Austria, as Jews had once known it, had come to such an end, was uncontested.

Whilst Jews desperately sought refuge in other countries, the Nazis enacted a barrage of new antisemitic legislation. Representatives of the German insurance companies argued that the reputation of the industry depended on paying out claims for damages, whether made by German or Jewish owners. Göring's solution was that all insurance payments on properties owned by Jews were to be made to the state. In addition, a one billion *Reichsmark* fine was imposed on the Jewish community. Other suggestions were put into effect within weeks. Jews

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<sup>62</sup> Konrad Kwiet, "The Second Time Around: Re-Acculturation of German-Jewish Refugees in Australia," *The Journal of Holocaust Education*, vol.10, number 1, 2001, p. 35.

were ordered to clean up the destroyed synagogues and swift new regulations increasingly segregated Jews.

Reactions of Jews in the aftermath of the pogrom in Magdeburg were swift. Given the seriousness of the events, Jews quickly adjusted to the grave situation they faced. The priorities became personal safety of loved ones, attending to the release of male relatives arrested and preparation for emigration. Some still hesitated to emigrate, as they remained even more fearful of the unknown than of the situation they faced in Magdeburg. However, for the majority emigration became the priority.<sup>63</sup>

Shortly prior to the pogrom, the families of Jakob Wurmser and Samuel Freiberg had commenced organising their families' emigration and both of their businesses were in the process of being 'aryanised' when the pogrom occurred. Wurmser's daughter recalled the confusion and panic that set in immediately after the destruction and the arrests. However, once the panic had subsided, careful organisation and planning ensued. She also remembered the disbelief of some foreign relatives, when telegraphed for financial assistance:

We were afraid to go out, but the grown-ups were even more afraid. Both our fathers were still in hiding and both our mothers were terrified. My mother had cousins in America and we were sent to the *Hauptpost* [main post office] to send a telegram to these relations. I still recall the long queue! And these relatives, they told us: "To stick it out! *Wer aushält, wird gekrönt!*" A telegram was also sent to my aunt and uncle in Palestine. And he responded and saved our lives. Our 'lift' was ordered; we already had our tickets for the trip via Canada; all that wasn't ready was our landing money. That's how we got to Australia.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> For a comprehensive account of the emigration experiences of Jewish refugees from Magdeburg during the Nazi period see Michael E. Abrahams-Sprod, "Australien! Wo ist denn das? The Migration Experience of Jewish Refugees from Nazi Germany," *Australian Journal of Jewish Studies*, vol. 17, 2003, pp. 9–24.

<sup>64</sup> H. B., op. cit., 15 August 1997 and 19 November 1997.

In addition to the distress and trauma Jews experienced at that time, the experience of these young Jews also highlights to some extent their adaptation to the difficulties and even to having manifested a certain resilience in dealing with their ongoing persecution.

Gerry Levy's experience was similar. Directly after farewelling his father at Gestapo headquarters, he accompanied his mother to the main post office in order to send a telegram to his uncle and aunt, Hans and Hilda Lewin, who had settled in Sydney.<sup>65</sup> The Levys were hopeful of receiving a landing permit for Australia. When the address and the text of the telegram were passed over to the postal clerk, the clerk upon viewing the address, grimaced and uttered to the surprised pair: '*Australien! Wo ist denn das?* [Australia! Where on earth is that?]'<sup>66</sup> Such a comment typified many elements of the migration experience of Jewish refugees. The clerk's facetious comment bore a partial truth, in that for most of the Jews of Magdeburg, and, indeed, Germany, distant Australia was more a part of the imagination than of any reality at that time.<sup>67</sup>

Hilda Lewin acted immediately and secured landing permits for the Levy family. The documentation arrived at the British Embassy in Berlin within one week.<sup>68</sup> Indeed, the Levy family was one of the very fortunate few, as the Australian quota for immigrants for 1938 was limited to 5,000. In 1938 alone, the

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<sup>65</sup> Suzanne D. Rutland and Sophie Caplan *With One Voice: A History of The New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies* Sydney: Australian Jewish Historical Society, 1998, p. 251.

<sup>66</sup> Levy, op. cit., 7 November 1996.

<sup>67</sup> A comprehensive and highly detailed report of life and conditions in Australia from the viewpoint of a German-Jewish immigrant family was published in January 1939 in the bi-weekly newspaper, the *Jüdisches Nachrichtenblatt*, of the Berlin-based Jüdischer Kulturbund in Deutschland, *Jüdisches Nachrichtenblatt*, 3. Januar 1939, Nr. 1, Jahrgang 1939, Bestand Pr.-030, ASGM. For further personal accounts see Volker Elis Pilgrim, Doris and Herbert Liffman, eds., *Fremde Freiheit: Jüdische Emigration nach Australien, Briefe 1938–1940* Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt Verlag, 1992.

<sup>68</sup> Levy, op. cit., 7 November 1996.

Australian government had received over 50,000 applications. Consequently, the vast majority of applicants were unsuccessful,<sup>69</sup> including Sigrid Freeman's family, the Schetzers. They later secured landing permits for the United States of America (USA) via London and the family departed four weeks before war's outbreak. Julius Schetzer was still reluctant to leave, but, nevertheless, emigrated.<sup>70</sup> The reaction of the wife of Rabbi Dr Wilde was equally as swift. Whilst her husband was still in Buchenwald Concentration Camp, she sent a telegram to the British Chief Rabbi, Dr Joseph H. Hertz, seeking his assistance.<sup>71</sup>

By the end of 1938, it had become increasingly difficult to secure both tickets and landing permits for countries willing to accept Jewish refugees. Jewish refugees had to accept whatever country offered asylum first and whatever passage was available, often involving unusual routes.<sup>72</sup> This was the exact situation that the family of Dr Max Jeruchem faced.<sup>73</sup> Abandoning his medical practice in the summer of 1938, he and his wife moved to Berlin and were living with Dr Jeruchem's eighty-five-year-old father in Wilmersdorf. His daughter was already in Berlin preparing for her emigration. Meanwhile his son was in Hamburg.

In Berlin, Dr Jeruchem regularly visited travel agencies trying to procure passages to Shanghai. In spite of having met all of the imposed legal and taxation

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<sup>69</sup> For a comprehensive discussion on the immigration of Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany to Australia see Suzanne D. Rutland, *Edge of the Diaspora: Two Centuries of Jewish Settlement in Australia* New York: Holmes and Meier, 2001 and Paul R. Bartrop, *Australia and the Holocaust 1933–45* Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 1994.

<sup>70</sup> George Wilde, *Eleven Days in the Concentration Camp Buchenwald, 1938–1939*, File ME 687; MM82, LBIA NY, op. cit., p. 5.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Strauss, op. cit.

<sup>73</sup> The situation and fate of Dr Jeruchem's medical practice in Schönebeck have been discussed in Chapter Two.

requirements by early December 1938,<sup>74</sup> he was still desperately waiting for landing permits and travel documents. Hans Jensen recollected his feelings at that time after the pogrom:

We wondered what would happen to us; we just lived from one day to the next.<sup>75</sup>

My father went practically every day to a certain travel agency wanting four tickets to Shanghai. That was the only thing left for us. One day my father went and the answer was no. And then, one fellow walked in and said: "I've got four tickets for Shanghai, can you sell them?" My father was in like a shot! That's how we got out of Germany. We got the train from Berlin to Trieste. We got onto the *Conte Rosso*, which was going on to Shanghai. It happened around early January 1939 – it was a miracle! Four tickets – I mean we needed four tickets!<sup>76</sup>

The example of the Jeruchem family highlights the difficulty of securing passage. This example also indicates that even at this point in time some emigrants were still selective in their destination, as the Jeruchems also managed to obtain visas for Siam, but decided against this destination.

On 2 January 1939, Walter Heinemann, the agent for Jewish emigration in Magdeburg, despatched a report on local Jewish emigration to the Magdeburg Gestapa and marked it to the attention of an officer by the surname of Plettig.<sup>77</sup> Heinemann was the agent not only for the city of Magdeburg, but the entire administrative district of Magdeburg, which included the cities of Bleicherode, Halle and Nordhausen amongst others. At the time he was processing 300

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<sup>74</sup> Bescheinigung für Divisenstelle, Finanzamt, Schönebeck (Elbe), 8. Dezember 1938, Private Archive of Hans Jensen, op. cit.

<sup>75</sup> Jensen, op. cit., 11 July 1999.

<sup>76</sup> Jensen, op. cit., 14 June 1999.

<sup>77</sup> Betr.: Bericht über die Auswanderung der Juden, 2. Januar 1939, Collection 0.51.OSSOBI, File 103, YVA, pp. 20–23. This highly detailed four-page report was divided into four sections, which discussed in a comprehensive manner the following subjects: The state of and possibilities for emigration; Plans for emigration; Financial means currently at Jews' disposal; Difficulties in emigration.

applications for emigration for 1,200 persons.<sup>78</sup> Listed from one to five, possibilities for immigration to the following countries existed: The USA, Palestine, the South American countries, Australia and China. The two main obstacles to mass Jewish emigration were the unwillingness of countries to accept Jews who possessed no capital and the fact that emigration from Germany needed to be executed according to a fully co-ordinated plan and not in the 'irregular' way that was occurring, according to Heinemann.<sup>79</sup> The Gestapa in Magdeburg deemed the report so important that it was sent on to the office of the *Reichsführer-SS und Chef der Deutschen Polizei* in Berlin, which in turn sent it on to the *Reichsführer-SS, Chef des Reichssicherheitshauptamtes* on 24 January 1939.<sup>80</sup>

In anticipation of mass Jewish emigration, the Gestapa in Magdeburg requested that the police commissioner's office report comprehensively on all emigration, particularly that taking place after 31 January 1939.<sup>81</sup> The Gestapa requested the details of all Jews, both *Reich* nationals and stateless Jews. Submitted details included: date of emigration, surname, first name, place and date of birth, profession, last domestic domicile, name of office that issued the emigrant's passport, passport number and the emigrant's temporary and permanent country of destination. The Gestapa further instructed that such lists were to be made up bi-monthly and sent from the police commissioner's office

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<sup>78</sup> Betr.: Bericht über die Auswanderung der Juden, 2. Januar 1939, Collection 0.51.OSSOBI, File 103, YVA, op. cit., p. 20.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., p. 23

<sup>80</sup> Betrifft: Auswanderung der Juden, 24. Januar 1939, ibid., p. 18.

<sup>81</sup> Betr.: Auswanderung der Juden, 3. Februar 1939, Bestand Oa, Signatur Nr. 46, ASGM, op. cit., unnumbered page.

directly to the Gestapa in Magdeburg.<sup>82</sup> On 16 March 1939, the provisional government acknowledged receipt of the nationally despatched memorandum from Reinhard Heydrich on 11 February 1939 establishing the *Reichszentrale für jüdische Auswanderung*, with himself as head.<sup>83</sup> In spite of a ban on Jews from operating travel agencies effective from 1 June 1939, exemptions for those operating as agents for Jewish emigration were granted on 8 May 1939.<sup>84</sup> Irrespective of the centrality of the Nazi desire and plan for mass Jewish emigration, the realities of the hurdles Jews faced in achieving this only increased. Jews desperately sought emigration, yet simultaneously faced Nazi bureaucracy; their limitations were due to their own impoverishment, few countries willing to offer asylum and the difficult prospect of securing passage.

Both the families of Samuel Freiberg and Jakob Wurmser left Magdeburg for Australia soon after the pogrom. Wurmser's daughter recalled their departure around the 23–24 November 1938:

Firstly, we said goodbye to our grandfather and to our aunt, who did not survive. That same evening, R.'s [her female cousin] uncle came from Buchenwald, black and blue – beaten, and with a shaved head – that was horrible; that was the same evening that we left. They had picked him up to say goodbye to us.<sup>85</sup>

Whilst their grandfather managed to immigrate to Palestine, their spinster aunt, Lilli Freiberg, remained. She was deported from Magdeburg to Berlin, and then to Auschwitz on 26 February 1943,<sup>86</sup> where she perished, aged fifty-two.

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<sup>82</sup> Betr.: Auswanderung der Juden, 3. Februar 1939, Bestand Oa, Signatur Nr. 46, ASGM, op. cit., unnumbered page.

<sup>83</sup> Betrifft: Reichszentrale für jüdische Auswanderung, 11. Februar, 1939, Bestand Rep. K 3, Signatur Nr. 4094 e, Film 58, LHASA MD, p. 49.

<sup>84</sup> Betr.: Jüdische Reisebüros und Auswanderungsagenten, 8. Mai 1939, Bestand Rep. C 20 I. I b, Signatur Nr. 2537, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 187.

<sup>85</sup> H. B., op. cit., 15 August 1997.

<sup>86</sup> Zentralinstitut für sozialwissenschaftliche Forschung, Freie Universität Berlin, ed., op. cit., p. 330.

Samuel Freiberg's daughter remembered the fact that her father could not sell his car, nor much else prior to their departure. She recalled a family friend drove the two families in the same car to the main railway station.<sup>87</sup> Both families travelled to France and on to Australia via Canada, as this was the only passage they could procure. Jakob Wurmser's daughter recalled the journey, especially from Montreal to Vancouver.<sup>88</sup> Originally bound for Melbourne, they disembarked in Sydney in January 1939.

Wurmser's daughter also made particular comment on their crossing of the German-French border:

At Kehl, near Strasbourg, the Germans were ready to search us bodily, and then they let us go. Anyway half across the Rhine bridge coming into Strasbourg my father took his Iron Cross and threw it into the [River] Rhine. He was finished with it! And when we came to Strasbourg it was such a feeling of relief. Absolutely! And my father spoke perfect French, and sitting on the train from Strasbourg to Tannes, there were workers and my father started talking. And I could see that relief, that he could say whatever he wanted. From then on as far as I was concerned I felt free!<sup>89</sup>

Her father's act with his Iron Cross reflects both the anger and the loss the older generation felt at their being forced out of their homeland. On a physical level, however, the tension of border crossings was something all interviewees experienced. Their fear was only equal to their sense of relief once they had left German soil, as demonstrated by Wurmser. His daughter further remarked on how courageous her father was to facilitate their emigration.<sup>90</sup> Her father's actions were the same actions that others were compelled to take. In the wake of the pogrom there remained little choice. As maintained by Susanne Heim, many Jews

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<sup>87</sup> R. Z., op. cit., 15 August 1997.

<sup>88</sup> H. B., op. cit., 15 August 1997.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

developed an astonishing ability to adjust to a situation they did not choose and to retain sovereignty over their own lives.<sup>91</sup>

The Levys' experience of departure resembles those of the Freiberg and Wurmser families. Gerry Levy recalled his father's return from Stendal prison. Whilst his father had returned without any signs of serious physical abuse and trauma, the opposite was the case for his uncle, who had returned from a concentration camp 'shorn, terribly quiet and quite traumatised.'<sup>92</sup> All furniture and household goods were sold to non-Jews very cheaply. Gerry Levy recalled assisting both his parents and family friends who were making their own preparations for departure. The Levys emigrated at the end of December 1938.<sup>93</sup> Gerry Levy's paternal grandparents, Salomon and Sara Levy, remained in Magdeburg and died of natural causes in 1941 and 1942, aged seventy-two and seventy-five respectively.<sup>94</sup> His father's youngest and unmarried sister, Hanna Levy, chose to remain behind as she did not want to leave her parents. In possession of a visa for England, she decided to remain with her elderly parents.<sup>95</sup> On 26 February 1943, she was deported in the same group as Lilli Freiberg from Magdeburg via Berlin to Auschwitz and perished there. She was aged thirty-three.<sup>96</sup> Gerry Levy's uncle, Herbert Levy, who was married to a non-Jewish

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<sup>91</sup> Susanne Heim, "Emigration and Jewish Identity: 'An Enormous Heartbreak'," *The Journal of Holocaust Education*, vol.10, number 1, 2001, p. 32.

<sup>92</sup> Levy, op. cit., 7 November 1996.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid. Interviewee was unsure about the exact date of departure. He felt the family left on either 30 or 31 December 1938.

<sup>94</sup> Personal file on the Levy family, Bestand Pe, Signatur Nr. 29, ASGM.

<sup>95</sup> Levy, op. cit., 4 August 1997.

<sup>96</sup> Zentralinstitut für sozialwissenschaftliche Forschung, Freie Universität Berlin, ed., op. cit., p. 741.

woman in Magdeburg, survived the *Shoah*, only to be shot by a Russian sentry guard in a tragic accident on 14 December 1945.<sup>97</sup> He was aged forty-seven.

When the fourteen-year-old Gerry Levy, together with his parents and maternal grandfather, departed Magdeburg, the remaining family members farewelled them at the main railway station. His uncle, who had once caught him smoking cigarettes and was outraged that the young boy would not tell him how he came to possess them, presented him with a gift. After the train's departure the young boy went in to the toilet and opened his gift. To his great astonishment his uncle had given him a packet of cigarettes! The young boy wept, knowing that it was unlikely that he would ever see his uncle or his relatives again.<sup>98</sup>

Gerry Levy recalled the rail journey from Cologne and across the German-Dutch border. All passengers were ordered off the train at the border and passport checks were undertaken by the German border police, who harassed Jewish travellers.<sup>99</sup> He recollected arriving in the Netherlands, remarking that: 'Holland seemed completely different. Psychologically, it was like breathing fresh air.'<sup>100</sup> The Levys arrived in Amsterdam and took a ferry across to England. They sailed from England to Sydney, arriving in February 1939.

The Jeruchem family commenced their journey in February 1939. For all interviewees the trauma and emotional burden, which the separation of family members caused, was something which has remained a source of deep personal pain for those who were fortunate to survive. Hans Jensen recalled leaving relatives behind:

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<sup>97</sup> Personal file on the Levy family, Bestand Pe, Signatur Nr. 29, ASGM, op. cit.

<sup>98</sup> Levy, op. cit., 7 November 1996.

<sup>99</sup> Owing to an initiative of the Swiss government to prevent an influx of Jews into Switzerland, from 5 October 1938 the German government commenced stamping the passports of Jews with a large letter 'J.'

<sup>100</sup> Levy, op. cit., 7 November 1996.

The worst thing was to leave my grandfather, who was over eighty then, and my uncle, behind. I didn't go back to Schönebeck before we left, but my father had to; I was told all of this while I was still in Hamburg. When it was all cleared and when we knew we had the chance to get out by ship, I left for Berlin. We left for Trieste around about the tenth of February. We had to leave my grandfather and his eldest son, my uncle, behind. My grandfather was sent in 1942 to Theresienstadt.<sup>101</sup>

The activity prior to their departure is indicative of both the chaos at that time and the rigidity of German bureaucracy. Because Schönebeck was the registered domicile of the family, Dr Jeruchem could only finalise both legal and taxation requirements there, in spite of the fact that they had been living in Berlin since July 1938. Once this was finalised, the family members co-ordinated their arrival in Wilmersdorf, at the home of Dr Jeruchem's father. When the family did depart from Berlin in February, it was the last time they saw their relatives again. The fate of Hans Jensen's uncle, Georg Jeruchem, remains unknown to this day, despite international searches. His grandfather, David, was deported from Berlin to Theresienstadt on 18 August 1942. He died there on 22 November 1942, four months from his ninetieth birthday.<sup>102</sup>

Hans Jensen recalled the unusual situation they faced on the train to Trieste:

We sat down and these two elderly people said to us, please don't talk to us, we are being accompanied by the Gestapo. We got absolutely terrified: "What do you mean? We should not talk to you?" I learned that these two people came from a little place somewhere in southern Germany, where they had been living all their lives. The people there were so friendly with them, that they decided that these people should leave Germany protected, Jewish Germans, protected by the Gestapo – so that they get over the border without any fuss. And that's exactly what happened!

We came to the border, and everybody had to leave this train and the Gestapo officer said: "You stay here!" This applied to us too because we were in the same compartment. So we did not have to go outside and open up all the stuff there. And so that's how we left Germany! We managed to get over the border to Trieste. But in Trieste, where we were all, more or less, herded into a place where we could sleep on stretchers. Then I realised how

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<sup>101</sup> Jensen, *op. cit.*, 14 June 1999.

<sup>102</sup> Institut Theresienstädter Initiative, *ed.*, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

my parents suddenly began to weaken, because that was too much for them. As for being out of Germany, we just looked disappointed.<sup>103</sup>

The Jeruchems did not face the same situation as other interviewees at the border crossing. However, their anxiety was something of a different kind, as their level of insecurity soared upon learning of the presence of the Gestapo, irrespective of the Gestapo's intentions. Hans Jensen noted:

The real situation hit us in Trieste. There we were put into a place where we had to spend a night. I remember my father he was terribly, terribly shaken to live in such conditions, where we had to sleep with huge numbers of people. The interesting thing is that most of these people were definitely on their way to Palestine at that time, some of them did go to Shanghai, but most of them were going to Palestine. That elderly couple in our compartment, they were going to Palestine.<sup>104</sup>

All Jews felt both physical and psychological relief in knowing that they were no longer in danger. However, the realisation that they had left lives, livelihoods and relatives behind was encountered starkly at this point in time. Many found the reality of their refugee status difficult to deal with, given their former lives in Germany. The Jeruchem family arrived in Bombay on 24 February 1939. They did not continue on to Shanghai, but remained in India. By 1947 the entire family had emigrated to Australia.<sup>105</sup>

Rabbi Dr Georg Wilde and his wife Martha emigrated to England on 27 March 1939.<sup>106</sup> Prior to his departure the rabbi had received a letter from the board of the *Synagogen-Gemeinde*,<sup>107</sup> confirming that he had been on leave abroad for the period 1 April 1939 until 31 December 1939. It further stated that

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<sup>103</sup> Jensen, op. cit., 14 June 1999.

<sup>104</sup> Jensen, op. cit., 11 July 1999.

<sup>105</sup> The various stages of the emigration of members of the Jeruchem family have been discussed in Chapter Five.

<sup>106</sup> Personal file on Rabbi Dr Georg and Mrs Martha Wilde, Bestand Pe, Signatur Nr. 50, ASGM, op. cit.

<sup>107</sup> Correspondence to Rabbi Dr Wilde, 14 March 1939, Bestand 5B1, Signatur Nr. 66, CJA, p. 340.

his retirement would commence on 1 January 1940 and that he would receive an allocated pension for his thirty-eight years of service.<sup>108</sup> The Wildes remained in England and settled in Cambridge.

Sigrid Freeman recalled vividly her family's departure from the railway station in August 1939, farewelled by her paternal uncle and aunt. In possession of a visa for the USA, her uncle refused to leave Magdeburg and thought his brother, Julius Schetzer, 'crazy' for leaving.<sup>109</sup> This was in spite of having spent six months in Dachau Concentration Camp. He and his wife remained in Germany and perished.

As with the other interviewees, Sigrid Freeman recollected the tension of the situation at the German-Dutch border, where her father was taken off the train and subjected to a body search. She remarked: 'We were lucky that he didn't miss the train. At the last minute Daddy got on!'<sup>110</sup> Once over the border she felt a combination of relief and fear of the unknown. She concluded her recollections recounting their immigration to Australia:

We went to England and our things went to Melbourne until after the war. Then we got married and everything came back from Melbourne to London; including rats and mice in that container! And then came the Berlin airlift. In London it looked very much like another war, and that's when my father said: "Come on, let's go to Australia." And this was when we came. It was 1949. We arrived at first *Seder* [Passover] night in Melbourne. The name of the ship was *Largs Bay*, an English ship. There were three ships: *Largs Bay*, *Esperance Bay* and a third one. They were all named after Australian bays. They were originally troop ships. It was a beautiful journey – six weeks!<sup>111</sup>

For the Schetzers and the previously discussed families, along with hundreds of others from Magdeburg, their prime reaction to the pogrom was emigration.

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<sup>108</sup> Correspondence to Rabbi Dr Wilde, 14 March 1939, Bestand 5B1, Signatur Nr. 66, CJA, op. cit., p. 340.

<sup>109</sup> S. Freeman, op. cit., 13 May 1998.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

The entire community also worked to facilitate the *Kindertransporte* to England<sup>112</sup> and Youth *Aliyah* to Palestine.<sup>113</sup> One interviewee, whose father was involved in the rescue efforts, recalled:

Before war's outbreak many tried to leave the country and get out. Children went away on the *Kindertransport*. That was another section my father worked in. I remember him telling me about trying to get people out at the end of 1938 and early 1939. Many children left.<sup>114</sup>

Hemmi Freeman remembered that some forty children were sent to Palestine, where they remained. The exact number of children brought to safety to England and Palestine is not known.<sup>115</sup>

A number of Jewish families from Magdeburg also made all of the necessary preparations for emigration, but failed owing to the outbreak of World War Two. In June 1937 there were 1,256 Jews in Magdeburg.<sup>116</sup> In May 1939 the number had dropped to 726.<sup>117</sup> These figures would place the number of emigrants at

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<sup>112</sup> See Wolfgang Benz, "Emigration as Rescue and Trauma: The Historical Context of the Kindertransport," *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies*, op. cit., pp. 2–7 and Wolfgang Benz, ed., *Das Exil der kleinen Leute. Alltagserfahrungen deutscher Juden in der Emigration*, op. cit. For personal accounts of the experiences of the Kindertransport see also Mark Jonathan Harris and Deborah Oppenheimer, *Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport* New York and London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2000.

<sup>113</sup> See Freier, op. cit.

<sup>114</sup> M. F., op. cit., 27 June 1999.

<sup>115</sup> H. Freeman, op. cit., 13 May 1998.

<sup>116</sup> Mitgliederzahl der Synagogen-Gemeinde zu Magdeburg, Stichtag 1937, Collection D/Ma3, File VIII.8, CAHJP, op. cit.

<sup>117</sup> Landesverband Jüdischer Gemeinden Sachsen-Anhalt, ed., op. cit., p. 189. This figure is also cited in Jutta Dick and Marina Sassenberg, eds., *Wegweiser durch das jüdische Sachsen-Anhalt*. Potsdam: Verlag für Berlin-Brandenburg, 1998, p. 125. This statistic refers to membership of the Jewish community in 1939. However, the actual statistics from the census based on the respondent's number of 'racially' Jewish grandparents indicated the following for the city of Magdeburg. All figures are approximates: four Jewish grandparents – 739; three Jewish grandparents – 5; two Jewish grandparents – 320; and one Jewish grandparent – 224. The racial classification of a further 66 individuals could not be established. These figures were defined according to racial classification as dictated by the Nuremberg Laws of 1935 and, consequently, converts to Judaism were not included in the statistics. For full details of these statistics, see *Sonderaufbereitung der Volkszählung vom 17. Mai*

approximately 530 individuals for the period. This amounted to a further reduction in the city's Jewish population by approximately 42%. It must be assumed that the majority of this emigration occurred between the pogrom and May 1939. Jews from Magdeburg emigrated to other parts of Europe, to Palestine, the British Empire, North and South America and to Africa.<sup>118</sup>

When the figure of 726 Jews for 1939<sup>119</sup> is subtracted from the original June 1933 statistic of 1,973<sup>120</sup> Jews in Magdeburg, the drop in population during that approximately six-year period computes to 1,247 persons. Thus, between 1933 and 1939 the Jewish population dropped by approximately 63%. Clearly, such factors as births, deaths and relocations in Germany cannot be factored into this figure. However, it must be assumed that the majority of the Jews, who comprise this 63%, emigrated as a result of Nazism.

The reactions of the perpetrators in the aftermath of the pogrom were further repressive measures and the desire to re-establish 'law and order.' The Jewish community in Magdeburg, as elsewhere in Germany, was fined for the damage inflicted and further segregation was legally imposed, notably in Jewish businesses and in public schools. Key priorities of the city were the restoration of the damaged cityscape and the confiscation of the insurance payments which normally would have been paid out to the Jewish owners of the damaged

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1939, *Listung der Erhebungsbögen für Provinz Sachsen, Stadtkreis Magdeburg, Gemeinde Magdeburg*, BAB, op. cit., pp. 3–29.

<sup>118</sup> Correspondence and report from the president of the Synagogen-Gemeinde zu Magdeburg, Otto (Ismar) Horst Karliner, to Director Fink, American Joint Distribution Committee, 1 March 1948, Bestand 5B1, Signatur Nr. 65, CJA, op. cit., p. 211.

<sup>119</sup> Landesverband Jüdischer Gemeinden Sachsen-Anhalt, ed., op. cit., p. 189.

<sup>120</sup> Statistisches Reichsamts, *Statistik des Deutschen Reichs, Band 451, Volkszählung: die Bevölkerung des Deutschen Reichs nach den Ergebnissen der Volkszählung 1933, Heft 5, Die Glaubensjuden im Deutschen Reich*, Bestand R 3102, BAB, op. cit., pp. 15–33.

premises. Expedited economic exclusion designed to further impoverish the Jews also occurred.

On 12 November 1938, following the edict of that date by General Field Marshal Hermann Göring, all Jews who were nationals of Germany were subjected to contributing to the one billion *Reichsmark* fine.<sup>121</sup> On 1 December 1938, the commissioner of the Ministry of Finance in Magdeburg requested detailed statistics on monies to be paid by Jews in the administrative district of Magdeburg. The information had to be lodged by 22 December 1938 and included the number of levied Jews, the amount of assets to be levied and the total net value of the levies.<sup>122</sup> Whilst the exact figure that the community paid has not been established, evidence indicates that individuals were levied according to their assets. An example is provided in the case of the Magdeburg dermatologist, Dr Carl Lennhoff, who was levied RM 35,000.<sup>123</sup> On 12 November 1938, in a further measure to increase and amplify economic strangulation and impoverishment, Jews were forbidden from appointing ‘Aryans’ to manage Jewish-owned property, unless this was specifically authorised.

On 15 November 1938, Jewish pupils were expelled from public schools.<sup>124</sup> The *Reich* Minister for Science, Training and National Education issued a memorandum stating that ‘owing to the dastardly, murderous act in Paris that German teachers could no longer be expected to instruct Jewish pupils and that it would be unbearable for German pupils to have to sit in the same classrooms as

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<sup>121</sup> Verordnung über die Sühneleistung der Juden deutscher Staatsangehörigkeit, 12. November 1938, Bestand Rep. G 1, Signatur Nr. 389, LHASA MD, pp. 1–4.

<sup>122</sup> Betrifft: Judenvermögensabgabe, 1. Dezember 1938, *ibid.*, pp. 6–7.

<sup>123</sup> Einiges aus dem Leben des Dr. Carl Lennhoff, undated two-page report, Bestand Oa, Signatur Nr. 46, ASGM, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

<sup>124</sup> Betrifft: Schulunterricht an Juden, 15. November 1938, Bestand Rep. C 28 II, Signatur Nr. 88, Band 2, LHASA MD, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

Jews.’ Jewish pupils were henceforth only authorised to attend Jewish schools.<sup>125</sup> All interviewees who had attended public schools recalled being ‘forced out.’ Gerry Levy remembered being collected by his mother from his school on the morning of 10 November 1938. When asked by the teacher why Mrs Levy was taking him home, she replied: ‘At times like this, it is better to be together.’<sup>126</sup>

As the newly established ‘*Judenschule*’ possessed no staff in the wake of the pogrom, classes were officially suspended there on 7 December 1938.<sup>127</sup> One week prior to this, the city mandated that Jewish parents were to attend to the educational needs of their children, should no Jewish school exist in the vicinity.<sup>128</sup> On 17 December 1938, a memorandum from the *Reich* and Prussian Minister for Science, Training and National Education was despatched, concerning future arrangements for the instruction of Jewish pupils and indicated that a revision of the Jewish schools’ system was set to take place shortly.<sup>129</sup> Despite the fact that Jewish pupils were without schooling, it reinforced the view that even segregated classes in public schools had to be dissolved, unless the segregated classes for Jewish pupils were located in a separate building. The execution of lessons to both German and Jewish pupils in the same building was

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<sup>125</sup> Betrifft: Schulunterricht an Juden, 15. November 1938, Bestand Rep. C 28 II, Signatur Nr. 88, Band 2, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 69. The cited quotation is the author’s translation from the original German which reads: ‘Nach der ruchlosen Mordtat von Paris kann es keinem deutschen Lehrer und keiner Lehrerin mehr zugemutet werden, an jüdische Schulkinder Unterricht zu erteilen. Auch versteht es sich von selbst, daß es für deutsche Schüler und Schülerinnen unerträglich ist, mit Juden in einem Klassenraum zu sitzen.’

<sup>126</sup> Levy, op. cit., 7 November 1996.

<sup>127</sup> Correspondence from the office of Der Oberbürgermeister der Stadt Magdeburg, 7 December 1938, Bestand Rep. C 28 II, Signatur Nr. 3996, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 22.

<sup>128</sup> Correspondence concerning the schooling of Jewish pupils in the administrative district of Magdeburg, 1 December 1938, Bestand Rep. C 28 II, Signatur Nr. 88, Band 2, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 70.

<sup>129</sup> Betrifft: Schulunterricht an Juden, 17. Dezember 1938, *ibid.*, p. 72.

out of the question.<sup>130</sup> The minister finally remarked, in a bid to alleviate the situation, that all male Jewish teachers still incarcerated in camps would be released. In Magdeburg the subject of schooling arrangements for Jewish pupils was not raised again until early January 1939. In the meantime, Jewish parents were responsible for the education of their children.

The extent of the political use of the pogrom is evidenced with a further attempt to confirm and/or incite hatred of the Jews endorsed by the Lutheran Church. For example, on 23 November 1938, Bishop Martin Sasse of nearby Eisenach edited a new celebratory edition of the pamphlet *Martin Luther über die Juden: Weg mit ihnen!* [*Martin Luther on the Jews: Be gone with them!*]<sup>131</sup> Sasse included in his antisemitic foreword that on Luther's birthday, 10 November, synagogues were burning and that the Jews had finally been extricated from the financial life of the nation. He further commended the reader to heed the words of Luther, when dealing with the Jews.<sup>132</sup> By the end of November this thirteen-page tract was available for purchase at a cost of RM 0.10 all over the *Reich*, including Magdeburg.

Of concern to the provincial government in the wake of the *Reichskristallnacht* was the restoration of the cityscape. The government lodged an official complaint with the police on 24 November 1938. It noted that as a

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<sup>130</sup> Betrifft: Schulunterricht an Juden, 17. Dezember 1938, Bestand Rep. C 28 II, Signatur Nr. 88, Band 2, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 72. The cited quotation is the author's translation from the original German which reads: 'Die in den Schulgebäuden der allgemeinen Volksschulen eingerichteten Sammelklassen sind jedoch, wenn andere Räumlichkeiten nicht zur Verfügung stehen, aufzulösen, da ein Unterricht an deutsche und jüdische Schüler im gleichen Gebäude nicht mehr in Betracht kommen kann.'

<sup>131</sup> Martin Sasse, ed., *Martin Luther über die Juden: Weg mit ihnen!* Freiburg im Breisgau: Sturmhut Verlag, 1938, Collection JM, File 10625, YVA, op. cit., pp. 127–135.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 128.

provincial capital it had an image to maintain. The letter reminded the police that the streetscape had not been restored and that shopfronts on *Alter Markt*, *Breiter Weg* and *Jakobstraße* were still shabbily boarded up, which was only meant to be a temporary measure. The complaint requested that the police commissioner respond with a detailed report by 30 November.<sup>133</sup>

In an effort to pacify the government, on 6 December, the police commissioner ordered that the shopfronts of damaged shops be covered with sympathetic timber panelling in order that the damage be at least less visible.<sup>134</sup> On 15 December 1938, he further reported that with the exception of two shopfronts, the display windows of all damaged 'Jewish shops' had been restored. The report bemoaned the difficulties of both delays in freight and procuring the various types and shapes of glass required. Various fixtures associated with doors, shop fittings and windows were also still outstanding for a further four shops. The police commissioner promised to keep the government informed of the completion of the repairs as soon as his office received information from the mayor.<sup>135</sup> Further to the efforts of ensuring the complete restoration of the streetscape, on 14 December 1938 the provincial government sought advice from Berlin as to when the debris and rubble from the ruined synagogues in its administrative district would be cleared away, as this had already occurred in the neighbouring district of Erfurt.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Betr.: Maßnahmen gegen jüdische Geschäfte, 24. November 1938, Bestand Rep. C 20 I. I b, Signatur Nr. 2537, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 96.

<sup>134</sup> Betr.: Maßnahmen gegen jüdische Geschäfte, 6. Dezember 1938, *ibid.*, p. 97.

<sup>135</sup> Betr.: Maßnahmen gegen jüdische Geschäfte, 15. Dezember 1938, *ibid.*, pp. 103–104.

<sup>136</sup> Betrifft: Ruinen und Synagogen, 14. Dezember 1938, Bestand Rep. C 20 I. I b, Signatur Nr. 119, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 335.

In the wake of the pogrom and the release of Jewish males from concentration camps and prisons, Jews preparing for emigration were desperately attempting to salvage and sell whatever assets they still possessed. In the weeks after the pogrom the government responded with more repressive economic measures. On 8 December 1938, the payout figures on all insurance claims made by Jews for the damage caused during the pogrom were confiscated. However, life insurance claims remained unaffected.<sup>137</sup> A fatal blow was dealt when all contracts involving the sale of Jewish property finalised after 9 November 1938 that had received approval were temporarily revoked on 17 December 1938.<sup>138</sup> Henceforth, sale prices of all Jewish property had to be regulated and approved by the government.<sup>139</sup> This measure effectively ruined Jews who still possessed property, should they attempt to sell it prior to emigration. December 1938 marked the beginning of mass confiscation of Jewish assets.

The initial Jewish reaction to the pogrom and arrests of the *Reichskristallnacht* was marked by disbelief and fear. However, the brutality of the events both compelled and propelled Jews to quickly take control of their lives. This was largely undertaken by women, youth and older members of the community. The first reaction was to ensure the safety of those not arrested and to attempt to restore a sense of normality to their shattered lives; the second became the efforts to organise or at the very least to keep informed of the release of male loved ones from concentration camps and prisons; thirdly, the difficult decision on emigration had to be made. However, regardless of the decision, both options met with

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<sup>137</sup> Betrifft: Versicherungsansprüche von Juden deutscher Staatsangehörigkeit, Verordnung vom 12. November 1938 – RGB1. I S. 1581, 8. Dezember 1938, Bestand Rep. K 3, Signatur Nr. 4094 e, Film 58, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 49.

<sup>138</sup> Verkauf von jüdischen Grundstücken, 17. Dezember 1938, *ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>139</sup> Verkauf von jüdischen Grundstücken, 20. Dezember 1938, *ibid.*, p. 23.

painful consequences. For some Jews the fear of the unknown and leaving their family members behind was enough to keep them in Germany; for others, the violence of the events made the decision to emigrate easier. On a communal level, the ethnic, political and religious differences that existed between the *Synagogen-Gemeinde* and the *Shtiblech* dissolved, as the seriousness of the situation forced the congregations to unify.<sup>140</sup>

The reaction of the perpetrators was to apportion blame onto the victims and then make them accountable. In the weeks leading up to the end of 1938, Jews in the city experienced further exclusion and segregation and the government commenced the complete removal of Jews from the German economy. In Magdeburg whilst this was occurring, both the city and the provincial authorities also prioritised the restoration of the cityscape, the levying of the Jewish community and the exclusion of Jewish children from public schools. The intensification of persecution in all avenues of life represented the commencement of the second phase of the *Shoah*. Complete exclusion and de-facto ghettoisation became policy for the Jews of the *Reich*.

### **The Post-*Reichskristallnacht* and Pre-War Persecutions**

By the beginning of 1939, the only Jewish institutions operating in Magdeburg were the *Synagogen-Gemeinde* and its associated welfare organisations. By the outbreak of World War Two, Jews could no longer own or drive cars, whilst theatres, cinemas and sporting stadiums were closed to them. Jews were also moved into '*Judenhäuser*.' They were extricated from the economy and only a

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<sup>140</sup> H. Freeman, op. cit., 13 May 1998.

small number of professionals were still permitted to offer their services to an exclusively Jewish clientele. Jewish children were compelled to attend segregated schools and all Jews were removed from the welfare system. Valuables were also progressively confiscated. Jewish policy henceforth would come under the control of the *Schutzstaffel* (SS). Finally, on 4 July 1939, the Nazis closed down the *Reichsvertretung der Juden in Deutschland* and replaced it with the *Reichsvereinigung der Juden in Deutschland*.<sup>141</sup> The main task of the *Reichsvereinigung* was to convey orders. It also maintained social welfare and educational programs from privately raised finance and organised emigration. The Jewish community was reduced to utter compliance.

In the period between the *Reichskristallnacht* and the outbreak of World War Two legislation against the Jewish community intensified and Jewish life continued under increasingly hostile conditions. From 28 November 1938 Jews were banned from certain areas and a curfew was imposed, all at the discretion of the local police authorities in Magdeburg. Jews who breached this ordinance were fined RM 150 or subjected to imprisonment for up to six weeks.<sup>142</sup> On the same day Jews were forbidden from having permits for the possession of or sale of explosives. As far as the government was concerned, Jews had proven their 'enemy' status by the assassination in Paris. Consequently, allowing them to possess such materials was deemed a serious threat to public safety.<sup>143</sup> In

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<sup>141</sup> Raul Hilberg has described the *Reichsvereinigung der Juden in Deutschland* as the model for the *Judenräte*, the Jewish Councils, of Nazi-occupied Eastern Europe. See Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (revised and expanded edition) New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003.

<sup>142</sup> *Polizeiverordnung über das Auftreten der Juden in der Öffentlichkeit*, 28. November 1938, Bestand Rep. C 20 I. I b, Signatur Nr. 119, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 389.

<sup>143</sup> *Betrifft: Sprengstoff-Erlaubnisscheine/Juden*, 28. November 1938, Bestand Rep. C 34, Signatur Nr. 130, LHASA MD, p. 149.

Magdeburg this process was conducted meticulously.<sup>144</sup> Such measures as this were entirely symbolic and more for propagandistic value in presenting to the public the image of the Jew as the enemy and as a threat to public safety.

On 4 December 1938, the *Magdeburgische Zeitung* announced that all Jews had to surrender their drivers' licences by 31 December 1938.<sup>145</sup> On 25 February 1939, the Gestapa in Magdeburg revoked, once again, hunting licences possessed by Jews. As with the explosives permits, this was largely a symbolic act. The reason for the action was the same. Jews should not under any circumstances possess any items which could inflict harm.<sup>146</sup> In March 1939 Jews in Berlin and Munich started to be evicted from their homes and forced into designated apartment buildings, or '*Judenhäuser*,'<sup>147</sup> and this was introduced some months later in Magdeburg. At the time of the national census conducted on 17 May 1939,<sup>148</sup> Jews were still living at addresses of their choice. However, a number were already living by choice in apartment buildings which would later become designated '*Judenhäuser*.'<sup>149</sup> By the time of the outbreak of World War Two, the

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<sup>144</sup> Betrifft: Sprengstoff-Erlaubnisscheine/Juden, 28 November 1938-8. Dezember 1938, Bestand Rep. C 34, Signatur Nr. 130, LHASA MD, op. cit., pp. 149–157.

<sup>145</sup> "Juden in Deutschland wird der Führerschein entzogen," in *Die Magdeburgische Zeitung*, 4. Dezember 1938, Bestand Rep. C 20 I. I b, Signatur Nr. 2537, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 91.

<sup>146</sup> Betrifft: Ausstellung von Jagdscheinen an Juden, 20. Februar 1939, Bestand Rep. C 20 I. I b, Signatur Nr. 1831, Band IV, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 123.

<sup>147</sup> Betrifft: Neubesetzung von Wohnungen jüdische Mieter, 2. März 1939, Bestand Rep. K 3, Signatur Nr. 4094 e, Film 58, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 51.

<sup>148</sup> Sonderaufbereitung der Volkszählung vom 17. Mai 1939, Listung der Erhebungsbögen für Provinz Sachsen, Stadtkreis Magdeburg, Gemeinde Magdeburg, BAB, op. cit., pp. 3–29.

<sup>149</sup> For a comprehensive discussion on '*Judenhäuser*' see Konrad Kwiet, "Nach dem Pogrom. Stufen der Ausgrenzung," in Wolfgang Benz, ed., *Die Juden in Deutschland: Leben unter nationalsozialistischer Herrschaft* München: Verlag C. H. Beck, 1989, pp. 545–659; Barkai, "In a Ghetto Without Walls," in Meyer, ed. op. cit., pp. 343–346; and Kaplan, op. cit. The subject of '*Judenhäuser*' shall be fully explored in Chapter Seven.

majority of Jews in Magdeburg had been evicted and herded together in ‘*Judenhäuser*.’<sup>150</sup>

On 20 March 1939, the *Reich* Minister for the Interior issued new guidelines on marriage between ‘*Mischlinge*’<sup>151</sup> and between ‘*Mischlinge*’ and ‘Aryans.’ A prohibition was placed on any liaison or marriage between ‘full Jews’ and ‘*Mischlinge*.’<sup>152</sup> Of continued priority were the health of the ‘national body’ and the protection of ‘Aryan’ blood and lineage. In furtherance of this complete isolation and segregation, a modification governing the choice of first names for Jews was issued in Berlin on 20 March 1939.<sup>153</sup> From 17 August 1938 all Jews were mandated to insert the middle names of ‘Israel’ and ‘Sara’ into their names. This was to become effective from 1 January 1939. However, the aforementioned memorandum included an attached list of Jewish first names for males and females. The names were all of biblical origin. Henceforth, should Jews choose to use names from the list or name their children with names from the list, then they no longer needed to insert the middle names of ‘Israel’ or ‘Sara.’ If they did not choose to use names from the list, then the mandated insertion of the former two names remained in force.<sup>154</sup> On 24 March 1939, the District Court in Magdeburg

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<sup>150</sup> M. F., op. cit., 27 June 1999.

<sup>151</sup> For comprehensive discussions on the subject of ‘*Mischlinge*’ and ‘*Mischehen*’ see Meyer, op. cit. and Jeremy Noakes, “The Development of Nazi Policy towards the German-Jewish ‘*Mischlinge*’,” *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*, vol. XXXIV, 1989, pp. 291–354. The subject of ‘*Mischlinge*’ and ‘*Mischehen*’ shall be discussed in Chapter Seven.

<sup>152</sup> Betr.: Eheauglichkeitsuntersuchungen, 20. März 1939, Bestand Rep. 28 I g, Signatur Nr. 363, LHASA MD, p. 22.

<sup>153</sup> Betrifft: Jüdische Vornamen, 20. März 1939, Bestand Rep. G 1, Signatur Nr. 389, LHASA MD, p. 80.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

ordered the Registrar General's office to insert the names of 'Israel' and 'Sara' into the names of all Jews in the register for births.<sup>155</sup>

On 15 April 1939, the *Reich* Minister for the Interior ordered that all archival material and documentation seized from Jewish institutions during the pogrom be turned over to the Gestapo, if this had not already occurred.<sup>156</sup> The concern was raised that a number of other governmental bodies still had in their possession important and valuable documentation, which the Gestapo wished to assess.<sup>157</sup> On 9 May 1939, the *Reich* Propaganda Office for Magdeburg-Anhalt, located in Dessau, despatched a memorandum announcing the forthcoming nationally acclaimed exhibition of 'The Eternal Jew'. Magdeburg hosted the exhibition from 13 May – 11 June 1939. The memorandum proclaimed the success of the exhibition in other districts and encouraged attendance of this 'great political, educational exhibition.'<sup>158</sup> According to the memorandum the exhibition provided the visitor with an overview of the Jews' pollution and ruination of other peoples, both in the past and the present, and provided evidence of how the Jew was already identified as an enemy of the people centuries prior.<sup>159</sup> The exhibition was open daily from 9.00 a.m. until 8.00 p.m. Tickets were sold at a cost of RM 0.35 for advance bookings or RM 0.50 at the door. In order to advertise and celebrate

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<sup>155</sup> Correspondence from Das Amtsgericht Abt. 13, 24 March 1939, Bestand Oa, Signatur Nr. 46, ASGM, op. cit., unnumbered page.

<sup>156</sup> Betrifft: Jüdisches Archivgut, 15. April 1939, Bestand Rep. C 20 I. I b, Signatur Nr. 1, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 201.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Ausstellung "Der ewige Jude", 9. Mai 1939, Bestand Rep. C 141, Signatur Nr. 2, LHASA MD, p. 20.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid. The cited quotation is the author's translation from the original German which reads: 'Die Ausstellung gibt in übersichtlicher Form einen Einblick in das völkerverderbende Treiben der Juden in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart. Weiterhin wird anhand von Tatsachenmaterial nachgewiesen, wie der Jude schon vor Jahrhunderten als Volksfeind erkannt worden ist.'

the exhibition, a commemorative cancellation for postage was used in Magdeburg for all mail during the exhibition period.<sup>160</sup>

In May 1939 the commissioner of the Ministry of Finance in Magdeburg requested that the racial category of all foreign business contacts be ascertained in order to avoid procuring contracts with foreign Jews.<sup>161</sup> On 28 June 1939, the Gestapa in Magdeburg, in a criticism of the local police constabularies, requested that a complete and detailed list of all Jews resident in the administrative district of Magdeburg be completed and delivered to the Gestapa by 30 July 1939.<sup>162</sup> The Gestapa bemoaned the fact that to date the registration of Jews at the local police level had been conducted in ‘an irregular and incomplete manner.’ It requested that the following details be provided for every Jew: surname; first name; date and place of birth; profession, marital status; nationality; religion; address; passport number and date and place of issue, where applicable; and identification number or ‘*Kennkartennummer*.’ It further requested, to avoid any further confusion or error, that all registrations of Jews settling in or leaving Magdeburg, in addition to the births and deaths of Jews in the administrative district, be included in the police reports to be forwarded on to the Gestapa.<sup>163</sup> Legislation enacted during this period prior to the outbreak of war continued in an intensified manner to demonise and isolate Jews.

In Magdeburg, a small number of professionals remained in practice for an exclusively Jewish clientele. The vast majority had lost their right to practise

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<sup>160</sup> Postage cancellation “Der ewige Jude”, June 1939, Magdeburg, Collection AR 7169, File III, Gemeinde and Organisation Stamps, LBIA NY.

<sup>161</sup> Betrifft; Zahlung von Provision und Vertreterauslagen, 19. Mai 1939, Bestand Rep. I 53, Signatur Nr. 2343, LHASA MD, p. 30.

<sup>162</sup> Betr.: Aufstellung einer Judenkartei, 28. Juni 1939, Bestand Oa, Signatur Nr. 46, ASGM, op. cit., p. 363.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

between July and September 1938. However, prior to the pogrom, some professionals were re-instated to attend to the needs of a specifically Jewish clientele. The general practitioner, Dr Heinz Goldschmidt, was one such example who was re-instated on 19 October 1938.<sup>164</sup> In the column marked 'Remarks' the entry for Dr Goldschmidt read: 'Jew! From 19 October 1938 approval granted again for the treatment of Jews.'<sup>165</sup>

Nevertheless, Jewish professionals were still being deregistered in the months after the pogrom. The physician Dr Otto Schlein lost his right to practise on 23 January 1939.<sup>166</sup> Clearly, in the wake of the deregistrations the government had to respond to the need of Jews requiring professional services. On 17 January 1939, as a result of the *Achte Verordnung zum Reichsbürgergesetz*, a limited number of professionals were re-instated for this purpose. Many of these further re-instatements occurred from February 1939. On 16 February 1939, the Magdeburg dentist Dr Martin Reinhold was re-instated as a 'practitioner of the sick' or '*Krankenbehandler*.'<sup>167</sup> Likewise, on 20 February 1939, the Magdeburg dentist Dr Ignaz Kreisky was also listed as registered to practise.<sup>168</sup> Beyond this period the physician Dr Hans Aufrecht was reregistered with the city authorities to treat

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<sup>164</sup> Nachweisung der Veränderungen unter den Ärzten, Zahnärzten und Apothekern des Kreises Magdeburg für den Monat November 1938, 2. Dezember 1938, Bestand Rep. C 28 I g, Signatur Nr. 34, LHASA MD, p. 81.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid. The cited quotation is the author's translation from the original German which reads: 'Jude! Ab 19.10.38 wieder zugelassen zur Behandlung von Juden.'

<sup>166</sup> Erlöschen der Bestallung als Arzt, 23. Januar 1939, Bestand Rep. C 28 I g, Signatur Nr. 16, Band 5, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 95.

<sup>167</sup> Correspondence from the Reich Minister for the Interior, 16 February 1939, *ibid.*, pp. 99–100.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 102–104.

Jewish patients only on 1 April 1939.<sup>169</sup> Evidence does not provide any further information on other reregistrations.

One other group of professionals for whom there was still a demand were those practitioners of law. Solicitors, or '*Konsulenten*,' were subjected to the same measures as their medical colleagues. In Magdeburg, Julius Riese was still serving his community's legal needs in July 1939.<sup>170</sup> This reduction in the number of professionals created much strain on the community. Jews could only be attended to by Jewish professionals, whose numbers were limited. This indirect form of persecution added to the burden of daily life. The professionals themselves counted themselves fortunate to be able to practise, unlike others who were already impoverished. This was in spite of the fact that they had been stripped of their professional dignity, as evidenced in their titles since July 1938, and that their segregated practices operated under highly regulated restrictions and constant monitoring.

The remaining approximately 30% to 40% of Jewish-owned businesses attempted to continue to operate. Owing to the constantly increasing exclusionary measures, the majority of these businesses had been 'aryanised' by September 1939. In the wake of the pogrom, 'aryanisations' occurred at an expedited pace. In a number of cases businesses were simply abandoned and/or eventually confiscated. The compounded effect of lack of employment opportunities, exclusion, 'aryanisations' and confiscations had reduced the remaining approximately 726 Jews to poverty. The task of attempting to sustain Jewish

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<sup>169</sup> Nachweisung der Veränderungen unter den Ärzten, Zahnärzten und Apothekern des Kreises Magdeburg für den Monat März 1939, 1. April 1939, Bestand Rep. C 28 I g, Signatur Nr. 34, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 154.

<sup>170</sup> Correspondence from Julius Israel Riese, Konsulent, 10 July 1939, Bestand Rep. C 28 I f, Signatur Nr. 933, Band 8, LHASA MD, p. 191.

families both morally and physically fell in its entirety to the *Synagogen-Gemeinde* and its welfare organisations.

From the period immediately after the pogrom until early January 1939, parents provided schooling arrangements for their children. No formal classes took place. On 9 January 1939, the subject of compulsory schooling for Jewish pupils re-emerged on the mayor's agenda.<sup>171</sup> In his correspondence to the provincial government, he reiterated the decision to dissolve the '*Judenschule*' at its former site. Owing to a shortage of school facilities in general and specifically of the required segregated building and the necessary Jewish staff, the '*Judenschule*' would remain temporarily closed. However, the mayor suggested that until the situation could be resolved that lessons take place in the building adjacent to the gutted *Synagogen-Gemeinde*, which belonged to the Jewish community. Registered private Jewish teachers would be employed and the entire cost born by the *Synagogen-Gemeinde* and the *Reichsvertretung der Juden in Deutschland*.<sup>172</sup> The mayor received approval for this from the police commissioner and suggested that a local teacher of English, Lilly Karger, be engaged for the interim period.<sup>173</sup>

On 8 March 1939, the mayor reported that the police commissioner had granted permission for the '*Judenschule*' to be re-established in the building next door to the synagogue. Rooms were made available on the ground floor of this building located at *Große Schulstraße* 2b. This information was conveyed to the board of the *Synagogen-Gemeinde*, and the mayor requested their participation in

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<sup>171</sup> Betr.: Schulunterricht an Juden, 9. Januar 1939, Bestand Rep. C 28 II, Signatur Nr. 3996, LHASA MD, op. cit., pp. 27–28.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

the process of procuring the necessary teaching staff.<sup>174</sup> On 28 April 1939, the superintendent of schools wrote to the board of the *Synagogen-Gemeinde* requesting an update. On 3 May 1939, Dr Ernst Merzbach replied that the necessary teaching staff had still not been procured and that the board was continuing its efforts to fill the positions.<sup>175</sup>

On 5 July 1939, the superintendent of schools reported to the provincial government that the board of the *Synagogen-Gemeinde* informed him that lessons had commenced in the re-established ‘*Judenschule*’ on 6 June 1939.<sup>176</sup> The school consisted of forty-nine male and female pupils and the curriculum was that set down by the *Reichsvertretung der Juden in Deutschland*. The teachers employed were Hermann Spier, formerly of Prenzlau and Max (Meier) Teller, cantor and former teacher of the dissolved *Religionsschule* of the *Synagogen-Gemeinde*. On 26 June 1939, the Gestapa in Magdeburg approved the re-establishment of the school, as the segregation requirements had been met.<sup>177</sup> On 14 August 1939, the *Reich* Minister for Science, Training and National Education mandated guidelines for all matters relating to the education of Jewish pupils.<sup>178</sup> The desired complete isolation of Jewish children, which the city had striven to achieve as early as September 1935, had now been attained. Ironically, yet not surprisingly, for Jewish pupils, this school experience was entirely positive and fostered a love and value of all things Jewish in a nurturing environment.

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<sup>174</sup> Betrifft: Schulunterricht an Juden, 8 März 1939, Bestand Rep. C 28 II, Signatur Nr. 3996, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 29.

<sup>175</sup> Betrifft: Schulunterricht an Juden, 12. Mai 1939, *ibid.*, p. 30.

<sup>176</sup> Betrifft: Schulunterricht an Juden, 5. Juli 1939, *ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>177</sup> Betr.: Beschulung der Judenkinder in Magdeburg, 26. Juni 1939, *ibid.*, p. 31.

<sup>178</sup> Betrifft: Ausführungsanweisung zu Art. II der 10. Verordnung zum Reichsbürgergesetz vom 4. Juli 1939 – RGB1.I S.1079, 14. August 1939, Bestand Rep. C 28 II, Signatur Nr. 88, Band 2, LHASA MD, op. cit., pp. 78–79.

The confiscation of valuables belonging to Jews was conducted with rigour at an expedited pace after the pogrom. The sale of their remaining possessions now formed the sole source of any income. For those who had emigrated, the situation was the same, as they sought to salvage their assets to finance their emigration costs.

In Magdeburg guidelines for the sale of stocks and shares belonging to Jews were introduced in late December 1938.<sup>179</sup> This was followed by similar measures to be used on transactions of property owned by Jews.<sup>180</sup> On 16 January 1939, further guidelines were issued in Magdeburg stipulating that sales of stocks, shares and property owned by Jews could only be approved once the Jewish vendor had divested him or herself of all valuables, including jewellery and art works.<sup>181</sup> From 25 January 1939 Jews were prohibited from buying, pawning or selling objects containing gold, platinum or silver, in addition to fine gems and pearls.<sup>182</sup> On 9 February 1939, the *Reich* Chamber of Commerce despatched nationally guidelines for the appropriation of all Jewish property.<sup>183</sup> On 21 February 1939, all Jews of German nationality were ordered to deliver all personal

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<sup>179</sup> Betrifft: Erster Teilbetrag der Judenvermögensabgabe; hier Mitwirkung der Devisenbanken bei der Inzahlunggabe von Wertpapieren, 20. Dezember 1938, Bestand Rep. G 1, Signatur Nr. 389, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 24.

<sup>180</sup> Betrifft: Erster Teilbetrag der Judenvermögensabgabe; hier: Inzahlunggabe von Grundstücken, 21. Dezember 1938, *ibid.*, p. 34.

<sup>181</sup> Betrifft: Inzahlunggabe von Wertpapieren auf die Judenvermögensabgabe; hier Ablehnung der Inzahlunggabe für andere Steuern und Abgaben, 16. Januar 1939, *ibid.*, p. 40.

<sup>182</sup> Betr.: Errichtung öffentlicher Ankaufsstellen, 25. Januar 1939, Bestand Rep. C 20 I. I b, Signatur Nr. 2537, LHASA MD, op. cit., pp. 115–116.

<sup>183</sup> Betrifft: Verordnung über den Einsatz des jüdischen Vermögens, 9. Februar 1939, Bestand Rep. C 110, Signatur Nr. 47, LHASA MD, pp. 216–225.

objects containing gold, platinum, silver, precious stones and pearls to newly established purchase centres, within two weeks of the execution of the order.<sup>184</sup>

Owing to the wave of Jewish emigration, on 15 May 1939 the *Reich* Minister for Science, Training and National Education issued national guidelines to prevent emigrating Jews from transferring 'items of German cultural significance' out of the country.<sup>185</sup> The memorandum stated that, whilst the large-scale emigration was highly desired, it also brought with it a number of dangers when it came to the potential transfer of 'high quality items of German cultural significance.'<sup>186</sup> In Magdeburg, measures to prevent this were introduced. The assumption of the local finance commissioner of the Foreign Exchange office was that all affluent Jews would possess items of historical, artistic and cultural value. Given the ban placed on transferring such items out of Germany, the commissioner compiled a list of 143 affluent Jews in the administrative district of Magdeburg. Each entry bore the individual's first name, surname, address and estimated net wealth. Of the 143 entries, 29 were residents of the city of Magdeburg, including the father of Hemmi Freeman, Pinkas Frühman.<sup>187</sup> The list was lodged with the State Archive in Magdeburg for use as the need arose with the flow of emigration or in the attempt to sell off assets.

Evidence also indicates at this time that a number of Jews in Magdeburg had applied to exchange local businesses for businesses in the USA owned by

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<sup>184</sup> Dritte Verordnung auf Grund der Verordnung über die Anmeldung des Vermögens von Juden, 21. Februar 1939, Bestand Rep. G 1, Signatur Nr. 389, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 78.

<sup>185</sup> Betrifft: Schutz des deutschen Kulturgutes gegen Abwanderung (Mitnahme von Umzugsgut bei der Auswanderung von Juden, 15. Mai 1939, Bestand Rep. C 22, Signatur Nr. 245, LHASA MD, pp. 20–22.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

<sup>187</sup> Betr.: Mitnahme von Umzugsgut bei der Auswanderer (Schutz des deutschen Kulturgutes gegen Abwanderung); Liste der wohlhabenden Juden, 9. Juni 1939, ibid., pp. 29–32.

expatriate Germans returning to Germany.<sup>188</sup> If successful, such ventures would prevent the sale of their property and/or businesses at deflated and regulated prices. This practice of further devaluation and price regulation became normative in Magdeburg in June 1939.<sup>189</sup>

On 24 August 1939, the *Reich* Minister for Commerce despatched a memorandum nationally concerning the elimination of the Jews from the German economy. The memorandum extolled the success of the removal of the Jews from all areas of influence, but lamented that it was still necessary to permit a limited number of Jews to operate businesses and practices to meet the needs of other Jews. He indicated, however, that in the future that this would not be permitted in the case of businesses and that the needs of the remaining Jews would be met by ‘Aryan’ businesses. The memorandum also advised that henceforth Jewish hairdressers were no longer permitted to work in public, but had to attend to their clientele in their homes or the homes of clients. A further directive was ordered that Jewish burial societies reduce their activities.<sup>190</sup> Four days later, all exclusionary economic measures enacted against Jews of German nationality were extended to Jews of foreign nationalities resident in Germany.<sup>191</sup> The determination to completely eliminate Jews from the economy and from the

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<sup>188</sup> Behandlung von Grundstückstauschverträgen nach der Verordnung über den Einsatz dem jüdischen Vermögens vom 3.12.1938, 15. Juni – 1. September 1939, Bestand Rep. K 3, Signatur Nr. 4094 e, Film 58, LHASA MD, op. cit., pp. 62–64.

<sup>189</sup> Betrifft: Erhebung einer Ausgleichsabgabe bei der Genehmigung des Verkaufs jüdischer Grundstücke, 20. Juni 1939, *ibid.*, pp. 55–57.

<sup>190</sup> Betr.: Verordnung zur Ausschaltung der Juden aus dem deutschen Wirtschaftsleben vom 12. November 1938, 24. August 1939, Bestand Rep. C 28 I f, Signatur Nr. 933, Band 16, LHASA MD, p. 17.

<sup>191</sup> Betrifft: Anwendung der Verordnung zur Ausschaltung der Juden aus dem deutschen Wirtschaftsleben vom 12. November 1938 auf Juden fremder Staatsangehörigkeit, 28. August 1939, *ibid.*, p. 24.

public eye became policy. Now that Jews had been ostensibly removed from the economy, they would also be removed from the view of the public.

In the period between the *Reichskristallnacht* and September 1939 the Jews of Magdeburg experienced an even greater level of demonisation, exclusion and pauperisation. The majority of employable community members were now unemployed. At the very best they were living off the proceeds of the sale of assets and at worst relying on welfare assistance. Total segregation had commenced and was consolidated by their evictions from homes and allocation of rooms in '*Judenhäuser*.' Jews from Magdeburg were still emigrating when war broke out. For those who remained, in the wake of the vacuum created by the departure of Rabbi Dr Wilde, the teacher Hermann Spier led the community. The first official religious service after the pogrom occurred at Passover 1939, when members of all the former religious communities gathered to worship in unison in the former rooms of the *B'nai B'rith*, located in the community building next door to the destroyed synagogue.<sup>192</sup> Sadly, but importantly, the pogrom and the intensity of the inflicted persecutions had created some sense of unity at this moment of communal fate. For the Jews of Magdeburg, what they had experienced in the previous nine months became a prelude to new levels of persecution yet to come, in the wake of Germany waging war.

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<sup>192</sup> Correspondence from M. F. to the author, 12 July 1999.

