

Chapter Three: Daily Life in the Public Domain, 1933–1938

Nazi Policy toward the Jews

The introduction and the implementation of Nazi policy toward the Jews affected them in all aspects of their lives, including the public domain. As the years progressed, their level of insecurity and lack of safety escalated. Whether policy dealt with public or private space, Jewish or non-Jewish space was inconsequential. All policy was engineered toward the demonisation, humiliation and exclusion of Jews from all spheres of life and influence in Germany. Included in this was their constant surveillance as declared ‘enemies of the German people.’ All policy also affected the behaviours and attitudes of non-Jews towards Jews in the public domain, as Jews had been allocated pariah status.

In depicting the effect of Nazi policy on the daily lives of Jews in the city from 1933 until the pogrom in November 1938, a similar pattern corresponding to the time-line of economic disenfranchisement emerges. The initial shock and violence of 1933 was followed by a period of adjustment to their new and disturbing status.¹ Ongoing boycotts and public defamation, combined with the exclusion from some public places, were the main features until the introduction of the Nuremberg Laws in 1935. After September 1935 Jews no longer possessed any legal status and were racially defined. This led to an open season of accusing Jews of either invented crimes or newly created crimes, such as ‘*Rassenschande*.’ In Magdeburg this resulted in show trials and the trial by media of a number of community members.

¹ For a complete discussion on this period of transition from 1933 until 1935, see Matthäus, *op. cit.*

As the application of these race laws progressed, so too did a steady flow of antisemitic legislation and propaganda designed to make life as difficult as possible for Jews and to encourage them to emigrate. By the time the *Reichskristallnacht* occurred, very few aspects of Jewish life in both the public and private domains were not governed by Nazi policy. A chronological study of the legislative measures highlights this escalation of demonisation and exclusion.

In 1933 the Jews of Magdeburg were shocked and dismayed by the destruction of the German-Jewish 'symbiosis.' The majority of interviewees were either children or teenagers at this time and recalled the reactions of community members and their own families. The consensus of opinion of their parents' and grandparents' generation was that Hitler was a temporary aberration and that the German people would not tolerate such a government for long. They also assumed that the initial violence and defamation of Jews were temporary measures and would cease once the Nazis had established themselves and felt secure. Hemmi and Sigrid Freeman recall:

All the older generation still, I think, had hope that being German would save them and that Hitler was temporary and would die a sudden death. Everybody thought that it's a government that on one fine day will be kicked out. But it didn't work that way!²

The majority of the older generation retained this attitude for some time. Even when the boycott of 1 April 1933 took place, whilst community members were frightened and shocked, the majority still remained convinced that these new conditions were only temporary.³

From 1933 to the introduction of the Nuremberg Laws in 1935, Nazi policy toward the Jews in the city reflected the determination to consolidate power, to

² H. and S. Freeman, op. cit., 13 May 1998.

³ Kent, op. cit., 5 January 1998.

target and to commence the isolation of the Jewish community, to maintain surveillance of the community and to collect data on the community. Whilst this was occurring, the Jewish community attempted to adjust to the new situation it faced on a daily basis in the public domain. The policies of separation commenced as early as 7 April 1933 with the enactment of the *Berufsbeamtengesetz* and on 25 April 1933⁴ when quotas on the numbers of Jewish students at schools and universities were introduced. Exemptions for war veterans and their families played a vital role, as none of the interviewees was forced out of school in Magdeburg, owing to their fathers' war service.

Jews received mixed signals with these policies. Whilst they experienced the atmosphere of public defamation and boycott, a majority of the Jewish population remained exempt from a number of antisemitic measures.⁵ This ambiguity in policy gave the Jewish population the hope that they had not been completely rejected. Consequently, the older generation still maintained and cherished its German-Jewish identities. So strong was this that during the period under discussion, the majority of community members still believed that the display of their German allegiance would prove to the non-Jewish population that they were not a separate and foreign body in Germany.

On 9 July 1934, the Gestapo in Berlin dispatched a national memorandum with the request that a detailed questionnaire on all existing Jewish organisations and institutions be completed and returned by 1 September 1934.⁶ This marked the commencement of preparations for legal exclusion. By early 1935 the policy of exclusion needed to be formalised from the Nazi viewpoint, as there were still

⁴ Meyer, ed., op. cit., p. 438.

⁵ This has been previously demonstrated in Chapter Two.

⁶ Betrifft: Überwachung des Judentums, 9. Juli 1934, Collection JM, File 10624, YVA, op. cit., pp. 7–10.

far too many Jewish organisations espousing the compatibility of Germanness and Jewishness. The end result was a clear ban on Jewish organisations that did not fit into the ideologies of the government. The memorandum of 31 May 1935 by Dr Werner Best⁷ provided a blueprint for the consolidation of exclusion and a confirmation particularly for Jews that they were irrevocably placed outside the ‘*Volksgemeinschaft*.’⁸ From this point until the enactment of the Nuremberg Laws, measures on the local level reflected this.

On 5 July 1935, the State Police for the Magdeburg District issued a memorandum requesting the completion of a questionnaire concerning Jewish vocational retraining camps.⁹ The memorandum acknowledged that such camps were in the process of retraining Jews in agricultural pursuits and trades. The police required that the number and nature of such camps be surveyed through a questionnaire to be completed by 10 August 1935. Included in the questionnaire were questions relating to the exact purpose and ideology of the camps. Their main concern was to confirm that the camps were Zionist in nature and were preparing Jews for emigration.¹⁰ At least two such camps for Jewish youth were known to have existed just outside the city.¹¹

One month later on 13 August 1935, the Gestapa in Berlin issued strict guidelines on how the *Reichsverband der jüdischen Kulturbünde in Deutschland*

⁷ Memorandum from the Geheimes Staatspolizeiamt, Berlin, An alle Staatspolizeistellen concerning the subject of the assemblies and activities of Jewish organisations, 31 May 1935, Bestand Z.-Dok.001, Signatur Nr. 052, op. cit., ASGM.

⁸ This has been previously discussed in Chapter One.

⁹ Rundschreiben Nr. 249; Betr.: Jüdische Umschulungslager, 5. Juli 1935, Bestand Oa, Signatur Nr. 46, ASGM, op. cit., p. 232.

¹⁰ Ibid. For a discussion on the general reactions of the Zionist movement in Germany see Jehuda Reinharz, “The Zionist Response to Antisemitism in Germany,” *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*, vol. XXX, 1985, pp. 105–140.

¹¹ This subject will be discussed in Chapter Five.

was to conduct its activities.¹² Included in the eleven stated guidelines was the instruction that all organised activities had to be registered with the Gestapa a minimum of ten days prior to the execution of any planned activity. The guidelines explicitly stated that only Jews and ‘non-Aryans’ were permitted to attend such activities.¹³ On 20 August 1935, the office of the State Police for the Merseburg District dispatched a further memorandum to Magdeburg, instructing that henceforth any Jewish organisation that was not a member of the *Reichsverband der jüdischen Kulturbünde in Deutschland* was to be dissolved, with the exception of Jewish schools and religious communities.¹⁴ It indicated that dissolving all unaffiliated organisations would enable a consistent and easier surveillance of the activities of Jews and that all Zionist activities (with a view to emigration) were to be encouraged.

As further evidence of this surveillance and separation, the same office issued instructions on 21 August 1935 that Jews were not to be given information on the activities of non-Jews, particularly on any business-related matter.¹⁵ In a comprehensive measure to ensure the tabulation of data on all movements of Jews, on 2 September 1935, the office of the State Police for the Magdeburg

¹² Richtlinien für die Tätigkeit des Reichsverbandes der jüdischen Kulturbünde in Deutschland, 13. August 1935, Bestand Z.-Dok.001, Signatur Nr. 040, ASGM, p. 74. For a comprehensive discussion on the history of this organisation, see Akademie der Künste, ed., *Geschlossene Veranstaltung. Der Jüdische Kulturbund in Deutschland 1933–1941* Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1992 and Alan E. Steinweis, “Hans Hinkel and German Jewry, 1933–1941,” *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*, vol. XXXVIII, 1993, pp. 209–219.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 74–75.

¹⁴ Betrifft: Reichsverband der jüdischen Kulturbünde in Deutschland, 20. August 1935, Bestand Z.-Dok.001, Signatur Nr. 042, ASGM, p. 73.

¹⁵ Rundschreiben; Betrifft: Auskunftseinholung durch Juden, 21. August 1935, Collection JM, File 10624, YVA, op. cit., p. 76.

District¹⁶ instructed that in Magdeburg, as in the entire country, an index of Jews and Jewish organisations was to be created. As a result, lists of community members and members of Jewish organisations were to be reported quarterly henceforth. These reports had to be submitted in triplicate and include departures resulting from relocation, death and emigration, as well as the arrival of new members.¹⁷ This small selection of policies toward the Jews in the city prior to the Nuremberg Laws provides evidence of the clear policy to commence the isolation of the Jewish community, to maintain surveillance of it, in addition to the tabulating of data on the community. Simultaneously, the community suffered steadily from ongoing boycotts and public defamation. However, Nazi policy in itself was still largely evolving with regard to its measures toward the Jews. The full force of the development of this policy was felt on 15 September 1935 when the next phase was introduced with the enactment of the Nuremberg Laws, which marked the permanent segregation and the absolute disenfranchisement of Jews.

In a special session of the *Reichstag* at the Nazi Party convention in Nuremberg on 15 September 1935, three new laws were promulgated. *Das Gesetz zum Schutze des deutschen Blutes und der deutschen Ehre*¹⁸ prohibited marriage and sexual relations between Jews and ‘Aryans’ and banned ‘Aryan’ women under the age of forty-five from working in Jewish households. The *Reichsflaggengesetz* prohibited Jews from ‘displaying national colours,’ while at

¹⁶ Rundschreiben Nr. 340/35; Betr.: Judenkartei, 2. September 1935, Bestand Rep. C 31, Signatur Nr. 26, LHASA MD, p. 79.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

¹⁸ Reichsausschuss für Volksgesundheit, *Das Reichsbürgergesetz vom 15. September 1935 und Das Gesetz zum Schutze des deutschen Blutes und der deutschen Ehre vom 15. September 1935 mit Ausführungsverordnungen vom 14. November und 21. November 1935* Berlin: Reichsdruckerei, 1936, Bestand Rep. C 28 I g, Signatur Nr. 460, Band 3, LHASA MD, pp. 33–44.

the same time permitted them to display ‘the Jewish colours.’¹⁹ *Das Reichsbürgergesetz* introduced a new category of civil law, namely that of ‘citizen with German blood,’ endowed with full political rights. A Jew, by contrast, could only now be a ‘subject of the state’²⁰ and for this reason this law was pivotal. The ensuing ordinances of this law stripped Jews of all legal rights and possessions and ultimately destroyed them.²¹ The reinforcement of the image of the Jews as racially separate and as contaminators of everything features prominently in directives, laws and edicts. With the application of the Nuremberg Laws the Jews of Magdeburg were also targeted in the judiciary, as they were now without rights.

The impact of the Nuremberg Laws in Magdeburg was immediate. Gerry Levy recalled that his paternal uncle, Herbert Levy, had a non-Jewish partner at the time and they had a daughter, Jutta, aged approximately six years old. He married his partner as a matter of urgency prior to the laws taking effect, as if he had not he could have been accused of ‘*Rassenschande*.’²² The application of these laws shocked all community members, as they were now subjected to a very public demonisation and had no possibility of recourse through the legal system. Nevertheless, ironically, the laws also clarified for the Jews their position in the new Germany.²³

¹⁹ *Reichsgesetzblatt, Teil 1, 16. September 1935, Nr. 100* Berlin: 1935, Collection JM, File 10625, YVA, pp. 141–142.

²⁰ Reichsausschuss für Volksgesundheit, *Das Reichsbürgergesetz vom 15. September 1935 und Das Gesetz zum Schutze des deutschen Blutes und der deutschen Ehre vom 15. September 1935 mit Ausführungsverordnungen vom 14. November und 21. November 1935*, Bestand Rep. C 28 I g, Signatur Nr. 460, Band 3, LHASA MD, op. cit., pp. 33–44.

²¹ Barkai, “Exclusion and Persecution: 1933–1938,” in Meyer, ed., op. cit., pp. 210–211.

²² Levy, op. cit., 7 November 1996.

²³ For a complete discussion on the reaction of the Jewish community to the Nuremberg Laws see Abraham Margalio, “The Reaction of the Jewish Public in Germany to the Nuremberg Laws,” *Yad Vashem Studies*, vol. XII, 1977, pp. 75–107

On 25 September 1935, the *Reich* Minister for Trade and Commerce requested that ‘non-Aryans’ be excluded from all markets as merchants and as clients.²⁴ On 11 November 1935, complaints were made at the number of Jewish commercial agents still representing ‘Aryan’ enterprises in Magdeburg and the assistance of the police was sought to rectify the situation. Another complaint was made that local farmers were still selling to Jewish cattle and horse dealers and that this situation had to be addressed.²⁵ The local authorities were determined to remove Jews from these areas and curtail any further interaction. The repeated reference made about ‘non-Aryans’ in the correspondence adds a racial component to the directive, in addition to the economic exclusion, which is obvious.

This sentiment of absolute segregation is further evidenced in a directive from the office of the State Police for the Merseburg District on 9 December 1935 concerning the local *Jüdische Winterhilfe*.²⁶ The memorandum indicated that the *Winterhilfe* was purely an internal matter for the Jews and under no circumstances would any form of public advertising of it be tolerated. The only exception granted was the use of advertising posters within the buildings of Jewish organisations and synagogues. Otherwise, all breaches of this were to be reported and registered.²⁷ From the end of 1935, the introduction and application of new policies and measures designed to segregate, to humiliate and demonise Jews in all avenues of life was expedited. This campaign in public was very important

and Joseph Walk, “Reactions of the Jewish Press in Germany to the Nuremberg Laws,” in Bankier, ed., op. cit., pp. 329–338.

²⁴ Betr.: Marktverkehr, 25. September 1935, Bestand Z.-Dok.001, Signatur Nr. 038, ASGM, p. 1.

²⁵ Betr: Polizeiliche Eingriffe in Dienstverträge mit Nichtariern, 11. November 1935, Bestand Rep. C 20 I. I b, Signatur Nr. 1, LHASA MD, op. cit., pp. 168–169.

²⁶ Betrifft: Jüdische Winterhilfe, 9. Dezember 1935, Collection JM, File 10624, YVA, op. cit., p. 99.

²⁷ Ibid.

because of its propaganda value. The policy of racially cleansing Germany was a hallmark of this phase, which continued until the pogrom of 1938. Having formally defined and legislated the Jews as the ultimate other, the Nazis wanted them disassociated from all things German, and wanted this foreign body to leave Germany. The city of Magdeburg subjected its Jewish population to all the associated measures with diligence.

On 16 January 1936, the State Police for the Magdeburg District ordered that Jews were forbidden to wear the insignia of the *Reich Sports' Association*.²⁸ This included both the adult and youth divisions. In the case of the youth division, it was the responsibility of all group leaders to confirm the 'Aryan' lineage of their members under the age of eighteen.²⁹ Günter Manneberg, then a young Jewish teenager, fell victim to this and was expelled from his local non-Jewish sports' association days later.³⁰ On 7 January 1935, after careful consideration by the local police, Jews were still permitted to possess licences for firearms. A concern was raised that allowing Jews to possess any form of weaponry could prove a danger to the local population. The police also promised to re-assess the matter in the future, should too many Jews in the city apply for such licences.³¹ In this instance the clear picture of demonisation is articulated as Jews are imagined to be a serious physical threat to the safety of the city's population. Further evidence of this occurred on 12 March 1936 when assemblies of any of the permitted Jewish organisations in Magdeburg were temporarily banned until the elections for the

²⁸ Rundschreiben Nr. 28/36; Betr.: Tragen der Reichssportabzeichens und des Reichsjugendabzeichens durch Juden, 16. Januar 1936, Bestand Rep. C 31, Signatur Nr. 26, LHASA MD, p. 66.

²⁹ Paul Yogi Mayer, "Equality – Equality – Jews and Sport in Germany," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*, vol. XXV, 1980, pp. 221–241.

³⁰ Mannings, op. cit., 17 August 1999.

³¹ Betrifft: Erteilung von Waffenscheinen an Juden, 7. Januar 1936, Collection JM, File 10624, YVA, op. cit., p. 111.

Reichstag had taken place. The key concern appeared to have been that all ‘Jewish political activity’ could only lead to unrest.³²

On 4 April 1936, the Prussian Gestapa in Berlin banned the use of Hebrew at any Jewish cultural assembly.³³ A complaint had reached its office that Hebrew was being used at public gatherings and this prevented surveillance. All organisations were ordered henceforth to use only German. However, Hebrew was still permitted at Jewish schools, synagogues and at ‘closed gatherings’ for Zionist purposes in preparation for emigration to Palestine.³⁴ On 22 April 1936, the provincial government of Saxony ordered that all antisemitic signage had to correspond in caption and form to that which had been mandated by the Nazi Party nationally, as uniformity was important, especially for foreign visitors.³⁵ This racial separation was paramount to Nazi ideology in both its propaganda campaign and in its manifestation of policy. On 23 April 1936, Jews were forbidden from having any female household staff who were of German (or related) blood and foreign nationality.³⁶ Gerry Levy recalled this vividly as he thought that his family’s non-Jewish maid would have to leave their employ. She had been with the family for many years. However, as she was over the age of forty-five, she remained with the family until the *Reichskristallnacht*.³⁷ All these

³² Betrifft: Versammlungstätigkeit der jüdischen Organisationen, 12. März 1936, Collection JM, File 10624, YVA, op. cit., p. 117.

³³ Betrifft: Den Gebrauch der hebräischen Sprache in öffentlichen jüdischen Versammlungen, 4. April 1936, Bestand Z.-Dok.001, Signatur Nr. 045, ASGM, p. 118.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Betrifft: Judenfeindliche Schilder, 22. April 1936, Collection JM, File 10625, YVA, op. cit., p. 123.

³⁶ Betrifft: Beschäftigung deutschblutiger Hausgehilfinnen fremder Staatsangehörigkeit in jüdischen Haushalten, 23. April 1936, Bestand Z.-Dok.001, Signatur Nr. 033, ASGM, p. 119.

³⁷ Levy, op. cit., 7 November 1996.

policies added to Jews' daily burden, particularly when they were in the public domain.

Toward the middle of 1936 the dispensing and application of policies and measures against the Jewish population came to a peak of activity. On 30 April 1936, the subject of antisemitic signage was of concern once more to the provincial government. A memorandum sent to all governmental bodies once again requested consistency, but also added that to date in Magdeburg the language of such signage had been 'particularly venomous' and that it was believed that a better approach would be to try and inform the local population of the 'crimes' of the Jews, rather than adopting such a spiteful approach.³⁸ On 9 October 1936, the *Reichsbund jüdischer Frontsoldaten* was ordered by the Gestapa not to undertake any other activities other than representing the interests of and addressing the needs of its membership, otherwise it would be banned from operation.³⁹ In November 1936 when the approaching campaign of the *Winterhilfswerk des Deutschen Volkes* for the winter of 1936–1937 was discussed, the Gestapa informed the population that Jews would not receive assistance, but were instructed to seek assistance from the *Zentral- Wohlfahrtsstelle der Juden in Deutschland*. However, 'Mischlinge' and those in 'Mischehen' would receive assistance from both organisations.⁴⁰ On 14 December 1936, the Magdeburg Gestapa ordered henceforth that any expatriate Jews returning to the city for any

³⁸ Betrifft: Judenfeindliche Schilder, 30. April 1936, Bestand Rep. C 31, Signatur Nr. 26, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 122.

³⁹ Betrifft: Betätigung des Reichbundes jüdischer Frontsoldaten in Versorgungssachen, 9. Oktober 1936, Collection JM, File 10624, YVA, op. cit., p. 156.

⁴⁰ Betrifft: Betreuung der Juden im Winterhilfswerk 1936/37 und die Beteiligung der Juden am Spendenaufkommen, 14. November 1936, Bestand Z.-Dok.001, Signatur Nr. 024, ASGM, pp. 158–160.

reason were to be taken into custody.⁴¹ Their office was so efficient that it had already dispatched a memorandum on 10 December indicating the imminent arrival in Magdeburg of the Jewish expatriate, Lothar Kaminski from Ra'anana, Palestine.⁴² As the years progressed, so too, did the intensity of antisemitic policies which regulated every aspect of the lives of the Jewish population. This pattern continued and compounded their segregation and social exclusion. The situation involving the issue of antisemitic signage in the city typifies this. Obviously, the form the campaign had taken had become so vulgar in its application that the local Nazi hierarchy began questioning the effectiveness of their techniques. The Winter Relief Program of 1936–1937 and the removal of the Jews from the consciousness of the public eye is aptly exemplified in the cited example.

This campaign of policy bombardment continued. In December 1936 all Jewish organisations were forbidden from meeting. This occurred nationally owing to the perception that the foreign press was receiving negative reports from Jewish organisations in Germany. The Gestapo was convinced that these reports were emanating from 'Jewish-political' organisations.⁴³ As Jewish political groups no longer existed, the assertion must be made that if anything had been reported from German-Jewish sources, then in all likelihood it would have come from Zionist sources and in the case of Magdeburg, numerous Zionist organisations and groups existed. This action later became a pattern of public

⁴¹ Rundschreiben Nr. 610/36; Betr.: Einreise ausgebürgerter Personen in das Reichsgebiet, 14. Dezember 1936, Bestand Z.-Dok.001, Signatur Nr. 054, ASGM, p. 206.

⁴² Rundschreiben Nr. 604/36, 10. Dezember 1936, *ibid.*, p. 210.

⁴³ Betrifft: Verbot jüdischer Versammlungen und Veranstaltungen, 21. Dezember 1936, Bestand Rep. C 20 I. I b, Signatur Nr. 119, LHASA MD, *op. cit.*, p. 315.

punishment for Jews.⁴⁴ This very same ban occurred again on 10 April 1937 and remained effective until 10 June 1937.⁴⁵ However, on this occasion the stated reason was that local Jewish organisations had conspired with international Jewry and foreign ‘assimilatory’ Jewish organisations in a propaganda campaign against Germany. Jewish sporting organisations were also included in the ban.⁴⁶ However, in both instances religious and ‘cultural’ gatherings were exempted.

In the pursuit of effective surveillance of all matters Jewish, in January 1937 the director of Magdeburg’s State Archive, Dr Möllenberg, ordered a complete inventory of archival material on the history of the Jews in the city to be completed and submitted by 1 March 1937.⁴⁷ This was duly completed and proved to be an extensive collection. It also included references to name changes registered with the Magdeburg State Police. These name changes were referred to as the falsification of names and the intimation in the memorandum was that Jews were changing their names owing to criminal activity and/or to avoid criminal prosecution.⁴⁸ This instance displays the extent of the vilification of the Jews. Name changes were not uncommon, yet the purported reason for Jews changing their names could only have been owing to their criminal behaviour, according to the Nazis.

⁴⁴ Betrifft: Verbot jüdischer Versammlungen und Veranstaltungen, 21. Dezember 1936, Bestand Rep. C 20 I. I b, Signatur Nr. 119, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 315.

⁴⁵ Betrifft: Verbot jüdischer Versammlungen und Veranstaltungen, 5. April 1937, Bestand Z.-Dok.001, Signatur Nr. 021, ASGM, p. 175.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Betrifft: Ermittlung und Sicherung der Personenstandsquellen des Judentums, 15. Januar 1937, Bestand Z.-Dok.001, Signatur Nr. 001, ASGM, p. 6.

⁴⁸ Betrifft: Ermittlung und Sicherung der Personenstandsquellen des Judentums, 31. März 1937, Bestand Rep. C 96 II, Signatur Nr. 40, LHASA MD, p. 17. This file contains an extensive list of the archival collection on the history of the Jews of Magdeburg at the time of the completion of the inventory in March 1937.

In further confirmation of the policy of the removal of Jews from public space and of their isolation, on 30 March 1937 the Gestapo requested that all its branch offices inform the Berlin office by 5 April of the names of spas and resorts frequented by Jews in their respective districts, as policy was to be developed segregating Jews from public spas and resorts. The view held was that segregated spas and resorts for Jews only were to be instituted in the near future.⁴⁹ Even with the intensity of the ongoing policies of segregation, the Gestapo was still concerned that too many Jews were taking up membership of ‘assimilatory’ Jewish organisations in Germany and in April 1937 the Magdeburg Gestapa increased its monitoring of the remaining Jewish organisations.⁵⁰ The concern was that this tendency on the part of the Jews was counter to the plans of the government, which was still encouraging emigration. The Nazis wanted the Jews segregated and to adhere to the Nazis’ perception of their own culture. However, they also wanted them to leave. In fine-tuning racial policy and the policies of exclusion on 15 May 1937, the Gestapo ordered the dissolution of the *Paulus-Bund* and ordered that ‘full racial Jews’ now become members of the Jewish communities and that they cease any social intercourse with ‘*Mischlinge*.’⁵¹

By the middle of 1938 a new inventory of Jewish organisations was being conducted as a component of ongoing surveillance.⁵² In the furtherance of permanent segregation and to assist in the targeting of Jews, on 17 August 1938, a

⁴⁹ Betrifft: Zuweisung besonderer Badeorte an Juden, 30. März 1937, Bestand Z.-Dok.001, Signatur Nr. 022, ASGM, p. 174.

⁵⁰ Rundschreiben Nr. 167/37; Betr.: Assimilatorisch eingestellte Juden in Deutschland, 3. April 1937, Bestand Z.-Dok.001, Signatur Nr. 002, ASGM, p. 192.

⁵¹ Betrifft: Paulus-Bund, 18. Mai 1937, Collection JM, File 10625, YVA, op. cit., p. 232. See Beate Meyer, ‘*Jüdische Mischlinge*’. *Rassenpolitik und Verfolgungserfahrung 1933–1945* Hamburg: Dölling und Galitz, 1999 and Cohn, op. cit.

⁵² Betrifft: Jüdische Stiftungen, Vereine usw., 2. Juni 1938, Bestand Rep. C 20 I. I b, Signatur Nr. 119, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 325.

law was enacted obligating all Jews who did not already have first names that were clearly Jewish to adopt the name Israel or Sarah, beginning 1 January 1939, and to always give that name orally and include it in their signatures.⁵³ In the final months prior to the *Reichskristallnacht* the frenzied activity of policy creation to include any remaining areas continued. In August 1938 guidelines for the activities of Jewish sports' organisations were issued by the Gestapo and made effective in Magdeburg on 1 September 1938.⁵⁴ On 3 October 1938, the Gestapo ordered that henceforth the transcripts of all oral presentations to be given at any Jewish organisation were to be submitted prior to the event for censorship purposes.⁵⁵ This became effective in Magdeburg on 7 October 1938.⁵⁶ In October 1938 the provincial government ordered that 'Jewish donations' to any 'Aryan' institution could not be accepted on racial grounds and banned the practice.⁵⁷ The volume and the pedantry of Nazi policy toward the Jews in this phase was exhaustive and left Jews suffocating from a barrage of exclusionary measures.

From the introduction of the Nuremberg Laws in September 1935 until the *Reichskristallnacht* the application of Nazi policy toward the Jews was perfected by the Gestapo and the local authorities. This phase of policy creation and application was completely directed by the Nazi definition of race, by the ongoing

⁵³ Barkai, "Exclusion and Persecution: 1933–1938," in Meyer, ed., op. cit., p. 220.

⁵⁴ Betrifft: Richtlinien für die Betätigung jüdischer Sportvereine, 24. August 1938, Bestand Rep. C 20 I. I b, Signatur Nr. 1831, Band IV, LHASA MD, op. cit., pp. 113–116. For a comprehensive discussion on the role of sport in Jewish life during the Nazi period, see Hajo Bernett, "Die jüdische Turn- und Sportbewegung als Ausdruck der Selbstfindung und Selbstbehauptung des deutschen Judentums," in Paucker, ed., op. cit., pp. 223–237.

⁵⁵ Betrifft: Vorträge bei Veranstaltungen jüdischer Organisationen, 3. Oktober 1938, ibid., p. 121.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Betrifft: Annahme Jetztwilliger und anderer unentgeltlicher Zuwendungen von Juden durch öffentliche Körperschaften, 13. Oktober 1938, Collection JM, File 10625, YVA, op. cit., p. 138.

and snowballing effects of exclusion and by the Nazi desire for Jewish emigration. All policies and measures affected all avenues of daily life, or had the potential to do so, by virtue of the fact that by November 1938 the lives of all Jews were completely regulated by Nazi policy. This exclusion from the '*Volksgemeinschaft*' was most noticeable in the public domain where Jews were easy and obvious targets. In the hostile climate of Magdeburg, daily life in the public domain for Jews was oppressive. However, owing to the initiatives of local authorities and the local branch of the Nazi Party the Jews of Magdeburg were subjected to even greater humiliation on a day-to-day basis⁵⁸ as will be discussed in the following section.

Daily Life and Exclusion

The implementation and application of Nazi policy toward the Jews affected them in all avenues of their lives. Daily life in the public domain became increasingly onerous as the years progressed. The phases marking their situation and the reality of their exclusion mirror those previously discussed. For Jews, experiences in the public domain in 1933 were marked by shock, confusion, adjustment and a broad range of both supportive and antagonistic behaviours from non-Jews. For the period from 1933 up until the months preceding the Nuremberg Laws, Jewish citizens were either subjected to or witnessed a broad range of antisemitic behaviours in public, ranging from the standard antisemitic signage, boycotts, the singing of defamatory songs, to occasional street violence. However, during this phase the thrust of the antisemitic behaviour Jews experienced was largely

⁵⁸ Kurt Sabatzky, *Meine Erinnerungen an den Nationalsozialismus*, undated, File ME 541; MM65, LBIA NY, op. cit., p. 26.

confined to their terrorisation rather than their complete isolation and exclusion. From mid-1935, in the months leading up to the implementation of the Nuremberg Laws through to 1938, in addition to these behaviours, Jews were subjected publicly to exclusionary measures, designed to vilify and segregate simultaneously.⁵⁹ These measures ranged from the full application of the Nuremberg Laws to the introduction of accommodation hostels for Jews only, the revoking of hunting licences to Jews, the banning of Jews from public venues such as cinemas and public baths to the complete segregation for health reasons of Jewish patients in public hospitals.

All practices associated with day-to-day living increased in burden, whether it involved attempting to take public transport from one place to another or to undertake routine shopping. By November 1938 Jews in Magdeburg were so isolated in their city that they avoided going out in public and, other than attending to necessary daily affairs, they remained either indoors or only in the company of other Jews. They were effectively living in a ghetto without walls owing to the threats that surrounded them in non-Jewish space. By November 1938 only two public meeting places remained for Jews in Magdeburg – the synagogue and the cemetery with its adjacent field.

Interviewees' perception of daily life in public supports the view of an initial transitional period of uncertainty. Both Jews and non-Jews in the city were unsure about many of the antisemitic measures in 1933 and attempted to go about their

⁵⁹ The cited phases and the ensuing levels of public exclusion and humiliation correspond to a study by Michael Wildt on the small Franconian Jewish community of Treuchtlingen. Whilst this community only numbered 119 Jews out of approximately 4,200 townspeople, owing to its regional nature and the lack of anonymity Jews faced in such communities, many similarities exist between its situation and that of the Magdeburg community. See Michael Wildt, "Violence against Jews in Germany 1933–1939," in Bankier, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 181–209.

daily affairs as though life had not changed. However, all interviewees concurred that the presence of uniforms and the boycott of 1 April 1933 forced Jews to accept this change. As early as 1933 it was already a precarious exercise to shop, as one young girl, then aged eight, recalled:

The sign “Jews are not wanted!” was on nearly every shop and I know it was difficult for my mother to do the shopping. Often she would send me. That, I remember very well.⁶⁰

Interviewees repeatedly remarked on the antisemitic signage, particularly on shops, and the unnerving effect the presence of uniforms had on them.⁶¹ This early campaign against Jews in the public domain resulted from the combined efforts of two leading local antisemites: the mayor of Magdeburg and the Nazi Party’s *Kreis- und Abschnittsleiter*, Rudolf Krause.⁶²

The greatest cause of complaint on the part of Jews with regard to public order was the effect of the ongoing barrage of antisemitic signage in the city.⁶³ In addition to the signage previously discussed, two further signs, displayed at key junctions all over the city read: ‘Jews are not welcome here!’ and ‘Jews enter this area at their own risk!’⁶⁴ Obviously such signs only furthered Jews’ concerns for their safety in public. This fear escalated as the years progressed. A deterioration in public safety for Jews in February 1935 definitely resulted from the publication and distribution of tens of thousands of copies of the antisemitic booklet

⁶⁰ Personal interview with R. Z. (recorded), Sydney, 15 August 1997.

⁶¹ Poppert, *op. cit.*, 9 January 1998.

⁶² Kurt Sabatzky, *Meine Erinnerungen an den Nationalsozialismus*, undated, File ME 541; MM65, LBIA NY, *op. cit.*, pp. 25–26.

⁶³ Correspondence from the regional office of the CV in Leipzig concerning antisemitic signage in Magdeburg, 5 January 1934, Collection RG-11.00M.31, Reel 102, File 721-1-2397, USHMMA, p. 71.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* The original German text of the signs read: ‘Juden sind hier unerwünscht!’ and ‘Juden betreten den Ort auf eigene Gefahr!’

Magdeburgs Juden stellen sich vor!,⁶⁵ which essentially identified and labelled every Jew in the city. The publication of this booklet marked a further transition in Magdeburg's treatment of its Jews in the public domain. From this point onward up until November 1938, a rapid escalation of the application of the policy of exclusion ensued. As the physical situation deteriorated for Jews in the city, their daily degradation and public humiliation increased severely.

On 6 March 1935, the office of the State Police for the Magdeburg District ordered that Jewish street artists were banned from performing in public, as the mingling of 'non-Aryans' with Germans would not be tolerated. Those Jews ignoring the ban were to be arrested.⁶⁶ On 8 March 1935, the Jewish community achieved a temporary victory after a four-month campaign to stop local *Sturmabteilung* (SA) troops and Hitler Youth groups from publicly singing the defamatory songs 'When Jewish blood sprays from the knife!' and 'Beat the Jews, throw the big shots into the wall!'⁶⁷ Gerry Levy recalled the popularity of the first song at one of his schools. On one occasion when his class, together with his teacher and some parents, went on an excursion by train to Potsdam, the children, all seated in rows, commenced singing the very same song. The teacher requested the children to cease singing the song and apologised to Gerry Levy's mother, who had accompanied the class. The teacher remarked to Mrs Levy that such

⁶⁵ Correspondence from the regional office of the CV in Leipzig to the Gestapo in Magdeburg, complaining about boycott lists and the publication *Magdeburgs Juden stellen sich vor!*, 13 February 1935, Collection RG-11.00M.31, Reel 130, File 721-1-2845, USHMMA, op. cit., pp. 428–429.

⁶⁶ Betr.: Auftreten jüdischen Künstler, 6. März 1935, Bestand Oa, Signatur Nr. 46, ASGM, op. cit., p. 85.

⁶⁷ Correspondence to and from the regional office of the CV in Leipzig, concerning the singing of defamatory songs, 18 November 1934 – 8 March 1935, Collection RG-11.00M.31, Reel 112, File 721-1-2499, USHMMA, pp. 19–40. The original German titles of the songs read: 'Wenn das Judenblut vom Messer spritzt!' and 'Schlagt die Juden, stellt die Bonzen an die Wand!'

behaviour would not be tolerated.⁶⁸ Whilst the noble act of the teacher must be acknowledged, the deep sense of embarrassment and humiliation of the Levys must also be noted. Day-to-day life for Jews in public included being publicly defamed verbally, and often to one's face.

In July 1935 spontaneous demonstrations against Jews had created such a degree of public disorder that the office of the State Police for the Magdeburg District condemned and outlawed such activities, claiming that those individuals involved were opponents of the state.⁶⁹ Such spontaneous demonstrations became an ongoing problem, and this situation is confirmed by oral history. So serious was the situation that on 22 August 1935 a local businessman and Nazi Party member by the name of Rellum wrote a detailed letter condemning the public disorder in Magdeburg and despatched it to the Minister for the Interior, Wilhelm Frick.⁷⁰ Rellum wrote that in his view the 'struggle against the Jews' in Magdeburg had become 'crude and indecent.'⁷¹ Rellum provided a useful account of the sense of public disorder in Magdeburg at the time. He elaborated on the facts that Jews in the city were forbidden from theatres and public baths and no newspaper in the city would accept any business in the form of advertisements from Jews. He confirmed that any potential customer entering a Jewish business was set upon by either uniformed or plain-clothes officers and harangued. He also bemoaned the directive from the local Nazi Party that every business and even street pedlars had to purchase and display the mandatory sign 'Jews are not

⁶⁸ Levy, *op. cit.*, 7 November 1996.

⁶⁹ Betr.: Antisemitische Demonstrationen, 18. Juli 1935, Bestand Rep. C 31, Signatur Nr. 26, LHASA MD, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

⁷⁰ 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, pp. 321–322. This letter provides a highly detailed report on the subject of public disorder in Magdeburg.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 321.

welcome here!’⁷² The signs were compulsory and were purchased for RM 1 each.⁷³

Rellum’s main protest revolved around the issue of public disorder. He described how, in the week preceding the writing of his letter, a new practice had emerged. He wrote of how, in the evenings after dark, a motorcade of between eight and ten vehicles, each consisting of between ten and twenty SA men, would traverse the city’s streets shrieking antisemitic slogans, predominantly ‘Perish Jew!’,⁷⁴ and occasionally fire their rifles into the air. The vehicles were emblazoned with signs reading: ‘The Devil is the Father of the Jews’ and ‘Strike the Jews dead, wherever you may find them!’⁷⁵ Rellum concluded his letter by remarking that he was one of thousands of concerned Magdeburg citizens who felt that such behaviours were dishonourable to Germany and that, given such excesses, he questioned whether or not he was still residing in a cultured and law-abiding state. He also lamented that the city police could openly commit murder without recourse. In his final sentence, Rellum professes that there would be no peace in Magdeburg until *Gauleiter* Loeper and *Kreisleiter* Krause were replaced, and blamed the lawlessness solely on ‘their lack of discretion’ in all matters pertaining to the Jews.⁷⁶

⁷² 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. The original German text of the sign reads: ‘Juden sind hier unerwünscht!’

⁷³ Kent, op. cit., 5 January 1998.

⁷⁴ 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. The original German text reads: ‘Jude, verrecke!’

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 322. The original German texts of the signs read: ‘Der Teufel ist der Vater der Juden’ and ‘Schlagt die Juden tot, wo ihr sie findet!’

⁷⁶ Ibid.

Rellum's depiction of the situation is, perhaps, the most frank and graphic in describing the situation in the public domain for Jews at that time. Oral testimony confirms that Jews were set upon and the only way of evading this was to be vigilant in perceiving potential threats or to remain indoors. A small number of Jews escaped molestation owing to their lack of 'typical Jewish physiognomy,' unless they were publicly identified.⁷⁷

From 31 August 1935 all trams in Magdeburg were outfitted with signs which bore the caption: 'Jews are not welcome here!'⁷⁸ Owing to the intervention of the *Centralverein* (CV), the signs were removed from 20 September 1935,⁷⁹ but were to later re-appear sporadically. Gerry Levy recalled travelling on a tram with his parents some time after this. Whilst sitting on the tram, a couple opposite the Levys were pointing at them and a little later they beckoned to the conductor and spoke to him. After their conversation, the conductor approached the Levys and remarked that the other passengers had indicated that the Levys were Jews. The conductor asked the Levys if this was correct and when they replied yes, the conductor politely requested them to disembark at the next tram stop. The Levys complied with the request.⁸⁰

The Nazi Party was so dedicated and thorough in the distribution of mandatory antisemitic signage that during one particular boycott campaign on 24 September 1935, the order was given that all businesses had to use the prescribed Nazi Party aluminium signage in order to maintain uniformity and develop community spirit.

⁷⁷ Name withheld, op. cit., 18 June 1999.

⁷⁸ Correspondence from the regional office of the CV in Leipzig to the head office of the CV in Berlin, concerning the introduction of antisemitic signage on Magdeburg trams, 31 August 1935, Collection RG-11.00M.31, Reel 130, File 721-1-2845, USHMMA, op. cit., p. 392. The original German text of the sign reads: 'Juden sind hier unerwünscht!'

⁷⁹ Betrifft: Magdeburger Strassenbahn, 20. September 1935, *ibid.*, p. 377.

⁸⁰ Levy, op. cit., 7 November 1996.

All signs read: ‘Jews are not welcome here!’⁸¹ Following the Nuremberg Laws, the campaign expanded. Interviewees who travelled to other parts of the country including Berlin, Hamburg and Königsberg recalled that Magdeburg had more antisemitic signage than any other city they had visited. They also noted that Magdeburg’s signage campaign commenced very early in comparison to other cities.⁸² It is also clear that unofficial antisemitic signage was widely used in the city. One record of such an instance occurred in November 1935, when the provincial government requested confirmation from the chief of police in Magdeburg that unofficial signage had been removed from the cityscape. The offending signs included:

‘Whoever buys from a Jew is a traitor of the people!’
 ‘Denounce the lackeys of the Jews!’
 ‘The Jew is the master of all lies!’⁸³

On 10 July 1935, approval was granted for the establishment of Jewish Youth Hostels. However, by January 1936 it had already been ordered that should such venues risk any disturbance to the peace, then they should be immediately closed down.⁸⁴ On 2 December 1935, the chief of police in Magdeburg ordered that Jews could only be sold milk in cases where the Jewish purchasers were of acceptable appearance and where their presence was deemed inconspicuous.⁸⁵ On the same

⁸¹ Betr.: Schilder: ‘Juden sind hier unerwünscht!’, 24. September 1935, Bestand Rep. C 20 I. I b, Signatur Nr. 119, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 274. The original German text of the sign reads: ‘Juden sind hier unerwünscht!’

⁸² These memories have been confirmed in the writings of the CV’s Kurt Sabatzky.

⁸³ Correspondence from the Oberpräsident in Magdeburg to the Polizeipräsidenten in Magdeburg, 9 November 1935, Bestand Rep. C 20 I. I b, Signatur Nr. 119, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 289. The original German texts of the signs read: ‘Wer beim Juden kauft, ist ein Volksverräter!’, ‘Brandmarkt die Judenknechte!’ and ‘Der Jude ist Meister im Lügen!’

⁸⁴ Betrifft: Jüdische Übernachtungsheime, 4. Januar 1936, Collection JM, File 10624, YVA, op. cit., p. 108.

⁸⁵ Betrifft: Milchversorgung für jüdische Kinder, 2. Dezember 1935, Bestand Rep. C 20 I. I b, Signatur Nr. 119, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 295.

day the Gestapa ruled that only in exceptional circumstances could Jewish functions take place on Christian holidays and/or Sundays, owing to the lack of available surveillance. The memorandum indicated that up to that time the Jews had taken advantage of this.⁸⁶

By the end of 1935 exclusion of Jews in the public domain had been expedited and daily life in public became increasingly burdensome and the risk of public humiliation greater. Gisela Kent recalled the impossible situation when one came upon a Nazi parade:

You had to raise your hand to greet the flag. But I never knew if I raised my hand if someone would say: "There is a Jew and how dare you greet the flag!" Or, if I didn't greet the flag they would say to me: "Why didn't you greet the flag?" There were always opened doorways, where I ducked into. It was terrible. This was our home where you belonged and you didn't question that. And all of a sudden you were an outcast!⁸⁷

Public chores and daily routines once considered simple took on a whole new meaning for Jews, who could find potential danger at every corner.

From 1936 onwards the opinion of interviewees was that exclusion from all non-Jewish public venues was normative. One interviewee recalled the existence of benches in parks marked for the use of Jews only.⁸⁸ She recalled incidents of the ongoing exclusion:

When we went ice-skating, we were thrown out. We could not go swimming; we could not go to the cinema. The risk was always being identified. If you weren't, you got through; otherwise you got thrown out. We couldn't even go to restaurants.⁸⁹

The same situation applied to the families of Gisela Kent and Gerry Levy. Gisela Kent recalled a similar situation, which is graphically illustrative of the exclusion:

⁸⁶ Betrifft: Jüdische Veranstaltungen, 2. Dezember 1935, Collection JM, File 10624, YVA, op. cit., p. 97.

⁸⁷ Kent, op. cit., 12 January 1998.

⁸⁸ H. B., op. cit., 15 August 1997.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

We didn't go out a lot socially. You couldn't go to the pictures because of the same signs: "Jews, Gypsies and Dogs are not allowed!" So, you just didn't go out. We kids sometimes did; we snuck in, but our parents never did. And there was one place in Magdeburg called '*Schwarzs Kaffee-Garten*' ['Schwarz's Coffee Garden'] where they used to go every Sunday. They still went there – my parents, my aunt, uncle and my grandparents, for quite a while, until about 1936. And then they stopped, or perhaps they were asked to stop.⁹⁰

When Gerry Levy's aunt took him to a restaurant for a light refreshment they experienced the situation of being identified, approached by the manager and asked to leave. His aunt agreed to comply, but also added in her reply: 'Yes, but not before we finish our cherries and ice-cream!'⁹¹ The defiance expressed here may sound light-hearted; however, it belies the reality of the deep hurt of this social ostracism. Eventually, the Jews in Magdeburg were excluded from the majority of public space, as evidenced in the preceding two situations. More and more Jews simply remained indoors and limited their outdoor activities to the confines of their business lives, to procuring household provisions and to activities conducted in the relative safety of Jewish space.

From 1937 until the pogrom of November 1938 exclusion from the daily life of the city continued apace. With each new policy or measure against the Jews came further isolation, further restrictions and greater insecurity and a mounting lack of public safety. Clearly a large element of policy had more to do with propaganda than with any real application. The desired outcome on the part of the Nazis was to fully isolate the Jews and to simultaneously present their presence in the community as a serious public danger. This is indicative in numerous policies. For example, on 21 March 1937 the Gestapo forbade the issuing of hunting

⁹⁰ Kent, op. cit., 5 January 1998.

⁹¹ Levy, op. cit., 7 November 1996.

licences to Jews on account of preserving public safety.⁹² It is highly unlikely that Jews who previously did hold hunting licences were still hunting, which was not a favoured leisure activity in any event.⁹³ The premise in the memorandum was that allowing Jews to possess firearms posed a potential danger to the ‘*Volksgemeinschaft*,’ given the view expressed that all Jews were opponents of the state.

With the initial policy of segregation in the public domain, governmental bodies encouraged the creation of establishments for Jewish clientele only. However, eventually all such establishments were reduced in number or dissolved, leaving Jews without any venues in the public domain. One such incident occurred on 26 August 1937 when the Ministry for the Interior decided that there was no longer any reason for the further establishment of any Jewish taverns and guest houses.⁹⁴ By September 1937 Jews in Magdeburg were only being treated in public hospitals under exceptional or life-threatening circumstances, owing to the rationale that their presence in public hospitals created a health risk for ‘Aryan’ patients and the mayor’s office drew up specific guidelines for this practice.⁹⁵ As a result of this, discussions about the possibility of establishing a Jewish clinic in Magdeburg were still being conducted in January 1938⁹⁶ and the approval for the

⁹² Betrifft: Ausstellung von Jagdscheinen an Juden, 21. März 1937, Bestand Rep. C 20 I. I b, Signatur Nr. 1831, Band IV, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 6.

⁹³ Jewish law (*Halacha*) prohibits the practice of hunting.

⁹⁴ Betrifft: Gesetzliche Bestimmungen für die Errichtung jüdischer Gast- und Schankwirtschaften, 26. August 1937, Bestand Rep. C 20 I. I b, Signatur Nr. 2537, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 1.

⁹⁵ Betr.: Aufnahme und Behandlung von Juden in den städtischen Krankenhäusern, 15. September 1937, Bestand Oa, Signatur Nr. 46, ASGM, op. cit., pp. 204–206.

⁹⁶ Correspondence to the Provinzialverband für jüdische Wohlfahrtspflege, Magdeburg, 28 January 1938, Collection RG-11.00M.31, Reel 148, File 721-1-3042, USHMMA, pp. 15–16.

training of Jewish health professionals to specifically treat Jews only was approved by the authorities in June 1938.⁹⁷

Confirmation of the city's perception of the Jewish threat to public safety is confirmed in correspondence to the provincial government concerning arrests in the city. Correspondence from 21 June 1938 indicated that for the period from and including 13 June 1938 to 18 June 1938 the police arrested twenty-one Jews and seventy-seven 'asocials,' all of whom were transported to either Buchenwald Concentration Camp or Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp.⁹⁸ By this point in time, Jews were completely segregated from the non-Jewish community. They were prohibited from most public venues and were scorned or at best ignored at those few remaining areas still open to them, the most obvious being shops. As a result, they developed their own internal network of services. By November 1938 simply being identified in public as a Jew posed serious potential dangers.

From the months preceding the introduction of the Nuremberg Laws up until the pogrom of November 1938 the burden of everyday life in the public domain increased manifestly as exclusion of Jews from all public venues became complete. The compounding influence of the public vilification of the Jews also added to the strain of day-to-day living. The simultaneous campaigns of demonisation and segregation led to complete ostracism and humiliation. Daily life went on, but, Jews only ventured into the public domain when it was absolutely necessary, and even when doing so they attempted to remain invisible.

⁹⁷ Zulassung nichtdeutschblütiger Personen zur staatlichen Prüfung als Krankenpfleger(in) und für verwandte Berufe, 11. April 1938, Bestand Arch., Signatur Nr. 002, ASGM, pp. 2–5.

⁹⁸ Betrifft: Vorbeugende Verbrechensbekämpfung, 21. Juni 1938, Bestand Rep. C 20 I. I b, Signatur Nr. 1839, LHASA MD, p. 160.

By the time of the pogrom their contact with non-Jews was minimal, as Jews were effectively dwelling in their own private island in the city.

Contact with Non-Jews

According to interviewees, on the eve of the Nazi accession to power, relations between Jews and non-Jews were not problematic. On occasion there had been incidents of antisemitism. However, the Jewish community felt totally integrated into the fabric of mainstream society in Magdeburg and fully accepted. The only exceptions would have been those Jews of Eastern European origins, whose strict Orthodoxy prevented them from complete acculturation. The pattern of behaviour between Jews and non-Jews from 1933 until 1938 in the social sphere conforms to those previously elaborated on in the economic sphere and in the public domain. From 1933 until 1935 the majority of interviewees confirmed that non-Jewish family acquaintances and business contacts remained often sympathetic and attempted to carry on established relationships. By the time of the Nuremberg Laws these relationships had already commenced their demise. Some non-Jews did acknowledge their former Jewish acquaintances in public. Others actually explained that, owing to the new political situation, such relationships had to end. A small number of non-Jews also remained loyal to the very end. By November 1938, few Jews in the city had any contact on a personal level with any non-Jews; by this time not one interviewee recalled either themselves or any family member possessing non-Jewish friends and acquaintances who acknowledged them in public. A minority of Jews, both children and adults, still possessed non-Jewish friends and acquaintances who met them clandestinely. The experiences varied from individual to individual and particularly from children to adults. One

common thread, however, was the strong emotional scarring that occurred when these relationships became casualties of Nazism.

In 1933, all of the families of the interviewees were typical acculturated Jews. Parents and grandparents of the interviewees mixed in predominantly Jewish social circles. However, a significant number had both friends and acquaintances who were non-Jews. These relationships had resulted from war service; lasting friendships at school; political connections prior to 1933; involvement in recreational activities such as sports and cards; mixed marriages; and most obviously from business lives. Few of these relationships continued to exist beyond 1935. In the case of the interviewees who were children and teenagers at the time, the same pattern applied. However, as a general rule, the majority did not even have the opportunity to develop relationships with non-Jewish children and teenagers, as the full effects of antisemitic propaganda at both school and in the youth movements ended any of these potentialities. A minority of young Jews did manage to maintain contacts with non-Jews; but these were the exceptions.

Gerry Levy recalled that his mother had non-Jewish friends, even though his parents as a couple possessed no non-Jewish friends. As a family the same applied. However, with regard to his parents' separate social circles he recalled:

My mother still had her *Kränzchen* [circle of friends] until the very end. But the friendships did cool off toward the end. My father had no such similar contacts. He had served in World War One, but never saw anyone from that group. However, there were one or two exceptions with whom he played football.⁹⁹

The situation of the Levy family appeared to have been a common one in the Magdeburg community. Social interaction with non-Jews existed on a singular

⁹⁹ Levy, op. cit., 10 July 1997.

adult level, but seldom on the family level. Another interviewee recalled his family's social connections with non-Jews prior to the full application of the Nuremberg Laws:

Dad was a very strong believer in socialism and the Social Democratic Party and had lots of colleagues. And he was a bowler. As far as I know it was not a Jewish club. So again, he would have had quite a lot of non-Jewish friends.

I don't think my mother had any friends at all outside the family. I mean she had her brother, but I don't think she had many friends. From my very small days, there was an elderly [non-Jewish] couple living near us in Buckau and they were childless so they took great pleasure in having me and my brother around them and I think Mum used to go and help Dad in the shop. We spent a fair bit of time with this couple. So, they would have been very strong friends of my mother's. But once we went to live in the city we didn't see them all that often.¹⁰⁰

This story, was, however, an exception to the rule. All interviewees possessed fond memories of the social events associated with male members of the family playing cards, which included non-Jews. Gisela Kent recalled this:

My father played *Skat* [Skat] and the other players were non-Jewish; naturally they brought their wives along, and friendships developed, yet not very close.

Once Hitler came to power this all changed. So much so that some of them made it quite obvious with such lines as: "We'll let you know when we can do it again." Eventually the meetings simply stopped.¹⁰¹

Hemmi Freeman had similar recollections of his father's non-Jewish *Skat* companions.¹⁰²

One of the most common areas of social contact with non-Jews was with the non-Jewish families of those family members and/or friends who had non-Jewish spouses. Yet, even the majority of these social contacts ceased by the end of 1935, with the obvious exception of the immediate family of the non-Jewish spouse, who generally retained contact.

¹⁰⁰ Name withheld, op. cit., 18 June 1999.

¹⁰¹ Kent, op. cit., 5 January 1998.

¹⁰² H. Freeman, op. cit., 13 May 1998.

The final and most common area of all with regard to contact with non-Jews was in the business sphere. All interviewees concurred that their parents possessed numerous non-Jewish business contacts. In a community of Magdeburg's size this also stands to reason, as no one could have survived in any business relying on Jewish custom alone – something that Jewish businesses quickly learned when this, in fact, became the case due to Nazi regulations. Recollections of business relationships indicate that they were very cordial and even friendly; but seldom ventured into the social domain. Not dissimilar to the preceding areas of contact, these interactions faded away, with the only exception being of some businesses where contact did remain, although on strictly professional terms, until businesses were invariably 'aryanised.'

There were some instances where non-Jews did maintain contact with Jewish friends, but these were the exceptions and much of this contact was clandestine. Of particular note was a member of the Gestapo in Magdeburg by the name of Plettig. This man had served in World War One and had reputedly served with a Jewish man from Magdeburg and both formed a bond. Gerry Levy recalled that 'as a result of this association, communal organisations were often given warnings of anti-Jewish *Aktionen* that were to take place and that he was in fact a friend of the Jews.'¹⁰³ With prior knowledge of the pogrom to be unleashed on 9–10 November 1938, this man informed a number of Jews who were to be arrested. Some of them evaded incarceration thanks to this information.

Some non-Jews provided material comforts to Jews. Rosemarie Berndt, a non-Jewish friend of Inge-Ruth Herrmann, often took food to the Herrmanns.¹⁰⁴ Their

¹⁰³ Levy, op. cit., 10 July 1997.

¹⁰⁴ Austinat, op. cit., 29 January 2001.

daughter, Inge-Ruth, had left on a *Kindertransport* in August 1938¹⁰⁵ and Otto and Regina Herrmann had been reduced to impoverishment. The young Rosemarie recalled that it was common knowledge that her mother was sending her to the Herrmanns with food provisions and she remembered neighbours and friends remarking to her that she was '*judenfreundlich*' ['Jew-friendly'],¹⁰⁶ which she chose to ignore. Nevertheless, she was cognisant of the risks involved.

Gisela Kent recalled a non-Jewish friend of her mother's who remained loyal and with whom she made contact again after the end of the war.¹⁰⁷ In the case of Gisela Kent's mother and brother, Alice and Günther Jankelowitz, assistance was provided even after they had been deported to Warsaw in April 1942. Alice Jankelowitz's friend in Magdeburg, Ilse Riedel, continued to send food parcels to Warsaw. It is known that the parcels did arrive, as Alice Jankelowitz acknowledged receipt in her correspondence to her friend.¹⁰⁸

A number of important conclusions can be drawn from these adult experiences. The pattern of attempting to maintain life and relationships continued after 1933. The transition period also existed in the social network between Jews and non-Jews. The majority of relationships, be they acquaintanceships or friendships, disappeared by September 1935. By this time any illusion of co-existence had evaporated and the full weight of the regime's racial policies were felt. However, the personal element was more prevalent for obvious reasons. It proved to be not unlike the impersonal interactions in the economic sphere and in the general public domain where Jews were treated with clinical contempt as

¹⁰⁵ Poppert, op. cit., 9 January 1998.

¹⁰⁶ Austinat, op. cit., 29 January 2001.

¹⁰⁷ Kent, op. cit., 16 January 1998.

¹⁰⁸ Personal file on the Jankelowitz family, Bestand Pe, Signatur Nr. 22, ASGM, op. cit.

faceless enemies. In all of the experiences of the parents and grandparents of the interviewees there were no reports of any type of abuse from those non-Jews who severed social and/or business contact. The relationships simply faded away or were ended abruptly without acrimony. However, there existed a minority of noble-minded non-Jews who continued to maintain contact and provide assistance to their Jewish friends and acquaintances as the situation worsened.

Unlike their parents or grandparents, Jewish children and youth drew most of their social circle from school and from the Jewish community. They felt the brutality after 1933 severely. Non-Jewish children were antagonistic toward Jewish children from very early on, particularly in public schools. Owing to the impact of both propaganda and the Nazi youth movements, the experiences of Jewish children and youth were predominantly negative and on occasion violent. By 1935, the overwhelming majority of Jewish youth possessed only Jewish friends. Owing to the obvious fact that non-Jewish children could identify their Jewish counterpart, from their school connections, Jewish children and youth were targeted constantly in public. This instilled a fear in most Jewish youth, who avoided any contact with all non-Jews in public. However, there were instances where the few Jews who possessed non-Jewish friends and acquaintances remained loyal and attempted to maintain their friendships as though they were normal. No single pattern characterising social contact between Jews and non-Jews who were children or youths emerges (not dissimilar to the situation of life at school). However, the majority of interviewees recalled a range of only negative experiences in any contact with their non-Jewish cohort.

Those interviewees who were already teenagers in 1933 recalled that they, too, experienced a period of transition. Non-Jewish friends were quick to remind their

Jewish friends that ‘they [the Nazis] don’t mean you!’¹⁰⁹ In discussing the attitudes of non-Jews toward Jews before 1935, Gisela Kent remarked:

It is very hard to say, because the people I knew, they said: “They don’t mean you! They mean the others!” And of course every Jew had a Christian who said: “They don’t mean you!” With reference to outright Jew-haters, we didn’t mix with them! They didn’t want us, and we didn’t want them!¹¹⁰

Hemmi Freeman elaborated on who the perceived ‘other’ was:

There were certain types of Germans that were anti-Jewish from the beginning; against non-German Jews more so. Let’s face it, Polish Jews or Eastern European Jews looked slightly different, dressed slightly different, behaved slightly different, and the Germans, that’s what they picked immediately. They didn’t speak German properly, or with an accent or with Yiddish German. That had an influence on some Germans. I remember at school if somebody pronounced a word badly, a non-Jewish boy, they immediately made an anti-Jewish remark: “You speak like a *polnische Jude!* [Polish Jew!]” It really depended on the background. Generally, the Germans that we came into contact with, business-wise or otherwise, they said: “Well it’s not you; we don’t mean you.” They made this excuse; we all know it.¹¹¹

However, it did not take very long for even comments like these to cease. In the majority of cases, Jews often became invisible figures to those non-Jews who had known them prior to 1933. In the case of children and youth, some parents even went to the trouble of informing the Jewish parents as to why the friendship of their children could no longer continue. Gerry Levy recalled the case of his friend, Günther Hartwig:

At the *Mittelschule* [Middle Secondary School] I had a number of non-Jewish friends. However, only a couple were real friends. I would go to their homes and vice versa. This ceased, in any case, after a while. One of these friends, Günther Hartwig, whose parents were Social Democrats, even came to my parents and informed them that their Günther was no longer able to spend time with me, due to the current political climate.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ Kent, op. cit., 12 January 1998.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ H. Freeman, op. cit., 13 May 1998.

¹¹² Levy, op. cit., 10 July 1997.

Perhaps even more psychologically brutal than this direct approach of severing relationships were occurrences where non-Jews simply ignored former Jewish friends if they encountered them, particularly in public. One such instance was that of a young Jewish girl and her 'adopted' non-Jewish aunt and uncle. Still sensitive to the rejection she suffered at the time, she recalled:

When we lived in Neustadt, across the street there lived a couple, who had no children. I was extremely fond of them, and they of me. I visited them each evening, and I called them aunt and uncle. I had the *Chanukah* [Jewish festival of lights] lights, and they had the Christmas tree, and I could go over. I also recall that they enjoyed our 'Jewish food,' and I theirs. What I also remember is that I liked them very, very much.

Then my family moved and this couple would still come to us for my birthday and then Hitler came. And then I saw them all of a sudden on the street and I ran towards them, and they turned around and went the other way, and I cried. I cried – that I remember, and they were supposed to have loved me very much!¹¹³

This non-violent, but no less damaging, rejection was in marked contradiction to the general abuse from non-Jewish youth which Jewish children and youth endured in public. This abuse ranged from verbal altercations to physical attacks and only increased as the years progressed and definitely escalated after September 1935. In a number of situations it also involved Jewish youth reaching saturation point, with regard to their constantly being taunted, and lashing out physically. This was a dangerous action to take and it indicated the near breaking-point level of frustration and anger which Jewish youth felt. The consensus of opinion of all interviewees was that members of the *Hitler Jugend* (HJ) were equally as prevalent in public as members of the *Bund deutscher Mädel* (BdM). However, the consensus was that the members of the HJ were far more brutal in their public behaviour and more aggressive toward Jews.¹¹⁴

¹¹³ H. B., op. cit., 15 August 1997.

¹¹⁴ Kent, op. cit., 12 January 1998.

In the instances where Jewish youth defended themselves physically, all felt great pride over their actions. They knew that this course of action was dangerous; however, it made them feel less humiliated and less of a victim. The young Inge-Ruth Herrmann recalled numerous altercations with members of the HJ, but one incident stood out:

They needled you, you know; just little things. I remember I came from school one day. I was walking with another couple of Jewish children and a couple of boys in the Hitler Youth pushed us off the footpath. I turned around and I shoved them back again. When I came home I told my mother. She was waiting for days for the Gestapo. I mean, we got told to keep away from them as much as we could.¹¹⁵

Gerry Levy also had similar experiences. He recalled a bicycle trip when he and a Jewish friend were cornered by a group of HJ. A fight ensued and Gerry's Jewish friend left him. He recalled that 'it was quite a good fight'¹¹⁶ and that they threw stones at him and that he still actually possesses a scar from the incident. He remarked:

I am very proud that I didn't run away. I didn't win, but they left me alone. I think they rather respected me for the fact that I didn't run away.¹¹⁷

The epitome of the vulnerability of Jewish children and youth is evidenced in this final recollection of the same young girl who experienced the rejection by her adopted non-Jewish aunt and uncle:

Around the corner from my street, *Königgrätzer Straße*, there lived a boy and whenever I went past there, he spat at me and called me "*Jude! Itzig!*" ["Jew! Yid!"] One day I felt so annoyed, he was in full Hitler Youth uniform, and I just lunged at him. I started scratching and he pushed me and we fell down; and a woman opened a window and shouted: "Aren't you ashamed to hit a girl!" And he never spat at me again.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵ Poppert, op. cit., 9 January 1998.

¹¹⁶ Levy, op. cit., 10 July 1997.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ H. B., op. cit., 15 August 1997.

Clearly most of the abuse Jewish children and youth encountered emanated from their initial identification as Jews in school, which made them potential targets anywhere. This would account for the experience of Günter Manneberg, who as the only Jew in his school remained unmolested until his peers learned that he was Jewish.¹¹⁹

There were few exceptions for Jewish children in their pre- and early teens who did not experience public abuse. The majority of interviewees remarked that by the time they were of an age ripe for forming friendships that the policy of state-sponsored antisemitism was well under way. Hence, in the majority of encounters they were treated as a faceless and depersonalised enemy. This trend did not always apply to those interviewees who were already teenagers when the change of regime took place. The pattern associated with Jewish children generally applied, but in the case of teenagers, there were some exceptions to this rule. These exceptions emanated, no doubt, from friendships having been formed prior to 1933. The situation of Hans Jensen (born Hansgünter Jeruchem in 1920) typifies this exception to the general rule of hostility:

I had a friend who was a leader in the *Hitler Jugend* [Hitler Youth]. He said to me one day: “We must go on a bicycle tour through the Harz and around that part of the world. My parents heard about this and said: “No way. No way, you can’t go.....you can’t sleep in a *Hitler Jugend-Heim* [Hitler Youth Hostel].” Anyway, I did in the end and I had a wonderful tour. We didn’t stay in a *Hitler Jugend-Heim*. He agreed that he would not risk that, but he didn’t travel in uniform either. I was about sixteen. I remember going to the famous *Denkmal* [monument] of Friedrich Barbarossa in Goslar and all that. We were gone close to two weeks.

I made another bicycle tour with this fellow Simon in 1937. From Magdeburg by train to Heidelberg. We had a tent; we couldn’t sleep in the *Jugendheime* so we took everything that we needed. And we went to the famous car race held every year near Heidelberg and got on our bikes to Mannheim; from Mannheim to Worms. We went to the oldest Jewish cemetery in Worms; and

¹¹⁹ Mannings, op. cit., 17 August 1999.

from Worms to Trier over the mountains; from Trier along the *Mosel* [River Moselle] to Koblenz: from Koblenz to Wiesbaden and to Frankfurt and then back to Magdeburg. That was a few weeks in the summer in 1937, and again without any problem.¹²⁰

Hans Jensen's positive experiences remain the general exception. When Hans Jensen was asked whether or not he and this friend ever discussed the political situation and state antisemitism, he replied:

He never discussed anything like that. It is a version of the psyche of that time. Some of them were so imbued with hate; they showed it; and others like him did not.¹²¹

Thus, Jewish children and youth had similar experiences to their parents and grandparents in their contact with non-Jews in public. However, there were differences as well. They, too, generally experienced a period of transition, even though it was somewhat shorter, owing to the early effects of propaganda at school and in the youth movements. Most relationships already established ended abruptly or faded out, again without any acrimony, by 1935. Some teenagers proved to be the exceptions and managed to maintain friendships with non-Jews, some until 1938. However, the experiences of the majority of children and teenagers do diverge from the experiences of adults when assessing their contacts with non-Jewish children. Owing to their identification as Jews at school, all Jewish youth became potential targets of verbal and physical abuse anywhere at any time. Much of the time the assailants were unknown to them and they became simply the face of the enemy. This did not take place to the same extent in the adult world. Adults were also far more experienced and equipped to assess and deal with such situations, should they arise. They also had a broad experience of German society prior to Hitler. For the majority of Jewish children and youth this

¹²⁰ Jensen, op. cit., 14 June 1999.

¹²¹ Jensen, op. cit., 11 July 1999.

was not the case. Their rejection and humiliation was often compounded by their confusion. The abuse they experienced also led the majority of them to reject all things German, much earlier than those Jewish members of the adult world.

Contact with non-Jews continued for a relatively short time after 1933. For the majority of Jews, such relationships had been terminated by the time the Nuremberg Laws were enacted. A minority of Jews maintained some social contact with non-Jewish friends and acquaintances beyond this period up until the pogrom of November 1938; some even beyond it. The experiences of adults and children varied, with children generally experiencing greater abuse by their non-Jewish cohort. Particularly after September 1935 through until the pogrom of November 1938, Jews confined themselves socially to the company of other Jews. The Nuremberg Laws effectively ended any possibility of social intercourse between the two groups once all residents in Germany were defined racially. Contact with non-Jews became potentially fraught with serious danger and even with accusations of '*Rassenschande*,' a crime which featured in Magdeburg even before the Nuremberg Laws were promulgated.

Rassenschande

A favourite target for racially motivated antisemitic agitation was the sphere of alleged intimacy between Jews and 'Aryans.'¹²² Such relations were branded '*Rassenschande*' or '*Rassenverseuchung*.' Relations between Jewish men and non-Jewish women were condemned as 'the product of a devilish universal plan for the poisoning of the races,' and German women were warned about such

¹²² Barkai, "Exclusion and Persecution: 1933–1938," in Meyer, ed., op. cit., p. 208.

temptations.¹²³ Even prior to the Nuremberg Laws this area of policy toward the Jews took on a violent form in Magdeburg. Organised terror always preceded any new laws or ordinances¹²⁴ and this proved equally so in the case of Magdeburg. Trials of Jews in Magdeburg for ‘*Rassenschande*’ featured as early as June 1935.¹²⁵ Owing to the co-operation of the Nazi Party (in *Gau* Magdeburg-Anhalt), the judiciary and the city council, Jews from all avenues of society in the city were publicly humiliated, degraded and in the end incarcerated for this crime,¹²⁶ the most notorious being that of the baptised Jew, Albert Hirschland. For the Jews of Magdeburg this crime, complete with its associated demonisation of Jews as racial polluters, exacerbated isolation and exclusion, whilst simultaneously adding further degradation to their already difficult daily lives. Further to this, it created a real fear of contact with non-Jews, especially in business relations, as unprotected by the law, they were easy targets. Given the grotesque and sensationalistic media coverage of the alleged crimes, the impact in the public domain for Jews was immediate and unrelenting.

A number of the recorded trials of Jews for ‘*Rassenschande*’ in Magdeburg bear witness to what can only be described as the legal application of the pseudo-scientific theories of ‘racial hygiene,’ whereby near pornographic fantasies were played out in trials and depicted in the print media. After passage of the Nuremberg Laws, many Jews were arrested throughout Germany on charges of ‘*Rassenschande*’ and then ‘persuaded’ in gaols or concentration camps to sell

¹²³ Barkai, “Exclusion and Persecution: 1933–1938,” in Meyer, ed., op. cit., p. 208.

¹²⁴ Ibid., p. 209.

¹²⁵ Correspondence to the Oberlandesgerichtspräsidenten in Naumburg a/S, 22 June 1935, Bestand Rep. C 128, Signatur Nr. 81, LHASA MD, p. 153.

¹²⁶ Kurt Sabatzky, *Meine Erinnerungen an den Nationalsozialismus*, undated, File ME 541; MM65, LBIA NY, op. cit., pp. 25–26.

their businesses.¹²⁷ Of the five cases to be discussed in this section, this was certainly the case for those employees accused of ‘*Rassenschande*’ at Magdeburg’s leading department store: ‘*Kaufhaus Gebrüder Barasch*’, owned and operated by Hermann Broder, a member of the *Synagogen-Gemeinde* and prominent figure in the Jewish community. However, the remaining three cases only loosely fall into this category and perhaps bear even greater witness, not only to covetous greed, but to the city’s determination to publicly vilify and destroy ordinary Jews.¹²⁸ In the remaining four cases, one individual was the director of a business college, one a solicitor, one an unnamed woman and the final individual was a general practitioner. Of the five cases, only one of the accused miraculously escaped conviction and was acquitted. In the remaining four cases all three were convicted and sentenced to imprisonment, but there was one exception.

The most widely publicised and sensationalised trial for ‘*Rassenschande*’ in Magdeburg for the entire Nazi period was that of Albert Hirschland, who was tried and convicted in June 1935.¹²⁹ This was the first show trial in the city¹³⁰ and attracted significant local and national media coverage. The propaganda value of the trial was maximised by the Nazi Party with a sixteen-page special edition of

¹²⁷ Barkai, op. cit., p. 71.

¹²⁸ For a discussion on the practice of denunciations involving ‘*Rassenschande*,’ see Christl Wickert, ‘Popular Attitudes to National Socialist Antisemitism: Denunciations for ‘Insidious Offenses’ and ‘Racial Ignominy’,’ in Bankier, ed., op. cit., pp. 282–295.

¹²⁹ Correspondence to the Oberlandesgerichtspräsidenten in Naumburg a/S, 22 June 1935, Bestand Rep. C 128, Signatur Nr. 81, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 153.

¹³⁰ Spector, ed., op. cit., p. 782. At the time of the completion of this chapter this famous trial had only been referred to in this source and in David J. Hogan, ed., *The Holocaust Chronicle* Lincolnwood, Illinois: Publications International, 2000, p. 92.

Der Stürmer dedicated solely to the Hirschland case published throughout Germany on 1 August 1935.¹³¹

In 1935 Albert Hirschland was the director of the formerly named ‘*Brucks höhere Handelsschule*’. The renamed ‘*Kaufmännische Privatschule*’ was a vocational institution which had been founded some thirty-eight years prior by Hirschland’s brother-in-law, Alfred Bruck.¹³² Bruck was married to Hirschland’s sister, Elfriede. All parties were Jewish. Owing to Bruck’s partial blindness and ill-health, Hirschland had operated the business college for some time.¹³³

Hirschland had commenced instruction for conversion to Lutheranism in November 1934 and was duly baptised on 17 March 1935.¹³⁴ According to a former acquaintance of Hirschland’s, Fritz Voss, Hirschland had undergone conversion as he had become engaged to a non-Jewish woman by May 1935.¹³⁵ Voss, also Jewish, had been the manager of the leading Magdeburg shoe store ‘*Rheingold*’ for approximately fifteen years. Originally a Jewish-owned business, the shop had been ‘aryanised’ in September 1933 and the new owners had retained Voss in their employ.¹³⁶ Even though a former acquaintance of Hirschland’s, they had not seen one another in seven years.

In the middle of May 1935 Hirschland was accused of ‘*Rassenschande*’ and of having sexual relations with under-aged females. His accusers were adult female

¹³¹ “Albert Hirschland: Der Rassenschänder von Magdeburg,” in *Der Stürmer*, Sondernummer 2, 1. August 1935, Bestand Rep. C 128, Signatur Nr. 81, LHASA MD, op. cit.

¹³² Correspondence from Alfred Bruck to the Reichsvertretung der Deutschen Juden, Berlin, 5 September 1935, Collection RG-11.00M.31, Reel 130, File 721-1-2845, USHMMA, op. cit., pp. 388–389.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Betr.: Taufe Hirschland, undated, Bestand Rep. A, Spec. G, Signatur Nr. A 800, AKPS, unnumbered page, one page.

¹³⁵ Fritz Voss, *Sensationsprozess ‘Rassenschänder Hirschland’*, 21. Oktober 1935, Collection 0.2, File 1079, YVA, op. cit., p. 1.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

students of his college. In the ensuing investigation Hirschland's diaries were uncovered. Both Sabatzky¹³⁷ and Voss confirm that the diaries record amongst more pedestrian events, a sordid side of Hirschland's life. Voss recorded that he blushed with shame when he read the entries.¹³⁸ In his memoirs, Sabatzky writes that the alleged exploits of Hirschland should not have been glossed over, as he may have abused his position. However, he also writes that should Hirschland be found guilty, such a crime would normally have attracted a prison term of three years.¹³⁹

Owing to the mentioning of Voss's name in a cursory manner in Hirschland's diaries, Voss was later called upon as a witness in the trial. According to Voss, the legal counsel for the office of the public prosecutor, a man by the name of Kürth, sought every avenue of attempting to accuse Voss of crimes as well.¹⁴⁰ Voss was targeted for interrogation and subjected to scrutiny because of his Jewishness. All parties involved intended to use the situation to the best advantage for the further vilification of not only the Jews in the city, but nationally as well.

The trial was set for 18 June 1935. Eight days before the trial, advertisements were placed in trams, on billboards and all over the city advertising the 'sensational court case against the race defiler Hirschland.'¹⁴¹ Demonstrations were organised, where representatives of the *Gauleiter* and Chief Editor Holz of

¹³⁷ Kurt Sabatzky, *Meine Erinnerungen an den Nationalsozialismus*, undated, File ME 541; MM65, LBIA NY, op. cit., p. 26.

¹³⁸ Fritz Voss, *Sensationsprozess 'Rassenschänder Hirschland'*, 21. Oktober 1935, Collection 0.2, File 1079, YVA, op. cit., p. 1.

¹³⁹ Kurt Sabatzky, *Meine Erinnerungen an den Nationalsozialismus*, undated, File ME 541; MM65, LBIA NY, op. cit., p. 26.

¹⁴⁰ Fritz Voss, *Sensationsprozess 'Rassenschänder Hirschland'*, 21. Oktober 1935, Collection 0.2, File 1079, YVA, op. cit., p. 1.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 1–2.

Der Stürmer addressed the masses on the subject of ‘The True Face of the Jew.’¹⁴² Voss testified on 18 June 1935 to a closed court. Only Nazi hierarchy, Chief Editor Holz, photographers and those directly involved in the proceedings were present.

After two days of deliberation, on 19 June 1935 Hirschland was declared a dangerous and habitual criminal and found guilty of five counts of illicit sexual acts with female students. He was sentenced to a total of ten years’ imprisonment and ten years’ loss of civil rights in preventative detention.¹⁴³ It is not known what became of Hirschland and it can only be assumed that he died in prison.¹⁴⁴ For Hirschland the case ended with his incarceration, but, for those Jews associated with the defendant ramifications were to follow.

Both local newspapers the *Magdeburgische Zeitung* and *Die Mitteldeutsche Zeitung* reported accounts of the proceedings of the two days, together with the verdict.¹⁴⁵ The former had, in its sensationalistic account of Hirschland’s misdeeds, included the fiction that Voss had made his apartment available to Hirschland for the purposes of mass orgies.¹⁴⁶ Voss was dismissed from his position at the shoe store and was informed by friends that he should leave Magdeburg immediately as the police were seeking him. Even though Voss had committed no crime, he knew, as a Jew, that this detail was irrelevant and he escaped. After travelling from place to place, he finally lodged with his nephew in

¹⁴² Fritz Voss, *Sensationsprozess ‘Rassenschänder Hirschland’*, 21. Oktober 1935, Collection 0.2, File 1079, YVA, op. cit., p. 2.

¹⁴³ Correspondence to the Oberlandesgerichtspräsidenten in Naumburg a/S, 22 June 1935, Bestand Rep. C 128, Signatur Nr. 81, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 153.

¹⁴⁴ Spector, ed., op. cit., p. 782.

¹⁴⁵ Newspaper reports on the Hirschland case, Magdeburg, 19-20 June 1935, Collection RG-11.00M.31, Reel 130, File 721-1-2845, USHMMA, op. cit., pp. 412–423.

¹⁴⁶ Fritz Voss, *Sensationsprozess ‘Rassenschänder Hirschland’*, 21. Oktober 1935, Collection 0.2, File 1079, YVA, op. cit., p. 2.

Mannheim.¹⁴⁷ On 25 July 1935, advertisements nationwide were issued of the forthcoming special edition of *Der Stürmer* that appeared on 1 August, dedicated to the ‘sensational court case of Hirschland, the race defiler from Magdeburg.’¹⁴⁸

After his nephew pleaded with him to leave Mannheim, Voss left for his parents’ home in Krefeld on 31 July. Later in Mainz he purchased a copy of the sixteen-page special edition of *Der Stürmer* and ‘was speechless over the outrageousness of the untruths’ and was even more shocked to discover photographs of himself in the newspaper.¹⁴⁹ The entire newspaper was replete with its well-known vulgar and crudely antisemitic language.¹⁵⁰ Realising that his situation was hopeless and in order to avoid arrest, Voss took a one-way flight from Cologne to Amsterdam.

Bruck’s college had been shut down in June 1935 during the demonstrations and a sign reading: ‘The Jews’ college is closed!’¹⁵¹ had been affixed to its entrance. Alfred Bruck was soon thereafter accused of tax evasion and ordered to pay RM 30,000. As a result the college remained permanently closed and the real estate, which he owned, was sold off. Bruck and his family were left penniless.¹⁵²

Clearly, it would appear that Hirschland was promiscuous and had a number of non-Jewish consensual sexual partners and he may have even abused his

¹⁴⁷ Fritz Voss, *Sensationsprozess ‘Rassenschänder Hirschland’*, 21. Oktober 1935, Collection 0.2, File 1079, YVA, op. cit., p. 3.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ “Albert Hirschland: Der Rassenschänder von Magdeburg,” in *Der Stürmer*, Sondernummer 2, 1. August 1935, Bestand Rep. C 128, Signatur Nr. 81, LHASA MD, op. cit.

¹⁵¹ Ibid. The original German text of the sign reads: ‘Die Judenschule ist geschlossen!’

¹⁵² Correspondence from Alfred Bruck to the Reichsvertretung der Deutschen Juden, Berlin, 5 September 1935, Collection RG-11.00M.31, Reel 130, File 721-1-2845, USHMMA, op. cit., pp. 388–389.

position of trust at the college. However, this was maximised in the Nazi propaganda campaign against the Jews, both locally and nationally. The remaining details of the entire case and the campaign that followed conform to the desired and much-publicised image of Jews as sexual predators and of being capable of every type of sexual perversion. To this end the media campaign in Magdeburg and beyond reached a frenzy of demonisation and hatred. Through the diligence of *Der Stürmer* the case of Hirschland, and everyone whose photograph appeared in that special edition, became household knowledge throughout Germany. This also occurred before the Nuremberg Laws were even enacted. With such a public campaign in progress, all Jews in the city were potential targets.

The following multiple cases of '*Rassenschande*' occurred after the promulgation of the Nuremberg Laws and involved senior staff at Magdeburg's leading and most modern department store: '*Kaufhaus Gebrüder Barasch*'. This establishment was owned and operated by Hermann Broder, a member of the *Synagogen-Gemeinde*.

This department store was a household name in Magdeburg and possessed a reputation as a fine establishment. The multiple cases of '*Rassenschande*' surrounding '*Barasch*' caused a sensation locally. Of the numerous cases of '*Rassenschande*' which took place in the city, this one particularly remained in the minds of all interviewees, largely due to the owner's highly respected profile in the Jewish community and the profile of the department store as an essential component of the cityscape.

Early in December 1935 an informant contacted the office of the State Police in Magdeburg claiming that a number of senior male staff at '*Barasch*' had committed 'serious acts of moral indecency' against female employees, including

apprentices.¹⁵³ All of the male staff implicated were Jewish and all of the alleged victims were non-Jewish females. The department store was ordered to close temporarily on 12 December 1935 and the owner was instructed by the police that it could re-open on 14 December,¹⁵⁴ provided that all senior managerial staff, including the accused, had been replaced by ‘Aryan’ staff.¹⁵⁵ The owner complied and four of the accused were arrested and taken into custody. Three managed to evade initial arrest, but were later apprehended.

The three senior male staff members who were originally arrested were Julius Fischel, Rudolf Friedländer and Isidor Gans.¹⁵⁶ The fourth man originally arrested appears to have been the non-Jewish owner of the hotel in *Kantstraße*, where the alleged crimes were to have taken place. His name was Oehm.¹⁵⁷ Three other Jews accused of involvement were also arrested; only two of whose names have been located, they being Petzall and Wertheimer.¹⁵⁸ Fischel had been the personnel chief at ‘*Barasch*’ since 1927; Friedländer was the supervisor of general staff, including apprentices; and Gans had been the company secretary since 1922.

Whilst attending to the assistance required by the defendants, Kurt Sabatzky of the CV makes repeated references in his correspondence to the number of Jews, both in Magdeburg and beyond, who were arrested for ‘*Rassenschande*.’ In all

¹⁵³ Betrifft: Verfehlungen von leitenden Angestellten des jüdischen Warenhauses Barasch in Magdeburg, 13. Dezember 1935, Bestand Rep. C 20 I. I b, Signatur Nr. 119, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 302.

¹⁵⁴ Betrifft: Schließung des jüdischen Kaufhauses Barasch in Magdeburg, 13. Dezember 1935, *ibid.*, p. 301.

¹⁵⁵ Betrifft: Verfehlungen von leitenden Angestellten des jüdischen Warenhauses Barasch in Magdeburg, 13. Dezember 1935, *ibid.*, p. 303.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 302.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸ Correspondence from the regional office of the CV in Leipzig to the head office of the CV in Berlin, 6 January 1935, Collection RG-11.00M.31, Reel 130, File 721-1-2845, USHMMA, op. cit., p. 359.

instances this was for what would have been deemed normal relationships between Jews and non-Jews prior to September 1935. Reference is also made to the amount of publicity the case had drawn from the press in Frankfurt.¹⁵⁹ In the ensuing weeks, a large number of the store's Jewish employees tendered their immediate resignation. Although not implicated in any way in the alleged crimes, Hermann Broder was already investigating the sale of his business.¹⁶⁰ Clearly, both Broder and his staff were fearful and felt vulnerable.

As in the case of Albert Hirschland, the legal counsel for the office of the public prosecutor was the same representative, a man by the name of Kürth. Likewise, the presiding judge, Judge Pippig, was the same. Both men were notorious antisemites. On 25 February 1935, *Die Mitteldeutsche Zeitung*, which had been reporting the entire trial proceedings, triumphantly wrote that Fischel had been sentenced to four years' imprisonment, Gans to one year's imprisonment and Oehm to five months. The other accused had been acquitted.¹⁶¹ It is not known if they were re-arrested, as was the tendency in such cases.

In these instances of '*Rassenschande*' the clear delineation was made that, as in accordance with the Nuremberg Laws, any sexual relations between Jews and 'Aryans' were prohibited. Sabatzky commented that Jews were being arrested for exactly this reason. This separation in accordance with both law and Nazi racial doctrine is demonstrated rigidly. As articulated by Barkai,¹⁶² this instance is also an excellent example of sale by coercion, as Hermann Broder, sensing the

¹⁵⁹ Correspondence from the regional office of the CV in Leipzig to the head office of the CV in Berlin, 15 December 1935, Collection RG-11.00M.31, Reel 130, File 721-1-2845, USHMMA, op. cit., p. 373.

¹⁶⁰ Correspondence from the regional office of the CV in Leipzig to the head office of the CV in Berlin, 6 January 1936, *ibid.*, pp. 359–360.

¹⁶¹ "Gefängnisstrafen im Barasch-Prozeß," in *Die Mitteldeutsche Zeitung*, 25. Februar 1935, *ibid.*, p. 348.

¹⁶² Barkai, op. cit., p. 71.

inevitable and fearful that he would be accused of such a crime, had sold his business to Willibald Lemke by March 1936.¹⁶³

The three remaining examples of trials were not as well documented as the previous two. However, the recording of these offences conform to the Nazi policy in Magdeburg of forced segregation and of ‘proving’ the true nature of ‘Jewish sexual perversion and predatory practice.’ Throughout these trials there followed the associated vilification and ruination. In this respect they are not reflective of cases which arose from the sole motivation of ‘aryanisation.’

On 12 March 1936, a non-Jewish insurance agent, Bernhardt Gans of *Jakobstraße*, was sentenced to fourteen months’ imprisonment for ‘*Rassenschande*.’¹⁶⁴ Both he and the Jewess involved were also deprived of all civil rights for three years. Gans had spent the preceding New Year’s Eve with an unnamed Jewish woman and was denounced by one of his neighbours. Of particular interest in this case was the absence of a prison sentence for the Jewess involved. It could be postulated that as the ‘crime’ had taken place at Gans’ residence, that the judge found him more culpable and wished to make an example of him as a warning to ‘Aryans’ and Jews.

Another key case was the arrest, imprisonment and subsequent trial of the Magdeburg solicitor and notary, Willi Spanier in 1938. Spanier was accused of committing indecent sexual assault on a fifteen-year-old male office employee. A particularly well-organised hate campaign was instigated by the city’s governmental and legal bodies against the innocent Spanier, complete with an

¹⁶³ Correspondence from the regional office of the CV in Leipzig to the head office of the CV in Berlin, 20 March 1936, Collection RG-11.00M.31, Reel 130, File 721-1-2845, USHMMA, op. cit., p. 342.

¹⁶⁴ Strafsache, 20. März 1936, Bestand Rep. C 144, Signatur Nr. 68, LHASA MD, p. 10.

article in *Der Stürmer* entitled: ‘The notary Spanier! The sex criminal from Magdeburg.’¹⁶⁵ The half-page article reported the alleged crime in its customary crude and grotesque language, which included an exploration of the topic: ‘The Jew as master of perversion.’¹⁶⁶ After a lengthy court battle he was found innocent and released,¹⁶⁷ an event which Gerry Levy recalled vividly. Rumour had circulated in the Jewish community that upon Spanier’s release, he was going to be re-arrested immediately. In an attempt to circumvent this, Hans Lewin, Gerry Levy’s maternal uncle, together with a group of other friends of Spanier’s, organised a car to be waiting at the rear of the Palace of Justice for him. Lewin himself collected Spanier and drove him out of the province.¹⁶⁸ It is not known what eventually became of Spanier.

The final case also occurred in 1938. On 26 August 1938, the general practitioner Dr Erich Böhm was convicted on two counts of ‘*Rassenschande*.’¹⁶⁹ He was found guilty of maintaining a sexual relationship with a married ‘Aryan’ woman since the application of the Nuremberg Laws and of employing a female ‘Aryan’ housekeeper under the age of forty-five years. The chief witness in the case was the co-accused – the woman who was having the extra-marital affair with Böhm. Their business relationship actually dated from 1920 and their personal one from 1930. At the time of the trial Böhm was unmarried. The judgement read that sexual relations took place approximately every three to four

¹⁶⁵ “Notar Spanier! Der Sexualverbrecher von Magdeburg,” in *Der Stürmer*, undated, Bestand Rep. 30, Signatur Nr. 2501 199, STAM, pp. 37–38.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

¹⁶⁷ Kurt Sabatzky, *Meine Erinnerungen an den Nationalsozialismus*, undated, File ME 541; MM65, LBIA NY, op. cit., p. 26.

¹⁶⁸ Levy, op. cit., 10 July 1997.

¹⁶⁹ *Betrifft: Strafverfahren gegen den prakt. Arzt Dr. Böhm wegen Rassenschande*, 15. September 1935, Bestand Rep. C 28 I g, Signatur Nr. 16, Band 5, LHASA MD, op. cit., p. 41.

weeks and that in spite of the known breaches of the Nuremberg Laws, Böhm maintained the relationship until arrested. Sentencing was set for 4 October and his sentence remains unknown. This final example is perhaps the most typical of the cases. The motivations of Böhm's lover, turned informant, accuser and witness, remain unknown. However, this case illustrates how perilously dangerous any social relationships with non-Jews had become. Quite separate from their public demonisation, Jews were also completely unprotected legally and put themselves at potential risk when interacting on any level with non-Jews.

By the very essence of the crime, '*Rassenschande*' could be viewed as perhaps the most humiliating and degrading of all 'crimes' a Jew could be accused of at that time. A number of observations may be drawn from these cases in Magdeburg. Not all cases resulted from the possibility of an 'aryanisation,' but the sample cases from Magdeburg indicate a range of motivations. The cases of Albert Hirschland and Willi Spanier provided the local Nazi Party and racial ideologists with perfect propagandistic opportunities. Regardless of the veracity of the accusations, they made sure that they used such cases to prove to the public the supposed perverse nature of Jewish sexuality. In the case of '*Kaufhaus Gebrüder Barasch*' the prime motivation would have been the 'aryanisation' of the business. In the remaining two cases of Gans and Böhm, personal motivations for gain or revenge came into play. However, the unifying element in all of the cases was the public humiliation, the shame and the degradation both the accused and the Jewish community experienced. In depriving Jews of any legal status, the Nuremberg Laws made them perfect targets for any accusation. With the introduction of the crime of '*Rassenschande*' added to the ongoing public campaign of demonisation, Jews were now defined legislatively as the ultimate

other and capable of racial pollution and ruination through social contact and sexual relations. Understandably, this led to fear and a sense of vulnerability on the part of Jews, and particularly so in the public domain, where they predominantly encountered non-Jews. The creation of this new crime also marked irrevocably the official nullification of what had been the success story of the much-loved and proudly nurtured German-Jewish identity.

The Destruction of the German-Jewish Symbiosis

In the early years of the Nazi regime the majority of the adult Jewish population clung to their much-cherished German-Jewish identities. Magdeburg was no exception. The majority of the community proudly boasted that they were German citizens of the Jewish faith. With the onslaught of antisemitic policies and their application in all spheres of life, many Jewish Germans wanted to maintain the traditional symbiosis they had grown up to know and love, while the Nazis intended its complete nullification. With the promulgation of the Nuremberg Laws the German-Jewish symbiosis was irrevocably destroyed. Whether Jews accepted it or not became irrelevant, as the process of public vilification and incrimination increased. In Magdeburg the very public destruction of this relationship was perhaps best symbolised by both the judicial and the media campaigns against the Jews. By the end of 1935 the Jews of Magdeburg were suffocating in their own city. The pursuit of economic strangulation, of racial segregation and vilification was undertaken with great energy by the judiciary and reported regularly in the media. It is in this pursuit of media coverage of trials of Jews accused of fabricated crimes that the end of this relationship is well viewed. In Magdeburg, as elsewhere, the humiliation and the despair over this state-sponsored persecution

was felt so keenly by some of the accused, that they could not bear the daily strain of incrimination and degradation anymore and committed suicide.¹⁷⁰ For the Jews who accepted this forced separation a renewal or (re-) discovery of their Jewishness took place.¹⁷¹ For those who did not, a gaping void emerged as they were thrown into an identity crisis and often remained in a vacuum.

The unanimous opinion of all interviewees when the subject of identities was raised was of the absolute and irresolute Germanness of the adult generation in their social circle. Countless male members of their families had served with honour and pride in World War One. Their family pedigrees were thoroughly rooted in the German-speaking lands. One interviewee expressed the attitude prevalent in his own home, which could easily be applied to all of the interviewees. He remarked:

I remember my father describing himself as a *deutscher Bürger jüdischen Glaubens* [German citizen of the Jewish faith]. I also remember very well my father's father having a picture of the *Kaiser* [Emperor] on the wall. He didn't have too many religious things around, but he had a picture of the *Kaiser*!¹⁷²

Gisela Kent expressed similar sentiments indicating the level of nationalism in this small community, when she remarked that her family was 'very liberal, very German. They were Germans with a Jewish religion.'¹⁷³

Conversely, whilst social contact with non-Jews in the city was limited, the Jews of Magdeburg felt perfectly equal and fully accepted into the city's fabric.

For this reason alone, particularly in the early years, and for some Jews even up

¹⁷⁰ For a detailed discussion on the position of suicide in the Jewish community of Germany under Nazism, see Konrad Kwiet, "The Ultimate Refuge – Suicide in the Jewish Community under Nazism," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*, vol. XXIX, 1984, pp. 173–198.

¹⁷¹ Jehuda Reinharz, "Jewish Nationalism and Jewish Identity in Central Europe," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*, vol. XXXVII, 1992, pp. 147–167.

¹⁷² Personal interview, name withheld on request (recorded), Sydney, 13 July 2004.

¹⁷³ Kent, op. cit., 5 January 1998.

until 1938, the community felt that as loyal citizens the legal apparatus of the state would protect them. Given the large number of war veterans in the community, there was also a strong feeling that their service record would protect them and their loved ones. Until 1935, whilst some Jews were confused about events, others were in total denial of the situation with regard to their new and evolving place, or lack thereof, in Hitler's Germany. Gisela Kent lamented her father's denial of the situation:

This is a very sore point with me. My father said it can't last, and that: "They don't mean me. I was a soldier on the front; I got an Iron Cross. Those people in the concentration camps, they must have done something wrong."¹⁷⁴

Prior to the Nuremberg Laws, the majority of adult community members attempted to adjust to their changed status, yet still clung to their trusted German-Jewish identities. Simultaneously, they learned to cope with taunting and public displays of antisemitism. Most felt it was temporary. However, this did not make it any easier. Interviewees recalled many instances of being excluded or publicly embarrassed on account of their Jewishness. Gisela Kent recalled such an instance:

This girl said to me: "My mother told me that Jews cannot sing the national anthem." And I said that's silly, of course we can. So she said: "Then sing it!" So, I sang it! Unfortunately, I cannot sing. So, I'm sure that she never doubted her mother's word again [laughing]! I knew all the words, but the notes weren't there!¹⁷⁵

All illusions of the hoped-for temporary nature of their situation evaporated in September 1935. In Magdeburg this symbolic end was made manifest in the judiciary and the press. On 7 December 1935, the *Reich* and Prussian Minister for the Interior requested that the coverage of all criminal trials of Jews be made a

¹⁷⁴ Kent, op. cit., 5 January 1998.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

priority.¹⁷⁶ Magdeburg proved no exception to this rule, as previously demonstrated in the coverage of ‘*Rassenschande*’ trials. Given the new legal and racial status of Jews, propaganda only intensified. On 3 January 1936, *Die Mitteldeutsche Zeitung* in Magdeburg published an article discussing the topic: ‘No national minority.’¹⁷⁷ The reality of the end of this relationship was now being played out to the full. Jews were not only to be pursued in the judiciary and the press, but Jewish voices were also going to be forbidden in the public domain. In Magdeburg regular bans on Jewish public speakers were ordered, with the strict instruction that should such bans be breached, then the offending parties were to be arrested.¹⁷⁸

As in the trials involving the crime of ‘*Rassenschande*,’ other cases which were played out in Magdeburg emanated from the same variety of motivations. The primary purpose was to expose ‘Jewish criminality.’ Two high-profile cases involving invented crimes typify the torment played out publicly and also represent this tragic end.

Ernst Fliess was a prominent solicitor and respected member of the Jewish community. Having been arrested and charged for the alleged crime of trafficking in foreign currency, he opted to represent himself. The charges were manufactured and Fliess was innocent. In spite of the judicial ruling which guaranteed that legal counsel could not be detained when representing a defendant, Fliess’s opponent,

¹⁷⁶ Memorandum the Reich and Prussian Minister for the Interior to the State Governments, 7 December 1935, Collection JM, File 10624, YVA, op. cit., p. 101.

¹⁷⁷ “Keine nationale Minderheit! Grundsätzliche Ausführungen zur Judenfrage,” in *Die Mitteldeutsche Zeitung*, 3. Januar 1936, Collection JM, File 10624, YVA, op. cit., p. 105.

¹⁷⁸ Rundschreiben; Redeverbot, 21. Februar 1935 – 12. Februar 1937, Bestand Z.-Dok.001, Signatur Nr. 001, ASGM, op. cit., pp. 230–233; Collection JM, File 10624, YVA, op. cit., pp. 91–152; Bestand Z.-Dok.001, Signatur Nr. 099, ASGM, p. 99.

Dr Kulmey, insisted that Fliess be detained and Judge Pippig obliged.¹⁷⁹ Fliess was eventually found guilty and sentenced to nine months' imprisonment in January 1936. Sabatzky wrote that 'not long thereafter in a moment of despair Fliess took his own life.'¹⁸⁰ Sabatzky also wrote that the campaign of public defamation in the city's press had shattered Fliess's already fragile nervous state.¹⁸¹

The case of the prominent Magdeburg banker, Philipp Schmulewitz, and three of his clients in August 1936 mirrored the situation of Fliess. Schmulewitz was accused of the same crime. Once again the combination of the judiciary and the press proved no match and all of the defendants were publicly harangued. On 8 August 1936, Sabatzky reported that all four defendants had been found guilty as charged.¹⁸² Throughout the course of the trials *Die Mitteldeutsche Zeitung* had reported in sensationalistic and antisemitic rhetoric the entire proceedings and the final verdicts. Philipp Schmulewitz was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment, ten years' loss of civil rights and ordered to pay a fine of RM 320,000; Max Friedländer was sentenced to three years' imprisonment, three years' loss of civil rights and ordered to pay a fine of RM 5,000; Ilse Friedländer was sentenced to two years' imprisonment, three years' loss of civil rights and ordered to pay a fine of RM 3,000; and Jenny Lederer was sentenced to fourteen months'

¹⁷⁹ Kurt Sabatzky, *Meine Erinnerungen an den Nationalsozialismus*, undated, File ME 541; MM65, LBIA NY, op. cit., p. 26.

¹⁸⁰ Betr.: Prozessangelegenheit Rechtsanwalt Fliess, 1. Februar 1936, Collection RG-11.00M.31, Reel 130, File 721-1-2845, USHMMA, op. cit., p. 353.

¹⁸¹ Kurt Sabatzky, *Meine Erinnerungen an den Nationalsozialismus*, undated, File ME 541; MM65, LBIA NY, op. cit., p. 26.

¹⁸² Betr.: Prozess Schmulewitz - Magdeburg, 8. August 1936, Collection RG-11.00M.31, Reel 130, File 721-1-2845, USHMMA, op. cit., p. 335.

imprisonment, three years' loss of civil rights and ordered to pay a fine of RM 10,000.¹⁸³

Regardless of how Jews felt about their identities, after September 1935 a decision had been made for them. As far as the Nazis were concerned there were only Jews in Germany and not Jewish Germans. With the full application of the Nuremberg Laws this separation enabled the public vilification of Jews as the apparatus of the state sought to lay bare their 'criminality.' In Magdeburg the combined efforts of the judiciary and the press proved highly successful. In many respects this symbolised the destruction of the German-Jewish symbiosis in the city. One of the outcomes of this amputation was the creation and nurturing of Jewish identities and Jewish space. Jewish education became a priority. Owing to their exclusion in every sphere, by 1938 Jewish lives in Magdeburg were centred on the home and the few remaining Jewish institutions still operational.

¹⁸³ Newspaper reports on the Schmulewitz case, Magdeburg, 15 August 1936, Collection RG-11.00M.31, Reel 130, File 721-1-2845, USHMMA, op. cit., pp. 335–339.