

## The forgotten Mass Attacks on Jewish Homes during the 1938 November Pogrom

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The 1938 pogrom in Nazi Germany is perceived by scholars as the turning point towards a genocidal society. While the attacks on synagogues and Jewish shops are a commonly discussed topic, most scholarly and public accounts neglect entirely the invasion of private homes during the violent events. This is particularly astonishing because survivors frequently mention such attacks in their testimonies.

My paper aims to investigate this glaring discrepancy in Kristallnacht accounts by employing a comparative micro-historical approach. The results of my research underscore that scholars hitherto have gravely overlooked the scale and extent of the attacks on Jewish homes. For dozens and dozens of villages, towns and cities in the Greater German Reich, evidence of the intrusion into and destruction of homes and apartments emerges from contemporary administrative reports, letters and diaries, as well as from survivor testimonies. In some big cities, e.g. Duesseldorf and Rostock, SA and SS vandalized between 75 and 90 percent of Jewish homes. As widespread as the attacks were, as intense and audacious was the destruction, thousands of homes were left uninhabitable with their windows and doors broken, china, furniture, and lamps smashed to pieces, and valuables looted. Humiliations, beatings, murder and sexual violence frequently accompanied the attacks on the last refuge of Jews: their homes. The forgotten, brutal mass intrusion on their privacy perpetrated by SA, SS, Hitler youth, and their neighbors had a horrific psychological and material impact on the Jewish victims. It has been an overlooked, yet decisive factor, for countless individual decisions of German and Austrian Jews to flee their homeland or commit suicide.