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Status and Prospects for Research on the German Police and Administration's Actions Against Poland in the Period from mid-October 1938 till December 1939

Stan i perspektywy badań nad policyjno-administracyjnymi działaniami strony niemieckiej wobec Polski w okresie połowa października 1938–grudzień 1939 r.

ABSTRACT

Preparations for aggression against Poland on the police-administrative front began in Germany as early as the spring of 1939. At the forefront, here are the activities of the police authorities (*Gestapo, Security Service*) aimed at collecting data on persons in the territory of Poland to be arrested and possibly liquidated. In the form of arrest warrants, these findings were then used, in September and October 1939, by the so-called operational groups of the Security Police and SD (*Einsatzgruppen*). In mid-October, these groups established permanent headquarters, spreading political terror over the occupied

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areas. The administrative side of the occupier's activities differed depending on the status given to particular areas: whether they were incorporated into the Reich or included in the so-called General Government. All these aspects, including the personalities of the functionaries and clerks involved, deserve full investigation.

Key words: war preparation, pacification operations, appointment letters, occupation administration, research status

STRESZCZENIE

Przygotowania do agresji na Polskę na froncie policyjno-administracyjnym rozpoczęły się w Niemczech już wiosną 1939 r. Na pierwszy plan wysuwają się tu działania organów policyjnych (Gestapo, Służba Bezpieczeństwa) zmierzające do zebrania danych o osobach przebywających na terytorium Polski, które miały zostać aresztowane i ewentualnie zlikwidowane. Ustalenia te, w formie nakazów aresztowania, były następnie wykorzystywane we wrześniu i październiku 1939 r. przez tzw. grupy operacyjne Policji Bezpieczeństwa i SD (Einsatzgruppen). W połowie października grupy te utworzyły stałe siedziby, szerząc terror polityczny na okupowanych terenach. Administracyjna strona działalności okupanta różniła się w zależności od statusu nadanego poszczególnym obszarom: czy zostały one włączone do Rzeszy, czy też weszły w skład tzw. Generalnego Gubernatorstwa. Wszystkie te aspekty, w tym osobowości zaangażowanych funkcjonariuszy i urzędników, zasługują na pełne zbadanie.

Słowa kluczowe: przygotowania wojenne, operacje pacyfikacyjne, akty powołania, administracja okupacyjna, stan badań

Although, as presumed recently by Polish historians, the decision to solve problems with Poland with the use of other than peaceful means was most likely taken in February 1939¹, preparations of administrative and police elements for a new situation started at the end of the spring-time. Due to time limitations, German institutions had to base their actions on lessons learned from earlier conflicts and annexations of Austria and Czechoslovakia, including taking Czech Sudeten in 1938 and the rest of this country in March 1939.

STATUS OF RESEARCH

Before turning to detailed description, analysis and assessment of available data, information and knowledge, it is worth to mention available syntheses that cover the problems touched by this article. In the first place, this is the work of Czesław Madajczyk from the 1970, and its first volume in particular, as it covers prewar political concepts of German

¹ See: M. Kornat, *Polityka zagraniczna Polski 1938–1939. Cztery decyzje Becka*, Gdańsk 2012, pp. 294–295.

Eastern policies. It also includes issues of military administration of annexed territories and their administrative division, with all related specificities². Secondly, the print of Jochen Böehler published in 2014 should also be taken into account³. The list could be supplemented by 'regional' monographs, as the print of Ryszard Kaczmarek on the Upper Silesia⁴. According to the title of this article, policing and administrative questions would be treated separately. It is quite likely that first group of problems would be more interesting and would become more essential component for a situation assessment.

GERMAN POLICING IN POLAND

As for German policing in Poland, we have to take into account and analyze the whole complex set of repression activities. From the first hours of the German aggression, such actions were carried out by special *Operational Groups of Security Police and Security Service* (Ger. *Einsatzgruppen der Sicherheitspolizei und SD*). J. Böehler even named them, due to their intensity and scope, as the 'introduction to the total war' (*Auftakt zum Vernichtungskrieg*)⁵. The discussion how big was the *Auftakt* and what was the scope of the *Vernichtungskrieg* still remains unresolved⁶.

Although the top Wehrmacht leadership had all necessary information on tasks and deployments of *Einsatzgruppen*, military commanders and staff officers knowingly refrained from any involvement. They did not meddle in their establishment, training as well as in deployment,

² C. Madajczyk, *Polityka III Rzeszy w okupowanej Polsce*, vols 1–2, Warszawa 1970 (re-edition: Warszawa 2019).

³ J. Böehler, *German Preparations of Administration and Police Forces to War with Poland in 1939*, in: *Kampania polska 1939 r. Polityka – społeczeństwo – kultura*, vol. 2, *Polityka i społeczeństwo. Imponderabilia, pamięć, kultura*, eds. M.P. Deszczyński, T. Pawłowski, Warszawa 2014, pp. 233–242.

⁴ R. Kaczmarek, *Górny Śląsk podczas II wojny światowej. Między utopią niemieckiej wspólnoty narodowej a rzeczywistością okupacji na terenach wcielonych do Trzeciej Rzeszy*, Katowice 2006.

⁵ J. Böehler, *Auftakt zum Vernichtungskrieg. Die Wehrmacht in Polen 1939*, Frankfurt/Main 2006.

⁶ In practical terms, in the general historiography the second of these designata is used, according to the classical publication of Ernst Nolte, only with regard to developments during the German war with the Soviet Union. See: E. Nolte, *Der Faschismus in seiner Epoche. Die Action Française. Der Italienischer Faschismus, Der Nationalsozialismus*, München 1963, p. 436. See also: *Vernichtungskrieg. Verbrechen der Wehrmacht 1941–1944*, eds. H. Heer, K. Naumann, Hamburg 1995.

tasking and operations of such units, including random street round-ups of pedestrians, resettlements, pacifications and collective executions. There had been some efforts to stop unlawful actions, mainly at lower echelons of command. They did not however change the overall picture of the campaign and therefore they would not be covered here.

However, actions of operational groups *in se* certainly deserve our attention, although such topics have already been extensively covered, especially with regard to the first days and weeks of war. 'Extensively' does not mean 'comprehensively and exhaustively', as emphasized by authors of *Einsatzgruppen w Polsce* (Eng. *Einsatzgruppen in Poland*), who drew an explicit comparison with the position of historians in 1989 wanting to achieve a kind of consensus on this subject. Authors considered that the 'simple comparison and achieving an agreement on the state of knowledge is not enough. There are still many questions that have not been asked or properly and exhaustively answered'.

The knowledge on *Einsatzgruppen* still is not complete, also with regard to numbers and personnel. Still, there is no full explanation how orders for groups were transmitted and how they were executed. Next research problem is on murderers from *Einsatzgruppen*: How members of such groups faced the situation? How were they looking at themselves? What was the way they saw themselves under the circumstances? How victims and survivors perceived the acts of genocide? How members of German special operational groups used the lessons identified and lessons learned from the Polish September 1939 Campaign? How they used Polish experiences during the war in 1941, after the attack on the Soviet Union? Were they able to come back to the conventional bourgeois life? Have they been held accountable and brought to justice? All such questions require documented and credible answers⁷. This opinion is rather harsh and such situation demands clarification if this harshness is fully justified.

Such questions and related remarks and comments have been submitted, although in much more subdued manner, in very valuable work edited by J. Böhler and Stephan Lehnstaedt, which is, in practical terms, the source edition of *Einsatzgruppen* reports.

In the introduction to this publication, we can find the following piece: 'The historic role of such units [*Einsatzgruppen*] in the first weeks of war and during the German occupation is impossible to overestimate.

⁷ J. Böhler, K.-M. Mallmann, J. Matthäus, *Einsatzgruppen w Polsce*, Warszawa 2009, p. 13. This is the Polish translation of the work of above-mentioned three authors (German edition: J. Matthäus, K.-M. Mallmann, J. Böhler, *Einsatzgruppen in Polen. Darstellung und Dokumentation*, Darmstadt 2008).

Collected experiences had been used to build further policies. That was clearly and firmly emphasized by authors. They have also indicated that so far there had not been performed systematic research on *Einsatzgruppen* in Poland, on their particular operations, on specific areas of *Einsatzgruppen* operations, on fate of victims and interpretations of events through the prism of the German occupier [...]'⁸.

It is possible here to present an observation that goes beyond the above-described research spectrum. In most of the cases, taking into account all reservations, it is possible to state that conclusions from research on *Einsatzgruppen* in Poland is considered as a kind of introduction to much bigger criminal acts during the German war with the Soviet Union. This leads to the conclusion that events in Poland had been a part of a bigger process and its full understanding is not possible without the full comprehension of very origins of the situation.

However, this does not mean that the research on *Einsatzgruppen* in Poland had been mainly done by German scientists. Here, in Poland, there had also been several projects that finished with quite substantial results⁹. However, as in the case of most research project on the German occupation of Poland, the period after 1990 was the time of a significant regress. The gap was immediately filled with works of German authors¹⁰.

The specificity of the *Einsatzgruppen* problem also requires complementing the research by a study on similar phenomenon, i.e. activity

⁸ *Die Berichte der Einsatzgruppen aus Polen 1939. Vollständige Edition*, eds. S. Lehnstaedt, J. Böhler, München 2013, p. 7.

⁹ See: K. Leszczyński, *Działalność Einsatzgruppen policji bezpieczeństwa na ziemiach polskich w 1939 r. w świetle dokumentów*, "Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce" 1971, 22, pp. 7–290; K. Radziwończyk, *Akcja Tannenberg" grup operacyjnych SIPO i SD w Polsce jesienią 1939 r.*, "Przegląd Zachodni" 1966, 5, pp. 94–128; idem, *Zbrodnie generała Streckenbacha*, Warszawa 1966. The most important is the first of above-mentioned publications. However, working translations of *Einsatzgruppen* reports that were included in the publication had been prepared only by the author. They are considered to have some gaps, mistakes and omissions. However, some of these drawbacks can now be attributed to the censorship regulations.

¹⁰ It is necessary to mention here the research and publications of Helmut Krausnick. In 1981, he published, together with Hans-Heinrich Wilhelm, the comprehensive monograph on *Einsatzgruppen* (H. Krausnick, H.-H. Wilhelm, *Die Truppe des Weltanschauungskrieges, Die Einsatzgruppen der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD 1938–1942*, Stuttgart 1981). Later editions of this monograph have been prepared and edited only by Krausnick (H. Krausnick, *Hitlers Einsatzgruppen. Die Truppe des Weltanschauungskrieges 1938–1942*, Frankfurt/Main 1985). It is also worth to present here the work of Alexander B. Rossino (A.B. Rossino, *Hitler Strikes Poland. Blitzkrieg, Ideology and Atrocity*, Lawrence 2003 (Polish edition: idem, *Hitler uderza na Polskę. Blitzkrieg, ideologia i okrucieństwo*, transl. H. Górska, Warszawa 2009).

of 'German self-defense forces' (*Volksdeutscher Selbstschutz*). It was a structure that was inspired, organized and partially controlled by special operational groups. It was also the element that executed similar tasks, sometimes at much bigger scale.

Pomerania has experienced criminal German actions in a particular, horrible way. Even the special term was coined for events of that time – 'The Pomeranian Crime'. It was an effort to present in the proper way the sheer size of these events and their unprecedented nature¹¹. This special aspect of first weeks and months of German occupation have been studied quite extensively and a number of publications on the topic is available, including monographs. One of the most important is the collective work edited by Izabela Mazanowska, Tomasz S. Ceran and Marcin Przegiętka¹². *Selbstschutz* operations had been thoroughly analyzed, mainly with regard to its geographical aspect. Some articles described and evaluated situation and actions of *Selbstschutz* in the Gdansk Pomerania, in Kuyavia (*Selbstschutz Westpreußen*), in Greater Poland (*Selbstschutz Posen*), in the area of Lodz, in the Upper Silesia and also in the Ciechanow Province (Ger. *Regierungsbezirk Zichenau*), established by Germans after the Campaign (so-called *Südpolen*)¹³.

Establishment and actions of *Selbstschutz* units, especially in the first months of their existence, was closely connected with the German military operations, mainly conducted by the German military intelligence, the *Abwehr*. Some important elements should still be described and evaluated, also to indicate close links of such entities with German state institutions. It was mainly noticeable in the occupied Upper Silesia¹⁴.

The *Einsatzgruppen* were organized in parallel with other actions aimed at preparing German Police structures for new tasks. We are talking here about methods, techniques and tools that were to be used to carry out tasks in the occupied territories, such as 'fighting with all elements

¹¹ See: T. Ceran, I. Mazanowska, M. Tomkiewicz, *Zbrodnia pomorska*, Warszawa 2018.

¹² *W cieniu Einsatzgruppen. Volksdeutscher Selbstschutz w okupowanej Polsce 1939–1940*, eds. I. Mazanowska, T. Ceran, M. Przegiętka, Warszawa 2021.

¹³ As for Gdansk Pomerania and Kuyavia – it is also possible to use earlier publications of I. Mazanowska, T.S. Ceran, Barbara Bojarska and many other authors on so-called Pomeranian Crime 1939. The most comprehensive works and compilations of sources are included to bibliographies listed in the publication: *W cieniu Einsatzgruppen...* In order not to miss the most popular source of the young generation, the Wikipedia, it is also possible to refer to the appealingly designed and competently prepared record on this specific topic in this electronic publication: See: https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zbrodnia_pomorska_1939 [access: 29.08.2022].

¹⁴ See also: G. Bębnik, *Sokoły kapitana Ebbinghausa. Sonderformation Ebbinghaus w działaniach wojennych na Górnym Śląsku w 1939 r.*, Katowice–Kraków 2014.

hostile to Germany, the Third Reich and Germanness (Ger. *Deutschtum*) in the enemy territory, in the rear areas of the front troops' (*Bekämpfung aller Reichs- und deutschfeindlichen Elemente in Feindesland rückwärts der fechtenden Truppe*)¹⁵. First recommendations and orders for *Einsatzgruppen* were prepared on the basis of the lessons learned from annexations of Austria and Czechoslovakia. They were issued by Reinhard Heydrich on 18 May 1939¹⁶.

A few days later, a new entity, within the Amt II of the SD-Hauptamt, named *Zentralstelle II P (Polen)* was established. It was to be responsible for building the Central Archive of Records on the Polish citizens hostile to Germany, including Polish Jews, with all the collected data and information on such people. The new office was headed by Hans Germann from the II 212 Section, responsible for 'Ethnicity and Ethnology' (*Volks-tum und Volkskunde*). His main task was 'to collect, collate and integrate in one place all proceedings of the belief, worldview, cultural, propaganda and economic nature, related to the issues of Germanness in Poland'¹⁷. It is quite clear that in this case we deal with an entity that continued, during the whole interwar period, carefully planned and strictly executed activities of both Weimar Republic and the Third Reich, all directed against ethnic minorities in Germany (including Polish organizations), with some operations conducted also in Poland.

In the SD-Hauptamt, established 30 January 1935, events and situation in Poland were carefully followed and assessed by two "central sections" – Section I 3 and Section III. They collected all prints and press publications on Poland, its citizens, on general and modern history. It had been not just typical work of librarians but also performance of advanced analytical projects. This can be proved with some examples, including documents prepared by two functionaries of above-mentioned sections, Franz Six and Heinz Jost, who made their gloomy mark on the Polish history¹⁸.

In mid-April 1939, before the establishment of the *Zentralstelle II P*, they prepared the analysis titled *Wroga niemieczyźnie działalność w Polsce* (Ger. *Deutschfeindliche Arbeit in Polen*). Some elements were added to the paper and the new version published a month later. It was sent to Section II 2. This entity analyzed 'different forms of action of opponents'

¹⁵ J. Böhler, K.-M. Mallmann, J. Matthäus, *op. cit.*, document no. 2: *Wytyczne dla zagranicznych operacji policji bezpieczeństwa i SD* [August 1939], pp. 126–130.

¹⁶ J. Böhler, K.-M. Mallmann, J. Matthäus, *op. cit.*, p. 14; K. Leszczyński, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

¹⁷ See: G. Bębnik, *Proskrypcja*, p. 59.

¹⁸ A. Ramme, *Służba Bezpieczeństwa SS*, 2nd edition, Warszawa 1984, pp. 99–100.

(*Gegnerformen*)¹⁹. It should be noted here that the first version of the document was edited already before the Hitler's termination of the Polish-German Declaration on Non-Violence of January 1934. These papers were to start preparation of 'operational records' with the execution time by 4 July. It clearly shows German intentions as the time for this specific task was extremely short and it had been more a manifestation of SD objectives and an apparent illustration of wishful thinking²⁰.

It would be very useful here to draw attention of readers to *modus operandi* of German security and intelligence services. That could be examined and evaluated by archival research. For example, one of the most useful elements is the analysis of documents from the Third Department of SD (*Hauptabteilung*) and its SS-Section South East (*SS-Oberabschnitt „Südost“*) in Wrocław (Breslau).

However, there is one problem with such papers. They were published twice (in one case also in its original form), firstly – in "Strażnica Zachodnia", then in the work of Paweł Dubiel "Wrzesień 1939 na Śląsku" (Eng. "September 1939 in Silesia"). Files were most likely in the private possession of the author, P. Dubiel himself. Today, we have to consider these documents as missing or lost, as there is no access to the papers.

It should force us to give a thought to the winding paths in the life of a researcher, and also ask questions about the scale of 'privatization' of such important materials²¹. We should realize that even a small number of such documents would provide us with invaluable information on main areas of SD interest in Poland on the eve of the German aggression. There is no doubt that SD actions were focused on 'people hostile to Germanness' and on several categories of Polish citizens and people who 'were to be arrested in Poland'.

The Head of above-mentioned Breslau *SS-Oberabschnitt* office, Hermann Ling, reiterated that his unit was 'not only interested in registration of people hostile to Germanness' and requested and reiterated that he was 'mostly interested in getting the information about people engaged in the intelligence activities'²².

¹⁹ G. Bębnik, *Proskrypcja*, pp. 62–63.

²⁰ These records were organized by names, locations and institutions. They also included names of Polish citizens, who "distinguished themselves in connection with the ethnic confrontation", i.e. Silesian and Greater Poland uprisings veterans and Polish patriotic organizations activists. J. Böhler, K.-M. Mallmann, J. Matthäus, *op. cit.*, p. 14. See also: G. Bębnik, *Proskrypcja*, document no. 2: 4 lipca 1939 roku, Berlin, *Notatka aktowa dotycząca stanu prac Zentralstelle II P*, pp. 311–316.

²¹ G. Bębnik, *Proskrypcja*, p. 63.

²² *Ibidem*, pp. 67–68.

In other word, SD wanted to arrest functionaries and agents of the Polish Intelligence and Counterintelligence, leaving issues related to ‘enemies of the Reich’ to other institutions and services (mainly to Gestapo), also to diplomatic missions and consular offices. The latter elements had also played a role, along with the German military Intelligence, the Abwehr, although the level of engagement of this service to such tasks was relatively small²³.

An information on the first of the aspects could be found in source editions of the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs published by the Western allies from the period 1938–1939 under the title *Akten zur Deutschen Auswärtigen Politik 1918–1945. Aus dem Archiv des deutschen Auswärtigen Amtes*²⁴. Documents and assessments presented there proved something very sinister at work, but also a great rush in preparation of “enemy of the Third Reich” lists, with names of Polish citizens. As always in such situations, the rush to complete the task resulted in poor quality of prepared documents. It is very difficult to evaluate directly now how faulty such materials had been. We can do that only indirectly, assessing German actions and documents in the form of an All-Points Bulletin (APB), ‘Special APB for Poland’ (Ger. *Sonderfahndungsliste [für] Polen*). All *Einsatzgruppen* entering Poland by step with the Wehrmacht front troops got such lists²⁵.

There is no doubt that such a list existed and was used by *Einsatzgruppen*. However, till now no copy of this document was discovered, even in excerpts. The most likely explanation is that all copies of the list printed before 1 September 1939, before the invasion, were destroyed according to the 1937 Himmler regulation governing the documents circulation and lifecycle, which also including provisions on documents withdrawal and destruction, on documents that had been evaluated as ‘out-of-date’ (*überholt*)²⁶.

²³ *Ibidem*, pp. 68–74. More comprehensive analysis of German consulates activities in Poland could be found in: *Konsulaty na pograniczu polsko-niemieckim i polsko-czechosłowackim w latach 1918–1939*, eds. R. Kaczmarek, M. Masnyk, Katowice 2004.

²⁴ APB – a broadcast alert from one institution to all others in an area, state, etc., as with instructions to arrest a particular suspect or suspects (Translator’s note).

²⁵ As for the project – Series D materials, for the period 1937–1945, are the most useful and interesting source, especially volumes: 4: *Die Nachwirkungen von München, Oktober 1938–März 1939*, Göttingen 1951; 5: *Polen, Südosteuropa, Lateinamerika, Klein- und Mittelstaaten, Juni 1937–März 1939*, Göttingen 1953; 6: *Die letzten Monate vor Kriegsausbruch, März bis August 1939*, Göttingen 1956; 7: *Die letzten Wochen vor Kriegsausbruch, 9. August bis 3. September 1939*, Göttingen 1956; Also: *Ergänzungsband zu den Serien A–E: Gesamtpersonenverzeichnis. Portraitphotos und Daten zur Dienstverwendung. Anhänge*, Göttingen 1995.

²⁶ G. Bębnik, *Proskrypcja*, pp. 90–106 and 111–114. See also: J. Böhler, K.-M. Mallmann, J. Matthäus, *op. cit.*, passim.

Most likely all copies of *Sonderfahndungsliste für Polen* were considered a waste paper, when all German Police and Security Service units received a new document, the "Special APB Book" (*Sonderfahndungsbuch Polen*)²⁷. Such book included new information on people to be arrested and data collected by *Einsatzgruppen*. It happened only in March 1940²⁸. This publication is well known and studied as there are still few copies available that survived the war. One of the most complete copies was subjected to a thorough examination and analysis – to give explanations to facts of publication of particular names, to find why these people were of interest to the German Police and Security Services and their fate during the war. Just after the preliminary study, it was possible to discover that 3,678 names out of 8,787 had been people with the criminal past (this included Polish Communists, i.a. Marcelli Nowotko and Alfred Lampe).

The rest of the people has not been a very homogeneous group (also with regard to scope and volume of information in each record). However, it is possible to notice some regularities and patterns. First and foremost, in many cases reported information had very chaotic form and content. Sometimes records were fraught with many errors and mistakes, often they were simply useless. Such state of the affairs resulted from the big rush and time limitations with regard to data and information collection process. It had a direct impact on the quality of, especially due to problems with data verification and data/information supplementation. Many of such problems were simply transferred from the initial list to *Sonderfahndungsbuch Polen*. Secondly, most of the data belonged to people, who were born or lived in areas that belonged earlier to Germany or to places with a strong and active German minority (i.e. Lodz). Thirdly, for these people that could be identified without being afraid of making serious mistakes, the big part of consists of functionaries and agents of Polish Intelligence and Counterintelligence as well as Government middle-ranking or junior officials. A part most certainly was the result of SD operations, other elements – those had been reports of German agents in Poland and denunciations prepared by members of the German minority in Poland²⁹. It is to note that most of records and warrants had been prepared very carelessly and it resulted in low effectiveness of legal proceeding and investigations. However, all prepared documents, the list and the book,

²⁷ G. Bębnik, *Proskrypcja*, pp. 68–74.

²⁸ See: G. Bębnik, *Proskrypcja*, document no. 5, 12 marca 1940 roku, Kraków. *Pismo Brunona Streckenbacha do podległych mu kierowniczych placówek policyjnych*, pp. 323–325.

²⁹ The analysis of the *Sonderfahndungsbuch Polen* content – See: G. Bębnik, *Proskrypcja*, pp. 147–160.

had played quite a significant role in repressions. This dimension still requires comprehensive and integrated approach³⁰.

We have to refer here to works of already mentioned trio of Böhler – Mallmann – Matthäus and their 2008 publication. It would also be very interesting to look into records and careers (also during the post WWII period) of RSHA officers. This would complement, of course in the microscale, the elaborate research of Michael Wildt³¹. It would help to prepare a scientific reflection of German repression structures and their transformation from operation groups to a more permanent organization. It happened with the groups in the last quarter of 1939, when operational groups' officers constructed security service elements in the occupied territories. A lot already has been done in the area but still there is a lot of topics that have to be examined³².

ADMINISTRATION ISSUES

The administrative dimension of the issue has not attracted as much attention of researchers as military aspects have, and the main reason for that is a simply smaller emotional load it carries. Most likely, such 'murderers' or 'desk criminals' (*Schreibtischmörder, Schreibtischtäter*) seemingly had to wait for their turn, in Poland – until after 1966. The above-mentioned term has been widely used after the publication of Hanna Arendt. Of course, the figures described are secondary to such figure-heads of the Nazi regime and German Government as Adolf Eichmann or Heinrich 'Gestapo' Müller.

In formal terms, the German military authority in the Polish areas annexed by Germans, ended on 26 October 1939. Then, it was taken over by the special, newly established institution and its top official, the Head of the Civil Administration (*Chef der Zivilverwaltung, CdZ*)³³. The structure of this office was rather unclear and quite complicated. On the regional

³⁰ In the publication, author of this article identified, more or less precisely, 265 persons from this book (of course, excluding criminals), which is about 5% of the volume. Therefore, conclusion had to be drawn from such a small sample. See: G. Bębnik, *Proskrypcja*, pp. 160–226.

³¹ M. Wildt, *Generation des Unbedingten. Das Führungskorps des Reichssicherheitshauptamtes*, Hamburg 2002.

³² See: A. Konieczny, *Organizacja gestapo na ziemiach polskich włączonych do Rzeszy w latach 1939–1945*, "Studia nad Faszyzmem i Zbrodniami Hitlerowskimi" 2008, 30, pp. 331–349.

³³ As for military administration: H. Umbreit, *Deutsche Militärverwaltungen 1938/39. Die militärische Besetzung der Tschechoslowakei und Polens*, Stuttgart 1977.

level, the respective NSDAP gauleiter was assigned a head of office. In many cases, a Party official combined the party function with the post of the Province Governor (Ger. *Oberpräsident*), as it had been for Silesia, and another territorial entity, the 'Reich District' (*Reichsgau*). That was the situation for the Poznan District (*Reichsgau Wartheland*), and Gdansk and Eastern Prussia (*Reichsgau Posen-Westpreußen*).

The special case had been the episode with Heinz Jost, the person already mentioned when discussing *Sonderfahndungsliste [für] Polen*, who became 'the Head of the Civil Administration in the Hostile Country' (*Chef der Zivilverwaltung Feindesland*). The post was soon cancelled and the format of the General Government introduced. As for areas of the former Silesian Voivodeship and parts of Cracow and Kielce Voivodeships (so-called *eingegliederte Oststreifen*), they were included to the German Silesian Province. The Breslau Gauleiter, Josef Wagner, sent to Katowice, as his Deputy, the Head of the Breslau Chamber of Industry and Commerce – Otto Fitzner (who anyway had Upper Silesian roots). He was accompanied by the Special Staff (Ger. *Sonderstab Fitzner*), who was affiliated to the 3. Command of the German Border Guard. These people were responsible for building the local administration at the district and commune levels³⁴.

Heads of Civilian Administration soon received powers to direct and manage activities of the *Ordnungspolizei*, with its *Schupo*, gendarmerie and Fire Departments. Such institutions had soon become the most visible sign of the German rule in the annexed territories³⁵.

It should be noted that it is now possible to employ quite sizeable biographic sources on Heads of German Civilian Administration, for Albert

³⁴ The problem of German administrative structures – See: J. Böhler, *Ordinary Clerks or Trailblazers of Destruction? The "First Wave" of Chiefs of Civil Administration and Their Implementation of Nazi Policy During the German Invasion of Poland in 1939*, "Dapim. Studies on the Holocaust" 2015, 29, 1, pp. 17–40. In the last publication some personnel issues related to the post of the "CdZ" and two less known officials: Heinz Jost (*Chef der Zivilverwaltung Feindesland*), and O. Fitzner, who operated on behalf of J. Wagner in areas included to the Silesian Province, were described.

³⁵ What is quite interesting, such topics were not covered by Polish researchers, excluding works of Irena Sroka in the Silesian Province. See: I. Sroka, *Policja hitlerowska w rejencji katowickiej w latach 1939–1945*, Opole 1997; eadem, *Organizacja i działalność policji niemieckiej w rejencji katowickiej w 1939 roku*, Katowice 1969. Recently, it is possible to notice a kind of renewed interest on the Polish Police in the General Government (after publications of Adam Hempel – See: A. Hempel, *Pogrobowcy kłęski. Rzecz o policji „granatowej” w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie 1939–1945*, Warszawa 1990; idem, *Policja granatowa w okupacyjnym systemie administracyjnym Generalnego Gubernatorstwa 1939–1945*, Warszawa 1987). See also: *Policja granatowa w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie w latach 1939–1945*, eds. T. Domański, E. Majcher-Ociesa, Kielce–Warszawa 2019.

Forster³⁶, Erich Koch³⁷, Arthur Greiser³⁸, and finally Hans Frank³⁹, in the research. As for Josef Wagner, we do not have so many volumes as should be expected due to his special role in the beginning of the occupation of Poland. It resulted from ceding by him most of his powers to Otton Fitzner and stormy final of his career in NSDAP structures (in practical terms – the beginning of 1941)⁴⁰. Next interesting biography is that of the Wagner's Deputy, Fritz Bracht, an important personality for Silesia and other areas of that time⁴¹. The stories on Heads of Civilian Administration cover not only activities of typical administration nature. They also refer to the judicial dimension and such structures in the occupied territories. In most of the cases, decisions on such issues, mainly on institutions and personnel, had already been taken before September 1939. Therefore, such events should or even had to be carefully traced, described and evaluated, even despite complicated civilian–military relations during the first period of WWII⁴².

³⁶ D. Schenk, *Hitlers Mann in Danzig. Gauleiter Forster und die NS-Verbrechen in Danzig-Westpreußen*, Bonn 2000 (Polish edition: *Albert Forster – Gdański namiestnik Hitlera*, Gdańsk 2002); M. Podgóreczny, *Gauleiter i oskarżony*, Gdańsk 1977.

³⁷ R. Meindl, *Ostpreußens Gauleiter. Erich Koch – eine politische Biographie*, Osnabrück 2007 (Polish edition: *Gauleiter Prus Wschodnich. Erich Koch – biografia polityczna*, Olsztyn 2022); A. Fuhrer, H. Schön, *Erich Koch. Hitlers brauner Zar – Gauleiter von Ostpreußen und Reichskommissar der Ukraine*, Olzog 2010.

³⁸ C. Łuczak, *Arthur Greiser. Hitlerowski władca w Wolnym Mieście Gdańsku i w Kraju Warty*, Poznań 1997; C. Epstein, *Model Nazi. Arthur Greiser and the Occupation of Western Poland*, Oxford–New York 2010 (Polish edition: *Wzorcowy nazista. Arthur Greiser i okupacja Kraju Warty*, Wrocław 2011).

³⁹ D. Schenk, *Hans Frank. Hitlers Kronjurist und Generalgouverneur*, Frankfurt/Main 2006 (Polish edition: *Hans Frank. Biografia generalnego gubernatora*, Kraków 2009).

⁴⁰ More attention to this figure was dedicated by Ryszard Kaczmarek. See: R. Kaczmarek, *Pod rządami gauleiterów. Elity i instancje władzy w rejencji katowickiej w latach 1939–1945*, Katowice 1998, pp. 28–81. It would also be useful to look into the figure of O. Fitzner; it has been already done by J. Böhler in his work (J. Böhler, *Ordinary*, pp. 17–40). See also: K. Graczyk, *Sondergericht Kattowitz. Sąd Specjalny w Katowicach 1939–1945*, Warszawa 2020, pp. 66–70; G. Bębnik, *Wrzesień 1939 r. w Katowicach*, Katowice 2012, pp. 110–111. To note, author of this text has started his work on the biography of Fitzner.

⁴¹ M. Węcki, *Fritz Bracht (1899–1945). Nazistowski zarządca Górnego Śląska w latach II wojny światowej*, Katowice 2014 (German edition: *Fritz Bracht – Gauleiter von Oberschlesien*, Paderborn 2021).

⁴² The regulation on special courts (*Sondergerichte*) was issued on 26 August 1939, i.e. on the day that was initially planned as the date of the invasion of Poland. See: A. Konieczny, *Pod rządami wojennego prawa karnego III Rzeszy. Górny Śląsk 1939–1945*, Warszawa–Wrocław 1972, p. 141.

In this last context, a special place should be assigned to research on so-called special jurisdiction system and its elements, inextricably linked to the system of German terror in Poland. As noted by Konrad Graczyk – ‘as the courts themselves had been employed for special purposes, their litigations could not have been ordinary either [...]. The main characteristics of such legal proceedings had been acceleration and simplification of all legal actions. Proceedings served the purpose of “instant investigation and trial’ (*schlagartige Verfolgung und Aburteilung*), ‘rapid and effective arrest’ (*blitzartige[s] Zugreifen*), and, if necessary, “elimination of the criminal” (*Vernichten des Verbrechers*), all for alleged self-defence of the State and the Nation⁴³.

There is one important element that causes certain confusion, as the research on this area that also included the judicial system in the occupied territories stopped, for all intents and purposes, in the 1980s. As for bibliography, apart from the great work of K. Graczyk, we should add to the list research results of Andrzej Wrzyszc (on the General Government)⁴⁴ and some German authors, who explored this specific area with a number of successes.

Some of their work touched issues directly related to Polish territories occupied by Germany. Gerd Weckbecker made the comparison of jurisprudence of German special courts in Frankfurt am Main and Bydgoszcz, Götz Hütt wrote about the special court in Kalisz, Holger Schlüter – in Łódź⁴⁵. Also, the extensive research paper on the subject by Maximilian Becker should be mentioned here. He has made quite a successful attempt to present the occupational judicial system in occupied Polish territories with many references to the personnel involved⁴⁶.

⁴³ K. Graczyk, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

⁴⁴ A. Wrzyszc, *Okupacyjne sądownictwo niemieckie w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie 1939–1945. Organizacja i funkcjonowanie*, Lublin 2008.

⁴⁵ See: G. Weckbecker, *Zwischen Freispruch und Todesstrafe. Die Rechtsprechung der nationalsozialistischen Sondergerichte Frankfurt/Main und Bromberg*, Baden-Baden 1998; G. Hütt, *Urteile des Sondergerichts Kalisch und der Richter Ferdinand Trümper aus Duderstadt*, Norderstedt 2015; H. Schlüter, *„...für die Menschlichkeit im Strafmaß bekannt...“ Das Sondergericht Litzmannstadt und sein Vorsitzender Richter*, Düsseldorf 2006. As noted by K. Graczyk, the last of the authors ‘creatively used very good article of Jan Waszczyński’. K. Graczyk, *op. cit.*, p. 22. See: J. Waszczyński, *Z działalności hitlerowskiego Sądu specjalnego w Łodzi (1939–1945)*, “Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce” 1972, 24. Several years later, the same author returned to the topic. See: J. Waszczyński, *Działalność hitlerowskiego Sądu Specjalnego w Łodzi w latach 1939–1945*, in: *Zbrodnie i sprawcy. Ludobójstwo hitlerowskie przed sądem ludzkości i historii*, ed. C. Pilichowski, Warszawa 1980.

⁴⁶ M. Becker, *Mitstreiter im Volkstumskampf. Deutsche Justiz in den eingegliederten Ostgebieten 1939–1945*, München 2014. This book has recently seen the publication in Polish by

Here, we should also notice the necessity to reflect upon the German Concentration Camps and the penitentiary system on the Polish territories under the German occupation. However, this goes far beyond the scope of this article and listing of only the most important subject literature from the subjective point of view of the author, would have consumed much of the available space. This does not exclude presenting facts and assessments on German preparation in such domains already before the outbreak of WWII.

RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES AND POSTULATES

Some remarks on the research perspective and postulated have been already presented in the main body of the text. However, it is still possible to make additional and general comments on the topic in question, mainly with regard to future archival research.

Firstly, project researchers should re-visit the German Federal Archive in Berlin-Lichterfelde, and use fonds and files from the times of the Third Reich. The most important is the fond of the Reich Security Main Office RSHA with the Archive Fond Number R 58. Some more elements should also be inspected such as the fond RD 19 with different kinds of 'prints' (*Drucksachen*). It is possible to find at this location classified Police periodicals that could help to assess the scope and intensity of involvement of the German Police in preparations of an aggression of Poland.

The research should also focus on deepening the knowledge of the process to prepare proscription lists with the names of Polish citizens and search for the entire *Sonderfahndungsliste [für] Polen* document from September 1939 or at least some elements of it.

The supplementary research should lead us to the Federal Archive in Koblenz. It is, however, necessary to take into account that this specific institution stores materials generated by structures of the Bundesrepublik Deutschland, i.e. since 1949. Its fonds and files include a lot of information on many important political figures of Germany (Ger. *Nachlässe*), with many who had been involved in building administrative structures on the territories of Poland occupied by Germany. Another important stop is the Archive of the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Ger. *Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes*).

IPN (idem, *Sądownictwo niemieckie i jego rola w polityce okupacyjnej na ziemiach polskich wcielonych do Rzeszy 1939–1945*, Warszawa 2020). The work of M. Becker could be considered a first effort to present the problem in a comprehensive and synthetic way. The problem however still requires further detailed research.

Also, the research on the role of German diplomatic service, mainly on consular offices, should also be relaunched as these entities were delivering many pieces of information from Poland to Berlin. Such data and information about people 'hostile to Germanness' had not been properly covered in the source editions to date and in scientific research conducted so far. That is the gap that absolutely should and could be closed.

The requirement to look into biographies of the key political figures of the time has been already emphasized. It should be done not only with regard to leading political actors but also to background players from the administrative structures and from the German judicial system, such as judges and prosecutors. This would allow to find an answer when and how different actions were planned and organized, especially with regard to the penitentiary system. It could be done with personal files of members and officials of judiciary and Prosecutor Offices at different levels. Such element could be accessed via the *Geheimes Staatsarchiv – Preußischer Kulturbesitz* in Berlin-Dahlem. As for legal proceedings after WWII launched in Germany, related files and fonds are stored in Ludwigsburg, in one of the departments of the German Federal Archive.

We should not forget about materials that are available in the Institute of National Remembrance – the Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation (IPN), both at the central and regional levels. IPN launched a number of proceedings on German crimes in Poland. Available materials were used for the purpose with some successes. Such a solution is very economic as it allows to save money on foreign trips.

As for additional research at the national level, some important discoveries are still possible in regional National Archives departments, especially in districts that had been part of Germany before the Second World War. Main research objectives should be the use of fonds and files from the provincial level (including Gdansk), as they could include information on personnel movements to and from Polish occupied territories and transfers of different officials to take important posts in Poland. The IPN archives certainly hold many surprises...

In the light of above-mentioned observations, one important issue remains open, namely, the problem of identities and personal details of people that had been included to different lists and APBs. Research results would certainly allow to restore mechanisms of many actions directed against Polish leaders and elites, such as *Intelligenzaktion* or *Außerordentliche Befriedungsaktion* (AB Action).

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