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THE PARTICIPATION OF THE UKRAINIAN AUXILIARY POLICE
(UKRAINISCHE HILFSPOLIZEI) IN THE EXTERMINATION
OF JEWS IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF ŁYSIEC IN STANYSLAVIV
COUNTY IN 1941–1943

Introduction

The subject of the activity of the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei) in the Galicia District of the General Governorate (German: Generalgouvernement, Polish: Generalne Gubernatorstwo, GG) has yet to be comprehensively researched. After the fall of the Iron Curtain, the issue of Ukrainian cooperation with the German occupiers has come to the attention of many researchers. This has been the case, particularly with the participation of Ukrainian auxiliary formations in the extermination of Jews. Many historians have dealt with this topic, including Dieter Pohl,¹ Franek Golczewski,² Martin Dean,³ Grzegorz

¹ D. Pohl, "Ukrainische Hilfskräfte beim Mord an den Juden," in *Die Täter der Shoah: Fanatische Nationalisten oder normale Deutsche?*, ed. G. Paul (Göttingen, 2002), pp. 205–234.

² F. Golczewski, "Shades of Grey. Reflections on Jewish-Ukrainian and German-Ukrainian Relations in Galicia," in *The Shoah in Ukraine. History, Testimony, Memorialization*, ed. by R. Brandon and W. Lower (Bloomington, 2008), pp. 114–155; *idem*, "Die Kollaboration in der Ukraine," in *Kooperation und Verbrechen. Formen der "Kollaboration" im östlichen Europa 1939–1945*, ed. by Ch. Dieckmann, B. Quinkert, and T. Tönsmeier (Göttingen, 2003), pp. 151–182.

³ M. Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust. Crimes of the Local Police in Belorussia and Ukraine 1941–1944* (New York, 2000).

Rossoliński-Liebe,⁴ Grzegorz Motyka,⁵ John-Paul Himka,⁶ Yuri Radchenko,⁷ and Taras Martynenko,⁸ as well as Gabriel Finder and Alexander V. Prusin.⁹ However, they presented the results of their research in broad terms, rarely discussing specific cases. On the other hand, no publications in Polish historiography have analysed this issue locally by showing the activities of individual Ukrainian Auxiliary Police stations.

The text presented here does not exhaust the complex and multidimensional topic of the participation of Ukrainian policemen in the extermination of Jews. It is only an attempt to outline the problem from the perspective of the activity of one of the posts of the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police. In this way, the article takes on the form of a case study, with the purpose being to indicate the role of Ukrainian policemen in the extermination of the Jewish community of Łysiec, a community that was part of Stanyslaviv (Polish: Stanisławów, now Ivano-Frankivsk in Ukraine) County before the war. The author of this article also intends to illustrate the scale of their involvement in actions against Jews and to answer the question of the extent to which members of the Ukrainian formations acted independently.

The source base for this article is essentially the files from the investigation conducted in 2002–2004 by the Branch Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation in Katowice, looking into the crimes committed against Jews in the Łysiec area during the German occupation by a Ukrainian policeman Bohdan Kozij.¹⁰ It was opened on 23 September 2002 at the request of the direc-

⁴ G. Rossoliński-Liebe, “Ukraińska policja, nacjonalizm i zagłada Żydów w Galicji Wschodniej i na Wołyniu,” *Holocaust. Studies and Materials* 13 (2017), pp. 57–79.

⁵ G. Motyka, “Kolaboracja na Kresach Wschodnich II Rzeczypospolitej 1941–1944,” *Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość* 1 (2008), pp. 183–197.

⁶ J.P. Himka, “Organizacja Ukraińskich Nacjonalistów, Ukraińska Policja i Holocaust,” in *OUN, UPa i zagłada Żydów*, ed. A.A. Zięba (Cracow, 2016), pp. 453–468.

⁷ J. Radchenko, “Policja pomocnicza, OUN a Holocaust na terenie obwodu sumskiego (1941–1943),” *Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość*, 1/29 (2017), pp. 413–446.

⁸ T. Martynenko, “Ukrayins’ka Dopomizhna Politsiya v okruzi L’viv-misto: shtrykhy do sotsial’noho portreta,” *Visnyk L’vivs’koho universytetu. Seriya istorychna* 48 (2013), pp. 152–167.

⁹ G.N. Finder and A.V. Prusin, “Kolaboracja w Galicji Wschodniej. Policja ukraińska i Holocaust,” in *OUN, UPa and the Holocaust*, pp. 361–385.

¹⁰ Bohdan Kozij aka Bohdan Koziy, born on 23 February 1923 at Pukasowce near Halicz, Stanislaviv County, son of Ivan and Maria née Sowiuk, Ukrainian nationality, Greek Catholic religion. A member of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists. From 1 April 1942 to 31 January 1944, he served in the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police at Łysiec. Upon hearing of the approaching Red Army, he left for Germany. In December 1949, he emigrated to the United States and changed his name to Koziy. On

tor of the Simon Wiesenthal Center¹¹ – Efraim Zuroff – who had been seeking punishment for that war criminal for many years. The investigation ended on 11 March 2004, with a discontinuance due to the perpetrator's death.¹²

The investigators collected unique source material comprising 18 volumes of files. Among other things, it included documentation acquired through international legal assistance from an ongoing trial before the US judiciary to strip Bohdan Kozij of US citizenship, as well as that produced during attempts to launch the procedure for Kozij's extradition to the USSR in the 1980s. The source material includes the minutes of more than fifty interrogations of more than a dozen Łysiec residents. The witnesses included Poles, Ukrainians and one Jewish Holocaust survivor. The American, Soviet and Polish administrations of justice interviewed the witnesses. The extremely voluminous (often dozens of pages long) and detailed witness interrogation minutes prepared by the US investigators are of particular

9 February 1956, he was granted American citizenship. In 1977, the US Department of Justice opened an investigation against him in connection with his concealment in his visa application of the information about his service in the Ukrainian police and membership in the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN). On 29 March 1982, he was stripped of his US citizenship by a ruling of the US District Court for the Southern District of Florida. On 19 March 1982, the US Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization initiated deportation proceedings against him. On 1 October 1984, a US court passed a ruling that he could be deported to the USSR. In September 1984, he left the United States and went to Costa Rica. The Soviet authorities unsuccessfully sought his extradition. On 23 September 2002, the Institute of National Remembrance – Branch Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation (*Instytut Pamięci Narodowej – Oddziałowa Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu*, hereinafter OKŚZpNP) in Katowice opened an investigation into the perpetration of an offence by him under Article 1.1. of the Decree of 31 August 1944 concerning the punishment of fascist-hitlerite criminals guilty of murder and ill-treatment of the civilian population and prisoners of war, and the punishment of traitors of the Polish Nation and Article 123.1.4 of the Penal Code in conjunction with Article 11.2 of the Penal Code. On 7 November 2003, the IPN in Katowice issued a request for his arrest and extradition. On 26 November 2003, the Alajuela High Court issued a warrant for his arrest. On 30 November 2003 Kozij died in the San Rafael Hospital in Alajuela due to a cerebral haemorrhage. See Oddziałowe Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej w Katowicach (Branch Archives of the Institute of National Remembrance in Katowice, hereinafter AIPN Ka), S 45/02/Zn, Main Files of the investigation into the 1943 murder of three persons of Jewish nationality in Łysiec, Stanislaviv County, Decision to discontinue the investigation, 11 March 2004, pp. 3640–3643.

¹¹ The Simon Wiesenthal Center is a non-governmental Jewish organisation based in Los Angeles, whose activities focus primarily on preserving the memory of the Holocaust. Since 2001, the centre has issued an annual report with a list of wanted Nazi criminals, see <https://www.wiesenthal.com/about/about-the-simon-wiesenthal-center/> (accessed 17 June 2022).

¹² AIPN Ka, S 45/02/Zn, Files of the investigation into the 1943 murder of three persons of Jewish nationality in Łysiec, Stanislaviv County, Decision to discontinue the investigation, 11 March 2004, pp. 3640–3643.

value. On their basis, it is possible to precisely reconstruct the participation of Ukrainian policemen in the extermination of the Jews of Łysiec. Also of interest in the context of this research are documents produced by the State Security Committee (KGB) of the USSR for the Ivano-Frankivsk region, including minutes of interrogations of two Ukrainian police officers serving at the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police station in Łysiec.

Characteristics of the Research Area

The research area was limited to the precinct of the operations of the Łysiec Ukrainian Auxiliary Police station, which included, in addition to Łysiec itself, the villages of Łysiec Stary, Drohomirczany, Iwanikówka, Krechowce, Posiecz, Radcza, Stebnik and Zabereże. It thus overlapped with the pre-war municipality of Łysiec. On the eve of the Second World War, the municipality was located in Stanyslaviv County, Stanyslaviv Voivodeship of the Second Republic of Poland. It occupied an area of over 138 sq. km. The village of Krechowce, which was part of it, was directly adjacent to Stanyslaviv from the north. The province's capital was about 8 km in a straight line from Łysiec. From the north, the Łysiec municipality also neighboured the Piaseczna municipality; from the east, it neighboured the Czernijew municipality; from the south, in a small section, it neighboured the Lachowce municipality and a sliver of the Starunia municipality, which was part of Nadwornia County, while from the southwest it neighboured the Bochorodzany Stare municipality. To the west of the Łysiec municipality was the Łysiec Forest, which was a part of the vast Czarny Las forest complex that separated the Stanyslaviv County from Kaluga County. The border between the Łysiec municipality and the municipalities of Podmichale and Nowica, which were in Kaluga County, ran through the forested area.

After the Third Reich and the USSR invaded Poland in September 1939, the area of the Łysiec municipality was occupied by the Red Army and incorporated into the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. In January 1941, the Soviet authorities established the Łysiec region within the Stanyslaviv region.¹³ After

¹³ G. Mazur, *Pokucie w latach drugiej wojny światowej. Położenie ludności, polityka okupantów, działalność podziemia* (Cracow, 1994), pp. 30, 32; G. Hryciuk, *Przemiany narodowościowe i ludnościowe w Galicji Wschodniej i na Wołyniu w latach 1931–1948* (Torun, 2005), p. 38.

the Third Reich's aggression against the Soviet Union in June 1941, the area came under German occupation, after a brief episode of Hungarian military administration. The German authorities created a rural municipality (Landgemeinde) of Łysiec, which existed within the boundaries of the county starosty (Kreishauptmannschaft) of Stanyslaviv located in the Galicia District of the General Governorate.¹⁴

Łysiec and its environs, like the rest of the Eastern Borderlands, were known for the diverse social fabric. The village was a cultural, ethnic and national melting pot. The religious and nationality structure of individual localities can be reconstructed in detail by analysing the 1923 *Skorowidz miejscowości Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* [Index of Localities of the Republic of Poland], based on the results of the 1921 census. This states that 11,188 people inhabited the area under study at that time, of which 86.76% were Ukrainian,¹⁵ 8.75% were Polish and the Jewish population was just 4.27%.¹⁶ Łysiec itself had 1,560 inhabitants. Religiously, it was the most diverse of all the villages that, during the German occupation, were part of the precinct of the Ukrainian police station in question. The town had a predominantly Ukrainian population – more than 58%, with Poles accounting for 23% of the local population. It was also home to 275 Jews, numbering nearly 18% of the population.¹⁷ There were also some Armenians, but by the beginning of the twentieth century they had already largely been assimilated with the Polish population.¹⁸ The table below presents a detailed breakdown of the population of the various villages comprising the Łysiec municipality by religion.

¹⁴ *Amtliches Gemeinde- und Dorfverzeichnis für das Generalgouvernement auf Grund der Summarischen Bevölkerungsbestandsaufnahme am 1. März 1943. Herausgegeben vom Statistischen Amt des Generalgouvernements* (Cracow, 1943), p. 12.

¹⁵ Aware of the far-reaching simplifications resulting from such a choice, in assessing nationality I have adopted the criterion of religion as declared in the census.

¹⁶ *Skorowidz miejscowości Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*, vol. 14: *Województwo stanisławowskie* (Warsaw, 1923), pp. 3, 17.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ L. Eagle, P. Hawryłyszyn, "Ormiańskie miasteczko Łysiec," *Nowy Kurier Galicyjski* 8/372 (2021).

Table 1. Residents of the Łysiec municipality in 1921 by religion

Locality	Total population	Religion			
		Greek Catholic	Roman Catholic	Mosaic	Other
Drohomirczany	1122	786 (70.05%)	296 (26.38%)	39 (3.47%)	1
Iwanikówka	1210	1188 (98.18%)	4 (0.33%)	18 (1.49%)	–
Krechowce	1304	1099 (84.28%)	139 (10.66%)	58 (4.45%)	8
Łysiec	1560	916 (58.72%)	359 (23.01%)	275 (17.63%)	10
Łysiec Stary	2132	2005 (94.04%)	81 (3.80%)	46 (2.16%)	–
Posiecz	969	919 (94.84%)	37 (3.81%)	13 (1.34%)	–
Radcza	1649	1594 (96.66%)	34 (2.06%)	21 (1.27%)	–
Stebnik	424	407 (95.99%)	12 (2.83%)	5 (1.18%)	–
Zabereże	818	794 (97.06%)	17 (2.08%)	5 (0.61%)	2

Source: *Skorowidz miejscowości Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*, vol. 14: *Województwo stanisławowskie* (Warsaw, 1923).

According to the next census of 1931, 14,657 people inhabited the area of interest.¹⁹ Unfortunately, the compiled and published results of the second census do not contain detailed data allowing us to reconstruct the nationality structure at the level of individual localities in the municipality. It is also impossible to determine precisely how many people resided in the area on the eve of the outbreak of the Second World War or what changes occurred in the social fabric during the Soviet occupation. According to estimates by the German occupation authorities, there were 13,664 people in the rural municipality of Łysiec on 1 March 1943 (including 1,467 people in Łysiec itself).²⁰

In 1921, the area in question was home to 478 Jews.²¹ As can be seen from the list presented here, they mainly lived in Łysiec. In the other villages, they constituted

¹⁹ *Skorowidz gmin Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej. Ludność i budynki oraz powierzchnia ogólna. Województwa południowe* (Warsaw, 1933), p. 11.

²⁰ *Amtliches Gemeinde- und Dorfverzeichnis*, p. 12.

²¹ By comparison, the percentage of Jewish population was more than twice as high in the entire pre-war Stanislawiv Province.

only a trace part of the population.²² Assuming with a high degree of probability that the nationality structure of the municipality's population did not change much over the next ten years, we can estimate that, in 1931, the municipality may have been inhabited by some 600 Jews.

Analogous to the situation in the entire pre-war Stanislawiv Voivodeship, the vast majority of the Łysiec Jews made a living from trade and crafts. They also ran small enterprises, such as a sawmill or a bakery. They also performed freelance work.²³

The local Jewish population lived mainly in the Jewish community of Łysiec.²⁴ It maintained cultural distinctiveness and total freedom of religion. As in smaller urban centres throughout the pre-war eastern Lesser Poland, and especially in the villages, many Jews maintained only economic relations with the non-Jewish environment, preserving its relative isolation.²⁵

What emerges from the investigation files is a picture of good relations between Jewish and non-Jewish residents of Łysiec during the interwar period. Witnesses emphasise that, until the outbreak of war, there were no major nationality-based conflicts.²⁶ Undoubtedly, however, events during the German occupation and the attitude of Ukrainian policemen toward Jews were influenced by the Ukrainian-Jewish antagonism, which intensified in the second half of the 1930s. Its echoes must have reached Łysiec as well. It is worth noting that the conflict occurred primarily at an economic level. It stemmed from the emancipation tendencies that prevailed among Ukrainians, especially from Ukrainian aspirations to become economically independent and increase their presence in non-agricultural sectors of the economy, hitherto controlled by Poles and Jews.²⁷

²² *Skorowidz miejscowości*, pp. 3, 17.

²³ *Drugi powszechny spis ludności z dn. 9 XII 1931 r. Województwo stanisławowskie*, Series C, fasc. 65 (Warsaw, 1938).

²⁴ For a more extensive discussion of the functioning of Jewish religious communities in the Second Republic of Poland, see T. Kawski, *Żydowskie gminy wyznaniowe w II Rzeczypospolitej. Studium historyczno-administracyjne* (Bydgoszcz, 2014).

²⁵ P. Eberhardt, "Liczebność i rozmieszczenie ludności żydowskiej na Kresach Wschodnich I i II Rzeczypospolitej w pierwszej połowie XX wieku," in *Świat niepożegnany. Żydzi na dawnych ziemiach wschodnich Rzeczypospolitej w XVIII–XX wieku*, ed. K. Jasiewicz (Warsaw–London, 2004), p. 72.

²⁶ AIPN Ka, S 45/02/Zn, Main Files of the Investigation, Minutes of the interrogation of Józef Berezowski before the OKŚZpNP in Katowice, 23 October 2002, p. 230; Minutes of the interrogation of the witness Jadwiga Spilarewicz before the OKŚZpNP in Katowice, 16 January 2003, p. 246.

²⁷ For a more extensive discussion of the Ukrainian-Jewish conflict, see M. Hon, "Konflikt ukraińsko-żydowski na ziemiach zachodnioukraińskich w latach 1935–1939," in *Świat niepożegnany*, pp. 244–258.

The outbreak of war in 1939 led to a further exacerbation of nationality relations and a deterioration of the situation of basically all the region's inhabitants. The Red Army occupied the area in question, and the Soviet Union incorporated it into the Ukrainian SSR. The rapid unification of the political, social, economic, cultural and economic systems with those of the USSR followed. From the very first moments of the occupation, the repressive Soviet policy was directed mainly against representatives of the broadly understood elite of the Polish state and all those whom the communist authorities defined as enemies of the new order – nearly two years of Soviet rule led to the pauperisation of the local community.²⁸

It is worth noting that although the local population perceived Jews as allies of the Soviet power, which mainly contributed to the tightening of nationality relations in later years, some of them were also victims of Soviet repression. This particularly applied to representatives of the Jewish elite, including local elites, who were marginalised and deprived of their property through the nationalisation of enterprises by the Soviet authorities.²⁹

Organisation of the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police at Łysiec

After the Red Army left Łysiec in early July 1941,³⁰ local militias began to form in the town, acting on behalf of the Bandera faction of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN-B). After a few days, they transformed into the Narodna

²⁸ For more on Soviet policy in the Eastern Borderlands, see Mazur, *Pokucie w latach drugiej wojny światowej*, pp. 43–46; W. Bonusiak, *Polityka ludnościowa i ekonomiczna ZSRR na okupowanych ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1941* („Zachodnia Ukraina” i „Zachodnia Białoruś”) (Rzeszów, 2006); *idem*, “Przemiany ekonomiczne w Małopolsce Wschodniej w latach 1939–1941,” in *Okupacja sowiecka ziem polskich 1939–1941*, ed. P. Chmielowiec (Rzeszów–Warszawa, 2005), pp. 94–110; A. Głowacki, “Formy, skala i konsekwencje sowieckich represji wobec Polaków w latach 1939–1941,” in *Okupacja sowiecka*, pp. 126–138; *idem*, “Unifikacja Galicji Wschodniej i Wołynia z ZSRR (1939–1941),” *Studia Rzeszowskie* 3 (1996), pp. 53–66; G. Mazur, “Z dziejów sowietyzacji tzw. Zachodniej Ukrainy 1939–1941,” *Studia Rzeszowskie* 3 (1996), pp. 67–84; A. Sudoł, *Początki sowietyzacji Kresów Wschodnich Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej (jesień 1939). Wybrane problemy polityczne i organizacyjne* (Bydgoszcz–Toruń, 1997); A. Głowacki, *Sowieci wobec Polaków na Ziemiach Wschodnich II Rzeczypospolitej 1939–1941* (Łódź, 1998); M. Wierzbicki, “Sowiecka polityka okupacyjna na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1941,” in *Kresy Południowo-Wschodnie Rzeczypospolitej pod okupacją sowiecką 1939–1941*, ed. by P. Chmielowiec and I. Kozimala (Rzeszów, 2014), pp. 12–23.

²⁹ Mazur, *Pokucie w latach drugiej wojny światowej*, pp. 43–46.

³⁰ On 4 July 1941, Hungarian troops allied with the Third Reich occupied Stanisławów/Stanylaviv. Certainly, Łysiec, eight kilometres away, was captured at the same time. See *ibid.*, p. 62; W. Komar, “Miasto Stanisławów pod sowiecką i niemiecką okupacją,” *Scripta Historica* 21 (2015), p. 191.

Militsiya (National Militia). Such structures, established in eastern Lesser Poland when a kind of political vacuum appeared between the evacuation of the Soviet administration and the establishment of German rule, manifested the state-forming aspirations of Ukrainian nationalists.³¹ Ukrainians created militia formations in parallel with local government bodies as an attempt to seize power in the area.³² The National Militia played a vital role in the anti-Jewish acts and pogroms that occurred in eastern Lesser Poland in the initial days after the evacuation of the Soviet authorities.³³ Unfortunately, little information is available about the functioning of the National Militia in the Łysiec area at that time. It is also impossible to reconstruct its structure.³⁴

During Operation Barbarossa, Łysiec found itself in the area of operations of the Hungarian troops allied with the Wehrmacht. On 7 August 1941, the Hungarian troops handed over the area to the German administration.³⁵ The Germans dissolved the National Militia formed by the OUN-B in late August and early September 1941. In practice, however, they reformed it and created the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police (Ukrainische Hilfspolizei) on its basis.³⁶ Units of this type came into being under Heinrich Himmler's order of 25 July 1941. In it, the SS Reichsführer referred to the earlier practical cooperation of the Einsatzgruppen with local militia units. In the occupied eastern territories, the Germans approved the creation of auxiliary police units from selected and accepted ethnic groups (including Ukrainians) subordinate to the German security apparatus. Recruitment for these units was to be conducted among local Ukrainians and prisoners of war who were not communists.³⁷ While in other regions of occupied Poland and the

³¹ Finder, Prusin, "Kolaboracja w Galicji Wschodniej," pp. 368, 372.

³² Martynenko, "Ukrayins'ka Dopomizhna Politsiya," p. 155.

³³ Rossoliński-Liebe, "Ukraińska policja," pp. 78–79. On the pogroms that took place in 1941 in the former Soviet occupation zone, see W.W. Mędykowski, *W cieniu gigantów. Pogromy 1941 r. w byłej sowieckiej strefie okupacyjnej* (Jerusalem, 2018).

³⁴ In his testimony, Antony Waceb indicates that militia units were formed three days after the Soviet withdrawal. According to him, about 12 militiamen served in them. See AIPN Ka, S 45/02/Zn, Translation of the Minutes of the interrogation of Antony Waceb of 20 March 1981, 19 March 2003, p. 2155.

³⁵ Mazur, *Pokucie w latach drugiej wojny światowej*, p. 65.

³⁶ Rossoliński-Liebe, "Ukraińska policja," pp. 70–71; Himka, "Organizacja Ukraińskich Nacjonalistów," p. 460.

³⁷ Finder and Prusin, "Kolaboracja w Galicji Wschodniej," p. 373; AIPN Ka, S 45/02/Zn, Translation of the Minutes of the Interrogation of Prof. Raul Hilberg, 14 April 1982, undated, p. 1626.

USSR, representatives of other nationalities (including Russians, Tatars, Poles, and *Volksdeutsche*) were admitted to the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police, in the Galicia District, the formation consisted exclusively of ethnic Ukrainians.³⁸ It is worth noting that the creation of the Ukrainian police was beneficial to the Germans, who in this way gained units that could relieve the burden of the German occupation in the field and was in the interest of the Ukrainian nationalists. From their perspective, the establishment of a Ukrainian police apparatus was essential for the creation of a future “Ukrainian autonomy”. It was also a vital step for building Ukrainian statehood.³⁹

The Ukrainian Auxiliary Police was subordinated to the German Order Police (Ordnungspolizei), while in the villages, it came under the supervision of the commanders of local German gendarmerie posts.⁴⁰ In the case of Łysiec, the Ukrainian police were subordinate to the German Order Police in Stanyslaviv. In matters of minor importance, the direct supervision of the Ukrainian police units was exercised by the Ukrainian Police Headquarters.⁴¹ A separate rank system distinguished this formation from the German one, and there was a characteristic uniform: black trousers, a navy-blue shirt and a headgear typical of Ukrainian formations – a *mazepynka* with a trident. The policemen’s arsenal consisted of wooden sticks, pistols and rifles.⁴²

The Łysiec Auxiliary Police station was based in a building near the intersection connecting the road from Stanyslaviv to Bohorodczany with the road leading to Radcza. Before the war, this was the headquarters of the Polish State Police. During the Soviet occupation, the District Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine was probably located there.⁴³ As mentioned, the station’s precinct, besides Łysiec itself, covered the villages of Stary Łysiec, Drohomirczany,

³⁸ J. Radczenko, “‘Wystrzelaliśmy do nich wszystkie naboje’. *Ukrainische Hilfspolizei* i Holocaust na terenie Generalbeziirk Charkow w latach 1941–1943,” in *OUN, UPA i zagłada Żydów*, pp. 474–475.

³⁹ Finder and Prusin, “Kolaboracja w Galicji Wschodniej,” p. 370.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 373.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*; AIPN Ka, S 45/02/Zn, Translation of the minutes of Prof. Raul Hilberg’s interrogation of 14 September 1982, n.d., p. 1634.

⁴² Martynenko, “Ukrayins’ka Dopomizhna Politsiya,” p. 156.

⁴³ AIPN Ka, S 45/02/Zn, Minutes of the interrogation of Michał Mokłowicz, 18 September 1987, p. 2484; *ibid.*, Minutes of the interrogation of Józef Berezowski before the Branch Commission for the Investigation of Hitlerite Crimes against the Polish Nation (*Okręgowa Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu*, hereinafter OKBZH) in Wrocław, 19 November 1976.

Ivanikovka, Krechowce, Posiecz, Radcza, Stebnik and Zabereże. It is noteworthy, however, that the police not only secured the areas of individual villages, but also nearby forests and uninhabited areas. The sector of routine patrols extended to the border of neighbouring municipalities.⁴⁴

It is impossible to precisely reconstruct the personnel composition of the staff of the Ukrainian police station in Łysiec, though we know there was a rotation in the personnel. From the testimony of Łysiec police officers, it appears that about five or six police officers served at one time.⁴⁵ The first commander was Lyczaj (first name unknown), who was replaced by Bilanczuk⁴⁶ (first name unknown). Among the policemen serving in various periods at the Łysiec post, Bohdan Kozij, Jurij Irodenko, Semen Witwicki, Nikolaj Karpiniec, Bilogubka (first name unknown) and Dowganicz (first name unknown) may also be mentioned. Moreover, a German gendarme was posted there.⁴⁷ However, we do not have more detailed information about his role in daily operations.

Witnesses particularly remembered Bohdan Kozij, who, in the opinion of many Łysiec residents, was the most diligent in carrying out the Germans' orders. Ivan Paszkiewicz recalled: "By nature, Kozij was a bad and cruel man. He liked to abuse people."⁴⁸ Similarly, Iosif Ilkowski described him as follows: "Kozij was cruel and devoted to the fascist occupants, he was servile to them. In Łysiec, all the inhabitants were afraid of him, he could hose any person down for no reason."⁴⁹ During the occupation period, Bohdan Kozij married the daughter of Łysiec's mayor Wasyl

⁴⁴ AIPN Ka, S 45/02/Zn, Main Files of the Investigation, Translation of the minutes of Professor Raul Hilberg's interrogation of 14 September 1982, no date, p. 1633.

⁴⁵ AIPN Ka, S 45/02/Zn, Main Files of the Investigation, Translation from Russian of the minutes of the interrogation of Semen Witwicki dated 12 June 1987, 6 October 2003, p. 2628; *ibid.*, Translation from Russian of the minutes of the interrogation of Jurij Irodenko dated 13 June 1976, 20 September 2009, p. 2615.

⁴⁶ In the source material, there are various forms of writing his name: Bilanchuk, Bileytchuk, Belanchuk.

⁴⁷ AIPN Ka, S 45/02/Zn, Main Files of the Investigation, Translation from Russian of the minutes of the interrogation of Semen Witwicki dated 12 June 1987, 6 October 2003, p. 2628; *ibid.*, Translation from Russian of the minutes of the interrogation of Jurij Irodenko dated 13 June 1976, 20 September 2009, p. 2615.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, Translation from Russian of Iwan Paszkiewicz's interrogation report of 16 May 1975, 20 September 2003, p. 2592.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, Translation from Russian of the minutes of Iosif Ilkowski's interrogation of 26 November 1975, 16 September 2003, p. 2583.

Ostapiak. Since then, he began to take advantage of his privileged position. Semen Witwicki, who served with him, testified: "Taking advantage of his father-in-law's influential position, Kozij behaved brazenly, nonchalantly, and one could say that the man did not acknowledge any of the policemen. He maintained friendly relations chiefly with the German [...]. He had a bad, explosive character."⁵⁰

The primary criteria for admission to service in the Ukrainian police formation were appropriate political views and physical fitness. The recruited individuals were vetted by the German Security Police (*Sicherheitspolizei*), among others.⁵¹ The German authorities also conducted training sessions for Ukrainian police officers. During such classes, the lecturers emphasised instilling a Nazi ethos in the students. According to Gabriel Finder and Alexander Prusin, although no direct evidence has been found of anti-Semitic indoctrination of Ukrainian police officers in Eastern Galicia, it can be assumed that, following the example of units operating in Soviet Ukraine, Ukrainian police officers were also "trained to prepare themselves for the 'Jewish danger'."⁵²

It is impossible to unequivocally determine what motivations guided those joining the ranks of the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police. In addition to ideological issues, practical considerations, including privileges, were undoubtedly important. Ukrainian policemen were relatively well-secured economically. Among other things, they were entitled to wages at the level of a skilled labourer, extra food rations and social insurance.⁵³ Police service also guaranteed relative security for officers' families and protected them from deportation for forced labour to the Reich.⁵⁴ It was the latter motivation that Jurij Irodenko, who served in Łysiec, pointed out in his testimony. He admitted that he joined the Ukrainian police voluntarily because he believed that serving in the police formation would protect him from being deported to perform forced labour.⁵⁵ In addition to ideological

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, Translation from Russian of the minutes of the interrogation of Semen Witwicki on 15 June 1987, 6 October 2003, p. 2632.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, Translation of the minutes of the interrogation of Prof. Raul Hilberg on 14 September 1982, no date, p. 1638.

⁵² Finder and Prusin, *Kolaboracja w Galicji Wschodniej*, p. 374.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 380.

⁵⁴ Маргиненко, *Українська Допоміжна Поліція*, p. 161.

⁵⁵ AIPN Ka, S 45/02/Zn, Main Files of the Investigation, Translation of the minutes of the interrogation of Jurij Irodenko on 11 June 1975, 20 September 2003, p. 2609.

and social motivations, Taras Martinenko rightly pointed to psychological factors determining entry into police formations. In his opinion, an essential motive for entering the service was the opportunity for officers to gain a sense of limited but power over others.⁵⁶ Finally, it is worth emphasising that some of the officers of the Łysiec post transferred to the police directly from the disbanded structures of the OUN militia.⁵⁷

As Raul Hilberg underlined,⁵⁸ the local police performed many auxiliary functions. "Every duty of the German police was also the duty of the local police."⁵⁹ The scope of duties of the Ukrainian police in Łysiec was precisely set out in the testimony of Semen Witwicki mentioned above:

The primary task of the district police and ours as policemen was maintaining the occupation regime. Policemen were required to unconditionally carry out all the recommendations and orders of the German command. For the slightest disobedience, they risked being shot, or at best arrested and sent to a concentration camp. We, as police officers, were to perform a patrol duty [...], to keep an eye on order, to combat theft, hooliganism, to assist the German-fascist pacification authorities in detecting, detaining, arresting, escorting and shooting Soviet citizens of Jewish nationality, former activists of Soviet power, communists, partisans.⁶⁰

Actions of the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police against Łysiec Jews

From the first days of the German occupation, Ukrainian policemen demonstrated anti-Semitic attitudes. They committed acts of individual violence against representatives of the Jewish community. They mistreated and humiliated local

⁵⁶ Мартиненко, *Українська Допоміжна Поліція*, p. 161.

⁵⁷ Antony Vaceb listed Bilogubka and Karpiniec, among others, among the militia officers. On the other hand, he erroneously named Semen Witwicki, who was staying in his hometown village of Piaseczno at the time. AIPN Ka, S 45/02/Zn, Main Files of the Investigation, Translation of the minutes of the interrogation of Antony Vaceb on 20 March 1981, 19 March 2003, p. 2155.

⁵⁸ Prof. Raul Hilberg was appointed by US investigators as an expert witness in the Bohdan Kozij case and was on 14 September 1982.

⁵⁹ AIPN Ka, S 45/02/Zn, Main Files of the Investigation, Translation of the minutes of the interrogation of Prof. Raul Hilberg of 14 September 1982, no date, p. 1634.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, Translation from Russian of the minutes of the interrogation of Semen Witwicki on 15 June 1987, 6 October 2003, p. 2632.

Jews. Karol Koluszko recalled in his testimony that some policemen “displayed terrible sadism.”⁶¹ During the first period of the German occupation, the first commander of the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police in Łysiec – Nyczaj – showed particular brutality towards Jews. As the quoted witness testified later in the interrogation, when the commandant “met a Jew, he would give him orders – Get down! Stand up! He would jump on his back or chest and beat him with a baton.”⁶²

Violent, degrading and insulting behaviour on the part of the Łysiec Ukrainian policemen towards Jews occurred throughout the occupation. Max Kandler testified that, in September or October 1942, when he worked at a German company for which he collected recyclables in the Łysiec area, he was stopped by a patrol of Ukrainian policemen. After checking his papers, one of the officers wanted to light a cigarette and asked him for matches. When Kandler handed him a lit match, it went out so the officer punched him violently in the face. He was probably saved from further repressions from Ukrainian policemen because he had a German pass confirming that he was working for the Reich.⁶³ Jadwiga Spilarewicz, on the other hand, recalled during her interrogation how she was being transported in a van from Łysiec to the Gestapo headquarters in Stanyslaviv, the escorting Ukrainian policemen from the local police station abused the Jews transported with her. The Ukrainians pushed and beat them and ordered them to pray and sing songs.⁶⁴

As Dieter Pohl rightly pointed out, in the face of the total disenfranchisement and expropriation of the Jewish community by the German authorities, even the “normal” tasks of the auxiliary police, such as combating the black market or smuggling, among others, became part of activities aimed at the destruction of the Jews.⁶⁵ It was also the order of the day for Ukrainian policemen to make individual profits at the expense of the local Jewish community. While on duty, they engaged in various types of extortion, including obtaining valuables as bribes from their

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, Minutes of the inspection of a VHS cassette with the recording of the interrogation of Karol Koluszko on 19 January 1981 by American investigators, 20 January 2003, p. 1415.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ AIPN Ka, S 45/02/Zn, Main Files of the Investigation, Translation from English of the minutes of the interrogation of Max Kandler on 11 July 2003, p. 2235.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, Translation from English of the minutes of the interrogation of Jadwiga Spilarewicz, 7 June 2003, p. 2081.

⁶⁵ Pohl, “Ukrainische Hilfskräfte,” p. 211.

victims. It is worth underlining that this type of practice was against the rules of the Ukrainian police.⁶⁶ The officers were also responsible for common theft. As Józef Waclaw Jabłoński testified, during many evenings, Ukrainian police officers would search Jewish homes and take valuables from them.⁶⁷ The liquidation of the Jewish community of Łysiec and the surrounding villages was another opportunity for the Ukrainian police to enrich themselves at their victims' expense. Bohdan Kozij, having married the mayor's daughter, Jarosława Ostapiak, moved into a house previously owned by a Jewish family.⁶⁸ There were rumours among the residents of Łysiec that he decorated his home with items he took from Jewish homes after their owners were resettled to the ghetto.⁶⁹

An essential duty of the local Ukrainian police was supervising Jewish labourers performing forced labour for the Germans. Jurij Radczenko cites the contents of one German instruction from 1941 that emphasised: "The Jewish population should be forced to work under the supervision of the Ukrainian police, primarily in agriculture."⁷⁰

Ukrainian law enforcement forces in the Galicia District also played an auxiliary role in the German authorities' operations to displace and deport the Jewish community to extermination camps. As in other regions of the occupied country, the German authorities, when planning the extermination of Jews, sought to concentrate them. To this end, they placed Jews from villages and smaller urban centres in ghettos established in larger towns and county towns. The Jewish residents of Łysiec were resettled to the largest ghetto in the area, located in Stanyslaviv. The Germans carried out the resettlement action of the Łysiec Jews in the spring of 1942. The Ukrainian Auxiliary Police of Łysiec were also actively involved.⁷¹

When the resettlement started, Ukrainian policemen were responsible, among other things, for identifying and bringing the Jews to the designated place. The

⁶⁶ Himka, "Organizacja Ukraińskich Nacjonalistów," p. 457.

⁶⁷ AIPN Ka, S 45/02/Zn, Main Files of the Investigation, Minutes of the inspection of a VHS cassette with the recording of the interrogation of Józef Waclaw Jabłoński on 19 January 1981 by American investigators, 10 February 2003, p. 1489.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, Minutes of the interrogation of Władysław Bryndziej, 22 September 1987, p. 2479.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, Minutes of the interrogation of Józef Waclaw Jabłoński, 25 September 1987, p. 2497.

⁷⁰ Radczenko, "Policja pomocnicza," p. 418.

⁷¹ AIPN Ka, S 45/02/Zn, Main Files of the Investigation, Justification of the request of the OKŚZpNP in Katowice for legal assistance, July 2003, pp. 2316–2317.

officers went around houses inhabited by representatives of the Jewish faith and forced them to leave their farms. They conducted the entire operation in a highly violent manner. The aggressive behaviour of the Ukrainian policemen increased the terror among the Jews leaving their homes. The Ukrainian policemen led all the Jewish residents of the town, as well as the surrounding villages, to the central square of Łysiec. According to witnesses' estimates, they gathered there about 250 people of mixed genders and ages. Under the guard of Germans and Ukrainian police officers, Jews were held there for more than 24 hours without food or drink. Then in formed columns on foot, the German and Ukrainian escort led them to the Stanyslaviv ghetto.⁷²

Even though the Germans planned, directed and coordinated the action, given the number of auxiliary units, local conditions and good knowledge of the area that the local Ukrainian police structures possessed, it is likely, in practice, that it was the Ukrainian police officers who were mostly responsible for the smooth execution of the operation to resettle the Łysiec Jews.

It is worth mentioning that the local Ukrainian authorities, following an obligation binding throughout the General Governorate, also had to provide means of transportation to secure the action. To this end, letters were sent to individual residents of Łysiec, ordering them to appear with their carts and horses at a designated place on a specific day and to obey all orders of the security forces. Local peasants, under the guard of Ukrainian policemen, were used to transport those Jews who could not walk a long distance on their own.⁷³

The residents of Łysiec knew very well the conditions in the Jewish quarter in Stanyslaviv. In late 1941 and early 1942, the situation was incomparably worse in the ghetto than in the rest of the town. Outside the ghetto, despite the harsh realities of the occupation, people had access to food. For example, even before the deportation of local Jews to the ghetto, Max Kandler, who lived in Łysiec,

⁷² *Ibid.*, Translation from Russian of the minutes of the interrogation of Iosif Ilkowski of 26 November 1975, 20 September 2003, p. 2582; *ibid.*, Translation from Russian of the minutes of the interrogation of Jurij Irodenko of 13 June 1976, 20 September 2003, p. 2614.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, Minutes of the inspection of a VHS cassette with the recording of the interrogation of Józef Waclaw Jabłoński on 19 January 1981 by American investigators, 10 February 2003, p. 1481; *ibid.*, Minutes of the inspection of a VHS cassette with the recording of the interrogation of Karol Koluszko on 19 January 1981 by American investigators, 20 January 2003, pp. 1409–1410.

delivered food to his relatives confined in the Stanyslaviv quarter. He secretly went there at night to avoid German and Ukrainian patrols. During such trips, he saw conditions in the ghetto.⁷⁴ In addition, the Łysiec Jews were undoubtedly familiar with the events of Bloody Sunday, which occurred on 12 October 1941 in Stanyslaviv. At that time, the Germans, supported by Ukrainian policemen, killed about 10–12 thousand Jews.⁷⁵ All this meant that Jewish community members could not be sure of their fate, and some had already tried to avoid resettlement at all costs. Those who attempted to escape during the resettlement were shot on the spot. According to witness testimonies, at least a few Łysiec Jews were killed in this manner,⁷⁶ including Abraham Kandler, who was killed on the road in Łysiec because he was unable to maintain a proper marching pace in the column of Jews headed to the ghetto.⁷⁷ However, it is impossible to determine whether these killings were carried out by Ukrainian policemen or Germans escorting the column.

During the action mentioned above, not all the Jews were expelled from Łysiec. A specific group stayed in the town, performing useful functions from the local authorities' perspective. For example, a local doctor – Oskar Singer – stayed in Łysiec for another two months until he was warned of the next, pending action to expel the remaining Jews. Thanks to this information, he found shelter for himself and his family members. He was helped by a Pole – Andrzej Kozdęba – from the nearby Olesiów.⁷⁸ It was extremely tough for Jews to find shelter. The Christian population, fearing repression, was reluctant to help any fugitives. This mainly applied to Ukrainians. Jews who had maintained contact with Polish residents of Łysiec and its surroundings before the war stood a much better chance of finding a hiding place.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, Translation of the minutes of the interrogation of Max Kandler, 11 July 2003, p. 2221.

⁷⁵ D. Pohl, *Hans Krueger and the Murder of the Jews in the Stanyslaviv Region (Galicia)*, https://www.yadvashem.org/odot_pdf/Microsoft%20Word%20-%202292.pdf (accessed 10 November 2018).

⁷⁶ AIPN Ka, S 45/02/Zn, Main Files of the Investigation, Translation of the minutes of the interrogation of Józef Frankowicz-Ilkowski of 1981, p. 2189.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, English translation of the minutes of the interrogation of Max Kandler, 11 July 2003, p. 2361.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, Minutes of the inspection of a VHS cassette with the recording of the interrogation of Karol Koluszko on 19 January 1981 by American investigators, 20 January 2003, pp. 1421–1423.

⁷⁹ While researching aid given by Poles to Jewish residents of the Stanyslaviv County, it was determined that at least four Polish families from Łysiec and the immediate vicinity were involved in helping Jews, and together they hid at least 22 Jews.

After the deportation of the Jews to the Stanyslaviv ghetto, one of the most important tasks of the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police from the Łysiec post (as was the case with the other UAP posts in the Galicia District) was to search for members of the Jewish community hiding in the town and the surrounding villages – those who had managed to take refuge from deportation and those who had escaped from the ghetto or transports to the Belzec death camp. Ukrainian policemen were tasked with locating where the fugitives hid and then turning them over to the German authorities or shooting them on the spot.⁸⁰ They may have received extra pay from the Germans for spotting those in hiding, which for them, was undoubtedly a specific motivating factor.⁸¹ Cooperation with the local population often proved essential in these operations.

In the summer of 1942, three Ukrainian policemen (station commander Biłanczuk, Bohdan Kozij and Jurij Irodenko), together with a German gendarme, found a Jewish girl in one of the nearby gardens, hiding from being taken to the ghetto. As Maria Ilkowska – an eyewitness to the incident – testified, the policemen “started beating [the girl – T.G.] savagely. They beat her with their hands and with some rubber whips. When she collapsed, a German standing beside her set a dog on her. Then they led this girl away, and I never saw her again.”⁸² Maria Ilkowska also saw how Bohdan Kozij and a German gendarme found her neighbour Lida (last name unknown), who had escaped from the Stanyslaviv ghetto, in a barn near the Jewish cemetery. The witness recalls: “[The two – T.G.] beat her with a whip, and the dog violently attacked her and tore her clothes. They derided her, insulted her.”⁸³ The further fate of the Jewish woman is also unknown; most likely, she was murdered.

There is no doubt that Ukrainian policemen from Łysiec were directly involved in the killing of local Jews. In the fall of 1942, Bohdan Kozij shot Lusia Rosiner, a teenager. Her father had been a militiaman in Łysiec during the 1939–1941 So-

⁸⁰ AIPN Ka, S 45/02/Zn, Main Files of the Investigation, Translation of the Minutes of the Interrogation of Prof. Raul Hilberg on 14 September 1982, undated, p. 1637.

⁸¹ Pohl, “Ukrainische Hilfskräfte,” p. 217.

⁸² AIPN Ka, S 45/02/Zn, Main Files of the Investigation, Translation from Russian of the minutes of the interrogation of Maria Ilkowska on 9 June 1975, 10 September 2003, p. 2562.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, Translation from English of the minutes of the interrogation of Maria Ilkowska, 21 May 2003, p. 1989.

viet occupation. She avoided the fate of her parents and managed to save herself from deportation to the ghetto of Stanyslaviv. She led a wandering life for several months, as she could not find permanent shelter with the residents. She spent the nights in barns and other village buildings. Witnesses testified that one day a crowd of dozens of townspeople gathered in the centre of Łysiec, in the farmyard that before the war belonged to Bunia Shulema. In a small shed, the Jewish woman mentioned above was sitting on a pile of hay. One of the townspeople must have found the hiding girl and notified the local Ukrainian police station because, after some time, an armed Ukrainian policeman, Bohdan Kozij, arrived on the spot. He chased away the gathered crowd of onlookers and entered the shed.⁸⁴ It is worth noting that no other Ukrainian policemen or German officers were nearby. In his testimony, witness Iosif Ilkowski described the events that unfolded in the following minutes: “The girl began to ask to be sent back to her father and mother. As I still remember today, Kozij replied, ‘I will take you to your father and mother right away.’ He ordered everyone to disperse, then returned to the shed and shot the girl.”⁸⁵

In the early spring of 1943, the place where the Bredgolc family of four were hiding was also discovered in Łysiec under unknown circumstances.⁸⁶ The family ran a bakery in the town before the war.⁸⁷ After bringing the Jewish family to the Ukrainian police station, the German gendarme and Bohdan Kozij searched everyone. Valuables were found in Bredgolc’s wife’s hair. One of the Ukrainian policemen – Jurij Irodenko – described the events unfolding at the station in his testimony: “The policeman Kozij and the German gendarme began beating Bredgolc and his family savagely. They inflicted blows with their hands and feet. It

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, Translation from Russian of the minutes of the interrogation of Antony Vaceb, 29 May 1975, 6 September 2003, p. 2549; *ibid.*, Translation from Russian of the minutes of interrogation of Antony Vaceb, 4 November 1975, 8 September 2003, pp. 2555–2556; *ibid.*, Translation from Russian of the minutes of the interrogation of Maria Ilkowska, 14 January 1976, 10 September 2003, p. 2580; *ibid.*, Translation from Russian of the minutes of the interrogation of Iosif Ilkowski, 26 November 1975, 16 September 2003, p. 2583; *ibid.*, Translation from Russian of the minutes of the interrogation of Iosif Ilkowski, 15 January 1976, 20 September 2003, p. 2589; *ibid.*, Translation from Russian of the minutes of the interrogation of Iwan Paszkiewicz, 16 May 1975, 20 September 2003, p. 2592.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, Translation from Russian of the minutes of the interrogation of Iosif Ilkowski, 26 November 1975, 16 September 2003, p. 2583.

⁸⁶ Several variants of the family name notation can be found in the source material: Bredgolts, Bredgolc, Bredholz, and Bergolc.

⁸⁷ AIPN Ka, S 45/02/Zn, Main Files of the Investigation, Translation from English of the minutes of the interrogation of Maria Ilkowska, 21 May 2003, pp. 1987–1989.

was a horrible sight; the children were crying, asking for mercy.⁸⁸ After the Jewish family was escorted out of the Ukrainian police station, Bohdan Kozij ordered the couple to lie down on the ground and get up repeatedly, and he punched them again and again.⁸⁹ The Ukrainian policeman and a German gendarme escorted them then to a nearby Jewish cemetery, where they murdered them. The policeman Irodenko claimed in his testimony that he remained at his post and did not participate in the shooting of this family.⁹⁰ However, according to other witnesses, he was personally involved. There are also inaccuracies regarding the presence of a German gendarme at the execution. According to Maria and Iosif Ilkowski, the gendarme only escorted the Jews to the cemetery and then left the execution site. However, there is no doubt that he gave the Ukrainian policemen a verbal order to shoot the family.⁹¹ Of the locals, Zenowij Ostapiak gave the most accurate and reliable description of the events at the cemetery:

I saw that Bredgolc and his wife held their hands behind their backs; apparently, their hands were tied. They were sobbing loudly, shouting, begging for mercy, and did not want to go to the cemetery. Behind them, with rifles, walked the policemen – Kozij and Irodenko. They beat the Bredgolces, poking them in the back with their rifles, thus forcing them to go to the cemetery. Following Kozij and Irodenko were the Bredgolces' children, two girls about 6 and 12 years old. They were crying, screaming, begging for mercy. Behind them walked two more policemen I didn't know. A German with a sheepdog followed them. [...] The German with the sheepdog and the two policemen I didn't know stood to the side and gave some commands in German. In contrast, Kozij Bohdan and Irodenko Jurij stood at a distance of about five metres from the Bredgolc family. [...] At the German's command, Kozij and Irodenko raised their rifles, aimed

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, Translation from Russian of the minutes of the interrogation of Jurij Irodenko, 13 June 1976, 20 September 2009, p. 2615.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, Translation from Russian of the minutes of the interrogation of Iosif Ilkowski, 15 January 1976, 20 September 2003, p. 2588.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, Translation from Russian of the minutes of the interrogation of Jurij Irodenko, 13 June 1976, 20 September 2009, p. 2615.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, Translation from English of the minutes of the interrogation of Maria Ilkowska, 21 May 2003, pp. 1987–1989; *ibid.*, Translation from Russian of the minutes of the interrogation of Iosif Ilkowski, 26 November 1975, 16 September 2003, p. 2584.

at Bredgolc and his wife directly at the back of the head and fired. [...] The shot victims fell straight into the pit. The German moved away after that, and Kozij and Irodenko immediately shot the Bredgolces' children in the same way.⁹²

Also, in the spring of 1943, Bohdan Kozij shot Lonia Nagler, a teenage Jewish boy. The boy came from Stary Łysiec, where his parents probably ran a store before the war. He avoided deportation to the ghetto and hid in nearby villages, performing occasional jobs for local peasants. Among other things, he stayed on Julian Biereznicki's farm for a while. However, the farmer refused to continue hiding him when he learned of a decree by the German authorities that threatened those helping Jews with death. In unexplained circumstances, the boy was detained in the Łysiec area by Bohdan Kozij. The policeman escorted the child to the Jewish cemetery, where he shot Lonia in the back of the head with a pistol. At the time of this incident, no German gendarme or any other Ukrainian policeman was nearby.⁹³

Władysław Bryndziej witnessed the moment when Bohdan Kozij shot a Jewish woman named Kalmus in the autumn of 1943. While working on the farm of a local Ukrainian farmer Dymitr Hudyma, the witness found the wounded Jewish woman near the barn. He testified:

The Jewish woman Kalmus did not tell me who shot her but only asked me to hide her. I complied with her request, pulled her [...] to a shed next to the barn and covered her with straw. Kalmus asked me to notify Doctor Kohutiuk. [...] I told her to be quiet and not to moan and that I would just give the horses some hay and would immediately go to Doctor Kohutiuk. I left the shed and went to the barn to get hay. After a while, Bohdan Kozij came into the barn and asked me: "Where is she?" I asked him: "Who?" to which B[ohdan] Kozij answered: "That Jewish girl." At that moment, B[ohdan] Kozij hit me in the face with his hand and ran out of the barn. It seems to me that he must have heard the moaning of

⁹² *Ibid.*, Translation from Russian of the minutes of the interrogation of Zenowij Ostapiak, 26 November 1987, 6 October 2003, pp. 2643–2644.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, Translation from Russian of the minutes of the interrogation of Maria Ilkowska on 9 June 1975, 10 September 2003, p. 2564; *ibid.*, Translation from Russian of the minutes of the interrogation of Zenowij Ostapiak of 26 November 1987, 12 June 2003, p. 2642; *ibid.*, Translation from Russian of the minutes of the interrogation of Maria Ilkowska of 12 June 1975, 10 September 2003, p. 2565.

the Jewish woman Kalmus coming from the shed. B[ohdan] Kozij entered the shed, summoned me to him, told me to uncover the straw, and ordered me to pull Kalmus out into the yard. I told B[ohdan] Kozij that I could not pull her out. At that point, B[ohdan] Kozij grabbed Kalmus by the arm and leg himself and pulled her into the yard. He loaded his rifle, shot Kalmus in the head, and killed her. He also wanted to shoot me, but someone from the Ostapiak family shouted not to kill me. B[ohdan] Kozij [...] kicked me and told me to run away.⁹⁴

Another sequence of events involving Ukrainian police took place in the autumn of 1943. It affected the fate of the remaining Jews still hiding in the village. On the night of 24–25 October 1943, an unidentified Ukrainian armed group broke into the farm of Andrzej Kozdęba in Olesiów (located about 4 km from Łysiec) and searched it.

It was presumably a branch of the Ukrainian Insurrectionary Army (UPA). At the time, nine Jews were probably hiding at the Pole's farm in a specially prepared hiding place in the barn,⁹⁵ including the local doctor, Dr Oskar Singer, with his wife and brother-in-law. Two men managed to escape under unknown circumstances; a Ukrainian unit found the others and took them away. We have no information about their fate.⁹⁶ The next day, two Ukrainian policemen from the Łysiec police station arrived at Andrzej Kozdęba's farm, among them Bohdan Kozij. Perhaps they had been informed that the UPA unit had found Jews there. Also staying at

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, Minutes of the interrogation of Władysław Bryndziej, 22 September 1987, p. 2481.

⁹⁵ Jews were hiding on the farm of Andrzej Kozdęba from November or December 1942. Initially, two men found shelter there: Haller (first name unknown) and Blumenstein (first name unknown), as well as Oskar Singer and his family. In the spring of 1943, the Nagler family of four from Posiecz (a married couple with teenage children) joined those in hiding. However, they stayed in hiding periodically. In the summer, they returned to their hometown. In the autumn, they again took shelter at Andrzej Kozdęba's home. The Jews hid in the barn, in a prepared hiding place covered with hay. See *ibid.*, Minutes of the inspection of a VHS tape with a recording of Karol Koluśzko's testimony in the "US v. Bohdan Kozij" trial 30 January 2003, pp. 1423–1424; *ibid.*, Minutes of the interrogation of Karol Koluśzko by the OKBZH in Bydgoszcz, 1 February 1977, p. 1394; *ibid.*, Minutes of the interrogation of Mieczysław Kozdęba, 22 April 1977, p. 1532; *ibid.*, *Minutes of the interrogation of Karol Koluśzko*, 25 September 1987, p. 2507; *ibid.*, Minutes of the interrogation of Jadwiga Spilarewicz on the order of the General Prosecutor's Office of the People's Republic of Poland, 24 September 1987, p. 2473.

⁹⁶ Max Kandler testified that he had heard from unidentified residents of Łysiec that a UPA unit had taken Dr Oskar Singer to provide medical assistance to the unit's members. See *ibid.*, Minutes of the Interrogation of Max Kandler, 11 July 2003, p. 2368.

the Pole's farm at the time were the host's son Mieczysław Kozdęba and grandson Karol Kuluszko. As the latter did not live permanently on his grandfather's farm, he was sent back home by Kozij. Andrzej and Mieczysław Kozdęba were arrested by police officers, probably for giving shelter to the Jews mentioned above, and were handed over to the Gestapo.⁹⁷

At this point, it is worth looking at the relationship between the Ukrainian policemen from Łysiec and the local UPA units. The case described above indicates that the Ukrainian police must have received information that a Ukrainian armed unit had found hiding Jews, which initiated further actions against the Polish family giving aid. This information may have been passed to the police station by someone from the unit. Police officers from the Łysiec police station probably maintained regular contact with the UPA units. Although on 17 November 1941, it was forbidden to recruit people associated with the Bandera movement into Ukrainian police structures, the OUN-B consistently tried to infiltrate the local police force.⁹⁸ The same probably happened in Łysiec, as there were sympathisers of the Ukrainian nationalist movement among the local police officers. Bohdan Kozij was a member of the OUN-B before joining the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police in Łysiec.⁹⁹ A suggestion of his close relations with the armed units of the Ukrainian nationalists can be found in the testimony of police officer Semen Witwicki.¹⁰⁰ In the final phase of the war, there was also an exodus of police officers to UPA units. It is likely that, in 1944, one of the policemen serving at the Łysiec police station – Bilogubko¹⁰¹ – joined such a unit.

The detection of Jews on the Kozdęba farm set further events in motion. Karol Kuluszko, a witness to the arrest of his grandfather and uncle, warned his parents,

⁹⁷ Andrzej Kozdęba died under unknown circumstances in prison in Stanyslaviv, while Mieczysław Kozdęba was released after three months. See *ibid.*, Minutes of the interrogation of Mieczysław Kozdęba, 22 April 1977, p. 1532; *ibid.*, Minutes of the interrogation of Karol Kuluszko by the OKBZH in Bydgoszcz, 1 February 1977, p. 1394.

⁹⁸ Himka, "Organizacja Ukraińskich Nacjonalistów," p. 462.

⁹⁹ Finder and Prusin, "Kolaboracja w Galicji Wschodniej," p. 375.

¹⁰⁰ He testified, among other things, that in December 1943, while he was on night duty, an armed unit of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army arrived at the police station and wanted to agree with Bohdan Kozij on "some matters". See AIPN Ka, S 45/02/Zn, Main Files of the Investigation, Translation from Russian of the minutes of the interrogation of Semen Witwicki of 15 June 1987, October 6, 2003, p. 2635.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, Translation from Russian of the minutes of the interrogation of Antony Vaceb of 29 May 1975, 6 September 2003, p. 2550.

Tomasz and Helena Koluszko, who were also hiding Jews, about the danger. They immediately left Łysiec with their children for fear of repressions from the Germans and Ukrainian police. Hiding in the Poles' farmhouse at that time was the Kandler family of five: Bernard Kandler with his wife and child, Bernard's two sisters and his wife's family (a married couple with two children – last name unknown). Before the war, the Kanders owned a mill adjacent to the Koluszko farm. It is unknown why the Jews did not leave the hiding place with the fleeing Poles. Around 26 October 1943, the Germans showed up at the Koluszko farm with the Ukrainian police. After searching and ransacking the entire farm, they found the Jews hiding in a specially prepared place in the barn. The Jews were taken to the post in Łysiec.¹⁰² That same day, in the afternoon, a German gendarme and Bohdan Kozij led the detained Jews out of the post to the courtyard. The course of events that unfolded in front of the building is described in detail by Józef Waclaw Jabłoński:

Kozij lined up the women in front of the stairs leading out towards the well in the police station's courtyard, and the men on the right in front of the women. I observed this scene closely since I was standing near the gate leading to the police station's courtyard [...]. After lining these women up, Kozij, who was standing on the steps and armed with a rifle, ordered them to turn around so that they were standing with their backs to him. On the other side, a German policeman was also standing on the stairs and holding a pistol, ready to shoot. These women refused to turn around, as they realised what would happen to them, and began screaming and crying terribly. At that point, Kozij took the rifle off his shoulder and started shooting at them. Also shooting at the women with a pistol was a German policeman. At this time, the Jewish men standing beside them fell to their knees and started kissing Kozij's shoes, asking him not to shoot their loved ones. However, these requests did not affect Kozij's and the German's actions. After shooting the women and the child, the German police-

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, Minutes of the interrogation of Karol Koluszko by the OKBZH in Bydgoszcz, 1 February 1977, pp. 1394–1395; *ibid.*, Minutes of the inspection of a VHS cassette with a recording of the testimony of Karol Koluszko in the “US v. Bohdan Kozij” trial, 30 January 2003, pp. 1423–1434; *ibid.*, Report of the interrogation of Karol Koluszki, 25 September 1987, pp. 2507–2509.

man remained on the stairs while Kozij escorted these men – Jews – inside the building.

The German policeman then descended the stairs to the shot women and child to check for any signs of life. After finding them dead, he also went inside the building. Then, after a few minutes had passed, Kozij, the German and a third policeman, Irodenko, led Bernard Kandler and an unknown man out of the post building from the side of the main road. The two Jews – after descending the stairs and walking towards a standing truck covered with a tarp – tried to escape [...]. Kozij, who had a pistol then, ran after Bernard Kandler and, grabbing him by the arm, put the pistol to his head and [shot] him. [...] At the same time, a German policeman ran after the other man and shot him with a pistol as well.¹⁰³

The Kozdęba family's arrest and the discovery of Dr Oskar Singer's hiding place threatened the safety of his little daughter, who had taken refuge with Jadwiga Spilarewicz. Fearing that the location of the little Jewish girl's hiding place would be revealed, the Pole, urged by her mother – Stefania Kotopka – decided to leave with the girl to visit relatives near Cracow. On the way, however, she stopped in Łysiec at the home of her aunt – Agnieszka Sałek. Probably on 27 October 1943, Ukrainian police officers arrived at Sałek's apartment and recognised Dr Singer's daughter. Jadwiga Spilarewicz, her mother and her aunt were detained and, together with the young Jewish girl, transported to the police station.¹⁰⁴ Once there, Bohdan Kozij snatched the crying girl from Jadwiga Spilarewicz's arms, led the child into the yard and shot her there. Kozij did not act on anyone's orders. No German functionary was present at the execution, although it was undoubtedly carried out following general German orders.¹⁰⁵ This was the last murder indicated by witnesses to have been committed by Ukrainian policemen in the Łysiec area.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, Minutes of the interrogation of Józef Waław Jabłoński before the OKBZH in Bydgoszcz, 6 April 1977, p. 1399.

¹⁰⁴ Agnieszka Sałek and Stefania Kotopka were probably released on the same day, while Jadwiga Spilarewicz was taken to a prison in Stanyslaviv that evening, where she stayed for about two weeks. See *ibid.*, Report of the interrogation of Jadwiga Spilarewicz before the OKŚZpNP in Katowice, 16 January 2003, pp. 246–250.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, Request of the CID in Katowice for the temporary arrest and extradition of Bohdan Kozij, 6 November 2003; *ibid.*, Translation from Russian of the minutes of the interrogation of Roman Pindus of 18 November 1987, 6 October 2003, p. 2639.

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SUMMARY

The extermination of the Jews of Łysiec, as in the entire pre-war Stanyslaviv voivodeship, was planned, organised and directed by the German occupiers. However, the Germans would not have been able to carry out their criminal plans effectively without the involvement of auxiliary formations whose officers demonstrated better knowledge about the area.

To this end, the Germans included the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police in the mechanism of the extermination of the Jews. According to the research, the participation of Ukrainian policemen in the various phases of the extermination of the local Jewish community was significant. They took an active part in the first stage of liquidating the Łysiec Jewish community, during which there were many brutal attacks, physical and psychological humiliation of members of the Jewish community, and the theft and requisitioning of property. They were also involved in the closing action of this stage of deporting local Jews to the Stanyslaviv ghetto, where they either died in the closed-off district or were deported to the Belzec extermination camp.

To no small extent, the officers of the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police were also involved in the second stage of exterminating the Jews of Łysiec and the surrounding area, which involved tracking down and murdering Jewish people hiding in the surrounding villages. It was at this stage that they showed more of their own initiative. There is no doubt that in many cases this occurred without the participation and probably without the knowledge of the Germans. The role of UAP officers was, therefore, not limited to the technical support of the German murder machine. Also critical here seems to be the attitude of individual officers, especially Bohdan Kozij, who showed particular zeal and his own initiative in carrying out the goals set for the Ukrainian police by the German authorities. In doing so, he acted with particular brutality.

KEYWORDS

Holocaust • Ukrainian Auxiliary Police • Łysiec • Bohdan Kozij