

INTRODUCTION

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the murder in Markowa (Podkarpackie region) of the Ulma Family and the Jews they sheltered from the Goldman, Didner and Grünfeld families. Because of this family's heroism and extraordinary acts, the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, by a resolution of 28 July 2023, established 2024 the Year of the Ulma Family. The resolution stated that "in Poland and beyond its borders they (i.e. Ulmas) are a symbol of all those who gave their lives for helping Jews persecuted by the Germans."¹ The fifth volume of *Polish-Jewish Studies* primarily focuses on the aid provided to the Jews during World War II in occupied Poland as well as in other parts of Europe. The volume is divided in four sections: "Studies," "Sources," "Reviews/Polemics," and "Chronicles."

The first group of texts, found in the "Studies" section, consists of articles related to the issue's main theme, presenting it from comparative, historiographical, methodological, and psychological perspectives. The section opens with the article "Types of Penalties for Helping Jews between 1939 and 1945. Typology and Overview: German Regulations in Force in Selected Areas of Occupied Europe. A Research Reconnaissance," in which Martyna Grądzka-Rejak and Aleksandra Namysłó presented the current state of knowledge on the consequences of providing various types of assistance to Jews in selected countries occupied by or cooperating with the German Reich. In the second article, Alicja Gontarek and

¹ Resolution of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland of 28 July 2023 on the establishment of the year 2024 as the Year of the Ulma Family (*Monitor Polski* 2023, item 886).

Tomasz Domański (“The Phenomenon of Aid Given to Jews by Poles in the Occupied Polish Territories: Approaches and Research Models. A Survey of Positions Taken by Polish and Polish-Jewish Historians”) drew attention to the so-called conceptual model of research on aid to Jews, which prevails in the existing literature and consists in recounting individual testimonies (or collections of testimonies). At the same time, the study advocated a wider application of a model addressing this topic in a thematic manner, which would make it possible to draw a historical synthesis. Meanwhile, the third text (“Was it Trauma? Insights into the Psychological Costs of Hiding Jews During World War II”) by Wiesława Sotwin, presents this researcher’s take on the issue of aid from the point of view of a psychologist. The article considers applying the category of trauma to experiences of people who gave shelter to Jews. The author pointed out that the trauma of those who provided help to the Jews is absent in the public space, and stressed that this problem has still not been socially embraced and acknowledged.

This section’s second group includes texts attempting to respond to the research postulate of Domański and Gontarek presented above. These articles deal with various forms of assistance given to the Jews in selected areas of occupied Poland. The first text concerns the Distrikt Krakau (Cracow Province) and focuses on the problem of providing shelter to Jewish children (“At Home, We Called Her Hanka.” The Issue of Poles Sheltering Jewish Children on the Aryan Side in the Distrikt Krakau (Cracow Province”). Basing on the fates of several dozen children, Roman Gieron outlined the nature of the help given to them – he answered the question of how they reached their new guardians, and characterised the conditions in which they were staying. The author took into account the context of the various challenges, problems and dangers that those who decided to provide long-term assistance faced in the German occupation conditions. The next article presents the forms of support provided to Jews residing in the so-called Jewish quarters established by the German authorities on the territory of the pre-war Stanisławów Voivodeship (“Individual Aid Provided to Jews in Ghettos in the German Occupation: The Pre-War Stanisławów Voivodeship (1941–1943)”). Tomasz Gonet, providing an overview of the occupation-era conditions in the analysed area, attempted both a description and a statistical account of the above phenomenon. In the last article of this group, Paweł Kornacki presents various aid activities undertaken to

support the Jews under the German occupation, based on the example of the pre-war Łomża District (“Pre-War Łomża District Inhabitants Helping Jews During the German Occupation. A Contribution to Research”).

The “Studies” section closes by containing texts focusing on the lives of Jews imprisoned in the ghettos and their survival strategies – these articles also contain threads relating to the subject of aid. “Resistance and Struggle for the Survival of Garbatka Jews Under the German Occupation” became the subject of Ryszard Śmietanka-Kruszelnicki’s research. Łukasz Połomski in turn outlined “Everyday Life and Living Conditions of Jews in the Nowy Sącz Ghetto 1940–1942.” These texts broaden the knowledge on the history of local Jewish communities and their destruction during World War II.

In the “Sources” section, Kinga Czechowska draws attention to the still unexplored topic of the involvement of the Polish Protestants in helping Jews. In her article entitled “Polish Evangelicals Helping Jews. Two Letters of Celina Reńska née Kawecka to Yad Vashem Concerning Aid Provided in Warsaw by the Szulc and Stechbart Families,” she presents documents that are intended to prompt further research into the issue.

Eight reviews in all form the next part of *Polish-Jewish Studies* no. 5. Przemysław Benken reviews an illustrated study (Warsaw–Jerusalem, 2020), edited by Tomasz Głowiński, Daniel Koreś, Witold Mędykowski and Jan Wiktor Sienkiewicz (*Z armii Andersa do armii Izraela. Drogi żydowskich żołnierzy Wojska Polskiego do niepodległego Izraela / From Anders’ Army to the Israeli Army: The Ways Leading the Jewish Soldiers of the Polish Army to Independent Israel*). The presentations and assessments of the publication by Ryszard Tyndorf and Zygmunt Zieliński concerning the activities of the Catholic Church and Catholic clergy to aid Jews in German-occupied Poland (*Wartime Rescue of Jews by the Polish Catholic Clergy: The Testimony of Survivors and Rescuers*, vol. 1–2, Lublin, 2023) are included in this section in two texts penned by Piotr Briks and Limore Yagil. In the next review, Tomasz Domański analyses the posters on display at the exhibition “Some Were Neighbors. Choice, Human Behavior and the Holocaust” – that were prepared by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and toured many Polish towns and institutions. Thereafter, Adam Dziurok shares his thoughts on Andrew Kornbluth’s publication *The August Trials: The Holocaust and Postwar Justice in Poland*. Alicja Gontarek reviews the extensive (over

a thousand pages long) publication edited by Piotr Długolecki, presenting sources concerning the activities of the Polish Government-in-Exile towards the Jewish population (*W obliczu Zagłady. Rząd RP na uchodźstwie wobec Żydów 1939–1945*, Warsaw, 2021; *Confronting the Holocaust: Documents on the Polish Government-in-Exile's Policy Concerning Jews 1939–1945*, Warsaw, 2022). Next, Martyna Grądzka-Rejak reviews the publication by Andrzej Żbikowski (*O nadziei, cierpieniu, bólu. Ludność cywilna w czasie powstania w getcie warszawskim*, Warsaw, 2023 [Hope, Suffering, and Pain: The Civilian Population During the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising]), and a collective monograph dedicated to Jewish women who fought in the uprising in the Warsaw Ghetto (*Kwestia charakteru. Bojowniczki z getta warszawskiego*, ed. Sylwia Chutnik, Monika Sznajderman, Wołowiec–Warsaw, 2023 [A Matter of Character: Women Combatants from the Warsaw Ghetto]).

The last section, “Chronicles,” includes three texts and begins with the article by Wojciech Hanus “For though they be punished in the sight of men, yet is their hope full of immortality...” Report on Institute of National Remembrance Activities in Connection with Solemn Beatification of the Ulma Family,” who provides a detailed description of the Institute’s initiatives associated with the ceremony held on 10 September 2023 in Markowa. The other two are a continuation of the previous volume of Polish-Jewish Studies no. 4 theme, and are related to the Institute of National Remembrance activities commemorating the victims of Operation “Reinhardt.” Tomasz Domański demonstrates the scope of these initiatives in “Institute of National Remembrance: Research, Educational and Commemorative Activities Devoted to German ‘Operation Reinhardt’ Eightieth Anniversary Events. Report” and in closing this volume of Polish-Jewish Studies no. 5, Paweł Kornacki gives a detailed account of one of the first major academic events to take place in 2022 – in connection with the anniversary of the start of this criminal German Aktion (Symposium Report: “*Aktion Reinhardt* and the Holocaust of Polish Jews: Exploring the Mechanisms and Perpetrators,” Warsaw, 9 March 2022).

Roman Gieron

* Book of Wisdom 3:4. The Polish verse was used on one of the posters of the exhibition “Death for Humanity. The Ulma Family.”