

INTRODUCTION

We invite you to explore the sixth volume of *Polish-Jewish Studies*, which builds upon recent scholarship in the field of Polish-Jewish relations. The articles in this volume are arranged into three sections: “Studies,” “Reviews/Polemics,” and “Chronicles.”

The first group of texts, presented in the section “Studies,” addresses Polish-Jewish relations in the interwar period (1918–1939) and in the years 1939–1945. Edyta Majcher-Ociesa opens with a nuanced analysis of a rarely addressed issue in the academic literature: the state of research on Polish-Jewish relations in the interwar period within Polish historiography. Subsequent studies explore the survival strategies of the Jewish population in the General Governorate, focusing on occupied Cracow (Martyna Grądzka-Rejak) and on Huta Pieniacka and Huta Werchobuska (Michał Siekierka). Taken together, these works offer a comparative perspective on similar phenomena within the same German-occupied entity, while also underscoring the local specifics of anti-Jewish policies across different regions of the General Governorate.

Other texts in the “Studies” section address the latter topic, focusing on the course, methods, and anatomy of the persecution of Jews in occupied Poland by the German occupation apparatus at the local level. Noteworthy is an article by Grzegorz Berendt, which examines the participation and contribution of police forces in the persecution and extermination of Jews in Tarłów (Radom District of the General Governorate) between 1939 and 1944, including the activities of the so-called Blue Police (*Polnische Polizei*). Berendt also considers the Jewish ghetto police as part of

the police system created by the German occupation authorities. In his view, they were largely obedient executors of orders from the German institutions to which they were subordinate. This assessment is not altered by the eventual extermination of the officers of this formation, carried out on the orders of the occupation authorities in 1942–1944. A similar perception of the historical context is presented in Tomasz Domański's article on German crimes against the Jewish community of Działoszyce, a town in the General Governorate during the war. He highlights the crucial issue of German leadership and responsibility for these crimes, while offering an objective and nuanced account of the attitudes of the *Polnische Polizei* officers engaged by the occupiers in the liquidation of Jews. Wojciech Hanus examines a related field of research, analysing the relatively underexplored issue of the extermination of Jews in the Kreis Rawa Ruska area. His study successfully organises and refines information on the course of the German extermination campaign there, while also offering reflections on the assistance provided to Jews by the non-Jewish population.

The second group of texts includes articles on negative acts committed against the Polish and Jewish populations during World War II and their post-war reckoning. Sebastian Piątkowski described the activity of Alfons Himmel, one of the officers of the military police station in Lipsko, Kreis Starachowice (General Governorate), as reflected in post-war investigative and trial material. Tomasz Gonet dealt with the case of the post-war reckoning of the Gestapo chief in Kołomyja, Peter Leideritz, and his wife Anneliese. Konrad Graczyk, on the other hand, presented the case of Michał Sokołowski, who was responsible for denouncing Jews hiding in Sanok, and of Wiktoria Kopiczak, who was helping them. These studies highlight the crucial role of records of post-war criminal proceedings in reconstructing the reality of the occupation.

The post-war attitude of the pro-independence underground towards the Jewish population is examined in Ryszard Śmietanka-Kruszelnicki's essay on the murder of Jews in Działoszyce on the night of 16–17 June 1945. The author seeks to clarify the nature of this incident. This section concludes with Roman Gieron's article on the circumstances and rationale behind the Supreme Court's ruling of 18 October 1949, which broadened the interpretation of the term "capture" and influenced trials in the late 1940s and early 1950s concerning various forms of participation in the capture of Jews between 1942 and 1945.

In the “Reviews/Polemics” section, particular attention is given to Damian Sitkiewicz’s insightful review of Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe’s widely discussed German book, *Polnische Bürgermeister und der Holocaust. Besatzung, Verwaltung und Kollaboration* (Polish Mayors and the Holocaust: Occupation, Administration, and Collaboration). Equally thorough are the discussions of works addressing crimes committed against Poles from Ciepiałów and the surrounding area who aided Jews (Konrad Graczyk, with a gloss by Sebastian Piątkowski); the crimes in Przedbórz at the end of May 1945 (in separate studies by Martyna Grądzka-Rejak and Tomasz Toborek); the Warsaw ghetto (Martyna Grądzka-Rejak); labour camps for Jews in the Cracow District of the General Governorate (Alicja Jarkowska); and the rescue of Jews by Catholic clergy in the Archdiocese of Wilno during the German occupation of 1941–1944 (Radosław Wnorowski). The reviewed monographs – authored by Polish, Anglo-Saxon, and German scholars – span a wide range of issues concerning Polish-Jewish relations and various dimensions of Holocaust policy. Their critical analyses enrich the volume’s portrayal of the broad panorama of research problems it seeks to illuminate.

The volume concludes with a report by Wojciech Hanus, which provides a detailed description of the activities of the Institute of National Remembrance Branch in Rzeszów in connection with the 17th anniversary events devoted to the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust in the Podkarpacie Region (20–30 January 2025).

Roman Gieroń
Wojciech Wichert