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Local organizers and perpetrators of the Holocaust from the Kraków Gestapo. The case of the “Jewish section”

According to statistical data from the end of 1939, 68,482 Jews lived in Kraków, which constituted 23% of the city's total population¹. This number fluctuated constantly over the following years of the occupation, due, among other things, to forced resettlements to other towns (1940–1941)², the ghettoization of the Jewish community (from March

1 Based on the registration carried out at the request of the Germans in 1939. See Report on the Jewish population of Krakow (statistical data), Archives of the Jewish Historical Institute [Archiwum Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego, hereafter: AJHI], file no. 228/11, f. 1; List of the Jewish population in Krakow from May 20, 1940, AJHI, file no. 228/13, p. 32. See A. Chwałba, *Dzieje Krakowa*, vol. 5, Kraków 2002, p. 95.

2 For example, in February 1940, there were 7,000 refugees and displaced persons in the city, mainly from Bielsko-Biała, Chrzanów, Kalisz and Łódź, as well as from the Third Reich. See Correspondence of the Jewish community in Kraków with the

1941 to March 1943), as well as to Operation Reinhard and the direct extermination of Jews (1942–January 1945). Only 3,000 to 5,000 Kraków Jews survived the war.

The task of planning and implementing the Holocaust in occupied Kraków (1939–1945) fell within the remit of the staff of the local office of the Commandant of the Security Police and Security Service (Kommandeur der Sicherheitspolizei [SiPo] und des Sicherheitsdienst [SD], hereafter: KdS), who acted as subcontractors of the main architects of the “undertaking” in Berlin. They were officers recruited from the German and Austrian security services experienced in criminal and counterintelligence work, including the heads of Department IV-A (until 1942 – III), IV-B (until 1942 – III) and IV-N of the Kraków Gestapo (until 1942 – III C³). The first two departments were responsible for investigating and countering the activities of underground organizations (both left-wing and right-wing), the Jewish population, national minorities, trade and craft matters, border crimes and underground teaching. In turn, the task of Department IV-N was to work with agents and register them. This department specialized in providing support and assistance for the Gestapo’s most valuable agents and undercover spies.

From the autumn of 1939 until the end of the war, general Jewish matters were handled by sub-department III-B-2⁴ (later IV-B-1)⁵ headed, in chronological order, by SS-Oberscharführer Paul Siebert, SS-Untersturmführer Oskar Brandt, SS-Hauptsturmführer Wilhelm Kunde and SS-Oberscharführer Hermann Hubert Heinrich. They took an active part in the plunder of Jewish property and committed crimes against

AJDC Presidium from December 26, 1939 to April, 1940, Report on visits to refugee centres, AJHI, file no. 210/430, p. 72. See E. Rączy, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie krakowskim w latach 1939–1945*, Rzeszów 2014, pp. 93, 95.

3 See W. Borodziej, *Terror i polityka. Policja niemiecka a polski ruch oporu w GG 1939–1944*, Warszawa 1985, pp. 43–45, 86.

4 See W. Borodziej, *Terror i polityka*, p. 43.

5 Until June 16, 1942, a different numbering was in force, namely the Staff of the SiPo and SD commandant was at that time divided into four departments: 1. organizational and administrative-legal, 2. Security Service, 3. Gestapo, and 4. Criminal Police. See: Case files on the Gestapo in Kraków, Organizational structure SiPo and SD, The Archive of the Institute of National Remembrance Office in Krakow [Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej Oddział w Krakowie, hereafter: AIPN Kr], file no. Ds. 5/67.

the Jewish population in Krakow, the ghetto and the German-run camp ZAL/KL Plaszow⁶. This does not mean, however, that other Gestapo officers were not involved in these activities, including staff from Department III-A (later IV-A) (resistance-related matters), such as SS-Hauptsturmführer Alfred Spilker, SS-Hauptsturmführer Heinrich Hamann, SS-Sturmbannführer Rudolf Körner (responsible for combating the right-wing resistance), and SS-Hauptsturmführer Robert Weissmann, the last of the heads of Department IV-N, whose officers were at 2 Pomorska Street and 1 Grottgera Street (BdS⁷ Krakau), where different stages in the direct and indirect extermination of Jews were planned and coordinated. Furthermore, a number of non-Gestapo personnel were also involved in these operations, among them SS-Sturmbannführer Wilhelm Haase (in the autumn of 1942, he was appointed chief of staff for the SS and Police Commandant of Kraków District, SS-Oberführer Julian Scherner) and SS-Hauptsturmführer Amon Göth (commandant of the Plaszow camp). In this article, I will not dwell on the facts of Göth's brutality, nor on his

- 6 The German forced labour camp, and later concentration camp, operated in the years 1942–1944 on the site of two Jewish cemeteries at 25 Jerozolimska Street and 3 Abrahamia Street. In 1944, after its gradual expansion and reclassification as a concentration camp, it covered a total area of 80 ha. It also became a transit camp for Jews from Hungary. According to research conducted by historian Ryszard Kotarba, a total of about 30,000 prisoners passed through KL Plaszow in the years 1942–1944. Plaszów camp was supervised by successive commandants: from November 1942 to January 1943 SS-Unterscharführer Host Pilarzik, from January 1943 to February 11, 1943, SS-Oberscharführer Franz Josef Müller, from February 11, 1943 to September 13, 1944 SS-Untersturmführer Amon Leopold Göth, and from September 13, 1944 SS Hauptsturmführer Arnold Büscher, and then SS-Hauptscharführer Kurt Schupke.
- 7 BdS (Der Befehlshaber der Sicherheitspolizei [SiPo] und des Sicherheitsdienst [SD] im Generalgouvernement) –Commandant of the Security Police and Security Service. BdS was the superior institution in relation to KdS (Der Kommandeur der Sicherheitspolizei und des Sicherheitsdienstes), i.e. the Security Police and Security Service. KdS received instructions directly from the RSHA or the BdS in Krakow, carrying out tasks at a lower organizational level. See M. Mączyński, *Organizacyjno-prawne aspekty funkcjonowania administracji bezpieczeństwa i porządku publicznego dla zajętych obszarów polskich w latach 1939–1945. Ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem Krakowa jako stolicy Generalnego Gubernatorstwa*, Kraków 2012, pp. 247–248, 259.

crimes, including theft. This is a separate topic that has already been addressed in numerous publications⁸.

In the present article, on the other hand, I will attempt to describe the role primarily played by the heads of the Jewish section in KdS Krakau in the systematic and planned extermination of the Jewish inhabitants of Krakow in collaboration with other Gestapo officers and their agents. I will refrain from describing all the personnel of the Krakow Gestapo (numbering around 210 officers), and focus instead on discussing the roles of Paul Siebert, Oskar Brandt, Wilhelm Kunde, Herman Hubert Heinrich⁹ and their collaborators, including Rudolf Körner, Franz Stiech and Erich Vollbrecht, i.e. the main actors responsible for coordinating the Holocaust in Krakow. What happened to these people after the War constitutes a separate (extensive) topic. For the purposes of this article, I will analyse only the most important of their post-war activities and ascertain whether they were ever held accountable by the justice system for their crimes in Krakow. Their post-war fate will be the subject of my next project.

The source base for the present article are the available literature on occupied Krakow, the Holocaust of Jews in Krakow and the Krakow district¹⁰,

8 The most important are the following: *Proces ludobójcy Amona Leopolda Goetha przed Najwyższym Trybunałem Narodowym*, ed. N. Blumental, Warszawa–Łódź–Kraków 1947; J. Sachslehner, *Kat z Listy Schindlera. Zbrodnie Amona Götha*, trans. D. Salamon, Kraków 2010; M. Grądzka, “Wszystkim tym zarzutom przeczę zdecydowanie i stanowczo”. *Proces Amona Leopolda Götha przed Najwyższym Trybunałem Narodowym w Krakowie*, “Zeszyty Historyczne WiN-u” 21 (2012) no. 35, pp. 85–101.

9 Unfortunately, the sources related to the activities of this Gestapo officer are the fewest to have survived.

10 See R. Kotarba, *Żydzi Krakowa w dobie zagłady (ZAL/KL Płaszów)*, Kraków–Warszawa 2022; R. Kotarba, *Niemiecki obóz w Płaszowie 1942–1945*, Warszawa–Kraków 2009; M. Grądzka-Rejak, *Kobieta żydowska w okupowanym Krakowie (1939–1945)*, Kraków 2016; E. Rączy, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie krakowskim*; K. Zimmerer, *Zamordowany świat. Losy Żydów w Krakowie 1939–1945*, Kraków 2004; A. Jarkowska, *The Jewish Aid Agency in the Generalgouvernement (JUS) in occupied Kraków, 1942–1944*, in: *More than parcels: wartime aid for Jews in Nazi-era camps and ghettos*, ed. by J. Lambert, J. Lanicek, Detroit 2022; A. Jarkowska, *Criminal cases involving Jews heard in Krakow District Court in the period 1939–1944. A contribution to further research*, “Holocaust Studies A Journal of Culture and History” 2021; A. Jarkowska, *Wybrane formy kolaboracji w KL Płaszów. Charakterystyka zjawiska*, “Krzysztofory. Zeszyty Naukowe Muzeum Historycznego Miasta Krakowa” 38 (2020), pp. 149–170; A. Jarkowska, *Wewnętrzna struktura władzy w getcie krakowskim. Judenrat, policja żydowska*,

the Jewish sections¹¹, the Kraków Gestapo¹², as well as various documents of Polish, German and Jewish provenance dating from both during and after World War II. These include Home Army (Armia Krajowa, hereafter: AK) counterintelligence reports, the personal files of Gestapo officers (kept in the Bundesarchiv Berlin-Lichterfelde), the prosecutor's investigation files, the case files of Gestapo officers and their agents in both the Polish and German justice systems, in particular trials heard by the Special Criminal Court, the District Court, the Court of Appeal, the Main Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland, the Social Court of the Central Committee of Jews in Poland (specifically the Historical Commission in Kraków, currently in the collections of the Jewish Historical Institute) and the Central Office for the Investigation of National Socialist Crimes in Ludwigsburg (Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen zur Aufklärung nationalsozialistischer Verbrechen). The reason for this extensive archival inquiry was the scattered and fragmentary character of the sources, as the archives of the Kraków Gestapo have not survived intact.

konfidencki i ich powojenny wizerunek, in: "Ciemności kryją ziemię..." Wybrane aspekty badań i nauczania o Holokauście, ed. by M. Grądzka-Rejak, P. Trojański, Kraków 2019; A. Jarkowska, *Wymuszona współpraca czy zdrada? Wokół kolaboracji Żydów w okupowanym Krakowie*, Kraków 2018; A. Jarkowska, *Żydowska Służba Porządkowa w okupowanym Krakowie. Nowa elita w getcie krakowskim i niemieckim obozie Płaszów. Wybrane historie*, in: *Elity i przedstawiciele społeczności żydowskiej podczas II wojny światowej (1939–1945)*, ed. by M. Grądzka-Rejak, A. Namysło, Warszawa 2017.

- 11 See H. Berschel, *Bürokratie und Terror. Das Judenreferat der Gestapo Düsseldorf 1935–1945*, Essen 2001; F. Weisz, *Das Judensachgebiet/-Referat der Gestapoleitstelle Wien. Organisation, Personalstruktur, Arbeitsweise 1938 bis 1945*, Strasshof 2021.
- 12 See M. Mączyński, *Organizacyjno-prawne aspekty funkcjonowania administracji bezpieczeństwa i porządku publicznego dla zajętych obszarów polskich w latach 1939–1945. Ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem Krakowa jako stolicy Generalnego Gubernatorstwa*, Kraków 2012; J. Bratko, *Gestapowcy. Kontrwywiad – konfidencki – konspiratorzy*, Kraków 1990; S. Czerpak, T. Wroński, *Ulica Pomorska 2. O krakowskim Gestapo i jego siedzibie w latach 1939–1945*, Kraków 1972. It is also worth mentioning the foreign literature concerning the Gestapo: A. Ramme, *Służba Bezpieczeństwa SS*, trans. B. Jodkowska, introduction E. Stanczykiewicz, Warszawa 1975; R. Gellately, *The Gestapo and German society: enforcing racial policy 1933–1945*, London 1990; K.-M. Mallmann, A. Angrick, *Gestapo po 1945 roku. Kariery, konflikty, konteksty*, trans. I. Ewertowska-Klaja, Poznań 2018; E. Boeckl-Klamper, T. Mang, W. Neugebauer, *The Vienna Gestapo, 1939–1945. Crimes, perpetrators, victims*, New York 2022; J. Delarue, *The Gestapo. A history of horror*, New York 1964.

The article consists of several parts. Following the introduction, I will briefly describe the specific features of occupied Kraków, after which I will outline the structure of KdS Krakau, which will serve as an introduction to the main topic. The picture provided here is not a full and exhaustive one, due to the fact that the Gestapo archive at 10 Pomorska Street was deliberately destroyed by the Germans, and the fragmentary reports of the KdS (sent to the headquarters – the Reich Main Security Office [Reichssicherheitshauptamt, hereafter: RSHA]) will obviously not include any official evidence of crimes committed against Jews. Indirect confirmation of such crimes can be found in personnel documents sent to higher-ranking Gestapo units within the framework of applications for awards, promotions and decorations. A temporal correlation exists between the actions conducted by the Gestapo against Jews and the preparation of these applications. They clearly indicate the involvement of the Gestapo officers mentioned in these actions.

Kraków as the capital of the General Government

Kraków was made the capital of the General Government in October 1939. It became the seat of many lower and higher ranking bodies: district, county, city, as well as police and political institutions¹³. This triggered an influx of Germans into the city. It is estimated that by the end of the war, there may have been as many as 35,000 Germans working in all state and city administration offices in Kraków, as well as around 4,000 German policemen, and 6,000–8,000 soldiers in various units stationed in the city¹⁴. Edward Kubalski, a pre-war lawyer and local government official, who was also a chronicler of the German occupation of Kraków, wrote of a glut of “various German ‘Heims’” and of “postmen, railway workers, police” being saturated by Germans, claiming the city was being taken over by the ‘German’ element¹⁵. This massive German presence became especially pronounced during numerous celebrations marking

13 This included the Secret State Police (Gestapo), the Security Police (SiPo), the Criminal Police (Kripo), the Order Police (Orpo) and the state Protection Police (Schupo). Kraków was also home to all civil, social and economic institutions, including the Central Welfare Council.

14 See M. Drozdowski, *Kraków jako stolica Generalnego Gubernatorstwa. Wpływ stołeczności na życie miasta*, in: *Oblicza wojny*, vol. 5: *Miasto i wojna*, ed. by W. Jarno, J. Kita, Łódź 2021, p. 261.

15 See E. Kubalski, *Niemcy w Krakowie. Dziennik 1 IX 1939–18 I 1945*, Kraków 2010.

Hitler's birthday, each successive anniversary of the beginning of the war, during events held at the state casino¹⁶, as well as in military parades of troops of various units on the Main Market Square, which itself would be decorated with Nazi flags, as well as on the Błonia or around Wawel, where Hans Frank, the general governor, resided. This created a completely different atmosphere in Kraków than in other cities of the General Government. The Germans maintained a strong presence in public space, not only on the streets and in public offices, but also in parks, cafes and restaurants. Germans regarded Kraków as an "Urdeutsche Stadt"¹⁷.

The prevailing atmosphere among the city's native population was one of fear and terror. Among other things, as Anna Czocher rightly noted, this was consequence of the fact that "Krakow became a scene of round-ups, raids and mass arrests, the victims. These round-ups were quite arbitrary in character (randomised terror, i.e. 'blind' terror)"¹⁸, and most arrests took place in public space¹⁹. In the first months of the war, the Germans also conducted a deliberate policy of terror against members of the intellectual elite, bureaucrats, and officers (the Sonderaktion Krakau and Zweite Sonderaktion Krakau in 1939, AB Action – Ausserordentliche

- 16 In 1940, the Germans rebuilt and then adapted the New Building of the National Museum into a German house and casino. The project lasted from 1940 to 1943 (1944) but was suspended due to the worsening economic situation caused by war with the USSR. *Niechciana stołeczność. Architektura i urbanistyka Krakowa w czasie okupacji niemieckiej 1939–1945*, ed. by J. Purchla, Kraków 2022, p. 278.
- 17 See J. Stocki-Sosnowski, *Jedno życie, cztery światy*, Kraków 1994; A. Kamiński, *Dziennik podręczny 1939–1945*, prepared by A. Palarczykowska, J. Stoksik, Warszawa 2001; S. W. Dobrowolski, *Memuary pacyfisty*, Kraków 1989.
- 18 A. Czocher, *Mechanizmy represji i struktura terroru dnia codziennego. Przykład Krakowa 1939–1945*, in: *"Fikcyjna rzeczywistość". Codzienność, światy przeżywane i pamięć niemieckiej okupacji w Polsce*, ed. by R. Traba, K. Woniak, A. Wolff-Powęska, Warszawa–Berlin 2016, p. 72.
- 19 See A. Czocher, *Mechanizmy represji*, p. 69; see also K. Pieradzka, *Terror hitlerowski i rządy gestapo w Krakowie 1939–1945*, "Rocznik Krakowski" 31 (1949–1957): *Kraków w latach okupacji 1939–1945. Studia i materiały*, Kraków 1957, pp. 227–255; A. Pankowicz, *Akcja AB w Krakowie*, in: *Ausserordentliche Befriedungsaktion 1940: akcja AB na ziemiach polskich. Materiały z sesji naukowej 6–7 listopada 1986*, ed. by Z. Mańkowski, Warszawa 1992.

Befriedungsaktion). At first, people associated with the resistance were only of secondary importance²⁰.

The city's Jewish community was particularly vulnerable to German acts of terror and repression. From the autumn of 1939, the occupation authorities introduced various regulations excluding Jews from social, economic and cultural life, and later from public space altogether, e.g. orders expelling Jews from the city (the 'forced resettlements' of 1940–1941)²¹, and the order, issued in March 1941, requiring Jews to relocate to the newly established ghetto²². For the next two years (March 1941–March 1943) the Kraków ghetto was inhabited by 15,000 to 20,000 people, a significant number of whom died during the brutal deportations organized in June and October 1942 as well as during the liquidation of the ghetto on March 13 and 14, 1943²³. Moreover, it is estimated that from autumn 1943 until January 1945, the Germans carried out around 100 mass killings in occupied Kraków. According to Ryszard Kotarba's findings, from the beginning of the war up to March 1, 1944, 1,600 people perished in public executions in the Kraków district²⁴. The number of killings may have been considerably higher.

20 See A. Czocher, *Mechanizmy represji*, p. 69; I. Paczyńska, *Aktion gegen Universitäts-Professoren (Kraków, 6 listopada 1939 roku) i okupacyjne losy aresztowanych*, Kraków 2019; see also K. Pieradzka, *Terror hitlerowski*, pp. 227–255.

21 According to estimates, approximately 50,000 people were affected by these actions. M. Grądzka-Rejak, *W godzinach rannych zebrano na tym placu około 2000 osób. Przebieg i topografia "Einsatz Reinhardt" w okupowanym Krakowie*, in: *Infrastruktura akcji Reinhardt*, ed. by T. Kranz, Lublin 2023, p. 54.

22 The Kraków ghetto existed for two years, from March 1941 to March 1943, in the neglected and rundown Podgórze district. During this time between 11,000 and 20,000 Jews lived in an area no larger than 20 hectares and comprising only 320 houses. Initially, the ghetto was fenced with barbed wire, and enclosed by a wall with four gates. It was not completely isolated from the rest of the city, but the Vistula was the only natural border between the two sides.

23 During the first deportation in June, 5,000 to 7,000 Jews were sent to the Bełżec extermination camp. Several months later, in October 1942, another 7,000 were sent there. The final liquidation of the ghetto began on March 13, 1943, when 6,000 to 8,000 people were relocated to the nearby Plaszow concentration camp, and the next day, about a thousand were transported to Auschwitz. It is estimated that 700 Jews were murdered on the spot. Those who survived hid on the 'Aryan' side.

24 See R. Kotarba, *Przechorzały, Kamedulska, "Glinik"... Zapomniane miejsca hitlerowskiej kaźni*, "Zeszyty Historyczne WIN-u" 21 (2012) no. 35, pp. 47–67.

A major role in the planned extermination of the Jewish population was performed by the Gestapo's extensive surveillance and intelligence gathering networks. They consisted of agents, undercover spies and large numbers of informants. It is estimated that these groups comprised 2,000 people of various nationalities, religions and social backgrounds. Their ranks included Austrians, Volksdeutsche, Poles, Reichsdeutsche, Germans from the Reich, Ukrainians, Belarusians and Jews. I examined the data of nearly one thousand people who collaborated with the Gestapo or were suspected of doing so²⁵. These networks were the main source of information on what was happening in the city and enabled the KdS Krakau police apparatus to operate efficiently and effectively. Among other things, Gestapo agents were pivotal in breaking up section III of the Union of Armed Struggle (Związek Walki Zbrojnej, hereafter: ZWZ) subordinate to the Kraków-City District Command, liquidating the organization's left-wing units (Polska Partia Socjalistyczna and Polska Partia Robotnicza) and closing down their printing house on Kujawska Street in 1942. It is estimated that in 1941 the Gestapo arrested around 300 members of the Union of Retaliation and the Grey Ranks, which resulted in the dissolution of the District Command of IV ZWZ. The Gestapo's agents were instrumental in numerous arrests made between February and October 1941. Among those arrested were Lt. Col. Jan Cichocki, Lieutenant Józef Cyrankiewicz (April 18, 1941), Aleksander Bugajski (acting Head of the Union of Retaliation of the Kraków District of the ZWZ). In the following years (especially in 1944) the following people were arrested: Colonel Józef Spychalski²⁶, Augustyn Bańczyk²⁷. Among those detained by the Gestapo were Alojzy

25 See A. Jarkowska, *Brunatna pajęczyna. Agenci Gestapo w okupowanym Krakowie i ich powojenne losy*, Kraków 2024.

26 Józef Spychalski ps. "Czarny", "Gruda", "Grudzień", "Jurand", "Lawina", "Luty", "Socha", "Soroka", "Stryjek", "Szary", "Ścibor", "Włast", "Taran" (born March 19, 1898 in Łódź) – a member of the Silent and Unseen. In light of my research, the Gestapo placed agent Franciszek Ponicki in the entourage of "Luty" and he was probably directly or indirectly responsible for the arrest of Spychalski. The manner in which this arrest was carried out may indicate an 'operational game' being played by the Gestapo (colloquially referred to as acting "under a foreign flag") aimed at camouflaging the agent's involvement in these activities. See A. Jarkowska, *Brunatna pajęczyna*, pp. 68–69.

27 Augustyn Bańczyk (1888–1944) – Deputy Commandant-in-Chief of the Silesian Province Police. In August 1939, he organized the insurgents in Silesia into

Kaczmarczyk, pseudonym “Wacław” (together with other AK soldiers – March 14, 1944), Major Stefan Sikorski (Chief of the Department I of the District Staff), General Stanisław Rostworowski (Inspector of AK Headquarters for the Kraków and Silesia District, who was responsible for coordinating Operation Tempest in Kraków), as well as Colonel Edward Godlewski (the penultimate commandant of the Kraków District)²⁸.

Despite the Gestapo's success in detaining numerous suspects, the AK still managed to carry out assassinations and acts of sabotage against the occupier, including against its agents, informers and informants. The number of such actions increased with each year²⁹ as the resistance became better organized and its counterintelligence wing stronger. Certainly, if it was not for the relative effectiveness of the occupier's terror apparatus (comprising, among other things, the Gestapo, Abwehr, SD, Kripo, Bahnschutz and other police units), the resistance would have caused even more destruction in Kraków, on a scale similar perhaps to what took place in Warsaw, and perhaps with better results. Just how effective the Gestapo were is evident in German statistics for the years 1940–1943. According to the findings of Piotr M. Majewski and Jan Vajskebre in 1940, i.e. at the very beginning of the occupation, a total of 289 “robberies and

self-defence units, and in the years 1940–1944, in the General Government [hereafter: GG], he was involved in the resistance movement as a staff officer of the Kraków District of the ZWZ/AK. See <https://isp.policja.pl/isp/aktualnosci/15741,Odsloniecie-tablicy-podinsp-Policji-Wojewodztwa-Slaskiego-Augustyna-Banczyka.html> (28.03.2025). According to the AK findings, the arrest of Inspector Bańczyk, pseudonym “Gdawski”, in the resistance bar “Pod Siódmką” was possible thanks to the actions of Włodzimierz Krechel and Edward Michaluk. See A. Jarkowska, *Brunatna pajęczyna*, p. 156; *Odsłonięcie tablicy podinsp. Policji Województwa Śląskiego Augustyna Bańczyka*, <https://isp.policja.pl/isp/aktualnosci/15741,Odsloniecie-tablicy-podinsp-Policji-Wojewodztwa-Slaskiego-Augustyna-Banczyka.html> (28.03.2025).

28 See S. Dąbrowa-Kostka, *Krakowska wyspa wiosną 1941*, “Kierunki” 1970 no. 46; S. Dąbrowa-Kostka, *W okupowanym Krakowie*, Warszawa 1972; W. Hein, C. Jakubiec, *Montelupich*, Kraków 1985; J. Bratko, *Gestapowcy*, Kraków 1985; R. Nuskiewicz, *Uparci*, Warszawa 1983; T. Wroński, *Kronika okupowanego Krakowa*, Kraków 1974; A. Jarkowska, *Brunatna pajęczyna*, s. 68, 156, 220.

29 Similarly, as in other larger cities, such as Warsaw, Radom and Lublin districts. See P. M. Majewski, J. Vajskebr, *Sytuacja w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie w świetle niemieckich statystyk policyjnych. Próba analizy ilościowej*, “Przegląd Historyczny” 107 (2016) no. 4, pp. 586, 593–594.

other acts of violence” took place in Kraków district, including common banditry, armed actions³⁰, and various resistance operations, compared with 215 in Warsaw. With each year of the war that passed, the number of “robberies and other acts of violence” in the Kraków district increased compared to 1940, but the rate of acceleration was far lower than in, for example, Warsaw district. In the last full year for which statistics were kept, i.e. in 1943, 3,348 “robberies” were committed in Kraków district, far short of the 10,648 reported in Warsaw district³¹. One of the likely reasons was the professionalism of the Kraków Gestapo, which could rely on many extensive agent networks.

In Kraków, intended assassination targets included senior officials of the German Police and Security Service and the GG administration. For the most part these failed despite, or perhaps because of the fact that experienced AK soldiers from Warsaw were selected to carry out some of these assignments. Attempts to eliminate Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, Wilhelm Koppe and Governor General Frank were all unsuccessful. Moreover, pre-emptive measures taken by the Kraków Gestapo thwarted plans for an uprising in the city in 1944.

KdS Krakau and its role in crimes against Jews

Organizationally, the Kraków branch of the Gestapo, established on November 1, 1939, was subordinate to the Reich Main Security Office. It was at this time that the occupation authorities also appointed a commandant of the Security Police and Security Service for the GG area (Der Befehlshaber der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD im Generalgouvernement, BdS), and later also the commandants of the Security Police and Security Service (KdS)³².

30 Tomasz Strzembosz defines the word “action” as “an act involving active resistance”, and “armed action” as “a planned and organized combat operation, offensive in nature and with a clearly defined goal” (T. Strzembosz, *Akcje zbrojne podziemnej Warszawy 1939–1945*, Warszawa 1978, p. 11).

31 See P. M. Majewski, J. Vajskebr, *Sytuacja w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie w świetle niemieckich statystyk policyjnych. Próba analizy ilościowej*, “Przegląd Historyczny” 107 (2016) no. 4, p. 586.

32 The following individuals served as SiPo and SD (BdS) commandant: SS-Brigadeführer Bruno Streckenbach (held the post in the years 1939–1941), SS-Oberführer Dr. Eberhard Schöngarth (1941–1943) and Police Colonel SS-Oberführer Dr. Walter Bierkamp (from June 15, 1943 to February 15, 1945). The function of the SiPo

The most important units of the German police apparatus were the Security Police (Sicherheitspolizei – SiPo) and the structurally affiliated Security Service of the Reichsführer SS (Sicherheitsdienst – SD), which worked closely together. In 1940, the staff of the SiPo and SD commandant were divided into four departments:

- I. Organizational and administrative-legal matters,
- II. Security Police,
- III. Gestapo,
- IV. Kripo.

Two years later, in accordance with the decree issued by Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger of June 26, 1942, the SiPo and SD were reorganized with a new numbering of departments:

- I/II – Administration and Law (Verwaltung und Recht),
- III – SD,
- IV – Gestapo,
- V – Kripo³³.

The Krakow KdS featured an additional VI Department which included the position of RSHA liaison officer, who was head of the foreign intelligence service³⁴.

The Police and SS Command in Kraków District was subordinate to the more senior SS and Police Leader in the GG, who had acted as Governor General Hans Frank's deputy responsible for security operations since May 1942. These functions were performed by SS-Obergruppenführer Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger (1939–1943), and later by SS-Obergruppenführer Wilhelm Koppe (1943–1945).

Department IV of KdS Krakau, better known as the Gestapo, oversaw the work of regional outposts and coordinated their activities. The commandants of this department were as follows: SS-Sturmbannführer

and SD commandant of the Kraków district (KdS) was held by: SS-Obersturmbannführer Wilhelm Harster (November 1, 1939–December 1939), SS-Sturmbannführer Bruno Müller (the end of November and the beginning of December 1939), SS-Sturmbannführer Walter Huppenkothen (December 1939–January 1940), SS-Sturmbannführer Dr. Ludwig Hahn (January 1940–August 13, 1940), SS-Obersturmbannführer Dr. Max Grosskopf (1941–1943) and SS-Obersturmbannführer Rudolf Batz (December 1943–January 17, 1945).

33 Case files on the Gestapo in Kraków, Organizational structure SiPo and SD, AIPN Kr, file no. Ds. 5/67.

34 See S. Czerpak, T. Wroński, *Ulica Pomorska 2*, p. 11.

Dr. Max Meyer (1939–1940), SS-Hauptsturmführer Eduard Fischer (1940), SS-Sturmbannführer Lothar Wandel (1940) and SS-Sturmbannführer Johann Robert Kraus (December 1940–January 1945)³⁵. They answered to the heads of individual departments, marked with the Roman numeral IV and letter symbols. The sub-departments were in turn marked with Arabic numerals. A total of 5 departments were created: IV-A, IV-B, IV-C, IV-D, IV-N. The first two were responsible for dealing with the resistance (both right-wing and left-wing organizations), Jewish affairs, the clergy, national minorities, trade and crafts, propaganda, border crimes, and underground education. Department IV-C dealt with record-keeping and arrests, as well as monitored printed matter and the press, while IV-N worked with informants, agents, as well as intelligence networks. The heads of the above departments and sub-departments carried out their tasks using an extensive network of agents. Their competences and personnel were divided as follows:

Department IV-A: matters relating to the resistance,

Heads: SS-Hauptsturmführer Alfred Spilker, Albert Schulz, Heinrich Hamann,

- Sub-Department IV-A-1: Countering the Left-Wing Resistance,
Heads: Paul Emil Groner, Kurt Heinemeyer;
- Sub-Department IV-A-2: Countering the Right-Wing Resistance,
Head: Rudolf Körner;
- Sub-Department IV-A-3: Countering Sabotage Affecting Industry and the Railways,
Head: Erich Vollbrecht;
- Sub-Department IV-A-4: Reporting and Personal Protection,
Head: no data;
- Sub-Department IV-AS-1; IV-AS-2: Countering the Partisan Movement (Sonderkommandos),
Head: Kurt Thomsen;

Department IV-B: Jewish Affairs, Clergy, National Minorities, Trade, Crafts, Propaganda, Border Crimes, Underground Education,

Heads: Wilhelm Raschwitz, Erich Mittman,

- Sub-Department IV-B-1: Jewish Affairs,
Heads: Paul Siebert, Oskar Brandt, Wilhelm Kunde, Herman Heinrich,

35 For more on this topic, see: M. Mączyński, *Organizacyjno-prawne aspekty funkcjonowania administracji bezpieczeństwa*, passim.

- Sub-Department IV-B-2: Religious Denominations,
Head: Paul Siebert,
- Sub-Department IV-B-3: Trade and Crafts,
Heads: Heinrich Mayer, Friedrich Popping,
- Sub-Department IV-B-4: Press and Propaganda,
Heads: Oskar Brandt, Wilhelm Kunde,
- Sub-Department IV-B-5: National Minorities,
Head: Otto von Malottki,
- Sub-Department IV-B-6: Border Crimes,
Head: no data;

Department IV-C: Records and Detention Centers,

Heads: Herman Hische, Otto Gundlach,

- Sub-Department IV-C-1: Information Office (Auskunftsstelle),
Head: no data,
- Sub-Department IV-C-2: Issues of Protection Detention Centers (Schutzhaft),
Head: no data,
- Sub-Department IV-C-3: Print and Control of the Mass,
Head: no data.

According to the findings of Kraków counterintelligence, from 1942 or 1943 the Gestapo probably employed around 210 officers of various rank in the city. The post-war Voivodship Office of Public Security in Kraków ascertained the personal details for 58 officers and civilian staff (including translators) from Department IV-A, 46 from Department IV-B, 1 from Department IV-C, 24 from Department IV-E and 5 from Department IV-N, making a total of 134 individuals. However, the actual number of Gestapo employees (both uniformed and ununiformed) fluctuated constantly, especially in the first year of the war.

The composition of Gestapo personnel also changed over the years. Turnover was quite considerable in the first months of the war in 1939 and 1940, when after a few or perhaps up to a dozen weeks staff would be assigned to other external posts, including to Radom, Nowy Sącz, Tarnów, Rzeszów, Sanok, Jasło, Zakopane etc. Another major upheaval took place in the years 1943–1944, although in this case caused by the transfer to Krakow of Gestapo officers from the eastern territories of the GG, including from Lviv, Tarnopol, and Baranowicze³⁶, which in turn was

36 See A. Jarkowska, *Brunatna pajęczyna*, pp. 45–46.

a consequence of, among other things, the advances of the Red Army on the Eastern Front.

Based on surviving sources (underground reports, lists of Gestapo officers and civilian employees, personal files, post-war testimonies), we can estimate that throughout the occupation several dozen officers with extensive counterintelligence experience as well as experience working for the Criminal Police or other police units, were engaged in operational work. Such was the case with the heads of the Jewish section. Prior to the war Siebert had served in the Schutzpolizei in Bremen, while Kunde was employed by the Gestapo in the same city as a criminal assistant. In turn, Brand was first a member of the Kripo, and later of the Sicherheitspolizei in Hanover. Kunde is also known to have completed a month-long course at the Institute of Forensic Science in Berlin. During the war, they were based in the KdS headquarters at 2 Pomorska Street. The interrogation rooms were located on the third floor, in rooms 304 and 305. This is also where the heads of Departments IV-A and IV-B were located³⁷. These departments operated a dozen or so agent networks and, unlike Radom KdS, “did not encounter many obstacles [like – A. J.] a lack of policemen trained in this area”³⁸.

Purely Jewish matters were dealt with on behalf of the Kraków Gestapo by the aforementioned sub-department IV-B-1, headed by Siebert (autumn 1939 – early 1940), Brandt (February 1940–June 1941), Kunde (July 1941–1943) and Hermann Heinrich (1943–1945)³⁹. According to the regulation of 2 March 1940, Jewish affairs were officially the responsibility of an independent section in the Department of Administration – Population and Social Welfare operating in the Office of the General Governor. According to this document, this section – quoting Dora Agatstein – was responsible for:

registering Jews and determining their affiliation to Judaism, establishing Jewish Councils of Elders, issuing orders concerning Jews and general Jewish matters, with the exception of social welfare. Thanks to the establishment of Jewish departments in all administrative offices, the uniform and professional handling of all Jewish matters was possible⁴⁰.

37 See A. Jarkowska, *Brunatna pajęczyna*, pp. 45–46.

38 W. Borodziej, *Terror i polityka*, p. 86.

39 See A. Jarkowska-Natkaniec, *Wymuszona współpraca czy zdrada?*, p. 260.

40 D. Agatstein-Dormontowa, *Żydzi w Krakowie w okresie okupacji niemieckiej*, „Rocznik Krakowski” 31 (1949–1957): *Kraków w latach okupacji 1939–1945. Studia i materiały*, p. 196.

In practice, however, the Security Police did not respect this division of competences and usually the Gestapo department had the final say in such matters and was responsible for implementing subsequent orders issued by the relevant district governor⁴¹. As Michał Weichert, president of Jewish Social Self-Help, rightly stated: “both the police and the German administration robbed the Jews as much as they could”⁴².

The Kraków Judenrat was established in September 1939 during an unofficial meeting between the then mayor of Kraków, Dr. Stanisław Klimecki, and the German authorities. Klimecki apparently proposed Marek Bieberstein⁴³ as chairman of the Judenrat during talks with Gestapo officer SS-Oberscharführer Paul Siebert (born June 10, 1906)⁴⁴. According to some sources, Siebert visited Bieberstein on September 8, 1939, and ordered him to select the other members of the Judenrat within the next 24 hours. Leib Salpeter, a witness to these events, further claimed that the Gestapo officer met with the remaining members of the Judenrat shortly afterwards in front of its main office on Krakowska Street and made the following declaration:

41 Pierwsze postanowienie wykonawcze do rozporządzenia z dnia 28 listopada 1939 r. o u становieniu rad żydowskich. Z dnia 25 kwietnia 1940 r. [The first executive resolution to the Decree of 28 November 1939 on the establishment of Jewish councils of 25 April 1940], “Verordnungsblatt des Generalgouverneurs für die besetzten polnischen Gebiete. Dziennik rozporządzeń Generalnego Gubernatora dla okupowanych polskich obszarów” Part 2, 1.05.1940, no. 32, p. 249. The second executive resolution to the Decree of November 28, 1939 was issued by the German authorities on June 7, 1940, see Drugie postanowienie wykonawcze do rozporządzenia z dnia 28 listopada 1939 r. o ustanowieniu rad żydowskich. Z dnia 7 czerwca 1940 r., “Verordnungsblatt des Generalgouverneurs für die besetzten polnischen Gebiete. Dziennik rozporządzeń Generalnego Gubernatora dla okupowanych polskich obszarów” Part 2, 4.07.1940, no. 45, p. 387.

42 Testimony of Michał Weichert, AIPN Kr, file no. 502/1385, ff. 14–15.

43 The chairmen of the Kraków Judenrat were Marek Bieberstein (1884–1944), Artur Rosenzweig and Dawid Gutter appointed by German officials. Its first seat was the tenement building at 41 Krakowska Street, while its seat in the ghetto was 1 Rynek Podgórski.

44 See Siebert Paul, The Federal Archives Berlin-Lichterfelde [Bundesarchiv Berlin-Lichterfelde], Z.A-VII 4645.

1. We came as victors, not to help Jews; 2. We recognize the Community as the only representative of Jews, and this in the person of the Obman; 3. Jews are not allowed to intervene with any authorities except the Gestapo (2 Pomorska Street), the Jews are subject only to the authority of the Gestapo; 4. The Community is to start organizing welfare for Jewish poor and refugees, and for this purpose it has the unrestricted right to impose taxes on Jews and baptisms⁴⁵.

Siebert made the Jewish leadership concentrated around the Judenrat subordinate to his own authority. They were to address him as “Herr Chef”. De facto, this meant that the Gestapo acted as a superior supervisory authority over the Judenrat (Aufsichtsbehörde)⁴⁶. Siebert was an ideological Nazi. Before the war he was a member of the German Labor Front, and in 1937 joined the NSDAP. Shortly afterwards, as I mentioned, he served in the Schutzpolizei in Bremen, where he probably volunteered in the hope of ensuring social and professional advancement. From a survey of NSDAP members from July 1939, we learn that he was a manual labourer (Handarbeiter)⁴⁷. He was appointed head of the Jewish section at the age of 33, and then from 1940 until at least 1942 he headed sub-department IV-B-2 responsible for the affairs of different religious denominations⁴⁸. He would probably have continued to climb the Nazi ladder if it had not been for his own romantic liaison with a translator and Gestapo agent, who ended up pregnant as result, as well as for his suspect interactions with the informant network ran by the said translator. The Germans no longer trusted Siebert and transferred him to Lviv⁴⁹. His place in the Jewish section was taken over by Oskar Brandt (born

45 Account of Leib Salpeter, AJHI, file no. 301/448, f. 2. See Account of Dawid Schlang, AJHI, file no. 301/240, f. 1–2.

46 See M. Mączyński, *Organizacyjno-prawne aspekty funkcjonowania administracji bezpieczeństwa*, p. 167.

47 See Siebert Paul, The Federal Archives Berlin-Lichterfelde [Bundesarchiv Berlin-Lichterfelde], Z.A-VII 4645; Sturmabteilungen der NSDAP: NS 23/9640, NS 23/5445; Paul Siebert, Personal questionnaire, The Federal Archives Berlin-Lichterfelde, Berlin Document Center, R 9361-1/3405.

48 His agents included Maria Czuraj, a certain Pocner and Antoni Kandzik. See A. Jarkowska, *Brunatna pajęczyna*. In the summer a group of priests were arrested on Siebert's orders; he was responsible for handling the case of Father Ferdynand Machaj.

49 See A. Jarkowska, *Brunatna pajęczyna*, p. 196.

5 August 1899 in Bad-Grund), a seasoned criminal policeman with many years of experience who acquired the moniker “Judenkönig” (German for “Jewish King”)⁵⁰. He had joined the service in 1919, and in 1932 began working for the Kripo, before moving to the Sicherheitspolizei in Hanover in 1934, where he held the position of criminal secretary until the outbreak of World War II⁵¹.

Brandt was transferred to the Jewish section in Kraków from Rzeszów at the end of January 1940⁵² and soon, like his predecessor, showed himself capable of extreme brutality. More than a month after taking up his position (“during the first Jewish Easter”⁵³) he summoned the members of the Judenrat to 41 Krakowska Street, where its headquarters were located. He then forced those gathered to do various physical exercises in the street, during which he reminded them of their duties towards the Gestapo⁵⁴.

Brandt stayed in Kraków until June 1941. Witnesses remembered him as a ruthless Gestapo officer who plundered Jewish property during the resettlement actions in 1940–1941⁵⁵, which he oversaw on behalf

50 See W. Hein, C. Jakubiec, *Montelupich*, Kraków 1985, p. 33.

51 The Police and SD Command in Kraków District (1940–1944) [Der Kommandeur der Sicherheitspolizei und des Sicherheitsdienst für den Distrikt Krakau (1940–1944)], Oskar Brandt’s personal questionnaire, AIPN, GK, file no. 678/16; Oskar Brandt case files, Personal questionnaire, AIPN, GK, file no. 455/13, vol. 2, pp. 3–4. Oskar Brandt did not mention working in the Jewish section in his testimony; he also downplayed his role in Stanisławów in 1941, where witnesses claimed he participated in numerous crimes against the Jewish community, including in the local ghetto. He claimed that he worked “as a border officer [for – A. J.’s] affairs” (pp. 60–61).

52 See Oskar Brandt’s personal questionnaire, decision of January 1940, AIPN, GK, file no. 678/16, p. 9.

53 Between March 22 and March 30, 1940, a series of attacks were carried out on the Jewish population in Warsaw and Krakow, commonly known as the “Easter pogroms”.

54 See Oskar Brandt case files, Testimony of Leib Salpeter, AIPN, file no. 455/13, vol. 2, p. 56, from: A. Jarkowska-Natkaniec, *Wymuszona współpraca czy zdrada?*, p. 262; A. Bieberstein, *Zagłada Żydów w Krakowie*, Kraków 2001, p. 31.

55 The first decisions to expel Jews from Krakow were taken at a meeting of the GG government in April 1940. At that time, it was decided that 10,000 to 15,000 Jewish craftsmen would be allowed to remain in the city. The German authorities issued an official decree on April 18, 1940, and an order requiring the Judenrat to organize the resettlement of the Jewish population from Krakow was issued by the Krakow

of the Gestapo⁵⁶. Residents of Krakow recall these events with particular clarity, not only because of the predatory and exploitative behaviour of Brandt and his associates, but also because of the way owners frantically sold, sometimes for next to nothing, apartment furnishings, as well as the bustling trade being done by second-hand furniture stores⁵⁷. At this time, Brandt was carrying out numerous searches and round-ups, often with considerable cruelty. One such raid took place in early 1940 in the city's Podgórze district. An unknown number of people summarily ejected from their apartments were shot. One witness of such an atrocity, Schlang, mentioned how members of the Judenrat had appealed to the Metropolitan Adam Stefan Sapieha to intervene on behalf of the Jewish community, but this had only ended in the arrest of "Rabbi Rapaport, Dr. Leuchter and 5 other people"⁵⁸. According to another source, Aleksander Bieberstein (brother of the president of the Judenrat and a well-known doctor), Count Adam Ronikier, president of the Central Welfare Council, had acted as intermediary in this matter after receiving a letter from Szmelkes Kronitzer, Szabse Rappaport and Majer Friedrich asking him to intercede on their

Starost, Carl Schmidt, on May 18, 1940. It was then decided that Jews were to leave the city by August 15 of that year. See the Governor-General's proposal to the heads of the districts of Kraków, Lublin, Radom, and Warsaw regarding the resettlement of Jews from Kraków, May 1940, AJHI, file no. 228/52, f. 2; Letter from the Jewish Community in Kraków to the Department of Population and Social Welfare in Krakow, AJHI, file no. 228/55, ff. 1–8; M. Hembera, "Die Stadt Krakau müsse die judenreinste Stadt des Generalgouvernements werden": Die Umsiedlung der jüdischen Bevölkerung aus Krakau, in: *Narrative im Dialog: deutsch-polnische Erinnerungsdiskurse*, ed. by W. Form, K. von Lingen, K. Ruchniewicz, Dresden 2013 pp. 311–332. The deportations lasted until the spring of 1941 and it is estimated that around 60,000 Jews left Krakow in this way. See E. Rączy, *Zagłada Żydów*, pp. 100–101.

56 Oskar Brandt case files, Testimony of Dawid Schlang, AIPN, GK, file no. 455/13, vol. 2, pp. 14–15.

57 See D. Swałtek-Niewińska, "Gospodarowanie" żydowskimi meblami w Krakowie w latach 1939–1945. Działalność Möbelbeschaffungsamt, in: *Klucze i kasa. O mieniu żydowskim w Polsce pod okupacją niemiecką i we wczesnych latach powojennych 1939–1950*, ed. by J. Grabowski, D. Libionka, Warszawa 2014, p. 263.

58 The Metropolitan Archbishop of Kraków, Fr. Archbishop Adam Sapieha, and the President of the Central Welfare Council intervened with the GG authorities to try and stop the resettlement of Kraków's Jews. See M. Grądzka, *Kościół katolicki w okupowanym Krakowie w pomocy Żydom. Zarys problematyki badawczej*, in: *Kościół krakowski 1939–1945*, ed. by Ł. Klimek, A. Baciński, Kraków 2014, p. 132.

behalf with Sapieha⁵⁹. Similarly, Brandt later took revenge on the authors of the letter and ordered their arrest in 1941⁶⁰. Nevertheless, Sapieha's intervention probably caused Brandt to limit summary executions of Jews. The Gestapo officer was also known to extort valuable items from members of the Judenrat. The real estate department, represented by Joachim Steinberg, was responsible for handing over such property on behalf of the institution⁶¹. In this way Brandt obtained luxury furniture, kitchen accessories and carpets. Leon Goldfinger, a master upholsterer, testified after the war that he had personally delivered couches and pillows to Brandt⁶². The Gestapo officer probably made use one of the confiscation ordinances published in the "Verordnungsblatt des Generalgouverneurs für die besetzten polnischen Gebiete. Dziennik rozporządzeń Generalnego Gubernatora dla okupowanych polskich obszarów" [Journal of Regulations of the General Governor for Occupied Polish Areas] of January 24, 1940, which obliged residents to report property⁶³. The inventory list compiled at that time by the Trust Office, to which policemen and officials had access, led to numerous abuses and thefts of Jewish property⁶⁴.

Brandt was responsible for the arrest of the first chairman of the Judenrat, Mark Bieberstein, and his associates: Dr. Wilhelm Goldblatt, Bernard Leinkram, Schmelke Mayer, and Goldfus, who were accused in September 1940 of receiving bribes (of between 500 and up to 2,000 zloties) from Jews hoping to avoid deportation from the city. Bieberstein was put on trial and sentenced to a year and a half in prison, while Goldfus was sentenced to a year and a half. Goldblatt and Leinkram were acquitted, and

59 See A. Bieberstein, *Zagłada Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 43.

60 See Trial of Oskar Brandt, Testimony of Leib Salpeter, AIPN, GK, file no. 455/13, vol. 2, p. 56.

61 See Oskar Brandt cases files, Testimony of Dawid Schlang, Testimony of Leib Salpeter, Testimony of Mieczysław Pemper, AIPN, GK, file no. 455/13, vol. 2, pp. 14–15, 56 and 63; A. Jarkowska-Natkaniec, *Wymuszona współpraca czy zdrada?*, p. 261.

62 Oskar Brandt cases files, Testimony of Leon Goldfinger, AIPN, GK, file no. 455/13, vol. 2, p. 11.

63 Rozporządzenie o konfiskacie majątku prywatnego w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie (Ordynacja konfiskacyjna). Z dnia 24.01.1940 r., "Verordnungsblatt des Generalgouverneurs für die besetzten polnischen Gebiete. Dziennik rozporządzeń Generalnego Gubernatora dla okupowanych polskich obszarów" Part 1, 27.01.1940, no. 6, pp. 23–27.

64 See D. Swałek-Niewińska, *"Gospodarowanie" żydowskimi meblami*, pp. 263–266.

the proceedings against Mayer were dismissed, although a few months later he along with Aron Markus (another individual suspected of complicity in the “crime”) was deported to Auschwitz, where he perished⁶⁵.

Shortly after these events, on October 5, 1940, Brandt received written praise from his superiors for his role in Jewish affairs, with a recommendation that he be promoted because:

He has a great deal of experience, especially with regards to the Jewish question. Brandt is eloquent and can communicate with the local population. His reports are impeccable in terms of style and are logically structured. He performs the tasks assigned to him skilfully and conscientiously. He is correct in his behaviour towards his superiors and friendly towards his colleagues. Considering his achievements to date, I will offer him the position of criminal secretary⁶⁶.

His role in the resettlement operation, the arrest of people suspected of accepting bribes, and the subordination of the local structures of the Judenrat and the Jewish police was no doubt appreciated.

In the following months, Brandt continued his policy of abuse and plunder. At the turn of 1940 and 1941, he personally participated in the search of property of those Jews who had converted⁶⁷. And from February to March 1941 (just before the establishment of the ghetto) he searched selected apartments in Krakow and the surrounding area, including

65 Report (monthly) on the activities of the Jewish Community in Kraków (October 1940), AJHI, file no. 218/7, f. 5. See: I. Trunk, *Judenrat*, p. 438; A. Löw, M. Roth, *Krakovscy Żydzi pod okupacją niemiecką 1939–1945*, trans. E. Kowynia, Kraków 2014, p. 40; Memoir of Michał Weichert, part 2, AJHI, sygn. 302/25, ff. 20–21.

66 “Der Krim Sekt. Brandt ist seit dem 19.8.1939 beim Einsatz in Polen. Er gehörte zunächst dem Einsatzkommando 1/I an und ist seit anfang Februar 1940 in meiner Dienststelle. Hier hat er die Bearbeitung der Judenfrage übernommen und ist stellvertretender Kommissariatsleiter. Er verfügt über reiche Fachkenntnisse, insbesondere auf dem Gebiet der Judenfrage. Brandt ist redigewandt und geschickt im Umgang mit Publikum. Seine Berichte sind stilistisch einwandfrei und logisch aufgebaut. Er erledigt die ihm aufgetragenen Arbeiten mit Geschick und Fleiss. Er ist korrekt im Verhalten gegenüber seinen Mitarbeitern. Auf Grund seiner bisheriger Leistungen schlage ich ihm zum Krim. Ob. Sekr. vor” (Oskar Brandt case files, AIPN, GK, file no. 678/16, p. 14).

67 See Oskar Brandt case files, Testimony of Dawid Schlang, AIPN, GK, file no. 455/13, p. 15.

Wieliczka, for furniture and valuable items⁶⁸. Michał Zellner, one of the victims of these confiscations in Wieliczka, described what happened:

Brandt came to Wieliczka with several SS men in the winter months of 1941 looking for Jewish furniture. He also visited me in my private apartment. He drove up in a truck, stopped in front of my building, entered the apartment and took the best furniture from four rooms. In one of the junk rooms there was a bed that my sister, Pola Rothblumowa MA, had saved from her apartment in Krakow. I asked him at least [to – A. J.] leave that bed, because it was all my sister's belongings. But then he reached for his revolver and said "Wenn du nicht verschwindet, erschiess ich dich wie einen Hund"⁶⁹. After taking the furniture, which the Jews had to load onto a truck, Brandt ordered an SS man to write a description of the collected furniture and carpets. After reading this list in my presence, I noticed that not everything was listed. To this the SS man replied, "Sei nicht redselig sondern unterschreiben sofort"⁷⁰. Despite asking for a certificate for the furniture, I did not receive one⁷¹.

This detailed description of the seizure of property belonging to Zellner and his sister highlights Brandt's ruthlessness in stealing and robbing Jews for his own profit without arousing the suspicions of his superiors. We can only suspect how many people can claim to be his victims, or the scale of the plunder he and his associates obtained for themselves. Thanks to the possession of a truck, the support of additional officers and a weapon he was able to carry out at least several dozen such "searches" in one location.

As head of the Jewish section, Brandt also helped organize 'anthropological' medicals that Jews underwent in the German Health Office at 64 Grodzka Street. Beginning in at least July 1940 Brandt would assign Jewish policemen⁷² the task of escorting young girls to the building where doctors performed 'anthropological' and gynaecological examinations

68 See D. Swątek-Niewińska, "*Gospodarowanie*" żydowskimi meblami, p. 266.

69 "If you don't leave, I'll shoot you like a dog".

70 "Stop talking and, just sign immediately".

71 Michał Zellner's report, AJHI, file no. 301/2362, f. 1. I would like to thank Dagmara Swątek-Niewińska for bringing this report to my attention.

72 The Jewish Order Service, commonly referred to as the Jewish Police, was established by order of Stadthauptmann Schmidt on July 5, 1940.

on them⁷³. The purpose of these examinations was to assess the health or fertility of Jewish women and check for any valuables hidden in their bodies⁷⁴. One Jewish student, born in Krakow in 1925, provided the following disturbing account of such an ordeal.

I came out from behind the screen in my overalls. The doctor told me to strip naked. The doctor in the white coat looked like a butcher, with thick, red, big hands. He was balding, had a ruddy face, and a thick neck. He was clean, but with the unpleasant cleanliness of a red fat man. He panted. He measured my height, wrote down the colour of my eyes, hair, took measurements of my face, measurements of my whole body. He didn't say anything. You were dying of fear. He behaved as if I was a thing, not a human being. Then with something like a toothbrush he ran over my skin, back and breasts. Then he examined me with his bare hand to see if I was a virgin, writing everything down in a thick book. I shuddered. He asked if it hurt. He stopped⁷⁵.

This young woman was summoned by the German doctor twice more for further medicals. On the third occasion, she and her mother “tried to get OD protection” and did not show up at Grodzka Street.

In July 1941, Brandt was transferred to the Gestapo HQ in Stanisławów, where he continued to steal and commit other crimes against the Jewish population. His place at the Kraków HQ was taken by SS-Hauptsturmführer Wilhelm Kunde (born August 14, 1905), who was just as brutal as Brandt, but who operated in a more sophisticated and deliberate manner in co-operation with other Gestapo officers, including Maks Olde⁷⁶ (from April

73 See Oskar Brandt case files, Testimony of Mieczysław Pemper, AIPN, GK, file no. 455/13, vol. 2, pp. 63–64.

74 See Borwicz Collection, Yad Vashem Archives, file no. O.62/76, p. 63; Testimony of Mieczysław Pemper, AIPN, GK, file no. 455/13, vol. 2, p. 63–64; Testimony of Apollonia Wiśniowska, AJHI, file no. 301/2198, f. 11; Testimony of Laura Dientenfass, AJHI, file no. 301/1202, p. 7.

75 Testimony of a Jewish female student, Borwicz Collection, Yad Vashem Archives, file no. O.62/76, f. 1–2. Although her account refers to an physical examination from the autumn of 1941, when Wilhelm Kunde was the head of the Jewish section, it reflects the course of those terrible procedures.

76 See Wilhelm Kunde case files, Main result of the investigation, The Federal Archives Ludwigsburg [Bundesarchiv Ludwigsburg], file no. B 162/1976, f. 694.

1941 onwards in sub-department IV-B-4) and Rudolf Körner. The latter was entrusted with handling Jewish matters in the Kraków ghetto.

Wilhelm Kunde was born in Woltersdorf, near Berlin, but from the age of four he was raised in Słupsk, where his father ran a butcher's shop and a farm. There he attended both primary and secondary school (Realschule) and completed an apprenticeship as a construction and machine fitter, after which he obtained his journeyman papers. From 1924 he served in the Bremen police, where in 1936 he rose to the rank of senior police officer. In 1937 Kunde joined the NSDAP (No. 5,630,786) and the gendarmerie in Neubruchhausen (nowadays a quarter in the town of Bassum in the district of Diepholz, Lower Saxony), where he served until the end of the year. In 1938 he first worked in the Bremen tax office, and six months later gained employment as a senior criminal assistant for the local Gestapo. After a 12-month probationary period, he was sent on a one-month course to the Institute of Forensic Science in Berlin. In 1940 he was appointed senior criminal assistant and SS-Oberscharführer at KdS Krakau, and after Brandt left he took over as head of the Jewish section and by the end of the war held the rank of SS-Hauptscharführer⁷⁷.

Kunde continued the work of his predecessor, but in different circumstances, including within the framework of Operation Reinhardt. What did not change were the 'anthropological' medical examinations, albeit now the women were brought from the ghetto, as well as acts of plunder and exploitation. Kunde "was a well-known figure [...]. He was master of life and death over the ghetto inhabitants". He also had his own office in the ghetto, probably located at 39 Józefińska Street, right next to the Jewish police station (No. 37)⁷⁸. He was most often seen in Polonia (15 Rynek Podgórski) a café in the ghetto run by a Gestapo agent, Aleksander Förster⁷⁹. It was here that Kunde met his agents, including Wilhelm Giemski, and Julian Apple. Polonia's clientele also included other agents,

77 See Wilhelm Kunde case files, Main result of the investigation. The defendant's curriculum vitae, The Federal Archives Ludwigsburg, file no. B 162/1976, ff. 1769–1770. See A. Jarkowska-Natkaniec, *Wymuszona współpraca czy zdrada?*, p. 262.

78 See Testimony of Kurt Heinemeyer, The Federal Archives Ludwigsburg, file no. B 162/1968, p. 100; A. Bieberstein, *Zagłada Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 92.

79 He was probably a pre-war Abwehr agent sent to Kraków to operate as an agent as early as 1937, and later began collaborating with the Gestapo. The Germans made him an undercover spy. For more on this individual, see: A. Jarkowska, *Brunatna pajęczyna*, pp. 228–240.

such as Jakub Selinger⁸⁰ and his wife Róża, Artur Appel (Julian's brother), Maurycy Diamant, Marcel Grüner and Szymon Spitz⁸¹ (who collaborated with Kurt Heinemeyer and Rudolf Körner)⁸². The parties, receptions and recitals held at Polonia provided a favourable setting for gathering information about the current situation in the ghetto, as well as for various traps and set-ups organized by agents under the strict supervision of the Gestapo, especially Körner. According to Aleksander Bieberstein, one person who eavesdropped on the conversations of the café's customers was Róża Selinger⁸³. Polonia (colloquially referred to as the "spy den") was a hub for various illicit dealings (e.g. smuggling, handling contraband, and bribing German officials), and where the Gestapo received reports from agents. Some of the latter, during the deportations to the Bełżec extermination camp (in June and October 1942), would provide information on places where Jews were in hiding, e.g. in bunkers (e.g. at 7 Lwowska Street)⁸⁴, or prepared lists of people sentenced to death (e.g. Szymon Spitz, Wilhelm Gemski). The place also served as venue for various intrigues, 'operational games' (more on this in a moment), as well as the private business interests and whims of the Gestapo (Haase, for example, came to the ghetto for a shave and manicure)⁸⁵ and bribery. The latter mainly

80 Jakub Selinger was a pre-war criminal involved in, among other things, racketeering, whose activities the Gestapo must have known about at the beginning of the occupation. A. Jarkowska, *Brunatna pajęczyna*, s. 213.

81 Born in Drohobych, Spitz, he like Selinger, was a pre-war criminal recruited by the Gestapo. Before the war broke out, he had been sentenced to a total of 1,5 years in prison and the loss of civil rights for 4 years.

82 See Rudolf Körner case files, Documentation from the investigation against Rudolf Korner conducted by the Hamburg Public Prosecutor's Office. Witness statements: Zimmerman, Hilfstein, Ben-David, Sternberg, Kornhauser, AIPN Kr, file no. KPP 62/73, ff. 14–16, 24, 34–36; Acquisitions 539, AK Kraków counterintelligence reports, AIPN, GK, file no. 174/670. See A. Jarkowska, *Brunatna pajęczyna*, pp. 61–62.

83 See A. Bieberstein, *Zagłada Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 36.

84 See Testimony of Isaac Lewenstein submitted to the police headquarters in Linz on September 19, 1946, Yad Vashem Archives, Jewish Historical Documentation Center, Linz, file no. M.9/99, f. 2.

85 See Minutes of the main hearing before the Voivodship Court in Kraków, Testimony of Józef Brandeis, Kraków, June 27, 1951, AIPN Kr, 502/2207, f. 222v, for: R. Gieroń, *Proces Williego Haasego przed Sądem Wojewódzkim w Krakowie w 1951 roku*, "Polish-Jewish Studies" 4 (2024), p. 199.

involved Gestapo agents and Jewish policemen cooperating with them, in particular Symche Spira, whom Kunde also met at the Jewish police headquarters at 39 Józefińska Street or at Pomorska. Spira not only took orders from the Germans, but also passed on the Jewish identification cards of his protégés for approval, which protected them from deportation⁸⁶.

Kunde was involved and personally participated in the deportations from the Kraków ghetto. These were led by SS-Oberführer Julian Scherner, SS and Police Leader in the Kraków District, and his Chief of Staff Martin Fellenz⁸⁷. The situation repeated itself in March 1943 during the liquidation of the ghetto. After the war, Kunde was accused of committing a total of 153 murders in Kraków, Wieliczka, Niepołomice and Bochnia⁸⁸. Among his victims from the Kraków ghetto were patients of the Jewish hospital on Józefińska Street, Rabbi Frankl and the family of Idek Tanennbaum (he worked in the Gestapo garages on Słowackiego Avenue)⁸⁹. He also shot Dr. Michał Weichert, president of Jewish Social Self-Help⁹⁰. The identity of the killer of the poet Mordechai Gerirtig and the painter Abraham Neumann remains unknown.

The aforementioned Heinrich and Olde, Haase, and especially Körner (born October 11, 1906) perpetrated numerous crimes in the ghetto and took part in its liquidation⁹¹. Wilhelm Kranz, a guard at the Jewish police

86 See Criminal case files of Wilhelm Kunde, Testimony of Hermann Heinrich, The Federal Archives Ludwigsburg, file no. B 162/1975, p. 1615.

87 See M. Grądzka-Rejak, *W godzinach rannych zebrano na tym placu około 2000 osób*, s. 87.

88 Testifying after the war as a witness in the trial of Wilhelm Kunde, Maks Miler stated that the German personally oversaw the deportation of Jews from Wieliczka to labour camps in Rozwadów, Stalowa Wola and KL Plaszow and that “the operation involved the gendarmerie, local police, Polish police and a special SS group, which arrived in Wieliczka at that time. Our group, which Kunde selected during the operation in Targowica, was for a few days stationed at [illegible – A. J.] and then sent by train to the camps” (Wilhelm Kunde case files, Testimony of Maks Miler, The Federal Archives Ludwigsburg, file no. B 162/25063, ff. 10–11).

89 See Wilhelm Kunde case files, Testimonies of Yitzhak Ramat and Aleksander Rad, David Wulf, Schinar, Kranz, The Federal Archives Ludwigsburg, file no. B 162/2252, ff. 2367, 193, 107, 272, 714.

90 See A. Bieberstein, *Zagłada Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 67.

91 See Frommel, Heinemeyer, Körner, Olde, Wehmeyer case files, The investigative proceedings against Körner, The Federal Archives Ludwigsburg, file no. B 162/29.280,

jail, testified that Körner often brought people to the jail only to shoot them soon afterwards. He recalls one case in particular where Körner and Mallotki were rewarded for shooting Dr. Kapiol (a gynecologist) from Bielsko-Biała and an unknown Jew with the surname of Preis. Foreign passports were found on Kapiol and Preis, and their bodies were later taken to the ghetto⁹². At the end of 1942 or the beginning of 1943, Körner shot two Poles while searching the apartment of a certain Fracz, who was then imprisoned in Montelupich prison. While reloading crates contained large amounts of alcohol, Körner got into an argument with several Poles who were carrying them to his car. The Gestapo officer fired shots in their direction, fatally wounding two of them⁹³.

At the same time, Kunde, Körner, Haase, Heinrich and Olde were looting Jewish property. In 1942, Haase stole paintings from the Kraków ghetto belonging to its inhabitants. Among them was a painting by Wojciech Kossak, who died the same year in Kraków. Kunde and his two agents, a certain Steinfeld and Moses Brodman, were also involved in the case, and, according to Tadeusz Pankiewicz, they handed the paintings over to the Gestapo officer. Most likely at the end of 1942 or the beginning of 1943⁹⁴. The Gestapo entrusted the task of collecting and sorting the silver and gold of the Jews who had been deported to Bełżec a few months earlier to Symche Spira, the commandant of the Jewish police. This task was given to Ajzyk Herzog, Lein Friedner, Aron Gruener and Mordechaj Wulkan, who sorted through the jewellery, coins, diamonds and other valuables, which were then transported to Berlin⁹⁵.

pp. 685–711. Interestingly, Körner came from a large family: he had 6 siblings, and one of his brothers was treated in a psychiatric hospital, which attracted the interest of the Nazis in the 1940s. Koerner Rudolf, Personal files, The Federal Archives Berlin-Lichterfelde, Berlin Document Center, file no. R 9361-III/102239.

92 See Frommel, Heinemeyer, Körner, Olde, Wehmeyer case files, The investigative proceedings against Körner, Testimony of Wilhelm Kranz, The Federal Archives Ludwigsburg, file no. B 162/29.280, p. 653.

93 See Frommel, Heinemeyer, Körner, Olde, Wehmeyer case files, The investigative proceedings against Körner, Testimony of Friedländer, The Federal Archives Ludwigsburg, file no. B 162/29.280, p. 711.

94 See T. Pankiewicz, *Apteka w getcie krakowskim*, Kraków 2022, p. 280; D. M. Grove, *Oskar Schindler. Prawdziwa historia*, Warszawa 2015, pp. 467–468.

95 See A. Jarkowska-Natkaniec, *Wymuszona współpraca czy zdrada?*, p. 161.

The Gestapo also played an active role in seeking out and killing Jews still hiding in the ghetto during its liquidation on March 13 and 14, 1943. This operation was headed at the time by Wilhelm Haase, who was responsible for issuing the order to shoot all those caught in the bunkers⁹⁶. Responsibility for detecting hiding places was entrusted to Jewish policemen (mainly Spira) and Gestapo agents (Spitz, Brodman, Giemski) acting on the orders of Kunde and Heinrich. On the first day of the liquidation, they found, among others, a bunker on Plac Zgody containing 7 people⁹⁷, while a further hiding place was discovered at 7 Lwowska Street where 19 people had sought refuge⁹⁸.

The Gestapo organized similar operations on the “Aryan” side, when the Jewish section was already headed by Herman Heinrich (born March, 7, 1914), about whom we have less information than the other individuals who held this position. After the war, one witness, a certain Ekstein, described the arrest of his sister and her husband Schor Süssel, two Turkish citizens, outside the ghetto. Shortly before its liquidation, a Jewish policeman had brought his sister’s two children to Ekstein, because their parents had been detained by the Jewish police in the ghetto and had been taken to Körner’s disposal. Ekstein tried to intervene with Lejzor Landau (Kunde’s agent)⁹⁹, who specified the amount of money in exchange for which the Gestapo officer might be willing to release his loved ones from custody. However, before these efforts were made,

96 See R. Gieroń, *Proces Williego Haasego*, p. 205.

97 See A. Jarkowska-Natkaniec, *Wymuszona współpraca czy zdrada?*, pp. 265, 371–372.

98 See Testimony of Isaac Lewenstein submitted to the police headquarters in Linz on September 19, 1946, Yad Vashem Archives, Jewish Historical Documentation Center, Linz, file no. M.9/99, p. 2.

99 Lejzor Landau worked closely with Wilhelm Kunde, having done some business with the latter from 1939 to 1941. A Gestapo officer warned him about the plans to establish a ghetto in Kraków. Landau escaped from Kraków and moved to Bochnia, where he lived on the “Aryan” side. In the following years, Landau by now residing in the Bochnia ghetto – according to Dagmara Swałek-Niewińska – was known for his ability to handle various matters (including arranging foreign documents or securing the release of someone from prison). See D. Swałek-Niewińska, *From Krakow to Bochnia and Piwniczna: Jews escaping from the Generalgouvernement across the Slovak border, 1939–1944*, in: *Entanglements of war. Social networks during the Holocaust*, ed. by E. R. Adler, N. Aleksion, Jerusalem 2022, p. 371; A. Jarkowska, *Brunatna pajęczyna*.

Ekstein's sister and her husband were deported to the Auschwitz-Birnekaue concentration camp¹⁰⁰. The Gestapo also used Spira and members of the Diamant and Förster networks to root out Jews in hiding¹⁰¹. It is worth mentioning here that after March 14, 1943, Jewish Gestapo agents met in the Maskota on Krakowska Street (no. 20), a well-known bar frequented by informants, the same place where Stefania Brandstätter and Diamant, agents from Förster's group, were often seen¹⁰².

At the same time (from at least 1942 up to the end of 1944), SS-Sturm-bannführer Erich Vollbrecht (from sub-department IV-A-3 – responsible for countering sabotage against industrial facilities and the railways), Franz Stiech, probably Siebert (until 1942) and Kunde from the Kraków Gestapo, as well as Wilhelm Schömburg from the Bochnia Kripo led an operation aimed at eliminating illegal smuggling routes between the GG and Hungary. Thanks to its highly successful web of agents, the Gestapo knew about illegal transports being organised from, among other locations, Kraków and Bochnia. On the Gestapo's orders, the agents were able to identify the smuggling routes and all the persons involved. The Gestapo assigned for this task, among others, Maurycy Diamant, Aleksander Förster, Salomon Weininger, Szymon Spitz, Natan Wurzl, Leon Silber and Jakub Selinger. They carried out a series of sting operations and other traps. First, they obtained information about Jews in possession of passports from neutral countries, gained their trust and then began to organize fictitious transports to Hungary. They met their victims at pre-arranged locations, set up meetings with Gestapo officers, presented details of alleged escapes and accepted money to organize them. When all these stages had been completed, the Gestapo would appear at the indicated address. This ended with the Jews being detained, arrested, sent to German concentration camps or shot on the spot. The most famous sting operation took place at the end of April or the beginning of May 1943, when 80 people from the Bochnia ghetto were shot in Kraków on the orders of the Gestapo. These victims tended to be the richest people from the ghetto. It also happened that Jews would be stopped at the border, where the German police would be waiting for them. Agents impersonating drivers, for

100 See Wilhelm Kunde case files, Testimony of Friedländer, The Federal Archives Ludwigsburg, file no. B 162/2252, p. 717.

101 A detailed description of the activities of this group can be found in the book A. Jarkowska, *Brunatna pajęczyna*, pp. 210–239.

102 See A. Jarkowska, *Brunatna pajęczyna*, pp. 99, 118.

example, after demanding a bribe from the escapees, took them to the indicated address and handed them over to the Germans. At the same time, the Gestapo stole many of the good. For example, they seized several crates with unknown contents from a warehouse at 12 Skawińska Street belonging to the Silbersteins, who had been victims of another set-up¹⁰³.

At the turn of 1943 and 1944, the Gestapo sent to Budapest Franz Stiech and Erich Vollbrecht, two agents experienced in countering sabotage both against industrial targets and the railways (sub-department IV-A-3) and who thwarted the aforementioned illegal transport of 80 Jews escapees from Bochnia to Hungary. Vollbrecht (born March 29, 1903 in Strasbourg) was an ideological Nazi (a member of the NSDAP from 1933) and an experienced criminal policeman. He joined the Mecklenburg police on February, 2, 1925, then served in the Schutzpolizei until August, 31, 1934, after which he transferred to the Kripo in Weimar¹⁰⁴. There is little information available about Stiech. He was probably born in 1912 and came from Vienna. According to post-war testimonies, he collaborated not only with Vollbrecht, but also with Körner. Marta Puretz, Salomon Weininger and Szymon Spitz, among others, were in his service. On his orders, the carried out reconnaissance of Jews with foreign documents trying to flee the General Government. These tasks were also performed by other Gestapo agents, including members of the Diamant network¹⁰⁵, as such an operation required the involvement of large numbers of people, and organizing many traps, stings and set-ups, etc. Hence the involvement of other Gestapo officers, including Wilhelm Kunde and his agents, who at the end of 1943 were assigned the task of investigating the Citizens' Committee for the Care of Polish Refugees in Budapest, financed by the Polish and Hungarian authorities and headed by Henryk Sławik, who, among other things, helped Jews escaping from occupied Poland. Jewish

103 A detailed description of the operations of this group can be found in the book A. Jarkowska, *Brunatna pajęczyna*, pp. 201–239.

104 See Vollbrecht Erich, Personal files, The Federal Archives Berlin-Lichterfelde, Berlin Document Center, R 9361-III/214800, ff. 270–272.

105 The Diamant Network – a group of Kraków-based Gestapo agents led by several Gestapo officers, including Wilhelm Kunde and Rudolf Körner, as well as Salomon Weininger, Julian Appel, Aleksander Förster (later an undercover spy of his own group), Stefania Brandstätter, Marta Puretz, Lejzor Landau, Ignacy Taubman, Joanna Landau, Jakub Selinger, Szymon Spitz Aleksander Förster (later an undercover spy of his own group, Moses Brodman and Moses Białobroda.

agents previously sent by the SD and the Gestapo, including Marta Puretz, Aleksander Förster, Jakub Seliger, Julian Appel, Salomon Weininger and Stefania Brandstätter, were already active on the streets of Budapest. By the end of 1943, Lejzor Landau had also arrived in Budapest, together with a 35-year-old agent called Rudnicki (first name unknown)¹⁰⁶. Thanks to its extensive network the Gestapo managed to uncover and arrest many members of the Committee and Jews hiding in the Hungarian capital.

Given the Gestapo's typical methods, its knowledge of the area, the tactics it employed (including infiltrating both the Committee and smuggling rings with its own agents), we can assume it conducted a special operation designed to disrupt and destroy the escape channel used by Jews from Krakow and Krakow district trying to seek sanctuary in Hungary, including staging ambushes prepared by agents from Bochnia and Krakow and shooting the aforementioned 80 people. Before the Germans seized power in Hungary, the Gestapo already had a very good understanding of the current situation. Once Krakow Gestapo agents launched their operation, they managed to identify and then arrest members of the Citizens' Committee, including Henryk Sławik, Andrzej Pysz, Stefan Filipkiewicz, Edmund Fietz and Stanisław Opo-ka-Loewenstein. Many Jews hiding in Hungary were also sent to concentration camps.

A group of Jewish agents were active in Budapest until the end of 1944. Some of these Gestapo collaborators left the city at the beginning of 1945. A number of them fled to Great Britain, and from there made their way to Palestine, France or, like their principals, returned to Krakow. Shortly afterwards, with the Germans now losing the war and the front approaching, the Gestapo withdrew from Krakow, burning all evidence of their criminal activity (i.e. the archive). They tried to protect some of their agents (providing them with documents legalizing their status) while ordering the elimination of others.

Conclusions

Tens of thousands of people of Jewish origin died during the occupation of Kraków. Most of them were perished following their deportation to German concentration and extermination camps in 1942 or during the liquidation of the Kraków ghetto in 1943. We have no precise data

106 See Report on the AK Kraków counterintelligence for the period 16.01–5.02.1944, AIPN Kr, file no. 075/1, vol. 17, f. 42; A. Jarkowska, *Brunatna pajęczyna*, pp. 245–246.

on all the victims of informers, agents, or the criminal actions of the German authorities in those nearby towns to which Jews fled from Kraków throughout the occupation. It is said that between 3,000 and 5,000 Kraków Jews survived the war, although this data is still incomplete. Few Germans and Austrians serving in the KdS Krakau were held accountable for their crimes against the Jewish population after the war, despite the efforts of the new communist authorities to bring them to justice. Following the end of World War II, both Polish and German prosecutors launched their own investigations, and tried (more or less successfully) to capture and punish the Kraków Gestapo officers who had escaped from Kraków at the end of 1944 or the beginning of 1945, including to the then Federal Republic of Germany.

In post-war Poland, these cases were handled by the Main Commission for the Investigation of German (later 'Hitlerite') Crimes in Poland, and in Germany, from 1958, by the Central Office for the Investigation of National Socialist Crimes in Ludwigsburg (German: Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen zur Aufklärung nationalsozialistischer Verbrechen). Incidentally, in the 1960s, both institutions joined forces in the prosecution of criminals. The German Central Office conducted investigations against, among others, former SS-Oberscharführer Franz Josef Müller regarding the murder of prisoners in the Kraków-Plaszów, Bieżanów and Prokocim concentration camps, as well as against Martin Fellenz, the head of SSPF personnel in Kraków, the aforementioned Wilhelm Kunde, and Rudolf Körner. Trials were held in various locations in post-war Germany, including in Hamburg, Hanover, Munich and Cologne. In the latter city, on March, 13, 1968, the court sentenced Kunde to several years in prison, and he died in custody the following year. This sentence was disproportionate to the actual scale of the Gestapo officer's brutality. He was accused of being directly involved in crimes against 153 people, and over 200 people were questioned in his case.

Wilhelm Haase, in turn, was first sentenced to two years in prison by a British court for membership in the SS and NSDAP. It was only in 1951 that the Regional Court in Kraków sentenced him to death, and the sentence was duly carried out¹⁰⁷. Most of the proceedings initiated by the Polish prosecutor's office ended with the investigation being suspended because "the suspect is outside the borders of the Polish State and there are no grounds to file an extradition request". Such was the case with

107 See R. Gieron, *Proces Williego Haasego*, p. 214.

Franz Stiech¹⁰⁸. In turn, the proceedings against Oskar Brandt were discontinued due to his death in a hospital prison in Wrocław¹⁰⁹.

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108 See Franz Stiech case files, Resolution to suspend the investigation, AIPN Kr, file no. 502/3541, p. 25.

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Abstrakt

Alicja Jarkowska

*Lokalni organizatorzy i wykonawcy Zagłady
z krakowskiego Gestapo. Casus tzw. referatu żydowskiego*

Artykuł stanowi analizę roli funkcjonariuszy krakowskiego Gestapo z podreferatu IV-B-1 w systemowej i planowej zagładzie Żydów w Krakowie. Autorka podejmuje próbę ukazania udziału kierowników powyższego podreferatu w grabieży mienia żydowskiego oraz w zbrodniach popełnionych na Żydach. W oparciu o dostępne źródła historyczne pochodzące zarówno z II wojny światowej, jak i z lat powojennych (różnej proweniencji) przedstawia metody działania Gestapo i jego agentury w wyszukiwaniu Żydów ukrywających się po tzw. aryjskiej stronie oraz uciekających z Generalnego Gubernatorstwa. Tekst ma układ chronologiczno-tematyczny i obejmuje głównie okres od jesieni 1939 do końca 1944 roku.

Słowa kluczowe:

Gestapo, Kraków, agenci, KdS, grabież

Abstract

Alicja Jarkowska

Local organizers and perpetrators of the Holocaust from the Kraków Gestapo. The case of the “Jewish section”

This article analyzes the role of officers from the Kraków Gestapo's sub-department IV-B-1 in the systematic and planned extermination of Jews in Kraków. It attempts to describe the involvement of the heads of this sub-department in the looting of Jewish property and in crimes committed against Jews. Based on available historical sources from both the Second World War and the postwar period (of various origins), the article presents the methods used by the Gestapo and its informant network to locate Jews hiding on the so-called “Aryan side” as well as those escaping from the General Government. The text follows a chronological and thematic structure, focusing mainly on the period from autumn 1939 to the end of 1944.

Keywords:

Gestapo, Krakow, agents, KdS, looking