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‘Aktion Zamosc’ and its Entanglements with the Holocaust

Abstract: During *Aktion Reinhardt*, the murder of one and a half million Jews, Himmler and Globocnik planned the next mass crime, *Aktion Zamosc*, which served as a test run for the *Generalplan Ost*. This largest deportation plan in history, which already presupposed the murder of the Jews, envisaged the expulsion of at least 31 million Slavs and the simultaneous settlement of hundreds of thousands of ‘ethnic Germans’. Only three days after *Aktion Reinhardt* in the district of Lublin was officially completed on November 9, 1942, Himmler proclaimed the Zamość-region the first German settlement area. Subsequently, 50,000 Poles were deported, the majority for forced labor to the German Reich or to the Auschwitz concentration camp, and several thousands, who were considered unfit for work were brought to so-called retirement villages. Thousands of Poles, fearing deportation, fled into the forests, where they joined the underground. Even though the German occupiers according to their National Socialist racial ideology made a clear distinction between Jews and Poles, an increasing radicalization towards the Polish population can be seen in *Aktion Zamosc* which was also a consequence of the numerous personnel continuities in the organizations of the occupation apparatus.

Introduction

On February 25, 1943, Zygmunt Klukowski, doctor and head of the hospital in Szczebrzeszyn, a small town south of Lublin, wrote the following lines in his diary:

I also had a patient in the hospital who had been resettled from the Poznań area together with her parents three years ago. A few weeks ago, in the course of the resettlement of the village of Kąty near Zamość, her husband was taken away and sent to Auschwitz, she was held “behind the wire” in Zamość, while the five children were taken by train to the Garwolin area. Finally, she herself was also deported to Germany to work. The brave woman escaped from the train on the way and got to Garwolin, found all five children there, who had been placed with various farmers, and returned to Zamość. All these bad experiences caused her to miscarry in the fourth month of pregnancy with very heavy bleeding.¹

1 Christine Glauning and Ewelina Wanke (eds.): Zygmunt Klukowski: *Tagebuch aus den Jahren*

In his diary entry, Klukowski describes the brutal actions of the German occupiers against the non-Jewish Polish population in a region that has been addressed in research primarily in the context of the Holocaust.

On November 24, 1942, the German occupiers began deporting non-Jewish Poles² from the area around Zamość, which Heinrich Himmler, Reichsführer-SS and Reich Commissioner for the Consolidation of German Nationhood (*Reichskommissar für die Festigung deutschen Volkstums*, henceforth RKF) had declared a German settlement area shortly before. This area was of interest to the German occupiers for several reasons: They had discovered traces of alleged German colonists there from the time of Austrian rule, who now were to be 're-Germanised'.³ The soils around Zamość were extremely fertile, and several important transport routes ran through the area.⁴

Originally, a 'Germanization' of the 'General Government', the central part of occupied Poland in which Zamość was located, had not been envisaged – it was rather to serve as the "Homestead of the Polish People"⁵ (*Heimstätte des polnischen Volkes*), as a reservoir of labor and as a deployment area of the *Wehrmacht* for the war against the Soviet Union. Only the so-called incorporated areas in Western Poland, which had become part of the Reich, were to be 'Germanised'.⁶ As early as September 1939, the German elites developed concrete plans for the reorganization of the population structure in the annexed territories.⁷ In this context, the creation of a 'Jewish reservation' near Lublin was

der Okkupation: 1939–1944, Berlin: Metropol, 2017, entry dated 25.02.1943, 413 (all translations by the author).

² Henceforth, when referring to Poles, this refers to non-Jewish Polish citizens.

³ W. Gradmann's note on the conditions of a 'Germanisation' of Zamość and the Zamość county, Łódź 19.03.1942, in Czesław Madajczyk (ed.): *Zamojszczyzna – Sonderlaboratorium SS. Zbiór dokumentów polskich i niemieckich z okresu okupacji hitlerowskiej*, volume 1, Warsaw: Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnictwo, 1977 (henceforth *Zamojszczyzna 1*, document titles are translated to English by the author), 53–60.

⁴ *Zamojszczyzna 1*, 12.

⁵ Werner Präg and Wolfgang Jacobmeyer (eds.): *Das Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs in Polen, 1939–1945*, Stuttgart: dva, 1975 (henceforth *Diensttagebuch*), entry dated 25.02.1940, 117.

⁶ Günther Häufele: "Zwangsumsiedlungen in Polen 1939–1941: Zum Vergleich sowjetischer und deutscher Besatzungspolitik", in Dittmar Dahlmann and Gerhard Hirschfeld (eds.): *Lager, Zwangsarbeit, Vertreibung und Deportation: Dimensionen der Massenverbrechen in der Sowjetunion und in Deutschland 1933 bis 1945*, Essen: Klartext, 1999, 515–534.

⁷ Already on 21.09.1939, Reinhardt Heydrich had presented a plan providing for a swift deportation of all Jews and the remaining Polish intelligentsia living in the incorporated territories; cf. Christopher Browning: *The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939–March 1942*, London: Arrow Books, 2005, 36.

also discussed. In October 1939, deportation plans had been increasingly linked to the resettlement of 'ethnic Germans' from the Baltics and Soviet-occupied eastern Poland to the annexed territories.⁸ By March 1941, the Central Emigration Office (*Umwandererzentralstelle*, henceforth UWZ) succeeded in deporting 410,000 Polish citizens to the 'General Government'.⁹

At the government meeting on March 25, 1941, after a talk with Hitler,¹⁰ 'General Governor' Hans Frank announced an abrupt change of the objective of the 'General Government':

The General Government, as we know it and as we have worked for, will be much richer, happier, will receive more support and, above all, will be de-Jewified. Yet, it will also lose the characteristic sight of a still predominant Polish life; for with the Jews the Poles will also leave this area. The Führer is determined to make this area a purely German country in the course of 15 to 20 years. The word of the home of the Polish people will no longer be applicable to this area of the former General Government [...].¹¹

The SS and police leader of the Lublin district, Odilo Globocnik, who had been commissioned by Himmler on July 17, 1941, to establish the SS and police bases in the new eastern territories, had been pressing ahead with this change of direction ever since. He advocated settling the entire district of Lublin with 'ethnic Germans'. In the long term, this was to create a German-populated 'ethnic bridge' from the Baltics to Transylvania. Those Poles who lived in the areas to the west of it were to be encircled in terms of settlement and, step by step, economically and biologically "crushed".¹² On July 30, 1941, during one of his many visits to Lublin and Zamość, Himmler ordered the expansion of the 'Search for German Blood' campaign to the entire 'General Government'. At the same

8 Circular by Wilhelm Koppe, Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) of Reichsgau of Wartheland, 12.11.1939, concerning preparations for the mass deportations, in Werner Röhr (ed.): *Europa unter dem Hakenkreuz: Die faschistische Okkupationspolitik in Polen (1939–1945)*, Heidelberg: VEB, 1989, 138–139.

9 Order by Himmler concerning the mass deportation of the Polish and Jewish population, 30.10.1939, Federal Archives Berlin (henceforth BAArch) R 49/4, fol. 20.

10 Diensttagebuch, entry dated 17.03.1941, 332–333.

11 Diensttagebuch, entry dated 25.03.1941, 335–336; According to Martin Broszat, the decision to include the 'General Government' in the German settlement area in the East was made as early as 1940. See Martin Broszat: *Nationalsozialistische Polenpolitik 1939–1945*, Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Bücherei, 1965, 165.

12 Helmut Müller's status report on the conditions in Lublin, directed to the head of the Main Race and Settlement Office (RuS), Otto Hoffmann, 15.10.1941, in Symon Datner, Janusz Gumkowski, Kazimierz Leszczyński: "Wysiedlanie w Zamojszczyźnie", in *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce*, volume 13 (henceforth BGKBZHwP 13), 1960, F 3–5.

time, he declared his plans to create a large settlement area near Zamość.¹³ In a test run initiated by Globocnik, 2,089 inhabitants were expelled from seven villages in the Zamość region and moved to the Hrubieszów county in November 1941.¹⁴

In the summer of 1942, when *Aktion Reinhardt* – the murder of mainly Polish Jews – in the Lublin district was at its peak, Globocnik pushed ahead with the elaboration of a plan for the expulsion of the entire Polish population from the Zamość area – the so-called *Aktion Zamosc*,¹⁵ which can be seen as the first phase of the *Generalplan Ost*. This gigantic demographic resettlement project, developed by Nazi German planning elites since the summer of 1941, envisaged the expulsion of at least 31 million people in East Central Europe and already presupposed the extermination of the Jews.¹⁶ Thus, it was no coincidence that on July 19, 1942, Himmler, who again stayed with Globocnik in Lublin, ordered the deportation – i.e. the murder – of almost the entire Jewish population in the ‘General Government’ to be completed by the end of the year. Accordingly, after this date, Jews were only to remain in labor camps.¹⁷

13 Note on the detailed order of the Reichsführer-SS, issued during his inspection tour to Lublin and Zamość, concerning the resettlement plans in the Lublin district, Lublin and Zamość on 30.07.1941, in *Zamojszczyzna* 1, 26–27.

14 Janina Kielboń: *Wysiedlency z Zamojszczyzny w obozie Koncentracyjnym na Majdanku 1943*, Lublin: Państwowe Muzeum na Majdanku, 2006, 34.

15 Letter of U. Greifelt to the Reichsführer-SS regarding the designation of the ‘General Government’ as settlement area, Berlin on 03.07.1942, in *Zamojszczyzna* 1, 127; minutes of the meeting regarding the resettlement plans in the district of Lublin; participants: the HSSPF East Friedrich-Wilhelm Krüger, state secretary Dr Bühler, governor of the district Lublin, Ernst Zörner, General Governor Hans Frank, 04.08.1942, in *Diensttagebuch*, 540–541.

16 “Generalplan Ost. Rechtliche, wirtschaftliche und räumliche Grundlagen des Ostaufbaus”, presented by Prof Dr Konrad Meyer, Berlin-Dahlem, June 1942, in Czesław Madajczyk (ed.): *Vom Generalplan Ost zum Generalsiedlungsplan: Dokumente*, Munich: Saur, 1994, 124. After reading Meyer’s draft, Himmler pointed out in his letter to Greifelt that he [Himmler] had obviously been misunderstood: he wanted the “Germanization” of the entire ‘General Government’ within 20 years, not just the establishment of bases, 12.06.1942, in Madajczyk, *Vom Generalplan Ost*, 133–134.

17 Order of the Reichsführer-SS Himmler to complete the murder of the Jewish population in the ‘General Government’ by the end of the year, the order was dated 19.07.1942, but actually sent from Hegewald to the HSSPF East, Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger on 29.07.1942, in Klaus-Peter Friedrich (ed.): *Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das national-sozialistische Deutschland 1933–1945. Volume 9: Polen: Generalgouvernement August 1941–1945*, Munich: De Gruyter-Oldenbourg, 2013, 337; Peter Witte, Michael Wildt, Martina Voigt, Dieter Pohl, Peter Klein, Christian Gerlach, Christoph Dieckmann and Andrej Angrick (eds.): *Der Dienstkalender Heinrich Himmlers 1941/42* (henceforth: *Himmlers Dienstkalender 1941/42*), Hamburg: Christians, 1999, entries dated 18.07.1942 and 19.07.1942, 493–496.

Until November 9, 1942, most of the remaining ghettos in the district were dissolved. Of 50,000 Jews residing in the Zamość region, 44,000 Jews had been killed in the extermination camps Bełżec and Sobibór, about 3,000 had been murdered on the spot or during the transports. It was hardly by chance that Globocnik chose November 9 as the end of *Aktion Reinhardt* – after all, it was a Nazi Memorial Day.¹⁸ Only three days later – on November 12, 1942 – Himmler declared the Zamość region the “first German settlement area”.¹⁹

This article focuses on the *Aktion Zamosc* as well as on its entanglements with the Holocaust and tries to clarify to what extent there were continuities in the policies of the occupiers. Furthermore, the question arises as to how the local population perceived these two crimes and related them to each other, and how people responded to *Aktion Zamosc*. The Holocaust in Poland cannot be viewed in isolation from other German mass crimes. In particular, the deportations of Jewish and non-Jewish Poles were strongly intertwined. The example of *Aktion Zamosc* and its entanglements with the Holocaust illustrates the complexity of German crimes in Central and Eastern Europe.

Despite solid source material, *Aktion Zamosc* – the deportation and eviction of about 50,000 Poles from the Southern counties of Hrubieszów, Zamość und Biłgoraj, carried out from November 1942 until August 1943 – was studied almost exclusively by Polish historians until the 1980s.²⁰ Zygmunt Mańkowski extensively dealt with this topic in the 1970s.²¹ Particularly noteworthy is the comprehensive source edition *Zamojszczyzna*²² published by Czesław Madajczyk in 1978. The diary entries of Zygmunt Klukowski²³ are also extremely valuable, as they provide an outstanding illustration of the increasing escalation of violence in this area.

18 Dieter Pohl: *Von der “Judenpolitik” zum Judenmord: Der Distrikt Lublin des Generalgouvernements 1939–1944*, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1993, 134–136; Christian Ingrao: *The Promise of the East: Nazi Hopes and Genocide, 1939–43*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2019, 205; cf. Tatiana Berenstein: “Martyrologia, opór i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie lubelskim”, in *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, 21, 1975, 21–92.

19 General order No. 17 C of the Reichsführer-SS on the designation of the first settlement area in the ‘General Government’, Berlin-Halensee on 12.11.1942, in *Zamojszczyzna* 1, 167–168.

20 Exceptions: Gerhard Eisenblätter: *Grundlinien der Politik des Reiches gegenüber dem Generalgouvernement 1939–1944*, unpublished dissertation from the University of Frankfurt am Main, 1969, 207–232; Broszat, *Nationalsozialistische Polenpolitik*.

21 Zygmunt Mańkowski: *Między Wisłą a Bugiem 1939–1944: Studium o polityce okupanta i postawach społeczeństwa*, Lublin: Wydawnictwo Lubelskie, 1978, 223–242, 264–266.

22 *Zamojszczyzna*.

23 Klukowski, Tagebuch; cf. Zygmunt Klukowski: *Terror niemiecki w Zamojszczyźnie 1939–1944*, Zamość: Powiatowa Rady Narodowej, 1945.

Expulsions and Selection in the Assembly Centers

The evictions, which started on November 24, 1942, usually followed a similar pattern: Early in the morning, units of SS, Gestapo, Wehrmacht, Gendarmerie, and uniformed police (*Ordnungspolizei*, Orpo) surrounded the respective village. The head of the village (*soltys*) was ordered to gather all inhabitants, including sick and old people, babies, and pregnant women, in a central place. The people had 15 to 30 minutes to pack some personal belongings and food, but it also happened that they were not allowed to do so.²⁴ The police behaved brutally towards the expellees, and some who tried to escape or refused to leave their home were shot on the spot or beaten to death.²⁵ Some people were selected to remain in the village as workers for the settled ‘ethnic German’ colonists. The majority of the inhabitants, however, were loaded onto carts and taken to the UWZ assembly center in Zamość²⁶, a former prisoner of war camp that had been adapted only a few days before.²⁷

After the registration, ‘experts’ of the Race and Settlement Office (*Rasse- und Siedlungsamt*, henceforth RuS) screened the deportees and selected them into four main categories according to ‘racial value’ and ability to work.²⁸ Similar categories had already been contained in the ‘German People’s List’ (*Deutsche Volksliste*, DVL), which had been applied in the annexed territories and later also in the ‘General Government’, although not for the purpose of exclusion as

24 Himmlers Dienstkalender 1941/42, entry dated 01.12.1942, 625; Helena Kubica: *Zagłada w KL Auschwitz: Polaków wysiedlonych z Zamojszczyzny w latach 1942–1943*, Oświęcim – Warszawa: IPN, 2004, 11–12; cf. Wolfgang Curilla (ed.): *Der Judenmord in Polen und die deutsche Ordnungspolizei 1939–1945*, Paderborn: Schöningh, 2011; Klaus Dönecke and Hermann Spix: “Das Reserve-Polizeibataillon 67 und die ‘Aktion Zamość’. Ein Recherchebericht”, in *MEDAON* 13, 2013, 1–8. Available at: http://www.medaon.de/pdf/MEDAON_13_Doenecke-Spix.pdf. Last accessed: 02.05.2021.

25 Dönecke and Spix, *Reserve-Polizeibataillon 67*, 7–8; Genowefa Anna Wójtowicz, “Eviction of the village of Żurawłów”, in *Zamojszczyzna* 2, 380–382.

26 Kubica, *Zagłada*, 11–12; Minutes of the testimonial of Anna Hanas, Zamość on 22.11.1967, in Waclaw Szulc (ed.): *Wysiedlanie ludności polskiej w tzw. Kraju Warty, na Zamojszczyźnie oraz popełnione przy tym zbrodni. Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce*, volume 21 (henceforth BGKBZHWP 21), Warszawa: Wydawnictwo prawnicze, 1970, 298–299.

27 Kielboń, *Wysiedlency z Zamojszczyzny*, 34.

28 BGKBZHWP 21, 298–299.

in *Aktion Zamosc*, but rather to integrate ethnic Poles considered racially valuable into the German 'Volksgemeinschaft'.²⁹

The RuS categories I and II were to include persons who had 'Nordic' characteristics and were intended for 'Germanization'. They were to be segregated and brought to the UWZ Litzmannstadt (Łódź), where they were to be definitively examined for their 'racial characteristics'.³⁰ All persons considered 'only of importance in terms of work' (*nur in arbeitsmäßiger Hinsicht von Bedeutung*) were selected into RuS category III. They were to be deported to the Reich as forced laborers, first of all to replace the so-called armament Jews in Berlin. Those selected into RuS category IV were to be deported to the Auschwitz concentration camp. Elderly, sick, and disabled people as well as children between the ages of seven months and 14 years selected into RuS categories III and IV were to be deported to so-called retirement villages (*Rentendörfer*), deserted villages, from which the Jewish inhabitants had previously been deported to the extermination camps.³¹

Living conditions in the assembly center in Zamość were poor: up to 1,500 people were housed in one barrack. The most vulnerable – old, sick, and disabled persons as well as children, were accommodated in the shabbiest barracks – former horse stables where there were neither stoves, nor floor or straw sacks. Thus, the inmates had to sleep on the bare bunks. The roof had holes, so it rained and snowed into the barrack soaking the ground so that the people stood ankle-deep in mud.³² Insufficient food, the lack of medical care and terrible hygienic conditions led not only to numerous illnesses, but also to increased mortality, especially among children.³³ The already precarious situation of the deportees was made even worse by the sadistic behavior of the camp staff. The camp commander, Artur Schütz, beat, tortured, set his dog on the prisoners, and did not even hesitate to murder inmates.³⁴

²⁹ Isabel Heinemann: "Rasse, Siedlung, deutsches Blut": *Das Rasse- und Siedlungshauptamt der SS und die rassenpolitische Neuordnung Europas*, Göttingen: Wallstein, 2003, 263–267.

³⁰ Zamojszczyzna 1, 14.

³¹ H. Krumei's guidelines regarding the classification of the deportees in the Zamość camp, Łódź on 21.11.1942, in Zamojszczyzna 1, 175–176; Kielboń, Wysziedlenci z Zamojszczyzny, 34.

³² Kubica, Zagłada, 14–15; Edward Madyniak, "Eviction of Wisłowiec, camp in Łódź, work in the Reich," in Zamojszczyzna 2, 370–371.

³³ Kielboń, Wysziedlenci z Zamojszczyzny, 34.

³⁴ Kubica, Zagłada, 19, 35–168: 1,301 of them were registered, a further 107 persons did not receive prisoner numbers.

Deportations for Forced Labor

All deportees selected into RuS categories III and IV were to be deported for forced labor, either to Germany or to the Auschwitz concentration camp. The first transport from Zamość to Auschwitz took place on December 10, 1942, and mainly concerned farmers from the surrounding villages around Zamość. The transport lasted for three days – the deportees spent this time standing crammed together in sealed wagons, receiving neither water nor food. The numerous stopovers prolonged the hardships. Among the first 632 Poles from the Zamość region, who arrived in Auschwitz on December 13, 1942, was also 14-year-old Czesława Kwoka. According to the death certificate, she died three months later due to intestinal catarrh.³⁵



Fig. 1: Picture of Czesława Kwoka, prisoner number 26947, taken by Wilhelm Brasse, by courtesy of Archiwum Państwowego Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau w Oświęcimiu.

However, the head of the ‘preventive detention-camp’ (*Schutzhaftlagerführer*) in Auschwitz, Hans Aumeier, was not satisfied with the incoming deportees regarding their ability to work. As can be read in a memo of his subordinate Heinrich Kinna, dated December 16, 1942, the Poles, in contrast to the Jews, were supposed to ‘die a natural death’. The assignment of those who were from the perspective of the Germans unfit for work – such as “handicapped, idiots, cripples and sick people” should be avoided in order to “prevent any useless burden on

³⁵ Kubica, *Zagłada*, 20–21, 86.

the camp and the feeder traffic”³⁶ that would result from having to liquidate them. Two weeks later, however, Aumeier’s demand was undermined by the leader of the UWZ, Hermann Krumei. In his final report for 1942, Krumei advocated that also children under 14 years should be deported to Auschwitz with their parents. Otherwise, they would “reappear biologically” at some later time and thus endanger the “Germanization” project.³⁷ Subsequently, during the following months, hundreds of children from the Zamość area were killed in Auschwitz by phenol injections.³⁸ In addition, experiments were carried out on individual children under the supervision of the infamous doctor Mengele, such as infection with typhoid fever or malaria.³⁹ In total, the mortality rate for Poles from the Zamość region deported to Auschwitz was extremely high at over 80 percent.⁴⁰

The first forced laborers deported to Germany (RuS category III) were to replace the so-called armament Jews in Berlin. Hitler had already been pushing since autumn 1942 to finally remove this yet protected group of Jews. In 1942 alone, 1,310 Poles were brought in four transports.⁴¹ Among them was Czesława Daniłowicz, who was selected for forced labor at the Pertrix Battery Factory in Berlin, where she arrived in January 1943. Later she recalled: “In the whole hall there were nothing but Jewish women. The Jewish women were with us for three weeks. For three weeks, we worked together with them. And then they came and took them away”.⁴² The Jewish forced laborers had to instruct the Poles, before they were arrested on February 27, 1943, as part of the so-called

³⁶ Both quotes from the report of H. Kinna on the transport of deportees from the Zamość region to the Auschwitz camp, Zamość on 16.12.1942, in *Zamojszczyzna* 1, 220–222.

³⁷ Report of H. Krumei on the activities of the Zamość branch of the UWZ from the beginning of the operation in Zamość to 31 December 1942, Łódź on 31.12.1942, in *Zamojszczyzna* 1, 259.

³⁸ Danuta Czech: *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau 1939–1945*. Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1989, 358–359. Two boys aged eight and nine whose mothers had tried to disguise them as girls. On 17.12.1942, the two – Tadeusz Rycyk and Mieczysław Rycaj – were discovered and later murdered by phenol injections.

³⁹ Testimonies of Stanisław Głowy and Roland Goryczki, in BGKBZHWP 21, 292–295; Report of Wacława Kedzierska regarding the experiments of Dr Mengele at Auschwitz, quoted from Kubica, Zagłada, 223.

⁴⁰ Kinna’s report, 16.12.1942, in *Zamojszczyzna* 1, 220–222.

⁴¹ Krumei’s UWZ-report, 31.12.1942, in *Zamojszczyzna* 1, 256–259.

⁴² Interview of Czesława Daniłowicz, NS-Zwangsarbeit Dokumentationszentrum, Zeitzeugenarchiv, dzsw8746, rec. 12.07.2014. Available at: <https://www.dz-ns-zwangsarbeit.de/zeitzeugenarchiv/interviews/video/danilowicz-czeslawa/>. Last accessed: 20.12.2020.

‘factory raid’ (*Fabrikaktion*).⁴³ While in total, only about 2,600 Poles were brought to Berlin, several thousand Berlin ‘armament Jews’ (*Rüstungsjuden*) were deported to Auschwitz, partly on the same trains in which the Poles had been deported to Berlin. Although the SS Main Economic and Administrative Office (*Wirtschaftsverwaltungshauptamt*) had issued instructions to preserve their labor at all costs, most of them were immediately murdered in the gas chambers.⁴⁴

Apart from the non-Jewish Poles who replaced the armament Jews in Berlin, tens of thousands more were deported to the Reich, where they were employed not only in armament but also on large construction sites and in agriculture.⁴⁵

Deportations to the *Rentendörfer*

All those persons selected to RuS categories III and IV, but considered incapable of working, were initially to be taken to the *Rentendörfer*. This included sick, handicapped, and elderly people, children from seven months to 14 years. The latter were brutally separated from their parents, who were deported to the Reich.⁴⁶ The teacher Adam Skora later reported how the formation of such a transport in the UWZ camp in Zamość was carried out:

After the files were prepared, the people were usually brought to the square in the early evening, where those designated for transport were read out. This lasted until 7 a.m., as the transports were large. During this time, the old, children and cripples lay in the snow. After the transport was completed, several bodies usually had to be removed from the square.⁴⁷

⁴³ Interview of Czesław Daniłowicz, NS-Zwangsarbeit Dokumentationszentrum; Akim Jah: *Die Deportation der Juden aus Berlin. Die nationalsozialistische Vernichtungspolitik und das Sammel-lager Große Hamburger Straße*. Berlin: be.bra, 2013, in particular chapter 7.

⁴⁴ Krumei's UWZ-report, 31.12.1942, in Zamojszczyzna 1, 257; Gruner, *Fabrikaktion*, 44, fn. 44, 75; Czech, *Kalendarium*, 428–429; Jah, *Deportation der Juden aus Berlin*, chapter 7; Götz Aly and Susanne Heim: *Vordenker der Vernichtung: Auschwitz und die deutschen Pläne für eine neue europäische Ordnung*, Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1995, 436–437.

⁴⁵ Final report on the work of the UWZ in the Reichsgau Wartheland and Generalgouvernement for 1943, Łódź on 31.12.1943, Federal Archives Berlin, BArch R 70-POLEN/263, fol. 162–163.

⁴⁶ Krumei's guidelines regarding the classification of the deportees in the Zamość camp, Łódź on 21.11.1942, in Zamojszczyzna 1, 175–176; Kielboń, *Wysiedlency z Zamojszczyzny*, 34.

⁴⁷ Zygmunt Klukowski: “Zbrodnie Niemieckie w Zamojszczyźnie”, in *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce*, 2, 1947 (henceforth BGKBZHWP 2), 62.

There are records of at least six transports with a total of 5,342 persons from the Zamość area to the Warsaw district. The first transport left on December 7, 1942, and reached Garwolin, southeast of Warsaw, three days later with a total of 605 people, including 275 children. Already upon arrival, 13 persons were dead, more died afterwards. On December 11 and 18, the next two transports left the camp with 634 and 974 persons respectively, reaching Sobolew, south of Garwolin, on December 13 and 20, 1942. Upon arrival, the deportees were distributed among the surrounding towns, where they were housed in foster families or temporarily in community facilities, such as schools and community centres.⁴⁸ Józef Braciejewski described the arrival of one of these transports at the Sobolew railway station:

The wagons were gradually opened by the gendarmerie and then a horrifying, terrible sight appeared before our eyes: a crowded mass of people, mangled, frightened, polluted. There was an unbearable stench from these unfortunate people. During the transport, they were not allowed to leave the wagon, so these people had to satisfy their physiological needs one on one, their clothes were soaked with excrement and urine, and one should not forget that it was December. Old people and poor children were not able to leave the wagons on their own, out of exhaustion [...].⁴⁹

On February 2, 1943, in the morning, news spread in Garwolin concerning another expected transport from Zamość, with children only, which finally arrived in the afternoon. Twenty children were already dead upon arrival, 80 children and 40 elderly persons had to be admitted to the hospital. They were mainly sick with pneumonia, stomach and intestinal catarrh or diarrhea – several of them died during the following days. Almost all deported children suffered from frostbite on their hands, feet, and faces. The Central Welfare Council (*Rada Główna Opiekuńcza*, henceforth RGO) and the municipal office provided the arrivals with bread and a warm meal. All those who did not need urgent medical attention were distributed among the locals, who took them to their homes. On February 3, 1943, a funeral procession with 23 white coffins went through the streets to the local cemetery in Cmentarna Street. Up to 4,000 Poles from the surrounding area and Siedlce took part in the ceremony and thus demonstrated their protest against the German occupation regime. The eyewitness Józef Buska, a member of the Polish underground, was later arrested by the Gestapo

⁴⁸ Kozaczyńska, *Wysiedlenia mieszkańców Zamojszczyzny*, 73–74.

⁴⁹ Klukowski, *Zbrodnie Niemieckie w Zamojszczyźnie*, 68–69.

and deported to Auschwitz, as he had taken several photographs during the funeral.⁵⁰

The RGO and other organizations endeavored to rescue as many children as possible, to provide them with medical care and to reunite them with their parents. Private individuals bribed the train staff to buy children out of the transports; others literally ‘kidnapped’ them. According to an undated report of the Security Service (*Sicherheitsdienst*, henceforth SD) of Warsaw, the transports of children were the talk of the town for weeks and aroused the Polish population to an extent that had not been observed in the previous three years.⁵¹ Partly responsible for this tense atmosphere were several articles in various underground newspapers calling for joint armed resistance against the occupiers. Most of these appeals argued that the Poles were now threatened with a fate similar to that of the Jews.⁵²

According to German sources, 7,000 Poles from the Zamość region were deported to the *Rentendörfer*. However, there is a lack of information about the further fate of these victims – many fled from there, the majority of the children were taken into care by Polish organizations or individuals. Often, the children’s biological parents could no longer be identified.

Resistance and Retribution

Since the beginning of *Aktion Zamosc*, thousands of Poles, fearing deportation, fled into the woods to join the resistance, who consisted mainly of the divisions of the Polish Peasants’ Battalions (*Bataliony Chłopskie*), the People’s Army (*Armia Ludowa*) and the Home Army (*Armia Krajowa*). Through countless acts of sabotage, attacks on the German police stations and ‘ethnic German’ settlers, the so-called people of the forest attempted to prevent the deportations.⁵³ As a consequence, many ‘ethnic German’ colonists fled from their new homes or

50 Report of a Siedlce inhabitant, Jozef Buszka, on the assistance of Siedlce inhabitants to the displaced people from the Zamość region, in Kubica, *Zagłada*, 208–209; Report of the Warsaw office of the Security Service on the effects of the Zamość resettlement action in the Warsaw district, in *Zamojszczyzna* 1, 380–383.

51 Report of the SD Warsaw, in *Zamojszczyzna* 1, 380–383.

52 See articles in various underground newspapers, published 01.01.1943–07.01.1943, in *Zamojszczyzna* 1, 271–313.

53 Bruno Wasser: *Die Neugestaltung des Ostens: Ostkolonisation und Raumplanung der Nationalsozialisten in Polen während der deutschen Besetzung 1939–1944 unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Zamojszczyzna im Distrikt Lublin*, dissertation from the RWTH Aachen University, Aachen, 1992, 228–229; Mańkowski, *Między Wisłą a Bugiem*, 272–276.

sold part of the livestock, arguing that one horse and one cow would be enough to make ends meet. The resulting rapid reduction in livestock caused great concern among the German occupiers, as the area around Zamość with its fertile soils deteriorated from an agricultural surplus to a subsidy area.⁵⁴

In response to the exploding resistance, the occupiers carried out so-called pacification operations, which included mass arrests and deportations to the Reich for forced labor, the burning and bombing of villages not yet 'Germanized', and massacres.⁵⁵ The first village to be 'pacified' was Kitów in December 1942, where members of the Police Reserve Battalion 67 rounded up 165 villagers – mostly women and children – on the village square and shot them with machine guns. All men aged 15 to 45 had been arrested two days earlier.⁵⁶

Despite or perhaps because of this brutal approach, the occupiers increasingly lost control in the Zamość area and beyond. Since January 1943, there had been several thousands of incidents, including attacks on postal and telecommunication facilities.⁵⁷ The leader of the first motorized Gendarmerie Battalion, major Schwieger, reported a veritable uprising at the beginning of March 1943, in which about 800 members of the Polish resistance had taken part. The German police forces were too weak and the Polish police not reliable to successfully fight the resistance. Therefore, according to Schwieger, the deployment of the German Army and Air Force was necessary.⁵⁸ In the village of Cieszyn, the former inhabitants, who had evaded the deportations, took revenge on the new 'ethnic German' settlers by burning down 90 farms and killing 160 people. In addition, there were attacks on people working for the Germans, including municipal officials and teachers. The forests were no longer accessible to forestry workers, as they ran the risk of being shot by members of the resistance, and several agricultural businesses had been destroyed.⁵⁹ Globocnik, however, overrode all criticism and ruthlessly pursued the goals set with Himmler.⁶⁰

54 Report of the SD Warsaw, in Zamojszczyzna 1, 380–383.

55 Wasser, Neugestaltung, 230–231.

56 Anna Pawelczyk, "Pacyfikacja Kitowa", in Zamojszczyzna 2, 390; Klukowski, Tagebuch, entry dated 13.12.1942, 393; Stefan Klemp: *"Nicht ermittelt": Polizeibataillone und die Nachkriegsjustiz. Ein Handbuch*, Essen: Klartext, 2011, 190; Extract from the testimony of SS man Joseph Scharenberg given in Essen on 07.06.1945, in Zamojszczyzna 2, 390–391.

57 Ingrao, Promise, 214; Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs, entry dated 28.05.1943, Archiv des Instituts für Zeitgeschichte (henceforth IfZ Archive), FB 105/29, fol. 7223, 7226.

58 Report of the commander of the first motorized gendarmerie battalion, major Schwieger, to the gendarmerie commander of the Lublin district concerning the Zamość-uprising, Lublin on 04.03.1943, in Zamojszczyzna 1, 472–476.

59 Minutes of the conference on the state of security in the Lublin district on 29.05.1943, Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs, IfZ Archive, FB 105/29, fol. 7252; Klukowski, Tage-

The negative impact of the forced resettlements intensified opposition from several Nazi officials, including ‘General Governor’ Hans Frank, Reich Minister of Propaganda Joseph Goebbels and Plenipotentiary of the Four Year Plan, Hermann Göring as well as the Governor of the Distrikt of Lublin, Ernst Zörner.⁶¹ Although there was a consensus that the ‘General Government’ should be ‘Germanized’ in the long term, Göring, Frank and Zörner feared unrest in the rear of the front and considerable economic losses.⁶² The official physician of Warsaw, Wilhelm Hagen, had already warned of the possible negative consequences of *Aktion Zamosc* in December 1942,⁶³ but in vain. In March 1943, Himmler even suggested that Hagen should be committed to a concentration camp for his “in his tendency outrageous letter”.⁶⁴

To calm his critics, on February 20, 1943, Himmler ordered all planning work for Lublin and Zamość unnecessary for the realization of the settlement of ‘ethnic Germans’ in the Lublin district to be stopped.⁶⁵ Subsequently, the racial examination of the deportees was dropped, the deportations, though, were continued under the pretext of ‘bandit fighting’ (*Bandenbekämpfung*) within the *Aktion Werwolf* – a literal war against the Polish population. Already on June 1, 1943, the village of Sochy was ‘pacified’: Policemen and soldiers of the Wehrmacht took the village under fire and committed massacres against the

buch, entry dated 15.05.1943, 426; Article in the Polish underground newspaper CKRL “Wiś – Al” concerning the partisan action in the village of Cieszyn, Warsaw on 11.02.1943, in *Zamojszczyzna* 1, 395–396.

⁶⁰ Minutes of the conference on the state of security in the Lublin district on 29.05.1943, Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs, IfZ Archive, FB 105/29, fol. 7253; Musiał, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung*, 37.

⁶¹ *Zamojszczyzna* 1, 15; Memo from the Governor of the Lublin District E. Zörner to the Governor General of the ‘General Government’ about the effects of the settlement action in the Zamość district, Lublin on 23.02.1943, in *Zamojszczyzna* 1, 415–421.

⁶² *Zamojszczyzna* 1, 15–16.

⁶³ Letter of protest from Dr W. Hagen, the Warsaw medical officer, to Hitler regarding the alleged planned murder of parts of the population of the Zamość area, Warsaw on 07.12.1942, in *Zamojszczyzna* 1, 210–212; in this letter, Hagen stood up for the Polish population, but also expressed his consensus with the extermination of the Jews. After the Second World War, Hagen became president of the Federal Health Office. In the 1960s, Hagen successfully sued Joseph Wulf for his book *Das Dritte Reich und seine Vollstrecker* and the arani publishing house; cf. Klaus Kempster: *Joseph Wulf: Ein Historikerschicksal in Deutschland*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013, 249–271.

⁶⁴ Letter from R. Brandt to the State secretary at the Ministry of the Interior, Leonardo Conti, in the matter of Dr Hagen, field headquarters on 29.03.1943, in *Zamojszczyzna* 1, 517.

⁶⁵ Letter of the Reichsführer-SS on the suspension of unnecessary planning work for Lublin and Zamość, field headquarters on 20.02.1943, in *Zamojszczyzna* 1, 410–411.

population. In addition, planes of the German Air Force bombed the village. A total of 181 inhabitants – mostly women, children and old people – were killed.⁶⁶ Able-bodied men aged 15 to 45 years were arrested en masse, interrogated, tortured and partly shot in the infamous Rotunda in Zamość. As the assembly centers in Zamość and Zwierzyniec were completely overcrowded, from June to August 1943 about 9,000 to 16,000 expellees, including many real and alleged resistance fighters, were brought to the concentration camp of Maidanek.⁶⁷ The majority of them were subsequently deported to Germany for forced labor. From the beginning of *Aktion Zamosc*, the RGO endeavoured to alleviate the suffering of the resettlers. In the summer of 1943, as part of negotiations with the occupiers, the RGO succeeded in obtaining the release of 2,000 people from Maidanek, whom it also provided with accommodation, food and medical care.⁶⁸

In the summer of 1943, the Zamość region increasingly descended into total chaos – the implementation of the Nazi resettlement plans had obviously failed.⁶⁹ However, this did not stop Himmler from adhering to his plans for a 'Germanization' of the Lublin district.⁷⁰

The Persecution and Murder of the Jews, the *Aktion Zamosc* and the Local Population

As early as March 1942, the German occupiers also carried out the murder of more than 33,000 Jews in the Zamość region as part of *Aktion Reinhardt*. Although this officially ended on November 9, 1942, it actually extended well into 1943.⁷¹ Both crimes were strongly entangled; they overlapped in time and were mutually dependent. This affected not only the perpetrators, who used sim-

⁶⁶ Matthias Uhl, Thomas Pruschwitz, Martin Holler, Jean-Luc Leleu, Dieter Pohl, Henrik Eberle, and Wladimir Sacharow (eds.): *Die Organisation des Terrors: Der Dienstkalender Heinrich Himmlers 1943–45*, Munich: Piper, 2020, 207, 211; Kazimiera Świtajowa, "Pazification of the village of Sochy", in *Zamojszczyzna* 2, 397; Klukowski, *Tagebuch*, 433–434.

⁶⁷ Kubica, *Zagłada*, 13; the transports to Majdanek took place on June 30, as well as July 1 (men's transport), 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 (women and children), 8 and 9, 1943. On 31.07.1943, men and women were brought to Majdanek who were suspected of being active in the resistance, Kielboń, *Wysiedlency z Zamojszczyzny*, 38–39, 45–47.

⁶⁸ Kielboń, *Wysiedlency z Zamojszczyzny*, 52–59; Report of the Polish Welfare Committee in Lublin to the RGO in Kraków on the release of Poles deported from the Zamość region from the Majdanek camp, Lublin on 07.09.1943, in *Zamojszczyzna* 2, 202–205.

⁶⁹ Cf. *Zamojszczyzna* 2, 165–211.

⁷⁰ Madajczyk, *Vom Generalplan Ost*, 256–288.

⁷¹ Curilla, *Judenmord in Polen*, 699–796.

ilar practices in both actions, but also society, which experienced both crimes as witnesses, perpetrators and/or victims. The Poles experienced the persecution and murder of their Jewish neighbors at first hand,⁷² and some even participated in it.⁷³

Already during *Aktion Reinhardt*, masses of Jews had fled into the forests to escape certain death in the nearby extermination camps of Bełżec and Sobibór. Partly they joined the underground groups there; partly they tried to go into hiding with the help of non-Jewish Poles. At the same time, the population was obliged by the country chiefs (*Kreishauptmänner*) to denounce and hunt for hidden Jews.⁷⁴ Thus, peasants often would hunt Jews in the villages and bring them to town or even kill them themselves. In addition, ‘thugs’ would kill Jews in the forests; sometimes they would just rob them of their clothes and let them go. The Jewish population could only hope for limited support from their non-Jewish compatriots – partly due to widespread antisemitism, partly because the non-Jewish Polish population also suffered significantly under the German occupation. The *Aktion Zamosc* led to countless initiatives on the part of Polish organizations and individuals.⁷⁵ On the other hand, thousands of non-Jews saved Jews, endangering not only their lives but also those of their relatives. Failed attempts are rarely documented, for example, by Zygmunt Klukowski: In his diary, he mentions a non-Jewish Polish peasant who died in his hospital after being seriously injured while fleeing from the German police. The farmer had hidden six Jews in his barn. Not only the six Jews, but also the farmer’s wife and their two little children were shot.⁷⁶

Entanglements and Continuities

During the *Aktion Zamosc*, the German occupiers deported about 50,000 Poles, as many fled on their own initiative. According to German documents, about 600 persons were assessed as “re-Germanizable” (RuS category II). Almost 39,000

⁷² Ingrao, *Promise*, 205.

⁷³ See e.g. Klukowski, *Tagebuch*, entry dated 21.10.1942–26.11.1942, 376–387.

⁷⁴ Musiał, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung*, 308–312; Shmuel Krakowski: *The War of the Doomed: Jewish Armed Resistance in Poland, 1942–1944*, New York, London: Holmes & Meier, 1984, 80–81.

⁷⁵ Klukowski, *Tagebuch*, entry dated 02.07.1943, 445; Kielboń, *Wysiedlency z Zamojszczyzny*, 50–55; Jaczyńska, *The SS Sonderlaboratorium*, 319–339; Ingrao, *Promise*, 212; cf. Kozaczyńska, *Wysiedlenia mieszkańców Zamojszczyzny*.

⁷⁶ Klukowski, *Tagebuch*, entry dated 04.11.1942 and 18.11.1942, 383–386; and entry dated 22.03.1943, 417–418.

Poles were deported for forced labor to the Reich (RuS category III, *Arbeitseinsatz Altreich*), more than 1,400 to the labor camp of Auschwitz (RuS category IV). Almost 7,000 persons were sent to *Rentendörfer* and about 814 persons either died in the assembly centers or fled.⁷⁷ Thousands were killed during the 'pacifications', which comprised massacres of the inhabitants and the destruction of whole villages or died due to the terrible conditions during the transports. In contrast to the Jews, who were shot on the spot or deported to extermination camps and immediately murdered, the Poles of the Zamość region suffered different fates.

Even though the German occupiers according to their Nazi racial ideology made a clear distinction between Jews and Poles, an increasing radicalization towards the non-Jewish Polish population can be seen in *Aktion Zamosc* which was presumably also related to the numerous personnel continuities, such as in Globocnik's staff. His adjutant Reinhold von Mohrenschildt had already been involved in the resettlement of 'ethnic Germans' from the Soviet sphere of influence in 1940 to the German-annexed territories; in 1942, he became head of the RKF office in Lublin and was thus responsible for the detailed resettlement planning. The Viennese archivist Franz Stanglica had not only participated in the resettlement of Poles and Jews and worked as a guard in the concentration camp of Auschwitz, but also played a leading role in the planning of *Aktion Zamosc*.⁷⁸ Ernst Lerch, as Globocnik's adjutant, *Judenreferent* and 'head of the personal office', was his closest and most influential collaborator and thus involved in Globocnik's projects. Another close associate of Globocnik was Hermann Höfle, who joined his team in Lublin in autumn 1940. Before he had been active in the 'ethnic German' self-protection militia (*Volksdeutscher Selbstschutz*), which had been involved in the mass shootings of the Polish intelligentsia (*Intelligenzaktion*). Höfle was not only one of the main coordinators of *Aktion Reinhardt*, but as SSPF deputy chief of staff also responsible for the establishment of the SS and police bases and thus involved in *Aktion Zamosc*.⁷⁹ Hermann Kintrup was head of Globocnik's SSPF staff in 1941 and promoted to Commander of the Orpo (KdO) in Lublin at the beginning of 1942.⁸⁰ In these

⁷⁷ Krumei's UWZ-report, 31.12.1942, in Zamojszczyzna 1, 256–259; Report of the UWZ Litzmannstadt for 1943, BArch R 70-POLEN/263, fol. 162–163.

⁷⁸ Bertrand Perz: "The Austrian Connection: SS and Police Leader Odilo Globocnik and His Staff in the Lublin District", in *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 13, 2015, 406–407, 411–412; Pohl, *Judenpolitik*, 153; Heinemann, *Rasse*, 406–407; Ingrao, *Promise*, 175–176.

⁷⁹ See e.g. Zamojszczyzna 1, 368–369, 448; Zamojszczyzna 2, 121, 172, 189; Perz, *Austrian Connection*, 415.

⁸⁰ Perz, *Austrian Connection*, 413.

two functions, Kintrup played a central role in both the extermination of the Jews and the expulsion of the Polish population. In the Zamość region especially the *Polizei-Reiter-Abteilung III*, the Police Regiment 25 with its Bataillon 67 and the *Polizeiabteilung z.b.V. Zamosc* participated in both mass crimes,⁸¹ supported by personnel of the Security Police, the Gestapo as well as the Gendarmerie.⁸²

The implementation of the deportations was entrusted to Krumei and his team of the UWZ, who, from September 1939 until March 1941, had already gained considerable experience in the mass expulsion of Poles and Jews from the incorporated territories to the 'General Government'. In the summer of 1941, Krumei had been sent to Croatia to ensure that no 'ethnic Germans' were deported.⁸³ As Krumei's final report for 1942 shows, the UWZ office Litzmannstadt provided the Zamość branch not only forms, index cards and its fleet of vehicles, but also with staff.⁸⁴ Among this staff was race expert Hans Rihl, who had already 'proven himself' within the early deportations from the annexed territories to the 'General Government' as well as in the racial screenings within the deportations in Slovenia.⁸⁵

Thus, methods from the early deportations in the context of the 'Germanization' of the incorporated territories were adopted, raids, selections, rail transport, expulsion, in part also from the 'ghettoization' as well as from *Aktion Reinhardt*, here again rail transport, the establishment of transit zones as well as the

81 The *Polizeiabteilung z.b.V. Zamosc* was headed by Hermann Meurin, who already in the fall of 1941 had been involved in the deportations of German Jews to Minsk: Schutzpolizei Captain Wilhelm Meurin describes his impressions as an escort of a deportation train from Düsseldorf to Minsk, 22.11.1941, in Susanne Heim and Maria Wilke (eds.): *Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933–1945. Volume 6: Deutsches Reich und Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren Oktober 1941 – März 1943*, Munich: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2019, 199–204; cf. Klemp, *Nicht ermittelt*, 409–420; Klaus-Michael Mallmann, Volker Rieß, and Wolfram Pyta (eds.): *Deutscher Osten 1939–1945: Der Weltanschauungskrieg in Photos und Texten*, Darmstadt: WBG, 2003, 167–171.

82 Dönecke and Spix, *Das Reserve-Polizeibataillon 67*, 1–8; cf. Curilla, *Judenmord in Polen*, 683–832; Klemp, *Nicht ermittelt*, 187–191.

83 LG Frankfurt am Main vom 29.08.1969, 4 Ks 1/63, in Christiaan Rüter and Dick de Mildt (eds.): *Justiz- und NS-Verbrechen: Sammlung deutscher Strafurteile wegen nationalsozialistischer Tötungsverbrechen 1945–1999, volume XXXIII*, Munich: Saur, 2005, Lfd. Nr. 716a, 5–64, here 10–11. In 1944, Krumei played a leading role in the deportations of Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz as a member of Eichmann's staff, BGH dated 22.03.1967, 2 StR 279/66 and Lfd. Nr. 716e, 194–199. He also stayed in Belgrade and Sarajevo – the nature and extent of his activities there are unknown.

84 Krumei's UWZ-report, 31.12.1942, in Zamojszczyzna 1, 256.

85 Heinemann, *Rasse*, 406–407.

'bandit fighting'.⁸⁶ The selection according to 'race' and 'ability to work', as practised in the context of *Aktion Zamosc*, was special in this form. The *Deutsche Volksliste* contained similar categories, but in contrast to the selection in the Zamość region was applied as an instrument for the integration of certain parts of the Polish population. The Jews, on the other hand, were selected only according to their ability to work. Since summer 1942, however, the German occupiers increasingly proceeded to murder all Jews, no matter, if fit or unfit for work.

Although within *Aktion Zamosc*, the Poles were supposed to die a 'natural death', the Germans actively killed thousands of Poles, in particular during the 'pacifications' and in the case of hundreds of children from the Zamość region who were murdered by phenol injections. However there was not such a clear consensus among the responsible Nazi officials regarding the Poles as there was concerning the extermination of the Jews; the majority spoke out in favor of resettlement to certain regions after the "final victory but did not consider mass murder".⁸⁷ While Polish historians since long have regarded *Aktion Zamosc* and the Holocaust as interrelated,⁸⁸ in Western historiography the two mass crimes were discussed rather separately until the 1990s.⁸⁹

The German occupiers pursued further 'Germanization' projects, such as in the Hegewald-colony near Zhytomyr and in the Crimea. However, the Hegewald project did not reach the scope of *Aktion Zamosc* and failed due to increasing partisan attacks, while the idea of a German settlement in Crimea was abruptly rejected.⁹⁰ The comprehensive source material on *Aktion Zamosc* allows also an analysis of the numerous entanglements with the Holocaust and shows how strongly deportation, population policy, the Holocaust and forced labor were intertwined under Nazi rule. The 'armament Jews' were deported from Berlin to Auschwitz on the same trains that had previously brought Poles from the Zamość area to Berlin. In Zamość the settled 'ethnic Germans' were compensated with the property of the Jews previously deported to the extermination camps. Polish deportees from the Zamość area were resettled in villages from which Jews had previously been deported. The organizers and executors of *Aktion Zamosc* had already been involved in

⁸⁶ Diensttagebuch, entry dated 07.12.1942, 583.

⁸⁷ Eisenblätter, Grundlinien, 216–217, 220–232.

⁸⁸ Mańkowski, Między Wisłą a Bugiem, 223–242, 264–266.

⁸⁹ Cf. Aly and Heim, *Vordenker der Vernichtung*, 432–440; Pohl, *Judenpolitik*, 153–157.

⁹⁰ Wendy Lower: *Nazi Empire-Building and the Holocaust in Ukraine*, Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005, 155–179; Norbert Kunz: *Die Krim unter deutscher Herrschaft 1941–1944. Germanisierungsutopie und Besatzungsrealität*, Darmstadt: WBG, 2005, 53–73.

the organization and implementation of the deportations from the Warthegau or *Aktion Reinhardt*.

Furthermore, the *Aktion Zamosc* shows what the implementation of the *Generalplan Ost* would have meant for the Slavic population of large parts of East-Central Europe in the event of a German victory and what practices would have been used. However, it also demonstrates that although the German occupiers were able to carry out the comprehensive murder of the Jews without major resistance, they increasingly reached their limits with their practice of rule, which in the East was based primarily on violence and terror. This also raises the question of whether and to what extent they would have been able to implement their gigantic deportation plans even if the course of the war had been different.