

Wojciech Łukaszun, "Jews in the structures of Polish military underground organizations in the Warsaw District in 1939-1945" (abstract)

The subject of the dissertation entitled "Jews in the structures of Polish military underground organizations in the Warsaw District in 1939-1945" focuses on issues related to the service of Jewish population in Polish military underground formations during World War II on the territory of the Warsaw District. The aim of the work is to analyze the possibility and conditions of Jews' participation in these organizations, to determine the type of tasks they performed and to indicate the problems and dangers encountered or advantages they benefited from throughout their service, as well as to present their daily life against the background of the general occupation conditions. In this context it was relevant to trace back the attitude of the main underground organizations towards the Jewish population and identification of the real possibilities for Jews to join the ranks of underground organizations, including limitations in this regard, as well as motivations and ways of establishing contact with the underground. Crucial effect of the research carried out is presentation of the list of Jews participating in the operation of the Polish military underground in the Warsaw District, which may be the first step in determining the full scale of Jewish involvement in the underground during World War II throughout occupied Poland.

The main research thesis adopted is the assumption that Jews, despite existing restrictions, were able to serve in Polish military underground organizations active during World War II. The author also assumes that the area of the Warsaw District is unique in the GG as a whole with regard to the service of the Jewish population in the Polish underground, particularly with regard to the scale of activity in the ranks of the Home Army and GL-AL, and comprises most of this phenomenon throughout occupied Poland.

The work consists of six chapters based on a chronological and problematic arrangement. The first describes the structure of the occupying administrative, police and military authorities on the territory of the district, as well as the actions taken by the Germans to subjugate the local population, with particular emphasis on terror. In addition, this part of the work contains information on living conditions in cities and rural areas.

The second chapter describes the situation of Jews living in Warsaw and the localities within the district. Particular attention is given to the issue who was considered by the Germans to be the Jew, process of creating ghettos, the conditions prevailing in them, as well as the course of the Holocaust and the rescue attempts made by Jews hiding on the Aryan side. An important aspect of the operation of Jewish conspiracy in the Warsaw Ghetto is also addressed.

The next chapter describes the structures of Polish military conspiratorial organizations operating in the Warsaw District in 1939-1945 summarizing their activities and political affiliations. Analysis of each underground organization's attitude towards the Jewish population was presented in this part.

The fourth chapter, which is the most important part of the dissertation, describes the issues of access to the underground formations and the problems that affected Jews serving in the Polish military underground, their daily activities as well as the dangers and benefits associated with them. This part of the work shows the scale of Jewish involvement in activities in the ranks of the Polish underground against the backdrop of the occupation reality, and the key role of individual decisions made by the underground management, which often had more significance in conspiratorial conditions than orders or instructions.

The fifth chapter presents a relatively high share of Jewish participation in the Warsaw Uprising - both those who had already been active in the underground and those who had not engaged in conspiratorial activities until then. There is portrayed the impact of Polish-Jewish relations at the time and the realities of the uprising on the functioning of Jews who joined the fight in this section.

The period after the end of the Warsaw Uprising has been set out in the sixth chapter which covers the fates of Jews active in underground structures who were taken into German captivity, labor or concentration camps, hid in Warsaw and surrounding towns until January 1945 and tried to continue conspiratorial activity.

The work is supplemented by tables containing by-name lists of Jews involved in underground activities in the ranks of the Polish underground in the Warsaw District and serving in the Polish ranks during the Warsaw Uprising in 1944. At the end of the work there is a complete bibliography included on which author's research is based.