

THE “REIBUNGSLOSE” HOLOCAUST?  
THE GERMAN MILITARY AND CIVILIAN  
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE “FINAL  
SOLUTION” IN UKRAINE, 1941–1944

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One of the recurring words Nazi bureaucrats in Ukraine used to describe the implementation of the “final solution” was “*reibungslos*” (smooth).<sup>1</sup> Often they referred specifically to the “smooth” relations between the Wehrmacht and SS-Police. On other occasions they boasted about their efficient step-by-step process of murder. To be sure, a peripheral official in Ukraine reporting to his superiors in Berlin might have been inclined to exaggerate how “free of friction” the administration of his tasks was. Indeed, recent “perpetrator” histories of the Holocaust stress the lack of conflict among regional officials vis-à-vis the “final solution.” Yet the tendency of these regional studies is not to question the Nazi sense of a “smooth” process of murder. Was it the sole aim of regional leaders in the occupation administration to make the implementation of the “final solution” appear orderly? Or could their handling of the genocide be described as “frictionless”?

This case study examines how regional leaders in the military and civilian administrations of Nazi-occupied Ukraine carried out the “final solution.”<sup>2</sup> It highlights the main administrative mechanisms and individual forces behind the Holocaust. The focus on Ukraine is particularly illuminating because the actual massacre of Jews occurred here amid the lawlessness and colonial-style methods that characterized German rule in the East. In contrast to their counterparts in the West, who operated within a relatively tight-knit structure of rule, local German leaders in Nazi-occupied Ukraine (and elsewhere in the East) were granted much more autonomy. According to the historian Theo Schulte (whose work focused on the military administration of Heeres Gruppe Mitte), “there were no clear written guidelines on Militärverwaltung comparable to those drawn up before the campaign in

the West...in the East the details of policy were often disseminated by word of mouth from the Quartermaster General's office."<sup>3</sup> A similar scenario existed in the civilian administration in Ukraine, known as the Reich Commissariat Ukraine. Hitler deliberately granted his regional commissars extensive ruling power, leaving the day-to-day details of administering Nazi goals in their hands.<sup>4</sup> In other words, local leaders played an essential role in developing and implementing the Nazi system of mass murder against Ukraine's Jews, a role that has only recently come to light with the opening of the former Soviet regional archives.

### **The Military Administration and the Onset of the Mass Murder, June 1941–October 1941**

As the Wehrmacht advanced toward Russia in the summer of 1941, the Germans divided the newly conquered eastern territory into three zones that extended from the front line westward to the rear areas. Along the front, or battle zones, and in the immediate rear areas, the army units assigned to Army Group South in Ukraine did not establish elaborate administrations. Instead, the itinerant army staffs attached to the Sixth, Eleventh, and Seventeenth Armies focused on expedient measures necessary for waging the war, which, in the Nazi *Vernichtungskrieg*, included "security cleansing operations" against Prisoners of war (POWs) and civilians. On the heels of the advancing armies came the security divisions (213, 444, 454) and their subordinate hierarchy of Kommandanturen. Known as the Army Group South Rear Area administration, this hierarchy fell under the command of General von Roques.<sup>5</sup>

The most important regional figures governing anti-Jewish policy in the rear area military administration were the field, city, and village commanders. The largest of these offices was administered by the Field Commander (FK) with his staff of several officers and about 100 men. The more rural outposts of the Ortskommandantur (OK) were usually manned by one officer and sixteen to twenty soldiers.<sup>6</sup> The OKs and FKs became the local dictators over the population, issuing streams of regulations and appointing indigenous collaborators (mayors and district leaders) to carry out Nazi orders. The Kommandanturen were assisted by Wehrmacht propaganda companies (PKs), military security units (Secret Field Police, sharpshooters, and field gendarmerie) and German SS-Police forces (Sicherheitspolizei-Sicherheitsdienst (Sipo-SD) mobile killing squads, Waffen-SS, and order police battalions).<sup>7</sup> As Schulte put it, "the FK and OK were the crucial point of contact where overall policy was interpreted and implemented...it was here at the grass roots level that the ruled came into contact with the ruler and that abstract theory became individual behavior mediated through the 'ordinary German soldier.'"<sup>8</sup>

Within the Kommandanturen administration one branch (Abteilung VII) was specifically dedicated to the "Jewish Question." According to the

August 1941 report of the Field Commander of Pervomais'k, there were four priorities in this area: (1) handling of Jewish Property; (2) marking of Jews; (3) exploitation of Jewish labor; and (4) registration and listing of the Jewish population. Ghettoization was not identified as an immediate step, and Judenräte were formed only to assist with the seizure of Jewish laborers and Jewish property. With the help of Göring's economic commandos, the Kommandanturen oversaw the distribution of rations, which became increasingly difficult for the Jews to obtain.<sup>9</sup>

In the realm of so-called security measures against the Jews, whom Nazi leaders had targeted in prewar guidelines as the key source of "Bolshevik" insurgency, army commanders relied extensively on the SS-Police forces. In Ukraine, Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler's right-hand man was Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) Friedrich Jeckeln (who was succeeded by Hans-Adolf Prützmann in November 1941). The first SS-Police units to enter the conquered territory were the mobile killing squads of Einsatzgruppe C (EGC) (special detachments Sonderkommando 4a (Sk4a) and Sk4b and task forces Einsatzkommando 5 (Ek5) and Ek6) and Einsatzgruppe D (special detachments Sk10a and Sk10b and task forces Ek11 and Ek12). They were assisted by additional reserves of Waffen-SS Brigades and order police battalions (e.g. 9, 45, 303, 314, 310, 304, 315, 320, and 322).

The SS-Police units received their quarters, supplies, and food rations from the local army command, and they were obligated to report to the local army staff headquarters or the Kommandantur the actions planned against the population and POWs. The SS and police were not supposed to act independently without the consent of the military.<sup>10</sup> In fact, three order police battalions were assigned directly to the Wehrmacht Security Divisions to assist with "cleansing" actions.<sup>11</sup> By design, then, the SS-Police and the military were to coordinate their actions even though these two pillars of Nazi power were separated by independent chains of command and jurisdictional priorities as well as distinctly different institutional histories. Given the strong potential for conflict between army and SS-Police authorities, what kind of "division of labor" emerged in the field during the summer and fall of 1941, when most of Ukraine's Jewish population was subjected to military rule?

In the brief five weeks that the military occupation administration existed in western Ukraine, the local field and village commanders in Lviv and elsewhere in Galicia initiated the registration and marking of the Jewish population. They forced all Jews over the age of fourteen years to wear the "Star of David," and they plastered the "Star" on Jewish shops.<sup>12</sup> The Field Commander (603) of "Lemberg" also reported that his staff had posted signs on shops, public baths, and other businesses to prevent Jews from entering them.<sup>13</sup> A Jewish council was formed, from which the military commander demanded a sum of twenty million rubles.<sup>14</sup> Another standard army practice was to seize Jewish laborers and employ them in the most gruesome tasks, such as the removal of corpses from the roadways and, later, the clearing of mines.<sup>15</sup> Ukrainians, *Volksdeutsche* (ethnic Germans), and other

locals assisted in the identification of the Jewish population. While military personnel imposed these anti-Semitic measures, SS and police units introduced more radical practices. First they sought out adult male Jews in party and state positions and other so-called radical elements to be found in the Jewish population (agitators, saboteurs, assassins). According to Operation Barbarossa guidelines and orders, the SD shot these Jews immediately.<sup>16</sup>

In June and July 1941, the most deadly form of military and SS-Police collaboration occurred in the pogroms and "reprisal" measures in western Ukraine. Sipo-SD chief Reinhard Heydrich had specified in his prewar guidelines for the Einsatzgruppen that pogroms should be sparked as a way of embroiling the indigenous population in Nazi plans to destroy Soviet Jewry.<sup>17</sup> When German and allied forces arrived in eastern Galicia and found the remains of about 5,300 People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD) prisoners who had been massacred in at least twenty-two villages and towns, they had discovered an ideal local source of friction to ignite the pogroms. Through loudspeakers, films, posters, leaflets, and rumor campaigns, the Wehrmacht propaganda units, intelligence (Ic) officials in the armored divisions, and SS-Police denounced the Jews as the NKVD-Bolshevik perpetrators, inciting locals to lash out at all Jews and promoting an official lynch justice against male Jews.<sup>18</sup>

The primary instigators, the SD's mobile killing squads, often turned to the army staffs for support, mainly for the propaganda work, but also occasionally to assist with the beating and shooting of Jews. In Luts'k, where the Germans discovered murdered German prisoners of war, the military took the lead in pogrom-style reprisals. At the end of June, the OK in Luts'k had ordered 1,000 Jews to report for labor. When, on 2 July, ten dead German soldiers were discovered there, the Wehrmacht's security forces shot these Jews and a further 160 in retaliation. German order police assisted in the executions.<sup>19</sup> A similar incident occurred in Ternopil'. Individual soldiers volunteered to participate in the pogroms and shootings that occurred in L'viv, Sokal, and Boryslav.<sup>20</sup> Not all of the soldiers and officers were "willing executioners," but many who were initially curious onlookers became willing accomplices to the SD executions of male Jews.<sup>21</sup>

As the German and SS-Police forces plunged eastward, Nazi leaders (Hitler, Himmler, Heydrich, and Göring) pushed for an expansion of the murder "behind the lines." In mid July 1941, SS-Obergruppenführer Friedrich Jeckeln authorized the killing of women during security operations planned for the area of Novohrad-Volyns'kyy. At the end of July, Seventeenth Army Commander von Stülpnagel defined the procedure for carrying out collective reprisal actions, specifying that Jews should be the target, even Jewish youths, and that local commanders should not incarcerate hostages to have them on hand for future reprisal actions because "there will be reason to kill them soon enough."<sup>22</sup> Perhaps in anticipation of mass murder on an even greater scale, Jeckeln also reasserted the necessity of military-SS and police coordination in the field. Jeckeln instructed Heydrich's Einsatzkommandos to establish more contact with military headquarters and division

commanders, in his words “to inform them of intended measures.” Typically the SD commanders registered their activities with the intelligence officer of the army staffs. In Jeckeln’s instructions he added that: “If the action is urgent, if there is no time for notification, then the report of the action will be provided subsequently.”<sup>23</sup>

As later events would demonstrate, the sense of urgency that SS-Police leaders attached to the implementation of the “final solution” was not always shared by local military commanders (and civilian commissars). In areas east of the Dniepr River, regional military commanders sometimes found that anti-Jewish measures such as the formation of labor gangs had to be abruptly discarded because the SD had pushed through the destruction of entire Jewish communities in such a rapid manner. For example, shortly after the regional military commander in Pervomais’k outlined his four priorities for handling the “Jewish question” there, he complained about the sudden loss of Jewish workers and the independent actions of the SD killing squads.<sup>24</sup>

The dramatic escalation in Nazi killing actions that began in August was marked by an increase in conflicts about who was authorized to kill Jews, when the actions should occur, and how the killings should be carried out. In the wake of the mass shootings that occurred in and around Vinnytsia, Zhytomyr, Berdychiv, and Kamiiianets’-Podil’s’kyi, the highest-ranking army leaders issued revised guidelines about individual soldiers’ participation in anti-Jewish massacres. In the Sixth Army order of 10 August 1941, Field Marshal von Reichenau stated that soldiers could comply with SD requests for assistance by serving as guards to cordon off the execution area and to prevent local civilians from entering the area.<sup>25</sup> The order from von Roques asserted that only officers could order executions and that the execution of Jews was to be carried out by forces of the HSSPF, not by individual soldiers.<sup>26</sup>

Hence during August 1941 the implementation of the “final solution” entered a new phase, in which individual perpetrator roles and agency jurisdictions were more clearly defined. As Hans Safrian observed in his study of the Sixth Army and the Holocaust: “As of August 1941, the mass murder of Jewish men, women, and children in the Sixth Army area was organized increasingly in the form of a division-of-labor cooperation between the Wehrmacht and the SS.”<sup>27</sup> Two outstanding case studies from Zhytomyr illustrate the actual forms of this cooperation.

When stationed in Zhytomyr, members of Einsatzgruppe C and the Sixth Army collaborated in the search for “better” mass-shooting procedures and killing methods. On 7 August 1941 the local field commander’s office along with Wehrmacht propaganda units and members of Sk4a staged a public execution of two Jews (Wolf Kieper and Moishe Kogan), who had been denounced as “Cheka” men. This Holocaust “spectacle,” which German propaganda units documented in a series of shocking photographs, was recently highlighted in the traveling German exhibit “The German Army and Genocide.” What the Wehrmacht PKs did not photograph and has not been analyzed by scholars is the scene that unfolded after the hanging.<sup>28</sup>

After local SS-Policemen hanged Kieper and Kogan in Zhytomyr's main square, Ukrainian auxiliaries and military field police forced over four hundred male Jews onto trucks and drove them to the horse cemetery. Here German soldiers beat the Jews with clubs and other objects before the order police and Ukrainian auxiliaries brought them in groups of ten to twelve to the edge of a pit. The Jews were lined up facing the firing squad of Waffen-SS riflemen, and the order to fire was probably given by their platoon commander, Grafhorst. After some time, the shootings were halted because SS and army officials (including a Sixth Army staff doctor) observed that not every victim who fell into the pit was dead. An impromptu meeting of SD and Wehrmacht officials was called. It included Sonderkommando 4a chief, SS-Standartenführer Blobel, the Wehrmacht doctor, and a military judge named Dr. Artur Neumann. They decided that the riflemen should aim for the heads. This method soon proved to be inadequate because it was too "messy"; nevertheless the executions continued until all the Jews had been killed. Afterwards Blobel and his men met again with local army officials. They discussed the fact that this "type of shooting was intolerable for both victim and firing-squad members."<sup>29</sup>

In early August 1941, around the time of the Kieper-Kogan hangings, the senior staff doctor with the Sixth Army, Dr. Gerhart Panning, approached Blobel with a special request. When the Sixth Army was stationed in Zhytomyr (if not earlier at Luts'k), close relations had developed between Sk4a and members of the Sixth Army medical staff. The commander of Sk4a, Colonel Paul Blobel, and some of his fellow executioners had sought medical attention from the staff. They received injections to calm their nerves after the massacres. Panning, who had learned about the German capture of certain Russian explosives (dumdum bullets), was investigating the possible injuries German soldiers might suffer from this illegal ammunition. To determine the possible effects of the Soviet ammunition on German soldiers, Panning decided that the explosives should be tested on human beings. Panning asked Blobel for some "guinea pigs." They agreed to use Jewish POWs.<sup>30</sup>

Oberstabsarzt Panning did not have the official authorization to order Blobel's men to carry out this murderous experiment, yet Blobel was willing to oblige. The experiment offered Blobel the possibility of "advancing" the implementation of the "final solution," and of maintaining "smooth" relations with the Wehrmacht. Additionally, Blobel handpicked certain men for this gruesome job so that they would become the increasingly hardened killers that he needed to carry out the "final solution." Dr. Panning, on the other hand, acted under the guise of "medical research." In fact, Panning's local reputation as a "researcher" spread to Berlin a few weeks later. On 12 September Helmuth James von Moltke, the Abwehr's international law expert, wrote to his wife about Panning's experiments with Jewish victims, stressing that the incident was "the height of bestiality and depravity and there is nothing one can do."<sup>31</sup>

The Blobel-Panning collaboration in Zhytomyr reveals several facets of the implementation of the "final solution" under the military administra-

tion. In particular, their close cooperation demonstrates how the otherwise independent interests of two agencies in the field converged around the Holocaust. On the face of it, such cooperation between a vicious commando chief and a doctor from the Prussian military establishment seems rather odd.<sup>32</sup> Blobel was a notoriously well-connected Nazi and vicious anti-Semite. He was an SD careerist who demanded that all of his underlings—cooks, drivers, typists, etc.—bloodied their hands in the murder. His superiors praised his total loyalty and reliability. In fact, Himmler later recognized Blobel by granting him the task of covering up the genocide as head of special top secret commando 1005. Yet Blobel, who was also known for his choleric outbursts, held a degree in architecture from one of the best art schools in Germany. In other words, he was not only (as his personnel file stated) a “born criminal investigator,” “of unconditional reliability,” but also a technically minded architect, “very predisposed to the practical.”<sup>33</sup> Thus Blobel appreciated pragmatic solutions, and in this regard he saw eye to eye with the senior staff doctor Panning, who was director of the Forensics Institute in the Military Medical Academy in Berlin. Basically unrestrained by institutional and legal structures, Blobel and Panning were free to “refine” killing methods against the Jews and to conduct heinous experiments with Jewish “guinea pigs.”

Such outstanding examples of cooperation illustrate the significance of individual initiative, behavior, and interaction in the field. In an even more familiar case of conflict, which emerged between Blobel’s men and the Sixth Army staff in Bila Tserkva, the radicalizing effect of administrative structures is especially evident. Here the main conflict between SD and Wehrmacht personnel centered not on killing methods per se, but on the uneasiness that surrounded the shooting of children. No matter how distasteful and psychologically taxing local officials had found the “messy” shooting methods they experienced in Zhytomyr and elsewhere across Western Ukraine, they accepted in principle the killing of male Jews, who were portrayed in militantly political and anti-Semitic terms as the “criminal” Bolshevik enemy. At Bila Tserkva, local SD and Wehrmacht officials confronted something new—the mass execution of “innocent” Jewish infants and children.

Not long after the Jewish population of Bila Tserkva had been registered in mid August 1941, the Field Commander Riedl called in members of Sk4a to assist with the executions.<sup>34</sup> Blobel dispatched a subunit of his killing commando to the town, led by SS-Obersturmführer August Häfner. When Häfner arrived in Bila Tserkva, he found the registered Jews in a school-type building at the edge of town, where they had been brought by the military’s Secret Field Police (GFP). Besides a few German soldiers, young Ukrainian militiamen armed with clubs and rifles guarded the building. The GFP handed over about 70 of the adult Jews to Häfner’s killing commando, and Waffen-SS marksmen shot them. Then several hundred more were gunned down, leaving the children who remained in the building orphaned. The crying of the abandoned infants and children was heard by nearby Wehrmacht units, whose chaplains filed a complaint on 20 August to the general staff



officer of Infantry Division 295, Lieutenant Colonel Helmuth Groscurth. Groscurth wrote up a report that eventually landed on the desk of the Commander of the Sixth Army, Field Marshal von Reichenau.

Groscurth was not convinced that the killing of Jewish children was properly authorized, so he insisted that the issue be brought to the attention of his superiors. Since the commander of Groscurth's division "was not capable of making this decision on his own," the case was brought to a higher level, to Sixth Army headquarters (AOK6). Groscurth's intervention caused a delay in the killing *Aktion* and prompted a meeting of local leaders on the next day (21st August). Field Commander Riedl hosted the meeting with Blobel and his subunit commander Häfner, an Abwehr (intelligence) officer from AOK6, Captain Luley, and Groscurth. The action had been mismanaged, they concurred, because it had caused a stir among the local soldiers, thereby jeopardizing troop discipline. They branded the chaplains a couple of "troublemakers." Then Riedl asserted the Nazi ideological rationale for the execution of Jewish children. He urged that "this brood must be stamped out" without any further "unnecessary" delays. Blobel agreed. When they moved to plan the next course of action, Blobel assured them that von Reichenau also wanted the children killed. Apparently this type of second-hand verbal approval sufficed, because the conveners then proceeded with the assignment of the personnel and resources needed to carry out the massacre.

Thus what proved to be decisive was not the existence of a written order to authorize the killing of Bila Tserkva's Jewish children. By this time, the participants in this critical meeting had already committed mass murder, had witnessed it, or had received other top-secret orders and instructions to kill more Jews. To be sure, Riedl's and Blobel's direct influence (representing the more extreme anti-Semites) was decisive. Yet additional forces were also present, especially the Nazi administrative momentum to "finalize" the *Aktion* in an orderly manner. On 26 August, von Reichenau fumed about the Bila Tserkva massacre, stating that it was simply not "organized properly."<sup>35</sup> He also wrote that, once such an *Aktion* is started, it should be carried out in an expedient manner. Reichenau disregarded the core issue in this conflict, the butchery of children, and instead stressed that killing actions should continue as planned in a frictionless way.<sup>36</sup>

The Bila Tserkva incident illuminates another important aspect of the SD-Wehrmacht dynamic. The Army had the power to dispute SD actions, to intervene, and even to protest them in an influential manner, but they opted instead for a relationship of mutual compliance. After the war, Blobel's right-hand man, August Häfner, summed it up best when he reflected on the SD-Wehrmacht relationship at this time: "The Security Police could not step back vis-à-vis the Wehrmacht and conversely General Field Marshall von Reichenau could not step back vis-à-vis the Security Police."<sup>37</sup>

As of summer 1941, a burgeoning number of SS-Policemen found themselves cast in the role of executioner. At Bila Tserkva, these killers demonstrated that they were capable of finding ways to adapt to the genocide, in large part by allocating certain "unpleasant" tasks to non-Germans, but



also by “improving” their mass-shooting methods. After the Bila Tserkva incident, Sk4a commanders took another, more “orderly” approach to the genocide by keeping Jewish mothers with their children. Sk4a commando leader Heinrich Huhn, who along with Ukrainian militiamen killed 561 Jewish children in Radomyshyl on 6 September, recounted that at the subsequent ghetto liquidation at Zhytomyr on 19 September: “The women were allowed to hold their children in their arms” (*Die Frauen durften ihre Kinder auf den Armen halten*).<sup>38</sup> Nazi killers such as Huhn believed that this was a more efficient and even “humane” approach. Thus, with each killing action, regional officials in the army and SS-Police advanced their genocidal methods and overcame conflicts. They gained experience as perpetrators, and as “policy administrators”.

Nowhere in Ukraine was this developing Nazi expertise in mass shooting as a killing “process” manifested to such a staggering degree as at Babi Yar on 29–30 September 1941.<sup>39</sup> In Kiev, SS-Police leaders Jeckeln and Blobel along with military city commander, Eberhard, decided to skip the registration procedure and ordered the Jews to gather near the killing site.<sup>40</sup> There German guards formed a corridor through which forty to fifty Jews were forced to walk toward the ravine, suffering beatings and blows to the head along the way.<sup>41</sup> Then German SS-Police and Ukrainian guards forced the Jews to remove their clothes, since the Germans had determined from previous actions that the clothes could be used for other purposes, such as for the needy ethnic Germans.<sup>42</sup> It is not evident at Babi Yar, but the Wehrmacht commanders at Mariupol' and in Kryvyi Rih took over the task of collecting, cleaning, and distributing Jewish clothing, linens, dishes, etc. In the Zhytomyr ghetto massacre a week prior to Babi Yar, the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle (Ethnic German Liaison Office) asserted its control over the Jewish belongings.<sup>43</sup>

After the Jews at Babi Yar were forced to remove their clothes and give up their valuables, members of the order police, known as “packers” led half-naked Jews into the ravine. SS-Policemen pushed the Jews face down on top of the bloody corpses of the victims who had preceded them. Then SD marksmen from Blobel's unit came along and shot the Jewish victims in the neck. There were three groups of marksmen (about twelve in each group) traversing the ravine at one time.

Standartenführer Blobel and Obergruppenführer Jeckeln established a rotation of duties whereby SD commandos changed from shooting to loading of ammunition to guarding the Jews near the ravine. During two days, from 6:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m., Blobel's men, with the help of order police battalion 45 and indigenous auxiliaries, massacred 33,771 Jewish men, women, and children in this manner. Afterwards Sk4a assigned some locals to cover up the bodies with soil and lime chloride. To seal off the grave site, the Germans blew up the walls of the ravine with explosives. The last task in this entire “killing process” was the handling of Jewish valuables. For several days Sk4a members smoothed out bank notes totaling millions, packed them into sacks and, as one participant recalled, “sent them off somewhere” (perhaps to the Beutestelle in Berlin).<sup>44</sup>

Indeed, Babi Yar demonstrates how systematic the Nazi approach to mass shooting had become during the summer of 1941. According to Einsatzgruppe C's report, the Babi Yar killings were so efficiently organized that the Jews believed they were going to be resettled right up to the last moment. Certainly Blobel's Sk4a unit of less than one hundred men manifested its developing expertise in mass murder at the ravine. At another level, the Nazi perception of an "orderly massacre" provided the perpetrators with a psychological buffer, a false sense of "civilized behavior" in the midst of the barbaric bloodshed. Furthermore, the perpetrators wanted a local *Aktion* to go smoothly because its completion meant that the Germans were one step closer to achieving their goal of making Nazi territory "free of Jews." Yet by October 1941, even after having reached a high level of proficiency as mass murderers, Nazi officials remained dissatisfied. As the Einsatzgruppe C chief reported, despite the "efficient organization" of Babi Yar and the fact that "approximately 75,000 Jews have been liquidated in this manner, it has nevertheless become apparent that this method will not provide a solution to the Jewish problem."<sup>45</sup>

As many as 300,000 Jews were killed under the Wehrmacht administration in Ukraine. By the end of January 1942, most of the larger Jewish communities from the Zhytomyr region and eastward to Kharkiv had been totally decimated.<sup>46</sup> The SS-Police's primary role as the executioners was manifested in this initial phase of the Nazi "final solution." Yet the regional military apparatus also played its part. The Kommandantur oversaw the registration and marking of the Jews and of Jewish property, the collection of arbitrary taxes, formation of Jewish forced-labor battalions, and the distribution of Jewish rations. Wehrmacht propaganda units broadcast anti-Semitic declarations and turned some executions into public spectacles. Newly reopened movie houses were furnished with a special film sent from Berlin, "Der ewige Jude."<sup>47</sup> In short, regional leaders in the military and SS-Police carved out their respective roles in the "final solution," and they did so in a relatively "frictionless" manner. As SS-Police and Wehrmacht forces arrived in the eastern parts of Ukraine, historic Jewish communities began to disappear from the map within a matter of days and weeks.

Nearly all of the estimated 350,000 Jews who survived this first killing wave resided in the western regions of Volhynia-Podolia.<sup>48</sup> This area of conquered Ukrainian territory was placed under commissariat rule after 1st September, thus ushering in a new phase of the Holocaust in Ukraine. During this phase, the prevailing Nazi desire for a "smooth" implementation of the "final solution" reappeared in more elaborate forms of administrative coordination, which were centered in the office of the commissar.

### The Administration of the “Final solution” in the Reich Commissariat Ukraine, 1941–1944

Unlike the mobile military administrations that swept across Ukraine in the summer and fall of 1941, the Reich Commissariat Ukraine was presumed to be a permanent governing structure. It consisted of five (later expanded to six) regional entities, known as General Commissariats. Within a Commissariat, such as the Zhytomyr General Commissariat, there were about twenty-five subdistricts, or district commissariats (*Gebietskommissariate*). Numerous public and private agencies also spanned across Ukraine’s rural landscape, including the Reich Post, the Reich Railway, and agricultural leaders from Hermann Göring’s Four Year Plan, as well as private construction companies like the Firma Jung, which was contracted by the Organisation Todt (OT) to build up Ukraine’s roadways and canals.

Within this web of Nazi public and private agencies, the most prominent regional figurehead was the General Commissar. He was responsible for the welfare and fate of the entire civilian population in his region, including the Jews, and empowered to enforce police measures against civilians. The commissars were surrounded by a clique of deputies, a regional SS-Police leader and, in some cases, a special advisor on Jewish matters. Together they kept the General Commissar abreast of the local “Jewish question.”

One of the first actions taken by the commissars in Volhynia-Podolia was the ghettoization of the Jews. In Letichev, District Commissar Frieber deliberately scheduled this upheaval on Rosh Hashana, 21 September 1941.<sup>49</sup> While the commissars gained a well-deserved reputation as the leaders of local terror campaigns against the Jews, the actual day-to-day implementation of the Nazi terror involved several departments in the commissariat office. The welfare, medical, and nutrition analysts made sure that Jews were left to die of starvation and disease in the ghettos and camps. In Zwiahel (Novhorad Volyns’kyi) and other areas populated by ethnic Germans, the commissars handled the redistribution of Jewish belongings to the *Volksdeutsche*.<sup>50</sup>

Although the commissars faced stiff competition from SS-Police officials over the fate of Jewish plunder, they were often quite effective in asserting control over the seizure and distribution of Jewish property and goods. According to the General Commissar of Zhytomyr, all Jewish property went first to the commissar’s office. Any Ukrainian militiaman who had plundered Jewish goods previously had to hand it over to the commissars.<sup>51</sup> Seized belongings like sewing machines, bedding and clothing were stored in a local booty depot. Army officials, members of the OT, *Volksdeutsche*, and others privileged by the Nazi system filed written requests – often pleas – to the commissar’s office to obtain these goods. Jewish flats and furniture were rented to Dutch and German businessmen in Zhytomyr. The commissars’ accountants tallied Jewish gold, silver, and currency. It was deposited in the operating budget along with other “Jewish contributions.”<sup>52</sup> During 1942–43, the commissar’s distribution of the plunder became more bureaucratic; receipts were issued showing the property’s Jewish provenance.<sup>53</sup>

On the eve of impending massacres the commissar held a briefing (a so-called *Einsatzbesprechung*) about the “Jewish Question.” He brought together his leading advisors to discuss the number of Jews left in the area, their exact location, the commissar’s local labor needs, and the timing of the next mass-shooting. Sometimes local army commanders and OT specialists participated in such meetings. The commissar and the district SS-Police leader coordinated all the necessary personnel and material needed to carry out the ghetto liquidations and massacres, down to the assignment of POWs or collective farm-workers to dig the mass graves.<sup>54</sup>

Among the various agencies stationed in the civilian occupied zones, the closest interaction occurred between the commissars and the SS police. According to Hitler’s (and Himmler’s) orders, each commissar was assigned an SS-Police leader who was “directly and personally” responsible to him.<sup>55</sup> Thus “on paper” the commissars could issue orders to the local SS-Police forces. In practice, however, the more senior the SS-Police leader, the more difficult it became for the commissar to control his counterparts in the SS-Police. After all, the SS-Police was the “executionary power” behind the “final solution.”<sup>56</sup> An independent SS-Police chain of command running from Himmler down to the lowest-level gendarme station chief remained in place, and ultimately all SS-Policemen were loyal to their Reichsführer, not to one of Rosenberg’s commissars, whom Himmler disparaged as a “a bunch of overpaid bureaucrats.”<sup>57</sup>

During the summer of 1942, for example, Zhytomyvs’ General Commissar Klemm was forced out of his position and sent back to the Reich because he had resisted the encroachment of the SS-Police into his region’s politics. While this conflict was raging, Klemm’s office reported to Berlin that local agencies worked together “smoothly” in the construction of Hitler’s secret bunker in Vinnytsia.<sup>58</sup> The Klemm incident made it clear to local leaders that inter-agency conflicts were to be avoided; stirring up such “problems” might mean a demotion or a transfer to the front.

Still, tension between the regional-level commissars and SS-Police officials surfaced when Himmler and the Reich Commissar for Ukraine Erich Koch pushed through the final liquidation of Ukraine’s ghettos in the second half of 1942. At the commissars’ convention in Luts’k on 29–31 August the commissars learned of Koch’s “personal wish” for the “final solution” to be carried out “one hundred percent.” Consequently, the General Commissar for Volhynia-Podolia promptly asked the SD outposts in his region to accelerate the actions against the Jews so that the ghettos would be destroyed within five weeks.<sup>59</sup> In Brest, the city commissar Franz Burat resisted the liquidation of the ghetto because he needed the Jewish labor force. As Christopher Browning’s research has shown, Burat and his ally in the SS-Police, Friedrich Rohde, argued to their superiors that the Jewish workers were more valuable than the meager food rations they consumed. But the attempt to resist was futile. In mid October 1942, the Brest ghetto was attacked by SS-Police forces. After several days of mass shootings and “Jew hunts,” the combined forces of local SS-Policemen, mobile Order-Police battalion 310 and the 48th motorized police company had killed 20,000 Jews.<sup>60</sup>

Outside major centers like Brest, relations between the rural commissars and gendarme stations were generally less antagonistic. The fewer traces of conflict at this level suggest that in the most remote outpost of Nazi rule the mere shortage of personnel usually encouraged cooperation. Two examples from the Volhynian district of Zdolbuniv typify the ideological affinity and administrative coordination that existed at the lowest levels of Nazi rule in Ukraine.

On a hot summer evening in August 1942, two members of the Ukrainian Schutzmannschaft were patrolling the Zdolbuniv ghetto when they spotted a Jewish girl named Hanka Prussack. She was sitting on a bench outside her house. Because it was after the official curfew time, the two Ukrainian auxiliaries beat her with their rifle butts until she lay lifeless. Hungarian soldiers stationed nearby heard the cries of Prussack and came to her aid. But they were too late. The outraged soldiers then lashed out at the Ukrainian auxiliaries, beating them so badly that they had to be hospitalized. The incident created a big stir within the commissariat administration because the “prestige” of the German government had been lowered by the Ukrainian auxiliaries’ actions. To counter this embarrassment, the commissar’s office declared that Hanka had been slain by a Jewish ghetto member and demanded that the Judenrat deliver the “Jewish murderer” or ten Jewish hostages. The Jewish elder protested to the Germans, but to no avail. Believing that the rest of the Jewish community would be spared death, the Judenrat complied with the German demand for hostages and gave ten Jews to the Germans. At least seven of them were placed in the custody of the district SS-Police leader Joseph Paur. The district commissar, Georg Marschall, who believed that the only possible solution to the Jewish problem was to “remove them all,” ordered Paur to kill these Jews.<sup>61</sup> One Jewish prisoner was able to run away during the shooting, but members of the gendarme post of Zdolbuniv killed the rest.<sup>62</sup>

About this time, in the summer of 1942, district SS-Police leader Paur had also arrested a local Jewish man named Gelman for an alleged violation of the Nazi law against the slaughtering of livestock. Paur, who was stationed in the same building as the district commissar Marschall, reported the violation to the commissar. Either Marschall or his deputy ordered Paur to execute Gelman publicly in order to terrorize the rest of the population. When Paur forwarded this order to his subdistrict gendarme post in Mizoch, where the alleged violation had occurred, Paur added that the Judenrat must assist in the execution. On the day scheduled for the hanging, Paur drove with his gendarme colleagues from Zdolbuniv to Mizoch. With the Jewish council present, the gendarmes hanged Gelman. In this case, the district SS-Police outposts did not feel it necessary to bring Gelman to the SD. The matter was worked out locally by the district SS-Police leader and the commissar, who asserted their own terror tactics.

As these examples demonstrate, the decentralization of the “final solution” did not result in administrative chaos. On the contrary, the fact that such ad hoc collaboration occurred at the district level of rule demonstrates

the totality of what Raul Hilberg has termed the "machinery of destruction." Yet the killings in Zdolbuniv also show that in the Reich Commissariat Ukraine this machine was not operated by automatons and desk murderers, but rather by functionaries with clear ideological and careerist ambitions.

Eventually, the direct involvement of public and private German agencies became so significant that the SD officials stationed in the Reich Commissariat (who were small in number) found it unnecessary to conduct searches for Jews in hiding.<sup>63</sup> As it turned out, Ukrainian and *Volksdeutsche* auxiliaries, German railroad workers, postal employees, construction foremen, foresters, and other local recruits turned the genocidal hunt for Jews into a bloodthirsty sport.<sup>64</sup> Jews who were not killed on the spot were brought to the SD office, where they underwent "special treatment." In Kiev's SD headquarters, the head of the Judenreferat (Department IVb) did not investigate whether his "prisoner" had committed a crime. He needed only to confirm the Jewishness of his "suspect," since being a Jew was deemed a crime punishable with death. The Judenreferat did not have to obtain countersignatures on the death sentences against Jews, which were required in other cases. Instead, the departmental chief, SS-Hauptsturmführer Hans Schumacher (a former member of Ek5), or his boss, the Commander of the SD in Kiev, Erich Ehrlinger (a former member of Ek1b), gave the Judenreferat the "nod" of approval.<sup>65</sup> The SD bureaucrats and commanders sought as much as possible to avoid placing their own signature on the death sentences of "innocent" Jews. In accepting a superior's nod of approval and not the requisite countersignature, these Nazi officials recognized the secret, criminal nature of the "final solution" while they upheld some semblance of an orderly "civilized" bureaucratic procedure.

In Kiev, executions of SD-held prisoners occurred weekly, if not more often, and usually on Saturday mornings. Kiev's SD Commander, Erich Ehrlinger, met with his adjutant to approve the final execution list, to determine the exact date and time, and to assign who would do the guarding, driving, and shooting. These assignments were posted on a bulletin board in the office. The execution commando consisted of eight to ten men. The Jewish prisoners, often families of men, women, and children, were gathered in the courtyard of the Gestapo prison, forced into gas vans or onto trucks and driven to the mass graves at the edge of the city. Commander Ehrlinger stood by the pits. Occasionally he grabbed a weapon and shot the Jews "to set a good example" or to "speed up the process." Between February 1942 and August 1943, about 365 Jews were gassed or shot by the SD in Kiev.<sup>66</sup>

Although the Sipo-SD played a central role in the genocide, the more numerous stationary and mobile Order-Police units and their indigenous auxiliaries became the "foot soldiers" of the "final solution" in Ukraine. On 12 March 1942, the Commander of the Gendarmerie in the Zhytomyr Commissariat wrote to his order policemen in the district offices that "from now on when it is totally clear why an execution should occur, it is not necessary to obtain approval; however in each case a short report of the act/event is to



be lodged with superiors.”<sup>67</sup> In effect, Nazi SS-Police leaders gave their subordinates at the lowest levels a license to kill Jews. In Koziatyn and Ruzhyn, for example, the gendarme chiefs routinely reported ex post facto the shooting of small numbers of Jews whom they found hiding in the forest and fields. In Zdolbuniv, the gendarme posts submitted lists of prisoners to their district headquarters. These lists showed the prisoners’ name, race, and any valuables seized. When district gendarme chief Paur looked over the list and saw “Jew,” he marked that name for execution. The gendarme post implemented the order without the involvement of the commissar, the nearest SD office, or central authorities in Berlin.<sup>68</sup>

The last major feature of the Nazi administration of the “final solution” in the Reich Commissariat Ukraine was the use of forced labor in the extermination process, known as the “*Vernichtung durch Arbeit* (extermination through labor).” This approach was formalized in the Wannsee Protocol of January 1942, which stated that Jews could provisionally be used in heavy-labor projects like road building and worked to death. As of 1942, Jews from Galicia, Transnistria, Hungary, and Poland were brought to Ukraine for such purposes. Most struggled for their lives in the SS-Police labor camp system along Ukraine’s southern border with Romania.

In the “*Vernichtung durch Arbeit*” campaign, one of the key organizational links between the SS-Police and private concerns was the OT, which was a militarized labor organization responsible for building military installations and transportation routes.<sup>69</sup> OT personnel handed over the exhausted or sick Jewish laborers to the SS-Police. OT engineers and foremen did not have the “power of public office” to carry out an execution, but occasionally they transgressed this Nazi law. For example, in March 1943, a military–SS and police tribunal in Proskurow (Luts’k) sentenced foreman Johann Meisslein to prison for ordering the execution of two Jewish female laborers.<sup>70</sup>

The Meisslein case shows that as the number of agencies involved in the genocide expanded, SS and police officials maintained that they alone were empowered to order the execution of Jews. The foreman could exploit the Jewish laborers and hand them over to the SS-Police to be killed, but the formal order to carry out the murder was supposed to come from the SS-Police. According to Hermann Kaienburg’s work on this underexamined aspect of the Holocaust in Ukraine, as many as 25,000 Jews died in the OT–SS and police construction of the autobahn.<sup>71</sup>

## Conclusion

In his seminal work on the Holocaust, Raul Hilberg introduced the metaphor of a machine to explain the Nazi administrative process behind the “final solution.” The key operator of this machine, as Hilberg demonstrated, was the middle-ranking bureaucrat, who “no less than his highest superior was aware of currents and possibilities.”<sup>72</sup> Like the Berlin-centered bureaucrats in Hilberg’s analysis, the regional leaders in Ukraine “displayed a striking

pathfinding ability in the absence of directives, a congruity of activities without jurisdictional guidelines, a fundamental comprehension of the task even when there were no explicit communications.”<sup>73</sup> The regional leaders not only translated Nazi aims into concrete plans of action, but a significant number bloodied their own hands in the implementation. Empowered by their superiors to murder Jews, they took the initiative to develop local “systems” and methods for killing over 1 million Jews in Ukraine.

The Nazi implementation of the “final solution” was an ongoing invention of central and peripheral leaders. Hitler, Himmler, and Heydrich defined the aim of the “final solution” and they constructed an administrative framework to administer the policy. Yet, in its implementation, the “process” of mass murder developed from the ground up, often after “on the spot” decision-making about how to proceed with the massacre in the most efficient manner. In other words, the technicians and operators of the “final solution” apparatus—men like SD commando chief Blobel, Sixth Army judge Neumann, Oberstabsarzt Panning, and Kiev’s Stadtkommandant Eberhard—developed a callously efficient, purposeful (“*zweckmäßig*”) approach to mass shooting. By early 1942, nearly all of Ukraine’s Jews east of the Zhytomyr region had been gunned down by Nazi SS-Policemen and collaborators in the local militia and army administration.

During the second phase of the “final solution” in Ukraine, the commissars imposed their own individual styles of terror against the Jews—hence the mosaic of local Holocaust histories that comprise the Nazi “final solution” in the region. Commissars like Marschall were generally university-degreed, middle-ranking bureaucrats and Nazi ideologues, who suddenly found themselves in positions of extreme power. Like the SS-Police killing commanders who preceded him during the 1941 sweep, Marschall understood his local anti-Jewish actions within the broader context of a “final solution.” Ultimately, the test of a regional leader’s “success” was his ability to garner and exploit all the local possibilities (e.g., the use of Ukrainian auxiliaries) for bringing about the destruction. When the commissar declared his region “*judenfrei*” he also sought approbation from his superiors for a job “well done.”

In Nazi-occupied Ukraine, the most remarkable administrative pattern was one of ad hoc collaboration. Ironically, factors that might otherwise have caused conflicts or resistance to the “final solution,” such as personnel shortages and the isolation of the rural outposts, actually furthered the Holocaust. Nevertheless, there were certain aspects of the genocide, like the loss of Jewish labor and the distribution of Jewish valuables, that sparked infighting among local German leaders. The commissars, who had ambitious plans for building up regional transportation systems, housing, and industry, wished to capitalize as much as possible on “free” Jewish labor. In the end, however, the ideological consensus surrounding the “final solution” proved stronger than the economic rationale for keeping Jewish laborers alive.

Regional leaders and functionaries who felt uneasy about the massacres found ways to adapt to the genocide. Even at the lowest levels of the Nazi

hierarchy, one could play one's part in the "final solution" without dirtying one's own hands, as Ukraine's Sipo-SD Commander Dr. Thomas reassured his deputy in late 1941. In other words, one could avoid officially authorizing the murder through oral orders and gestures like nodding, or one could find more bloodthirsty types among the Germans and indigenous population to do the most gruesome task, killing children. Regional leaders in the military and civilian administration sought to develop a "frictionless" killing process, one that afforded them some psychological distance from the killing, one that was efficient enough for large-scale massacres, and one that would impress superiors. But what they actually produced were bloody scenes of human butchery, scenes that the Nazi euphemism "*reibungslos*" certainly belies.

### Notes

\* The opinions expressed in this chapter are solely those of the author and are not to be construed as constituting the opinions of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

1. This common bureaucratic term appeared in the reports of SS-Police, military, and commissariat officials. The term also captured the attention of Jürgen Matthäus in "Reibungslos und Planmäßig: Die Zweite Welle der Judenvernichtung im Generalkommissariat Weissruthenien (1942–1944)," *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung* 4 (1995): 254–274. Also see Raul Hilberg, *Sources of Holocaust Research: An Analysis* (Chicago, 2001), pp. 104–105.
2. For the earliest in-depth treatment of the bureaucracy's role, see Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (New York, 1985 [1961]) and "The Bureaucracy of Annihilation," in Francois Furet, ed., *Unanswered Questions: Nazi Germany and the Genocide of the Jews* (New York, 1969). See also the structural analysis of the Third Reich by Hans Mommsen, *Beamtenum im Dritten Reich* (Stuttgart, 1967), and the sociological study by Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Ithaca, 1989).
3. Theo Schulte, *The German Army and Nazi Policies in Occupied Russia* (New York, 1989), p. 54.
4. Adolf Hitler, *Secret Conversations 1941–1944*, trans. Norman Cameron and R.H. Stevens (New York, 1979), p. 479.
5. For a more detailed overview of the military structure in Ukraine, see Dieter Pohl's "Schauplatz Ukraine: Der Massenmord an den Juden im Militärverwaltungsgebiet und im Reichskommissariat 1941–1943," in Norbert Frei, Sybille Steinbacher, and Bernd C. Wagner, eds., *Ausbeutung, Vernichtung, Öffentlichkeit: Studien zur nationalsozialistischen Verfolgungspolitik* (Munich, 2000), pp. 125–162. Erich Friderci replaced von Roques in November and December 1941.
6. Schulte, *German Army*, p. 66.
7. For the active role of the Army's propaganda and security units in anti-Jewish measures in Zhytomyr, see Wendy Lower, "Nazi Colonial Dreams: German Policies and Ukrainian Society in Zhytomyr, 1941–1944" (Ph.D. dissertation, American University, Washington D.C., 1999). For Kodyma, see records of the 30th corps, and postwar testimony of General von Salmuth and others, in the Nuremberg Military Tribunal (NMT) High Command Case 12, X, pp. 1228–1230.
8. Schulte adopts Jürgen Förster's concept from "New Wine in Old Sins?: The Wehrmacht and the War of 'Weltanschauungen,' 1941," in Wilhelm Deist, ed., *The German Military in the Age of Total War* (Leamington Spa, 1985), p. 319. See Schulte, *German Army*, p. 68.
9. The FK (676) Pervomaisk records from August 1941, held at the USHMM, Osobyi (Moscow) collection RG 11.001m13/ 92/1275-3-661. The marking of the Jews and for-

- mation of labor gangs was undertaken by FK 676 in Drohobycz, and special shops for Jews established in Sambor by the FK, July 1941. See FK 676 reports in this USHMM collection, 1275-3-661. Similar measures were outlined in the widely distributed “Merkblatt über Sofortaufgaben der Ortskommandanturen,” KTB SD454, Anlage zum Div. Befehl Nr. 59, NARA RG242/ T-315/R 2216/000091-94. Jewish rations were reduced to the amount allotted to children (if rations were available at all); see 4 November 1941 order no. 44, NARA RG 238/ PS-1189/ Box 26.
10. Raul Hilberg, “Wehrmacht und Judenvernichtung,” in Walter Manoschek, ed., *Die Wehrmacht im Rassenkrieg: Der Vernichtung hinter der Front* (Vienna, 1996), pp. 24–25.
  11. The three battalions were 82, 311, and 318. From the war diary (KTB) SD 454 it is evident that Orpo battalion 82 (from Breslau) was consistently deployed for actions against Jews and POWs, SD 454 KTB NARA RG 242, T-315/R 2215/000385-469. On the deployment of order-police battalions in the East, see the Himmler order of 21 May 1941, in *Der Krieg gegen die Sowjetunion 1941–1945: Eine Dokumentation zum 50. Jahrestag des Überfalls auf die Sowjetunion* (Berlin, 1991), pp. 99–100.
  12. Roques order of 21 July 1941, NARA RG 238/ NOKW-1601.
  13. FK 603 Tätigkeitsbericht Lemberg, 31 July 1941, USHMM (Osobyi) RG 11.001m13/92/1275-3-663.
  14. Dieter Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien 1941–1944* (Munich, 1997), pp. 46–47.
  15. The Jewish labor gangs were put to use on the roadways, first to clear rubble and corpses from the roads; see FK 675 Vinnitsa, August 1941, USHMM (Osobyi) RG 11.001m13/92/1275-3-662; in mine-clearings, at Kiev, 29th Infantry Corps to 99th Infantry Division (AOK6), 22 September 1941, NARA RG 238/NOKW-1323; and at Kharkov, NOKW-184.
  16. See “Guidelines for the Conduct of Troops in Russia,” in KTB SD 454, NARA RG 242/ T-315/2215/000711-13. Also see, Jürgen Förster’s “The Relation Between Operation Barbarossa as an Ideological War of Extermination and the Final solution,” in David Cesarani, ed., *The Final solution: Origins and Implementation* (New York, 1996), p. 93.
  17. See Richard Breitman’s *The Architect of Genocide: Himmler and the Final solution* (Hanover, 1991), pp. 167–177.
  18. Leaflets with anti-Semitic messages, in KTB AOK 17, NARA RG 242/ T-501/R674/8308414; released Ukrainian POWs who returned to their villages identified local Jews and hanged them with a vengeance, described in the report of Ortskommandant Wosnessensk, cited by FK (193) Nikolaev Lagebericht of 18 August–September 1941, USHMM (Osobyi) RG 11.001m13/92/1275-3-662. Also see Pohl, *Ostgalizien*, pp. 54–67.
  19. Hans Saffrian, “Komplizen des Genozids: Zum Anteil der Heeresgruppe Süd an der Verfolgung und Ermordung der Juden in der Ukraine 1941,” in Manoschek, ed., *Die Wehrmacht im Rassenkrieg*, p. 102.
  20. Pohl, *Ostgalizien*, pp. 59–60.
  21. The involvement of individual soldiers in pogroms (in Galicia) was discouraged by von Roques; see his memo, “Befriedungsmaßnahmen,” 29 July 1941, NARA RG 242/ T-501/R5/000475-476.
  22. AOK 17 order of 30 July 1941 regarding procedure for handing over suspicious persons from intelligence officer (Ic/AO), the army’s liaison to the SD kommandos, NARA RG 238/NOKW-1593.
  23. On authorization to kill “female agents or Jews who have placed themselves at the use of the Soviets” in Zwiahel (Novohrad-Volyns’kyi) see HSSPF Jeckeln’s instructions for joint SS-Police and military cleansing operations, dated 25 July 1941, in NARA RG 242 T-501/R 5/000559-60. See also, NARA RG 23/NOKW-1165 for joint First SS Brigade and AOK6 “cleansing” operations. Heydrich order of 17 July 1941 expanding the killing of all male Jewish prisoners, 17–45 years, reprinted in Peter Klein, ed., *Die Einsatzgruppen in der besetzten Sowjetunion 1941–42: Die Tätigkeits- und Lageberichte des Chefs der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD* (Berlin, 1997), pp. 331–334.

24. On the loss of Jewish labor, see FK Pervomais'k report of 21 September 1941, USHMM (Osobyi) RG 11.001m13/92/ 1275-3-661; and OKIV/839, Uman 30 August 1941, USHMM RG 11.001m13/92/ 1275-2-663. On local relations with the SD and the rapid massacres, see OK Nowo Ukrainka Lagebericht 1–14 September 1941, USHMM RG 11.001m13/92/1275-3-663/ 92 and OK Nikolejew, 11 September 1941, Nikoleav Oblast records, USHMM RG 31.008m/1432-1-1/ fiche 2. The military handed over 4,669 Jews to the SD in Nikoleav, NARA RG 238/NOKW-1464.
25. Von Stülpnagel's orders focused on maintaining troop discipline to keep peace with the Ukrainians, AOK 17 Ic.AO "Behandlung der Bevölkerung und Aufrechterhaltung der Disziplin," 24 August 1941, KTB AOK 6, NARA RG 242/ T-312/R 674/8308378; Von Reichenau's order of 10 August 1941, "Exekutionen durch den SD," Anlage KTB SD 454, NARA RG 242/ T-315/R 2215/000959. Also see Keitel's memo on "Jews in the Eastern Territories," 12 September 1941, NARA RG 242/ T-77/R 1028/6500510.
26. Commander Rear Army South, War Diary, Az. III Tgb.Nr. 3/41 geh., 1 September 1941, in KTB SD 454, NARA RG 242/ T313/R 2216/000081.
27. Safrian, "Komplizen des Genozids," in Manoschek, ed., *Die Wehrmacht im Rassenkrieg*, p.108.
28. The scene was precisely sketched by an eyewitness Wehrmacht soldier, probably drawn after the war. The eyewitness also claimed that the SD kommando photographed the killing but the film was destroyed by the commanding officer of the killing unit. See USHMM Photo Archives, #431.278, W/IS #79780, Zhitomir, Source: Schweizerisches Bundesarchiv.
29. Statements of August Häfner, 10 June 1965 and 8 February 1966, of Ernest Wilhelm Boernecke, 5 November 1965 and Heinrich Huhn, 13 September 1962, Trial against Kuno Callsen et. al, ZSt, AR-Z 419/1962. Häfner statements in Ernst Klee, Willi Dreßen, and Volker Rieß, eds., *The Good Old Days: The Holocaust as Seen by its Perpetrators and Bystanders* (New York, 1991), p. 114.
30. Statements of Kurt Friedrich Hans, 30 September 1965 and 12 August 1965, Callsen Trial, ZSt, AR-Z 419/1962.
31. See Gerhart Panning's "Wirkungsform und Nachweis der sowjetischen Infanteriesprengmunition," (mit 12 Abbildungen) in *Der deutsche Militärarzt*, January 1942. Library of Congress microfilm #0184. Panning died in March 1944. See von Moltke's letter in Beate Ruhm von Oppen, ed., *Letters to Freya, 1939–1945* (New York 1990), p. 160. See also, Alfred Streim *Die Behandlung sowjetischer Kriegsgefangener im "Fall Barbarossa"* (Heidelberg, 1981), pp. 135–137 and Friedrich Heber, *Gerichtsmedizin unterm Hakenkreuz* (Leipzig, 2002), pp. 274–278.
32. For a more in-depth analysis of the influence of Prussian tradition and values on the Nazi system, see Hans Mommsen, "Preussentum und Nationalsozialismus," in Wolfgang Benz, Hans Buchheim and Hans Mommsen, eds., *Der Nationalsozialismus: Studien zur Ideologie und Herrschaft* (Frankfurt on Main, 1993), pp. 29–41.
33. Paul Blobel's personnel record of 7 October 1935, reprinted in Henry Friedlander and Sybil Milton, eds. *Archives of the Holocaust: An International Collection of Selected Documents*, 11 (New York, 1989), p. 70.
34. Hans Safrian and Bernd Boll, "Auf dem Weg nach Stalingrad: Die 6. Armee 1941–42," in Hannes Heer and Klaus Naumann, eds., *Vernichtungskrieg: Verbrechen der Wehrmacht 1941 bis 1944* (Hamburg, 1995), p. 275.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 153.
36. Helmut Krausnick and Harold Deutsch, eds., *Helmuth Groscurth: Tagebücher eines Abwehroffiziers, 1938–1940* (Stuttgart, 1970), p. 541.
37. "Die Sicherheitspolizei konnte gegenüber der Wehrmacht nicht zurück und Generalfeldmarschall von Reichenau umgekehrt gegenüber der Sicherheitspolizei," August Häfner statement of 13 October 1965, Callsen Trial, ZSt 207 AR-Z 419/62.
38. Heinrich Huhn statement of 13 March 1966, Callsen Trial, ZSt 207 AR-Z 419/62.
39. The leading role of the SD Kommandos was made clear in the OK and FK reports from , Kryvyi Rih, and Nikolaev. See in particular the Nikolajew report, OK I/853 "Einsatz der Juden," 11 September 1941, Nikoleav Oblast records, USHMM RG 31.008m/1432-1-1/ fiche 2.

40. See Pohl, “Schauplatz,” p. 137 and Klee, Dreßen, and Rieß, *The Good Old Days*, pp. 63–68.
41. Testimony of survivor, Dina M. Proniceva, 9 February 1967, reprinted in Peter Longerich, ed. *Die Ermordung der europäischen Juden: Eine umfassende Dokumentation des Holocausts 1941–1945* (Munich, 1989), pp. 124–127. Additional survivor testimonies are in Erhard Roy Wiehn, ed., *Nothing is Forgotten: Jewish Fates in Kiev, 1941–1943* (Konstanz, 1993).
42. For the Zhytomyr ghetto action, see the Einsatzgruppe C Ereignismeldung of 7 October 1941, in Yitshak Arad, Shmuel Krakowski and Shmuel Spector, eds., *The Einsatzgruppen Reports: Selections from the Dispatches of the Nazi Death Squads’ Campaign Against the Jews in Occupied Territories of the Soviet Union July 1941–January 1943* (New York, 1989), pp. 171–174. The OK in Mariupol reported (29 October 1941) that, after the SD killed 8,000 Jews there, his office seized Jewish property and clothing given to the military hospital, POW camps, and ethnic Germans, in Illrii Illr’evich Kondufor, Vasilii Nikolaevich Nemiatiy and Instytut istorii partii, eds., *History Teaches a Lesson: Captured War Documents Expose the Atrocities of the German-fascist Invaders and their Henchmen in Ukraine’s Temporarily Occupied Territory during the Great Patriotic War (1941–1945)* (Kiev, 1986), p. 45.
43. A Nazi system for handling Jewish property was not developed at this early stage in the genocide. See Martin Dean’s chapter in this volume and “Jewish Property Seized in the Occupied Soviet Union in 1941 and 1942: The Records of the Reichshauptkasse Beutestelle,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 14 (Spring 2000): 83–101. In Kryvyi Rih, the military (OK 538) seized gold and other precious metals, which were applied to the local Wehrmacht operating budget; see OK (538) report dated 14 September 1941, USHMM (Osobyi)/RG 11.001m13 92/1275-3-665.
44. Klee, Dreßen and Rieß, *The Good Old Days*, p. 67. See report of Orpo battalion 314 about killings and confiscations of Jewish monies, 24 January 1942, BA Berlin-Lichtefeld, R 2104/25. I am grateful to Martin Dean for this document.
45. Einsatzgruppe C, Ereignismeldung no. 128, 2 November 1941. NARA RG 242/T175/233.
46. Pohl, “Schauplatz,” p. 159; Aleksandr Kruglov, *Unichtozhenie evreiskogo naseleniia Ukrainy v 1941–1944: khronika sobytii* (Mogilev, 1997), p. 96.
47. See the September and October 1941 RK and OK reports from Kryvyi Rih, USHMM (Osobyi)/RG 11.001m13 92/1275-3-665.
48. About 530,000 Jews in eastern Galicia were placed under the rule of the Generalgouvernement, and another 185,000 Jews along the southern border fell under Romanian control mainly in Transnistria.
49. See Vladimir Goykher’s memoir, *The Tragedy of the Letichev Ghetto* (New York, 1993). Shmuel Spector, *The Holocaust of Volhynian Jews, 1941–1944* (Jerusalem, 1990), pp. 116–187.
50. Lagebericht from Gebietskommissar, Zwiahel, dated 20 May 1942, BAK R6/310.
51. General Commissar Klemm’s order of 12 December 1941, Zhytomyr State Archive, Ukraine (hereafter ZSA), P1182-1-6/170.
52. See the accounting records (17 November 1941– 28 February 1942) of Gebietskommissar Dr. Bluemel in Tschudnow, ZSA, P1537-1-282. General Commissar Klemm ordered all commissars to report Jewish currency and gold to the finance department, 24 July 1942, ZSA, P1151-1-9.
53. Locals who had plundered furniture after the massacres of 1941 also came forward with “unofficial receipts” to claim that they had purchased the items from the Jews. See the inventory commission, files of the director, Herr Plisko, ZSA, P1152-1-16.
54. Case against the Kasatin district commissariat, “Abschlussbericht” ZSt II AR-Z 137/67, pp. 20–22 and Case against the Litin district commissariat, “Abschlussbericht” ZSt II AR-Z 135/6, pp. 561–563.
55. Hitler orders of 17 July 1941 on the administration in the East, NARA RG 242/ T-454/100/000680.
56. RmfdbO memo (Otto Brautigam’s file) “Richtlinien für die Behandlung der Judenfrage,” 4 February 1942, NARA RG 242/ roll 154/MR 334, EAP 99/447.



57. Himmler's criticism of Rosenberg's staff, Himmler letter to G. Berger, August 1942 NARA RG 242/ T-175/66/2582327. On the senior-level conflicts over *Ostpolitik*, see Alexander Dallin, *German Rule in Russia, 1941–1945: A Study of Occupation Policies* (New York, 1955) and Timothy Mulligan, *The Politics of Illusion: German Occupation Policy in the Soviet Union, 1942–43* (New York, 1988).
58. See General Commissar's Lagebericht dated 3 June 1942, BAK R6/310. I am grateful to Dieter Pohl for this document. Zhytomyr's SSPF Otto Hellwig memo about Klemm's complaints to the SS-Police, 20 July 1942, ZSA, P1151-1-706.
59. Records of the General Commissar of Volhynia-Podolia in the Polish Main Commission for the Investigation of Nazi Crimes, Zbior Zespolow Szczatkowych Jednostek SS I Policji-Sygnatura 77, memo to SD outposts 31 August 1942. Documents in Martin Dean's possession.
60. Christopher Browning, *Nazi Policy, Jewish Workers, German Killers* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 130–139.
61. See Douglas K. Huneke, *The Moses of Rovno: The Stirring Story of Fritz Graebe, A German Christian who Risked his Life to Lead Hundreds of Jews to Safety During the Holocaust* (New York, 1985), p. 33.
62. See Case 553, *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen: Sammlung deutscher Strafurteile wegen Nationalistischer Tötungsverbrechen 1945–1966* (Amsterdam, 1976–77). As of 1952, Paur was the director of the crime unit in Neustadt am Aisch. He retired in 1960 and was arrested and sentenced to seven years in prison in 1964.
63. In Zhytomyr, an area of 70,000 square kilometers (an area larger than the combined U.S. states of New Hampshire, Vermont and Massachusetts), there were six SD outposts. In Volhynia Podolia there were five.
64. Records of the Gebietskommissare in Berdychiv, esp. the case of three Jewish workers (the Horowitz brothers and Moses Landau) from 17 July 1942, ZSA, P1465-1-1. See also Case 26, *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* and Huneke, *Moses of Rovno*, p.82.
65. See Klein, *Die Einsatzgruppen*, pp. 81–82.
66. Case 526, *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, p. A-35-37.
67. KdG Zhytomyr, 12 March 1942, ZSA, P12151-1-9.
68. See Case 553, *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*. Reports of Jews killed by the district SS-Police offices in Kasatin and Rushin, ZSA, P1182-1-36 and P1182-1-6.
69. See *Handbook of the Organisation Todt* (MIRS, London, March 1945).
70. "Feldurteil" Gericht der Kdtr.des Bereiches Proskurow (FK183), 12 March 1943, Prague Military Archive Various SS Records, carton B142. I am grateful to Jürgen Matthäus for this document.
71. Hermann Kaienburg, "Jüdische Arbeitslager an der 'Strasse der SS,'" 1999. *Zeitschrift für Sozialgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts* 11 (1996): 38.
72. Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (New York, 1985), p. 996.
73. *Ibid.*, p. 993.