

The Kraków Pogrom of 11 August 1945 against the Comparative Background

1. The aim of the conducted research/the research hypothesis

The subject of the project is the analysis of the Kraków pogrom of August 1945 against the background of the preceding similar events in Poland (Rzeszów, June 1945) and abroad (Lviv, June 1945), as well as the Slovak and Hungarian pogroms at different times and places. The undertaking is a continuation of the research described in my book "Pod klątwą. Społeczny portret pogromu kieleckiego" (2018), in which I worked out a methodology of microhistorical analysis, allowing the composition of a pogrom crowd to be determined in a maximally objective manner. Thanks to the extensive biographical query it was possible to specify the composition of the forces of law and order of the Citizens' Militia (MO), the Internal Security Corps (KBW), and the Polish Army that were sent to suppress the Kielce pogrom, as well as to put forward hypotheses associated with the genesis of the event.

The question which I will address in the presented project concerns the similarities and differences that exist between the pattern according to which the Kielce and Kraków pogroms developed. To what extent did the people who were within the structures of the forces of law and order, primarily communist militia, take part in it –those who murdered Jews during the war? Are the acts of anti-Semitic violence on the Polish, Ukrainian, and Slovak lands structurally similar or fundamentally different? What are the roles of the legend of blood (blood libel), the stereotype of Żydokomuna (Jewish communists), and demographical panic and panic connected with equal rights for Jews, which destabilised traditional social relations?

In the framework of preparatory work I managed to initiate the studies on the Kraków pogrom in the IPN Archive (Institute of National Remembrance) and significantly advance the studies concerning the Ukrainian, Hungarian, and Slovak pogroms (the query was financed from the funds from the Marie Curie grant). I also have got the WiN archive (Freedom and Independence) examined in detail, which contains many sensational materials on the Kraków pogrom. This will allow me to focus in the grant on strictly microhistorical questions, resulting from personal queries, encompassing the names of the actors involved in the post-pogrom proceedings in individual locations.

2. The applied research method/the methodology

The methodology that I intend to apply, is borrowed by me from Roberta Senechal de La Roche, her concept of pogrom as an act of social control (following Donald L. Black) (*Collective violence as social control*, 1996), i.e. an act of self-help, which a society gives to itself when it cannot expect aid from the state. Such society takes the justice into its own hands, putting an end to deviations attributed to the pogrom victims¹

3. The impact of the expected results on the development of science

Thanks to the application of the biographical method in as objective manner as possible, the composition of the crowd participating in the Kraków pogrom will be determined. Taking into account the pre-war, war, and post-war past of its actors will help reconstruct ideologies by which they were guided when they attacked Jews. It is also expected that the conclusions of the research will reveal unknown aspects of the establishment and functioning of the force and order structures of newly established communist power.

¹ The study of de la Roche's concept in: W. Bergman, *Ethnic riots in situations of loss of control: revolution, civil War, and regime change as opportunity structures for anti-Jewish violence in nineteenth and twentieth-century Europe*, in: W. Heitmeyer, H.-G. Haupt, S. Malthaner, A. Kirschner, *Control of Violence. Historical and International Perspectives on Violence in Modern Societies*, Springer, New York–Dordrecht–Heidelberg–London 2011, p. 488