

## THE OPENING OF ARCHIVES AND THE HISTORY OF COMMUNISM

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### POLISH ISSUES IN NEWLY OPENED RESOURCES OF POST-SOVIET ARCHIVES

A condition indispensable for thorough familiarity with the recent history of the Polish nation and state is an examination of the documentation produced by the Russian, Soviet and once again Russian apparatus. Meanwhile, for decades, access was more than restricted, and that documentation which was disclosed and composed a surrogate workshop for historians was subjected to previous scrupulous and by no means scientific selection. The situation changed radically after the collapse of the Soviet Union and an attempt at building a political system bearing all the traits of a democracy pursued in the Russian Federation.

This process affected also the state archival service. As far as the Polish question is concerned it started on 13 April 1990, when Poland received the first part of documents concerning the murder of almost 22,000 Polish inmates and prisoners of war, committed by Soviet NKVD functionaries<sup>1</sup>. Soon after, the two governments issued *Declaration on Cooperation in the Fields of*

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<sup>1</sup>The whole of this documentation was published by Jędrzej Tucholski in the second part of his work: *Mord w Katyńiu. Kozielsk. Ostaszków. Starobielsk. Lista ofiar* (*The Murder in Katyń. Kozielsk. Ostashkov. Starobielsk. List of Victims*), Warszawa 1991. For a wider discussion see: W. Materski, *Stan publikacji dokumentów dotyczących sprawy katyńskiej uzyskanych dotychczas z archiwów rosyjskich* (*State of Publications of Documents Concerning the Katyń Issue Obtained up to Now from Russian Archives*), "Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość. Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej", vol. XXXVIII, Warszawa 1995, p. 289.

*Culture, Science and Education*, foreseeing, i.a. joint efforts as regards archival questions.

In December 1991, representatives of both central offices of the archives services signed *Protocol of Intentions*, implementing this aspect of the *Declaration* and planning an exchange of information about archival resources and complete accessibility of material kept in subordinate archives<sup>2</sup>. The resolutions contained therein were to come into force at the moment both institutions signed a suitable cooperation convention. On 27 April 1992, following brief negotiations, Poland and Russia signed *Convention about Cooperation between the Main Office of State Archives and the Committee for Archival Affairs in the Government of the Russian Federation*<sup>3</sup>. The convention predicted full accessibility of archival material relating to the history of both states and their mutual relations as well as — this is particularly significant — the duty of rendering available all types of assistance (catalogues, inventories, etc.), which would make it easier to conduct archival surveys. The *Convention* also mentioned the return of those documents whose rightful owner was the opposite party.

The Republic of Poland attached enormous importance to this agreement considering the scale of archival material of Polish origin, plundered and taken to the East in different periods. The so-called Polish Trophy Complex (*Pol'skiy trofleyntiy fond*) alone, deposited in the Centre for the Storage of Historical–Documentary Resources of the Russian Federation, contains about 1,000 archival units from the years 1914–1939 which, in accordance with international legal norms, should be returned to Poland<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup>Protokol o namierentyakh mezhdru Komitetom po dlet'am arkhivov Rossi i Genneralnoy direktsiyey gosudarstviennikh arkhivov Polshi, Moskva 20 December 1991 (document in the collection of the author).

<sup>3</sup>For a wider presentation of this convention see: B. Wo s z c z y ń s k i, *Współpraca archiwalna z Rosją i Białorusią (Archival Cooperation with Russia and Belarus)*, "Archeion", vol. XCI, Warszawa 1993, pp. 255–260; idem, *Porozumienie archiwalne z Rosją (Archival Convention with Russia)*, "Archiwista", № 88, 1993, pp. 3–8.

<sup>4</sup>They include the following complexes: the Polish Sejm; the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Poland; the Communist Party of Poland; the Ministry of Communication of the Republic of Poland; the Ministry of Military Affairs of the Republic of Poland; the second Department of the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces; the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Poland; the Chief Headquarters of the State Police; the State Police Academy; the County Headquarters of the State Police (Świętochłowice, Nowy Tomyśl); State Police Headquarters (Warszawa, Kraków, Lublin, Chorzów); the Command of the Sixth Corps Region (Information Division); the Chief Headquarters of the Border Guards; the Border Defence Corps; the Ministry of Finances of the Republic of Poland; the

The realisation of the convention provided a basis for permitting Polish historians and archivists to carry out surveys in Russian archives, albeit not all of them. There is still no access to the archives of the former *KGB*, at present the ministerial archives of the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation (*Tsentralniy Arkhiv Fiedleralnoy Sluzhbi Biezopasnosti Rossiyskoy Fiedleratsii*) and access to the Archives of the President of the Russian Federation, the former Archives of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (*Priezidentskiy Arkhiv Rossiyskoy Fiedleratsii*), the current archives of the Secretariat of the Apparatus of the President of the Soviet Union (*Tekushchiy Arkhiv Siekrietariata Apparata Priezidenta SSSR*) and archival material from the former General Prosecutor's Office of the Soviet Union remains limited.

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County Starostwo Nowy Tomyśl; the Chief Headquarters of the Legionnaire Union; the Main Board of the Federation of Polish Unions of Defenders of the Homeland; the Union of Jewish Cooperatives in Poland; regional election commissions during elections to the Sejm of the Republic of Poland and the Senate of the Republic of Poland; commands of military regions and military academies; Headquarters of the Border Guard Region (Brodnica, Łomża); collections of statutes of the Republic of Poland; Commissar of the Government of the Republic of Poland for Warsaw; the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Republic of Poland; the Ministry of Denominations and Public Education of the Republic of Poland; the Union of Polish Women Legionnaires; the Riflemen's Union; the Delegation of the Russian Red Cross for prisoners of war in the Polish Red Cross Society; the Main Board of the Camp of National Unity Camp; the Ukrainian Scientific Institute; the Ministry of the Post and Telegraph of the Republic of Poland; Youth Organisation of the Workers' University; the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reforms of the Republic of Poland; the Non-Party Bloc for Cooperation with the Government; the Main Statistical Office; material of the Intelligence service of the Republic of Poland working against the Soviet Union; the Public Prosecutor's Office of the Regional Court in Lublin; the Main Board of the Legion of Volhynian Insurgents; the Military Academy in Warsaw; branches of the Second Department of the Chief Staff (Warsaw, Vilno, Kraków, Lwów, Bydgoszcz, Brześć on the Bug); Inspection Bureaus in the General Inspectorate of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland; embassies and consulates of the Republic of Poland abroad; the Delegation of the Republic of Poland in the Mixed Frontier Commission in the East; the Chief Command of the Polish Armed Forces; the First, Third and Fourth Departments in the General Staff of the Ministry of Military Affairs of the Republic of Poland; the Józef Piłsudski Institute for Studies into the Newest History of Poland; the Military Historical Bureau; a group of Polish state, sociopolitical and military activists; the Geographical Institute of the Armed Forces; the General Commissioner of the Republic of Poland in the Free City of Gdańsk; a group of Polish national and military-diversion organisations; a group of Polish institutions and organisations from 1914-1918; the Organisational Committee of a convention of former prisoners of conscience from 1914-1921; the Kowel Branch of the Second Department of the Command of the General Region in Lublin. I based myself on: *Informacja o wynikach pracy Wojskowej Komisji Archiwalnej w archiwach Federacji Rosyjskiej w okresie wrzesień 1992 — czerwiec 1993 (Information on the Outcome of the Work of the Military Archival Commission in the Archives of the Russian Federation from September 1992 to June 1993)*, mimeographed typescript, Warszawa 1993, pp. 45-51.

The basic central Russian archives, accessible since the autumn of 1992, which contain material pertaining to have widely understood Polish issues and Polish–Soviet relations, include the above mentioned Centre for the Storage of Historical–Documentary Collections of the Russian Federation (*Tsentr Khraneniya Istoriko–Dokumental’nikh Kollektstii Rossiyskoy Fiedieratsii*), the former Central Special Archives (*Tsentrlniy Osooty Arkhiv*), the Russian Center for the Storage of Historical Collections and Studies (*Rossiyskiy Tsentr Khraneniya i Izucheniya Istoricheskikh Kollektstii*) — the former Central Archives at the Institute of Marxism–Leninism at the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (*Tsentrlniy Arkhiv Instituta Marksizma–Leninizma TsK KPSS*), the Centre for the Storage of Contemporary Documentation (*Tsentr Khraneniya Sovremennoy Dokumentatsii*) — part of the former Archives of the Central Committee of the CPSU (*Arkhiv TsK KPSS*), the Russian State Army Archives (*Rossiyskiy Gosudarstviennyi Voyennyi Arkhiv*) — the former Central State Archives of the Soviet Army (*Tsentrlniy Gosudarstviennyi Arkhiv Sovietskoy Armii*), the State Archives of the Russian Federation (*Gosudarstviennyi Arkhiv Rossiyskoy Fiedieratsii*) — the former Central State Archives of the October Revolution (*Tsentrlniy Gosudarstviennyi Arkhiv Oktiabrskoy Rievolutsii*) and the Central Archives of the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation (*Tsentrlniy Arkhiv Ministierstva Oboroni Rossiyskoy Fiedieratsii*)<sup>5</sup>.

A similar agreement about archival cooperation, planning Polish access to post–Soviet resources, was signed with Lithuania<sup>6</sup>.

In the spring of 1992, the Main Office of the State Archives of the Republic of Poland addressed the Russian side with a request for rendering state archives available for the purpose of an organised search for material concerning the fate of Poles in the East in the wake of the Red Army invasion of 17 September

<sup>5</sup>Cf. E. Fracki, *Dokumenty polskie i Polski dotyczące w archiwach rosyjskich (Polish Documents and Those Concerning Poland in Russian Archives)*, "Dzieje Najnowsze", № 1, 1993; R. Techman, *Z pobytu w archiwach moskiewskich (From a Stay in Moscow Archives)*, "Archeion", vol. XCVI, Warszawa 1996, pp. 345–349.

<sup>6</sup>H. Majewski, *Porozumienie o polsko–litewskiej współpracy archiwalnej (Convention on Polish–Lithuanian Archival Cooperation)*, "Archeion", vol. XCV, Warszawa 1995, pp. 194–196. See also: J. Skowronek, *Współpraca z archiwami litewskimi: warunki — rezultaty — perspektywy (Cooperation with Lithuanian Archives: Conditions — Results — Perspectives)*, "Archeion", vol. XCVII, Warszawa 1997.

1939. The obtained permission made it possible for the Minister of National Defence of the Republic of Poland to establish (on 29 June 1992) the Military Archival Commission entrusted with the task of an on-the-spot examination of Russian archival resources and a reprography of documents relating to Polish issues.

The Commission initiated work in September 1992, and the since obtained documents (more than 600,000 Xerox-copy leaves) were handed over to the Central Army Archives (Warsaw-Rembertów) for the purpose of their arrangement; the material is successively made available for scientific studies. In this way, an immense workshop was created for Polish historians. The resources are composed of two collections: documents concerning Polish prisoners of war in the Soviet Union during the Second World War (prisoner-of-war camps in 1939–1941, internment camps for soldiers of the Polish underground Home Army, documentation of the Board for Prisoners of War and Internees at the NKVD U.S.S.R., documentation of camp cemeteries, material relating to the Katyń massacre); documentation dealing with the intelligence and repressive activity of the Red Army and the NKVD in Polish lands (wartime crimes committed against the Polish Armed Forces and the civilian population in 1939, material about the Polish Underground, material on the Ukrainian and Belorussian staff of the partisan movement, documentation dealing with operations conducted by the NKVD–MVD U.S.S.R. in Polish lands up to 1950, documents concerning the so-called trial of the Sixteen — the deceitfully lured and arrested group of leaders of the Polish Underground state<sup>7</sup>, material pertaining to miners deported in 1945 from Upper Silesia and the Opole region to the U.S.S.R. (as slave labour); material about both Polish armies created in the Soviet Union during the second world war (the so-called General W. Anders Army, the so-called Kościuszko Division, the battle of Lenino); Red Army routes across Polish lands (the September 1939 campaign, activity in 1944–1945, the attitude of the Red Army Supreme Command towards the Warsaw Uprising, the activity of the so-called *trofiejchilki* in Polish lands and its consequences for the Polish economy); Polish political emigration in the Soviet Union; documentation pertaining to

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<sup>7</sup>Cf. *Materyały z procesu gen. Okulickiego w Moskwie w 1945 r. (Material from the Trial of General Okulicki in Moscow in 1945)*, prep. by J. Szostak and T. Wawrzyński, "Biuletyn Wojskowej Służby Archiwalnej", N° 16, 1993, pp. 119–200.

consecutive tides of repatriation from the Soviet Union to Poland; material on assorted plundered Polish property, subjected to vindication (*Pol'skiy trofleyntiy fond*), looted Polish property seized by the Soviet Union from Germany, and documents on the Polish Armed Forces from 1944–1946)<sup>8</sup>.

Truly effective work performed by the Military Archival Commission was inaugurated after 14 October 1992, when a collection of documents relating to crimes committed against Polish prisoners of war, i.a. Packet N<sup>o</sup> 1, containing decisions pertaining to the Katyń massacre, was rendered accessible and handed over to Poland<sup>9</sup>. This period is associated with the name of Prof. Rudolf Pikhoya, who from the beginning of 1996 was the head of the Russian Archival Service (*Rossarkhiv*).

Apart from the basic surveys carried out by the Military Archival Commission, Poland received collections of material selected and entrusted by the Russian side as a political gesture, purchases made by Polish institutions (chiefly scientific), material gained for joint publications prepared (or being prepared) by historians and archivists of both states, documentation presented by Russian historians and archivists, as well as the outcome of individual surveys conducted by particular researchers.

The first group includes, alongside the mentioned collection of the exceptionally significant so-called Katyń documents, a collection of several score documents handed over to Poland in November 1992, and concerning the fate of Polish citizens in the East in 1939–1951. This documentation was arranged in the Institute of Political Studies at the Polish Academy of Sciences and published in *Z archiwów sowieckich (From Soviet Archives)*, divided chronologically and thematically into five fasciculae, dealing with: Polish prisoners of war (the September 1939 campaign; internees handed over by the Lithuanian authorities), and during the initial period of the normalisation of Polish–Soviet relations, after the signing of the so-called Sikorski–Mayski treaty

<sup>8</sup>Acc. to: *Informacja o wynikach pracy WKA (Information about the Outcome of the Work of the Military Archival Commission)*, pp. 3–4 (10–53).

<sup>9</sup>For full documentation see: *Katyń. Dokumenty ludobójstwa. Dokumenty i materiały archiwalne przekazane Polsce 14 października 1992 r. (Katyń. Documents of Genocide. Documents and Archival Material Presented to Poland on 14 October 1992)*, Warszawa 1992. Selection of the most important documents in: *Katyń. Documents of Genocide. Documents and Materials from the Soviet Archives Turned over to Poland on October 14, 1992*, ed. by W. M a t e r s k i, Warszawa 1993.

of 30 July 1941<sup>10</sup>; the organisation of Polish armed forces in the the Soviet Union, the so-called General W. Anders Army and its departure for the Near East<sup>11</sup>; the period from December 1942 to July 1944, which witnessed numerous mutual conflicts and was treated as preparatory for a total subjugation of Poland *vis à vis* its Eastern neighbour<sup>12</sup>; the sombre role played by the Soviet side in the tragedy of the Warsaw Uprising<sup>13</sup>; the end part of the war and the first years of an intensive Sovietisation of Poland, as well as heretofore unknown secret amnesties bearing on repressed citizens of the former Second Polish Republic (1918–1939)<sup>14</sup>. The most essential selected documents were published as a separate volume in English<sup>15</sup>.

Another collection of documents made available to the Polish side as a political gesture, and presented in June 1990 by the State Security Committee of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic to the Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Kiev, was composed of material concerning primarily the Soviet aggression against Poland in September 1939 and internment camps for Polish citizens, subsequently issued in "Wojskowy Przegląd Historyczny"<sup>16</sup>.

Three years later, the head of the Russian archives handed over to Poland the so-called Suslov collection, supposedly containing all the documents to be found in post-Soviet archives

<sup>10</sup>*Polscy jeńcy wojenni w ZSSR 1939–1941 (Polish Prisoners of War in the U.S.S.R. 1939–1941)*, ed. by W. Materski, Warszawa 1992.

<sup>11</sup>*Armia Polska w ZSSR 1941–1942 (Polish Armed Forces in the U.S.S.R. 1941–1942)*, ed. by W. Materski, Warszawa 1992.

<sup>12</sup>*Konflikty polsko-sowieckie 1942–1944 (Polish-Soviet Conflicts 1942–1944)*, ed. by W. Roszkowski, Warszawa 1993.

<sup>13</sup>*Stalin a Powstanie Warszawskie (Stalin and the Warsaw Uprising)*, ed. by T. Strzembosz, Warszawa 1994. This documentation also in: *Związek Sowiecki a Powstanie (The Soviet Union and the Uprising)*, "Zeszyty Historyczne", N° 109, Paris 1994, pp. 181–206; *Sowieckie dokumenty wojskowe dotyczące Powstania Warszawskiego (Soviet Military Documents Concerning the Warsaw Uprising)*, ed. by S. Jaczyński, "Wojskowy Przegląd Historyczny", N° 3, 1994, pp. 226–251.

<sup>14</sup>*Powrót żołnierzy AK z sowieckich łagrów (The Return of Polish Home Army Soldiers from Soviet Camps)*, ed. by A. Paczkowski, Warszawa 1995. See also: *Nowe dokumenty do stosunków polsko-radzieckich (New Documents on Polish-Soviet Relations)*, ed. by D. Bóćkowski, "Rubleże", N° 2/3, 1993, pp. 90–92.

<sup>15</sup>*Kremlin versus Poland 1939–1945. Documents from the Soviet Archives*, ed. by W. Materski, Warszawa 1996.

<sup>16</sup>*Dokumenty katyńskie (Katyń Documents)*, ed. by M. Tarczyński, "Wojskowy Przegląd Historyczny", N° 3/4, 1990. See also: *Dokumentacja katyńska (Katyń Documentation)*, "Rzeczpospolita" 7–8 July 1990.

about the attitude of the Soviet Union to the martial law proclaimed in Poland in December 1981<sup>17</sup>. A survey conducted in Moscow archives by the well-known dissident Vladimir Bukovsky, who came across a number of other documents, including records of telephone conversations between Brezhnev and Jaruzelski and shorthand minutes from sessions held by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the CPSU, and pertaining to Polish issues, together with the so-called Operation X (the declaration of martial law), showed that the Suslov collection was by no means complete<sup>18</sup>.

In the wake of numerous Polish reminders, in May 1994, the head of the Security Service of Ukraine presented Stefan Śnieżko, Vice-Prosecutor General of the Republic of Poland, with a document of exceptional importance: the list of 3,435 names of Polish citizens imprisoned in so-called Western Ukraine, and murdered upon the basis of the same decisions passed by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) on 5 March 1940 as the prisoners of war in three so-called special camps — Kozielsk, Ostashkov and Starobielsk<sup>19</sup>. Up to now, a similar list, which should contain 3,870 names of Polish citizens, inmates of prisons in so-called Western Belorussia in March–April 1940, still remains unavailable.

A number of surveys carried out in the recently opened post-Soviet archives is financed by grants supporting work on particular topics or the supplementation of thematic documentation amassed by scientific institutes. By way of example, the grant *Poles in the North-Eastern Borderlands of the Former Second Republic under Two Occupations (1939–1946)*, coordinated by Prof. Tomasz Strzembosz and realised by the Institute of Political Studies at the Polish Academy of Sciences, enables a synthetic survey in Belorussian archives. *The History of Polish Diplomacy* grant, realised by the Institute of History at the Polish Academy of Sciences and coordinated by Prof. Gerard Labuda, assists a

<sup>17</sup>*Dokumenty: Teczki Susłowa (Documents: The Suslov Folios)*, ed. by A. Krawczyk, J. Snopkiewicz and A. Zakrzewski, Warszawa 1993. See also: V. I. Voronkov, *Sobit'ya 1980–1981 gg. v Polshe. Vzglad so Staroy Pl'oshchadi*, "Voprosy Istorii", № 10, 1995, pp. 92–121.

<sup>18</sup>V. Bukovsky, *Stan wojenny w archiwach Kremla (Martial Law in the Kremlin Archives)*, "Gazeta Polska", № 50, 19 December 1996, pp. 12–13; *Fragmentsy dokumentów z archiwum Władimira Bukowskiego (Fragments of Documents from the Archives of Vladimir Bukovsky)*, "Życie", № 64, 13 December 1996, p. 13; V. Bukovsky, *Moskiewski proces: dysydent w archiwach Kremla (A Moscow Trial: a Dissident in the Kremlin Archives)*, Warszawa 1998.



survey in the Archives of Foreign Politics of the Russian Federation. The Polish Science Foundation financed the *Joint Site — Eastern Europe* survey realised by the “Karta” Centre and the Polish Memorial programme, which produced several extensive collections of documents on the fate of Poles in present-day Ukraine, i.a. on the life of the Polish community in Ukraine during the inter-war period, and the origin, development and liquidation of the Polish National Region — the so-called Marchlewski region<sup>20</sup>. In this context, it seems worth noting that thanks to numerous methods, primarily cooperation with the Russian Memorial, the “Karta” Centre was capable of including into its so-called Eastern Archives an enormous number of documents with information about the fate of Poles in the East — from the tsarist period to the turn of the 1980s; all documents are available in the Centre offices<sup>21</sup>.

Copies of documents originating from post-Soviet resources, gathered in the Eastern Archives and concerning Polish issues, are composed of the following complexes: the Polish-Soviet war of 1920; the Polish National Region (the Marchlewski region) 1924–1935; deportations of Poles from the Kiev and Vinnitsa *oblast'* to Kazakstan; the 1933–1938 terror; Polish-Ukrainian relations 1920–1939; the Katyń massacre; Poles in Lvov 1939–1941; deportations of Polish citizens 1940–1941; Poles deported to the Komi Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic (1940–1945); the liquidation and evacuation of Soviet prisons after 22 June 1941; local representations of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Moscow (Kuybishev) 1941–1943; the Ukrainian Partisan Staff 1941–1944; the Warsaw Uprising; the liquidation of the Polish Underground 1944–1947; Poles interned in the Riazan *oblast'* 1944–1947; the deportation of Poles from the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic and Ukrainians from Poland 1944–

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<sup>19</sup>*Listy Katyńskiej ciał dalszy. Straceni na Ukrainie. Lista obywateli polskich zamordowanych na Ukrainie na podstawie decyzji Biura Politycznego WKP(b) i naczelnych władz państwowych ZSRR z 5 marca 1940 roku (A further Part of the Katyń List. Executed in Ukraine. A List of Polish Citizens Murdered in Ukraine upon the Basis of a Decision Passed by the Political Bureau of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and Supreme State Authorities of the Soviet Union on 5 March 1940)*, ed. M. Tarczyński and Z. Gajowniczek, “Zeszyty Katyńskie”, N° 4, Warszawa 1994; *Ukraiński ślad Katyńia (The Ukrainian Trace of Katyń)*, ed. by Z. Gajowniczek, Warszawa 1995.

<sup>20</sup>Cf. “Biuletyn Historycznej Agencji Informacyjnej” N° 3, 31 January 1995, pp. 2–5.

<sup>21</sup>Address: 02-536 Warszawa, ul. Narbutta 29, tel. 48-07-12, fax 48-07-28.

1947; the de-Polonisation of Soviet Ukraine in 1944–1970; the trial of the leaders of Underground Poland — the so-called trial of the Sixteen. To a certain degree, Polish issues and Poles are the topics of the following complexes in the Eastern Archives: camp revolts; the dissident movement in the Soviet Union in 1954–1986; the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation (1992). The above mentioned collections differ as regards the merit of the material and the size, oscillating from 20 to 900 documents<sup>22</sup>.

Important rank is attached to post-Soviet documentation concerning the battle route and activity of the Red Army in the so-called Polish campaign of September 1939, purchased by the Army Historical Institute. This documentation focuses on the military and political-diplomatic aspects of Soviet aggression against Poland<sup>23</sup>. Two copious volumes, out of the planned three-volume edition, have already appeared. Upon the basis of sources and material obtained by the Military Archival Commission, one of the volumes discusses preparations for, and the consequences of the appearance of Soviet armed forces in Polish eastern territories<sup>24</sup>, the second — operations conducted by the Soviet army in the south-eastern territories of the Republic of Poland<sup>25</sup>, and the third — the campaign carried out by the Red Army and the NKVD in the north-eastern parts of the Republic

<sup>22</sup>Cf. Z. Głuz a, *Archiwum Wschodnie (Eastern Archive)*, "Karta" N° 19, 1996, pp. 137–151.

<sup>23</sup>Those documents originate basically from two complexes in the Central State Army Archives of the Russian Federation: *Pokhod Krasnoy Armii v Zapadnuyu Ukrainu and Pokhod Krasnoy Armii v Zapadnuyu Bielorusiiyu*.

<sup>24</sup>*Agresja sowiecka na Polskę 17 września 1939 w świetle dokumentów (The Soviet Invasion of Poland on 17 September 1939 in the Light of Documents)*, vol. I: *Geneza i skutki agresji (The Origin and Effects of the Invasion)*, ed. E. Kozłowski, select. and ed. by C. Grzelak, S. Jaczyński, E. Kozłowski, Warszawa 1994.

<sup>25</sup>*Agresja sowiecka na Polskę 17 września 1939 w świetle dokumentów*, vol. II: *Działania wojsk Frontu Ukraińskiego (Armies of the Ukrainian Front)*, ed. S. Jaczyński, select. and prep by C. Grzelak, S. Jaczyński, E. Kozłowski, Warszawa 1996.

<sup>26</sup>*Agresja sowiecka na Polskę 17 września 1939 w świetle dokumentów*, vol. III: *Działania wojsk Frontu Białoruskiego (Armies of the Belorussian Front)*, ed. C. Grzelak, select. and prep by C. Grzelak, S. Jaczyński, E. Kozłowski, Warszawa 1995.

<sup>27</sup>*Wybór dokumentów do agresji 17. 9. 1939 r. (Selected Documents on the Invasion of 17 September 1939)*, part I, ed. by S. Jaczyński, "Wojskowy Przegląd Historyczny", N° 1, 1993, pp. 195–227; part II, ed. by S. Jaczyński, *ibid.*, N° 2, 1993, pp. 169–189; part III, ed. by C. Grzelak, *ibid.*, N° 3, 1993, pp. 173–197; part IV, *ibid.*, N° 4, 1993, pp. 211–234; part V, ed. by C. Grzelak, *ibid.*, N° 1/2, 1994, pp. 184–230; part VI, ed. by S. Jaczyński, *ibid.*, N° 4, 1994, pp. 166–172 (suppl. to part II).

of Poland<sup>26</sup>. A large part of this documentation was made available previously in "Wojskowy Przegląd Historyczny"<sup>27</sup>.

The above edition of documents about Soviet aggression is supplemented by smaller selections or even individual documents, published in specialised periodicals or as appendices to larger works. Among the numerous publications of sources found in post-Soviet archives we would like to draw attention to the original sketches of the activity of certain Red Army units, operational documentation supplementing the chronology prepared by Czesław Grzelak<sup>28</sup>, and important documents from the Regional State Archives in Lviv, illustrating the little-known problem of administrative counteraction against the spread of so-called defeatist moods in the eastern borderlands of the Republic of Poland in the course of the September campaign<sup>29</sup>, as well as the minutes of a session of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), held on 1 October 1939, which discussed extensively the technical and organisational course of the absorption and Sovietisation of the newly seized lands — including such details as the price of a kilogramme of salt<sup>30</sup>.

In the above context, a mention should be made of a *sui generis* paradox connected with the newly won access to post-Soviet archival resources. I have in mind the disclosure in the former Special Archives (today: the Centre for the Storage of Historical-Documentation Collections) of material of the Second Department of the Chief Staff of the Polish Armed Forces, lost in September 1939, and the Branch of the Second Department of the Chief Staff of the Polish Armed Forces (*fondy* 308 and 461). This material, initially captured in 1945 by the Germans and stored in archives in Gdańsk-Oliwa, was seized by the Red Army. Part was returned to Poland in 1954 and 1963; the other part, in

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<sup>28</sup>C. Grzelak, *Dziennik sowieckiej agresji. Wrzesień 1939 (Dziary of Soviet Invasion. September 1939)*, Warszawa 1994, pp. 216–231. See also: *Grif sekrietnosti snyat. Potert voruzhonnikh sil' SSSR v voynakh, boyevykh deystviyakh i voyennikh konfliktakh. Statisticheskoye issledovaniye*, ed. by G. Krivosheyeva, Moskva 1993.

<sup>29</sup>*Pierwsze dni II wojny światowej na Kresach Wschodnich RP (First Days of the Second World War in the Eastern Territories of the Republic of Poland)*, ed. by M. Sycz, "Dzieje Najnowsze", N° 1, 1994, pp. 121–125.

<sup>30</sup>"Ustanovili' tseni: na sol — 20 kopeyek za kilogramm...". *Dokument*, ed. by N. S. Lebedieva, "Moskovskiyе novosti" N° 47, 24 November — 1 December 1996, p. 18.

the form of so-called reserved secret collections, remained inaccessible to historians up to 1992. At present, both are available and first publications based on the documents have been already issued<sup>31</sup>.

Finally, an issue considered by historians upon numerous occasions<sup>32</sup>, but so far without a source basis. I have in mind the appearance of the first, greatly superficial and indirect documents concerning anti-Polish cooperation between the Soviet and the German political police — the NKVD and the Gestapo<sup>33</sup>. The whole issue still remains unclear, and it will be probably difficult to resolve it without access to the so-called Rudolf Hess archives, kept in the United Kingdom and to be opened in the year 2020.

An important document relating directly to the Polish campaign of September 1939 (the so-called liberation march of the Red Army across Polish lands) is composed of shorthand minutes from a session held in December 1940 by Red Army high commanders<sup>34</sup>. The topic of the debates were conclusions stemming from the 1939–1940 campaign, and in particular the wars against Poland and Finland. This specific material, dealing primarily with military operations, indubitably possesses great cognitive merits.

A number of newly revealed documents from the extremely inaccessible archives of the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation (formerly, the KGB) is presented in a source-material study by Antoni Przygoński, who analysed the attitude

<sup>31</sup>K. Badziak, G. Matwiejew, P. Samuś, "Powstanie" na Zaolziu w 1938 r. Polska akcja specjalna w świetle dokumentów Oddziału II Sztabu Głównego WP (The "Uprising" in Zaolzie in 1938. Polish Special Operation in the Light of Documents of the Second Department of the Chief Staff of the Polish Armed Forces), Warszawa 1997; e idem, Operacja "Łom". Polskie działania dywersyjne na Rusi Zakarpackiej w świetle materiałów Oddziału II Sztabu Głównego WP (Operation "Crowbar". Polish Diversion in Carpathian Ruthenia in the Light of Material of the Second Department of the Chief Staff of the Polish Armed Forces), Warszawa 1998; J. Lubach, Nowe archiwalia do dziejów Kolonii Gruzińskiej w II Rzeczypospolitej (New Archival Material for the History of the Georgians in the Second Republic), "Pro Georgia. Prace i materiały do dziejów stosunków gruzińsko-polskich", vol. IV, 1994, pp. 78–79.

<sup>32</sup>Cf. e.g. A. Bregman, Najlepszy sojusznik Hitlera. Studium o współpracy niemiecko-sowieckiej 1939–1941 (Hitler's Best Ally. A Study on German-Soviet Cooperation in 1939–1941), London, no date of publication.

<sup>33</sup>O. V. Vishlov, "Krakovskiy protokol" 1940 g. Bilo li "antipolskoye soglaseniye" miezhdu NKVD i gestapo? "Novaya novteyshaya istoriya", № 5, 1995.

<sup>34</sup>Nakanunite voynt. Materiali sovieshchantiya vsshiego rukovoditashchego sostava RKKA 23–31 dtekabria 1940 g., "Russkiy Arkhiv", vol. 12: *Vielikaya Ottechestvennaya*, part 1, Moskva 1993.

<sup>35</sup>A. Przygoński, *Stalin a Powstanie Warszawskie (Stalin and the Warsaw Uprising)*, Warszawa 1994.

of Stalin towards the Warsaw Uprising<sup>35</sup>. A parallel study by historians from the Army Historical Institute, concerning a similar topic, is intent on capturing all heretofore available documents associated with the sudden halt of the Red Army offensive in July 1944 along the Vistula. This publication includes documents from July to October 1944, part of which were obtained from the Central Archives of the Ministry of Defence of the U.S.S.R. in Podolsk before the disintegration of the Soviet Union. The documentation is arranged in chronological-thematic order within three groups: sources from the Chief Headquarters of the Supreme Command of the General Staff of the Red Army and central institutions of the People's Defence Commissariat of the U.S.S.R.; material of the command and staff of the First Belorussian Front; material of the command of the 47 Army of the Red Army, the First Army of the Polish Armed Forces, and the 16 Air Force Army of the Red Army<sup>36</sup>.

Other publications include first joint presentations of documents from post-Soviet archival resources relating to Poland. Particularly high rank is attached to the joint four-volume edition of documents associated with the Katyń massacre, realised by the head offices of the Polish and Russian archives: the origin and functioning of prisoner of war camps; crimes against Polish prisoners of war; the fate of officers who survived the operation; and echoes of the Katyń massacre<sup>37</sup>. The first two volumes of the edition have already appeared. The inaugurative volume contains 220 most important documents from resources of, for all practical purposes, every pertinent post-Soviet archive<sup>38</sup>. Thanks to this documentation we know the moment of the passage of the

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<sup>36</sup>Na oczach Kremla. Tragedia walczącej Warszawy w świetle dokumentów rosyjskich (*Within the Sight of the Kremlin. The Tragedy of Insurgent Warsaw in the Light of Russian Documents*), Warszawa 1994 [authors of studies: A. Chmielarz, S. Jacyński, T. Panek]; editor of documents: J. Margules]. This selection does not include one of the basic, but earlier published documents — cf. *Sprawozdanie dowódcy 2 Apanc. z bitwy pod Warszawą (Report by the commander of the Second Armoured Army on the battle of Warsaw)*, ed. by J. Margules, "Wojskowy Przegląd Historyczny", № 2, 1989, pp. 253–269.

<sup>37</sup>Furthermore, two additional volumes will be published only in the Polish edition: the letters and diaries of prisoners of war; verified lists of murdered prisoners of war from three special camps and prisons in so-called Western Belorussia and Western Ukraine.

<sup>38</sup>*Katyń. Dokumenty zbrodni (Katyń, Documents of a Crime)*, vol. I: *Jeńcy nie wypowiedzianej wojny. Śmierć 1939 — marzec 1940 (Prisoners of War of an Undeclared War. August 1939– March 1940)*, ed. by N. Lebedieva, W. Materski, N. Pietrosova and B. Woszczyński, Warszawa 1995.

genocidal decision; the persons responsible for the course and supervision of its implementation, as well as the exact number of the victims (21,857). It has been possible to recreate in great detail the earlier fate of the Polish prisoners of war — the course of their adaptation to Soviet captivity, the organisation of transitory, selection and labour camps, and the three so-called special camps. The same holds true for the time of the decisions about the handing over the prisoners by the Red Army to the Ministry of the Interior (the NKVD); the creation for this purpose of a special institution within the GULAG: the Board for Prisoners of War at the NKVD U.S.S.R. (from the very onset headed by Piotr Spurienko) and its local network, based on NKVD Boards in the western regions of the Soviet Union. We have information about the taking over of Polish prisoners of war interned in Lithuania by the NKVD, as well as the handing over to the Germans of Polish prisoners of war, predominantly rank-and-file soldiers from territories annexed in 1939 by the Third Reich. Newly obtained material recreates the chancery system and the mechanism of decisions pertaining to prisoners of war within the entire Soviet mechanism of power as well as the NKVD. Work on the equally extensive second volume is nearing completion. The widely delineated survey conducted for this purposes provided (in the form of Xerox copies) diverse and rich material, including several hundred leafs concerning the fate of Czech and Slovak soldiers of the so-called Czech Legion, organised alongside the Polish Armed Forces, who in September 1939 were taken into Soviet captivity.

The second volume of the edition in question offers post-Soviet source material dating from March to June 1940, and a wide discussion about the execution of the genocidal decision made on 5 March 1940 by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks)<sup>39</sup>. The documentation concerns not only the murder of 21,857 citizens of the Second Republic, inmates of the three so-called special camps (Kozielsk, Ostashkov and Starobielsk) as well as prisons in Western parts of Belorussia and Ukraine, but also the deportations of the families of the murdered prisoners of war and prison inmates, as well as labour camps intended for prisoners of war. The contained material testifies that the Katyń massacre was not

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<sup>39</sup>*Katyń. Dokumenty zbrodni*, vol. II: *Zagłada. Marzec-czerwiec 1940 (Annihilation. March-June 1940)*, ed. by N. Lebedeva, W. Materski, N. Pietrosova, B. Woszczyński and E. Rosowska, Warszawa 1998.

an isolated crime, but comprised the most important link in a whole chain of undertakings performed by the Soviet authorities as regards the so-called Polish issue. Furthermore, it forms unambiguous evidence of the fact that the most significant criminal decisions were not an arbitrary act of the NKVD, but the consequence of a strict realisation of decisions made at the supreme level — the Political Bureau of the All-Union Communist Party and the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R.

Three testimonies by the direct executors of the Katyń genocide, comprise shocking documents, created *ex post* and of varying value, reprinted in the second volume of *Katyń. Dokumenty zbrodni (Katyń. Documents of a Crime)*.

Particular significance belongs to the copious testimony by Dmitri Tokarev, former chief of the NKVD in Kalinin (Tver), published *in extenso* and concerning the murder of 6,300 internees from the Ostashkov camp, committed in the cellars of the headquarters of the regional NKVD Board<sup>40</sup>. This evidence contains the pedantically recalled course of the crime as well as its organisational and technical details. Similar material in the possession of the General Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Poland and the independent Historical Committee for Studying the Katyń Crime can be found in five protocols of interrogations of Mitrofan Syromiatnikov, former guard in the NKVD prison in Kharkov<sup>41</sup>. In contrast to Tokarev, this witness testified evasively, in an attempt to obliterate his role in the murder; nonetheless, this document too makes a great contribution to our knowledge about the last days and hours of the prisoners of war from the Starobielsk camp, as well as the place and circumstances of their burial. Two most essential protocols of the testimonies — the first and the fourth (with the participation of the Polish prosecutor Stefan Śnieżko) have been published<sup>42</sup>. The military prosecutor, Colonel Andrei Trietietski, was unable to conduct a similar interrogation of Piotr Soprunienko, head of the Main Board of

<sup>40</sup>*Zeznanie Tokariewa (The Tokarev Testimony)*, "Zeszyty Katyńskie" № 3, Warszawa 1994.

<sup>41</sup>B. Łojek, *Zeznania Syromiatnikowa w sprawie wymordowania jeńców polskich (The Siromiatnikov Testimonies Concerning the Murder of Polish Prisoners of War)*, "Zeszyty Katyńskie" № 5: *II półwiecze zbrodni. Katyń-Twer-Charków (The Second Half a Century of a Crime. Katyń-Tver-Kharkov)*, Warszawa 1995, pp. 64–73.

<sup>42</sup>*Zeznania Syromiatnikowa (The Siromiatnikov Testimonies)* ed. by B. Łojek, "Wojskowy Przegląd Historyczny", № 1/2, 1995, pp. 423–438.

Prisoners of War at the NKVD U.S.S.R., and thus restricted himself to noting down vague responses to earlier presented 19 questions, which add little to our knowledge about about this heinous institution<sup>43</sup>. A more exhaustive account was not obtained up to the death of Soprunienko (23 June 1992).

A monumental edition of documents about Soviet crimes against the Estonian nation, published in Tallin, includes material pertaining to the creation and liquidation of so-called Polish national regions, as well as major documents about the Katyń massacre<sup>44</sup>. The author included them into the publication predominantly due to their shockingly spectacular qualities as well as their cognitive merit for Poles living in Estonia.

Owing to its dimension and a half a century of odious manipulation, intent on concealing the true perpetrators, the Katyń crime stirs highly emotional reactions in Poland. The documents presented in the above mentioned editions were frequently reprinted in brochures, the press, historical and veterans' periodicals as well as published as appendices in scientific monographic studies. New material from the post-Soviet resources, disclosed and issued, supplemented details of the image produced by this basic documentation. Due to the enormous number of such publications, it is simply impossible to mention

<sup>43</sup>M. Harz, *Pierwsze zeznanie Soprunienki (The first Soprunienko Testimony)*, "Zeszyty Katyńskie", № 5: *II półwiecze zbrodni. Katyń-Twer-Charków*, Warszawa 1995, pp. 136-146 (*Protokół przesłuchania świadka (Protocol of a witness interrogation)*), pp. 137-146).

<sup>44</sup>*Vümatu vaikida [Nievozmozhno mol'chat']*, Hilda Sabbo, vol. I-II, Tallin 1996.

<sup>45</sup>Here are some examples: *Katyń: Starobielsk, Ostaszków, Kozielsk. Najnowsze dokumenty NKWD (Katyń: Starobielsk, Ostashkov, Kozielsk. Newest NKVD Documents)*, Paris 1990; *Katynskiy golosa*, ed. by N. S. Lebiedieva, "Noviy mir" 1991, № 2, pp. 214-220; *Wybrane dokumenty dotyczące funkcjonowania i likwidacji obozu w Starobielsku: (wrzesień 1939 — czerwiec 1940) (Select Documents Concerning the Functioning and Liquidation of the Camp in Starobielsk (September 1939 — June 1940))*, ed. by W. Roman, "Biuletyn Wojskowej Służby Archiwalnej", № 16, 1993, pp. 83-118; *Anatomia kłamstwa: dokumenty dotyczące zamordowanych jeńców w Katyniu (The Anatomy of a Lie: Documents Concerning Prisoners of War Murdered in Katyń)*, ed. by K. Kulczycka, "Pamięć Narodu", № 1, 1993, pp. 3, 12-14; *Słowa tęsknoty. Zachowane listy jeńców Kozielska, Ostaszkowa i Starobielska (Words of Longing. Preserved Letters by Prisoners of War in Kozielsk, Ostashkov and Starobielsk)*, ed. by E. Grüner-Zarnoch and M. D. Wołagiewicz, Szczecin 1996, pp. 225-245; *Katynskaya drama. Kozielsk, Starobielsk, Ostashkov: Sud'ba internirovannikh polskikh voyennosluzhashchikh*, Moskva 1991; *Katynskoye dielo: mozhno li postavit' tochku?*, "Vojenny Arkhiv Rossii", vol. I, 1993, pp. 123-174; *Dokumenty (Documents)* in: *Rosja a Katyń. "Biuletyn Historycznej Agencji Informacyjnej" (special edition) (Russia and Katyń)*, Warszawa 1994, pp. 90-109; A. Głowacki, *Obozy pracy dla polskich jeńców wojennych na wschodniej Ukrainie (w świetle dokumentów sowieckich) 1939-1940*



them all in our study<sup>45</sup>. At the same time, new documents produced by the Board for Prisoners of War and Internees of the NKVD U.S.S.R. pertain to other repressions of Polish citizens, performed by the apparatus of this institution<sup>46</sup>, especially in the wake of the liberation of Vilno by the Polish Home Army together with the Red Army — the so-called Ostra Brama Operation<sup>47</sup>.

A volume containing documents from 1944–1949, throwing light on the mechanism of the subjugation of the Polish state and the ruling party (the Polish Workers' Party — the Polish United Workers' Party) to Moscow, is an important joint edition<sup>48</sup>. It contains material from that part of the central apparatus of the Communist Party of Russia which steered foreign communist parties and associated organisations (apparatuses of power). The volume, which was issued parallel in Poland and in Russia<sup>49</sup>, possesses additional rank due to the fact that access to part of the documentation contained therein is now prohibited (the so-called *zakrytye fondi*) as a result of changes among the top rank staff of the Russian archival services (the dismissal of Rudolf Pikhoy).

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(*Labour camps for Polish prisoners of war in Eastern Ukraine (in the light of Soviet documents) 1939–1949*), "Dzieje Najnowsze", № 1, 1994, pp. 43–58; *Materiały archiwalne (Archive material)*, in: *Obozy jenieckie NKWD. IX 1939 — VIII 1941 (NKVD POW Camps. September 1939–August 1941)*, ed. S. Jacyński, Warszawa 1995, pp. 143–254; *Jeńcy polscy w ZSRR w początkowym okresie niewoli. Dokumenty (Polish Prisoners of War in the U.S.S.R. during the Initial Stage of Captivity. Documents)*, ed. by S. Jacyński, "Wojskowy Przegląd Historyczny", № 1/2, 1995, pp. 405–422; J. Tucholski, *Polacy w ZSRR 1939–1941 w dokumentach NKWD (Poles in the U.S.S.R. 1939–1941 in NKVD documents)*, *ibid.*, pp. 388–392; *Meldunki komisarzy politycznych z okresu likwidacji obozów specjalnych NKWD (Reports of Political Commissars from the Period of the Liquidation of Special NKVD Camps)*, *ibid.*, № 1, 1996. See also: *Jeńcy wojenni II wojny światowej. Stan archiwów i najnowszych badań (Prisoners of War during the Second World War. State of Archives and Newest Research)*, Opole 1996.

<sup>46</sup>*Organ gosbezopasnosti SSSR v godi Velikoy Otechestviennoy voynt. Sbornik dokumentov*, vol. I, book 1, Moskva 1995.

<sup>47</sup>*Dokumenty Zarządu NKVD d/s Jeńców Wojennych i Internowanych (1939–1955) (Documents of the NKVD Board for Prisoners of War and Internees, 1939–1955)*, ed. by W. Roman, "Biuletyn Wojskowej Służby Archiwalnej", № 16, 1993, pp. 64–77.

<sup>48</sup>*Polska–ZSRR. Struktury podległości. Dokumenty KC WKP(b) 1944–1949 (Poland–U.S.S.R.. Structures of Subordination. Documents of the Central Committee of the All–Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) 1944–1949)*, ed. G. Bordiugov, A. Koseski, G. Matvieyev and A. Paczkowski, Warszawa 1995.

<sup>49</sup>*SSSR–Polsha. Miekhanizm podchintentya. 1944–1949 gg. Sbornik dokumentov*, ed. by G. Bordiugov, G. Matvieyev, A. Koseski and A. Paczkowski, Moskva 1995.

<sup>50</sup>*The Cominform: Minutes of the Three Conferences 1947/1948/1949*, ed. by G. Procacci, Milano 1994.

A correlating publication is a copious volume of documentation, prepared by an Italian–Russian team of authors<sup>50</sup>, based predominantly on the archives of the former Information Bureau of the Communist and Workers' Parties (Cominform, Informbureau) from the early period of the functioning of the centres, with whose assistance Moscow disciplined particular communist parties and realised its policy towards the West, in which, as is shown by the sources, Poland occupied an essential place. The second edition was expanded by a number of new findings upon the basis of an archival survey continued in Moscow, significant also from the viewpoint of the interpretation of the available documentation and new factography<sup>51</sup>.

The intention of a publication series, written in Russian–German co-production, is to render available archival sources concerning so-called difficult topics. A markedly Polish aspect belongs to documentation included in the first volume of the edition, dealing with the military cooperation of the Reichswehr and the Red Army, whose basic link, as is known, was mutual hostility towards Poland<sup>52</sup>. Numerous documents, published earlier in Russia and originating from post-Soviet resources, show the anti-Polish edge of Soviet–German military cooperation, based on the so-called Rappalo Treaty and the Berlin Treaty signed in April 1926<sup>53</sup>.

<sup>51</sup>*Sovieshchantiya Kominforma. 1947, 1948, 1949. Dokumenti i materialy*, ed. by G. M. Adibekov, A. D. Biaggio, L. Y. Gibianskiy, F. Gori, S. Pons, Moskva 1998.

<sup>52</sup>*Reichswehr und Rote Armee. Dokumente aus den Militärarchiven Deutschlands und Russlands 1925–1931*, ed. by K. von Jena and N. E. Eliseeva, Koblenz 1995.

<sup>53</sup>Cf. e. g. Y. A. Dyakov, T. S. Bushuyeva, *Fashistskiy mtech kovalstva v SSSR. Krasnaya Armiya i Reykhsvier. Taynoye sotrudnichestvo 1922–1933 gg. Niezviestniye dokumenty*, Moskva 1992. See also: *Biale plamy. ZSRR — Niemcy 1939–1941. Dokumenty i materialy dotyczące stosunków radziecko-niemieckich w okresie od kwietnia 1939 r. do lipca 1941 r. (Blank Pages, U.S.S.R. –Germany 1939–1941. Documents and Material Concerning Soviet–German Relations from April 1939 to July 1941)*, Vilnius 1990; *Oglasheniyyu podlezhit: SSSR — Giermaniya. 1939–1941 gg. Dokumenty i materialy*, Moskva 1991.

<sup>54</sup>Cf. e. g. *Nakanunie. Pieriegovory V. M. Molotova v Bierlinie w noyabrie 1940 goda*, "Miezhdunarodnaya Zhizn'" 1991, № 6–8; *Skritaya pravda voynt: 1941 god. Niezviestniye dokumenty*, Moskva 1992; *Sovietsko-giermanskiye dokumenty 1939–1941 gg. iz Arkhiva TsK KPSS*, "Novaya novteyshaya istoriya" 1993, № 1; *Siekrietii Gitlera na stole u Stalina. Razviedka i kontrazviedka o podgotovkie giermanskoy agressii protiv SSSR. Mart–tyun' 1941 g. Dokumenty iz Tsentralnogo Arkhiva FSB Rossii*, Moskva 1995; L. Bez mensk y, *Siekrietniy pakt s Gitlerom pisa lichno Stalin. "NV" poluchilo dostup k lichnomu arkhivu vozhdia*, "Novoye vremia" 1998, № 1, pp. 30–33.

Indirectly, Polish issues are discussed in a number of recently available documents about the dissolution of the alliance and the beginning of the Soviet–German war<sup>54</sup>.

A number of editions of post-Soviet sources about Poland, prepared by Russian researchers, appeared in Russia. They include, i.a. two volumes of newly disclosed documentation relating to the Polish–Soviet war of 1919–1920<sup>55</sup>. This edition contains about 250 documents from three central archives, pertaining to assorted aspects of the conflict, i.a. the communist movement in Polish lands; the activity of Polish communists in the Soviet Union; the sociopolitical situation in Lithuania, Belorussia and Ukraine; information of the Soviet intelligence services about the situation in Poland; propaganda and diversion against Poland; the course of armed struggle; the organisation of the so-called Polish Red Army; the activity of the Communist Provisional Revolutionary Committee of Poland in 1920; prisoners of war; the attitude of the Polish population towards the Bolsheviks; truce negotiations; and international aspects of the Polish–Bolshevik conflict.

An important supplementation to this edition is the selection of documents published in “Niepodległość i Pamięć”, and originating from the *Polish Bureau of Agitation and Propaganda at the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in 1917–1931*, deposited in the Russian Centre for the Storage of Historical–Documentation Collections<sup>56</sup>. Originally chosen from the viewpoint of biogrammes of leftist activists, the presented selection of documents functioned as an important cornerstone of sources for the history of the so-called Polish revolutionary left. They demonstrate the anti-state and anti-national activity of Polish communists, accentuating their participation in the 1920 campaign on the Bolshevik side.

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<sup>54</sup> *Pol'sko-sovietskaya voyna 1919–1920. (Raneye nie opublikovanniye dokumenty i materialy)*, part I–II, ed. I. I. Kostushko, ed. by I. I. Kostushko and M. N. Chertnikh, Moskva 1994.

<sup>55</sup> *Dokumenty do dziejów lewicy polskiej w Rosji w latach 1919–1921 (Documents on the history of the Polish Left in Russia in 1919–1921)*, introd. M. Wrzosek, ed. by A. Pacholczyk and Z. Strzyżewska, “Niepodległość i Pamięć”, N° 3: 75 rocznica Bitwy Warszawskiej 1920 r. (75th Anniversary of the Battle of Warsaw of 1920), Warszawa 1995, pp. 189–231.

Another highly attention-worthy collection is the *Special Stalin Folio*, stored in the State Archives of the Russian federation, and including a wide array of material about Poland. Its inventory has been made available in print, facilitating the work of historians and archivists interested in a survey<sup>57</sup>. A similar publication, also of great help for studies focused on material concerning Poland and found in post-Soviet archival resources, is an inventory of sources published in Russia and relating to the military aspects of Polish-Soviet relations in 1941–1945<sup>58</sup>.

Significant cognitive value belongs to documentation about mass-scale deportations and re-emigrations of Poles, published by Nikolai Bugay upon the basis of a survey found in the *Special Stalin Folio*<sup>59</sup>. This documentation is composed of 76 documents from January 1936 to January 1959, illustrating chiefly three mass-scale repressive operations in relation to the Polish population: the liquidation of Polish national regions during the second half of the 1930s — the so-called Marchlewski and Dzierzhinsky regions; four mass-scale deportations of the population of annexed Polish lands in 1940–1941; and the campaign of deporting so-called specialist-settlers from the liberated terrains. The documents in question include reports by heads of resorts, resolutions and decrees, orders, letters, official

<sup>57</sup> *Arkhiv novleyshey istorii Rossii*, vol. I: *Osobaya papka I. V. Stalina. Iz materialov Siekretariata NKVD–MVD SSSR 1944–1953 gg. Katalog dokumentov*, ed. by V. P. Kozlov and S. V. Mironienko, Moskva 1994. See also: S. Krivienko, *Teczka Stalina. Raporty z Polski (The Stalin Folio. Reports from Poland)*, "Karta" № 15, 1995, pp. 28–52.

<sup>58</sup> "Russkiy Arkhiv", vol. XIV, 3/1: *Vielikaya Ottechestvinnaya vojna. SSSR i Pol'sha: 1941–1945. K istorii voyennogo soyuza. Dokumenty i materialy*, ed. V. A. Zolotareva, prep. by N. V. Vasilyev, S. Y. Lavrenov, S. G. Aukashov and Y. N. Pietrenko, Moskva 1994.

<sup>59</sup> *Specjalna Teczka Stalina : deportacje i reemigracje Polaków (The Special Stalin Folio: deportations and re-emigrations of Poles)*, ed. by N. F. Bugay, "Zeszyty Historyczne", № 107, Paris 1994, pp. 76–151. See also: V. N. Ziemskov, *Spetspostelentsi (po dokumentatsii NKVD–MVD SSSR)*, "Socjologicheskiye issledovaniya" № 11, 1990. See also: "Pogruzheni v esheloni i otpravleni k miestam postelenty..." L. Bertiya — I. Stalinu, "Istoriya SSSR", № 1, 1991; *40–50-ye godi: posledstviya dieportatsii narodov. (Svidetelstvuyut arkhivi NKVD–MVD SSSR)*, "Istoriya SSSR" № 1, 1992; E. Kowalska, *Zesłańcze przesiedlenia obywateli polskich z kresów wschodnich II Rzeczypospolitej w głąb Związku Radzieckiego w latach 1940–1941 — w świetle dokumentów Wojsk Konwojowych NKWD (Deportations of Polish Citizens from the Eastern Territories of the Second Republic in 1940–1941 in the Light of Documents of the NKVD Convoy Forces)*, "Dzieje Najnowsze", № 4, 1995, pp. 67–73.

<sup>60</sup> *Materiali k serti Narody i kultury*, XII edition: *Dieportatsii narodov SSSR (1930-ye — 1950-ye godi, part 1: Dokumentalniye istochniki Tsentralnogo Gosudarstvennogo Arkhiva Oktyabrskoy Revolutsii, vysshikh organov gosudarstvennoy vlasti i organov gosudarstvennogo upravleniya (TsGAOR) SSSR*, Moskva 1992.

correspondence of the NKVD–MVD U.S.S.R. centre with its local network, statistical tables, etc. The publication is supplemented by documents from the former Archives of the October Revolution<sup>60</sup> as well as the NKVD archives in Minsk, i.a. lists which for the first time reveal the scale of the consequences of the liquidation of the so-called Dzierzhinsky region, exceeding 14,000 fatalities<sup>61</sup>. Numerous Polish accents are to be found in the extensive documentation from the NKVD archives in Kharkov and Kiev, published in Ukraine and concerning repressions affecting Ukrainian NKVD activists during the second half of the 1930s, associated, i.a. with the Polish–Bolshevik war of 1920, peace negotiations in Riga, and the liquidation of the so-called Marchlewski region<sup>62</sup>. Polish accents in the newly disclosed documentation from Ukrainian security organs are much more numerous<sup>63</sup>.

Another NKVD source is a document of the Third Department of OGPU from the second half of the 1930s, dealing with a diagnosis by the Soviet intelligence service and concerning the internal political life in Poland, including the degree of the organisation of national minorities. In the autumn of 1939, operational activity in the vanquished Second Republic was probably conducted upon the basis of exactly this document<sup>64</sup>.

We received an important selection of documentation illustrating the degeneration of Soviet nationality policies in relation to Poles and Jews in Lithuania<sup>65</sup>. Soviet documentation published by Grzegorz Mazur accents the little-known fate of Polish

<sup>60</sup>R. Platonau, M. Stashkiewicz, *Dziewięć apieratsit suprats wrogau naroda*, "Bielaruskí Gistarichn Chasopis", № 1, 1993, pp. 73–80.

<sup>62</sup>*Dokumenty z istoriyi NKVD URSR*, "Nashe Minulye", № 1(6), Ki'iv 1993, pp. 39–150.

<sup>63</sup>*Represivno-karalna sistema v Ukraini 1917–1953. Suspilno-politichnyi ta istoriko-pravovyi analiz v dvoikh knihakh*, Ki'iv 1994; *Z arkhiviv VUCHK–GPU–NKVD–KGB*, "Nauchno-publitsistichnyi zhurnal", № 1/2, 1995; *Deportatsii. Zakhidni zemli Ukrainy knica 30–kh — pochatku 50–kh r.r. Dokumenti, materiali, spohadi*, vol. I: 1939–1945 r.r., Lviv 1996.

<sup>64</sup>*Rozpoznanie przez NKWD ZSRR Kolonii Gruzjińskiej w Polsce (1939) (NKVD Infiltration of the Georgian Colony in Poland, 1939)*, prep. by W. Materski, "Pro Georgiia. Prace i materiały do dziejów stosunków gruzjińsko-polskich", vol. IV, Warszawa 1994, pp. 80–83.

<sup>65</sup>N. W. Iwanow, *Litości ... Represje w obwodzie wilejskim w dokumentach 1939–1941 (Have Pity... Repressions in the Vilno Region in Documents 1939–1941)*, prep. by W. I Adamusko, N. W. Iwanow, Warszawa 1996.

<sup>66</sup>G. Mazur, *Uchodźcy polscy na Litwie w świetle dokumentów NKWD i NKGB (1940–1941) (Polish Refugees in Lithuania in the Light of NKVD and NKGB Documents, 1940–1941)*, "Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej" 1993, vol. XXXVI.

refugees in Lithuania prior to the fourth mass-scale deportation (June 1941)<sup>66</sup>.

The publication by Albin Głowacki, who upon the basis of a laborious survey carried out in Russian and Ukrainian archives established the composition of NKVD authorities in 1939–1941<sup>67</sup> can be regarded as a highly ranking document. The same holds true for his reconstruction of the complete composition of the personnel of the Soviet apparatus of repression in Eastern Little Poland and Volhynia. The victims included many local Poles and refugees from territories captured by Germany<sup>68</sup>.

One of the least examined themes in the domain of the martyrology of Polish citizens in the East during the Second World War is the evacuation of front-line prisons in June–July 1941. At that time, the NKVD murdered an inestimable number of citizens of the former Republic of Poland, imprisoned in so-called Western Belorussia and Western Ukraine. The scarce disclosed documents include publications issued by “Karta”, which demonstrate that the victims of this operation totalled at least 42,776<sup>69</sup>. Other normative and executive documents linked with the evacuation of Soviet prisons as well as witness accounts are contained in *Drogi śmierci (Routes of Death)*, published by the “Karta” Centre as part of the so-called “White Series”<sup>70</sup>.

Yet another important publication is the first volume in the documentary series *Stalintzm w Europie Wschodniej 1944–1953 (Stalinism in Eastern Europe 1944–1953)*, prepared upon the

<sup>66</sup>A. Głowacki, *Z archiwów postradzkiekich. Obsada personalna władz NKWD w latach 1939–1941 (From Post-Soviet Archives. The NKVD Staff in 1939–1941)* in: *Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość (Memory and Justice)*, “Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej”, Warszawa 1995, pp. 203–223.

<sup>68</sup>A. Głowacki, *Sowiecki aparat represji w Małopolsce Wschodniej i na Wołyniu, 1939–1941 (The Soviet Repression Apparatus in Eastern Little Poland and Volhynia 1939–1941)*, in: *Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość*, “Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej”, Warszawa 1997–1998, vol. XL, pp. 281–297.

<sup>69</sup>*Ewakuacja 1941. Dokumenty (Evacuation 1941. Documents)*, “Karta”, № 12, 1994, pp. 137–138.

<sup>70</sup>K. Popiński, A. Kokurin, A. Gurjanow, *Drogi śmierci. Ewakuacja więźniów sowieckich z Kresów Wschodnich II Rzeczypospolitej w czerwcu i lipcu 1941 (Routes of Death. The Evacuation of Soviet Prisoners in the Eastern Borderlands of the Second Republic in June and July 1941)*, Warszawa 1995. See also: P. Kilakovski, *Roztrilani na pochodku wityny*, “Z archiwiv VUCHK-GPU-NKVD-KGB” 1995, № 1, pp. 399–475.

<sup>71</sup>*NKVD i pol'skoye podpole 1944–1945. (Po Osobim papkam I. V. Stalina)*, ed. A. F. Noskova, prep by T. V. Vo'okil'na, G. P. Murashko, A. F. Noskova and D. A. Yermakova, Moskva 1994.

basis of the above mentioned archival collection — the *Special Stalin Folio*, supplemented with material from the affiliated *Special Molotov Folio*<sup>71</sup>. The gathered accounts present the struggle waged by the NKVD against political and armed forces which opposed the Red Army sweeping across Polish territory, and tried to resist the subordination of the country to Soviet control. The redominating documents are on-the-spot reports, dispatches about “operation-Chekist” actions, letters and notes by Beria, addressed to Stalin and Molotov, information from the Chief of the Soviet military counter-intelligence, reports by NKVD plenipotentiaries along front-lines crossing Polish territories, reports by Soviet advisers in the Polish Ministry of Public Security, testimonies and protocols of interrogations, etc. Translations of certain documents from the volume *NKVD i pol'skoye podpole* appeared in the press and specialist periodicals<sup>72</sup>.

An essential supplementation of the above volume, compiled in an artificial manner suggesting a comparability of the culpability of both sides, are consecutive publications about the Soviet destruction of the Polish Armed Underground. The first consists of documentation from the NKVD archives in Minsk, published by Halina Martynowa<sup>73</sup>. The study in question shows the most abominable symptoms of the liquidation of the Polish armed Underground in the former Eastern Borderlands of Pre-war Poland, predominantly the deceitful snaring and murder of 80 members of a detachment led by Antoni Burzyński-“Kmicic”, tortured by the NKVD to death. The second publication supplements material from a conference held by the Central-Eastern

<sup>72</sup>See, e.g.: *NKVD i polskie podziemie (materyaly z 'teczki Stalina)* (NKVD and the Polish Underground (material from the “Stalin Folio”)), prep. by A. Kastory, “Arcana”, № 6, Kraków 1996, pp. 120–126 (117–126).

<sup>73</sup>*Dokumenty KGB (KGB Documents)*, ed. by H. Martynowa, “Zeszyty Historyczne”, № 108, Paris 1994, pp. 185–200.

<sup>74</sup>*Kserokopie akt rosyjskich dotyczących działalności wojsk NKWD na ziemiach polskich i wywózek ludności polskiej do ZSRR w latach 1944–1950 w zbiorach Centralnego Archiwum Wojskowego (Xerox Copies of Russian Documents Concerning the Activity of the NKVD in Polish Lands and Deportations of the Polish Population to the U.S.S.R. in 1944–1950 in the Collections of the Central Army Archive)*, ed. by W. Roman, in: *NKWD o Polsce i Polakach. Rekonesans archiwalny (The NKVD about Poland and Poles. Archival Reconnaissance)*, ed. by W. Materski and A. Paczkowski, Warszawa 1996, pp. 83–146. See also: W. Roman, *Dokumentacja obozów specjalnych NKWD w zbiorach Centralnego Archiwum Wojskowego (Documentation of NKVD Special Camps in the Collections of the Central Army Archive)*, “Wojskowy Przegląd Historyczny”, № 1/2, 1995, pp. 374–387; M. Gnatoński, *Radzieckie dokumenty o polskim podziemiu niepodległościowym w regionie łomżyńskim w latach 1939–1941. Z tajnych archiwów radzieckich (I) (Soviet Documents about the Polish Pro-Independence Underground in the Region of Łomża in 1939–1941. From Secret Soviet Archives, I)*, “Studia Łomżyńskie”, vol. V, 1995.

Europe Forum at the S. Batory Foundation and the "Karta" Centre on: *The Soviet Union, Poland. Within the Empire*, and discusses the activity of the NKVD in Polish lands during the early aftermath of the Second World War<sup>74</sup>. A publication closely corresponding to it consists of a selection of documents from the Command of a Joint Division of Interior Forces of the NKVD U.S.S.R. (from January 1946 known as the 64 Division of Interior Forces), active in Poland in 1944–1946; Xerox copies of 42 folios from this collection, kept in the Central State Army Archives in Moscow, were deposited in the Central Army Archives in Rembertów (including the documentation of the Command of the Interior Forces of the NKVD U.S.S.R.); the resultant selection was based on this material<sup>75</sup>.

Material from the above mentioned conference, organised by the Forum, was published also in Russian in a version expanded by means of several new texts containing valuable information<sup>76</sup>.

The most important part of the documents included in the volume *NKVD i pol'skoye podpole 1944–1945* (42 documents) became part of a publication prepared jointly by Polish and Russian archivists and historians, and dealing with the operational activity of NKVD troops in Poland, chiefly — the pacification of the Polish Underground in 1944–1947<sup>77</sup>. All the documents contained therein, relating to issues connected with the stationing of NKVD troops in Poland, originated in the chancery of Lavrenti Beria, People's Commissar of Internal Affairs; these are copies of documentation systematically supplied to Poland and, at present, available in the State Archives of the Russian

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<sup>74</sup> *Działalność Złoczrej Dywizji Wojsk Wewnętrznych NKWD na terenie Polski w latach 1944–1946 w świetle wybranych dokumentów (Activity of the Joint Division of NKVD Interior Forces in Poland in 1944–1946 in the Light of Select Documents)*, ed. by W. Roman, "Biuletyn Wojskowej Służby Archiwalnej", № 17, 1994, pp. 168–214.

<sup>75</sup> *Istoricheskiye sborniki "Memoriala", 1: Riepriesti protiv polakow i polskikh grazhdan*, ed. by A. Y. Daniel et al., Moskva 1997. The new, supplementary texts comprise, i.a. information about post-Soviet archival resources dealing with the Polish Armed Forces in the U.S.S.R., the so-called General W. Anders Army (N. S. Lebedieva) and archival material from the Soviet Ministry of Defence pertaining to the transportation of Polish citizens interned by the Soviet authorities in 1944–1945 (coll.).

<sup>77</sup> *Teczka Specjalna J. W. Stalina. Raporty NKWD z Polski 1944–1946 (The I. V. Stalin Special Folio. NKVD Reports from Poland 1944–1946)*, selected and ed. by T. Cariewska, A. Chmielarz, A. Paczkowski, E. Rosowska and S. Rudnicki, Warszawa 1998.



Federation (*Gosudarstviennyi Arkhiv Rossiyskoy Fiedieratsii — GARF*).

A copious volume on the activity of the Soviet security apparatus in the region of Nowogródek, Grodno and Vilno in 1944–1948 forms specific publication, basically composed of two documents<sup>78</sup>. The above mentioned documents are arranged by the Ministry of the Interior of the Belorussian SSR: *The Outcome of the Agency–Operational Activity of Organs of the MVD of the Belorussian SSR as Regards the Liquidation of the anti-Soviet Nationalist Underground, its Groups and Other Counterrevolutionary Underground from 1 January 1944 to 1 March 1947*, and parts IV–VII of an untitled study on the destruction of the Polish armed Underground in the former Grodno Inspectorate of the Home Army (only its extensive fragment, parts IV–VII, was obtained). Those summary documents are accompanied by forty appendices, closely corresponding to the former and endowing them with an exceptionally dramatic character. The resultant whole demonstrates that despite treacherous arrests of the staff of the Vilno–Nowogródek Region of the Home Army and the internment of several thousand members of the Home Army in the wake of the “Ostra Brama” Operation, the struggle waged against the new aggressor did not come to a halt. Its intensity was considerable, and the ruthlessness and brutality of the NKVD forces stifling it was even greater than in Central Poland. Up to now, knowledge about this combat, continued to the end of the 1940s, was slight, and only newly accessible documentation opened a field of further research for historians interested in Polish pro-independence endeavours.

The relatively easily available archives of the three Baltic republics, and in particular the Lithuanian archives, contain numerous documents pertaining to Poles, mainly, albeit not exclusively, those with Soviet citizenship. By way of example, the complex dealing with common crimes (*fond ugolovnikh del*) in the former KGB archives in the Lithuanian SSR includes documents about Poles who were the objects of KGB operations —

<sup>78</sup>*NKWD o polskim podziemiu 1944–1948. Konspiracja polska na Nowogródzczyźnie i Grodzleńszczyźnie (The NKVD about the Polish Underground 1944–1948. Polish Conspiracy in the Nowogródek and Grodno Regions)*, prep. by A. Chmielarz, K. Krajewski, T. Łabuszewski and H. Piskunowicz, scientific ed. by T. Strzembosz, Warszawa 1997.

<sup>79</sup>*Cf. Estono-latyšsko-litovskiy soumestny seminar. Dokumenty KGB v baltiyskikh stranakh. Doklady*, Tallin 1996, pp. 34–40.

protocols of interrogations, verdicts, evidence; the infiltration collection (*fond jllratsyonnikh dtel*) includes dossiers of, i.a. persons who during the Soviet period left for Poland or planned to do so as well as those who arrived from Poland<sup>79</sup>. In this archives one may come across documentation of the Command of the Vilno–Nowogródek Region of the Home Army, seized by the Soviet authorities<sup>80</sup>.

The National Archives of the Republic of Belarus contains extensive and little studied documentation about Polish issues. It includes, i.a. 20 complexes (*fondy*) with more than 3,000 folios of material about the activity of the Union of Armed Struggle, and then the Home Army, in Belorussia<sup>81</sup>.

It is precisely the Belarussian archives which provide the basic core of documents issued in the heretofore fullest source publication about Soviet occupation in the Eastern territories of the Second Republic in 1939–1941, prepared by a team of researchers headed by Tomasz Strzembosz<sup>82</sup>. The seventy documents presented therein are the outcome of a survey conducted in the National Archives of the Republic of Belarus in Minsk, the State Archives of the Grodno Region, the State Archives of the Brest Region, and the Russian State Army Archives in Moscow. Documentation classified for this collection concentrates on the following themes: the construction of the foundations of Soviet power in occupied territories; the function-

<sup>80</sup>Cf. appendix in: J. Wołkonowski, *Okręg Wileński Związku Walki Zbrojnej Armii Krajowej w latach 1939–1945 (The Vilno Region of the Union of Armed Struggle (the Home Army in 1939–1945))*, ed. by G. Łukomski, Warszawa 1996, p. 383.

<sup>81</sup>More extensively in: W. Nosewicz, *Przegląd dokumentów Narodowego Archiwum Republiki Białoruś o działalności formacji Armii Krajowej w okresie II wojny światowej (Review of Documents from the National Archives of the Republic of Belarus about Home Army Formations during the Second World War)*, in: *Symposium historyczne "Rok 1944 na Wileńszczyźnie"*, Vilno 30 czerwca — 1 lipca 1994 r. (*Historical Symposium: "The Year 1944 in the Vilno Region"*, Vilnius 30 June — 1 July 1994), Warszawa 1996, pp. 218–230. See also: W. Stępnia k, *Konferencja naukowa w Mińsku (Scientific Conference in Minsk)*, "Archeion", vol. XCIV, Warszawa 1995, pp. 251–253; S. Iwań czuk, *Z pobytu w archiwach białoruskich (From a Stay in Belarussian Archives)*, *ibid.*, vol. XCV, Warszawa 1995, pp. 253–256.

<sup>82</sup>*Okupacja sowiecka (1939–1941) w świetle tajnych dokumentów. Obywatele polscy na kresach północno-wschodnich II Rzeczypospolitej pod okupacją sowiecką w latach 1939–1941 (Soviet Occupation 1939–1941 in the Light of Secret Documents. Polish Citizens in the North-eastern Borderlands of the Second Republic under Soviet Occupation in 1939–1941)*, ed. T. Strzembosz, prep. by K. Jastewicz, T. Strzembosz and M. Wierzbicki, Warszawa 1996.

ing of the occupation system; socio-economic transformations in rural terrains; repressions after the Skidel incident (18–19 September 1939); the farcical elections of deputies to the People's Assembly of (so-called) Western Belorussia; symptoms of civilian and armed resistance against the Soviet occupant. Other published documents depict so-called first Soviet occupation (1939–1941) on a much narrower scale, namely in the region of Ciechanów<sup>83</sup>.

The post-Soviet archival legacy concerning Polish issues, and available in the archives of Belarus, Lithuania and Ukraine, comprises a separate, insufficiently appreciated field of survey<sup>84</sup>. At the end of the Soviet period, some of the documents from the republican archives, in particular the local KGB archives, were selected by a special commission and handed over to Moscow; the overwhelming majority, however, remained behind, and now is available with no restrictions whatsoever. Initial research shows<sup>85</sup> that it could provide numerous important data, especially as regards the fate of the population of territories belonging to the former Second Republic, annexed by the Soviet Union in September 1939 and once again at the end of the war, sanctioned

<sup>83</sup>Z dokumentów ciechanowskiego NKWD (lata 1939–1941) (*From the Documents of the NKVD in Ciechanów, 1939–1941*), "Studia Łomżyńskie", vol. III, 1991.

<sup>84</sup>More extensively in: W. Stępnia k, *Sprawy archiwów w stosunkach Polski z jej wschodnimi sąsiadami* (*The Question of Archives in the Relations Between Poland and Its Eastern Neighbours*), "Archiwista", № 89, 1995, pp. 43–56; E. Rosowska, *Międzynarodowa konferencja archiwów krajów Wschodniej i Środkowej Europy* (*An International Conference of Archives from Central and Eastern Europe*), "Archiwista Polski" № 1, 1996, pp. 81–90; K. Nowo chaski, *Zasoby archiwalne i archiwa Ukrainy* (*Ukrainian Archival Resources and Archives*), *ibid.*, № 3, 1996, pp. 41–44.

<sup>85</sup>Cf. e.g. K. Jasiewicz, *Obywatele polscy aresztowani na terytorium tzw. Zachodniej Białorusi w latach 1939–1941 w świetle dokumentacji NKWD/KGB* (*Polish Citizens Arrested in the Territory of so-called Western Belorussia in 1939–1941 in the Light of NKVD/KGB Documentation*), "Kwartalnik Historyczny", № 1, 1994, pp. 105–134; J. Tucholski, *Straty wśród polskich oficerów i podoficerów w świetle materiałów Litewskiego Centralnego Archiwum Państwowego (czterdzieści krwawych dni rządów NKWD na Wileńszczyźnie)* (*Losses among Polish Officers and the Police in the Light of Material from the Lithuanian Central State Archives (Forty Bloody Days of NKVD Rule in the Vilno Region)*), "Zeszyty Katyńskie", № 6: *Zbrodnia nie ukarana. Katyń–Twer–Charków* (*Unpunished Crime. Katyń–Tver–Kharkov*), Warszawa 1996, pp. 151–165. See also: G. Vilkia is, *Żołnierze polscy internowani na Litwie w latach 1939–1940 (na podstawie materiałów Litewskiego Archiwum Państwowego)* (*Polish Soldiers Interned in Lithuania in 1939–1940 (upon the basis of Material from the Lithuanian State Archive)*), in: *Spoleczeństwo białoruskie, litewskie i polskie na ziemiach północno-wschodnich II Rzeczypospolitej w latach 1939–1941* (*The Belorussian, Lithuanian and Polish Communities in the North-eastern Territories of the Second Republic in 1939–1941*), Warszawa 1995.

<sup>86</sup>See, e. g. *Litość: represje w obwodzie wilejskim, op. cit.*

by a convention signed by the Polish Committee for National Liberation and the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R. on 27 July 1944. Up to now, wider documentation has been issued only sporadically<sup>86</sup>; as a rule, the publications are composed of individual documents or contributions illustrated by fragments of sources.

Only publications from the past few years contain, albeit sporadically, documentation on the fate of Poles in the Soviet Union after 1944. Nonetheless, those questions too are sometimes reflected in source material published in the particular republics of the former U.S.S.R., chiefly on the margin of material about repressions aimed against the population of a given post-Soviet republic, e. g. the Lithuanian Underground<sup>87</sup>.

A number of important documents on the situation in Poland and the whole region of Central Europe controlled by the U.S.S.R. is to be found in a volume of documents from post-Soviet resources, prepared by historians from the Institute of Slavonic and Balkan Studies at the Russian Academy of Sciences<sup>88</sup>. This volume, together with the earlier mentioned study: *NKVD i pol'skoye podpole 1944–1945* inaugurated the series: *Stalinism in Eastern Europe 1944–1953*, under the auspices of the Institute of Slavonic and Balkan Studies at the Russian Academy of Sciences; the next volumes will discuss, i.a. Transylvania in Soviet–Romanian–Hungarian relations and the mission of Andrei Vyshinsky in Bucharest in 1944–1946.

Polish motifs appear indirectly in copious multi-volume editions issued in Russia and dealing with the attitude of the

<sup>87</sup>*Lietuvos partizanų kovos ir jų slopinimas MVD–MGB dokumentuose 1944–1953 metais*, ed. by N. Gaskaitė, A. Kasėta, J. Starkauskas, Kaunas 1996.

<sup>88</sup>*Vostochnaya Yevropa v dokumentakh rossiyskikh arkhivov*, vol. I: 1944–1948, ed. by G. P. Murashko, Moskva 1997.

<sup>89</sup>*Komintern i vtoraya mirovaya vojna*, part. I: *Do 22 iyunia 1941 g.*, ed. by N. S. Lebedieva and M. M. Narinskij, Moskva 1994; part. II: *Posle 22 iyunia 1941 g.*, ed. by N. S. Lebedieva and M. M. Narinskij, Moskva 1998.

<sup>90</sup>*Nyurnbergskiy protsess*, vol. 5 and 6, ed. by N. S. Lebedieva, Moskva 1991–1995.

<sup>91</sup>*Dokumenty vneshnney politiki. 1939 god*, vol. XXII, book 1: *1 yanvaria — 31 avgusta 1939 g.*, Moskva 1992; book 2: *1 sientabria — 31 diekabria 1939 g.*, Moskva 1992. The edition came to halt on volume XXI in 1977.

<sup>92</sup>*Dokumenty vneshnney politiki. 1940 — 22 iyunia 1941 g.*, vol. XXIII, book 1: *1 yanvaria — 31 oktiabria 1940 g.*, Moskva 1995.

Comintern to the second world war<sup>89</sup>, the Nürnberg trial, and, in particular, the Katyń crime<sup>90</sup> as well as Soviet foreign policy in 1939<sup>91</sup> and 1940<sup>92</sup>.

The presence in scientific circulation of post-Soviet source material relating to mutual relations and the history of the People's Republic of Poland — from the 1950s to the inauguration of systemic transformation — is slight<sup>93</sup>. Let us hope that in time this documentation too will be made available for researchers.

Apart from material accessible in Russian archives, post-Soviet sources about Poland at our disposal at the moment — both those published and available in the Central Army Archives and the "Karta" Centre (Eastern Archive) — constitute an enormously important scientific workshop for historians specialising in newest history. A total of more than one million Xerox-copy leaves and microfilm frames enable, to a considerable degree, to fill so-called blank pages in the history of Poles in the eastern territories of Pre-war Poland, the history of Polish-Soviet relations, Polish communist organisations (formations), and the origin and early period of the People's Republic of Poland. These resources continue to be expanded, although the best period as regards access to post-Soviet archives is, unfortunately, already a thing of the past<sup>94</sup>.

(Translated by Aleksandra Rodzińska-Chojnowska)

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<sup>89</sup> Polish issues are disclosed, to a limited extent, by Documentation concerning the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, issued mainly in the form of individual documents, published in professional periodicals. Serial publications dealing with this field appear sporadically — cf. *Materiali plenuma Tsentralnogo Komiteta KPSS: 19–20 sientabria 1989 goda*, Moskwa 1989; *Materiali plenuma Tsentralnogo Komiteta KPSS: 5–7 sjevralia 1990 goda*, Moskwa 1990.

<sup>94</sup> Cf. *Arhiv snova zakrivayutsa*, "Izvestiya", № 182, 25 September 1997 [Interview with A. S. Prokopenko, consultant of the Commission of the President of the Russian Federation for the Rehabilitation of Victims of Political Repressions].