

twentieth-century Central Europe, but also in our contemporary world. The book ends with a “coda” that emphasizes, perhaps unnecessarily, this very fact.

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Person, Katarzyna. *Warsaw Ghetto Police. The Jewish Order Service during the Nazi Occupation*

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Katarzyna Person’s study of the Jewish Police in the Warsaw ghetto, translated from the 2018 Polish edition, is a major contribution to Holocaust Studies literature. Based on exhaustive archival research, including hundreds of unpublished diaries and testimonies housed at the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, documents from Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, the Yivo Institute in New York, and the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, this unique portrait of the Jewish Police in the Warsaw ghetto also includes stunning, rare archival photographs of ordinary Jewish policeman.

The book begins by chronicling the early history of the Warsaw ghetto’s Jewish police force from its establishment on 20 September 1940, to its dissolution on 30 April 1943, when its last dozen or so members were executed. Person’s study constitutes the most in-depth, detailed examination of this sensitive topic in Holocaust Studies touching upon Jewish agency and Jewish cooperation with the German authorities to facilitate mass Jewish deportations from the Warsaw ghetto. The book’s use of archival photos of ordinary Jewish policemen humanizes a story that is often told in the abstract and which heretofore has only discussed the top police chiefs.

The Jewish Police’s first chief, Józef Szerynski, was not Jewish. He was a Roman Catholic convert who qualified as Jewish by race under Nazi race laws. We learn from Person that Szerynski was only offered the position after two men turned down the offer (12). Szerynski was unknown in the Jewish community, “a man from nowhere” (14).

Of the 7,000 applicants for employment in the Jewish Police, 1,000 were initially approved in November 1940. Applicants had to be at least 5’ 7”, have a high school diploma, be physically fit, and have no police record (17). Person demonstrates that the initial 1,000 policemen came from a Jewish milieu, that they were not particularly assimilated, and many spoke Yiddish (23). Her findings go against the common perception that the Warsaw ghetto police were either converts or wholly assimilated. This perception likely derived from the fact that police chief Szerynski chose several fellow converts as his close collaborators. The Jewish Police force rose to its peak of 2,000 men by November 1941. Among them were an estimated 200 Jewish Gestapo informants placed there by the German authorities (31).

How, then, did the inhabitants of Nazi Europe’s largest ghetto view the Jewish Police by the end of 1941? Person maintains that Warsaw ghetto dwellers regarded the Jewish Police “as a criminal organization ... as people with agency, who chose to carry out orders against the interest of other Jews” (76). Accounts preserved in the Ringelblum Archive demonstrate that Jewish policemen in the Warsaw ghetto were not regarded as real Jews. But as Person argues, “[i]n reality, there were not many converts among the police and not all of them came from strongly assimilated homes” (80).

Person’s findings provide a significant corrective. She cites Emanuel Ringelblum noting that two of his assistants working on the underground archive were Jewish policemen. But it is true that the head

of the Jewish Police and his assistants were vehemently hated men. On 1 May 1942, the head of the Jewish Police, Józef Szerynski, was arrested for concealing a contraband fur coat that belonged to his wife. Szerynski was replaced by a figure who became even more hated, Jakub Lejkin, a graduate of the Officer Cadet School. With a reputation for dutifully carrying out German orders, Lejkin brutally oversaw the Great Deportations in the summer of 1942, when approximately 300,000 Jews were deported to death camps. Person's account of the deportations shows that some Jewish policemen were shot for refusing to carry out orders as well as the disappearance of other who would not comply (129). Those Jewish police who followed orders, however, got protection. They and their families were moved to a row of apartments dubbed the Police Bloc, which "became a symbol of the Jewish Order Service Members' complete breaking of ties with other Jews" (132).

The rise of the armed Jewish resistance movement in the Warsaw ghetto in July 1942—in particular, the Jewish Fighting Organization (ŻOB)—did not bode well for the Jewish Police. ŻOB's first armed action was an attempted assassination of Józef Szerynski, who had earlier been freed from prison on 20 August 1942 (133). ŻOB was more successful on 29 October 1942, when it assassinated the Jewish Police chief, Jakub Lejkin (143).


The tragedy of the story of the Warsaw ghetto Jewish Police is dramatically shown in its members' ultimate fate. Person reconstructs the scene of 21 September 1942, when German authorities blockaded off the Police Bloc and led Jewish policemen and their families to the Umschlagplatz, from where they were deported to death camps. Person cites the diary of Abraham Lewin who wrote on that day, "the Jews who watched this scene felt a definite satisfaction. This is the reward for their brutal acts against the Jews of Warsaw" (135). As the Jewish Police and their families became victims themselves of the Holocaust, the Jewish police force dropped dramatically in numbers from 2,000 in November 1941 to 240 by December 1942 (140). That number dropped again to 82 in January 1943 (140). After a string of further revenge acts by the underground Jewish resistance, including the assassination of Jewish gestapo agents and two Jewish policemen, Józef Szerynski took his own life on 23 January 1943 (143). On April 30, the last dozen Jewish policemen remaining were executed (145).

One of the most striking features of Person's *Warsaw Ghetto Police* is her use of unpublished war-time diaries, testimonies given immediately after the war, and published memoirs little known outside of Poland. The latter sources, many drawn from the archives of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, are on full display here as vital and essential windows into life in the Warsaw ghetto. At almost every turn in the story presented here, Person provides eyewitness accounts by Warsaw ghetto Jews. *Warsaw Ghetto Police* is also an emotionally and psychologically difficult book to read for anyone who is accustomed to seeing Jews exclusively as victims during the Holocaust.

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Larcati, Arturo, and Friedrich Stadler, eds. *Otto Neurath liest Stefan Zweigs "Die Welt von Gestern": Zwei Intellektuelle der Wiener Moderne im Exil*

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From a purely ideological point of view, Stefan Zweig (1881–1942) and Otto Neurath (1882–1945) do not have much in common. Zweig, who became the most successful German-speaking author in the