***Holocaust Testimonies and Documentations by Survivors in Eastern Europe in the Immediate Post-war Period***

Abstract:

In January 1946, a scholar and Holocaust survivor Philip Friedman (1901-1960) gave an account to the Commission for the Great Patriotic War of the Ukrainian Soviet Academy of Sciences detailing the destruction of the Jewish community in Lwów (Lemberg, today Lviv, Ukraine).[[1]](#endnote-1) Recalling the pogroms that took place shortly after the arrival of the German troops, Friedman reported:

“Elimination of Jews in the city of Lviv started from the first day of the German arrival, i.e. from 30 June 1941. However, at first the Germans conducted this elimination in a provocative way. Taking advantage of the Soviet Army’s retreat, the Germans took a part of the Jewish population to prisons and shot them there; the shootings were accompanied by torture so that the victims could not be identified. At the same time, they pursued another purpose: to present this as an example of the ‘atrocities’ committed by the NKVD who allegedly shot political prisoners before leaving Lviv. So, to clear the bodies (which in fact were the bodies of the Jews killed by Germans) immediately on arrival, Germans started seizing Jews in their homes and in the street; but the ones who survived, later said that they had not cleared any bodies but that they had recognized many local Jews who had just been murdered.”[[2]](#endnote-2)

In his testimony, Friedman tried to obscure the fact that the NKVD really had committed murders in the prisons shortly before the arrival of the German troops.[[3]](#endnote-3) He managed to incorporate these murders seamlessly into the background of the first wave of violence against the Jews in the city on July 3rd and 4th, 1941. Moreover, though Friedman described the death of several prominent Jews in this wave of violence, he made no mention of the participation of the local population in the public humiliation, rape, torture and killing of Jews. Rather, his testimony makes the pogrom appear as though it had been planned and carried out solely by the Germans.[[4]](#endnote-4) Remembering the so-called Petljura Days – the second wave of anti-Jewish violence which engulfed Lwów on 25-27 July 1941 – Friedman linked the Ukrainian population with the Germans’ sanction of the pogrom, testifying that “The Germans allowed the Ukrainian police to select a certain number of Jews and to do whatever they wanted with them, as a way of getting their revenge.”[[5]](#endnote-5) Though Friedman did not elaborate on the background of this revenge, he alluded to the 1926 murder of Symon Petljura (1879-1926), the president of the short-lived Ukrainian National Republic, who had been blamed for the bloody pogroms in the Ukraine in the aftermath of the First World War.[[6]](#endnote-6)

So, though giving a vague indication of popular discontent regarding the Jews, Friedman stressed in his testimony that “the civilian population of Lviv took no part in this brutalization of the Jews and that the Germans’ attempts to set the Ukrainians and the Polish upon the Jews failed.”[[7]](#endnote-7) In short, in testimony given before the Soviet body in the Soviet Ukraine, Friedman chose to obscure the NKVD crimes on the eve of the German occupation of Lviv and to downplay local population’s participation in the atrocities against Jews.[[8]](#endnote-8) Why did he chose to do so?

Friedman was a native of Lwów who had received his doctoral degree from the University of Vienna. He taught history at a prestigious Jewish Boys Gymnasium in Łódź, and with the outbreak of the war, he returned to his hometown and found employment at the Institute of Economics of the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. During the German occupation, he worked in a bread shop until August 1942 when he was captured during the *Aktion*, and taken to the notorious Janowska camp. Friedman managed to escape with the help of friends, and hid in Lwów and its vicinity until the arrival of the Soviet Army in the summer of 1944.[[9]](#endnote-9) Without a doubt, he was a seasoned historian, who before the war had collaborated with YIVO (the Yidisher Visnshaftlekher Institut, or Yiddish Scientific Institute) in Wilno, which carried out pioneering scholarship in Yiddish and about the history and culture of East European Jews. He also collected material about local history in Łódź while working there. His training only strengthens the question already raised above: why did he state what he knew not to be true?

The context of Friedman’s testimonies is key to understanding their changing content. context in the shaping of ’ testimonies,exposing at the same time the survivors’ agency, which expressed itself in gauging the political situation and changing their narratives and framing devices accordingly.

In the newly liberated Lwów, Friedman recalled the destruction of his community while deliberately avoiding statements that could jeoprodize him with both the Soviet authorities and the local Ukrainian population. His careful omissions reflect the difficult decisions survivors were forced to make on both personal and communal levels about what could be said in their testimonies. It is hardly surprising that in the Soviet context, Polish Jewish survivors crafted their accounts and their own biographies avoiding self-incrimination based on class or politics.[[10]](#endnote-10) When he moved west, first to Lublin and then to Łódź, Friedman found a more hospitable environment for reconstructing the destruction of his community. This is a concrete example of how communal and personal constraints shaped early testimonies. Beyond the limitations placed on survivors’ postwar testimony by the political climate in which they acted and their intended audiences, their emerging project of documenting the Holocaust was also shaped by the goals they set for their testimonies.

Of course, the question extends beyond Friedlander’s own testimony. How did the survivors testifying before Soviet institutions address issues that constituted political taboos?? And more broadly, what do we make of the role played by self-censorship in the early Holocaust documentation created by Holocaust survivors in eastern Europe? What was the effect of testifying from a position of trauma and vulnerability, and of appearing before bothJewish and non-Jewish institutions, and addressing both Jewish and non-Jewish audiences? These questions were particularly pronounced in three areas: neighbors’ collaboration in the Holocaust, the question of Jewish functionaries, and communal taboos in post-genocidal societies.

**Neighbors’ Collaboration**

Already in Lwów, Friedman had begun working on a monograph documenting the almost complete destruction of the Jewish community there. His booklet was published in 1945 under the auspices of the Central Jewish Historical Commission in Poland, which he headed until his departure from Poland in the summer of 1946. As opposed to X [presumably what you were citing above, but I see they were written rather proximately to each other…?], this historical account strikes a very different note when examining the subject of the local participation in anti-Jewish violence and persecutions. Friedman underlines that

“the Germans were received with cheers by the Ukrainian masses who hoped, with German assistance, to detach eastern Ukraine from the Soviet Union and unite the two parts of the Ukraine into one independent country.”[[11]](#endnote-11)

In his account of the first wave of violence, from June 30th to July 3rd, he writes:

“German soldiers spread through the streets of the city in the company of Ukrainian nationalists and an unruly mob of the local population. They fell upon Jews in the streets, beat them murderously, and dragged them away from ‘work’ – especially for cleansing of prisons filled with corpses and blood.”[[12]](#endnote-12)

He further stressed that:

“Then the destroyers, chiefly the newly organized Ukrainian militia, began to roam through Jewish houses, to remove men – and frequently, women also – ostensibly for ‘purification of prisons’.”[[13]](#endnote-13)

Friedman is referring here to the forced labor of Jewish men and women in washing the corpses found in the Lwów prisons and other locations throughout eastern Galicia. Writing for the Polish Jewish audience in Polish, Friedman described the second wave of violence, the Petljura days, mentioning the role of the Ukrainian population much more clearly:

“Thousands of Jewish men and women were seized by Ukrainian militiamen, ostensibly for ‘work’. The unfortunate were for the most part brought to the prison in Łąckiego Street; intermittently, Ukrainian mobs would burst in, howling ‘revenge for Petlura,’ and would beat many Jews to death. […] Rumors spread through the city that the Germans had given the Ukrainian nationalists ‘three days’ to do with the Jews as they saw fit to avenge the death of Semyon Petlura […].”[[14]](#endnote-14)

The stark contrast between these two accounts given by the same historian and Holocaust survivor underscores the unique position of the Central Jewish Historical Commission in Poland. In his two accounts, Friedman framed the question of local collaboration differently, the one aimed at the Polish, primarily the Polish-Jewish audience in Poland, the second [aimed at who?] and in the Ukrainian institution in the Soviet Lviv.

Friedman became the first director of the Central Jewish Historical Commission, a grass-root Jewish institution first organized in August 1944 in newly liberated Lublin by a small group of survivors, whose central mission was collecting documentation of the Holocaust, including survivors’ testimonies.[[15]](#endnote-15) The Jewish Historical Commission in Poland operated during a brief yet important period window-period: after the liberation from Nazi occupation, butbefore the consolidation of the Soviet-sponsored communist regime. Because the Commission was conceived as a Jewish communal organization, it was allowed to be concerned less with the emerging Polish narrative of competitive victimhood and therefore enjoyed comparatively free reign. In her work on survivors’ early efforts at documenting the Holocaust, historian Laura Jockusch stresses that this institution brought together a number of individuals from various walks of life – intellectuals, scholars, and professionals – who had been exposed to testimony collection projects before the war. They recognized the centrality of testimonies for the future history writing about the Holocaust, and conceived of this future-history as deal both with the lives of the vanished communities and with the punishment of those who participated in the destruction of Jewish communities.[[16]](#endnote-16) The closing of the Commission, in fall 1947, coincided with the increasing efforts to [name that effort], that led to dismantling most of the autonomous Jewish institutions by 1950.

The Central Jewish Historical Commission recognized how explosive the subject of local collaboration could have been for the community of survivors. It therefore instructed its testimonies collecting survivor- activists to proceed with caution regarding “the attitude of the local population to the Jews during the occupation”.[[17]](#endnote-17) In 1945, as the first brochure in the series of methodological studies, the Central Jewish Historical Commission published instructions for collecting historical material. For all its stated complexity, the activists were directed to encourage testimonies that would document the assistance of the non-Jewish population, for example cases of providing ghettos with goods, as well as depictions of the behaviour of this population in the darkest moments of the ghettos, namely during round-ups and deportations”.[[18]](#endnote-18) The Committee’s activists were also directed, but only as an addition to this primary directive, to take note of negative phenomena.[[19]](#endnote-19)



Nachman Blumental speaks at the meeting of the Central Jewish Historical Commission. To his left Philip Friedman. Source: Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw.[[20]](#footnote-1)

But the Polish Central Committee was only one venue where survivors deposited their testimonies. Some survivors, like Friedman, moved west from what became part of the Soviet Union, and then submitted their testimonies in local branches of the Jewish historical commission. In addition (?), many penned personal testimonies, in which they mapped out interethnic relations during the war and delt with the thorny question of local collaboration. In his testimony recorded in Polish by the commission in the fall of 1944, Ryszard Ryndner, who had lived in Lwów before and during the German occupation, recalled the German arrival in the city on 30 June 1941 and the immediate beginning of “agitation [nagonka]” against Jews on July 1st, in which

“Ukrainian militia captured Jews in the streets and delivered them to various collection points where they were mercilessly beaten. While returning home a rabbi was attacked by the Ukrainians, dragged to Brygidki [prison] and murdered there.”[[21]](#endnote-20)

More broadly, Ryndner’s impression was that “the attitude of the local population was indifferent”, while he survived hidden and supported by his former maid.[[22]](#endnote-21) In his Yiddish testimony, Pesach Herzog stated that Ukrainian participation in the pogrom in Tarnopol (today Ternopil, Ukraine) in 4-5 July 1941 was “very substantial.”[[23]](#endnote-22) Mendel Ruder testified that on 2 July, 1941 in Złoczów (today Zolotchiv, Ukraine), a day after the German units marched into town, a local meeting decided on a pogrom.In a bottom-up process, this local decision was then endorsed by the Ukrainian mayor, and resulted in the active participation of Ukrainians in the German murder of the local Jews.[[24]](#endnote-23) When Jews from the vicinity of Złoczów were forced into the ghetto there in the fall of 1942, they arrived “naked and barefoot. Ukrainians did not allow them to take anything with them.”[[25]](#endnote-24) But survivors did not stop at making general claims against their neighbors, but proceeded to name those who had wronged them. Rudolf Reder, for example, named a Ukrainian family who,he believed, had betrayed him when he hid with them in August 1942 in Lwów.[[26]](#endnote-25)

When Jews liberated in the territories that became part of the Soviet Union arrived or were ‘repatriated’ to Poland, as the language of population transfer put it, they seem to have had no qualms about reporting both on local collaboration and local assistance in their testimonies. Indeed, in the early survivors’ testimonies from eastern Galicia and Volhynia, local collaboration is primarily blamed on Ukrainians collectively, while ethnic Poles are singled out as assisting Jews.[[27]](#endnote-26) Still the testimonies indict numerous non-Jewish neighbors on collective crimes of collaboration, or at the very least appalling indifference, as in Ryndner’s above-cited testimony.[[28]](#endnote-27)Testimonies of survivors from other regions collected by the Central Jewish Historical Commission also explicitly blamed collaboration on ethnic Poles, and named those responsible for betraying or murdering Jews. For example, a survivor from Warsaw, Alter Ogień, a tailor who escaped from the ghetto to Łączna near Lublin, and then survived in hiding in its vicinity, testified in the fall of 1944that when he escaped from the Warsaw ghetto, he was recognized as a Jews by Polish passengers and thrown from the train.[[29]](#endnote-28) He also states that two Jewish brothers were murdered in the neighboring village to where he was hiding, naming the local perpetrator. While, neither of these facts was mentioned in the Polish summary of the testimony, the account in Yiddish named both the village and the perpetrator.[[30]](#endnote-29) Possibly the bestknown case of testimony which named Polish neighbors as guilty of killing the Jews was Shmuel Waserstejn’s account of events in Jedwabne.[[31]](#endnote-30)

Survivors’ willingness to discuss the collaboration of ethnic Poles and other non-Jewish neighbors suggests that in the immidate postwar period they did not yet (?) fear revealing these details and may indeed have hoped that state authorities would be active in seeking retribution. This position was strengthened by the fact that the new Polish government initially extended moral and financial support to Jewish institutions. In its 22 July 1944 Manifesto, the Polish Committee of National Liberation acknowledged the brutal murder of Jews by the German occupiers, announcing the return to equal rights, and promisingsurvivors that their communities would be rebuildt.

But Jewish hopes for retribution were not limited to state authorities, and included also Jewish enterprises of punishing collaborators. These endeavors resonated with the spirit of the so-called *sierpniówki,* trials that were based on a decree issued by the Polish Committee of National Liberation on 31 August 1944, that provided for the punishment of “anyone who, assisting the German occupation authorities, took part or is taking part, in killing civilians or prisoners of war, mistreating them, or persecuting them”. The decree also criminalized anyone who “acted or is acting to the detriment of individuals located in the territory of Poland, in particular by seizing or removing individuals sought or persecuted by the occupation authorities for any reason”.[[32]](#endnote-31) In this climate, it is clear that some survivors felt free to testify about their experiences during the Holocaust without any concern for leaving out the phenomenon of local collaboration.

**The Question of Jewish Functionaries**

Another subject that the early Jewish testimonies confront head on is Jewish collaboration, and in particular the contentious role of the *Judenrätte ,* or Jewish councils created by the Germans. Friedman’s account of the Judenrat in Lwów, for example, remained fundamentally the same in both his Soviet testimony and his other accounts. In his account for the Soviet Commission, Friedman was critical of the first Judenrat in Lwów, while providingto the mitigating historical cirucumstances: the German-appointed Jewish community leaders had been completely gas-lighted, and as late as July 1941 still held to antiquated ideas about the German occupation and its goals vis-à-vis the Jews. Friedman accordingly divided members of the Judenrat into two categories: the naïve ones and the scoundrels.[[33]](#endnote-32) As for the scoundrels, Friedman stated that they had no illusions about German intensions and “wanted to save themselves and to profit somehow.”[[34]](#endnote-33)

It should be noted that this position, though providing negative information about the Jewish community, phrased this material within the Soviet language of class conflict. -As in the case of the question of local collaboration examined above, the instructions for the 1945 Polish Historical Committee’s historical collection regarding the Judenräte directed that “most attention needs to be paid to collecting material that would shed light on the dignified behavior of the Jewish population, its particular groups, or even individuals.” But again, the guidelines were not incognizant of the need for testimonies expressing “debasement and betrayal, cowardice and lack of personal dignity, which unfortunately did take place in almost all Jewish communities.”[[35]](#endnote-34) But these testimonies were clearly only 2nd tier objectives, and had potential to destabilize the emerging postwar situation, in which murdered Jews were to be treated as murdered Soviet citizens, part of the Great Patriotic War.

Many Polish Jewish survivors recalled the role of the *Judenrat* members and of the Jewish police in harsh terms. Ogień blamed them for participating in the round ups of Jews for forced labor, thereby making the Germans work of dragging Jews from their homes easier. Instead, the Jews were delivered to the Germans.[[36]](#endnote-35) Ryndner stated that “the [Jewish] administration tried to outdo the Germans in their zeal”.[[37]](#endnote-36) Following another round up on the night between January 5-6, 1943, the Germans murdered the members of the last Judenratand the SS took over the direct control of the ghetto. At this point a “Jewish militia took power, replacing the Judenrat. Beginning with this, the population was constantly harassed and the non-working were constantly removed”.[[38]](#endnote-37)

Why were these ‘negative’ reports, testimonies about Jews who betrayed their communities seeking to secure survival for themselves and their families, collected? From our present historical perspective it seems clear that these testimonies were collected as part of a coming to terms with the past on a personal, and to a degree national, level, and as a basis for the future historical record. However, records of the Polish courts show that at least in some cases, survivors turned to Polish courts to prosecute Jewish collaborators, and were not afraid to address these matters publically, testifying during investigations and before the courts.

This was the case in the summer of 1946, when the Special Criminal Court in Lublin tried and sentenced to death Maks Heimberg, a Jewish policeman from Borysław.[[39]](#endnote-38) A Polish court adjudicated the case, and the investigation as well as the conviction relied on testimonies of Jewish survivors, natives of Borysław, who pressured the authorities to bring Heimberg to justice. Three Jewish survivors testified at the trial: Dawid Kestenbaum, Maks Doner and Matys Heilig.[[40]](#endnote-39) In April 1945, Kestenbaum made a statement at the Investigative Department of the Militia in Lublin.[[41]](#endnote-40) He informed the authorities that during the German occupation Max Heimberg – a man working in a leather dye works in Lublin – served in the Jewish police in Borysław. According to Kestenbaum, Heimberg “distinguished himself with particular fury and sadism vis-à-vis the Jews in Borysław, beating them mercilessly.” He publically accused Heimberg of “participation in killing 13,000 Jews in Borysław”. He concluded:

“Such a bandit at large ought to be subjected to the most awful punishment – this is the demand of the 13,000 dead Jews of Borysław. I demand in the name of the perished that the above-mentioned bandit be put on trial at the site of his crimes, according to the International Committee for Punishing Hitlerite Criminals”.[[42]](#endnote-41)

Kestenbaum was one of several witnesses who came forward to testify at Heimberg’s trial in June 1946. Sworn testimonies were sent from Łódź, Reichenbach (Dzierżoniów) and Kraków. News about the investigation and the trial evidently circulated among the survivors. The second witness who testified at the Office of Public Security (Wojewódzki Urząd Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego) against Heimberg wasMaks Donner, who knew Heimberg before the war.[[43]](#endnote-42) Donner charged Heimberg with assisting the Germans in finding Jewish hideouts, stealing provisions from inmates and brutalizing Jews with his whip.[[44]](#endnote-43)

For these Jewish surviovrs, participation in the trials of Nazi war criminals and Jewish collaborators ranked high on their priority list. This was community caught up in a state of flux, a disparate group of survivors in the midst of transit from Borysław, which was now part of the Soviet Union, to the West. While some were settling down in Poland, others werecontinuing their journey westward. Punishing Heimberg appears to have been a unifying project for this group. They acted with no self-imposed censorship or taboo about involving non-Jewish authorities in pursuing and punishing transgressions against Jewish communal solidarity. Ultimately, wartime transgressions of Jewish solidarity spilled into postwar life more generally. Michal Leonowicz-Gerszowski from Kopiczynce recalled Jewish collaboration with the Germans and ended his testimony with the following personal comment which pointed at deep conflicts that tore apart survivor communities: “My brother married a sister of a [man who became a] Jewish militia member [during the war], who turned my sister in. I am not on speaking terms with him now.”[[45]](#endnote-44) Thus it seems that there was no sense of taboo stopping Jewish survivors from speaking about collaboration of their non-Jewish neighbors or dishonorable behavior of their own, both in Jewish forums and in general forums. But if survivors did not whitewash local collaboration or the role of the Jewish functionaries, were there still other issues they chose not to talk about?

**Other Communal Taboos**

While Jewish collaboration was a broachable subject in the immediate postwar years, communal norms continued to apply to some aspects of Jewish suffering (?) during the Holocaust, particularly rape and infanticide.. Accounts of Jewish humiliation, suffering and powerlessness fill the testimonies. Survivors do not hesitate to assert that the cruelty inflicted on individual Jews broke them psychologically. Pesach Herzog reported that during the pogrom on 4 July 1941 Jewish men tortured in the town square lost their minds.[[46]](#endnote-45) Nonetheless, scenes of sexual violence against Jewish women remained taboo.

According to Ryszard Ryndner’s account on 25 July a pogrom started in Lwów in which 15 thousand people were killed: “Women were robbed, and men were stripped naked and taken to Piaskowa Góra where they were all shot”.[[47]](#endnote-46) Tellingly, he made no mention of a large-scale wave of rapes and sexual assaults against Jewish women, that preceded the killing action. It may have still been easier for him to elaborate on the degradation of Jewish men than on that of Jewish women. But even this taboo did not completely silencestories of sexual violence but rather had the effect of making it take the form either of short statements affirming that rapes had taken place, or allusions to sexual violence.

But this was not uniformly the case for all survivors, some of whom included rapes as an important part of their account. Dawid Berber of Stanisławów mentioned names of two women raped during the final liquidation of the ghetto in February 1943.[[48]](#endnote-47) Ignacy Feiner and Isser Reinharz gave an account of attempted rape in the ghetto in Przemyśl on 10 May 1943, but the focus of the testimony is the brave response of a male Jew whom the Germans publicly executed.[[49]](#endnote-48) Female testimonies include suggestions of sexual abuse and rape, but mostly they report on a rape they witnessed, not one they experienced.

Conclusion: Early Testimony in its Historical Context

In the aftermath of the Second World War, survivors began testifying about the destruction of their communities and the loss of families. These testimonies were to safeguard the memory of the crimes committed and lives lost, help to purse the perpetrators and build historical record for future generations, yet they were shaped by the agendas behind the documentation project. Political circumstances, individual trajectories and communal norms put a mark on these early, still somewhat pliable, accounts. It made a difference if the discussion was confined to the community of survivors or more broadly to Jewish community or a state institution and what goal the survivors hoped to achieve by testifying, wether it was testimony for historical record, to “setting the record straight”, or if was intended to achieve legal retribution. In particular, the Central Jewish Historical Commission documented crimes primarily within the Jewish community, that had marginal, if any, impact on the Polish non-Jewish memory of the war. [[50]](#endnote-49)

Nonetheless, when at the moment of reckoning, when survivors testified about local collaboration and the role of some Jewish functionaries in carrying out the Final Solution, they touched on topics that could prove both painful and unsafe. Survivors’ testimonies detailed cases of pogroms, murders, lootings and betrayal committed under the German occupation by non-Jewish local populations, including ethnic Poles.[[51]](#endnote-50) Indeed, there seems to be little self or institutionally imposed political censorship, and the survivors broached subjects which would later become taboo, including[[52]](#endnote-51) But how, then, to explain the ommissions and misrepresentations in Friedman’s testimony? The fluctuations in his narrative, highlight one of the accepted tactics of early postwar testimony, that is, of frameing the violence differently in different political contexts and for different audiences, in order to maximize the testimonies impact*.* Striving for recognition and agency, survivors testified before the Jewish Historical Commission, convened by the new Polish government, and for Polish courts. The survivors had reason to believe that certain goals could be achieved through these channels, which influenced their willingness to bring up difficult subjects. At the same time, they were cognizant of the politics behind these bodies, and shaped their testimonies so as to have maximal impact within this system. on.

So how should we relate to the body of testimonies left behind by Holocaust survivors? Political, communal and personal constraints in telling about the fates of Jewish communities and families raise questions about this systematic historical documentation. During the short postwar period, in the midst of political chaos and mass migration, survivors understood that different narratives could be delivered in the Soviet Union and in Poland, and were concerned with the decision on whether to leave eastern Europe or to stay. Reading early testimonies in comparison with accounts recorded later reveals inconsistencies that are not only a function of trauma and faulty memory but also survivors’ understanding of what could be said where. Early testimonies are more direct that later ones on some subjects, but are also highly susceptible to varion according to place and time of delivery. Rather than attesting to the fallibility of testimony, these variations should be read as signs of survivors agency, who actively shaped these accounts to successfully impact various postwar political contexts.

1. EHRI Online Course in Holocaust Studies TsDAHOU, f 166, op. 3, spr. 246, ark. 78-89: Pylyp Lazarovych Fridman, “Stenohrama zapysu spohadiv,” 22 January 1946 The Holocaust in Ukraine – The Pogroms of 1941 Translation: A10 of the record of the recollections of Pylyp Lazarovych Fridman, Doctor of Philosophy. The conversation was conducted by D.K. Gak, a researcher with [illegible] commission Typist G.V. Shestopalova. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. EHRI Online Course in Holocaust Studies TsDAHOU, f 166, op. 3, spr. 246, p. 80. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Kai Struve, *Deutsche Herrschaft, Ukrainischer Nationalismus, Antijűdische Gewalt. Der Sommer 1941 in der Westukraine* (Oldenbourg: De Gruyter, 2015), pp. 247-253. See ibid., pp. 14-221. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. EHRI Online Course in Holocaust Studies TsDAHOU, f 166, op. 3, spr. 246, p. 81. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Ibid., p. 84. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Friedman may have also alluded here to a more politically volatile question of the bodies left behind by the Soviets in the prisons in Lviv. In 1926, Petljura was shot by a Jewish journalist and Ukraine native Samuel (Sholem) Schwarzbard. Schwarzbard held Petljura responsible for the wave of violent pogroms that had claimed the lives of thousands of Jews in Ukraine in the aftermath of the First World War and the French court did not find him guilty in a trial that ended a year later. See David Engel, ‘Introduction,’ in *The Assassination of Symon Petliura and the Trial of Scholem Schwarzbard 1926-1927. A Selection of Documents*, ed. David Engel (Gottingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2016), p. 7-95. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. EHRI Online Course in Holocaust Studies TsDAHOU, f 166, op. 3, spr. 246, p. 84. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. See Struve, *Deutsche Herrschaft, ukrainischer Nationalismus, antijudische Gewalt. Der Sommer 1941 in der Westukraine*. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. See Roni Stauber, *Lying the Foundation for Holocaust Research. The Impact of the Historian Philip Friedman* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2009). Yad Vashem Archives, O.6 (Poland Collection), folder 419, unsigned letter dated Warsaw, 14 August 1981. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. In his testimony for the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission for the Lvov region, in August 1944, Rudolf Reder identified himself as a “worker” rather than “industrialist”. See “I/1. 1944, sierpień – zeznanie Rubina Hermanowicza Redera,” *Obóz zagłady w Bełżcu*, p. 26. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Philip Friedman, *Roads to Extinction: Essays on the Holocaust*, New York 1980, p. 245. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. Ibid., p. 246. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. Ibid., p. 247. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. Ibid., p. 249. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. On the activities of the Central Jewish Historical Commission see Noe Grüss, *Rok pracy Centralnej Żydowskiej Komisji Historycznej*, Łódź 1946; Natalia Aleksiun, "The Central Jewish Historical Comission in Poland, 1944-1947," *Polin* 20 (2007), p. 74-97; Laura Jockusch, *Collect and Record! Jewish Holocaust Documentation in Early Postwar Europe*, Oxford 2012, p. 84-120; Agnieszka Haska "'Zbadać i wyświetlić'. Centralna Żydowska Komisja Historyczna (1944-1947)", *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i Materiały* 13 (2017), p. 110-137. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. Jockusch, *Collect and Record! Jewish Holocaust Documentation*, p. 87. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. *Instrukcje dla zbierania materiałów historycznych z okresu okupacji niemieckiej* (Łódź: CKŻP, Komisja Historyczna, 1945), p. 11. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. See Ibid., p. 12. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. http://www.jhi.pl/blog/2015-11-06-seminarium-naukowe-tajemnice-centralnej-zydowskiej-komisji-historycznej [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
21. Archiwum Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego (Archives of the Jewish Historical Institute, AŻIH), 301/18, 8 Ryszard Rynder, testimony written down by M. Lewenkopf [?] in September 1944, p. 1. [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
22. AŻIH, 301/18, p. 5 [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
23. AŻIH, 301/20 Pesach Herzog, testimony written down on 6 September 1942[?] by M. Landeskopf. See also the role of Ukrainian guards in the labor camp Laski, described by Mendel Ruder AŻIH, 301/87, Mendel Ruder son of Mordechaja and Frumy Lajner, born 3 April 1909 in Obertyn, women tailor, p. 1. [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
24. AŻIH, 301/87, p. 2. [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
25. AŻIH, 301/87, p. 3. [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
26. See “I/4 1945 grudzień – Zeznanie Rudolfa Redera,” in *Obóz zagłady w Bełżcu w relacjach ocalonych i zeznaniach polskich świadków*, ed. Dariusz Libionka (Lublin: Państwowe Muzeum na Majdanku, 2014), p. 36. [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
27. For example in Mendel Ruder’s account from Złoczów his wife and son were briefly hidden by a Polish woman in the city. AŻIH, 301/87, p. 2. [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
28. In Stanisławów, they were told to have purchased tickets from the Germans to come and watch Jews hanged on the street lamps in August 1942, along one of the main streets. AŻIH, 301/91, p. 2, Dawid Berber, born 18 August 1910 in Stanisłów, son of Hersy and Henia, merchant, currently living in Bytom at 5 Paderewskiego Street, protokolowala Ida Gliksytejn, Bytom 15 December 1946. [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
29. AŻIH, 301/1, p. 3(12). Assisted by the Polish conductor whom he paid for his help, he made it to Lublin and then to Łączna. [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
30. See AŻIH, 301/1, p. 3 and 14(5). The testimony was recorded on 2 September 1944 in Lublin. Ogień was born in 1910 in Krasnosielsk and lived in Warsaw at the outbreak of the war. [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
31. See Jan T. Gross, *Neighbors. The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland* (Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 2001). See the critical edition of his testimonies in *Wokół Jedwabnego*, ed. Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak, vol. 2 Dokumenty (Warsaw: IPN, 2002). [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
32. Translation of the decree cited in Gabriel Finder and Aleksander Prusin, p. 126-127. Dekret Polskiego Komitetu Wyzwolenia Narodowego z dnia 31 sierpnia 1944 r[oku] o wymiarze kary dla faszystowsko-hitlerowskich zbrodniarzy winnych zabójstw i znęcania się nad ludnością cywilną I jeńcami oraz dla zdrajców Narodu Polskiego, Dziennik Ustaw Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej (DzURP), Lublin, 13 Spt. 1944, no. 4, pp. 17-18; Dekret Polskiego Komitetu Wyzwolenia Narodowego z dnia 12 września 1944 r[oku] o specjalnych sądach karnych dla spraw zbrodniarzy faszystowsko-hitlerowskich, Dz.URP, Lublin, 13 Sept. 1944, no 4, pp. 25-6. According to Finder and Prusin “At least forty-four defendants who stood trial in Polish state courts on charges of collaboration were Jews. They were charged with assisting the Germans in the murder and mistreatment of their fellow Jews in ghettos and camps. Thirty of the Jewish defendants were convicted, with ten sentenced to death (two death sentences were commuted); ten were acquitted.” p. 128. [↑](#endnote-ref-31)
33. EHRI Online Course in Holocaust Studies TsDAHOU, f 166, op. 3, spr. 246, ark. 78-89, p. 82. [↑](#endnote-ref-32)
34. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-33)
35. *Instrukcje dla zbierania materiałów historycznych z okresu okupacji niemieckiej*, p. 11-12 [↑](#endnote-ref-34)
36. AŻIH, 301/1, p. 3. [↑](#endnote-ref-35)
37. AŻIH, 301/18, p. 4. [↑](#endnote-ref-36)
38. Ibid, p. 4. [↑](#endnote-ref-37)
39. IPN Lu, 315/226, Protokół rozprawy głównej dnia 5 czerwca 1946 r., p. 127. See also IPN Lu, 315/226, p. 139-140, Sentencja wyroku w imieniu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej dn 5 czerwca 1946 Specjalny Sąd Karny w Lublinie w składzie następującym. For trials of Jewish collaborators in Poland see Gabriel N. Finder and Alexander V. Prusin, *Jewish Collaborators on Trial in Poland 1944-1956*, *Polin* vol. 20 (2008), 122-148. [↑](#endnote-ref-38)
40. Two of those had close ties to the Communist authorities, as Kestenbaum worked in the official newspaper, *Sztandar Młodych (the Banner of Youth)*, and Doner was listed as a government official, but had been earlier employed by the Security Services. IPN Lu, 315/226, Protokół rozprawy głównej dnia 5 czerwca 1946 r., p. 134. [↑](#endnote-ref-39)
41. IPN Lu, 315/226, Protokuł przyjęcia ustnego zawiadomienia o przestępstwie, Lublin 11 kwietnia 1945, 7. [↑](#endnote-ref-40)
42. IPN Lu, 315/226, Protokuł przyjęcia ustnego zawiadomienia o przestępstwie, Lublin 11 kwietnia 1945, 7. Zameldowanie przyjął: J Fijałkowski, Protokulant. Kestenbaum listed five potential witnesses who could confirm his accusations, all of them survivors from Borysław who lived together in Lublin. IPN Lu, 315/226, Protokuł przyjęcia ustnego zawiadomienia o przestępstwie, Lublin 11 kwietnia 1945, 8. [↑](#endnote-ref-41)
43. IPN Lu, 315/226, Protokół zeznania, 11 May 1945, p. 9-10. [↑](#endnote-ref-42)
44. IPN Lu, 315/226, Protokół zeznania Dnia 11 maja 1945 o godz. 15:30, p. 10. [↑](#endnote-ref-43)
45. AŻIH, 301/70, p. 6. [↑](#endnote-ref-44)
46. AŻIH, 301/20 Pesach Herzog adres w r. 1939 Tarnopol, ul. Ujejskiego nr 5-a

    Lublin 6 IX 1942? Napisal M. Landeskopf. [↑](#endnote-ref-45)
47. AŻIH, 301/18, p. 1. [↑](#endnote-ref-46)
48. AŻIH, 301/91, p. 3. Another testimony mentioning rapes of Jewish women comes from a Polish witness Alojzy Jazienicki, AŻIH, 301/45. [↑](#endnote-ref-47)
49. AŻIH, 301/73, p. 1, recorded by Taffet. [↑](#endnote-ref-48)
50. As Jockusch notes: “From the postwar perspective of most ethnic Poles, the wartime experiences of Poles and Jews remained two separate stories, and hence a fundamental ‘division of memory’ separated both groups’”. *Collect and Record! Jewish Holocaust Documentation*, p. 88. [↑](#endnote-ref-49)
51. Jockusch, *Collect and Record! Jewish Holocaust Documentation in Early Postwar Europe*. [↑](#endnote-ref-50)
52. See Monika Rice, *“What! Still Alive?!” Jewish Survivors in Poland and Israel Remember Homecoming* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2017), pp. 65-85. [↑](#endnote-ref-51)