

Prison system in Lublin during the German occupation (1939–1944)

During the German occupation in the Lublin region (1939–1944), the invader established more than six hundred penitentiary places of various types. Discussion on the manifestations of their functioning had been and still remains the subject of historical research, however the analysis of the scientific achievements in this context shows gaps in this respect. This work is an attempt to fill in these gaps. Its main objective is to conduct a holistic analysis of the Nazi prison system in Lublin, what allows to relate to established results.

The subject of the study undertaken in the dissertation is the prison system itself. The analysis of its individual aspects is carried out by means of a comparative study, and it is done on several levels, which correspond to aspects of the functioning of German prison facilities, distinguishable both from the administrative level as well as from the perspective of the inmates themselves.

The work – apart from the introduction and conclusion – consists of five chapters, bibliography and appendix.

In the first chapter, one presents the systemic minima of the assumptions of the German terror structure in the occupied territory of Poland. Where necessary, the specifics of their implantation in the Lublin region and in its capital city are indicated. The second chapter contains a detailed reconstruction of the phases and periods of the organisation process, together with implementation and subsequent operation of the prison system in Lublin. In the third chapter the narration focuses on functioning of the German system of camps, prisons, arrests and other places of detention within the city in the context of the general assumptions of the occupier's policy towards captured nations and territories. In the fourth chapter one discusses the impact of the German staff on the functioning of the prison system. The final, fifth chapter of the dissertation details living conditions in separate places of detention.

The scope of the study, carried out according to the outline above, reveals hitherto unknown, implicit, or unverifiable elements of the Nazi occupation prison system in Lublin. The result of research leads to the statement, that the German prison system implemented during World War II in the territories under the control of the Third Reich (including Lublin)

was a *de facto* almost autonomous structure, of *quasi*-chaotic nature, able to self-adapt to various and still changing economic and political circumstances, within which it existed. This system, through its embedded negative selection mechanism, favoured and promoted any initiatives, actions and mechanisms of a criminal, immoral and anti-humanitarian nature. As a result, as has been mentioned, the system itself came out to be an ultimately destructive tool of repressions towards the societies on which it had been imposed. Thus, it proved to be an effective appliance for implementation of the ideological assumptions of the German state and its leading Nazi party.

Key words: Lublin, prison system, German occupation, General Government, concentration camps, labour camps, prisons, arrests, rallying point, Majdanek, KGL/KL Lublin, Lublin Castle, "Under the Clock" arrest.

Marcin
Michnowski
20.7.2023