

Lawyers of German Origin in Łódź During the Second World War

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Abstract:

The aim of the present article is to analyze the biographies of German lawyers from Łódź who, during the Second World War, were faced with a choice to join the Volksliste or to maintain Polish citizenship and leave for the General Government. After January 1945, those who were included on the Deutsche Volksliste had to face legal consequences for accepting German citizenship. The participation of pre-war lawyers in the National Socialist justice system raised many doubts: the scope of action for German lawyers decreased year by year in wartime conditions, and they were unable to represent Polish and Jewish clients in German courts. In addition to the extermination of Jewish lawyers, their subsequent accountability and removal from the profession concluded pre-war conflicts of nationality over access to positions and the ability to represent clients. The fate of lawyers of German origin in Łódź is symptomatic of the fate of the entire German middle class in central Poland from the outbreak of war to the final expulsions and displacements from post-war Łódź and the greater region.

The fates of lawyers from national minority groups in the Second Polish Republic have only been partially explored so far. Since 1989, researchers have focused on the biographies of Jews and Ukrainians, but there is a lack of publications regarding the fate of German lawyers and notaries. Thus far, the most detailed account has been provided for individuals of German origin who were members of the Bar Association in Katowice before 1939 (Krzyżanowski, 2013). Łódź, as one of the pre-war centers of German influence in central Poland, had professionally active lawyers of German nationality until 1945. This article discusses the fates of this group between 1939 and 1950, aiming to examine the influence of both ethnic tensions in pre-war legal circles and the actions of the occupier during the Second World War. Did the ethnic radicalization in the legal profession in 1930s Łódź lead to a greater signing of the Deutsche Volksliste (DVL) later on? Is it possible to discuss, as Ryszard Kaczmarek (Kaczmarek, 2008, p. 161) does, a “generation of collaborationists”¹ – representatives of German free professions and intelligentsia in Poland, which was “destined” to support the occupier? The fates of lawyers of German origin are exemplary of the fates of representatives of the German technical intelligentsia and free professions who navigated between national allegiances and pressures to make a clear declaration of nationality. The idea of “national indifference” created by Tara Zahra (Zahra, 2010) is extremely useful here for describing this social group (Feest, 2017).

Due to the destruction of the files from the Warsaw Bar Association (and its delegation in Łódź) and the occupier’s files from the National Socialist Association of Legal Professionals in Łódź and Poznań, it is only possible to analyze the press with regard to ethnic tensions and to reconstruct the biographies of individuals using documents from the DVL and trials in postwar Poland and the Allied occupation zone after 1945.

No records of lawyers in Łódź classified by nationality have survived to the present day. Consequently, the identification of individuals of German descent is extremely difficult. Unlike Ukrainians (Petriw, 2007a, 2007b) and Jews, the German legal profession in pre-war Poland did not have its own organization (Materniak-Pawłowska, 2009, pp. 296–298). The absence of records from the Bar Association also hinders the full reconstruction of the network of contacts among members of this group and their declarations of German nationality before 1939. Therefore, in this article, I examine the fates of only a few lawyers who faced the dilemma during the Second World War of whether to register themselves on the DV: Eugeniusz Delnitz, Alfred Hittman, Walter Otto Kindermann, Erwin

1 For the purposes of this article, the term “collaborationism” refers to the co-operation of individual persons with the occupier based generally on a foundation of National Socialist ideology. “Collaboration” refers to the co-operation of the government or administration of a conquered state with the invader.

Koenig, Mikołaj Nippe, Rudolf Pohl, and Siegmund Puppe. This selection of individuals compelled me to use a prosopographical method suited to the study of biographies of members of small groups. This was indeed a numerically small body, considering that there were 266 lawyers in total, the majority of which were Jews and Poles. In addition to the individuals analyzed here, the group of German lawyers and notaries in Łódź must be expanded to include several individuals perceived as potential Volksdeutsche in the early stages of the occupation but who ultimately did not become so. Apart from Delnitz, Koenig, and Pohl, the address book of occupied Łódź also mentions the following lawyers: Hans Hungershausen, Oltmann Klockgeter, Hans Junge, W. Meyer, Karl Werner Mletzko, as well as K. Wendland and J. Waygand.²

The analyzed group made up part of the generation born in the early 20th century. Eugeniusz Delnitz was born on 20 July 1902, Alfred Hittman³ on 5 October 1897, Erwin Koenig on 22 July 1905, Mikołaj Nippe on 1 July 1897, Rudolf Pohl on 11 April 1903, and Siegmund Puppe on 3 May 1903.⁴ They all hailed from the area of present-day Łódź and attended schools in Łódź – Delnitz attended the Bogumił Braun Middle School between 1914 and 1919, and Hittman between 1915 and 1917. Pohl attended the Higher Vocational School, Puppe the Lodzer Deutsches Gymnasium between 1915 and 1923 (Questionnaire and supplementary documents of the Deutsche Volksliste of Eugeniusz Delnitz, 1940, pp. 1119–1123; Questionnaire and supplementary documents of the Deutsche Volksliste). They all studied law at Polish universities. Delnitz graduated from the University of Warsaw, and Hittman from the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. More precise information is available in the cases of Rudolf Pohl and Siegmund Puppe: Pohl studied law at the Jagiellonian University between 1921 and 1926, and Puppe in Kraków and Warsaw between 1923 and 1928 (Questionnaire and supplementary documents of the Deutsche Volksliste, 1940, p. 3; Report on Siegmund Puppe..., 1940, p. 3v). Puppe specialized in corporate law (Biography of Siegmund Puppe..., 1948), Delnitz in criminal law. The specializations of the remaining lawyers are not known.

Belonging to the same generation and having experienced their youth and socialization in Łódź could have influenced their fate during the occupation. They were natives of Łódź, had not studied at German universities, and likely had no experience of living outside Poland. Before 1939, they had built their careers within the local legal community. As individuals of German nationality born at the turn of the century outside

² Not all data could be reconstructed.

³ The spelling Hüttmann can also be found intermittently in records.

⁴ The article uses the spelling of surnames and first names as they were used by the individuals in question after 1945; some of them used Polish names interchangeably before 1939, i.e. Zygmunt Puppe.

of Germany, they were faced with a choice during the Second World War; declaring allegiance to the occupying nation could have meant a visible step forward in their budding careers, while maintaining Polish identity signified (at least temporarily) the end of their professional work. They all belonged to the same generation also in a psychological sense – they had all been adolescents or young adults during the First World War and the first occupation of Łódź. In the memoirs of some Łódź Germans, the entry of German troops during the Great War was considered a symbolically significant moment and the beginning of an ongoing carousel of changes in authorities and passports, which only ended with the liberation of the city in January 1945 (Waade, 1985).

After Poland regained independence, Łódź lawyers came under the jurisdiction of the Bar Association in Warsaw, which, like the rest of the legal profession, had become an arena of dispute between Polish and Jewish lawyers and trainees. The radicalization of the Sanation movement after Piłsudski's death only exacerbated ethnic tensions. In the Warsaw Bar, for example, there was a vote to establish *numerus clausus* for lawyers of Jewish origin (Materniak-Pawłowska, 2015), and the authorities of the Bar sought to reduce the number of Jewish lawyers by making it difficult for them to complete their traineeship in court (Koredczuk, 2005). *Numerus clausus* was also introduced for ethnically Jewish students at Polish universities (Judzińska, 2023). Even as a judge of the District Court in Łódź, Delnitz was subjected to discriminatory practices and likely had to resign due to his German origin (Romanowska, 2020, p. 189). It is not known how relations were arranged in the Łódź branch of the Bar Association, but (according to reports from the period of the Second World War) Siegmund Puppe was authorized to identify lawyers of Jewish origin within its ranks for subsequent removal from the legal profession (Report on Siegmund Puppe, 1940). Documents from the occupation, however, suggest a “self-cleansing” of the Bar from German lawyers shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War. In Koenig's application for the DVL, for example, there are accounts from Puppe about maintaining contacts between these lawyers after the last was expelled from the Bar Association (Report by Siegmund Puppe on Erwin Koenig of 3 July 1942, 1942, p. 26). However, this should not be regarded as a neutral description, but rather as a strategy, rhetoric aimed at emphasizing one's own contributions to the German cause during the period of “persecution” intended to help obtain the Volksdeutsche status of a higher, more privileged group.

The outbreak of the Second World War and the entry of German troops into Łódź brought about a radical change in the position of Polish lawyers. Many of them perished in the first weeks and months of the occupation, as a result of the Intelligenzaktion (Galiński & Budziarek, 1992) and other campaigns, while Jewish lawyers additionally had to reckon with being confined to ghettos. Similar to other territories directly incorporated into the Third Reich, the authorities in Łódź began the process of

Germanization of the city and its judiciary. One proscription list of Łódź lawyers has survived in the records of the Special Court in Łódź, with handwritten notes about their whereabouts immediately after the German troops entered (List of lawyers in Łódź, 1939, pp. 26–28). The Polish legal profession had to face an unprecedented threat, while lawyers of German nationality and origin had to make a serious decision and declare their allegiance to the German nation and register on the so-called DVL (Dzieciński, 1988; Turski, 2021).

The Łódź legal profession had to adapt to the conditions prevailing in Germany. On the one hand, the leadership of the Third Reich and the nationally and locally supervised ministries of justice had been striving since 1933 for maximum political control over the legal profession, while on the other hand bearing down on the marginalization of the entire judiciary, especially lawyers. The legal profession in Germany was finally absorbed in 1934 by the National Socialist Association of Legal Professionals – an organization that not only included lawyers but also representatives of all legal professions, including judicial officers such as judges and prosecutors. The right to represent clients was restricted by excluding Jews from the legal professions (in accordance with the Nuremberg Laws, see Reifner, 1984; Morris, 2013) and politically undesirable individuals, while simultaneously making it difficult to engage lawyers first by Jews, and after the outbreak of war, also by Poles and other non-Germans (Konig, 1988, pp. 119, 121–123). Later on, the possibility of appealing against administrative decisions, such as conscription into the Wehrmacht, was also taken away.

After the occupation began, many Polish lawyers decided to leave Łódź, either departing for the General Government or leaving the occupied country altogether. They, like those of Jewish origin, were not allowed to work in areas directly incorporated into the Third Reich. However, Poles could practice law in the General Government (Szulczyński, 2020, p. 42) – and some who fled Łódź found legal employment there (Bayer, 1988). It should be noted, however, that the Commissioner for the Reorganization of the Legal Profession in the General Government and the judicial authorities in Łódź exchanged the personal records of lawyers, using them to assess the political and professional standing of lawyers active before 1939 (Letter from the Commissioner Council of Advocates for the Warsaw District..., 1940, p. 68). Some lawyers of Jewish origin confined to the Łódź ghetto and other places worked in the ghetto judiciary in occupied Polish lands (Pawlikowski, 2002). This was a completely separate judicial system, over which German lawyers had no influence.

Throughout the occupation, the National Socialists also endeavored to bring lawyers to the directly annexed territories as part of an influx of officials, policemen, or teachers from the “old Reich.” The accounts of German judges and judicial officials arriving in Łódź and settling there have been preserved in the chronicles of the District Court and the Regional

Court of Łódź. They are imbued with an anti-Semitic and anti-Polish spirit (Chronicle of the District Court and the Regional Court of Łódź, 1940–1941, pp. 7–34). Many Reichsdeutsche regarded these appointments as actual demotions, and similar opinions must have prevailed among lawyers who were encouraged to settle in Łódź and the Wartheland in general. The occupation administration also sought to encourage lawyers who had been resettled from Eastern European countries to the Wartheland to open law and notary practices in Łódź (Copy of a letter from the Lawyers' Department of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle in Poznań..., 1940, pp. 90–92). The matter of cooperation among lawyers from these groups with each other remains unknown. Given the significant lack of mutual trust among all three groups, it can be assumed that in the legal world, there was no *Volksgemeinschaft* (community of all Germans) (Kundrus, 2009), and professional solidarity was limited to elementary matters. Judges sent from Germany to Łódź complained about the Polonization of Łódź Germans, for example, through marriages with Polish women (Chronicle of the District Court and the Regional Court of Łódź, 1940–1941, pp. 35–36).

Volksdeutsche lawyers were clearly visible in the legal profession in Łódź during the Second World War. In the telephone directory for the Wartheland for the year 1944, ten active law firms in Łódź were listed. The efficient functioning of the occupation judiciary required the involvement of trusted ethnic Germans. These locals knew the city well, were bilingual, and knew which individuals and institutions could organize resistance against the occupier.

Puppe played a significant role in the process of these assessments, and likely also selections. In documents preserved in the State Archive in Łódź from the Special Court, information can be found about the assessment of lawyers by Puppe on 2 and 4 December 1939. Out of several hundred lawyers in pre-war Łódź, only around a dozen passed the Nazi selection process (*Lista adwokatów okręgu Sądu Apelacyjnego w Warszawie...*, 1938).

The criteria were not specified. In the case of Walter Kindermann, the Jewish origin of his wife blocked his admission to the profession of lawyer, despite:

According to statements attached by the German consul Frh. Von Berchem-Königsfeld and bank director Dr. Kurt Schweikert, Kindermann has rendered outstanding service to Germanness. He is generally perceived as one of the most distinguished lawyers in Łódź (Letter from the Commissary President of the Regional Court in Łódź..., 1939, pp. 11–12).

Other lawyers were considered partially Polonized or insufficiently qualified.

Ultimately, as a result of the selection process for the profession, only a few lawyers of German origin from Łódź were admitted: Eduard Angerstein, Eugeniusz Delnitz, Erwin Koenig, Ludwik Pohl, Stefan Herman, and Siegmund Puppe. Kindermann and Nippe were rejected at the final stages, although they were still under consideration in March 1940 – their names appear on a handwritten list of the Sicherheitsdienst in Łódź. The surviving occupation records of Eugeniusz Delnitz include supplementary documents confirming the involvement of the DVL Office in the government district of Łódź in admitting lawyers to the profession in 1940. The DVL Office in the government district of Łódź assessed local Volksdeutsch lawyers (Letter from the Łódź branch of the Deutsche Volksliste Office..., 1940); without Grade B or higher, they were unable to practice as lawyers or notaries. Angerstein and Herman, faced with the dilemma of signing the DV, resigned from practicing as lawyers in Łódź (Declaration of lawyer Herman, 1949; Biography of lawyer Angerstein, 1946). In terms of the number of German lawyers, Łódź resembled more the territories of the General Government, where a similarly minimal number of German lawyers were admitted to the profession (Wrzyszczyk, 2008, p. 121).

It is unclear how this process unfolded in the remaining parts of the Kalisz region (later Łódź). From the available information, it is known that in Pabianice, Zgierz, Tuszyn and Kutno, there were no lawyers of German origin willing to cooperate. The involvement of employees from other sectors of the justice system, such as prosecutors or judges from the pre-war staff of the Łódź region, seems rather improbable; such a practice was not applied in other regions of occupied Poland either (Graczyk, 2020). A certain amount of technical personnel from Łódź and the immediate region could have been employed in occupied Poland's justice system in lower positions, while managerial positions were reserved for politically sympathetic lawyers from the Reich. A similar principle was applied in other institutions in occupied Łódź, as evidenced by the involvement of the pre-war commissioner of the State Police in Łódź, Stanisław Weyer, in the personnel department of the Kriminalpolizei (Documentation of the trial of Stanisław Weyer, n.d.).

After being expelled from the legal profession in Łódź, Mikołaj Nippe was earmarked for expulsion from the city (List of displaced persons, n.d., p. 20). Ultimately, he survived the war as an office worker in a Łódź factory. Walter Kindermann remained in Łódź and hid his half-Jewish wife; he sent her to Vienna probably in 1941, where she survived the war. His law practice was closed in early 1940, and he himself became a lawyer for a Viennese firm (Bömelburg, 2021, p. 324). He left Łódź shortly before the arrival of the Red Army. Hittman, after being released from the Weilburg internment camp, returned to Łódź and signed the DV, but he could not practice as a lawyer. Ultimately, an intervention by the Sicherheitsdienst caused him to be degraded from the second to the third group of the DV, which meant very serious restrictions, including a ban on working

in the profession (Letter from the Sicherheitsdienst-Abschnitt in Łódź..., 1942, p. 10).

Pohl appeared to be in good standing with the National Socialists. From the documents attached to his DVL questionnaire, it is known that the district office had been corresponding since December 1940 with the Łódź branch of the DVL and the president of the Higher Regional Court in Poznań regarding his admission to the profession of judge (Letter from the Reich Governor in the Wartheland District..., 1941, p. 20). Ultimately, due to his mother's Jewish ancestry, being a second-degree mixed-race individual, the DVL Office blocked his candidacy (Letter from the Łódź branch of the Deutsche Volksliste Office..., 1941, p. 21).

Eugeniusz Delnitz underwent a similar career path during the occupation. His questionnaire and other documents were attached to the post-1945 legal proceedings. They contain correspondence from the Łódź branch of the DVL Office regarding other lawyers. He was accused of Polonization, but unlike Pohl, he could practice in Łódź. Towards the end of the war, Delnitz fell out of favor with the National Socialists – according to Erika Carlhoff's memoirs, the liberation of the city in January 1945 halted the investigation into corruption that was being conducted against him (Bömelburg, Klatt, 2015, p. 153).

Erwin Koenig's career during the war did not significantly advance. An intriguing picture emerges from the opinions about him included in the records of the DVL Office: a German assimilated into Polish culture, before 1939 he defended, among others, Eugen Nippe and the "Freie Presse" magazine – which he did for financial reasons. In 1942, Koenig was close to being downgraded to the third group of the DVL and consequent exclusion from the legal profession. Siegmund Puppe, as his colleague and a member of the Nazi elite, defended him, euphemistically stating:

It is not the case that Mr. Koenig undertook the representation of those accused of being Germans and "Freie Presse" solely for profit. On the other hand, it cannot be said that he did it to actively help the Germans. The truth probably lies somewhere in between (Report by Siegmund Puppe on Erwin König of 3 July 1942, 1942, p. 26).

Opinions were also sought from Adolf Kargel, the influential editor of "Freie Presse."

In contrast to other lawyers, Puppe rose to prominence. On 1 November 1941, he was admitted to the NSDAP with the number 8606887 (KARTEI / 33400929, 1941). He served in the Nazi Party as the head of the legal office of the NSDAP in Łódź. He was a member of the Volksliste complaints department for the city of Łódź and the surrounding area. Following the decree of March 1941, his name can be found on many departmental decisions for the region. As one of the leading Nazis in the Łódź

region, Puppe was nominated for the War Merit Cross, Second Class, on 1 September 1942 (Extract from Führerkartei [Nominations for the War Merit Cross] regarding Siegmund Puppe, 1942). Towards the end of the war, he joined the SS.

Every lawyer admitted to the profession in Łódź and the Wartheland had to confront the degeneration of the justice system typical of the Third Reich. Early in the war, makeshift courts and special courts with simplified legal procedures were introduced in occupied Poland. The role of lawyers diminished as the war progressed and the law became stricter with regard to residents of conquered territories. The Special Court in Łódź, established in 1939, and its superior authority, the Higher Regional Court in Poznań, were just one of the many parts of the Nazi terror machine (Rudawski, 2022; Waszczyński, 1972). In the Wartheland, the Gestapo played the chief role of the police, prosecutor and court, and lawyers had no possibility of intervention. This already limited scope of action was further reduced in 1943 due to the prohibition on German lawyers defending Poles. The tightening of regulations meant depriving non-German defendants of any possibility of defense. Death sentences were often imposed on Poles and other “foreign nationalities” after trials that mocked the elementary principles of justice (Angermund, 1990, pp. 216–219).

Lawyers in the occupied judiciary had to handle many criminal and civil cases caused by the economic and social policies of the Nazis in Łódź. Such cases included divorces that emerged following the introduction of the DVL; German partners tried to defend their Polish spouses from being listed on the Volksliste via fictitious divorces, or divorced for ideological reasons (Christians, 2022, p. 151).⁵ A significant portion of the surviving files from Erwin Koenig’s office pertains to divorce proceedings and marriage annulments, especially in the case of German-Jewish marriages. German spouses, wanting to avoid deportation to the ghetto and death, opted for divorce (Inventory of records of the law firm of Erwin König, n.d.). Academic literature also points to the extremely dismissive treatment of Polish clients by German lawyers in criminal proceedings (Zarzycki, 1975). The last years of the war were marked by the conscription of lawyers and justice system employees into the Wehrmacht, further prolonging the wait for judgment and weakening the already fragile justice system.

The liberation of Łódź in January 1945 marked the end of dilemmas regarding cooperation with the National Socialist genre of justice and brought dramatic changes to the group of lawyers discussed. Siegmund Puppe avoided judgment by Polish courts by fleeing from the Red Army

5 Divorces for reasons of “unawareness of a partner’s connections with another race” were introduced into German law as part of the Nuremberg Laws in 1935 and later corroborated by an amendment to marriage law in 1938.

in 1945. He first found himself in besieged Wrocław, then spent several months in an NKVD prison. The NKVD did not learn about his activities in occupied Łódź, and Puppe was released twice. Shortly thereafter, he became a translator for the mayor of Greiz in Thuringia (Biography of Siegmund Puppe..., 1948, p. 25). In the summer of 1946, he escaped with his family to the Allied occupation zone, where he began the process of denazification. Supporting letters were issued by Oskar Haidinger, former president of the Special Court in Łódź, and Konstantin Lubbe, chairman of the civil chamber of the Regional Court in Łódź. Kurt Schweikert and Adolf Kargel, members of the Nazi elite in Łódź, also endorsed Puppe's denazification. Ultimately, Puppe settled in Bremen and practiced as a notary from the end of 1948 (Certificate of appointment of Siegmund Puppe as lawyer, 1949).

On the other hand, Delnitz and Hittman had to answer for collaboration before Polish courts. In Delnitz's case, a several-year legal battle began with his arrest on 7 February 1945. On 11 May, he was accused by the prosecutor of the Special Criminal Court in Łódź, under the August 1944 decree of the Polish Committee of National Liberation, of collaborating with the occupier through legal activities and affiliation with NSDAP, SS, and SA (Indictment of Eugeniusz Delnitz, n.d., p. 352). The sentence of life imprisonment was overturned by the Supreme Court on 30 January 1947, and referred for reconsideration by the Regional Court in Łódź (Judgment of the Supreme Court in Łódź in the case of Eugeniusz Delnitz..., 1947, pp. 1063–1069). The Regional Court now only took the accusation of declaring German nationality during the war into consideration, a typical charge for Volksdeutsche in post-war Poland and Łódź (Indictment of Eugeniusz Delnitz by the Public Prosecutor of the Regional Court in Łódź..., 1947, p. 677). The sentence of 10 years imprisonment and confiscation of all property (Judgment of the Regional Court in Łódź..., 1947, pp. 917–918) was appealed by Delnitz, and the Supreme Court in Warsaw again overturned the verdict on 20 April 1948, directing the case to the Regional Court in Warsaw (Judgment of the Supreme Court in Warsaw..., 1948, p. 968), which sentenced Delnitz on 22 October 1948 to four years in prison (reduced by time served during the previous arrests) and the confiscation of all property (Judgment of the Regional Court in Warsaw..., 1948, pp. 323–331).

Delnitz's trials, particularly the first before the Special Criminal Court, attracted the attention of Łódź residents and gathered personalities from pre-war Łódź and the legal world. Pre-war judges, prosecutors, and lawyers called as witnesses accused their former colleague of betrayal, while clients and employees from the period of occupation generally defended him. The Łódź press quoted the testimony of Tadeusz Łuszczewski, an investigative judge in Łódź in 1945 and a pre-war acquaintance of Delnitz. Significant individuals testifying in Delnitz's trial included, among others, Feliks Ast, Mer Szoll and Włodzimierz Dzieciołowski, lawyers in Łódź and Leszno Wielkopolskie, factory owner Stefan Greenwood, and

Krzysztof Schiefer, the pre-war president of the Deutscher Kultur- und Wirtschaftsbund in Polen in Łódź.

In Delnitz's testimony before the Special Criminal Court in Łódź, the topic of the Holocaust and the rescue of Jews from the Łódź and Warsaw ghettos arose. Eugeniusz Delnitz extensively described his efforts to assist Jewish people in Łódź and Warsaw (Minutes of the criminal hearing before the Special Criminal Court in Warsaw with its seat in Łódź of 10 August 1945, 1945, pp. 991–993), including by bribing Gestapo officers and finding hiding places for Jews on the Aryan side. His claims were corroborated by witnesses who survived the Łódź ghetto (pp. 1011–1013; Minutes of the criminal hearing before the Special Criminal Court in Warsaw with its seat in Łódź of 11 August 1945, 1945, pp. 1022–1023). Advocating for Delnitz were individuals such as Irena Sochaczewer, a teacher, Nina Jafra, unemployed, Tadeusz Ber, a wood block paver, Ina Namiot, a cosmetician, and Mer Szoll, a lawyer. Subsequent trials no longer contained information about the Holocaust and the Łódź ghetto. Despite the recognition of Jewish witnesses' testimonies as arguments in favor of the accused, these witnesses did not testify in trials after 1946.

Hittman's fate was less spectacular than Delnitz's. He first sought rehabilitation before the District Court in Łódź, which did not yield the desired result. His application, submitted on 30 October 1945, was brief and did not mention anything about his legal career during the occupation. His former colleagues from the Weilburg internment camp who now held important positions in the Łódź judiciary accused him during the trial of opportunism which could have influenced the future of the Volksdeutsch (Complaint of Władysław Kubik..., 1946). After appealing the verdict, a trial was opened before the Regional Court in Łódź accusing Hittman of declaring German nationality (Indictment of Alfred Hittman..., 1948, p. 5). He was sentenced to three years in prison on 12 May 1949 (Judgment of the Regional Court in Łódź in the case of Alfred Hittman..., 1949, p. 61), and the request for the verdict's annulment was rejected by the Supreme Court in Łódź on 7 February 1950 (Judgment of the Supreme Court in Warsaw..., 1950, pp. 68–70).

Erwin Koenig left Łódź and immigrated via Germany to Australia as Jan Erwin Koenig (Koenig Jan Erwin, n.d.). His subsequent fate is unknown.

The exclusion of Nippe from the legal profession during the war and his involvement in the first months after liberation led to a surprising career – he became the head of the Military Regional Court in Łódź (Żelazko, 2007, pp. 134–136). He was well-regarded, although later he was criticized for leniency in issuing judgments (Personal portfolio of Maj. Mikołaj Nippe, n.d.). At the same time, his background from a family of industrialists was a burden and ultimately may have contributed to his dismissal from the position. As a judge, Nippe was active in the trials of members of the independence underground.

After serving his sentence, Delnitz worked in one of the Łódź cooperatives and did not rebuild his position from 1939. Hittman also did not return to the profession of a lawyer.

The prewar German legal professionals in Łódź faced a dramatic dilemma in 1939. Choosing Polish nationality resulted in exclusion or the need to emigrate from Łódź. Puppe likely used the Volksliste and opinions about other lawyers to secure professional advantages for his trusted colleagues who met the requirements of the occupier. While historians may not have post-war accounts of the establishment of the National Socialist justice system in occupied Łódź, the presence of at least several lists and brief characteristics of lawyers allows tracing the thought process of officials responsible for overseeing the legal profession. The Volksliste sealed Puppe's choice: some lawyers refused to accept German citizenship and were not allowed to become lawyers. Importantly, strong ethnic tensions in the Polish legal profession until 1939 were ultimately resolved by foreign hands: during the occupation, Jewish lawyers perished in the Holocaust, and after the war, German lawyers were either expelled or forcibly Polonized. The decisions of National Socialist authorities served to select the lawyers most loyal to the German cause, and post-war authorities excluded this group from the legal profession, thus concluding the reckoning of the lawyers' actions during the occupation. The fates of the members of the described group are typical of the destinies of representatives of the German middle class in central Poland born at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. After the war, the rebuilding of their freshly-started careers in the Second Polish Republic was possible only in Germany.

(transl. by Ian Stephenson)

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