

**Andrzej Borcz**

**Doctoral dissertation**

**The District Łańcut SZP - ZWZ - AK over the period 1939-1945**

**Summary**

This dissertation is a result of studies of unique memories of military underground participants acting in Łańcut and Leżajsk region during the Second World War. Remaining conspiracy documents and available publications have been studied and confronted. This thesis has a dual structure, it has a problematic chronological character.

The main topics of the thesis are organization and activities of the military underground organizations during the Second World War on the prewar territory of the District Łańcut named respectively Służba Zwycięstwu Polski - SZP (the Polish Victory Service), Związek Walki Zbrojnej - ZWZ (the Union for Armed Struggle), Armia Krajowa - AK (the Home Army). In the thesis the term *conspiracy* was used interchangeably with the term *underground* meaning secret, illegal activities of persons, political and military organizations aimed against enemy authorities on the occupied territory in order to organize resistance movement and preparation of an armed uprising or other activities undertaken to liberate occupied country. Apart from military underground organization, the subject matter of the dissertation are the way of conducting and the effects of tactical actions of sections, patrols, sabotage, subdivisions (platoons), units and groups of sabotage and guerrilla warfare in terms of asymmetric activities, especially special and irregular warfare.

The chronological range of thesis covers the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939 till March / April 1945 when territorial structure of the Home Army in Łańcut was terminated. In the end of this period new conspiracy movement against imposed authorities in Poland was initiated.

The dissertation territorially covers Łańcut district including its borders before the year 1939 and partly encompasses neighboring areas of prewar districts, within which the underground structures existed also. Sabotage and guerilla units from the District Łańcut ZWZ-AK were acting on these territories also. These neighboring districts include the following: Rzeszów, Kolbuszowa, Nisko, Biłgoraj, Jarosław, Przeworsk and Przemyśl.

The applied historical research method was a deep study of collected memories connected with the study of other sources e. g. library research combined with critical analysis and the analysis of available source materials - documents, statements and information from

historical studies. As a part of scientific research numerous interviews were conducted with living conspiracy soldiers.

Terrain research was conducted together with topographic research of places connected with the activities of the SZP-ZWZ-AK in the District Łańcut within the prewar boundaries, such as: forest areas, railways, highways, streets, roads and other landmarks taking into account the changes that had occurred in this area since the Second World War.

A lot of cartographic materials were applied during studies, including Military Geographical Institute maps - 1938 and also cartographic materials.

This dissertation subject is a monographic study of military underground structure of the District Łańcut SZP-ZWZ-AK over the period 1939-1945 including all organizational, conspiracy and sabotage activities applied at that time.

Key research objectives were obtaining comprehensive knowledge about organizational development of military conspiracy of the SZP-ZWZ-AK in the District Łańcut. The further research purposes were connected with specifying the impact of the occupation forces on the functioning of armed conspiracy, defining the process of shaping the organizational structures of the underground military, presenting the current organizational activities of SZP-ZWZ-AK, determining the relationship with other underground organizations. The following objectives of the dissertations were connected with establishing of commanding structure for the District Łańcut, institutions, platoons, sabotage units, guerrilla units and determining the progress of efficiency and effectiveness of the acts of sabotage and guerrilla warfare taken by soldiers from the District Łańcut ZWZ-AK. The subsequent the objectives of the study were connected with determining the preparations for the uprising and demonstration of the actual plan of the action „Storm” in the District Łańcut, and the effects of this action, and also estimating the losses incurred by the underground army during the German occupation, presentation of the participation of some underground soldiers from Łańcut and Leżajsk District during the first stage of so-called: the second independent underground movement, showing the scale of repression taken towards military underground by security service structures.

The present dissertation consists of introduction, ten chapters and summary.

The introduction contains the current state of research, description of historical sources, its methodology, dissertation objectives, the overall presentation of contents and content of the annexes.

The first chapter is the intended to present the territory of District Łańcut - natural environment, social, political and economic situation on the day before the outbreak of the

Second World War and outline national aspects focusing on minorities, such as Ukrainians, Germans and Jews inhabiting the District Łańcut.

The second chapter describes regular warfare on District Łańcut in September 1939 which was conducted as a result of German aggression and the entry of the Red Army into Poland. Situation in the eastern part of Leżajsk region named „Zasanie” which was initially occupied by Soviet troops was also outlined. Furthermore, it also describes German occupation apparatus which was located in General Government and established occupied District Jarosław, apart from that this chapter presents police formations including supportive forces and Wehrmacht forces and also it shows the economic exploitation of the region by the occupation authorities.

Chapter third presents the attitude of the Ukrainian and German local minorities - both groups were politically active and strongly influenced the Polish underground military. This chapter comprises the sources of the Ukrainian nationalism and the cooperation of Ukrainian nationalist with German occupation authorities in the region of Łańcut and Leżajsk, the formation of the Ukrainian supportive police units, the attitude of the Ukrainian community in region of Leżajsk and Zasanie, the formation of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) and escalation of Polish-Ukrainian conflict in the spring 1944.

Chapter fourth describes the formation of the Polish Underground State in the early period of occupation, the organization of civilian structures of the Government Delegate for Poland in the district of Łańcut. Elements associated with the local military conspiracy, peasant, national and communist conspiracy were also presented in this chapter.

The fifth chapter intends to outline the organizational structure of the District Łańcut SZP-ZWZ-AK, commanders, commanding institutions, key functions of the underground and the beginnings of sabotage in the area of prewar district of Łańcut.

The sixth chapter outlines the organizational structure of the District Łańcut SZP-ZWZ-AK, quartermaster and supply, help for the needy, communication conspiracy, armament and equipment, intelligence and counter-intelligence and interrelations with other conspiracy organizations. This section also specifies integrating actions, propaganda activities, secret teaching, and military training, administration of justice, military service for women, medical and priesthood service and creation of sabotage structures.

The seventh chapter describes in detail the sabotage and diversion actions which were conducted in the territory of Łańcut and neighbouring districts. These are connected with actions in which diversion soldiers from the District Łańcut ZWZ-AK took part.

The eighth chapter presents the preparation of the common uprising and the course of the action „Storm” which took place on the territory of District Łańcut. It also includes Lvov conspiracy in the region of Łańcut and Leżajsk which created then elements of the „Warta” group.

Chapter ninth describes the German pacification and retaliatory action and it also presents losses incurred by underground military. Losses of civilian casualties were treated marginally due to existing studies on this topic.

Chapter tenth presents participation of the Home Army (AK) soldiers in the second independence underground against people's government over the years 1944-1945 and repressions of soldiers conducted then by security authorities.

The summary is an attempt of evaluate whether the objectives of the study have been achieved. It is also an attempt of evaluation of the achievements of conspiracy and sabotage in the District Łańcut SZP-ZWZ-AK in relation to the goals set appointed to the underground. This part also presents existing memory traces of soldiers and taken actions in the regions of Łańcut and Leżajsk. It also outlines current efforts of the local population to commemorate the military conspiracy achievements.

The dissertation also includes appendices, selected biographical notes, maps, photos and fragments of essential memories. The bibliography provides a list of source materials (published and unpublished memories, accounts and documents), published books and scientific papers.

List of abbreviations, geographical names, codenames, names and nicknames were also attached.

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