

MAŁGORZATA JAROSZEK

Uniwersytet Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego, Warszawa

KATYN – GOLGOTHA OF THE EAST

Poland has experienced two cruel systems. One of them was fascism, symbolized by the German Nazi concentration camps at Auschwitz-Birkenau. The second one was Stalinism, Katyn will remain its symbol forever. For over 50 years, no other issue in Polish-Soviet relations was as concealed as the Katyn massacre. In this essay, I will talk about the genocide in 1940 on 22,000 Poles (soldiers and civilians), investigations in this matter, and the fight for the truth. Everyone knew that any public statement about this crime could have significant consequences, such as dismissal from work or school expulsion. The Katyn genocide was a war crime that was first concealed and then distorted for the longest time. It can be said that it was a crime against the Polish nation¹.

For many years, the press, radio, and television did not talk about it. On April 13, 2020, Polish people celebrated the Katyn Massacre Remembrance Day². In the spring of the year 1940, during two months in and around Katyn (currently in Russia), executioners from the NKVD, ordered by the Soviet authorities, murdered 21,857 prisoners of war with a shot in the back of the head. NKVD-People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs was the interior ministry of the Soviet Union³. This enormously evil deed of the Bolsheviks is called the Golgotha of the East. Golgotha is a place near Jerusalem where convicts were executed. Christians believe that Jesus Christ was crucified in this place⁴. Similarly, innocent Polish officers were killed at this place of execution. The name of the crime comes from the village of Katyń near Smolensk, where victims were murdered and buried.

To understand the history of the murder of Polish prisoners of war in Katyn, one must go back in memory to the beginning of the Second World War. On September

¹ L. Sajdak, *25 lat temu Związek Sowiecki przyznał się do zbrodni katyńskiej*, dzieje.pl 13.04.2015 (Sajdak, 2015)

² I. Murawska, *Dzień Pamięci Ofiar Zbrodni Katyńskiej*, Polskie Radio 13.04.2020 (Polskie Radio, I. Murawska, 2020)

³ M. Kuźniar-Plota, „*Decision to commence investigation into Katyn Massacre*”. Departmental Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation. 30.11.2004 (Kuźniar-Plota, 2004)

⁴ H. Chisholm, ed. (1911). „Calvary”. *Encyclopædia Britannica* (11th ed.). Cambridge University Press. (Chisholm, 1911)

1, 1939, Nazi Germany invaded Poland. While two hundred Poles heroically fought off massive Wehrmacht attacks, the real war began in Moscow. On August 23, 1939, in the Kremlin, representatives of the Third Reich and the Soviet Union signed the Ribbentrop-Molotov non-aggression pact, thus starting Poland's fourth partition. The additional secret protocol assumed that the Third Reich and the USSR would detach along the Narew, Vistula and San rivers. The Soviet invasion of Poland began on September 17, 1939. As a result of the ongoing war and the Soviet attack, 250,000 soldiers and officers were taken prisoner on the USSR territories. The Soviet authorities wanted to remove the intelligentsia and leaders as soon as possible. This was necessary to facilitate the indoctrination and subjugation of Polish society⁵.

On September 19, 1939, Lavrenty Beria created a board of prisoners of war. Captives were held in harsh conditions and in a state of hunger. They were imprisoned at some old monasteries. There were eight generals, 55 colonels, 127 lieutenant colonels, and 230 majors—at the largest of the camps located in Ostashkov⁶. The People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the NKVD issued an order in which he wrote that they were all enemies of Soviet power and had expressed their hatred towards this country. Lavrenty Beria, on March 5, 1940, submitted a document addressed to the Politburo in the Kremlin. The political police chief issued a four-page note with a proposal to murder prisoners of war who threatened the USSR from Kozelsk, Ostashkov, and Starobielsk, and slaves held in Ukraine and Belarus. This order concerned the extermination of 21,768 people who were recognized as enemies of the nation and called prisoners of war. Beria, on March 22, 1940, issued another order number 00350 about the discharge of NKVD prisons. This liquidation was equal to the shooting of people residing there. It lasted from April 3 to May 19. Officers from the Kozielsk camp were shot in Katyn, those from Starobielsk – in Kharkiv, and police officers from Ostaszów – in Kalinin. The prisoners were executed in prisons in Minsk, Kyiv, Kharkiv, and Kherson⁷.

Prisoners of war from the Kozelsk camp were transported by trucks to the train station. It was there that their dramatic journey to the town of Gniezdowo, located 18 km from Smolensk, began. The wooden carriages in which these people traveled were called stolypinki. Prisoners from Starobielsk had to reach the train station in Kharkiv, while prisoners from Ostashkov were forced to walk to the nearby train station. From there, they were transported to Kalinin. To this day, historians have the most certain knowledge about the prisoners from Ostaszów and Starobielsk. They were taken to the NKVD regional networks, where they were to wait in cells for further decisions. It was then that the executions began. The NKVD officers took turns calling out the prisoners names and taking them to another location where,

⁵ M. Ray, *German-Soviet Nonaggression Pact*, Calvary Encyclopædia Britannica Cambridge University Press, 2011 (Ray, 2011)

⁶ W. Kowalski, *Ławrientij Beria (1899–1953)*, dzieje.pl 20.07.2020 (Kowalski, www.dzieje.pl, 2020)

⁷ S. Górkiewicz, *Katyń 1940* Strona poświęcona Zbrodni Katyńskiej ipn.gov.pl 25.07.2020 (Górkiewicz, 2020)

their hands were tied behind their back and they were shot in the back of the head⁸.

According to Dmitry Tokarev from NKVD, up to 250 people were killed in one night in Ostaszewo. An individual person was murdered every 2 minutes. Then his body was quickly thrown from the cell to the courtyard, and then the corpse was loaded into a truck. There were two convoys of these vehicles with bodies in one night. Trucks from Kalin reached Miednoje, and from Kharkiv to Pietychatek, where the bodies were thrown into pits dug in the ground. People from around that area heard, that „The Russians could not allow any local witnesses to see this done”⁹. Historical sources say that the prisoners from Kozielsk were shot in the basement of the NKVD headquarters at Smolensk. The first shots were fired at Polish prisoners of war on April 4 in Katyn.

During the occupation, Henryk Troszczyński, a Polish soldier of the Armia Krajowa-Home Army, was taken to work in Katyn. He was one of the first people to learn about this terrible Soviet murder. Troszczyński witnessed the discovery of the first grave. As Troszczyński mentioned in one of the interviews, that there were eight pits all together, in which bodies were found, and from where 4,321 murder victims were recovered¹⁰. From the Soviet perspective, the Katyn massacre can be considered an example of the NKVD's „success”.

Among those brutally murdered Poles was one woman, lieutenant pilot Janina Lewandowska, daughter of Józef Dowbor-Muśnicki, general of the tsarist army. During the war, as a sport pilot, she volunteered for the military. There was also a little boy lying beside her in the pit of death, wearing a navy-blue suit and shorts¹¹.

Three years later, people found bodies buried. When the Russians entered the Katyn area, all other witnesses of the exhumation disappeared without a trace. Henryk Troszczyński was the only survivor, he was bought by his father, after returning to Warsaw, he joined the Home Army and took part in the Warsaw Uprising. For years, communist propaganda did everything to ensure that the victims' families would never learn Katyn's truth. Among the victims were 18 generals, 350 colonels and lieutenant colonels, thousands of officers, 6,000 police officers, and other uniformed professions, 107 scientists, lecturers of Polish and European universities, 700 lawyers, judges, prosecutors, several dozen priests, inventors, industrialists, and entrepreneurs¹².

They were the flower of Polish intelligentsia, professional soldiers and reservists at the peak of their careers, and they became Stalin's defenseless prisoners of war. As a nation, we should always take care that the history of this crime is never

⁸ R. Szubarczyk, *Polscy jeńcy w obozie w Kozielsku, rozstrzelana Polska*, radiomaryja.pl, 16.03.2010 (Szubarczyk, 2010)

⁹ T. Kisielewski, *Katyn. Zbrodnia i kłamstwo*, Dom Wydawniczy Rebis, Poznań 2008, p. 76 (Kisielewski, *Katyn. Zbrodnia i kłamstwo*, 2008)

¹⁰ M. Domżańska, *Archiwum historii mówionej, Henryk Troszczyński „Murarz” 1944.pl* (Troszczyński, 2010)

¹¹ T. Kisielewski, *Katyn. Zbrodnia i kłamstwo*, Poznań 2008, str. 81–83 (Kisielewski, *Katyn. Zbrodnia i kłamstwo*, 2008)

¹² D. Gorajczyk, *Zbrodnia Katyńska*, Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, Kraków, 2014 (Gorajczyk, 2014)

forgotten. However, what needs to be emphasized, is that no one was ever tried, and no person expressed remorse over this terrible Katyn massacre. The world seems to be silent as if nothing happened.

Russia has so far not paid any compensation to the NKVD victims. Vladimir Putin does not admit to the world any responsibility for the murder of thousands of Poles in the Katyn forest. The Russian government still does not want to cooperate with the families of the victims. As long as the Russians do not plead guilty for the Katyn massacre and condemn Stalin's policies, the Politburo, and all those who for years concealed the criminal truth, Polish-Russian relations will not improve¹³.

Poles' characteristic feature is to have honor, pride, and courage in the fight for historical truth. They have proved it many times by taking actions during 123 years of captivity to regain independence. They took part in uprisings, created a culture of Polish traditions connected with the Catholic religion. Thanks to this, Poland retained its identity and national heritage.

The puzzling fact is why 20% of the officers found in the mass graves were tied up. They had their hands tied behind their backs and their heads with the same rope so that if they tried to free themselves, they would choke at the same time. On June 22, 1941, the Third Reich invaded the USSR. On July 30, 1941, the Sikorski-Majski Agreement was signed¹⁴. General Władysław Anders was ordered to create the Polish Army in the East. This army was missing 45% of its officers who disappeared without a trace. General Sikorski became involved in this matter. On December 3, 1941, he came to Moscow. In the Kremlin, he talked with Józef Stalin about Polish soldiers in the camps in Kozelsk, Osztakowo, and Starobelsk. The Soviet leader informed him that they had possibly fled to Manchuria. According to a Russian witness's testimony, Polish construction workers employed in Kozia Góra in 1942 learned from residents about mass graves in this region. A group of Poles found the body of a Polish officer buried underground.

During the trial in Nuremberg, one of the Germans testified that in February 1943, information about the body of a man found by a wolf reached the headquarters of the 537th Communications Regiment in the Katyn Forest. On April 13, 1943, the German radio reported that Polish officers' mass graves had been found near Smolensk. The Russian Press Agency TASS said that fascists killed Polish prisoners of war working in a nearby forest. The Germans wanted the world to know that the Soviets had murdered Poles in Katyn and nearby towns. The Germans knew about the place where the murdered Polish prisoners of war were buried as early as 1942. The Polish workers from the German Todt organization, working in the vicinity of Katyn, learned from the local population about the graves of Polish soldiers. The German authorities did not take any interest in this case at that time. They returned to it only later during January and February 1943, after the Germans' defeat at Stalin-grad. Nazi propaganda decided to use the information about the crime against Polish officers committed by the Soviets to start a quarrel between the Allies.

¹³ P. Cizak, *Reparacje wojenne dla Polski. Polacy chcą od Niemców odszkodowania* money.pl 12.09.2019 (Cizak, 2019)

¹⁴ A. Paul, *Katyn*. Wydanie poszerzone, Warszawa 2010, 190 (Paul, 2010)

The first exhumation works began on March 29, 1943, and lasted until April 11, when the Supreme Command of the Land Forces of the Third Reich issued an order to dig up the local mass graves. Professor Gerhard Buhtz headed the exhumation commission. He was a Nazi and a director of the Institute of Forensic Medicine and Forensics at the University of Wrocław. On April 11, a Polish delegation of researchers came to Katyn. Until then, 160 bodies were recovered, including two generals: Bronisław Bohaterewicz and Mieczysław Smorawiński. The Germans wanted as many people as possible to learn about the murder of Poles in Katyn. To provide information, they organized trips to Smolensk for journalists and Wehrmacht soldiers and they held press conferences¹⁵.

The Germans had control over the Polish Red Cross Technical Commission that came to Katyn. Adolf Hitler ordered that on April 10, 1943, Poles from the territories occupied by the Third Reich should go to Katyn. They were the writers Ferdynand Goetel and Jan Emil Skiwski. Germany exercised a great deal of control over the Polish Red Cross. Interestingly, the Polish Red Cross was invited to participate in the research three hours before the plane's departure to Katyn. Kazimierz Skarżyński, Secretary-General of the Polish Red Cross, was appointed the team leader. Skarżyński prepared the first secret report on the Katyn massacre in June 1943. This document was not released until 1989. The fate of the Secretary-General was challenging after the Red Army entered Warsaw. To conceal his identity, he changed his name, stayed for some time in London and Nuremberg, and eventually moved to Canada for good.

From April 28 to 30, 1943, the International Medical Commission, established on the Germans' initiative, also visited Katyn. It consisted of 12 representatives of forensic medicine from the countries occupied by the Third Reich and Switzerland. The German documentation from the exhumation of „Amtliches Material Zum Massenmord von Katyn” was issued by them in September 1943. There were written testimonies obtained from Russian witnesses from the vicinity of the murder site, a protocol from the International Medical Commission's work, an exhumation report by prof. Gerhard Buhtz, a list of badly decomposed remains of people who were identified and photos¹⁶.

After the exhumation works were completed, the Polish Red Cross prepared a „Confidential Report” in June 1943, which was sent to the Polish Government-in-Exile in London. Polish and German experts investigating the Katyn massacre found that the cause of death of several thousand Poles was a shot in the back of the head with a German 7.65mm Walther pistol.

In September 1943, after the Germans left the Smolensk area, a unique team of operational and investigated officers of the NKVD and the Soviet military counterintelligence Smiersz begin working in Katyn. This team's head was one of the

¹⁵ M. Komaniecka, *Katyn Massacre – Basic Facts*, Kraków ipn.gov.pl (Komaniecka, Katyn Massacre-Basic Facts, 2020)

¹⁶ A. Kruszyńska, *Wydano katyńskie listy ekshumacyjne i dokumenty PCK z lat 1943–1944*, dzieje.pl 25.04.2013 (Kruszyńska, 2013)

foremost perpetrators of crimes against Polish prisoners of war in Katyn and the first deputy of Lavrenti Beria-Vsevolod Merkulov (1895–1953). The NKVD investigation lasted until January 1944¹⁷. At the end of the research work, the team of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the USSR issued the document „Information on the preliminary investigation into the so-called Katyn case”.

On January 24, 1944, a special Soviet commission was established by prof. Nikolai Burdenka. It transferred the falsified information to the public after the extraction and examination of 925 bodies of Polish officers murdered in Katyn. His investigation showed that the Germans committed this inconceivable crime between September and December 1941. The Germans reported the discovery of mass graves on April 13, 1943. The USSR tried to hide the truth about this crime and blame Germany. On April 15, the Soviet Information Bureau, to blame the Third Reich, announced that Polish prisoners of war worked on construction works. In the summer of 1941, fascist executioners murdered them. This crime was to take place after the Soviet troops left the Smolensk region¹⁸. In Nuremberg, in 1945–1949, criminal trials against the Third Reich's main criminals were held before the International Military Tribunal, and then before American military courts. In 1946, at one of the trials before the tribunal, the Soviet Union wanted to blame the Germans for the murder of Polish officers in Katyn. Soviet accusers claimed that the full responsibility for this murder rested with the German 537th working battalion staff, commanded by Col. Arnes. The indictment includes a point about the shooting of 11,000 Polish officers in Katyn in September 1941. The shocking fact is that this falsified information was taken from an investigation by the Soviet Burdenko commission in 1944. The Soviet side appointed witnesses who testified in favor of the USSR. One of them was a member of the Burdenka commission's forensic physician, Wiktor Prozorowski. He suggested that the Germans searched the murdered officers' pockets to find documents and valuables in them¹⁹. Simultaneously, the Polish government in London asked its representative in Switzerland to ask the International Red Cross to examine Katyn's graves. On April 17, the Polish authorities sent a letter to this effect in Geneva. The Soviet Union did not want the Katyn investigation to be conducted by the ICC. On April 19, 1943, an article was written in the Soviet daily Pravda entitled “Polish helpers of Hitler”, harassing Poles²⁰.

However, in its verdict issued on September 30, 1946, the Nuremberg Tribunal omitted the murder of Polish officers due to a lack of evidence. It is worth noting that the Soviet judge Iona Timofeevich Nikitchenko rejected the court's decision. Professor Witold Kulesza said the Americans knew that the Soviets were the perpetrators of the Katyn massacre. However, during the Nuremberg trial, the Americans remained

¹⁷ M. Komaniecka, *Orędownik Sprawy Katyńskiej*, Biuletyn 4 2010, IPN Kraków (Komaniecka, *Orędownik Sprawy Katyńskiej*, 2010)

¹⁸ S. Kalbarczyk, *Zbrodnia katyńska w kręgu prawdy i kłamstwa*, Warszawa 2010, p. 252 (Kalbarczyk, 2010)

¹⁹ B. Świącicki, *Dziennik Bałtycki*, nr 47, R.II, 17 lutego 1946 – *Katyn – największa zbrodnia wojenna Niemiec przed trybunałem w Norymberdze*, (Świącicki, 1946)

²⁰ K. Strzyczkowski, *Zbrodnia katyńska – kłamstwa komisji Burdenki*, polskieradio.pl 01.21.2020 (Strzyczkowski, 2020)

silent, allowing Soviet prosecutors to attempt to attribute the Katyn massacre committed by the Soviets to the Germans²¹.

In 1952, in Washington, the United States Congress Special Investigation Commission's report to Investigate the Katyn Massacre, chaired by Ray John Madden of Indiana, was published. He informed that the Soviet Union was entirely responsible for the Katyn massacre. In 1951, the US House of Representatives established a Special Investigative Commission to Investigate the Facts, Evidence, and Circumstances of the Katyn Forest Murder, chaired by the lawyer and Congressman Ray John Madden (1892–1987). For a year, the commission conducted a comprehensive investigation, collecting materials and questioning over 100 witnesses from the USA, Great Britain, Germany, and Italy. The commission's work proved that the Americans withheld the Katyn massacre's historical truth, hiding it from the rest of the world. The Madden report is the only authentic and most relevant evidence confirming the USSR's guilt for 22,000 Poles' genocide²². The author of the Katyn report, the pre-war president of the Polish Writers' Union, Ferdynand Goetel, was accused of having the information prepared for the needs of, after his return to Poland, the reptilian press.

In the 1940s and 1950s, the Polish press repeatedly published propaganda articles to conceal the historical truth about the Katyn massacre of 1940. „Głos Warszawy,” posted by „Wiesław,” played an essential role in reproducing untrue information about this crime²³.

The most vigorous propaganda attacks happened in 1945 at the end of World War II and in 1952. At that time, an investigation by the US Commission was ongoing. For decades, the communists tried to prove that the Nazis were responsible for this genocide, who, like in Auschwitz-Birkenau and many other camps, murdered millions of Poles²⁴.

The United States and Great Britain have, for many years, concealed the truth about the murder of 22,000 Polish officers in Katyn by the NKVD. US soldier Lt. Col. John Huff Van Vliet Jr., on May 22, 1945, reported on the exhumation carried out by the Germans in 1943, in which he stated that the responsibility for this genocide rested with the USSR. This document shows that soldiers from the British army also went to Katyn together with German researchers. At that time, the President of the United States was Franklin Delano Roosevelt. He did not reveal the truth about Katyn, because the USSR was an ally of the United States during World War II and the President feared at that time that there would be a collapse of the Allied coali-

²¹ I. Kozłowska, *Proces norymberski z cieniem hańby*, rozmowa z prof. Witoldem Kuleszą, *Nasz Dziennik*, 09.12.2012 (Kozłowska, 2012)

²² W. Wasilewski, *Mord w Lesie Katyńskim. Przesłuchania przed amerykańską komisją Maddena w latach 1951–1952*, t. 1, Warszawa 2017, 680 s (Wasilewski, *Mord w Lesie Katyńskim. Przesłuchania przed amerykańską Komisją Maddena w latach 1951-1952*, tom 1, 2017)

²³ W. Wasilewski, *Komunizm: system – ludzie – dokumentacja* rocznik naukowy 5 (2016) Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, Polska (Wasilewski, *Komunizm: system-ludzie-dokumentacja*, 2016)

²⁴ K. Utracka, *The Katyn Massacre – Mechanisms of Genocide* warsawinstitute.review 18.05.2020 (Utracka, 2020)

tion in the fight against the Nazi Third Reich²⁵. The head of the British government, prime minister Winston Churchill like the US president, knew very well that Joseph Stalin had ordered the killing of 22,000 Poles in Katyn. Churchill concealed this truth because he wanted to preserve the unity of the anti-Nazi coalition²⁶.

On April 13, 1990, after 50 years of lies, propaganda, and repression, the Russians admitted that the NKVD had murdered Polish officers in Katyn. The Secretary-General of the CPSU Central Committee, Mikhail Gorbachev, invited General Wojciech Jaruzelski, the President of Poland, to Moscow. On April 13, 1990, Gorbachev handed over to the President of the Republic of Poland two files containing a list of Polish prisoners of war in Starobielsk and a description of transports from the camps in Kozelsk and Ostashkov to the places of execution. Jaruzelski did not receive the decision of the Politburo of March 5, 1940, to kill the Polish officers, as this document was lost somewhere for unknown reasons. On April 13, 1990, the Russian press agency TASS reported that the NKVD carried out the Katyn massacre²⁷.

On October 14, 1992, there was a breakthrough in reaching the sources of truth. President Yeltsin of Russia gave orders to the chairman of the State Archives Committee, prof. Rudolf Pichoji, to hand over to the then reigning Polish President Lech Wałęsa, as well as to the Russian Constitutional Tribunal, secret documents from a file no. 1 concerning the Katyn massacre. They contained an order to shoot Polish prisoners of war in the USSR, issued by the Politburo on March 5, 1940. In 1991, more remains of victims murdered by the NKVD were discovered at Katyn. On August 2, 1993, a report issued by the Chief Military Prosecutor's Office of the Russian Federation stated that the Katyn massacre was one of the most severe crimes against peace and humanity. Item 6 of this report contained information that the NKVD murdered 14,522 prisoners of war in Starobielsk, Ostashkov, Kozielsk, Kharkiv, and Kalinin²⁸. In 2004 the Russian Prosecutor General's Office informed the Polish Institute of National Remembrance that the Katyn massacre not be classified as a crime against humanity. From 1990 to 2004, no one was charged with any crime. The Russian prosecutor's office rejected the provision that the Katyn massacre was genocide. The Russians concluded their investigation into the Katyn massacre on September 21, 2004. They argued that after more than 60 years, those guilty of the Katyn massacre were no longer alive and thus refused to provide Poles with 116 out of 183 volumes of documents describing the course of the genocide of 1940. The Polish side found out about the investigation on September 29, 2004, during the President of the Republic of Poland, Aleksander Kwasniewski's visit to the Kremlin²⁹.

²⁵ B. Chrabota, *Ameryka odsłania Katyń*, 24.08.2012 rp.pl (Chrabota, 2012)

²⁶ M. Mądrzejewski, *Popołudnie z jedyką, rozmowa z Piotrem Długoleckim, historykiem z MSZ Polskie Radio 04.09. 2015* (Mądrzejewski, 2015)

²⁷ K. Krzykowska, 13 kwietnia 1990 r. był końcem kłamstwa katyńskiego dzieje.pl, 13.04.2018 (Krzykowska, 2018)

²⁸ M. Komaniecka, *The Person and the Challenges*, Volume 3 (2013) Number 2, p. 65–92 (Komaniecka, *The Person and the Challenges*, no 2, Vol. 3, 2013)

²⁹ D. Boćkowski, A. Dzienkiewicz, *Katyń – zbrodnia (nadal) chroniona tajemnicą państwową*, Władimir Abarinow: *Oprawcy z Katynia*, Kraków 2007, s. 311–327 (D. Boćkowski, 2007)

It is a harrowing matter of not knowing the place of burial of 3,870 Poles. Their names appeared on the so-called Belarusian Katyn list, which has also not been found³⁰. The Ukrainian Katyn list contained the names of 3,435 victims. Although their identity is known, archaeologists have found only nine bodies³¹. Russia needs to reveal the truth about Katyn because it could rebuild international relations.

In September 2011, there was a very crucial conference entitled “Katyn – Unfinished Inquiry” on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC. One of the speakers was Professor David Crane. He said that the United States should also issue an apology to the Katyn victims and the Polish people. They should provide compensation to the Katyn families who are US citizens either directly or through the establishment of the Katyn Truth and Reconciliation Research Institute. Frank Spula, President of the Polish American Congress, emphasized that the Katyn massacre is as important to Poles as the Holocaust is to Jews³².

Each year, remembering the Katyn massacre anniversaries, Poles must not forget about the second Katyn, the Smolensk tragedy on April 10, 2010, in which 96 outstanding Poles died³³. They were representatives of the Polish state who wanted to pay tribute to the Katyn massacre victims. Among them, there was the President of the Republic of Poland, prof. Lech Kaczyński with his wife Maria, military commanders, clerics, politicians, patriots and plane crew leaders³⁴. Just like the truth about Katyn, also about Smolensk, it should be revealed, and those responsible for this massive loss for the Polish nation be punished. The Smolensk catastrophe has united thousands of Poles in our homeland and around the world. Since that time, many emigrants have become interested in Polish affairs again. Ten years after this tragedy, world still does not know the truth about what happened in Smolensk. Parents and teachers play a huge role in the transmission of knowledge. History lessons in schools should primarily focus on educating students about the historical events of the 20th and 21st centuries’ and sponsor meetings with living witnesses. Parents and teachers play a huge role in the transmission of knowledge. The current generation of young people can learn the truth about the murder of Polish officers in Katyn from eyewitnesses.

In conclusion, this article refers not only to the crime itself, but also to its origin, and to the historical processes, and the lies accompanying the Katyn massacre. Young people may ask why is it necessary to deal with the massacre which happened 80 years ago and with the perpetrators who are no longer alive. Not only every Pole but the world should know the history and struggle for this murder’s circumstances to be disclosed, for all victims of this tragedy to be found, named and duly commemorated. This murder is part of the holocaust in the world memory and at the same time, a warning to all humanity.

³⁰ W. Materski, *Katyn – motywy i przebieg zbrodni (pytania, wątpliwości)*, Zeszyty Katyńskie (nr 12), Warszawa 2000, s. 26–40 (Materski, 2000)

³¹ P. Falkowski, *Odczytaliśmy dziewięć nazwisk*, radiomaryja.pl, 4 czerwca 2011 (Falkowski, 2011)

³² M. Szonert-Binienda, Report from the Capitol Hill Conference “Katyn: Unfinished Inquiry” librainstitute.org (Szonert-Binienda, 2011)

³³ E. Stankiewicz, *Manifest*, Solidarni2010.pl [30.07.2020]

³⁴ N. Kulish, E. Barry, *Michał Piotrowski Polish President Dies in Jet Crash in Russia*, New York Times 4.10.2010

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Chisholm H., (1911), Calvary. In H. Chisholm, *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Chrabota B., (2012, 08 24), *Ameryka odsłania Katyń*. Retrieved from www.rp.pl: <https://www.rp.pl/artykul/927125-Ameryka-odslania-Katyn.html>
- Ciszak P. (2019, 09 12), *Polacy chcą od Niemców odszkodowania*, Retrieved from www.money.pl: <https://www.money.pl/gospodarka/reparacje-wojenne-polacy-chca-od-niemcow-odszkodowania-6423613020334209a.html>
- Święcicki B., (1946, 02 17), *Katyń-największa zbrodnia wojenna Niemiec przed trybunałem w Norymberdze*, *Dziennik Bałtycki* nr 47, p. 4.
- Boćkowski D., A.D. (2007), *Katyń – zbrodnia (nadal) chroniona tajemnicą państwową*. 311–327. Kraków, Warszawa.
- Falkowski P., (2011, 06 04), *Odczytaliśmy dziewięć nazwisk*. Retrieved from www.radiomaryja.pl: <https://www.radiomaryja.pl/bez-kategorii/odczytalismy-dziewiec-nazwisk/>
- Gorajczyk D., (2014), *Zbrodnia katyńska*. Retrieved from www.ipn.gov.pl: https://ipn.gov.pl/pl/publikacje/teki-edukacyjne/27577_Zbrodnia-Katynska.html
- Górkiewicz S., (2020, 07 25), *www.ipn.gov.pl*. Retrieved from *Katyń 1940 Strona poświęcona Zbrodni Katyńskiej*: https://ipn.gov.pl/pl/edukacja-1/portale-tematyczne/39365_Katyn-1940.html
- Kalbarczyk S., (2010), *Zbrodnia katyńska w kręgu prawdy i kłamstwa*. In S. Kalbarczyk, *Zbrodnia katyńska w kręgu prawdy i kłamstwa* (p. 252). Warszawa: IPN.
- Kisielewski T., (2008), *Katyń. Zbrodnia i kłamstwo*. In T. Kisielewski, *Katyń. Zbrodnia i kłamstwo* (p. 76). Poznań : Dom Wydawniczy Rebis.
- Kisielewski T., (2008), *Katyń. Zbrodnia i kłamstwo*. In T. Kisielewski, *Katyń. Zbrodnia i kłamstwo* (pp. 81–83). Poznań: Dom Wydawniczy Rebis.
- Komaniecka M., (2010), *Orędownik Sprawy Katyńskiej*. Biuletyn 4, IPN Kraków.
- Komaniecka M., (2013), *The Person and the Challenges*, no 2, Vol. 3. *Katyn Massacre – Basic Facts*, pp. 65–92.
- Komaniecka M., (2020), *Katyn Massacre-Basic Facts*. Retrieved from www.ipn.gov.pl/en: https://ipn.gov.pl/en/news/3921_Katyn-Massacre-Basic-Facts.html
- Kowalski W., (2015, 05 29), *Stanisław Swianiewicz – ocalony z Katynia*. Retrieved from www.dzieje.pl: <https://dzieje.pl/artykulyhistoryczne/stanislaw-swianiewicz-ocalony-z-katynia>
- Kowalski W., (2020, 20 07), *www.dzieje.pl*. Retrieved from <https://dzieje.pl/postacie/lawrientij-beria-1899-1953>
- Kozłowska I., (2012, 09 12), *Proces norymberski z cieniem hańby, rozmowa z prof. Witoldem Kuleszą*. Retrieved from www.naszdziennik.pl: <https://naszdziennik.pl/polska-kraj/9655.proces-norymberski-z-cieniem-hanby.html>
- Kruszyńska A., (2013, 04 25), *Wydano katyńskie listy ekshumacyjne i dokumenty PCK z lat 1943–1944*. Retrieved from www.dzieje.pl: <https://dzieje.pl/aktualnosci/wydano-katynskie-listy-ekshumacyjne-i-dokumenty-pck-z-lat-1943-1944>
- Krzykowska K., (2018, 04 13), *13 kwietnia 1990: był końcem kłamstwa katyńskiego*. Retrieved from www.dzieje.pl: <https://dzieje.pl/aktualnosci/j-szarek-13-kwietnia-1990-r-byl-koncem-klamstwa-katynskiego>
- Kuźniar-Plota M., (2004), *Decision to commence investigation into Katyn Massacre*. Departamental Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation.
- Materski W., (2000), *Katyń – motywy i przebieg zbrodni (pytania i wątpliwości)*. *Zeszyty Katyńskie* nr 12, *Warszawa*, pp. 26–40.
- Mądrzejewski M., (2015, 04 09), *Popołudnie z jedyneką, rozmowa z Piotrem Długoleckim*. Retrieved from www.polskieradio.pl: <https://www.polskieradio.pl/13/53/Artykul/1417268,Rozmowa-dnia-Piotr-Dlugolecki>
- Paul A., (2010), *Katyń. Wydanie poszerzone*. In A. Paul, *Katyń-wydanie poszerzone* (p. 190). Warszawa: Świat Książki.

- Polskie Radio, I. Murawska, (2020, 04 13), Dzień Pamięci Ofiar Zbrodni Katyńskiej. Warszawa.
- Ray M., (2011), German-Soviet Nonaggression Pact. In M. Ray, *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sajdak L., w. (2015, 04 13), *25 lat temu Związek Sowiecki przyznał się do zbrodni katyńskiej*. Polska: dzieje.pl.
- Strzyczkowski K., (2020, 01 21), *Zbrodnia katyńska-klamstwa komisji Burdenki*. Retrieved from www.polskieradio.pl: <https://www.polskieradio.pl/39/156/Artykul/760479,Zbrodnia-katyńska-%e2%80%93-klamstwa-komisji-Burdenki>
- Szonert-Binienda M., (2011, 09 15), *Report from the Capitol Hill Conference „Katyn: Unfinished Inquiry”*. Retrieved from www.librainstitute.org: <http://librainstitute.org/PDFs/Report%20on%20Capitol%20Hill%20Katyn%20Conference.pdf>
- Szubarczyk R., (2010, 06 13), *Polscy jeńcy w obozie w Kozielsku, rozstrzelana Polska*. Retrieved from www.radiomaryja.pl: <https://www.radiomaryja.pl/bez-kategorii/polscy-jency-w-obozie-w-kozielsku-rozstrzelana-polska/>
- Troszczyński H., (2010, 04 20), Henryk Troszczyński „Murarz” . (M. Domżańska, Interviewer)
- Utracka, K. (2020, 05 18). *The Katyn Massacre-Mechanisms of Genocide*. Retrieved from www.warsawinstitute.review: <https://warsawinstitute.review/issue-2020/the-katyn-massacre-mechanisms-of-genocide/>
- Wasilewski W., (2016), *Komunizm: system – ludzie – dokumentacja. Rocznik naukowy 5, IPN*, p. 40.
- Wasilewski W., (2017), *Mord w Lesie Katyńskim. Przesłuchania przed amerykańską Komisją Maddena w latach 1951–1952*, t. 1. In W. Wasilewski, *Mord w Lesie Katyńskim. Przesłuchania przed amerykańską Komisją Maddena w latach 1951–1952*, t. 1 (p. 680). Warszawa: IPN.

Key words: Katyn massacre, stalinism, genocide, NKVD

Nota o Autorce

Małgorzata JAROSZEK – absolwentka studiów na kierunku Dziennikarstwo i komunikacja społeczna w Instytucie Edukacji Medialnej i Dziennikarstwa UKSW w Warszawie (2021). Obecnie studentka I roku na kierunkach: Komunikacja medialno-marketingowa UKSW oraz Creative management in new media w Szkole Filmowej im. K. Kieślowskiego UŚ w Katowicach. Ukończony staż w amerykańskim wydawnictwie Aquila Polonica w Los Angeles (2018), staż w Fundacji na Rzecz Kultury Prawnej Ordo Iuris w Dziale Komunikacji i Fundraisingu (2020) oraz praktyka dziennikarska w Instytucie Myśli Schumana, rzeczniczka prasowa organizacji (2021). Współpracownica w Dziale Planowania i Strategii Polskiego Radia S.A. oraz w Departamencie Polskiego Bonu Turystycznego Polskiej Organizacji Turystycznej. Zainteresowania badawcze: dyplomacja, polityka, nowe media, historia Polski XX w., Stany Zjednoczone.

Kontakt e-mail: gosiajaroszek8@gmail.com