

## Is the Name “Polish Death Camps” a Misnomer?

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*The purpose of the study is a historical-linguistic analysis of the ambiguous name “Polish death camps” (or “Polish concentration camps”), which for the last thirty years has led to conflicting assessments among politicians, journalists and historians, and in some cases being considered as a term. In order to make an accurate assessment of this name, and to clarify the question of the correctness/incorrectness of its use and come to a conclusion about the linguistic suitability/unsuitability to consider it a term, the authors study the new evidence by historians, interviews with public and political figures, and in particular, for the first time investigate the original editorial material where the name was formulated. In the course of the study, the true source of the name “Polish death camps” was first disclosed and a comprehensive history of its use was presented. Basing on gathered material the conclusion was made that the name is linguistically incorrect and can not be used as a term.*

Key words: *Polish death camps; language meaning; editorial mistake; misnomer; name falsification; working paper*

### Introduction

It would seem obvious that the mass media’s active assignment of the terminological function to the name “Polish death camps” (hereinafter referred to as PDCs<sup>1</sup>) has only geographical significance; when referring to the times of World War II, it means death camps built by the authorities of the Third Reich in occupied Poland and aimed at the extermination of all “Nazi useless”, and, since 1941 – Jews and Roma people (nationalities discriminated by the German Nuremberg Acts of 1935).

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<sup>1</sup> Since the distinction between the use of the term “Polish death camps” in the plural and the singular is important here, two abbreviations are used in the article: PDC – for the singular, PDCs – for the plural form.

However, for people who do not have historical knowledge, the name has meaning of concentration (extermination) camps built and managed by the Polish authorities. The other side of the question is that the use of the name PDCs, falsely referring to the ontological nature of the object being described, is easily used for populist falsification of history. When two definitions are used – one ontological and the other quasi-ontological – this very name deliberately transfers responsibility for the criminal implementation of the camps from the German Nazis to the Polish nation, which caused not only confusion in understanding historical facts, but also their intentional distortion. For many years, Poles have been dealing with hundreds of cases per year of misleading use of this type of expressions by the world media and politicians (see, e.g., Fig. 1 and 2).



Fig. 1. A screenshot of an Israeli politician's tweet.<sup>2</sup>



Fig. 2. Tweet of senior editor of the Jerusalem Post.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> [Online] <https://twitter.com/yairlapid/status/957208421794709504>, accessed 2019-06-03.

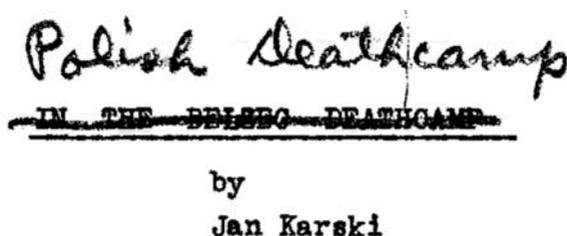
<sup>3</sup> [Online] <https://twitter.com/LahavHarkov/status/957294785622171654?s=20>, accessed 2019-05-19

Therefore, the authors of this article set themselves the task of revealing the mechanism of the creation and subsequent popularization of the studied name. The implementation of the task required a query of the earliest media publication of the PDC name and updating the state of factual knowledge from the most recent publications on the history of World War II Central Europe located extermination camps.

### Archive research of the editorial materials of Jan Karski's article from 1944

We have investigated the earliest use of the name PDC that means the title of the article by Jan Karski, the famous emissary of the Polish underground state, a professional diplomat and committed witness, as well as officer directly reporting about the Holocaust to the Allies leaders during World War II. The article containing his own personal testimony on German Nazi extermination camp was published in a 2.5 million circulation in the American weekly Collier's Weekly of October 14, 1941. At that time, both the German Nazi Holocaust and the war between the Allies and Axis countries continued at full scale.

The title "Polish Death Camp" was manually implemented in the Jan Karski typescript (see Fig. 3).



Polish Deathcamp  
~~IN THE BELZEC DEATHCAMP~~  
by  
Jan Karski

Fig. 3. Handwritten title change in the typescript of Jan Karski's article.<sup>4</sup>

The manuscript of the article, sent to the editor of Collier's Weekly, was originally titled "In the Belzec Death Camp" and was a chapter of the book by the same author, which was to be published in November 1944<sup>5</sup>. The title of the chapter in the book was: "To die in Agony ...".

Because the text was only a chapter of the book, it did not include any comprehensive explanation of the situation in occupied Poland and that the

<sup>4</sup> Karski, J. (1944). *In the Belzec Death Camp*, typescript, Crowell-Collier Publishing Company records, MssCol. 703 box 605, Karski Jan, The New York Public Library, Manuscripts and Archives Division, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations, New York, USA, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Karski, J. (1944). *Courier from Poland: The Story of a Secret State*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

country was terrorized by the Nazis and Soviet occupants. There were no Polish state organs. Germany ruled through terror on a much larger scale than in other occupied Western European countries.

At the same time, at the beginning of the article only a few sentences of the editor (1) and author (2) explanations were added:

(1) Insert from the editor:

*“A patriot disguised as a guard bribed his way into the Nazi execution grounds at Belzec.*

*Here, for the first time, is his eyewitness story of the Nazis’ systematic slaughter of Jews, based on his official report to London and Washington”* (see Fig. 4).

A patriot disguised as a guard bribed his way into the Nazi  execution grounds ~~in~~  at Belzec. Here, for the first time, is his eye-witness story of  the Nazis’ systematic slaughter of Jews, based on the author’s report to the exile government in London.

Fig. 4. Insert by the editor.<sup>6</sup>

(2) Typescript insert from the author

*“As a member of the underground, I was ordered to leave Warsaw and report to the Polish government and the Allied authorities about conditions in Poland. My orders came from the delegate of the Polish government acting somewhere in Poland and from the commander in chief of the underground army. Jewish leaders confided to me their written report but they insisted that in order to be able to tell the truth I should see with my own eyes what actually happened to the Jews in Poland. They arranged for me to visit one of the Jewish death camps.”* (see Fig. 5).

The expression “Jewish death camps” was used in occupied Poland (perhaps following Jewish organizations) precisely to indicate that these camps were built by the Nazis specifically for the extermination of Jews.

At the same time, the same issue of The Colliers’s Weekly published just a few pages earlier, an article by journalist Robert De Vore, describing problems in

<sup>6</sup> Karski, J. *In the Belzec Death Camp*, Op. cit., p. 1.

*(As a member of the underground)*  
~~Below~~ I was <sup>to</sup> leave Warsaw <sup>and</sup> report to Allied leaders in London and Washington about conditions in Poland. <sup>My orders came from</sup> ~~the~~ Delegate of the Polish Government and of the Commander-in-Chief of the Underground Army. ~~Some~~ Jewish leaders ~~also~~ <sup>written</sup> confided to me their report. <sup>But they</sup> ~~Besides the written documents, I received~~ ~~from them, the Jewish leaders~~ insisted that in order to be able to tell the truth I should see with my own eyes what actually happened to the Jews in Poland. They arranged for me to visit the Jewish death camp.

Fig. 5. Introduction by Jan Karski. (Note: the name „the Jewish death camp“ used by Poles and Jews in Nazi-occupied Poland.)<sup>7</sup>

American prisoner-of-war camps. There were about 250,000 of them in camps in the US at the time. The article was titled “Our ‘Pampered’ War Prisoners”).<sup>8</sup>

Thus, in the same issue of Collier’s Weekly of October 14, 1944, there were two articles about war camps: one article about the German death camp in occupied Poland near Belżec and one article about American prisoner-of-war camps.

It is quite possible that this accidental thematic interference between two articles in the same issue of the weekly Collier’s Weekly caused the editor to try to separate the two topics by using a more radical wording for the title of Jan Karski’s article. Also probably not many of the readers of “Collier’s Weekly” were clearly aware that Belzec is not located in the USA.

As we have determined, the preprint of the Karski article contains two signatures: “RFM-8-18-44” (see Fig. 6) and “Peggy-8-18-44” (see Fig. 7). Probably one of these persons changed the title of the article.

SLIDE B—34

GAL. 1

Collier’s—Sept. 23  
RFM—8-18-44

## POLISH DEATH CAMP

By Jan Karski

Fig. 6. Preprint header GAL. 1.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Karski, J. *In the Belzec Death Camp*, Op. cit., p. 2.

<sup>8</sup> De Vore, R. (1944). Our ‘Pampered’ War Prisoners. *Collier’s Weekly*, October 1944, pp. 14, 57–59.

<sup>9</sup> Karski, J. (1944). *Polish Death Camp*, preprint, Crowell-Collier Publishing Company records, MssCol. 703 box 605, Karski Jan, The New York Public Library, Manuscripts and Archives Division, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations, New York, USA, p. 1.

SLIDE B-36  
 Collier's—Sept. 23  
 Peggy—8-18-44

GAL. 3

POLISH DEATH CAMP

Fig. 7. Preprint header GAL. 3.<sup>10</sup>

It would have seemed that Jan Karski could clearly oppose the title “Polish Death Camp”<sup>10</sup> and instead propose something like the “German Death Camp”. However, he did not have such an opportunity. The Polish emissary’s book publication, prepared in parallel, was created in close cooperation with the editor and publisher Emery Reeves (he played the same role in publishing Winston Churchill’s books in the United States), editor William Poster and promotional agent Clarke Getts. After finishing the final version of the text of J. Karski’s book “Courier from Poland. The Story of a Secret State” by the publisher, Reeves and Getts sent its fragments to all major US press titles and radio stations, as well as to the most important local state press titles (over two hundred places). Each recipient had the right to amend the received text by his editors. Neither Getts nor Reeves nor Karski had any influence on this. This was also the case with the Collier’s Weekly editorial staff.<sup>11</sup>

### Further shaping the wrong name from 1944 to the present day

The unfortunate title of the first such comprehensive description of the Nazi death camp in the media by the famous Polish war courier Jan Karski, probably contributed to the automatic reproduction of PDCs by readers and mass media and to its growing popularity.

Jan Karski repeated many times that the use of the term „Polish camp“ by the participants of his author meetings was quite frequent after the publication of the above-mentioned book. This was not due to the desire to assign Poles the role of perpetrators in these terrible criminal undertakings, but without bad intentions and only to determine camps geographical location. What could hurt a Pole was colloquially understood by the American.

It is interesting that in the modern electronic world both articles in the same issue of „Collier’s Weekly“ are labeled in slightly different ways:

- Jan Karski’s article received the title changed to the plural – “Polish Death Camps”, which is quite illogical because the article describes a single German

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>11</sup> Piasecki, W. (2017). *Jedno życie. Kompletna opowieść. Tom 2 (1939–1945)*. Krakow: Insignis.

Nazi death camp – the death camp in Bełżec. The added subtitle reads (see Fig. 8): “In the Nazi slaughter pens, a patriot witnessed mass torture and slow death”.

It should be noted here that for most modern readers who often work under time pressure and have only a few seconds to gather additional information on the web – the above image of the database record of the famous article by Jan Karski may lead to ambiguity, who actually invented, ran and managed not only the death camp in Bełżec, but all the death camps.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL [www.unz.com/print/Colliers-1944oct14-00018/?View=PDF](http://www.unz.com/print/Colliers-1944oct14-00018/?View=PDF). The page title is "The Unz Review: An Alternative Media Source" with the subtitle "A Collection of Interesting, Important, and Controversial Perspectives Largely Excluded from the Mainstream". The navigation menu includes: HOME, FOREIGN POLICY, ECONOMICS, HISTORY, BLOGGERS, VIDEOS, PRINT ARCHIVE, ABOUT, RACE/ETHNICITY, IDEOLOGY, SCIENCE, COLUMNISTS, BOOKS, ANNOUNCEMENTS. Below the menu is the section "CONTENT ARCHIVE OF PRINTED PERIODICALS AND BOOKS" with buttons for "TOTAL ARCHIVE", "BOOKS ARCHIVE", and "ARTICLES ARCHIVE". A dropdown menu shows "Collier's Weekly Archives" with "All Years = 1,385 Issues, 24,514 Articles". The main article header reads: "Collier's Weekly • 32 Years, 1,385 Issues, 24,514 Articles, 104,177pp". Navigation links are "← PREVIOUS ARTICLE", "ENTIRE ISSUE", and "NEXT ARTICLE →". The article title is "Polish Death Camp" with the subtitle "In the Nazi slaughter pens, a patriot witnessed mass torture and slow death" by Jan Karski, published in "Collier's Weekly, October 14, 1944, pp. 18-19". There is a small thumbnail image of the article cover. Social media sharing options for Like, Share, and Tweet are visible, along with Email and Print buttons. At the bottom, there are buttons for "Contents", "Tree", and "Search". The article preview shows the title "POLISH DEATH CAMP" by JAN KARSKI, illustrated by WILLIAM FAGNER.

Fig. 8. Screenshot of the Unz Review database record header for the article of Jan Karski.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Karski, J., *Polish Death Camp*. Content Archive of Printed Periodicals and Books, [Online] <http://www.unz.com/print/Colliers-1944oct14-00018>, accessed 2019-08-09.

- Robert De Vore's article received in this database a new, explanatory subtitle "Our Army clearly is not coddling prisoners" (see Fig. 9).

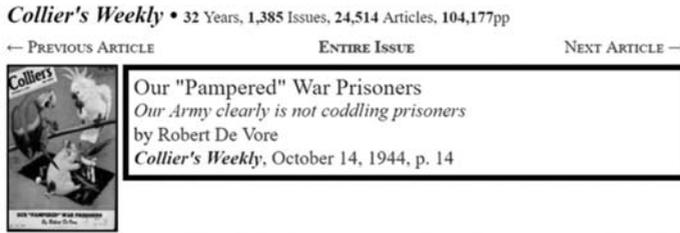


Fig. 9. Screenshot of the Unz Review database record header for the article of Robert De Vore.<sup>13</sup>

Note also that the term PDCs has been propagated starting from the 1960s by West German civilian intelligence BND<sup>14</sup> as a means of propaganda struggle against the communist bloc and integration of Germany with the Western defense system.<sup>15</sup>

### Historical facts

As an additional confirmation that the appearance of the name PDCs is not associated with the criminal activities of Poles in this field, we briefly recall here some historical realities concerning the death camps. First of all, let's turn to a secret report prepared in the autumn of 1944 at the Headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) and summarizing intelligence knowledge about German concentration camps.<sup>16</sup>

This report identified 615 German concentration camps. These camps were grouped geographically according to the following breakdown: Baltic countries, Belgium, Bulgaria, Channel Islands, Gdansk, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, the Netherlands, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Poland, Slovakia, and Yugoslavia.

<sup>13</sup> De Vore, R., *Our 'Pampered' War Prisoners*. Content Archive of Printed Periodicals and Books, [Online] <http://www.unz.com/print/Colliers-1944oct14-00014>, accessed 2019-08-09.

<sup>14</sup> BND – Bundesnachrichtendienst.

<sup>15</sup> Chodakiewicz, M. (2019). Polskie obozy koncentracyjne jako Rufmord. *Tygodnik Solidarność*, [Online] <https://www.tysol.pl/a31716—Tylko-u-nas-Marek-Jan-Chodakiewicz-%E2%80%9E%E2%80%9E-Polskie-obozy-koncentracyjne%E2%80%9D-jako-Rufmord>, accessed 2019-05-11.

<sup>16</sup> German Concentration Camps, Supreme Headquarters of Allied Expeditionary Force. Evaluation and Dissemination Section, (November 1944), CIA, [Online] [https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/GERMAN%20CONCENTRATION%20CA\\_MPS\\_0001.pdf](https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/GERMAN%20CONCENTRATION%20CA_MPS_0001.pdf), accessed 2019-05-30.

Estimating mortality in the camps is sporadic and far from complete. The only concept from the German nomenclature mentioned in the report is naming of a kind of prisoners intended by the Nazis for exhaustion and death by the name NN-Häftinge (Ger. *Nacht und Nebel* = Night and Fog). This group could actually include anyone they consider based on non-racial criteria to be an enemy.

The report identifies 9 extermination camps for Jews (Extermination/Annihilation Camps for Jews). Eight of these extermination camps were located in occupied Poland. They were: Auschwitz-Birkenau, Belzec, Chełmno (Kulmhof), Kosów Podlaski (the camp did not exist), Majdanek, Sobibór, Treblinka and Trawniki. The number of victims of extermination camps is not mentioned. The concept of “death camps” does not appear in the report.

In fact, it does not seem to be rather unusual for the Nazis to not distinguish between extermination and concentration camps in their internal communication. However, the terms “Todeslager” (Eng. *Death camp*) and “Vernichtungslager” (Eng. *Death camp*) were not found in German documents and available literature. Rudolf Höss, former commandant of the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp, uses in his extensive memories the term “Vernichtungsstellen i Ost” (Eng. *Extermination centers in the East*).<sup>17</sup> In relation to Belzec, Treblinka and Sobibór, SS used the completely false term “SS-Arbeitslager”<sup>18</sup> (Eng. *SS labor camps*). The buildings of the Belzec extermination center bore the inscription „Dienststelle Belzec der Waffen SS“ (Eng. *Waffen SS Belzec Department*).<sup>19</sup> The commander of ‘Aktion Reinhardt’ (Polish: ‘Akcja Reinhardt’), Odilo Globocknik, in his report 1943 called the camps briefly ‘lager’; after the end of the “action” he writes: “Ich habe mit 19. 10. 1943 die Aktion Reinhardt, die ich im Generalgouvernement gefurt habe, abgeschlossen und alle Lager aufgelöst.”<sup>20</sup>

“Todeslagers” were designed specifically for the systematic killing of people who were mass-delivered by trains and rarely by trucks - for an extermination. Creating the appearance of a transit camp with the help of persuasion, official announcements, speeches and signboards, pretending the selection for relevant works and resettlement areas, Jews were recommended to give away all personal belongings, men, women and children separated, and undressed under the guise of bathing and disinfection. Groups of naked prisoners separated as above were

<sup>17</sup> Broszat, M. (1958). *Kommandant in Auschwitz. Autobiographische Aufzeichnungen von Rudolf Höss*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, p. 153.

<sup>18</sup> Black, P. (2004). Prosty Żołnierz “akcji Reinhardt”. Oddziały z Trawniki i eksterminacja polskich Żydów. In D. Lebionka (Ed.), *Akcja Reinhardt. Zagłada Żydów w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie*, Warszawa: IPN, pp. 103–131.

<sup>19</sup> Piotrowski, S. (1949). *Misja Odyla Globocknika. Sprawozdania o Wynikach Finansowych Zagłady Żydów w Polsce*. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, p. 10.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77.

guided into sham “baths” and, after closing the door within 15–30 minutes gassed to death with flue gas pumped into the room or with Cyclone-B dropped from the holes in the ceiling. All resistance was immediately suppressed by brutal violence or by the removal and shooting of those resistant. A maximum of several hours elapsed from bringing the prisoners to Belzec, Sobibór or Treblinka (from several dozen to several thousand people) to gassing them to death. In this way, there were murdered: in Kulmhof 152-180 thousand, Auschwitz-Birkenau 900 thousand, Belzec 435 thousand, Sobibór 101 thousand. and Treblinka 800,000, Total: 2.4 million.

Each extermination center was run by „SS-Sonderkommando“ consisting of 15–20 Germans.<sup>21</sup> In the case of Auschwitz-Birkenau, it was about 100 officers from various formations. As auxiliary services they used 30 to 120 guards from the German police (Kulmhof), Trawniki-men (Belzec, Sobibór, Treblinka) or SS branches (Auschwitz-Birkenau – increase from ca 590 to 4000<sup>22</sup>). Removal of corpses from gas chambers, their transport, burying, exhumation and cremation, sorting the belongings of victims, and sometimes “reception co-service” of victims into the extermination center (in Auschwitz-Birkenau – Samliungskommando) were carried out by groups of prisoners – up to a thousand slave workers – the so-called “Sonderkommando prisoners”.<sup>23</sup> These mostly Jewish workers were occasionally murdered by the SS-Sonderkommando and replaced by others. The exception was 8 Polish workers from the extermination camp in Kulmhof, who, despite their slave status, were not shot, and thanks to their collaboration they were transferred to Auschwitz as prisoners-workers.<sup>24</sup>

In Belzec, Sobibór and Treblinka, the so-called Trawniki-men (official name SS-Wahmannschaften) were used as auxiliary units. They were specially trained in Trawniki training camp for participation in deportation and murder of civilians. These “hard choice” volunteers initially recruited from prisoners of the Soviet Army and later from the inhabitants of the Nazi conquered areas of Eastern Europe. Archive files on this formation include about 5000 recruits<sup>25</sup> in the period 1941–1944. They were mostly Ukrainians – ca. 50%,<sup>26</sup> “Volksdeutsche” (people

<sup>21</sup> Lehnstaed, S. (2017). Akcja ‘Reinhard’ w świetle najnowszej niemieckiej literatury przedmiotu. *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i materiały*, 13, pp. 719–33.

<sup>22</sup> Setkiewicz, P. (2017). Załoga SS w KL Auschwitz. *Głosy Pamięci*, 13, p. 13.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Montague, P. (2014). *Chelmo. Pierwszy nazistowski obóz zagłady*. Wołowiec: Czarne, p. 355.

<sup>25</sup> Kudryashov, S. (2005). Ordinary Collaborators: The Case of The Trawniki Guards. In L. Erickson i M. Erickson (Eds.), *Russia: War, Peace and Diplomacy: Essays in Honour of John Erickson*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, p. 232.

<sup>26</sup> Lehnstaed, S., op. cit., p. 726; Lehnstaed, S. (2018). *Czas Zabijania*. Warszawa: Prószyński i S-ka, p. 49.

from outside Germany who could prove their German origin) – approx. 15–25%, followed by Russians and many other nationalities, including several Poles.<sup>27</sup> The attempt to recruit Polish highlanders ended in failure: after finding unsuitability, the Germans arrested them and then released them home.<sup>28</sup> The voluntary recruitment of Poles to the SS was introduced first December the 4<sup>th</sup>, 1944.<sup>29</sup> Trawniki men command were carried out by Germans – “particularly predisposed” SS officers.<sup>30</sup>

A separate mention deserves the Nazis fanatical implementation on the occupied territories of the theory of subsequent annihilation of “useless”, “harmful” and finally “racially unclean” social groups: In the frame of T4 Aktion 1939–41, covering the whole III Reich administrated territory, at least 6,000 residents of Polish psychiatric institutions and nursing homes were killed. It was then the first experiments with different killing methods and in particular with the gas chambers took place. Simultaneously at least 100,000 was shot in so called “Intelligenzaktion” 1939–1940.<sup>31</sup>

The German death camps project for extermination of Jews and Roma people (from 1941) used experience and teams that had previously implemented the program of extermination of the mentally ill and unable to work<sup>32</sup>. Also on the ramp at Auschwitz, the selection for gas chambers was carried out by German sanitary service (“Sanitätsdienstgrade”).<sup>33</sup> They also let the cyclone into the gas chambers.

Fanaticism led finally the Nazis to a total internal contradiction when they exterminated highly qualified Jewish slave workers of their own war industry.

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<sup>27</sup> Wardzyńska, M. (1992). *Formacja Wachmannschaften des SS und Polizeiführers in distrikt Lublin*. Warszawa: IPN, p. 27.

<sup>28</sup> Gdański, J., Polacy po stronie Niemców. *Inne Oblicza Historii*, [Online] <http://ioh.pl/artykuly/pokaz/polacy-po-stronie-niemcw,1052/>, accessed 2019-07-05; Black P. Op. cit., p. 109.

<sup>29</sup> Verwendung von Polen in der deutschen Vermacht als Hilfswillige, *letter*, December 4, 1944, sygn. MA T-175/22/2527441, Archiwum Akt Nowych, Warszawa.

<sup>30</sup> Lehnstaed, S. *Czas Zabijania*, Op. cit., p. 48.

<sup>31</sup> Wardzyńska, M. (2009). Był rok 1939 : operacja niemieckiej policji bezpieczeństwa w Polsce ‘Intelligenzaktion’. In D. Mazek, E. Dulna-Rak, M. Baj, A. Broniak (Eds.), *Monografia*, vol. 53. Warszawa: IPN, p. 74.

<sup>32</sup> Arad, Y. (1987). *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka: The Operation Reinhard Death Camps*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, pp. 34–35; Firedländer, S. (2010). *Czas Eksterminacji. Nazistowskie Niemcy i Żydzi 1939–1945*. Warszawa: Prószyński i S-ka, p. 355; Lehnstaed, S., *Czas Zabijania*, op. cit., pp. 44–47.

<sup>33</sup> Setkiewicz P., op. cit., p. 18.

## Conclusions

Revealing the mechanism of the creation and subsequent popularization of the name PDCs and a detailed analysis of the latest literature on the crews of German Nazi death camps led to the following conclusions:

- the use of the name under examination cannot be associated with the name of the Polish war courier J. Karski (the original term for J. Karski – “Belzec death camp”). The real source of the name is an unauthorized rewording of the title in the original typescript of J. Karski by the *Colliers’ Weekly* editors;
- in the absence of a clear explanation in the article submitted by J. Karski, (which was a fragment of a book being prepared), that it was a German camp in occupied Poland, the American editor change of the title of the article “In the Belzec Death Camp” on the title “Polish Death Camp” could be motivated by the desire to clearly emphasize that the death camp was not located in the US, especially since the advertised article by R. De Vore on the cover of the magazine was about American camps for prisoners-of-war. Because not all Americans could have an idea of the location of Belzec, it was necessary to clearly emphasize that the death camp is not located in the USA. In such a situation, however, the proper linguistic solution would be the title “German Death Camp”;
- further propagation of the name “PDCs” in the plural form was caused by the lack of public correction of the name and its conscious media dissemination, among others by the BND – in the ‘70s. It seems that neither American Polonia nor Polish authorities have shown sufficient sensitivity in this matter then;
- the name “PDCs” was not created in Poland. Here, its illogicality is immediately understood by both Poles and Jews. It could in some sense be an understandable result of the collective memory of the Holocaust of Jews living outside Poland; memories of transporting them to death in extermination camps in Nazi occupied Poland;
- the name “PDCs” cannot be considered as a term due to its ambiguity and incorrectly chosen verbal form because the first meaning of the adjective POLISH is nationality, not territorial area. The use of this term in reference to Nazi extermination camps for Jews, Roma (nationalities discriminated against in the German Nuremberg Acts 1935) and mentally retarded during World War II is deeply misleading because it does not convey the truth about the Holocaust;
- the term German Nazi concentration camp (s) / extermination camp (s) has a form that does not lead to ambiguity and cannot be used by history counterfeiters. It means Concentration / Extermination Camp (s) built by the authorities of the Third Reich in the country occupied during the Holocaust.

Many leading scientific centers of Holocaust research<sup>34</sup>, leading media as well as political leaders and organizations<sup>35</sup> have been calling for the use of this correct term, which truly reflects historical realities;

- in the modern world of rapid development of new technologies as well as rapid transmission and spreading of information, the use of precise language (avoiding incorrect terms) is an important factor in avoiding serious local and international misunderstandings and conflicts.

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<sup>34</sup> Museum Letter to President of Poland, [Online] <https://www.ushmm.org/information/press/press-releases/museum-letter-to-president-of-poland>, accessed 2019-06-04; Yad Vashem Response to the Law Passed in Poland Yesterday, [Online] <https://www.yadvashem.org/press-release/27-january-2018-18-43.html>, accessed 2019-06-04.

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