



Preface

The present, sixth volume of the “Totalitarian and 20th Century Studies” yearbook comprises analytical articles devoted to issues addressed in research projects conducted at the Pilecki Institute. First and foremost among them are the fates of the Polish intelligentsia during the Second World War, the economic history of Poland during the period of German Nazi totalitarian rule, Soviet totalitarianism, and the subsequent decades of the Moscow-backed Communist dictatorship, the post-war settlement of crimes and the quest for justice, and the system of Hitlerite repression. The above issues often intermingle to create a mosaic of the processes that shaped the political history of East-Central Europe in the 20th century. It was, therefore, the aim of the editorial board to present these problems in a broad transnational perspective which clearly demonstrates that local histories and the fates of individuals were always dependent on external political circumstances.

In the opening article, Dmitriy Panto describes how Poles from various social strata, including the intelligentsia, were deported to Kazakhstan and forcibly harnessed to the Soviet machine of economic modernization and, simultaneously, extermination. Reviewing the current state of research and presenting his own case study, Domokos Szokolay outlines the various discourses on the post-1945 system of justice in Hungary, and highlights the problem of constructing a coherent narrative around this topic. In their studies, Tomasz Chinciński and Igor Niewiadomski discuss the system of repression implemented by the German occupier. While focusing on different territories and population groups, both authors point to terror as the primary tool used to exercise control over the conquered populace. Finally, Janusz Kaliński and Damian Markowski conduct an analysis of the banking system at the time when the Polish territories were occupied by both the Nazis and the Soviets, and during the later period of Communist rule. Essentially, the authors argue that neither of the

three was interested in ensuring the financial security of the local population. Instead, they sought to exploit it economically and make it subordinate to the structures of power, thereby advancing their own political projects at the people's expense. Significantly, these goals were achieved through the wholesale plunder of financial resources, the unlawful seizure of businesses, and, in the post-war period, the state-wide centralization of monetary instruments, thus leading to mass pauperization and widespread economic decline.

The articles published in the present volume help further our understanding of the research topics which they touch upon, and at the same time prove that historical phenomena should be placed in a broader temporal and geographical context. We are convinced that the current year-book will serve to inspire the scholarly milieu.

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