

Warsaw, 12 November 2025

**STATEMENT**  
**BY THE KULSKI FOUNDATION FOR POLISH-AMERICAN RELATIONS**  
**REGARDING THE BOOK BY GRZEGORZ ROSSOLIŃSKI-LIEBE**  
***POLNISCHE BÜRGERMEISTER UND DER HOLOCAUST***

The book *Polnische Bürgermeister und der Holocaust* (Polish Mayors and the Holocaust) by Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, published in German in early August 2024 by De Gruyter, launches a relentless and defamatory attack on the late Julian Spitośław Kulski and – indirectly – on his surviving family members. The publication is currently under legal review, and legal counsel will advise the Kulski Family and the Kulski Foundation for Polish-American Relations on appropriate actions against the author and the publisher. Preliminary analysis of the book's content indicates that Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe has unjustifiably implicated Julian Spitośław Kulski as a co-perpetrator of the persecution and extermination of Polish and European Jews.

This statement is issued regarding the meeting scheduled for 25 November 2025 at the Polish-German House in Berlin with Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, author of the book *Polnische Bürgermeister und der Holocaust*, which alleges the involvement of Polish mayors in the persecution and murder of Jews during the Second World War.

The claims in the book that Julian Spitośław Kulski was an anti-Semite involved in Holocaust crimes are – based on current knowledge, historical facts, and recognised scholarly publications – **false, unfounded, and a violation of academic integrity**. The book, particularly the allegations concerning Julian Spitośław Kulski, is currently undergoing thorough expert review in preparation for potential legal action against the author and publisher.

Julian Spitośław Kulski served as the German-appointed mayor (*burmistrz komisaryczny*) of Warsaw during the war, **with the approval of the Polish Underground State and the Polish government-in-exile**. In his position, he was able to issue false documents to Polish citizens, such as employment certificates at Warsaw City Hall. In doing so, he saved thousands of lives. He was appointed to this position after the arrest of his predecessor, Stefan Starzyński, who was detained by the Gestapo and brutally murdered. Both Julian Spitośław Kulski and his deputies were repeatedly arrested and interrogated; one of them, Jan Pohoski, was executed in Palmiry in 1940. Julian Spitośław Kulski was of Jewish ancestry and was therefore at risk of persecution by the occupying authorities on racial grounds.

Jan Nowak-Jeziorański, the legendary Courier from Warsaw, wrote about Julian Spitośław Kulski: "During the occupation, City Hall became a fortress of the Underground State. Without the heroic Mayor Kulski and his associates, the underground army as a whole would not have survived until the Uprising."

Last year, shortly after the book's release, the publisher received a detailed letter from the Kulski Foundation for Polish-American Relations, identifying fundamental inaccuracies and errors that disqualify the publication as a credible academic work.

The book fails to provide even a basic historical framework necessary for readers to understand the realities of the German occupation of Poland, in which Julian Spitośław Kulski operated. These realities were highly specific and fundamentally different from those in the Nazi-occupied Western Europe. The book does not describe the Nazi terror or the extermination policies directed at the Polish population. Approximately 3 million Polish citizens of Jewish origin and an equal number of citizens of other faiths or none were murdered by the German occupiers on Polish soil.

Under Nazi occupation policy, Warsaw was treated with particular brutality – its population was subjected to various forms of extermination. This policy was implemented from the very beginning of the German occupation and involved both the annihilation of the Jewish population and the systematic destruction of the non-Jewish population. This included, in particular: street roundups, mass and public executions, deportations to concentration camps, forced labour deportations to Germany, starvation of the entire population, constant plundering of essential resources, daily terror, and degrading treatment as “subhumans.” In total, during the occupation, Warsaw lost approximately 700,000 residents – more than half its pre-war population.

Any assistance to persons of Jewish origin was punishable by death; this punishment also extended to the helper’s close circle, including family members and neighbours. Any form of resistance or disobedience was likewise punishable by death or deportation to a concentration camp. Under such conditions – marked by pervasive terror and the total subordination of Jewish affairs to the orders of the German occupation authorities – any suggestion that Julian Spitośław Kulski participated in “debates” or “negotiations” indicates either a profound **misunderstanding of the historical context or a deliberate disregard for it.** In either case, **it constitutes a breach of scholarly integrity, based on an objectively false portrayal of history.**

The book, apart from providing fragmentary information, fails to explain adequately the division of responsibilities between the Warsaw City Administration and the Judenrat. The latter served as a nominal form of local government under the supervision of the German authorities and was outside the jurisdiction of the Warsaw City Administration, which was itself also subject to German supervision. This omission led to unfounded claims and insinuations suggesting that Julian Spitośław Kulski or the Warsaw City Administration under his authority were involved in the deportation of Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto to extermination camps, or even in directly assisting German liquidation squads.

The book’s assessments of Julian Spitośław Kulski lack sufficient support from verifiable source materials and confirmed historical facts. **The book contains numerous instances of overinterpretation and selective presentation of information. It displays internal contradictions, unfounded generalisations, and arbitrary or baseless judgements, suggestions, and insinuations, all of which are unacceptable in a rigorous academic work.**

The book and the associated research were funded by Freie Universität Berlin and the Fritz Thyssen Foundation in Cologne. The Foundation was established in 1959 in memory of August and Fritz Thyssen. August Thyssen (1842–1926) was a German industrialist and the father of Fritz Thyssen (1873–1951). Fritz supported the NSDAP and the Nazi regime. After the war, he was tried for aiding the Nazis. Between 1939 and 1945, the Thyssen plants in Essen and Duisburg employed thousands of forced labourers – both civilians from occupied countries and concentration camp prisoners – many of whom died or suffered as a result of exhaustion, disease, accidents, and brutal treatment.

The Kulski Foundation, together with members of the Kulski family, is committed to defending the memory and good name of Julian Spitośław Kulski. To that end, it will pursue all legal measures available.



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Relations