

WANDA MYŚLAKOWSKA

On 29 September 1947 in Kraków, a member of the Main Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland, Deputy Prosecutor of the Court of Appeal in Kraków, Edward Pęchalski, acting in accordance with procedure provided for under the Decree of 10 November 1945 (Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland No. 51, item 293), with the participation of a reporter, trainee judge Krystyna Turowicz, and pursuant to Article 20 of the provisions introducing the Code of Criminal Procedure in connection with Article 107 and 115 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, heard the person named below as witness, who testified as follows:

Name and surname	Wanda Myślakowska
Date and place of birth	17 December 1905 in Kraków
Parents' names	Franciszek Południewski and Wanda, <i>née</i> Mieszkowska
Citizenship and nationality	Polish
Occupation	office worker
Religious affiliation	Roman Catholic
Criminal record	none
Place of residence	Kraków, [...]

I arrived at the Auschwitz concentration camp on 29 April 1942; I was sent there from the Montelupich prison in Kraków. I stayed there until the end of the camp's existence, i.e., until 18 January 1945.

At first I was incarcerated in the parent camp, but in the summer of 1942, I was transported together with other women to the women's camp in Birkenau. I was employed in various

kommandos over the time of my stay, and since the autumn of 1944, I worked as a *Schreiberin* [secretary, scribe] in block 4 in camp section B-IIb. Therefore, I had the opportunity to meet almost all members of the camp personnel of the women's camp in Birkenau. I remember all of them very well from that period. I know particularly well the following women: *Oberaufseherin* [senior overseer] Maria Mandl, *Aufseherin* Theresa Rosi Brandl, *Aufseherin* Luise Helene Elisabeth Danz, and *Aufseherin* Elfriede Kock. I recognized all four of them on 25 September 1947 during the confrontation in the Central Prison in Kraków.

As an *Oberaufseherin*, Maria Mandl supervised the entire women's camp. She was an extreme sadist, who tortured the prisoners and harassed them in all ways imaginable at every opportunity. She always walked with a whip in hand, flinging it left and right and beating prisoners all over the camp premises for no reason whatsoever. It seemed as if maltreatment of prisoners was the core of Maria Mandl's existence in the Auschwitz camp. She meted out camp punishments such as flogging very generously. For the slightest offence, she would assign the prisoner to the penal unit, which meant death.

During the morning roll calls, she organized running races, and when she noticed that some prisoner was unable to run fast, she would have that prisoner moved to block 25, from which the prisoners were sent to the gas chamber. Mandl was also present during all selections in the camp and took an active part in them, personally choosing prisoners who were to be gassed.

I also heard that during the typhus epidemics in 1942 and 1943, Maria Mandl proposed that the entire women's camp be gassed. This plan, however, didn't meet with approval of the authorities.

The above-mentioned *Aufseherins* Brandl, Danz and Kock, who resembled Maria Mandl in their sadism, eagerly implemented all her instructions aimed at the extermination of the women imprisoned in the camp. They also beat prisoners for no reason at all and harassed them in all sorts of ways. They simply sought an opportunity to charge the prisoners with a variety of offences and then hand out severe camp punishments. The prisoners would shun meeting them in order to avoid a beating.

I myself was beaten by Brandl for no reason whatsoever when she stormed into my block, and another time she beat a number of prisoners, including me, when the supper was being handed out.



Brandl worked as *Aufseherin* in the *Bekleidungskammer* [clothing storeroom], in the *Schuhkammer* [shoe storeroom] to be exact. The prisoners who worked there complained that Brandl treated them in a cruel manner. I very often saw Brandl beat the prisoners who were sent from the camp to the *Bekleidungskammer* to get new shoes.

I used to meet Luise Danz, then *Rapportführerin* [report leader], at the time when I worked as *Schreiberin* in block 4 of section B-IIb. Although I myself luckily managed to avoid beatings, I know that she beat all prisoners at every opportunity. I hadn't met her before, as she worked at other camp sections.

I remember Elfriede Kock very well, because she always roamed the camp premises with a big dog and set him on the women, clearly deriving pleasure from watching the dog bite the inmates. She supervised some working *kommando*, but I don't know exactly which one.

After the evacuation of the Auschwitz camp, I was transported together with many other women from the Auschwitz camp to the camp in Ravensbrück, where I stayed until 29 April 1945; a few days later, the camp was liberated by the Soviet troops. I didn't come across any of the above-mentioned SS women in the Ravensbrück camp.

At this point the report was concluded and, after being read out, signed.