

Horst Petri (1913-1962)



Certified farmer, SS-Untersturmführer

High school graduation; training as a farmer; studies in Jena 1935 completed as a graduate farmer

1932: NSDAP; 1934: SS

1939: SS training in Buchenwald and Dachau concentration camps

1941: Conscription to the Waffen-SS: Order, establishment of SS goods in Galicia

1942: Plant manager SS-Gut Grzenda; consultant for 18 other SS estates. Petri leads a cruel regiment, abuses Polish and Ukrainian farmers and kills Jews

1944: Retreat before Red Army; SS blood group tattoo removed

After 1945: training of agricultural cadres in GDR, promotion to management level; joining system-compliant organisations: LDPD (bloc party), FDGB (sole national trade union) and VdGB (Association of Mutual Farmers' Aid)

1957: After the "escape from the republic" of a son, surveillance by the Stasi (state security service)

1961: Arrested for "anti-state activities". During a house search accidentally found photos from Grzenda. Charges are now being brought for Nazi crimes in Ukraine

1962: Erfurt District Court, I Bs 8/62, 15.09.1962, sentence of death penalty, mainly "*for continued murder, partly as sole and partly as accomplice, inciting and aiding and abetting murder, attempted manslaughter*". Less than a month later, the sentence is confirmed by the Supreme Court of the GDR, and the execution is carried out in 1962

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During the trial, Ukrainian and Polish witnesses are heard, whose abuses are described in detail and who also testify to the murders of Jewish people, but apparently no Jewish witnesses. In the proceedings, elementary norms of the rule of law are violated. There is no doubt, however, that the murder of Jews, sometimes in the form of outright battue hunts, has been observed. The final liquidation of the camp in October 1943, in which Jewish forced labourers offered massive resistance, is not revealed in the trial.

Sources: BG Erfurt, I Bs 8/62, 15.09.1962, in: DDRJuNSV, Nr. 1073; Lower, Hitler's Furies; Honigsmann, Juden in der Westukraine