

HOLOCAUST HANDBOOKS · VOLUME 9

BELZEC

PROPAGANDA, TESTIMONIES,
ARCHEOLOGICAL RESEARCH AND HISTORY



CARLO MATTOGNO

PUBLISHED BY CASTLE HILL PUBLISHERS

BELZEC: PROPAGANDA, TESTIMONIES,
ARCHEOLOGICAL RESEARCH AND HISTORY

This is a reprint of the 2004 first edition of this book. Since that year, the authors have found a wide range of additional documents and testimonies. Most of them are discussed in the two-volume, 1396-page study *The "Extermination Camps" of "Aktion Reinhardt": An Analysis and Refutation of Factitious "Evidence," Deceptions and Flawed Argumentation of the "Holocaust Controversies" Bloggers*, by Carlo Mattogno, Jürgen Graf and Thomas Kues, which deals with all three "Aktion Reinhardt" camps (Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka). The authors plan to completely overhaul this present study in conjunction with the two monographs in our series Holocaust Handbooks dealing with Sobibor and Treblinka. (For details see the books advertised in the back of this book). Since this process will take a long time, and because the present book has become virtually unavailable on the book market, we have decided to reprint it, and offer it for retail until the new edition becomes available.

Castle Hill Publishers

Belzec

Propaganda,
Testimonies,
Archeological Research
and History

Carlo Mattogno



Castle Hill Publishers
P.O. Box 243, Uckfield, TN22 9AW, UK
October 2016

HOLOCAUST HANDBOOKS, Volume 9:

Carlo Mattogno:

Belzec: Propaganda, Testimonies, Archeological Research and History

Translated by Henry Gardner

Reprint of the 1st edition of June 2004

Uckfield, East Sussex: CASTLE HILL PUBLISHERS

P.O. Box 243, Uckfield, TN22 9AW, UK

October 2016

ISBN13: 978-1-59148-162-1 (print edition)

ISBN10: 1-59148-162-7 (print edition)

ISSN: 1529-7748

© 2004 by Carlo Mattogno

Distribution worldwide by:

Castle Hill Publishers

P.O. Box 243

Uckfield, TN22 9AW

UK

Set in Times New Roman

www.holocausthandbooks.com

Cover illustrations: top: sculpture at the Belzec Camp representing a pyre; left: excavated garage building (Document 13 in the Appendix); right: entry gate to the camp grounds (© C. Mattogno); bottom: parts of the grounds of the Belzec Camp are today filled with chunks of concrete and rebar. The memorial was designed by Polish artists Andrzej Solyga, Zdzislaw Pidek and Marcin Roszczyk and opened with great ceremony on June 3, 2004 (top and bottom image: © Lysy, 18 September 2011, commons.wikimedia.org); background: the Belzec Monument from a distance (© Ulranen, June 2010, Wikipedia commons).

Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction	7
Chapter I: Literary Origins and Development of the Alleged Methods of Murder	9
1. Birth of an ‘Extermination Camp’	9
2. Extermination by Electricity	11
3. From Electrocution to the “ <i>Trains of Death</i> ”	22
4. The “ <i>Soap Factory Using Human Fat</i> ” at Bełżec	33
Chapter II: Origins and Development of the Official Historical Version	35
1. The Struggle between Electric Current and Exhaust Gas	35
2. Revisions and Contradictions by Michael Tregenza	41
3. Execution Chambers of the First Extermination Building: Narrative Origins and Recent Developments	44
4. The Number of Victims of the Alleged Gassings.....	47
Chapter III: Witnesses and Defendants	51
1. The Witnesses Kurt Gerstein and Rudolf Reder	51
2. The Witness Wilhelm Pfannenstiel	52
3. The Bełżec Trial	62
Chapter IV: Bełżec in Polish Archeological Research (1997 to 1999).....	71
1. The Mass Graves	71
2. Comparison of Research Results with Testimonies and Judicial Findings.....	74
2.1. Testimonies	74
2.2. First Judicial Findings	74
2.3. The Location of the Mass Graves.....	75
3. Uncovering the Corpses	76
3.1. The Findings and Claims of Andrzej Kola.....	76
3.2. The Polish Findings of 1945.....	79
3.3. Significance of Corpses Present	81
4. Compatibility of Archeological Research Results with the ‘Extermination Camp’ Thesis.....	82
4.1. Cremation of the Corpses	82
4.2. Capacity of the Graves	85
4.3. Wood Requirements	85
4.4. Duration of the Cremations	86
4.5. The Ash	86
4.6. The Soil Removed from the Graves	87
4.7. Actual Surface Area of the Graves	88

4.8. Density of Corpses in the Graves	90
4.9. Reasons for Cremation	91
5. The Buildings	92
5.1. The Actual Purpose of the Excavations.....	92
5.2. The Alleged Gas Chambers of the Second Phase of the Camp	93
5.3. The Alleged Gas Chambers of the First Phase of the Camp	94
Chapter V: Documented History of the Belżec Camp.....	97
1. Origins and Function of the Belżec Camp	97
2. The Belżec Camp in Documents	99
3. Belżec As Part of the German Policy of Deporting Jews to the East ...	103
Conclusion	109
Appendix	111
Abbreviations	111
Tables	112
Documents.....	115
Bibliography.....	129
Index of Names.....	133

Introduction

For official historiography it is now indisputable dogma that, from March 1942 onwards, three extermination camps were set up on Polish soil – at Bełżec, at Treblinka, and at Sobibór – where mass murder of Jews deported there took place in homicidal gas chambers using the exhaust gases from diesel engines. However, this is neither the first nor the only version that circulated during the Second World War; it was the eventual result of a slow narrative evolution, the main phases of which can be followed in the propaganda, in the original historical version, and in the judicial proceedings of that time. Until 1946, there circulated several totally different versions of the extermination methods allegedly used in those camps, which nonetheless received the blessings of the Polish authorities. With respect to the number of victims in these camps, various absolutely ludicrous figures were reported: 3 million for Treblinka,¹ now reduced to 870,000; some 2 million for Sobibór,² now standing at 250,000; and 3 million for Bełżec,³ against 600,000 at present.

How and why did the present ‘authorized’ version of official historiography come about? And what is its historical value? In the book *Treblinka: Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*⁴ Jürgen Graf and I have exhaustively answered those questions for the alleged extermination camp at Treblinka. The present study undertakes the same task with respect to the alleged extermination camp at Bełżec. In the discussion which follows, I shall obviously make use of the results arrived at in my Treblinka book, without repeating the corresponding evidence each time, although some quotations become necessary.

I did not, on the other hand, think it necessary to reiterate the technical objections valid with respect to the use of diesel exhaust gases for homicidal gassings; they apply for the Treblinka camp just as much as for Bełżec.⁵ Aside from this, I have been able to make use of a precious tool – archeological research at the ‘scene of the crime’ – which unfortunately was not available at Treblinka and which, as we shall see, will furnish us with conclusive criteria for testing the official theses.

Carlo Mattogno

¹ Report of the Soviet commission of inquiry, Aug. 24, 1944. GARF, 7021-115-9, pp. 103-110.

² Testimony of Zelda Metz, in N. Blumental (ed.), *Dokumenty i materiały*, vol. I, Łódź 1946, p. 210.

³ According to witness R. Reder. Cf. below, Chapter II.4.

⁴ Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2004.

⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 111-137.

Chapter I: Literary Origins and Development of the Alleged Methods of Murder

1. Birth of an ‘Extermination Camp’

Bełżec originated in the summer of 1940 as a work camp,⁶ but from November 1941 on – according to the official historiography – it took on a new function as a camp for total extermination, in line with the camps at Sobibór and Treblinka created later. This means that the Jews deported there were totally exterminated on arrival, except for an insignificant handful of people who were allowed to live a little while longer in order to carry out labor tasks. The alleged extermination activity at Bełżec began on March 17, 1942, and ended in November or December of that year. The camp was allegedly equipped, successively, with two extermination installations. The first, made of wood, was allegedly built some time in November and December 1941; it measured 12 by 8 meters and housed three gas chambers 4 by 8 meters each. The second structure was claimed to have been set up in June of 1942 after the first had been torn down. It was a brick structure that contained six gas chambers arranged on either side of a central corridor, each measuring 4 by 5 meters.⁷

For Bełżec, and the other two camps as well, the study of the origins and development of the sources of information during the war and in the postwar period is of vital importance for an understanding of how the currently dominant historical version of Bełżec came about and what level of credibility can be ascribed to it.

In the book *Treblinka*⁴ I have described the origins and the development of these sources of information about the Treblinka camp: from the effect of the mysterious “*toxic fluids*” to the “*mobile gas chambers*,” to the delayed-action gas, to the railroad cars sprinkled with quicklime, to the famous “*steam chambers*,” to the vacuum death chambers, to the poisoning by means of “*chlorine gas and cyclon gas*.”⁸

⁶ Cf. Chapter V.1.

⁷ For a summary of the official version see Israel Gutman (ed.), *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, 4 vols., Macmillan, New York 1990, here vol. 1, pp. 174-179.

⁸ C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 47-76.

In 1946, witnesses imputed even more fanciful methods of murder to the Sobibór extermination facilities; Alexander Pechersky depicts them as follows:⁹

“At first sight, one has the impression of entering a bath-house like any other: faucets for hot and cold water, wash basins. [...] As soon as all have entered, the doors are closed with a heavy thump. A heavy black substance comes down in swirls from openings in the ceiling. One hears frantic screams, but not for very long because they change to gasping suffocating breaths and to convulsions. Mothers are said to have been covering their children with their bodies.

The ‘bath’ keeper observes the whole procedure through a window in the ceiling. Within a quarter of an hour everything is over. The floor opens and the corpses fall into carts waiting below, in the basement of the ‘bath-house’. As soon as they are full, they move away quickly. It is all done according to the latest German technology. Outside, the corpses are discharged in a certain order and doused with gasoline which is then lit. Right there, they burn.”

Another witness, Leon Feldhendler, declared:¹⁰

“The bath was equipped in a way as if it were really meant to be used for washing (faucets for the shower, a pleasant environment). The baths were places for gasification.^[11] Five hundred persons were gassed at a time. Sometimes they released streams of chlorine [sic¹²], they always tried out other gases.”

The themes of chlorine and a sliding floor were subsequently merged into a new version by the witness Zelda Metz, who asserted:¹³

“[The victims] went naked to the cashiers. They deposited there any money, jewels, and other valuables. The Germans gave them a brass token or simply a number, orally, so that later they would be able to withdraw the money and their belongings. They then entered the wooden building where the women’s hair was cut, and then to the ‘Bath’, i.e., the gas chamber. They were asphyxiated with chlorine.^[14] After 15 minutes, they had all suffocated. Through a window it was checked whether they were all dead. Then the floor opened automatically. The corpses fell into the cars of a train passing through the gas chamber and taking the corpses to the oven. Before being burnt, their gold teeth were extracted. The oven was an enormous open-air furnace with a grid.”

⁹ A. Pechersky, *The Sobibór Revolt*, State Edition Der Emes, Moscow 1946, in Yuri Suhl, *Ed essi si ribellarono. Storia della resistenza ebraica contro il nazismo*, Milan, 1969, p. 31.

¹⁰ N. Blumental (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 2), p. 204.

¹¹ “gazowniami”

¹² “czasem puszczano prąd chlorku”

¹³ N. Blumental (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 2), p. 211.

¹⁴ “dusili chlorem”

The version of murder by means of exhaust gas from an undefined “engine” was only made official from 1947 on.¹⁵

Propaganda stories that are no less fantastic were told of Bełżec as well; we shall examine them in the following paragraphs.

2. Extermination by Electricity

In the stream of information on the Bełżec camp which emerged during the Second World War, the alleged system of murder later to be embraced by the official historians – gas chambers using the exhaust gas from a diesel engine – does not appear at all. Instead, we find all manner of methods, not only diverse in nature, but in part quite fantastic.

The first reports of Bełżec appeared on April 8, 1942, a few weeks after the opening of the camp.¹⁶

“Among the Jews terrible desperation. We now know that every day there is a train arriving at Bełżec from Lublin and one from Lvov, each with twenty cars. The Jews must get off, are taken behind a barbed-wire fence and murdered by an electric current^[17] or poisoned with gas^[18] and then the corpses are burnt^[19].”

The electrocution tale appears also in the “chronicles of an unknown author,” said to have been unearthed in that camp in 1953:²⁰

“Sadism in the years 1940–1941

At Bełżec, near the Soviet border, there was a camp which surpassed even Auschwitz in terms of sadism. For example, Jews were arrested every day, forced to dig a deep and narrow ditch and were then thrown into it one at a time. Then each prisoner was forced to go to the toilet on the head of the victim. Anyone refusing received 25 lashes. In this way, they went to the toilet all day long until the victim finally suffocated in the feces.

The Soviet border guards, on the other side, asked the Jews to try to escape to the Russian zone if at all possible. Anyone able to make use of a moment of inattention by the SS would succeed, because the SS, when they noticed this, could no longer shoot – the bullets would have hit the other side of the borderline. Then the SS took up a position next to the fence, shooting at the hands or feet still sticking out on their side, and when the

¹⁵ Z. Łukaszewicz, “Obóz zagłady w Sobiborze,” in *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce*, Poznań 1947, p. 52

¹⁶ Z. Klukowski, *Dziennik z lat okupacji*, Lublin 1959, p. 254.

¹⁷ “prądem elektrycznym”

¹⁸ “gazami”

¹⁹ “zwłoki palą”

²⁰ “Kronika oświęcimska nieznanego autora,” in *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, Warsaw, no. 54, January-June 1954, p. 307.

Soviet border guards protested, the SS shouted, 'The hand or the leg is still on our side!'

At that time, the work to be done was to dig a long and deep trench along the borderline. Later, when the Germans had penetrated deep into the USSR, 8 large barracks were built in the forest, equipped with tables and benches. The Jews from Lublin and Lvov were pushed into them and electrocuted."²¹

On July 10, 1942, the Polish government in exile in London received the following report:²²

"According to information from a German who is employed there, the place of execution is at Bełżec, near the station, and is surrounded by barbed wire. Inside as well as around the fence, Ukrainians are on guard duty. The execution is done in the following way: A train full of Jews, after arriving at Bełżec station, moves on a siding toward the fence which surrounds the place of execution. There is a change of crew. Beyond the fence, the train is handled by German personnel up to the point of unloading where the rails end. Once discharged, the men go into a barrack on the right, the women into one on the left, to undress, supposedly for taking a bath. Then the groups go together into a third barrack with an electric plate^[23] where the execution occurs. The bodies are then taken by means of a railway to a pit, about 30 meters deep, situated outside the fence. The pit was dug by Jews who have all been killed. The Ukrainian guards who are assigned to the camp are to be murdered once the action is over. The Ukrainians on guard duty have lots of stolen money and jewelry: They pay 400 zloty for a liter of vodka, or 2,000 to have sex with a woman, and give her jewels."

On November 15, 1942, Dr. Ignacy Schwarzbart, a member of the Polish National Council, made a declaration, in which he paraphrased the above report:²⁴

"The methods applied in this mass extermination are, apart from executions, firing squads, electrocution and lethal gas-chambers. An electrocution station is installed at Bełżec camp. Transports of settlers arrive at a siding, on the spot where the execution is to take place. The camp is policed by Ukrainians. The victims are ordered to strip naked ostensibly to have a bath and are then led to a barracks with a metal plate for floor. The

²¹ "elektryzowano"

²² *Meldunek nadzwyczajny z miejsca tracenia w Bełżcu z 10.VII.42r*, SPP, Jcha 15, poz. 81. The report was later included as "Annex 3" in the long account (Sprawozdanie No. 6/42) drawn up in London on December 23, 1942, by the Interior Minister, St. Mikołajczyk, of the Polish government in exile. HILA, Stanford University, Box 3, pp. 63f.

²³ "z płytą elektryczną"

²⁴ Jacob Apenszlak (ed.), *The Black Book of Polish Jewry*, American Federation for Polish Jews, New York 1943, p. 131.

door is then locked, electric current passes through the victims and their death is instantaneous. The bodies are loaded on the wagons and taken to a mass grave some distance from the camp."

The report dated July 10, 1942, reappears on December 1 in an English-language Polish review:²⁵

"Extraordinary Report from the Jew-extermination Camp at Belzec.

July 10th, 1942.

According to information from a German employed at the extermination camp, it is situated in Belzec, by the station, and is barred off by barriers of barbed wire. Inside the wire, and all round the outside, Ukrainians are on guard. The executions are carried out in the following fashion: When a trainload of Jews arrives at the station in Belzec, it is shunted by a side track up to the wire surrounding the place of execution, at which point there is a change in the engine crew and train guards. From the wire onward the train is serviced by German drivers who take it to the unloading point, where the track ends. After unloading, the men go to a barracks on the right, the women to a barracks situated on the left, where they strip, ostensibly in readiness for a bath. After they have undressed both groups go to a third barracks where there is an electrified plate, where the executions are carried out. Then the bodies are taken by train to a trench situated outside the wire, and some thirty metres deep. This trench was dug by Jews, who were all executed afterwards. The Ukrainians on guard are also to be executed when the job is finished. The Ukrainians acting as guards are loaded with money and stolen valuables; they pay 400 zlotys for a litre of vodka, 2,000 zlotys and jewellery for relations with a woman."

The declaration made by Dr. Schwarzbart was recapitulated ten days later by the bulletin of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency in an article entitled "250,000 Warsaw Jews Led to Mass Execution: Electrocuting Introduced As New Method of Mass Killing of Jews."²⁶ On December 20, 1942, the *New York Times* ran an article on the alleged extermination of Jews in Poland by the Germans which said, among other things:²⁷

"Actual data concerning the fate of the deportees is not at hand, but the news is available – irrefutable news – that places of execution have been organized at Chelm and Belzec where those who survive shootings are murdered en masse by means of electrocution and lethal gas."

In 1944, the story of the electrocution installation at Bełżec was embellished with new and fantastic details. On February 12, the *New York Times* revisited the camp, publishing a more detailed report headlined "Nazi Execution

²⁵ *Polish Fortnightly Review*, December 1, 1942, p. 4.

²⁶ "250,000 Warsaw Jews Led to Mass Execution: Electrocuting Introduced As New Method of Mass Killing of Jews," *Daily News Bulletin*, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, vol. XXIII, no. 273, November 25, 1942, p. 2.

²⁷ "Allies describe outrages on Jews," *The New York Times*, December 20, 1942, p. 23.

Mill Reported in Poland: Fugitive Tells of Mass Killings in Electrically Charged Vats”.²⁸

“Stockholm, Sweden. Feb. 11 (AP). A young Polish Jew who escaped from a mass execution in Poland with the aid of false identification papers repeated today a story that the Germans operated an ‘execution factory’ in old Russian fortifications in eastern Poland.

The Jews were forced naked onto a metal platform operated as a hydraulic elevator which lowered them into a huge vat filled with water up the victims’ necks, he said. They were electrocuted by current through the water. The elevator then lifted the bodies to a crematorium above, the youth said.

The youth said he personally had seen trainloads of Jews leave Rawna Luska [Rawa Ruska] in eastern Poland in the morning for the crematorium at near-by Beljec [Belżec] and return empty in the evening. He was told the rest of the story, he said, by individuals who escaped after actually being taken inside the factory. The fortifications, he added, were built by the Russians after they had occupied eastern Poland.”

In 1944, Dr. Abraham Silberschein, a member of the Polish parliament and delegate of the World Jewish Congress, published, in Geneva, a series of mimeographed brochures entitled *Die Judenausrottung in Polen* (The extermination of Jews in Poland), in which he included even more horrifying propaganda stories. From these, I shall present two reports on the Belżec camp in their entirety. The first one has the title “*Die Hölle von Belzec*” (The Belżec Hell).²⁹

“Jews deported to Belzec were ordered to undress, as if they were going to take a bath. They were, indeed, taken to a bathing establishment able to contain several hundreds of people. However, they were executed en masse by means of an electric current. A boy who managed to escape from such an establishment told me what happened after the electrocution: The fat from the corpses was drained in order to – make soap from it. The remnants of the corpses were then thrown into anti-tank ditches which had been laid out along the Russian border by the arch-henchman Major Dollf. Burial of the slaughtered had to be done by the strongest of the Jews, selected among the doomed. It often happened that these people had to bury their own relatives. Not much later, these Jews, too, who had been assigned the task of burying their dead brethren – a task which they did against their will and by being forced – were killed in the same way. The

²⁸ “Nazi Execution Mill Reported in Poland: Fugitive Tells of Mass Killings in Electrically Charged Vats,” *The New York Times*, February 12, 1944, p. 6.

²⁹ A. Silberschein, “*Die Hölle von Belzec*,” in *Die Judenausrottung in Polen*, vol. V, Geneva 1944, pp. 21f.

Jews buried at Belzec came mainly from Lublin, Lemberg [Lvov], and other towns in Eastern Galicia. Some 300,000 Jews were interred there.

Far too many corpses having been thrown into these mass graves, it was impossible to cover them with a sufficiently thick layer of earth. This caused a stench of rotting flesh to spread over the whole area. This smell is still perceptible (i.e. in April, at the time of writing of this eyewitness report). Travelers on the railway line Zawada-Rawa Ruska close the windows, for this awful stench penetrates into the compartments and causes the people to vomit. I myself had to travel along this line on several occasions and have thus been able to convince myself of this state of affairs. As late as April 10, 1943, I passed through there one last time. The Christian population of Belzec has left this place for the only reason of this stench.

The men of the Gestapo and the Ukrainians who commit these murders have magnificently enriched themselves by taking the gold and the jewelry which some Jews had sewn into their clothes. Those butchers had so much money that they were able to pay 20 gold dollars to the farmers for a bottle of vodka.”

The second report published by A. Silberschein was called “*Hinrichtungs- und Vernichtungslager Belzec*” (Execution and Extermination Camp Belzec) and spoke of an undefined “*electric oven*” as the means of assassination.³⁰

“The Victims.”

Starting in 1942, so-called actions took place in all Polish cities and towns. Based on a well-defined plan, they were repeated at almost regular intervals and became the horror of the Jewish population. In general, such actions consisted of a number of local Jews being rounded up and deported. The number was often specified in advance, and the local Jewish council was demanded to provide this number. Special commando units were organized for this purpose. They traveled from one town to the next to carry out their hounding of the Jews. The Jews caught in this way were normally taken to the Belzec extermination camp. Without exception, this was the fate of all Jews caught in Eastern Galicia.

Belzec is a little town, formerly a border crossing between Galicia and Poland, situated on the railway line from Lemberg [Lvov] to Lublin. The camp that existed here was a most extraordinary one. While all other camps were officially designated as prison camps, concentration camps, or work camps, this camp was a pure extermination camp. Jews were sent there for this purpose only. It would not be wrong to say that all Jews from Galicia, certainly all who came from Eastern Galicia, died there with the exception of the few who were able to save themselves. However, not only were transports of Polish Jews from Galicia taken there, Belzec was also

³⁰ A. Silberschein, “*Hinrichtungs- und Vernichtungslager Belzec*,” in *Die Judenauströpfung in Polen*, Geneva 1944, vol. III, pp. 41f.

the destination for many convoys of foreign Jews, in particular Jews from Holland and from Germany.

Installations.

Belzec and its surroundings have become a fortress of the Inquisition as never before seen in the history of mankind.

Special buildings for gassing experiments were built here, special factories for the production of soap and shoe polish from Jewish fat, hospitals were built for the purpose of a prior withdrawing of blood transfusions of Jewish children [sic]. Special types of equipment for hanging were devised. Even soldiers of the Wehrmacht would not believe it, but still, those installations were observed by reliable eyewitnesses.

Murder Procedure.

Not a single one of all the hundreds of thousands brought to Belzec ever managed to escape. We are, therefore, unable to know the details of what was going on inside the camp.

According to a German employed there, the camp is protected by a barbed-wire fence and is situated in the immediate vicinity of the station. Within the barbed-wire, Ukrainians are on guard duty.

The executions take place as follows: On arrival, the train with the Jews is taken to a siding right next to the wire fence. Then the crew is changed. After unloading, the men are directed to the right, the women into the barrack on the left. They were ordered to undress and to prepare for an end. They then must enter a third barrack, which contains an electric oven. The executions take place in this barrack. After that, the corpses are taken by train to a ditch beyond the barbed-wire fence. The ditch has a depth of some 30 meters. It was dug by Jews.

Travelers and tourists who have passed through Belzec have confirmed that the fields all around have become mass graves. At every step one notices traces of lime and gore. The fields are strewn with skeletons in various stages of decomposition. The air reeks with a pestilential stench. Therefore, the farmers in the area have fled from their villages. The town itself is deserted and ghost-like. There is only the occasional SS policeman loitering about, yawning.

On the basis of the number of Jews caught during the actions, who were all taken – as previously mentioned – to Belzec, it can be assumed that no fewer than six hundred thousand Jews from Galicia died as martyrs there. Adding the other transports, one can safely say that the number is much higher still, perhaps twice as high.”

The paragraph relating the method of execution appears nearly word for word, in another book, also published in 1944; here, however, instead of the

term “oven” we have “hearth”: “Then they move on into a third barrack with an electric hearth where the execution takes place.”³¹

In a book published in Stockholm in 1944 and translated into English and German a year later, Stefan Szende gives the following account of Belzec camp:³²

“Belzec was a little place to the north of Rawa-Ruska, just on the 1939 Russo-German frontier. Immediately this frontier line had been agreed on, the Russians had begun to erect fortifications on a big scale. When the German troops crossed the frontier in June, 1941, the fortifications were still incomplete.

It was from these half-finished Russian fortifications that the Nazis made their slaughter-house in which millions of Jews were exterminated.

To exterminate 5 million people is an enormous task, and even in our age of technical perfection it needs a lot of preparing and organizing, and there are many problems to be faced by those planning to carry it out. Tens of thousands, even hundreds of thousands, of Jews had been taken to ‘Pjaski.’ Further tens of thousands, even hundreds of thousands had died as a result of ill-treatment, starvation and disease. But there were still millions left and they all had to be killed in accordance with the orders of the Fuehrer.

Even the effective killing of bed-bugs or lice on a large scale demands a certain technique. However, no one can doubt that the Germans are a highly talented people in all technical matters. Amongst them there were highly efficient engineers of death. These men were given their instructions by the Gestapo, and they set to work to solve the technical problems to which the mass slaughter of millions of defenseless men, women and children gives rise. They solved the problem. They solved it brilliantly. Their Fuehrer, Adolf Hitler, and Himmler, the head of the Gestapo, must be well satisfied with them and their work.

Months of planning and building operations were necessary, but the Germans are a patient people and the objective was worth the time spent on achieving it. The extermination of millions of Jews with the very latest modern technical means -what an enticing aim! Hundreds of thousands of labor hours were expended. Tens of thousands of tons of valuable materials were used in the process. But at last, in the spring of 1942, the scientific slaughter-house at Belzec was ready.

The mass-killing installation at Belzec occupies an area almost five miles across. This area is surrounded by barbed wire and every other

³¹ *Soll ich meines Bruders Hüter sein? Weitere Dokumente zur Juden- und Flüchtlingsnot unserer Tage*, Evangelischer Verlag A.G. Zollikon, Zürich 1944, p. 56.

³² Stefan Szende, *Der letzte Jude aus Poland*, Europa Verlag, Zürich 1945, pp. 290-292; Engl. Stefan Szende, Adolf Folkmann, *The Promise Hitler Kept*, V. Gollancz, London 1945/Roy, New York 1945, pp. 159-161.

modern device for keeping prisoners in and others out. No one is permitted to come near the place except properly authorized persons or those who will never leave the place alive. But despite all these precautions there were one or two people who saw the inside of Belzec and nevertheless succeeded in escaping. Despair and desperation makes a man ingenious.

Specially chosen S.S. men guard the Belzec killing plant. They are men without nerves. There is much to do in a slaughterhouse and it gives sadists great pleasure to compel their victims, to do as much of it as possible. For instance, the clothes and the belongings of the millions of victims had to be collected and sorted out. For this purpose the S.S. chose certain Jews out of each transport that arrived. These Jews were not spared, of course. It was merely that their execution was postponed. Two such Jews actually succeeded in making their escape. They escaped into the Ghetto which still existed in Rawa-Ruska at the time. In Rawa-Ruska they reported the details of the technically perfected slaughter going on in Belzec.

As far as I know, no Jew ever succeeded in escaping from Belzec and reaching neutral or Allied territory. The two Jews who made their escape from Belzec to Rawa-Ruska in the summer of 1942 were probably killed subsequently when the Ghetto there was liquidated, but a number of people who heard the evidence of these two fugitives from Belzec did escape. The following description of the Belzec slaughterhouse comes from them.

The trains coming into Belzec loaded with Jews were driven into a tunnel in the underground premises of the execution building. There the Jews were unloaded and ordered to divest themselves of all their things. In 1942 Jews arriving at Belzec came dressed and carrying all sorts of belongings with them. Fully loaded trains from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Belgium, Holland, France and the Balkan States arrived in Belzec, and they were all treated in the same way. These Jews were told to take all their things with them, as they were going to be 'settled' in the East. Thus tens of thousands of Jews arrived, bringing all sorts of property with them, typewriters, sewing machines, crockery, silver and so on.

Everything was taken away from them. The goods seized in this way were carefully sorted out, listed and ticketed and subsequently used for the benefit of the master race. It was to spare the staff at Belzec this tremendous task, which, of course, hindered them in their real job, that later on all Jews were sent to Belzec naked.

When trainloads of naked Jews arrived they were herded into a great hall capable of holding several thousand people. This hall had no windows and its flooring was of metal. Once the Jews were all inside, the floor of this hall sank like a lift into a great tank of water which lay below it until the Jews were up to their waists in water. Then a powerful electric current was sent into the metal flooring and within a few seconds all the Jews, thousands at a time, were dead.

The metal flooring then rose again and the water drained away. The corpses of the slaughtered Jews were now heaped all over the floor. A different current was then switched on and the metal flooring rapidly became red hot, so that the corpses were incinerated as in a crematorium and only ash was left.

The floor was then tipped up and the ashes slid out into prepared receptacles. The smoke of the process was carried away by great factory chimneys.

That was the whole procedure. As soon as it was completed, it could start up again. New batches of Jews were constantly being driven into the tunnels. The individual trains brought between 3,000 and 5,000 Jews at a time, and there were days on which the Belzec line saw between twenty and thirty such trains arrive.

Modern industrial and engineering technique in Nazi hands triumphed over all difficulties. The problem of how to slaughter millions of people rapidly and effectively was solved.

The underground slaughter-house spread a terrible stench around the neighborhood, and sometimes whole districts were covered with the foul-smelling smoke from the burning human bodies.”

A variant of the underground extermination was published in the infamous *Black Book* of the well-known Soviet propaganda writers I. Ehrenburg and V. Grossman, compiled in 1945 and 1946. A certain corporal (*Obergefreiter*) Erik Heubaum, a German prisoner of war, is said to have declared in a statement, about which no particulars are given, not even a date:³³

“I have even seen how peaceful citizens were exterminated by means of gas. I drove some communications people to a minor station some 12 kilometers from Rawa Ruskaya. Near that station, in the middle of a forest, an underground encampment had been set up. One day, when I was there, a convoy of Jews was brought in. From closed cars, people were stretching their arms out the windows begging for water, but nobody was allowed near them. In the evening, these people were led into the forest. Anyone not involved was moved to the station building. The forest was surrounded by SD units. Then all of these people, without any distinction of age or of sex, had their clothes taken from them and were pushed into the underground encampment. Three quarters of an hour later, men from a different section were sent in to take out the corpses before another group was brought in. In this way, each night, up to three hundred people were killed.

*I observed that scene over a period of eight days. An SS man from Saxony, Karl Horst, told me that those people were being asphyxiated by means of gas. He took part in this. The executions were directed by *Sturmbannführer* [major] Herbst, who came from Breslau.”*

³³ I. Ehrenburg, V. Grossman, *Le livre noir*, Actes Sud, 1995, pp. 1058f.

But even the story of the descending or collapsible floor took on further variations. The files of the Soviet commission of inquiry for the Sokal territory, dated October 7, 1944, contain is the statement of a certain Rozalja Schelewna Schier:³⁴

“My husband, who was working at the Belżec station at the time, told me the following:

At Belżec station two transports consisting of fifty to sixty cars arrive every day. Each car holds 100-120 persons. The train is taken to a siding in the forest, about one kilometer away. There a movable shed has been placed on the rails. It is marked ‘Baths for Jews.’ The people who have arrived are ordered to undress and enter the baths; they are promised work afterwards. When the bath house is completely full with 100-120 people, gas and high-voltage electric current are fed into it. Within 5 minutes, all the people in the bath house were dead. Inside the shed, the floor folds automatically, and the corpses fall into a previously dug trench where the victims are doused with a flammable liquid and burnt.”

A year later, the extraordinary collapsible floor at Belżec has changed again. On October 16, 1945, the witness Jan G. declared to the investigative judge of Zamość:³⁵

“By what means the Jews in the gas chamber were killed is difficult to say. At the time the Jews were driven into the gas chamber, a strong engine (250 HP) was running within the camp. It is said that the Jews were killed by means of the exhaust gas. It is untrue that the Jews were killed by means of an electric current; the voltage was much too low for masses of people to be killed that way. While the extermination camp was in operation, the ‘blacks’^[36] in my railroad workshop fashioned 48 pairs of special hinges, and a large number of narrow-gauge rails were shaped by bending. From this I conclude that the hinges were used for the floor of the gas chamber, which opened up after the Jews had been killed, thereby letting the corpses drop into carts, which took them to a common grave.”

In 1945, Dr. Guérin reported on an encounter he had had three years before with a soldier of the Security Police during a round-up of Jews in the ghetto of Rawa Ruska:³⁷

“He then pulled out a map and pointed to the name of a village: Belsetz [sic]. The means of extermination: electrocution. Women, old people, and children were taken on foot, naked, into a hall with metal plates in the floor. When a certain number of people had been assembled, a high-voltage current passed through the plates. The name of Belsetz was con-

³⁴ GARF, 7021-67-82, p. 3.

³⁵ ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1157 (translation from the Polish).

³⁶ Soviet prisoners of war.

³⁷ Armand Guérin, *Rawa Ruska*, Editions Oris, Paris 1945, p. 148.

firmed on two occasions by other Germans but none of those we approached was able to confirm that he had personally witnessed such executions. Others held that the executions took place in gas chambers, but here, too, the exact place could not be ascertained.”

In 1945, Stefan Tadeusz Norwind wrote:³⁸

“Major corpse factories existed at Belzec, at Sobibor, at Majdanek, and also, it is said, at Palmyry in the region of Warsaw.[...] The factories had two types of installations. Some of them were electrical, i.e. naked people were pushed onto a steel plate and then killed by a high-voltage current (this took place e.g. at Belzec). Others consisted of hermetically sealed gas chambers where, again, naked people were killed by means of steam or gas (this took place at Tremblinka [sic]).”

The story of extermination by means of electricity also appears, with other fanciful details, in the above-mentioned *Black Book*:³⁹

“Belzec is a terrifying place where the Jews were exterminated. And this place is surrounded by the utmost secrecy on the German side. But the railway men who operate the convoys of the condemned tell their family and friends the truth about the extermination of the Jews at Belzec.

The Jews were made to go into a gigantic hall, which could take in up to a thousand people. Along the walls, the Germans had strung uninsulated electric wires. The same wires were in the floor. When the hall was full of naked people, the Germans switched on the current. It was a gigantic electric chair, which we never thought could have been invented even by the most warped mind.”

In 1946, Simon Wiesenthal wrote an article with the title “*Seifenfabrik Belsetz*” (soap factory Belżec), his second of two dedicated to this fanciful topic.⁴⁰ In this article he outlined out an imaginary history of the Belżec camp, crammed with historical falsifications. In January 1942, Wiesenthal says, the Belżec area was inspected by a commission of top SS officials, among them Adolf Eichmann, whom Wiesenthal promotes to the rank of “*SS General*” for the occasion! The commission decides to make “*the available installations the starting point for the erection of a place of extermination.*” For this purpose, “*a site of 3 square kilometers*” (300 hectares, or about 750 acres) was fenced in. The area of the camp proper came to about 6 hectares, or about 15 acres. Then comes his description of the alleged extermination procedure:⁴¹

“The people, squeezed together by the SS, hounded by the Latvians and Ukrainians, ran into the ‘bath’ through the open gate. It could hold 500 persons at a time. The floor of the ‘bathhouse’ was made of metal, and

³⁸ S. T. Norwind, *Martyrium eines Volkes*, 1945, pp. 102f.

³⁹ I. Ehrenburg, V. Grossman, *op. cit.* (note 33), pp. 213f.

⁴⁰ Cf. below, section 4.

⁴¹ S. Wiesenthal, “*Seifenfabrik Belsetz*,” *Der neue Weg*, No. 19/20, Vienna 1946, p. 14.

showers hung down from the ceiling. When the space was full the SS delivered a 5,000-volt current to the metal plate. At the same time, the showers spewed out water. A brief scream and the execution was over. An SS surgeon-major by the name of Dr. Schmidt ascertained the death of the victims by looking through a peephole, the second door was opened, the 'corpse commando' arrived and quickly removed the dead. – There was now room for the next load of five hundred."

3. From Electrocution to the “*Trains of Death*”

Another story about Belżec, widely circulated during the Second World War, concerned the “*trains of death*.” It was invented by Jan Karski (his real name was Koziulewski), a courier with the Polish government in exile in London, who affirmed that he had visited the Belżec camp in October 1942, disguised as an Estonian guard, together with a real Estonian guard who had been bribed. Walter Laqueur writes:⁴²

“Karski lived underground in Warsaw in 1941-2, engaged in ‘black propaganda’ among German soldiers, printing and distributing leaflets in German.”

In fact the story told by Karski is a simple kind of “*black propaganda*.” It was the final product of a well-defined literary development which can easily be traced in the surviving documents. The first version of this story, dating back to November 1942, did mention trains of death, but only as an instrument of torture, taking the Jews from the Warsaw ghetto “*to special camps at Treblinka, Belzec and Sobibor*,” where they would be killed. With respect to the camp at Belżec, Karski not only did not yet pretend to have visited it but ascribed to it the method of extermination in vogue at the time – electrocution. However, by December 1942, Karski had invented the story of his phantom visit – disguised as a Polish policeman – to a “*marshalling camp*” fifty kilometers from Belżec, rehashing “the trains of death” motif, the trains having now become a means of extermination in themselves, although he was still assigning to Belżec the methods of murder by poison gas and electric current. In the final elaboration of his story, Karski transformed the “*marshalling camp*” into the camp at Belżec, which he now pretended to have visited disguised as an Estonian guard!

On November 25, 1942, Karski arrived in London and handed the Polish government in exile a report.⁴³ It was transcribed under the title “*News Is*

⁴² W. Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret: An Investigation into the Suppression of Information about Hitler's “Final Solution”*, H. Holt, New York 1998, p. 230.

⁴³ Cf. M. Gilbert, *Auschwitz and the Allies*, Henry Holt, New York 1981, p. 93-95.

Reaching the Polish Government in London about the Liquidation of the Jewish Ghetto in Warsaw,” and the complete text of it is as follows:⁴⁴

“The persecution of the Jews in Poland, which has been in progress from the very first day of the German occupation, has taken on extremely acute forms since March 1942, when Himmler ordered the extermination of 50% of the Jewish population in the Government General, to be carried out by end of 1942.

Though the German assassins had started this work with extraordinary gusto, the results apparently did not satisfy Himmler for during his visit to the General Gouvernement in July 1942 he ordered new decrees personally, aiming at the total destruction of Polish Jewry.

The persecution in Warsaw started on 21st July 1942, when German police cars suddenly drove into the ghettos. The soldiers immediately started rushing into houses, shooting the inhabitants at sight, without any explanation. The first victims belonged mostly to the educated classes. On that day almost all the members of the Jewish Municipal Council were arrested and held as hostages.

On 22nd July 1942 the Jewish Council was ordered to proclaim the decree of the German authorities dealing with the re-settlement of all the Warsaw Jews, regardless of sex or age, in the eastern part of Poland, with the sole exception of persons working in German factories or members of the Jewish militia. The daily quota of people to be re-settled was fixed at 6,000 and members of the Jewish Municipal Council were ordered to carry out the order under pain of death.

By the next day, however, on 23rd July, the German police again appeared in the Jewish Municipal Council and demanded to see the chairman, Mr. Czerniakow. After the police had left, Czerniakow committed suicide. From a note left for his wife, it became clear that he had received orders to deliver 10,000 people the next day and 7,000 daily on the following days, in spite of the fact that the quota had been fixed originally at 6,000. The victims to be delivered to the Germans are either dragged out of their homes or seized in the streets. As the zeal of the Jewish police to perform these duties against their own people was slight and did not give a guarantee of efficiency, the Germans have mobilised temporary security battalions for the man-hunts, consisting of Ukrainians, Latvians, and Lithuanians. These battalions, under the command of SS men, are characterised by their utter ruthlessness, cruelty and inhumanity.

The Jews, when caught, are driven to a square. Old people and cripples are then singled out, taken to the cemetery and there shot. The remaining people are loaded into goods trucks, at the rate of 150 people to a truck with space for 40. The floor of the truck is covered with a thick layer of

⁴⁴ Foreign Office papers, 371/30923, xp 009642, pp. 78f., and 371/30917, xp 5365, pp. 78f.

lime and chlorine sprinkled with water. The doors of the trucks are locked. Sometimes the train starts immediately on being loaded, sometimes it remains on a siding for a day, two days or even longer. The people are packed so tightly that those who die of suffocation remain in the crowd side by side with the still living and with those slowly dying from the fumes of lime and chlorine, from lack of air, water and food. Wherever the trains arrive half the people are dead. Those surviving are sent to special camps at Treblinka, Belzec and Sobibor. Once there, the so-called 'settlers' are mass murdered.

Only young and relatively strong people are left alive, for they are valuable slave labour for the Germans. However, the percentage of these is extremely small, for out of a total of about 250,000 're-settled' only 4,000 have been sent to auxiliary work on the battlefronts.

Neither children nor babies are spared. The orphans from asylums and day-nurseries are evacuated as well. The director of the biggest Jewish orphanage in Warsaw and well known writer Janusz Korczak, whom the Germans had given permission to remain in the ghetto, preferred to follow his charges to death.

Thus under the guise of re-settlement in the east, a mass murder of the Jewish population is taking place. Started on 22nd July 1942, it has been progress ever since. By the end of September 1942 250,000 Jews had been eliminated. The extent of this action is best characterised by a few figures: In the Warsaw ghetto there lived, according the official German statistics of March 1942, about 433,000 people. In spite of the extremely high mortality caused by bad hygienic conditions, epidemics, starvation, executions etc., the number of Jews in the ghetto remained more or less stable, for to replace the dead, Jews from other parts of Europe, Germany, Austria, Holland, were sent to Warsaw. According to information leaking from the Arbeitsamt [Labor Office], only 40,000 people are to remain in the Warsaw ghetto, only highly skilled workers, to be employed in German war industry. The most convincing proof of the dwindling numbers in the ghetto lies in the fact that for September 1942 120,000 ration cards were printed. For October the number issued was only 40,000.

Simultaneously with the extermination of Jews in the Warsaw ghetto, ghettos in the provinces, at Falenica, Rembertow, Nowy Dwor, Kaluszyn and Minsk Mazowiecki are being liquidated. In the district of Wilno only one Jewish community has remained, in the city itself, numbering only 12,000 people. According to news which reached London some time ago the Germans have murdered 60,000 Jews in Wilno, 14,000 in Kowno and 50% of the Jewish population of Lwow; similar news reaches us from cities in S. Eastern Poland, such as Stanislawo, Tarnopol, Stryj.

The methods applied in this mass extermination are, apart from executions by firing squads, electrocution and lethal gas-chambers.

An electrocution station is installed at Belzec camp. Transports of 'settlers' arrive at a siding, on the spot where the execution is to take place. The camp is policed by Ukrainians. The victims are ordered to strip naked, – to have a bath, ostensibly – and are then led to a barrack with a metal plate for floor. The door is then locked, electric current passes through the victims and their death is almost instantaneous. The bodies are loaded on the waggons and taken to a mass grave some distance from the camp.

A large digging machine has been installed recently at Treblinka. It works ceaselessly digging ditches – mass graves for Jews who are to meet their death there. The Ukrainian guards, witnesses of the mass murders, are allowed to keep the money and jewellery robbed from the victims. These bestial murders sometimes take place in the presence of the local non-Jewish population, who are helpless and overcome with horror at the sight of such inhuman violence. What the Poles' reactions to these unspeakable crimes are, is best proved by a pamphlet by the 'Front for the Liberation of Poland', containing a strongly worded protest against the terrible extermination of the Jews. According to the pamphlet, the total number of Jews murdered in Poland since September 1939 exceeds one million."

The text of the report on Belżec is identical to the one by Ignacy Schwarzbart mentioned above, which, however, dates from November 15, 1942, and therefore precedes it by ten days. On November 26, 1942, Richard Law, British Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, wrote in a note that "*this morning*" two English Jews, Mr. Silverman and Mr. Easterman, had requested an audience to talk "*about the extermination of Jews in Europe,*" and that the latter had presented him with a document, "*which was handed to him last night by a member of the Polish Government.*"⁴⁵ But I. Schwarzbart, who was indeed a member of the Polish National Council, was in possession of a portion of the document as early as November 15.

Another portion, the section dealing with the transports of the Jews, appeared with some modifications and with the inevitable reference to the electrocutions in the report of the Polish government in exile at London of December 10, 1942:⁴⁶

"The floor [sic] of the trucks were covered with quicklime and chlorine. As far as is known, the trains were dispatched to three localities, Tremblinka [sic], Belzec and Sobibor, to what the reports describe as 'extermination camps'. The very method of transport was deliberately calculated to cause the largest possible number of casualties among the condemned

⁴⁵ Foreign Office papers, 371/30923, xp 009642, p. 73.

⁴⁶ Foreign Office papers, 371/30924, xp 5365, pp. 121-124. Jacob Apenszlak (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 24), p. 122.

Jews. It is reported that on arrival in camp the survivors were stripped naked and killed by various means, including poison gas and electrocution.”

This shows that the ‘mission’ of Jan Karski was, in fact, a “*black propaganda*” operation carried out in style. Sure enough, the story of the trains of death, attributed to a “*courier who reached London in December 1942,*” surfaced in London that December.⁴⁷

This precedes Jan Karski’s version of 1944, which we will examine below, but with one decisive difference. He did not yet pretend to have smuggled himself into the Belżec camp, even though he did visit a marshalling camp situated “*about fifty kilometers from the city of Belżec.*”

In March of 1943, the newspaper *Voice of the Unconquered* published the report in question under the title “*Eye-Witness Report of a Secret Courier Fresh from Poland.*” It also referred to a courier who “*reached London at the beginning of December, 1942.*”⁴⁸

This courier, just like the other one, had brought back “*a personal eye-witness account,*”⁴⁸ which was published in the newspaper. The part on Belżec is set forth below, with subtitles added by the editors of the paper:⁴⁹

“Roads Paved With Dead

I want to return to the question of ‘deportations’: I saw in Warsaw the first part of this act and later on the outskirts of Belżec the second and last part. From Warsaw the Jews are driven to the tracks on the outskirts of the city where a long train of cattle cars is already waiting for them. Before they reach the tracks, however, many are shot for one reason or another. Particularly those who lag behind. The whole route is literally strewn with corpses. When they finally reach their destination they are robbed of all their possessions (officially the deportees are urged to take along their most valuable possessions). Then they are loaded in cars, a hundred people in a car, and the first lap of the journey which lasts from two to eight days begin. Not once during the journey are the doors of the cars opened with the result that many die before they reach the ‘sorting point’ (Obóz Rozdzielczy) which is located about fifty kilometers from the city of Belżec. Nevertheless the first stage of this journey is mild, almost human, in comparison with what awaits them at the second stage.

Belżec the Slaughter House

In the uniform of a Polish policeman I visited the sorting point near Belżec. It is a huge barrack only about half of which is covered with a roof. When I was there about 5,000 men and women were in the camp. However,

⁴⁷ Jacob Apenszlak (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 24), pp. 135-138.

⁴⁸ “*Eye-Witness Report of a Secret Courier Fresh from Poland,*” *Voice of the Unconquered*, March 1943, p. 5.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 8.

every few hours new transports of Jews, men and women, young and old, would arrive for the last journey towards death.

It is humanly impossible to convey the impression that these 5,000 people made upon me: they are no longer in the image of men. Skeletons with eyes dead with resignation. Naked, frightened, they are in constant motion with convulsive, nervous movements. A child is lying with his face towards the roof. It is in the last agony of death. But no one pays any attention to it. I spot amidst this indistinguishable mass an old man completely nude. He was probably stripped of his rags. No one looks at him. He makes no impression upon the people that surround him. The guards keep on shooting at the throng. Corpses are scattered everywhere. Men, in their convulsive moving about, step over them. They hardly notice the dead. Every few minutes the guards pick a number of men to clear the dead which are piled up alongside the fence. This, too, is done without any emotion, without a single expression, in their faces as though they are completely oblivious of what they are doing. These are no longer normal beings but one large convulsive mass breathing its last.

The people are kept in this camp for several days. By the time they start on the last leg of their death-journey most of them have had nothing to eat for days since they are not given any food and have to subsist on whatever they manage to bring along with them.

The second and the most gruesome stage of their journey commences. Accompanied by the lashing of whips and the shooting of guns the 'deportees' are suddenly, without any warning, beginning to be driven to the railroad tracks which are several dozen meters from the camp. A wild stampede of human beings begins. In the meantime, the Germans have made all the preparations to intensify their torture.

The route from the camp to the tracks is a specially constructed narrow passage lined by a weak fence of boards. On both sides of the fence are stationed armed guards. From behind the people are driven by guards who lash out mercilessly with their whips. Everything is designed to create a panic and stampede. But at the same time 'order' is demanded and no one dare touch the fence. Anyone who as much as touches the fence is shot by the guards who are lined alongside of it. The shooting, the blood and the groans and shrieks of those who have been hit only increases the stampede and this gives the guards additional reason for shooting. In this manner, hundreds are killed on a stretch of several meters. But these are the lucky ones. An even more horrible death awaits the survivors.

The narrow passage leads to an open door of a cattle car. These are the famous cars designed for '40 people or 8 horses.' We have measured these cars and found that if human beings were to be loaded there tightly pressed together and completely nude they could hold only 90. Yet 140 people are loaded in these cars. On both sides of the entrance are stationed special

S.S. men with guns and whips. It is their job to force the people into the cars.

In Area of 50 Kilometers Corpses of Jews Are Being Burned Day and Night

In panic and fear the emaciated skeletons perform acrobatic feats. A moment comes when the last inch of a car is loaded to capacity. But human beings are still being driven into it: einsteigen, einsteigen!^[50] People begin to climb over the heads of their neighbors holding on by the hands, feet or hair of those who are already inside. Thus fifty more manage to get into the car which is then locked. Soon another takes its place...

A long train thus packed with several thousand men, women, and children is switched to a side line where it remains from two to eight days. The doors are never opened. Those inside suffer inhuman agony. They have to perform natural functions over the heads of the others. Many cars are painted with lime which begins to burn from the dampness of the urine and increases the tortures of the barefooted and nude.

Because there are not enough cars to kill the Jews in this relatively inexpensive manner many of them are taken to nearby Belzec where they are murdered by poison gases or by the application of electric currents. The corpses are burned near Belzec. Thus within an area of fifty kilometers huge stakes are burning Jewish corpses day and night."

In 1944, Karski published a book of memoirs entitled *Story of a Secret State*. He relates that in early October of 1942 he slipped into the ghetto of Warsaw and established contact with the local Bund, the union of socialist Jews. The head of this organization informed him about the deportation of "over three hundred thousand" Jews into "execution camps."

The story goes as follows:⁵¹

"A few days after my second visit to the Warsaw ghetto, the Bund leader was to arrange an opportunity for me to see the Jewish death camp. The camp was located near the town of Belzec about one hundred miles east of Warsaw and was well-known all over Poland from the tales of horror that were circulated about it. The common report was that every Jew who reached it, without exception, was doomed to death. The Bund leader had never been in it but had the most detailed information on its operations. I was to go on a day when executions were scheduled. The information was easy to obtain because many of the Estonian, Latvian, and Ukrainian attendants who worked there under Gestapo supervision were in service of Jewish organisations. Not from any humane or political consideration, but for money. I was to wear the uniform of one of the Estonians who would stay home while I went in with his papers. [...] Early in the morning of the

⁵⁰ In German in the text.

⁵¹ Jan Karski, *Story of a Secret State*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston 1944, pp. 339-351.

day we had selected, I left Warsaw in the company of a Jew who worked outside the ghetto in the Jewish underground movement. We arrived in Belzec shortly after midday and went directly to the place where the Estonian was supposed to be waiting to give me his uniform."

Karski's story is quite verbose, so I will only quote the essential points. Accompanied by an Estonian guard, he approaches the camp:

"As we approached to within a few hundred yards of the camp, the shouts, cries, and shots cut off further conversation. [...] We passed through a small grove of decrepit-looking trees and emerged directly in front of the loud, sobbing, reeking camp of death. It was on a large, flat plain and occupied about a square mile. It was surrounded on all sides by a formidable barbed-wire fence, nearly two yards in height and in good repair. Inside the fence, at intervals of about fifteen yards, guards were standing, holding rifles with fixed bayonets ready for use. Around the outside of the fence militia men circulated on constant patrol. The camp itself contained a few small sheds or barracks. The rest of the area was completely covered by a dense, pulsating, throbbing, noisy human mass."

Karski then dwells on the description of the crowd, repeating and enlarging on themes already dealt with in his paper of December 1942, but with an important addition: *"They were all former inhabitants of the Warsaw ghetto."* As in the preceding report about the "marshalling camp" located at 50 km from Belzec, Karski mentions the trains of death and the narrow passages the Germans had set up to funnel the crowd into the cars, and then continues:

"And now came the most horrible episode of them all. The Bund leader had warned me that if I lived to be a hundred I would never forget some of the things I saw. He did not exaggerate. The military rules stipulate that a freight car may carry eight horses or forty soldiers. Without any baggage at all, a maximum of a hundred passengers standing close together and pressing against each other could be crowded into a car. The Germans had simply issued orders to the effect that 120 to 130 Jews had to enter each car."

After another digression describing the loading of the victims into the cars, Karski writes emphatically:

"I know that many people will not believe me, will not be able to believe me, will think I exaggerate or invent. But I saw it and it is not exaggerated or invented. I have no other proofs, no photographs. All I can say is that I saw it and that it is the truth. The floor of the car had been covered with a thick, white powder. It was quicklime. Quicklime is simply unslaked lime or calcium oxide that has been dehydrated. Anyone who has seen cement being mixed knows what occurs when water is poured on lime. The mixture bubbles and steams as the powder combines with the water, generating a large amount of heat. Here the lime served a double purpose in the Nazi economy of brutality. The moist flesh coming in contact with the

lime is rapidly dehydrated and burned. The occupants of the cars would be literally burned to death before long, the flesh eaten from their bones. Thus, the Jews would 'die in agony', fulfilling the promise Himmler had issued 'in accord with the will of the Fuehrer', in Warsaw, in 1942.^[52] Secondly, the lime would prevent decomposing bodies from spreading disease. It was efficient and inexpensive – a perfectly chosen agent for their purposes.”

After three hours, the forty cars of the train filled with Jews started to move. Karski continues:

“My informants had minutely described the entire journey. The train would travel about eighty miles and finally come to a halt in an empty, barren field. Then nothing at all would happen. The train would stand stock-still, patiently waiting while death penetrated into every corner of its interior. This would take from two to four days. When quicklime, asphyxiation, and injuries had silenced every outcry, a group of men would appear. They would be young, strong Jews, assigned to the task of cleaning out these cars until their own turn to be in them should arrive. Under a strong guard they would unseal the cars and expel the heaps of decomposing bodies. The mounds of flesh that they piled up would then be burned and the remnants buried in a single huge hole. The cleaning, burning and burial would consume one or two full days. The entire process of disposal would take, then, from three to six days. During this period the camp would have recruited new victims. The train would return and the whole cycle would be repeated from the beginning.”

Even if Karski's account, in its various literary layers, is a simple fabrication, someone tried to improve on it, arguing that Karski had simply been wrong, that instead of visiting Belżec he had gone to Izbica, a place some sixty kilometers farther north.⁵³ That could be true with respect to the “*marshaling camp*” of December 1942, but in 1944, as we have seen, Karski spoke specifically of the Belżec camp:

“A few days after my second visit to the Warsaw ghetto, the Bund leader was to arrange an opportunity for me to see the Jewish death camp. The camp was located near the town of Belżec about one hundred miles east of Warsaw and was well-known all over Poland from the tales of horror that were circulated about it.”

⁵² This promise was another infantile invention of Jan Karski.

⁵³ E. Th. Wood, S. M. Jankowski, *Karski. How One Man Tried to Stop the Holocaust*, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York 1994, pp. 128f.

This is so clear that the book was published in the US with a leaflet by William Sharp containing four drawings which summarized its contents, the fourth one containing the following explanation:⁵⁴

“He visited notorious Jewish death camp, disguised as Estonian guard.”

In 1987, in an interview given to Maciej Kozłowski, a journalist with *Tygodnik Powszechny*, Karski stated firmly that he had actually entered the Bełżec camp:⁵⁵

“We went together [with a guide] to Lublin, then changed trains and finally came to Bełżec. It was in mid-October [1942].”

At this time, Karski added a further lie to his original fabrication:

“I thought, then, that Bełżec was a transit camp. It was only after the war that I convinced myself that Bełżec was the final point of extermination.”

In his description of 1944 he unavoidably made serious errors, because, in fact, he had never seen the Bełżec camp. For example, that camp is not “on a large, flat plain,” but on the side of a hill, and Estonian guards were never on duty there. Furthermore, the very basis of the story – that the camp guards could be bribed – is in flagrant contradiction to their being described, in the report of July 10, 1942, and others, as having “lots of stolen money and jewelry” and being able to pay 20 gold dollars for a bottle of vodka.

That the whole account has been completely invented is evident, by the way, from its basic premises. In October 1942, in order to investigate how the deportees from the Warsaw ghetto were allegedly exterminated, Karski allegedly went – on the specific instructions of the head of the Bund – not to Treblinka but to Bełżec! And at a point in time at which the first wave of deportations has been over for a month, he ‘sees’ there crowds of Jews from the Warsaw ghetto! Thus, if Karski’s fable were to be convincing, it would be necessary for the Jews from the Warsaw ghetto to have been deported to Bełżec via Izbica! With total disregard for the intelligence of the victims of his fabrications, Karski did not even go to the trouble to check the location of Bełżec. He places it at a distance some 160 km east of Warsaw, whereas in reality it is nearly 300 km to the south-east of the Polish capital.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Reproduced in E.Th. Wood, S.M. Jankowski, *Karski. Opowieść o emisariuszu*, Wydawnictwo Baran i Suszczyński, Państwowe Muzeum Oświęcim-Brzezinka, Kraków/Oświęcim 1996, documentary annex outside the text.

⁵⁵ “*Niespełona misja. Z profesorem Jenem Karskim kurierem polskiego podziemia w latach II wojny światowej rozmawia Maciej Kozłowski*,” in *Tygodnik Powszechny*, No. 11, 1987. (No page number shown in the photocopy in my possession).

⁵⁶ This information is also in error for Treblinka, which is situated some 80 km northeast of Warsaw (by rail).

The whole story invented by Jan Karski has fallen into disrepute among official historians (despite isolated paroxysms),⁵⁷ but not the man himself, who enjoyed high regard among the official historians until his death in July 2000.⁵⁸ As Theodore O’Keefe has correctly said:⁵⁹

“few alleged eyewitnesses to the Nazi ‘extermination’ camps have been as influential, and as honored, as Jan Karski.”

Thus the *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust* has an entry on Karski which, however, puts in doubt the acceptability of his testimony:⁶⁰

“It is not quite clear whether Karski, disguised as a guard, actually did view the mass murder in the Belżec extermination camp, as he later wrote.”

In Western countries, on the other hand, he was always careful, enjoying the mendacious fame of being an ‘eye-witness’ of the ‘extermination camp’ at Belżec, to give support to the official story by his presence or his signature, without, however, detailing his ‘testimony.’ With the complicity of the official historians, he became the guarantor of the alleged exterminations in the gas chambers of Belżec, for which the exhaust gas from a diesel engine was allegedly used. In this role he appeared, for example, in an Italian broadcast⁶¹ and in Claude Lanzmann’s famous film *Shoah*. In these Karski tells about his various ‘missions’ during the war, but without ever mentioning the Belżec camp.⁶²

Here is another striking example. In 1997 J. Karski wrote the foreword to the new edition of a translation of Rudolf Reder’s book about Belżec, which

⁵⁷ E.g., on Oct. 7, 2003, p. L37, Germany’s highly renowned newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* wrote: “[Historian Raul] Hilberg’s last book to date [...] ‘Sources of Holocaust Research,’ has silently abandoned some of the most famous, but obviously also least reliable witnesses like Kurt Gerstein and Jan Karski. Thus, the denier and the propagandist are complementary figures of our times.”

⁵⁸ “On September 10th, 2002, Polish Foreign Minister Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz unveiled a monument to Dr. Jan Karski on the campus of Georgetown University. The monument is crafted as a park bench with Karski sitting on it.” http://polish-jewish-heritage.org/Eng/monument_karski.htm. In 1999, the book by Karski was published in Polish under the title *Tajne państwo: opowieść o polskim podziemiu*, Twój Styl, Warsaw 1999.

⁵⁹ T.J. O’Keefe, “A Fake Eyewitness to Mass Murder at Belzec,” in *The Revisionist*, No. 1, November 1999, p. 1.

⁶⁰ E. Jäckel, P. Langerich, J. Schoeps (eds.), *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust*, Argon Verlag, Berlin 1993, vol. II, p. 741; the earlier English edition of this encyclopedia does not mention Belżec in its entry on Karski at all: Israel Gutman (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 7), vol II, p. 787.

⁶¹ The “*Speciale-Mixer*” of Giovanni Minoli, broadcast for the first time by RAI 2 on June 21, 1989, at 8:30 PM. Cf. in this respect my comments in *La soluzione finale: Problemi e polemiche*, Edizioni di Ar, Padua 1991, pp. 208-219.

⁶² C. Lanzmann, *Shoah*, Fayard, Paris 1985, pp. 183-196.

had first appeared in 1946,⁶³ needless to say without giving the slightest hint of his alleged visit to that camp.⁶⁴ Fraud in league with buffoonery!

4. The “*Soap Factory Using Human Fat*” at Bełżec

Even before the Second World War had ended, the legend of a factory established at Bełżec for the manufacture of soap from the corpses of the allegedly exterminated Jews was being circulated.

A report sent on August 30, 1942, by the Geneva Office of the Jewish Agency for Palestine to the US government and forwarded by the latter to the Holy See on September 26, 1942, contains the first germs of this legend.⁶⁵

“Liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto is taking place. Without any distinction all Jews, irrespective of age or sex, are being removed from the Ghetto in groups and shot. Their corpses are utilized for making fats and their bones for the manufacture of fertilizer. Corpses are even being exhumed for these purposes.

These mass executions take place, not in Warsaw, but in especially prepared camps for the purpose, one of which is stated to be in Belzek [sic⁶⁶].”

As we saw in section 1, by 1944 the legend of a factory for human soap at Bełżec had already started to take shape, and was disseminated in its initial form by A. Silberschein. In fact, the reports on Bełżec mentioned above state that in this camp “*the fat from the corpses was drained in order to – make soap from it*” and that the Germans had set up “*special factories for the production of soap and shoe polish from Jewish fat.*”

This juicy story then appeared in the *Black Book* in the following form:⁶⁷

“In another place, still in the Belzec camp, there was a soap factory. The Germans selected the fattest people and killed them to make their soap. Arthur [Israelevitch] Rosenstrauch, a bank clerk from Lvov to whom we owe this report, even held a bar of this ‘Jewish soap’ in his hands. The Gestapo bandits did not deny the existence of such a ‘factory’. When they wanted to scare a Jew, they said to him ‘we will make soap from you.’”

⁶³ Cf. below, Chapter II.1.

⁶⁴ R. Reder, *Bełżec*, Fundacja Judaica, Państwowe Muzeum Oświęcim-Brzezinka, Krakow 1999. Polish text and English translation with foreword by Jan Karski dated Washington, July 4, 1997, pp. 5 and 77.

⁶⁵ *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1942, vol. III, p. 775.

⁶⁶ The text received by the Vatican has the spelling “*Belick.*” *Actes et documents du Saint Siègue relatifs à la seconde guerre mondiale. Le Saint Siègue et les victimes de la guerre, janvier-1941-décembre 1942*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, vol. 8, 1974, p. 52. This is the only mention of the Bełżec camp in the whole book; clearly it has been confused here with the Treblinka camp.

⁶⁷ I. Ehrenburg, V. Grossman, *op. cit.* (note 33), p. 214.

However, the most enthusiastic storyteller and spreader of this legend of human was none other than Simon Wiesenthal. In 1946, he wrote an article entitled “RIF,” which opened with these words:⁶⁸

“In the last week of March, the Rumanian press published a unique piece of news: In the little Rumanian town of Folteceeni, twenty boxes of soap were laid to rest in the Jewish cemetery with all the traditional pomp and circumstance of a funeral. The soap had recently been found in a former German army depot. The boxes were clearly labeled ‘RIF – Rein jüdisches Fett’ [RIF – pure Jewish fat]. The boxes were destined for the Waffen-SS, and on the wrappers it said with full and cynical objectivity that the soap had been made from Jewish bodies.”

In reality, the acronym RIF stands for “Reichsstelle für industrielle Fettversorgung” (National office for industrial fat supply) and has nothing to do with human fat, much less Jewish fat, as was also admitted by the Jewish historian Yehuda Bauer in a letter dated January 9, 1991.⁶⁹

Still, Simon Wiesenthal recounts profusely the fantastic story of the alleged manufacture of human fat:

“Toward the end of 1942, the terrible words ‘transport for soap’ were uttered for the first time! It was in the Government General, and the factory was in Galicia, at Belsetz[sic]. In this plant, between April of 1942 and May of 1943, 900,000 Jews had been used as raw material [...]; certain solids [of the corpses] were separated and sent to northern Germany, and there, a special oil for U-boat engines was produced. The human bones went into the Lemberg bone mill, and there they were turned into fertilizer. [...] What was left, the residual fat, was needed for soap production. In parallel with the human transports, other substances such as soda, kolophonium, and sand were transported as secondary raw materials. The Belsetz plant had a daughter company at Danzig; a portion of the intermediates were sent there. Belsetz was a model plant. Therefore, transports to this location had priority with the Ostbahn [Eastern Railroad]. The plant needed raw materials ... and wheels turned for victory!”

We see that before he embarked on his lucrative career as a ‘Nazi hunter,’ Simon Wiesenthal pursued the slightly less noble activity of a catcher of lies!

⁶⁸ S. Wiesenthal, “RIF,” in *Der neue Weg*, No. 17/18, Vienna 1945.

⁶⁹ <http://www.nizkor.org/features/techniques-of-denial/appendix-7-02.html>; cf. also Reuter press release of April 24, 1990, as published in, e.g., *The Daily Telegraph*, April 25, 1990, “Jewish Soap Tale was ‘Nazi Lie’”; cf. Mark Weber, “‘Jewish soap,’” *Journal of Historical Review*, 11(2) (1991), pp. 217-227.

Chapter II: Origins and Development of the Official Historical Version

1. The Struggle between Electric Current and Exhaust Gas

On the eve of the Nuremberg trial, the version of extermination at Bełżec by electric current had vanquished the other versions and had been officially adopted by the Polish and Soviet authorities.

In 1945, Dr. Litawski, officer in charge of the Polish War Crimes Office, drafted a report on the alleged German extermination camps in Poland for the coming trial, in which he wrote:⁷⁰

“The camp of Bełżec was situated in the neighbourhood of the railway station and was linked with it by a special track on which the trains carrying arrested Jews were brought close to the barbed wire of the camp. In the beginning only smaller transports of Jews amounting to several hundreds of people were sent to this camp. But early in April 1941 a bigger group arrived, about 5,000 Jews picked up in a street chase in the ghetto of Warsaw.

Early in 1942 the first reports have been leaked [sic] out that special electric installations were used in this camp for a quick mass killing of Jews. On the pretext of bathing, completely undressed Jews were brought to a special building called ‘baths,’ whose floor consists of slabs through which flows electric current of high voltage. In this way big masses of Jews were killed; their corpses were cremated or buried in huge common graves.”

The Polish government, in its official report on the German crimes in Poland, presented by the Soviets as Document USSR-93 at the Nuremberg trial, wrote the following about the camp at Bełżec:⁷¹

“The camp at Bełżec was set up in 1940 to take in deportees, mostly Jewish deportees. By and by, however, it was converted to other ends and used for the execution of countless Jews. In the early months of 1942, reports came in that in this camp, special installations for the mass execution of Jews were being built. Under the pretext that they were being taken to a

⁷⁰ AGK, MSW London, 89, pp. 3f.

⁷¹ URSS-93, pp. 41f.

bath they were undressed completely and pushed into the building. A strong electric current passed through the floor of this building. Thousands of human beings were killed here. The guards plundered and robbed the inmates while they were still alive; after they had been killed they took anything that the Jews had left behind.”

The following passage from the official report of the Polish government, document USSR-93, was quoted at Nuremberg by the Soviet Prosecutor L.N. Smirnov during the session of February 19, 1946:⁷²

“I end my quotation here, and I call the attention of the Tribunal to Page 136, on the reverse side, of the document book; this is from a report of the Polish Government, which shows that the Camp Sobibur^[73] was founded during the first and second liquidation of the Jewish ghetto. But the extermination on a large scale in this camp really started at the beginning of 1943. In this same report, in the last paragraph on Page 136 of the document book, we may read that Camp Belsen [sic] was founded in 1940; but it was in 1942 that the special electrical appliances were installed for mass extermination of people. Under the pretext that the people were being led to the bath-house, the doomed were undressed and then driven to the building where the floor was electrified in a special way; there they were killed.”

On the other hand, the investigations conducted toward the end of 1945 and in early 1946 by Regional Investigative Judge Czeslaw Godziszewski of the court at Lublin and by the prosecutor of the Zamość court, Jan Grzybowski, who interrogated dozens of witnesses, not only did not determine what the alleged method of extermination had been, but managed to create total confusion in this regard. In fact, the indirect witnesses who reported hearsay mentioned a jumble of various methods of execution without, however, being able to state which one was the actual or the prevailing one. For example, on October 14, 1945, the Pole Eugeniusz G. declared:⁷⁴

“Being afraid for my own life, I did not ask the ‘blacks’ who worked in the extermination camp at Belzec by what means the Jews were killed. In general, people said that in the Belzec camp the Jews were annihilated by means of gas, others thought that electric current was used, others still maintained that they were killed in a chamber from which the air was pumped out for them to suffocate.”

And on March 20, 1946, another Polish witness, Edward F., gave the following deposition:⁷⁵

⁷² IMT, vol. VII, pp. 576f.

⁷³ Phonetic transliteration of Sobibór.

⁷⁴ ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1136 (translation from Polish into German).

⁷⁵ ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1223 (translation from Polish into German).

“They [the Ukrainians on duty in the camp] told me that several hundred Jews at a time were crammed into the barrack, where they were killed by an electric current; their corpses were then taken to the trench by means of a narrow-gauge railway.”

However, the final blow to the determination of the presumed methods of extermination came from the only self-styled eyewitness: Rudolf Reder.

On April 11, 1946, the Zamość prosecutor issued a report with the title *“Report on the results of the investigation in the matter of the extermination camp at Bełżec,”* in which he summarized the results of his investigation. On murder method, he wrote:⁷⁶

“It was impossible to determine what had been the method of killing of the people in the gas chambers. In particular, we could not ascertain whether the pipes which linked the engine with the gas chambers served to blow a gas into the chambers, to compress the air in the chambers, or to pump air out of the chambers. The witness Rudolf Reder, who worked in the camp at the time of the murder of the Jews, has stated that, while he was indeed on the ramp [next to the gas chambers] at the moment the doors were opened immediately after the people in the chambers had been killed, he never noticed any particular smell. The corpses in the chambers showed no unnatural discoloration. They had the appearance of living persons; usually their eyes were open. The air in the chambers, on opening, was pure, transparent, and odorless. In particular, there was no smell of smoke or of engine exhaust.”

Rudolf Reder was a Jew born at Dębica on April 4, 1881. From 1910 onwards, he lived at Lvov as a manufacturer of soap. He was interrogated as a witness by Judge Jan Sehn on December 29, 1945. He stated that he had been arrested in his city on August 16, 1942, and taken to Bełżec the following day. On arrival, the entire transport of some 5,000 persons was completely annihilated in an extermination building containing six chambers, except for eight persons, including the witness. They had responded to a request by one of the SS for specialist workers and had come forward, exactly eight persons out of 5,000! As the witness was already 61 years old at the time, it is not clear how he could have been selected for work. After a stay of more than three months in the camp, during which he miraculously stayed alive by various strokes of good luck, he no less miraculously managed to escape and stay in hiding until the Red Army arrived. He described in detail the alleged extermination building and added:⁷⁷

“I am not in a position to say precisely what chemical process was used to murder the people in the chambers at Bełżec. I know only that from the

⁷⁶ ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1226 (translation from Polish into German).

⁷⁷ AGK, OKBZN Kraków, 111, pp. 4-4a.

engine room a pipe, one inch^[78] in diameter, went to each of the gas chambers. Those pipes had their outlet in the individual chambers. I cannot say whether any gases were fed through those pipes into the chambers, whether they compressed the air in the chambers, or whether the air was pumped out of the chambers. I was often on the ramp at the moment the doors were opened, but I never smelled any odor, and on entering a chamber right after the doors were opened I never felt any ill effects on my health. The bodies in the chamber did not show any unnatural discoloration. They looked like live persons, most had their eyes open. Only in a few cases were the corpses bloodstained. The air in the chambers, when they were opened, was pure, transparent and odorless. In particular, there was no smoke from the exhaust gas of the engine. The [exhaust] gas was evacuated from the engine directly into the open air, and not into the chambers.”

In 1947, the *Glówna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce* (Central Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland) came to a dishonest finding on the method of murder to be attributed to the Belżec camp. In the article “*The Belżec extermination camp*” that appeared in the official bulletin of the commission, Eugeniusz Szrojt wrote:⁷⁹

“It has not been possible to ascertain for how long the execution chambers, in the construction of which the witness Kozak was employed, functioned. However, there is no doubt that the chambers in the new building mentioned by witness Reder were functioning in August of 1942. Nonetheless, within a span of two months, during which the camp did not operate – the period between the middle of May and the middle of July – the new building was put up, a more solid and more spacious building for mass murder of the victims in order to be ready for the major operation of the liquidation of the Jews in the Government General, which had been scheduled for the autumn.”

Szrojt was referring to two items from the evidence given by Stanislaw Kozak and Rudolf Reder, whom he called “*the two most authoritative witnesses in this respect.*”⁸⁰ Neither item in evidence explained what had been the alleged method of extermination. We shall deal with the deposition by the former in section 3 below. The latter piece of evidence is nothing but the statement given by Reder before Judge Jan Sehn on December 29, 1945, already mentioned!

Despite this, Szrojt adds, a few pages on:⁸¹

“All of the witnesses who have testified on this point – except one – agree that the Germans killed by means of the exhaust gases from an en-

⁷⁸ *Cal*, Polish inch, corresponding to 2.4 cm.

⁷⁹ E. Szrojt, “*Obóz zagłady w Belżcu,*” in *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce*, Poznan 1947, III, p. 36.

⁸⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 35.

⁸¹ *Ibidem*, p. 41.

gine set up in the execution building. The gases from the engine were fed into the chambers through special pipes with outlets in the chambers.”

This was a lie on several counts. First of all because, as we have seen, none of the witnesses had named this method of murder as the only or at least the prevailing method. Second, because Szrojt equates self-styled eye-witnesses and witnesses who had never set foot into the camp and who uttered only hearsay. Third, because “*the two most authoritative witnesses in this respect,*” Kozak and Reder, in fact had not mentioned this method, and fourth, because Reder had categorically ruled it out when he declared:

“The [exhaust] gas was evacuated from the engine directly into the open air, and not into the chambers.”

In 1948, in a subsequent official publication of the Polish government (which had given official sanction to high-voltage current as the murder method three years earlier), asphyxiation with carbon monoxide produced by the exhaust gas of an engine became ‘history’.⁸²

“With the victims in the gas-chambers, the final stage of the liquidation process commenced. The doors were securely locked behind the victims who were closely packed in the chambers. The engine was started up and carbon monoxide introduced into the chambers through special exhaust pipes. In a few minutes the cries of the suffocating people died down and after 10-15 minutes a special team of Jews opened the outer doors of the chambers.”

Elsewhere, the so-called ‘Gerstein report’⁸³ monopolized the attention of historians as soon as it was published and very quickly became the cornerstone of the proof that the alleged extermination camp at Bełżec (and, in the process, at Treblinka) was historical fact.

In a separate study of Treblinka, I have explained why and when the new method of murder by means of exhaust gases superimposed itself, in a textual process, upon the old method of steam and was elevated to the status of historical fact.⁸⁴ In this development, the decisive element, not only in the choice of exhaust gas as a method, but also for the type of engine that would produce it, was the ‘Gerstein report.’

⁸² *Polish Charges against German War Criminals (Excerpts from some of those) Submitted to the United Nations War Crimes Commission by Dr. Marian Muszkat*, Główna Komisja Badania Niemieckich Zbrodni Wojennych w Polsce, Warsaw 1948, p. 226.

⁸³ The account, in a number of versions, of SS *Obersturmführer* Kurt Gerstein who is said to have visited, in August of 1942 the extermination camps at Bełżec and Treblinka. Imprisoned by the French, Gerstein died under mysterious circumstances (presumed suicide) on July 25, 1945. Cf. in this respect: C. Mattogno, *Il rapporto Gerstein: Anatomia di un falso*, Sentinella d’Italia, Monfalcone 1985; H. Roques, *The “Confessions” of Kurt Gerstein*, Institute for Historical Review, Costa Mesa 1989; C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka, op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 41f. and 126-132 (“*The ‘Mission’ of Kurt Gerstein*”).

⁸⁴ C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka, op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 74-76.

At this point we should examine this most important point more closely. On January 30, 1946, Assistant General Prosecutor of the French Republic Charles Dubost presented to the Nuremberg tribunal a group of documents, classified as PS-1553, which included a report in French signed by Kurt Gerstein and dated April 26, 1945.⁸⁵ The report, in which Gerstein described one of his alleged visits to the camp at Belżec, was not read into evidence, but another version, with the story of the gas chambers running on an engine, was published by the French newspaper *France Soir* on July 4, 1945, with the title “*J’ai exterminé jusqu’à 11.000 personnes par jour*” (I exterminated up to 11,000 persons per day).⁸⁶ Furthermore, on January 16, 1947, the German translation of Document PS-1553 was presented as evidence at the ‘Doctors Trial’ as Exhibit 428.⁸⁷

Thus, at the beginning of 1946, the method of murder described by Kurt Gerstein had officially established itself in Western jurisprudence, and the Polish investigators did no more than follow suit. This, however, created a flagrant contradiction, which the official historiography has since preferred to gloss over: Notwithstanding the similarities between the tales of the two fundamental witnesses, Kurt Gerstein and Rudolf Reder – the most surprising elements of which cannot be verified objectively⁸⁸ – they differ on a by no means irrelevant point: Gerstein speaks of a “*Dieselmotor*,”⁸⁹ whereas Reder, just as explicitly, of an “*engine running on gasoline*,” which consumed “*about 4 jerricans of gasoline per day*.”⁹⁰ Also, in his booklet of memoirs, which came out in 1946, he mentions an “*engine functioning with gasoline*” (“*motor pędzony benzyną*”), which consumed “*about 80 – 100 liters of gasoline per day*.”⁹¹ Not to mention the fact that Gerstein attributes the death of the victims in the alleged gas chambers to the exhaust gases of his diesel engine, whereas Reder, on the contrary, states that the exhaust gases of his gasoline engine were vented not into the gas chambers, but into the open air!

When it became advisable to give some more weight to the story of an extermination of Jews at Belżec and to quote both Reder and Gerstein together,

⁸⁵ IMT, vol. VI, pp. 361-364, 424.

⁸⁶ Leo Kelber, “*Un bourreau des camps nazis avoue: ‘J’ai exterminé jusqu’à 11.000 personnes par jour*,”” *France Soir*, July 4, 1945, pp. 1f.

⁸⁷ Military Court, Case 1, Nuremberg, proceedings of January 16, 1947, pp. 1806-1815. A long portion of the document was published on pp. 1808-1814.

⁸⁸ Cf. in this respect my study *Il rapporto Gerstein, op. cit.* (note 83), pp. 129-137.

⁸⁹ PS-1553, p. 6; PS-2170, p. 6; T-1310, p. 14.

⁹⁰ Interrogation of December 29, 1945. AGK, OKBZN Kraków, 111, pp. 3-3a.

⁹¹ Rudolf Reder, *Belżec*, Centralna Żydowska Komisja Historyczna przy C.K. Żydów Polskich – Oddział w Krakowie, Kraków 1946, pp. 44 and 46.

it was sufficient to drop these irksome contradictions and to declare, as does Nella Rost Hollander:⁹²

“These two witness reports are nearly identical, therefore they confirm each other!”

The metaphorical duel described in this section, in its scope and its outcome, has an importance which goes beyond the single case we have dealt with, because it poses a general problem of historiographical method affecting all the fanciful versions that have circulated about the alleged extermination camps.

Official historiography now accepts that those stories are historically unfounded but tenaciously insists on granting them value insofar as, according to Pierre Vidal-Naquet, they are said to be *“like a shadow cast by reality, like an extension of reality,”*⁹³ and are thus, in their own way, real!

The problem is that the assumed ‘reality’ said to be casting this *“shadow”* is in itself historically unfounded, because it is based on ‘eye-witness testimonies’ the plausibility of which is exactly equivalent to those that have now been recognized as false. The abandonment of methods of murder prevailing until then (steam at Treblinka, chlorine at Sobibór, electricity at Bełżec) in favor of the new method of exhaust gas from a diesel engine does not relieve anyone of the responsibility of presenting new and decisive documents or evidence, or of new material findings, even if only out of opportunistic motives.

Thus it was necessary for the official historians to adopt a version, which, while maintaining a link with the witnesses, seemed at least superficially more credible, because they could obviously not call propaganda tales bordering on the ludicrous history. On the other hand, the murder method was made uniform for all three camps, as it was unbelievable that three camps under the same German authority were using such wildly differing methods of murder.

By 1965, when the Bełżec trial took place in Munich, the official historical and legal framework had been so firmly established that the defendants, in the hope of minimizing their sentences, could not but accept it unconditionally and proffer painful ‘confessions.’⁹⁴

2. Revisions and Contradictions by Michael Tregenza

Michael Tregenza, one of the major specialists on the history of Bełżec, has recently overcome the troublesome contradiction discussed above, in the

⁹² Nella Rost Hollander, *Belzec. Camara de gas. Tumba de 600.000 Mártires Judíos*, Stephen Wise Institute, World Jewish Congress in Uruguay, 1963, p. 4. Nella Rost was the author of the preface to the book of memoirs of Rudolf Reder quoted in the preceding note.

⁹³ P. Vidal-Naquet, *“Tesi sul revisionismo,”* in *Rivista di storia contemporanea*, Turin 1983, pp. 7f.

⁹⁴ Cf. below, Chapter III.

only way that correct historiographical method requires: by declaring all the key eyewitness testimony inadmissible!⁹⁵

But if the two essential testimonies – those of Rudolf Reder and Kurt Gerstein – on which, for all intents and purposes, the official story of Belżec is based, are inadmissible as evidence, how can one continue to state seriously that Belżec was an extermination camp? To resolve this problem, Tregenza entangles himself in a contradiction no less troublesome: He rejects the self-styled ‘eyewitnesses’ who testified in 1944 and 1945 in favor of a swarm of minor witnesses who first ‘spoke,’ on his prompting, in the 1990s (“*Gespräche und Interviews mit den Bewohnern von Belżec*”),⁹⁶ and of the defendants of the German Belżec trial who, as we have seen, testified 20 years after the events and who, for reasons of their defense strategy, confirmed the framework of Belżec based on the inadmissible evidence of the witnesses mentioned above!

Tregenza then makes several points, from which it is evident that Belżec was not a ‘shadow’ camp. According to him, everything took place in broad daylight, so that the legends mentioned above could not at all be “*like a shadow cast by reality.*” He writes:⁹⁷

“Whereas Sobibór and Treblinka lay hidden and isolated and were removed from public view, this extermination camp lay right next to the heavily traveled rail and road links between Lublin and Lemberg, directly next to the village of Belżec. Fences and watchtowers were clearly visible to the traffic passing through, as well as to the villagers. Thus, it is not surprising that both the camp and what happened inside were known to the local population from the beginning. After all, a group of workers was charged with the construction, which included the first gas chambers.”

Indeed, what strikes the visitor’s eye most of all is the proximity of the camp to the road (the present national road 17, linking Zamość to Rava Russkaya and continuing on to Lviv, called Lemberg by the Germans at the time and Lwów by the Poles) and to the railroad from Lublin to Rava Russkaya.⁹⁸ Since the camp was laid out on the side of a small hill, with the gas chambers of the second phase as well as the mass graves allegedly located in the upper portion, a 3-meter-high fence, even if it had been interwoven with pine or fir branches,⁹⁹ would not have prevented anyone from observing all phases of the alleged extermination from some distance. The ‘terrible secret’ of Belżec

⁹⁵ Cf. below, Chapter III.1.

⁹⁶ M. Tregenza, “*Das vergessene Lager des Holocaust,*” in I. Wojak, P. Hayes (eds.), “*Arisierung*” im Nationalsozialismus, Volksgemeinschaft, Raub und Gedächtnis, Campus Verlag, Frankfurt/Main, New York 2000, p. 246.

⁹⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 241f.

⁹⁸ Cf. documents 1-3 in the Appendix.

⁹⁹ ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1129 (translation from Polish to German), testimony of S. Kozak.

would therefore have become known immediately. In this regard Tregenza is even more explicit:¹⁰⁰

“From the very beginning, every single villager knew what was going on in the camp. This resulted from the fraternization between the camp staff and the Ukrainian village population, many of whom entertained members of the SS and ‘Trawniki men’ in their homes and were well paid for their ‘hospitality’. This apparently included prostitution as well. Some young women – according to statements by local people – were said to have done so with the ‘Trawniki men’ for jewelry and other valuables. Furthermore, prostitutes from other towns came to Bełżec. In the files of the Polish People’s Police there are indications concerning a number of villagers who served in various departments of the camp SS. In particular, three sisters of the J. family worked in the SS staff kitchen and in the SS laundry which belonged to the B. family. The village bakery, owned by the Ukrainian N. family, provided the daily supply of several hundred loaves of bread for the SS staff, the ‘Trawniki men,’ and the thousand or so Jews working in the camp. A number of villagers took the bread by farm cart to the camp gate. One of them was the Jew Mojesz Hellman, who lived clandestinely in Bełżec under the name of Ligowski. The wages consisted of valuables and cognac.

Four men were employed within the camp proper, among them Dmitri N., who checked and repaired the showers and baths of the ‘Trawniki men.’ Mieczyslaw K. and Waclaw O. worked as mechanics in the garage of the SS or as electricians. The electrician Michał K. installed cables and lighting in the second gas building, the so-called ‘Stiftung Hackenholt’ [Hackenholt Foundation] and is said to have occasionally assisted in the gassings. To the knowledge of the author, this is the only case of a Pole directly [involved] – voluntarily and with pay – in the mass murder of Jews in an extermination camp. It is also worth mentioning that the villagers Eustachy U. and Wojciech I. were not only allowed to own cameras but were even allowed, nay, encouraged, to take pictures of the guards of the extermination camp. Some of the photographs were even taken within the camp. The SS men and the ‘Trawniki men’ would also take pictures of one another and give the films to Wojciech I. for development and printing.”

Tregenza adds that the 20 men who, according to Kozak,¹⁰¹ were forced by the SS to build the first gas chamber at Bełżec were in fact paid volunteers:¹⁰²

“These workers were not forced to build the camp, rather, they were recommended by the village administration and were well paid.”

¹⁰⁰ M. Tregenza, *op. cit.* (note 96), pp. 246f.

¹⁰¹ Cf. following paragraph.

¹⁰² M. Tregenza, *op. cit.* (note 96), pp. 247f.

In 1961, Heinrich Gley declared during the preparation of the Belżec trial:¹⁰³

“In any case, I was frequently ordered to do work outside the camp with a Jewish work detail. The tasks varied in duration, between two and six weeks. They took me as far away as 50 kilometers from the camp.”

The Polish witness Maria D. had already declared (on October 16, 1945) that some Jews working at the camp *“had the right to leave the camp perimeter.”*¹⁰⁴ And on the previous day the Polish witness Tadeusz M. had stated:¹⁰⁵

“There were two groups of Jews employed in the camp: One group worked outside the limits of the camp, the other was not allowed to leave the camp and was charged with the removal of the murdered Jews from the gas chamber and with their burial. These groups were completely isolated from each other. The Jews who worked outside the camp had the right to marry and to write to their families. These letters were opened and any Jews in hiding could thus be found out. For the Jews employed within the camp, the Germans had organized a soccer team and a string orchestra.”

These descriptions prove, on the one hand, that in Belżec everyone knew everything about what went on and thus the legends related above had no reason for being other than to serve as propaganda tales; on the other hand they show that the SS at Belżec had no ‘terrible secret’ to keep and felt so strongly implicated in a monstrous crime that they allowed Polish civilians to enter the camp and take pictures of them!

3. Execution Chambers of the First Extermination Building: Narrative Origins and Recent Developments

As we have seen in the preceding section, the testimonies on the alleged execution chambers of the second extermination building at Belżec contain gross contradictions, to which the official historiographers – except Tregenza – have preferred to close their eyes, pretending that these contradictions did not exist. But the only testimony on the alleged execution chambers of the first extermination building not only fails to mention an engine for the production of the lethal gases, but appears technologically inexplicable.

Stanislaw Kozak was interrogated on October 14, 1945, by Regional Investigative Judge Czeslaw Godziszewski. He declared that, at the end of October of 1941, he was forcibly assigned by the SS to a group of 20 inhabitants of Belżec to work on the camp (for Tregenza, as we have seen, they were volunteers and were well paid). Work started on November 1. These Polish workers

¹⁰³ ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1285, interrogation of May 8, 1961.

¹⁰⁴ ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1154 (translation from Polish into German).

¹⁰⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 1144.

built three barracks. The third is said to have been an extermination barrack. Kozak describes it as follows:¹⁰⁶

“A barrack, right next to the siding, was 50 m long and 12.5 m wide. It was to be a day room for the Jews selected for work in the camp. The second barrack, measuring 25 m in length and 12.5 m in width, was destined for the Jews going to the bath. Next to it we built a third barrack, 12 m by 8 m. It was split into three rooms by wooden walls, each room thus measuring 4 by 8 meters; they were 2 meters high. The dividing walls were made of wooden boards nailed to either side, the space in between being filled with sand. On the inside, the walls of the barrack were covered with cardboard; the floors and the walls up to a height of 1m and 10 cm were covered with sheets of galvanized steel. From the first to the second barrack, which I mentioned above, there was a passage 3 m wide and having a barbed-wire fence, 3 m high, on either side. Part of this fence, toward the siding, was covered by means of pines and firs that had been specially cut down for the purpose of making the siding invisible.

A covered passageway led from the second to the third barrack; it was about 2 m wide and high and had a length of some 10 meters. This aisle led to the corridor of the third barrack; there were three doors for access to the three parts of the barrack. Each part had a door on the northern side, about 1.80 m high and about 1.10 m wide. These doors, as well as those from the corridor, were tightly sealed with rubber. All the doors of this barrack opened toward the outside. The doors were very strong, made from planks three inches thick and protected against being pushed open by a wooden bolt that would be placed into two hooks specially mounted for this purpose. Each of the three rooms had waterpipes at a level of 10 cm above the floor. Furthermore, on the western wall of each part of the barrack water pipes ascended vertically to a level 1 m above the floor, ending with an opening directed into the room. The elbowed pipes on the walls of the barrack were connected to the pipes running below the floor. In each of the three parts of the shed we set up ovens weighing about 250 kilograms. One may assume that the elbowed pipes were later connected to the ovens. The ovens were 1 m 10 cm high, 55 cm wide and 55 cm deep. Out of curiosity I looked into an oven through the oven door. I did not see any grids. The inside of the oven seemed to be lined with refractory bricks. I did not see any other openings. The oven door was oval in shape and had a diameter of some 25 cm placed about 50 cm above the floor. Along the north side of this shed, at a level of 1 meter, a wooden ramp had been built next to a narrow-gauge track which led to the trench in the far corner of the northern and eastern limit of the extermination camp, which had been dug by

¹⁰⁶ ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, pp. 1129f. (translation from Polish into German).

the 'blacks.' [...] After we had finished building the three barracks just described, the Germans released us from work on December 22, 1941."

The most surprising thing in this account is that the SS, after making the 20 Poles build the alleged homicidal gas chambers and the auxiliary barracks, had no qualms about sending home the holders of this 'terrible secret'!¹⁰⁷ In addition, Kozak's story is incomplete since it lacks the fundamental element: the means by which death was to be inflicted. The story is even more mysterious because of the presence of an oven – without a grid, but with a refractory lining! – in each of the three rooms: What was the purpose of these ovens? Yitzhak Arad reports the testimony of Kozak without comment,¹⁰⁸ and that is very telling.

It is clear that Kozak, called upon to testify after the end of the war about the 'extermination camp' at Belżec, reinterpreted his experience of 1941 accordingly and consequently distorted what he remembered. This is the only way to explain the strange mixture of divergent elements in his account. As Jean-Claude Pressac underlined in 1995, the description given by Kozak corresponds, in fact, more closely to a disinfestation unit¹⁰⁹ than to an extermination site:¹¹⁰

"Instead of a homicidal installation, one ought to accept the hypothesis of three delousing stations set up at Belżec, Sobibor, and Treblinka, whose purpose was prophylactic hygiene and the fight against typhoid fever."

Other historians have, on the contrary, tried to explain Kozak's description within the framework of official historiography, adding on fancifully. The first to do so was the witness Michał Kuśmierczak, who, while being interrogated by Regional Investigative Judge Godziszewski on October 16, 1945, made the following statement:¹¹¹

"One of the 'blacks' told me that they killed the Jews with the exhaust gases produced by a 250 KV[sic! KW] engine, or rather asphyxiated them in this way; the motor was said to have been hidden 3 m below ground, at a distance of 30 m from the chamber. The exhaust pipe measured 7 inches in diameter and fed into pipes 2 1/2 inches in diameter. As soon as a transport of Jews arrived at the station, the engine was started up."

Recently, this incredible story has been taken up by Tregenza, who has drawn a map of the camp at Belżec with a phantom-like "gassing engine in

¹⁰⁷ It would be even more surprising that the Germans paid Poles to build the alleged gas chambers!

¹⁰⁸ Y. Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka. The Operation Reinhard Death Camps*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis 1987, p. 25.

¹⁰⁹ This explains the presence of the stoves. They were *Heißluftentwesungsöfen* = hot air disinfestation ovens.

¹¹⁰ J.-C. Pressac, "Enquête sur les camps de la mort," in *Historama-Histoire*, special issue 34, 1995, pp. 121.

¹¹¹ ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1150 (translation from Polish into German).

pit” and an “underground gas pipe.”¹¹² But why place an engine in a pit, 30 m from the ‘gas chambers,’ and hook it up to them with an underground pipe? An impenetrable mystery!

4. The Number of Victims of the Alleged Gassings

On September 22, 1944, while being questioned by the Soviet prosecutor for the region of Lvov, Rudolf Reder declared that 3 million people had been murdered at Bełżec.¹¹³ On April 11, 1946, the Polish prosecutor at Zamość, T. Chróściewicz, summarized in a report the results of his investigations on the Bełżec camp and wrote on the subject of the number of victims:¹¹⁴

“The total number of transports of Jews taken to Belzec amounted to some 500, with 439 having come from the direction of Rawa Ruska and 57 from the direction of Zawada. The average number of persons in one transport was 3,500. Multiplying this figure by the number of transports, i.e. 500, and adding the 100,000 persons taken to the Belzec camp by trucks, one can arrive at a total number of some 1,800,000 persons who were murdered at Belzec.”

In 1947, the Central Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland set the number of alleged victims for this camp at 600,000; this figure then passed into official historiography and is almost unanimously accepted even today, although it is based on an absolutely arbitrary method of computation. The assumption was that from March 17, 1942, until the beginning of May and from July until the end of September, or 133 days, one transport per day comprising 40 cars each with 100 persons per car on average, thus 532,000 persons altogether, had arrived at the camp, and that in October, November, and December there had been two transports per week of 4,000 persons each – another 96,000 arrivals – thus bringing the total number to 628,000, or roughly 600,000 altogether.¹¹⁵ On the number of transports there was no document whatsoever; everything was derived from the testimony of the eyewitnesses, the most precise of whom had been Eustachy Ukraiński, who had spoken of 500 transports and 1,800,000 victims.¹¹⁶ This testimony had appeared so convincing to the prosecutor of Zamość that in his report of April 11, 1946, as we have seen, he made it the basis of his calculation of the

¹¹² R. O’Neil, “Bełżec: The ‘Forgotten’ Death Camp,” in *East European Jewish Affairs*, 28(2) (1998-9), p. 59. In the caption on this page the author explains: “All drawings by Michael Tregenza.” Cf. document 5 in the Appendix.

¹¹³ GARF, 7021-149-99, p. 18.

¹¹⁴ ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1225 (translation from the Polish into German).

¹¹⁵ E. Szrojt, “Obóz zagłady w Bełżcu,” in *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce*, Poznan 1947, III, pp. 43f.

¹¹⁶ ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1118 (translation from the Polish into German).

number of victims. At the time, a number of alleged victims in the millions was being bandied about,¹¹⁷ with a corresponding number of transports attested to by the witnesses. Therefore, a computation of 600,000 victims, with no basis whatsoever in the eyewitness testimony, was, for all intents and purposes, arbitrary and unfounded.

The Central Commission's finding was really a clear attempt to justify, one way or another, the figure mentioned as mere conjecture by Abraham Silberschein in 1944:¹¹⁸

"On the basis of the number of Jews rounded up during the actions, who, as mentioned above, were all taken to Belżec, it is to be assumed that no fewer than six hundred thousand Jews from Galicia suffered a martyr's death there." (emphasis added)

In its verdict in the Belżec trial, the Munich Jury Court asserted the following:¹¹⁹

"Between March and May 1942 at least 90,000 persons and between July and November 1942 (after the erection of the permanent gassing building) at least 300,000 persons came to their deaths in the Belżec extermination camp."

But Adalbert Rückerl says in a note:¹¹⁹

"In Polish publications the total number of persons murdered at Belżec is given as 600,000. However, recent estimates by the historian Dr. Scheffler, based in particular on transport documents, arrive at an even higher figure."

During the 1960s, Tatiana Berenstein tried to make the conjectures of the Central Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland more consistent in her study *"Extermination of the Jewish Population in Galicia (1941-1943)"*, in which she asserted that at Belżec some 550,000 Jews from Galicia had been murdered.¹²⁰ The article was accompanied by tables full of data on the deportations of the Jews, based almost exclusively on testimony.¹²¹ The figure adopted by Berenstein corresponds to 87.5% of the total of presumed victims adopted by the Polish investigative commission, without the roundings (i.e. 628,000); the percentage of transports coming from Galicia, as indicated by the prosecutor of Zamość, is practically identical: 87.8% (439÷500). Arithmetically speaking, we have $628,000 \times 439/500 = 551,384$, i.e. about 550,000!

¹¹⁷ The witness Eugeniusz G. mentioned the figure of 2 million (ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1136). R. Reeder, as we have seen, takes it to 3 million.

¹¹⁸ A. Silberschein, *op. cit.* (note 30), p. 44.

¹¹⁹ A. Rückerl (ed.), *NS-Vernichtungslager im Spiegel deutscher Strafprozesse*, DTV-Verlag, Munich 1979, p. 136.

¹²⁰ T. Berenstein, "Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941-1943)," in *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego w Polsce*, 61, 1967, p. 29.

¹²¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 32-59.

In this way, Polish historiography, in its arbitrariness, tried to justify the arbitrary findings of the Polish judiciary. This work was brought further along by Arad. In spite of the fact that his tables of deportations to Bełżec – which are not substantiated by documents – came to a total of about 517,000 deportees,¹²² he nonetheless pretended to prove the official figure of 600,000 victims.¹²³

Robin O’Neil has gone far beyond his predecessors, affirming that at Bełżec 800,555¹²⁴ persons were murdered. The list of transports that he used is, however, to a great extent the fruit of his imagination. Recently, Michael Tregenza has become even more radical; he writes:¹²⁵

“Officially, we speak today of ‘at least 600,000 murdered persons,’ but on the basis of more recent research and diggings one has to assume a considerably higher figure – possibly up to one million.”

Actually, neither the new research nor the Polish excavations have brought forth even the slightest indication as to the number of victims of the camp’s alleged gas chambers; indeed, the figure stated by Tregenza is based entirely on old testimony:¹²⁶

“The Central Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland’, in 1945, came to the conclusion that the Bełżec camp operated for a total of 133 days and that over this period transports of 40 cars with some 4,000 Jews arrived at the camp each day. This corresponds to a minimum number of 532,000 victims. Later estimates assumed a minimum of 680,000 Jews that arrived at the camp. During the period with the highest number of gassings, in August and September 1942, there were three or more transports daily, frequently with over sixty cars, each car containing at least 100 persons. This amounts to a daily number of some 12,000 victims. Rudolf Reder, a survivor of the camp, has confirmed this figure. Other witnesses, among them the personnel at Bełżec station, claim that on certain days 15,000 or more Jews had arrived at the station. However, not all of them were gassed the day they arrived. If, for this period of fifty days, we add another 5,000 per day (to the 4,000 victims mentioned above) we would arrive at a total of at least 930,000.”

This figure is therefore not based on new documentary sources but on new historiographical aberrations: It is, in fact, composed of the old unfounded figure of 532,000, arbitrarily raised to 680,000, plus the new arbitrary figure of (5,000×50=) 250,000!

¹²² Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 108), pp. 383-389.

¹²³ *Ibidem*, p. 177.

¹²⁴ R. O’Neil, “Bełżec: A Reassessment of the Number of Victims,” in *East European Jewish Affairs*, 29(1-2) (1999), p. 104.

¹²⁵ M. Tregenza, *op. cit.* (note 96), p. 242.

¹²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 253.

Elsewhere, Tregenza, relying on such sources, committed a historiographical blunder of his own, because the testimony that 12,000 to 15,000 deportees arrived at Belżec each day was tailored to the propaganda schema of the immediate postwar years, of 2 to 3 million victims; the role of the witnesses was precisely to substantiate such figures.

To justify his raising the ante on the number of the victims, Tregenza invokes another argument that is even less consistent:¹²⁶

“There is much disagreement on the subject of the number of pyres at Belżec. Witnesses from the village state that up to five pyres were in use, whereas SS personnel spoke of two pyres during the judicial proceedings in Munich in 1963/1964. According to their indications, at least 500,000 people were burned on those pyres. Assuming that a minimum of 500,000 corpses were burned on two pyres, one has to assume, for five pyres, a much higher figure – possibly twice as high – than the 600,000 persons officially assumed so far.”

In this way Tregenza not only attributes more value to the declarations of “witnesses from the village” of Belżec than to the results of the proceedings of the trial at Munich, he also arbitrarily selects from these declarations those that mentioned a higher number of pyres!¹²⁷

But then he himself realizes the absurdity of what he has just written and says:¹²⁶

“It is difficult to conceive that within such a short span of time – in only nine months – so many people could have been murdered under the supervision of not more than fifteen SS men.”

Indeed.

According to German sources, the number of Jews *deported* to Belżec was 434,508.¹²⁸

¹²⁷ Cf. below, Chapter IV.4.1.

¹²⁸ Cf. below, Chapter V.3.

Chapter III: Witnesses and Defendants

1. The Witnesses Kurt Gerstein and Rudolf Reder

For several years now revisionist historical criticism has been demonstrating that the two fundamental witnesses to the assumed extermination of Jews at Belżec – Kurt Gerstein and Rudolf Reder – are totally untrustworthy. Since the middle of the 1980s, the so-called ‘Gerstein report’ has been analyzed either by myself¹²⁹ or by Henri Roques;¹³⁰ I also studied Rudolf Reder during that period.¹³¹ As we have seen in the preceding chapter, the two testimonies contain glaring contradictions, in particular on the essential point of the technique used for the gassings. This, together with other contradictions, absurdities, and incongruities, has led Michael Tregenza to a total and unconditional acceptance of revisionist positions:¹³²

“At the end of 1945, only seven surviving Jews were known to have survived Belżec,^[133] one of whom was murdered a year later at Lublin by Polish anti-Semites. Of these seven survivors, two – Rudolf Reder and Chaim Hirszman^[134] – testified to the mass murder in court after the war. Only Rudolf Reder, the most famous survivor, published a brief account of his experience in Krakow in 1946.

¹²⁹ C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 83); Mattogno, *L’ “irritante questione” delle camere a gas ovvero da Cappuccetto Rosso ad ...Auschwitz. Risposta a Valentina Pisanty*, Graphos, Genoa 1998, pp. 76-121; C. Mattogno, J. Graf, Treblinka, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 126-132.

¹³⁰ A. Chelain (ed.), *Faut-il fusiller Henri Roques?* Polémiques, Paris 1986. English translation: H. Roques, *op. cit.* (note 83); cf. A. Chelain (ed.), *La thèse de Nantes et l’affaire Roques*, Polémiques, Paris 1988.

¹³¹ C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 83), Chapter VIII, pp. 129-137 (on the witness Rudolf Reder).

¹³² M. Tregenza, *op. cit.* (note 96), pp. 242f.

¹³³ Rudolf Reder, Sara Beer, Hirsz Birder, Mordechai Bracht, Samuel Velsler, Chaim Hirszman, and a Jew nicknamed “*Szpilke*.”

¹³⁴ On March 19, 1946, Chaim Hirszman appeared before the regional historical commission of Lublin, but he was murdered the same day after his interrogation had been adjourned. Therefore, we have only a very laconic testimony from his side (Zydowski Instytut Historyczny (Jewish Historical Institute), Warsaw, Report N° 1476). As far as its content is concerned, it is so irrelevant that it does not even appear in the extract of testimonies on Belzec presented by Marian Muszkat in the official report of the Polish government on the German crimes against Poland. *Polish Charges against German War Criminals...*, *op. cit.* (note 82), pp. 227-232.

Judged in the light of what we know today, the two reports are contradictory and contain inconsistencies. Reder, for example, spoke of 3 million victims and gave false dimensions regarding the mass graves and the camp. He stated that Rumanians and Norwegians had been involved in the exterminations, which is incorrect, and he mentions an undocumented visit to Belżec by Himmler. Hirszman, too, exaggerated the number of victims, speaking of 800,000 victims between October and December of 1942; he spoke of roll calls, which Reder, for his part, discounted; he spoke of children being thrown into the gas chambers over the heads of the women, which is improbable considering the height of the ceiling in the chambers.

Further information regarding Belżec is limited to the frequently mentioned report of the SS officer Kurt Gerstein, the ‘Gerstein Report.’ [...]

Based on the current state of our research, we must also designate Gerstein’s material on Belżec as questionable, even belonging to the realm of fantasy in some places. He gave erroneous dimensions for the mass graves, the number of guards he mentioned is too high, he assigned twenty to twenty-five million victims to Belżec and Treblinka, he described the camp commander Wirth as ‘a frail and small man from Swabia’ (in reality, Wirth was tall and broad-shouldered), etc. In contrast to Gerstein’s statements we must assume that he spent more than two days in the Belżec camp. As he indicated to another witness,^[135] he was present there on several occasions. As has been ascertained by later investigations and statements, all three eyewitness reports regarding the Belżec camp must be considered to be unreliable.”

It is no longer worth our while, therefore, to insist on the value of these two testimonies, which the leading official specialist on Belżec has now called “*nicht zuverlässig*” (not reliable).

The devaluation of these witnesses has, however, forced Tregenza to re-evaluate other minor witnesses, starting with Dr. Wilhelm Pfannenstiel and the accused in the Belżec trial. We shall consider them in the following sections.

2. The Witness Wilhelm Pfannenstiel

In the various versions of his report, Gerstein had mentioned Dr. Wilhelm Pfannenstiel, asserting that the latter had accompanied him on his trip to Belżec. At the end of the war, the “*French Charges against German War Crimes*” section of the United Nations War Crimes Commission issued an arrest warrant, in which, on the basis of what Gerstein had written, Gerstein himself was considered a suspect (“[...] *and the name of the author of the re-*

¹³⁵ The witness Wilhelm Pfannenstiel. Cf. following paragraph.

port, Kurt Gerstein, who pretends to have fought this policy of atrocities”).¹³⁶ Pfannenstiel was counted among the “German leaders responsible for having ordered the policy of extermination of the detainees in various camps by means of gas chambers.”¹³⁷ His name followed, in sequence, those of Hitler, Himmler, Eichmann, and Günther!¹³⁸ The charge was the violation of article 302 of the penal code, which carried the death penalty. After being arrested by the Allies, Pfannenstiel was interrogated as one of the accused in the IG Farben trial (August 1947 to June 1948) on the subject of his relations with Gerstein, whose report of April 26, 1945, (PS-1553) had already been submitted as proof of the charges and accepted by the tribunal in the Doctors Trial. In order to save his skin, he tried to wriggle his way out, ‘confirming’ that he had been present at a gassing with exhaust gas from a diesel engine, but denying that he had ever been at Belżec or Treblinka:¹³⁹

“Q. Of what other concentrations camps did you know that they conducted gassings? You were also at Treblenka[sic]?”

A. I do not know that at all.

Q. Belczek?[sic]

A. I have heard Belczek being talked about.”

Pfannenstiel’s ‘confession’ on the subject of the alleged gassing is very significant in view of the circumstances under which it was made. It was the first interrogation which the accused underwent, as is clear from its opening:¹⁴⁰

“Pfannenstiel is sworn in.

Q. I could have interrogated earlier, but I waited until I had more material against you.”

During the interrogation, out of the blue, the prosecutor von Halle asked Pfannenstiel:¹⁴¹

“Do tell us about the scene you have witnessed, won’t you, with this diesel engine, how many chambers were there?”

The only previous reference by Pfannenstiel to the gassings had been:¹⁴²

“Q. I want you to tell the truth about what happened at Lublin.

¹³⁶ “[...] et le nom de l’auteur du rapport, Kurt Gerstein, qui prétend avoir combattu cette politique d’atrocités.”

¹³⁷ “dirigeants allemands responsables d’avoir ordonné la politique d’extermination des détenus dans divers camps par l’usage des chambres à gaz”, S. Friedländer, *Kurt Gerstein ou l’ambiguïté du bien*, Casterman, Tournai 1967, pp. 14f.; Engl. see Saul Friedländer, *Counterfeit Nazi: the ambiguity of good*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London 1969.

¹³⁸ Rolf Günther, SS *Sturmbannführer*, head of *Abteilung* (department) IV-B-4a of the RSHA, under SS *Obersturmbannführer* Adolf Eichmann, head of *Abteilung* IV-B-4.

¹³⁹ Interrogation No. 2288 of Prof. Dr. Pfannenstiel by Mr. von Halle on October 30, 1947, p. 6; Staatsarchiv Nuremberg, KV-Anklage, Interrogations, No. P 33.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 1.

¹⁴¹ *Ibidem*, p. 4.

¹⁴² *Ibidem*, p. 2.

A. I have told you the absolute truth. I learned later that at Lublin gas-sings were carried out with auto-gas.”

Hence the gassings “with auto-gas” had happened at Lublin and not at Belżec, and Pfannenstiel had not been present there with Gerstein, because he learned about them “later.”

Still, Pfannenstiel, without at least asking – as would have been logical – to which “scene” von Halle was referring, was eager to reply, contradicting himself:¹⁴³

“A. There were – I believe – six chambers in a slightly elevated building.

Q. The people inside were naked and squeezed together?

A. Yes, the chambers were being filled one by one.

Q. Were there any children?

A. Yes.

Q. How was the diesel exhaust introduced?

A. From a 1,100 HP engine. The exhaust pipes went into the individual chambers.”

It is thus obvious that von Halle knew the Gerstein report, at least superficially, and that Pfannenstiel not only knew it, but also knew that von Halle did! And from such a scenario of intrigue the only result could be this kind of Kafkaesque interrogation!

In 1949, Kurt Gerstein’s story was debated at the trial of Gerhard Peters, the former director of the DEGESCH company,¹⁴⁴ distributor of Zyklon B; it found a wide echo in the German press under Allied command.¹⁴⁵ But Pfannenstiel, in spite of having been acquitted on all counts by the Allied tribunals, still had to face the final hurdle of the German legal system. When he was interrogated by the Darmstadt district court on June 6, 1950, he was still a defendant, but by the next time (November 9, 1959), Pfannenstiel had become an important witness, and he would appear in this role at the Belżec trial of 1965.¹⁴⁶ At that time, he began his career as the official guarantor of the truth of the Gerstein report, much to the benefit of the growing German historiography on the Holocaust. Pfannenstiel did not have to wait long for the results. He was acquitted for lack of proof in three proceedings against him by the prosecutor at Marburg on Lahn (a small act of gratitude on the part of the leaders of the judiciary), and all passages placing him in a bad light were expunged from the first official German publication of Gerstein’s report of May 4, 1945, prepared by historian Hans Rothfels in 1953 (a small act of gratitude

¹⁴³ *Ibidem*, pp. 4f.

¹⁴⁴ DEutsche GESellschaft für SCHädlingsbekämpfung – German Society for Pest Control.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. for example the article “Zyklon B gegen KZ-Häftlinge. Bericht über ersten deutschen Giftgasprozess,” in *Die Neue Zeitung*, Nr. 34, March 22, 1949.

¹⁴⁶ A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 119), p. 83. Cf. following paragraph.

on the part of historiographers).¹⁴⁷ It is therefore not surprising that, after 1950, Pfannenstiel would guarantee officially and publicly the admissibility of the Gerstein report (with the exception of the passages regarding himself).

In private, on the other hand, he could allow himself to express what he really thought. This he did in a letter to Paul Rassinier, dated August 3, 1963, in which he wrote:¹⁴⁸

“Your assumptions regarding the genesis of his [Gerstein’s] report, this most incredible piece of trash in which ‘poetry’ far outweighs truth, and also about his death, are in my opinion quite correct.”

Since Rassinier suspected that the report was neither true nor authentic and that it was drafted by the two American officers who were the first to interrogate Gerstein, it is clear that Pfannenstiel entirely discounted the veracity of the report. Further along in the letter Pfannenstiel explained that the mentioning of his name in the “trash” had caused him serious prejudice, and that in consequence he wanted to avoid at all cost a debate about his person; he asked Rassinier to exercise the greatest reserve regarding his name. And this is quite easy to understand.

The Gerstein report had thus become well known by 1959. In 1951, Léon Poliakov published a long extract of the April 26, 1945, version of the report (PS-1553),¹⁴⁹ which became an official ‘historical document;’ two years later, Hans Rothfels published the German report of May 4, 1945. Pfannenstiel could no longer play on the ambiguities. On the contrary, the “*Bericht vom 26. April 1945*” (Report of April 26, 1945) served as the basis for the interrogation of November 9, 1959, as is evident from the fact that Pfannenstiel expressly mentioned it.¹⁵⁰ During the interrogation, Pfannenstiel also referred to Gerald Reitlinger’s book *Die Endlösung*¹⁵¹ (The Final Solution); he was, therefore, well informed about the historiographical dogma of the time and knew well what he had to say. Pfannenstiel’s ‘confirmation’ was no doubt copied from the ‘Gerstein report,’ although he found a way of inserting (on purpose?) additional contradictions and absurdities.

¹⁴⁷ Hans Rothfels, “Augenzeugenbericht zu den Massenvergasungen,” *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 1(2) (1953), pp. 177-194.

¹⁴⁸ Letter published as a facsimile by W. Stäglich and U. Walendy in “NS-Bewältigung. Deutsche Schreibtischhüter,” *Historische Tatsachen* No. 5, Historical Review Press, Brighton 1977, p. 20.

¹⁴⁹ L. Poliakov, *Bréviaire de la haine. Le IIIe Reich et les Juifs*, Calmann-Lévy, Paris 1951, pp. 221-224; Engl.: *Harvest of hate; the Nazi Program for the Destruction of the Jews of Europe*, Syracuse University Press, Syracuse, N.Y., 1954.

¹⁵⁰ Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on June 6, 1950. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 44.

¹⁵¹ The book was published in Berlin by Colloquium Verlag in 1956; first Engl. ed.: Gerald Reitlinger, *The Final Solution*, Mitchell, London 1953.

Pfannenstiel declared that he had gone to Lublin together with Gerstein, and from there to Belżec, where he witnessed the arrival of a transport of Jews:¹⁵²

“Several railroad cars were pushed into the camp, containing some 500 Jews – men women and children. [...] I wish to add that some Jews had died along the way. My impression was that the Jews in the cars were squeezed extremely tightly together.”

Now this is how Pfannenstiel describes the alleged event during the interrogation of November 8, 1963:¹⁵³

“I observed the arrival of the train of some 12 cars, from which 300 to 500 men, women and occasional children disembarked. Nobody was shot. I saw no corpses being carried out of the train, either.”

The 500 deportees had thus become 300 to 500, whereas the “children” had transformed themselves into “occasional children.” Furthermore, “some Jews” who had been unloaded dead now disappeared. Furthermore, if the 12 cars making up the transport contained 300 to 500 persons, the average load for each car was 25 to 42 persons, who could surely not be described as having been “extremely tightly squeezed together”!

Gerstein had spoken of 6,700 deportees, of whom 1,450 arrived dead!¹⁵⁴ Then Pfannenstiel described the first gassing:¹⁵⁵

“Once the hair of the women had been shorn, the whole transport was led into a building containing 6 chambers. As far as I know, only 4 were needed that time. When the people had been locked into the chambers, the exhaust gases of an engine were fed into these chambers. Gerstein determined that it took 18 minutes for everything to become quiet in the chambers. [...] Once stillness reigned, the outer doors of the chambers were opened and the corpses brought out, checked for gold teeth, and then piled up in a pit. Again, this work was performed by Jews. No physician was present. I did not notice anything unusual about the corpses. Some were bluish in the face.”

The “bluish” coloration of the corpses is dealt with (as is the rest) in the Gerstein report: “*On jette les corps, bleus, humides [...]*”¹⁵⁶ (they throw the blue, wet corpses). As has already been noted, the victims of poisoning from carbon monoxide (contained in the exhaust gases of a diesel engine) have a “cherry-red” or “pink” color,¹⁵⁷ not blue.

¹⁵² Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on November 9, 1959. ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, pp. 138f.

¹⁵³ Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on November 8, 1963. ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 15.

¹⁵⁴ PS-1553, p. 6.

¹⁵⁵ Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on June 6, 1950. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 43.

¹⁵⁶ PS-1553, p. 7.

¹⁵⁷ F. P. Berg, “Diesel Gas Chambers: Ideal for Torture – Absurd for Murder,” in G. Rudolf (ed.), *Dissecting the Holocaust*, 2nd ed., Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago, 2003, p. 439 and corresponding references to the specialist literature in note 22.

Regarding the reasons for his visit to Belżec, Pfannenstiel declared that at Lublin he had learned that Belżec was a camp at which Jews were murdered; he asked SS *Brigadeführer* Globocnik, deputy of Heinrich Himmler, to be allowed to visit it. The latter, proud of his work, was happy to oblige.¹⁵⁸ Pfannenstiel justifies himself as follows:¹⁵⁹

“The reason why I asked at all to be allowed to visit the camp is probably due to a certain curiosity on my part. I wanted to find out, in particular, whether any cruelties accompanied the killing of these people. I considered it particularly cruel that the killing took 18 minutes to accomplish.”

In contradiction to this, in the interrogation of November 8, 1963, Pfannenstiel declared:¹⁶⁰

“On the other hand, if the concept of humaneness can be applied here at all, matters proceeded very humanely.”

Obviously, this “cruelty” was “very humane,” if only because the duration of the gassing had dropped to 12 minutes in the interrogation of April 25 1960.¹⁶¹

“After some 12 minutes, things became quiet in the chambers. The Jewish crew then opened the doors leading to the outside [...]”

Furthermore, during the interrogation on November 9, 1959, Pfannenstiel declared he had gone to Lublin with Gerstein on August 17, 1942. This is the first time that he gives a precise date for this trip. Somehow, Pfannenstiel’s memory seems to have become sharper with the passage of time. In the interrogation of October 30, 1947, he mentions no date; in the one of June 6, 1950, he makes the general statement that the alleged event took place “in the summer of 1942”;¹⁶² in that of November 9, 1959, he affirms that he had “gone to Belzec on August 18 or 19, 1942”;¹⁶³ and in the interrogation of April 25, 1960, he finally states the exact date of the alleged gassing:¹⁶⁴

“If you ask about executions of Jews, I must confirm that I witnessed an execution of Jews on August 19, 1942, in the extermination camp of Belzec.”

Of course, Pfannenstiel had only reread, more attentively, the Gerstein report. With respect to the objective of the Gerstein ‘mission,’ Pfannenstiel declared:¹⁶⁵

“Gerstein had been ordered by Globocnik to take care of the disinfection of the large amounts of clothing that originated at Belzec.”

¹⁵⁸ Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on June 6, 1950. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, vol. I, pp. 42f.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 43f.

¹⁶⁰ Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on November 8, 1963. ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 16.

¹⁶¹ Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on April 25, 1960. ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 587.

¹⁶² Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on June 6, 1950. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 42.

¹⁶³ Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on November 9, 1959. ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 137.

¹⁶⁴ Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on April 25, 1960. ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 585.

¹⁶⁵ Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on November 9, 1959. ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 136.

No mention at all of a mission to change the operation of the alleged gas chambers. With this simple statement, Pfannenstiel completely destroyed the entire narrative structure of the Gerstein report. What need was there, really, to send a technician from Berlin on a journey over 700 km with a hazardous load of liquid hydrocyanic acid, merely to disinfect¹⁶⁶ clothing? And where and how would Gerstein have been able to carry out the disinfection with liquid hydrocyanic acid? Furthermore, during the interrogations of June 6, 1950, onwards, Pfannenstiel had declared that Gerstein “*had already gone to Lublin and Belżec several times before,*”¹⁶⁷ thus inflicting another mortal blow to the story of Gerstein’s alleged ‘mission.’

Here’s how Pfannenstiel described the motivation for his own visit to the Belżec camp:¹⁶⁸

“As far as I remember, Globocnik suggested that, as a Professor of Hygiene, I should occasionally go along.”

Thus, he had not asked permission from Globocnik to visit the camp out of a “*certain curiosity,*” but had been asked to do so by Globocnik himself!

Later, Pfannenstiel would change his story again:¹⁶⁹

“At that time, a certain SS Obersturmführer [senior lieutenant] Gerstein, who also belonged to the SS health office in Berlin, was questioned by Globocnik at Lublin about how best to disinfect these large amounts of textiles. Gerstein had recommended a certain product that could be sprayed on the individual layers of clothing. I did not know this product myself. Globocnik also asked my advice, whereupon I told him that it would be best if I could go and have a look at the camp.”

Obviously, as the “*large amounts of textiles*” were stocked at Lublin, there was no need for Pfannenstiel to go to Belżec, or for Globocnik to give him the permission to visit the alleged extermination camp. Relying, here as well, on the Gerstein report, Pfannenstiel then devised a ‘virtuous’ reason to justify the alleged fact that he had witnessed a ‘gassing.’¹⁷⁰

“He [Wirth] asked me whether I wanted to observe such an extermination operation; after a long hesitation I accepted. My aim was, in fact, to report to the SS Reichsarzt [SS surgeon general] about these extermination operations.”

In the interrogation of November 8, 1963, Pfannenstiel perfected this explanation, asserting:¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁶ With the term “*Desinfizierung*” (disinfection) Pfannenstiel meant “*Entwesung*” (disinfection).

¹⁶⁷ Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on June 6, 1950, ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 43.

¹⁶⁸ Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on November 9, 1959, ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, pp. 136f.

¹⁶⁹ Interrogation on April 25, 1960, ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 585.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 586.

¹⁷¹ Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on November 8, 1963. ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 15.

“Thereupon I decided to stay in Belzec for the night, so as to be able to report to Berlin about the whole matter from my own observation. At that time, I firmly believed that nothing was known in Berlin about these things.”

Here we have Pfannenstiel wanting to become another Gerstein and to inform, not the whole world, but Berlin about the alleged extermination of the Jews! Needless to say, the report by Pfannenstiel to the SS *Reichsarzt*, Dr. Grawitz, took place “orally,”¹⁷² because there is no trace of it. As for Pfannenstiel’s attempt to link this alleged report to the closing of the Belżec camp,¹⁷² there is no documentary evidence of that either.

In the interrogation of November 9, 1959, Pfannenstiel made another statement which is not a little extraordinary.¹⁷³

“As far as I can remember, the German personnel at the camp consisted of about four persons.”

Thus the extermination of 600,000 people would have been the work of four SS men!

Later, Pfannenstiel describes the gassing installation:¹⁷⁴

“The gas chambers were lined up on either side of the corridor. The corridor itself was 3 m wide. I do not remember exactly the size of the chambers. I think they had a floor area of about 16 sqm. The doors of the gas chambers were equipped with glass windows, through which it was possible to watch what was going on inside. They were not actual windows, only small peepholes. The engine itself was not in a separate room, rather, it stood freely on a podium. It was run with diesel fuel.”

On the subject of the murder engine, Gerstein had been extremely vague, saying only that it had been “an old Russian diesel engine”,¹⁷⁵ therefore Pfannenstiel had to improvise. He invented its unique location in the open, and showed a double blindness, gross and contradictory, about its horsepower, which he reduced drastically from 1,100 HP during the interrogation of October 30, 1947, to 10 HP in the interrogation of April 25, 1960:¹⁷⁶

“The Jews had to enter into chambers in the building, into which were fed the exhaust gases of a 10 HP engine, located in the same building.”

If we remind ourselves that the diesel engine of the best Soviet tank of World War II, the T 34, had a power of 500 HP, it is easy to judge the value of Pfannenstiel’s declarations.

¹⁷² Interrogation of April 25, 1960, ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 588.

¹⁷³ Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on November 9, 1959. ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 137.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 138.

¹⁷⁵ PS-2170, p. 3.

¹⁷⁶ Interrogation on April 25, 1960, ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 587.

Moreover, Gerstein's engine was explicitly labeled "old"; it actually stalled, and it took 2 hours and 49 minutes to get it going.¹⁷⁷ Pfannenstiel's engine, on the other hand, ran smoothly right away:¹⁷⁸

"There was no slowdown due to an engine failure. I would surely remember that."

The doors of the alleged gas chambers were equipped with peepholes. About this, Pfannenstiel declared:¹⁷⁹

"The peephole that existed in all the doors had quickly steamed up from the inside, so it was no longer possible to observe anything from the outside."

Gerstein, on the other hand, was luckier and could observe the inside of the gas chambers clearly:¹⁸⁰

"Another 25 minutes pass. Sure enough, many are now dead. One can see this through the little window in which the electric light illuminates the chambers for a moment."

Pfannenstiel also disputes the dimensions of the alleged piles of clothing, 35 to 40 m high, 'seen' by Gerstein,¹⁸¹ which he says were only one tenth as high:¹⁸²

"The figures advanced by Gerstein are grossly exaggerated. In the report I possess there is a mention of 35 to 40 m in height. These figures are completely false. But even the actual pile of textiles with a height of 3 to 4 m was terrifying enough."

Pfannenstiel, for obvious reasons, denied categorically the passages of the Gerstein report which place him a bad light. In the interrogation of June 6, 1950, he said:¹⁸³

"I know that Dr. Gerstein gives a totally different account of this gassing scene. His account is wrong. It is full of exaggerations. His statement that he believes 25,000,000 people have been dealt with in this way is a typical example."

He specifically denied ever having uttered – at least in a derogatory sense – the phrase Gerstein attributed to him: "like in a synagogue" with reference to the agonized victims of the alleged gas chambers, and most emphatically denied having gone to Treblinka where – according to Gerstein – he gave a talk praising the extermination of the Jews.¹⁸⁴

¹⁷⁷ PS-1553, p. 3.

¹⁷⁸ Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on November 8, 1963. ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 16.

¹⁷⁹ Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on November 9, 1959, ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 139.

¹⁸⁰ PS-2170, p. 6.

¹⁸¹ PS-1553, p. 4.

¹⁸² Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on November 8, 1963. ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 16.

¹⁸³ Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on June 6, 1950. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, vol. I, p. 44

¹⁸⁴ PS-1553, pp. 4f.

All this is easy to understand, but Pfannenstiel makes another rather more enigmatic statement:¹⁸⁵

“Through these [doors] Jewish detainees took out the corpses and threw them into large pits. The corpses were burned in these pits. [...] From my point of view, the incineration of the corpses at the time was still quite imperfect.”

In the interrogation of April 25, 1960,¹⁸⁶ Pfannenstiel again sets forth his ‘observations,’ this time in greater detail:¹⁸⁷

“From the inspection site the corpses were taken directly to deep mass graves that had been dug in the vicinity of the extermination installation. When the pits were rather full, the corpses were doused with gasoline – it may have been some other flammable liquid – and were then lit. I could only determine that the corpses burned just partly. Then another layer of earth was thrown over the corpses and then fresh corpses were placed into the same pit.”

This ‘observation’ by Pfannenstiel was in contradiction both with his own statements,¹⁸⁸ with the Gerstein report, and with official historiography (G. Reitlinger), and Pfannenstiel realized it full well. This could only be intentional. Why should Pfannenstiel want to deny this tenet of the Holocaust dogma?

The reasons which prompted Pfannenstiel to give official backing to the ‘confirmation’ of the Gerstein report (and to deny it privately later) are easy to understand, and there is no need to dwell on them. The content of Pfannenstiel’s confirmation is totally dependent upon the Gerstein report, its one and only source. Even where he claims to have traveled from Berlin to Bełżec together with Gerstein, his statements contain no new or significant element which might actually stem from such an event; they do nothing but echo Gerstein’s statements. In the rare instances in which Pfannenstiel tries to distance himself from Gerstein’s testimony, he ends up talking nonsense, as in the case of the diesel engine’s horsepower. From Pfannenstiel’s account we can draw no new knowledge, no new documentation, no new proof. From the beginning, both the judges and the historians realized the incongruity of the Gerstein report. Thus, for example, León Poliakov’s expurgation of the text he quoted, in the end falsifying it in an essential point.¹⁸⁹ Pfannenstiel’s task was

¹⁸⁵ Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on November 9, 1959. ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, pp. 139f.

¹⁸⁶ Interrogation of W. Pfannenstiel on April 25, 1960. ZStL, Z 252/59, vol. I, pp. 583-588.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 587f.

¹⁸⁸ As we have seen above, in the interrogation on June 6, 1950, he had only said that the corpses had simply been “*in einer Grube aufgeschichtet*” (piled up in a pit), but not burnt.

¹⁸⁹ He falsified the surface area of the alleged gas chambers by writing 93 square meters instead of Gerstein’s 25 and omitting Gerstein’s figure for their volume (45 cubic meters). Poliakov realized full well that the correct quotation alone (700 to 800 persons in 25 square meters and 45 cubic meters) would have sufficed to disqualify the entire Gerstein report. Concern-

to rescale Gerstein's report, to eliminate its outrageous exaggerations in order to reduce it to an acceptable nucleus. Today, some official historians, such as Tregenza, consider Pfannenstiel's testimony more important than Gerstein's, which is (finally) regarded as inadmissible. But why was Gerstein, if describing an actual event, constrained to provide an account so demented as to render it inadmissible?

On this fundamental point, which could shed light on the actual impetus of the Gerstein reports, the official historiography is silent.

As for Pfannenstiel, his efforts failed: He diminished Gerstein's acceptability without being able to achieve his own.

3. The Belżec Trial

The vagaries of the Belżec trial were summarized by Adalbert Rückerl as follows:¹⁹⁰

“The main proceedings against the only defendant still in the dock in the Belżec trial, Josef Oberhauser, lasted a mere four days, from January 18 to 21, 1965. The court interrogated fourteen witnesses. Thirteen of them had been members of the SS or the T4 organization at the time. The fourteenth witness was – as far as could be ascertained – the only one of the victims to have survived the Belżec camp. Among the witnesses were six suspects against whom the penal court had dropped charges. Five of them, as well as another witness, had since become defendants in the Sobibór trial. One of the witnesses was Professor Pfannenstiel, who had, at the time, in August of 1942, visited the Belżec camp together with Gerstein.

During these proceedings, the defendant Oberhauser refused any comment regarding the case. He pleaded to having acted under orders and to having been sentenced previously, on September 24, 1948, by the Magdeburg district court for participation in the mass killings perpetrated at Belżec, with subsequent incarceration in GDR prisons on account of this sentence. [...]

The criminal section of Munich district court I sentenced Oberhauser for aiding and abetting in 300,000 cases of joint first degree homicide, as well as five further counts of aiding and abetting in 150 cases each of joint first degree homicide, to a total of four years and six months penal servitude and loss of civic rights for a period of three years.”

ing Poliakov's manipulations cf. in this respect my study *Il rapporto Gerstein, op. cit.* (note 83), pp. 208-227.

¹⁹⁰ A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 119), pp. 83f.

Aside from Oberhauser, the most important codefendants were Werner Karl Dubois, Erich Fuchs, Alfred Schluch, Robert Jührs, and Heinrich Gley; these, however, soon became mere witnesses.

As we have seen in Chapter II, by 1965, when the Belzec trial was conducted at Munich, the official legal and historical framework in relation to this camp had already been consolidated; hence, in their efforts to minimize their sentences, the defendants were compelled to accept this framework.

What is striking in their depositions – and thus confirms their purely tactical and defensive value – is the extreme vagueness with which they replied to the essential questions regarding the camp: the structure and operation of the alleged gas chambers, the burial and incineration of the corpses, the transports and the records of the alleged extermination. Nothing new of any substance emerges from their statements. And when, for tactical reasons, something new does appear, it contradicts the official version. This, however, does not disturb official historians like Yitzhak Arad, who, by means of a convenient sleight of hand, manages to create a fictitious ‘convergence,’ where there is, in actual fact, a glaring contradiction.

In the chapter “*Die ‘Aktion Reinhard’: Gaskammern in Ostpolen*” (‘Operation Reinhard’: Gas Chambers in Eastern Poland) in a classic work of the 1980s, Arad writes:¹⁹¹

“Within four weeks, between 17 March and 14 April, close to thirty thousand of the thirty-seven thousand inhabitants of the Lublin ghetto were deported to Belzec. Within the same period an additional eighteen thousand to twenty thousand Jews from the Lublin district were sent to Belzec, among them three thousand from Zamosc, thirty-four hundred from Piaski, and twenty-two hundred from Izbica and other localities.

The first Jewish convoy from the Lvov district came from Zolkiew, a town fifty kilometers southwest of Belzec. This convoy consisted of approximately seven hundred Jews and reached Belzec on 25 or 26 March 1942. Subsequently, within the two weeks up to 6 April 1942, some thirty thousand other Jews from the Lvov district arrived in Belzec.

Among them were fifteen thousand Jews deported from Lvov during the so-called March operation, five thousand from Stanislawow, the same number from Kolomea, and others from Drohobycz and Rawa-Ruska. Most of those who were sent to Belzec from the district of Lvov during this wave of deportations were classified as ‘unfit for work.’

After eighty thousand Jews had been murdered in a major operation that lasted about four weeks, the convoys were suspended. Toward the end of April or the beginning of May 1942, Wirth and his SS men left the camp.

Oberhauser made the following statement on the subject:

¹⁹¹ Eugen Kogon, Hermann Langbein, Adalbert Rückerl *et al.* (eds.), *Nazi Mass Murder*, Yale, New Haven 1993, pp. 102-138, here p. 121.

After these first gassings, Wirth and Schwarz, together with all the German personnel, disappeared from the camp.”

Arad thus makes Oberhauser the scapegoat of the story of the alleged gassing of 80,000 Jews, but the former SS sergeant had said something quite different:¹⁹²

“The gassings of Jews in the Belzec camp up to August 1, 1942, can be divided into two categories. The first test series covered 2 or 3 transports of 4 to 6 cars with 20 to 40 persons each. On average, 150 Jews arrived with each transport and were killed. These gassings were not yet carried out within the framework of a systematic program of extermination; the aim was to test the capacity of the camp and to determine technically how gassings could be carried out.

After these first gassings, Wirth and Schwarz as well as the whole German crew disappeared from Belzec.”

Oberhauser hence refers to the gassings of 2 to 3 transports of 150 persons each, at most 450 altogether, whereas Arad makes him responsible for the gassing of 80,000 persons!

The Jewish historian was obliged to have recourse to this base deception because the contradiction between Oberhauser’s version and the official one is simply too stark to be reconciled.

Arad’s historical ‘reconstruction’ continues:¹⁹³

“In mid-May Wirth returned to Belzec. During the latter half of the month two smaller convoys reached the camp, bringing 1,350 Jews from the ghettos of Laszczow and Komarow, near Zamosc.²⁸ In early June convoys began to arrive from the Cracow district. Three, consisting of five thousand Jews in all, came between 1 and 6 June. A total of eleven thousand more victims, from the city of Cracow and its surrounding areas, reached Belzec between 11 and 13 June. They were followed shortly afterward by another forty-five hundred.”

Hence, during this period, another 21,850 Jews are alleged to have been gassed. However, Oberhauser had this to say on the matter:¹⁹⁴

“For another 6 weeks, things were quiet in the Belzec camp. [...] then there was another test series up to August 1, 1942. During this time, as far as I know, we had 5 or 6 transports consisting of 5 to 7 cars with 30 to 40 persons each coming to Belzec. The Jews of two of these transports were still gassed in the small chamber, then Wirth had the gassing barrack torn down and replaced it with a solid new building with a higher capacity. The Jews of the remaining transports were then gassed in this new gassing building.”

¹⁹² Interrogation of J. Oberhauser on December 12, 1962. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, pp. 1683f.

¹⁹³ E. Kogon et al. (eds.), *op. cit.* (note 191), p. 121f.

¹⁹⁴ Interrogation of J. Oberhauser on December 12, 1962. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, p. 1685.

Thus, according to Oberhauser, the number of gassing victims was at most 1,680, a figure quite different from the 21,850 presented by Arad. In further contradiction to the official version, Oberhauser asserted:¹⁹⁴

“Whereas during the first test series and the first two transports of the second test series bottled gas was still used for the gassings, the Jews of the last transports of the second test series were killed with the exhaust gas of the tank engine or truck engine, which Hackenholt operated.”

This means that the alleged first gassing building was not equipped with an engine for the production of the deadly exhaust gas. With respect to the use of “bottled gas,” Oberhauser gave no details, nor did he describe the new building, the burials, or the burning of the corpses.

The judges did not seem overly worried about these strident contradictions. They asked no explanations of the defendant, and handed everything over to the historians.

The statements of Werner Karl Dubois, who was a driver at Bełżec, are on the other hand rather general. On the question of the alleged gas chambers, he came up with nothing better than:¹⁹⁵

“It has just been asked how large the gas chambers may have been or how many persons they would have been able to accommodate. I cannot answer this, in the same way that I cannot say anything about the engine used. I cannot even offer an appropriate estimate. I never saw the gas chambers from the inside. The engine was inside the building in which the gas chambers were located as well. I never saw that engine either.”

Considering that the camp was rather small and that the SS personnel numbered a dozen men or so, this witness’ statement is curious, to say the least – unless he had never seen the presumed gas chambers from the outside, either.

He had seen something, though:¹⁹⁶

“With my own eyes I have seen that a transport consisted of at least 20 and up to 40 cars.”

“Some 15 cars for unloading” entered the camp and *“at least 30 and up to 50 people were transported in one car,”* so that the maximum load of a train would be 2,000 persons, i.e. half the figure commonly accepted.

He relates activities that would not really be in keeping with those of an extermination camp:¹⁹⁷

“Thus it happened occasionally that I did clean-up operations in the installations of the former demarcation line with a Jewish work detail. A number of shelters contained equipment still serviceable, such as machine

¹⁹⁵ Interrogation of Werner Karl Dubois on September 16, 1961. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, p. 1398.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 1402.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 1396.

guns, etc. This equipment would be collected and taken to the equipment depot.”

*“It also happened that I organized a soccer match with 22 Jews on the sports ground; Jews from No. 1 camp were able to watch it under proper guard.”*¹⁹⁸

The testimony of Heinrich Gley, a former SS *Scharführer* (sergeant), is also rather pallid, except for some details about the incineration of corpses, which I shall consider in chapter V.

His knowledge of the alleged extermination installations of the camp can be judged in the light of the following statement:¹⁹⁹

“After the doors of the gas chambers had been closed, a large engine – I don’t know whether it was a diesel or an Otto [gasoline] engine – was started up by a mechanic from the Hiwi [auxiliaries] section. The exhaust fumes of this engine were fed into the chambers and caused the death of the Jews.”

This means that he did not even know whether the alleged murder weapon was a diesel or a gasoline engine!

Robert Jühns was transferred to Belżec in August 1942. He, too, offered nothing but general and uninteresting statements, with one exception, which, however, collides with the official version:²⁰⁰

“The corpses from the gas chambers were taken to the burial area not by carts but manually and directly by the Jewish work detail.”

This signifies that the 600,000 corpses attributed to Belżec were hand-carried, one by one, to the mass graves!

Karl Alfred Schluch, who had been assigned to Belżec from April 1942 through August 1943²⁰¹ – except for sick leave between October 1942 and February/March 1943 – furnished a more detailed account of the alleged extermination process than did the other defendants:²⁰²

“When the Jews had entered the gas chambers, the doors were closed by Hackenholt himself or by one of the Ukrainians under his command. Then Hackenholt started the engine, with which the gassing was carried out. After some 5 to 7 minutes – this is only my estimate – the death of all inside was ascertained by looking through the peephole. Only then were the outer gates opened and the chambers aired [...]”

The duration of the victims’ agony – even if roughly estimated – is in general too short, even in light of the ‘determination’ of the tribunal, which set it

¹⁹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 1394.

¹⁹⁹ Interrogation of Heinrich Gley on May 8, 1961. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, p. 1291.

²⁰⁰ Interrogation of Robert Jühns on October 11, 1961. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, p. 1465.

²⁰¹ Interrogation of Karl Alfred Schluch on April 11, 1962. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, p. 1247.

²⁰² Interrogation of Karl Alfred Schluch on November 10, 1961. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, p. 1512.

at 15 to 30 minutes.²⁰³ Rather than being an estimate, it is reminiscent of something in the testimony of Stanislaw Kozak, dated February 19, 1946, which had been translated into German and admitted into the trial proceedings.²⁰⁴

“To poison a person, 7 minutes in the ‘bath’ are needed.”

A novelty worth noting is the ventilation of the alleged gas chambers mentioned by the witness. Taking into account the density of carbon monoxide of 0.967 (relative to air), which is practically equal to that of hydrogen cyanide (0.969), and mindful that killing the victims within 15–30 minutes would have required reaching a lethal concentration of some 5,000 parts per million (5.7 milligrams/liter)²⁰⁵ within the gas chambers, it would certainly have been necessary to ventilate the chambers or to wear an independent breathing apparatus on entering, but none of the main witnesses ever mentioned this. This witness, however, describes the victims of the presumed gassings thus:²⁰⁶

“After the gas chambers had been ventilated, a Jewish work detail arrived, led by a Kapo, and removed the corpses from the chambers.

I was occasionally on duty at this site, and I can thus describe the operations in detail, because I saw and witnessed everything myself.

The Jews had been squeezed very tightly into the gas chambers. For this reason, the corpses were not found lying on the floor, rather they stood this way or that, leaning against one another, some forward some backward, depending on the space they had, some kneeling. At least some of the corpses were wet with feces and urine, others with saliva. I could clearly see that some of them showed a bluish discoloration at the lips or the tip of the nose. Some of them had their eyes closed, others’ eyes had rolled up. The corpses were pulled out of the chambers and immediately examined by a dentist. The dentist removed any rings from their fingers and extracted any gold teeth present. The objects of value thus recovered were thrown by him into a carton provided for this purpose.”

This is copied straight out of the ‘Gerstein report,’ which describes the scene in the following terms:²⁰⁷

“The dead are standing upright, like columns of basalt. [...]

They throw out the corpses – wet with sweat and urine, dirty with feces, with menstrual blood down their legs.”

²⁰³ *Urteilsbegründung* (judicial opinion) in the Bełżec trial, in A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 119), p. 135.

²⁰⁴ ZStL, 8AR-Z 252/59, p. 1131.

²⁰⁵ According to F. Flury, the concentration of CO at 5,000 p.p.m. is “in 5-10 Minuten tödlich” (lethal within 5-10 minutes). F. Flury, F. Zernik, *Schädliche Gase, Dämpfe, Nebel, Rauch- und Staubarten*, Verlag von Julius Springer, Berlin 1931, p. 209.

²⁰⁶ Interrogation of Karl Alfred Schluch on November 10, 1961. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, p. 1513.

²⁰⁷ PS-2170, p. 6.

This is confirmed by the inevitable reference to the “*bluish*” color of the corpses, again taken from the ‘Gerstein report,’ with which I have already dealt above.

It should also be mentioned that people tightly pressed together in a room would not stand upright after they died. Their knees would bend one way or another, and their bodies would thus slump. It is furthermore worth noting that it would not exactly have been the epitome of German organizational genius to have 600,000 corpses checked by *one* dentist!

The witness then relates the burial of the victims in mass graves:²⁰⁶

“After this procedure, the corpses were thrown into the large pits already prepared. I can state the dimensions of a pit only in a rough way. It could have measured some 30 m in length by 20 m across. The depth is more difficult to guess, because the side walls were at an angle and, moreover, the loose earth had been piled up along the edges. I think, though, that the pit may have been 5 to 6 m deep.”

The interesting point here – as we shall see in Chapter V – is the mention of the earth removed from the pit and piled up near its edge. The witness says nothing about the total number of pits or the total number of corpses thrown into the pit he refers to.

Schluch claimed to have been on duty at the gas chambers, but in spite of this he did not even know how many there were:²⁰⁶

“How many gas chambers there were at Belzec[sic] I cannot say exactly. There must have been several because, after the gassings, corpses were taken out through the doors both on the left and on the right hand side. Just like any other member of the Belzec staff, I imagine, I inspected the gas chambers. Besides, when we were assigned for duty there, we also had to check the gas chambers.”

He does know the dimensions of the gas chambers, though:²⁰⁸

“The gas chamber at Belzec may have measured 4 x 8 meters.”

Here, the poor witness gets mixed up between the dimensions of the *new* gas chambers and the *old*, just as Kozak did.²⁰⁹

Elsewhere, Schluch’s testimony shows another surprising omission:²⁰⁸

“How the gas was fed into the chamber, I can no longer recall.”

The instrument of murder was a “*diesel engine*,” but unfortunately K.A. Schluch had not seen it and could not describe it:²⁰⁹

“For the gassings an engine was started up. I cannot give a more detailed description of the engine, because I never saw it. I am not a specialist, but I would say that, judging from the sound, it was a medium-size diesel engine.”

²⁰⁸ Interrogation of Karl Alfred Schluch on November 10, 1961. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, p. 1514.

²⁰⁹ ZStL, 8 AR-Z 252/59, p. 1129.

Erich Fuchs, former SS *Scharführer* (sergeant), explained that he had been sent to Belżec in the winter of 1941:²¹⁰

“When we arrived at Belcec [sic] we met Friedel Schwarz and two SS men whose names I cannot remember. They were guarding a barrack structure, which we were to equip as a gas chamber.

Wirth told us that ‘all Jews were to be killed off’ at Belcec. For this purpose, the barracks [plural in the original German – ed.] were to be turned into gas chambers. I installed shower heads in the gas chambers. These shower heads were not hooked up to a water pipe, because they were only meant as a disguise for the gas chambers. The Jews to be gassed were, in fact, falsely told that they were to be bathed and disinfected.”

As we have seen above, the witness Stanislaw Kozak stated he built the barrack housing the gas chambers between November 1 and December 22, 1941. Erich Fuchs spoke, on the other hand, of barracks being “*turned into gas chambers.*” Which barracks, if the alleged gassing barrack was a single one? And in what way were these “*barracks [...] turned into gas chambers*”? Simply by equipping them with fake shower heads! Precisely because they were crude fakes, these showers wouldn’t have worked “*as a disguise,*” but would immediately have aroused the suspicion of the intended victims.

Fuchs further testified that he had been present at the gassing of the first transport of Jews, some 1,000 persons, “*in the so-called bath room (gas chamber),*” thus adopting the terminology of the Polish witnesses just as he had accepted the fake showers. He later stated that he had been present at two other transports, without supplying any pertinent details.²¹¹

In conclusion, the witnesses at the Belżec trial followed, more or less freely, depending upon their tactical aims, the dictates of the official historiography on Belżec, founded upon the ‘Gerstein report’ and upon the Polish testimonies of the years 1945/1946. Their statements read like vague summaries of earlier court reports, without adding to these any important new findings. Like the court reports, the testimonies are absolutely devoid of any objective or documentary evidence. These declarations have, no doubt, a legal value – which, however, has nothing to do with a demonstration of the truth or with historiography.

²¹⁰ Interrogation of Erich Fuchs, ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, pp. 1782f.

²¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 1783.

Chapter IV: Bełżec in Polish Archeological Research (1997 to 1999)

1. The Mass Graves

In 1997, the Rada Ochrony Pamięci Walk i Męczeństwa (Council for safeguarding the remembrance of struggle and martyrdom) of Warsaw, together with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum of Washington, D.C., decided to undertake archeological diggings within the area of the former camp at Bełżec, with the principal aim of identifying the mass graves described by witnesses. The work was conducted by a team of archeologists from the Nicolas Copernicus University of Toruń, led by Professor Andrzej Kola; it was conducted in phases: in 1997 from October 12 through 25, in 1998 from April 27 through June 6 and from October 25 through November 14, and finally in 1999 from September 12 through 25. The historians Robin O'Neil and Michael Tregenza took part in the project in 1997 and 1998; the latter, on his own account, investigated the area with a metal detector. In 2002, Kola wrote a paper on the diggings entitled "*Hitlerowski obóz zagłady Żydów w Bełżcu w świetle źródeł archeologicznych. Badania 1997-1999*,"²¹² published in English under the title "*Bełżec: The Nazi Camp for Jews in the light of archeological sources: Excavations 1997-1999*."²¹³ During the research, drilling was conducted out in the designated area at 5 m intervals with a manual drill some 6 to 8 m long and with a diameter of 65 mm. Altogether 2,227 drillings were sunk, and mass graves were identified by 236 of them. The earth samples taken in this way were then analyzed to determine their contents. This research resulted in the discovery of 33 graves in two separate areas of the camp; Kola provides a drawing and a brief description for each of them. He then summarizes his observations as follows:²¹⁴

²¹² Rada Ochrony Pamięci Walk i Męczeństwa/United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Warsaw/Washington 2000.

²¹³ The Council for the Protection of Memory and Martyrdom, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Warsaw-Washington 2000.

²¹⁴ A. Kola, *Bełżec: The Nazi Camp for Jews in the light of archeological sources: Excavations 1997-1999*, *op. cit.* (note 213), pp. 38-40. The imperfect English in the following excerpts is derived from the USHMM's English translation of Kola's Polish original.-ed.

“The first zone, probably the older one, contained the graves appearing close to the other in western and north-western part of the camp. [...] That was probably the place, where they started burying the victims. Generally 21 graves were reported in that area, which makes nearly 64% of the whole number in that site. The largest graves were also registered in that part. One can not exclude, however, that several of them (reported as graves of a big volume) were previously some separated smaller ones, which borders mixed either during covering them with soil, covering the traces of the camp up after closing the camp down or result of burglary searches after the war. [...] The other zone of the graves’ appearance takes up the north-eastern area of the camp. 12 graves were reported here (about 36% of the total number), with more regular forms (mainly of a rectangle view), which differed from one other in size and appearing in significant scattering. In the area of those graves, transformation of ground, characteristic for the first zone does not occur at all, or very rarely. The other parts of the camp are free from graves. The majority of graves situated here reached the depth between 4,00-5,00 m. One can suppose that those depths were regarded as the optimum ones; underground waters appeared at bigger depths. In the first zone, as we can suppose, connecting smaller neighbouring graves into bigger ones by destroying earth walls separating them was observed. That is why the bigger graves show clearly former original pits. The structures of grave contents in both zones are similarly varied. One can report graves filled with bodies in wax-fat transformation (in bottom parts of the ditches, as a rule), over which there are layers of body ashes and charcoal. Similar structure was reported in 10 graves (No 1, 3, 4, 10, 13, 20, 25, 27, 28, 32). In the rest of the graves in number of 23 only the layers of crematory ashes as well as charcoal placed on a few levels with sandy ground were observed. In non crematory graves, there was often a layer of lime placed over the bodies, which purpose was to quicken the process of decomposition of the corpses. The total surface of the burial pits at the area of the camp amounts about 0,52^[215] ha, which states barely 9% of the camp territory in the present, enclosed shape.^[216] The total volume of the graves is estimated for about 21,000 m³. The big number contains mainly ashes of bodies, which made killing and burying hundreds of thousands of people in one place possible.”

In the table below I have summarized the details of the dimensions of the graves:

²¹⁵ Actually 0.59 hectares (about 1.5 acres). Cf. below.

²¹⁶ In the southeast, the original surface area of the camp extended beyond the present boundary and measured about 6.2 hectares.

#	Dimensions [m]	Depth [m]	Surface [m ²]	Est'd. volume, [m ³]
1	40×12	4.80	480	1,500
2	14×6	2.00	84	170
3	16×15	5.00	240	960
4	16×6	2.30	96	250
5	32×10	4.50	320	1,350
6	30×10	4.00	300	1,200
7	13–14×27	4.50	364.5	1,600
8	28×10	4.00	280	850
9	8×10	3.80	80	280
10	24×18	4.25–5.20	432	2,100
11	9×5	1.90	45	80
12	6×16×11.50×18	4.00	~132	400
13	12.50×11×17×18 ²¹⁷	4.80	~200	920
14	37×10	5.00	370	1,850
15	13.50×6.50	4.50	87.75	400
16	18.50×9.50	4.00	175.75	700
17	17×7.50	4.00	127.5	500
18	16×9	4.00	144	570
19	12×12	4.00	144	500
20	26×11	5.00	286	1,150
21	5×5	1.70	25	35
22	9×15	3.50	135	200
23	16×8.50	4.00	136	550
24	20×5.50	5.00	110	520
25	13×5	4.00	65	250
26	13×7	4.00	91	320
27	18.50×6.00	5.00	540	450
28	?	?	~17.5 ²¹⁸	70
29	25×9	4.50	225	900
30	5×6	2.70	30	75
31	9×4	2.60	36	90
32	15×5	4.00	75	400
33	9×5	3.00	45	120
Total:			5,919	21,310

The 33 graves thus have a total surface area of 5,919 square meters and a total volume of 21,310 cubic meters.

²¹⁷ Dimension taken from the drawing.

²¹⁸ Assuming an average depth of 4 meters.

2. Comparison of Research Results with Testimonies and Judicial Findings

2.1. Testimonies

As we have explained above, Kurt Gerstein and Rudolf Reder are the two principal witnesses regarding the camp at Belżec. Both of them give a detailed description of the mass graves. In a declaration made before the Jewish historical commission in 1945, Reder stated:²¹⁹

“A grave was 100 m long and 25 m wide. A single grave contained about 100,000 persons. In November 1942 there were 30 graves, i.e. 3 million corpses.”

During the interrogation, which was conducted by the investigative judge Jan Sehn on December 29, 1945, the witness strengthened his declaration further:²²⁰

“The graves were all dug to the same dimensions and measured 100 m in length, 25 m in width and 15 m in depth.”

In his famous report of April 26, 1945, Gerstein wrote:²²¹

“Then the naked bodies were thrown into large trenches about 100 by 20 by 12 m, situated near the death chambers.”

And in the report he wrote on May 6, 1945, he affirmed:²²²

“The naked corpses were thrown onto wooden carts [and then] into pits only a short distance away and measuring 100 by 12 by 20 meters.”

One trench thus had a surface area of 2,500 m² for Reder and 2,000 m² for Gerstein, a volume of 37,500 m³ for the former and 24,000 m³ for the latter. However, from Kola's research we can deduce that the largest trench in area (#27) had a surface of 540 m³, whereas the most capacious (#10) had a volume of only 2,100 m³. Furthermore, as Kola has determined, the majority of the trenches had a depth of 4 to 5 meters; below this level there was ground water. Hence, the depth of 12 to 15 meters asserted by the two witnesses could not be confirmed by the diggings. As for Reder's testimony, the total surface area of the 30 graves he claims to have seen in the camp (7.5 hectares) would have covered more ground than the camp itself (6.2 hectares)!

2.2. First Judicial Findings

So obvious an absurdity as this was not only accepted but willfully exaggerated by the Zamość prosecutor, who, in his report of April 11, 1946, wrote:²²³

²¹⁹ N. Blumental (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 2), p. 223.

²²⁰ AGK, OKBZN Kraków, 111, p. 4.

²²¹ PS-1553, p. 7.

²²² PS-2170, p. 6.

“All mass graves had the same dimensions: 100 m in length, 25 m in width, and 15 m in depth. The corpses tossed into the graves were covered with lime. Then those piles of corpses were covered up with sand by the detainees. There may well have been thirty, forty, and even more graves of this kind in the camp.”

In this fashion, Rudolf Reder’s thirty graves became “forty and even more”!

2.3. The Location of the Mass Graves

Andrzej Kola has made a drawing of the Belżec camp, with the area of the mass graves marked by vertical shading.²²⁴

A drawing published by Robin O’Neil shows the actual position of the graves and their peripheries in more detail.²²⁵ The majority of the graves is located along the northwestern border of the camp (on the left in the drawing), some graves are near the center of the camp, and a few lie along the northeastern border (at the top in the drawing).

In 1946 Rudolf Reder wrote a book entitled *Belżec*, which was published in Krakow by the central Jewish historical commission. On p. 43 of this book there is a map of the camp, drawn by J. Bau according to information from the witness.²²⁶ This drawing – which Kola publishes without comment²²⁷ – is upside down with respect to normal practice. It shows 26 graves along the northwestern border and 6 in the center.

The official map of the camp was drawn by the investigative commission of the German crimes in Poland and appeared in the article “*The Belżec extermination camp*” by Eugeniusz Szrojt, a member of this group.²²⁸ There, the area of the graves is represented by a rectangle placed near the northeastern border of the camp.

In conclusion, we can see that the location given by Kola for the majority of the graves is in disagreement both with Rudolf Reder’s testimony and with the findings of the Polish investigative commission. Furthermore, an examination of the map of Belżec as published by Arad²²⁹ forces one to conclude that the quarters of the Ukrainian guards, the hygienic installations (barbers, infirmary, dentists for the SS and the Ukrainians), the kitchen for the Ukrainian

²²³ ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1227 (translation from Polish into German).

²²⁴ A. Kola, *Belżec...*, *op. cit.* (note 213), p. 19. Cf. document 4 in the Appendix.

²²⁵ R. O’Neil, *op. cit.* (note 112), p. 59. Cf. document 5 in the Appendix.

²²⁶ R. Reder, *op. cit.* (note 91), p. 43. Cf. document 6 in the Appendix.

²²⁷ A. Kola, *Belżec...*, *op. cit.* (note 213), p. 7.

²²⁸ E. Szrojt, “*Obóz zagłady w Belżcu*,” in *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce*, vol. III, Poznań 1947, insert without page number. A. Kola has also shown this map without any commentary; cf. document 7 in the Appendix.

²²⁹ Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 108), p. 437. Cf. document 8.

guards, the garage, and the shoemakers' and tailors' workshops (shown on the map as numbers 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8) were located right next to mass graves or even on top of them!

These are not the only problems stemming from the location of the graves. Kola's and Robin O'Neil's maps (documents 4 and 5 in the Appendix) show mass graves scattered at random all over the camp, without any particular orientation or order. It is not necessary here to invoke the proverbial German pedantry, which has been well discussed by Rudolf Reder. On his map, in fact, the mythical 30 mass graves all have the same shapes, dimensions, orientation, and are properly arranged in two parallel rows. This is simply a matter of common sense: An orderly arrangement of the graves would obviously have allowed more efficient use to be made of the limited space available within the camp, and a better hygienic protection of the camp personnel. It is no exaggeration to claim that, if the camp commander had had the mass graves dug in such an irregular fashion, he would have been shot for sabotage. Unless, of course, he had peculiar artistic inclinations. Many graves shown by Kola have, in fact, the oddest shapes!²³⁰

3. Uncovering the Corpses

3.1. The Findings and Claims of Andrzej Kola

As we have seen above, A. Kola asserts that ten graves (# 1, 3, 4, 10, 13, 20, 25, 27, 28, 32) were "*filled with bodies in wax-fat transformation,*" but then hastens to add that they were located "*in bottom parts of the ditches, as a rule,*" which means that these graves were not, in fact, 'filled' with corpses in a state of saponification.

Before we deal with the problem of the number of corpses in these graves, we must first explain what "*wax-fat transformation*" is:²³¹

"[It] consists of the formation of adipocere, an insoluble soap of greasy and oily appearance having an unpleasant odor, produced by the combination of neutral fats from tissue and calcium and magnesium salts present in the water or in the humid soil in which the corpse rests. The absence of air is crucial. The process starts with the subcutaneous tissue and then spreads to the fatty perivisceral tissue. Saponification sets in after a few weeks and is complete after 12 to 18 months."

Robin O'Neil, referring to the diggings done during the period between April 28 and June 4, 1998, has proposed a general estimate of the number of corpses:²³²

²³⁰ As the graves No. 1, 9, 12, 14, 22 and 29. Cf. documents 9, 10 in the Appendix.

²³¹ <http://digilander.libero.it/fadange/medicina%20legale/tana.htm>

²³² R. O'Neil, *op. cit.* (note 112), p. 54.

“In two of these graves the bodies had not been exhumed and burnt as per the Himmler directive of 1942. How many bodies remain in these two graves is difficult to establish. To be sure, there are many thousands.”

Michael Tregenza, on the other hand, has been bold enough to name a precise figure:²³³

“Although it is difficult to attach a figure to the unburnt corpses, a conservative estimate would be on the order of at least 15,000.”

What is the basis of this estimate? Obviously nothing but the volume of the graves and the thickness of the layer of corpses, but, as we shall see, Tregenza’s estimate is decisively disproved by the actual results of the Polish field work.

The only way to dispel any uncertainty would obviously have been to unearth the corpses buried in the graves – why did the Polish authorities not do this? If the main objective of the archeological research was the identification of the mass graves, why were the corpses buried in these graves not exhumed? When the Germans discovered the graves of the victims of the Soviet NKVD at Katyn and Vinnytsya, they did not simply drill holes in the ground with a manual drill – they opened the graves, exhumed the corpses, did autopsies, and tried to identify them.

On April 13, 1943, on the basis of information from the local population, the Germans discovered seven graves containing a total of 4,143 corpses of Polish soldiers in the forest of Katyn. Between April and June, the bodies were examined by a commission consisting of physicians from twelve European countries, by a commission of the Polish Red Cross, and by U.S., British, and Canadian officers who were prisoners of war. The Germans then published an official report with the forensic medical findings of the investigation, containing 80 photographs and the names of the victims identified.²³⁴

The Vinnytsya massacres were discovered by the Germans in the beginning of June 1943. Ninety-seven mass graves were found in three different locations, containing the bodies of 9,432 Ukrainians murdered by the Soviets. Between June 24 and August 25 no fewer than 14 commissions, 6 of them composed of foreigners, visited the mass graves. Again, the Germans collected the results of their findings in a substantial publication: 282 pages with 151 photographs, with forensic medical reports, and victims’ names.²³⁵

Why, then, were the corpses of the mass graves at Belżec not exhumed? The answer is implied in the analyses of the probes taken out during the drillings. In fact, Andrzej Kola publishes the results of 137 samples – obviously the most significant ones of the 236 samples taken altogether – but out of

²³³ M. Tregenza, *op. cit.* (note 96), p. 258.

²³⁴ *Amtliches Material zum Massenmord von Katyn* (Official documents concerning the mass murders at Katyn), Berlin 1943.

²³⁵ *Amtliches Material zum Massenmord von Winniza* (Official documents concerning the mass murders at Vinnytsya), Berlin 1944.

these only two (482/XV-30-60 and 486/XV-25-50) bear the explicit designation “*human corpses*.”²³⁶ The symbol designating “*human bones and wax-fat mass*” – a kind of stylized double X – appears, in addition to the samples just mentioned, only on four more samples (485/XV-30-50, grave 10, 286/XVI-90-40 and 332/XVI-85-40, grave 3, and finally 1042/XIV-45-80, grave 20).²³⁷ The thickest layer is the one belonging to sample 332/XV-85-40 (described as “*tooth/human hair/water/human hair*”), which corresponds to approximately 15% of the depth of the grave (= 5 meters), thus to about 0.75 meters. Kola further mentions the discovery of corpses in a layer 1 meter thick in grave 27,²³⁸ but without providing a visual representation of the location of the 4 drillings carried out in this location. In any case, the order of magnitude does not change.

In all other instances, the corpse layer is thinner and is always located at the bottom of the grave. Hence, there are only three graves which contain more or less strongly saponified bodies. Moreover, in the light of the approximating method used by Kola (one sample every 5 meters), strictly speaking one cannot even say that these graves contained a layer of bodies as extensive as their surface area. This becomes evident, at last, in the results of the analyses published by Kola: Human remains are present in 3 out of 7 samples in grave 10, and in 1 out of 5 samples in grave 3 and grave 20. In these, the only three graves containing corpses,²³⁹ human remains were identified in 5 out of 17 samples, *i.e.*, in fewer than 30% of these cases. Thus, from all 236 drilling samples, we have only 5 ‘positive’ cases, that is, 2%! What does that mean, apart from any extrapolations? It means simply that the drill, which had a diameter of 65 millimeters (~2.5 inches), went like a lance five times through the remains of three or four bodies; in other words, *in concrete terms*, Kola has discovered 15 or 20 corpses.

Therefore, the only legitimate conclusion one can draw from these samples is that the graves mentioned contained only rare corpses here and there.

Nonetheless, Kola’s book contains a rich photographic documentation of objects found in the area of the camp during the project work. A full 37 color photographs show the most insignificant junk: horseshoes, keys and padlocks, earthenware pots and rusty scissors, pieces of glass and of china, broken combs, glass bottles, coins etc., etc. – but not a single photograph shows a corpse or part of a corpse!

On the other hand, given the small number of drillings, one cannot exclude the presence of other layers of corpses near those identified by Kola; this is even probable. In fact, when one examines the positions of the three samples

²³⁶ A. Kola, *Belžec...*, *op. cit.* (note 213), p. 15.

²³⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 15, 17f.

²³⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 36.

²³⁹ I have not taken into account grave No. 27, because A. Kola has not provided the diagram of his probes, and verification is thus impossible.

in grave 10 that indicated the presence of the corpses in a state of saponification, they are found to be concentrated in two small areas at lower left²⁴⁰ of samples 485 to 486 and near 483. This may indicate that originally there were two small graves of 40 to 50 square meters with several layers of corpses at the bottom. The same might be true for samples 286 and 332 of grave 3, which are next to each other within the standard distance of 5 meters along the south-north diagonal of the grave,²⁴¹ and for sample 1042 of grave 20. One may conclude that the *most probable* interpretation is that the graves contained at most several hundred corpses.

3.2. The Polish Findings of 1945

On October 12, 1945, the Regional Investigative Judge of the district court of Zamość, Czesław Godziszewski, presented an “*Account of the diggings in the cemetery of the Belżec extermination camp,*” in which he set down the findings from the inspection of the Belżec camp he had made that day, aided by 12 workers. In this context, he wrote:²⁴²

“The opening labeled No. 1 was taken down to a depth of 8 m and a width of 10 m and attained the bottom level of the graves. During the operation, at a depth of about 2 m, we struck the first layer of ash stemming from incinerated human bodies, mixed with sand. This layer was about 1 m thick. The next layer of ash was discovered at a depth of 4 – 6 meters. In the ash removed, some charred remains of human bodies were found, such as hands and arms, women’s hair, as well as human bones not totally burnt. We also recovered pieces of burnt wood. In trench No. 1, the layer of human ash stopped at a depth of 6 meters. The opening labeled No. 2 was taken down to a depth of 6 meters. In this trench, the layer of human ash began at a depth of 1.5 m and continued down to a depth of some 5 m, with occasional breaks. Here, too, the ash contained human hair, part of a human body, pieces of clothing, and remnants of incompletely burnt bones. Openings labeled Nos. 3 and 4 were freed to a depth of 3 meters. In hole No. 4, at a depth of 80 cm, we found a human skull with remnants of skin and hair, as well as two shinbones and a rib. Furthermore, at a level of between one and three meters, these holes yielded human ash mixed with sand and fragments of incompletely burnt human bones. Openings labeled Nos. 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 were dug to a depth of 2 m, but showed only human ash mixed with sand and human bones, such as jawbones and shinbones. Throughout all the excavations it was observed that the camp cemetery had already been disturbed by wildcat diggings; this is borne out by the fact

²⁴⁰ Cf. document 11 in the Appendix.

²⁴¹ A. Kola, *Belżec...*, *op. cit.* (note 213), p. 22.

²⁴² ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1121 (translation from Polish into German).

that the layers of human ash are not uniform but mixed with sand. The recovered human bones; the bodily remains, which were in a state of complete decomposition; and the ash were collected in a common location to await the arrival of the district surgeon. Work was stopped at 17:30 hours."

The next day, October 13, 1945, the findings were inspected by the coroner. The subsequent report describes primarily the results of the examination performed by the judge and the coroner:²⁴³

"During the inspection of the area of the extermination camp, particularly during the excavations at the place of the cemetery on October 12, 1945, a large number of human bones were found, such as skulls, parts of skulls, vertebrae, ribs, collarbones, shoulder blades, arm bones, lower legs, wrists, fingers, pelvic bones, thigh bones, lower legs, and foot bones. Some of the bones mentioned are either partly burnt or had not been burnt at all. Except for a few skulls showing rotting scalp and hair, the majority of the bones are free from soft tissue. Among the remains of human bodies recovered on October 12, 1945, we identified two forearms and a lumbar portion of the backbone with some soft tissue and traces of carbonization. The lumbar section belongs to an adult, whereas the forearms come from a child a few years old. From the size of the various bones one can conclude that they belong to persons of different age groups, from two-year-olds up to very old people, as borne out by toothless jaws and numerous dentures. Among the jawbones found there was one partially burnt specimen containing milk teeth as well as incipient permanent teeth, which indicates that it belongs to a person 7 to 8 years of age. No traces of bullet holes or other mechanical wounds were found on the skulls. The long bones show no traces either of gunshot wounds or fractures. Because of the advanced state of decomposition it was very difficult to say to what organs the recovered shapeless portions of soft tissue from human bodies might belong. In a hole dug by the local population in a search for gold and valuables, two lower legs belonging to a two-year-old child were discovered. These members are partly decomposed, partly mummified. The area of the cemetery, in particular the wildcat holes, is covered with layers of human ash of varying breadth, which stem from the incineration of human corpses and wood; they are intermingled with sand in varying proportions. The color of the ash varies between light-ash and dark gray; the ash has a heavy consistency and smells of decomposing human bodies. In the ash, charred human bones as well as pieces of charcoal are clearly visible. In the lower strata of the ash the smell of decomposition is more pronounced than in the layers nearer the surface. The hair discovered belongs mainly to women,

²⁴³ *Protokoll der Leichenschau* (report of coroner), October 13, 1945. ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, pp. 1123f. (translation from Polish into German).

as shown by their length and by the type of arrangement (braids and buns fixed with hairpins). In addition to natural hair, we encountered ladies' wigs as well. With this, the inspection was terminated."

The coroner's expert opinion, which comes at the end of the report, reached the following conclusions: The bones found were human in origin and came from a "very large" quantity of corpses; these corpses had been interred about three years earlier; some of them did not present traces of incineration; and the examination of the skulls and other samples excluded shooting as the cause of death.

The presence of unincinerated corpses within the Belżec camp area is therefore nothing new. As far as their number is concerned, the Polish coroner's expert opinion gives no specific data, but the general tone of the report and its insistence, in the description, on single bones as if they were unique pieces leaves us wondering about the value one should attribute to the "very large" quantity of corpses conjectured by the coroner.

In any case, the essential problem is not the existence, but the significance of these corpses. In other words: What does their existence prove?

3.3. Significance of Corpses Present

All official commentators have interpreted the presence of those corpses as proof of the alleged fact that mass exterminations did indeed take place at Belżec. As we have already seen, O'Neil sounded that battle cry as early as 1998: The bodies were those of victims from the gas chambers that had not been exhumed and cremated, contrary to Himmler's mysterious order.²⁴⁴ Thus he has created a circular logic that starts with the assumption that the corpses are those of victims of the gas chambers and proceeds to 'demonstrate,' on the basis of their presence, that the gas chambers did indeed exist! The pretension of these commentators – that the corpses at Belżec amount, furthermore, to a refutation of revisionist theses – is not only false, it is also grotesque. Of course, no revisionist historian would dream of stating that there were never any deaths at Belżec. As we shall see in the next chapter, deaths at that camp occurred among the detainees due to epidemics, and due to hard work and misery even before it became – according to the official historiography – an extermination camp. This fact entirely demolishes the interpretation of the official historians by proving that the presence of corpses at Belżec is not in absolute disagreement with the revisionist thesis. If one really wanted to disprove that thesis, it would be necessary to demonstrate that there are burial sites in the camp containing hundreds of thousands of victims. But if this cannot be done for entire corpses, as we have seen, might it not be true – given

²⁴⁴ Cf. next paragraph.

that the evidence of incinerations at Belżec is indisputable – for incinerated corpses at the camp?

To answer this question, it is necessary to ascertain whether the volumes of the mass graves identified by Kola and the amount of ash from human beings and wood the graves contain are in keeping with the mass cremation of hundreds of thousands of corpses, or, more exactly, 600,000 corpses. We shall examine this in the next section.

4. Compatibility of Archeological Research Results with the ‘Extermination Camp’ Thesis

4.1. Cremation of the Corpses

In the chapter “*The Erasure of the Crimes*” of his book on the Operation Reinhardt camps, Yitzhak Arad relates the story of the mysterious order to burn the victims of the alleged German exterminations as follows: In the spring of 1942, Himmler decided on the exhumation and cremation of Jews and Soviet prisoners of war shot by the *Einsatzgruppen* in the occupied Soviet territories. In March, Heydrich discusses the question with SS *Standartenführer* (colonel) Blobel who, in June, is entrusted with that mission (the alleged “*Sonderaktion* [special operation] 1005”) by Heinrich Müller, the head of the Gestapo. After some experimentation at Kulmhof, the first exhumation and incineration of corpses is carried out at Auschwitz.

The order is alleged also to have been transmitted to Odilo Globocnik, who, under the direct command of Himmler, commanded the three Operation Reinhardt camps; Arad does not state this explicitly.

In these three camps, the exhumation and cremation activities are said to have started in the summer of 1942 at Sobibór, in December 1942 at Belżec, and in March 1943 at Treblinka! Why didn’t Globocnik obey Himmler’s order? The answer Arad provides is astonishingly flimsy: Kurt Gerstein tells us that Globocnik allegedly declared in August 1942 that, instead of erasing the traces of the mass graves, it would be better to commemorate them on bronze tablets inscribed to the effect that it was the Germans who had had the courage to carry out such a gigantic job, and “*for this reason Globocnik did not immediately enforce cremation of the corpses in the Operation Reinhardt camps.*”²⁴⁵

Still, says Arad, “*in spite of Globocnik’s attitude*” the exhumation and cremation activities were undertaken all the same.

Actually, Arad’s story has no historical foundation.²⁴⁶ The only thing that is certain is that the alleged visit by Himmler to Treblinka, during which he is

²⁴⁵ Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 108), pp. 170f.

²⁴⁶ Cf. in this respect C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka, op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 217-229.

said to have decided on the cremation of the corpses in there, never took place!²⁴⁷

We know next to nothing about the cremation of corpses at Belżec. The Zamość prosecutor, in his report of April 11, 1946, mentioned above, wrote:²⁴⁸

“A number of tasks in the camp, such as the transportation of the murdered Jews, the digging of graves, the mass burial of corpses in the graves, the sorting of clothes, other objects and valuables left behind by the victims, were carried out by certain Jews staying permanently in the camp. After the liquidation of the camp, these Jews were taken to Sobibór, presumably to be executed. We were able to ascertain that the Jews working in the camp received a food ration of half a loaf of bread per day. In December of 1942, the transports of Jews to the Belzec camp were stopped; the Germans then started to erase systematically the traces of their crimes. The corpses were unearthed with special excavators and burned on piles of wood doused with a flammable mass. Later, the cremation process was improved by using railroad rails to build scaffolds, on which layers of corpses were placed in alternation with layers of wood soaked, as before, with an easily flammable liquid. To separate valuables that the corpses might have contained, the ash of the cremated corpses was passed through a grain separator and then buried again. The cremation of corpses was terminated in March 1943. Then all camp buildings, fences, and watchtowers were dismantled, the area was cleaned, leveled, and replanted with young pine trees.”

The cremations were thus carried out, apparently, between December of 1942 and March of 1943. The witness Kozak declares in this respect:²⁴⁹

“The disinterred corpses were piled on pyres that were burning and were doused with a liquid. Two or three pyres were burning simultaneously. While this was going on, a horrible stench of decomposed human bodies and burnt human bones and bodies floated over Belzec. This stench could be smelled up to 15 km away from Belzec. The cremations went on without interruption for three months; after that, the Germans started dismantling the camp.”

On the number of pyres, the witnesses questioned by the Polish judiciary in 1945 gave widely differing answers: For Eustachy Ukraiński²⁵⁰ there were “mehrere” (several), one for Tadeusz M.,²⁵¹ one to three for Mieczysław K.,²⁵²

²⁴⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 141-143.

²⁴⁸ ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1227 (translation from Polish into German).

²⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 1132.

²⁵⁰ ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1119: “Es brannten zugleich mehrere solche Feuer” (Several such fires were burning simultaneously).

²⁵¹ ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1145: “Zu gleicher Zeit konnten mehrere Haufen brennen, doch habe ich persönlich nur 1 großes Feuer und einen Rauch auf dem Lagerhügel gesehen” (Several

three for Eugeniusz G.²⁵³ and Edward F.,²⁵⁴ three to four for Edward Luczynsky,²⁵⁵ four to five for Wiktor S.²⁵⁶

During pre-trial interrogation for the Belżec trial, Heinrich Gley declared on January 7, 1963.²⁵⁷

“As far as I can remember, the gassings were stopped toward the end of 1942, when we already had snow. Then the general exhumation and cremation started; it may have lasted from November 1942 through March 1943. The cremations went on day and night without interruption, first on one and then on two hearths. One hearth allowed some 2,000 corpses to be burned in 24 hours. The second hearth was erected about four weeks after the beginning of the cremation operation. Thus, on average, the one hearth burned a total of 300,000 corpses over a period of some 5 months, the other 240,000 over some 4 months. Of course, these are only general estimates.” (emphasis added)

However, during his interrogation on May 8, 1961, he had said something entirely different:²⁵⁸

“The mass gassings of Jews in the Belzec [sic] camp were terminated at the end of 1942. To answer your question, I say that I am sure no corpses were as yet being cremated when I arrived. In the beginning of 1943 – I can no longer say whether it was in January, February, or March – I was ordered to gather, with a work detail, regular and narrow-gauge rails and large rocks. This material was to serve for the construction of large grids, upon which the corpses were burned that had been buried initially. I was not part of the cremation detail.”

Thus, the cremations would not have started before January of 1943. In section 4.3. we shall examine the consequences ensuing from these declarations.

Yitzhak Arad, one of the major specialists on Belżec among the official historians, dedicated only one scant page to the question of corpse cremations, in which he refers to H. Gley, to the report of the Zamość prosecutor, and to

piles could burn at the same time, but I saw only one large fire and a [column of] smoke on the camp hill.)

²⁵² ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1128: “*Ich habe gesehen, daß zur gleichen Zeit 1-3 Feuer brannten*” (I have seen 1 to 3 fires burning simultaneously).

²⁵³ ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1136: “*Wie ich gesehen habe, brannten zugleich drei Haufen*” (From what I have seen, 3 piles were burning simultaneously).

²⁵⁴ ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1223: “[...] *diese verbrannte man an drei Stellen*” (...those were burnt at three sites).

²⁵⁵ ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1140: “*Gleichzeitig brannten 3-4 Scheiterhaufen*” (3 to 4 pyres were burning simultaneously).

²⁵⁶ ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1160: “*Gleichzeitig brannten 4-5 Feuerstellen im oberen Teil des Lagers*” (4 to 5 fire sites were burning simultaneously in the upper part of the camp).

²⁵⁷ A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 119), pp. 142f.

²⁵⁸ ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1286.

the statement of seven lines of one Maria Daniel, an insignificant witness who never put her feet into the camp!²⁵⁹

4.2. Capacity of the Graves

On the basis of experimental data, the maximum capacity of a mass grave can be set at 8 corpses per cubic meter, assuming that one third of them are children.²⁶⁰ Hence, the alleged 600,000 corpses at Belżec would have required a total volume of $(600,000 \div 8 =)$ 75,000 cubic meters. The average depth of the graves identified by Professor Kola is 3.90 meters. Assuming a layer of earth 0.3 m thick to cover the graves, the available depth would be 3.60 meters.²⁶¹ It follows that the burial of 600,000 corpses would have required an effective area of $(75,000 \div 3.6 =)$ approx. 20,800 square meters. On the other hand, the surface area of the graves identified by Kola is 5,919 square meters and their volume 21,310 cubic meters, theoretically sufficient to inter $(21,310 \times 8 =)$ 170,480 corpses – but then where would the other $(600,000 - 170,480 =)$ 429,520 corpses have been put?

4.3. Wood Requirements

The cremation of a corpse of 46 kg (average assumed weight, including allowance for presumed children) requires about 160 kg of firewood.²⁶² To burn 600,000 corpses, one would therefore have needed $(600,000 \times 160 =)$ 96 million kg of wood, or 96,000 tons; this corresponds to the harvesting of 192 hectares of a 50-year-old fir forest,²⁶³ about thirty times (!) the surface of the Belżec camp. Photographs taken of Belżec from the air, published by John C. Ball, show that in 1944 the forests around the Belżec camp were the same as in 1940.²⁶⁴ So where would this immense quantity of wood have come from? Its transportation would have required some 19,000 trucks or over 3,800 freight cars, the equivalent of 95 trains of 40 cars each! However, none of the numerous local witnesses interrogated by the investigative judge of Zamość between the end of 1945 and the beginning of 1946 ever saw such an enormous flow of trucks and/or trains full of firewood.

As we have seen in section 4.1., according to the findings of the Polish courts the cremation of 600,000 corpses went on without interruption for three

²⁵⁹ Y. Arad, *op. cit.* (note 108), pp. 172f.

²⁶⁰ C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 137f.

²⁶¹ This also results from A. Kola's data: $(21,310 \div 5,919 =)$ 3.60 meters of depth utilized for the burials.

²⁶² C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 145f.

²⁶³ *Ibidem*, p. 151f.

²⁶⁴ J.C. Ball, *Air Photo Evidence: Auschwitz, Treblinka, Majdanek, Sobibor, Bergen Belsen, Belżec, Babi Yar, Katyn Forest*, Ball Resource Services Limited, Delta, B.C., Canada, 1992, pp. 94f.

months, from December 1942 through March 1943. This corresponds to an average of 6,650 corpses per day! For each and every day about 1,064 tons of wood – over 42 freight cars or over 200 trucks – would have been needed.

4.4. Duration of the Cremations

No witness has described the structure of the pyres or the technique of cremation. Assuming that the pyres were identical to those allegedly used at Treblinka, the corpses would have been cremated on two or three grids made of railroad rails and measuring 90 square meters each.²⁶⁵ Let us assume that there were three grids. The amount of wood which can be burnt per square meter of such a grid is approximately 80 kg per hour,²⁶⁶ hence $(90 \times 80 =)$ 7,200 kg per hour for one such grid, or 21,600 kg/h for three. This means that in order to burn the 1,064 tons of wood which were needed every day, the time taken would have been $(1,064,000 \div 21,600 =)$ 49 hours of continuous combustion. If we add another day for the cooling of the pyre, the removal of the ash, and the construction of a fresh pyre, the cremation of 6,650 corpses would have taken no less than three days, and the whole undertaking would have stretched out over at least 9 months. The cremation would, therefore, not have ended in March of 1943 but in September of that year!

If, on the other hand, we assume only two grids, the cremation would have lasted more than 13 months!

4.5. The Ash

The incineration of a corpse in a crematorium oven yields about 5% of ash having a specific gravity of 0.5.²⁶⁷ For a cremation in the open air the quantity of ash goes up considerably. The wood burnt produces about 8% of ash with a specific gravity of 0.34.²⁶⁶ Therefore, the alleged 600,000 victims would have left behind $(600,000 \times 45 \times 0.05 =)$ 1,350,000 kg or 1,350 tons of ash, with a volume of $(1,350 \div 0.5 =)$ 2,700 cubic meters, whereas the wood ash would have amounted to $(96,000 \times 0.08 =)$ 7,680 tons, corresponding to about 22,600 cubic meters. Altogether then, some $(1,350 + 7,680 =)$ 9,030 tons or $(2,700 + 22,600 =)$ 25,300 cubic meters of ash would have resulted from the enormous incinerations.

However, the total volume of the graves identified by Kola is 21,310 cubic meters. Thus, even if all of the graves had been full to the brim with ash unmixed with sand, there would have been $(25,300 - 21,310 =)$ about 4,000 cubic meters of pure ash left over, enough to fill some 290 trucks or 60 railroad freight cars.

²⁶⁵ C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 146-148.

²⁶⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 149.

²⁶⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 150.

But the graphs of the analyses of the 137 drill cores presented by Kola show that the ash in the graves is normally intermingled with sand, that in more than half of the samples the layer of ash and sand is extremely thin,²⁶⁸ and that at times the ash is close to being completely absent.²⁶⁹ Furthermore, out of the 236 samples, 99 are irrelevant, and among the 137 relevant ones more than half show only a very thin layer of sand and ash, whereas among the remainder the percentage of sand is not less than 50%, and the thickness of the sand/ash layer varies greatly. Finally – and Kola does not state this explicitly – besides the sand, the human remains are intermingled also with animal remains:²⁷⁰

“These diggings produced also a large amount of human bones,^[271] which were partly intermingled with remains of animal origin.”

From all this it becomes obvious that the amount of ash actually located in the graves is *absolutely incompatible* with the cremation of 600,000 corpses.

4.6. The Soil Removed from the Graves

When a grave is being dug, the soil removed in the process, which was initially somewhat compressed, will normally dilate by 10 to 25% in volume.²⁷² We have already seen that the burial of 600,000 corpses would have required mass graves having at least a total volume of 75,000 m³ and an area of 20,800 m². The 75,000 m³ of extracted sand, undergoing a dilation of 10%, would have increased to some 82,500 m³. Where would such an enormous quantity of sand have been put? If it had been spread evenly throughout the camp in a layer 2 m thick, it would have covered an area of (82,500÷2=) 41.250 m²; in other words: equal to the total area of the camp minus the mass graves!²⁷³ Dry sand has a specific gravity of 1.4; therefore, the 82,500 m³ of sand mentioned above would correspond to (82,500×1.4=) 115,500 tons, or the equivalent of more than 4,600 freight cars or more than 24,000 truckloads. If the mass graves were covered by a layer of sand 30 cm thick, this would have consumed (20,800×0.3=) about 6,200 m³, but then where would the remaining (82,500–6,200 =) 76.300 m³ have gone?

²⁶⁸ As for example in the samples 394/XVI-70-75, 395/XVI-70-80, 396/XVI-65-80, 400/XVI-65-50, 401/XVI-65-45, 474/XV-40-55, 478/XV-35-60, 600/XV-20-45, 607/XV-20-15, 612-XV-25-10, and others.

²⁶⁹ In the samples 281-XVI-95-30, 282/XVI-95-35, 288/XVI-90-30, 289/XVI-90-25, 290/XVI-90-20, 291/XVI-90-15, 292/XVI-90-10, 295/XVI-85-0, 296/XVI-85-10, 300/XVI-85-30, 336/XVI-80-35, 337/XVI-80-30, and 341/XVI-80-10.

²⁷⁰ M. Tregenza, *op. cit.* (note 96), p. 257.

²⁷¹ Incineration of the corpses involved burning up the bones as well as the flesh, so Kola includes the unburnt ones in the category “*human bones and wax-fat mass*” discussed above.

²⁷² C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 139.

²⁷³ 62,000–20,800=41,200 m².

This enormous quantity of sand could neither have been piled up in the camp²⁷⁴ nor transported out of the camp, therefore it was never actually extracted, and thus the respective mass graves were never dug.

4.7. Actual Surface Area of the Graves

The official thesis of the extermination of 600,000 (or hundreds of thousands) of persons at Belżec is therefore in contradiction on every count with the material data we have examined. Still, according to Kola's statements, 33 mass graves were dug within the camp. How many corpses did they actually contain? In section 4.2. we have calculated that they would have had a capacity of some 170,500 corpses.

But since this purely theoretical figure is already destroying the Holocaust pretense of a mass extermination allegedly perpetrated at Belżec, it cannot, at the same time, be accepted as a working hypothesis to determine the full scope of the facts. *Either* an extermination of *at least* 434,500 Jews (the figure resulting from the report of SS-*Sturmbannführer* Höfle of April 28, 1943) did indeed take place at Belżec, *or* there was no mass extermination at all, for if we accept a lower number – for example the hypothetical 170,500 victims mentioned above – the result would be that the remaining 264,000 deportees were taken elsewhere – alive and kicking – away from the Belżec camp.

The capacity figure of 170,500 corpses for the actual mass graves, is, however, based on two unrealistic assumptions: a maximized surface/volume of the graves and a maximized density of corpses in them.

Let us consider the first assumption. Kola's assertions concerning the area and the volume of the mass graves are actually rather arbitrary. He himself, as we have seen in section 4.1. above, has remarked:²⁷⁵

“In the first zone, as we can suppose, connecting smaller neighbouring graves into bigger ones by destroying earth walls separating them was observed.”

And a few pages further along he adds:

“Additional disturbances in archeological structures were made by intensive dig-ups directly after the war while local people were searching for jewellery. The facts make it difficult for the archeologists to define precisely the ranges of burial pits.”

The Germans closed Belżec in September 1943. The Soviets arrived in October 1944. In October 1945, the district court at Zamość opened an inquiry on the alleged extermination camp. On October 14, the witness Stanislaw Kozak stated:²⁷⁶

²⁷⁴ Thus, the statement of the witness Karl Alfred Schluch regarding a mass burial of this size cannot be true.

²⁷⁵ A. Kola, *Belżec...*, *op. cit.* (note 213), p. 65.

²⁷⁶ ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1132f (translation from Polish into German).

“After the removal of the fences, the local population started to search for gold, jewels, and other valuables that might have been left behind by the Jews, by digging in the area of the camp. That explains the great number of human bones spread all over the site of the former camp, as well as the great number of holes in the ground.”

Other witnesses, like Eustachy Ukraiński²⁷⁷ and Eugeniusz G.,²⁷⁸ confirmed this statement. In his report of April 11, 1946, the Zamość prosecutor wrote:²⁷⁹

“At the moment, the camp site has been completely dug up by the local population in their search for valuables. This has brought to the surface ash from the corpses and from wood, charred bones as well as bones that were only partially charred.”

What’s more, as we have seen above, nine graves had been opened by order of Regional Investigative Judge Godziszewski on October 12, 1945. The local population continued to dig in the area of the camp until the early sixties, at which time it was transformed into a monument and surrounded by the present enclosure. How many graves were dug up in those twenty years? The diggings took place in total disorder, without any regard for orientation, order, or symmetry, which explains the total lack of orientation, the confusion, and the irregularity of the graves identified by Kola. In the course of these diggings, the walls which had originally separated the graves were destroyed, deceptively enlarging the graves. Furthermore, as we see from Kozak’s testimony, the soil removed from the graves was spread across a large area of the camp, leaving ash and human remains exposed. When the graves were re-filled, this mixture of soil, ash, and human remains ended up both in places which had originally been earthen walls separating the graves, and in holes where there were originally neither remains nor ash, thus creating the illusion of more numerous and more extensive mass graves. The presence of saponified corpses in limited areas of three large graves (see section 3.1.) can be explained in this way, or by the enlargement of graves that had initially been smaller.

The correctness of this interpretation is supported by the drawings of the graves published by Kola. In fact, the sections of the individual graves nearly always show a highly irregular bottom, with bumps and holes. This is particularly apparent in graves 3, 7, 8, 12, 14, 20, 23, 28, 32, and 33. These unconnected graves give evidence of the activity of wildcat diggers, certainly not of excavations of mass graves aligned in military fashion.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 1119.

²⁷⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 1135.

²⁷⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 1227.

²⁸⁰ A. Kola, *Belżec...*, *op. cit.* (note 213), pp. 21-39.

The drawings of the soil samples that were taken provide further confirmation. As we have seen, of the 236 samples taken in connection with the graves, 99 are irrelevant and more than half of the remaining 137 show a very thin layer of sand and ash. What is more important, however, is the fact that there is often a difference between samples in a single grave, with very thin and very thick layers, as shown for example by graves No. 3, 4, 6, 7, 17.²⁸¹ Such a variation in the soil strata can only be explained by the inclusion in the grave of soil from an area that did not initially belong to it.

Andrzej Kola, who was supposed to furnish the ‘material proof’ of the alleged extermination at Bełżec, did not take these facts into account; because of this the layout he gives for the graves is completely random, as is their surface area, their volume, and even their number.

4.8. Density of Corpses in the Graves

Let us now turn to the second assumption. Here, the comparison with the mass graves discovered in the vicinity of the Treblinka I camp leads us to entirely different conclusions. In August 1944 the Soviets found three mass graves with a total surface area of some 150 m² and a volume of some 325 m³, of which 250 m³ were actually used (the graves were covered with a layer of sand about 50 cm thick), containing 305 corpses, or 1.2 corpses per cubic meter.²⁸² A year later, the Poles discovered, in the forest of Maliszewa, about 500 m south of the Treblinka I camp, 41 mass graves having a total surface area of 1,607 m², which, according to the estimate of the judge Łukasziewicz, contained 6,500 corpses. In the opinion of the forensic physician, a grave of 2×1×1 m³ contained, in fact, 6 corpses, i.e., 3 corpses per cubic meter.²⁸³

Therefore, the purely theoretical assumption that the original mass graves could have contained 170,500 corpses is without physical basis, and the actual figure should be considerably lower.

In conclusion, the mass graves at Bełżec are absolutely incompatible with the burial of 600,000 bodies, even if we include a large number of children among the dead. Mass extermination excluded, there is thus only one assumption which could explain the presence at Bełżec of mass graves and corpses: the revisionist thesis.

As we will see in the following chapter, at Bełżec deaths of detainees from epidemics (such as typhus) were recorded as early as the spring of 1940, and many other deaths were recorded in succeeding months, when the site became a very harsh hard labor camp. In later phases of the story of Bełżec, the arrival of transports under disastrous conditions – such as the one from Kolomea on

²⁸¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 14-18.

²⁸² C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 77.

²⁸³ *Ibidem*, p. 88.

September 10, 1942, with 2,000 dead on board – added thousands of bodies to the mass graves of the camp. To this we must add the natural mortality among the approximate 434,000 Jews transferred to Bełżec. Although it is impossible to establish the number of these deaths, it is nonetheless possible to infer, from what has been discussed above, an order of magnitude of several thousands, perhaps even some tens of thousands.

4.9. Reasons for Cremation

The cremation of the bodies of the dead constitutes in and of itself neither proof nor evidence in favor of the official theses, because this was the practice in all concentration camps and had a well-established hygienic function. In the area of the Bełżec camp, Kola's findings show that, along a line linking grave 3 and grave 10, about two-thirds of the length of the camp,²⁸⁴ the groundwater level was at a depth of 4.80 meters.²⁸⁵ In the area below, toward the railroad, this level was obviously at a smaller depth; in the area of grave 1, it was 4.10 meters.²⁸⁶ It is probable that the cremation had to do with the danger of contamination of the ground water, as I have discussed elsewhere.²⁸⁷ Fundamentally, however, one cannot exclude the explanation adopted by the official historiography, while giving it a different interpretation. If the Soviets had discovered mass graves full of corpses dead of disease or malnutrition, then they would certainly have exploited them for propaganda against the Germans, as the latter did in Katyn and Vinnytsya against the Soviets.

What is not clear is why a certain number of bodies was not cremated. This fact is explained by O'Neil in the following terms:²⁸⁸

“The corpses not exhumed and burnt (graves from first investigation) may have been the result of a mass panic with insufficient time to destroy all evidence.”

But this makes no sense, because the cremations stopped officially in March 1943, and the SS garrison stayed at the camp for another six months, until September of 1943. One might think that there was an oversight, but this assumption, too, does not hold much water, because the last SS administration of the camp certainly made a record of the mass graves and would have known where to dig. Finally, even the conjecture that at first sight appears to be the most plausible, namely that we have here the corpses of the Jewish personnel exterminated after the end of the cremations, cannot be sustained be-

²⁸⁴ The camp was situated on a slight incline with a difference of about 10 meters between the lower portion, near the railway, and the highest point.

²⁸⁵ A. Kola, *Bełżec...*, *op. cit.* (note 213), p. 22.

²⁸⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 21.

²⁸⁷ C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 139f.

²⁸⁸ R. O'Neil, *op. cit.* (note 112), p. 56.

cause everybody – witnesses,²⁸⁹ judges²⁹⁰ and historians, including O’Neil²⁹¹ – is in agreement on the fact that these Jews were not killed at Belżec, but were rather transferred to Sobibór.²⁹²

On the other hand, the graves that contain saponified bodies are not concentrated in a definite area, but are scattered throughout the camp (see document 4 in the Appendix). The most plausible hypothesis is that these graves pertain to the previous camp administration and therefore go back to 1940, when Belżec was originally used as a camp for gypsies and later integrated into the “*Otto-Programm*,”²⁹³ in both instances plenty of victims were buried in the camp. At that time, the structure of the camp was different from what it was later on, and there was more space; this may explain the unusual position of these mass graves.

5. The Buildings

5.1. The Actual Purpose of the Excavations

The Polish researchers also sought to identify the buildings that had been at Belżec. The results have been described in detail by A. Kola.

What strikes us immediately in Kola’s account is that, opposed to the procedure with the mass graves, actual diggings were undertaken to bring to light the original structures. Kola has published a dozen photographs of these. This was done out of an obvious scientific intent: The primary and essential task of the Polish archeologists was the search for traces of the missing gas chambers. For this reason they unearthed and examined any kind of structural remnant in the hope that it might belong to the gas chambers, but they were careful not to disinter and examine the remains in the mass graves, because, as we have seen, this would have risked too blatant a refutation of the thesis of mass extermination. The need to find the remnants of the gas chambers has spurred Kola into advancing the most unconvincing hypotheses.

²⁸⁹ For example E. Ukraiński and S. Kozak. ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, pp. 1119 and 1131.

²⁹⁰ For the corresponding passage see § 9a of the report by the prosecutor of Zamość dated April 11, 1946, *op. cit.* (note 76).

²⁹¹ R. O’Neil, *op. cit.* (note 112), p. 50. Cf. also I. Gutman (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 7), vol. I, p. 178.

²⁹² According to the official historiography, these detainees were transferred to that camp to be murdered there. However, Tregenza states: “*After the dissolution of the Belżec extermination camp, Sara Beer, together with a group of 20 to 25 Jewesses, was transferred to the Jewish work camp at Trawniki and from there to the concentration camp at Auschwitz-Birkenau. Sara Beer survived the ‘death march’ from Auschwitz to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in January 1945 and was freed by British units on April 15, 1945.*” (M. Tregenza, *op. cit.* (note 96), p. 260). Hence, the SS at Belżec were not so anxious to eliminate ‘eye-witnesses’ after all!

²⁹³ See Chapter V.

5.2. The Alleged Gas Chambers of the Second Phase of the Camp

After having described six irrelevant findings (Buildings A – F) Andrzej Kola focuses on “*Building G*” (see document 4, site reference G). Here, the drillings²⁹⁴

“revealed the existence of an undefined building negative, made completely of wood, partly buried in the ground, dismantled totally. In the bottom view the relicts had a shape of a regular rectangle with the size of about 3,5 x 15 m, which bottom was deposited horizontally to the depth of about 80 cm. [...] The wooden building served probably as gas chamber in the second stage of the camp functioning [sic], in autumn and winter 1942. Such an interpretation could be confirmed by its location in the camp plan. The probing drills from the north-eastern and eastern part of the building excavated only mass grave pits. Location of the gas chamber close to the burial places in the second stage of the camp existence was confirmed by some of the witness reports.”

This is incredible. The only reason why this “*Building G*” must have contained the alleged homicidal gas chambers of the second phase of the camp is its location! Obviously Kola never even considered whether this wooden structure could have belonged to the initial phase of the camp, *i.e.*, the year 1940, and whether the graves could have been dug after the structure had been dismantled. Actually, everything stated above about this building is in open contradiction to the testimonies and the judicial findings. Andrzej Kola is aware of this, as he writes:²⁹⁵

“According to him [Rudolf Reder], however, the chamber was made of concrete. The excavations carried out in that area did not prove any traces of brick or concrete buildings, which makes that report unreliable.”

But then one would have to class all the witnesses and all the judicial findings as “*unreliable*,” because they all agree that the gas chambers of the second phase of the camp were housed in a brick structure. One has only to quote the two most authoritative historical sources. The sentence passed at the Belżec trial (January 18 to 21, 1965) mentions explicitly the construction, in the second phase of the camp, of “*a solid stone building with a total of 6 gas chambers measuring 4 by 5 meters.*”²⁹⁶

And the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, under the entry “*Belzec*,” chapter “*Second Phase*” states:²⁹⁷

“The existing gas chambers were demolished and in their place a new building, made of brick and concrete and containing six 13-by-16-foot (4 × 5 m) cells, was erected.”

²⁹⁴ A. Kola, *Belżec...*, *op. cit.* (note 213), p. 61.

²⁹⁵ *Ibidem*, note 28 on p. 61.

²⁹⁶ A. Rückerl (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 119), p. 133.

²⁹⁷ I. Gutman (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 7), Vol. I, p. 178.

Kola's hypothesis contradicts the testimonies and the judicial findings not only as to the structure of the alleged gas chambers, but also regarding their surface area. As noted in the two preceding quotations, their official dimensions are 4 by 5 m, *i.e.* 20 square meters each, or 120 m² for all six chambers. Kola's "*Building G*," on the other hand, had dimensions of 3.5 by 15 m or 52.5 m². According to the drawing that is at the center of J. Bau's map, the gas chamber would have had to contain six gas chambers arranged on either side of a central corridor.²⁹⁸ If that corridor had a minimum width of 1 m²⁹⁹ and ran the length of the building, an area of 37.5 m² would remain for the six gas chambers, *i.e.*, 6.25 m² in average (*i.e.*, including outer and inner walls) for each gas chamber, which thus would have had to measure $((3.5-1)\div 2=)$ 1.25 by 5 meters!

To recapitulate: On the one hand, the archeological findings contradict the testimonies and the judicial findings, making them inadmissible; on the other hand, Kola's hypotheses regarding the functions of "*Building G*" are in disagreement with the testimonies and the judicial findings. However, if we are to accept the official thesis, we cannot free ourselves from these sources: Either the gas chambers did exist the way the witnesses have described them, or they did not exist at all. And because the archeological findings contradict the witnesses, the gas chambers of the second phase of the camp never existed. And those of the first phase?

5.3. The Alleged Gas Chambers of the First Phase of the Camp

This assumed extermination structure, according to Kozak, who claimed to have taken part in its construction and described it in detail,³⁰⁰ must have been located in the southern part of the camp, near the railroad siding. Andrzej Kola has therefore examined this area of the camp in detail, looking for the remains of these elusive first gas chambers. In the southwest angle of the camp he found the remnants of a large building (labeled by him "*Building D*" and indicated by me with the letter "*D*" in document 4 in the Appendix) with brick foundations and measuring 26 by 12 meters. He describes it as follows:³⁰¹

"The building had at least 6 equal rooms with the sizes of about 16.60 x 3.80 m, separated by inside wall. Only the southern (6th) room was additionally divided into two smaller ones."

This is at variance with the drawing of the diggings he presented (figure 69 on p. 55),³⁰² which shows foundations of about 16 by 12 m and dividing walls in six main rooms (which I have numbered 1 to 6 in the drawing mentioned)

²⁹⁸ Cf. document 6 in the Appendix.

²⁹⁹ But, as we have seen in Chapter III, W. Pfannenstiel mentioned a width of 3 meters!

³⁰⁰ Cf. Chapter II.3.

³⁰¹ A. Kola, *Belżec...*, *op. cit.* (note 213), p. 55.

³⁰² Cf. document 12 in the Appendix.

with dimensions of about 5×3.80 meters. In sector No. 2, there is a brick channel $6 \times 1 \text{ m}^2$ (labeled “K” in the drawing of the diggings) “*servicing originally as a canal[sic] for repairing cars.*”³⁰³ The two photographs published by Kola leave no room for doubt in this respect.³⁰⁴ The conclusion is obvious:³⁰⁵

“One can suppose the room served as a garage.”

I have dwelt on this point because, surprisingly, Kola clumsily tries to pass it off as the first extermination structure, with its three gas chambers!

Of this, Kola gives not even a vague hint on the four pages he dedicates to “*Building D.*” The contrast between a real garage with a workshop for vehicle repairs and the alleged homicidal gas chambers is too glaring. He therefore introduces his nonsensical hypothesis underhandedly, in a different context. A few pages further on he says that he did three soundings in the area north of “*Building D*”³⁰⁶

“to verify the location of the railway which served in the first stage of the camp functioning for removing the corpses from the gas chambers to the grave pits. It was connected with the interpretation of the function of Building D as gas chamber.”

But what sort of a link could there be between “*Building D*” and the alleged gas chambers? Again, only its location!

The camp railway that Kola was looking for was mentioned by Kozak, who declared:³⁰⁷

“Along the north side of this barrack [the ‘gas chambers’] there was a ramp made of wooden planks at a level of 1 m, and along this ramp there was a track of a narrow-gauge railroad leading to the ditch, which the ‘blacks’ [Soviet prisoners of war] had dug in the very north and east border of the extermination camp.”

And here is the result of Kola’s search:³⁰⁸

“However, traces of that railway were not found.”

Later, possibly a little discouraged by this resounding failure, Kola returns to his hypothesis in a slightly more moderated tone:³⁰⁹

“Only the building D was relatively big. Can it be interpreted as a death chamber?”

Then Kola restates the description of the supposed first gassing structure given by the witness Kozak and comments:³⁰⁹

“They [the remains of “Building D”] are different, much bigger building size, which were about $26.00 \times 8.00 \text{ m}$,^[310] and the interior was divided

³⁰³ A. Kola, *Belżec...*, *op. cit.* (note 213), p. 56.

³⁰⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 55f., photographs 71 and 72; cf. document 13 in the Appendix.

³⁰⁵ A. Kola, *Belżec...*, *op. cit.* (note 213), p. 57.

³⁰⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 64.

³⁰⁷ ZStL, 252/59, vol. I, p. 1130 (translation from Polish into German).

³⁰⁸ A. Kola, *Belżec...*, *op. cit.* (note 213), p. 65.

³⁰⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 66.

into 6 rooms. [...] *The function interpretation of building D and the witness's description is not fully in accordance with the observation made during archeological works. It concerns first of all its location inside the camp. That building was excavated in its western part, whereas, according to S. Kozak's report the gas chamber described by him could have been placed several meters toward the south from that place. Moreover the witness mentioned erecting the hut with the destination of being a gas chamber, when in the case of building D could have only an adaptation of the existing building equipped with a garage canal. The division of foundation part of building D into 6 identical rooms indicate that its overground part had 6 frame-houses, one of which served as garage.*"

To summarize: The barrack described by Kozak was at a different location than the traces of "Building D." It was built expressly as a gassing structure, whereas "Building D" had a different purpose. It measured 12 by 8 m as opposed to the latter's 26 by 12 m. It was divided into three rooms rather than the six in "Building D," and finally there is no trace of a camp railway: Thus, Kozak's description is in absolute disagreement with the archeological findings. But Kola did not want to draw the logical conclusion that this witness, too, is 'unreliable'; instead, he has opted for an unbelievable escape hatch:³¹¹

"In such an interpretation the gas chamber in the first stage of the camp existence must have been situated south-east from building D and south to it the changing room and the barber." (emphasis added)

In other words, since the remains of "Building D" are in total disagreement with Kozak's description, and since the homicidal gas chambers must have existed, it follows that they were located "south-east of building D"! Unfortunately for Kola, there is not a trace of any structure in that area. Thus, in his attempt at least partly to salvage the official thesis, Kola is obliged to have recourse to an act of faith: There are no archeological traces of those elusive gas chambers, but nevertheless they did exist!

That there is indeed not a trace of the presumed gas chambers is admitted candidly by O'Neil who writes:³¹²

"We found no trace of the gassing barracks dating from either the first or second phase of the camp's construction."

Obviously, he relates that fact to the efforts of the SS to erase any vestiges of the alleged gassing structures, but who can seriously believe that they could have succeeded in making the buildings, foundations and all, disappear without a trace? Unless the SS had sensed that over half a century later Kola and Robin O'Neil would come looking for them with their manual drill!

³¹⁰ As I have indicated above, the remains measured 26 m × 12 m according to the survey by A. Kola.

³¹¹ A. Kola, *Belżec...*, *op. cit.* (note 213), p. 67.

³¹² R. O'Neil, *op. cit.* (note 112), p. 55.

Chapter V: Documented History of the Bełżec Camp

1. Origins and Function of the Bełżec Camp

In June of 1940, as part of the so-called “*Otto-Programm*,”³¹³ the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht decided on the construction of an anti-tank trench (a “*Buggraben*”) between the Bug and San rivers along the Polish-Soviet border.

In September of 1940, 6,000 Jews were transported from Warsaw and elsewhere to Hrubieszów, a town near the river Bug, which formed the border between Poland and the Soviet Union, where they were to build a road of strategic importance. The detainees were housed in a labor camp. On September 10, a Jewish hospital was set up for the inmates. One of those assigned to it was a Jewish doctor who left Poland in April 1943 and later wrote an account of the German occupation. He stated:³¹⁴

“At the same time [August 1940], the Jews of the city and the district of Lublin were arrested and sent to Belzec, where they were ‘taught’ how to work under the guidance of the ‘famous’ Dachau henchman Major Dollf and his assistant Berteczko. Almost nobody came back from this ‘course.’ Many died of injuries from the beatings they received while working, others from typhus and other diseases, still others were simply shot. At Belzec, their main task was to dig anti-tank trenches along the border at a distance of several tens of kilometers.”

Bełżec was the center of a network of ten forced labor camps for a total of some 15,000 Jews, of whom 2,500 were initially detained at Bełżec³¹⁵ as part of an “*SS Grenzsicherungsbaukommando*” (SS border securing construction group).³¹⁶ The living conditions of the detainees in these camps were very

³¹³ A project for the construction of roads of strategic importance and for technical improvement of the entire transport infrastructure of the Government General. Cf. S. Piotrowski, *Dziennik Hansa Franka*, Wydawnictwo Prawnicze, Warsaw 1956, p. 218 (*Arbeitssitzung* [working session] of September 20, 1940).

³¹⁴ A. Silberschein, *op. cit.* (note 29), p. 8.

³¹⁵ T. Berenstein, “*Obozy pracy przymusowej dla Żydów w dystrykcie lubelskim*,” in *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego w Polsce*, 22, 1957, pp. 5f.

³¹⁶ Jüdisches Historisches Institut Warschau (ed.), *Faschismus-Getto-Massenmord. Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während der zweiten Weltkrieges*, Röderberg-Verlag, Frankfurt/Main 1960, p. 219.

harsh. In a “*Bericht über das Ergebnis einer ärztlichen Visitation in den Lagern der Belżec-Gruppe*” (Report concerning the results of a medical inspection of the camps in the Belżec group), dating from the middle of September 1940, one can read:³¹⁷

“*Generally abominable, especially in the north. The rooms are absolutely inadequate to take in so many people. They are dark and dirty. Infestation by lice is rampant. About 30% of the workers have no shoes, no trousers, no shirt. Everyone sleeps on the floor, without any straw. The roofs are damaged everywhere, no glass in the windows, it is terribly crowded. For example, 75 persons sleep in a room 5 by 6 [m], on the floor, one upon the other. Under these circumstances, there is no question of undressing. On top of that, there is a scarcity of soap, and it is even difficult to get water. The sick sleep and lie together with the healthy. The barracks must not be left during the night, all the natural urges have to be relieved locally. Thus, it is not surprising that under these circumstances there are many cases of disease. It is extremely difficult to be excused from work for even one day. Hence, even the sick have to go to work.*”

This tragic situation seems to have been especially prevalent at Belżec because, on September 20, 1940, a “*Bekanntmachung an die jüdische Bevölkerung*” (announcement to the Jewish population) from the *Arbeitsamt Lublin* (Lublin labor office) threatened Jews who tried to avoid in the following terms:³¹⁸

“*Anyone not respecting this duty after Monday, September 23, 1940, will immediately be sent to the Belżec work camp.*”

On October 21, 1940, a civil servant of the office of “*Innere Verwaltung, Bevölkerungswesen und Fürsorge*” (Internal administration, population matters and social welfare) of the “*Regierung des Generalgouvernements*” (Administration of the Government General) wrote an internal memo concerning “*Ihre fernmündliche Anfrage wegen Auflösung des Judenlagers in Belżec und vorhandene Mißstände*” (your telephone inquiry regarding the dissolution of the Jewish camp at Belżec and present deficiencies). The memo states that because of lack of cooperation on the part of SS *Brigadeführer* (major general) Globocnik, it was not clear whether “*das Judenlager in Belżec*” (the Jewish camp at Belżec) had already been closed. The memo continues:³¹⁹

“*The Jews of the Belżec camp shall be disbanded^[320] and put to work within the Otto-Programm. Those from Radom and Warsaw are to go back to their original homes. The Jewish councils are even ready to fetch their racial comrades. Concerning the execution of this task there is a puzzling*

³¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 221.

³¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 231.

³¹⁹ N. Blumental (ed.), *op. cit.*, (note 2), pp. 220f.

³²⁰ “*aufgelöst*”

lack of clarity, and the proper cooperation of the organs of the SS and *Polizeiführer* [Chief of SS and Police] cannot always be achieved in practice. The present state of affairs is as follows: 8 trains have been scheduled for the transport. Two trains have meanwhile departed. The first train left from Hrubieschow with 920 Jews on board, accompanied by 9 SS and local militia personnel. Only about 500 of them have arrived. We could not find out where the other 400 have gone. As they cannot have been shot in such a large number, I have heard it said that they were perhaps released against payment of a certain sum. Let me stress that this latter statement is only a supposition. The second train went to Radom with some 900 Jews. While it would have been easy to identify the 3 to 400 Jews from Radom still at the Bełżec camp, this request of the Department of Work was not granted, and only 16 from Radom were on the train.”

The fate of the Jews detained at Bełżec was clarified in the “*Oktober-Bericht des Gouverneurs im Distrikt Lublin, Zörner, über die Zwangsarbeit der Juden*” (October report of the governor of the Lublin district, Zörner, regarding the forced labor of the Jews):³²¹

“During the month in question, so many Jews were requisitioned for forced labor that Jews had to be brought in from other districts. From the Jewish camp at Bełżec, 4,331 Jewish forced laborers who were released had been assigned to road construction and building work for the ‘*Otto-Programm*.’ Their condition was such that they could not be regarded as completely fit for work.”

Previously, in April 1940, Bełżec had served as a camp for gypsies, and the inmates had suffered from the spread of infectious diseases such as typhus.³²²

2. The Bełżec Camp in Documents

Only a few original documents concerning the deportations to Bełżec (from Galicia) have survived. While they show a very severe German attitude toward the Jews, they do not confirm the alleged extermination policy.

On February 2, 1942, the *Kommandeur der Ordnungspolizei im Distrikt Galizien* (Commander of order police in the district of Galicia) issued an order on the “*Arbeitseinsatz von Juden*” (labor service of Jews), in which he stated:³²³

“On the basis of a number of notes I have received from German official agencies and authorities, I must strongly insist on the following: Re-

³²¹ Jüdisches Historisches Institut Warschau (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 316), p. 217.

³²² E. Dziadosz, J. Marszałek, “*Więzienia i obozy w dystrykcie lunelskim w latach 1939-1944*,” in *Zeszyty Majdanka*, 3, 1969, p. 61.

³²³ RGVA, 1323-2-292b, p. 129.

cently, we have seen more and more cases in which Jewish workers assigned to urgent work for war aims are being rounded up by various official agencies and are thus being withdrawn from the necessary work that they had been assigned to. Jews who have been drafted for important war projects of the Wehrmacht as well as for projects of the Four Year Plan possess a corresponding identity card bearing the seal of the agencies or authorities to which they are assigned.

I request once again to inform expressly all units under [my] command, and in particular the Ukrainian auxiliary police, to the effect that it is prohibited to round up those Jews assigned to work service. In case of non-compliance with this order I shall punish the guilty."

On September 14, 1942, *Zugwachtmann der Schutzpolizei* (railroad guard of the protection police) Josef Jäcklein wrote a report, "*Resettlement from Kolomea to Belzec.*" He escorted a train of 51 cars loaded with 8,200 Jews that left Kolomea at 20:50 hours on September 10. The Jews quickly sought ways to escape, ripping the barbed wire from the openings of the cars and opening up holes in the walls, which caused Jäcklein to cable ahead to Stanislaw station to have boards and nails ready. On arrival at that station, the train stopped one hour and a half for the repairs. A few stations farther along, the Jews had again ripped out the barbed wire and made new holes, so the train stopped again. Jäcklein relates:

"When the train left, I even noticed that in one car hammers and pliers were being used. Questioning the Jews as to why they still had these tools, they declared that they had been told that they would be able to put them to good use at their next destination."

Again and again, at every stop, the train had to stop for repairs to the car walls. Finally the train arrived at Lemberg/Lwów, where Jäcklein turned over "9 cars marked L and destined for the forced labor camp at Lemberg" to SS *Obersturmführer* (senior lieutenant) Schulte, but another 1,000 Jews came on board. When the train moved on, escape attempts resumed. As the escort had expended all their ammunition, they had to use "stones" and "bayonets" to prevent escapes. The transport took place under catastrophic conditions. Jäcklein writes in this respect:

"The ever increasing panic among the Jews, caused by the strong heat, overloading of the cars with up to 220 Jews, the smell of corpses – 2,000 dead were counted when the train was unloaded – made the transport nearly impossible."

The train arrived at Belzec at 6:45 p.m. the following day and was turned over to the camp authorities at 7:30 p.m. Unloading the cars took until 10 p.m.³²⁴

³²⁴ RGVA, 1323-2-292b, pp. 61f.

This transport was also the topic of another report, drawn up at Lemberg on September 14, 1942, by *Leutnant der Schutzpolizei der Reserve* (lieutenant of the reserve protection police) Wassermann.³²⁵ The train carried 8,205 Jews, and most cars contained 180 to 200 persons. The guard detail traveled in 2 passenger cars so that the average load per car was $(8,205 \div 49 =)$ 167 persons.

In the first portion of his report, Wassermann describes a transport from Kolomea to Belżec on September 7, 1942. The security police gathered some 5,300 Jews at the “*Sammelplatz des Arbeitsamtes*” (collection site of the labor office), and another 300 were rounded up in the Jewish sector. Wassermann states:

“The transport was fully loaded at 19 hours. Altogether, 4,769 Jews have been resettled, once the security police had released about 1,000 of the Jews who had been rounded up.”

Each car was loaded with 100 persons. Other Jews were, however, shot:

“On September 7, 300 old, infected, frail, or untransportable Jews were executed.”

During the days following there were more shootings:

“During the actions in the Kolomea area on September 8, 9, and 10, 1942, about 400 Jews had to be liquidated by shooting for the usual reasons.”

The catastrophic transport of September 10-11, 1942, was caused by logistical deficiencies rather than homicidal intent; when it was possible, transports took place under more humane conditions, like the one on September 7, when the deportees traveled 100 per car. Before the transport left, the security police released about 1,000 Jews who could have easily been transported on the train, by simply increasing the load from 100 to 123 persons. During the transport of September 10-11, 1942, nine cars with detainees were unloaded “*for the forced labor camp.*” This does not jibe with an alleged program for the *total* extermination of the Jews.

The shootings of various groups of Jews were motivated by the fact that they were “*old, infected, frail, or untransportable*” persons – but if the direct transports to Belżec were carried out for the purpose of extermination, then why these preliminary shootings?

³²⁵ RGVA, 1323-2-292b, pp. 40-42. A “*Leseabschrift*” (reading copy) of this document was reproduced by R. Hilberg in the book *Sonderzüge nach Auschwitz*, Dumjahn Verlag, Mainz 1981, pp. 194-197. Although claiming to be an identical text, it shows substantial formal differences from the document conserved at the RGVA: It is an original typescript, while the RGVA document is a carbon copy; it does not show runic characters for SS, which are, however, present in the RGVA version; it does not have handwritten annotations and has a different line width, which causes the typescript to be 4 pages long as against 3 for the RGVA version. The signature of Wassermann is identical for the two versions to the point of seeming to have been copied in, see Document 16 in the Appendix.

Moreover, that the “resettlement” was in reality the murder of the Jews in the alleged gas chambers, as the official historiography interprets it, is all the more dubious in light of the above.

In the weekly report of “*Sicherungsbezirk Nord, Einsatzkommando 5. Komp. Pol. Rgt. 24*” (Security district north, action commando, 5th company, 24th police regiment), written at Rawa Ruska on December 12, 1942, one can read:³²⁶

“In the period concerned, the action commando was used for the resettlement of Jews in Rawa Ruska. 750 Jews who were in hiding after resettlement were dealt with according to instructions.”

Apparently these Jews were not hiding before or during the resettlement in order to escape it, but they were hiding *afterwards*. Hence, these Jews were still alive “*after resettlement*” and were able to hide – certainly not in the Belżec camp! – and they were treated accordingly because of that, which can mean that they were either shot or punished otherwise.

On October 31, 1942, the *Einsatzkommando* of *Sicherungsbezirk Nord* reports the arrest (but not shooting!) of 20 Jews for having “*left resettlement location without permission and jumped from transport trains.*”³²⁷

And the report of December 5 states that 60 Jews “*were dealt with according to instructions*” (perhaps shot, but perhaps also only arrested) for the very same reason:³²⁸

“Escaped from transport trains and left resettlement location without permission.”

The “*resettlement location*” was the ghetto of Rawa Ruska, 27 km away from Belżec; it continued to exist seven months after the opening of the presumed extermination camp!

As I have shown elsewhere, on October 28, 1942, SS *Obergruppenführer* (General) Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, in his capacity as Senior SS and Police Chief in the General Government and Secretary of State for the Security Services, issued a “*Police regulation concerning the formation of Jewish living quarters in the districts of Warsaw and Lublin,*” which instituted 12 Jewish residential areas; on November 10, 1942, Krüger instituted another 4 such areas in the district of Radom, 5 in the district of Krakow, 32 in the district of Galicia, and 2 more in the county of Rawa Ruska (Rawa Ruska ghetto and Lubaczów).³²⁹ A few weeks later, Belżec, which – according to the official historiography – had been set up specifically to exterminate the Jewish population of the district of Galicia, ceased activity!

³²⁶ RGVA, 1323-2-292b, p. 6. Cf. document 15 in the Appendix.

³²⁷ RGVA, 1323-2-292b, p. 29.

³²⁸ RGVA, 1323-2-292b, p. 7.

³²⁹ C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka, op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 266f.

3. Bełżec As Part of the German Policy of Deporting Jews to the East

A document that has recently come to light – a report by SS *Sturmbannführer* (major) Höfle to SS *Obersturmbannführer* (lieutenant colonel) Heim, dated April 28, 1943, and decrypted by the British secret services – gives the number of persons transferred to Bełżec up to December 31, 1942: 434,508, numbers quite far from those championed by the official historiography.³³⁰

This document must be viewed in the light of decisions taken by Fritz Reuter, an employee of the Department of Population and Welfare in the Office of the Governor General for the District of Lublin, and by SS *Hauptsturmführer* Hans (or Hermann)³³¹ Höfle, then delegate for Jewish resettlement in the Lublin district, dated March 16, 1942.

It is advisable here to repeat what I have already written in a separate study.³³²

On March 17, 1942, Fritz Reuter made a note in which he referred to a talk on the previous day with the SS *Hauptsturmführer* Höfle, the delegate for the resettlement of Jews in the Lublin district:³³³

“I arranged for a talk with Hstuf. Höfle for Monday, the 16th of March 1942, namely at 17:30 hours. In the course of the discussion the following was explained by Hstuf. Höfle:

It would be expedient to divide the transports of Jews arriving in the Lublin district at the station of origin into employable and unemployable Jews. If it is not possible to make this distinction at the departure station, then the transport will have to be divided in Lublin in the manner mentioned above.

All unemployable Jews are to come to Beżec [Bełżec], the outermost border station in the Zamosz district.

Hstuf. Höfle is thinking of building a large camp in which the employable Jews can be registered in a file system according to their occupations and requisitioned from there.

Piaski is being made Jew-free and will be the collection point for the Jews coming out of the Reich.

Trawnicki [Trawniki] is not at present occupied by Jews.

³³⁰ Peter Witte, Stephen Tyas, “A New Document on the Deportation and Murder of the Jews during ‘Einsatz Reinhardt’ 1942,” in *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, no. 3, Winter 2001, pp. 469f.

³³¹ According to *Faschismus-Getto-Massenmord* (note 316) and Reitlinger (note 151), Höfle’s first name was Hans, but according to R. Hilberg (note 325) and the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* (note 7), it is Hermann.

³³² C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 235-238.

³³³ Józef Kermisz, *Dokumenty i Materiały do dziejów okupacji niemieckiej w Polsce*, vol. II: “Akce” i “Wysiedlenia,” Warsaw-Lodz-Krakow 1946, p. 32f.

H. asks where on the Dęblin-Trawnicki route 60,000 Jews can be unloaded. Informed of the Jewish transports now departing from here, H. explained that of the 500 Jews arriving in Susiec, those who were unemployable could be sorted out and sent to Bezec. According to a government teletype dated March 4, 1942, a Jewish transport, whose destination was the Trawnicki station, is rolling out of the Protectorate. These Jews are not unloaded in Trawnicki, but have been brought to Izbiza. An inquiry of the Zamosz district, asking to be able to request 200 Jews from there for work, was answered in the affirmative by H.

In conclusion he stated that he could accept 4-5 transports of 1,000 Jews to the terminal station Bezec daily. These Jews would cross the border and never return to the General Gouvernement."

This document is of capital significance for two reasons. First, Höfle was the deputy *Stabsführer* (staff leader) of the SS and Police Chief for the Lublin district (Odilo Globocnik). According to official historiography, in this capacity he coordinated "*the construction of the extermination camp Belzec and the deportations there from the Lublin district.*"³³⁴ Second, Belżec is supposed to have begun its homicidal activity on the day after the talk referred to in Reuter's note, March 17, 1942. According to official historiography, it was (like Treblinka, Sobibór, and Chelmno) a pure extermination camp, where there was no separation of those fit and those unfit for labor. Yet, according to the cited document:

A subdivision of the Jews into those able to work and those not able to work was planned. The Jews able to work were to be used for labor assignments. Belżec was to become a camp in which the Jews fit to work were "*registered in a file system according to their occupations.*" This does not conform in the least to a 'pure extermination camp.'

All Jews unable to work were to be brought to Belżec. The camp was supposed to "*accept 4-5 transports daily, of 1,000 Jews to the terminal station Bezec[sic],*" clearly Jews unable to work, who would "*cross the border*" never to return to the General Government. For that reason, Belżec was designated as "*the outermost border station in the Zamosz district.*" This sentence makes sense only in connection with a resettlement beyond the border.

Piaski was to become the "*collection point for the Jews coming out of the Reich.*" If one travels by road, it is another 24 km to Lublin, located to the northwest of Piaski, and 91 km to Belżec. The distance to Belżec by train is even greater (about 130 km). This contradicts the thesis that Belżec was a pure extermination camp, since in this case the collection point would have been Belżec itself.

³³⁴ E. Jäckel *et al.* (eds.), *op. cit.* (note 60), vol. II, p. 619. Not included in the English edition by I. Gutman, *op. cit.* (note 7).

It was intended to unload 60,000 Jews at a point on the Dęblin-Trawniki route. The former locale is 76 km northwest of Lublin (in the direction of Warsaw); Trawniki is 13 km east of Piaski (for which it serves as rail station) on the Lublin-Rejowiec-Chełm/Lublin-Belżec railroad line (before the Rejowiec station, a junction of the rail line turns off south toward Belżec). This project as well cannot be reconciled with the claim that Belżec was a pure extermination camp.

This is fully and entirely confirmed by a report dated April 7, 1942. Its author is SS *Hauptsturmführer* Richard Türk, director of the Department for Population and Welfare in the Office of the Governor of the Lublin district. The report deals with the month of March and contains a paragraph titled “*Jewish Resettlement Operation of the SS and Police Chief*,” in which Türk reports:

“The possibilities of accommodation, limited to places along the Dęblin-Rejowiec-Belzec railway line, were and are currently being discussed with the representative of the SS and Police Chief. Alternative possibilities were determined.

On the basis of my proposal, there is a fundamental understanding that as Jews from the west are being settled here, local Jews are to be evacuated in like numbers, if possible. The current status of the settlement process is that approximately 6,000 were settled here from the Reich, approximately 7,500 have been evacuated from the district, and 18,000 from the city of Lublin.

Individually, 3,400 have been evacuated from Piaski, district of Lublin, and 2,000 Reich Jews have come in so far; 2,000 from Izbica, Krasnystaw district, and 4,000 Reich Jews arriving in it; from Opole and Wawolbnica, Puławy district, 1,950 have been evacuated [...].”

The report later mentions the resettlements of Jews from Mielec and Bilgoraj and makes clear that the majority of the evacuees was unfit for labor:³³⁵

“On March 13, 1942, the Cholm district received approximately 1,000 Jews, of whom 200 were accommodated in Sosnowice and 800 in Włodawa.

On March 14, 1942, Międzyrzec, Radzyn district, received 750 Jews. On March 16, 1942, the Hrubieszow district received 1,343 Jews, 843 of which have been accommodated in Dubienka and 500 in Belz. The majority were women and children, with men fit for labor only a minority. On March 16, 1942, the Zamosz district received 500 Jews, all of whom have been lodged in Cieszanow.

On March 22, 1942, 57 Jewish families with 221 persons were resettled from Bilgoraj to Tarnograd.”

³³⁵ Jüdisches Historisches Institut Warschau (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 316), p. 271.

The history of the resettlement of Jews in the district of Lublin confirms fully the Höfle directive mentioned above and is in clear contrast with the official thesis of the extermination of Jews.

After the opening of the Belżec and Sobibór camps, as many as 33 transports of western Jews (a total of 31,046 persons) arrived in the Lublin district; they were not sent to either of the two alleged extermination camps; and after the arrival of the first transport at Sobibór (May 9, 1942) in the district of Lublin, through July 15, 1942, there were another 36 transports (with a total of 35,034 persons) of which only eleven (with 11,021 persons) were sent to Sobibór, and none to Belżec.³³⁶

On the other hand, the first transport of western Jews to arrive at Sobibór (the transport of 1,000 Jews arriving on May 9, 1942, from Theresienstadt at Sobibór-Osowa³³⁷) was not gassed in its entirety, as the official historiography maintains: At least 101 Jews from this transport died at Majdanek,³³⁸ and we have registry data for 90 of them;³³⁹ this indicates that an equal number of Jews – if not the entire transport – were transferred to this camp.

Nor were the Jews deported to various places in the Lublin district ‘gassed’ in the alleged extermination camps at Belżec and Sobibór. According to research done by Miroslav Kryl, 858 Jews sent to the Lublin district from the ghettos at Theresienstadt and Prague died between May and September 1942 at the Majdanek camp.³⁴⁰ Of these, 525 arrived directly at Lublin and 333 had come there from other places in the Lublin district.³⁴¹

A study by Janina Kielboń of the *Totenbücher* (death books) of Majdanek furnishes more detailed data: Between May and September 1942 a total of 4,687 western Jews died in this camp, among them 1,066 Czech Jews, 2,849 Slovak Jews, and 772 German and Austrian Jews.³⁴² Of these, 735 Jews were between 11 and 20 years old, 163 were over 60 years of age, out of whom three Slovak Jews were in the 81 to 90 year age range.³⁴³

The number of western Jews who died at Majdanek, however, was even greater, as can be deduced from the series of documents “*Totemeldung für die Effektenkammer*” (Mortality report for the property depot), which have survived in part. For eight days in all (October 20 and November 29 through December 5, 1942), the deaths of at least 183 western Jews were registered in

³³⁶ Cf. the transport list in C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 242-244.

³³⁷ Osowa is a small community located a few kilometers southwest of the Sobibór camp.

³³⁸ Cf. below.

³³⁹ Cf. Table 1.

³⁴⁰ M. Kryl, “*Deportacja więźniów żydowskich z Terezina i Pragi na Lubelszczyznę*,” in *Zeszyty Majdanek*, XI, 1983, pp. 33-35.

³⁴¹ *Ibidem*, p. 35, cf. Table 2.

³⁴² J. Kielboń, “*Księga więźniów zmarłych na Majdanek w 1942 R. Analiza dokumentu*,” in *Zeszyty Majdanek*, XV, 1993, p. 114.

³⁴³ *Ibidem*, p. 113.

these documents: 41 Czechs, 108 Slovaks, and 34 Germans and Austrians.³⁴⁴ The Jews evacuated from Theresienstadt had been deported mainly to Izbica (March 11 and 17), to Trawniki (June 12), and to Zamość (June 20 and 30).

Thus the number of deaths of western Jews at Majdanek established so far is 4,870. According to Zofia Leszczyńska, between April and June 1942 five transports of Czech and Slovak Jews (4,813 persons) were sent directly to Majdanek and another 16 (about 13,500 persons) were transferred there from the residential areas of the Lublin district,³⁴⁵ which brings the total to about 18,300. This figure, though, does not include the German and Austrian Jews, whose numbers can be estimated at about 3,600.³⁴⁶ Hence, no fewer than 21,900 western Jews were registered at Majdanek, about one third of all the deportees to the Lublin district. Jews from France, Belgium, and Holland³⁴⁷ also arrived at Majdanek and were probably taken elsewhere. Only one Dutch Jew appears in “*Totenmeldung für die Effektenkammer*”: Lewy Trompetter, born in Amsterdam on April 27, 1873, and registered, at age 69, under the number 7,593; he died on December 1, 1942.³⁴⁸

In October of 1942, 1,700 Jews left Belżec for Majdanek.³⁴⁷ At least 700 Dutch Jews were moved from Sobibór to work camps,³⁴⁹ and some of them returned home by way of Auschwitz.³⁴⁹ The Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie (Imperial Institute for War Documentation) in Amsterdam has in its archives six postcards written by Dutch Jews detained at the work camp of Włodawa³⁵⁰ (Sobibór).³⁵¹ One was written on May 23, 1943,³⁵² by Elly Herschel, a Dutch Jewess, 18 years old, who had been deported to Sobibór on April 6.³⁵³ From Treblinka, at least several thousand Jews were transferred to other camps.³⁵⁴ The case of Minna Grossova, a Czech Jewess, is particularly significant; born on September 20, 1874, she was deported to Treblinka October 19, 1942, but died on December 30, 1943, at Auschwitz.³⁵⁵ Thus, in spite of her 68 years of age, she was not only not ‘gassed’ at Treblinka, but was in-

³⁴⁴ GARF, 7021-107-3, pp. 226-235.

³⁴⁵ Z. Leszczyńska, “*Transporty więźniów do obozu Majdanku*,” in *Zeszyty Majdanka*, IV, 1969, p. 184

³⁴⁶ The figure is based on the mortality rate of the Czech and Slovak Jews, i.e. $(4.064 \div 18.300 \times 100 =) 22.2\%$ applied to the 806 ascertained deaths of the German and Austrian Jews: $(802 \times 100 \div 22.2) \cong 3.600$.

³⁴⁷ Z. Leszczyńska, *op. cit.* (note 345), p. 189.

³⁴⁸ GARF, 7021-107-3, p. 234.

³⁴⁹ C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 259-261.

³⁵⁰ Włodawa was located about 10 km from Sobibór.

³⁵¹ J. Schelvis, *Vernichtungslager Sobibór*, Metropol Verlag, Berlin 1998, pp. 154f.

³⁵² Date entered by the detainee in the text of the postcard.

³⁵³ ROD, c[2]-611. Cf. document 14 in the Appendix.

³⁵⁴ C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 286-288.

³⁵⁵ *Terezínská Pamětní Kniha*, Terezínská Iniciativa, Melantrich 1995, p. 393.

deed moved to Auschwitz, where she was duly registered; hence, she survived even the ‘selection’ on arrival.

Besides the transports to the Lublin district, between May 5 and November 28, 1942, another 36 transports of western Jews (about 35,000 additional persons) were deported into the eastern territories (Minsk, Raasiku, Maly Trostinec, Riga) without even stopping at the three alleged extermination camps at Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka.³⁵⁶

How are these facts to be reconciled with the theses of official historiography?

In the preceding chapters I have shown that not only is the massacre of the Jews transported to Bełżec not confirmed by any material or documentary proof, but also that the results of Polish archeological research refute it; therefore, we are left with only one possibility: Bełżec was a transit camp – of the same type as Sobibór and Treblinka.

This is not the place to reiterate the evidence I have gathered in another, much more exhaustive study.³⁵⁷ Thus I shall limit myself to stating that, having excluded the hypothesis of a massacre, we can regard as true everything that the witnesses described as ‘camouflage’ to fool the victims. I refer in particular to the speeches by the SS regarding the destination of the deportees: They were in a transit camp, from which they would be moved to other labor camps in the east, but first they had to take a shower and be disinfested.

And, as Jean-Claude Pressac has made clear, the first alleged gassing building can be interpreted only as a building for disinfestation by means of steam.¹¹⁰

Significantly, no witness has ever mentioned the existence at Bełżec, or anywhere near the camp, of a disinfestation unit, which, however, would have been indispensable – *even* if mass exterminations had taken place – for the treatment of the enormous quantity of the victims’ garments, before those could have been loaded on trains and shipped to Lublin.

³⁵⁶ C. Mattogno, J. Graf, *Treblinka*, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 200f. (List of transports).

³⁵⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 253-273 and 290-299.

Conclusion

In this study, I have described, first of all, the literary formation of the thesis, presently upheld by official historiography, of mass exterminations at Bełżec by means of diesel engine exhaust gas; I have shown that it represents the culmination of the propaganda legends spread during the Second World War by professionals in atrocity propaganda like Jan Karski. I have exhaustively demonstrated how this version came to prevail over the other two versions – just as untrue – of extermination by means of electrocution and by means of “*trains of death*.” I have further shown that the two principal testimonies on which the extermination thesis has been tendentiously constructed – those of Rudolf Reder and of Kurt Gerstein – are not only in irreconcilable disagreement with each other over the type of engine used for the alleged murder of the victims (diesel for one, gasoline for the other), but even with respect to its very use as an instrument of murder: Whereas Gerstein attributed the death of the victims in the alleged gas chambers to the exhaust gases from his diesel engine, Reder asserted that the exhaust gases of his gasoline engine were released into the open air instead of into the gas chambers! The official thesis, based on the so-called ‘Gerstein report,’ has therefore been openly denied ever since the immediate postwar period.

Once the murder method had been selected – exhaust gases from a diesel engine – the judiciary quickly entered the fray on the side of historiography, to give it its official blessing and to disseminate it worldwide through the farcical trial testimonies as a worthy epilogue to the black propaganda of the war years.

The thesis of mass extermination at Bełżec not only collapses under the weight of its own principal main witnesses, it also runs up against insurmountable material impossibilities, especially those concerning the cremation of the alleged victims. Polish archeological research has dealt the final death-blow to the official thesis: Its findings categorically disprove the possibility of burying 600,000 (or several hundred thousand), corpses, and the quantity of bodies, bones, and ashes that was discovered are absolutely incompatible with such an enormous massacre. Moreover, the total absence of archeological evidence of the alleged extermination installations completely refutes the conflicting testimonies that are the basis for the extermination claims, testimonies Tregenza has already qualified “*as not reliable*” (rendering them thus doubly unreliable). The excavations at Bełżec have therefore contributed greatly to revealing the truth – but not the official truth!

Now that the hypothesis of mass extermination has been ruled out, there remains only one alternative: Bełżec was a transit camp for the transfer of Jews to the east.

Appendix

Abbreviations

- AGK:** Archiwum Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni w Polsce, at present Główna Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, Warsaw
- GARF:** Gosudarstvenni Archiv Rossiskoi Federatsii, Moscow
- HILA:** Hoover Institution Library and Archives, Stanford University
- IMT:** The Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal, Nuremberg, 1945-1946
- ROD:** Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie, Amsterdam
- ZStL:** Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen, Ludwigsburg

Tables

Table 1

Jews deported on May 9, 1942, from Theresienstadt/Terezin to Sobibór-Osowa and deceased at Lublin-Majdanek (from: *Terezínská Pamětní Kniha*, Terezínská Iniciativa, Melantrich 1995, vol. I, pages shown in table; dates given in dd/mm/yyyy).

Surname	first name(s)	date of birth	date of death	reference
Adler	Rudolf	6/12/1909	21/7/1942	p. 522
Beck	Rudolf Jan	27/4/1918	14/8/1942	p. 354
Broch	Karel	19/3/1895	4/7/1942	p. 508
Danzer	Jaroslav	26/4/1910	6/9/1942	p. 522
Derblich	Josef	11/9/1894	14/8/1942	p. 522
Ditmar	Julius	28/5/1894	17/8/1942	p. 523
Dorfmann	Ladislav	26/8/1891	4/9/1942	p. 523
Dubsky	Bedrich	27/1/1895	30/8/1942	p. 523
Dusner	Vilem	13/6/1898	14/8/1942	p. 524
Dux	Viktor	1/6/1896	25/6/1942	p. 524
Edelstein	Frantisek	28/3/1896	8/6/1942	p. 524
Ehlich	Jan	27/6/1925	24/7/1942	p. 524
Ehrlich	Bedrich	17/3/1895	22/6/1942	p. 524
Ehrlich	Jan, Ing.	13/8/1898	27/6/1942	p. 524
Einhorn	Mojzis	19/5/1894	22/8/1942	p. 525
Eisler	Josef	26/11/1906	10/9/1942	p. 525
Eisner	Vilem	4/9/1905	16/7/1942	p. 525
Eisner	Harry	28/1/1920	16/9/1942	p. 526
Ekstein	Bedrich	23/9/1892	16/7/1942	p. 526
Felix	Josef G.	26/7/1904	25/7/1942	p. 190
Fischhof	Evzen	28/12/1907	10/8/1942	p. 526
Fischl	Pavel	9/3/1897	28/6/1942	p. 526
Fleischl	Valtr	5/12/1900	27/7/1942	p. 494
Forell	Vitezslav	16/5/1899	18/7/1942	p. 412
Graumann	Bedrich	13/3/1892	2/9/1942	p. 527
Grossmann	Jan	3/1/1920	4/9/1942	p. 527
Günsberg	Karel	29/7/1918	4/8/1942	p. 527
Günstling	Karel	23/8/1924	25/7/1942	p. 527
Guth	Josef	12/4/1925	24/9/1942	p. 527
Guttman	Jindrich	22/4/1899	22/7/1942	p. 528
Guttman	Jiri	21/6/1925	28/7/1942	p. 528
Guttman	Leopold	13/3/1899	1/9/1942	p. 528

Surname	first name(s)	date of birth	date of death	reference
Guttmann	Oavel	12/3/1921	25/7/1942	p. 528
Haag	Milos	1/5/1907	22/7/1942	p. 528
Haas	Arnost	10/1/1895	25/7/1942	p. 528
Haas	Beno	20/9/1893	12/9/1942	p. 528
Haber	Julius	12/11/1892	12/9/1942	p. 528
Hatschek	Bedrich	7/4/1902	13/9/1942	p. 423
Hochberg	Julius	18/11/1904	11/9/1942	p. 452
Kalla	Robert	24/6/1924	14/8/1942	p. 529
Klein	Otto	4/5/1899	23/5/1942	p. 454
Klement	Richard	15/4/1898	27/7/1942	p. 358
Kohn	Artur	2/6/1899	13/7/1942	p.454
Kohn	Alexander	3/10/1924	1/8/1942	p. 529
Kohn	Bedrich	13/3/1894	13/7/1942	p. 529
Kohn	Edvard	3/1/1903	11/7/1942	p. 529
Kohn	Emil	6/11/1894	7/9/1942	p. 529
Kohn	Emil	12/2/1901	5/9/1942	p. 529
Kohn	Frantisek	26/2/1910	6/1/1945 [sic]	p. 529
Kohn	Jan	26/3/1923	23/8/1942	p. 529
Kohn	Karel	10/4/1914	31/7/1942	p. 529
Kohn	Leo	28/6/1908	4/9/1942	p. 529
Kohn	Leo	20/3/1892	9/7/1942	p. 529
Kohn	Rudolf	4/4/1882	30/8/1942	p. 529
Kollin	Otto	8/9/1904	7/9/1942	p. 530
Kowanitz	Jindrich	10/4/1924	11/8/1942	p. 530
Kürschner	Oskar	24/10/1900	31/7/1942	p. 484
Löwy	Maximilian	13/2/1896	4/9/1942	p. 469
Löwy	Alois	7/7/1897	8/8/1942	p. 531
Löwy	Ervin	4/9/1898	7/8/1942	p. 531
Löwy	Ervin	10/9/1895	10/8/1942	p. 531
Löwy	Frantisek	26/9/1900	2/9/1942	p. 531
Löwy	Josef	2/12/1896	25/9/1942	p. 531
Löwy	Kurt	23/1/1927	4/8/1942	p. 531
Löwy	Norbert	16/11/1900	20/7/1942	p. 531
Löwy	Rudolf	16/6/1902	6/7/1942	p. 531
Löwy	Valtr	2/6/1907	15/7/1942	p. 531
Löwy	Viktor	29/4/1896	16/7/1942	p. 531
Mahler	Hanus	24/4/1897	13/8/1942	p. 241
Mahler	Petr	30/5/1926	4/9/1942	p. 241
Neumann	Anton	1/4/1928	11/9/1942	p. 533
Neumann	Frantisek	11/8/1904	1/9/1942	p. 533
Neumann	Jan	14/5/1909	16/8/1942	p. 533
Neumann	Leo	1/4/1897	21/8/1942	p. 533
Neumann	Oskar	4/7/1892	12/9/1942	p. 533
Neumann	Valtr	13/12/1918	20/7/1942	p. 533

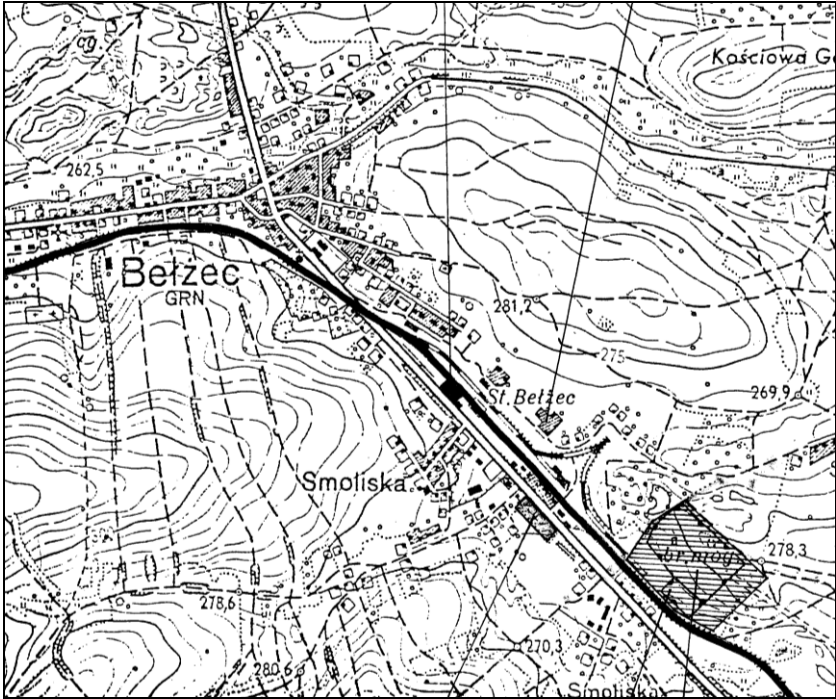
Surname	first name(s)	date of birth	date of death	reference
Neumann	Viktor	12/11/1896	23/9/1942	p. 533
Neuschul	Emil	17/1/1899	1/8/1942	p. 534
Nord	Oskar	26/2/1899	17/9/1942	p. 534
Polak	Frantisek	21/12/1902	9/9/1942	p. 165
Polesi	Karel	29/5/1896	30/7/1942	p. 274
Roll	Vitezslav	28/7/1921	12/9/1942	p. 182
Rosenbaum	Ota	22/7/1893	7/7/1942	p. 275
Sinaiberger	Pavel	19/7/1910	31/8/1942	p. 472
Spitzer	Simon Arnost	23/12/1902	28/6/1942	p. 445
Weiner	Josef	29/8/1907	7/9/1942	p. 490
Weiss	Bedrich	12/2/1908	30/8/1942	p. 535
Wurm	Jan	2/2/1911	20/7/1942	p. 535
Zucker	Hugo	1/11/1904	11/7/1942	p. 490
Zwicker	Arnost	1/4/1916	20/8/1942	p. 402

Table 2

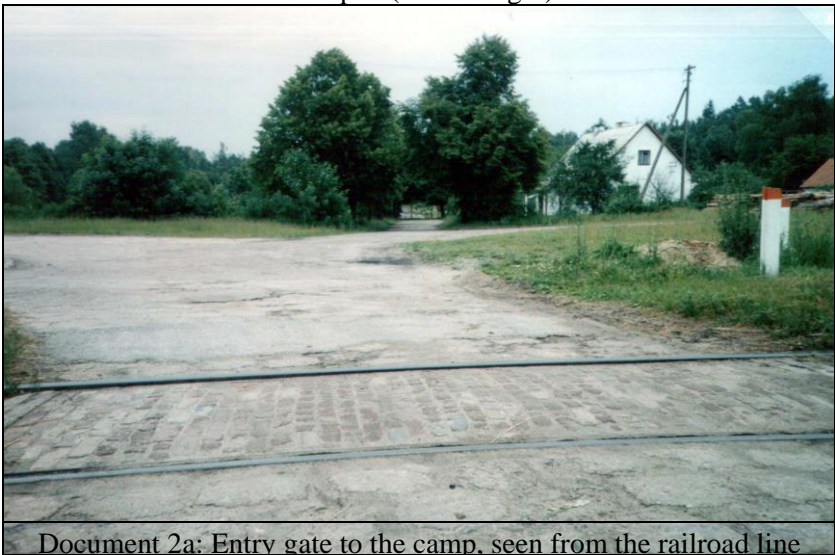
Jews deported from the ghettos of Theresienstadt/Terezin and Prague to the Lublin district and deceased at Lublin-Majdanek between May and September 1942 (dates given in dd/mm/yyyy).

Date of deportation	origin	destination	number of deaths
11/3/1942	Theresienstadt	Izbica	7
17/3/1942	Theresienstadt	Izbica	2
1/4/1942	Theresienstadt	Piaski	21
18/4/1942	Theresienstadt	Rejowiec	1
23/4/1942	Theresienstadt	Lublin	101
27/4/1942	Theresienstadt	Lublin	118
9/5/1942	Theresienstadt	Sobibór/Osowa	101
17/5/1942	Theresienstadt	Lublin	146
25/5/1942	Theresienstadt	Lublin	71
10/6/1942	Prague	Ujazdów	105
12/6/1942	Theresienstadt	Trawniki	96
13/6/1942	Theresienstadt	Majdanek	89
Total:			858

Documents



Document 1: Topographical map of the Belzec area. The camp area is striped (bottom right).



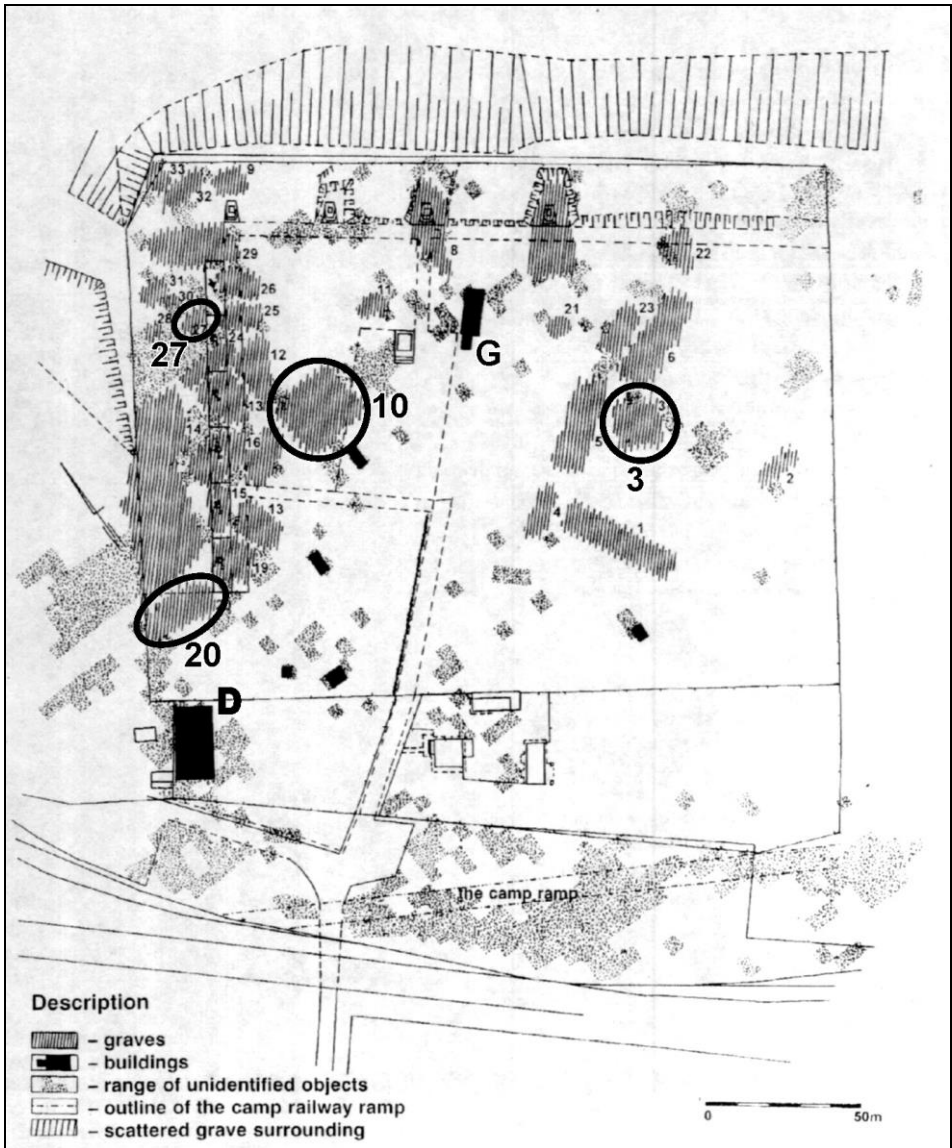
Document 2a: Entry gate to the camp, seen from the railroad line
Lublin-Rava-Russkaya. © Carlo Mattogno



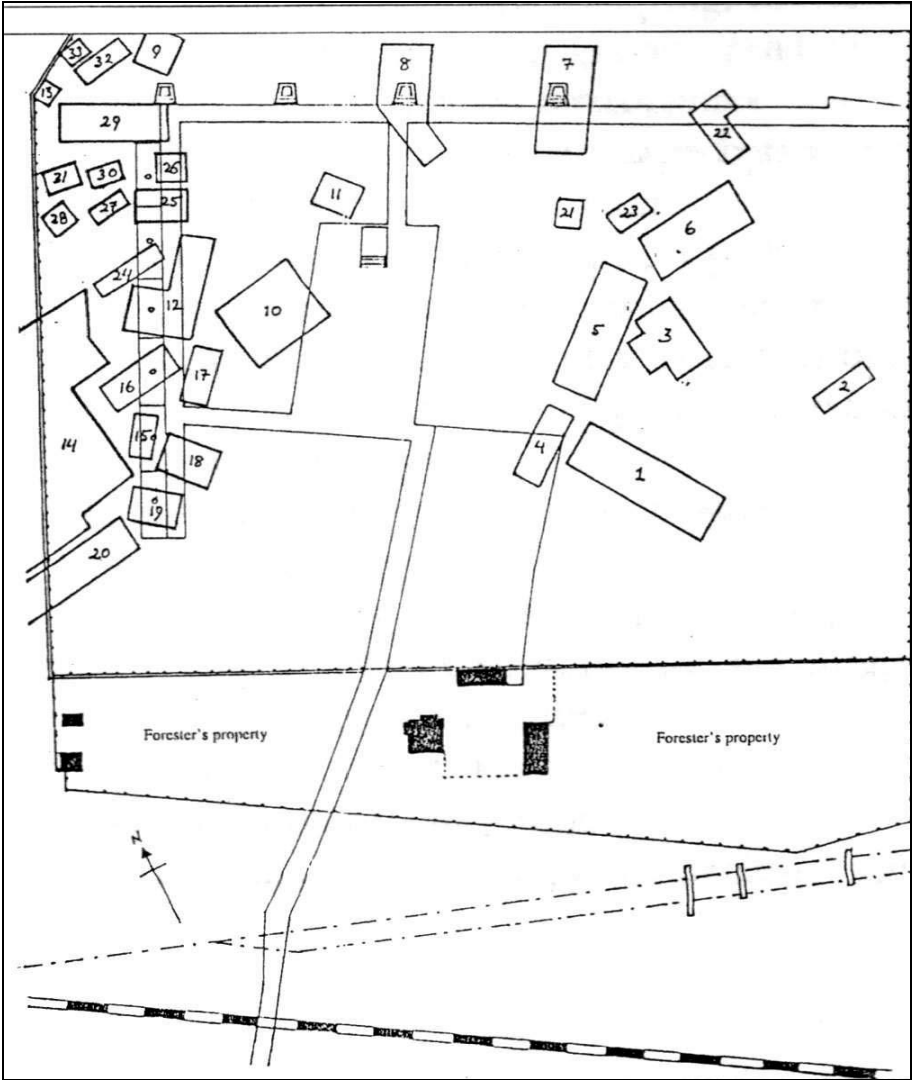
Document 2b: Close-up view of entry gate to the camp. © Carlo Mattogno



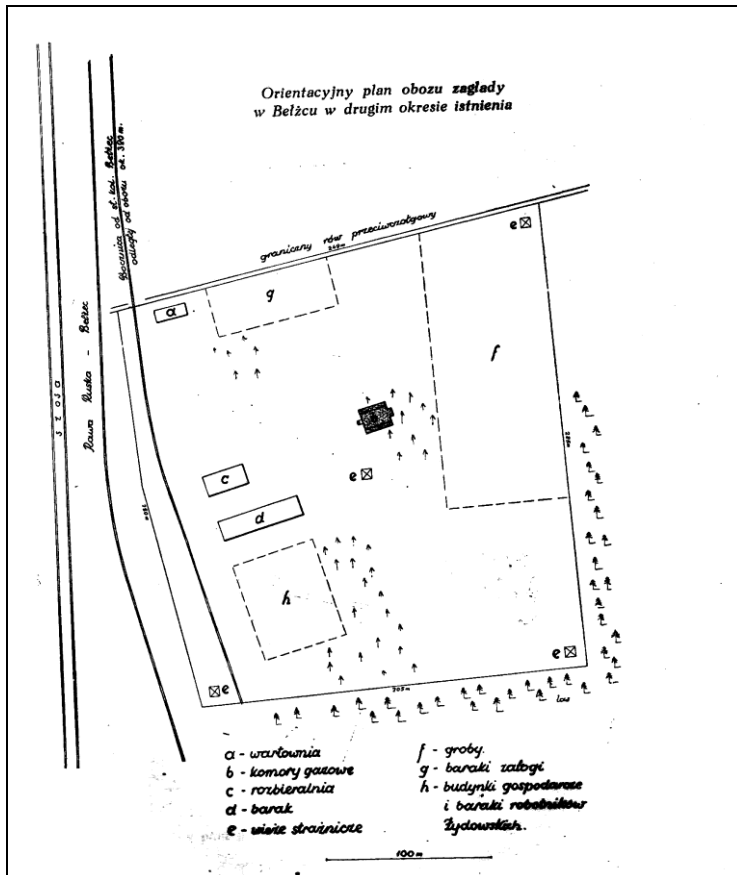
Document 3: State road no. 17, seen from the north-west corner of the camp. © Carlo Mattogno



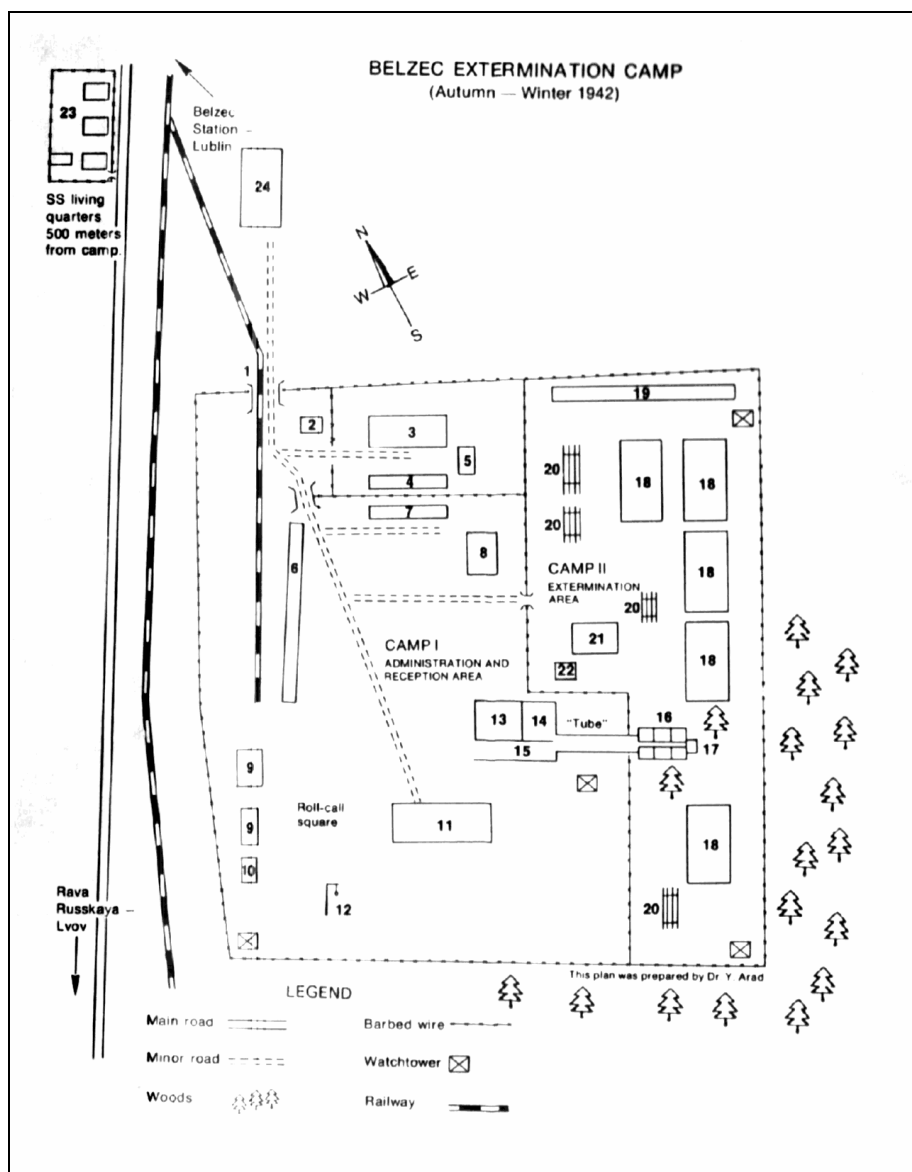
Document 4: Map of the Belzec camp showing the areas with mass graves (shaded) and the locations of brick structures (in black). Graves #3, 10, 20, 27, surrounded with circles, contain corpses in a state of saponification.¹



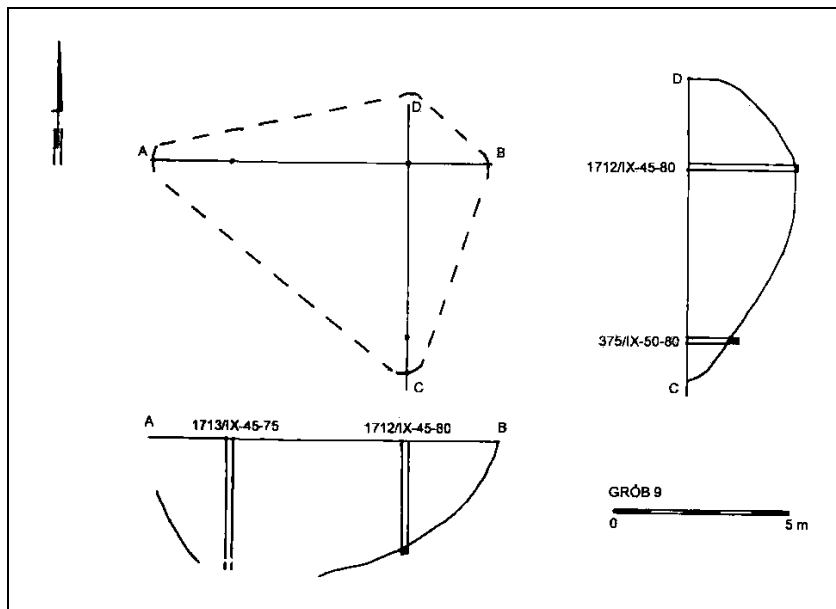
Document 5: Position and orientation of the mass graves.²



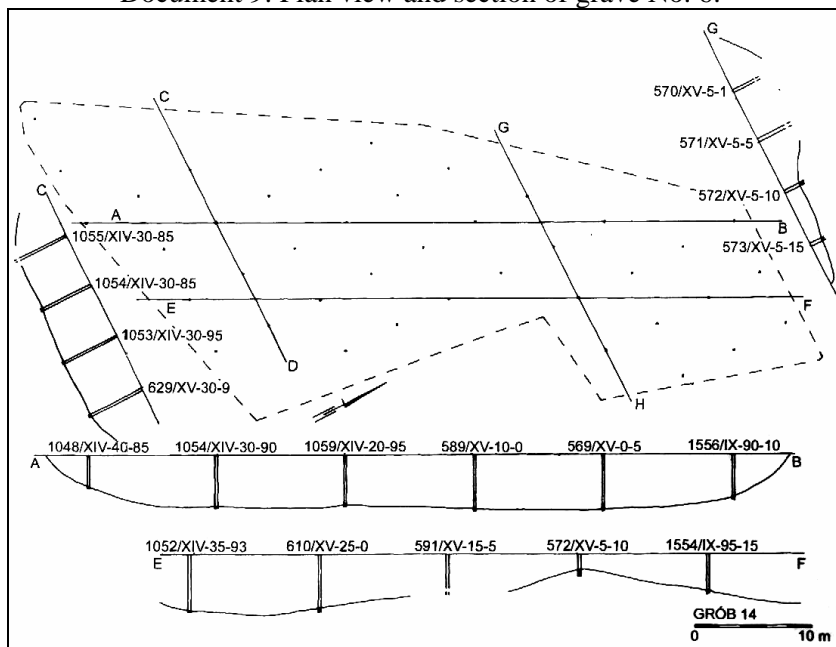
Document 7: Official map of the Bełżec camp by the Central Commission for the Investigation of the German Crimes in Poland.⁴



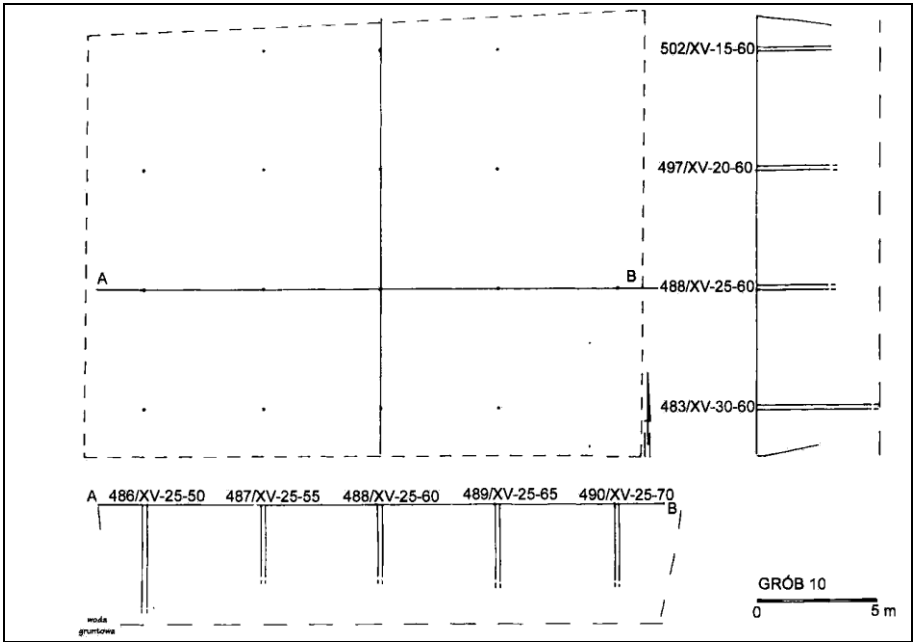
Document 8: Map of the Belzec camp according to Arad.⁵



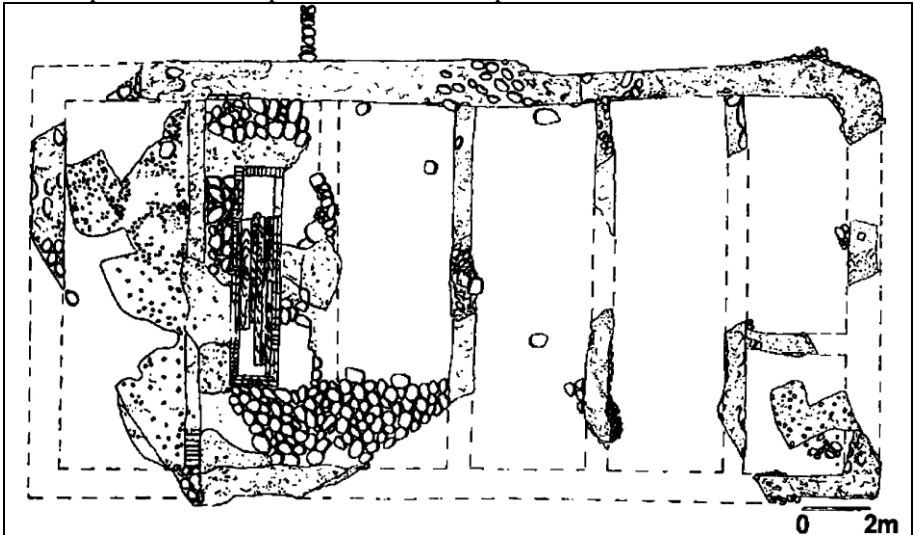
Document 9: Plan view and section of grave No. 6.⁶



Document 10: Plan view and section of grave No. 14.⁷



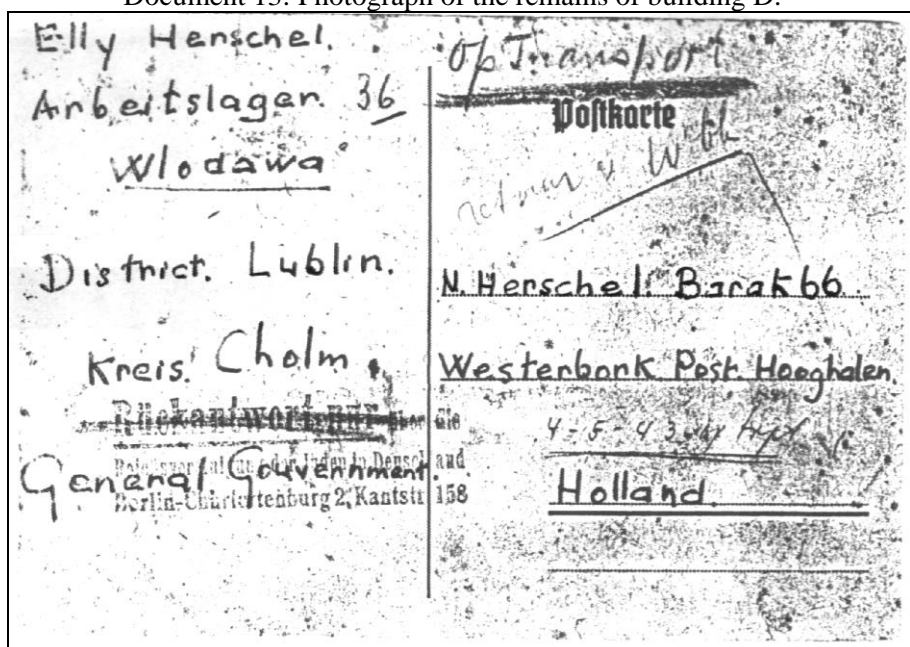
Document 11: Plan view and section of grave No. 10. Drillings evidencing the presence of corpses in a state of saponification are shown in bold.⁸



Document 12: Plan view of building D.⁹



Document 13: Photograph of the remains of building D.¹⁰



Document 14: Postcard sent on May 23, 1943, by Elly Herschel, Jewish inmate of the camp at Włodawa (Sobibór).¹¹

Sicherungsbezirk Nord
Einsatzkommando
5. Komp. Pol. Rgt. 24

Rawa Ruska, den 12. Dezember 1942
Straße der Wehrmacht Nr. 26

1) In der Zeit vom 6. mit 12. Dezember 1942 wurden befehlsgemäß
behandelt:

a) Banditen	:	--
b) Helfershelfer	:	--
c) Geisteskranke	:	1
d) Juden	:	30
zusammen	:	31
		=====

II. / Pol. 24	
Eing.	14. DEZ 1942
Beil.	Nr.

In der gleichen Zeit wurden festgenommen:

a) Banditen	:	1
d) Diebe	:	1
c) politisch Verdächtige:		2
zusammen	:	4
		=====

An Gend.-Zug RR. übergeben: 1 Dieb
=====

Arbeitsamt Rawa Ruska zum Arbeitseinsatz in Reich
zugeführt: : 188
=====

Arbeitsamt Lubaczow zugeführt: 35
=====

Arbeitsamt Sokal zugeführt : 8
=====

In der Berichtszeit war das Einsatzkdo. zur Judenumsiedlung
in Rawa Ruska eingesetzt.

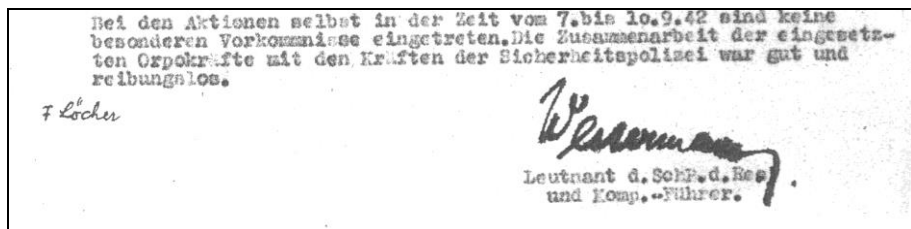
750 Juden die sich nach der Umsiedlung versteckt hielten
wurden befehlsgemäß behandelt.

Verteiler:

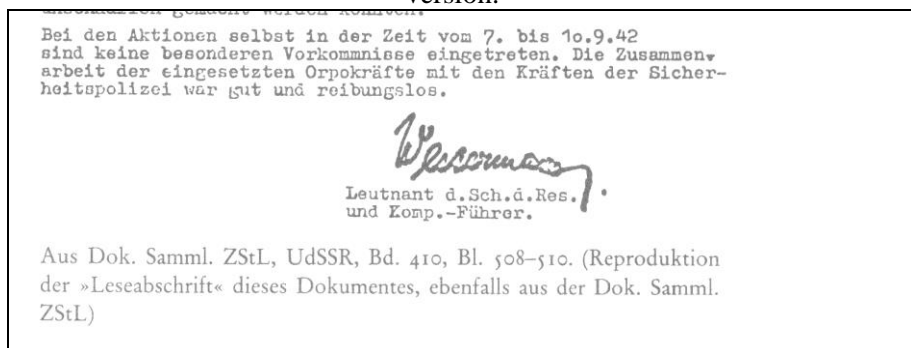
Gend.-Hauptmannschaft Lemberg:	1
II. / Pol. 24 Stanislaw	: 1
5. / Pol. 24 Drohobycz	: 1
Einsatzkdo. RR.	: 1
zusammen	: 4

Schwarz
Rev.-Leutnant d. Stb.

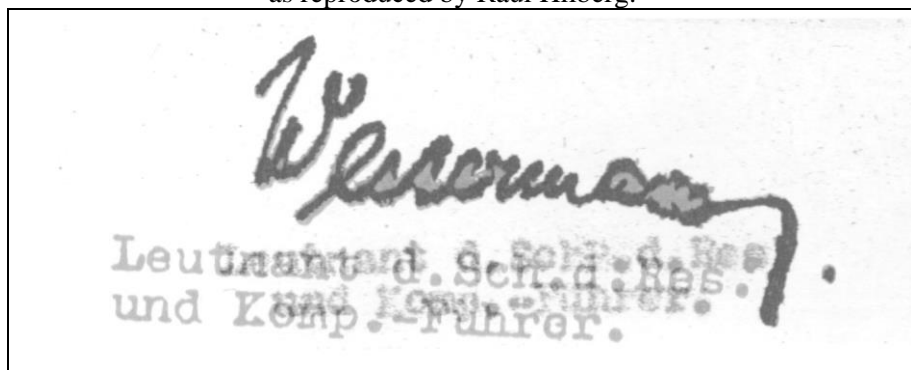
Document 15: Report of security district north, action commando, 5th
company, 24th police regiment: 750 Jews were hiding after resettlement.¹²



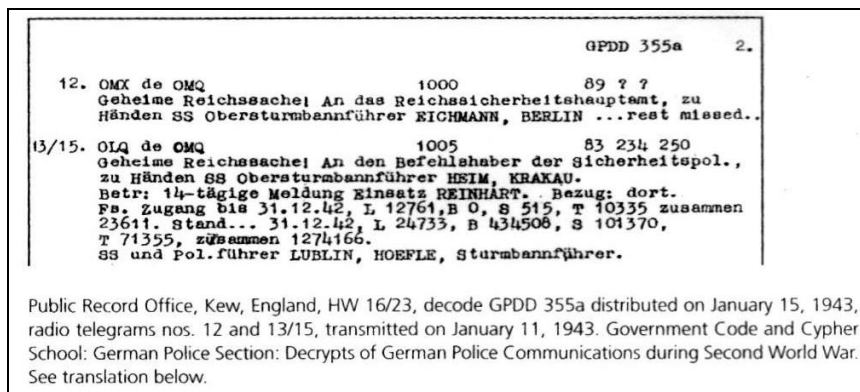
Document 16a: Signature underneath the Report of a deportation transport of Jews to Belżec, by *Leutnant der Schutzpolizei der Reserve* (lieutenant of protection police reserve) Wassermann of September 14, 1942 – GARF version.¹³



Document 16b: Signature part of the same document as 16a, but the version as reproduced by Raul Hilberg.¹⁴



Document 16c: Overlay of signatures from documents 16a and 16b.



Document 17: German Police Communication on deportation figures to the Reinhardt camps Lublin-Majdanek (L), Bełżec (B), Sobibór (S), and Treblinka (T).¹⁵

Document Sources

- ¹ A. Kola, *Bełżec. The Nazi Camp for Jews in the light of archeological sources. Excavations 1997-1999*, Warsaw-Washington 2000, p. 19; circles with large number as well as large letters "D" and "G" added by this author.
- ² R. O'Neil, "Bełżec: The 'Forgotten' Death Camp," in *East European Jewish Affairs*, 28(2) (1998-9), p. 59.
- ³ R. Reder, *Bełżec*, Centralna Żydowska Komisja Historyczna przy C.K. Żydów Polskich – Oddział w Krakowie, Kraków 1946, p. 43.
- ⁴ E. Szrojt, "Obóz zagłady w Bełżcu," in *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce*, III, Poznań 1947, insert without page number.
- ⁵ Y. Arad, *Bełżec, Sobibor, Treblinka. The Operation Reinhard Death Camps*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis 1987, p. 437.
- ⁶ A. Kola, *op. cit.* (note 1), p. 26.
- ⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 29.
- ⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 27.
- ⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 55.
- ¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 56.
- ¹¹ Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie, c[2]-611.
- ¹² RGVA, 1323-2-292b, p. 6.
- ¹³ RGVA, 1323-2-292b, pp. 40-42.
- ¹⁴ R. Hilberg, *Sonderzüge nach Auschwitz*, Dumjahn Verlag, Mainz 1981, pp. 194-197.
- ¹⁵ Peter Witte, Stephen Tyas, "A New Document on the Deportation and Murder of the Jews during 'Einsatz Reinhardt' 1942," in *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, no. 3, Winter 2001, pp. 469f.

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Index of Names

Individuals only. Entries in footnotes as italics.

— A —

Apenszlak, Jacob: *12, 25, 26*

Arad, Yitzhak: 46, 49, 63, 64, 65, 75, 82, 84, 85, 121, *127*

— B —

Ball, John C.: 85

Bau, Jozef: 75, 94, 119

Bauer, Yehuda: 34

Beer, Sara: *51, 92*

Berenstein, Tatiana: 48, *97*

Berg, Friedrich Paul: *56*

Berteczko: *97*

Birder, Hirsz: *51*

Blobel, Paul: 82

Blumental, Nachman: 7, *10, 74, 98*

Bracht, Mordechai: *51*

— C —

Chróściewicz, T.: *47*

Cimoszewicz,

Włodzimierz: *32*

— D —

Damiel, Maria: 44, 85

Dollf, Major: 14, *97*

Dubois, Werner Karl: 63, 65

Dubost, Charles: 40

Dziasosz, Edward: *99*

— E —

Ehrenburg, Ilja: 19, *21, 33*

Eichmann, Adolf: 21, *53*

— F —

F., Edward, witness: 36, 84

Feldhendler, Leon: 10

Folkmann, Adolf: *17*

Fuchs, Erich: 63, 69

— G —

G., Eugeniusz, witness: 36, *48, 84, 89*

G., Jan, witness: 20

Gerstein, Kurt: 32, 39, 40, 42, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55,

56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61,

62, 67, 68, 69, 74, 82,

109

Gilbert, Martin: 22

Gley, Heinrich: 44, 63, 66, 84

Globocnik, Odilio: 57, 58, 82, 98, 104

Godziszewski, Czeslaw: 36, 44, 46, 79, 89

Graf, Jürgen: 7, 9, 39, *51, 82, 85, 86, 87, 90, 91, 102, 103, 106, 107, 108*

Grawitz, Ernst: 59

Grossman, Vassili: 19, *21, 33*

Grossova, Minna: 107

Grzybowski, Jan: 36

Guérin, Armand: 20

Günther, Rolf: 53

Gutman, Israel: 9, 32, 92, *93, 104*

— H —

Hackenholt: 43, 65, 66

Heim: 103

Hellman, Mojesz: 43

Herbst, Stuf.: 19

Herschel, Elly: 107, 124

Heubaum, Erik: 19

Heydrich, Reinhard: 82

Hilberg, Raul: 32, *101, 103, 126, 127*

Himmler, Heinrich: 17, 23, 30, 52, 53, 77, 81, 82

Hirszman, Chaim: 51, 52

Hitler, Adolf: 17, 53, 71

Höfle, Hermann or Hans:

88, 103, 104, 106

Hollander, Nella Rost

Hollander: 41

Horst, Karl: 19

— I —

I., Wojciech, witness: 43

— J —

Jäckel, Eberhard: *32, 104*

Jäcklein, Josef: 100

Jankowski, Stanisław M.: *30, 31*

Jührs, Robert: 63, 66

— K —

K., Michał, witness: 43

K., Mieczysław, witness: 43, 84

Kafka, Franz: 54

Karski, Jan: 22, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 109

Kelber, Geo: *40*

Kermisz, Józef: *103*

Kiełboń, Janina: 106

Klukowski, Zygmunt: *11*

Kogon, Eugen: *63, 64*

Kola, Andrzej: 71, 74, 75,

76, 77, 78, 79, 82, 85,

86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91,

92, 93, 94, 95, 96, *127*

Kozak, Stanisław: 38, 39,

42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 67,

68, 69, 83, 88, 89, 92,

94, 95, 96

Krüger, Friedrich

Wilhelm: 102

Kryl, Miroslav: 106
Kuśmierczak, Michal: 46

— L —

Langbein, Hermann: 63
Lanzmann, Claude: 32
Laqueur, Walter: 22
Leszczyńska, Zofia: 107
Ligowski: 43
Litawski, Jerzy: 35
Longerich, Peter: 32
Luczynsky, Edward: 84
Łukaszewicz, Zdzisław:
11, 90

— M —

M., Tadeusz, witness: 44,
83
Marszałek, Józef: 99
Mattogno, Carlo: 7, 9, 39,
51, 82, 85, 86, 87, 90,
91, 102, 103, 106, 107,
108, 115, 116
Metz, Zeld: 7, 10
Mikołajczyk, Stanisław:
12
Minoli, Giovanni: 32
Müller, Heinrich: 82
Muszkat, Marian: 51

— N —

N., Dmitri, witness: 43
Norwind, Stefan Tadeusz:
21

— O —

O., Waclaw, witness: 43
O'Keefe, Theodore J.: 32
O'Neil, Robin: 47, 49, 71,
75, 76, 81, 91, 92, 96,
127
Oberhauser, Josef: 62, 63,
64, 65

— P —

Pechersky, Alexander: 10
Peters, Gerhard: 54
Pfannenstiel, Wilhelm: 52,
53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58,
59, 60, 61, 62, 94
Poliakov, Léon: 55, 61, 62
Pressac, Jean-Claude: 46,
108

— R —

Rassinier, Paul: 55
Reder, Rudolf: 7, 32, 33,
37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42,
47, 48, 49, 51, 52, 74,
75, 76, 93, 109, 119,
127
Reinhardt, Fritz,
Operation: 63, 82
Reitlinger, Gerald: 55, 61,
103
Reuter, Fritz: 103
Roques, Henri: 39, 51
Rosenstrauch, Arthur
Israelevitch: 33
Rothfels, Hans: 54, 55
Rückerl, Adalbert: 48, 54,
62, 63, 67, 84, 93
Rudolf, Germar: 56

— S —

S., Wiktor, witness: 84
Scheffler, Wolfgang: 48
Schelvis, Jules: 107
Schier, Rozalja
Schelewna: 20
Schluch, Karl Alfred: 63,
66, 67, 68, 88
Schoeps, Julius: 32
Schulte, Ostf: 100
Schwarz, Friedel: 64, 69
Schwarzbart, Ignacy: 12,
13, 25

Sehn, Jan: 37, 38, 74
Silberschein, Abraham:
14, 15, 33, 48, 97
Smirnov, L.N.: 36
Stäglich, Wilhelm: 55
Suhl, Yuri: 10
Szende, Stefan: 17
Szpilke: 51
Szojrt, Eugeniusz: 38, 39,
47, 75, 127

— T —

Tregenza, Michael: 41, 42,
43, 44, 46, 47, 49, 50,
51, 52, 62, 71, 77, 87,
92, 109
Trompetter, Lewy: 107
Türk, Richard: 105
Tyas, Stephen: 103, 127

— U —

Ukraiński, Eustachy: 43,
47, 83, 89, 92

— V —

Velser, Samuel: 51
Vidal-Naquet, Pierre: 41
von Halle: 53, 54

— W —

Walendy, Udo: 55
Wassermann, Ltn.: 101,
126
Weber, Mark: 34
Wiesenthal, Simon: 21, 34
Wirth, Christian: 52, 58,
63, 64, 69
Witte, Peter: 103, 127
Wood, E. Thomas: 30, 31

— Z —

Zörner, Ernst: 99

HOLOCAUST HANDBOOKS

This ambitious, growing series addresses various aspects of the “Holocaust” of the WWII era. Most of them are based on decades of research from archives all over the world. They are heavily referenced. In contrast to most other works on this issue, the tomes of this series approach its topic with profound academic scrutiny and a critical attitude. Any Holocaust researcher ignoring this series will remain oblivious to some of the most important research in the field. These books are designed to both convince the common reader as well as academics. The following books have appeared so far, or are about to be released. Compare hardcopy and eBook prices at www.findbookprices.com.

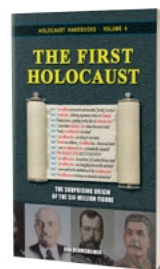
SECTION ONE:

General Overviews of the Holocaust

The First Holocaust. The Surprising Origin of the Six-Million Figure.

By Don Heddesheimer.

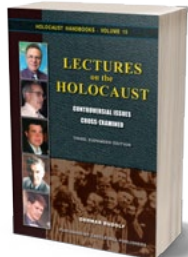
This compact but substantive study documents propaganda spread prior to, during and after the FIRST World War that claimed East European Jewry was on the brink of annihilation. The magic number of suffering and dying Jews was 6 million back then as well. The book details how these Jewish fundraising operations in America raised vast sums in the name of feeding suffering Polish and Russian Jews but actually funneled much of the money to Zionist and Communist groups. 5th ed., 200 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#6)



neled much of the money to Zionist and Communist groups. 5th ed., 200 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#6)

Lectures on the Holocaust. Controversial Issues Cross Examined.

By Germar Rudolf. This book first explains why “the Holocaust” is an important topic, and that it is well to keep an open mind about it. It then tells how many mainstream scholars expressed doubts and subsequently fell from grace. Next, the physical traces and documents about the various claimed crime scenes and murder weapons are discussed. After that, the reliability of witness testimony is examined. Finally, the author lobbies for a free exchange



of ideas about this topic. This book gives the most-comprehensive and up-to-date overview of the critical research into the Holocaust. With its dialog style, it is pleasant to read, and it can even be used as an encyclopedic compendium. 3rd ed., 596 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#15)

Breaking the Spell. The Holocaust, Myth & Reality.

By Nicholas Kollerstrom. In 1941, British Intelligence analysts cracked the German “Enigma” code. Hence, in 1942 and 1943, encrypted radio communications between German concentration camps and the Berlin headquarters were decrypted. The intercepted data

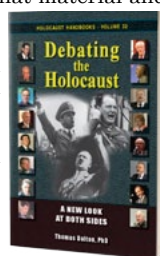
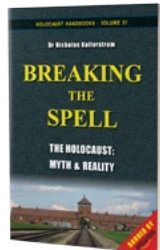


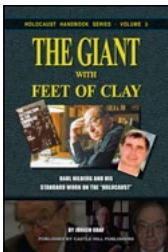
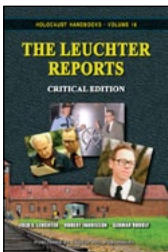
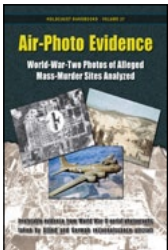
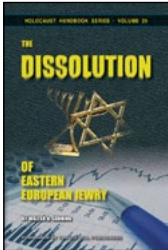
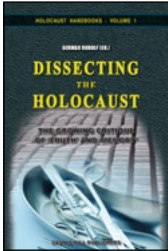
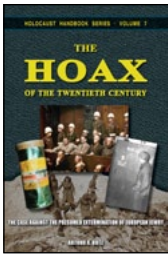
Pictured above are all of the scientific studies that comprise the series *Holocaust Handbooks* published thus far or are about to be released. More volumes and new editions are constantly in the works. Check www.HolocaustHandbooks.com for updates.

refutes the orthodox “Holocaust” narrative. It reveals that the Germans were desperate to reduce the death rate in their labor camps, which was caused by catastrophic typhus epidemics. Dr. Kollerstrom, a science historian, has taken these intercepts and a wide array of mostly unchallenged corroborating evidence to show that “witness statements” supporting the human gas chamber narrative clearly clash with the available scientific data. Kollerstrom concludes that the history of the Nazi “Holocaust” has been written by the victors with ulterior motives. It is distorted, exaggerated and largely wrong. With a foreword by Prof. Dr. James Fetzer. 5th ed., 282 pages, b&w ill., bibl., index. (#31)

Debating the Holocaust. A New Look at Both Sides.

By Thomas Dalton. Mainstream historians insist that there cannot be, may not be, a debate about the Holocaust. But ignoring it does not make this controversy go away. Traditional scholars admit that there was neither a budget, a plan, nor an order for the Holocaust; that the key camps have all but vanished, and so have any human remains; that material and unequivocal documentary evidence is absent; and that there are serious problems with survivor testimonies. Dalton juxtaposes the traditional Holocaust narrative with revisionist challenges and then analyzes the mainstream’s responses to them. He reveals the weaknesses of both sides, while declaring revisionism





the winner of the current state of the debate. 2nd ed., 332 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#32)

The Hoax of the Twentieth Century. The Case against the Presumed Extermination of European Jewry. By Arthur R. Butz. The first writer to analyze the entire Holocaust complex in a precise scientific manner. This book exhibits the overwhelming force of arguments accumulated by the mid-1970s. Butz's two main arguments are: 1. All major entities hostile to Germany must have known what was happening to the Jews under German authority. They acted during the war as if no mass slaughter was occurring. 2. All the evidence adduced to proof any mass slaughter has a dual interpretation, while only the innocuous one can be proven to be correct. This book continues to be a major historical reference work, frequently cited by prominent personalities. This edition has numerous supplements with new information gathered over the last 35 years. 4th ed., 524 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#7)

Dissecting the Holocaust. The Growing Critique of 'Truth' and 'Memory.' Edited by Germar Rudolf. *Dissecting the Holocaust* applies state-of-the-art scientific technique and classic methods of detection to investigate the alleged murder of millions of Jews by Germans during World War II. In 22 contributions—each of some 30 pages—the 17 authors dissect generally accepted paradigms of the “Holocaust.” It reads as exciting as a crime novel: so many lies, forgeries and deceptions by politicians, historians and scientists are proven. This is the intellectual adventure of the 21st century. Be part of it! 3rd ed., ca. 630 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#1)

The Dissolution of Eastern European Jewry. By Walter N. Sanning. Six Million Jews died in the Holocaust. Sanning did not take that number at face value, but thoroughly explored European population developments and shifts mainly caused by emigration as well as deportations and evacuations conducted by both Nazis and the Soviets, among other things. The book is based mainly on Jewish, Zionist and mainstream sources. It concludes that a sizeable share of the Jews found missing during local censuses after the Second World War, which were so far counted as “Holocaust victims,” had either emigrated (mainly to Israel or the U.S.) or had been deported by Stalin to Siberian labor camps. 2nd ed., foreword by A.R. Butz, epilogue by Germar Rudolf containing important

updates; 224 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography (#29).

Air Photo Evidence: World War Two Photos of Alleged Mass Murder Sites Analyzed. By Germar Rudolf (editor). During World War Two both German and Allied reconnaissance aircraft took countless air photos of places of tactical and strategic interest in Europe. These photos are prime evidence for the investigation of the Holocaust. Air photos of locations like Auschwitz, Majdanek, Treblinka, Babı Yar etc. permit an insight into what did or did not happen there. The author has unearthed many pertinent photos and has thoroughly analyzed them. This book is full of air photo reproductions and schematic drawings explaining them. According to the author, these images refute many of the atrocity claims made by witnesses in connection with events in the German sphere of influence. 5th edition; with a contribution by Carlo Mattogno. 168 pages, 8.5”x11”, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index (#27).

The Leuchter Reports: Critical Edition. By Fred Leuchter, Robert Faurisson and Germar Rudolf. Between 1988 and 1991, U.S. expert on execution technologies Fred Leuchter wrote four detailed reports addressing whether the Third Reich operated homicidal gas chambers. The first report on Auschwitz and Majdanek became world famous. Based on chemical analyses and various technical arguments, Leuchter concluded that the locations investigated “could not have then been, or now be, utilized or seriously considered to function as execution gas chambers.” The second report deals with gas-chamber claims for the camps Dachau, Mauthausen and Hartheim, while the third reviews design criteria and operation procedures of execution gas chambers in the U.S. The fourth report reviews Pressac's 1989 tome *Auschwitz*. 4th ed., 252 pages, b&w illustrations. (#16)

The Giant with Feet of Clay: Raul Hilberg and His Standard Work on the "Holocaust." By Jürgen Graf. Raul Hilberg's major work *The Destruction of European Jewry* is an orthodox standard work on the Holocaust. But what evidence does Hilberg provide to back his thesis that there was a German plan to exterminate Jews, carried out mainly in gas chambers? Jürgen Graf applies the methods of critical analysis to Hilberg's evidence and examines the results in light of modern historiography. The results of Graf's critical analysis are devastating for Hilberg.

2nd, corrected edition, 139 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#3)

Jewish Emigration from the Third Reich. By Ingrid Weckert. Current historical writings about the Third Reich claim state it was difficult for Jews to flee from Nazi persecution. The truth is that Jewish emigration was welcomed by the German authorities. Emigration was not some kind of wild flight, but rather a lawfully determined and regulated matter. Weckert's booklet elucidates the emigration process in law and policy. She shows that German and Jewish authorities worked closely together. Jews interested in emigrating received detailed advice and offers of help from both sides. 2nd ed., 130 pages, index. (#12)

Inside the Gas Chambers: The Extermination of Mainstream Holocaust Historiography. By Carlo Mattogno. Neither increased media propaganda or political pressure nor judicial persecution can stifle revisionism. Hence, in early 2011, the Holocaust Orthodoxy published a 400 pp. book (in German) claiming to refute "revisionist propaganda," trying again to prove "once and for all" that there were homicidal gas chambers at the camps of Dachau, Natzweiler, Sachsenhausen, Mauthausen, Ravensbrück, Neuengamme, Stutthof... you name them. Mattogno shows with his detailed analysis of this work of propaganda that mainstream Holocaust hagiography is beating around the bush rather than addressing revisionist research results. He exposes their myths, distortions and lies. 2nd ed., 280 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#25)

SECTION TWO: Specific non-Auschwitz Studies

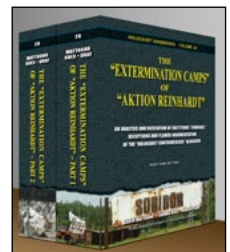
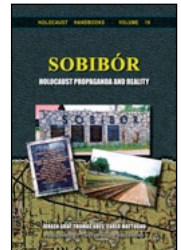
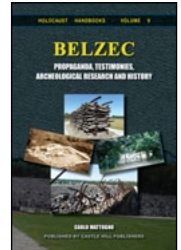
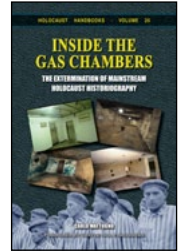
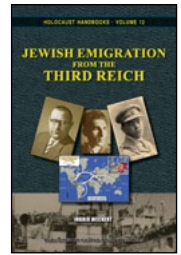
Treblinka: Extermination Camp or Transit Camp? By Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf. It is alleged that at Treblinka in East Poland between 700,000 and 3,000,000 persons were murdered in 1942 and 1943. The weapons used were said to have been stationary and/or mobile gas chambers, fast-acting or slow-acting poison gas, unslaked lime, superheated steam, electricity, diesel exhaust fumes etc. Holocaust historians alleged that bodies were piled as high as multi-storied buildings and burned without a trace, using little or no fuel at all. Graf and Mattogno have now analyzed the origins, logic and technical feasibility of the official version of Treblinka. On the basis of numerous documents they reveal Treblinka's true identity as a mere transit

camp. 2nd ed., 372 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#8)

Belzec in Propaganda, Testimonies, Archeological Research and History. By Carlo Mattogno. Witnesses report that between 600,000 and 3 million Jews were murdered in the Belzec camp, located in Poland. Various murder weapons are claimed to have been used: diesel gas; unslaked lime in trains; high voltage; vacuum chambers; etc. The corpses were incinerated on huge pyres without leaving a trace. For those who know the stories about Treblinka this sounds familiar. Thus the author has restricted this study to the aspects which are new compared to Treblinka. In contrast to Treblinka, forensic drillings and excavations were performed at Belzec, the results of which are critically reviewed. 142 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#9)

Sobibor: Holocaust Propaganda and Reality. By Jürgen Graf, Thomas Kues and Carlo Mattogno. Between 25,000 and 2 million Jews are said to have been killed in gas chambers in the Sobibór camp in Poland. The corpses were allegedly buried in mass graves and later incinerated on pyres. This book investigates these claims and shows that they are based on the selective use of contradictory eyewitness testimony. Archeological surveys of the camp in 2000-2001 are analyzed, with fatal results for the extermination camp hypothesis. The book also documents the general National Socialist policy toward Jews, which never included a genocidal "final solution." 442 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#19)

The "Extermination Camps" of "Aktion Reinhardt". By Jürgen Graf, Thomas Kues and Carlo Mattogno. In late 2011, several members of the exterminationist *Holocaust Controversies* blog posted a study online which claims to refute three of our authors' monographs on the camps Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka (see previous three entries). This tome is their point-by-point response, which makes "mincemeat" out of the bloggers' attempt at refutation. **Caution:** The two volumes of this work are an intellectual overkill for most people. They are recommended only for collectors, connoisseurs and professionals. These two books require familiarity with the above-mentioned books, of which they are a comprehensive update and expansion. 2nd ed., two volumes, total of 1396 pages, illustrations, bibliography. (#28)



Chelmno: A Camp in History & Propaganda. By Carlo Mattogno. At Chelmno, huge masses of Jewish prisoners are said to have been gassed in “gas vans” or shot (claims vary from 10,000 to 1.3 million victims). This study covers the subject from every angle, undermining the orthodox claims about the camp with an overwhelmingly effective body of evidence. Eyewitness statements, gas wagons as extermination weapons, forensics reports and excavations, German documents—all come under Mattogno’s scrutiny. Here are the uncensored facts about Chelmno, not the propaganda. 2nd ed., 188 pages, indexed, illustrated, bibliography. (#23)

The Gas Vans: A Critical Investigation. By Santiago Alvarez and Pierre Marais. It is alleged that the Nazis used mobile gas chambers to exterminate 700,000 people. Up until 2011, no thorough monograph had appeared on the topic. Santiago Alvarez has remedied the situation. Are witness statements reliable? Are documents genuine? Where are the murder weapons? Could they have operated as claimed? Where are the corpses? In order to get to the truth of the matter, Alvarez has scrutinized all known wartime documents and photos about this topic; he has analyzed a huge amount of witness statements as published in the literature and as presented in more than 30 trials held over the decades in Germany, Poland and Israel; and he has examined the claims made in the pertinent mainstream literature. The result of his research is mind-boggling. Note: This book and Mattogno’s book on Chelmno were edited in parallel to make sure they are consistent and not repetitive. 398 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#26)

The Einsatzgruppen in the Occupied Eastern Territories: Genesis, Missions and Actions. By C. Mattogno. Before invading the Soviet Union, the German authorities set up special units meant to secure the area behind the German front. Orthodox historians claim that these units called *Einsatzgruppen* primarily engaged in rounding up and mass-murdering Jews. This study sheds a critical light into this topic by reviewing all the pertinent sources as well as material traces. It reveals on the one hand that original war-time documents do not fully support the orthodox genocidal narrative, and on the other that most post-“liberation” sources such as testimonies and forensic reports are steeped in Soviet atrocity propaganda and are thus utterly unreliable. In ad-

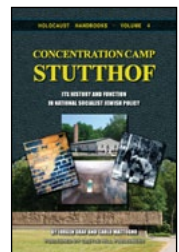
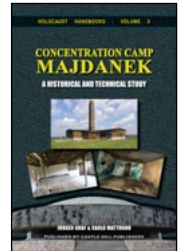
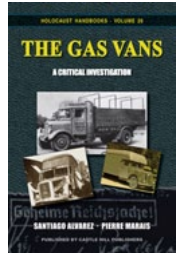
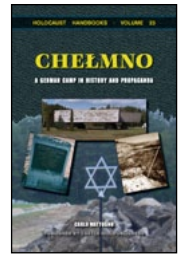
dition, material traces of the claimed massacres are rare due to an attitude of collusion by governments and Jewish lobby groups. 830 pp., b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#39)

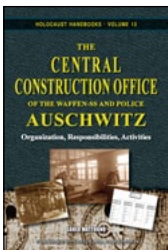
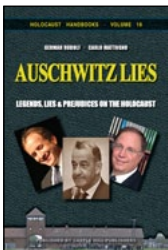
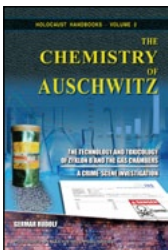
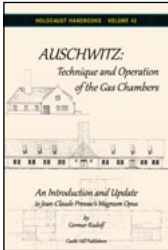
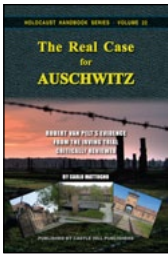
Concentration Camp Majdanek. A Historical and Technical Study. By Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf. At war’s end, the Soviets claimed that up to two million Jews were murdered at the Majdanek Camp in seven gas chambers. Over the decades, however, the Majdanek Museum reduced the death toll three times to currently 78,000, and admitted that there were “only” two gas chambers. By exhaustively researching primary sources, the authors expertly dissect and repudiate the myth of homicidal gas chambers at that camp. They also critically investigated the legend of mass executions of Jews in tank trenches and prove them groundless. Again they have produced a standard work of methodical investigation which authentic historiography cannot ignore. 3rd ed., 358 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#5)

Concentration Camp Stutthof and Its Function in National Socialist Jewish Policy. By Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf. Orthodox historians claim that the Stutthof Camp served as a “make-shift” extermination camp in 1944. Based mainly on archival resources, this study thoroughly debunks this view and shows that Stutthof was in fact a center for the organization of German forced labor toward the end of World War II. 4th ed., 170 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#4)

SECTION THREE: Auschwitz Studies

The Making of the Auschwitz Myth: Auschwitz in British Intercepts, Polish Underground Reports and Post-war Testimonies (1941-1947). By Carlo Mattogno. Using messages sent by the Polish underground to London, SS radio messages sent to and from Auschwitz that were intercepted and decrypted by the British, and a plethora of witness statements made during the war and in the immediate postwar period, the author shows how exactly the myth of mass murder in Auschwitz gas chambers was created, and how it was turned subsequently into “history” by intellectually corrupt scholars who cherry-picked claims that fit into their agenda and ignored or actively covered up literally thousands of lies of “witnesses” to make their narrative look credible. Ca. 300





pp., b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (Scheduled for mid-2020; #41)

The Real Case of Auschwitz: Robert van Pelt's Evidence from the Irving Trial Critically Reviewed. By Carlo Mattogno. Prof. Robert van Pelt is considered one of the best mainstream experts on Auschwitz. He became famous when appearing as an expert during the London libel trial of David Irving against Deborah Lipstadt. From it resulted a book titled *The Case for Auschwitz*, in which van Pelt laid out his case for the existence of homicidal gas chambers at that camp. This book is a scholarly response to Prof. van Pelt—and Jean-Claude Pressac, upon whose books van Pelt's study is largely based. Mattogno lists all the evidence van Pelt adduces, and shows one by one that van Pelt misrepresented and misinterpreted each single one of them. This is a book of prime political and scholarly importance to those looking for the truth about Auschwitz. 3rd ed., 692 pages, b&w illustrations, glossary, bibliography, index. (#22)

Auschwitz: Plain Facts: A Response to Jean-Claude Pressac. Edited by Germar Rudolf, with contributions by Serge Thion, Robert Faurisson and Carlo Mattogno. French pharmacist Jean-Claude Pressac tried to refute revisionist findings with the “technical” method. For this he was praised by the mainstream, and they proclaimed victory over the “revisionists.” In his book, Pressac's works and claims are shown to be unscientific in nature, as he never substantiate what he claims, and historically false, because he systematically misrepresents, misinterprets and misunderstands German wartime documents. 2nd ed., 226 pages, b&w illustrations, glossary bibliography, index. (#14)

Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers: An Introduction and Update. By Germar Rudolf. Pressac's 1989 oversize book of the same title was a trail blazer. Its many document reproductions are still valuable, but after decades of additional research, Pressac's annotations are outdated. This book summarizes the most pertinent research results on Auschwitz gained during the past 30 years. With many references to Pressac's epic tome, it serves as an update and correction to it, whether you own an original hard copy of it, read it online, borrow it from a library, purchase a reprint, or are just interested in such a summary in general. 144 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography. (#42)

The Chemistry of Auschwitz: The Technology and Toxicology of Zyklon B and the Gas Chambers – A Crime Scene Investigation. By Germar Rudolf. This study documents forensic research on Auschwitz, where material traces and their interpretation reign supreme. Most of the claimed crime scenes – the claimed homicidal gas chambers – are still accessible to forensic examination to some degree. This book addresses questions such as: What did these gas chambers look like? How did they operate? In addition, the infamous Zyklon B can also be examined. What exactly was it? How does it kill? Does it leave traces in masonry that can be found still today? The author also discusses in depth similar forensic research conducted by other authors. 3rd ed., 442 pages, more than 120 color and almost 100 b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#2)

Auschwitz Lies: Legends, Lies and Prejudices on the Holocaust. By C. Mattogno and G. Rudolf. The fallacious research and alleged “refutation” of Revisionist scholars by French biochemist G. Wellers (attacking Leuchter's famous report), Polish chemist Dr. J. Markiewicz and U.S. chemist Dr. Richard Green (taking on Rudolf's chemical research), Dr. John Zimmerman (tackling Mattogno on cremation issues), Michael Shermer and Alex Grobman (trying to prove it all), as well as researchers Keren, McCarthy and Mazal (how turned cracks into architectural features), are exposed for what they are: blatant and easily exposed political lies created to ostracize dissident historians. 3rd ed., 398 pages, b&w illustrations, index. (#18)

Auschwitz: The Central Construction Office. By C. Mattogno. Based upon mostly unpublished German wartime documents, this study describes the history, organization, tasks and procedures of the one office which was responsible for the planning and construction of the Auschwitz camp complex, including the crematories which are said to have contained the “gas chambers.” 2nd ed., 188 pages, b&w illustrations, glossary, index. (#13)

Garrison and Headquarters Orders of the Auschwitz Camp. By C. Mattogno. A large number of all the orders ever issued by the various commanders of the infamous Auschwitz camp have been preserved. They reveal the true nature of the camp with all its daily events. There is not a trace in these orders pointing at anything sinister going on in this camp. Quite to the

contrary, many orders are in clear and insurmountable contradiction to claims that prisoners were mass murdered. This is a selection of the most pertinent of these orders together with comments putting them into their proper historical context. (Scheduled for late 2020; #34)

Special Treatment in Auschwitz: Origin and Meaning of a Term. By C. Mattogno. When appearing in German wartime documents, terms like “special treatment,” “special action,” and others have been interpreted as code words for mass murder. But that is not always true. This study focuses on documents about Auschwitz, showing that, while “special” had many different meanings, not a single one meant “execution.” Hence the practice of deciphering an alleged “code language” by assigning homicidal meaning to harmless documents – a key component of mainstream historiography – is untenable. 2nd ed., 166 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#10)

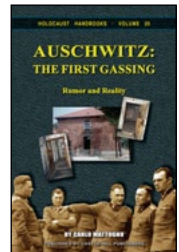
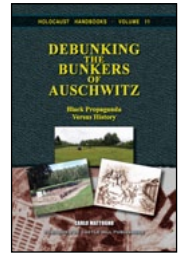
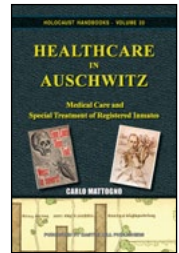
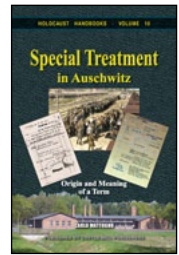
Healthcare at Auschwitz. By C. Mattogno. In extension of the above study on *Special Treatment in Auschwitz*, this study proves the extent to which the German authorities at Auschwitz tried to provide health care for the inmates. Part 1 of this book analyzes the inmates’ living conditions and the various sanitary and medical measures implemented. Part 2 explores what happened to registered inmates who were “selected” or subject to “special treatment” while disabled or sick. This study shows that a lot was tried to cure these inmates, especially under the aegis of Garrison Physician Dr. Wirths. Part 3 is dedicated to Dr. this very Wirths. His reality refutes the current stereotype of SS officers. 398 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#33)

Debunking the Bunkers of Auschwitz: Black Propaganda vs. History. By Carlo Mattogno. The bunkers at Auschwitz, two former farmhouses just outside the camp’s perimeter, are claimed to have been the first homicidal gas chambers at Auschwitz specifically equipped for this purpose. With the help of original German wartime files as well as revealing air photos taken by Allied reconnaissance aircraft in 1944, this study shows that these homicidal “bunkers” never existed, how the rumors about them evolved as black propaganda created by resistance groups in the camp, and how this propaganda was transformed into a false reality. 2nd ed., 292 pages, b&w ill., bibliography, index. (#11)

Auschwitz: The First Gassing. Rumor and Reality. By C. Mattogno. The first gassing in Auschwitz is claimed to have occurred on Sept. 3, 1941, in a basement room. The accounts reporting it are the archetypes for all later gassing accounts. This study analyzes all available sources about this alleged event. It shows that these sources contradict each other in location, date, victims etc, rendering it impossible to extract a consistent story. Original wartime documents inflict a final blow to this legend and prove without a shadow of a doubt that this legendary event never happened. 3rd ed., 190 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#20)

Auschwitz: Crematorium I and the Alleged Homicidal Gassings. By C. Mattogno. The morgue of Crematorium I in Auschwitz is said to be the first homicidal gas chamber there. This study investigates all statements by witnesses and analyzes hundreds of wartime documents to accurately write a history of that building. Where witnesses speak of gassings, they are either very vague or, if specific, contradict one another and are refuted by documented and material facts. The author also exposes the fraudulent attempts of mainstream historians to convert the witnesses’ black propaganda into “truth” by means of selective quotes, omissions, and distortions. Mattogno proves that this building’s morgue was never a homicidal gas chamber, nor could it have worked as such. 2nd ed., 152 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#21)

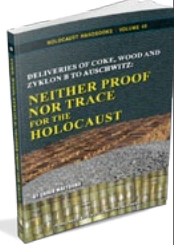
Auschwitz: Open Air Incinerations. By C. Mattogno. In spring and summer of 1944, 400,000 Hungarian Jews were deported to Auschwitz and allegedly murdered there in gas chambers. The Auschwitz crematoria are said to have been unable to cope with so many corpses. Therefore, every single day thousands of corpses are claimed to have been incinerated on huge pyres lit in deep trenches. The sky over Auschwitz was covered in thick smoke. This is what some witnesses want us to believe. This book examines the many testimonies regarding these incinerations and establishes whether these claims were even possible. Using air photos, physical evidence and wartime documents, the author shows that these claims are fiction. A new Appendix contains 3 papers on groundwater levels and cattle mass burnings. 2nd ed., 202 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#17)



The Cremation Furnaces of Auschwitz. By Carlo Mattogno & Franco Deana. An exhaustive study of the history and technology of cremation in general and of the cremation furnaces of Auschwitz in particular. On a vast base of technical literature, extant wartime documents and material traces, the authors can establish the true nature and capacity of the Auschwitz cremation furnaces. They show that these devices were inferior make-shift versions of what was usually produced, and that their capacity to cremate corpses was lower than normal, too. 3 vols., 1198 pages, b&w and color illustrations (vols 2 & 3), bibliography, index, glossary. (#24)

Curated Lies: The Auschwitz Museum's Misrepresentations, Distortions and Deceptions. By Carlo Mattogno. Revisionist research results have put the Polish Auschwitz Museum under pressure to answer this challenge. They've answered. This book analyzes their answer and reveals the appallingly mendacious attitude of the Auschwitz Museum authorities when presenting documents from their archives. 248 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#38)

Deliveries of Coke, Wood and Zyklon B to Auschwitz: Neither Proof Nor Trace for the Holocaust. By Carlo Mattogno. Researchers from the Auschwitz Museum tried to prove the reality of mass extermination by pointing to documents about deliveries of wood and coke as well as Zyklon B to the Auschwitz Camp. If put into the actual historical and technical context, however, these documents prove the exact opposite of what these orthodox researchers claim. Ca. 250 pages, b&w illust., bibl., index. (Scheduled for 2021; #40)



SECTION FOUR: Witness Critique

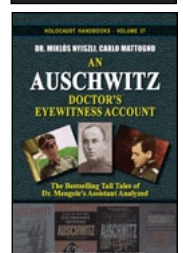
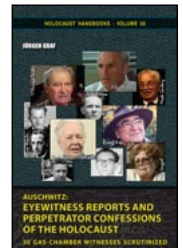
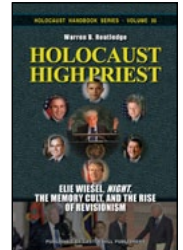
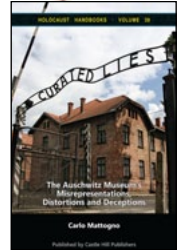
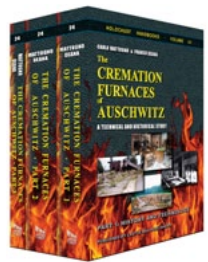
Holocaust High Priest: Elie Wiesel, Night, the Memory Cult, and the Rise of Revisionism. By Warren B. Rutledge. The first unauthorized biography of Wiesel exposes both his personal deceptions and the whole myth of "the six million." It shows how Zi-

onist control has allowed Wiesel and his fellow extremists to force leaders of many nations, the U.N. and even popes to genuflect before Wiesel as symbolic acts of subordination to World Jewry, while at the same time forcing school children to submit to Holocaust brainwashing. 468 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#30)

Auschwitz: Eyewitness Reports and Perpetrator Confessions. By Jürgen Graf. The traditional narrative of what transpired at the infamous Auschwitz Camp during WWII rests almost exclusively on witness testimony. This study critically scrutinizes the 30 most important of them by checking them for internal coherence, and by comparing them with one another as well as with other evidence such as wartime documents, air photos, forensic research results, and material traces. The result is devastating for the traditional narrative. 372 pages, b&w illust., bibl., index. (#36)

Commandant of Auschwitz: Rudolf Höss, His Torture and His Forced Confessions. By Carlo Mattogno & Rudolf Höss. From 1940 to 1943, Rudolf Höss was the commandant of the infamous Auschwitz Camp. After the war, he was captured by the British. In the following 13 months until his execution, he made 85 depositions of various kinds in which he confessed his involvement in the "Holocaust." This study first reveals how the British tortured him to extract various "confessions." Next, all of Höss's depositions are analyzed by checking his claims for internal consistency and comparing them with established historical facts. The results are eye-opening... 402 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#35)

An Auschwitz Doctor's Eyewitness Account: The Tall Tales of Dr. Mengele's Assistant Analyzed. By Miklos Nyiszli & Carlo Mattogno. Nyiszli, a Hungarian physician, ended up at Auschwitz in 1944 as Dr. Mengele's assistant. After the war he wrote a book and several other writings describing what he claimed to have experienced. To this day some traditional historians take his accounts seriously, while others reject them as grotesque lies and exaggerations. This study presents and analyzes Nyiszli's writings and skillfully separates truth from fabulous fabrication. 484 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#37)



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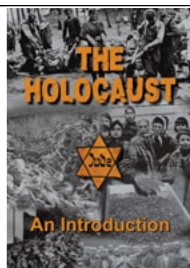
BOOKS BY AND FROM CASTLE HILL PUBLISHERS

Below please find some of the books published or distributed by Castle Hill Publishers in the United Kingdom. For our current and complete range of products visit our web store at shop.codoh.com.

Thomas Dalton, *The Holocaust: An Introduction*

The Holocaust was perhaps the greatest crime of the 20th century. Six million Jews, we are told, died by gassing, shooting, and deprivation. But: Where did the six million figure come from? How, exactly, did the gas chambers work? Why do we have so little physical evidence from major death camps? Why haven't we found even a fraction of the six million bodies, or their ashes? Why has there been so much media suppression and governmental censorship on this topic? In a sense, the Holocaust is the greatest murder mystery in history. It is a topic of greatest importance for the present day. Let's explore the evidence, and see where it leads.

128 pp. pb, 5"×8", ill., bibl., index

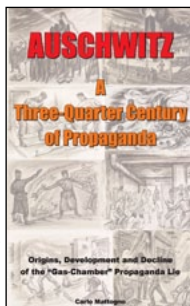


Carlo Mattogno, *Auschwitz: A Three-Quarter Century of*

Propaganda: Origins, Development and Decline of the "Gas Chamber" Propaganda Lie

During the war, wild rumors were circulating about Auschwitz: that the Germans were testing new war gases; that inmates were murdered in electrocution chambers, with gas showers or pneumatic hammer systems; that living people were sent on conveyor belts directly into cremation furnaces; that oils, grease and soap were made of the mass-murder victims. Nothing of it was true. When the Soviets captured Auschwitz in early 1945, they reported that 4 million inmates were killed on electrocution conveyor belts discharging their load directly into furnaces. That wasn't true either. After the war, "witnesses" and "experts" repeated these things and added more fantasies: mass murder with gas bombs, gas chambers made of canvas; carts driving living people into furnaces; that the crematoria of Auschwitz could have cremated 400 million victims... Again, none of it was true. This book gives an overview of the many rumors, myths and lies about Auschwitz which mainstream historians today reject as untrue. It then explains by which ridiculous methods some claims about Auschwitz were accepted as true and turned into "history," although they are just as untrue.

125 pp. pb, 5"×8", ill., bibl., index, b&w ill.

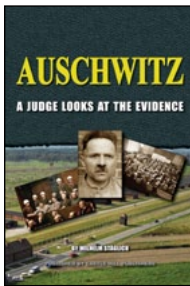


Wilhelm Stäglich, *Auschwitz: A Judge Looks at the Evidence*

Auschwitz is the epicenter of the Holocaust, where more people are said to have been murdered than anywhere else. At this detention camp the industrialized Nazi mass murder is said to have reached its demonic pinnacle. This narrative is based on a wide range of evidence, the most important of which was presented during two trials: the International Military Tribunal of 1945/46, and the German Auschwitz Trial of 1963-1965 in Frankfurt.

The late Wilhelm Stäglich, until the mid-1970s a German judge, has so far been the only legal expert to critically analyze this evidence. His research reveals the incredibly scandalous way in which the Allied victors and later the German judicial authorities bent and broke the law in order to come to politically foregone conclusions. Stäglich also exposes the shockingly superficial way in which historians are dealing with the many incongruities and discrepancies of the historical record.

3rd edition 2015, 422 pp. pb, 6"×9", b&w ill.

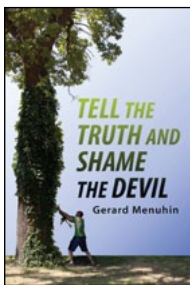


Gerard Menuhin: *Tell the Truth & Shame the Devil*

A prominent Jew from a famous family says the "Holocaust" is a wartime propaganda myth which has turned into an extortion racket. Far from bearing the sole guilt for starting WWII as alleged at Nuremberg (for which many of the surviving German leaders were hanged) Germany is mostly innocent in this respect and made numerous attempts to avoid and later to end the confrontation. During the 1930s Germany was confronted by a powerful Jewish-dominated world plutocracy out to destroy it... Yes, a prominent Jew says all this. Accept it or reject it, but be sure to read it and judge for yourself!

The author is the son of the great American-born violinist Yehudi Menuhin, who, though from a long line of rabbinical ancestors, fiercely criticized the foreign policy of the state of Israel and its repression of the Palestinians in the Holy Land.

4th edition 2017, 432 pp. pb, 6"×9", b&w ill.



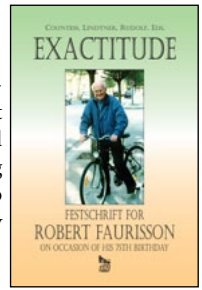
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Robert H. Countess, Christian Lindtner, Germar Rudolf (eds.),

Exactitude: Festschrift for Prof. Dr. Robert Faurisson

On January 25, 1929, a man was born who probably deserves the title of the most courageous intellectual of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century: Robert Faurisson. With bravery and steadfastness, he challenged the dark forces of historical and political fraud with his unrelenting exposure of their lies and hoaxes surrounding the orthodox Holocaust narrative. This book describes and celebrates the man, who passed away on October 21, 2018, and his work dedicated to accuracy and marked by insubmission.

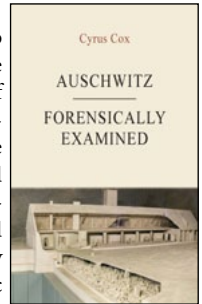
146 pp. pb, 6"×9", b&w ill.



Cyrus Cox, ***Auschwitz – Forensically Examined***

It is amazing what modern forensic crime-scene investigations can find out. This is also true for the Holocaust. There are many big tomes about this, such as Rudolf's 400+ page book on the *Chemistry of Auschwitz*, or Mattogno's 1200-page work on the crematoria of Auschwitz. But who reads those doorstops? Here is a booklet that condenses the most-important findings of Auschwitz forensics into a nutshell, quick and easy to read. In the first section, the forensic investigations conducted so far are reviewed. In the second section, the most-important results of these studies are summarized, making them accessible to everyone. The main arguments focus on two topics. The first centers around the poison allegedly used at Auschwitz for mass murder: Zyklon B. Did it leave any traces in masonry where it was used? Can it be detected to this day? The second topic deals with mass cremations. Did the crematoria of Auschwitz have the claimed huge capacity claimed for them? Do air photos taken during the war confirm witness statements on huge smoking pyres? Find the answers to these questions in this booklet, together with many references to source material and further reading. The third section reports on how the establishment has reacted to these research results.

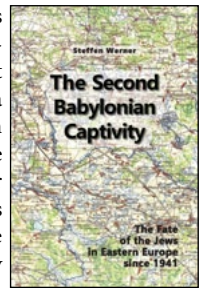
124 pp. pb., 5"×8", b&w ill., bibl., index



Steffen Werner, ***The Second Babylonian Captivity: The Fate of the Jews in Eastern Europe since 1941***

“But if they were not murdered, where did the six million deported Jews end up?” This is a standard objection to the revisionist thesis that the Jews were not killed in extermination camps. It demands a well-founded response. While researching an entirely different topic, Steffen Werner accidentally stumbled upon the most-peculiar demographic data of Byelorussia. Years of research subsequently revealed more and more evidence which eventually allowed him to substantiate a breathtaking and sensational proposition: The Third Reich did indeed deport many of the Jews of Europe to Eastern Europe in order to settle them there “in the swamp.” This book, first published in German in 1990, was the first well-founded work showing what really happened to the Jews deported to the East by the National Socialists, how they have fared since, and who, what and where they are “now” (1990). It provides context and purpose for hitherto-obscure and seemingly arbitrary historical events and quite obviates all need for paranormal events such as genocide, gas chambers, and all their attendant horrors. With a preface by Germar Rudolf with references to more-recent research results in this field of study confirming Werner's thesis.

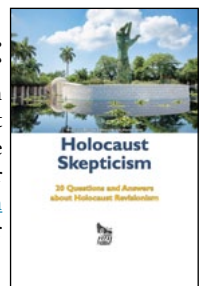
190 pp. pb, 6"×9", b&w ill., bibl., index



Germar Rudolf, ***Holocaust Skepticism: 20 Questions and Answers about Holocaust Revisionism***

This 15-page brochure introduces the novice to the concept of Holocaust revisionism, and answers 20 tough questions, among them: What does Holocaust revisionism claim? Why should I take Holocaust revisionism more seriously than the claim that the earth is flat? How about the testimonies by survivors and confessions by perpetrators? What about the pictures of corpse piles in the camps? Why does it matter how many Jews were killed by the Nazis, since even 1,000 would have been too many? ... Glossy full-color brochure. PDF file free of charge available at www.HolocaustHandbooks.com, [Option "Promotion"](#). This item is *not* copyright-protected. Hence, you can do with it whatever you want: download, post, email, print, multiply, hand out, sell...

15 pp., stapled, 8.5"×11", full-color throughout

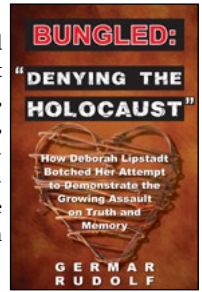


For prices and availability see www.shop.codoh.com or write to: CHP, PO Box 243, Uckfield, TN22 9AW, UK

Germar Rudolf, **Bungled: "Denying the Holocaust"** How Deborah Lipstadt Botched Her Attempt to Demonstrate the Growing Assault on Truth and Memory

With her book *Denying the Holocaust*, Deborah Lipstadt tried to show the flawed methods and extremist motives of "Holocaust deniers." This book demonstrates that Dr. Lipstadt clearly has neither understood the principles of science and scholarship, nor has she any clue about the historical topics she is writing about. She misquotes, mistranslates, misrepresents, misinterprets, and makes a plethora of wild claims without backing them up with anything. Rather than dealing thoroughly with factual arguments, Lipstadt's book is full of *ad hominem* attacks on her opponents. It is an exercise in anti-intellectual pseudo-scientific arguments, an exhibition of ideological radicalism that rejects anything which contradicts its preset conclusions. **F for FAIL**

2nd ed., 224 pp. pb, 5"×8", bibl., index, b&w ill.



Carolus Magnus, **Bungled: "Denying History"**. How Michael Shermer and Alex Grobman Botched Their Attempt to Refute Those Who Say the Holocaust Never Happened

Skeptic Magazine editor Michael Shermer and Alex Grobman from the Simon Wiesenthal Center wrote a book in 2000 which they claim is "a thorough and thoughtful answer to all the claims of the Holocaust deniers." In 2009, a new "updated" edition appeared with the same ambitious goal. In the meantime, revisionists had published some 10,000 pages of archival and forensic research results. Would their updated edition indeed answer all the revisionist claims? In fact, Shermer and Grobman completely ignored the vast amount of recent scholarly studies and piled up a heap of falsifications, contortions, omissions, and fallacious interpretations of the evidence. Finally, what the authors claim to have demolished is not revisionism but a ridiculous parody of it. They ignored the known unreliability of their cherry-picked selection of evidence, utilizing unverified and incestuous sources, and obscuring the massive body of research and all the evidence that dooms their project to failure. **F for FAIL**

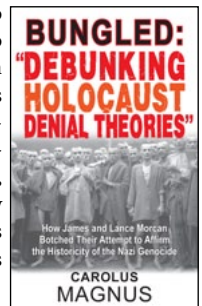
162 pp. pb, 5"×8", bibl., index, b&w ill.



Carolus Magnus, **Bungled: "Debunking Holocaust Denial Theories"**. How James and Lance Morcan Botched Their Attempt to Affirm the Historicity of the Nazi Genocide

The novelists and movie-makers James and Lance Morcan have produced a book "to end [Holocaust] denial once and for all." To do this, "no stone was left unturned" to verify historical assertions by presenting "a wide array of sources" meant "to shut down the debate deniers wish to create. One by one, the various arguments Holocaust deniers use to try to discredit wartime records are carefully scrutinized and then systematically disproven." It's a lie. First, the Morcans completely ignored the vast amount of recent scholarly studies published by revisionists; they didn't even identify them. Instead, they engaged in shadowboxing, creating some imaginary, bogus "revisionist" scarecrow which they then tore to pieces. In addition, their knowledge even of their own side's source material was dismal, and the way they backed up their misleading or false claims was pitifully inadequate. **F for FAIL**.

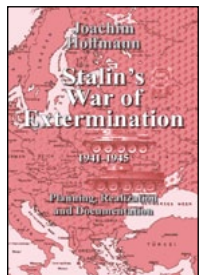
144 pp. pb, 5"×8", bibl., index, b&w ill.



Joachim Hoffmann, **Stalin's War of Extermination 1941-1945**

A German government historian documents Stalin's murderous war against the German army and the German people. Based on the author's lifelong study of German and Russian military records, this book reveals the Red Army's grisly record of atrocities against soldiers and civilians, as ordered by Stalin. Since the 1920s, Stalin planned to invade Western Europe to initiate the "World Revolution." He prepared an attack which was unparalleled in history. The Germans noticed Stalin's aggressive intentions, but they underestimated the strength of the Red Army. What unfolded was the most-cruel war in history. This book shows how Stalin and his Bolshevik henchman used unimaginable violence and atrocities to break any resistance in the Red Army and to force their unwilling soldiers to fight against the Germans. The book explains how Soviet propagandists incited their soldiers to unlimited hatred against everything German, and he gives the reader a short but extremely unpleasant glimpse into what happened when these Soviet soldiers finally reached German soil in 1945: A gigantic wave of looting, arson, rape, torture, and mass murder...

428 pp. pb, 6"×9", bibl., index, b&w ill.



Udo Walendy, *Who Started World War II: Truth for a War-Torn World*

For seven decades, mainstream historians have insisted that Germany was the main, if not the sole culprit for unleashing World War II in Europe. In the present book this myth is refuted. There is available to the public today a great number of documents on the foreign policies of the Great Powers before September 1939 as well as a wealth of literature in the form of memoirs of the persons directly involved in the decisions that led to the outbreak of World War II. Together, they made possible Walendy's present mosaic-like reconstruction of the events before the outbreak of the war in 1939. This book has been published only after an intensive study of sources, taking the greatest care to minimize speculation and inference. The present edition has been translated completely anew from the German original and has been slightly revised.

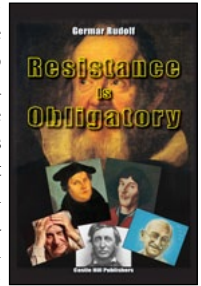
500 pp. pb, 6"×9", index, bibl., b&w ill.



Germar Rudolf: *Resistance is Obligatory!*

In 2005 Rudolf, a peaceful dissident and publisher of revisionist literature, was kidnapped by the U.S. government and deported to Germany. There the local lackey regime staged a show trial against him for his historical writings. Rudolf was not permitted to defend his historical opinions, as the German penal law prohibits this. Yet he defended himself anyway: 7 days long Rudolf held a speech in the court room, during which he proved systematically that only the revisionists are scholarly in their attitude, whereas the Holocaust orthodoxy is merely pseudo-scientific. He then explained in detail why it is everyone's obligation to resist, without violence, a government which throws peaceful dissident into dungeons. When Rudolf tried to publish his public defence speech as a book from his prison cell, the public prosecutor initiated a new criminal investigation against him. After his probation time ended in 2011, he dared publish this speech anyway...

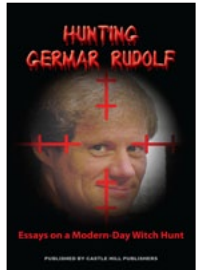
2nd ed. 2016, 378 pp. pb, 6"×9", b&w ill.



Germar Rudolf, *Hunting Germar Rudolf: Essays on a Modern-Day Witch Hunt*

German-born revisionist activist, author and publisher Germar Rudolf describes which events made him convert from a Holocaust believer to a Holocaust skeptic, quickly rising to a leading personality within the revisionist movement. This in turn unleashed a tsunami of persecution against him: loss of his job, denied PhD exam, destruction of his family, driven into exile, slandered by the mass media, literally hunted, caught, put on a show trial where filing motions to introduce evidence is illegal under the threat of further prosecution, and finally locked up in prison for years for nothing else than his peaceful yet controversial scholarly writings. In several essays, Rudolf takes the reader on a journey through an absurd world of government and societal persecution which most of us could never even fathom actually exists...

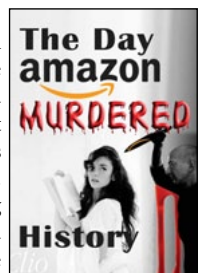
304 pp. pb, 6"×9", bibl., index, b&w ill.



Germar Rudolf, *The Day Amazon Murdered History*

Amazon is the world's biggest book retailer. They dominate the U.S. and several foreign markets. Pursuant to the 1998 declaration of Amazon's founder Jeff Bezos to offer "the good, the bad and the ugly," customers once could buy every book that was in print and was legal to sell. However, in early 2017, a series of anonymous bomb threats against Jewish community centers occurred in the U.S., fueling a campaign by Jewish groups to coax Amazon into banning revisionist writings, false portraying them as anti-Semitic. On March 6, 2017, Amazon caved in and banned more than 100 books with dissenting viewpoints on the Holocaust. In April 2017, an Israeli Jew was arrested for having placed the fake bomb threats, a paid "service" he had offered for years. But that did not change Amazon's mind. Its stores remain closed for history books Jewish lobby groups disapprove of. This book accompanies the documentary of the same title. Both reveal how revisionist publications had become so powerfully convincing that the powers that be resorted to what looks like a dirty false-flag operation in order to get these books banned from Amazon...

128 pp. pb, 5"×8", bibl., b&w ill.



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Thomas Dalton, *Hitler on the Jews*

That Adolf Hitler spoke out against the Jews is beyond obvious. But of the thousands of books and articles written on Hitler, virtually none quotes Hitler's exact words on the Jews. The reason for this is clear: Those in positions of influence have incentives to present a simplistic picture of Hitler as a blood-thirsty tyrant. However, Hitler's take on the Jews is far more complex and sophisticated. In this book, for the first time, you can make up your own mind by reading nearly every idea that Hitler put forth about the Jews, in considerable detail and in full context. This is the first book ever to compile his remarks on the Jews. As you will discover, Hitler's analysis of the Jews, though hostile, is erudite, detailed, and – surprise, surprise – largely aligns with events of recent decades. There are many lessons here for the modern-day world to learn.

200 pp. pb, 6"×9", index, bibl.



Thomas Dalton, *Goebbels on the Jews*

From the age of 26 until his death in 1945, Joseph Goebbels kept a near-daily diary. From it, we get a detailed look at the attitudes of one of the highest-ranking men in Nazi Germany. Goebbels shared Hitler's dislike of the Jews, and likewise wanted them totally removed from the Reich territory. Ultimately, Goebbels and others sought to remove the Jews completely from the Eurasian land mass—perhaps to the island of Madagascar. This would be the “final solution” to the Jewish Question. Nowhere in the diary does Goebbels discuss any Hitler order to kill the Jews, nor is there any reference to extermination camps, gas chambers, or any methods of systematic mass-murder. Goebbels acknowledges that Jews did indeed die by the thousands; but the range and scope of killings evidently fall far short of the claimed figure of 6 million. This book contains, for the first time, every significant diary entry relating to the Jews or Jewish policy. Also included are partial or full citations of 10 major essays by Goebbels on the Jews.

274 pp. pb, 6"×9", index, bibl.



Thomas Dalton, *The Jewish Hand in the World Wars*

For many centuries, Jews have had a negative reputation in many countries. The reasons given are plentiful, but less well known is their involvement in war. When we examine the causal factors for war, and look at its primary beneficiaries, we repeatedly find a Jewish presence. Throughout history, Jews have played an exceptionally active role in promoting and inciting war. With their long-notorious influence in government, we find recurrent instances of Jews promoting hardline stances, being uncompromising, and actively inciting people to hatred. Jewish misanthropy, rooted in Old Testament mandates, and combined with a ruthless materialism, has led them, time and again, to instigate warfare if it served their larger interests. This fact explains much about the present-day world. In this book, Thomas Dalton examines in detail the Jewish hand in the two world wars. Along the way, he dissects Jewish motives and Jewish strategies for maximizing gain amidst warfare, reaching back centuries.

197 pp. pb, 6"×9", index, bibl.



Barbara Kulaszka (ed.), *The Second Zündel Trial: Excerpts from the Transcript*

In 1988, German-Canadian Ernst Zündel was for on trial a second time for allegedly spreading “false news” about the Holocaust. Zündel staged a magnificent defense in an attempt to prove that revisionist concepts of “the Holocaust” are essentially correct. Although many of the key players have since passed away, including Zündel, this historic trial keeps having an impact. It inspired major research efforts as expounded in the series *Holocaust Handbooks*. In contrast to the First Zündel Trial of 1985, the second trial had a much greater impact internationally, mainly due to the *Leuchter Report*, the first independent forensic research performed on Auschwitz, which was endorsed on the witness stand by British bestselling historian David Irving. The present book features the essential contents of this landmark trial with all the gripping, at-times-dramatic details. When Amazon.com decided to ban this 1992 book on a landmark trial about the “Holocaust”, we decided to put it back in print, lest censorship prevail...

498 pp. pb, 8.5"×11", bibl., index, b&w ill.

