

Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka

Holocaust Denial and Operation Reinhard

A Critique of the Falsehoods of Mattogno, Graf and Kues

Holocaust Controversies

2011

A Holocaust Controversies White Paper, First Edition, December 2011

<http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com>

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This Critique contains numerous links to various online resources. Internet links are ephemeral and tend to "decay" as time passes. While there are no solutions that guarantee retrieval of the materials that have become unavailable, the reader can try to retrieve the defunct links with the help of the Wayback Machine - <http://web.archive.org> - that contains cached versions of millions of websites.

Dedicated to
Harry Mazal
(1937-2011)

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Introduction

From the earliest days of their movement, Holocaust deniers have largely centred their arguments on the Auschwitz death camp. Surveying the literature which makes up so-called Holocaust Revisionism¹, the obsession with Auschwitz is undoubtedly one of its defining features. Since the early 1990s, with the advent of the modern world-wide web, Holocaust deniers have taken to the internet to try and argue their case. Until recently, the ensuing online debates between advocates of Holocaust denial and their critics have likewise focused on Auschwitz. In 2005, there was even a formal debate on Auschwitz between several prominent Revisionists and their critics, hosted at the Real Open Debate on the Holocaust forum.²

Around the same time, however, a noticeable shift in Revisionist discourse began to make itself felt. After arguing for so long over Auschwitz, and losing those arguments in open court during the Irving vs Lipstadt libel trial of 2000, deniers began to turn their attention to the so-called Aktion Reinhard camps of Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka. Although these camps had been discussed in passing in many older Revisionist works, it was not until the mid-2000s that they became a veritable fixation for Holocaust deniers. In 2005, sometime National Alliance activist Greg Gerdes created a website to promote a fictitious 'National Association of Forensic Criminologists and Historians' offering a reward for "proof" of the existence of mass graves at the three Reinhard camps - what constituted "proof", needless to say, was entirely up to Gerdes to dictate. The following year, perhaps inspired by the success of the 9/11 conspiracy video 'Loose Change', another American Revisionist, 'denierbud' (aka 'Mike Smith' from California), released the first substantive attempt at a Revisionist YouTube documentary, the 30-part 'One Third of the Holocaust' video. Anti-deniers noticed that their opponents were losing interest in Auschwitz and becoming more obsessed with Treblinka.

Part of the reason for this shift lay in the publication of new Revisionist works on

¹ The designation preferred by Holocaust deniers. We have used this label interchangeably with 'denier' and 'negationist' to refer to those who contest the historical veracity of the Holocaust.

² Archived at <http://rodohforum.yuku.com/forums/10/The-Scholars-Debate>.

Treblinka and Belzec by veteran denier authors Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf. Mattogno, an Italian writer, had been active on the Revisionist scene since the mid-1980s, but remained a relatively obscure figure until his works were more extensively translated from Italian to English from the early 2000s as part of the 'Holocaust Handbooks' series edited by Germar Rudolf. Graf, a Swiss German, had made a name for himself on the denier scene from the early 1990s by virtue of being one of the first Swiss deniers to be prosecuted under anti-racist legislation passed in 1995 by referendum. Unusually for Revisionists, both authors had also visited archives together, and began to research a series of co-authored and single-authored books on different Nazi camps from the mid-1990s onwards. With the demise of so many other veteran Revisionist authors and the suspension of the *Journal of Historical Review* in 2002, Mattogno and Graf have been the 'serious' face of Holocaust denial this century.

The motivation for the following work initially arose out of prior efforts to establish a formal debate between Revisionists and non-Revisionists on the subject of the Aktion Reinhard camps, in a reprise of the 2005 RODOH debate on Auschwitz. In 2006, several of the authors of the present work had been involved in refuting the 'One Third of the Holocaust' video at the Holocaust Controversies blog, a refutation that had gone unanswered from the Revisionist side.³ A formal debate seemed like the fairest way to test denier arguments about the Reinhard camps, and to give the Revisionist side the chance to respond to a considerable number of criticisms that had accumulated of the denier case against the Reinhard camps. It also seemed like the best way to draw a line under what had become a seemingly interminable argument across a number of internet forums, and have it out in the open.

While several non-Revisionists volunteered for this event, and the Revisionist side was initially able to assemble a number of volunteers, the Revisionists were not in the end able to establish a debate team, and within weeks of the initial agreement had to declare themselves inoperative. Included among the invitees to join the Revisionist team were notable deniers such as Thomas Kues, Friedrich Berg, and 'denierbud', as well as lesser lights like Wilfried Heink, but the offer was not accepted by these negationist luminaries. Such a failure certainly puts the lie to the oft-heard demand by Revisionists that they want open debate on the Holocaust, a fact reinforced by the censorship tactics employed at the CODOH Revisionist forum.

³ See the posts under 'Debunking Denierbud videos and writings' at: <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2006/04/quick-links.html>.

Despite the failure of Revisionists to assemble a debate team, the non-Revisionists decided to go ahead with a response to deniers' arguments regarding the Reinhard camps. At the same time, there also exists a gap in Holocaust literature for a new complete history of Aktion Reinhard; much has been researched in the two decades since Yitzhak Arad published his 1987 monograph on the camps. While this critique cannot claim to serve as that new history, it has synthesized a lot of recent scholarship regarding the camps while also making some new connections based on the evidence, some of which has not been discussed in the available literature before.

Moreover, refuting Revisionism was an opportunity for us to expand our historical work on the Holocaust into a larger text than the blog format allows, while synthesizing and developing some ideas already present in those articles. It was also a chance to enjoy the satisfaction of exposing shoddy and deceitful history. We feel that, despite the claims of some commentators that refuting Holocaust denial is a waste of effort, the opportunity to debunk the output of pseudoscholars is one that should be taken for its own sake. It does not mean that we regard deniers as equal debating partners on an intellectual or ethical level; instead, we proceed in the knowledge that deniers operate in ignorance and bad faith.

The most obvious targets for such a project were Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf's *Treblinka* as well as Mattogno's *Belzec*. Some other denier works were included in our analysis and study as well, but it was decided that the primary focus of our efforts should remain on the foremost Revisionist researchers. It was also learned (through the private admission of one of the parties involved) that the lengthy article "Akte Sobibor" was to form the basis of a new work on the Sobibor camp by Mattogno, Graf, and Revisionist writer Thomas Kues (hereafter MGK).⁴ That work appeared midway through the project, but we had been advised by Kues to disregard *Akte Sobibor* and instead save our efforts for the finished and extended study on the camp.⁵

The new work apparently gave members of MGK some added confidence. Since the appearance of *Sobibór*, after a year of silence in regards to the blog, Mattogno has posted a new response⁶, while Kues for the first time openly responded to a few criticisms of his

⁴ Carlo Mattogno, Jürgen Graf, Thomas Kues, *Sobibór: Holocaust Propaganda and Reality*, Washington: Barnes Review, 2010.

⁵ Thomas Kues, e-mail message to authors, April 6, 2010.

⁶ Carlo Mattogno, 'Il comitato di soccorso Zimmerman: Glio Olo-Bloggers In(denigr)azione Nel Web,' Studi di Carlo Mattogno, October 4, 2010, <http://revisionismo.splinder.com/post/23402176/ilcomitato-di-soccorso-zimmerman>; Roberto Muehlenkamp, 'Mattogno freaks out,' *Holocaust Controversies*, 7.10.10, <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2010/10/mattogno-freaks-out.html>.

blogging and journalism for the Inconvenient History blog and journal.⁷ For his part Graf, apparently in the name of “the authors of *Sobibór*”⁸, on two occasions in the past year has challenged the Holocaust Controversies blog crew to write a comprehensive and detailed critique of one of their works, suggesting *Sobibór* as a potential candidate on both occasions.⁹ Unfortunately for Graf and his cohorts, the present writers did not bother to wait for his invitations, nor are we restricting ourselves to just one book. Instead, we took it upon ourselves to critique what we saw as the denier ‘trilogy’ on the Reinhard camps produced by MGK: *Treblinka*, *Belżec*, and *Sobibór*. Where relevant we have also included responses to articles, blog posts, or other publications they and other deniers wrote apart from the three core Reinhard books.

Reading extensively and studiously through MGK’s trilogy and other works was hardly the most pleasant of experiences as a reader. The first thing that became apparent was the unjustifiable number and length of quotations that were used. In *Belżec*, for instance, the main text plus footnotes weighs in at a measly 46,636 words, while at least 18,494 of those words derived from block quotes. Thus 40% of Mattogno’s work was simply quotes, often produced without analysis or comment, or even an explanation on why such lengthy quotes were included.¹⁰ Such an addiction to quotations continued in *Sobibór*, where the reader is often presented with quotes numbering many hundreds of words. Following the introduction to the work, the reader is immediately hit by an extensive quote from the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* (hardly anything but a tertiary source) running some 2,196 words long.¹¹ As the main text and footnotes of *Sobibór* combine to roughly 150,000 words, the first quote already takes up nearly 1.5% of the entire work. The quote percentage of the main work continues to increase as you read on, with archaeologist Andrzej Kola quoted for a combined 3,328 words (2.2%), wartime demographer Eugene Kulischer quoted for 3,298 words (2.2%), Sobibor

⁷ Thomas Kues, ‘Lies and obfuscations about Himmler’s Sobibor directive,’ *Inconvenient History* blog, 22.5.11, <http://www.revblog.codoh.com/2011/05/lies-and-obfuscations-about-himmlers-sobibor-directive/>; Roberto Muehlenkamp, ‘Thomas Kues on ‘Lies and obfuscations about Himmler’s Sobibor directive’,’ *Holocaust Controversies* blog, 25.5.11, <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2011/05/thomas-kues-on-lies-and-obfuscations.html>; Thomas Kues, ‘On the terms Sonderlager and SS-Sonderkommando,’ *Inconvenient History* blog, 27.5.11, <http://www.revblog.codoh.com/2011/05/on-the-terms-sonderlager-and-ss-sonderkommando/>; Roberto Muehlenkamp, ‘Thomas Kues’ takes on the Sonderlager paper dragon,’ *Holocaust Controversies* blog, 27.5.11, <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2011/05/thomas-kues-takes-on-sonderlager-paper.html>; Thomas Kues, ‘Sobibor-Muehlenkamp’s “best explanation”,’ *Inconvenient History* blog, 4.6.11, <http://www.revblog.codoh.com/2011/06/sobibor-muehlenkamps-best-explanation/>; Roberto Muehlenkamp, ‘Thomas Kues tries to defuse the Benda report,’ *Holocaust Controversies* blog, 5.6.11, <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2011/06/thomas-kues-tries-to-defuse-benda.html>.

⁸ Jürgen Graf, e-mail message to authors, 19.10.10.

⁹ Roberto Muehlenkamp, ‘A message from Jürgen Graf,’ *Holocaust Controversies* blog, 24.6.11, <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2011/06/message-from-jurgen-graf-24.html>.

¹⁰ This figure would undoubtedly increase by removing the words included through footnotes.

¹¹ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.15-20.

survivor and historian Jules Schelvis for 1445 words (1%), historian Christopher Browning for a combined 1,388 words (1%), historian Yitzhak Arad for 899 words (0.5%), historians Peter Witte and Stephen Tyas for 661 words (0.5%), archaeologist Yoram Haimi's team's Sobibor publication for 561 words (0.4%). All of those quotes contain other peoples' research, and their extensive length potentially breaches 'fair use', thus violating copyright. Just in those sources alone we reach nearly one-tenth of MGK's word count for their main text including footnotes. No mainstream publisher would ever accept the manuscripts for such books. The number of testimonies and documents quoted by MGK would no doubt substantially increase such a figure, lessening the amount of original work and interpretation that MGK actually produce. They also use an extensive amount of exclamation marks to emphasize their points, a feature usually completely absent from serious scholarship.

The large number of quotes aside, it is still hard to determine many of MGK's actual arguments in their works. Their methodology is scattergun and piecemeal, something highlighted by the publication of one book per Reinhard camp, and largely negationist in approach. The overwhelming majority of the trilogy is dedicated to discussing what did not happen at the various Reinhard camps instead of what did. Such is of course the opposite of proper historiographical methods. Yet even in their negationist arguments one is hard pressed to work out a comprehensive and coherent history. Many witnesses are quoted, and then simply handwaved, ridiculed, or contradicted without any proper explanation about the sources' reliability or general circumstances. Were the witnesses present at the camp but telling lies in their testimony? Were they not present at all? Were they given a script to repeat during interrogations? Is their whole testimony worthless? None of these crucial issues are ever discussed by MGK. They also fail to establish a proper convergence through the different forms of evidence, which leaves their limited attempt to present a positive history when advancing their 'transit camp' thesis largely based on their negationist efforts to read the evidence, and thus renders this thesis completely incoherent.

It also became painfully obvious that MGK are extremely repetitious in their works. Many of the same arguments or points were made across multiple writings in a variety of languages. This will become noticeable throughout the critique as multiple locations for MGK's arguments are pinpointed in the footnotes.

Despite Graf's challenges to us and despite the limited responses from Mattogno and Kues to previous criticisms, faced with the scale of critique, MGK might feel the sudden urge to think up excuses in order to avoid responding to us. Mattogno had earlier chastised Holocaust Controversies as being "held in no account by Holocaust historians" and its writers

“have published nothing in printed form.”¹² Such an excuse came about after Mattogno had already responded to some of our blog posts, and so seems rather desperate.¹³ Our blog has actually been cited several times by Emory University’s Holocaust Denial on Trial website¹⁴, one of the primary online resources on Holocaust denial, as well as in the scholarly Holocaust collection put together by Pavel Polian and Alfred Kokh.¹⁵ We need not boast about the emails and face to face remarks praising the blog we have received from academics; without naming all of the historians who have expressed their appreciation, we are quite certain that they outnumber whatever praise Mattogno himself has ever received from any academics.¹⁶ Mattogno also claimed that none of the blog members ever visited an archive, a library, have seen an original document, or are aware of the documentary evidence of the camps. This is flat out false, as will be seen in the following pages. Finally, although Mattogno says that we “love to hide behind pseudonyms,” only one of the five present writers uses a pseudonym. Moreover, it is grossly ironic for Mattogno to moan about pseudonyms given the aliases used by Mattogno’s own co-author ‘Thomas Kues’, and his former editor Germar Rudolf.¹⁷ The blog does not make a claim to greatness or importance as MGK sometimes do, but instead was established so as to provide a more popular (i.e. not academic) response to the activities of Holocaust deniers.¹⁸ With regard to this primary aim, we consider our blog to be extremely successful.

¹² Mattogno, ‘Il comitato di soccorso Zimmerman.’

¹³ Cf. Carlo Mattogno, ‘Belzec or the Holocaust Controversy of Roberto Muehlenkamp,’ <http://www.codoh.com/gcgv/gcgvhcrm.html>.

¹⁴ Emory University’s Holocaust Denial on Trial website has several Myth/Fact pages to refute specific denier arguments. The Holocaust Controversies blog is cited in the following issues: ‘80,000 People Cannot Be Buried In A Grave The Size of a Henhouse,’ <http://www.hdot.org/en/learning/myth-fact/graves4>; ‘There Are No Mass Graves At Treblinka,’ <http://www.hdot.org/en/learning/myth-fact/graves1>; ‘There are no Mass Graves in Belzec,’ <http://www.hdot.org/en/learning/myth-fact/graves2>; ‘Mass Incineration: Not Enough Room To Crush The Bones,’ <http://www.hdot.org/en/learning/myth-fact/incineration10>; ‘The incineration fires would have needed to (sic) much wood: Part 1 of 2,’ <http://www.hdot.org/en/learning/myth-fact/incinerate5>; ‘The incineration fires would have needed to (sic) much wood: Part 2 of 2,’ <http://www.hdot.org/en/learning/myth-fact/incinerate6>; ‘Where are the teeth that once belonged to that multitude of incineration victims,’ <http://www.hdot.org/en/learning/myth-fact/incinerate8>.

¹⁵ Pavel Polian and Alfred Kokh (eds), *Otritsanie otritsaniia ili bitva pod Aushvitsem. Debaty o demografii i geopolitike Kholokhosta*, Moscow: Tri kvadrata, 2008.

¹⁶ One of the authors has given papers on the history of Holocaust denial at academic conferences in late 2008, June 2009 and September 2010, attracting praise and encouragement from several historians whose work is cited in this critique. It may have escaped MGK’s attention that Holocaust denial is largely now seen as an object for research by political scientists; historians will in the future be most likely to research the history of Revisionism from the perspective of the post-1945 collective memory of Nazi atrocities and the Holocaust at best; or to situate the phenomenon into the context of extreme-right political movements and so-called ‘secondary antisemitism’ after 1945. No historian of our acquaintance takes the historical interpretations advanced by Holocaust revisionism seriously.

¹⁷ For more on Rudolf, see Harry Mazal, ‘What’s in a nym?’ *Holocaust History Project*, <http://www.holocaust-history.org/denial/nym.shtml>.

¹⁸ Nick Terry, ‘Intention and Explanation,’ *Holocaust Controversies*, March 23, 2006, <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2006/03/intention-and-explanation.html>.

If MGK were to employ such a dodge tactic to refuse a response, then they would obviously bear the brunt of their own sword, for none of the three have submitted anything for a peer-reviewed journal (no denier work is peer-reviewed as there simply are no peers for them), nor do any of them have university credentials. Thus, there is no justification that compels academics to automatically take them seriously. Indeed, this critique shows why Revisionist arguments are anything but.

There also was never a great need for the present writers to even bother with MGK's arguments; nor do they consider MGK's work to be so impressive as to demand a mainstream response. A simple survey of the general state of Revisionism is enough to reaffirm to scholars that negationist arguments are unworthy of academic consideration. The most recognized Holocaust denier, David Irving, recanted his earlier gas chamber denial several years ago¹⁹, and has expressly stated his belief that the Reinhard camps were a site of mass murder.²⁰ The newer works by MGK do not even appear to be read by their fellow deniers, with their works very seldom referred to in discussion forums and in other Revisionist articles. Thomas Kues' own blog partner recently admitted of the *Sobibór* book, which has been freely available online for more than a year, "I've not read what Messrs. Mattogno, Graf and Kues have written."²¹ Internet traffic counters also support the simple fact that only a very small number of people are actually reading MGK's work.²² If MGK's own cheerleaders don't even bother with their convoluted work, there is no reason why professional historians should. Indeed the real driving factor behind this critique remained our historical interest in the Holocaust, and the enjoyable experience we had of exposing shoddy and deceitful history.

Reading through the collective works and online comments by MGK, it becomes clear to the reader that the trio possess a high degree of resentment and contempt for those who tell a different history than the one they half-heartedly propose. In many instances

¹⁹ Irving still challenges gassings in some of the crematoria in Auschwitz-Birkenau, but does accept that hundreds of thousands perished in the bunkers.

²⁰ Marissa Brostoff, 'Holocaust Deniers Ranked by Their Standard Bearer's Revisions,' *The Jewish Daily Forward*, 3.10.2007, <http://www.forward.com/articles/11755/>.

²¹ See post #10 by Wilfried Heink (aka 'neugierig') of 27.12.2011 in the RODOH discussion thread "Our Holiday Gift to Mattogno, Graf and Kues: The AR Critique," available at <http://rodohforum.yuku.com/sreply/275828/Our-Holiday-Gift-to-Mattogno-Graf-and-Kues-The-AR-Critique>.

²² The Holocaust Handbooks website, where all of the series' works can be downloaded for free, including new works such as MGK's *Sobibór*, was given a rank of 26,240,705 for internet traffic, according to the web information company Alexa in December 2011. This rank is dwarfed by the rankings of the denier websites CODOH (801,960) and VHO (331,727) as well as our own blog Holocaust Controversies (2,792,586). The website SiteAnalytics, operated by Compete, Inc., cannot even record the number of visitors to the Holocaust Handbooks website as the traffic is so low, suggesting far fewer than 1,000 visits a month, while our blog averages around 7,000 per month.

Holocaust survivors have been blatantly described as liars²³ and stupid.²⁴ Those Germans who admitted to their participation in the gassings have also been described as traitors.²⁵ Such scornfulness is also evident against other researchers and historians of the Holocaust, as their honor is repeatedly questioned²⁶, as is sometimes even their morality.²⁷ The very authors of this critique have also been exposed to personal attacks from the trio, being called armchair critics, cowards, and sophists by Mattogno,²⁸ and liars, disinformers, slanderers and charlatans by Kues.²⁹ For our part we haven't pulled punches in our analysis of MGK, as people who have voluntarily excluded themselves from peer review can't expect the same civility that academics would give to peers. Rather than indulge in hollow name-calling as they do, however, we have in this analysis focused on exposing their fallacies and left the decision on appropriate epithets to our readers. We have also refrained from saying much about the apparent motives of MGK until the conclusion.

Before we get too far ahead of ourselves, the present authors need to address some basic issues such as our general understanding of Aktion Reinhard, a serious review of the current literature on the subject, an explanation regarding the structure of the present critique, as well as personal acknowledgements from the authors. Readers should note two major stylistic differences between this critique and the works of MGK immediately: the structure of the work and the literature review. In their major works, MGK generally follow the odd path of historiography and wartime knowledge, technical matters related to exterminations within the camps, war crime trials, Nazi policy, and then conclude by arguing for the supposed 'real' purpose of the camps discussed.³⁰ More will be said about our structure later in this introduction. What follows, however, is a conventional academic literature review of the Aktion Reinhard camps. While Graf assumes that writing pot shots and snarky comments against memoirists and historians about the camps count as proper literature reviews, he is sadly mistaken.³¹

²³ M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.41, 175; MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.88, 175, 187, 188, 190, 399.

²⁴ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.136.

²⁵ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.188.

²⁶ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.60, 167.

²⁷ Jürgen Graf, 'Was geschah mit den nach Auschwitz deportierten, jedoch dort nicht registrierten Juden?' *Vierteljahreshefte für freie Gesichtsforschung*, 2/2, 2000, pp.140-149. Graf describes historian Georges Wellers as "ein Mann von niedrigem moralischen Niveau."

²⁸ Carlo Mattogno, 'Il comitato di soccorso Zimmerman.'

²⁹ See Thomas Kues' 25.6.10 comments in response to criticism from a non-HC member, available below one of his articles: Thomas Kues, 'Chil Rajchmans Treblinka-vittnesmål – En kritisk granskning,' Mohamed Omar Blog, 22.6.10, <http://alazerius.wordpress.com/2010/06/22/thomas-kues-chil-rajchmans-treblinka-vittnesmal---en-kritisk-granskning/>

³⁰ See M&G, *Treblinka*, as well as MGK, *Sobibór*, for said structures.

³¹ M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.19-46; MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.15-61.

Overview and Historiography of Aktion Reinhard

Between March 1942 and October 1943, nearly 1.4 million Jews were deported to the camps of Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka. The camps were operated under the auspices of the SS and Police Leader (SS- und Polizeiführer, SSPF) Lublin, Odilo Globocnik, and used the codename 'Einsatz Reinhardt' or 'Aktion Reinhard'. German SS men along with companies of Ukrainian auxiliaries trained at the Trawniki camp manned the camps in detachments designated 'SS-Sonderkommando'. The majority of the German staff had previously served in six euthanasia 'institutes' in Germany as part of the T4 organisation named after its headquarters on Tiergartenstrasse 4 in Berlin. There they had helped murder 70,000 'incurable' psychiatric patients using carbon monoxide gas dispensed from cylinders, and to cremate the bodies.

The overwhelming majority of the 1.4 million Jewish deportees to the Aktion Reinhard camps died either en route or immediately after arrival, victims of the Nazi 'Final Solution of the Jewish Question'. A tiny percentage were selected after arrival for forced labour either in the three camps or, more rarely, in nearby labour camps, work which the majority did not survive. A significant number of the deportees died en route while still on the trains from asphyxiation or exhaustion. Many more were shot immediately after arrival for resisting or because they were deemed too weak to walk towards the main killing method at the three camps, gas chambers into which carbon monoxide-laden engine exhaust fumes were piped. At first, the corpses of the victims – from whatever cause – were dragged to mass graves by the Jewish slave labourers who had been temporarily spared execution and buried there; later on, the decomposed and decomposing bodies were exhumed and burned on large open-air pyres along with the corpses of newly arrived victims. In two of the three camps, the slave labourers successfully revolted, breaking out of Treblinka in August 1943 and Sobibor in October 1943.

Most of the victims of Aktion Reinhard were Polish Jews from the Warsaw, Radom, Cracow, Lublin and Galicia districts of the Generalgouvernement as well as the Zichenau and Bialystok districts annexed into Germany proper. But transports arrived directly or indirectly at Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka from Germany, Austria, the so-called 'Protectorate' of Bohemia-Moravia (today's Czech Republic), Slovakia, the Yugoslavian region of Macedonia, the Greek region of Thrace, France, the Netherlands, Lithuania and Belorussia. Virtually none survived. Precisely two out of 17,004 Jews deported from Theresienstadt to Treblinka in the autumn of 1942 were alive at the time of liberation. Among those who did

not survive were three of Sigmund Freud's sisters.³² Of the 34,313 Jews deported from the Netherlands to Sobibor in the spring and early summer of 1943, just 18 survived the war.³³

How do we *know* all this? How did we come to know about Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka? A short answer to this question would go something like this: during the war, reports began to appear within a month of the opening of Belzec that large numbers of Jews were entering the camp and not coming out.³⁴ A growing number of reports reaching the Polish underground state, the Delegatura, as well as Jewish organizations such as the Oneg Shabes archive in Warsaw³⁵, led virtually all within Poland quickly to conclude that Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka were sites of extermination. Hearsay rumours of the use of electricity and steam circulated among the Polish and Jewish population of Poland as well as among German occupation officials and troops, but the majority of the reports in Poland converged on the use of gas chambers. Eyewitness accounts were written at the time by a small number of escaped prisoners.³⁶ The news was communicated in partially distorted form to the outside world. Reports of Belzec and Sobibor reached London along with reports on the Chelmno extermination camp in the annexed territory of the Warthegau, in June 1942.³⁷ A further crucial report, combining information compiled by Oneg Shabes with Polish underground sources, was brought out by the Polish underground courier Jan Karski in November 1942³⁸, and together with other evidence from other regions of Nazi-occupied Europe, led the Allies

³² Alfred Gottwaldt, 'Sigmund Freuds Schwestern und der Tod. Anmerkungen zu ihrem Schicksal in Deportation und Massenmord', *Psyche* 58, 2004, pp.533-543. On these transports see also Miroslav Karny, 'Das Schicksal der Theresienstädter Osttransporte im Sommer und Herbst 1942', *Judaica Bohemiae*, 1988.

³³ Schelvis, *Sobibor. A History of a Nazi Death Camp*, New York, 2007, p.227 n.12: "Earlier publications reported nineteen survivors. However, one of the women, Jeanette de Vries-Blitz, who registered as a survivor with the Red Cross, was actually never at Sobibór according to the Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie (NIOD)."

³⁴ For the most recent and most comprehensive overview on the initial reports of extermination in Poland, see Adam Puławski, *W obliczu Zagłady. Rząd RP na Uchodźstwie, Delegatura Rządu RP na Kraj, ZWZ-AK wobec deportacji Żydów do obozów zagłady (1941-1942)*. Lublin: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, 2009.

³⁵ Samuel Kassow, *Who Will Write Our History? Rediscovering a Hidden Archive from the Warsaw Ghetto*. London, 2007.

³⁶ Most notably the comprehensive account by Treblinka escapee Abraham Krzepicki, given to Oneg Shabes and published after the war as Abraham Krzepicki, 'Treblinka', *Biuletyn ZIH* 43-44, 1962, pp.84-109, translated in Alexander Donat (ed.), *The Death Camp Treblinka*, New York: Holocaust Library, 1979, as well as the account by Yankiel Wiernik, *Rok w Treblince*, Warsaw, 1944, translated as *A Year In Treblinka*, New York, 1944; two more *wartime* (1943-44) accounts by escapees from the Treblinka extermination camp and labour camp have recently been published as Israel Cymlich and Oskar Strawczynski, *Escaping Hell in Treblinka*. New York: Yad Vashem and the Holocaust Survivors' Memoirs Project, 2007.

³⁷ A good summary of this phase is in Dariusz Stola, 'Early News of the Holocaust from Poland', *HGS* 11/1, 1997, pp.1-27. For background on the Polish government-in-exile's reactions to the Holocaust, see David Engel, *In the Shadow of Auschwitz: The Polish Government-in-Exile and the Jews, 1939-1942*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987, and *Facing a Holocaust. The Polish Government-in-Exile and the Jews 1943-1945*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993.

³⁸ David Engel, 'Jan Karski's Mission to the West, 1942-1944', *HGS* 5/4, 1990, pp.363-380; Thomas E. Wood and Stanislaw M. Jankowski, *Karski: How One Man tried to Stop the Holocaust*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1994.

to issue a declaration in December 1942 condemning the Nazi extermination of the Jews.³⁹ Further reports leaked out via exchanges of citizens of Mandate Palestine with interned Germans⁴⁰, Slovakia⁴¹, Sweden⁴² and into Germany.⁴³ By 1943, the Polish underground was tracking the course of the extermination campaign as well as the cover-up attempts of the Nazis at the camps very closely.⁴⁴ Wartime publications outside Nazi-occupied Europe reprinted some of the most crucial early reports, complete with inaccuracies such as misidentifying gas chambers as steam chambers⁴⁵, while other publications, based on more recent reports without the distortion of wartime hearsay and Chinese whispers, spoke of gas chambers⁴⁶, and newspapers reprinted testimonies from Treblinka escapees offering a detailed account of the extermination process.⁴⁷

In the summer of 1944, the sites of the three camps were overrun in the Soviet summer offensive, and survivors began to come out of hiding, joining nearby villagers who had observed the killing and burning on their doorsteps in giving testimonies and statements to Polish and Soviet investigators⁴⁸ as well as Polish and Soviet journalists⁴⁹; these recipients

³⁹ The spread of reports of extermination is well covered in Walter Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret. An Investigation into the Suppression of Information About Hitler's 'Final Solution'*. London, 1980 and Martin Gilbert, *Auschwitz and the Allies*. London, 1981.

⁴⁰ Tuvia Friling, *Arrows in the Dark. David Ben-Gurion, the Yishuv Leadership, and Rescue Attempts During the Holocaust*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2005.

⁴¹ Gila Fatran, 'The "Working Group"', *HGS* 8/2, 1994, pp.164-201.

⁴² Jozef Lewandowski, 'Early Swedish Information about the Nazis' Mass Murder of the Jews', *Polin*, 2000.

⁴³ The most comprehensive account of German knowledge is Bernward Dörner, *Die Deutschen und der Holocaust. Was niemand wissen wollte, aber jeder wissen konnte*. Berlin: Proyläen, 2007.

⁴⁴ Excerpts from the reports, which consisted of individual, weekly/fortnightly and monthly overviews, have been published in Maria Tyszkowa, 'Eksterminacja Żydów w latach 1941-1943. Dokumenty Biura Informacji i Propagandy KG AK w zbiorach oddziału rękopisów BUW', *Biuletyn ŻIH* 4, 1964; Krystyna Marczevska and Władysław Ważniewski, 'Treblinka w świetle Akt Delegatury Rządu RP na Kraj', in: *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce*, XIX, Warsaw 1968, pp.129-164; Jozef Marszałek, 'Rozpoznanie Obozów Śmierci w Belżcu, Sobiborze i Treblince przez wywiad A.K. i Delegatury Rządu Rzeczypospolitej na Kraj. i Armii Krajowej', *Zeszyty Majdanka* t. 14, 1992, pp.39-59; underground press commentary is surveyed in Bogdan Chrzanowski, 'Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w świetle polskich wydawnictw konspiracyjnych', *BZIH* 133-134, 1985, pp.85-104 and in the dissertation by Klaus-Peter Friedrich, *Der nationalsozialistische Judenmord in polnischen Augen: Einstellungen in den polnischen Presse 1942-1946/47*, PhD, Universität zu Köln, 2002.

⁴⁵ Jacob Apenszlak (ed), *The Black Book of Polish Jewry. An Account of the Martyrdom of Polish Jewry under the Nazi Occupation*. New York, 1943.

⁴⁶ Jacob Apenszlak and Moshe Polakiewicz, *Armed Resistance of the Jews in Poland*. New York: American Federation of Polish Jews, 1944.

⁴⁷ *Canadian Jewish Chronicle*, 13.1.1944. The account published here is identical with the information conveyed by David Milgroim, who escaped Treblinka in 1942, via Slovakia in August 1943. See Richard Breitman, 'Other Responses to the Holocaust' in: Richard Breitman, Norman W. Goda, Timothy Naftali and Robert Wolfe (eds), *U.S. Intelligence and the Nazis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, pp.45-72, here p.51

⁴⁸ Excerpts of the Soviet 65th Army's 1944 investigation into Treblinka were published in F.D. Sverdlov (ed), *Dokumenty obviniaout. Kholokost: svidetel'stva Krasnoi Armii*. Moscow, 1996.

⁴⁹ The best known accounts are: Vasily Grossman, *Treblinkii ad*, Moscow 1944 and many subsequent reprints/translations; Ilya Ehrenburg, 'Sobibor', in: Jewish Black Book Committee, *The Black book: the Nazi*

were soon joined by the Central Jewish Historical Commission of Poland⁵⁰, which took down further testimonies and also began the process of historical research by sifting through captured German documents⁵¹ as well as publishing memoirs, narrative accounts and studies in Polish and Yiddish.⁵² The sites – which rapidly resembled moonscapes due to grave-robbing by peasants and others searching for imaginary ‘Jewish gold’ – were inspected in 1944 by the Soviets and examined in greater detail by investigators of the Polish Main Commission in the autumn of 1945. Enormous quantities of ash from cremains as well as other body parts littered the sites, which stank according to visitors who recorded their impressions at the time.⁵³ Utilising eyewitness testimonies, the physical inspections and investigations of the condition of the sites and a certain number of captured German documents, the Polish Main Commission concluded that Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka had been extermination camps and estimated the number of victims at 1,631,000 (Belzec: 600,000; Sobibor: 250,000; Treblinka: 781,000), rejecting earlier overestimates from disoriented survivors that ranged up to 2 or 3 million per camp.⁵⁴ The evidence gathered was then used in certain trials of Nazi officials extradited to postwar Poland. For example the Treblinka investigation was submitted in toto at the trial of Ludwig Fischer, the governor of the Warsaw district.⁵⁵

At the same time as investigations in Poland were under way, eyewitnesses began to give testimonies in Western Europe, some from survivors and some from SS men who had

crime against the Jewish people. New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1946 and also intended to be published in the suppressed Russian-language edition of the Black Book.

⁵⁰ On the Jewish Historical Commission in Poland, see Laura Jockusch, ‘*Collect and Record! Help to Write the History of the Latest Destruction!*’ *Jewish Historical Commissions in Europe, 1943-1953*, PhD, New York University, 2007, pp.146-237; Feliks Tych, ‘The Emergence of Holocaust Research in Poland: The Jewish Historical Commission and the Jewish Historical Institute in Poland (ŻIH), 1944-1989’ in David Bankier and Dan Michman (eds), *Holocaust Historiography in Context: Emergence, Challenges, Polemics and Achievements*, Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2008, pp.227-244.

⁵¹ Samples of both testimonies and documents were published in the three volumes of the *Dokumenty i materialy* series.

⁵² A good overview of the early historiography of the Holocaust in Poland can be found in Natalia Aleksion, ‘Polish Historiography of the Holocaust – Between Silence and Public Debate’, *German History* Vol 22 No 3, 2004, pp.406-432.

⁵³ See Martyna Rusiniak, ‘Treblinka – Eldorado Podlasia?’, *Kwartalnik Historii Żydów* 2/2006, pp.200-211; Jan Tomasz Gross, *Złote zniwa. Rzecz o tym, co się działo na obrzeżach zagłady Żydów*. Krakow: Znak, 2011.

⁵⁴ Summaries of the reports were published in Central Commission for Investigation of German Crimes in Poland (ed), *German crimes in Poland*, Warsaw 1946-7, an English translation of the first two volumes of Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce. Longer versions of reports on individual camps were published as Zdzisław Łukaszkiewicz, *Obóz straceń w Treblince*, Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, Warsaw 1946; On the Polish Main Commission in general, see Andreas Mix, ‘Juristische Ermittlungen und historische Forschung in Polen. Von der "Hauptkommission" zum Institut des Nationalen Gedenkens’ in Benz, Wolfgang (ed), *Wann ziehen wir endlich den Schlussstrich? Von der Notwendigkeit öffentlicher Erinnerung in Deutschland, Polen und Tschechien*. Berlin: Metropol, Berlin, 2004, pp.75-94.

⁵⁵ See the files AIPN NTN 69 and 70. On Polish war crimes trials see in general Bogdan Musiał, ‘NS-Verbrecher vor polnischen Gerichten’, *VfZ* 47, 1999, pp.25-58; Alexander Victor Prusin, ‘Poland's Nuremberg: The Seven Court Cases of the Supreme National Tribunal, 1946-1948’, *HGS*, 24/1, 2010, pp. 1-25.

visited the camps or knew of their purpose. German documentary evidence, not least from the official diary of Hans Frank's Generalgouvernement administration, was examined and conclusively proved that Nazi policy towards Polish Jews was one of extermination, leaving only a minority alive temporarily as slave labourers. The International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg as well as the successor Doctors' Trial⁵⁶ and Oswald Pohl Trial collectively uncovered the evidence of the T4-Aktion Reinhard connection, the involvement of the SS Economic and Administration Main Office (*Wirtschafts- und Verwaltungshauptamt*, WVHA) in the processing of plunder as well as the role of Odilo Globocnik in directing Aktion Reinhard.⁵⁷ The Dutch Red Cross launched a systematic investigation of the fate of the 34,313 Dutch Jews deported to Sobibor, based on the records of the Westerbork transit camp in the Netherlands and the testimonies of the 18 survivors.⁵⁸ Dutch cooperation with the Polish Main Commission over Sobibor was close.⁵⁹

By the end of the 1940s, the evidence for extermination at the Aktion Reinhard Camps was sufficiently conclusive that they could be labeled a historical fact. However, only a fraction of the total evidence had hitherto come to light. Historians began the process of - research, aided on the one hand by the publication of many documents and other sources from the 1940s trials, but hampered by lack of access to the full range of sources – as was universal in an era before anyone had thought of a Freedom of Information Act. Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka were prominently discussed in all of the original pioneering overviews by Leon Poliakov, Gerald Reitlinger, Arthur Eisenbach and Raul Hilberg published from 1951 to 1961.⁶⁰ Indeed, Eisenbach published the first short English-language overview of Aktion Reinhard in 1962.⁶¹ Outside the academy, survivors and members of the *landsmanshaften* of the erased Jewish communities of Poland began to compile so-called

⁵⁶ Ulf Schmidt, *Justice at Nuremberg : Leo Alexander and the Nazi doctors trial*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004; Paul Weindling, *Nazi Medicine and the Nuremberg Trials. From Medical War Crimes to Informed Consent*. Houndsmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

⁵⁷ Stanisław Piotrowski, *Misja Odyla Globocnika: sprawozdania o wynikach finansowych zagłady żydów w Polsce*, Warsaw: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1949.

⁵⁸ Afdelingsbureau Concentratiecampen, *Sobibor*, 's Gravenhage, 1946; Informatiebureau van Het Nederlandsche Roode Kruis, *Sobibor*, 's Gravenhage, 1947; A de Haas, L Landsberger, K Selowsky, *Sobibor : rapport omtrent de Joden, uit Nederland gedeporteerd naar het kamp Sobibor*, 4de verb. en aangev. uitg., 's Gravenhage : Vereniging het Ned. Roode Kruis, 1952.

⁵⁹ See the correspondence in AIPN Ob.60.

⁶⁰ Leon Poliakov, *Breviare de la haine*, Paris, 1951; Gerald Reitlinger, *The Final Solution: The Attempt to Exterminate the Jews of Europe, 1939-1945*, London: Vallentine Mitchell, 1953; Arthur Eisenbach, *Hitlerowska polityka eksterminacji Żydów w latach 1939-1945 jako jeden z przejawów imperializmu niemieckiego*, Warsaw: ZIH, 1953 and *Hitlerowska polityka zagłady Żydów*, Warsaw, 1961; Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of European Jews*, Chicago: Quadrangle, 1961.

⁶¹ Artur Eisenbach, 'Operation Reinhard, Mass Extermination of the Jewish Population in Poland', *Polish Western Affairs* 3, 1962, pp.80-124.

yizker bukher or memorial books, and a number of these memorial books contained the testimonies of Sobibor and Treblinka survivors, as well as copious detail on the deportations, and escapes from deportation trains.⁶²

In contrast to other Nazi camps, the staff of Aktion Reinhard was slow to be apprehended, not least because the camps were closed down and the personnel transferred to other duties long before the end of war, whereas concentration camp staff was generally captured in or near to concentration camps in the spring of 1945. Many, like Christian Wirth, the “inspector” of the three camps, had died during the war. Globocnik had committed suicide in 1945, and key subordinates such as Franz Stangl, the commandant of Sobibor and Treblinka, had assumed false identities and later fled to Latin America. Thus it was not until 1948-1950 that the first SS men who had served at Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka were interrogated about their activities by detectives from the newly created state of West Germany, in the course of the judicial investigation of the T4 euthanasia program, and then put on trial.⁶³ Their Ukrainian auxiliaries, however, had been apprehended and interrogated in ever increasing numbers by Soviet investigators starting in September 1944, but it was not until several decades later that these statements began to be made available in the West.⁶⁴ In 1958, West Germany began to investigate Nazi crimes systematically through the Central Office of State Justice Administrations for the Investigation of National Socialist Crimes (*Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen zur Aufklärung nationalsozialistischer Verbrechen*)⁶⁵, and succeeded in apprehending a significant number of the Aktion Reinhard SS, prosecuting them in a series of trials in the 1960s while also investigating and prosecuting the crimes of other SS and Police commands that had been involved in the deportation side of Aktion Reinhard.⁶⁶ The capture and trial of Adolf Eichmann prompted a further bout of

⁶² On the memorial books see Jack Kugelmass and Jonathan Boyarin (eds), *From a Ruined Garden: The Memorial Books of Polish Jewry*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998, 2nd expanded edition.

⁶³ Dick de Mildt, *In The Name of the People: Perpetrators of Genocide in the Reflection of their Postwar Prosecution in West Germany. The ‘Euthanasia’ and ‘Aktion Reinhard’ Trial Cases*. The Hague, 1996; Michael S. Bryant, *Confronting the “Good Death”: Nazi Euthanasia on Trial, 1945-1953*. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2005.

⁶⁴ Dieter Pohl, ‘Sowjetische und polnische Strafverfahren wegen NS-Verbrechen – Quellen für den Historiker?’ in Andreas Wirsching, Jürgen Finger and Sven Keller (eds), *Vom Recht zur Geschichte. Akten aus NS-Prozessen als Quellen der Zeitgeschichte*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Rupprecht, 2009, pp.132-141.

⁶⁵ Annette Weinke, *Eine Gesellschaft ermittelt gegen sich selbst. Die Geschichte der Zentralen Stelle in Ludwigsburg 1958-2008*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2008; Hans H. Pöschko (ed). *Die Ermittler von Ludwigsburg. Deutschland und die Aufklärung nationalsozialistischer Verbrechen*. Berlin, 2008.

⁶⁶ Adalbert Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager im Spiegel deutscher Strafprozesse*. Munich, 1977; de Mildt, *In the Name of the People*.

publications of evidence of Nazi crimes, including the crimes of Aktion Reinhard⁶⁷, and saw a number of survivors of Sobibor and Treblinka give evidence during the trial.⁶⁸

At the same time, there were a series of trials of Trawniki men in the Soviet Union. From the 1970s, judicial investigations of Aktion Reinhard revolved almost entirely around the Trawniki men, with trials in West Germany of the commandant of Trawniki, Karl Streibel, as well as of a Trawniki man assigned to the Treblinka I labour camp. Trawniki who had emigrated to the United States and Canada began to be investigated from the end of the 1970s, in the US under the auspices of the Office of Special Investigations⁶⁹, and in Canada by a unit of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. These investigations benefited from increased cooperation between the Soviet Union, West Germany and North America, and led to denaturalization proceedings and the deportation of Nazis and their collaborators who had lied while immigrating. The most prominent case involved a Trawniki man, Ivan Demjanjuk, who was denaturalized and deported to Israel, which prosecuted him for his alleged role at Treblinka in 1987, convicting him and sentencing him to death.⁷⁰ This sentence was overturned on appeal due to the emergence of new evidence and the realisation that this was a case of mistaken identity⁷¹; Demjanjuk had not been “Ivan the Terrible” but had in fact been a guard at Sobibor. Returning to the US, Demjanjuk was again denaturalized and deported to Germany in 2009, where he was put on trial in 2010 and convicted in May 2011, almost certainly the last man to be tried for his involvement in Aktion Reinhard.⁷²

Our knowledge of Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka does not, however, rest solely on judicial investigations. From the 1960s onwards, journalists, freelance writers and documentary film-makers portrayed these camps using classic journalistic methods,

⁶⁷ Szymon Datner; Janusz Gumkowski; Kazimierz Leszczynski, *Zbrodnie Adolfa Eichmanna. Cz. 2, Wysiedlana w Zamojszczyźnie. Zagłada Żydów w obozach na Ziemiach Polskich*, Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Prawnicze, 1960.

⁶⁸ See the transcript published as State of Israel, Ministry of Justice (ed), *The Trial of Adolf Eichmann. Record of Proceedings in the District Court of Jerusalem*, Jerusalem 1993, available online at <http://nizkor.org/hweb/people/e/eichmann-adolf/transcripts/>. On the role of witnesses at the Eichmann trial, see Lawrence Douglas, *The Memory of Judgement. Making Law And History In The Trials Of The Holocaust*. London: Yale University Press, 2001, pp.97-182.

⁶⁹ On the early years of the OSI, see Allan Ryan, *Quiet Neighbors. Prosecuting Nazi War Criminals in America*, New York, 1984; on Canadian context see David Matas with Susan Charendoff, *Justice Delayed: Nazi War Criminals in Canada*, Toronto: Summerhill Press, 1987; Howard Margolian, *Unauthorized Entry: The Truth about War Criminals in Canada, 1946-1956*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000.

⁷⁰ For accounts of the trial, see Tom Teicholz, *Ivan the Terrible. The Trial of John Demjanjuk*. London, 1990 as well as the memoir of his defense lawyer, Yoram Sheftel, *Show Trial. The Conspiracy to Convict John Demjanjuk as ,Ivan the Terrible’*. London, 1994.

⁷¹ The most comprehensive examination of the mistaken identity aspect of the case is in Willem A. Wagenaar, *Identifying Ivan. A Case Study in Legal Psychology*. Hemel Hempsted, 1988. Wagenaar was an expert witness for Demjanjuk’s defense.

⁷² Heinrich Wefing, *Der Fall Demjanjuk: der letzte grosse NS-Prozess. Das Leben, der Prozess, das Urteil*. Munich: Beck, 2011; Angelika Benz, *Der Henkersknecht: Der Prozess gegen John (Iwan) Demjanjuk in München*, Berlin: Metropol, 2011.

interviewing survivors and perpetrators.⁷³ The first such journalistic account, by Jean-François Steiner, led to a major public controversy in France in the mid-1960s.⁷⁴ Survivors of the camps also offered their own accounts, producing a series of memoirs and in some cases, engaging in their own historical research.⁷⁵ Survivors were also responsible for editing two important collections of testimonies from Treblinka and Sobibor that appeared in 1979 and 1980 respectively.⁷⁶ Kurt Gerstein, an SS officer who visited Belzec in August 1942 and witnessed a gassing, became a kind of icon in postwar West Germany due to the widespread dissemination of his eyewitness account and the ambiguity of his role as an SS officer responsible for supplying Auschwitz with Zyklon B but who also tried to spread the news of extermination.⁷⁷

From an even earlier stage, historians examined the Aktion Reinhard camps both in their own right and in the context of other aspects of the Holocaust. Documents were uncovered that had remained unknown to the earlier war crimes investigations; contemporary sources ranging from diaries and letters to the contents of Jewish underground archives, the intelligence reports of the Delegatura and Polish underground newspapers were edited and published. Some historians writing on Aktion Reinhard, like Wolfgang Scheffler, had served as an expert witness in the West German trials and produced no comprehensive overview.⁷⁸

⁷³ Jean-François Steiner, *Treblinka*, Paris: Librairie Arthème Fayard, 1966; English edition: Simon and Schuster, New York 1967; Gitta Sereny, *Into That Darkness*. New York, 1974; Richard Rashke, *Escape from Sobibor: The Heroic Story of the Jews Who Escaped a Nazi Death Camp*. New York, 1982. The French filmmaker interviewed Franz Suchomel as well as bystanders and survivors of Treblinka for his documentary 'Shoa'. See Claude Lanzmann, *Shoa*, Paris: Editions Fayard, 1985, translated as *Shoa*, DaCapo Press, New York 1995.

⁷⁴ Samuel Moyn, *A Holocaust Controversy: The Treblinka Affair in Postwar France*. Waltham, Mass.: Brandeis University Press, 2005. Statements from survivors refuting Steiner's misrepresentations and fictionalisations were gathered in Miriam Novitch, *La vérité sur Treblinka*, Paris: Presses du temps présent, 1967.

⁷⁵ Most notably, Jules Schelvis, *Vernichtungslager Sobibór*, Berlin: Metropol, 1998 and Hamburg/Münster, 2003; translated as *Sobibor*, Oxford: Berg, 2008.

⁷⁶ Donat (ed), *The Death Camp Treblinka*; Miriam Novitch, *Sobibor. Martyrdom and Revolt*. New York, 1980.

⁷⁷ Gerstein's testimony was published numerous times in the 1950s and 1960s, with an introduction by Hans Rothfels as 'Augenzeugenbericht zu den Massenvergasungen', *VfZ* 2, 1953, pp.177-194 and in the widely-disseminated brochure *Dokumentation zur Massenvergasung*, Bonn, 1962. For other examples of his iconic status in West Germany, see IfZ Zs 0326. His international fame was the result of Rolf Hochhuth's controversial play *Der Stellvertreter* (The Deputy) in 1963. For 1960s examinations of Gerstein, see Saul Friedländer, *Kurt Gerstein ou l'ambiguïté du bien*, Tournai: Casterman, 1967, translated as *Counterfeit Nazi: the ambiguity of good*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1969; Pierre Joffroy, *L'espion de Dieu. La passion de Kurt Gerstein*, Paris: Robert Laffont, 1969. For modern reexaminations, see Bernd Hey et al, *Kurt Gerstein (1905 - 1945). Widerstand in SS-Uniform*. Bielefeld, 2003; Florent Brayard, 'L'humanité versus zyklon B: L'ambiguïté du choix de Kurt Gerstein', *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire*, No. 73, Jan. - Mar., 2002, pp. 15-25; 'Grasping the Spokes of the Wheel of History'. Gerstein, Eichmann and the Genocide of the Jews', *History & Memory*, 20/1, Spring/Summer 2008, pp.48-88; Valerie Hébert, Kurt Gerstein's Actions and Intentions in the Light of Three Postwar Legal Proceedings. MA thesis, McGill University, 1999; idem, 'Disguised Resistance? The Story of Kurt Gerstein', *HGS* 20/1, Spring 2006, pp. 1-33.

⁷⁸ Ino Arndt and Wolfgang Scheffler, 'Organisierter Massenmord an Juden in Nationalsozialistische Vernichtungslagern', *VfZ* 2/1976, pp.105-135; Wolfgang Scheffler, 'Chelmno, Belzec, Sobibor und Treblinka' in Eberhard Jäckel and Jürgen Rohwehr (eds), *Der Mord an den Juden im Zweiten Weltkrieg. Entschlußbildung*

Others, like the Israeli historian Yitzhak Arad, a survivor of the Wilno ghetto and a sometime director of Yad Vashem, contributed essays and encyclopedia entries on the Aktion Reinhard camps and also produced the first comprehensive monograph of all three camps in 1987.⁷⁹ In the 1980s, writers and historians such as Ernst Klee, Michael Burleigh and Henry Friedlander also explored the connection between the T4 euthanasia program and the Nazi Final Solution.⁸⁰ A variety of brochures and short books from Polish and German authors and historians of varying calibres have appeared in recent decades.⁸¹ Amateur researchers such as Michael Tregenza⁸² as well as historians working largely outside the academy such as Robin O’Neil⁸³ and Stephen Tyas⁸⁴ have played a significant role in discovering new documents or researching camps such as Belzec, while the German private researcher Peter Witte has done important work on Sobibor and the surrounding context of Aktion Reinhard.⁸⁵

At the same time, professional historians have not remained idle, most notably in Poland, where earlier discussions at conferences of the 1980s⁸⁶ have given way to a fairly systematic research effort. A major conference on ‘Aktion Reinhard’ was held in the German Historical Institute in Warsaw in 2002, with the proceedings published in both German and

und Verwirklichung, Stuttgart: DVA, 1985, and ‘Probleme der Holocaustforschung’ in Stefi Jersch-Wenzel (eds), *Deutsche, Polen, Juden*, Berlin: Colloquium-Verlag, 1987, pp.259-281.

⁷⁹ Yitzhak Arad, ‘Aktion Reinhard’ in: Eugen Kogon, Hermann Langbein and Adalbert Rückerl (eds), *Nationalsozialistische Massentötungen durch Giftgas*, Frankfurt am Main, 1983; “Operation Reinhard”: Extermination Camps of Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka’, *Yad Vashem Studies* XVI, 1984, pp.205-239; *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka. The Operation Reinhard Death Camps*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987; entries on Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka in Israel Gutman (ed), *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, New York: Macmillan, 1990.

⁸⁰ Ernst Klee, *“Euthanasie” im NS-Staat: Die “Vernichtung lebensunwerten Lebens”*. Frankfurt: Fischer Verlag, 1983; Michael Burleigh, *Death and Deliverance. ‘Euthanasia’ in Germany 1900-1945*. Cambridge, 1994; Henry Friedlander, *The Origins of Nazi Genocide. From Euthanasia to the Final Solution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995.

⁸¹ As the largest of the three camps, Treblinka has been more extensively written up than either Belzec or Sobibor. See Janusz Gumkowski and Adam Rutkowski, *Treblinka*, Warsaw, 1961-2 (editions in Polish, English, French, German and other languages); Ryszard Czarkowski, *Cieniom Treblinki*, Warsaw, 1989; Manfred Burba, *Treblinka. Ein NS-Vernichtungslager im Rahmen der “Aktion Reinhard”*, Göttingen 1995; Witold Chrostowski, *Extermination Camp Treblinka*, London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2004; Ian Baxter, *The SS of Treblinka*, Stroud: The History Press, 2010. On Sobibor see Zbigniew Sulimerski, *Sobibór. Hitlerowski Obóz Śmierci*, Chelm, 1993.

⁸² Michael Tregenza, ‘Christian Wirth: Inspekteur der SS-Sonderkommandos ‘Aktion Reinhard’,’ *Zeszyty Majdanka*, t.XV, 1993; ‘Belzec - Das vergessene Lager des Holocaust’ in Irmtrud Wojak and Peter Hayes (eds), *“Arisierung” im Nationalsozialismus, Volksgemeinschaft, Raub und Gedächtnis*. Frankfurt am Main, 2000; ‘Belzec – okres eksperymentalny. Listopad 1941 – kwiecień 1942’, *Zeszyty Majdanka*, t. XXI, 2001.

⁸³ Robin O’Neil, ‘Belzec – the ‘Forgotten’ death camp’, *East European Jewish Affairs* 28, 1998, pp.49-69; Belzec: Stepping Stone to Genocide. Hitler’s Answer to the Final Solution, 2004, online at <http://www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor/belzec1/bel000.html>.

⁸⁴ Most notably, by discovering the so-called Höfle telegram giving the 1942 statistics intercepted by Bletchley Park in 1943. See Peter Witte and Stephen Tyas, ‘A New Document on the Deportation and Murder of Jews during ‘Einsatz Reinhardt’ 1942’, *HGS* 15/3, 2001, pp.468-486.

⁸⁵ Witte’s assistance is explicitly acknowledged in the work of Jules Schelvis.

⁸⁶ Szymon Leczycki, ‘Obozy zagłady w Belżcu, Sobiborze i Treblince (Międzynarodowa konferencja, Lublin 22–27 VIII 1987)’, *Państwo i Prawo* 43/2, 1988, pp.130–132; Piotr Madajczyk, Belzec, Sobibór, ‘Treblinka jako obozy natychmiastowej zagłady’, *Przegląd Zachodni* 44/3, 1988, p.191ff.

Polish in 2004, bringing together articles by Polish, German, Israeli and American historians on many aspects of Aktion Reinhard.⁸⁷ By the 2000s, biographies and biographical essays on key perpetrators within Aktion Reinhard, including Odilo Globocnik⁸⁸, the first commandant of Treblinka, Irmfried Eberl⁸⁹, but also more junior SS men⁹⁰, were appearing. The publication of the camps encyclopedia *Ort des Terrors* in the late 2000s combined rather insubstantial entries based on secondary literature for Sobibor and Treblinka, written by the editors Barbara Distel and Wolfgang Benz, with a thorough description of Belzec written by the director of the Belzec Museum, Dr. Robert Kuwałek⁹¹, whose monograph on Belzec appeared in Polish in late 2010.⁹² Kuwałek's counterpart at the Sobibor Museum, Marek Bem, has recently edited a collection of testimonies in Polish⁹³, while Russian researchers have produced an oral history of the Sobibor revolt from accounts of Russian survivors.⁹⁴ A series of articles on the Trawniki have also appeared in academic journals and edited collections, including examinations of the cohort of Trawniki at Belzec by Dieter Pohl⁹⁵ as well as studies by David Rich and Peter Black, researchers who work or have worked for the OSI and its successor office within the US Department of Justice on Trawniki cases.⁹⁶ Work has also been done on the memorialisation of the sites, research which has uncovered further information about the condition of the sites from 1944 to the erection of memorials from the

⁸⁷ Bogdan Musial (ed), "Aktion Reinhardt". *Der Völkermord an den Juden im Generalgouvernement 1941-1944*. Osnabrück: fibre Verlag, 2004; Dariusz Libionka (ed), *Akcja Reinhardt. Zagłada Żydów w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie*. Warsaw: IPN, 2004.

⁸⁸ Joseph Poprzeczny, *Odilo Globocnik, Hitler's Man in the East*. London: McFarland & Company, 2004; Berndt Rieger, *Creator of Nazi Death Camps. The Life of Odilo Globocnik*. London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2007.

⁸⁹ Michael Grabher, *Irmfried Eberl. 'Euthanasie'-Arzt und Kommandant von Treblinka*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2006.

⁹⁰ Jan H. Fahlbusch, 'Im Zentrum des Massenmordes. Ernst Zierke im Vernichtungslager Belzec', in: Andreas Mix (ed), *KZ-Verbrechen. Beiträge zur Geschichte der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager*, Berlin: Metropol, 2007.

⁹¹ Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel (eds), *Der Ort des Terrors. Geschichte der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager. Band 8: Riga-Kaiserwald, Warschau, Vaivara, Kauen (Kaunas), Plaszow, Kulmhof/Chelmo, Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*. Munich: C.H. Beck, 2008.

⁹² Robert Kuwałek, *Obóz zagłady w Belżcu*. Lublin: Wydawnictwo Państwowe Muzeum na Majdanku, 2010.

⁹³ Marek Bem (ed), *Sobibor*. Warsaw: Osrodek Karta. Dom Spotkan z Historia, 2010.

⁹⁴ S.S. Vilenskii, F.B. Gorbovitskii, L.A. Tyorushkin (eds), *Sobibor, Vosstanie v lagere smerti*. Moscow: Vozvrashchenie, 2010.

⁹⁵ Dieter Pohl, 'Die Trawniki-Männer im Vernichtungslager Belzec 1941–1943,' in Alfred Gottwaldt, Norbert Kampe and Peter Klein (eds), *NS-Gewaltherrschaft: Beiträge zur historischen Forschung und juristischen Aufarbeitung*. Berlin: Edition Heinrich, 2005, pp.278–89.

⁹⁶ David A. Rich, 'Reinhard's Foot Soldiers: Soviet Trophy Documents and Investigative Records as Sources', in: John K. Roth & Elizabeth Maxwell (eds), *Remembering for the Future: the Holocaust in an Age of Genocide, Vol. 1 (History)*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001, pp.688-701; Peter Black, 'Die Trawniki Männer und die 'Aktion Reinhard'', in Musial (ed), *Aktion Reinhard*, pp. 309–52, expanded in English as 'Foot Soldiers of the Final Solution: The Trawniki Training Camp and Operation Reinhard', *HGS* 25/1, 2011, pp.1-99.

1960s onwards.⁹⁷ Finally, in the late 1990s and 2000s, archaeologists, most notably Andrzej Kola, have examined the sites of Belzec⁹⁸ and Sobibor⁹⁹ and provided much more information than had been possible with 1940s techniques and the limited resources of devastated postwar Poland, especially on the size and shape of the mass graves, using techniques such as aerial photography and bore-probes. Further archaeological work is planned for Treblinka.¹⁰⁰

The question “how do we know about Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka?” is thus answered: from a variety of *investigations*. Some have been legal, some have been what the Russians call “medico-legal”, i.e. forensic; some archaeological; some journalistic; many historical. Accumulating over time, our knowledge and understanding of the three camps – just as with any historical event – has deepened and been refined progressively. Moreover, this process will not stop any time soon. Quite aside from the prospect of further archaeological research, historians of the Holocaust are exceedingly unlikely to leave the subject of the Aktion Reinhard camps alone. The results of the past two decades of research, especially since the end of the Cold War and the opening up of archives in Eastern Europe, have accumulated faster than they can be synthesised into a single work. The time is ripe for a comprehensive monograph on the Aktion Reinhard camps, since our understanding of both the camps themselves as well as their context has changed considerably in the last quarter-century.¹⁰¹ One or more will undoubtedly be written within the next five to ten years. Bemoaning its absence today would be to commit the single-study fallacy, and to ignore how the exact same issue confronts virtually every topic. Research is ultimately no different to painting the proverbial Forth Bridge: as soon as you have completed one coat, you have to do it all over again.

⁹⁷ Martyna Rusiniak, *Oboz zagłady Treblinka II w pamięci społecznej (1943-1989)*. Warsaw, 2008; cf. also Barbara Buntman, 'Tourism and Tragedy: The Memorial at Belzec, Poland', *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 14/5, 2008, pp. 422-448.

⁹⁸ Andrzej Kola, *Belżec: the Nazi Camp for Jews in Light of Archaeological Sources: Excavations 1997-1999*, Warsaw and Washington: The Council for the Protection of Memory of Combat and Martyrdom and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2000.

⁹⁹ Andrzej Kola, 'Badania archeologiczne terenu byłego obozu zagłady Żydów w Sobiborze', *Przeszłość i Pamięć. Biuletyn Rady Ochrony Pamięci Walk i Męczeństwa*, 4, 2001, pp.115-122; Isaac Gilead, Yoram Haimi, Wojciech Mazurek, 'Excavating Nazi Extermination Centres', *Present Pasts*, 1, 2009, pp.10-39. Further excavations at Sobibor have been undertaken since the archaeological work written up in these publications was completed, both by the Gilead-Haimi-Mazurek team and by the director of the Sobibor Museum, Marek Bem.

¹⁰⁰ By Caroline Sturdy Colls, Birmingham:

<http://www.ideaslab.bham.ac.uk/Talent%20bank%20page/index.htm>.

¹⁰¹ Dieter Pohl, 'Massentötungen durch Giftgas im Rahmen der "Aktion Reinhardt". Aufgaben der Forschung,' in Günter Morsch, Bertrand Perz, Astrid Ley (eds), *Neue Studien zu nationalsozialistischen Massentötungen durch Giftgas. Historische Bedeutung, technische Entwicklung, revisionistische Leugnung*. Berlin: Metropol, 2011, pp.185-195.

Sources

The achievements of historians, journalists and judicial investigators in reconstructing events at Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka are all the greater because of the extensive destruction of documents by the Nazis, the dismantling of the camps and attempted erasure of the crimes, and the small number of survivors who escaped the camps and lived to testify. In the case of the Aktion Reinhard camps, the destruction of files is a documented fact, as we know from Odilo Globocnik's final report on Aktion Reinhard to Heinrich Himmler.¹⁰² The obliteration of records extends to many institutions who took part in Aktion Reinhard by organising deportations to the camps. Of more than 100 police battalions formed in the Second World War by Nazi Germany, there are extant war diaries for only a handful.

Nonetheless, historians and other investigators have been able to piece together the course of events from a wide variety of sources, and this critique has endeavoured to use as many as possible. Just as with the literature cited in what follows, the sources used in this critique were examined by several of the authors over a period of many years, largely while researching other, more conventional scholarly projects. By contrast, MGK's knowledge and use of the potentially available sources leaves much to be desired, and as will be shown repeatedly in what follows, their 'trilogy' largely consists of a string of omissions.

Although Holocaust deniers have frequently sought to cast doubt on the integrity of the documents submitted to the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg as well as the twelve successor trials, and many have tried to claim that key documents in these collections are forgeries¹⁰³, it is striking that MGK make extensive use of the Nuremberg documents in their work. We have likewise made use of Nuremberg documents, both from their published versions¹⁰⁴ and from unpublished copies held at the Imperial War Museum annex in Duxford, Cambridgeshire as well as the US National Archives in College Park, MD. Additional examples can also be found online on websites such as the Harvard Law School Library Nuremberg Trials project.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Globocnik an Himmler, 5.1.1944, 4024-PS, IMT XXXIV, p.71.

¹⁰³ Most notably, Carlos W. Porter, *Made in Russia: The Holocaust*, Uckfield: Historical Review Press, 1988; updated online version <http://www.cwporter.com/intro.htm>.

¹⁰⁴ Namely, the 'Blue' Series of 42 volumes of the proceedings of the International Military Tribunal, or main Nuremberg Trial, with English language transcript and documents mostly in the original language, cited in this critique as IMT; the 'Red Series' of 11 volumes of Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, cited as NCA, offering English translations of documents submitted as well as unused at IMT; and the 'Green' Series of 15 volumes presenting excerpts from the 12 US National Military Tribunal 'successor trials', cited as NMT. Scanned PDF copies of all three series can be downloaded from the Library of Congress' Military Legal Resources section at http://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/Military_Law/Nuremberg_trials.html.

¹⁰⁵ http://nuremberg.law.harvard.edu/php/docs_swi.php?DI=1&text=overview .

Many documents submitted at the 13 Nuremberg trials were resubmitted in evidence at the trial of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem, along with other documents identified and copied from a variety of archives by the Israeli prosecution, in all nearly 1,500 documents.¹⁰⁶ While a copy of the transcript has been available on the Nizkor website for many years¹⁰⁷, it is only recently that the Israeli Ministry of Justice scanned and uploaded copies of almost all of the documents to its website.¹⁰⁸ Hitherto, copies of the microfiched documents were the preserve of larger libraries or research archives such as the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Together with the Nuremberg documents, the Eichmann trial documents can be considered part of the basic knowledge that serious researchers of the Holocaust must master.¹⁰⁹ Since Mattogno makes use of the Eichmann trial as well as the Nuremberg documents, we presume that there need be no dispute that they are genuine, and will thus ignore one of the more familiar trolling routines used by deniers online.

As serious researchers know, the originals of the Nuremberg documents were for the most part reintegrated into the respective document collections, microfilmed by the US National Archives and Record Administration, and then restituted to the Federal Republic of Germany from the 1950s onwards, where they were archived in the Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, since moved to Berlin-Lichterfelde, the Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, and the Foreign Office archive (Politische Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes) in Berlin.¹¹⁰ Both the Captured German Documents collection at NARA¹¹¹ as well as the restituted files in the German archives have provided several generations of historians with literally decades of research, yet curiously MGK have virtually ignored these collections, citing from just three files from the Bundesarchiv and Foreign Office archive, a number so low that the suspicion is created that they – or rather Mattogno, who it is that cites these files – simply plundered the references from a secondary source, or were mailed a photocopy by Udo Walendy some time back in the day, without ever having seen the document in its original file context.

Our research using the Bundesarchiv and NARA files was first conducted for scholarly projects mainly on the Holocaust in the Soviet Union as well as Nazi occupation

¹⁰⁶ State of Israel, Ministry of Justice, *The Trial of Adolf Eichmann. Record of Proceedings in the District Court of Jerusalem*, Jerusalem 1993, 7 volumes.

¹⁰⁷ <http://nizkor.org/hweb/people/e/eichmann-adolf/transcripts/> .

¹⁰⁸ <http://www.justice.gov.il/MOJHeb/ReshimatEichman/Guyde.htm>.

¹⁰⁹ Nuremberg and Eichmann trial documents are cited by code number, thus for IMT documents –PS, EC-, L0 R-, RF-, and USSR-; for NMT documents NO-, NG-, NI-, NOKW-; and for Eichmann trial documents T/- .

¹¹⁰ For an overview of this process, see Josef Henke, 'Das Schicksal deutscher zeitgeschichtlicher Quellen in Kriegs- und Nachkriegszeit. Beschlagnahme – Rückführung – Verbleib', *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 30. Jahrg., 4. H. (Oct., 1982), pp. 557-620.

¹¹¹ RG 242; cited as NARA T-collection/microfilm roll number/frame.

policy in the Soviet Union, subjects which MGK purport to master when they advance their 'resettlement thesis'. Yet from a very early stage of his research, one of the authors of this critique began collecting documents relating to the Holocaust in Poland 'en passant', often because the relevant files were adjacent, or documents could be found in the same files. More recently, files relevant to the Holocaust in Poland have been sought out over the course of multiple research trips to Berlin and Washington, DC,¹¹² along with the personnel files of SS officers from the Berlin Document Center collection. Originally administered by the US Army in Berlin, the collections have since been restituted to reunified Germany, after the entire collection was microfilmed for the US National Archives.¹¹³ Other than quoting indirectly from a tiny handful of documents from these personnel files transcribed in published primary source collections, MGK have totally ignored the crucial BDC files.

We do not pretend to have exhausted all the research possibilities offered by the BDC, Bundesarchiv or NARA and believe that although the primary collections of captured Nazi documents are very well known to professional historians, new connections and links will continue to be made as these files are examined and re-examined. The same can also be said for the records of West German war crimes trials used in this critique. These trial sources can be divided into several categories. Of central significance for any study of Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka are the pre-trial investigations opened up by the Zentrale Stelle at Ludwigsburg into the three camps directly.¹¹⁴ From what we can discern, MGK have hitherto cited only from the investigation of Josef Oberhauser in connection with Belzec, and rely exclusively on citations from secondary sources for their knowledge of the investigations into Sobibor and Treblinka.¹¹⁵ The following critique cites from all of these investigations, utilising an extensive collection of copies made available privately to one of the authors as well as from copies made available by Jules Schelvis, whose research files have been archived at the Nederlands Instituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie, and which have been recently scanned and put online.¹¹⁶ Schelvis' research files contain not only copies from the Ludwigsburg investigations, but also from many of the trial proceedings archived in State Attorney's

¹¹² Although original files at the Bundesarchiv were consulted, the USHMM holds microfiche copies of many Bundesarchiv collections, while the same documents are of course microfilmed in the NARA collections, and copied in the Nuremberg and Eichmann trial documents, with the result that some documents have been seen by the authors five or six times in different locations.

¹¹³ Copies were consulted in NARA and are cited as NARA-BDC, SS-OA (Offiziersakte), name of officer.

¹¹⁴ Now the Bundesarchiv Ludwigsburg, cited as BAL.

¹¹⁵ Mattoigno has also used a few stray citations from euthanasia investigations.

¹¹⁶ NIOD 804, at the time of writing accessible at

<http://www.archieven.nl/en/search?miview=inv2&mivast=0&mizig=210&miadt=298&micode=804>.

offices and State archives across Germany.¹¹⁷ We presume that since the publication of the English-language edition of *Sobibór* last summer, MGK may well have become aware of this online source collection, but we have the sad duty to inform them of more bad news, which is that SS men, Trawniki and survivors of the Aktion Reinhard camps also gave evidence in the course of many other investigations and trials archived in Ludwigsburg or regionally, including the investigation and trial of Karl Streibel, commandant of Trawniki; of Ludwig Hahn, the Commander of Security Police (*Kommandeur der Sicherheitspolizei*, KdS) in Warsaw; and of many other key officers involved in Aktion Reinhard. Although one of the authors of the critique is currently researching these trials for serious scholarly purposes, we have not included even a fraction of the total potential evidence that is available from these cases, and have restricted ourselves to citing a few sources to refute MGK on specific points or to demonstrate the breadth and range of this material.

To the extent that Mattogno and Graf have made any kind of name for themselves in the negationist community, it is because of their research trips to East European archives, most especially the former ‘Special Archive’¹¹⁸ and State Archive of the Russian Federation¹¹⁹ in Moscow, searching out materials on Auschwitz, in particular the massive collection of files of the Auschwitz Central Construction Office (*Zentralbauleitung*, ZBL). It is quite apparent that whatever files they cite from Polish and Russian archives have been largely scraped together from brief moments on research trips for other purposes. Indeed, of the non-judicial files cited across the ‘trilogy’, 11 relate to Auschwitz while 7 relate to other concentration camps, leaving only 7 that ostensibly relate directly to Belzec or Treblinka along with 18 to the Galicia and Lublin districts and 4 to the Lodz ghetto. 11 more files from the Moscow archives are quoted in relation to the Holocaust in the Soviet Union, while one file purportedly cited from the National Archives of Belarus is seemingly plagiarised from secondary sources.¹²⁰

Measured against the research efforts of serious historians, all these figures are risible. We see no reason why any rational person would prefer to take seriously the word of Mattogno on a subject like the Lodz ghetto when he has across all his writings cited from

¹¹⁷ Most often denoted as StA for *Staatanwaltschaft* or *Staatsarchiv*.

¹¹⁸ Now RGVA.

¹¹⁹ GARF.

¹²⁰ NARB 378-1-784. This file was quoted wrongly in the first edition of M&G, *Treblinka*, p.200. Soviet archives organised files according to fond (collection), opis (finding guide), and delo (file), which can be cited either as f.378, o.1, d.784, the standard mode of citation for Russian, Ukrainian and Belarusian historians, or as 378-1-784, more commonly used by western historians. Like MGK we have used the latter mode of citation in this critique.

seemingly only 8 files¹²¹, whereas there are several monographs on the same topic. Nor would any rational person think that Mattogno had grasped the context of the Holocaust in the Galicia or Lublin districts better than the numerous researchers who have systematically surveyed all the relevant files and woven them into a coherent narrative.

Our own research into the materials from East European archives have included research trips to some of the relevant archives as well as the exploitation of the remarkable collection of microfilmed and microfiched copies available at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The sources consulted include among other collections, files of the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission investigations into several of the Aktion Reinhard camps, as well as copies of Red Army investigative reports from the Russian military archive at Podolsk. Of particular significance and importance to the subject of this critique are materials from a variety of archives relating to the Trawniki men. These include contemporary personnel records and related German documents as well as the proceedings of several hundred postwar Soviet investigations and trials of Trawniki serving at Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka as well as other stations in the Lublin district. Among the most important collections are copies of trials from the archives of the Ukrainian SBU¹²², which inherited the Soviet-era records after the collapse of communism in 1991 and which are now available on microfilm at USHMM. As with the records of West German war crimes investigations and trials, these sources are being examined in the course of conventional scholarly research conducted by one of the authors of this critique, and only a tiny fraction of the total volume of such evidence is included here.

It is striking that in all of their work, MGK consistently act as if the only source that can be considered a 'document' is a German report. Yet such an attitude is quite frankly the purest gibberish when measured against all known standard practices of historical scholarship ever since they were codified in the 19th Century. Rankeanism has only one rule, namely to prefer where possible a source that is closer to the events, either in terms of chronology or proximity. Medievalists, after all, are often forced to rely on sources from long after the fact, written down by commentators who were nowhere near the events they describe. Military historians do not have a problem in making use of the records of both sides in a war or conflict. Many historians of the Holocaust have since the 1940s made good use of non-German contemporary documents, most especially the written records of Jewish councils and

¹²¹ Counting across Carlo Mattogno, *Chelmno: A German Camp in History and Propaganda*. Washington, D.C: Barnes Review, 2011; Carlo Mattogno, "Das Ghetto von Lodz in der Holocaust-Propaganda," *Vierteljahres für freie Geschichtsforschung*, 7/1 (2003), pp.30-36.

¹²² Cited as Archive of the SBU (ASBU) for the relevant oblast, eg ASBU Dnepropetrovsk.

the Polish underground. Such sources are indisputably *documents*, and we have made use of some of them in what follows. The majority come from published primary source collections, which now include extensive series of publications of materials from the archives of the Polish Delegatura as well as the Oneg Shabes or Ringelblum archive, but also now such things as translations of the records of the Bialystok Jewish Council. We have also made use of a number of files from the Public Record Office in Kew, London, including not only some wartime reports from occupied Poland, but also the important collection of the so-called Police Decodes, German signals traffic intercepted and decoded by Bletchley Park. A small number of unpublished sources from the Polish underground have also been utilised, along with a variety of contemporary printed sources.

In such a well-researched field as the history of the Holocaust, it is of course unsurprising that researchers can rely on several generations' worth of published primary sources, including collections of documents, testimonies, letters and diaries. MGK, too, make use of such published sources, but the number of omissions is striking. Like serious historians, Mattogno for example makes extensive use of well-known published documentary collections such as the 1946 volume *'Akcje i wysiedlenia'* or the 1960 collection *Faschismus-Getto-Massenmord*, published by the Central Jewish Historical Commission and its successor, the Jewish Historical Institute in Poland, respectively.¹²³ Strangely absent, however, are such important published sources as the Goebbels diaries or Himmler's appointments diary for 1941/42, while absolutely vital sources such as the published minutes of conferences in Hans Frank's Generalgouvernement administration are almost entirely omitted, especially for the crucial years of 1942-3.

The published memoirs of survivors of Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka must also be considered primary sources, and both MGK as well as ourselves have unsurprisingly referred to them. However, we note with bemusement that their need to cite from memoirs is perhaps greater than ours, especially in their desperate attempt to scratch out any evidence for their resettlement thesis by quote-mining eyewitness accounts. Virtually all the memoirists left earlier accounts, whether in yizkor (memorial) books, postwar investigations or in trials, and thus we have regarded memoirs as simply another source alongside these. Since Mattogno and Graf began writing on the Aktion Reinhard camps in 2002, a number of memoirs have

¹²³ Józef Kermisz (ed), *Dokumenty i Materiały do dziejów okupacji niemieckiej w Polsce, Vol. II: "Akcje" i "Wysiedlenia"*, Warsaw-Lodz-Krakow 1946; Tatjana Berenstein et al (eds), *Faschismus - Getto - Massenmord. Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des Zweiten Weltkrieges*. Frankfurt am Main, 1961. Together, these two volumes provide 24 out of 140 references for Chapter 8 of M&G, *Treblinka* (two are improperly credited).

been published, either from manuscripts written earlier or as the final accounts of the survivors offered in the twilight of their lives. This has generated the amusing spectacle of M&G's younger colleague Thomas Kues frantically penning a series of 'reviews' of the newly appeared memoirs, always analysing them in virtually splendid isolation and often contrasting them against a strawman version of the history of the three camps.¹²⁴ Although several more recent memoirs are analysed in *Sobibór*¹²⁵, unfortunately there are still more than have appeared which have gone uncommented by MGK¹²⁶, an observation which can also be made about several recent works which republish obscure testimonies from Aktion Reinhard camp survivors¹²⁷ or which analyse similarly obscure testimonies from yizkor books.¹²⁸

Our approach to the sources, as will be seen in the forthcoming chapters of this critique, is undoubtedly diametrically opposed to the method, if it can be called that, used by MGK in either gathering or analysing sources. The preceding review of sources has made little distinction between documents and eyewitness testimonies, because from a research perspective there is none; both are encountered in archival files, and any historian who still possesses a shred of their sanity is not going to ignore several thousand pages of material which might be found in a single postwar investigation. This does not mean, of course, that when weighing and evaluating sources, we ignore the differences between types of sources; it does mean, however, that we refuse to fetishise certain types of source over others.

In our experience, debates with Holocaust deniers invariably involve a combination of rhetorical strategies whereby a denier will find a nit to pick in a witness testimony, then be corrected, then suddenly demand a "document", as if history could ever be made to vanish into a puff of smoke because a particular type of source was missing; and then when corrected again will bring out the argument of last resort, and start demanding "physical evidence." The sorry spectacle thus inevitably ends with the denier moaning "*mass graves, mass graves*" over and over, as if they in the grip of a particularly tedious form of Tourette's Syndrome.

¹²⁴ Israel Cymlich and Oskar Strawczynski, *Escaping Hell in Treblinka*. New York: Yad Vashem and the Holocaust Survivors' Memoirs Project, 2007; Chil Rajchman, *Je suis le dernier Juif. Treblinka (1942-1943)*. Paris, 2009; see Thomas Kues, 'Chil Rajchman's Treblinka Memoirs', *Inconvenient History* 2/1.

¹²⁵ E.g. Kalmen Wewryk, *To Sobibor and Back: an Eyewitness Account*. Włodawa, Muzeum Pojezierza Łęczyńsko Włodawskiego, 2008; Dov Ber Freiberg, *To Survive Sobibor*, Lynnbrook, NY: Gefen Books, 2007.

¹²⁶ Philip and Joseph Bialowitz, *Bunt w Sobiborze*. Warsaw: Wydawnictwo 'Nasza Księgarnia', 2008.

¹²⁷ Mark S. Smith, *Treblinka Survivor. The Life and Death of Hershl Sperling*. Stroud: The History Press, 2010.

¹²⁸ Yoram Lubling, *Twice-dead. Moshe Y. Lubling, the Ethics of Memory, and the Treblinka Revolt*. New York: Peter Lang, 2007.

Leaving aside the shocking ineffectiveness of such a rhetorical strategy – because of the immense ennui it causes when the denier goes into autorepeat – this negationist approach to evidence, namely to refuse to consider the sum total of evidence together, is not only nowhere to be found in any known methodology or philosophical consideration of evidence, but also expects the mark targeted for Revisionist rhetorical persuasion to forget all the evidence they might ever have come across when reading about the subject. For many of us, it would be extraordinarily difficult to forget Stangl’s confessions or the filmed admissions of Suchomel, so naturally we take them into consideration even when the negationist insists on repeating, over and over, that there is “no document” which might “prove” gas chambers at Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka. Well, duh. The files went up in smoke.

It is our contention in this critique that such a hyperpositivist demand is intellectually bogus, and reverses the normal chain of reasoning from the general to the particular. Indeed, one can quite easily invoke the much-vaunted Revisionist “hierarchy of evidence”¹²⁹ to demonstrate this point with a simple thought experiment: would the world regard Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka as Nazi extermination camps where hundreds of thousands of Jews were murdered if there were no surviving witnesses? The answer is an unequivocal yes. We possess more than sufficient evidence from German documents to indicate that large numbers of Jews were deported to the camps, that the Nazis in the Generalgouvernement were exterminating the Jews, and essentially no evidence to suggest that large numbers of Jews came out of the camps. Add in the physical evidence of the condition of the sites after liberation, with their vast piles of ash and cremains, as well as the results of archaeology since then, and the conclusion any normal person would reach by common-sense inference is inescapable. By analogy with other documented Nazi killing sites, as well as the documented involvement of the mass murder experts from T4 in Aktion Reinhard, the rational observer would even be able to conclude – from the German documents alone – that gas was the most probable method. Such a conclusion would harden into a greater certainty when the evidence of *contemporary documents* from Polish and Jewish sources is taken into consideration.

Far from relying “exclusively on eyewitness testimonies”¹³⁰, the acceptance of mass murder at Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka by everyone other than the tiny minority of

¹²⁹ Germar Rudolf, *Lectures on the Holocaust. Controversial Issues Cross Examined*, Chicago: Theses and Dissertations Press, 2005, pp.190-2, also repeated in the 2nd edition (Washington, DC: The Barnes Review, 2010), pp.134-8; Jürgen Graf and Carlo Mattogno, *Concentration Camp Majdanek: A Historical Technical Study*, Chicago: Theses & Dissertations Press, 2003, p.239.

¹³⁰ This is a kind of incessant refrain in the ‘trilogy’: cf. Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf, *Treblinka: Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, Chicago: Theses & Dissertations Press, 2004, pp.19, 34, 164, 299;

negationists is very much grounded in the reasoning outlined above. That the eyewitnesses might disagree over the exact make and type of the engine is quite frankly irrelevant when set against the totality of the documentary and physical evidence. In the game of scissors, paper and stone deniers want to play, errors in witness evidence cannot be used to refute documents, but this is seemingly the reasoning they want us to follow.

Nor do we accept the piecemeal isolation of evidence that passes for MGK's method of source criticism. In our experience, online denier trolls are largely incapable of discussing more than one piece of evidence at a time. MGK may object to this remark on the grounds that they are not Greg Gerdes, but on closer inspection their oeuvre largely disintegrates into a series of decontextualised misreadings of individual sources ripped out of their context by omitting or ignoring other pieces of evidence that confirm, corroborate or converge with the source in question. The ultimate test for any piece of historical evidence, in our opinion, is whether it can be used to construct a historical narrative or historical explanation. A simple litmus test for any claim about the past (whether 9/11, the Cold War, the Nazis, Holocaust or anything else doesn't matter) is whether the claim can be presented in narrative form, telling a coherent story *which utilises as much of the available evidence as possible*. In this regard, MGK's approach is a miserable failure, as none of their works are written in anything like conventional narrative form, and not infrequently violate simple chronological order in order to construct their attempt at a counternarrative. We do not doubt that MGK believe they are presenting a story of some kind, but we will cast more than severe doubt on their ability to *justify* their story in the chapters that follow this introduction.

Structure of the Critique

Our structure is the opposite of MGK's. Whereas they begin with minutiae and nitpicks and only discuss 'the big picture' (policy) in the latter phases of each book, we follow the only logical and acceptable academic convention, which is to start with overall context before analyzing the camp structures and killing methods. This context fills chapters 1-4 of the work, which establish overwhelming proof of decisions to exterminate Jews before we even move inside the camps proper. This proof would exist independently of the perpetrator, survivor and bystander witnesses that we present in chapters 5-8; but those witnesses would also constitute independent proof by themselves, because there is simply no possibility that any power could ever co-ordinate so many testimonies across so many times and places

Carlo Mattogno, *Bełżec in Propaganda, Testimonies, Archeological Research, and History*, Chicago: Theses & Dissertations Press, 2004, pp.69, 94; MGK, *Sobibór*, pp. 22, 39, 76, 177, 289, 392.

whilst silencing all those who would have witnessed resettlement or who would have participated in the hoax that is integral to all denier arguments.

The detailed structure develops as follows. Chapter 1, written by Nick Terry, examines the failure of MGK to come to grips with the ‘discovery process’; that is, the process by which Aktion Reinhard became known to the outside world. We show how MGK are unable or unwilling to comprehend how wartime knowledge was acquired and disseminated, and how the crimes were investigated and prosecuted after the war. Chapter 2, by Jonathan Harrison, discusses MGK’s unwillingness to confront the gradual radicalization of Nazi policy from March 1941 to July 1942, which they evade by turning historians of the process into strawmen and by imposing nonsensical thresholds, such as the insistence that a final, inflexible Hitler decision to kill all Jews (fit and unfit) must be proven to have been made by the end of September 1941 with no allowance for radicalization thereafter.

Nick Terry’s chapter 3 places the history of Aktion Reinhard into the context of Nazi policy in Poland and shows how and why the Lublin region was finally chosen as the region in which so many Jews would be killed. It exposes MGK’s manipulation and incomprehension of documents relating to the evolution of the program. Chapter 4, primarily written by Jason Myers, demonstrates that Jews could not have been resettled in the East by showing the economic and political realities that pertained in the Nazi-occupied USSR. It also exposes MGK’s double-standards of evidence, as they rely on hearsay witnesses who come from the same survivor population whose testimonies MGK dismiss when they describe extermination. Jonathan Harrison contributes a section on the Ostland that demonstrates the ignorance of Kues about that region’s demographics and documentation. Sergey Romanov contributes the internal Soviet statistics about the GULAG camps and so-called special settlements, which shows that USSR did not hide hundreds of thousands foreign Jews during or after the war.

Chapters 5-8 move to the insides of the camps and the witness accounts that describe them. In chapters 5 and 6, on gas chambers and camp witnesses respectively, Jason Myers shows how perpetrators closest to the action usually gave the most detailed accounts, and this was notable in how their trials were structured. For example, Erich Fuchs was charged with actually operating the murder weapon. It is therefore absurd to play off his testimony against that of a hearsay ‘steam chamber’ witness, as if their evidential value were the same. The chapter shows convergences and how these clearly over-ride the nitpicking of MGK over minutiae. The fact that Bauer and Fuchs described an engine as the murder weapon clearly matters far more than whether one or other could not accurately recall, over 20 years after the

event, every minor detail of the crime scene. The latter would require far more accuracy of memory than is ever likely to occur in a trial held two decades after a crime. Chapters 5 and 6 also have material contributed by Nick Terry and Sergey Romanov which reveals that there are many witnesses that MGK have never discussed.¹³¹ Furthermore, there are perpetrators who gave detailed accounts while living in freedom: Eichmann in Argentina; Rauff in Santiago; Suchomel, Hödl and Gomerski after their release. Again, we would ask any rational person to consider the possibility that all of these would have colluded in a hoax, or given such testimony unless it was true.

In Chapter 7, Roberto Muehlenkamp presents the known forensic and archaeological evidence about the mass graves and refutes the related arguments of Mattogno, Graf and Kues, especially their attempts to make believe that the graves are not compatible with or do not necessarily indicate large-scale mass murder. Chapter 8, also by Roberto Muehlenkamp, is dedicated to deconstructing MGK's farcical claims that cremating the murdered victims' bodies at the Nazi extermination camps would have been an impracticable undertaking as concerns fuel requirements, cremation time and disposal of cremation remains.

The drafting and redrafting of chapters was a collaborative effort, so each author had some input into most chapters, even if only a few sentences and footnotes. We take collective responsibility for any errors, which we will endeavour to correct both in the blog and in any future editions of this text. While each of the authors has been studying Aktion Reinhard for several years (mostly for longer than Kues has been doing), this critique has been written without pay in our spare time during evenings, weekends and vacations. None of us has ever been paid for our activities, and we have not employed professional editors and proof-readers.

In addition, we have had to co-ordinate our drafting across long distance and to negotiate stylistic differences. Two of us live in the USA (one a native, the other an immigrant from the UK); one of us lives in England, one Portugal and one in Russia. Two of us use English as our second or third language, and there are notable differences between British and American spelling, punctuation and usage. Not all these differences can be easily eliminated.¹³²

¹³¹ We have cited from interrogations in German, Polish and Russian. The original language can be distinguished as follows: Vernehmung or Vernehmungsprotokoll for German, Protokol for Polish, and Protokol doprosa for Russian.

¹³² For instance, several different editions of Schelvis' work on Sobibor and Hilberg's foundational work on the Holocaust have been used across this critique.

This study is therefore necessarily a ‘white paper’ with rough edges. We anticipate that some of the feedback we receive from readers will recommend the fixing of various typos and stylistic inconsistencies that inevitably infiltrate a ‘first version’ of this kind of work. We would note that MGK’s texts are often error-prone, even though they use fewer sources than we have done, so we make no apology for publishing a critique that is unlikely to be totally error-free. We do, however, undertake to respond to reader queries, advice and corrections, albeit on a timescale of our choosing.

Of course, some of that ‘advice’ will come from deniers and will be made in bad faith. Given that deniers seem incapable of reading a book from front to back, we anticipate that many denier readers will start with the gas chamber chapter and then respond with personal incredulity. They will ignore the long sections on discovery and wartime knowledge (chapter 1), overwhelming proof of extermination decisions (chapter 2) and the twisted road to Belzec (chapter 3). They will refuse to accept any burden of proof to show that there was a hoax (chapter 1) or to show systematic evidence of resettlement, not the cherrypicked hearsay crap that Kues hypocritically parades as evidence (chapter 4). All these things would be mistakes. The critique is intended to be read as a whole, and the arguments advanced in each chapter have not been put forward independently of each other.

We also hope that this critique will be of value to those interested in the Aktion Reinhard camps and the Holocaust more generally, rather than in the often narrow pseudo-debate conjured up by Holocaust deniers. Although this work is not a comprehensive history of the Aktion Reinhard camps, we believe that general as well as specialist readers will find much of interest in these pages.

No serious scholarly project is ever completed without help from others, and our critique is no exception. For regular active assistance throughout this project, we thank David Woolfe, Mike Curtis, Dr. Andrew Mathis, and Dr. Joachim Neander. For translating and clarifying Brazilian sources on Gustav Wagner’s arrest, we thank Roberto Lucena. For pseudonymous aid and advice, the kibitzers KentFord9, Hans, bluespaceoddy, Dogsmilk and nexgen586 were invaluable to us. Pooshoodog provided the crucial ammunition of humour when we finally lost patience with denier trolling at RODOH. Special thanks are also due to Peter Laponder for making available copies of his maps of the Reinhard camps for use in this study. For answering queries and assistance with materials, we thank Steve Tyas, Jürgen Langowski, Albrecht Kolthoff, Christian Mentel, Harry Mazal, Professor John Zimmerman, Dr. David Rich, Professor Andrzej Gawryszewski, Professor Christopher Browning, Dr. Martin Dean, Dr. Michael Gelb, Professor Antony Polonsky, Andrea Simon,

Introduction

the JDC Archives Section, Martin Davidson, Dr. Philip Blood, and Leonid Tyorushkin of the Holocaust Foundation, Moscow. Although we have greatly valued all of these individuals' assistance, none of them are responsible for the interpretations and arguments we advance in these pages, or any errors that may be present. For all of those, the authors of the critique take full responsibility.

Chapter 1

The Hoax That Dare Not Speak Its Name

From its inception, Holocaust Revisionism has repeatedly asserted that we have been lied to about the fate of Europe's Jews at the hands of the Nazis. However much it might be denied by some contemporary negationists, Holocaust denial is unthinkable without some form of conspiracy theory. Indeed, the popularity of the term 'holohoax', coined by the sometime Liberty Lobby associate Revilo P. Oliver, among present-day deniers on the internet is a striking illustration of this. Without a conspiracy, there would be no hare to chase for many Revisionists. Moreover, it is virtually impossible to find a major negationist author who does not at some point advance a claim of fabrication, manipulation, coercion or some other form of skulduggery.

And yet it is truly shocking to discover how poorly thought out and how feebly substantiated these claims have been. If one re-reads the texts of the first generation of Revisionist authors, one encounters a veritable cacophony of finger-pointing, as different suspects are blamed for starting 'the Hoax'. For Paul Rassinier and his epigones/plagiarists David Hoggan and Richard Harwood, the man to blame for it all was Raphael Lemkin, the legal scholar who coined the term genocide, who was supposedly 'the first' to charge that the Nazis had exterminated the Jews in gas chambers in 1943, a conclusion Rassinier reached after supposedly 'fifteen years of research'¹, while a conversation with a 'university professor' from the Allied side fabricated by Friedrich Grimm was enough to allow nearly a dozen negationists to point the finger at British propaganda expert Sefton Delmer.² For Arthur Butz, meanwhile, the 'Hoax' was the work of "New York Zionists"³, based no doubt on the fact that Butz did not search much further than the pages of the *New York Times* for his

¹ Paul Rassinier, *Le Drame des juifs européens*, Paris: Les Sept Couleurs, 1964, p.107; David Hoggan, *The Myth of the Six Million*, Los Angeles: The Noontide Press, 1969, Chapter 6; Richard Harwood, *Did Six Million Really Die? The Truth At Last*, London, n.d., 1974, Chapter 4.

² The origin of the meme is Friedrich Grimm, *Politische Justiz, die Krankheit unserer Zeit. 40 Jahre Dienst im Recht*, Bonn, 1953, p.147ff. Sefton Delmer has been invoked by Udo Walendy, Franz Scheidl, Heinz Roth, Wolf-Dieter Rothe, Austin App, J.G. Burg, Ernst Zündel, Mark Weber, William Lindsey, Dankwart Kluge, Roland Bohlinger and Johannes Ney, Cedric Martel, Joachim Nolywaika and Knud Bäcker.

³ Arthur R. Butz, *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century*, 3rd ed., Chicago: Theses and Dissertations Press, 2003.

evidence of hoaxing, and assumed that whatever appeared in the paper could not possibly have come from Nazi-occupied Europe, but was simply locally-produced propaganda. Robert Faurisson, on the other hand, did not even have the courtesy to identify a more specific hoaxer, but simply asserted that the “lie” was “essentially of Zionist origin”.⁴

It is instructive to be reminded of such utter embarrassments for Revisionism before we consider how the ‘Hoax’ has evolved in recent negationist writings and in the work of Mattogno, Graf and Kues. For the identification of a hoaxer revealed more about the Revisionist than it did about the Holocaust: that is why the antisemite Rassinier fingered the Polish Jewish lawyer Lemkin, why the German nationalist Grimm fingered a British propagandist, and why Butz and Faurisson babbled about ‘Zionists’. Placing cart firmly before horse and arriving at their conclusion before checking the facts, the early Revisionists simply vented their frustrations and anger at their imagined enemies and accused them of a massive act of fabrication which many *could not* have committed. For it is a matter of record that Raphael Lemkin was not the first to discuss gas chambers, and likewise that the “New York Zionists” of Butz’s fantasies could not have been the origin of reports of Nazi gassings during the war. Not one contemporary negationist author has ever tried to correct or apologise for these blatant errors and falsehoods, which have instead simply been thrown down the denier memory-hole as if they never existed, even though Butz remains by far the most widely-touted Revisionist author on the internet, in the experience of the present group of writers.

No doubt recoiling in shame and horror at the crudity of previous Revisionist efforts to locate the origins of the ‘Hoax’, in 1997 the American negationist “Samuel Crowell” tried to advance the theory that the ‘Hoax’ was in fact not a ‘Hoax’ at all, but simply a gigantic oopsie, a colossal misunderstanding, a product of culturally-determined hysteria born out of East European Jews’ alleged fear of German hygiene measures, leading them to mistake delousing procedures for homicidal gassing.⁵ In Crowell’s view, the history of the Holocaust was really only a ‘hystory’, a panic reaction no different to the shock produced by the Orson Welles radio play of *The War of the Worlds* in America during 1937. This seemingly intellectually sophisticated theory has been touted for some time now on the CODOH home page with the marketing slogan ‘No Conspiracy – A Grand Delusion’.⁶ But even Crowell

⁴ Robert Faurisson, ‘The Problem of the Gas Chambers’, *Journal of Historical Review*, 1/2, 1980, pp.103-114.

⁵ Samuel Crowell, *The Gas Chamber of Sherlock Holmes*, CODOH, 1997, now republished and revised as *The Gas Chamber of Sherlock Holmes and Other Writings on the Holocaust, Revisionism, and Historical Understanding*, Charleston, WV: Nine-Banded Books, 2011.

⁶ <http://www.codoh.com/>, accessed 8.8.2011.

reverted to type when his narrative reached the end of the war, and started alleging that key SS witnesses had been tortured and coerced.

Crowell's argument reflected the mood of the era which produced this piece of drivel, since the very notion of a 'hystory' reflected quite specifically the concerns of 1990s American media culture, wracked as it was by panics over Satanic child abuse, false memory syndrome and UFO abductions.⁷ A number of other negationist writers, among them Germar Rudolf and David Irving, similarly tried to ride the zeitgeist by echoing Crowell's claims about 'false memory syndrome' as a supposed explanation for eyewitness accounts of Nazi mass murder.⁸ More recently, 'Denierbud' has reverted to Revisionist type and begun the truffle hunt for the head hoaxer all over again, fingering SHAEF's Psychological Warfare Division as the probable chief culprit.⁹ Leaving aside his consistent – and annoying – misspelling of 'psyche warfare', Denierbud's claims are risible, simply repeating the same error of reductionism made by the first generation of negationist writers, as the largely American PWD did not operate in Soviet-liberated territory. Perhaps in dim acknowledgement of this, Denierbud has occasionally fingered the Soviet Jewish journalist Ilya Ehrenburg as another head honcho of the 'Hoax', simply replacing one strawman target with another. Meanwhile, the lunatic fringe of the denier scene has decided to blame the 'Zionists' after all, claiming that 'the Jews' had already launched one Holocaust propaganda campaign in the aftermath of the First World War, citing, as is usual for cranks, a single 'Crucial Source', namely a misinterpreted newspaper article originally dredged up by Udo Walendy.¹⁰

The intellectual disarray among Revisionists regarding the origins of the 'Hoax' or 'hystory' is thus truly profound. Neither when reviewing earlier negationist writings nor when examining the products of the past eleven years since the Irving-Lipstadt libel trial is there *any* reason to dissent from the assessment offered by Robert Van Pelt that

The negationists claim to be Revisionist historians, but they have yet to produce a history that offers a credible, "revised" explanation of the events in question. Until Crowell's piece appeared, Rassinier and his disciples had an exclusively nihilist agenda. They attacked the inherited account on the unproven assumption

⁷ Indeed, Crowell took the idea of a 'hystory' from a then-brand new book published the same year as his original essay, Elaine Showalter, *Hystories*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1997.

⁸ David Irving, 'Falschzeugen', *Vierteljahreshefte für freie Geschichtsforschung* 1/1, 1997, pp.41-46 (review of Elizabeth Loftus, *The Myth of Repressed Memory*, New York, 1994); Germar Rudolf, 'Falsche Erinnerungen überall – nur nicht in der Zeitgeschichte. Über die Unehrllichkeit einer jüdischen Psychologie-Professorin und Expertin für Aussagenkritik', *Vierteljahreshefte für freie Geschichtsforschung* 2/3, 1998, pp.214-217

⁹ <http://holocaustdenialvideos.com>

¹⁰ Don Heddeshimer, *The First Holocaust. Jewish Fund Raising Campaigns with Holocaust Claims During and After World War One*, Chicago: Theses & Dissertations Press, 2003.

of some general conspiracy, but they had not been able, or willing, to even begin writing a single piece of investigative journalism (let alone produce one product of serious revisionist historiography) that gives us the origin and development of this conspiracy – the reason why and how it seized on, of all places, those very “ordinary” Auschwitz concentration camps as the fulcrum of its effort to hoodwink both gentiles and Jews – to leverage the international community in general and defraud the Germans and Palestinians in particular. Crowell’s article attempts to create a plausible narrative that could have begun, at least superficially, to engage with issues of relevancy and causation. But one cannot but judge Crowell’s attempt an utter failure.¹¹

What Pelt was asking for – and what has to this day not been produced – is a coherent explanation from Revisionists of how and why the reports of mass murder and gassing originated. Misunderstanding Pelt’s point and also snipping most of the quote, Mattogno claimed recently in *Auschwitz: The Case for Sanity* (2010) that he had in fact provided just such a credible, “revised” explanation¹², but it is perfectly obvious from the book that he has done no such thing, rather instead simply repeated a range of decontextualised negationist jabs at familiar Revisionist bugbears such as the Vrba-Wetzler report on Auschwitz published by the War Refugee Board report.¹³

In the ‘trilogy’ of works on Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka, Mattogno, Graf and Kues repeat much the same strategy as Mattogno has essayed in his works on Auschwitz. All three volumes contain a series of chapters or part chapters addressing what might be called the ‘discovery process’ of the Holocaust in general and the Aktion Reinhard camps in particular. Already in this critique’s introduction, we have asked the question, ‘how did we come to know about Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka?’, and answered it by referring to three broad processes: wartime reports, postwar investigations and trials, and historiography. It is not difficult to discern that MGK have huge problems with all three phases, and indeed end up making conspiracy allegations regarding wartime reports, postwar trials as well as history and memory. Nowhere, however, do they use the term ‘Hoax’. But this does not stop them from using substitute weasel terms like ‘propaganda’¹⁴ as well as such rhetoric as ‘the gassing myth’.¹⁵ Clearly, this is nothing else but the ‘Hoax’ that dare not speak its name.

There are any number of problems for MGK’s allegations, but two are perhaps more critical than others. The biggest problem of all is how MGK have addressed these issues: one camp at a time, in total and utter isolation from each other. Yet if MGK are alleging that

¹¹ Pelt, *The Case for Auschwitz*, p.318.

¹² Carlo Mattogno, *Auschwitz: The Case for Sanity*, Washington, DC: The Barnes Review, 2010, Vol. 2, p.669.

¹³ Mattogno, *Auschwitz: The Case for Sanity*, p.541ff.

¹⁴ Used in a derogatory sense 20 times in M&G, *Treblinka*, 11 times in Mattogno, *Belzec* and 16 times in MGK, *Sobibór*.

¹⁵ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.32.

wartime reports were nothing more than ‘propaganda’, it would stand to reason that such a conclusion could be reached only after *all* wartime reports of *all* camps have been analysed *together*. Likewise, if postwar trials were frame-ups, then proving such a claim would necessitate examining *all* trials. MGK have alleged that so many different Nazi war crimes are ‘myths’ or ‘propaganda’ in so many different publications that the impression is given from browsing their oeuvre that almost every single Nazi war crime is a hoax. Indeed, the ‘trilogy’ gives powerful voice to such a suspicion by at one point or another denying the full extent of the mass shootings in the occupied Soviet Union¹⁶, the use of gas chambers in the T4 euthanasia program¹⁷, the existence of gas vans at Chelmno or anywhere else¹⁸, along with the gas chambers at Auschwitz and Majdanek¹⁹. By breaking the Holocaust down into its component parts and examining them piecemeal, MGK create the impression that they do not want to consider them together, lest anyone start asking questions about the sheer logistics involved in writing up so much false propaganda, rigging so many trials, and hoodwinking so many historians. Even if they were to follow Crowell in focusing only on gassings, then the number of sites (and thus reports, trials, history books) to be considered rapidly escalates to thirty or so locations. But as MGK in fact also deny mass shootings, the number of sites, reports, trials and history books is even larger. The one-camp-at-a-time piecemeal approach is both intellectually dishonest as well as incoherent.

The second problem for MGK follows on from the first, which is that all of the different phases of the ‘discovery process’ have been examined in what is by now some considerable detail by historians. Yet MGK do not seem very familiar with the now substantial literatures on wartime knowledge, postwar trials, historiography or collective memory.²⁰ They therefore end up making a number of assertions which are easily refuted by consulting this literature, and are in effect trying to stake out a position while remaining spectacularly ignorant of what has already been said about the phenomena they are trying to address. The discrepancy between MGK’s scribblings in the ‘trilogy’ and what is available to the serious researcher on each of the rubrics is stark, and starker still when we look at individual themes. While Mattogno, who draws the duty of ‘tackling’ wartime reports, at

¹⁶ M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.203-231; MGK, *Sobibór*, p.100 n.256;

¹⁷ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.254, 278

¹⁸ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.395

¹⁹ E.g. M&G, *Treblinka*, p.300

²⁰ There are dedicated chapters to the themes of bystanders and trials in Dan Stone (ed), *The Historiography of the Holocaust*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004, covering the literature to the early 2000s; MGK have not even mastered *that* portion of the literature, much less recent research.

least bothers to cite some literature and a few sources on the subject²¹, Graf, who pens a chapter in both *Treblinka* and *Sobibór* on postwar trials²², evidently thinks it acceptable to opine about trials whose transcripts he does not cite and has not read, and while ignoring virtually everything ever written on the subject. Unless, that is, Graf has redefined scholarship to include quoting from Wikipedia, a practice which these days is liable to result in a fail if tried on by a first year undergraduate student.²³ It is unsurprising, therefore, that virtually all of Mattogno and Graf's allegations are totally unsubstantiated conspiracy theories.

Wartime Reports

Mattogno's exegeses of wartime reports from the death camps all share in common a number of bogus assumptions. One such a priori assumption is even clearly spelled out in the titles of several of his books: that the reports can be dismissed as "propaganda".²⁴ Yet nowhere in his oeuvre does Mattogno explain what is meant by this term or justify why calling something 'propaganda' necessarily implies its falsity. That Mattogno doesn't understand the meaning of the terms he is using is proven by his frequent invocation of something he calls "black propaganda", apparently an especially nasty type of propaganda, if one follows the usage of the slogan through his oeuvre.²⁵ But in actual fact the term 'black propaganda' has a very precise meaning, which Mattogno himself inadvertently quotes when citing Walter Laqueur speaking of how Polish underground courier Jan Karski "engaged in 'black propaganda' among German soldiers, printing and distributing leaflets in German".²⁶ This is a correct use of the term. Black propaganda is propaganda purporting to come from the enemy side. Mattogno's "black propaganda" is nothing of the sort. Instead, it is just a hysterical repetition of a phrase he liked when he first read and commented on Laqueur's book back in 1991, and which is not being correctly used.²⁷

In a number of cases, Mattogno sails onto thin ice by labelling the wartime reports he so badly wants to dismiss as 'propaganda' when they were nothing of the sort *functionally*.

²¹ M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.47-64; Mattogno, *Bełżec*, pp.9-34; MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.63-69

²² M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.161-175; MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.171-192

²³ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.174 n.501, 178 n.510, 186 n.528, 191 n.548

²⁴ The term propaganda can be found in the titles of Mattogno, *Bełżec*; Carlo Mattogno, *The Bunkers of Auschwitz: Black Propaganda versus History*, Chicago: Theses & Dissertations Press, 2004; Mattogno, *Chelmo*; MGK, *Sobibór*.

²⁵ Mattogno, *Bełżec*, pp.22, 26; MGK, *Sobibór*, p.47, 180, 187

²⁶ Walter Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret: An Investigation into the Suppression of Information about Hitler's "Final Solution"*, New York, 1998, p. 230.; cf. Mattogno, *Bełżec*, p.22;

²⁷ Carlo Mattogno, *La soluzione finale. Problemi e polemichi*, Padova: Edizioni di Ar, 1991, p.145. The relevant passage is repeated verbatim in Mattogno, *Bełżec*, p.22

One can certainly call newspapers, leaflets and other publicity materials put out by a particular side in a war or in politics ‘propaganda’, *without* necessarily implying anything about its truth or falsity. But one cannot label internal intelligence reports, diaries, letters or other secret sources as ‘propaganda’ unless one is severely deranged or in the grip of a rabidly partisan bias. The Polish underground state, the Delegatura, was a shadow government whose regional branches reported to the centre and then transmitted those reports to the Polish government-in-exile in London.²⁸ Individual units of the Polish Home Army (Armia Krajowa) filed numerous secret intelligence reports on what they observed in Nazi-occupied Poland, and these were then compiled into several serials of memoranda which appeared at regular intervals. One such serial, the Pro Memoria series of quasi-monthly situation reports were circulated internally and copied to the government-in-exile, and remained unpublished.²⁹ Another serial, *Current Information (Informacja Bieżąca)*, was in fact an internal circular, and not an underground newspaper at all, contrary to Mattogno’s claim, although editors of the underground newspapers of the very many political factions in the Polish resistance did then receive it.³⁰ A comparison between the reports of the Aktion Reinhard camps written up in *Informacja Bieżąca* and what appeared in the Polish underground press shows that the latter hardly had the space to run all of the information contained in *Current Information*; the largest newspaper, *Biuletyn Informacyjny*, was just eight pages long and in 1942 was largely filled with war news from the many fronts of the now global conflict.³¹ Whatever else might be said about the news of the death camps, it did not originate as “propaganda”. In similar fashion, the reports gathered and compiled by Jewish underground organisations such as the Oneg Shabes archive in the Warsaw ghetto cannot be called “propaganda” without doing considerable violence to the real meaning of the term. This does not mean that information received by Oneg Shabes was not passed to the Polish underground press via the Bureau of Information and Propaganda – in modern terms, the publicity department of the AK³² or, indeed, later, to the outside world³³, but is a

²⁸ For background on the Polish government-in-exile’s reactions to the Holocaust, see David Engel, *In the Shadow of Auschwitz: The Polish Government-in-Exile and the Jews, 1939-1942*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987, and *Facing a Holocaust. The Polish Government-in-Exile and the Jews 1943-1945*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993

²⁹ Janusz Gmitruk et al (eds), *Pro Memoria (1941-1944). Raporty Departamentu Informacji Delegatury Rządu RP na Kraj o zbrodniach na narodzie polskim*. Warsaw/Pultusk, 2004/2005

³⁰ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.47

³¹ On the Polish underground press, see Klaus-Peter Friedrich, *Der nationalsozialistische Judenmord in polnischen Augen: Einstellungen in den polnischen Presse 1942-1946/47*, PhD, Universität zu Köln, 2002.

³² Cf. Ruta Sakowska, ‘Biuro Informacji Propagandy KG Armii Krajowej a Archiwum Ringelbluma (luty-lipiec 1942)’, *BZIH* 162-163, 1992.

comment on where the information came from. A postcard received from a shtetl in the Lublin district – just one of the many pieces of documentary evidence in the Ringelblum archive pertaining to Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka – is not, and cannot be by definition, “propaganda”. Mattogno will simply have to find another term for what he is discussing, be more discriminating in his rhetoric, or continue to earn derision.

Another bogus assumption is also shared by Samuel Crowell, who like Mattogno seems to have devised a new correspondence theory of (un)truth to explain away wartime reports of mass murder and extermination. That is, to claim that such reports originated because of a “literary evolution” of claims, whereby the changes between different reports are not the product of outside stimuli (like new information being acquired) but are instead the product of the unnamed forger/fabricator honing and sharpening their literary skills and ‘perfecting’ the ‘propaganda’.³⁴ But in no case have either Mattogno or Crowell proven such a ‘literary evolution’, a negationist cliché which is also applied to testimonies. Indeed, Crowell excelled himself by applying this rarefied version of deconstruction for white nationalists, their fellow travellers and useful idiots to a testimony by Pavel Leleko, a Treblinka II Trawniki guard captured by the 2nd Belorussian Front near Stutthof, whence he had been posted in late 1943 along with other former Treblinka Trawniki, and who was interrogated in 1945. According to Crowell, Leleko was the blueprint for all the statements about the Aktion Reinhard camps that came after, including the Gerstein report: “all other confessions, to the extent that they describe the gassing process at all, show clear traces of harmony with Leleko's testimony”.³⁵ The hilarity of such a claim is that of course, there had already been a great many other statements about Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka well before Leleko’s interrogation in February 1945, and that his statement was then locked away, unpublished, unused, and entirely unknown outside the Soviet Union until the second Fedorenko denaturalisation trial in the early 1980s.

Both Mattogno and Crowell, it turns out, are extraordinarily bad at discerning the provenance of reports and identifying when a report is derivative and repetitive, versus when it is entirely independent. This ineptitude is in no small part due to their lack of awareness of the full range of reports. Pace Crowell, reports of gassing cannot be reduced to the product of hysterical rumours; pace Mattogno’s *implied* argument, there are too many independent

³³ Most notably, the Bund report of June 1942 and the report of November 1942 written by Hersz Wasser on the liquidation of the Warsaw ghetto and the Treblinka extermination camp.

³⁴ This approach is embedded into the title of Chapter I of Mattogno, *Belzec*, pp.9-34: ‘Literary Origins and Development of the Alleged Methods of Murder’.

³⁵ Crowell, *Gas Chamber of Sherlock Holmes*, p.50

sources of such reports to try and dismiss them as the product of a single ‘propagandist’. And here one must reiterate: *implied* argument, because Mattogno nowhere makes it clear from whence the reports originated, who started them, or why.

In both cases also, reports of gassings at extermination camps are simply hacked out of their actual wartime context, with the preceding escalation of violence and its reporting through underground channels entirely ignored. But it is a matter of record that the first reports of large-scale, four-figure killings of Polish Jews emerged in the second half of 1941 from eastern Poland, and were moreover received both by the Delegatura³⁶ and by Oneg Shabes. Indeed, there is now a full publication of the reports received by Oneg Shabes from the Polish borderlands, the *kresy*.³⁷ Such reports allowed the Delegatura to estimate that over 200,000 Polish Jews had been murdered by February 1942, a figure which in retrospect was surprisingly accurate when compared with the known shooting actions in eastern Poland during 1941.³⁸

News of Chelmno, meanwhile, not only reached the Warsaw ghetto via the escaped slave labourer Shlomo Winer, also known as ‘Szlamek’³⁹, but was noted down by AK units in the Warthegau simultaneously.⁴⁰ Moreover, the flight of Szlamek from ghetto to ghetto, using the pseudonym Yakov Grojanowski⁴¹, left further contemporary traces, not least in the diary of a rabbi from Konin.⁴² Mattogno’s attempt to defuse Szlamek’s report in his short brochure on Chelmno⁴³ therefore need not detain us here, as he will have to go back to the library before his comments need be taken even vaguely seriously. But Szlamek’s role did

³⁶ A good summary of this phase is in Dariusz Stola, ‘Early News of the Holocaust from Poland’, *HGS* 11/1, 1997, pp.1-27; the most recent and most exhaustive account is in Adam Puławski, *W obliczu Zagłady. Rząd RP na Uchodźstwie, Delegatura Rządu RP na Kraj, ZWZ-AK wobec deportacji Żydów do obozów zagłady (1941-1942)*. Lublin: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, 2009.

³⁷ Andrzej Zbikowski, (ed.), *Archiwum Ringelbuma: Konspiracyjne Archiwum Getta Warszawy, vol. 3: Relacje z Kresów*, Warsaw: Żydowski Instytut Historyczny IN-B, 2000.

³⁸ Puławski, *W obliczu Zagłady*, pp.153-4; Stola, ‘Early News’, p.4.

³⁹ The identity of ‘Szlamek’ has been clarified beyond reasonable doubt in Przemysław Nowicki, ‘Zanim “przybył z zaświatów”, nazywał się Winer. Krąg rodzinny i konspiracyjny Szlamka, uciekiniera z ośrodka zagłady w Chełmnie nad Nerem, *Zagłada Żydów*, 2009, pp.162-192.

⁴⁰ Puławski, *W obliczu Zagłady*, p.83ff. The AK continued to report on Chelmno through 1942, cf. Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939-1945*. Wiesbaden, 2006, p.451 n.403.

⁴¹ Kassow, *Who Will Write Our History?* p.291. This has caused a number of authors to misidentify Szlamek’s real name as Grojanowski.

⁴² Esther Farbstein, ‘Diaries and Memoirs as a Historical Source – The Diary and the Memoir of a Rabbi at the ‘Konin House of Bondage’, *YVS* XXVI, 1998, pp.87-128.

⁴³ Mattogno, *Chelmno*, pp.66-76. The criticisms levelled are mostly paranoid nitpicks or statements of incredulity and incomprehension, for example Mattogno does not consider that the description of the internal workings of the gas van in Szlamek’s report are closer to the previous generation of vans used by Sonderkommando Lange in its euthanasia operations across the Warthegau in 1940-41. Cf. Patrick Montague, *Chelmno and the Holocaust. The History of Hitler’s First Death Camp*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2011, pp.203-4, who comes to the same conclusion.

not end with his account of Chelmno. Fearing for his safety, Oneg Shabes helped Szlamek find a new home under a new identity in Zamosc, the capital of the county in which Belzec was located. There, Szlamek swiftly discovered that he had escaped out of the frying pan into the fire, as he related in a postcard sent to Warsaw between April 5 and 12, 1942 which reached Oneg Shabes: “they make cold in the same way that they did in Chelmno. The cemetery is in Belzyc. The towns mentioned in the letter have already been made cold.”⁴⁴

Szlamek himself was probably deported on April 11 to Belzec, but his knowledge of the nearby extermination camp was far from unique, as the postwar testimony of the head of the Zamosc Judenrat, Mieczyslaw Garfinkiel, indicates.⁴⁵ Garfinkiel first heard ‘alarming news’ that the Jews of Lublin were being transported through Zamosc to Belzec. At first he did not believe the news that the deportees were being killed there; not even the appearance of several escapees from the camp convinced him. Only when the son of an acquaintance returned after escaping did Garfinkiel fully believe what he was hearing.

The local Armia Krajowa command filed a confidential report in April 1942 which is worth quoting in full, not least because although it has been published and translated in full in Yitzhak Arad’s work on Aktion Reinhard, Mattogno sees fit to ignore it entirely in his book on Belzec:

The camp was fully completed a few days before March 17, 1942. From that day transports with Jews began to arrive from the direction of Lvov and Warsaw... On the first day five transports arrived, afterward, one transport arrived daily from each direction. The transport enters the railway spur of Belzec camp after disembarkation, lasting half an hour, the train returns empty.... The observation of the local population (the camp is within sight and hearing distance of the inhabitants near the railway station) led all of them to one conclusion: that there is a mass murder of the Jews inside the camp. The following facts testify to this:

1. Between March 17 and April 13, about fifty-two transports (each of eighteen to thirty-five freight-cars with an average of 1,500 people) arrived in the camp.
2. No Jews left the camp, neither during the day nor the night.
3. No food was supplied to the camp (whereas bread and other food articles had been dispatched to the Jews who had worked earlier on the construction of the camp).
4. Lime was brought to the camp.
5. The transports arrived at a fixed time. Before the arrival of a transport, no Jews were seen in the camp.

⁴⁴ Reproduced in facsimile in Ruta Sakowska (ed), *Archiwum Ringelbluma. Konspiracyjne Archiwum Getta Warszawy. Tom 1: Listy o Zagladzie*. Warsaw, 1997, p.131

⁴⁵ Michal Grynberg and MariaKotowska (eds), *Zycie i zaglada Zydw polskich 1939-1945. Relacje swiadkow*. Warsaw: Oficyna Naukowa, 2003, p.151-4 (from AZIH zespol 302/122); cf. Hilberg, *Vernichtung*, Bd.2, p.518.

6. After each transport, about two freight cars with clothing are removed from the camp to the railway stores. (The guards steal clothes.)
7. Jews in underwear were seen in the area of the camp.
8. In the area of the camp there are three barracks; they cannot accommodate even one-tenth of the Jews.
9. In the area of the camp, a strong odor can be smelled on warmer days.
10. The guards pay for vodka, which they drink in large quantities, with any requested sum, and frequently with watches and valuables.
11. Jews arrived in Belzec looking for a witness who would testify that Jews are being killed there. They were ready to pay 12,000 zloty... They did not find a volunteer. ... It is unknown by which means the Jews are liquidated in the camp. There are three assumptions: (1) electricity; (2) gas; (3) by pumping out the air.

With regard to (1): there is no visible source of electricity; with regard to (2): no supply of gas and no residue of the remaining gas after the ventilation of the gas chamber were observed; with regard to (3): there are no factors that deny this. It was even verified that during the building of one of the barracks, the walls and the floor were covered with metal sheets (for some purpose).

In the area of the camp huge pits were dug in the autumn [of 1941]. At that time it was assumed that there would be underground stores. Now the purpose of this work is clear. From the particular barrack where the Jews are taken for so-called disinfection, a narrow railway leads to these pits. It was observed that the “disinfected” Jews were transported to a common grave by this trolley.

In Belzec the term Totenlager was heard in connection with the Jewish camp. The leadership of the camp is in the hands of twelve SS men (the commander is Hauptmann Wirth) who have forty guards for help.⁴⁶

The report is remarkable for a number of reasons. Firstly, the AK observers reported on what they saw: 52 transports arriving, whereas “no Jews left the camp, neither during the day or the night”. From this simple observation, they could deduce that something was seriously awry at Belzec, and tested this against a variety of other, enumerated observations. Like a detective in a locked-room mystery, they drew the conclusion “that there is a mass murder of Jews inside the camp”. This is in fact absolutely no different to that which can be deduced from German documents and the physical condition of the site after liberation, and is just as conclusive.

Only the precise murder method was unclear *to outside observers*, and thus the AK summarised the thoughts of nearby villagers as to what it was. The discrimination with which they weighed up gas, electricity and the pumping out of air is also striking, as we have here a documentation of the speculation that was circulating in the Lublin countryside. Indeed, Zygmunt Klukowski, a Polish doctor living in Szczepieszyn, Zamosc county, noted in his

⁴⁶ Zygmunt Marikowski, *Zwiazek Walki Zbrojnej, I, Armia Krajowa w Okregu Lubelskim*, London. 1973. Book Two, *Documents*, pp.34-35, also translated and cited in Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor Treblinka*, pp.350-1

diary on April 16 that “we now know that every day there is a train arriving at Belzec from Lublin and one from Lwow, each with twenty cars. The Jews must get off, are taken behind a barbed-wire fence and murdered by an electric current or poisoned with gas and then the corpses are burned.”⁴⁷

Deniers have long pointed gleefully to reports of ‘electric chambers’ at Belzec without investigating the real context. Some have even tried to parlay the hearsay reports spreading across the Polish countryside into “eyewitness” accounts, a dishonesty which will be examined further in Chapter 6. But none have bothered to track the spread of the hearsay or to properly acknowledge that from the outset, there were simultaneous reports of gassing. Indeed, Mattogno’s gloss on the reports, that they did not specify “gas chambers using the exhaust gas from a diesel engine”, is a particularly odious example of the fallacy of misplaced precision and a classic instance of negationist misdirection. By omitting the AK report from his analysis, Mattogno prevented his faithful flock from learning of a report that might inflict too much cognitive dissonance on them.

It is not difficult to track the spiral of hearsay which led to ‘electric chambers’ becoming strongly associated with Belzec. But it is likewise not difficult to find references to Belzec using gas. Several Delegatura reports claimed electricity, ignoring the uncertainty in the original report⁴⁸, but this did not stop Stanislaw Mikolajczyk, the prime minister of the Polish government-in-exile, stating at a meeting on July 7, 1942 that “apparently, in Belzec and Trawniki, murder with poison gas.”⁴⁹ The Pro Memoria report covering the period from August 26 to October 19, 1942, was not untypical in referring to gas chambers at Belzec.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Zygmunt Klukowski, *Dziennik z lat okupacji*, Lublin, 1959, p.254; cf. Musial, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung*, p.324; Puławski, *W obliczu Zagłady*, p.291. The reference to the burning of corpses is a typical example of ‘slippage’: it is not unlikely that rubbish was burned at the camp, which together with the fact that deportees were entering the camp and not coming out, would be easily misinterpreted at this stage. Later testimonies and reports about open-air cremations are more detailed, as will be seen in Chapter 6.

⁴⁸ *Biuletyn Informacyjny*, the official organ of the AK, repeated the uncertainty over ‘poison gas or electric current’ in August 1942: see edition Nr 32 (136), published in *Biuletyn Informacyjny. Czesc II: Przedruk rocznikow 1942-1943*, Warsaw, 2002, p.1045; cf. Friedrich, *Der nationalsozialistische Judenmord in polnische Augen*, p.113; Markus Roth, *Herrenmenschen: Die deutschen Kreishauptleute im besetzten Polen – Karrierewege, Herrschaftspraxis und Nachgeschichte*, Osnabrück: Wallstein, 2009, pp.227-8.

⁴⁹ Stola, ‘Early News’, p.7. In a recent article, Thomas Kues has highlighted a report appearing in the Polish exile newspaper *Dziennik Polski* on 11 July 1942, in which Mikolajczyk is quoted as referring to deportations to ‘Belzec and Treblinka’. As the official protocol of the cabinet meeting apparently says ‘Trawniki’, the gambit – trying to stir up suspicion about a too-early reference to deportations to Treblinka – fails utterly. Somewhere along the chain of transmission from local underground organisation to London and thence to the *Dziennik Polski* journalist, the information became garbled – something which was clear from re-reading Stola’s article for this critique. The present author previously expressed the suspicion that Udo Walendy had altered the original newspaper to score a revisionist ‘goal’, and is happy to accept that he was acting like, well, a Revisionist. See Thomas Kues, ‘A Premature News Report on a ‘Death Camp’ for Jews’, *Inconvenient History* 3/3, 2011.

⁵⁰ Sprawozdanie z sytuacji w kraju w okresie 26 VIII – 10 X 1942, in Gmitruk (ed), *Pro Memoria*, p.251

Moreover, the Polish underground was far from the only recipient of eyewitness or hearsay reports regarding Belzec. The so-called ‘Working Group’ in Slovakia, organised by among others Gisi Fleischmann, received reports in October 1942 from couriers travelling between Bratislava and ghettos in the Lublin district which still accommodated surviving Slovak Jewish deportees, that Slovak Jews had been evacuated “to the other side of the Bug”. Clarification was forthcoming by the end of November: letters from survivors informed the ‘Working Group’ about “facilities” (*Anstalten*) for extermination by “lethal fumes” located “near Belzec.”⁵¹

On the other hand, it seems that rumours of electricity as the killing method at Belzec persisted most strongly in the Galicia district to the east of Belzec. A Ukrainian nationalist newspaper published by the OUN, *Ideya i Chyn*, referred to ‘electric current’ as the method used “in Belzec” to kill the Jews being deported westwards “out of Galicia... in an unknown direction.”⁵² Two further reports from Galicia are even more instructive in their contrasting reports. Stemming from French and Belgian prisoners of war interned in the Stalag at Rawa Ruska, a major rail junction not far from Belzec, who successfully escaped across the Baltic to Sweden, the first report, taken down in February 1943, cited hearsay of “electrocution en masse” about a massacre and deportation at Tarnopol.⁵³ A second report came from two Belgian POWs, who had observed hundreds of wagons passing through the Rawa Ruska rail junction and returning empty. Those who died on the way or were shot trying to escape were dumped unceremoniously onto the side of the tracks.

What made the most impression on them was the extermination of the Jews. They had both witnessed atrocities. One of the Belgians saw truck loads of Jews carried off into a wood and the trucks returning a few hours later – empty. Bodies of Jewish children and women were left lying in ditches and along the railways. The Germans themselves, they added, boasted that they had constructed gas chambers where Jews were systematically killed and buried.⁵⁴

The spread of knowledge was therefore and *not unsurprisingly*, inconsistent. In 1944 a Jewish survivor from the Galicia district, Adolf Folkmann, likewise escaped to Sweden and brought with him a hearsay account of electrocution at Belzec, manifestly elaborated in the telling and retelling.⁵⁵ Mattogno, of course, gleefully cites this account at inordinate length,

⁵¹ Gila Fatran, ‘The “Working Group”,’ *HGS* 8/2, 1994, pp.164-201, here pp.182-3

⁵² Dieter Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien 1941-1944*. Munich: Oldenbourg Verlag, 1996, p.326

⁵³ Press Reading Bureau Stockholm to PID London, 24.2.43, PRO FO 371/34427. The report was first highlighted in 1990 in David Bankier, *The Germans and the Final Solution: Public Opinion under Nazism*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1992, p.110.

⁵⁴ PRB Stockholm to PID London, 18.5.43, PRO FO 371/34430; cf. Bankier, p.110

⁵⁵ Stefan Szende, Adolf Folkmann, *The Promise Hitler Kept*, London: Victor Gollancz, 1945

and also cites a *New York Times* report from February 1944 which likewise mentioned electricity as the killing method at Belzec.⁵⁶ What he omits to mention is that the *NYT* report was based on the same source.⁵⁷ Other survivors of the Holocaust in Galicia, including witnesses whose testimony was included in the Black Book compiled by Ilya Ehrenburg and Vasily Grossman⁵⁸, as well as Simon Wiesenthal, who wrote a lurid pamphlet in 1946 which additionally spoke of human soap being manufactured from corpses, also referred to electricity as the chosen killing method at Belzec.⁵⁹

It is a matter of indifference to us that rumours of a ‘soap factory’ attached themselves to Belzec, although it seems to exercise Mattogno greatly⁶⁰, just as it is a matter of indifference that distorted hearsay about electricity at Belzec was demonstrably repeated, because in both cases the reports were manifestly *hearsay*, something which seemingly eludes Mattogno’s co-author Jürgen Graf when he conflates Wiesenthal and Szende into apparent direct-eyeball witnesses.⁶¹ Historians have no great difficulty in distinguishing between such hearsay reports and more direct accounts. The cloud of hearsay distortion surrounding Belzec is a classic illustration of the adage ‘no smoke without fire’, as well as a model example of how Chinese whispers develop. The reports demonstrate that Belzec was referred to, over and over again, as a site of extermination. The distortions generated by hearsay had a clear point of origin in fact, as the Armia Krajowa report of April 1942 indicates. The facts were, indeed, rather simple: Jews went in and did not come out.⁶² Until Mattogno and his sidekicks deal with *those* reports and explain why they are to be set aside,

⁵⁶ New York Times, 12.2.1944, p.6

⁵⁷ Folkmann was also the most likely source for Stefan Tadeusz Norwid, *Landet utan Qusling*, Stockholm: Bonniers, 1944, pp.102-4, which likewise mentioned electricity at Belzec. Cf. Ingvar Svanberg and Mattis Tyden, *Sverige och förintelsen. Debatt och dokument om Europas judar 1933-1945*. Stockholm: Dialogos, 2005, pp.364-8, also including a full excerpt of Norwid’s account. Mattogno, *Belzec*, p.21, quotes from the German edition, *Martyrium eines Volkes*, 1945..

⁵⁸ Ilya Ehrenburg and Vasily Grossman, *The Complete Black Book of Russian Jewry*, New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2002, p.82.

⁵⁹ Simon Wiesenthal, ‘Seifenfabrik Belsetz,’ *Der neue Weg*, Nr. 19/20, 1946. We thank Dr. Joachim Neander for a copy of this article. On Wiesenthal’s rather complex self-presentation after the war, see the engaging recent biography by Tom Segev, *Simon Wiesenthal. The Life and Legends*, London: Jonathan Cape, 2010, which unlike denier rantings aimed at one of their favourite hate-figures, at least has the virtue of being readable.

⁶⁰ Mattogno, *Belzec*, pp.33-34

⁶¹ Jürgen Graf, *The Giant With Feet of Clay. Raul Hilberg and his Standard Work on the "Holocaust"*. Chicago: Theses and Dissertations Press, 2001., p.83

⁶² This was emphasised by the Polish underground press in the first half of 1942 regarding Belzec, which was identified as “a special camp, where the expelled Jews are concentrated and apparently murdered” (*WRN*, 7/89, 27.4.1942, a socialist paper), and about which “all signs indicate that the murder of thousands of people takes place in this camp” (*Biuletyn Informacyjny* Nr 22 (126), 3.6.1942) and that it was a camp “from which no one returns” (*Szaniec*, Nr 12 (86), 15.6.1942, a right-wing paper), citations from Friedrich, *Der nationalsozialistische Judenmord*, pp.174-5, 112, 235. The degree of unanimity across the political spectrum is also worth emphasising.

then we will simply notch up ‘Belzec electric chambers’ alongside many another idiotic meme on the Denier Bullshit Bingo scorecard.

The implied argument within Mattogno’s “propaganda thesis” – insofar as one can discern a coherent argument at all – is that all reports can be traced back to Polish or Jewish sources. This is refuted in the case of Belzec by a number of reports reaching neutral recipients in 1942 and 1943, some of which have already been mentioned above. One of the more important examples was the first report to definitively reach the Swedish government in August 1942, filed by the Swedish consul in Stettin, Vendel, after a meeting with a German Army officer, most likely associated with the resistance circle around Henning von Tresckow. The report, dated August 20, ran:

The treatment of the Jews, as described by the person to whom I spoke, is of the kind that is impossible to express in writing. That is why I limit myself to a few brief pieces of information. The treatment differs in different locations, depending on the number of Jews. In some cities there are Jewish quarters; in others there are ghettos surrounded by high walls, which Jews can trespass only at the risk of being shot; finally, in some others Jews enjoy some freedom of movement. Nevertheless, the aim is the extinction of them all. The number of Jews murdered in Lublin is estimated at 40,000. The Jews over fifty years of age and children under ten are especially subjected to extermination. The rest are left alive in order to fill the gap in the workforce; they will be exterminated as soon as they are no longer useful. Their property is confiscated; it mostly falls into the hands of SS men. In the cities all Jews are gathered; they are officially informed that it is for the purpose of ‘delousing’. At the entrance they have to leave their clothes, which are immediately sent to a ‘central warehouse of textile materials’. Delousing is in practice gassing, after which all are packed into previously prepared mass graves. The source from whom I received all the information about the conditions in the General Government is such that there can be no shadow of a doubt that his description is true.⁶³

At virtually precisely the same time, as is well known, Kurt Gerstein visited Belzec, and upon his return informed the Swedish diplomat Baron von Otter of what he had witnessed there. Although Otter corroborated Gerstein’s 1945 claim to have passed on the news, no documentary trace survived in the files of the Swedish Foreign Office.⁶⁴ The Vendel report, however, does. The reference to the liquidation of the Lublin ghetto places the report and its mention of gassing in direct connection with Belzec. Another report that can be directly connected with Belzec is a letter from the Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Uniate Church in Lwow, Sheptyts’kyi, to the Vatican at the end of August 1942, which spoke of the

⁶³ Jozef Lewandowski, ‘Early Swedish Information about the Nazis’ Mass Murder of the Jews’, *Polin*, 2000, pp.117-8

⁶⁴ Cf. Steven Koblik, *The Stones Cry Out: Sweden’s Response to the Persecution of the Jews 1933-1945*, New York: Holocaust Library, 1988, p.58ff

murder of 200,000 Jews in Eastern Galicia.⁶⁵ The accumulation of such reports helps corroborate a wartime report based on information from Kurt Gerstein that does survive, namely the report of Gerstein's friend in the Netherlands, J.H. Ubbink, written down in Dutch after a 1943 meeting with Gerstein in Berlin. Gerstein reported to Ubbink on his visit to 'killing facilities' (*Tötungsanstalten*) in Poland, specifically including 'Belsjek', where he witnessed a gassing of Jews. As the 1943 report stated (perhaps not entirely precisely relaying details from Gerstein account), "Outside the building now a big tractor is started, the exhaust of which enters the building."⁶⁶

Mattogno is completely silent on the Ubbink report in *Belżec*, and indeed has very little to say about Gerstein in that brochure. He might well reply by pointing to his discussion of Gerstein in *Treblinka* (!)⁶⁷, and to his 1980s book on Gerstein – unfortunately, not a single copy of the latter book appears to be available in any library of the present author's home country, so it might as well not exist for all practical purposes.⁶⁸ The discombobulation and incoherence produced by his refusal to discuss the Ubbink report in its proper context – wartime reports about Belzec – and the more general refusal to analyse the three camps together is in our view a typical example of Mattogno's dishonesty and intellectual vapidty.

One point that has not so far been aired regarding the reports of Belzec – there are more, but it would be merely bouncing the rubble to repeat them all – is the striking mention in the AK report of April 1942 of none other than a 'police captain' by the name of Wirth who commanded Belzec. It would be a colossal coincidence that the Polish resistance would succeed in naming the same man as is documented in German records as involved directly in Aktion Reinhard. With literally thousands of camps in Poland, the odds of the Polish resistance arbitrarily picking Belzec and picking Wirth by chance are indeed, astronomical. MGK might well respond by conceding that Wirth was the commandant of Belzec, but at the cost of confirming a detail mentioned by more than a few witnesses (see Chapter 6).

Mattogno's refusal to discuss all three Aktion Reinhard camps together leads him into yet another argumentative cul-de-sac in *Sobibór*. Noting that there were relatively few reports

⁶⁵ *Actes et documents du Saint Siège relatifs à la seconde guerre mondiale. Le Saint Siège et les victimes de la guerre. Tome 3/2.* Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1967, pp.625-9, esp. 625; cf. also Pohl, *Ostgalizien*, p.329-330. On Sheptyts'kyi see also Hansjakob Stehle, 'Der Lemberger Metropolitan Šeptyčkyj und die nationalsozialistische Politik in der Ukraine', *VfZ* 34/3, 1986, pp. 407-425; Shimon Redlich 'Metropolitan Andrei Sheptyts'kyi, Ukrainians and Jews Before, During and After the Holocaust', *HGS* 5/1, 1990, pp.39-51

⁶⁶ The report is facsimiled in Louis de Jong, *Een Sterfgeval in Auschwitz*, Amsterdam, 1967 and 1970, without pagination. On the Ubbink report see also Louis De Jong, 'Die Niederlande in Auschwitz', *VfZ* 17/1, 1969, pp.1-16, and more recently Florent Brayard, 'An Early Report by Kurt Gerstein', *Bulletin du Centre de recherche français a Jerusalem* 6, 2000, pp.157-174.

⁶⁷ M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.128-132.

⁶⁸ Carlo Mattogno, *Il rapporto Gerstein. Anatomia di un falso*. Monfalcone: Sentinella d'Italia, 1985.

about the camp⁶⁹, he does not stop to ask why. But this is intuitively obvious: Sobibor was even more remotely located than Belzec or Treblinka, and the news of the camp arrived at a time when reports of Chelmno and Belzec were accumulating, so that Polish underground intelligence bulletins and newspapers frequently bracketed Sobibor together with other camps.

Nonetheless, news began to accumulate in June 1942, especially reports received by Oneg Shabes in Warsaw. A postcard from Wlodawa, Chelm county, sent on June 1, 1942 warned that “uncle” (the Nazis) was preparing “the same kind of wedding for the children that we had here” and building a new house “very near to you”, and that the “best remedy for this illness” was to go into hiding.⁷⁰ Written in veiled code, the message was received and understood by Oneg Shabes, as two couriers, Frumka Plotnicka and Chava Folman, reported back from Rejowiec and Hrubieszow with the news that Sobibor was the destination of the Jews deported from this region, and was like Belzec.⁷¹ A fugitive from Biala Podlaska, another town in the Lublin district caught up in the Sobibor deportations at this time, also made his way to Warsaw and informed Emanuel Ringelblum, the chief organiser of Oneg Shabes, of what had transpired: “a population ‘transfer’ (it would be more accurate to speak of a transfer’ into the beyond’) to Sobibor near Chelm, where Jews are poisoned with gas.”⁷²

Another Warsaw diarist, Abraham Lewin, spoke with a girl from Deblin-Irena who had escaped deportation on July 5, hearing a lengthy account of the brutal and violent circumstances of the deportation and how the surviving Jews tried to find out where the deportees had been sent. A Jewish woman bribed a “Gestapo agent” (presumably, a Polish informer) for information. “He told her that in Sobibor he had not found the men he was looking for. He had been told that the men had been taken to Pinsk. We should assume that this was just a pretext. He couldn’t find them because they were probably no longer in this world. For his trouble and his travel expenses, the agent extorted from the unfortunate wife and mother 1,000 zloty.”⁷³ Indeed, no Jews arrived from anywhere in the Pinsk ghetto at this or any other time⁷⁴; Lewin correctly deduced that the story was false. “What happened in

⁶⁹ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.63.

⁷⁰ Sakowska (ed), *Archiwum Ringelbluma. Listy o Zagladzie*, pp.151-155

⁷¹ Ruta Sakowska, *Die Zweite Etappe ist der Tod. NS-Ausrottungspolitik gegen die polnische Juden gesehen mit den Augen der Opfer*, Berlin: Edition Hentrich, 1993, p.40ff; cf. Kassow, *Who Will Write Our History?* p.293

⁷² Hilberg, *Vernichtung*, p.525, citing Emanuel Ringelblum’s diary entry of 17.6.1942, published by Joseph Kermisz in *YVS VII*, 1968, p.178. Cf. similar entries in diary of Hersh Wasser, Joseph Kermisz, ‘Daily Entries of Hersh Wasser’, *YVS XV*, 1983, pp.201-282, esp entries of 26.5.42 and 30.5.42, pp.277, 282

⁷³ Havi Ben-Sasson and Lea Preiss, ‘Twilight Days: Missing Pages from Avraham Lewin’s Warsaw Ghetto Diary, May-July 1942’, *YVS XXXIII*, 2005, pp.7-60, here pp.48-51, citation p.51

⁷⁴ On the history of the Jews of Pinsk and the ghetto in 1941-2, see E.S Rozenblat and I.E. Elenskaia, *Pinskie evrei: 1939-1944 gg.* Brest, 1997.

Deblin,” he continued, “also happened in the surrounding Jewish small towns such as Baranow, Micow, and Ryki. In the place of the deported Jews, Slovakian and Czech Jews were brought in. They took over the small houses of the deportees. The Jews who have been brought in work for the Germans. They are held in barracks, that means that they are in a labour camp all week and can come home to the town only on Sundays.”⁷⁵

Lewin was a fairly well informed observer who had already noted on May 30 that the number of victims in Galicia had reached 100,000.⁷⁶ Lewin’s diary entry on Sobibor is instructive, as it accurately reflects Nazi policy at this time: extermination coupled with forced labour, Polish Jews – especially the unfit - deported to the death camps while Jews from Slovakia and the Reich were moved in temporarily to replace them, being targeted for deportation in later waves.⁷⁷ The diary also reflects the blatant dissembling of the Nazis over where the Jews had gone, and the refusal of more and more Jews to believe the fairy-tales of ‘resettlement’. To take the claim of a deportation from Deblin-Irena to Pinsk literally, one would moreover have to presume that every survivor of the Pinsk ghetto was in on a gigantic conspiracy of silence, and that all German records from the Generalkommissariat Wolhynien have been falsified; moreover, *even if* all of these hurdles were straddled, as we will see in Chapter 2, the Jews of Pinsk were murdered in October 1942 in a mass shooting.

Other Warsaw diarists, meanwhile, did not fully assimilate the news. Chaim Kaplan still thought on July 10, 1942, that Sobibor was a gigantic work camp.⁷⁸ Given that Sobibor was encircled with a penumbra of satellite labour camps, this was a partial truth of sorts. Indeed, a more detailed wartime report from Sobibor hailed precisely from one of the lucky few to be selected at Sobibor and sent to a nearby labour camp. It was produced by an anonymous Slovakian Jewish deportee who survived until at least August 1943 in the region and then escaped, and whose account was smuggled out to the ‘Working Group’, who then passed it on to the Czechoslovak embassy in Switzerland.⁷⁹ Although reproduced almost in full in Jules Schelvis’ book on Sobibor⁸⁰, Mattogno does not see fit to acknowledge this source properly.

The report describes the writer’s deportation to Rejowiec and life in the ghetto and labour camp there, until on August 9, 1942, the ghetto and labour camp were both hit by a

⁷⁵ Ben-Sasson/Preiss, ‘Twilight Days’, p.51

⁷⁶ Lewin, *A Cup of Tears*, p.107ff

⁷⁷ See Chapter 3.

⁷⁸ Chaim Kaplan, *Scroll of Agony: The Warsaw Diary of Chaim A. Kaplan*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999, p.370

⁷⁹ *Tatsachenbericht eines aus der Slowakei deportierten und zurückgekehrten Juden*, 17.8.43, VHA Fond 140/59, pp.41-50 (Papers of J. Kopecky)

⁸⁰ Schelvis, *Vernichtungslager Sobibór*, pp.253-259

deportation to Sobibor⁸¹, beginning with the usual massacre of the sick and escalating into an indiscriminate mass shooting of part of the assembled population, leaving around 700 Jews dead. The remaining 2,000 were transported to Sobibor, accompanied by Trawniki ("black Ukrainians"). On arrival, men and women were separated, and a selection was carried out, picking out 155 men and women. They were told by an SS lieutenant, "you have been reborn." They were then taken to the labour camp at Krychow, where they became part of a contingent of 1200 workers composed of 400 Czech, 200 Slovak and 600 Polish Jews. Deaths were numerous, and the group of 155 from Rejowiec lost at least 60 to typhus and exhaustion. A selection was carried out on October 16, with the selectees being transported from the camp to Wlodawa, from where they were deported to Sobibor four days later. Another selection took place on December 9, liquidating the entire camp barring 110 people. In the first half of 1943, the Krychow camp was expanded once more when the nearby labour camps at Osowa, Sawin, Sajozice and Luta were liquidated, so that the number of inmates rose again to 553. In April 1943, the camp inmates were told that 'Belgian and Dutch Jews' would soon arrive, but they never came. "In the vicinity of Sobibor," the writer noted, "one can always observe fire by night, and in a wide area one can register the stink of burned hair. Various signs allow the conclusion (the population asserts it in any case) that the corpses, which had been executed previously through electricity and gas – and were later buried – are now exhumed and burned, in order to leave no trace."⁸²

The writer's descriptions of fires burning at night and the stink of burning hair were direct observations, his mention of "electricity and gas" were not. The mention of electricity indicates how widespread this rumour was – it was also repeated for Treblinka – but more problematic for Mattogno is why the Slovakian fugitive also mentioned gas. He had spent too little time in the forecourt at Sobibor when selected and spared for labour to learn anything of the exact inner workings of the camp, and as we will see later, there was a great deal of uncertainty among the Sonderkommandos working in the 'outer camp' at Sobibor about the precise killing mechanism. Nonetheless, the fact that gas was being spoken of in Chelm county in 1942-3 is instructive. It helps explain why underground newspapers were identifying gas as the killing method at both Belzec and Sobibor by early August 1942.⁸³

⁸¹ At this time, the rail line to Sobibor *north* of the camp was being regauged; Rejowiec is however to the *south*.

⁸² Tatsachenbericht eines aus der Slowakei deportierten und zurückgekehrten Juden, 17.8.43, VHA Fond 140/59, p. 50

⁸³ Friedrich, Der nationalsozialistische Judenmord im Augen der Polen, p.335, citing Przewalka do zwyciestwa mit, wdz Nr 18 (56), 10.8.42

With the pause in operations at Sobibor through the summer of 1942, reports about the camp unsurprisingly declined, but this was not the case for Treblinka. The place name was already associated with a forced labour camp, Treblinka I, established in November 1941 that over the course of the first half of 1942 had acquired a fearsome reputation in Warsaw, as it swallowed up hundreds of Jews deported there for slave labour. The start of the Warsaw ghetto action on July 22, 1942, however, could not be mistaken for a mere labour transfer. On July 26, Stefan Korbonski radioed out of Warsaw that Nazis

have begun the slaughter of the Warsaw Ghetto. The order concerning the deportation of 6,000 was posted. One is allowed to take 15kg of luggage and jewellery. So far two trainloads of people were taken away, to meet death, of course. Despair, suicides. Polish police have been removed, their place was taken by *szaulisi*⁸⁴, Latvians, Ukrainians. Shooting on streets and in houses.⁸⁵

News rapidly returned to the ghetto and the city that the deportees, leaving Warsaw at the rate of 5,000 per day, were turning off the main Warsaw-Minsk railway line at Malkinia and being sent to another camp at Treblinka. The deputy commander of the Armia Krajowa, General Tadeusz Bor-Komorowski, later wrote:

Not later than July 29 we learned from reports of the railway workers that transports were being taken to the concentration camp of Treblinka and that the Jews were disappearing there without a trace. There can no longer be any doubt that the deportations are the beginning of an extermination.⁸⁶

At this point, communications between Warsaw and the government-in-exile in London seem to have broken down, causing an ongoing postwar controversy that the government-in-exile had delayed the news of the destruction of the Warsaw ghetto. Bor-Komorski and Korbonski both claimed to have sent numerous radio messages, but few reached London.⁸⁷ Courier communications were also hampered by the rolling-up of the “Swedish connection” shortly before the start of the action, ending an important outlet of information via Swedish businessmen based in Warsaw who smuggled Delegatura reports to Stockholm.⁸⁸ The delays in news reaching London seriously affected how the Warsaw ghetto action and Treblinka were reported. *The Times*, for example, published a Reuters report datelined Zurich on August 17 stating that the head of the Jewish Council in Warsaw, Adam Czerniaków, had committed suicide after refusing to provide list of 100,000 Jews who would be deported to

⁸⁴ Lithuanian auxiliary police, also known as Shaulists.

⁸⁵ Cited in Stola, ‘Early News’, p.9

⁸⁶ Tadeusz Bor-Komorowski, *The Secret Army*, London, 1950, pp.97-99

⁸⁷ Stola, ‘Early News’, pp.10-12

⁸⁸ Józef Lewandowski, *Swedish contribution to the Polish resistance movement during World War Two (1939-1942)*, Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet, 1979

“an unknown destination in the east”, adding that Czerniaków realised “that the 100,000 would most probably be massacred.”⁸⁹

Inside Poland, meanwhile, the Delegatura as well as other underground observers were confirming that the deportees were indeed being massacred. A report from the commander of the Armia Krajowa, General Rowecki, sent on August 19 and reaching London on August 15, stated:

Since July 22, liquidation of the Warsaw ghetto (400,000 inhabitants) has continued with great cruelty by the German police and Latvian auxiliary police. Till now 5-6 and at present 15 thousand daily have been deported. Apparently, the majority is murdered in Belzec and Treblinka, a part seems to be assigned to labor behind the front line. Mass killings and robbery along with deportation. Several tens of thousands of skilled craftsmen and their families are to remain in the ghetto. To this point more than 150,000 have been deported.⁹⁰

Biuletyn Informacyjny, the AK’s official newspaper, similarly wrote on August 20 that “extermination in a camp near Treblinka in gas chambers” was taking place.⁹¹

Both dispatches to London as well as newspaper articles could not of course include more extensive details, but these were noted and recorded in other reports. During August and September, the Delegatura rapidly accumulated information about Treblinka, which unsurprisingly began with confused descriptions which gradually became more accurate. The edition of *Current Information* of August 17 – the same day as news of Czerniaków’s suicide was reported in London – wrote that up to August 7, 113,100 had been deported from Warsaw to Treblinka, along with Jews from other cities and towns in Poland such as Radom. Of their fate upon arrival, the report wrote

After the engine leaves the station, they force the Jews to undress in order to go, supposedly, to the showers. Actually they are taken to the gas chambers, exterminated there, and then buried in prepared pits, sometimes when they are still alive. The pits are dug with machines. The gas chambers are mobile, and they are situated above the pits.⁹²

The observation about mobile gas chambers, it was noted, could not be corroborated by any other source.⁹³ A follow-up report, dated September 8, elaborated further on the camp:

The Treblinka extermination camp, the place where the Jews are being killed, is

⁸⁹ *The Times*, 17.8.42, cf. Gilbert, *Auschwitz and the Allies*, p.63

⁹⁰ Stola, ‘Early News’, p.12

⁹¹ Krakowski, “Holocaust in the Polish Underground Press”, p. 250

⁹² *Informacja Bieżąca* Nr 30 (55), 17.8.1942, published in Marczewska/Ważniewski, ‘Treblinka w świetle Akt Delegatury’, pp.136-7

⁹³ A mobile gas chamber was also recorded in the diary of Wehrmacht captain Wilm Hosenfeld on 6.9.1942. In our view, this would trace back to the same original source. Entry published in Wladyslaw Szpilman, *Das wunderbare Überleben. Warschauer Erinnerungen 1939-1945*. Düsseldorf, 1998, p.197ff

located near the labour camp. It is situated 5km from the Treblinka station, and 2km from Poniatowo station. There is a direct telephone link to Malkinia. There is an old camp (for Poles) and a new camp whose construction is still under way (exclusively for Jews)... The extermination of the Jews is now carried out in a way that is completely independent of the old camp. A locomotive pushes the wagons with the Jews to the platform. The Ukrainians remove the Jews from the cats and lead them to the “shower to bathe”. This building is fenced off with barbed wire. They enter it in groups of 300-500 people. Each group is immediately closed hermetically inside, and gassed. The gas does not affect them immediately, because the Jews still have to continue on to the pits that are a few dozen meters away, and whose depth is 30 metres. There they fall unconscious, and a digger covers them with a thin layer of earth. Then other groups arrive... Soon we will relay an authentic testimony of a Jew who succeeded in escaping from Treblinka”.⁹⁴

Mattogno cites from both of these reports with virtually no comment⁹⁵, as part of a section of verbatim quotes which are evidently intended to create the impression of great confusion and inaccuracy. His circumspection, however, simply begs the question as to what his argument actually is. In fact, it would appear that he doesn't *have* an argument here, and is advancing what might be called the non-argument argument, whereby the mere act of quoting something is supposedly sufficient to prove a point that is not even outlined, much less explained. That early news reports are invariably somewhat garbled is more or less taken for granted by everyone other than conspiracy theorists, who seem to find discrepancies fascinating in and of themselves, or take them for proof of nefarious goings-on orchestrated by the New World Order/Illuminati/Jews/Them, rather than seeing them for what they are, namely, garbled reports.

In the two examples above, the inaccuracies are easy to decipher: *both* of them offer confused descriptions of how the bodies of the victims were taken from the gas chambers to the mass graves. One has the gas chamber moving, the other has a delayed-action gas so that the victims would stumble from the chamber to the graves. Considering that in reality, the corpses of the victims were hauled to the graves by exhausted slave labourers whose life expectancy in the first phase of Treblinka was measured in days, and that use was also made of flatcars travelling on field railway tracks from the chambers to the grave, both descriptions are entirely plausible coming from a witness escaping the outer camp at Treblinka who lacked either a precise line of sight or sufficient time to register their impressions properly. As with other eyewitness distortions about collapsing floors⁹⁶, such distortions are *exactly*

⁹⁴ *Informacja Bieżąca* Nr 33 (58), 5.9.1942, published in Marczevska/Ważniewski, ‘Treblinka w świetle Akt Delegatury’, pp.137-8

⁹⁵ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.48

⁹⁶ See Chapter 6.

what one would expect. Moreover, such variations clearly emanated from different eyewitness accounts, not from any kind of ‘literary evolution’ when the report-writers sat around the Shits ‘n’ Giggles department at Hoaxter Central and deliberately decided to leave Important Clues for conspiraloons to seize upon decades later. While we are fully aware that this isn’t in fact Mattogno’s argument, it might as well be, because nowhere does he even try to explain these reports or offer any kind of meaningful argument about them.

Nor does Mattogno deal properly with the fact that detailed reports on Treblinka reached *two* recipients at this time, the Polish underground as well as the Jews of the Warsaw ghetto. Given the chaos of the Warsaw ghetto action and the mass round-ups forcing Jews into hiding, it is unsurprising that activists in the ghetto found it difficult to learn accurate news until well into the deportation. Nonetheless, the Jewish social democratic party, the Bund, succeeded in sending emissaries to Sokolow Podlaski by the end of August, whose reports were used by Leon Feiner to write one of several reports recorded at this time.⁹⁷ The Bund newspaper *Oif der Vach* published a lengthy article about Treblinka on September 20:

‘The Jews of Warsaw Are Killed in Treblinka’

During the first week of the “deportation Aktion” Warsaw was flooded with greetings from the deported Jews. The greetings arrived from Białystok, Brest-Litovsk, Kosov, Malkinia, Pinsk, Smolensk. All this was a lie. All the trains with the Warsaw Jews went to Treblinka, where the Jews were murdered in the most cruel way. The letters and greetings came from people who succeeded in escaping from the trains or from the camp. It is possible that in the beginning, from the first transports, some of the Warsaw Jews were sent to Brest-Litovsk or Pinsk, in order that their greetings would mislead, deceive, and provoke false illusions among the Jews in Warsaw. Actually, what was the fate of the deported Jews? We know it from the stories of the Poles and of those Jews who succeeded in escaping from the trains or from Treblinka...

The size of Treblinka was one-half square kilometer. It was surrounded by three fences of barbed wire... After unloading the train of the living and the dead, the Jews were led into the camp... During the descent from the train, shots were fired on those who were slow or even for no reason. Those who died en route or were shot on the spot were buried between the first and the second fence...

The women and children from the arriving transport were divided into groups of 200 each and were taken to the “baths”. They had to take off their clothes, which remained on the spot, and were taken naked to a small barrack called the “bath”, which was located close to the digging machine. From the bath nobody returned, and new groups were entering there constantly. The bath was actually a house of murder. The floor in this barrack opened up and the people fell into a machine. According to the opinion of some of those who escaped, the people in the barrack were gassed. According to another opinion, they were killed by electrical current.

⁹⁷ Daniel Blatman, *For Our Freedom and Yours: The Jewish Labour Bund in Poland, 1939–1949*. London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2003, pp.102-4.

From the small tower over the bath, there were constant shots. There was talk that the shots were aimed at the people inside the barrack and those who survived the gas. The bath absorbs 200 people every fifteen minutes, so in twenty-four hours the killing capacity is 20,000 people. That was the explanation for the incessant arrival of people in the camp, from where there was no return, except a few hundred who succeeded in escaping during the whole time.... During the daytime women and children were liquidated and during the nights, the men...

The escape from the camp was difficult and dangerous, but there were people who tried to do it, in spite of the fact that the camp was strongly illuminated during the night... Why wasn't a mass escape organised? There were rumours in the camp that it was surrounded by a strong guard and the fences were electrified. The people were broken from their experiences at the Umschlagplatz, on the train and in the camp. The general depression influenced also those who were, by nature, more active...

An SS man gave a speech before each of the arriving transports and promised that all of them would be sent for work in Smolensk or Kiev.

The night between August 19 and 20, when Warsaw was bombarded, there was a blackout in the camp for the first time. An SS man addressed the assembled Jews. He told them that an agreement had been reached between the German government and Roosevelt about the transfer of European Jews to Madagascar. In the morning they would leave Treblinka with the first transport. This announcement aroused a great joy among the Jews. As soon as the all-clear signal was given, the extermination machine started its "normal" activity. Even inside the camp, the Nazis continued to mislead the Jews until the last moment...

There were three such camps: one in the vicinity of Pinsk for the eastern area, another in the area of Lublin at Belzec, and the third, the largest, was Treblinka near Malkinia.⁹⁸

As with many other such sources, this report is ignored by Mattogno, although one might expect the references to 'electrical current' to excite him. Indeed, diarists in the ghetto continued to refer to electricity well into October. Oneg Shabes activist Peretz Opoczynski reported rumours of a "giant electric chair" in Treblinka, capable of killing ten thousand Jews and Poles each day. "The Germans like to brag about their industrial prowess," he wrote, "and so they also want to run their killing industry with American efficiency."⁹⁹ Emanuel Ringelblum likewise reported in a long diary entry, undoubtedly dated retrospectively to October 15, once the deportation action was over, of "the news about the gravediggers (Rabinowicz, Jacob), the Jews from Stok who escaped from the wagons... the unanimous description of the "bath", the Jewish gravediggers with yellow patches on their knees. – The method of killing: gas, steam, electricity."¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Cited from Arad, 'Reinhard', pp.244-6

⁹⁹ Kassow, *Who Will Write Our History?*, p.192, citing AR-II, No.289 (9.10.1942)

¹⁰⁰ Jacob Sloan (ed), *Notes from the Warsaw Ghetto. The Journal of Emmanuel Ringelblum*, New York: ibooks, 2002, pp.320-1

Unanimous the reports may have been about the existence of a “bath”, there was still much confusion about the precise killing method at Treblinka, as Ringelblum’s diary entry and its smorgasbord of “gas, steam, electricity” indicates. Jacob Rabinowicz’s account had in fact described gas chambers, even specifying the use of a “diesel” engine.¹⁰¹ As will be seen in Chapter 5, calling the killing engine a “diesel” seems to have been part of the *Lagerjargon* of Aktion Reinhard, a misnomer borrowed from the diesel generator supplying electricity to the camp, which was located more or less alongside the petrol driven gassing engine. Thus can several inaccuracies be traced back to a similar root cause.

Another account by a Treblinka escapee written down at this time is entirely ignored by Mattogno in his attempt at tracing “the development of the idea of Treblinka as an extermination camp”, namely the lengthy description given by Abraham Krzepicki and recorded by Oneg Shabes activist Rachel Auerbach in October 1942.¹⁰² Krzepicki’s report, which will be referred to several times in this critique, also identified a gas chamber. As both Rabinowicz and Krzepicki had referred to gas chambers, it is mildly hard to understand why the long report compiled by Oneg Shabes activist Hersz Wasser on the liquidation of the Warsaw ghetto and the extermination camp at Treblinka, dated November 15, 1942 referred to *steam* chambers.¹⁰³ But only mildly hard to understand, for steam is, after all, a gas, and it is not difficult to see how the anonymous source describing steam to Wasser could have deduced that the victims were being killed with steam when witnessing the opening of a gas chamber and mistaken the emanation of exhaust fumes from the chamber for a lethal sauna.

Wasser’s report reached London by January 1943 and was published virtually in full by the end of the year in *The Black Book of Polish Jewry*.¹⁰⁴ It was undoubtedly the source for many references to killing by steam appearing *outside Poland* through to 1945. A summary was included in a newspaper article appearing in the *New York Times* in August 1943¹⁰⁵, while another version of the long report was published in Switzerland by Adolf

¹⁰¹ Rabinowicz’s report is published in Ruta Sakowska (ed), *Archiwum Ringelbluma, getto warszawskie: lipiec 1942-styczen 1943*. Warsaw, 1980.

¹⁰² Abraham Krzepicki, ‘Treblinka’, *BZIH* 43-44, 1962, pp.84-109; on Auerbach’s role see Kassow, *Who Will Write Our History?*, pp.309-11

¹⁰³ The Polish original is published in Marczevska/Ważniewski, ‘Treblinka w świetle Akt Delegatury’, pp.138-145; for English translations, see below.

¹⁰⁴ Apenszlak (ed), *The Black Book of Polish Jewry*, pp.141-7. This title can be read free of charge at Hathi Trust Digital Library, so will not be reproduced here.

¹⁰⁵ ‘2,000,000 Murders by Nazis Charged, Polish Paper in London Says Jews Are Exterminated in Treblinka Death House’, *NYT*, 8.8.1943, p.11, citing an article published in *Polish Labor Fights* on 7.8.1943. Poland Fights, a related organisation, recorded the existence of a ‘Treblinka III’ for Jews alongside a ‘Treblinka II’ for Poles in an enumeration of camps in Poland appended to Poland Fights, *Oswiecim – Camp of Death*, New York, 1944, pp.45-6. The ‘Treblinka’ report referencing steam was also published in the *Canadian Jewish Chronicle*, 20.8.1943.

Silberschein in 1944.¹⁰⁶ Mattogno naturally records all of this and devotes the majority of a chapter to reprinting these accounts verbatim.¹⁰⁷ What he does not do is explain why further reports on Treblinka written in Poland in late 1942 and 1943 consistently talked of gas chambers. Thus, the Pro Memoria report covering August 26 to October 10, 1942 spoke of the use of “suffocating gas” at Treblinka¹⁰⁸, as did the report covering March 25 to April 23, 1943, while also describing the first measures to erase the evidence of the crime by covering the graves in quicklime.¹⁰⁹

Even if Mattogno or his acolytes were to cling to the repetition of ‘steam chambers’ outside Poland, then they would still be ignoring reports of gas chambers at Treblinka that not only reached the outside world, but were also published. One Treblinka escapee, David Milgroim, who was deported from Czestochowa in 1942 and broke out of the camp after one week, eventually made his way to Slovakia where his report was recorded at the end of August 1943, being passed to the OSS in Istanbul by early 1944.¹¹⁰ Milgroim’s description of the killing process was as follows:

The naked people who were brought there were herded into those barracks, and told that they are going to be bathed. When a batch of them is inside, poison gas was let in. Those still outside naturally tried desperately to back away when they realised what was going on inside. Then the SS and the Ukrainians with their bloodhounds went into action and forced them in. The cries we had heard came from such crowds at the moment of entering. When a batch was inside the door was closed and remained so for fifteen minutes. When it was opened again, everyone inside was dead. Now the 500 Jews employed there had to throw the corpses into the fire-ditch which stretched beyond the fence into the death-camp. Those 500 Jews were in terrible condition of physical and psychic decay. They also got very little food, and ten or twelve committed suicide daily. From their “work” they all emitted a penetrating cadaverous smell, and it was this smell which betrayed our two informants, who were discovered among us and marched away by guards.

An anonymous version of this report was published in January 1944 in the *Canadian Jewish Chronicle*; key lines match word for word, and thus the published version can be firmly traced back to Milgroim’s report.¹¹¹

In reducing his discussion of the wartime reports to the killing method alone, Mattogno also ignores a wealth of evidence concerning the progression of the deportations.

¹⁰⁶ Adolf Silberschein, *Les camps d’extermination en Pologne III*, Geneva, 1944

¹⁰⁷ M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.51-64

¹⁰⁸ Sprawozdanie z sytuacji w kraju w okresie 26.VIII-10.X.1942, in Gmitruk (ed), *Pro Memoria*, p.273

¹⁰⁹ Pro memoria o sytuacji w kraju Generalnie Gubernatorstwo i Ziemia Wschodnie w okresie 25.III-23.IV.1943 r., in Gmitruk (ed), *Pro Memoria*, p.323

¹¹⁰ Breitman, ‘Other Responses to the Holocaust’, p.51; the report was already highlighted by Hilberg, *Vernichtung*, Bd. 3, p.1202 n.220.

¹¹¹ *Canadian Jewish Chronicle*, 14.1.1944.

Not all such reports, of course, were always accurate. For example, an account written down by a fugitive from Hrubieszow reaching the Warsaw ghetto and archived by Oneg Shabes described the Aktion in Hrubieszow at the start of June 1942 in great detail, but stated that the deportation went to Belzec rather than Sobibor.¹¹² Information could be conveyed as a mixture of accurate and inaccurate reports. In January 1943, the Delegatura noted accurately that “new transports of Jews to their death continue to arrive. For example: on November 20, 1942, forty freight cars arrived from Biala Podlaska.; on November 21 and 22, every day forty freight cars from Bialystok; on November 24, forty freight cars from Grodno. During these five days, thirty-two freight cars with Jew’s clothing were sent from Treblinka to the Reich” but incorrectly stated that “lately there are transports with Jews from eastern Galicia and Rumania.”¹¹³ By 1943, the Delegatura was routinely identifying deportations, as the following excerpts from a weekly report from the end of June 1943 shows.

Lukow: After a week-long massacre, the liquidation of the ghetto in Lukow finally ended in the first days of June. A thousand persons were taken away to the camp at Treblinka, a small number of Jews escaped, and 2,000 were murdered on the spot....

Trawniki: Selections are conducted in the Trawniki camp every few days, and the selectees go either to Sobibor or to a peat-cutting about six km from the camp. The pit or its surrounding area serve as an execution site for persons deemed unfit for work.¹¹⁴

Polish underground newspapers reported on the deportation of Dutch Jews to Sobibor and Bulgarian Jews to Treblinka in the spring of 1943¹¹⁵, while the Pro Memoria monthly report for July 26 to August 26, 1943, synthesised information from sources such as the weekly report quoted above to note the presence of Dutch Jews in the Dorohucza forced labour camp, the same site as the “peat-cutting about six km from” Trawniki mentioned above.¹¹⁶

Contrary to a rather wild claim by Mattogno, the Polish underground also reported on the open air cremations at the death camps.¹¹⁷ It takes a special effort to ask in regard to open-air cremations at Treblinka “how does it happen that there is no mention of this in any

¹¹² Adam Kopciowski and Dariusz Libionka (eds), ‘Życie i Zagłada w Hrubieszowie w oczach młodej warszawianki’, *Zagłada Żydów*, 2007, pp.229-240

¹¹³ Aneks nr 45 za czas od 1 do 15.I.1943 r., published in Marczevska/Ważniewski, ‘Treblinka w świetle Akt Delegatury’, also cited in Arad, ‘Reinhard’, p.356

¹¹⁴ Ref.Zeg/IX, Informacja tygodniowa, 30.6.1943, AAN 202/XV-2, fols. 341-42.

¹¹⁵ Dutch transports: Friedrich, Nationalsozialistischen Judenmord, p.309, citing Prawda Nr 4, 4.43 (Catholic newspaper); Bulgarian transports: ibid., pp.178-9, citing *Dziennik Polski* Nr 528, 5.6.1943

¹¹⁶ Pro memoria o sytuacji w kraju. Generalne Gubernatorstwo i Ziemie Wschodnie w okresie 26.VII-26.VIII.1943 r., in Gmitruk (ed), *Pro Memoria*, p.437

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p.437. The burning of bodies at Treblinka had indeed long been mentioned in the underground press; cf. Friedrich, Nationalsozialistischen Judenmord, p.178, citing *Dziennik Polski* Nr 517, 13.5.1943.

of the reports of the Polish resistance movement?”¹¹⁸, and not realise that your own source spells it out¹¹⁹ while the standard work on the Reinhard camps quotes the same point.¹²⁰ But apparently that is the standard of research and level of accuracy that Mattogno thinks is acceptable when discussing this issue.

Although we could recapitulate even more examples, the essential point has been made: wartime reports of Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka consistently identified them as extermination camps, and such reports reached multiple recipients while originating from multiple points of origin. The killing methods were not always clear, but this is unsurprising given the organisation of all three camps into ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ camps as well as the relatively small number of escapees until the revolts in Treblinka and Sobibor during August and October 1943. Nonetheless, the preponderance of reports about the killing method identified gas or gas chambers. The most prevalent misinterpretations, steam and electricity, are not difficult to trace back to plausible origins, namely in exhaust fumes seen from a distance and the presence of electricity generators. Above all else, the Polish underground was able to track the course of the deportations with considerable accuracy and could observe transports entering the camps and not coming out.

It is not the task of this critique to detail every available wartime report on Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka. It is, however, Mattogno’s task, if he wants to stand a chance in hell of advancing a coherent explanation for them. Quite possibly, Mattogno might retreat to the seeming safe haven of whining that many wartime reports were vague, or lacked this or that precise detail, or failed to live up to whatever other exacting but entirely arbitrary standard he can think of. The assumption underlying this particular fallback gambit is that there could somehow be perfect transparency and clarity of information, and that the inner workings of the death camps were somehow on public display and could be described perfectly from the get-go. No attempt, of course, is made by Mattogno to justify this assumption, although it clearly lurks beneath his presentation of the wartime reports. Inaccuracy or vagueness, however, doesn’t equal ‘hoax’ any more than contradiction or anomaly equals ‘hoax’.

On the contrary: the ability of the Polish underground as well as other observers to hit the intelligence jackpot and learn such precise details as the presence of Wirth at Belzec in the spring of 1942, as well as the week-by-week tracking of developments in 1943, beg serious questions about the plausibility of Revisionist claims that reports of extermination and

¹¹⁸ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.148

¹¹⁹ Marczevska/Ważniewski, ‘Treblinka w świetle Akt Delegatury’, p.154

¹²⁰ Arad, ‘Reinhard’, p.358

gassing in the six camps of Poland where gassing took place can be dismissed as mere “propaganda”. For the Polish resistance succeeded in identifying not just one or two but *all six camps* as sites utilising gassing.¹²¹ This begs a set of questions which are nowhere even vaguely answered by Mattogno, Graf or Kues, starting with: *why?* If this really was just some kind of Polish underground “propaganda”, why would they *misidentify* six camps that MGK declare to be ‘transit camps’ one and all, as death camps? Why would they write false reports about camps swallowing up train after train, if in fact there were other trains taking the deportees on their merry way to Russia or wherever the hell it is they supposedly went? Why would they do so starting from the very beginning of 1942 with Chelmno and Belzec? Why did other observers – Jewish organisations in Poland and Slovakia, Ukrainian nationalists and churchmen, German officials, Swedish diplomats, the Dutch resistance and so on – also receive such reports? Why is there literally no report from this time mentioning trains continuing onwards from these specific camps to the occupied Soviet territories en masse? MGK’s claims are simply wildly implausible.

The implausibility increases exponentially when one considers the Nazi response to the spread of knowledge of the extermination of the Jews across Europe. It is now well established that from 1941 onwards, the Nazis said as little as possible about the deportation of the Jews in the press, while continuing to pump out antisemitic propaganda and publish speeches by Hitler as well as other leaders which proclaimed, time and again, their intention to ‘destroy’ or ‘extirpate’ the Jews of Europe.¹²² Simultaneously, knowledge spread widely across Germany and into neutral countries of the mass shootings in the occupied Soviet Union, another subject that was taboo in the Nazi press.¹²³ Knowledge of the ‘Riga Bloody Sunday’ and the mass execution of the Jews of Borisov reached into Catholic and military

¹²¹ Mattogno has elsewhere tried to repeat the same isolationist nitpicking spam-quote routine for Auschwitz and Majdanek, utilising Polish publications excerpting reports on the individual camps, most notably the compilations ‘Oboz koncentracyjny Oswiecim w swietle akt Delegatury Rządu RP na Kraj’, *Zeszyty Oswiecimskie*, 1968, special issue 1 for Auschwitz, as well as Krystyna Marczevska and Władysław Ważniewski, ‘Obóz koncentracyjny na Majdanku w świetle akt Delegatury Rządu RP na Kraj,’ and Jolanta Gajowniczek, ‘Obóz koncentracyjny na Majdanku w świetle 'Dziennika Polskiego' i 'Dziennika Polskiego i Dziennika Żołnierza' z lat 1940-1944,’ *Zeszyty Majdanek*, VII, 1973, pp. 164-241, 242-261. It has evidently not occurred to him to examine all the camps in tandem, or if it has, he has realised that doing so would severely undermine his methodology of the non-argument argument mixed in with vague conspiracising and arguments to incredulity.

¹²² See on reactions and knowledge within Germany Peter Longerich, ‘*Davon haben wir nichts gewusst!*’ *Die Deutschen und die Judenverfolgung 1933-1945*. Munich, 2006; Dörmer, *Die Deutschen und der Holocaust*; Frank Bajohr and Dieter Pohl, *Der Holocaust als offenes Geheimnis. Die Deutschen, die NS-Führung und die Alliierten*. Munich: C.H. Beck, 2006; on antisemitic propaganda see Jeffrey Herf, *The Jewish Enemy. Nazi Propaganda during World War II and the Holocaust*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006. All of these important studies appeared in 2006-7.

¹²³ The Reich Press Office ordered on 7.1.1942 that nothing was to be mentioned regarding “the Jewish question in the occupied eastern territories”. Herf, *Jewish Enemy*, p.138

circles on the home front with little difficulty¹²⁴, and spread quickly to the wider population as soldiers wrote letters home¹²⁵ or when they returned on leave.¹²⁶ Deserters from the Einsatzgruppen even reached Switzerland and recounted their involvement in mass shootings in considerable detail to Swiss military intelligence.¹²⁷

The regime response was both belated and transparently nonsensical. On October 9, 1942, the Party Chancellery sent a circular to offices of the NSDAP with “confidential” instructions on how to spin the Final Solution of the “Jewish Question”, in which it was claimed that Nazi policy, “starting in the Reich itself and then extending into other European countries included in the Final Solution,” was to move the Jews “into large camps in the East, some already in existence, others yet to be set up.”¹²⁸ This was fine and good, were it actually the policy, but in fact, deported Jews were disappearing from across Europe to “unknown destinations” where they could not be reached by post or any other form of communication and would be reported as “whereabouts unknown.”¹²⁹ The absence of news from the deportees was a major red flag for neutral and Allied observers alike.¹³⁰ Thus when reports began to roll in of mass killings and extermination, Swiss newspapers asked “are the deported Jews being killed?”¹³¹, and were met with silence from the Nazi press and media.

Indeed, Goebbels and the Propaganda Ministry were quite clear that they could not stem the tide of reports of extermination because they could not provide a plausible alibi, cover story or proof-of-life. A conference on December 12, 1942, was devoted in part to figuring out how to distract attention from the reports. Goebbels admitted “that we do not

¹²⁴ On reactions to the Riga massacre in the Berlin episcopate, see Michael Phayer, ‘The Catholic Resistance Circle in Berlin and German Catholic Bishops during the Holocaust’, *HGS* 7/2, 1993, pp.216-229; on the rapid spread of knowledge of the Borisov massacre among officers of OKH and OKW, see Johannes Hürter, *Hitlers Heerführer. Die deutschen Oberbefehlshaber im Krieg gegen die Sowjetunion 1941/42*. Munich: Oldenbourg, 2006, pp.563-5

¹²⁵ Michaela Kipp, ‘The Holocaust in the letters of German soldiers on the Eastern front (1939-44)’, *Journal of Genocide Research*, 9/4, 2007, pp.601 -615

¹²⁶ See the extensive documentation of reports among the German population in Otto Dov Kulka and Eberhard Jäckel (eds), *Die Juden in den geheimen NS-Stimmungsberichten 1933-1944*, Düsseldorf, 2004

¹²⁷ Einvernahme-Protokoll des deutschen Deserteurs Unteroffizier xyz, 28.2.42, published in *Diplomatische Dokumente der Schweiz*, Bd. 14, Berne, 1997 (doc nr. 296)

¹²⁸ Vertrauliche Informationen der Partei-Kanzlei, Folge 66, 9.10.1942, 3244-PS, also published in Peter Longerich (ed), *Die Ermordung der europäischen Juden*, Munich; Piper, 1989, p.433ff. This document is quoted verbatim in MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.210-212, as if it constitutes actual proof of “resettlement”.

¹²⁹ FS RSHA IV B 4 A an BdS Frankreich, Betr.: Ausstellung von Bescheinigungen für Evakuierte, 9.12.1942, gez. Eichmann, T/37 (65).

¹³⁰ This is very apparent from Jean-Claude Favez, *The Red Cross and the Holocaust*, New York : Cambridge University Press, 1999 (French original 1988).

¹³¹ Toggenburger Tageblatt, 10.10.1942, cited in Dörner, *Die Deutschen und der Holocaust*, p.271. On Swiss knowledge in general, see Gaston Haas, ‘Wenn man gewusst hätte, wass drüben im Reich abspielte’. *Was man in der Schweiz von der Judenvernichtung wusste 1941-1943*. Frankfurt am Main, 1994.

have all that much to bring forth by way of counter-evidence.”¹³² The same day, he wrote in his diary that

The atrocity campaign about Poland and the Jewish Question is assuming enormous dimensions on the other side. I fear that over time we cannot master the issue with silence. We have to have some kind of answer... It is best to go over to the offensive and talk about English atrocities in India or the Middle East. Perhaps that will get the English to keep quiet. In any case, by doing so, we change the subject and raise another issue.¹³³

Two days later, Goebbels admitted that “there can be no question of a complete or practical refutation of the allegations of anti-Jewish atrocities.”¹³⁴ The half-hearted denials and denunciations of the United Nations Declaration on the Extermination of the Jews, issued on December 17, 1942, prompted the following response from the Polish government in exile:

Sir - In view of the German allegation that the stories of German atrocities, published here, are "British propaganda lies", it may be a useful suggestion that Mr. Eden should officially challenge Germany to allow a special commission, consisting of neutrals and International Red Cross representatives, to visit Poland.

Let the Germans show to this commission on the spot: (1) Where have the millions of Jews been deported to? (2) Where are, and how many are still alive out of, the nearly 3,500,000 Polish Jews and between 500,000 and 700,000 Jews deported to Poland from other occupied countries during the year 1942?

Yours faithfully

Szm. Zygielbojm,

Member of the National Council of the Republic of Poland

Stratton House, Stratton Street, W1¹³⁵

No such international or neutral commissions, of course, ever visited the “large camps in the East” which the Party Chancellery had spoken of in October 1942. The sole visit to any camp in Poland organised by the Nazis to refute the reports of extermination was in fact conducted by a tame Slovakian journalist, who was taken on a tour of the Organisation Schmelt forced labour camp complex in Upper East Silesia in December 1942 by Eichmann’s office. It may need to be pointed out to geographically-challenged negationists that the Schmelt camps were to the *west* of Auschwitz. When in the spring of 1943, the Catholic Church in Slovakia began to denounce the deportations of Slovakian Jews and to ask what had happened to them, the best that Eichmann and his men could think of was to offer to

¹³² Minister Conference of 12.12.1942, published in Willi Boelcke (ed), *The Secret Conferences of Dr. Goebbels: The Nazi Propaganda War, 1939-1943*, New York: Dutton, 1970.

¹³³ *TBJG* II/6, pp.438-9 (13.12.1942).

¹³⁴ Minister Conference of 14.12.42, published in Boelcke (ed), *Secret Conferences*, pp.308-9.

¹³⁵ Letter to the Editor, *The Times*, 20.1.1943, p.5

arrange a visit to the Potemkin ghetto of Theresienstadt, hardly capable of accommodating the several million missing deportees.¹³⁶ Seventy-eight years after Zygielbojm's letter, we are still waiting for a coherent response from Hitler's willing defense lawyers regarding the whereabouts of the 'missing Jews', as we will see in Chapter 4. Alas for them, Nazi Germany and its apologists forfeited the right to be taken seriously on this question in 1943.

Investigations and Trials

If the Hoax that dare not speak its name is already wildly implausible regarding wartime reports, it becomes even more ludicrously improbable when we reach the liberation of Poland in 1944 and turn to the investigations and trials set in motion in connection to Aktion Reinhard. It is virtually an article of faith among Revisionists that these investigations and trials were frame-ups and fabrications; even Samuel Crowell resorts to claims of coercion and torture by the time he reaches the postwar years. This absolute certainty that all trials were show trials is perhaps the one constant feature of negationism since its first stirrings in the late 1940s with the writings of Maurice Bardeche. But in more than sixty years of trying, Revisionists have consistently failed to explain how it was possible that the Allied powers as well as the successor states in Germany and Austria could orchestrate the massive conspiracy to distort the truth implied by the term 'show trial'.

The problem starts with establishing how it was that the liberators knew what shape the story would take. Soviet knowledge of Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka was in fact extremely poor. Few reports on the camps had appeared in the Russian or Yiddish language press in the wartime Soviet Union¹³⁷, while the Soviet leadership received vague reports at best about the camps. No survivors of the camps reached Soviet lines until the summer of 1944, precisely at the moment when Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka were liberated.¹³⁸ Any insinuation that "the Soviets" applied a scripted or preordained propaganda story to these camps is refuted by the total absence of any evidence to support such a suggestion.

Nor were other powers in any position to help script, orchestrate or choreograph the investigations. The Polish government-in-exile's relations with the Soviet Union were

¹³⁶ On the visit to the Schmelt camps and proposed tour of Theresienstadt see RSHA IV B 4, *Aussiedlung der Juden aus der Slowakei – Hirtenbriefe der slowakischen Bischöfe gegen die staatlichen antijüdischen Massnahmen*, 3.6.1943, gez. Eichmann, T/1108. On the reactions of the Slovakian Church see Michael Phayer, *The Catholic Church and the Holocaust, 1930-1965*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000, p.86ff

¹³⁷ Yitzhak Arad, 'The Holocaust as Reflected in the Soviet Russian Language Newspapers in the Years 1941-1945'; Dov-Ber Kerler, 'The Soviet Yiddish Press: During the War, 1942-1945' in Robert Moses Shapiro (ed), *Why Didn't The Press Shout? American & International Journalism During the Holocaust*. Yeshiva University Press, Jersey City, NJ, 2003, pp.199-220, 221-249

¹³⁸ Karel C. Berkhoff, ' "Total Annihilation of the Jewish Population"'. *The Holocaust in the Soviet Media, 1941-45*, *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 10, 1 (Winter 2009), pp.61-105.

severed in 1943 after the revelations of the Katyn massacre, and it neither provided the USSR with the intelligence it received on the mass killings in Poland, nor did it provide this intelligence to the communist puppet provisional government set up in Lublin in 1944. There is no evidence that the full range of wartime Delegatura reports were available in postwar Poland during 1944 or 1945, the time-frame of the first investigations of the Reinhard camps.¹³⁹ Nor were the documents collected by Oneg Shabes available, as the Ringelblum archive was buried in two tranches in July 1942 and February 1943, the first was located in September 1946, the second, containing critical evidence of the Reinhard camps, was not dug up until December 1950.¹⁴⁰

Any argument insinuating or claiming coercion or ‘scripting’ is in fact refuted by two favourite gambits on the Denier Bullshit Bingo scorecard, namely the repetition of wartime hearsay reports of ‘electricity’ and ‘steam’ as killing methods in the prosecution case at Nuremberg. Both were based exclusively on wartime reports quoted uncritically by researchers trying to draft charges for the Nuremberg trial. That they were repeated into late 1945 and early 1946 is evidence only of a considerable lack of coordination between different war crimes investigations. In several volumes of the ‘trilogy’, Mattogno cites from a report drafted *in London* by Dr. Litwinski in preparation for Nuremberg, and chortles when Litwinski repeated the 1942 claim of “electric installations” at Belzec, while the brevity of the description of Sobibor provokes more sneering.¹⁴¹ This merely proves that Litwinski did not have access to the full range of information at the time. But the paucity and inaccuracy of information in such reports makes it hard for deniers to explain why eyewitnesses interrogated by the western powers, such as Gerstein or Oskar Berger, gave detailed descriptions of the gas chambers at Belzec and Treblinka if the Allies had such a demonstrably inaccurate knowledge of these camps well into 1945. The submission by the Polish government of a summary of evidence mentioning steam chambers¹⁴² as well as another summary mentioning electric chambers¹⁴³ in both cases can be traced back to the work of the government-in-exile.¹⁴⁴ Neither report took the slightest notice of either the 1944

¹³⁹ The papers of the Delegatura may not even have been made available to the Polish Main Commission until mid to late 1947, as a simple comparison of the NTN trials of Rudolf Höss (March 1947) and the Auschwitz SS Staff (December 1947) indicates. Whereas the SS Staff trial evidence included an extensive collection of underground reports on Auschwitz, these were not used in evidence in the Höss trial.

¹⁴⁰ Kassow, *Who Will Write Our History?*, pp.1-5

¹⁴¹ Mattogno, *Belzec*, p.75; MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.67-8.

¹⁴² Charge No.6 of the Polish Government vs Hans Frank, 5.12.1945, 3311-PS, IMT XXXII, pp.154-8.

¹⁴³ IMT VII, p.576ff (19.2.1946, presentation of L.N. Smirnov); cf. also the unpublished compendium USSR-93.

¹⁴⁴ Dr. Tadeusz Cyprian, the signatory to 3311-PS, had been the Polish government-in-exile representative on the United Nations War Crimes Commission; cf. United Nations War Crimes Commission, *History of the United Nations War Crimes Commission and the Development of the Laws of War*. London, 1948. Like many

Soviet or 1945 Polish investigations into the Reinhard camps, or indeed any other postwar investigation. This is perhaps unsurprising, given that the Soviet delegation at Nuremberg was largely recruited from the Ministry of Justice while the actual field investigations into Nazi war crimes had mostly been carried out by the Red Army or provincial civilian authorities, with only minimal assistance from the Extraordinary State Commission.¹⁴⁵ Different agencies had not talked to each other properly.

This demonstrable lack of coordination is perfectly comprehensible to anyone who has properly studied the workings of any modern government, but evidently passes unnoticed by deniers, who persist time and again in assuming not only that departments communicate instantaneously with each other inside one government, but that *different governments can also do so*. At a stroke, it would appear, a significant chunk of the entire discipline of political science, much of international relations, institutional sociology and management studies as well as a substantial swathe of historiography are effectively thrown in the trash-bin, presumably so that deniers can feel they are fighting the good fight against the Borg, or Skynet, or some other malevolent entity with a hive mind. Although social scientists and historians have filled entire libraries detailing who knew what when inside every major government about every major event in modern history, and although the files of the various departments and commissions are freely available for all to research, MGK seem to believe that they can assert that a particular source or report was definitely transmitted from one place to the other without bothering to check to see if there is any *proof* that this was actually done.

We are not, unfortunately, making this up. Both Mattogno and Kues have separately asserted that the Gerstein report was a model for Polish investigators allegedly helping Rudolf Reder, virtually the only survivor of Belzec, to ‘script’ his testimony.¹⁴⁶ But this claim is immediately refuted by the fact that Reder gave a lengthy testimony to Soviet

other exiled officials, Cyprian transferred his allegiance to the Lublin government after the western Allies derecognised the government-in-exile as the legitimate representatives of Poland in 1945.

¹⁴⁵ On the Soviet delegation at IMT, see Francine Hirsch, ‘The Soviets at Nuremberg: International Law, Propaganda, and the making of the Postwar Order’, *American Historical Review*, Vol. 113 Issue 3 (Jun, 2008), pp.701-730; on the Extraordinary State Commission (ChGK), see Marina Sorokina, ‘People and Procedures: Toward a History of the Investigation of Nazi Crimes in the USSR’, *Kritika* 6/4, 2005. pp.797–831. In the experience of the present author after reviewing ChGK files from the RSFSR, Belorussian SSR, Ukrainian SSR and in relation to the camps of Auschwitz and Treblinka, as well as Red Army war crimes files, the actual ‘commission’ in Moscow did not function as a genuine investigative commission at all, but instead processed the results of literally 10s of 1000s of individual investigations launched by local civilian or military authorities.

¹⁴⁶ Mattogo, *Belzec*, p.40; Thomas Kues, ‘Rudolf Reder’s Belzec – A Critical Reading’, online at <http://www.codoh.com/newvoices/nrtkreder.html>

investigators from the Lvov oblast procuracy in September 1944¹⁴⁷, well before Gerstein wrote his report.¹⁴⁸ Nor is there any evidence that the Polish Main Commission or the Jewish Historical Commission had received copies of Nuremberg documents by the time Reder was interrogated for the Polish Belzec investigation of late 1945¹⁴⁹, or even by the time Reder's memoir was published in 1946.¹⁵⁰ Moreover, as Mattogno points out, and will be discussed at greater length in Chapter 5, Reder and Gerstein identified the engine type differently. This likewise rules out the possibility of collusion or scripting. One wonders what Mattogno thinks he gains by shooting himself in the foot like this, unless the mere existence of a contradiction exerts such a powerful attraction over feeble conspiracy-addled minds that Mattogno has not realised he has destroyed the foundations of his argument.

Much the same might be said about Mattogno's attempts at exegesis of all early eyewitness accounts¹⁵¹, as will be seen further in Chapters 5 and 6. So in thrall is he to the simple joys of anomaly-hunting that he does not notice that the presentation of conflicting eyewitness accounts rules out any suggestion that someone sat the witnesses down and scripted them. In which case: from where did the survivors of Sobibor and Treblinka derive their descriptions? Did the Soviet investigators corral a random selection of peasants and Jewish survivors and enrol them in some sort of ghastly creative-writing contest, giving them minimum instructions as to what to say, and allowing them to disagree over the minutiae that so obsess Mattogno? Or were these interrogations an early experiment in extrasensory perception that went slightly wrong? Was one witness placed in one room and asked to mind-meld with another witness who was sitting in the next? We are simply not told.

For all Mattogno's huffing and puffing, the contradictions in testimonies and descriptions of the camps and the killing methods offered by witnesses are nowhere so severe that they cannot be explained by the vantage point of the witness – whether they worked in the inner or outer camps, and for how long; whether they had learned of the camps directly or via hearsay; and whether they possessed sufficient technical knowledge of internal combustion engines to know what they had seen. Such knowledge can hardly be taken for granted in the somewhat less than motorised Poland of the 1940s. Far from proving a 'Hoax', the discrepancies refute the possibility of one.

¹⁴⁷ Prokuratura L'voskoi oblasti, protokol doprosa, Rubin[sic!] Germanovich Reder, 22.9.1944, GARF 7021-149-99, pp.16-19

¹⁴⁸ It ought to be remembered that Gerstein wrote his statement down for the *French*, not the Americans. See on this, in addition to the secondary literature cited in the introduction, the report of US investigators in Gerstein's file, NARA, RG 153, Box 91.

¹⁴⁹ Vernehmung Rudolf Reder, 29.12.45, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 252/59, p.1177-1176 (German translation).

¹⁵⁰ Rudolf Reder, *Belzec*. Kraków: Wojewódzka żydowska komisja historyczna, 1946

¹⁵¹ M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.64-76; Mattogno, *Belzec*, pp.35-41; MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.69-76

That is also a conclusion confirmed by the diversity of investigators involved who assembled information on the Reinhard camps in 1944 and 1945. Belzec was liberated by Marshal Konev's 1st Ukrainian Front, and this Soviet formation's rear areas were still evidently in place in the Zamosc region in time to receive a report in early 1945, shortly before the Front liberated Auschwitz during the Vistula-Oder Operation. The report is instructive for including an account by Stanislaw Kozak of the construction of the first gas chamber building that differs little from his testimony to the Polish Main Commission in October 1945.¹⁵² Marshal Zhukov's 1st Belorussian Front liberated Sobibor, Treblinka and Majdanek. Only the investigation of the last site received any reinforcements from the Extraordinary Commission in Moscow, and was also the site singled out for full display to the world's media.¹⁵³ The reasons for this are obvious: not only was Majdanek largely intact, but it had been a concentration camp, and had killed both Jews and non-Jews. For all the subsequent publicity given to Majdanek, the lion's share of the investigative work, as with the later 1st Ukrainian Front investigation of Auschwitz, fell on the shoulders of the judge advocate staff of 1st Belorussian Front.¹⁵⁴ The crime scenes at Sobibor and Treblinka were delegated to subordinate armies, with 47th Army tasked to Sobibor¹⁵⁵, while General P.A. Batov's 65th Army investigated the two camps at Treblinka.¹⁵⁶ General Chuikov's 8th Guards Army had additionally filed a brief report on Sobibor, Majdanek and a number of Soviet POW camps at the end of July, and also gathered testimonies from villagers in the area surrounding Sobibor.¹⁵⁷

It is obvious from the reports filed by the frontline armies that they had neither the resources nor the interest in pursuing a really systematic investigation of any of these sites. The striking brevity of the early reports on the Reinhard camps in comparison to the lengthy manuscripts compiled on Majdanek and Auschwitz can surely be ascribed in part to a degree of disinterest in the fate of *Jewish* victims. Nonetheless, the reports are also highly revealing, with the akt of 8th Guards Army summarising the testimonies of villagers at Sobibor

¹⁵² Akt o zverstvakh nemetskikh okkupantov v lagere stantsii Bel'zhets, Tomashuvskogo uezda, Liublinskogo voevodstva, 25.1.1945, TsAMO 236-2675-340, pp.31-3.

¹⁵³ Cf. 'Nazi Mass Killing Laid Bare in Camp', *New York Times*, 30.8.44, p.1, discussed further in the Conclusion chapter below.

¹⁵⁴ Zakliuchenie po delu o zverstvakh i zlodeianikah nemetsko-fashistskikh zakhvatchikov v gor. Liublin, TsAMO 233-2374-25, 8.1944, pp.459-488.

¹⁵⁵ Soderzhanie o rezul'tatakh obspedovaniia faktov massovogo istrebleniia naseleniia nemetskimi okkupantami v lagere na stantsii Sabibur, 25.8.1944, TsAMO 233-2374-58, pp.225-229.

¹⁵⁶ As has already been mentioned, excerpts of the 65th Army investigation files from Podolsk have been published in Sverdlov (ed), *Dokumenty obviniaut*. Copies of the investigation were also transmitted to the Extraordinary Commission in Moscow (GARF files 7021-115-8, 9, 10, 11 and GARF 7445-2-136).

¹⁵⁷ Spravka o zverstvakh nemetsko-fashistskikh zakhvatchikov, vyivlennykh na territorii Pol'shi, 29.7.1944, TsAMO 233-2374-58, pp.96-98R.

explicitly mentioning gas as the killing method, and recording how villagers heard the sound of the motor followed by the cries of the victims.¹⁵⁸ More striking still is the obvious fact that the subordinate armies had no guidance from above that can be discerned, and were reporting *upwards* to the Front. Evidently, Mattogno would have us believe that junior officers – as he writes in Treblinka, “First Lieutenant of Justice Jurowski... Major Konoyuk, Major V.S. Apresian, First Lieutenant F.A. Rodionov, Major M.E. Golovan and Lieutenant N.V. Kadalo” – somehow dreamed up the world-beating Hoax all on their own.¹⁵⁹ Moreover, 1st Belorussian Front was hardly the only formation or institution involved in gathering testimonies from Reinhard camp eyewitnesses, as the examples of Pavel Leleko (interrogated by 2nd Belorussian Front) and Rudolf Reder (interrogated by the Lwow oblast procuracy, a civilian agency) discussed above indicate.

Needless to say, nowhere do either Mattogno or Graf, the two Revisionist researchers who have visited the Moscow archives, present any evidence of top-down or horizontal coordination between the different investigations. Indeed, the Extraordinary Commission in Moscow increasingly functioned more like a postbox to which reports on war crimes could be sent by various agencies and then dropped down the memory hole to be buried in the archives.¹⁶⁰ If there is a ‘Hoax’ in here somewhere, we have yet to see any proof of it, and find such an assumption to be hilariously improbable as well as ignorant of Soviet realities. Much the same can, of course, be said about the investigations of the Polish Main Commission, which will be discussed in their forensic aspects in Chapter 7 and in relation to witnesses in Chapters 5 and 6. Any allegation of Polish hoaxing can be safely ignored until there is proof of Soviet hoaxing, along with an explanation for the magical transmission of data to witnesses interrogated by the western Allies and, of course, an explanation for the wartime reports.

By this stage, roughly by 1946, MGK’s “propaganda” allegation has already assumed the contours of an Impossibly Vast Conspiracy, unless they are seriously going to try alleging Hoax by Telepathy. The inflationary limit of this conspiracy, however, is not really reached until Jürgen Graf attempts to deal with the war crimes trials prosecuted in West Germany, Austria, the Soviet Union and Israel from the 1950s to the 1980s in two of the sorriest, most

¹⁵⁸ Akt, 29.7.1944, stantsia Sabibor, TsAMO 233-2374-58, p.131.

¹⁵⁹ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.77.

¹⁶⁰ See for example the reports on Auschwitz collected in GARF 7021-108-52, sent in by the editors of a wide variety of Soviet newspapers and political offices. The Soviet war crimes trial program was moreover rather limited, and involved relatively few trials, almost all of which concerned crimes committed on Soviet soil. See on this Alexander Prusin, ‘Fascist Criminals to the Gallows!': The Holocaust and Soviet War Crimes Trials, December 1945-February 1946', *HGS* 2003, pp.1-30.

bereft chapters in the entire 'trilogy'. Put simply, Graf does not know what he is talking about, since nowhere does he bother to cite from a single case file relating to these trials. The result is a series of assertions which would be merely risible were it not for the increasingly offensive tone of Graf's conspiracising. Not content with simply alleging a frame-up, Graf eventually hits the full conspiraloon jackpot by claiming that key witnesses were murdered, libelling respected journalists and slandering eyewitnesses by asserting that they had knowingly conspired in the death sentences of war criminals, all without bothering to provide a shred of evidence and while ignoring nearly everything ever written on these war crimes trials, much less their actual transcripts and exhibits.

Graf wastes no time at the start of his chapter on the trials in Sobibor and immediately asserts his first conspiracy theory:

once the victorious Western Allies had created a puppet state called 'Federal Republic of Germany' its leaders ordered the judiciary to fabricate the evidence for the mirage of the murder of millions of people in gas chambers, for which not a shred of evidence survived – if it ever existed.¹⁶¹

Aside from offering a textbook example of assuming the consequent, Graf's wild claim is not only unsubstantiated and totally devoid of any evidence to support it, but it is also refuted by the actual history of war crimes investigations in West Germany. The origins can be traced very firmly back to the desire of many Germans to hold a judicial accounting of the crimes committed by the Nazis against Germans. After the International Military Tribunal had ruled that it could not judge Nazi war criminals for their actions prior to 1939, responsibility for prosecuting crimes against Germans devolved to the restored judicial system in the occupation zones, utilising 1871 German law – in other words, using German law against German defendants who had committed crimes in Germany against Germans. Among the many such crimes which were prosecuted were those perpetrated in the 'euthanasia' program, which had claimed the lives of several hundred thousand Germans and Austrians, 70,000 of whom died in the gas chambers of the T4 "institutes". It was unsurprising, therefore, that these investigations and trials soon stumbled across the involvement of T4 personnel in the Reinhard camps.¹⁶² In some cases, as with Irmfried Eberl, the commandant of Treblinka, the suspects were able to save themselves from the indignity of prosecution by committing suicide before they were interrogated in detail about Aktion Reinhard.¹⁶³ In other cases, such as that of Josef Hirtreiter, an investigation into his role at

¹⁶¹ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.171.

¹⁶² See Bryant, *Confronting the 'Good Death'*; de Mildt, *In the Name of the People*.

¹⁶³ Cf. Grabher, *Irmfried Eberl*.

Hadamar (he had been arrested on July 2, 1946) soon grew into a separate case, resulting in Hirtreiter's conviction for murder at Treblinka in 1951 by the Landgericht at Frankfurt am Main.¹⁶⁴ Nowhere is Hirtreiter's name even *mentioned* in Mattogno and Graf's book on Treblinka.

Graf's approach to the other two early Reinhard camp trials, of Erich Bauer and of Hubert Gomerski and Johann Klier, both in 1950 and both trials focusing on crimes at Sobibor, is revealing for its incoherence as well as its dishonesty. In seeking to support his assertion that the trial of Gomerski and Klier was "accompanied by a massive campaign in the media still under Allied control", he cites precisely one newspaper article from the *Frankfurter Rundschau*, a paper based in the same town as the trial was being held.¹⁶⁵ This "massive campaign in the media" evidently did not include either *Die Zeit* or *Spiegel*, neither of whom ran a single story on the trial.¹⁶⁶ So where are all the stories, Jürgen?

Another gambit is to insinuate that Erich Bauer had not been mentioned by early witnesses, as if it were necessary for a survivor to know every SS man's name, rather than to recognise their face. Typically, Graf highlights Bauer's absence in the testimony of one witness while omitting his inclusion in the next statement in his source.¹⁶⁷ Equally typical is the obsessive attack on Esther Raab based on her ghosted memoir from 2004, which includes misreading easily comprehensible English¹⁶⁸ as well as the following piece of logical gibberish. Because Raab implied in 2004 that she was the 'only' witness to Bauer's crimes, yet there were seven other witnesses at the trial, Graf is apparently entitled to discredit a trial fifty-four years beforehand, and feels entitled to ignore the other seven witnesses since Raab is the apparent chief witness, and as is well known, negationist reasoning decrees that it is sufficient to debunk one witness in order to debunk the whole.¹⁶⁹ For the Gomerski-Klier trial, Graf offers little more than generic arguments to incredulity, on which we need not waste any more time here.¹⁷⁰

Nowhere in his account of either trial did Graf think to cite a work by Dick de Mildt appearing in 1996 on the euthanasia and Aktion Reinhard trials, something that would be normally regarded as an essential first step for any scholar writing on the subject – namely, to

¹⁶⁴ de Mildt, *In The Name of the People*, p.249; *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* Bd VIII (Lfd Nr 270).

¹⁶⁵ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.179.

¹⁶⁶ As can be found out by a simple search of both title's online archives.

¹⁶⁷ Blumental (ed), *Obozy*, pp.208 (Leon Feldhendler), 214 (Zelda Metz).

¹⁶⁸ See the nonsensical exegesis of the extract from Shaindy Perl's book on MGK, *Sobibór*, p.175

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.174-5

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.178-182. We examine a paranoid claim by Kues about the Gomerski trial in Chapter 6.

familiarise themselves with the existing literature.¹⁷¹ Indeed, he barely scrapes together more than a handful of references to the judgement, much less tries to seek out any available witness statements from the cases in question. This level of shoddiness is repeated throughout his chapters on the Treblinka and Sobibor trials. Nor does Graf bother to consider the historical context, which has been amply researched and written about, preferring to substitute his own (Horst) Mahleresque fantasy fugue about West Germany as a puppet state. Far from being staged as part of an Allied propaganda campaign, the early trials were either outgrowths of existing investigations or the result of chance accidents – the recognition of Bauer by survivors in Berlin. There is no evidence that, and no rhyme or reason as to, why the courts in Berlin and Frankfurt would have been ‘persuaded’ by the nameless nefarious entities of Graf’s insinuations to conduct these trials and then not have them widely reported, as contrary to his insistence that there was a massive campaign in the media, nothing of the sort occurred. Moreover, if in 1950 the Allies were so keen to have West German courts chase down Aktion Reinhard SS men, why was nothing more done for nearly a full decade?

The answer to anyone who actually knows anything about postwar West German history is obvious.¹⁷² The Adenauer era tried to ‘come to terms with the past’ with the symbolic gesture of compensation, brought an end to denazification and made it possible for former Nazis to reintegrate into society; and then concentrated mainly on commemorating German victimhood.¹⁷³ The ‘cold amnesty’ for Nazis, however, ran into continual problems, as a string of scandals over the Nazi pasts of senior politicians, civil servants and other public figures wracked the media, culminating in the Ulm Einsatzgruppen trial of 1958 and the decision to establish the Zentrale Stelle at Ludwigsburg.¹⁷⁴ The Cold War context, especially the mutual recriminations and accusations of one Germany against the other for harbouring ‘Nazis’, culminating in the German Democratic Republic’s ‘Brown Book’ campaign, was an additional major factor.¹⁷⁵ Although the GDR routinely accused the Federal Republic of Germany of softness and laxity towards Nazi war criminals, it, too, was quite capable of overlooking past misdeeds and had just as mixed a track record of war crimes prosecutions as

¹⁷¹ de Mildt, *In the Name of the People*.

¹⁷² A useful overview of the ‘second history’ of Nazism in postwar Germany can be found in the collection of essays by Peter Reichel, Harald Schmid, Peter Steinbach (eds), *Der Nationalsozialismus. Die Zweite Geschichte*. Munich: C.H.Beck, 2009, as well as the monograph by Peter Reichel, *Vergangenheitsbewältigung in Deutschland. Die Auseinandersetzung mit der NS-Diktatur von 1945 bis heute*. Munich: C.H. Beck, 2001.

¹⁷³ Norbert Frei, *Adenauer’s Germany and the Nazi Past: The Politics of Amnesty and Integration*. New York, 2002; Robert G. Moeller, *War Stories. The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany*. Berkeley, 2001.

¹⁷⁴ Jörg Friedrich, *Die kalte Amnestie: NS-Täter in der Bundesrepublik*. Berlin: List, 2007.

¹⁷⁵ Annette Weinke, *Die Verfolgung von NS-Tätern im geteilten Deutschland. Vergangenheitsbewältigungen 1949-1969 oder: Eine deutsch-deutsche Beziehungsgeschichte im Kalten Krieg*. Paderborn: Schöningh, 2002

West Germany.¹⁷⁶ In the end, the decisive factor in the renewed – and sustained – prosecution of Nazi war crimes in West Germany was a generational shift, as the so-called 49ers who had entered adulthood after the Second World War graduated to positions of influence and authority, and resolved to come to terms with the Nazi past on their own terms rather than the shaky compromise stitched together under Adenauer. The *Spiegel* affair was as emblematic in this regard as the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial.¹⁷⁷

The Ludwigsburg inquiries¹⁷⁸ which led to the 1960s Aktion Reinhard camp trials were part of a *systematic* investigation of *all* Nazi war crimes that began in the late 1950s. The Zentrale Stelle was organised into a number of Referate or desks, each assigned to a particular region or complex of crimes. The Reinhard camps fell under Referat 8, later 208, which also investigated other SS and Police units stationed in the Lublin district. By contrast, the Radom district was scrutinised by Referat 206. Once the preliminary investigation was complete, state attorney's offices became involved in the interrogation of suspects and eyewitnesses. A certain number of investigations were additionally delegated to a similar central office in the State of North-Rhine Westphalia, which largely bungled the investigations of many police battalions, a failure which was severely exacerbated by the old boys' network in police and detective forces that resulted in many former Order Policemen going scot-free.¹⁷⁹ Nonetheless, there were eventually 131 trials of crimes committed in the territory of the Generalgouvernement held in West Germany, of which 10 focused on the extermination camps of Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka II and one on the Treblinka I labour camp. By contrast, the GDR prosecuted only 8 equivalent cases, of which only one concerned the Treblinka I labour camp.¹⁸⁰ A further 28 trials concerned crimes committed in the annexed territories, including four trials in connection with the Bialystok district.¹⁸¹

Up to 1960, twenty-three trials had taken place in connection with the euthanasia program; a further eight cases went to trial thereafter, for a total of 31 euthanasia trials in West Germany.¹⁸² As is well known, Aktion Reinhard was where the euthanasia program

¹⁷⁶ Henry Leide, *NS-Verbrechen und Staatssicherheit. Die geheime Vergangenheitspolitik der DDR*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 3. Auflage, 2007.

¹⁷⁷ Christina von Hodenberg, 'Mass Media and the Generation of Conflict: West Germany's Long Sixties and the Formation of a Critical Public Sphere,' *Contemporary European History* 15, 2006, pp.367-395; on the public discourse on the Holocaust in the Federal Republic during the 1960s see Mirjam Wenzel, *Gericht und Gedächtnis. Der deutschsprachige Holocaust-Diskurs der sechziger Jahre*. Göttingen: Wallstein, 2009.

¹⁷⁸ For an overview, see Weinke, *Eine Gesellschaft ermittelt gegen sich selbst*.

¹⁷⁹ Stefan Klemp, 'Nicht ermittelt'. *Polizeibataillone und die Nachkriegsjustiz – Ein Handbuch*. Essen, 2005.

¹⁸⁰ Figures compiled from Justiz und NS-Verbrechen, at <http://www1.jur.uva.nl/junsv/inhaltsverzeichnis.htm>

¹⁸¹ Freia Anders, Hauke Hendrik Kutsch and Katrin Stoll (eds), *Bialystok in Bielefeld. Nationalsozialistische Verbrechen vor dem Landgericht Bielefeld 1958 bis 1967*, Bielefeld, 2003

¹⁸² de Mildt, *In the Name of the People*, pp.404ff.

converged with Nazi crimes against Jews in the Generalgouvernement and Bialystok. Reinhard men in fact testified in the investigations and trials of other SS and Police units which had committed crimes in the Generalgouvernement, as we have already mentioned in the introduction. The fact that there were at least 155 trials which related directly or indirectly to Aktion Reinhard naturally goes unmentioned by Graf, although it was quite apparent at the time to the Ludwigsburg investigators.¹⁸³

These figures do not, of course, count the numerous investigations that never went to trial because the investigation did not find probative evidence that would trigger an indictment for murder. West German law, inheriting the provisions of the Wilhelmine legal code, required that a charge of murder could only result in conviction if it could be proven that the killing had been carried out for “base motives”, “bloodlust”, “maliciousness” or “cruelty”.¹⁸⁴ The mere carrying out of executions, even if these were considered illegal by postwar courts, did not suffice to convict the perpetrator for murder. Although the defence of obedience to orders had been set aside in 1940s Allied trials, it re-entered West German courtrooms through the backdoor, as ‘obedient’ executioners could not be found guilty of murder, and courts spent an inordinate amount of time examining whether the perpetrator had subjectively felt that they were acting under duress, although no case of an SS man being punished for disobeying an order to kill ever came to light.¹⁸⁵ The result was that courts convicted the “excessive” perpetrators while giving either derisory sentences to mass murderers or acquitting them, and that state attorneys closed out hundreds of cases for lack of probative evidence. Thus, although every single office in the civil administration of the Generalgouvernement was investigated, only one case produced a conviction and only one other case went to full trial, both in the immediate postwar years.¹⁸⁶

Thus, the number of *cases* where Aktion Reinhard could have been an issue numbered into the high hundreds; literally thousands of West Germans who had served in the Generalgouvernement and Bialystok district in the SS, Police or civil administration were interrogated in the 1960s either as suspects or witnesses. A substantial number of these witnesses admitted knowing that the Reinhard camps were extermination sites, or that the

¹⁸³ Zusammenstellung der bisherigen Ergebnisse der Untersuchungen durch die Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen in dem Komplex “Aktion Reinhard”, unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Vernichtungslagers Belzec, 10.11.1960, BAL B162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd. 4, pp.39-47

¹⁸⁴ Adalbert Rückerl, *NS-Verbrechen vor Gericht. Versuch einer Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, Heidelberg, 1984, p.329; for a short summary of the legal issues in Nazi war crimes trials in West Germany, see Helge Grabitz, Helge, ‘Problems of Nazi Trials in the Federal Republic of Germany’, *HGS* 3/2, 1988, pp.209-222

¹⁸⁵ Herbert Jäger, *Verbrechen unter totalitärer Herrschaft: Studien zur nationalsozialistischen Gewaltdelinquenz*, Frankfurt am Main, 1982 (first edition, 1967).

¹⁸⁶ Roth, *Herrenmenschen*, pp.344-387; Musial, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung*, pp.351-374

Jews were being deported to their deaths. Even more admitted to witnessing the mass shootings that routinely accompanied the deportations. A German stationed in a provincial county capital could hardly avoid encountering the sight of Jews being murdered.

Graf naturally suppresses this legal and historical context, although he engages in a little throat-clearing about “base motives”¹⁸⁷ before advancing his conspiracy theory: that the defendants in the Reinhard trials were pressured into admitting extermination and gassing. The fact that not one SS man who served at the Reinhard camps denied that they were extermination camps evidently does not faze him, as he constructs a convoluted theory whereby if defendants had done so, they would have received higher sentences, a claim for which he provides not a shred of evidence. Indeed, the best he can come up with is to point to the prosecution of Josef Oberhauser in the Belzec trial. Oberhauser refused to testify at the trial; which Graf interprets to mean “that he was not contesting the extermination of the Jews in Belzec.” This putative compliance with the authorities supposedly earned him a four and a half year sentence.¹⁸⁸ But Oberhauser had in fact repeatedly testified to events at Belzec over a four year period from 1960 to 1964. His refusal to testify *on the stand* was neither the cause of the low sentence nor an Important Clue for Graf to decipher decades later, but simply the defence strategy chosen by the defendant and/or his lawyer. Nor is Graf correct to assume that other defendants, such as Erich Fuchs at Sobibor, gave testimonies regarding gassings in exchange for mild sentences¹⁸⁹, since West German law did not allow for the possibility of plea bargaining.¹⁹⁰

Nowhere in any of the three volumes of the ‘trilogy’ do MGK try to prove their conspiracy theories and innuendo about backroom deals and leniency awarded on a nod and a wink; they do not even try to analyse the cohort of defendants and prove that there is any kind of genuine pattern. Such a task would of course be beyond them, as they have evidently not read the sum total of witness statements or court testimonies¹⁹¹ and cannot therefore substantiate the insinuation that more testimony about gassing = lighter sentence. Indeed, the example of Erich Bauer, given a life sentence for his role as the ‘Gasmeister’ of Sobibor, refutes such an insinuation before it has even left the starting-gate. The number of Reinhard camp defendants is sufficiently small that the absence of any attempt at a systematic analysis

¹⁸⁷ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.183.

¹⁸⁸ M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.164-5

¹⁸⁹ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.183-7

¹⁹⁰ J.H. Langbein, ‘Land without plea bargaining: How the Germans do it.’ *Michigan Law Review*, 78 (2) (December 1979).

¹⁹¹ It is not a requirement of West German law to maintain a stenographic protocol of the trial, although this is often done. Transcripts of the 1966 Hagen trial of Sobibor defendants definitely exist.

is a sure sign that all Mattoigno, Graf and Kues have are innuendo and hasty generalisations. The assertions of Graf and Kues in particular on these trials make a mockery of MGK's frequent invocation of 'scientific' rhetoric. For it is a basic rule of any academic discipline that conclusions must be based on the most complete data available. With fewer than 40 Reinhard defendants, there is no justification for sampling – either the entire group is taken into consideration, or the assertion falls.

When turning his attention to trials in other countries, innuendo is literally all that Graf has left. In *Sobibór*, Graf concocts a gold-standard conspiracy theory to insinuate that in August 1962, the Austrian judiciary murdered Hermann Höfle, Globocnik's chief of staff in SSPF Lublin and the main organiser of the deportations in Aktion Reinhard, and faked the murder to look like a suicide.¹⁹² Without so much as bothering to try and source Höfle's interrogations or to get hold of the case files in the Vienna archives, Graf rhapsodically convinces himself that Höfle was bumped off for refusing to admit to the extermination program and that this meant that Höfle "had stolidly maintained in the face of the Austrian judiciary that the three camps had been transit camps and that the alleged annihilations were nothing but propaganda."¹⁹³ Graf evidently thought it acceptable to make such an assertion without even trying to check the facts. Alas for his pretensions at scholarly competence, not only are Höfle's interrogations available in West German cases, but they were published in French translation four years before Graf pulled his conspiracy theory out of his behind.¹⁹⁴ From these sources it is not difficult to discern that when first arrested and interrogated in Austria during late 1947, Höfle lied about his wartime experiences, claiming to have been based in Mogilev from 1941 to 1943¹⁹⁵, and stolidly denied knowing *anything* when arrested and interrogated in 1961, even claiming on occasion to have been mistaken for another Hermann Höfle.¹⁹⁶ Höfle was no more about to "spill the beans" on Graf's fantasy transit camps than he was going to announce a cure for cancer in the Vienna courtroom. He knew, moreover, that there were a great many witnesses fingering him for his involvement in Aktion Reinhard, including key members of the SSPF Lublin staff such as Georg Michalsen and Hermann Worthoff.¹⁹⁷ From the extant protocols it is quite apparent that Höfle was too stupid to ride to the rescue as the saviour of German and Austrian honour and would have

¹⁹² MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.189-190

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, p.189

¹⁹⁴ Ajenstat/Buk/Harlan (ed), *Hermann Höfle*.

¹⁹⁵ Interrogation of 18.10.1947 in Ajenstat/Buk/Harlan (ed), *Hermann Höfle*, p.23

¹⁹⁶ See the interrogations from July-August 1961 in StA Hamburg 147 Js 7/72, Bd.17, pp.3216-3327. On Höfle's claim of mistaken identity, see also the report in NYT, 22.8.1962.

¹⁹⁷ Many reproduced in Ajenstat/Buk/Harlan (ed), *Hermann Höfle*; cf. also the Michalsen case in JuNSV Bd. XXXIX, Nr. 812; BAL B162/208 AR-Z 74/60.

simply continued to deny everything implacably while evidence from other witnesses accumulated against him, which would have probably resulted in a conviction, even under the relatively lenient terms of Austrian law. Höfle's suicide was nothing more and nothing less than the behaviour of a certain type of defendant who feels they are trapped.

The record of Austrian justice in relation to the prosecution of Nazi war crimes has often been criticised for its laxity and inefficiency, and indeed the Höfle case was transferred from Salzburg to Vienna because the original prosecutor had a nervous breakdown, while in Vienna a backlog of other cases caused an almost glacial progress to the case.¹⁹⁸ Yet the Höfle investigation actually led to the arrest, prosecution and conviction in 1966 of SS-Unterscharführer Leopold Lanz, a Treblinka I guard.¹⁹⁹ Moreover, there had been a considerable willingness through the 1950s and 1960s to prosecute many of the Austrian Schutzpolizisten assigned to the Generalgouvernement, in particular the Schupo of the Galicia district, resulting in a string of trials that laid bare the brutality of everyday life in occupied Poland and recounted numerous mass murders by shootings.²⁰⁰

Graf is not, however, content with merely accusing the Austrian judicial system of conspiring to murder, he also nauseatingly insinuates that the journalist Gitta Sereny poisoned Franz Stangl, the commandant of Treblinka, by bringing Stangl an Austrian recipe soup when he was unwell in June 1971.²⁰¹ In a classic post hoc ergo propter hoc fallacy spun furiously into a baseless accusation, Graf notes that the following day, Stangl died, saying that "we leave it to the reader to draw his own conclusion from these bare facts."²⁰² Yeah, right: someone is feeling unwell; they are brought a soup to make them feel better, so it must be the soup that killed them. And maybe the coroner was paid off by Sereny, too. Or did you mean something else, Jürgen? Are you too chicken to come right out and say that Sereny murdered Stangl? Because that's how it reads, and that officially makes you a coward who doesn't have the guts to stand by your own convictions, however unfounded they might be.

¹⁹⁸ This is spelled out clearly in Graf's own selectively cited source. Cf. Winfried Garscha, 'The failure of the "little Eichmann trial" in Austria', <http://www.nachkriegsjustiz.at/prozesse/geschworeneng/hoefle.php>

¹⁹⁹ Eva Holpfer and Sabine Loitfellner, 'Holocaustprozesse wegen Massenerschiessungen und Verbrechen in Lagern im Osten vor österreichischen Geschworenengerichten. Annäherung an ein unerforschtes Thema' in Thomas Albrich, Winfried R. Garscha and Martin F. Polaschek (eds), *Holocaust und Kriegsverbrechen vor Gericht. Der Fall Oesterreich*, Vienna: StudienVerlag, 2006, pp.104-6

²⁰⁰ Ibid., pp.87-126. For the 1950s trials, see also the series of documentary collections published by Tuviah Friedman: *Schupo-Kriegsverbrecher in Kolomea vor dem Wiener Volksgericht*. Haifa, October 1995 (orig: 1957); *Schupo-Kriegsverbrecher von Stanislaw vor dem Wiener Volksgericht*. Haifa, November 1995 (orig: October 1957); *Schupo-Kriegsverbrecher von Stryj vor dem Wiener Volksgericht*. Haifa, June 1957.

²⁰¹ Sereny, *Into that Darkness*, p.362.

²⁰² MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.191-2.

Nearly as nauseating is Graf's cursory treatment of the trials of Trawniki in the Soviet Union, based as usual on almost zero knowledge of the cases, something which also characterises his frequent diatribes about the Demjanjuk case in *Treblinka* and *Sobibór*, eventually culminating in a piss-poor chapter-length rant about Demjanjuk's extradition to Germany and recent prosecution in Munich. Deriving most of his thin gruel of information from websites, Graf cannot resist the opportunity to take another pot-shot at the Russian Sobibor survivor Alexander Pechersky, who evidently fulfils much the same function in negationist demonology for that camp as Yankiel Wiernik does for Treblinka. Citing Pechersky's testimony at two Soviet trials of Trawniki in the 1960s, Graf declares that he "could thus boast of having brought ten or thirteen men in front of a firing squad and of thus having had another man locked up for a decade and a half through his lies."²⁰³ Once again, Graf does not even think to find out whether the relevant case files are available. In actual fact, copies of a great many Trawniki trials are now freely available in the archive of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and some can also be seen in Ludwigsburg. Contrary to the unsourced claim in Barbara Distel's entry on Sobibor in the *Ort des Terrors* encyclopaedia of camps²⁰⁴, which is Graf's main source for accusing Pechersky of having the deaths of supposedly innocent men on his conscience, Pechersky was a minor part of the evidence presented in these Trawniki trials, and thus hardly a 'key witness' as Distel claimed.

In fact, Soviet investigations of Trawniki had begun in September 1944, after several guards from Treblinka I, including one, Ivan Shevchenko, who had previously served in Treblinka II, were captured when attempting to flee after the evacuation of the camp.²⁰⁵ Through the remainder of the 1940s, a great many more Trawniki were identified on the basis of personnel files and transfer lists captured in Poland, which thus enabled Soviet interrogators to confront suspects with hard evidence of their service in the Trawniki force, as well as the Reinhard camps. However, it was also possible for ex-Trawniki to evade detection at this time, since the system of NKVD filtration camps was overwhelmed by its task of scrutinising Soviet citizens who were returning from Nazi-controlled territory.²⁰⁶ Thus, Yakov Karplyuk admitted in 1961 that "in an effort to conceal my service in the death camp in Sobibor, as well as in the Treblinka camp, I provided false statements during the investigation in 1949. I falsely stated that after completing training in Trawniki, I guarded

²⁰³ Ibid., p.190

²⁰⁴ Barbara Distel, 'Sobibor', in: *Der Ort des Terrors*, Bd. 8, p.400.

²⁰⁵ Protokół doprosa, Ivan Semenovitch Shevchenko, 8.9.1944, copy in ASBU Donetsk 5734-37834, pp196-206.

²⁰⁶ On Soviet trials of collaborators in general, see Tanja Penter, 'Collaboration on Trial: New Source Material on Soviet Postwar Trials against Collaborators', *Slavic Review*, Vol. 64, No. 4. (Winter, 2005), pp. 782-790.

imprisoned Jews there until November 1943.”²⁰⁷ In the trials of the 1940s and 1950s, mere service at Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka did not necessarily result in the death penalty (which was in any case suspended in the USSR between 1947 and 1950), but was frequently punished by the standard 25 year sentence for treason, although many were indeed sentenced to death. Giving false statements in earlier investigations, however, appears to have been a major aggravating factor in the sentences meted out in the 1960s trials of Trawniki. Karplyuk was sentenced to death in Kiev on March 31, 1962 along with other auxiliaries who had served at Sobibor and Treblinka.²⁰⁸

The trial of Shul'ts et al in March 1962 was the culmination of a lengthy investigation which encompassed at least 33 volumes of interrogations, documentation and other evidence. Many of the accused had been identified by name, and their actions at the camps described by other Trawniki during interrogations dating back to the 1940s. Trapped by the statements of their former comrades, the accused were also convicted on the basis of their own interrogations. These were not, however, confessions in the clichéd sense of the word, as Trawniki continued to deny their own personal involvement in crimes of excess. In particular, whether the Trawniki had or had not participated in shootings at the so-called ‘Lazarett’ established in each of the Reinhard camps became a frequent focus for Soviet judicial attention.²⁰⁹

MGK are certainly entitled to assert that all interrogations of Trawniki were the product of some kind of gigantic fabrication exercise, without offering any proof of their allegation, but at the cost of excluding themselves from consideration as serious scholars. For unless MGK present a systematic analysis of these trials and these interrogations, whatever they say will not be grounded in empirical evidence, end of story, and thus need not be taken seriously. Not even invoking Stalinist malpractice from the 1930s show trials or pointing to known cases of legal abuse in the assembly-line trials of German prisoners of war at the end of the 1940s²¹⁰ would actually count as relevant evidence, since such assertions would be merely an argument by analogy, asserted without checking whether the Trawniki trials were

²⁰⁷ Protokol doprosa, Yakov Karplyuk, 29.10.1961, Kiev, ASBU Kiev 66437-14-9, p.225.

²⁰⁸ Protokol sudebnogo zasedaniia, 20-31.3.1962, Voennyi Tribunal Kievskogo voennogo okruga, ASBU Kiev 66437-14-9pp.53-276.

²⁰⁹ The preceding remarks summarise the present author's impressions from perusing a large number of Trawniki trials from the archives of the Ukrainian SBU, microfiled at USHMM.

²¹⁰ Manfred Zeidler, *Stalinjustiz contra NS-Verbrechen. Die Kriegsverbrecherprozesse gegen deutsche Kriegsgefangene in der UdSSR in den Jahren 1943-1952. Kenntnisstand und Forschungsprobleme*, Dresden, 1996; Andreas Hilger, Ute Schmidt and Günther Wagenlehner (eds), *Sowjetische Militärtribunale, Bd. I: Die Verurteilung deutscher Kriegsgefangener 1941-1953*, Cologne, 2001.

at all similar. Nor is it up to anyone else to do the work of proving otherwise, as it would be their claim, and thus their burden of proof, which has manifestly *not* been carried hitherto.

The probability of the interrogations of Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka Trawniki all having been coerced is vanishingly low for three reasons. Firstly, the records are too voluminous and too extensive, with too many interrogations per suspect.²¹¹ Secondly, probably more than one hundred Trawniki serving in the Reinhard camps were interrogated after the war. The sheer number makes a claim of fabrication wildly improbable. Finally, and most decisively, the interrogations and trials were given virtually no publicity, the 1940s and 1950s trials not even seemingly reported in the Soviet press while the large group trials of the 1960s received at best, passing mentions. As with the wartime reports, MGK cannot label these trials as “propaganda” if they were not used as such.

Indeed, it was not until the 1970s that there was much cooperation between the Soviet authorities and war crimes investigators in *either* East *or* West Germany, and thus not until then that Trawniki statements began to be made available to war crimes investigators in the west, in the course of the investigations of Franz Swidersky, a Treblinka I guard, and Karl Streibel, the commandant of Trawniki, by the state attorney’s office in Hamburg under Helge Grabitz.²¹² This delay explains why it was not until the 1970s that Nazi collaborators began to be investigated in North America, as even had there been a stronger desire to track down suspected war criminals before then, the opportunity had not been available, since few knew much about the role of the Trawniki in Aktion Reinhard.

The first Trawniki case in the United States, the denaturalisation proceedings against Treblinka II Trawniki Fedor Fedorenko, proceeded without the benefit of any Soviet-derived evidence.²¹³ In this regard, it stood in relation to the formation of the Office for Special Investigations as the Ulm Einsatzgruppen trial did in relation to the establishment of the Zentrale Stelle in Ludwigsburg, since the Fedorenko case was already under way by the time that the Carter administration ordered the creation of the OSI within the US Department of Justice. Throughout his case, Fedorenko never once denied that he had served at Treblinka nor that he had witnessed the extermination of Jews there in gas chambers; and had thus clearly lied when immigrating to the US in 1949. The first denaturalisation hearing saw a number of Treblinka survivors appear as witnesses, unnecessarily as Fedorenko’s own

²¹¹ This should be apparent to any sane person reading the summaries in Rich, ‘Footsoldiers of Reinhard’; Pohl, ‘Trawniki-männer in Belzec’ and Black, ‘Footsoldiers of the Final Solution’, much less if the case files are read.

²¹² For a summary of these cases, see Helge Grabitz and Wolfgang Wolfgang, *Letzte Spuren. Ghetto Warschau, SS-Arbeitslager Trawniki, Aktion Erntefest. Fotos und Dokumente ueber Opfer des Endloesungswahns im Spiegel der historischen Ereignisse*. Berlin, 1987.

²¹³ See the transcript of *US vs Fedorenko*, June 1978, microfilm copy available at the Wiener Library, London.

admissions sufficed to prove that he had violated immigration law. His defense, however, tried to argue that as Fedorenko had not participated directly in the extermination process but merely stood guard in a watchtower, that he should be acquitted, an argument which the judge in the first trial accepted, but which was overturned on appeal after the Department of Justice pointed out the legal errors in the initial verdict.²¹⁴ Fedorenko was then deported to the Soviet Union and executed after a trial there in 1987.²¹⁵

The Fedorenko case was fateful for triggering the denaturalisation proceedings against John Demjanjuk, after a poorly-constructed photo spread was shown to five Treblinka survivors, who identified Demjanjuk as ‘Ivan the Terrible’, one of the operators of the gassing engine at Treblinka.²¹⁶ The first moves to denaturalise Demjanjuk were also made before the establishment of the OSI, in 1977, but the case became the major focus of the new office through the 1980s, and led to a request for Demjanjuk’s extradition in 1983, which he appealed in 1985, losing the appeal on October 31, 1985.²¹⁷ Demjanjuk was then deported to Israel in February 1986, standing trial there from November 26, 1986 to April 18, 1988.²¹⁸

From an evidentiary perspective, the Demjanjuk case, including both his appeal against the extradition order in 1985 as well as the trial in Israel, was distinctive in two regards. The first was the flawed identification: the entire affair was a case of manifestly mistaken identity, whose origins however could easily be traced back to the fact that Demjanjuk did indeed look rather like Ivan Marchenko, the real ‘Ivan the Terrible’.²¹⁹ The second facet of the case was the large amount of evidence provided from the Soviet Union, which brought evidence from earlier Trawniki trials into the public domain for the first time. Indeed, this evidence made it quite clear that Ivan Marchenko had operated the gassing engine at Treblinka, as he was routinely singled out by Treblinka Trawnikis for having performed this duty with zeal and sadism.²²⁰

The Demjanjuk trial must also be regarded as the moment when Holocaust deniers began to develop their present obsession with the Reinhard camps. From the writings of Rassinier onwards, negationists had really only ever discussed the figure of Kurt Gerstein and

²¹⁴ Appeal brief, US vs Fedorenko, Wiener Library.

²¹⁵ On legal aspects of the Fedorenko case, see also Abbe L. Dienstag, ‘Fedorenko v. United States: War Crimes, the Defense of Duress, and American Nationality Law’, *Columbia Law Review*, Vol. 82, No. 1 (Jan., 1982), pp. 120-183.

²¹⁶ On the flawed identification photo-parades, see Wagenaar, *Identifying Ivan*.

²¹⁷ John Demjanjuk v. Joseph Petrovsky, et al, United States Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit. - 776 F.2d 571

²¹⁸ On the Demjanjuk case in general, see Teicholz, *Ivan the Terrible*; Sheftel, *Show Trial*; as well as the succinct summary in Douglas, *Memory of Judgment*, pp.185-211.

²¹⁹ Wagenaar, *Identifying Ivan*.

²²⁰ E.g. in Protokol doprosa, Fedor Ryabeka, 25.4.1961, also on 31.8.1961, ASBU Kiev 66437-14-12, pp.21, 122.

his visit to Belzec in August 1942, culminating in the excruciatingly irrelevant exegeses of the minutiae of Gerstein's statements by Henri Roques in the guise of a mature student dissertation for a doctorate passed under dubious circumstances at the University of Lyons-III in 1985.²²¹ Until the Demjanjuk case, Revisionism had however extraordinarily little to say about Treblinka. The case became the occasion for what might be called the 'forensic turn' in negationism and the beginning of its tedious obsession with mass graves. Unsung key players were the Polish Historical Society in the United States, led by Tadeusz Skowron and Myrosław Dragan. Stung by the case of Frank Walus, the Polish Historical Society lent its support to the legal fight of John Demjanjuk. Established in 1988, the Polish Historical Society brought two new twists to negationism. Hitherto, the Revisionist scene had possessed few people skilled enough to read or translate East European languages. The second innovation was to exploit the use of wartime air photos from the US National Archives, in particular those taken by Luftwaffe reconnaissance planes. Around 1990, Polish Historical Society provided the ammunition for a slew of negationist texts attacking the historicity of the extermination camp of Treblinka.²²²

In parallel to these moves, German Revisionists as well as non-denier supporters of Demjanjuk tried to cast doubt on the authenticity of a key but contradictory piece of evidence in the case, namely Demjanjuk's Trawniki identity card. This formed one of the main targets for several brochures by Dieter Lehner and Hans Rullmann, which both argued in classic negationist nitpicking style that 'anomalies' meant the ID card was a KGB forgery.²²³ But the card in fact specified that Demjanjuk had served at Sobibor, not Treblinka, forcing the Israeli prosecution and OSI lawyers to engage in bizarre contortions to explain away the contradiction, while Demjanjuk's defenders then contradicted their forgery claim by also appealing to the evidence of the posting to Sobibor in order to acquit Demjanjuk (rightly) of the charge of being 'Ivan the Terrible' at Treblinka.

²²¹ On the Roques affair, see Henry Rousso, *Commission sur le racisme et le négationnisme à l'université Jean-Moulin Lyon-III* (2004), http://www.ladocumentationfrancaise.fr/rapports_publics/044000492/index.shtml.

²²² The debt to the Polish Historical Society for sourcing and copying the air photos of Treblinka is explicitly acknowledged in all these texts. See Udo Walendy, 'Der Fall Treblinka', *Historische Tatsachen* Nr. 44, 1990; Mark Weber and Andrew Allen, 'Treblinka: Wartime Aerial Photos of Treblinka Cast New Doubt on "Death Camp" Claims', *Journal for Historical Review*, 12/2, 1991, pp.133-158; Tadeusz Skowron, *Amicus Curiae* Brief, Polish Historical Society, Stamford, CT, 1992, <http://www.vho.org/GB/c/AmicusCuriaeDemjanjuk.html>; Dr. Christian Konrad [=Germar Rudolf], 'Polnische Historiker untersuchen angebliches Vernichtungslager. Demjanjuk-Verfahren führt zu Treblinka-Kontroverse', *Deutschland in Geschichte und Gegenwart* 41/3, 1993, p.23ff; Arnulf Neumaier, 'Der Treblinka Holocaust' in: Ernst Gauss [=Germar Rudolf] (ed), *Grundlagen zur Zeitgeschichte*, Tübingen, 1994, pp.347-374.

²²³ Dieter Lehner, *Du sollst nicht falsch Zeugnis geben*, Berg am Starnberger See: Vowinckel, 1987; Hans Peter Rullmann, *Der Fall Demjanjuk. Unschuldiger oder Massenmörder?*, Viöl: Verlag für ganzheitliche Forschung und Kultur, 1987.

Graf, needless to say, repeats the old 1980s allegations that the ID card was a forgery in numerous places across the ‘trilogy’²²⁴, reiterating what is evidently a Revisionist article of faith.²²⁵ Indeed, the forensic claims of document experts seeking to prove the card to be a forgery have become legendary examples of misinterpreted scientific evidence, while the analyses of the content of the document betray a total lack of understanding for the historical context.²²⁶ The forgery claims also totally ignore eight other pieces of documentary evidence which place Demjanjuk at Trawniki and Sobibor.²²⁷ By repeating the forgery meme in 2010, Graf merely exposes himself as ignorant of the counter-arguments and counter-evidence, and thus confirms his reputation as the sloppiest of sloppy researchers of the three co-authors of the ‘trilogy’.

That the Demjanjuk case in the 1980s was a miscarriage of justice is not in reasonable dispute. The entire saga has dragged on for so long that one can be critical of its pursuit into the 2000s, without needing to endorse the conspiracy theories of Graf and co. Demjanjuk’s renewed denaturalisation in 2003²²⁸ and his extradition to Germany in 2009 to stand trial in Munich, resulting in his conviction in May of this year²²⁹, can indeed be criticised on a variety of grounds, not least of which is the discomfort in pursuing war criminals until they are in their 90s. But we regard Graf’s argument that the Demjanjuk trial in Munich was staged for “the promotion of the ‘Holocaust’ hysteria”²³⁰ or to distract from the Israeli incursion into the Gaza strip in 2008/2009²³¹ as fundamentally batty. Far from demonstrating “the proverbial servility of the German puppet state towards Israel and Zionist organizations”, the Demjanjuk case in Munich has been criticised as the result of prosecutorial grandstanding by the Zentrale Stelle in Ludwigsburg Munich state attorney’s office. It may well be that Graf requires a refresher lesson in the doctrine of the separation of powers between the judiciary, legislature and executive. As hard as it may be for Graf to

²²⁴ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.173; MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.9, 382-3.

²²⁵ Cf. Richard A. Widmann, ‘The Strange Case of John Demjanjuk’, *Inconvenient History* 3/2, 2011, http://www.inconvenienthistory.com/archive/2011/volume_3/number_2/the_strange_case_of_john_demjanjuk.php.

²²⁶ Cf. Joe Nickell, *Unsolved History: Investigating Mysteries of the Past*, The University Press of Kentucky 2005, pp. 34-50.

²²⁷ This evidence is summarised by Sergey Romanov, ‘Demjanjuk and Holocaust Deniers’, HC, 5.2006, and thus need not be repeated here. <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2006/05/demjanjuk-and-holocaust-deniers-part-i.html>.

²²⁸ See *Demjanjuk vs Petrovsky*, US Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, 10 F.3d 338, 17.11.1993, <http://nizkor.org/hweb/people/d/demjanjuk-john/circuit-court/> as well as <http://news.findlaw.com/hdocs/docs/demjanjuk/usdemjanjuk022102jud.pdf>

²²⁹ For the latest accounts of the Demjanjuk case, see Wefing, *Der Fall Demjanjuk*; Benz, *Der Henkersknecht*.

²³⁰ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.390

²³¹ *Ibid.*, p.397

grasp this, judicial authorities in Germany have the power to place a cause celebre on the front pages of the world media without reference to any council of the Elders of Zion.

Thus ends our survey of the implied and overt conspiracy theories peddled by Mattogno, Graf and Kues about the “origins” and “evolution” of the supposed “propaganda myth” of mass extermination at Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka. Although we do not doubt that MGK may well seriously believe what they are writing in this regard, nowhere in their arguments do we find anything that remotely resembles a coherent, substantiated explanation for the totality of the evidence contained in the wartime reports or the postwar investigations and trials. And although we do not doubt that the Hoax that dare not speak its name will continue to feature in their writings, we hereby put them on notice that their “work” has been weighed in the balance and found wanting. Either put up, by going back to the library and archives and finding some evidence for your silly conspiracy theories, or shut up.

Chapter 2

Nazi Policy

Mattogno's policy contributions to the trilogy are the result of a writing career on the topic that stretches back to the 1980s.¹ It is therefore instructive to contrast his lack of progress with the advances that have been made in the proper historiography. Scholars such as Browning, Gerlach, Kershaw and Longerich² have produced a body of work which recognizes that the decision-making that produced and implemented the Final Solution was "an incremental process, with a number of acceleratory spurts, between summer 1941 and summer 1942" rather than one that required a single, explicit written order that was unchanging thereafter.³ Mattogno, by contrast, is still wading in the shallows, unable to swim with the tide of scholarship, because he is wedded to false dilemmas, fixed thresholds and fallacies of the excluded middle, which lead him to insist that an extermination never took place unless a single decisive written order can be established that was issued by a fixed date, namely the end of September, 1941.

Mattogno's work is therefore a dual negation because, whereas other Holocaust deniers focus on textual misrepresentation, and fixate on technical minutiae, Mattogno adds to that mix a falsification of the discussion that has taken place within historiography during the last three decades. Mattogno has partially shifted the focus of negationism from 'lying about Hitler' and the Nazi regime to 'lying about Hilberg' and his academic successors.

¹ Carlo Mattogno, 'The myth of the extermination of the Jews: Part I', *The Journal of Historical Review* 8/2, 1988, pp.133-172; Carlo Mattogno, *La soluzione finale*.

² Christopher R. Browning, *The Path To Genocide. Essays on the Launching of the Final Solution*. Cambridge, 1992, p.114; Christian Gerlach, 'The Wannsee Conference, the Fate of German Jews and Hitler's Decision in Principle to Exterminate All European Jews,' *The Journal of Modern History* 70/4, December 1998; Ian Kershaw, 'Hitler's Role in the Final Solution', *Yad Vashem Studies* 34, 2006, pp.7-43; Peter Longerich, *The unwritten order: Hitler's role in the final solution*. Stroud, 2001; Gerhard Feldman and Wolfgang Seibel (eds), *Networks of Nazi Persecution. Bureaucracy, Business and the Organization of the Holocaust*. New York: Berghahn, 2004; Michael Thad Allen, 'Not Just a 'Dating Game': Origins of the Holocaust at Auschwitz in the Light of Witness Testimony', *German History* 25/2, 2007, pp.162-191; Peter Witte, 'Two Decisions Concerning the "Final Solution to the Jewish Question". Deportations to Lodz and Mass Murder in Chelmno', in David Cesarani and Sarah Kavanaugh (eds), *Holocaust. Critical Concepts in Historical Studies, Volume 3*. London, 2004, pp.48-49.

³ Kershaw, 'Hitler's Role', p.24. Online:

http://www1.yadvashem.org/about_holocaust/studies/vol34/Kershaw%20E.pdf .

Mattogno's writings on Nazi policy ignore the fact that the evolution of a Europe-wide Final Solution from September 1941 was predicated on the fact that an extermination of Soviet Jews was already in motion, the foundations of which were laid during the planning of Operation Barbarossa. Plans were already submitted prior to June 22, 1941, which entailed the mass starvation of civilians and the political killing of male Jews, which then escalated into a decision to kill all Soviet Jews that was taken by the end of July. This also inevitably fed into deportation policy because designers such as Globocnik knew that Jews were to be deported into areas where the existing Soviet Jews were being exterminated. Evacuation plans made increasing reference to 'reprisals' and 'decimation', which would have brought about gradual extermination by a variety of means (starvation, shootings, pogroms, disease, etc). Extermination policy therefore evolved from evacuation measures that already contained exterminatory components. The radicalization from such measures to a policy that included homicidal gas chambers could be achieved by evolution, because Nazi Jewish policy no longer required a massive moral leap once it was already intended that millions would die.

Mattogno's neglect of the literature on these facts makes his chapters on deportation policy meaningless because they fail to consider why Jews would be resettled from September 1941 into areas where the existing Jews were being exterminated. For example, section 8.1 of *Sobibór* is a series of unfounded assumptions and fallacies of the excluded middle concerning the historiography of Hitler's decision-making during 1941. Mattogno is deeply unhappy that many historians no longer rely upon a single Hitler order, so he pretends that all such historiography "borders on parapsychology."⁴

This pretence in turn relies upon three incorrect assumptions. Firstly, Mattogno asserts that, if the historiography were true, there would have had to be a single moment when "the policy of emigration/evacuation was abandoned in favour of extermination." This is a fallacy of the excluded middle because it ignores the fact that radicalization from deportation plans that were already decimatory to a policy that included homicidal gas chambers could be achieved by evolution, because it did not require the massive moral leap that Mattogno would like his readers to assume.

Secondly, Mattogno ignores numerous statements by senior Nazi figures referring to Hitler speeches and table talk that show a progressive radicalization of his intentions. Rosenberg and Goebbels understood in December 1941 that Hitler's intentions were more radical than they had assumed just months earlier. These written responses to Hitler's

⁴ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.236.

expressions of intent clearly show that Hitler's desires could be communicated to his inner circle without the need for an order.

Thirdly, the assumption of a false dichotomy between orders and 'parapsychology' ignores the ways in which historians have advanced their understanding of decision-making, not just with regard to the Third Reich but to all complex organizations. The relationship between centre and periphery is no longer viewed as always dominated by the former, but is instead understood by many historians to be a network of proposals, counter-proposals and requests for radical measures to resolve local problems.

Furthermore, Mattogno himself gives importance to consensual decision-making below Führer level when it suits his purposes to do so. Nearly all the policies proposed by Mattogno in Chapter 7 of *Sobibór* are driven by Hitler's underlings, who seem to be 'working towards the Führer' rather than in response to his orders; for example, Mattogno's discussion of the Madagascar Plan never goes higher than Ribbentrop and Heydrich. Mattogno also in that chapter gives importance to actors on the periphery such as Zeitschel, to the extent that he argues that "Zeitschel's proposal was thus accepted some months later by Hitler himself."⁵ Mattogno is willing to entertain consensual decision-making below Führer level, and processes in which Hitler gave his consent to proposals from elsewhere, when the subject is evacuation, but not for major killing actions. This double standard suggests that his assumptions are held for the sake of political convenience.

Mattogno also fails to consider other policies that did not require a written order. In September 1940, for example, Brandt and Bouhler obtained Hitler's verbal authorization for extralegal abortions. This was implemented by the RMdI two months later.⁶ A year later, the Reich Ministry of Justice requested a meeting with the RMdI and the Führer's Office to clarify Hitler's authorization. This was held on November 26, 1941. The Ministry noted afterwards that "The Führer's Office is of the opinion that it is not the right time to ask the Führer to put the authorization in writing. It is certain that the Führer stands by this authorization." We thus have documentary proof that Hitler's Office was protecting the Führer from having to issue written orders on subjects that were socially and politically controversial during the period when the extermination of the Jews was being decided. Extermination would clearly have fallen into that category of subject.

⁵ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.114.

⁶ Götz Aly, Peter Chroust and Christian Pross, *Cleansing the Fatherland. Nazi Medicine and Racial Hygiene*. London and Baltimore, 1994, p.54, citing Geheimerlass des Reichsministerium des Inneren, 19.11.40, and Reichsjustizministerium note, 26.11.41, both held in BAK, R 22/5008.

Mattogno's summary of the historiography since 1984 is taken entirely from a paper by Kershaw that is available online. The historians cited by Kershaw have not been read by Mattogno in relation to this issue. Mattogno ignores Kershaw's caveat that the term 'Führerbefehl' can be understood in different ways, not necessarily a "precise and clear directive" but also as merely a "green light" to proposals from others.⁷ Browning's formulation regarding the summer of 1941 actually uses the term "green light":

Having received the "green light" from Hitler to prepare what was in effect a "feasibility study" for the Final Solution", Heydrich drafted his famous "authorization" to prepare and submit a plan for the "total solution" of the Jewish Question in Europe. He then visited Göring on July 31 and obtained the latter's signature.⁸

This is clearly a different scenario from Mattogno's single moment when "the policy of emigration/evacuation was abandoned in favour of extermination." Browning does not state that all evacuation plans halted at that moment. Instead, according to Browning, there were clearly two overlapping processes, in which the feasibility study was occurring alongside the old policy, which would not be abandoned until all contingencies and feasibilities had been determined.

Mattogno's claim that "as of 2005 the controversy around the Führerbefehl was not only unresolved but continued to rage to a greater degree"⁹ is utter nonsense. Most of the literature reviewed in Kershaw's article was written in the 1990s or earlier. Browning and Gerlach have not published new work on the subject recently. Their most recent research has been on labour camps and comparative violence respectively, reflecting the concerns of present-day history departments.

The sections that make up this chapter discuss the policy decisions and documents that are neglected and/or distorted by Mattogno in pursuit of his false assumptions. The first section examines the extermination of Soviet Jews that set the precedent for a Europe-wide extermination. The subsequent sections look at the decision-making that led to extermination decisions regarding Jews across Europe. It should be noted from the outset that we argue for a process of gradual radicalization during this period. The feasibility of extermination was being studied from July 1941, as per Browning's formulation, and Hitler gave his consent to the implementation of extermination before the end of 1941 (we argue for December as the

⁷ Kershaw, 'Hitler's Role', p.25.

⁸ Browning, *Path*, p.114.

⁹ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.229.

month), but the implementation itself depended on other decisions made in the first seven months of 1942.

Furthermore, we argue that extermination decisions in 1941 followed different timelines for Soviet and non-Soviet Jews. Preparations for Barbarossa included long-term plans to starve millions of Soviet Jews and short-term plans to shoot Jewish males who held suspected political positions. These plans were replaced in July by the demand to alleviate pressures on food supplies by killing “useless eaters”, namely unfit Jews, whilst placing working Jews in conditions where they would gradually die from hard labour. In December, it was clarified further that Soviet Jews would be killed regardless of economic considerations. Intentions towards non-Soviet Jews initially included sterilization and deportation to a harsh climate that would induce a dying out. By August 1941, this had been reformulated into a more explicit language of reprisals, whereby deported Jews would be “worked over in the harsh climate.” This language informed plans to deport Reich Jews to the East. In December, however, the language of reprisals gave way to explicit extermination across Europe.

The implementation of the decision from January 1942 was not linear but required instead later decisions about how and when working Jews would be killed. Industrialists and the Wehrmacht had labour needs that frustrated SS attempts to complete the extermination before Germany’s impending military defeat enabled a small number of Jews to survive.

Extermination of Soviet Jews, June 1941-March 1942

During the planning stages for Operation Barbarossa, Nazi food policy was linked to plans for large-scale political killing. On May 2, 1941, a conference of state secretaries, chaired by Thomas, had concluded that “umpteenth million people will doubtless starve to death, if we extract everything necessary for us from the country.”¹⁰ The selection of these starvation victims would follow a political economy of racial value, but would also be shaped by a political-ideological-racial belief that the enemy was the ‘Jewish-Marxist.’ Rosenberg recognised this linkage when he wrote, on May 8, 1941, that the war would be:

[a] fight for the food supply and raw materials for the German Reich as well as for Europe as a whole, a fight ideological in nature in which the last Jewish-

¹⁰ Aktennotiz über Ergebnis der heutigen. Besprechung mit den Staatssekretären über Barbarossa, 2.5.41, 2718-PS, IMT XXXI, pp.84-85; cf. Alex J. Kay, ‘Germany’s Staatssekretäre, Mass Starvation and the Meeting of 2 May 1941’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 41/4, October 2006, pp.685-700.

Marxist enemy has to be defeated.¹¹

The specific demographic consequences anticipated in this planning were spelled out in a report by the Agriculture Group on May 23, 1941, based on recommendations by Backe. The USSR would be split into two (a productive and an unproductive zone) and surplus populations redirected to Siberia, even though “railway transportation is out of the question”:

There is no German interest in maintaining the productive capacity of these regions, also in what concerns the supplies of the troops stationed there. [...] The population of these regions, especially the population of the cities, will have to anticipate a famine of the greatest dimensions. The issue will be to redirect the population to the Siberian areas. As railway transportation is out of the question, this problem will also be an extremely difficult one.¹²

The report then admitted that “Many tens of millions of people will become superfluous in this area and will die or have to emigrate to Siberia.” The document tellingly referred to these groups as “useless eaters”, a phrase originally used to justify killing the mentally ill in the T4 program, thereby confirming that euthanasia terminology had spread to these planners. However, if there was no rail transport to take them to Siberia, the latter option was already a dubious one, so this document could be viewed as an early admission that death was at the forefront of Nazi intentions for the Soviet population, with Jews at the front of the queue. This is further confirmed by a document by Engelhardt¹³, which included a table of nationalities by town and country in Belorussia, on which Waldemar von Poletika had underlined Jews, Russians and Poles and added a marginal note saying 'starve!' Another part of the same text had a marginal note by von Poletika saying that a population of 6.3 million people would die.

Hunger planning was reiterated after the invasion. On August 14, 1941, Göring “reckoned with great loss of life on grounds of nutrition.”¹⁴ On November 13, 1941, Wagner confirmed that “non-working prisoners of war in the prison camps are to starve.”¹⁵ In November, Göring told the Italian Foreign Minister, Ciano:

¹¹ Rosenberg, Allgemeine Instruktion für alle Reichskommissare in den besetzten Ostgebieten, 8.5.41, 1030-PS, IMT XXVI, pp.576-80.

¹² Wirtschaftspolitische Richtlinien für die Wirtschaftsorganisation Ost vom 23.5.1941, erarbeitet von der Gruppe Landwirtschaft, 23.5.41, EC-126, IMT XXXVI, pp.135-57.

¹³ Eugen Freiherr von Engelhardt, Ernährung- und Landwirtschaft, p.11, NARA T84/225/1595914. Document was first discussed in Bernhard Chiari, ‘Deutsche Zivilverwaltung in Weissrussland 1941-1944. Die lokale Perspektive der Besatzungsgeschichte’, *Militärgeschichtliche Mitteilungen* 52, 1993 and most extensively in Christian Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde. Die deutsche Wirtschafts- und Vernichtungspolitik in Weißrußland 1941 bis 1942*. Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 1999, pp.57-8.

¹⁴ Verbindungsstelle d. OKW/WiRüAmt beim Reichsmarschall, Wirtschaftsauszeichnungen für die Berichtszeit vom 1-14.8.41 (u.früher), NARA T77/1066/1062; cf. Christopher R. Browning, 'A Reply to Martin Broszat regarding the Origins of the Final Solution', *Simon Wiesenthal Center Annual* 1, 1984, pp.113–32.

¹⁵ AOK 18 Chef des Stabes, Merkpunkte aus der Chefbesprechung in Orscha am 13.11.41, NOKW-1535.

This year, 20 to 30 million people will die of hunger in Russia. Perhaps it is a good thing that this is happening, because certain peoples must be decimated.¹⁶

During the summer of 1941, starvation policy was conjoined with a more active shooting policy, partially justified by the concept of reprisal and partly by a conflation of all male Jews with Bolshevism. In March 1941, Göring had told Heydrich to draft a warning to the troops “so that they would know whom in practice to put up against the wall.”¹⁷ On June 17, 1941, Heydrich held a meeting with the unit commanders of the Einsatzgruppen in Berlin, giving instructions for the units to follow after the invasion. On July 2, 1941, he passed on a summary of these instructions to the four HSSPF. He explicitly listed “Jews in party and state positions” as a group to be executed, and also called for the incitement of pogroms, euphemistically dubbed “self-cleansing attempts” (*Selbstreinigungsvorsuchen*), but “without trace” (*spurenlos*) of German involvement.¹⁸ These instructions placed all Jewish men in peril, especially those within pre-1939 Soviet borders, whom Nazi ideology automatically assumed to be Bolsheviks. Among the first men in the firing line were any educated Jewish males, such as the Lwow males killed in the “intelligentsia action” of early July. Einsatzgruppe C reported “Leaders of Jewish intelligentsia (in particular teachers, lawyers, Soviet officials) liquidated.”¹⁹ Einsatzgruppe B noted that “In Minsk, the entire Jewish intelligentsia has been liquidated (teachers, professors, lawyers, etc. except medical personnel).”²⁰ Lutsk, Ukraine, witnessed an early example of the hugely disproportionate application of reprisals:

On July 2 the corpses of 10 German Wehrmacht soldiers were found. In retaliation, 1160 Jews were shot by the Ukrainians with the help of one platoon of the police and one platoon of the infantry.²¹

The Germans did not recognize the concept of ‘proportionality’ that applies to reprisals in international law, which requires that “Acts done by way of reprisals must not, however, be excessive and must not exceed the degree of violation committed by the enemy.”²² By October, one military leader, Reichenau, was calling for a “tough but just

¹⁶ Czeslaw Madajczyk (ed), ‘Generalplan Ost’, *Polish Western Affairs* III/2, 1962, pp.391-442.

¹⁷ Browning, *Path*, p.236, citing Secret file note Heydrich (CdS B Nr. 3795/41), 26.3.41, RGVA 500-3-795, fols. 140-42.

¹⁸ Heydrich an Jeckeln, von dem Bach-Zelewski, Prützmann, and Korsemann, 2.7.41, RGVA 500-1-25; cf. Peter Klein, ed. *Die Einsatzgruppen in der besetzten Sowjetunion 1941/42. Die Tätigkeits- und Lageberichte des Chefs der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD*. Berlin: Edition Heinrich, 1997, pp.319-28.

¹⁹ EM 13, 5.7.41.

²⁰ EM 32, 24.7.41.

²¹ EM 24, 16.7.41.

²² Michael A. Musmanno, U.S.N.R, Military Tribunal II, Case 9: *Opinion and Judgment of the Tribunal. Nuremberg: Palace of Justice*, 8.4.48, pp.106-108, citing the *British Manual of Military Law*, paragraph 459.

atonement of Jewish Untermenschentum.”²³ Nazi desires to wreak vengeance against Jews therefore converged, in the East, with a military culture in which vengeance actions were already inclined to seek unlimited total solutions.²⁴ This context is totally ignored by MGK, and systematically misrepresented by deniers who discuss reprisal policy.²⁵

As a result of this vengeance culture, in addition to the central momentum of Heydrich’s pre-war orders, but without a general extermination order for the Jewish population prior to the invasion, anti-Jewish measures in the Soviet Union were driven by locally initiated ad-hoc killings for the first months of the occupation, characterized by a high degree of co-operation between the Wehrmacht and the SS.²⁶ For example, the northern sector of the occupied territories, an area patrolled by Franz Stahlecker’s Einsatzgruppen A, and under the responsibility of HSSPF Hans Adolf Prützmann, became the source of a crucial local initiative. After a fifteen hour battle over the small Lithuanian border town of Garsden, which cost the lives of around 100 German soldiers, the German border police unit “Stapo Tilsit” and the Tilsit-SD (security police) contingent moved into the area. As the town’s Jews were accused of aiding the Soviet troops during the battle, police leader Hans-Joachim Böhme and SD-commander Werner Hersmann ordered the arrest of 201 Jews on June 23, and immediately sought their execution. Following a discussion with Stahlecker, who gave his “basic agreement concerning the cleansing operation”, the next day (June 24) the 201 Jews, including a woman, were executed. Following their work in Garsden, Böhme’s newly titled “Einsatzkommando (EK) Tilsit” conducted similar killings, predominantly of Jews, in the nearby towns of Krottingen (June 25, 214 people) and Polangen (June 27, 111 people); both were reprisal measures for guerrilla activities.²⁷ Heydrich and Himmler, in their June 30 tour of Grodno, “approved in full” the measures of EK Tilsit.²⁸ By July 18, EK Tilsit had murdered 3,302 victims (mostly military-aged Jewish men) in their border-area cleansing

²³ AOK 6 Verhalten der Truppe im Ostraum, 10.10.41, published in Gerd R. Ueberschär and Wolfram Wette (eds), “Unternehmen Barbarossa”. *Der deutsche Überfall auf die Sowjetunion*. Frankfurt am Main, 1991, p.285ff.

²⁴ Isabel V. Hull, *Absolute Destruction. Military Culture and the Practices of War in Imperial Germany*. London, 2005.

²⁵ For an attempt by two deniers to whitewash the reprisal policy, falsely claiming that “most of the German reactions were totally covered by international law”, see ‘Dipl.-Chem.’ Germar Rudolf and Sibylle Schröder, ‘Partisan War and Reprisal Killings’, *The Revisionist* 1/3, 2003, pp.321-330: <http://www.vho.org/tr/2003/3/RudolfSchröder321-330.html>.

²⁶ For overviews of Wehrmacht-SS cooperation, see Johannes Hürter, *Hitlers Heerführer. Die deutschen Oberbefehlshaber im Krieg gegen die Sowjetunion 1941/42*. Munich: Oldenbourg, 2006, pp.509-599; Dieter Pohl, *Die Herrschaft der Wehrmacht: Deutsche Militärbesatzung und einheimische Bevölkerung in der Sowjetunion 1941-1944*. Munich: Oldenbourg, 2008, pp.243-282.

²⁷ Report of Stapo Tilsit, 1.7.41, RGVA 500-1-758; cf. Konrad Kwiet, ‘Rehearsing for Murder: The Beginning of the Final Solution in Lithuania in June 1941’, *HGS* 12/1, 1998, p. 5.

²⁸ Peter Witte et al (eds), *Der Dienstkalender Heinrich Himmlers 1941/42*. Hamburg: Christians, 1999.

operations²⁹, an undertaking which was not ordered by any central SS figure, but instead was initiated by a lowly police official.

The actions of EK Tilsit were, however, capitalized upon by the higher SS leaders in order to radicalize their other units. The day after meeting with Böhme and sanctioning his proposed executions, Stahlecker met with the leader of Sonderkommando (SK) 1a, Martin Sandberger, and advised him to carry out matters in his area “along the same lines” as Böhme. As Sandberger’s unit pressed forward to Estonia, it began shooting communists and adult Jewish males. Following Stahlecker’s briefing of the commander of SK 1b, its men also began liquidating selected racial and political enemies. In addition, Böhme established contact with the commander of EK 3, Karl Jäger.

Following the pre-war instructions by Heydrich on encouraging and initiating native pogroms, up to ten thousand Lithuanian Jews were killed in such actions just days after the German invasion. In Latvia, which was fully occupied by mid-July, similar pogroms occurred, but not to the same extent as those in Lithuania. In some cases, no German involvement was needed to precipitate such horror; in Kaunas, for instance, nearly 4,000 Jews were spontaneously murdered immediately after the Soviet withdrawal.³⁰ These pogroms helped fuel and radicalize the Einsatzgruppen’s own actions in the region; it was no coincidence that the commander of Einsatzkommando 3, Jäger, began his unit’s slaughter of Jews in Kaunas, murdering nearly 3,000 Jews and Jewesses in the city in early July, a number which undoubtedly included more than just “Jews in party and state positions.”

An expansion of killing to include women and children resulted, in part, organically from such local initiatives, and partly from the realisation that food supply was very limited and that it would be very difficult to feed both the Wehrmacht and the civilian population.³¹ The expansion was authorized explicitly by Hitler on July 16, 1941, when, at a meeting with top Nazi leaders, he stressed his desire to create a Garden of Eden in the East by “All necessary measures – shootings, resettlement, etc.” - and hinted that troops and police should now take the lead in “shooting anyone even looks sideways at us.”³² The following day, Heydrich issued *Einsatzbefehl* No. 8 on the weeding out of prisoners for “special treatment”, clearly meaning execution:

²⁹ EM 26, 18.7.41.

³⁰ EM 19, 11.7.41.

³¹ Christian Gerlach, ‘German Economic Interests, Occupation Policy, and the Murder of Jews in Belorussia, 1941/3’ in Ulrich Herbert (ed), *National Socialist Extermination Policies. Contemporary German Perspectives and Controversies*. London, 2000, pp.210-39; Christoph Dieckmann, ‘The War and the Killing of the Lithuanian Jews’, in Ulrich Herbert (ed), *National Socialist Extermination Policies. Contemporary German Perspectives and Controversies*. London, 2000, pp.240-75.

³² Vermerk über die Besprechung am 16.7.1941, L-221, IMT XXXVIII, pp.86-94.

Above all, the following must be discovered : all important functionaries of State and Party, especially professional revolutionaries ... all People's Commissars in the Red Army, leading personalities of the State ... leading personalities of the business world, members of the Soviet Russian Intelligence, all Jews, all persons who are found to be agitators or fanatical Communists. Executions are not to be held in the camp or in the immediate vicinity of the camp ... The prisoners are to be taken for special treatment if possible into the former Soviet Russian territory.³³

Escalation was also clear in the Ostland and in Ukraine. After the German Blitzkrieg failed to bring immediate victory over the USSR, it became apparent that there would not be enough food to meet all demands: German domestic demand, Wehrmacht supply demand and the nutrition of captured civilians. In the area of Army Group North (including the Baltic states), this resulted in almost immediate radicalization. On July 20, 1941, Vilnius and Kaunas between them only had stocks of 5,000 to 6,000 tonnes of grain, yet in August the Wehrmacht took 6,500 tonnes, leaving the stocks essentially empty.³⁴ Troops thus then had to take provisions directly from the land.

It is thus highly significant that, when the 2nd SS Cavalry Regiment was preparing to sweep the Pripet Marshes, it received an "explicit order" (*ausdrücklicher Befehl des RF-SS*) from Himmler on August 1, 1941 to kill women and children through drowning: "All Jews must be shot. Drive the female Jews into the swamp."³⁵ Magill's reply stated that "the swamps were not so deep that a sinking under could occur."³⁶ In the Baltic region, Stahlecker wrote a draft on August 6, 1941, that rejected Lohse's ghettoization proposals of July 27 and proposed instead that policy should focus on "the radical possibilities for dealing with the Jewish Problem" that had "emerged for the first time in the Ostland." He referred to "general orders from above that cannot be discussed in writing,"³⁷ and stated that, unlike in the GG, "Perspectives derived from the need to use the Jews for labour will simply not be relevant for the most part in the Ostland."³⁸ Stahlecker was silent on the fate of non-working Jews, but

³³ Einsatzbefehl No. 8, 17.7.41, NO-3414; see also earlier draft, 28.6.41, 78-PS.

³⁴ Dieckmann, 'The War and the Killing of the Lithuanian Jews', p.256, citing statement of account of IV Wi AOK 18 relative to stocks on July 20, 1941, LVCA P 70-2-40 Bl.2 and statement of account re. Requirements of Army Group North (16th and 18th Armies, Panzergruppe 4) for meat, lard and flour in August and September 1941, LVCA P 70-1-16, Bl.39.

³⁵ Christopher R. Browning and Jürgen Matthäus, *The Origins of the Final Solution. The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939-March 1942*. London, 2004, p.310, citing Himmler order of 30.7.41 to SS Cavalry Regiment 2, 1.8.41, BA-MA, RS 3-8/36; cf. JuNSV Bd. XX, Nr. 570.

³⁶ Magill report on the Pripet action, 12.8.41, MHA, Kommandostab des RFSS.

³⁷ These may have been issued during Himmler's visit to Riga discussed in EM 48, 10.8.41, which also mentioned that "he intends to set up police formations consisting of Lithuanians, Latvians, Estonians, Ukrainians, etc., employing them outside of their own home areas," implying an escalation of killing using native auxiliaries.

³⁸ Longerich, *Holocaust*, pp.232-34, citing Betrifft: Entwurf über die Aufstellung vorläufiger Richtlinien für die Behandlung der Juden im Gebiet des Reichskommissariates Ostland, 6.8.41, LCHA.

stated that the small number of working Jews would be subject to a “ruthless exploitation” that would produce “a significant easing of the later transportation of Jews.” This could only mean that non-working Jews were already to be killed immediately whilst working Jews were to be decimated by forced labour to leave only a rump that would have to be resettled later. In many ways, this foreshadowed the Wannsee Protocol.

Stahlecker’s intentions clearly reached the head of EK 3, Karl Jäger. Beginning on August 15, 1941, Jäger's statistics demonstrate a sharp increase in the number of Jews being shot and the inclusion of large numbers of Jewish women and children.³⁹ Meanwhile, an OKW file document revealed the first intimations that gassing was an option being considered in the Ostland.⁴⁰

Stahlecker’s view of decimation by labour was shared by Einsatzgruppen C leader Otto Rasch. In August, Rasch advocated the use of Jews in the Pripet marches.⁴¹ On September 17, Rasch⁴² suggested that an “extensive labour utilization” should be used to achieve a “gradual liquidation of the Jews.”⁴³

Rasch’s zone, Ukraine, witnessed the largest early massacres, but these were mainly instigated by HSSPF Jeckeln, who had assumed operational control of killing forces. In August, 23,600 Jews, many of whom had been expelled from Hungary, were killed at Kamenets-Podolsky. Their fate was sealed in a meeting headed by the Quartermaster-General Wagner and the Chief of Military Administration, Schmidt von Altenstadt.⁴⁴ In September, the execution of 33,771 Jews at Babi Yar, Kiev, was carried out “[in] cooperation with the HQ of EGC and two Kommandos of Police Regiment South” whilst in Zhitomir, 3,145 Jews were registered and shot.⁴⁵ In the latter action, "The women were allowed to hold their children in their arms" during the shooting.⁴⁶

³⁹ Jäger report of EK 3, 1.12.41, RGVA 500-1-25, p.115.

⁴⁰ Otto Dov Kulka und Eberhard Jäckel (eds), *Die Juden in den geheimen Stimmungsberichten 1933-1945*. Düsseldorf, 2004, p.454, citing Dok. 563, Reisebericht des Ia des Wehrwirtschafts- und Rüstungsamts des OKW über seinen Besuch im Abschnitt der Wirtschaftsinspektion Nord, 11.8.41. Originally cited by Götz Aly, *“Endlösung”. Völkerverschiebung und der Mord an den europäischen Juden*, Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1995, p. 333.

⁴¹ EM 52, 14.8.41.

⁴² As is discussed below, Rasch previously ran the Soldau camp in East Prussia and paid SK Lange to operate a gas van to kill mental patients at the site; see Rediess to Wolf, 7.11.1940, NO-2909; Rasch testimony to SS investigation of Soldau, 16.6.43, NO-1073.

⁴³ EM 86, 17.9.41.

⁴⁴ Vermer über die im OKH stattgefundene Besprechung wegen Übernahme eines Teils der Ukraine in Zivilverwaltung am 27.8.1941 in Berlin, 197-PS; cf. Klaus-Michel Mallmann, ‘Der qualitative Sprung im Vernichtungsprozess. Das Massaker von Kamenez-Podolsk Ende August 1941’, *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung* 10, 2001, pp.237-64.

⁴⁵ EM 106, 7.10.41.

⁴⁶ Wendy Lower, ‘The ‘reibungslose’ Holocaust? The German Military and Civilian Implementation of the ‘Final Solution’ in Ukraine, 1941-1944,’ in Gerald Feldman and Wolfgang Seibel (eds), *Networks of Nazi*

The civilian administration in the Ostland joined the systematic killing policy in September. On September 3, Gewecke noted the need “to liquidate all Jews” across the ‘Schaulen’ [Siauliai] region.⁴⁷ Postwar testimony indicates they were killed as “useless eaters”, the same formulation earlier used to justify killing T4 patients.⁴⁸ The language was repeated by Erren in Slonim, Belorussia, when 7,000 Jews were shot: “The action carried out by the SD on 13 November rid me of unnecessary mouths to feed.”⁴⁹

Extermination was also mandated by the assumption, expressed for example by von Bechtolsheim, that “without a single exception, Jews and partisans are an identical concept.”⁵⁰ This statement, with its use of ‘concept’, demonstrates that the Jew-partisan linkage was established in the minds of the Wehrmacht leaders before they invaded the USSR, but it was also intensified into more systematic killing actions as the war proceeded. Moreover, Bechtolsheim’s order that Jews had to “vanish from the flat land and the Gypsies too have to be exterminated”⁵¹ was issued before there was any partisan threat in Belorussia. Indeed, the fact that Gypsies also had to be exterminated shows that Bechtolsheim was using military prerogatives to carry out extermination of groups he defined by race. Bechtolsheim’s Befehl Nr. 24 put in writing what his forces had already been doing in conjunction with Reserve Battalion 11, sent from Lithuania, which killed 11,400 men, women and children in massacres that spanned Slutsk, Kletsk, Kliniki, Smilovichi, Kojdanov and the Minsk civilian prisoner camp.⁵² The civil administration expressed shock at these murders.⁵³

In November, Georg Thomas called for the “complete extermination of the Jews” in Volhynia (in western Ukraine) on the grounds that Jews were “without any doubt less

Persecution. Bureaucracy, Business and the Organization of the Holocaust. Berghahn, 2004, p.244; Pohl, *Die Herrschaft der Wehrmacht*, pp.259-60.

⁴⁷ Gewecke, Jewish Concerns in Schaulen, 3.9.41, 3661-PS.

⁴⁸ Einsatzgruppen-Prozess Ulm, Urteil, Ks 2/57, JuNSV Bd. XV, Nr. 465. Online <http://www.holocaust-history.org/german-trials/einsatz-ulm.shtml>.

⁴⁹ Status report, RC Slonim, 25.1.42, in Anklageschrift Erren et al., StA Hamburg 141 Js 173/61, p.50.

⁵⁰ Jürgen Förster, ‘The Wehrmacht and the War of Extermination against the Soviet Union,’ *Yad Vashem Studies* 14, 1981, pp.7-33, citing Kommandant in Weissruthenien, Situation Report of February 1-15, 1942, BA-MA WK VII/527 RH 53 – 7/v. 206 RH 26-707/v. 1; cf. Hannes Heer, ‘Gustav Freiherr von Mauchenheim, genannt Bechtolsheim – ein Wehrmachtsgeneral als Organisator des Holocaust’ in Klaus-Michel Mallmann and Gerhard Paul (hg), *Karrieren der Gewalt. Nationalsozialistische Täterbiographien*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2004, pp.33-46; Browning, *Origins*, p.289; Peter Lieb, ‘Täter aus Überzeugung? Oberst Carl von Andrian und die Judenmorde der 707. Infanteriedivision 1941/42. Der Tagebuch eines Regimentskommandeurs: Ein neuer Zugang zu einer berühmten Wehrmachtdivision’, *VfZ* 50, 2002; Hannes Heer, *Tote Zonen. Die Wehrmacht an der Ostfront*. Hamburg, 1999; Hannes Heer, ‘Killing Fields: the Wehrmacht and the Holocaust in Belorussia, 1941-42’, *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 11/1, 1997) pp.79-101.

⁵¹ Kommandant in Weissruthenien Ia, Befehl Nr. 24, 24.11.41, gez. v. Bechtolsheim, NARB 378-1-698, p.32; cf. Browning, *Origins*, p.289.

⁵² Kommandant in Belorussia, 8.10.41 and 16.10.41, NARB 378-1-698; cf. Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, pp. 612-13. For Minsk, see EM 92, 23.9.41.

⁵³ Gebietskommissar Sluzk an Kube, 30.10.41, gez. Carl, 1104-PS, IMT XXVII, pp.4-8.

valuable as labourers compared with the damage they do as ‘germ carriers’ of communism.”⁵⁴ On December 18, 1941, Braütigam told Lohse that “economic considerations” (referred to by Lohse in earlier correspondence of November 15) “should fundamentally remain unconsidered.” Furthermore, he stated that this had probably been agreed via verbal discussion, thereby confirming that policy was not always being conveyed by written order but instead by mouth.⁵⁵ On January 10, 1942, Himmler confirmed to Rosenberg that “measures to eliminate Jews shall be taken without regard to economic consequences.”⁵⁶

In summary, by the time the top Nazi leadership decided to deport European Jews to death camps, the fate of Soviet Jews had already been sealed and large numbers of women and children were already documented as killed in the Nazis’ own reports. For example, in early 1942, only 22,767 Jews remained alive, according to a census, in the military occupied zone of eastern Belorussia.⁵⁷ In the area of Einsatzgruppe A, Stahlecker reported in January 1942 that “The systematic mopping up of the Eastern Territories embraced, in accordance with the basic orders, the complete removal if possible, of Jewry” and that this had resulted in “the execution up to the present time of 229,052 Jews.”⁵⁸ He noted that in Latvia, “Up to October 1941 approximately 30,000 Jews had been executed by these Sonderkommandos.” He then related how “27,800 were executed in Riga at the beginning of December 1941” by Jeckeln’s forces.

Stahlecker then detailed killings in Lithuania, where “136,421 people were liquidated in a great number of single actions.” Total Jewish deaths in Ukraine in 1941, including eastern Galicia and territory occupied by Rumania, have been estimated at 509,190.⁵⁹ For the ‘White Russian Sector’, Stahlecker noted:

41,000 Jews have been shot up to now. This number does not include those shot in operations by the former Einsatzkommandos. From estimated figures about 19,000 partisans and criminals, that is in the majority Jews, were shot by the Armed Forces [Wehrmacht] up to December 1941.

⁵⁴ EM 133, 14.11.41.

⁵⁵ Braütigam an Lohse, Jewish Question re. correspondence of 15 Nov. 1941, 18.12.41, 3666-PS, IMT XXXII, p.347.

⁵⁶ Himmler an Rosenberg, 10.1.42, NARA T454/154/334; cf. Wendy Lower, *Nazi Empire-Building and the Holocaust in Ukraine*. Chapel Hill, 2005, p.251.

⁵⁷ Beauftragter des RMO beim Befehlshaber rückwärtiges Heeresgebiet Mitte. Bericht Nr. 6, 10.2.42, NARA T454/102/595.

⁵⁸ Stahlecker, Report of Einsatzgruppe A, n.d., 2273-PS.

⁵⁹ Alexander Kruglov, ‘Jewish Losses in Ukraine, 1941-1944’, in Ray Brandon and Wendy Lower (eds), *The Shoah in Ukraine. History, Testimony, Memorialization*. Bloomington, 2008, pp.278-79.

The academic literature on these killings emphasizes the Einsatzgruppen's utilization of large numbers of Order Police and native auxiliaries.⁶⁰ This is especially true of the studies of the actions of Einsatzgruppe A and its collaborators in Lithuania⁶¹, Latvia⁶² and Estonia.⁶³

Further killings in White Ruthenia in the winter of 1941-42 were only delayed by the frozen ground and by Kube's attempts to delay the shooting of deported Reich Jews. On January 31, 1942, Hofmann noted that "At present a complete liquidation of the Jews is not possible due to the frost, because the ground is too frozen to dig pits which would then be available as mass graves for the Jews." Hofmann promised, however, that "in the spring large-scale executions would be initiated again."⁶⁴ These killings are discussed later in this chapter.

In Ukraine, killings continued through the winter of 1941-42, as shown by the gassing of Jews with Lorpocrin to clear the Zlatopol ghetto in Nikolayev on the orders of the county commissar.⁶⁵ Gas vans were used in Simferopol, as confirmed in the trial of Drexel and

⁶⁰ Reitlinger, *The Final Solution*; Hans-Joachim Neufeldt, Jürgen Huck, Georg Tessin, *Zur Geschichte des Ordnungspolizeis 1936-1945*. Koblenz, 1957; Andrej Angrick, Martina Vogt et al, ' 'Da hätte man schon ein Tagebuch führen müssen'. Das Polizeibataillon 322 und die Judenmorde im Bereich der Heeresgruppe Mitte während des Sommers und Herbstes 1941' in Helga Grabitz et al (eds), *Die Normalität des Verbrechens. Festschrift für Wolfgang Scheffler*. Berlin, 1994; Jürgen Matthäus, 'What about the 'Ordinary Men'?' The German Order Police and the Holocaust in the Occupied Soviet Union', *HGS* 11, 1996, pp.134-150; Klaus-Michel Mallmann, 'Vom Fussvolk der 'Endlösung'. Ordnungspolizei, Ostkrieg und Judenmord', *Tel Aviver Jahrbuch für deutsche Geschichte* XXVI, 1997; Edward B. Westermann, *Hitler's Police Battalions. Enforcing Racial War in the East*. Kansas, 2005; Stefan Klemp, 'Nicht ermittelt'. *Polizeibataillone und die Nachkriegsjustiz – Ein Handbuch*. Essen, 2005; Wolfgang Curilla, *Die deutsche Ordnungspolizei und der Holocaust im Baltikum und in Weissrussland 1941-1944*. Paderborn, 2006; Erich Haberer, 'The German police and genocide in Belorussia, 1941-1944: Part I: Police Deployment and Nazi genocidal directives. Part II: The 'second sweep': Gendarmerie killings of Jews and Gypsies on January 29, 1942. Part III: methods of genocide and the motives of German police compliance', *Journal of Genocide Research* 3/1, pp.13-29, 3/2, pp.207-218, 3/3, pp.391-403.

⁶¹ This is clearly spelt out in the Jäger report of EK 3, 1.12.41, RGVA 500-1-25, and in the secondary literature, cf. Dieckmann, 'The War and the Killing of the Lithuanian Jews', pp.240-75 and now Christoph Dieckmann, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Litauen 1941-1944*. Göttingen: Wallstein, 2011; Wolfram Wette, *Karl Jäger: Mörder der litauischen Juden*. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 2011; Petras Stankeras, *Litovskie politiseiskie batal'onny 1941-1945gg*. Moscow: Veche, 2009; also in at least one well-known diary: Kazimierz Sakowicz, *Ponary Diary, 1941-1943. A Bystander's Account of a Mass Murder*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005.

⁶² Margers Vestermanis, 'Der lettische Anteil an der "Endloesung". Versuch einer Antwort', in Uwe Backes, Eckhard Jesse, Rainer Zitelmann (eds), *Die Schatten der Vergangenheit. Impulse zur Historisierung des Nationalsozialismus*. Frankfurt am Main/Berlin: Propylaen, 1990; Andrew Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia 1941-1944. The Missing Centre*. Washington, DC, 1996; Katrin Reichelt, *Lettland unter deutscher Besatzung 1941-1944. Der lettische Anteil am Holocaust*. Berlin: Metropol, 2011; 'Unichtozhit' kak možno bol'she..' *Latviiskie kollaboratsionistskie formirovaniia na territorii Belorussii, 1942-1944 gg. Sbornik dokumentov*. Moscow: Fond 'Istoricheskii pamiat', 2009.

⁶³ Ruth Bettina Birn, 'Collaboration with Nazi Germany in Eastern Europe: The Case of the Estonian Security Police', *Contemporary European History*, 10/2, July 2001, pp.181-198; Anton Weiss-Wendt, *Murder Without Hatred: Estonians and the Holocaust*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2009.

⁶⁴ Protokoll über den Hergang der Hauptabteilungsleiter- und Abteilungsleiterbesprechung am 29.1.42, NARB 370-1-53, p.165.

⁶⁵ Fragment of a situation report from BdO Ukraine (gez. Müller-Brunkhorst), ca. March 1942 (title page missing); TsADAVOV, R-3676-4-317, p.71; cf. Dieter Pohl, 'The Murder of Ukraine's Jews under German

Kehrer of EK 12a and 12b.⁶⁶ German court cases against German officers who overstepped their duties or used unauthorized killing methods show that the purpose of the Security Police was defined as the extermination of Jews. A group of documents⁶⁷ describes the massacre of Jewish prisoners in Poltava military prison on March 25, 1942. SS-Obersturmführer Schulte (who at the time was a liaison officer between the 6th army high command and Sonderkommando 4a) explained that he had to execute several prisoners, but didn't have an authority for special treatment (*Sonderbehandlung*) of “NKVD commissars, Communist elements and Jews”, and therefore he requested Unteroffizier Hans Röttgermann⁶⁸ to perform the special treatment.⁶⁹ According to Schulte some space in the frozen pits was available, so Röttgermann could proceed.

In his May 31, 1942 report⁷⁰ Röttgermann explained that on March 25 he was asked by *Gefreiter der Feldgendarmarie* Konrad Neese, to whom Röttgermann had previously given the prisoners to perform some tasks, to arrive in the prison yard, since the Jews refused to work and were threatening Neese. Röttgermann ordered the Jews to work, and when they refused he used a rubber stick. Röttgermann alleged that because of that two Jewish “commissars” threatened him with wooden logs. He shot them and other 6 Jews, as allegedly they asked him to shoot them too, which he proceeded to do. Röttgermann writes that he has in possession Schulte's order for execution of these Jews on that same date. In order to simplify things, Röttgermann shot two Jewish women right in the yard.

Röttgermann was arrested on April 3, 1942 and accused of neglecting official orders and undermining the authority of the Germans in Ukraine. The verdict of the court-martial (Feldkriegsgericht) after the proceedings which took place on April 17, 1942 under Kriegsgerichtsrat Dietzel (from Poltava Kommandantur), stated, in part:

Therefore shootings of Jews, which lately have been a task of SD, are acts of the state [*Akte des Staates*], ordered for extermination of these enemies in a certain manner [*der die Austilgung dieser Feinde in einer bestimmten Art und Weise anordnet*] and performed in this manner. In order to implement these measures, which the state deems to be necessary, special organs are used. These organs are subject to strict guidelines.

Military Administration and in the Reich Commissariat Ukraine’, in Ray Brandon and Wendy Lower (eds) *The Shoah in Ukraine*, Bloomington, 2008, p.48.

⁶⁶ JuNSV Bd. XL, Nr. 816 StA Muenchen I, Az.119c Ks 6 a-b/70, Bl.33-35.

⁶⁷ Discovered by Sergey Romanov.

⁶⁸ Hans Röttgermann, 25.11.1900, Wesel (Kreis Düsseldorf) son of Johann Röttgermann and Maria (nee Bielefeld); plasterer; on 27.04.1922 married Helene Echte with whom had at least 4 children; took part in WWI as a volunteer; joined NSDAP in 1932; SS since 1932; in 1933 served in Papenburg concentration camp; Unteroffizier since 01.11.1941. Zugführer in SS-Sturm 8/19 [9/18?].

⁶⁹ Schulte to Thomas, 24.7.42, RGASPI 17-125-250, l. 13.

⁷⁰ RGASPI 17-125-250, l. 14.

[...]

Thereby it is guaranteed that the acts of the state are implemented within the limits set by the state. The military implements altogether different tasks. It is not a permissible interpretation that duties of specific military men are defined by their belonging to SS and that under any circumstances they implement the tasks of SS or SD.

[...]

The accused shall be punished for lack of discipline.

By shooting 10 Jews in the military prison he failed to follow the order of his direct military commander lieutenant Lutzke. Due to this lack of discipline the accused caused severe harm. This means severe undermining of the German military and reputation of Germans in Ukraine in general.

When weighing any exculpatory circumstances it should be taken into account that liquidation of Jews [*die Beseitigung der Juden*] should not harm the Germans' authority since for these measures there are guidelines given by the state. This especially pertains to the SD activities, since they implement these measures within these guidelines.⁷¹

This court case therefore followed a similar pattern to that against Täubner of the Waffen-SS 1.SS-Inf.Brig. (mot), who was investigated by an SS court in 1942 for excessively cruel acts during the killing of at least 319 Jews in Novograd-Volynsky (Zhitomir oblast), 191 Jews in Sholokhovo (Dnepr. oblast), 459 in Aleksandriia (Kirovograd oblast). The court reached the following verdict:

The accused shall not be punished because of the actions against the Jews as such. The Jews have to be exterminated and none of the Jews that were killed is any great loss. Although the accused should have recognized that the extermination of the Jews was the duty of Kommandos which were set up especially for this purpose, he should be excused for considering himself to have the authority to take part in the extermination of Jewry himself. Real hatred of the Jews was the driving motivation for the accused. In the process he let himself be drawn into committing cruel actions in Alexandriya which are unworthy of a German man and an SS-officer. These excesses cannot be justified, either, as the accused would like to, as retaliation for the pain that the Jews have caused the German people. It is not the German way to apply Bolshevik methods during the necessary extermination of the worst enemy of our people. In so doing the conduct of the accused gives rise to considerable concern. The accused allowed his men to act with such vicious brutality that they conducted themselves under his command like a savage horde...⁷²

⁷¹ RGASPI 17-125-250, ll. 16-20.

⁷² Ernst Klee, Willi Dressen and Volker Riess (eds), *The Good Old Days*, New York: Konecky & Konecky, 1988, pp.196-207; cf. JuNSV Bd. XLV, Nr. 877. The killings in Novograd-Volynsky (Zviahel county, Zhitomir oblast; town is Zviahel in Polish), 191 Jews in Sholokhovo (Dnepropetrovsk oblast), 459 in Aleksandriia (Kirovograd oblast) were documented in Einsatzbefehl Jeckeln an 1. SS-Brigade, 25.7.1941, NARA RG 242 T-501R 5/000 559-60; Cf. Dieter Pohl, 'The Murder of Ukraine's Jews under German Military Administration and

Himmler had advised the tribunal in instructions issued on his behalf by Bender on October 26, 1942 that “Execution for purely political motives shall result in no punishment, unless this is necessary for maintaining discipline and order.”⁷³ Himmler thus saw the murder of Jews as political killing justified by the policy of the state, namely the Final Solution.

MGK’s three main responses to the mass shootings in the USSR are to ignore the mass of evidence, selectively quote a small number of documents in a misleading manner, and lie about the work of legitimate historians. For example, in a book attacking Raul Hilberg, Graf uses quotes by Hilberg that refer to the personnel composition of the Einsatzgruppen, whilst misrepresenting the instances where Hilberg discusses killings by other agencies and emphasizes the Einsatzgruppen's utilization of large numbers of Order Police and native auxiliaries.⁷⁴ This misrepresentation is in part due to Mattogno and Graf’s massive ignorance of the huge literature on the subject of police battalions, the origins of which stretch back to Reitlinger in 1953⁷⁵; but in many cases, it can be shown to be deliberate, because Graf refers to specific killings that Hilberg discusses in inter-agency terms. Graf wants the reader to believe that Hilberg is claiming these were exclusively Einsatzgruppen killings, when Hilberg's text actually says the opposite. Graf sets up his strawman as follows:

The claimed numbers of victims of the Einsatzgruppen are impossibly large. The largest of the four, Einsatzgruppe A, had 990 members. If we subtract from this

in the Reich Commissariat Ukraine’, p.28; *Unsere Ehre heisst Treue. Kriegstagebuch des Kommandostabes Reichsführer SS. Tätigkeitsberichte der 1 und 2. SS-Infanterie-Brigade, der 1. SS-Kavallerie-Brigade und von Sonderkommandos der SS*, Vienna, 1984, p.105ff; Kruglov, ‘Jewish Losses in Ukraine, 1941-1944’, p.276; Wendy Lower, ‘On Him Rests the Weight of the Administration’: Nazi Civilian Rulers and the Holocaust in Zhytomyr’, in in Ray Brandon and Wendy Lower (eds) *The Shoah in Ukraine*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008, p.240. The commissar for Zviahel County was Hans Schmidt, who was a Hauptscharführer in the SD.

⁷³ Beurteilung von Judenerschießungen ohne Befehl und Befugnis, 26.10.42, NO-1744; Cf. Yehoshua Büchler. ‘“Unworthy Behavior”: The Case of SS Officer Max Täubner,’ HGS 17/3, 2003, pp.409-429.

⁷⁴ Graf, *Giant*, 2001.

⁷⁵ Reitlinger, *The Final Solution*; Hans-Joachim Neufeldt, Jürgen Huck, Georg Tessin, *Zur Geschichte des Ordnungspolizeis 1936-1945*. Koblenz, 1957; Andrej Angrick, Martina Vogt et al, ‘ ‘Da hätte man schon ein Tagebuch führen müssen’. Das Polizeibataillon 322 und die Judenmorde im Bereich der Heeresgruppe Mitte während des Sommers und Herbstes 1941’ in Helga Grabitz et al (eds), *Die Normalität des Verbrechens. Festschrift für Wolfgang Scheffler*. Berlin, 1994; Jürgen Matthäus, ‘What about the ‘Ordinary Men’? The German Order Police and the Holocaust in the Occupied Soviet Union’, HGS 11, 1996, pp.134-150; Klaus-Michel Mallmann, ‘Vom Fussvolk der ‘Endlösung’. Ordnungspolizei, Ostkrieg und Judenmord’, *Tel Aviver Jahrbuch für deutsche Geschichte* XXVI, 1997; Edward B. Westermann, *Hitler’s Police Battalions. Enforcing Racial War in the East*. Kansas, 2005; Stefan Klemp, ‘Nicht ermittelt’. *Polizeibataillone und die Nachkriegsjustiz – Ein Handbuch*. Essen, 2005; Wolfgang Curilla, *Die deutsche Ordnungspolizei und der Holocaust im Baltikum und in Weissrussland 1941-1944*. Paderborn, 2006; Erich Haberer, ‘The German police and genocide in Belorussia, 1941-1944: Part I: Police Deployment and Nazi genocidal directives. Part II: The ‘second sweep’: Gendarmerie killings of Jews and Gypsies on January 29, 1942. Part III: methods of genocide and the motives of German police compliance’, *Journal of Genocide Research* 3/1, pp.13-29, 3/2, pp.207-218, 3/3, pp.391-403.

the 172 vehicle drivers, 3 women employees, 51 interpreters, 3 teletypewriter operators and 8 radio operators, there are about 750 combatants left to use for the mass killings (p. 303; DEJ, p. 289). Up to 15th October 1941, Einsatzgruppe A supposedly killed 125,000 Jews (p. 309; DEJ, p. 289). Considering the fact that the mass murders first began in August (p. 307; DEJ, na), the overwhelming majority of the 125,000 victims, let us say 120,000, must have been killed in a period of ten weeks.⁷⁶

Graf's decision to focus on Einsatzgruppe A is a tactical error on his part, because even a reader with minimal Holocaust knowledge will be aware that this unit operated in Lithuania⁷⁷, Latvia⁷⁸ and Estonia⁷⁹ with the largest proportion of native collaborators. Moreover, Graf himself discusses the involvement of native Baltic citizens in pogroms:

In addition, thousands of Jews were killed in pogroms initiated by the native populations following the German invasion. After they had been freed from the Bolshevik yoke, Latvians, Lithuanians, Ukrainians and others took revenge on Jews because the Red terror machinery had been led mainly by Jews, and this retribution unfortunately fell also on Jews who had nothing to do with the Communist crimes.⁸⁰

Graf is thus skewered by his contradictory aims. He wishes to show that the natives hated Jews, but, in order to maintain his Einsatzgruppen strawman, he also needs to claim that all killings must have been done by Einsatzgruppe A acting alone. Hilberg's actual text is clear that Einsatzgruppe A needed local assistance. Summarizing the actions of EK 2 in September 1941, documented by Jäger's report, Hilberg notes that EK 2 was "augmented by a Latvian Sonderkommando of more than one hundred men (eventually two companies of three platoons each) under a Latvian with legal training and police experience, Viktor Arajs." Graf quote-mines the "21 men" in Einsatzkommando 2 (Einsatzgruppe A) and adds a ludicrous exclamation mark to express his personal incredulity, but omits the fact that this action was led by the HSSPF, not the Einsatzgruppe. For Kiev, Hilberg notes that "two detachments of

⁷⁶ Graf, *Giant*, p.40.

⁷⁷ This is clearly spelt out in the Jäger report of EK 3, 1.12.41, RGVA 500-1-25, and in the secondary literature, cf. Dieckmann, 'The War and the Killing of the Lithuanian Jews', pp.240-75; Petras Stankeras, *Litovskie politseiskie batal'ony 1941-1945gg.* Moscow: Veche, 2009; also in at least one well-known diary: Kazimierz Sakowicz, *Ponary Diary, 1941-1943. A Bystander's Account of a Mass Murder.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005.

⁷⁸ Margers Vestermanis, 'Der lettische Anteil an der "Endloesung". Versuch einer Antwort', in Uwe Backes, Eckhard Jesse, Rainer Zitelmann (eds), *Die Schatten der Vergangenheit. Impulse zur Historisierung des Nationalsozialismus.* Frankfurt am Main/Berlin: Propylaen, 1990; Andrew Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia 1941-1944. The Missing Centre.* Washington, DC, 1996; Katrin Reichelt, *Lettland unter deutscher Besatzung 1941-1944. Der lettische Anteil am Holocaust.* Berlin: Metropol, 2011; 'Unichtozhit' kak mozžno bol'she..' *Latviiskie kollaboratsionistskie formirovaniia na territorii Belorussii, 1942-1944 gg. Sbornik dokumentov.* Moscow: Fond 'Istoricheskii pamiat', 2009.

⁷⁹ Ruth Bettina Birn, 'Collaboration with Nazi Germany in Eastern Europe: The Case of the Estonian Security Police', *Contemporary European History*, 10/2, July 2001, pp.181-198; Anton Weiss-Wendt, *Murder Without Hatred: Estonians and the Holocaust.* Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2009.

⁸⁰ Graf, *Giant*, p.36.

Order Police helped Einsatzkommando 4a in the Kiev massacre.” For Kamenets-Podolsky, Hilberg emphasizes that HSSPF Jeckeln’s “own staff company (*Stabskompanie*) did the shooting.”⁸¹

Graf has therefore lifted death figures from Hilberg without acknowledging that some of the killings were instigated by the Higher SS and Police Leaders and/or the Wehrmacht, and were sometimes carried out by forces that were often primarily non-Einsatzgruppen personnel. The size of these non-Einsatzgruppen personnel exposes even further the deep dishonesty of Graf’s position. During the summer of 1941, there were 21 Order Police battalions operating in the USSR.⁸² By 1942, when the Order Police became stationary, their combined total would be just under 15,000 men. The HSSPF, from July 1941, had at their disposal the First SS Brigade and the SS Cavalry Brigade, which were assigned respectively to the areas of HSSPF Jeckeln (Russia South) and HSSPF Bach-Zelewski (Russia Center). The total manpower of these units was between 10,000 and 11,000 men.⁸³ The men assigned to Jeckeln killed more Jews in Ukraine in 1941 than did Einsatzgruppe C and D combined.⁸⁴

Moreover, by far the largest numerical collections of killers were the non-German auxiliaries, known as Schutzmannschaft.⁸⁵ On July 1, 1942, these forces totaled 165,128 men.⁸⁶ It is therefore beyond dispute that the Nazis had enough men available to exterminate the Jews of the USSR. Graf is either ignorant or dishonest on this issue.

Finally, it should be noted that Baltic and Ukrainian auxiliaries of the type ignored by Graf were later used in Aktion Reinhard to liquidate ghettos by deportation to the death camps or shooting on site. For example, Erich Kapke, who commanded a ghetto-clearing unit

⁸¹ Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction Of The European Jews. Third Edition, Vol. 2.* Yale Univ. Press 2003, p.299 n.16 and p.303.

⁸² George Tessin, Norbert Kannapin, and Bruen Meyer, *Waffen-SS und Ordnungspolizei in Kriegseinsatz.* Osnabrueck. Biblio Verlag, 2000, pp.629-38.

⁸³ Yehoshua Robert Büchler, ‘Kommandostab Reichsführer-SS. Himmler’s Personal Murder Brigades in 1941’, *HGS I/1*, 1986, pp.11-25; Martin Cüppers, *Wegbereiter der Shoah. Die Waffen-SS, der Kommandostab Reichsführer-SS und die Judenvernichtung 1939-1945.* Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2005.

⁸⁴ Dieter Pohl, ‘The Murder of Ukraine’s Jews under German Military Administration and in the Reich Commissariat Ukraine’, in Ray Brandon and Wendy Lower (eds) *The Shoah in Ukraine.* Bloomington, 2008, p.40.

⁸⁵ As noted above, Himmler’s planning for these units during his visit to Riga was discussed in EM 48, 10.8.41, which notes their availability for use outside their own region. The literature on these units includes Richard Breitman, ‘Himmler’s Police Auxiliaries in the Occupied Soviet Territories’, *Simon Wiesenthal Center* 7, 1997; Franz Golczewski, ‘Organe der deutschen Besatzungsmacht: die ukrainischen Schutzmannschaften’ in Wolfgang Benz, Johannes Houwink ten Cate and Gerhard Otto (eds), *Die Bürokratie der Okkupation: Strukturen der Herrschaft und Verwaltung im besetzten Europa.* Berlin, 1998; Martin C. Dean, ‘The German Gendarmerie, the Ukrainian Schutzmannschaft and the ‘Second Wave’ of Jewish Killings in Occupied Ukraine: German Policing at the Local Level in the Zhitomir Region, 1941-1944’, *German History* 2/14, 1996; Martin C. Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust: Crimes of the Local Police in Belorussia and Ukraine, 1941-1944.* Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000; D.A. Zhukov and I.I. Kovtun, *Russkaia politsiia*, Moscow: Veche, 2010; Leonid Rein, *The Kings and the Pawns: Collaboration in Byelorussia During World War II.* Oxford: Berghahn, 2011

⁸⁶ Staerkenachweisung der Schutzmannschaft, Orpo Hauptamt, Berlin, 1.7.42, BA R 19/266, pp.5-11.

in the Radom district in the autumn of 1942, told investigators in 1968 that the unit had Ukrainian and Baltic manpower.⁸⁷

Evolution of Europe-Wide Final Solution, September - December 1941

The decision-making process to kill Europe's Jews was a mixture of decisions made at the top by the Führer and Himmler, and decisions made in consultation with more junior personnel concerning local killing actions. The centre allowed local authorities to kill Jews in increasing numbers, and these local killings then fed the centre's growing desire for killing Jews on a Europe-wide scale. Local killing decisions normalised extermination thinking that had been developing at the centre.

The following discussion contrasts Mattogno's fantasies about a Nazi resettlement decision with the real historiography of the decision-making process. It shows how, in order to promote his thesis, Mattogno has to suppress evidence whilst distorting the meaning of documents that actually prove extermination.

Mattogno's distortions begin by softening the reality of the plans that preceded the Final Solution. On page 198 of *Sobibór*, Mattogno claims that the Madagascar Plan formulated by Franz Rademacher⁸⁸ proposed for the Jews an "autonomous state under German supervision." He then translates one of Rademacher's lines as, "Within this territory, the Jews will be given autonomy in other respects: their own mayors, their own police, their own postal and railroad services, etc." However, he omits the key sentence preceding that line, which transforms the passage in a way that Mattogno has intentionally concealed:

That part of the island not required for military purposes will be placed under the administration of a German Police Governor, who will be under the administration of the Reichsführer-SS. Apart from this, the Jews will have their own administration in this territory: their own mayors, police, postal and railroad administration, etc.⁸⁹

Rademacher's wording, omitted by Mattogno, clearly shows that the Madagascar reservation would have been an SS enclosure. Mattogno also omits Rademacher's insistence that the Jews would be hostages:

Moreover, the Jews will remain in German hands as a pledge for the future good behaviour of the members of their race in America.

⁸⁷ Christopher R. Browning, *Remembering Survival. Inside A Nazi Slave Labor Camp*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2010, p.89.

⁸⁸ Mattogno incorrectly refers to him as 'Fritz Rademacher'; MGK, *Sobibór*, p198.

⁸⁹ Rademacher, The Jewish Question in the Peace Treaty, Berlin, 3.7.40, NG-2586-B. Online at http://www1.yadvashem.org/about_holocaust/documents/part2/doc97.html .

Mattogno's "an autonomous state" is directly contradicted by Rademacher's insistence that "our German sense of responsibility towards the world forbids us to make the gift of a sovereign state to a race which has had no independent state for thousands of years." Mattogno also omits Rademacher's rejection, in an earlier document⁹⁰, of the idea of sending Jews to Palestine, because of the "danger of a second Rome!", even though this phrase was quoted by fellow denier David Irving in *Hitler's War*.⁹¹

When Mattogno discusses the end of the Madagascar Plan, in *Treblinka* (p.186) he claims it was "temporarily shelved" in September 1941; *Sobibór* (p. 209) gives February 10, 1942 as the official date when the plan was cancelled.⁹² However, this fact undermines Graf's reliance on Goebbels' March 7, 1942 diary entry where he references deportations to Madagascar:

Being one of the leading figures of the Third Reich, Dr. Goebbels would of course have known about such an extermination policy, so how do the "holocaust" historians explain the fact that he spoke of the concentration of the Jews in the East and advocated assigning them Madagascar (or another island) as late as on 7 March 1942? ⁹³

Mattogno and Graf get themselves into this muddle because of their insistence upon clear policy breaks that allow no overlaps, and because they wish to pretend that Madagascar and 'resettlement to the East' were both benign plans rather than genocidal ones. Their reliance on a figure tertiary to the decision-making process also doesn't help them.

Mattogno also ignores the fact that the Madagascar Plan evolved at the same time as written exchanges between Wetzel and Himmler on racial policy. Mattogno cites selectively from this documentation in *Sobibór*⁹⁴, in a lame attempt to neutralize it, but ignores its implications for the decimatory nature of 'resettlement'. On November 25, 1939, Wetzel and Hecht stated that "We are indifferent to the hygienic fate of the Jews. Also for the Jews the basic principle is valid, that their propagation must be curtailed in every possible way." This clearly converges with developments in 1940 ignored by Mattogno such as Brack's proposals

⁹⁰ Peter Longerich, *Holocaust. The Nazi Persecution and Murder of the Jews*. Oxford, 2010, p.162, citing Rademacher an Luther, Gedanken ueber die Arbeit und Aufgaben des Ref. D III, PA, Inland II AB 347/3; synopsis Rademacher an Dannecker, 5.8.40, NG-5764.

⁹¹ David Irving, *Hitler's War* on-line edition, p.136:
http://www.fpp.co.uk/books/Hitler/1977/html_chapter/08.html .

⁹² The official cancellation by Franz Rademacher in February 1942 shows the transparency and deceitfulness of Hitler's reference to the plan several months later.

⁹³ Jürgen Graf, 'Hungarian Holocaust Debate: Otto Perge vs. Dr. Laszlo Karzai'. Online at
<http://juergen-graf.vho.org/articles/hungarian-holocaust-debate.html> .

⁹⁴ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.196-97 and pp.236-39.

for sterilization by X-ray⁹⁵ and Hitler's authorization of forced abortions. In May 1940, Himmler said that:

...I hope that the concept of Jews will be completely extinguished through the possibility of large-scale emigration of all Jews to Africa or some other colony. It must also be possible, in a somewhat longer period of time, to let the national concept of Ukrainians, Gorals and Lemcos disappear in our territory. Whatever is said concerning these splinter peoples applies on a correspondingly larger scale to the Poles.

...Cruel and tragic as every individual case may be, this method is the mildest and best if, out of inner conviction, we reject the Bolshevist method of physical destruction of a people as un-Germanic and impossible....⁹⁶

Himmler was thus proposing, at the very least, a short-term extermination of Jewishness as a cultural identity through emigration to Madagascar. How else would this have been achieved apart from decimation? Mattogno clings to the latter sentence about how “we reject the Bolshevist method of physical destruction of a people as un-Germanic and impossible” but this assumes that Himmler included Jews in his definition of “a people”, which is clearly very unlikely; both Wetzel and Himmler stressed that Jews were to be treated differently from the other eastern nationalities discussed in these documents. Even in the unlikely event that Himmler was rejecting the physical extermination of Jews in 1940, it would be the snapshot fallacy to cite this to try and neutralise the 1941-44 paper trail. It is possible but unlikely that Himmler rejected the idea of extermination in May 1940, but utterly ludicrous by June-December 1941.

Mattogno's policy chapter in *Treblinka* (Chapter VI), duplicated in *Sobibór* (Chapter 7), relies heavily upon a note sent by Zeitschel, an advisor at the German embassy in Paris, for the attention of ambassador Otto Abetz, suggesting that all the Jews in places occupied by the Germans be deported to “a special territory presumably marked off for them.” Mattogno claims that:

Zeitschel's proposal was thus accepted some months later by Hitler himself, who resolved to temporarily shelve the Madagascar Plan and to deport all Jews living in the occupied territories to the east. This decision of the *Führer* was probably made in September 1941.⁹⁷

The vagueness of ‘probably’ contradicts Mattogno's demand for precision in the policy thresholds he imposes on his strawman version of the proper historiography. Moreover, the

⁹⁵ Brack an Himmler, 28.3.41, NO-203.

⁹⁶ Himmler an Hitler, 25.5.40, NO-1880.

⁹⁷ M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.184-86, citing Zeitschel an Abetz, 22.8.41, 1017-PS. Note that this Mattogno paragraph contains a direct contradiction between “some months later” and “September 1941”: Zeitschel's proposal was dated 22.8.41, so a September decision would be one month or less afterwards.

focus on Zeitschel and Abetz is selective because it ignores three crucial facts. Firstly, on the previous day, Zeitschel had proposed the sterilization of all Jews on German-controlled soil.⁹⁸ Zeitschel's intentions therefore clearly had a genocidal purpose, and reflected sterilization experiments that were already taking place in Berlin.⁹⁹ Secondly, when Hitler met with Abetz on September 16, 1941, the Führer discussed plans to starve millions of people in Leningrad:

The Petersburg 'nest of poison' from which for so long Asian poison had flowed into the Baltic, must vanish from the earth. The city [Leningrad] was already surrounded: all that remained to do was to pound it with artillery and from the air. Everything the population needed to survive, such as the water pipes and the power stations, would be destroyed. The Asians and Bolshevists must be chased out of Europe, the episode of '250 years of Asianness' was at an end.¹⁰⁰

Abetz was therefore fully aware that the fate awaiting the Jews would involve highly attritional death rates, as Hitler had already told him that he would remove “Everything the population needed to survive” from the “Asians and Bolshevists.” Mattogno ignores this context because, by implication, it shows that Hitler would not allow Jews, who were automatically defined as enemies of the Reich, to survive in the USSR. Thirdly, Mattogno ignores the literature that shows how deportation policy in France evolved from reprisals policy. On December 14, 1941, Goebbels described impending deportations from France “to the eastern region” as “In many cases...equivalent to a death sentence.” In April 1942, a Hitler decree stipulated that “for each future assassination...500 Communists and Jews are to be turned over to the RFSS and the German Chief of Police for deportation to the East.”¹⁰¹ By May 31, 1942, 6,000 Communists and Jews had been deported as “reprisals.”¹⁰² Deportations from France should therefore be understood as having been commenced in lieu of shooting: as an equivalent death sentence. This alone is sufficient to place Zeitschel and Abetz's correspondence in the timeline of extermination, not (as Mattogno's title chapter claims) ‘emigration’.

⁹⁸ Zeitschel, 21.8.41, CDJC, V-8, published in Serge Klarsfeld, *Vichy - Auschwitz. Die Zusammenarbeit der deutschen und französischen Behörden bei der "Endlösung der Judenfrage" in Frankreich*. Nördlingen, 1989, p.367.

⁹⁹ Brack an Himmler, 28.3.41, NO-203.

¹⁰⁰ Note on the Führer's comments to Abetz, 16.9.41, ADAP [*Akten zur Deutschen Auswärtigen Politik*], Serie D, Bd. 13/2. Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970, pp.424-25.

¹⁰¹ Erlass des Militärbefehlshaber in Frankreich, 10.4.42, RF-1241; for context, see Ulrich Herbert, ‘The German Military Command in Paris and the Deportation of the French Jews’, in Ulrich Herbert (ed), *National Socialist Extermination Policies. Contemporary German Perspectives and Controversies*. London, 2000, pp.128-62; Christopher Neumaier, ‘The Escalation of German Reprisal Policy in Occupied France, 1941-42’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 41/1, January 2006, pp.113-31.

¹⁰² Herbert, ‘The German Military Command in Paris’, p.144, citing Das Geiselnverfahren im Bereich des Militärbefehlshabers in Frankreich vom Aug. 1941–Mai 1942, p.40ff. BA RW 35/524.

Mattogno cites Goebbels' diary entry for August 20, 1941, but overlooks the parts of that entry, cited by Browning, which quote Hitler's statements that Jews deported to the USSR "will be worked over in the harsh climate there" and:

As for the Jewish question, today in any case one could say that a man like Antonescu, for example, proceeds much more radically in this manner than we have done until now. But I will not rest or be idle until we too have gone all the way with the Jews.¹⁰³

Hitler would have known that Antonescu's Rumanian police had been liquidating Jews since July, in co-operation with Einsatzgruppe D, and driving those unfit to work into Transnistria, where most would starve or be shot. For example, Einsatzkommando 11A reported that "551 Jews have been liquidated in Kishinev."¹⁰⁴

Mattogno also discusses Goebbels' meeting with Heydrich on September 24, 1941, in which the latter stated that Jews deported from Berlin "in the end are all supposed to be transported [...] into the camps built by the Bolsheviks"¹⁰⁵; and they cite Hitler's statement of October 6, 1941, reported by Koeppen, that "Together with the Jews of the Protectorate, all the Jews of Vienna and Berlin must disappear."¹⁰⁶ However, they fail to make the obvious connection between these two statements: Heydrich's "camps built by the Bolsheviks" had become places where the Jews of Berlin would "disappear." How does disappearance in camps equate to a policy of resettlement?

Furthermore, Mattogno cites Heydrich's Prague meeting of October 10, 1941, but ignores a key passage referring to how Jews would be "decimated" (*dezimiert*).¹⁰⁷ Eight days earlier, a Heydrich speech in Prague had referred to the need "to gather the plans and the raw material" and to "test the material."¹⁰⁸ This indicates that the forthcoming deportations were associated with experiments taking place with "raw material."

In pages 274-276 of *Sobibór*, Mattogno attempts to neutralize Wetzel's draft to Lohse of October 25, 1941 (three weeks after Heydrich's "raw material" speech), concerning the proposed construction of "*Vergasungsapparate*" (also referred to as "Brack's device") in Riga to kill Reich Jews incapable of work.¹⁰⁹ The context of this draft should be noted.

¹⁰³ TBJG, II/1, p.266 (19.8.41) and p.278 (20.8.41).

¹⁰⁴ EM 45, 7.8.41.

¹⁰⁵ TBJG, II/1, pp.480-81 (24.9.1941).

¹⁰⁶ M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.185-86; Broszat, 'Hitler und die Genesis der "Endlösung"', pp.739-75: TBJG II/1, pp.480-81 (24.9.41);; Miroslav Karny, Jaroslava Milotova and Margita Karna (eds), *Politik im 'Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren' unter Reinhard Heydrich 1941-1942*. Berlin, 1997, p.97, citing Notiz Koeppens, 6.10.41.

¹⁰⁷ Minutes of a discussion in Prague on the Solution of the Jewish Question presided over by Heydrich, Prague, 10.10.41, T/294.

¹⁰⁸ Karny, *Politik im 'Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren' unter Reinhard Heydrich 1941-1942*, pp.107-22.

¹⁰⁹ Wetzel draft an Lohse, 25.10.41, NO-365.

Wetzel also drafted a covering letter on behalf of Rosenberg, so claims of forgery would need to account for both drafts, not just one.¹¹⁰ Both drafts had been prepared for Lohse's attention but must have been given to him verbally because he arrived in Berlin on the same day to protest against the planned deportation of Reich Jews to Riga and Minsk. Furthermore, only two days before this draft, and on the same day that Wetzel was meeting with Brack, Paul Wurm, the foreign editor of *Der Stürmer*, had written from Berlin to Franz Rademacher advising him that "many of the Jewish vermin will be exterminated through special measures." It is thus certain that Lohse was aware of plans to kill deported Jews in the Ostland before he left Berlin.¹¹¹

Mattogno attempts to negate this entire process by claiming that "Brack's device" proposed by Wetzel to be used in Riga would have been "carbon monoxide cylinders", but this is highly doubtful given that, as we show in the Gas Chamber chapter, Widmann had already discussed "the impossibility to transport the CO-cylinders in Russia"¹¹² (and gassing tests in Mogilev using engine exhaust had already taken place) when Wetzel wrote his draft on October 25. The eventual use of gas vans in the Minsk-Mogilev area was confirmed by EK 8 driver Josef Wendl in court testimony in 1970¹¹³, while Sergey Romanov of *Holocaust Controversies* has published a document cited by Gerlach showing the arrival of two "gas vans" (*Gaswagen* in the original German) in Smolensk in February 1942.¹¹⁴ Court proceedings have also uncovered that, around the end of May 1942, EK 8 received a gas van from Smolensk. The driver was SS-Hstuf Sch., who belonged to the driver Staffel of the EK.¹¹⁵ Against this raft of evidence, Mattogno cites only Brack's Nuremberg testimony on CO cylinders, and states that this applied to the same device as in Wetzel's draft¹¹⁶, but the

¹¹⁰ Wetzel draft an Lohse, 25.10.41, NO-996 and NO-997.

¹¹¹ Browning, *Origins*, p. 369, citing Wurm an Rademacher, 23.10.41, Political Archives of the German Foreign Office, Inland II A/B 59/3.

¹¹² Deposition by A.Widmann, Head of Abt. V D 2 (Chemistry and Biology) in the KTI, 11.1.1960; StA Düsseldorf, Az. 8 Js7212/59 [ZSL, Az.202 AR-Z 152/59], Bl.46.

¹¹³ Patricia Heberer, 'Justice in Austrian Courts?' in Patricia Heberer and Jürgen Matthaues (eds), *Atrocities on Trial: Historical Perspectives on the Politics of Prosecuting War Crimes*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008, p.237, citing testimony of Josef W., Strafsache gegen Josef W., Bd. IX, ON 117, p.16; see also on the gassing of mental patients in Mogilev, Andrej Angrick, *Besatzungspolitik und Massenmord. Die Einsatzgruppe D in der südlichen Sowjetunion 1941-1943*. Hamburg, 2003, p.368ff.

¹¹⁴ EGr B, Tätigkeits- und Lagebericht, 16-28.2.42, p.7, RGVA 500-1-770; cf. Christian Gerlach, 'Failure of Plans for an SS Extermination Camp in Mogilew', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 11, 1997, p.77 n.83; Sergey Romanov, 'How the convergence of evidence works: the gas van of Auschwitz', *Holocaust Controversies*, 6.10.06. Scan of document, p.7:

http://farm1.static.flickr.com/111/262271654_67d0a83246_o.jpg .

¹¹⁵ JuNSV, Bd. 23, Nr. 624, p.344 (Urteil LG Frankfurt/Main 4 Ks 1/65 gegen Josef Har., 12.3.66); cf. also JuNSV Bd. XXXIII, Lfd. Nr. 720; JuNSV Bd. XXXII, Lfd. Nr. 702.

¹¹⁶ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.274-75.

exchange he cites was referring only to the gassing of mental patients in T4 euthanasia centres¹¹⁷ so was irrelevant to the proposed gassing of Jews in Riga.

This same section then engages in a fallacy of excluded middle by assuming that the Riga plan must have been abandoned when work began on Belzec. Moreover, it assumes that Belzec's original intention must, according to the official historiography, have been to kill fit as well as unfit Jews. This is simply a false reading of the historiography because almost all historians concur that the policy at the time of the Wannsee Protocol was to gas unfit Jews whilst granting workers a stay of execution. Both of these false assumptions can be refuted by noting the obvious fact that the Ostland and Belzec operated as killing sites simultaneously in the spring and summer of 1942, so Belzec was simply an additional killing option at the moment that construction commenced, not a replacement for the Wetzel proposal. Furthermore, by conceding that Wetzel's document referred to killing, Mattogno concedes a murderous motive, and fails to explain why that motive would not have been carried forward into 1942 at the expense of resettlement.

Mattogno also perpetrates distortions concerning witnesses to decision-making. On page 235 of *Sobibór*, Mattogno insists that Führer orders must be located that match those claimed in testimonies by Höss for June 1941 and Wisliceny for April 1942. This is, of course, hypocritical; firstly because Mattogno's own dating for a resettlement decision is not precise (he says 'probably' September, as was noted above) and secondly because he insists in other chapters that perpetrator testimonies are unreliable for purposes of dating and detail. Moreover, Höss's dating is contradicted by his own affidavit, which stated that he received the order when the three Reinhard camps were already operational.¹¹⁸ His dating has also been criticized by historians such as Browning¹¹⁹ and Orth¹²⁰, who have shown why it was incorrect. Consequently, there is no reason why historians should follow Höss's dating, and for Mattogno to insist otherwise is simply ludicrous, if not outright dishonest. Historians also point out that perpetrators such as Höss had a motive to insist on an early Führerbefehl, as a way of evading their own personal responsibility for killings, but this obvious point about defence strategy is ignored by Mattogno because it would take away the Führerbefehl strawman.

¹¹⁷ NMT, I, pp.876-86: <http://fcit.usf.edu/HOLOCAUST/resource/DOCUMENT/DocEuth.htm> .

¹¹⁸ Affidavit of Rudolf Franz Ferdinand Höss, 5.4.46, 3868-PS, NCA VI, pp. 787-90.

¹¹⁹ Christopher R. Browning, *Collected Memories: Holocaust History and Postwar Testimony*. Madison, WI, 2003.

¹²⁰ Karin Orth, 'Rudolf Höss und die 'Endlösung der Judenfrage'. Drei Argumente gegen deren Datierung auf den Sommer 1941', *WerkstattGeschichte* 18, 1997, pp.45-57. Mattogno misdates this as 1999.

Mattogno's treatment of Wisliceny's testimony is just as poor. Wisliceny referred to an extermination order by Himmler in April 1942 that gave a temporary exemption to Jews required for essential labour. Mattogno gives no plausible reason why Himmler did not have that authority by that date to issue such an exemption without requiring a superior Hitler order. Moreover, Wisliceny's claim is supported by documentation that Mattogno ignores. On May 18, 1942, Müller wrote to Jäger, following the execution of 630 workers in Minsk, to inform him that Jews aged 16-32 in these camps were to be "excluded from special measures until further notice."¹²¹ Peter Longerich has concluded using documentation from the GG that Himmler actually gave this order on May 18.¹²² Thus the order dated by Wisliceny for April 1942 can actually be documented as having been given in May.

Mattogno claims instead that the original Führerbefehl had, according to Höss, allowed no exceptions, so any exceptions had to be granted by Hitler in a subsequent order, but this does not take cognizance of the fact that Höss's actual wording simply stated that all Jews were to be "destroyed now during the war, without exception." By failing to consider the timescale implied by Höss's "during the war", Mattogno falsifies its meaning into one that requires total immediate killing at the time of deportation, whereas in fact Höss's formulation is perfectly compatible with the Wannsee Protocol's requirement that some Jews were to be exempted for labour but then killed afterwards. There is simply nothing in Höss or other sources that precludes temporary exemptions for labour.

Mattogno's distortions continue with the 1942 evidence. On May 1, 1942, Greiser asked Himmler for permission to extend the *Sonderbehandlung* of "about 100,000 Jews in the area of my Gau"¹²³ to ensure that "the cases of open tuberculosis among the Polish people are extirpated."¹²⁴ Mattogno acknowledges that Greiser was requesting permission to kill these Poles¹²⁵, but then perversely omits the connection with the killing of the 100,000 Jews that Greiser explicitly made in the letter. The use of the word *Sonderbehandlung* to refer to the killing of these Poles also occurs in letters by Koppe¹²⁶ and Blome.¹²⁷ In the latter, Blome presented *Sonderbehandlung* and the "Creation of a reservation for all TB patients" as mutually exclusive options, so *Sonderbehandlung* could not mean resettlement, contrary to

¹²¹ FS Müller an Jäger, Betr.: Endgültige Lösung der Judenfrage, 18.5.1942, RGVA 500-1-25, p.379.

¹²² Longerich, *Holocaust*, p.342, citing minute of chief of staff of SSPF Cracow 27.7.42, BAB, NS 19/1765.

¹²³ Greiser an Himmler, 1.5.1942, BA NS19/1585, p.1-R, also NO-246.

¹²⁴ Scans and translations of all the documents discussed in this section can be found on-line: Sergey Romanov, 'Documents about the murderous purpose of SK Lange', *Holocaust Controversies*, 9.7.06: <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2006/07/documents-about-murderous-purpose-of.html> .

¹²⁵ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.280 n.850.

¹²⁶ Koppe an Brandt, 3.5.1942, BA NS19/1585, p.4, also NO-247.

¹²⁷ Blome an Himmler, 18.11.42, NO-250.

the claim made by Mattogno, who states that this was an extension of the Himmler-Greiser correspondence of September 1941.¹²⁸ The same distinction was made by Himmler in his reply.¹²⁹

Mattogno further distorts this documentary sequence by claiming that, because Himmler changed his mind about authorizing these killings, this must cast doubt on killings of Polish mental patients in 1939-40. However, this is a chronological distortion because Blome's letter had referred to the political controversy leading up to the suspension of the euthanasia program as his reason for fearing that the TB euthanasia would be similarly controversial:

I could imagine that the Führer, having some time ago stopped the program in the insane asylums, might at this moment consider a "special treatment" of the incurably sick as unsuitable and irresponsible from a political point of view.

This controversy occurred after the mentally ill Poles had already been killed in 1939-40, so it cannot have prevented the killing of those Poles. Furthermore, Mattogno's assumption that no tubercular Poles were killed may be incorrect; Greiser's note to Brandt of June 1942 has a handwritten notation saying that the action was "under way."¹³⁰

This long list of distortions by Mattogno is intended to deflect their readers' attention from the real policy timeline. This can be reconstructed as follows. On September 20, 1941, the representative for the Eastern Ministry in Hitler's headquarters, Koeppen, wrote that the Envoy von Steengracht (representative of the Foreign Office in the headquarters of the Führer) had told him that Hitler was considering the question of postponing possible "Pressalien" (i.e. Repressalien; reprisals) against the German Jews "for [the] eventuality of an American entry into the war."¹³¹ Given that the reprisal policy that operated in the East and in Serbia was to execute 100 civilians for every killed German soldier, it would be perverse to assume that a Jewish population deported as a reprisal action would not suffer a large death toll, even if the method of death had not yet been decided.

During that early autumn period, the intentions of Hitler, Himmler and Heydrich appear to have been 'decimation' rather than a policy to exterminate every Jew. Hitler stated in August that the deported Jews "will be worked over in the harsh climate there."¹³² Hitler did not say "by the harsh climate", so his formulation left open the possibility that 'worked

¹²⁸ Mattogno, *Chelmo*, p.41.

¹²⁹ Himmler an Greiser, 3.12.42, NO-251.

¹³⁰ Greiser an Brandt, 27.6.42. NO-252.

¹³¹ Peter Longerich, *Hitler's Role in the Persecution of the Jews by the Nazi Regime*, electronic version, defence document in Irving v. Lipstadt, 2000, citing BA R 6/34a, Koeppen-Aufzeichnungen, 21.9.1941.

¹³² *TBJG* II/1, pp.266, 278 (19.8.1941, 20.8.1941).

over' could mean active killing by SS and police as well as decimation from hunger and disease. This interpretation is supported by his reference, in the same entry, to Antonescu's shooting of Rumanian Jews. As we have already seen above, that possibility was also embraced by Heydrich in his Prague meeting of October 10, 1941.

The decision-making process leading to that point can be charted through Rosenberg's knowledge of Hitler's intentions as reflected in his documents and speeches in the latter half of 1941. He was present at the meeting of July 16, when Hitler proposed "shooting anyone who even looks sideways at us" in the USSR.¹³³ Rosenberg declined Frank's request of October 13 to deport Jews from the General Government into the Ostland, where Soviet Jews were being shot in large numbers. The Wetzel-Lohse draft of October 25 concerning the construction of "*Vergasungsapparate*" in Riga was prepared for Rosenberg's attention. On November 18, three days after a meeting with Himmler, Rosenberg gave a briefing to the German press in which he stated that:

In the east some six million Jew still live, and this question can only be solved in a biological eradication of the entire Jewry of Europe. The Jewish question is only solved for Germany when the last Jew has left German territory, and for Europe when not a single Jew lives on the European continent up to the Urals. ...for this reason it is necessary to expel them over the Urals or eradicate them in some other way.¹³⁴

These 'six million' appear again in a draft that Rosenberg prepared for a speech to be given on December 18, in which he threatened "New York Jews" with "a negative elimination of these parasitic elements." More importantly, on December 16, Rosenberg made a note concerning a meeting with Hitler in which they had decided to modify the speech in the light of the declaration of war against the USA and "the decision" to kill all of Europe's Jews:

With regard to the Jewish question, I said that my remarks about the New York Jews would perhaps have to be changed now, after the decision. My position was that the extermination of the Jews should not be mentioned. The Führer agreed. He said they had brought the war down on us, they had started all the destruction, so it should come as no surprise if they became its first victims.¹³⁵

Evidence that this was the moment when Hitler announced 'the decision' also comes from the speech Goebbels described as having been made to the top echelons of the Nazi party by Hitler on December 12, 1941:

¹³³ Vermerk über die Besprechung am 16.7.1941, L-221, IMT XXXVIII, p.88.

¹³⁴ Christopher R. Browning, *Evidence for the Implementation of the Final Solution*, citing Rosenberg speech, 18.11.1941, in Political Archives of the Foreign Office, Pol. XIII, VAA Berichte.

¹³⁵ Rosenberg, Vermerk über die Unterredung beim Führer, 14.12.41, 1517-PS, IMT XXVII, p.270ff.

With regard to the Jewish Question, the Führer is determined to make a clean sweep of it. He prophesied that, if they brought about another world war, they would experience their annihilation. That was no empty talk. The world war is here¹³⁶. The annihilation of Jewry must be the necessary consequence. The question is to be viewed without any sentimentality. We're not there to have sympathy with the Jews, but only sympathy with our own German people. If the German people has again now sacrificed around 160,000 dead in the eastern campaign, the originators of this bloody conflict will have to pay for it with their lives.¹³⁷

The following day, Goebbels wrote that the deportation of French Jews would be “In many cases...equivalent to a death sentence.”¹³⁸ The number of deaths that Goebbels anticipated must have been high because, the previous day, he had recorded Hitler's reference to 160,000 dead in the eastern campaign. If the Nazis applied a 100:1 reprisal ratio to Jews for those deaths, then the death toll in reprisals alone would easily encompass every Jew living in Europe. Consequently, although Goebbels referred to the Madagascar Plan as late as March 7, 1942 and was possibly not briefed on Aktion Reinhard until the deportations began later that month (see discussion below in the section on his March 27, 1942 diary entry), he was already, by December 14, 1941, viewing deportation plans through the prism of mass death, in which deportation would result in “the destruction of the Jews”, i.e. the deaths of so many of them that they ceased to be a viable entity, if not their total extermination.

Furthermore, if a reprisal quota of 100:1 were applied to the 160,000 dead Germans in this speech, the quota would justify the killing of all the 11,000,000 Jews that Goebbels mentions on March 7, 1942. It is thus inconceivable that Goebbels would be viewing deportation as a resettlement in which more than a ‘remnant’ of Jews would be left alive. His view of deportation had already been radicalized, even if he was ‘out of the loop’ of discussions on the extent of the extermination and the actual implementation details as to the location, method and timescale of the destruction. Hans Frank reflected the meaning of ‘the decision’ in a speech in Krakow on December 16, 1941:

But what is to happen to the Jews? Do you believe that they will be lodged in settlements in the Ostland? In Berlin we were told: why all this trouble; we cannot use them in the Ostland or the Reichskommissariat either; liquidate them yourselves! Gentlemen, I must ask you, arm yourselves against any thoughts of compassion. We must destroy the Jews, wherever we encounter them and wherever it is possible, in order to preserve the entire structure of the Reich.

¹³⁶ This was the week Germany declared war on the United States.

¹³⁷ *TBJG* II/2, pp.498-99 (13.12.1941).

¹³⁸ *TBJG* II/2, p.503 (14.12.1941).

Frank continued by noting that “We cannot shoot or poison those 3,500,000 Jews, but we shall nevertheless be able to take measures, which will lead, somehow, to their annihilation...”¹³⁹ The documents therefore converge on an extermination decision having been finalized in the period when Rosenberg was drafting his speech, as Rosenberg’s note tells us that “the decision” changed the content of the speech, and this occurred in the same week as Hitler’s speech that was noted by Goebbels and echoed by Frank. However, Rosenberg’s previous speech of November 18 had anticipated the decision, whilst leaving open the possibility that Jews may still be killed by expulsion into an inhospitable climate rather than by shooting or gassing. Furthermore, Rosenberg’s awareness of the shooting of Jews ‘as partisans’ on Soviet territory had conditioned his reluctance to agree to Frank’s request to deport Polish Jews to the Ostland in October, whilst his subordinate Wetzel was involved in the quest to find gassing solutions.

Local Exterminations: Chelmno, Serbia and Reich Jews in RK Ostland

The central decision-making process described above took place against a backdrop in which local officials were pressing for permission to kill Jews who had been deported into their regions. When consent to kill these Jews was granted, it made the subsequent Europe-wide ‘decision’ all the more certain, because a precedent had already been set for killing Jews who had been deported into spaces that were unable or unwilling to permanently accommodate them.

Pressures to kill Jews locally had already been anticipated in the centre, and the centre’s acknowledgment indicates the degree of common thinking that existed between central and local players. On September 2, 1941, Höppner (a close associate of the senior Warthegau figures Greiser and Koppe) wrote to Eichmann that it was “essential ... that total clarity prevails about what finally shall happen to those undesirable ethnic elements deported from the greater German resettlement area. Is it the goal to ensure them a certain level of life in the long run, or shall they be totally eradicated?”¹⁴⁰ Höppner was aware that deportation could mean death and was therefore seeking clarification. The ensuing months would answer his query.

¹³⁹ Werner Präg and Wolfgang Jacobmeyer (eds), *Das Diensttagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs in Polen 1939-1945*. Stuttgart, 1975, p.457ff.

¹⁴⁰ Höppner an Eichmann, 2.9.41, AIPN CA 362/102, pp.45-62; Cf. Götz Aly, “*Endlösung*”. *Völkerverschiebung und der Mord an den europäischen Juden*, Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1995, pp. 334-39; Christopher R. Browning, *Nazi Policy, Jewish Workers, German Killers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, p.37.

Decision-making to gas Jews at Chelmno was preceded by arguments over overcrowding in the Lodz ghetto that resulted from deportation. On October 4, 1941, Uebelhoer forwarded a protest to Himmler, written by Hans Biebow, that “were the ghetto a *pure* decimation ghetto, then one could contemplate a pure concentration of Jews.” Himmler’s response was that the author “did not appear to be an old national socialist”¹⁴¹, and on October 15, a further 20,000 Jews and 5,000 gypsies were sent to Lodz, thereby making the “decimation ghetto”¹⁴² a greater reality. Gassing was agreed between Greiser, Koppe and Himmler as a solution to this problem because it resulted in decimation by quicker means.¹⁴³ The centre [Himmler] was thus responding to local initiative and protest, a pattern that was repeated in the Ostland and Serbia. Moreover, this did not require Hitler’s personal intervention because Hitler had already told Greiser that he could use his own discretion in choosing how he dealt with the Jewish problem.¹⁴⁴

The gassing of Jews at Chelmno was preceded in 1940 by the use of gas vans employing bottled CO in the Warthegau and at Soldau, East Prussia, run by Otto Rasch.¹⁴⁵ The main unit using gas vans in the Warthegau was SK Lange, which was assigned to HSSPF Koppe for “special tasks”. In the spring of 1940, Koppe loaned the unit to Rediess, the HSSPF for East Prussia, to gas mental patients in Soldau:

[The] so-called Sonderkommando Lange, assigned to me for special tasks, was detached to Soldau in East Prussia from 21 May to 8 June, 1940, as per agreement with the Reich Main Security Office [RSHA]. During this period, it successfully evacuated 1,558 mental patients from the Soldau transit camp.¹⁴⁶

Koppe referred to Soldau as a ‘transit camp’ because, in that period, it was also used to forcibly resettle Jews from western Polish towns such as Plock into the General

¹⁴¹ Ventzki an Uebelhoer, 24.9.41, NARA T/175/54/2568671-94; Himmler an Uebelhoer, 10.10.41, NARA T/175/54/2568662-63; cf. Browning, *Origins*, p.331.

¹⁴² The term “decimation ghetto” was repeated by Ribbe on 9.10.41 to justify the ghetto’s inability to loan Jewish labour to other projects. Browning, *Origins*, p.392, citing Ribbe Aktennotizen of meetings on 9.10.41 and 16.10.41, YVA, JM 800.

¹⁴³ For further context, see Michael Alberti, *Die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939-1945*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006; Peter Klein, *Die ‘Gettoverwaltung Litzmannstadt’ 1940-1944: Eine Dienststelle im Spannungsfeld von Kommunalbürokratie und staatlicher Verfolgungspolitik*. Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2009; Gordon Horwitz, *Ghettostadt: Lodz and the making of a Nazi city*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008; Montague, *Chelmno and the Holocaust*.

¹⁴⁴ Ian Kershaw, ‘Improvised Genocide? The Emergence of the ‘Final Solution’ in the ‘Warthegau’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th Series, 2, 1992, p.72, citing Greiser an Himmler, 21.11.42, BDC, PA Greiser.

¹⁴⁵ Rasch testimony to SS investigation of Soldau, 16.6.43, NO-1073; cf. Peter Witte and Stephen Tyas, ‘A New Document on the Deportation and Murder of Jews during ‘Einsatz Reinhard’ 1942’, *HGS* 15/3, 2001, p. 486 n.61.

¹⁴⁶ Koppe an HSSPF Nordost, 18.10.1940, BA NS19/2576, p.3ff., also NO-2908.

Government.¹⁴⁷ However, the use of the obvious euphemism ‘evacuated’ to mean killed suggests that Soldau may have set a precedent for referring to death camps as transit camps, which was later applied to Sobibor.¹⁴⁸ A letter from Rediess to Wolff on November 7, 1941, revealed that 250-300 “insane persons (Poles) from the area of Zichenau” were added to this operation.¹⁴⁹ This letter also had a marginal note, handwritten by Brack, stating that Lange had received an advance payment from Rasch. A later letter in this correspondence had a handwritten note on top, “Tel. with Obf. Brack.”¹⁵⁰

In August 1941, after Himmler's visit to a shooting site, Bach-Zelewski had asked Koppe to send Lange to meet him in Minsk.¹⁵¹ In October 1941, Koppe forwarded a request to Himmler from Army High Command that Lange, five subordinates and the gas van be sent to Novgorod to kill 100 Russians suffering from dysentery because the army needed the hospital for its own quarters.¹⁵² In late November, Jews from the Bornhagen labour camp were gassed.¹⁵³ The initiative to gas the Warthegau Jews at Chelmno came from close co-operation between Koppe and his Gauleiter, Arthur Greiser. The latter wrote to Himmler on October 28, 1941, referring to "the agreement reached between us."¹⁵⁴ On May 1, 1942, he wrote again and referred to the initial gassing request:

It will be possible to conclude the action of special treatment of about 100,000 Jews in the area of my Gau, authorized by yourself with the agreement of the head of the Reichssicherheitshauptamt, SS-Obergruppenführer Heydrich, within the next 2-3 months.¹⁵⁵

Greiser’s figure of 100,000 is close to that given in a letter by Willy Just to Walter Rauff¹⁵⁶ on June 5, 1942, suggesting improvements to the vans. Just noted that since “December 1941, ninety-seven thousand have been processed, using three vans, without any defects showing up in the vehicles.”¹⁵⁷ In one of his interviews with Sassen, recorded when he was a free man

¹⁴⁷ Browning, *Remembering Survival*, pp.53-56.

¹⁴⁸ Himmler an Pohl, 5.7.43, NO-482.

¹⁴⁹ Rediess an Wolf, 7.11.1940, NO-2909.

¹⁵⁰ Koppe an Wolff, 22.2.1941, NO-2911.

¹⁵¹ *Dienstkalender*, p.195 n.15, citing British wireless intercepts.

¹⁵² PRO, HW 16/32, 4.10.41.

¹⁵³ The graves were exhumed after the war and the leader of the action, Ferdinand Goehler, was given a life sentence by a court in Stuttgart. Browning, *Origins*, 2004, p.542 n.144, citing JuNSV, Bd. VII, Nr. 231b, pp.217-33, Urteil LG Stuttgart 3 Ks 31/49.

¹⁵⁴ Catherine Epstein, *Model Nazi: Arthur Greiser and the Occupation of Western Poland*, Oxford, 2010, p.185, citing Greiser am Himmler 28.10.41 BAB, NS19/2655, 49.

¹⁵⁵ Greiser am Himmler, 1.5.42, BA NS19/1585, p.1-R, also NO-246.

¹⁵⁶ Just an Rauff, 5.6.42, BA R 58/871, cited in Eugen Kogon, Hermann Langbein and Adalbert Rückerl (eds), *Nationalsozialistische Massentötungen durch Giftgas. Eine Dokumentation*. Frankfurt, 1986, pp.333-37.

¹⁵⁷ Five other gas van documents involving Rauff are cited in Mathias Beer, ‘Die Entwicklung der Gaswagen beim Mord an den Juden,’ *Vierteljahresshefte fuer Zeitgeschichte*, 37/3, pp.403-417. These are: Rauff an der KTI [Kriminaltechnisches Institut], 26.3.1942. Copy in ZSL, Folder: Verschiedenes Nr.227; Schäfer an Rauff,

in Argentina, Eichmann stated that “Later in that same winter [1941] Müller sent me to watch Jews being gassed in the Litzmannstadt area of central Poland.”¹⁵⁸

The gassings in the Warthegau have four important implications for Nazi decision-making that are simply not comprehended by Mattogno. Firstly, the gassings did not require an order; Greiser clearly refers instead to the gassings being “authorized by yourself with the agreement of the head of the Reichssicherheitshauptamt, SS-Obergruppenführer Heydrich.” Secondly, permission to gas 100,000 Jews locally could be given without that action requiring a general policy having already been decided to exterminate all Europe’s Jews. Thirdly, the progression from such local killings to a Europe-wide killing program did not involve a massive moral and political leap: the moral boundary had already been crossed long before the full program was authorized and implemented. Fourthly, the technical means to gas these Jews had been evolved, in co-operation with the KTI, in response to practical local problems in Serbia, the Ostland and the Warthegau, and such evolution did not require a master plan but simply a shared problem-solving bureaucracy that operated from the assumption that Jewish lives were expendable.

Extermination in Serbia escalated from shooting reprisals in the autumn of 1941 to the use of gas vans in the spring of 1942, the latter coinciding with the use of gas vans at Chelmno and at Maly Trostinets. In mid-August, 1941, Harald Turner, the chief of military administration in Serbia requested (via Benzler) that all Jews be deported down the Danube to Rumania or the General Government. This request was declined, but a month later, Turner persuaded Benzler to make an appeal to Rademacher, requesting deportation of the Jews to Poland or the USSR. Rademacher recorded the reply that he received in a handwritten note that was subsequently presented in evidence at the Eichmann trial:

In the opinion of Sturmbannführer Eichmann, RSHA IVD4, there is no possibility to take them to Russia or to the Generalgouvernement. Even Jews from Germany cannot be accommodated there. Eichmann proposes to kill them by shooting.¹⁵⁹

9.6.1942, 501-PS; Truehe an Rauff, 15.6.1942, 501-PS; Becker an Rauff, 16.5.1942, 501-PS; letter by Firma Gaubschat [Company/manufacturer] to the *Referat* [sub-department] IID 3a of the RSHA [Rauff], 14.5.1942, ZSL, USA Dok. Film I, Bl.28. Beer cites Rauff’s admission, given as a free man in Santiago in 1972, that “I think, it is impossible that Pradel undertook the development of the gas- vans on his own. He must have had an order either by me or someone with a higher position.” The deposition is on-line; English translation by Roberto Muehlenkamp: <http://nizkor.org/ftp.cgi/people/r/rauff.walter/Rauff-deposition-translation> (StA Hamburg, Az. 147 Js 31/67; ZSL, Az.II 415 AR-Z 1310/63-E32, Bl.545). Rauff had no fear of extradition because West Germany’s extradition request was denied by the Chilean Supreme Court in 1963.

¹⁵⁸ ‘Eichmann Tells His Own Damning Story’, *Life* 49/22, 28.11.60, p.102.

¹⁵⁹ Telegram from Benzler to Foreign Ministry concerning the expulsion of Jews in areas of Serbia, 12.9.41, T/874.

In the meantime, the Wehrmacht, under the command of Böhme, began to shoot Jews under the pretext of the need to fill 1:100 reprisal quotas. Such reprisals were not, however, for crimes committed by Jews but were instead inflicted on Jews in lieu of Serb partisans who had not been captured in sufficient numbers to meet the quotas. Turner admitted that this was morally wrong in a private letter dated October 17, 1941, sent to Hildebrandt:

In the last 8 days, I have had 2,000 Jews and 200 Gypsies shot dead, following the quota of 1:100 for brutally murdered German soldiers, and a further 2,200, also nearly all Jews, will be shot in the next 8 days. That is not pleasant work! But it must be done, in order to make it clear to people what it means to attack a German soldier, while at the same time, the Jewish question solves itself most quickly in this way. Actually, it is wrong, if taken literally, that for murdered Germans, for whom the ratio of 1:100 should come at the expense of the Serbs, 100 Jews will now be shot, but they are the ones we happened to have in the camp...¹⁶⁰

On October 26, Turner ordered that “Jews and Gypsies” were “a danger to public order and safety” and that all male Jews and Gypsies would therefore be put “at the disposal of the troops as hostages.”¹⁶¹ The background to Turner's order was a meeting on October 20 in Belgrade between Turner, Rademacher, Suhr and Fuchs, in which it was decided that male Jews would be held as hostages and gradually killed to meet reprisal quotas against Serb (non-Jew) partisans, whilst evacuation of women & children 'to the East' was agreed for a future unspecified date. However, this evacuation did not take the form of expulsion, but instead took the form of gas vans the following spring, which Turner falsely claimed credit for in his letter to Wolff:

Already some months ago, I shot dead all the Jews I could get my hands on in this area, concentrated all the Jewish women and children in a camp and with the help of the SD got my hands on a "delousing van," that in about 14 days to 4 weeks will have brought about the definitive clearing out of the camp, which in any event since the arrival of Meyssner and the turning over of this camp to him, was continued by him. Then the time is come in which the Jewish officers to be found in prisoner of war camps under the Geneva Convention find out against our will about their no longer existing kinfolk and that could easily lead to

¹⁶⁰ Turner to Hildebrandt, 17.10.41, NO-5810. On the murder of Serbian Jews see Walter Manoschek, ‘*Serbien ist judenfrei*’. *Militärische Besatzungspolitik und Judenvernichtung in Serbien 1941/2*. Munich, 1993; English-language summary as ‘The Extermination of the Jews in Serbia’, in Ulrich Herbert (ed), *National Socialist Extermination Policies. Contemporary German Perspectives and Controversies*. London, 2000, pp.163-187, here p.177; for a pen-portrait of Harald Turner see Christopher R. Browning, ‘Harald Turner und die Militärverwaltung in Serbien 1941-1942’, Dieter Rebentisch and Karl Teppe (eds), *Verwaltung contra Menschenführung im Staat Hitlers. Studien zum politisch-administrativen System*, Göttingen, 1986, pp.351-373; for an essay on Turner, Biebow and Rademacher, see Browning, *Path*, pp.126-41.

¹⁶¹ Turner’s order to all district and field commands, 26.10.41, NOKW-802.

complications.¹⁶²

Turner admitted that 'Entlausungswagen' was a euphemism for gas van by placing the term in inverted commas.¹⁶³ The gas van had been ordered direct from Berlin by the head of the Security Police in Belgrade, Emanuel Schäfer, who admitted this in his West German postwar trial testimony at both his trial in Cologne¹⁶⁴ and Pradel's trial in Hannover. After the gassings, Schäfer reported back to Berlin noting that the two drivers of the "special Saurer truck", Götz and Meyer, "had carried out their special task."¹⁶⁵ Army records cited in the Schäfer trial judgment show that the victims were women and children.¹⁶⁶ Serbia therefore illustrates how a reprisal mentality that had racial targets could escalate into a policy of gassing racial groups.

Decision-making in the Ostland was initiated, as shown above, by Hitler's decision in September 1941 that Reich Jews were to be deported as a reprisal measure, meaning that their lives were in severe peril. There is compelling evidence that the deaths of some German Jews deported to RK Ostland were decided before the formal Hitler decision to kill all Europe's Jews was communicated to the German hierarchy in December.¹⁶⁷ The decision was made whilst Lohse was visiting Berlin for two weeks commencing in on October 25. It can be inferred from the fact that, on October 27, Lange told Lohse that "essential work" on the camps had not yet commenced and that other arrangements could be made if the camps were not ready (other arrangements being code for shooting or for the gassing device in Wetzel's draft of October 25).¹⁶⁸ This can be inferred from the fact that Lange's letter of November 8, which announced the deportations of 25,000 Jews each to Riga and Minsk, revealed that five transports may be sent to Kaunas. Lange and Lohse would have known that Kaunas had a killing site (Fort IX) but no camps for holding the Jews. The resultant killings were recorded in the Jäger Report:

25.11.41 Kauen-F.IX 1,159 Jews, 1,600 Jewesses, 175 Jewish children (resettlers from Berlin, Munich and Frankfurt am Main) 2,934

¹⁶² Turner and Wolff, 11.4.42, NARA- BDC SS-OA Harald Turner; also online at <http://www.holocaust-history.org/19420411-turner-wolff>.

¹⁶³ Carlo Mattogno, *Raul Hilberg e i «centri di sterminio» nazionalsocialisti*, AAARGH, 2008, p.79, cites this document but follows Weckert's example by ignoring the meaning of the inverted commas and taking the term Entlausungswagen literally. Mattogno does not explain why a delousing van would be required to 'clear out a camp' nor does he confront the last sentence concerning 'no longer existing kinfolk'.

¹⁶⁴ JuNSV Bd. XI, Nr. 362; cf. Browning, *Path*, Cambridge, 1992, p.137.

¹⁶⁵ Schäfer an Pradel, RSHA II D 3, 9.6.42, 501-PS.

¹⁶⁶ JuNSV Bd. XI, Nr. 362, Gründe, p.5: Online: <http://www1.jur.uva.nl/junsv/Excerpts/362005.htm>.

¹⁶⁷ Andrej Angrick and Peter Witte, *The "final solution" in Riga: exploitation and annihilation, 1941-1944*. Oxford: Berghahn, 2009.

¹⁶⁸ Browning, *Origins*, 2004, p.333, citing RK Ostland Vermerk, initialled by Wetzel, 27.10.41 YVA, JM 3435 (YIVO Berlin Collection Occ E3-30).

29.11.41 Kauen-F.IX 693 Jews, 1,155 Jewesses, 152 Jewish children (resettlers from Vienna and Breslau) 2,000.¹⁶⁹

Operational Situation Report USSR No. 151 linked these killings to an Aktion carried out by Jeckeln in Riga on November 30:

The first three transports that were to come to Riga were sent to Kaunas. The Riga camp that is to admit about 25,000 Jews is being built and will be completed very soon.

In the meantime, the Higher SS Police in Riga, SS-Obergruppenführer Jeckeln started a [mass] shooting action on Sunday, November 30, 1941. He removed about 4,000 Jews from the Riga ghetto and from an evacuation transport of Jews from Germany. The action was originally intended to be carried out with the forces of the Higher SS and Police Chief; however, after a few hours, 20 men of EK 2 who were sent there for security purposes were also employed in the shooting.¹⁷⁰

The killings were organized at local level in a meeting between Peter Kleist and Jäger on November 22. Kleist's notebook provides confirmation of the meeting and some of the killings. The entry for December 1 states that Lohse was present at the previous day's massacre of German and Latvian Jews in Riga. Lohse voluntarily admitted that he had been present at the massacre when interrogated by West German authorities on April 19, 1950. The Riga massacre was also noted by Bernhard Lösener on December 19, 1941.¹⁷¹ Himmler had belatedly attempted to avert this massacre by issuing a "keine Liquidierung" order, possibly because executions had only been authorized explicitly for Kaunas, or because local protests against prior killings had prompted Berlin to urge a pause.¹⁷² In either case, the wording "keine Liquidierung" clearly expresses an exception being made that acknowledges that liquidations were taking place elsewhere.

We can infer three reasons why Lohse insisted that the Reich Jews be killed. Firstly, the reception camps in Riga that had been promised for these Jews were not ready. Secondly, Lohse and his colleagues believed the camps should have been set up further east. Thirdly, Army Group Centre was likely to oppose the deportations, and this is precisely what transpired in the case of the 25,000 scheduled to be deported to Minsk. On November 20, at the instigation of von Greiffenberg, the Wehrmachtbefehlshaber Ostland (Walter Braemer) complained that "The influx of German Jews, far superior in intelligence to the bulk of the

¹⁶⁹ Jäger report of EK 3, 1.12.41, RGVA 500-1-25.

¹⁷⁰ EM 151, 5.1.42.

¹⁷¹ Gerlach, 'Wannsee Conference', pp.768-69, citing Kleist, personal notebook, entries for 22.11.41 and 1.12.41, Staatsanwaltschaft Hamburg 147 Js 29/67, vol. 65, fol. 12460, interrogation of Hinrich Lohse, 19.4.50., Staatsanwaltschaft Hannover 2 Js 499/61, Sonderheft 4, fols. 82ff, and Bernhard Lösener, 'Als Rassereferent im Reichsministerium des Innern', VfZ, 9/3, 1961.

¹⁷² *Dienstkalender*, p.278 (30.11.41).

Belorussian population constitutes a severe danger for the pacification of White Ruthenia, the Jewish population of which is made up of Bolsheviks capable of any hostile, anti-German stance.”¹⁷³

As a result of these protests, deportations from the old Reich to Minsk ceased on November 28, and only 7,000 of the 25,000 Jews were transported. This incident demonstrates, in miniature, why the Wehrmacht would never have consented to the resettlement of Jews in the USSR.

Minsk’s leading administrator, Kube, sent a letter to Lohse on December 16, 1941, noting that the Reich Jews would die of cold in Minsk, and requesting that Lohse order their killing by a more humane method.¹⁷⁴ Kube made a further veiled request on February 6, 1942, when he noted that "because the ground in White Russia is frozen down to a depth of two meters, other possibilities were also not available".¹⁷⁵ This echoed the note, cited above, made by Hofmann a week earlier, stating that “the ground is too frozen to dig pits which would then be available as mass graves for the Jews” but that “in the spring large-scale executions would be initiated again.”¹⁷⁶

In April and May 1942, Hofmann’s prediction was fulfilled: extermination was resumed both of Soviet Jews and of deported Jews in the Ostland. From May 6 to October 5, 1942, seventeen transports departed from the Reich to GK White Ruthenia, carrying a minimum of 16,395 Jews. From August 15 to October 26, 1942, seven transports went from the Reich to the Baltic region, carrying a minimum of 6,601 Jews.¹⁷⁷ These transports would mostly have been routed across the Germany-Lithuania border, as this route had been documented for the Düsseldorf-Riga transport of December 12, 1941, by Salitter:

At 12.10 hours the train left Konitz. The journey then continued via Dirschau, Marienburg, Elbing to Königsberg Pr. At 1.50 hours it went onto Tilsit.

At 5.15 hours the frontier –station of Laugszargen and 15 minutes later, the Lithuanian station of Tauroggen were reached.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷³ Hilberg, *Destruction*, Vol. 2, 2003, p.366, citing Wehrmachtbefehlshaber Ostland/Ic an Reichskommissar Ostland, 20.11.41, Occ E 3-34.

¹⁷⁴ Kube an Lohse, 16.12.41, facsimile in Max Weinrich, *Hitler’s Professors*, New York, 1946, p.153ff.

¹⁷⁵ Browning, *Origins*, p.394, citing Kube an Lohse, 6.2.42, YVA, JM 3455.

¹⁷⁶ Protokoll über den Hergang der Hauptabteilungsleiter- und Abteilungsleiterbesprechung am 29.1.42, NARB 370-1-53, p.165.

¹⁷⁷ Alfred Gottwaldt und Diana Schulle, *Die Judendeportationen aus dem Deutschen Reich 1941–1942. Eine kommentierte Chronologie*, Wiesbaden, 2005, p.230ff. Their minimums per destination are 7,900 Minsk, 6,506 Maly Trostinec, 993 Koidanov and 996 Baranovichi; 4500 to Riga and 2051 to Raasiku.

¹⁷⁸ Report by Hauptmann Salitter of the Security Police on the transport of Jews from Düsseldorf to Riga; Düsseldorf, 11.12.41, T/303.

The political situation in Minsk had been tense. Planning as of March 1942 was a subject of hostility between Kube and Strauch. On July 25, 1943, Strauch wrote a report to von dem Bach that described this period, complaining that “the Gauleiter used his knowledge to save his Jews.”¹⁷⁹ However, Kube’s intervention was not motivated by a desire to permanently save these doomed Jews, but by a wish to give them a more ‘humane’ or ‘dignified’ death. Kube’s resistance may have been one of the factors that led Heydrich to visit Minsk in April 1942.¹⁸⁰ The visit was followed soon after by the beginning of deportations from Austria, Germany and the Protectorate to GK White Ruthenia, to the killing site at Maly Trostinets. These consisted of at least seventeen transports departing between May and October 1942.¹⁸¹ A further transport was diverted to Baranovichi and liquidated on July 31, 1942.¹⁸²

Heydrich’s visit also coincided with a new wave of killings in other parts of the GK. Thus Kube reported on July 31, 1942 that “we have liquidated about 55,000 Jews in Byelorussia in the past 10 weeks,” including the “Jews incapable of work, who were sent to Minsk in November of last year by order of the Führer, mainly from Vienna, Bruenn, Bremen and Berlin.”¹⁸³ The Aktion was described even more explicitly in an Activity Report on August 3, 1942: “Between July 25 and 27, new trenches were dug. During the Grossaktion on July 28 in the Russian section, 6,000 Jews are taken to the pit. On July 29, 3,000 German Jews are brought to the pit.”¹⁸⁴ On May 17, 1942, the same author had written that “On May 11 a transport of Jews (1,000 head) from Vienna arrived in Minsk and were moved immediately from the station to the trench” and that “For this reason the platoon was deployed right by the pit.”¹⁸⁵ In court testimony given in Koblenz on October 30, 1962, defendant Karl Dalheimer admitted that in 1942 he had stood at the edge of an open grave in

¹⁷⁹ Strauch an von dem Bach, 25.7.43, BA NS19/1770, pp.15-27, also NO-2662, NO-4315 and NO-4317.

¹⁸⁰ JuNSV Bd. XIX, Nr. 552, p.192, Urteil gegen Heuser, LG Koblenz, Ks 9/62, 21.5.1963; cf. Longerich, *Holocaust*, p.323.

¹⁸¹ See the file of Hauptbahndirection Mitte, NARB 378-1-784; cf. Longerich, *Holocaust*, p.322; Gerlach, ‘Wannsee Conference’, p.804, citing Transport Lists of the Vienna Transports, highlighted in JuNSV Bd. XIX, Nr. 552; cf. also Gottwaldt and Schulle, *Judendeportationen*, p.237ff.

¹⁸² KdS Minsk an HBD Mitte, 31.7.42, gez. Heuser, NARB 378-1-784; cf. Yehuda Bauer, ‘Jewish Baranowicze in the Holocaust’, *Yad Vashem Studies*, 31, 2003, pp. 95-152; JuNSV Bd. XIX, Nr. 552.

¹⁸³ Kube an Lohse, 28.7.42, PS-3428.

¹⁸⁴ Tätigkeitsbericht Arlt, 3.8.42, published in *Unsere Ehre heisst Treue. Kriegstagebuch des Kommandostabes Reichsführer SS. Tätigkeitsberichte der 1 und 2. SS-Infanterie-Brigade, der 1. SS-Kavallerie-Brigade und von Sonderkommandos der SS*. Vienna, 1984, p.242; cf. Hans Safrian, *Eichmann’s Men*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010, p.127; Petra Rentrop, *Tatorte der ‘Endlösung’. Das Ghetto Minsk und die Vernichtungsstätte von Maly Trostinetz*. Berlin: Metropol, 2011

¹⁸⁵ Tätigkeitsbericht Arlt, 17.5.42 in *Unsere Ehre heisst Treue*, p.236; cf. Safrian, *Eichmann’s Men*, p.126.

Minsk and shot Reich Jews in the back of the neck.¹⁸⁶ The killing of many of these deported Jews was done in gas vans. This was made clear in a telex of June 15, 1942:

A transport of Jews, which is to be subjected to special treatment, arrives weekly at the office of the commandant of the Security Police and Security Service of White Ruthenia.

The three S-vans there are not sufficient for that purpose. I request assignment of another S-van (five tons). At the same time, I request the shipment of twenty gas hoses for the three S-vans on hand (two Diamond, one Saurer), because the ones on hand are already leaky.¹⁸⁷

August Becker, a gas van specialist who liaised in the Ostland, testified on March 26, 1960, to having witnessed killings in Minsk:

In Riga I learned from Standartenführer Potzelt, Deputy Commander of the Security Police and SD in Riga, that the Einsatzkommando operating in Minsk needed some additional gas-vans as it could not manage with the three existing vans it had. At the same time I also learned from Potzelt that there was a Jewish-extermination camp in Minsk. I flew to Minsk by helicopter, correction, in a Fieseler Storch [light aircraft] belonging to the Einsatzgruppe. Travelling with me was Hauptsturmführer Rühl, the head of the extermination camp at Minsk, with whom I had discussed business in Riga. During the journey Rühl proposed to me that I provide additional vans since they could not keep up with the exterminations. As I was not responsible for the ordering of gas-vans I suggested Rühl approach Rauff's office. When I saw what was going on in Minsk — that people of both sexes were being exterminated in their masses, that was it — I could not take any more and three days later, it must have been September 1942, I travelled back by lorry via Warsaw to Berlin. I had intended to report to Rauff at his office in Berlin. However, he was not there. Instead I was received by his deputy, Pradel, who had meantime been promoted to Major. ... In a private conversation lasting about an hour I described to Pradel the working method of the gas-vans and voiced criticism about the fact that the offenders had not been gassed but had been suffocated because the operators had set the engine incorrectly. I told him that people had vomited and defecated. Pradel listened to me without saying a word. At the end of our interview he simply told me to write a detailed report on the matter. Finally he told me to go to the cashier's office to settle up the expenses I had incurred during my trip.¹⁸⁸

A driver of one such gas van, Josef Wendl, testified in Austria in October 1970 that he was loaned by EK 8 in Mogilev (where he had gassed prisoners) to KdS Minsk, and gassed a trainload of Austrian Jews at Maly Trostinets on September 14, 1942:

I heard also that Jews from the Reich were coming and would be gassed...Resistance would have been useless, so I didn't offer any. I loaded these people in and drove to the pit. I had seen that the van was nearly full, that about fifty people were inside...The van ran on idle while gassing. It really should have been run with the choke, so that the gas mixture would be richer, and the people inside would die more quickly. But the choke

¹⁸⁶ JuNSV Bd. XIX, Lfd Nr. 552; 'Ex-Nazi Tells Ghastly Tale', *St. Petersburg Times*, 31.10.62.

¹⁸⁷ FS BdS Ostland an RSHA II 3 D A, 15.6.42, gez Trühe, 501-PS, IMT XXVI, p.108.

¹⁸⁸ Klee, *The Good Old Days*, pp.70-71.

didn't work in my van. I then drove back...[and] received orders to bring all the luggage to Trostinets. On the day I was on assignment there, 600 people were gassed.¹⁸⁹

In addition to gassing, the Germans continued to shoot thousands of Jews. Strauch had referred to 'resettlement', 'evacuation' and 'pits' in his *Einsatzbefehl* of February 5, 1943, for the extermination of Jews in Slutsk:

On 8 and 9 February 1943 there will be a resettlement in the town Slutsk by the local command...The evacuation of the Jews to the resettlement place happens by means of 6 trucks, each to be accompanied by 4 Latvians...At each pit a group of 10 leaders and men will work, to be relieved every 2 hours. Times 8-10 o'clock, 10-12 o'clock, 12-14 o'clock, 14-16 o'clock...

The document continued with a reference to the giving out of cartridges.¹⁹⁰

In summary, therefore, localized killing in Chelmno, Serbia and Minsk had helped bring gassing technology to the center of the Final Solution through the use of gas vans. The demands of local officials to eradicate Jews had brought fresh momentum to the quest for killing solutions which then fed into the radicalization of the Europe-wide Final Solution using gassing technologies.

Mattogno's response to this mass of evidence is to ignore most of it whilst systematically distorting the rest. For example, he quotes Kube's letter to Lohse of February 6, 1942¹⁹¹, but omits the key passage stating that "because the ground in White Russia is frozen down to a depth of two meters, other possibilities were also not available."¹⁹²

Thomas Kues, meanwhile, makes a risible attempt to deny the reality of policy in Serbia¹⁹³. Kues claims that "Due to the significant involvement of Jews in the very active Serbian partisan movement, a large number of Serbian Jews were killed as hostages", but this is clearly refuted by Turner's admission to Hildebrandt that "it is wrong, if taken literally, that for murdered Germans, for whom the ratio of 1:100 should come at the expense of the Serbs, 100 Jews will now be shot, but they are the ones we happened to have in the camp ...". Kues then claims that "a large number of Serbian Jews were shot, not primarily because of their ethnicity, but because of reasons of military security, and this as a last resort", but this is also false because Turner had written that "the Jewish question solves itself most quickly in this way" as partially explaining motive. Kues contradicts himself by claiming that the Jews

¹⁸⁹ Patricia Heberer, 'Justice in Austrian Courts?', p.237, citing testimony of Josef W., Strafsache gegen Josef W., Bd. IX, ON 117, p.16.

¹⁹⁰ Kommandeur der Sicherheitspolizei Weißruthenien, Einsatzbefehl v. 5.2.43, RGVA 500-1-769, pp.113-16; JuNSV Bd. XIX, Nr. 552, pp.198-200; cf. Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, p.734.

¹⁹¹ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.198.

¹⁹² Browning, *Origins*, p.394, citing Kube an Lohse, 6.2.42, YVA, JM 3455.

¹⁹³ Kues, 'Evidence for the Presence of "Gassed" Jews in the Occupied Eastern Territories, Part 1', *Inconvenient History*, 2/2.

were shot “as a last resort” but then claiming that Jewish women and children were “deported east”, thus failing to explain why the men could not also have been deported. Moreover, Kues’ admission that a request by Ribbentrop to Himmler on October 2, 1941, to deport the Jews was rejected contradicts Mattogno’s thesis in Sobibor that a resettlement policy was agreed in September.

Most ludicrously of all, Kues insists that Rademacher’s report of October 25, 1941, specifying the evacuation of women and children disproves Turner’s letter of April 11, 1942, thereby ignoring the subsequent radicalization of policy after that date and the fact that Rademacher received a letter from Wurm dated October 23, 1941, that “many of the Jewish vermin will be exterminated through special measures.” This indicates that the women and children would have died in the East after deportation, and that the policy change after October was simply to send the gas van to Serbia instead. The methodological absurdity of using a document from October 1941 to refute a policy that specifically applied to April 1942 exposes Kues’ mendacity. Moreover, Kues’ quotation from Rademacher’s report omits the crucial preceding phrase, “As soon as the technical possibility exists within the scope of the total solution of the Jewish question”, which hints at the experiments with killing methods that were noted by Wurm and Wetzel three and five days later.

The Europe-Wide Final Solution, January 1942 – March 1943

The Wannsee Protocol¹⁹⁴ is silent on the fate of non-working Jews. Given that the document claims to be concerned with resettlement, this is a case where silence implies intent to kill. The fate of the working Jews also makes this inference the only plausible one:

Under proper guidance, in the course of the final solution the Jews are to be allocated for appropriate labour in the East. Able-bodied Jews, separated according to sex, will be taken in large work columns to these areas for work on roads, in the course of which action doubtless a large portion will be eliminated by natural causes.

The possible final remnant will, since it will undoubtedly consist of the most resistant portion, have to be treated accordingly, because it is the product of natural selection and would, if released, act as a the seed of a new Jewish revival (see the experience of history.)

¹⁹⁴ Besprechungsprotokoll, Am Grossen Wannsee Nr. 56-58, 20 Jan. 1942, Berlin, 20.1.42, NG-2586-G. In *Treblinka*, M&G claim that “there is well-founded doubt as to the authenticity of the Wannsee Protocol” (p.187 n.537), but in *Sobibór* they pronounce that “the authors of the present work... see no need to doubt its authenticity” (p.205 n.602). Moreover, later documents in the same IMT bundle refer to the Protocol, and M&G use at least one of the bundle’s documents (Luther memorandum, 21.8.42, NG-2586-J) in support of their own thesis.

There is policy continuity between these paragraphs and Wetzel's discussion of "*Vergassungsapparate*" (the Protocol can only be read as stating that unfit Jews will receive the same treatment as the "final remnant") but at Wannsee the discussion had clearly shifted to include all of Europe's Jews.

Mattogno claims that the Wannsee Protocol cannot refer to the extermination of the unfit because the phrase "if released" must mean that the Jews were to be held in captivity. However, the passage as a whole refers to the death of the Jews: the phrase "if released" is written in the context of "eliminated by natural causes" in the previous paragraph; it is meant to convey the meaning that Jews were a historical virus that must not be allowed back into the ecosystem ("see the experience of history"). Mattogno also denies the killing of the unfit on the basis that the Protocol allowed for transports of old persons to Theresienstadt. However, this omits the fact that transport documents referred to Theresienstadt as a 'Propagandalager'. For example, the Eichmann trial documentation included a minute by Zoepf from October 5, 1942, stating that according to Eichmann, Jews who, on account of their age or merits, could not be put on the same footing with other Auschwitz Jews may be transferred at any time from Westerbork to the "Propaganda camp" Theresienstadt.¹⁹⁵ Moreover, if Theresienstadt is the only reference in the Protocol to the unfit, this simply highlights the silence of the document concerning other unfit Jews.

In his Old Fighters' speech of February 24, 1942, Hitler declared that "through this war, Aryan humankind will not be annihilated, but the Jew will be exterminated."¹⁹⁶ In his diary entry of April 27, 1942, Goebbels recorded a similar threat by the Führer, who stated that "the hardest punishment that one can impose upon [the Jews] is still too lenient."¹⁹⁷

At the Final Solution conference of March 6, 1942, it was stated that it had come down from the "highest quarter" (Hitler) that "it was in no way tenable to keep the half-Jews permanently alive as a small race". It was thus clearly known that full Jews were not to be kept alive.¹⁹⁸

On March 27, 1942, Goebbels revealed the fate of the non-working Jews, whilst also repeating The Wannsee Protocol's formulation for the workers:

The Jews are now being pushed out of the General Government, beginning near Lublin, to the East. A pretty barbaric procedure is being applied here, and it is not

¹⁹⁵ Minute by Zoepf, 5.10.42, T/537.

¹⁹⁶ Max Domarus, *Hitler. Reden und Proklamationen 1932-1945*. 2 Bde. Wiesbaden, 1973, II, p.1844; cf. Aly, *Endlösung*, p.404; Richard J Evans, *David Irving, Hitler and Holocaust Denial*, electronic edition, 2000.

¹⁹⁷ *TBJG* II/4, p.184 (27.4.1942).

¹⁹⁸ Besprechungsniederschrift der Besprechung über die Endlösung der Judenfrage, 6.3.1942, NG-2586 (H); T/100

to be described in any more detail, and not much is left of the Jews themselves. In general one may conclude that 60% of them must be liquidated, while only 40% can be put to work. The former Gauleiter of Vienna [Globocnik], who is carrying out this action, is doing it pretty prudently and with a procedure that doesn't work too conspicuously.¹⁹⁹

The 60-40 split between those immediately selected for gassing and those “put to work” suggests that the Nazis were still being conservative in the targets they announced to their inner circle compared to the actual proportions that were selected.

A final confirmation that resettlement of Jews in Siberia had been abandoned as policy by May 1942 was contained in Wetzel's document, *Opinion and Ideas Regarding the General Plan for the East of the Reichsführer-SS*, dated April 27, 1942. Wetzel wrote that:

An evacuation of the Jews also mentioned in the plan is no longer necessary due to the solution of the Jewish question. An eventual transfer of the Jews still remaining after the end of this war to forced labour camps in the northern Russian and Siberian territory is no "evacuation". Of the alien peoples to be considered for evacuation there thus remain to be discussed only the Poles, Western Ukrainians (it is not quite clear if by "Galicians" the plan means Poles or Ukrainians) and White Ruthenians.

It was clear from Wetzel's language that the “the Jews still remaining after the end of this war” would be only a small remnant of the original population, echoing the Wannsee Protocol's reference to a “possible final remnant” that would “have to be treated accordingly.” Non-working Jews would have already been liquidated so could not be resettled. Wetzel contrasted their fate with that of the Poles:

It should be clear that one cannot solve the Polish question by liquidating the Poles like the Jews. Such a solution of the Polish question would incriminate the German people until a distant future and take away our sympathies everywhere, especially as all other neighbouring peoples will have to count on being treated similarly when the time comes.²⁰⁰

In January 1942, Himmler began planning a system of closed camps whose inmates would be Jewish forced labourers.²⁰¹ The previous extermination of Soviet POW's had left him with no other options than to use some Jewish labour. Pohl acknowledged the new policy on April 30, 1942, but noted that the Jewish labour would be worked to death; the work would be “exhaustive in the true sense of the word.”²⁰² Eighteen days later, Müller wrote to Jäger, following the execution of 630 workers in Minsk, to inform him that Jews aged 16-32

¹⁹⁹ *TBJG* II/3, p.561 (27.3.1942).

²⁰⁰ Helmut Heiber, ‘Der Generalplan Ost’, *VfZ Jahrgang* 6, 1958, pp.281-325.

²⁰¹ Himmler an Glücks, 25.1.1942, BA NS19/1920, p.1, also NO-500; cf. Ulrich Herbert, ‘Labour and Extermination: Economic Interest and the Primacy of Weltanschauung in National Socialism’, *Past and Present*, No. 138, Feb., 1993, pp.144-95.

²⁰² Pohl an Himmler, 30.4.1942, R-129, IMT XXXVIII, p.362ff.

in these camps were to be “excluded from special treatment [*Sonderbehandlung*] until further notice.” This was another document where *Sonderbehandlung* was clearly used to mean killing.²⁰³ This also converges with Wisliceny’s testimony that an extermination order had been shown to him in April 1942 stating that Jews fit for work were to be excluded and placed in concentration camps.²⁰⁴ On June 23, 1942, Brack wrote the following to Himmler, making a clear connection between sterilization and extermination:

Among 10 millions of Jews in Europe there are, I figure, at least 2-3 millions of men and women who are fit enough to work. Considering the extraordinary difficulties the labor problem presents us with, I hold the view that those 3 millions should be specially selected and preserved. This can, however, only be done if at the same time they are rendered incapable to propagate. About a year ago I reported to you that agents of mine had completed the experiments necessary for this purpose. I would like to recall these facts once more. Sterilization, as normally performed on persons with hereditary diseases, is here out of the question, because it takes too long and is too expensive. Castration by X-ray however is not only relatively cheap, but can also be performed on many thousands in the shortest time. I think, that at this time it is already irrelevant whether the people in question become aware of having been castrated after some weeks or months once they feel the effects.²⁰⁵

On April 10, 1942, Heydrich informed Slovakian Prime Minister, Tuka, that “half a million” Jews were to be deported “from Europe to the East.” Countries affected were to include Slovakia, the Reich, the Protectorate, France, Belgium and Holland.²⁰⁶ In the same period, Heydrich visited Minsk²⁰⁷ and Paris as part of the preparation for these deportations.

Between March 11 and May 25, 1942, thirty transports left the Reich for transit ghettos in the Lublin region, but in June 1942, most Reich Jews deported to this region went directly to Sobibor.²⁰⁸ A circular by Eichmann stated that on June 15, 1942, a transport to ‘Izbica’ would include 450 mental patients from Bendorf-Rhein²⁰⁹, but subsequent Gestapo reports show 142 mental patients being sent on that train in covered G-Wagen.²¹⁰ Given that MGK claim that sick Jews were ‘euthanized’ at Sobibor, it would be highly hypocritical of them to deny the true fate of these deportees. A destination of Sobibor is also known for certain for the Vienna transport documented by Fischmann²¹¹, whose name is spelt by

²⁰³ FS Müller an Jäger, Betr.: Endgültige Lösung der Judenfrage, 18.5.1942, RGVA 500-1-25, p.379.

²⁰⁴ Testimony of Dieter Wisliceny, 3.1.46, IMT IV, pp.355-73; copied T/58.

²⁰⁵ Brack an Himmler, 23.6.1942, BA NS19/1583, p.34-R, also NO-205. Brack’s original sterilization proposal was made to Himmler on 28.3.41, NO-203.

²⁰⁶ Longerich, *Holocaust*, p.328.

²⁰⁷ Helmut Heiber, ‘Aus den Akten des Gauleiters Kube’, *Vierteljahrshäfte für Zeitgeschichte* 4, 1956, pp.67-92.

²⁰⁸ Mattogno conflates these two time periods in order to disguise the escalation point.

²⁰⁹ Photocopies of documents from the Düsseldorf Files, 21.4.42-30.6.42 (Vol. III, pp.1357-58), T/1400.

²¹⁰ Düsseldorf File No. 2 (Vol. III, pp.1356-57), T/1396.

²¹¹ Fischmann report, 20.6.42. YVA, O-51/163/42-43.

Mattogno as ‘Frischmann.’²¹² Significantly, Fischmann referred to Sobibor as a “labour camp”, which was obviously a euphemism. Kues attempts to neutralize this by claiming that Fischmann made an error, but his claim relies on a totally *a priori* assumption (a fallacy of personal incredulity) that the Nazis would not have used three different euphemisms for ‘death camp’.²¹³ Kues has to break the ‘Occam’s Razor’ rule to make this neutralization attempt. Given that Kues concedes that Fischmann was not fully informed about Sobibor, it is more plausible that information was withheld from the officer because the camp was a death camp than because it was a transit camp, as the former would have been more damaging to German interests if leaked to the enemy.

An estimated 53,000 Slovakian Jews were deported between March 26 and June 26, 1942; by the end of 1942, this had risen to 57,752, consisting of 18,746 to Auschwitz and 39,006 to Lublin and its surrounding areas.²¹⁴

The beginning of systematic deportations from France was preceded by a number of exterminatory statements. On May 6, 1942, Heydrich visited Paris to mark the commencement of Oberg's duties as HSSPF and supplied Wehrmacht officials with information about gassing policy, noting that gassing "busses" were being replaced with "more sophisticated solutions providing a higher yield." This conversation was passed on by one of the attendees (Bälz) to Bargatzky, who recorded it in his diary.²¹⁵ Bälz reported Heydrich’s revelation that:

Just as with the Russian Jews in Kiev, the death sentence has been pronounced on all the Jews of Europe. Even on the Jews of France, whose deportations begin in these very weeks.

Heydrich’s use of “death sentence” echoed Goebbels’ usage of the same phrase on December 14, 1941, but Heydrich referred to “all the Jews of Europe” rather than just “in many cases.” On May 15, 1942, Goebbels noted in his diary that “it would be best if we either evacuated (*abschöben*) or liquidated (*liquidierten*) all eastern Jews still remaining in Paris.”²¹⁶ Given that Goebbels had already stated in December 1941 that deportation from France would be “In many cases... equivalent to a death sentence”, Goebbels must here have

²¹² M&G, *Treblinka*, p.260; MGK, *Sobibór*, p.305.

²¹³ Thomas Kues, ‘On the terms Sonderlager and SS-Sonderkommando’, n.48.

²¹⁴ Schelvis, *Sobibor*, p.211; Cf. Yehoushua Büchler, ‘The Deportation of Slovakian Jews to the Lublin District of Poland in 1942’, HGS 6/2, 1991, p.166.

²¹⁵ Walter Bargatzky, *Hotel Majestic. Ein Deutscher im besetzten Frankreich*, Freiburg, 1987, p.103ff.; cf. Herbert, ‘Deportation of the French Jews’, p.152.

²¹⁶ *TBJG*, II/4, p.293 (15.5.42).

been using *abschöben* to refer to killing by deportation and *liquidierten* to refer to killing on French soil.

On May 13, 1942, Dannecker noted that, in a conversation with Lieutenant General Kohl, who was responsible in Paris for rail transportation, Kohl appeared to Dannecker to be an "enemy" of the Jews, who agreed "100%" with "a final solution to the Jewish question with the goal of a total destruction of the enemy" (*eine Endlösung der Judenfrage mit dem Ziel restloser Vernichtung des Gegners*).²¹⁷

Deportation policy unfolded in stages. On June 11, 1942, Dannecker announced that 100,000 Jews would be deported from the unoccupied zone, at a rate of three transports per week.²¹⁸ On June 22, 1942, Eichmann specified to Rademacher that 40,000 Jews from the unoccupied zone, 40,000 from the Netherlands and 10,000 from Belgium would be deported to Auschwitz²¹⁹, but the following day Himmler instructed the RSHA that "the previously planned rate (3 transports each of 1,000 Jews every week)" must be "significantly raised within a short time ... with the goal of freeing France entirely of Jews as soon as possible."²²⁰ A few days later, Zeitschel stated that Dannecker required 50,000 Jews from the unoccupied zone to be deported "to the East as soon as possible."²²¹ As a result of this urgency, transports to Auschwitz increased from four in the month of June to eight in July, thirteen in August and thirteen in September.²²² By July 21, 1943, the number of Jews evacuated from France had increased to 52,000.²²³

The exterminatory nature of deportation is also shown by the policy of deporting unaccompanied children to death camps, and of preventing children being given refuge in Palestine. On July 20, 1942, Eichmann advised Dannecker that as soon as trains could again be dispatched to the Generalgouvernement area, transports of children would be able to roll.²²⁴ On August 13, 1942, Günther advised the SD in Paris that the Jewish children in the camps of Pithiviers and Beaune-la-Rolande could be divided up gradually among the

²¹⁷ XXVb-29, published in Serge Klarsfeld, *Die Endlösung der Judenfrage in Frankreich. Deutsche Dokumente 1941–1944*. Paris, 1977; also Raul Hilberg, *Sonderzüge nach Auschwitz: The Role of the German Railroads in the Destruction of the Jews*, Mainz, 1981.

²¹⁸ Memorandum by Dannecker on a discussion in Eichmann's office, 11.6.42, RF-1217, also T/419.

²¹⁹ Eichmann to Rademacher concerning the deportation to Auschwitz of Jews from Western Europe, Paris, 22.6.42, NG-183, also T/422.

²²⁰ Minutes by Eichmann and Dannecker on their discussion concerning the deportation of Jews from France, Paris, 1.7.42, RF-1223, also T/429.

²²¹ German Embassy to the Head of the Security Police in France, 27.6.42, RF-1220.

²²² Serge Klarsfeld, *Die Endlösung der Judenfrage in Frankreich. Deutsche Dokumente 1941–1944*. Paris, 1977.

²²³ Roethke's review of "the present state of the Jewish Question in France". Paris, 21.7.43, T/488.

²²⁴ Minute by Dannecker on a telephone call from Eichmann and Novak. Paris, 21.7.42, T/439.

transports to Auschwitz.²²⁵ Instructions for the transport of children from France to Auschwitz were signalled to Höss and the RSHA, but not to any other institution farther east.²²⁶ Similarly, two teleprint messages from Roethke to Eichmann and to the Senior Commanders of the Security Police and the SD in Cracow and Lublin, sent on March 4-6, 1943, reporting the departure of deportation trains from Le Bourget-Drancy to Chelm (Cholm), did not have recipients farther east.²²⁷ In April 1944, the round-ups were extended to children's homes.²²⁸ Attempts to prevent the emigration of Jewish children to Palestine led to correspondence, involving Eichmann's office, concerning children in, for example, Sweden²²⁹, Bulgaria²³⁰, and Rumania.²³¹

Rumania is particularly important in explaining the role of German officials in the Final Solution at this time. Mattogno has often attempted to use Luther's memo of August 21, 1942, as evidence of a resettlement program. However, two days earlier than that memo, Luther received a telex from Rintelen quoting a report by the Chief of the Security Police and the SD, dated July 26, 1942, addressed to Himmler, on the situation with regard to deportation of Jews from Rumania.²³² This stated that non-working Jews would be "subjected to special treatment."

On October 5, 1942, Luther met the Hungarian Ambassador, Sztojaj, who expressed concerns that deported Hungarian Jews would not have a "continued existence." Luther replied that all evacuated Jews would "first be used in the East for road construction and

²²⁵ Teleprint message from Günther to the Security Police branch in Paris stating that the Jewish children in the camps of Pithiviers and Beaune-la-Rolande can be divided up gradually among the transports to Auschwitz. Berlin, 13.8.42, T/443.

²²⁶ Roethke to Eichmann reporting the departure of a train from Le Bourget-Drancy to Auschwitz with 1,000 Jews, Paris, 14.8.42, T/444; set of chronologically arranged teleprint messages from SD Section IV J in Paris reporting the departure of deportation trains to Auschwitz (each report was forwarded to Eichmann in the Head Office for Reich Security, to the Inspector of Concentration Camps in Oranienburg, and to the Auschwitz concentration camp), Paris, 17.7.42-2.3.43, T/447 (pp.1-9, 12-13, 14, 16); and teleprint message from Roethke to Eichmann, to the Inspector of Concentration Camps in Oranienburg, and to the Auschwitz concentration camp, reporting the departure of a deportation train carrying 1,000 Jews; Paris, 23.9.42, T/455; see also the same distribution chain in T/457 and T/461.

²²⁷ T/447 (17-18), T/1420 and T/1421.

²²⁸ Telegram from Barbie of the Security Police, Lyon, to Group IVb, Paris, reporting on the arrest and deportation of the children and the staff of the Jewish children's home, "Colonie Enfant," in Izieu-Ain; Lyon, 6.4.44, NO-1411, also T/505 and CDJC VII-10; cf. Serge Klarsfeld, *Die Endlösung der Judenfrage in Frankreich. Deutsche Dokumente 1941-1944*. Paris, 1977, p.135.

²²⁹ Letter from Günther to the Foreign Ministry, transmitting a DNB (official German news agency) report on a charity event in Stockholm on behalf of Jewish children to be sent to Palestine, Berlin, 6.4.43, T/601; see also T/602.

²³⁰ Letter from Bergmann, Foreign Ministry, to the German Legation in Sofia instructing it to oppose the emigration of 5,000 Jewish children to Palestine, 13.2.43, NG-1783, also T/948; see also T/949, T/950, T/951 and T/952.

²³¹ T/1049, T/1050, T/1051 and T/1056.

²³² NG-3559, also T/1023.

would later be settled in a Jewish reserve.”²³³ This was clearly a lie because, as was discussed in Chapter 2, Heydrich had insisted as early as the autumn of 1941 that deportees would be interned in “camps built by the Bolsheviks” and that deportation would involve “decimation”, yet here Luther was denying decimation of any kind. Luther led the Hungarians to believe that deported Jews would have a “continued existence” yet on December 7, 1942, Luther again discussed plans to sterilize Mischlinge.²³⁴ Sterilization and “continued existence”, applied to the survival of a population, are mutually exclusive terms.

Officials in Italian-controlled territories were aware of the intended fate of deported Jews. In August 1942, the Nazis requested the handing over of Croatian Jews who were under Italian occupation. The Minister of State at the German Embassy, Prince Otto von Bismarck, “stated that it was a question of several thousands of people and led me to understand that such measures would lead, in practice, to their dispersion and liquidation [“annihilation” in the original but lined out].”²³⁵ However, when Mussolini received this information in writing, he scribbled that he had “no objection” (*Nulla osta*) to the deportation.²³⁶ Conversely, Mussolini’s officers remained obstructive as their knowledge of the genocide mounted. In March 1943, Bastianini was reported to have told Mussolini:

The real reason for the attitude of our officers was not said by Ambrosio, but I am going to say it to you, Duce. Our people know what fate awaits the Jews consigned to the Germans. They will all be gassed without distinction, the old women, babies. And that’s why our people will never permit such atrocities to take place with their connivance. And you, Duce, may not give your consent. Why do you want to assume a responsibility which will fall on you entirely?²³⁷

In early 1943, the progress of the Final Solution was documented by Richard Korherr.²³⁸ However, it is known that the original version of the Korherr Report did not use the term ‘durchgeschleust’ (‘sifted through’) but had instead referred to ‘Sonderbehandlung’ (‘special treatment’). Himmler’s assistant, Brandt, had written to Korherr and stated that:

The Reichsführer-SS has received your report on "The Final Solution of the European Jewish Question". He wishes that "special treatment of the Jews" not be

²³³ A Discussion between the German Foreign Office and the Hungarian Ambassador about the Final Solution of the Jewish Problem in Hungary. Yad Vashem Archives, TR2, NG 1800, N11/553/E.

²³⁴ Letter from Luther to Eichmann concerning the Foreign Ministry's stand on the proposed sterilization of half-Jews and the Jewish partners in mixed marriages. Berlin, 7.12.42, T/192.

²³⁵ Jonathan Steinberg, *All Or Nothing. The Axis and the Holocaust 1941-43*. London, 2002, p.52, citing Luca Pietromarchi, ‘Estratti del diario privato’, 20.8.42, in Joseph Rochlitz, *The Righteous Enemy. The Italians and Jews in Occupied Europe 1941-43*. Rome, 1988, p.7.

²³⁶ Steinberg, *All or Nothing*, p.2, facsimile of ‘Appunto per il Duce’, 21.8.42, Ministero degli Affari Esteri (MEA). Archivio Storico Diplomatico (ASD) Gab AP 35. ‘Croazia’.

²³⁷ Steinberg, *All or Nothing*, p.116, citing Luca Pietromarchi, ‘Estratti del diario privato’, 31.3.43, in Joseph Rochlitz, *The Righteous Enemy. The Italians and Jews in Occupied Europe 1941-43*. Rome, 1988, p.8.

²³⁸ Korherr reports, 19.4.43, NO-5193 and NO-5194.

mentioned anywhere.²³⁹

The term “special treatment” therefore clearly had a sinister meaning. The Korherr Report’s history therefore reveals not only the scope of the Final Solution, but also its true purpose.

It should also be apparent from the Korherr report and other documents so far discussed in this chapter (as well in the next one as well) that the Final Solution was being fully implemented during the war. In passages repeated near verbatim in both *Treblinka* and *Sobibór*, Mattogno half-heartedly suggested that the actions implemented against the Jews during the war were merely provisional and temporary measures; the real Final Solution was supposedly to be achieved only after the war.²⁴⁰ This position relies on several outdated documents from 1940 and 1941 (prior to the decision to implement the Final Solution), faulty or tertiary documents in the decision making process (Goebbels’ 7.3.1942 diary entry and the so called April 1942 ‘Schlegelberger’ memo²⁴¹), and a fundamental misreading of the Wannsee Conference protocol. Mattogno takes the stated “temporary measures” (*Ausweihmöglichkeiten*) to refer to the planned deportations, when actually the protocol was referring to the ongoing deportations of Reich Jews to locations such as Lodz, Minsk, and Riga.²⁴² From these smaller scale evacuations, “practical experience” was being gained which would help in the application of a total Final Solution. There simply is nothing provisional or temporary about the fate described for the able-bodied Jews at Wannsee, who were to be worked to death with any lasting remnant to be “treated accordingly” to prevent the seed for a new Jewish revival.

Killing of Soviet Jews, August-December 1942

Policy developments in the second half of 1942 took place against the backdrop of a massive killing action in GK Wolhynien-Podolien, which contained most of the Polesie province and the entire Wolyn (Volhynia) province that had formerly belonged to Poland.²⁴³ The killings are particularly significant because they prove that Nazi policy was now to kill working Jews as well as non-working ones. The number of Jews in this region was recorded as 330,000 in

²³⁹ Brandt an Korherr, 20.4.43, BA NS19/1570, also NO-5196.

²⁴⁰ MG, *Treblinka*, p.189; MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.207-208. It also becomes apparent from the documents Mattogno subsequently quotes in both books that the final solution was being put into effect during the war.

²⁴¹ On the note by Franz Schlegelberger see Richard Evans, *Lying About Hitler: History, Holocaust, and the David Irving Trial* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), pp.82-86.

²⁴² Cf. Browning, *Origins of the Final Solution*, p.411; Longerich, *Holocaust*, p.307

²⁴³ Shmuel Spector, *The Holocaust of Volhynian Jews 1941-1944*. Jerusalem, 1990, esp. pp.141-8; Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, pp.709-23.

March 1942²⁴⁴ and 326,000 in May 1942.²⁴⁵ Most of those Jews were dead by the end of November. Their deaths were included in Himmler's Meldung 51, whose total of 363,211 deaths also included approximately 70,000 Jews from Bezirk Bialystok.²⁴⁶

The largest killing actions occurred after a meeting in Lutsk on August 28-30, 1942. This was headed by Koch's representative Paul Dargel and attended by Pütz, and ordered a "100% solution" to the Jewish Question in the region, to be implemented within five weeks, with just a two-month stay of execution for 'specialists' after each Aktion.²⁴⁷ The first major Aktion in the Polesie following this conference took place in Domachevo, a spa town 25 miles south of Brest which had 3,316 Jewish inhabitants in February 1942. The fate of most of these Jews was documented in a Gendarmerie report dated October 6, 1942:

On September 19-20, 1942, an anti-Jewish Aktion was carried out in Domachevo and Tomashovka by a special commando of the SD together with the cavalry squadron of the Gendarmerie and the local police stationed in Domachevo, and in total, some 2,900 Jews were shot. The action took place without any disturbance.

The Aktion included the slaughter of Jewish children from an orphanage, whose clothes were then handed to ethnic German children attending a kindergarten in Domachevo.²⁴⁸ The Stadtkommissar for Brest, Franz Burat, wrote a response to the massacre which indicated that he and his SS counterpart, Rohde, were still making futile attempts to retain Jews for essential work in Brest. Burat stated that the "sudden liquidation" of the Jews of Domachevo and Tomashovka had caused "profound distress" among the Jews of Brest who strove desperately "to prove their indispensability" through "a model organization of Jewish workshops." Burat continued, "I must unconditionally plead for the retention of the most

²⁴⁴ Stadtkommissar Brest, Niederschrift ueber die zweite Tatumg in Luzk 27-29.3.42, 13.4.1942, BA R 6/243, p. 10R

²⁴⁵ Meldungen aus den besetzten Ostgebieten Nr. 5, 29.5.1942, NA T175/235/2724430; cf. Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust*, p.195.

²⁴⁶ Der Reichsführer-SS, Meldungen an den Führer über Bandenbekämpfung, Meldung Nr. 51 Russland-Süd, Ukraine, Bialystok. Bandenbekämpfungserfolge vom 1.9 bis 1.12.42, 23.12.1942, NO-511, also translated in NMT, Vol. XIII, p. 269-272, also T/338. The 292,263 Jews killed before 1.11.42 were almost exclusively from RUKU whilst those from Bezirk Bialystok were killed in November; cf. Kruglov, 'Jewish Losses', p.289 n.12.

²⁴⁷ Stadtkommissar Brest, Aktenvermerk über die Sitzung am 28-31.8.42, 4.9.1942, BA R6/243, p.21; the Lutsk meeting was preceded by a conference of Erich Koch and the RK Ukraine staff emphasising the food situation, an important 'accelerator' for the extermination campaign in Volhynia (Vernerik über die Tagung in Rowno vom 26-28.8.1942, 264-PS, IMT XXV, pp.325-27); cf. Christian Gerlach, 'Die Bedeutung der deutschen Ernährungspolitik für die Beschleunigung des Mordes an den Juden 1942. Das Generalgouvernement und die Westukraine' in *Krieg, Ernährung, Völkermord. Forschungen zur deutschen Vernichtungspolitik im Zweiten Weltkrieg*, Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 1998, pp.237-245.

²⁴⁸ Gendarmerie-Gebietsführer Brest-Litovsk, Lagebericht für Monat Oktober 1942, 6.10.42 NARA T454/102/980; Gebietskommissar Brest-Litovsk Lagebericht, 9.10.42, NARA T454/103/204-5; cf. Martin Dean, 'Soviet Ethnic Germans and the Holocaust in Reich Commissariat Ukraine', in Ray Brandon and Wendy Lower (eds.) *The Shoah in Ukraine*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008, p.259.

needed artisans and manpower.”²⁴⁹ These pleadings were in vain. The population reductions that took place in Brest are documented in the local archives. In November 1941, the Jewish population of Brest was 17,574.²⁵⁰ In February 1942, the population was 18,000, a figure that may have been rounded-up.²⁵¹ Andrea Simon examined the local food distribution report for June 5, 1942, showing 16,973 Jews,²⁵² reduced from 17,724 for the period March 24 to April 23, 1942, whilst Garrard & Garrard reproduced the ledger for October 15-16, 1942, which they described as follows:

This document is one of the most horrifying discovered at Brest, for it represents the complicity in mass murder of men who sat behind their desks throughout the entire process. Across the top of each page are the names of ethnic groups in Brest. The clerk has been ordered to keep a running total for each group: he records how many had 'arrived' and how many had 'departed' for each day. The total population is given in the right-hand column. As of 15 October 1942 the total population is 41,091. Of this total, 16,934 are designated in the column for Jews (Zydowsk). But then the clerk learns that this total is wrong. He has made a mistake in writing 16,934. In fact, all the Jews in the ghetto have now 'departed'. The clerk corrects his mistake; he strikes through 16,934 and writes in '0'. He then subtracts this figure of 16,934 from 41,091 and writes in the correct number of people alive in Brest now - 24,157. It is unlikely that the clerk did not know what had happened to these thousands of people, even if he was not sure exactly when and where they had been executed. Thus, with a single stroke of a pen, 16,934 people are erased.

Furthermore, Garrard & Garrard found that the reduction of 16,934 in the ghetto liquidation corresponded to the volume of transports from Brest to the killing site:

According to documents in the Brest archives, from late June to November 1942 a total of seven trains transported Jews to be executed at Bronnaya Gora. Three of these trains are said to have carried people from Brest - two trains consisting of 40 and 13 cars in July, and a third consisting of 28 cars in October. How many Jews from the Brest ghetto were transported in the three trains? If we say that close to 200 people were crushed into each car, then we arrive at a total of 8,000 people in the first train, 2,600 in the second, and 5,600 in the third. There is no way of knowing how many people had already died of starvation and sickness before July 1942, or were shot in and near Brest before October 1942. But the total number transported by this estimate (16,200) does approximate the figure given in the Brest Town Administration's 'Accounting and Control Book of

²⁴⁹ Gebietskommissar Brest-Litovsk Lagebericht, 9.10.42, NARA T454/103/205; cf. Browning, *Nazi Policy*, p.138.

²⁵⁰ Stadtkommissar Brest, Betr.: Lage-Bericht, 21.11.41 NARA T454/103/7.

²⁵¹ Ernährungsamt Brest-Litowsk, Statistischer Bericht, 28.2.42 NARA T454/103/65-66.

²⁵² Andrea Simon, *Bashert. A Granddaughter's Holocaust Quest*. Jackson, Mississippi, 2002, p.170, citing the statistics report of the Brest Town Administration on the distribution of provisions, 5.6.42. Each Jew received 1,050 grams of bread per week, produced by four bakeries and distributed from nine posts inside the ghetto. Brest archives.

Population Movement'...²⁵³

Moreover, these figures were corroborated by Polish railway worker, Roman Stanislavovich Novis, the former station master at Bronnaia Gora, who claimed to have counted 186 railroad cars arriving at Bronnaia Gora from various locations, and that his German successor as station master, Heil, had told him that 48,000 people were shot there.²⁵⁴ Finally, these demographics are supported by the Brest Ghetto Passport Archive, which consists of a list of Jews of 14 years of age and above living in the Brest Ghetto, who were required to obtain and sign for identity papers, which included their names, ages, and the names and dates of birth of their parents.²⁵⁵ A photo of each person was taken and all those receiving these internal passports were required to sign for them. The list contains 12,258 names. When the omitted children are added to this total, we have a baseline figure for the number of Brest Jews murdered in the second half of 1942.

In *Treblinka*, Mattogno fusses over the fact that old people and children appear in the Brest ghetto list.²⁵⁶ However, this is a red herring because the evidence cited by Andrea Simon and Garrard & Garrard revealed that children had been killed in the liquidation. Many were killed in the city instead of being sent to Bronnaya Gora.²⁵⁷ We can infer from this that the families of essential workers received exemptions and that the civilian authorities in Brest had attempted to run a productive ghetto prior to the order to liquidate it. This is confirmed by the protest of the Stadtkommissar for Brest, Franz Burat, noted above, when the Jews of neighbouring Domachevo and Tomashovka had been shot. It is therefore a strawman to state that, because some ghettos had exemptions for family members of workers, there was not a general policy of killing unfit Jews.

In early November, the remaining 26,200 Jews of Pinsk were exterminated as a result of this Himmler order:

OKW has informed me that region of Brest-Gomel suffers increasingly from gang attacks, which bring into question the need for additional troops. On the basis of the news, which has been reported to me, one must regard in the Ghetto of Pinsk the centre for the movement of the gangs in the region of the Pripyat marshes.

²⁵³ John Garrard and Carol Garrard, 'Barbarossa's first victims: The Jews of Brest', *East European Jewish Affairs*, 1998, 28/2, p. 33, citing Brest Town Administration, 'Accounting and Control Book of Population Movement', entry for 16.10.42, in Brest oblast archives.

²⁵⁴ Simon, *Bashert*, pp.189-91, citing testimony of Roman Stanislavovich Novis, 12.9.44, Soviet Extraordinary Commission, Region of Bronnaia Gora, the Brest Region.

²⁵⁵ Simon, *Bashert*, p.169, citing 'Brest Ghetto List, Administrative Department of the City of Brest, Book of Records of Distributed Passports, Started November 10, 1941, ended June 5, 1942'; online at <http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/Belarus/brest.htm>.

²⁵⁶ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.214.

²⁵⁷ Garrard and Garrard, 'Barbarossa's First Victims', pp.35-37.

Therefore I order, in spite of economic considerations, the destruction and obliteration of the Ghetto of Pinsk. 1000 male workers may be spared, in the event that the operation allows for this, to be made available to the Wehrmacht, for the production of wooden prefabricated huts. These 1000 men must be kept in a well-guarded camp, and if security not be maintained, these 1000 are to be destroyed.²⁵⁸

The results were documented in the *Erfahrungsbericht* of Hauptmann der Schutzpolizei Helmut Saur of Polizeibataillon 310.²⁵⁹ The dating of the Pinsk massacre confirms the fact that Himmler and Koch had planned the beginning of the Bialystok deportation (November 2, 1942) to coincide with the end of the extermination phase in GK Wolhynien-Podolien. Koch was the head of RK East Prussia (which incorporated Bialystok) as well as RK Ukraine.

Conclusion

The flaws in MGK's writing on Nazi policy, which we have documented above, can be divided into four categories: self-contradiction, irrelevancy, highly selective sourcing, and distortion.

It is self-contradictory that Mattogno fixes a resettlement decision in September 1941 but then Kues has to admit that requests from a very high level (Ribbentrop) to resettle Serb Jews were being declined by Himmler in October. It is self-refuting for Mattogno to admit that Wetzel was referring to gassing on 25.10.41 but for Kues to claim that Rademacher was referring to mere resettlement of Serb Jews in a document written on the very same day.

Irrelevancy and selective sourcing dog Mattogno's chapters on 'emigration'. It amounts to a strategy of distracting the reader: 'misdirection'. Mattogno's assumption that Zeitschel's request in August 1941 is more important than the well-documented deportation negotiations of October 1941 (which were won by Wetzel's assurances about "Brack's device") is clearly spurious. Kues' claim that Rademacher's deportation note of October 25, 1941 refutes Turner's gas van document of April 11, 1942, is an amazing chronological misdirection that ignores piles of intervening documentation, commencing with the Wetzel draft of the same October date, which clearly leads into the gassing timeline that takes the policy to Chelmno, the Ostland, Serbia and the Aktion Reinhard camps through gradual radicalization. Selective sourcing is most egregious, as noted above, in the Ostland paper trail

²⁵⁸ Helmut Heiber (ed), *Reichsführer!... Briefe an und von Himmler*. Stuttgart, 1968, p.165.

²⁵⁹ Hptm Saur, Pol.Btl. 310, *Erfahrungsbericht*, n.d., USSR-119a; on Battalion 310's operations at this time see Edward B. Westermann, ' "Ordinary Men" or "Ideological Soldiers"? Police Battalion 310 in Russia, 1942', *German Studies Review*, 21/1, Feb., 1998, pp.41-68.

of Kube and Lohse. The distortion of this documentation is so blatant that it amounts to a strategy of deliberately hiding smoking guns.

As readers can see, therefore, there are more than enough examples of distortion in MGK's work to prove their lack of scruples. This chapter does not address absolutely every last example that could be found in the trilogy, as it would lengthen the chapter several fold. We have, however, covered the most serious cases.

The intended result of Mattogno's distortions is to bury the real timeline of extermination, which we have rehearsed above. There was a process of cumulative radicalization that began with starvation planning in the spring and culminated in Himmler's order of July 1942 to kill working Jews as well as non-working Jews. This process had two peaks – the July 1941 Hitler's decision to kill all Soviet Jews (with some labor exemptions) and the December 1941 decision to kill Jews across Europe within the timeframe of the war – but these peaks were not a culmination because they still left open the matter of how quickly each category of Jews (non-working and working) would be killed. This was not resolved in full until July 1942, when Himmler set a deadline of December 31, 1942, but even then Himmler eventually had to concede some labor exemptions, which were concentrated into SS run camps. The fate of Jews in these camps is discussed in later chapters.

Finally, it is anticipated that MGK may mislead readers by pointing out that some children and old people survived to the end of the war, which they infer as meaning there was no extermination policy. This would be fallacious because it would omit the obstacles faced by the SS in the execution of policy. Some ghettos gave permits to the immediate families of essential workers (as we show below); some had officials who were bribed into giving out work permits to the highest bidder²⁶⁰, and some had children who were hidden. The SS eventually tracked most of these down, as we saw in the case of Domachevo above, but, given that Germany was fighting a losing war militarily, the SS could not ultimately track down every hidden child and overcome every local Wehrmacht official who wanted to keep productive Jews. Those that survived, however, were a tiny minority of the total Jewish population that came under Nazi rule. MGK's deceptions cannot negate this fact.

²⁶⁰ Browning, *Remembering Survival*, pp.76-78.

Chapter 3

Aktion Reinhard and the Holocaust in Poland

As the preceding chapter has demonstrated, Mattogno, Graf and Kues have an exceedingly poor grasp of the evolution of Nazi Jewish policy and of the Final Solution as a whole. The following chapter will show that such a verdict does not change in the slightest when we consider the arguments proffered by the trio regarding the evolution of Aktion Reinhard and the Holocaust in the regions of Poland most affected by Aktion Reinhard. Strictly speaking, the trio do not actually offer a coherent account of either of these things in the ‘trilogy’ of booklets about Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka. They might well say that their studies were of the camps themselves, and that they were not obligated to examine the history of Jewish policy in the Generalgouvernement. But in the guise of trying to prove ‘resettlement’, these books reimpose just such an account through the back door – an account, moreover, which is so horribly distorted, inaccurate and ignorant as to be all but unrecognisable to anyone who is moderately familiar with the conventional historical literature on the subject.

Just as with Nazi Jewish policy as a whole, the chapters under consideration here are almost entirely the work of Carlo Mattogno.¹ Indeed, some of the arguments Mattogno advances end up repeated in his own oeuvre², or in brochures by Graf³ or parroted in the summaries of other negationist gurus such as Germar Rudolf.⁴ Not only are the arguments repeated in other works, but the basic gist of the argument is largely unchanged from *Treblinka* (whose original version appeared in 2002 in German) to *Sobibór* (appearing in 2010). Closer examination reveals that the exact same references recur across both volumes, and are sometimes even repeated a third time in *Belżec*, where the corresponding chapter is truncated and refers the reader to the more extensive exposition in the earlier *Treblinka*.

¹ The relevant chapters are: M&G, *Treblinka*, part of Chapter II, part of III, VIII and IX; Mattogno, *Belżec*, Chapters I and V; MGK, *Sobibór*, part of Chapter 3 and most of Chapters 8 and 9

² Cf. Mattogno, *Hilberg*

³ Graf, *Neue Weltordnung*.

⁴ Cf. Rudolf, *Lectures on the Holocaust*

Taken together, the corresponding chapters purporting to deal with the origins of Aktion Reinhard and the deportations to Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka amount to about 81,000 words. In practice, a staggering amount of space is given over to digressions about Auschwitz or developments in Jewish policy in western Europe that are of indirect relevance at best to the question of what was Aktion Reinhard and what were Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka.⁵ Closer inspection reveals that some of these digressions are set-piece spiels which Mattogno uses in his Auschwitz brochures. Indeed, some documents turn out to be cited by Mattogno no fewer than nine times across his entire oeuvre.

These digressions and repetitions only serve to underscore one of the biggest problems with Mattogno's attempts to account for the evolution of Aktion Reinhard, namely the utter absence of any reference to a range of what might be considered obvious sources anywhere inside the 'trilogy'. A good example would be the well known Goebbels diary entry of March 27, 1942, already mentioned in the preceding chapter and which will be discussed further below. Not only is this source a standard reference in many studies of the origins of the Final Solution in general⁶, it is invariably mentioned in all the relevant regional studies of occupied Poland as well as in the standard histories of Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka.⁷ One would therefore expect that the document would be acknowledged and discussed in a serious work on those camps. Yet nowhere in the trilogy do Mattogno or either of his co-authors bother to mention this obviously critical source. When called on his omission of the diary entry from *Belzec* by Roberto Muehlenkamp, Mattogno feebly tried to claim that the document was not relevant because it did not mention Belzec by name.⁸ But this does not stop him from citing dozens of documents in *Treblinka* and *Sobibór* that not only do not mention Belzec, Sobibor or Treblinka, but which are not even relevant to any of the regions affected by these camps. One has to search far and wide through Mattogno's oeuvre to find *any* discussion of the Goebbels diary entry.⁹ The fact that he could not bring himself to include such a discussion in any of the three volumes of the 'trilogy' suggests that far from being able to explain away this deeply inconvenient reference, the leading negationist is actually embarrassed by it, and knows that if he were to include too many such

⁵ We have dealt with some of these digressions in the preceding chapter, and will examine more in Ch. 4.

⁶ To cite two older examples, see Martin Broszat, 'Hitler und die Genesis der 'Endlösung''. Aus Anlass der Thesen von David Irving', *VfZ* 25, 1977, pp.739-775, here p.762, as well as Browning, 'Antwort', p.99.

⁷ In addition to the numerous obvious examples from Western historiography, see also Zygmunt Mankowski, *Miedzy Wislaa Bugiem 1939-1944*, Lublin: Wydawnictwo Lubelskie, 1978, pp.222-3.

⁸ Mattogno, *Belzec e Muehlenkamp*, p.60.

⁹ To our knowledge, the three instances are in his reply to Roberto Muehlenkamp (as previous note), in Mattogno, *Hilberg*, pp.38-39 and Carlo Mattogno, 'Denying Evidence' in *Auschwitz Lies. Legends, Lies, and Prejudices on the Holocaust*, Chicago: Theses & Dissertations Press, 2005, pp.259-260.

documents invoking unpleasant terms such as ‘destruction’, ‘extirpation’, ‘liquidation’ or ‘killing’, then he would undermine his own argument and destroy the plausibility of the ‘resettlement thesis’. Unfortunately for Mattogno, as this chapter will demonstrate, the Goebbels diary entry is far from the only example of an omission of a crucial document. Moreover, when such a reference is omitted from not one or two but all three works, there are good grounds to apply a simple principle: ‘three strikes, and you’re out’. Such a flagrant omission is not the behaviour of a Doubting Thomas but of the proverbial three monkeys: hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil; deny, deny, deny.

Argument by omission – for that is what we are dealing with here – is however not the only failing which Mattogno brings to the table in the Aktion Reinhard chapters. Perusing them, it swiftly becomes apparent to any reader familiar with the conventional historiography of the Holocaust in Poland¹⁰ that Mattogno is deeply, profoundly ignorant of this literature, and is evidently blithely unaware of how rapidly the literature has grown in the past two decades in particular. Nor does he show much of a grasp of the available sources. Virtually all the Poland-specific citations are taken from a few published documentary collections. (And even then, many documents published in these collections are, unsurprisingly, omitted or overlooked.) Other sources are lifted from the Nuremberg trials, Eichmann trial documents or publications of the CDJC in Paris¹¹, leaving a vanishingly small number of citations to actual archival sources in the relevant chapters.¹² Under no circumstances can Mattogno be considered to have done the work, or to have bothered to listen to those who, unlike him, actually *have* done the work on this topic.

His use of the limited amount of scholarly literature and primary sources he does know about verges on the parodic. In *Treblinka*, for example, Chapter 8.7 turns out to be 2,211 words written about the Holocaust in Galicia, a mini-essay buttressed by 27 footnotes and grossly padded with 927 words of italicised block quotes. Mattogno’s most recent secondary source turns out to be Thomas Sandkühler’s dissertation on the Holocaust in Galicia, published in 1996.¹³ It is difficult to see how on earth Mattogno can believe that this section is even remotely capable of addressing the total volume of evidence on the Holocaust in Galicia or the relevant literature. Indeed, it is easy to identify nearly as many works

¹⁰ For an overview up to the early 2000s, see Dieter Pohl, ‘Poland’, in Dan Stone (ed), *The Historiography of the Holocaust*, London, 2004, pp.88-119

¹¹ Together 22 out of 140 references in Chapter 8 of M&G, *Treblinka*. Most do not actually relate to the Holocaust in the Generalgouvernement at all. Mattogno began his career by citing the CDJC documents from the relevant publications, but has taken to omitting his actual source.

¹² Just 12 archival sources can be identified out of 140 references in Chapter 8 of M&G, *Treblinka*.

¹³ Thomas Sandkühler, ‘*Endlösung*’ in *Galizien. Der Judenmord in Ostpolen und die Rettungsinitiativen von Berthold Beitz*, Bonn, 1996.

specifically on Galicia as there are footnotes in his shoddy little essay, including a *second* German dissertation from 1996 by Dieter Pohl¹⁴, and numerous works published in recent years.¹⁵ Why does Mattogno think that 2,211 words is a sufficient counter to two whole PhDs plus a substantial quantity of other literature, which collectively discusses a vast wealth of source material relating to the Holocaust in Galicia? There were more trials in West Germany for the Galicia district than he manages footnotes.¹⁶ Why would anyone bother to believe Mattogno's feeble take when there are extensive, detailed, coherent narratives and explanations of what happened in Galicia to the Jews there from 1941 to 1944? And why would anyone bother with Mattogno when he evidently *does not understand* the course of the Holocaust in Galicia, much less any of the other districts affected by 'Aktion Reinhard'?

For as well as resorting to argument by omission and argument from ignorance, Mattogno frequently relies on what might be called argument from incomprehension. As we have already seen in Chapter 2, Mattogno's grasp of the evolution of Nazi policy before and during the Final Solution consists of little more than a series of strawmen and misrepresentations. By far the most frequent misunderstanding is his refusal to grasp something that has been extensively discussed and debated in the conventional scholarly literature – the interaction of labour and extermination.¹⁷ Instead of demonstrating the

¹⁴ See in addition to works cited in Chapter 1 and in this Chapter, Tatiana Berenstein, 'Prace przymosiwa ludności Żydowskiej w tzw. Dystrykcie Galicja (1941-1944)', *BZIH* 1969, pp.3-45; Elisabeth Freundlich, *Die Ermordung einer Stadt namens Stanislaw*. Vienna, 1986; David Kahane, *Lvov Ghetto Diary*, Amherst, 1990; Jakub Chonigsmann, *Katastrofa lwowskiego ewreitsva*, Lviv, 1993; Dieter Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien 1941-1944*. Munich, 1996; Eliyahu Jones, *Żydzi Lwowa w czasie okupacji 1939-1945*, Łódź: Wyd. Oficyna Bibliofilów, 1999, translated as *Smoke in the Sand. The Jews of Lvov in the War Years 1939-1944*, Jerusalem: Gefen House, 2005; Bogdan Musiał, 'Konterrevolutionäre Elemente sind zu erschliessen'. *Die Brutalisierung des deutsch-sowjetischen Krieges im Sommer 1941*, Munich, 2000; Rosa Lehmann, *Symbiosis and Ambivalence: Poles and Jews in a Small Galician Town*, New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2001; Shimon Redlich, *Together and Apart in Brzezany*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002; Thomas Geldmacher, 'Wir als Wiener waren ja bei der Bevölkerung beliebt'. *Oesterreichische Schutzpolizisten und der Judenvernichtung in Ostgalizien 1941-1944*, Vienna: Mandelbaum Verlag, 2002

¹⁵ Gabriel N. Finder and Alexander V. Prusin, 'Collaboration in Eastern Galicia: The Ukrainian police and the Holocaust', *East European Jewish Affairs*, 2004, 34:2, pp.95 -118; Delphine Bechtel, 'De Jedwabne a` Zolotchiv: Pogromes locaux en Galicie, juin-juillet 1941,' in *Cultures d'Europe Centrale, vol. 5, La destruction de confines*, ed. Delphine Bechtel and Xavier Galmiche (Paris, 2005), 69–92; Omer Bartov, 'Eastern Europe as the Site of Genocide', *Journal of Modern History*, 80 (2008), pp. 557 – 593; Omer Bartov, *Erased: Vanishing Traces of Jewish Galicia in Present Day Ukraine*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007; Włodzimierz Wazniewski, *Stracone nadzieje. Polityka władz okupacyjnych w Malopolsce Wschodniej 1939-1944*, Warsaw, 2009; Christoph Mick, *Kriegserfahrungen in einer multiethnischen Stadt: Lemberg 1914-1947*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2011.

¹⁶ 28 such trials can be identified across the Justiz und NS-Verbrechen series.

¹⁷ The literature on this issue is vast, so we will confine ourselves at this stage to pointing to what is still one of the best short summaries of the debate, namely the article by Ulrich Herbert, 'Labour and Extermination: Economic Interest and the Primacy of Weltanschauung in National Socialism', *Past & Present*, No. 138 (Feb., 1993), pp. 144-195, originally appearing in German in Wolfgang Schneider (ed), *Vernichtungspolitik. Eine Debatte über den Zusammenhang vom Sozialpolitik und Genozid im nationalsozialistischen Deutschland*. Hamburg, 1991. Other titles will be cited below.

slightest awareness of this debate, Mattogno time and again resorts to a strawman of 100% extermination, expresses puzzlement as to why ever smaller minorities of Jews were being spared for slave labour, and declares pompously that selections for forced labour at this or that camp are supposedly incompatible with the ‘official thesis’ of extermination.¹⁸ Unfortunately for this truly imbecilic strategy of argumentation, the world has been quite aware *since 1942* that Nazi policy was, broadly, to exterminate the unfit first and spare those fit for labour for at least a temporary reprieve.¹⁹ The survival of an ever decreasing number of Jewish forced labourers cannot in any way be regarded as a meaningful or logical argument against the mass murder of 90% of the Jews of Poland. Yet Mattogno constantly argues as if it does, thereby exposing only his own lack of comprehension of the development of Nazi policy and the factors which went to shape it.

Contrary to the lurking strawman of Nazi Germany as a centralised, totalitarian state, it is a truism of conventional scholarship that Nazi occupation policy in Poland was rent sideways by political conflicts between different factions and institutions, and caught in a series of dilemmas generated by the contradictions between Nazi ideology and economic rationality.²⁰ Politics and economics, two subjects to which real historians pay great attention and which pseudoscholars rarely grasp, thus decisively shaped the course of the Holocaust in Poland. Moreover, *changing* political and economic circumstances over the course of 1941 to 1944 caused policy to now accelerate, now seemingly decelerate, and to *vary* considerably from region to region and phase to phase. These variations do not therefore generate discrepancies or anomalies as Mattogno might like them to, but are very easily explained as the results of conflicts between SS and civil administration, between ideology and economic pragmatism, between centre and periphery, between utopian ambition and logistical limitations, and between long, medium and short term goals. In this respect, Nazi Jewish policy in Poland was no different to any other policy enacted by the National Socialist regime, and just as other Nazi policies shifted rapidly to accommodate changed circumstances, so, too did Nazi Jewish policy change. By trying to eternalise Nazi Jewish

¹⁸ For example, MGK, *Sobibór*, p.310

¹⁹ Any misapprehensions on this score can be corrected by re-reading the United Nations Declaration regarding the extermination of the Jews, issued on December 17, 1942

²⁰ For Polish overviews of Nazi occupation policy in Poland, see For overviews, see Czeslaw Luczak, *Polytika ludnosciowa i ekonomiczna hitlerowskich Niemiec w okupowanej Polsce*, Poznan, 1979 and Czeslaw Madajczyk, *Die Okkupationspolitik Nazi-Deutschlands in Polen 1939-1945*. Cologne, 1988. A succinct summary of Nazi economic policy in the Generalgouvernement can be found in Sonja Schwanenberg, ‘Die wirtschaftliche Ausbeutung des Generalgouvernements durch das Deutsche Reich 1939-1945’ in: Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk (ed), *Polen unter deutscher und sowjetischer Besatzung 1939-1945*, Osnabrück: fibre, 2009, pp.103-129.

policy and ignoring change over time, Mattogno reveals himself as fundamentally tone-deaf to historical context. It is thus small surprise that his chapters and sections purporting to address this context display a degree of chronological discombobulation that is practically pathological, and in some cases almost certainly entirely deliberate.

This chronological discombobulation is mirrored on the thematic level by the staggering number of topics which are simply left out of Mattogno's confused account. Indeed, not only are these themes left out of the 'trilogy', but one is hard pressed to find *any* discussion of them *anywhere* in the entire negationist oeuvre. For example, Mattogno briefly discusses the Warsaw ghetto actions of 1942 and 1943 in Chapter 9 of 'Treblinka; but this is more or less the only location in his entire body of work where ghettos are discussed at all; and *nowhere* is the phenomenon of ghettoisation addressed.²¹ Why and how the Nazis decided to put Polish Jews into ghettos is simply not mentioned. In this regard, Mattogno is far from alone among negationist gurus, as his co-author Graf doesn't even manage to mention the word 'ghetto' once in *The Giant with Feet of Clay*, while Butz's account of the ghettos in *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century* seems to reimagine them as a paradise of Jewish self-rule.²² Yes, we know: Revisionists are concerned with extermination and death camps and gas chambers, but even the poorest student of history would surely be aware that what came before might well shape and influence what transpired later. By yanking Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka out of their proper historical context, and trying to fabricate a bright, shiny, new pseudo-context for them with the 'resettlement thesis', Mattogno isn't going to fool anyone.²³

Similarly, the fixation on the three Aktion Reinhard camps ends up ignoring the circumstances of the deportations in 1942-3 and the sheer amount of violence used to carry them out. Indeed, it ignores the fact that the Nazis had been dealing out death to Jews since 1939. From the very first days of the German invasion of Poland, Jews suffered at the hands

²¹ Philip Friedman, 'The Jewish Ghettos of the Nazi Era', *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (Jan., 1954), pp. 61-88 ; Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat. The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation*. Lincoln, 1972; Gustavo Corni, *Hitler's Ghettos: Voices from a Beleaguered Society, 1939-1944*. London: Bloomsbury, 2002; Tim Cole, 'Ghettoization' in Stone (ed), *Historiography of the Holocaust*, pp.65-87; Dan Michman, *The Emergence of Jewish Ghettos During the Holocaust*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

²² Graf, *Giant*; Butz, *THOTC*. One might also note that the section of Mattogno, *Hilberg*, purportedly dedicated to 'i getti' actually discusses ghettos in the Ostland, and has literally nothing to say about the ghettos of western Poland. The brief discussion of ghettos in Dalton, *Debating the Holocaust*, is so imbecilic as to not be worth the effort of refutation.

²³ One possible rejoinder, 'but Arad/Schelvis don't discuss ghettos!' falls at the first fence, because Arad and Schelvis are contributing to a historiography that *does* discuss ghettos, whereas 'Revisionism' does not. Moreover, Schelvis has little problem in giving a succinct summary of the issues involved, cf. *Vernichtungslager Sobibor*, pp.17-24.

of Nazi terror in Poland²⁴ that saw some 16,000 executions by October 25 and 50,000 by the end of 1939.²⁵ 7,000 of the killed were Jews, victims of a culture of antisemitic violence and abuse that had gestated within Nazi Germany during the pre-war years²⁶ as well as a specific contempt for East European Jews (*Ostjuden*)²⁷, a reaction which is amply documented in soldiers' letters and other sources.²⁸

The mass murder of the Jews inhabiting the regions of Poland affected by Aktion Reinhard involved both deportations to the death camps as well as extensive mass shootings. Nowhere in Mattogno's work is there a detailed confrontation with the demographics of the Holocaust in Poland.²⁹ Yet ghettos and shootings killed more Jews in the Generalgouvernement, Białystok and Zichenau districts than are held to have died at Belzec. The omission of this context unsurprisingly leads Mattogno to present conclusions which those more familiar with the evidence than he is will find either hilariously ignorant or utterly dishonest. With a total of 1,611 Jewish communities identified inside the borders of pre-war Poland, and over 630 localities in the Generalgouvernement, Zichenau and Białystok districts documented with Jewish communities, not to mention the hundreds of ghettos identified by

²⁴ On the September campaign see Szymon Datner, *55 dni Wehrmachtu w Polsce*. Warsaw, 1967; Alexander B. Rossino, *Hitler Strikes Poland. Blitzkrieg, Ideology and Atrocity*. Lawrence, Kansas, 2003 ; Jochen Böhrer, *Auftakt zum Vernichtungskrieg. Die Wehrmacht in Polen 1939*. Frankfurt, 2006

²⁵ Datner, *55 dni Wehrmachtu*, pp.110-122; Luczak, *Polityka*, pp.68-76; on the murders in the 'incorporated territories', many carried out by ethnic German militias, see Christian Jansen and Arno Weckbecker, *Der "Volksdeutsche Selbstschutz" in Polen 1939/40*. Munich: Oldenbourg, 1992 and most recently, Maria Wardzyńska, *Był rok 1939 Operacja niemieckiej policji bezpieczeństwa w Polsce. Intelligenzaktion*. Warsaw: IPN, 2009. For a case study of an SS unit which was already carrying out three-figures massacres of Jews during 1939, see Alexander B. Rossino, 'Nazi Anti-Jewish Policy during the Polish Campaign: The Case of the Einsatzgruppe von Woyrsch', *German Studies Review*, Vol. 24, No. 1. (Feb., 2001), pp. 35-53.

²⁶ On antisemitic violence and rituals of humiliation in German everyday life, see the important recent work of Michael Wildt, 'Gewalt gegen Juden in Deutschland 1933-1939', *WerkstattGeschichte* 18, 1997, pp. 59-80.; and his monograph *Volksgemeinschaft als Selbstermächtigung. Gewalt gegen Juden in der deutschen Provinz 1919 bis 1939*. Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2007, as well as the most recent study of the infamous 'Night of Broken Glass', the November pogrom of 1938, by Alan Steinweis, *Kristallnacht 1938*, Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2009.

²⁷ See Trude Maurer, *Ostjuden in Deutschland: 1918-1933*. Hamburg: Hans Christian, 1986 as well as David Clay Large, ' "Out with the Ostjuden". The Scheunenviertel Riots in Berlin, November 1923', in: Hoffmann, Christhard, Werner Bergmann, Helmut Walser Smith (eds), *Exclusionary Violence. Antisemitic Riots in Modern German History*, Michigan: University Press, 2002, p. 123-40. It is worth recalling that Kristallnacht was triggered ultimately by Nazi Germany's expulsion of Polish Jews in October 1938: Jerzy Tomaszewski, *Auftakt zur Vernichtung. Die Vertreibung polnischer Juden aus Deutschland im Jahre 1938*, Osnabrück, 2002.

²⁸ See the examples compiled in Walter Manoschek (ed), "*Es gibt nur eines für das Judentum: Vernichtung*". *Das Judenbild in deutschen Soldatenbriefen 1939-1944*. Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 1995, pp. Alexander B. Rossino, 'Destructive Impulses: German Soldiers and the Conquest of Poland', *HGS* 11/3, 1997, pp.351-265.

²⁹ Occasionally, Mattogno has ritualistically invoked the name of Walter Sanning, pretty much the last negationist writer to try and address the question of numbers in any meaningful way. Cf. Mattogno, 'Denying Evidence', p.245 and M&G, *Treblinka*, p.293, a chapter ostensibly authored by Mattogno, although the footnote reads like an addition by either Graf or Germar Rudolf.

multiple research projects in recent years³⁰, it is obvious that the Holocaust in Poland cannot be reduced to a matter of three camps and a few handwaving remarks about the Warsaw ghetto.

After the high-level decisions reached in December 1941 (already touched on in Chapter 2) had been made, and the necessary preparations to begin the extermination concluded, the 'Final Solution of the Jewish Question' began in earnest on March 16, 1942, with near-simultaneous deportations from the ghettos of Lublin as well as Lwow in the Galicia district, and a number of provincial small towns in both districts. From May 1942, the camp at Bełżec was joined by a second killing facility at Sobibór, which claimed the lives of Jews from the Lublin district as well as German, Austrian, Czech and Slovak Jews deported to the region from outside the Government-General. By June 1942, the initial operations had claimed well over 150,000 lives, and permission was forthcoming to extend the campaign to other districts in the Government-General. The Cracow district began to be targeted that same month³¹, before a transport stop was ordered until mid-July, in order to allow the free passage of reinforcements and supplies to the Eastern Front in preparation for the German summer campaign in eastern Ukraine and Russia. On July 22, 1942, the campaign, by then named Operation Reinhard in honour of the head of the RSHA, Reinhard Heydrich, who had been assassinated in Prague not long beforehand, was extended to encompass the Warsaw district, with the start of deportations from the Warsaw ghetto to a third extermination camp set up by Globocnik's staff at Treblinka.³² In early August, the Radom district was sucked into the process, which henceforth ran at high speed across the whole of the Generalgouvernement.³³ Deportations from the Radom district were directed almost exclusively to Treblinka and

³⁰ The first figure was calculated from the listings of *Pinkas hakehillot Polin*, Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976-2005, available online at jewishgen.org and zchor.org; the second from Franz Golczewski, 'Polen' in: Wolfgang Benz (ed), *Dimension des Völkermords: Die Zahl der jüdischen Opfer des Nationalsozialismus*, Munich: Oldenbourg 1991, pp. 411-97. Regarding ghettos see also Guy Miron (ed), *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of Ghettos During the Holocaust*, Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2010, 2 volumes. In 2012, USHMM will publish the second volume of their *Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos 1939-1945*, dedicated to ghettos, edited by Martin Dean. From samples shown to the present author the work will be of a very high quality. For ghettos in eastern Poland, i.e. Soviet-annexed territory, in this context the Białystok district (at least 80 communities), and Galicia districts (139 communities) see also Ilya Altman, *Kholokost na territorii SSSR. Entsiklopedia*. Moscow: Rosspen, 2011, which is also an impressive work of collective research. The older Polish encyclopedia, with which Mattogno is familiar, remains a useful summary, although the USHMM encyclopedia will clearly eclipse it. Czesław Pilichowski (ed), *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939-1945*, Warsaw, 1979

³¹ Cf. Andrea Löw and Markus Roth, *Juden in Krakau unter deutscher Besatzung 1939-1944*. Göttingen: Wallstein, 2011; Aleksander Bieberstein, *Zagłada Żydów w Krakowie*. Krakow, 1986.

³² The literature on the Warsaw ghetto is large. For the most recent summary, see Barbara Engelking and Jacek Leociak, *The Warsaw Ghetto: A Guide to the Perished City*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009.

³³ Robert Seidel, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Polen. Der Distrikt Radom 1939-1945*. Paderborn: Schöningh, 2006, pp.297-330; Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen. Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939-1945*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007.

secondarily to Belzec; transports from the Cracow and Galicia districts went exclusively to Belzec; trains from the Warsaw district were exclusively sent to Treblinka; while the Jews of the Lublin district were murdered in all three camps. In November 1942, the Zichenau and Bialystok districts, both annexed to East Prussia and thus belonging to the ‘incorporated territories’, were drawn in to Operation Reinhard with transports directed to Treblinka, although trains left from both districts to Auschwitz at this time.³⁴ In mid-December 1942, a renewed transport stop to enable reinforcements to reach the collapsing Eastern Front and relieve the encircled German forces at Stalingrad brought the second phase of Operation Reinhard to an end. By the end of 1942, 1,274,166 Jews had been deported to the Reinhard camps.³⁵

Alongside deportations, units of the SS and Police conducted so-called “local resettlements” in many districts, especially in smaller towns which lay some distance away from the rail lines. Over the course of 1942 and 1943, more than 300,000 Jews were killed on the spot in mass executions that affected every single district caught up in Operation Reinhard. In the Radom district, at least 11,000 were shot during the deportations.³⁶ A similar number were shot in the liquidation of the provincial ghettos of the Warsaw district³⁷, while at least 5,000 Jews, in all probability well over 10,000, were shot in the Warsaw ghetto action of the summer of 1942.³⁸ In the Galicia district, over 70,000 Jews were murdered in 1941 by units of the Einsatzgruppen, Order Police and the static KdS Galizien, decimating the Jewish population of the region.³⁹ Through to the end of 1942, approximately 250,000 Jews were

³⁴ On the Bialystok district see Szymon Datner, ‘Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w Okręgu Białostockim. Strukturą administracyjną okręgu Białostockiego’, *BZiH* 60, 1966, pp.3-48; on Zichenau see Michal Grynberg, *Zydzi w rejonie ciechanowskiej 1939-1942*. Warsaw, 1984 as well as Jan Grabowski, ‘Die antijüdische Politik im Regierungsbezirk Zichenau’, in: Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk and Jochen Böhrer (eds), *Der Judenmord in den eingegliederten polnischen Gebieten 1939-1945*. Osnabrück: fibre Verlag, 2010, pp.99-116 and Andreas Schulz, ‘Regierungsbezirk Zichenau’, in: Wolf Gruner and Jörg Osterloh (eds), *Das ‘Grossdeutsche Reich’ und die Juden. Nationalsozialistische Verfolgung in den ‘angegliederten Gebieten’*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 2010, pp. 261-282

³⁵ SSSP Lublin an BdS Krakau, 11.1.43, GPDD 355a, items 13/15, PRO HW 16/22.

³⁶ Seidel, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik*, pp.297-330, esp. p.330. On the Holocaust in the Radom district, see also Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen. Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939-1945*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007; there are also two studies of the liquidation of the Kielce ghetto by Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk, ‘Bestialstwo z urzedu. Organizacja hitlerowskich akcji deportacyjnych w ramach “Operacji Reinhard” na przykladzie likwidacji kieleckiego getta’, *Kwartalnik Historii Zydow* 3, 2002, pp.354-379; and Sara Bender, ‘The Extermination of the Kielce Ghetto – New Study and Aspects Based on Survivors’ Testimonies’, *Kwartalnik Historii Zydow* 2/2006, pp.185-199.

³⁷ Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, Dariusz Libionka (eds), *Prowincja Noc. Zycie i zaglada Zydow w dystryktie warszawskim*. Warsaw, 2007.

³⁸ Hilberg, *Vernichtung*, p.530, citing Monatsberichte von Lichtenbaum, 5.9. and 5.10.42, ZStL Polen 365 d, S.654-72

³⁹ See below.

deported and another 70,000 shot “locally”.⁴⁰ Shootings were almost as extensive in the Krakow district, in former western Galicia, where up to 60,000 Jews were shot in repeated actions through to the start of 1943.⁴¹

In 1943, after the closure of Belzec, shooting was more or less the only method used in eastern Galicia, claiming another 150,000 lives by the end of that year. Whereas the Jewish population of Galicia was counted at 278,000 on September 15, 1942, it had decreased to 161,500 by the end of 1942.⁴² A similar depletion is easily demonstrated for other districts. Whereas in early 1942, there were 300-320,000 Jews in the Lublin district, by July/August 1942, this had fallen to 190,000 Jews, and by the end of the year shrunk to a mere remnant of 20,000.⁴³ Across the whole Generalgouvernement, there were officially only 297,000 Jews left by the end of 1942, virtually all of whom were engaged in forced labour. The census of March 1, 1943 found 203,679 Jews left in the Generalgouvernement, a number that was reduced to around 80,000 by the start of 1944.⁴⁴

The Origins of Aktion Reinhard

It is typical of Mattogno – and negationism as a whole - that until *Sobibór* (2010), he made absolutely no effort to address the origins of Aktion Reinhard. Not a word is expended in *Treblinka* (2002) or *Belżec* (2004) about the direct decision-making processes leading up to the establishment of the Aktion Reinhard camps. Instead, Mattogno simply assumes that his version of Aktion Reinhard must have been ordered from the centre by Hitler, neatly absolving himself of the necessity of dealing with a variety of inconvenient evidence. A reader asking ‘why did the Nazis build Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka?’ comes away empty-handed after reading *Treblinka* or *Belżec*. Despite the addition of 25,000 words ostensibly on the ‘Führerbefehl and the Origins of the “Extermination Camps in the East”, *Sobibór* doesn’t

⁴⁰ For reconstructions of the deportations in the Galicia district, see Tatiana Berenstein, ‘Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie Galicja (1941-1943)’, *BZIH* 61, 1967, pp.3-58; Aleksander Kruglow, ‘Deportacja ludności żydowskiej z dystryktu Galicja do obozu zagłady w Belzcu’, *BZIH* 151, 1989, pp.101-118, latter updated in Alexander Kruglov, *The Losses Suffered By Ukrainian Jews in 1941-1944*, Kharkov: Tarbut Laam, 2005, chapters on Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv and Ternopil oblasti.

⁴¹ E. Podhorizer-Sandel, ‘O zagładzie Żydów w dystrykcie krakowskim’, *BZIH* 30, 1959; Klaus-Michel Mallmann, ‘ ‘Mensch, ich feiere heute’ den tausenden Genickschuss’. Die Sicherheitspolizei und die Shoa in Westgalizien’ in Gerhard Paul (ed), *Die Täter der Shoah*, pp.109-136; cf. also Thomas Kühne, *Belonging and Genocide: Hitler’s Community, 1918-1945*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010, pp.55-94, for a discussion of Sicherheitspolizei behaviour in Nowy Sacz; Stawiarska, Malgorzata, ‘Judenmorde in der polnischen Stadt Sanok während des Zweites Weltkrieges’, *kwartalnik Historii Żydów* 4/2005, pp.506-540

⁴² Włodzimierz Bonusiak, *Małopolska Wschodnia pod rządami Trzeciej Rzeszy*. Rzeszów: Wydawn. Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej w Rzeszowie, 1990, p.106; Korherr-Bericht, 19.4.1943, NO-5193.

⁴³ Musial, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung*, pp.100-1; Bevölkerung des Distrikts Lublin nach dem Stande vom 1. August 1942, Lublin, den 5. März 1943, AIPN CA 891/8, p.487, cf. Eisenbach, *Hitlerowska polityka*, p.426; Korherr-Bericht, 19.4.1943, NO-5193.

⁴⁴ Golczewski, ‘Polen’, p.479.

actually answer the question, either. Instead, Chapter 8 turns out to be a mishmash of previous Mattogno texts together with newer scrapings, with very little of direct relevance to the evolution of Nazi Jewish policy in the Generalgouvernement or the origins of Aktion Reinhard. Section 8.1 is a ham-fisted gloss on the debate on the origins of the Final Solution as a whole, which has already been dealt with in Chapter 2 of this critique. Several later sections deal with the minutiae of the construction of gas chambers, and as such will be examined in Chapter 5 of this critique. Meanwhile, Section 8.5 is ostensibly dedicated to ‘Euthanasia and Aktion Reinhardt’, belatedly trying to paper over one of the greatest dishonesties of the preceding volumes of the ‘trilogy’ – the utter silence on the connection between the T4 euthanasia program and its six gas chambers, and the three death camps of Aktion Reinhard.

Slaloming between high policy and the pointless nitpicking of SS witness testimonies about the size and shape of gas chambers, Mattogno further confuses matters by staging his very own Rocky Horror Picture Show and does the timewarp again. One suspects that even diehard negationists would find the chapter hard to read because of the chronological and thematic confusions littering the text. The attentive reader who is familiar with the actual literature and sources, however, will notice that once the game of musical chairs has stopped, once again a whole wealth of evidence is left out, and that once again, Mattogno’s grasp of existing historiography and interpretations is shaky at best. His inability to stick to the topic at hand, as well as his limited engagement with the relevant historiography, is nowhere better illustrated than in Section 8.2, ‘Origins and Significance of “Aktion Reinhardt”,’ which despite the promising sounding title mostly turns out to be a reprint of a previous spiel on the origins of *Birkenau*.⁴⁵ As with so many of Mattogno’s recent texts, the spiel seems to have been inspired by his frustration at reading a single article by a mainstream historian, in this case an important essay by Jan Erik Schulte.⁴⁶ Schulte’s article does indeed discuss in passing an important way-station on the road to Aktion Reinhard, the SS and Police Strongpoints project assigned to Odilo Globocnik in July 1941, but this is really not an excuse for Mattogno to rehearse less than relevant details about the construction of Birkenau, especially if he is unwilling to also read Schulte’s **book**, which goes into considerably more

⁴⁵ Carlo Mattogno, ‘Genesi e funzioni del campo nel Birkenau’, AAARGH, June 2008, in English as ‘Origins and Function of the Birkenau Camp’, *Inconvenient History* 2/2, 2010; references repeated in verbatim sequence in Carlo Mattogno, ‘*Azione Reinhard*’ e ‘*Azione 1005*’, Genova: Effepi, 2008.

⁴⁶ Jan Erik Schulte, ‘Vom Arbeits- zum Vernichtungslager. Die Entstehungsgeschichte von Auschwitz-Birkenau 1941/42’, *VfZ* 50, 2002, pp.41-69. It is telling that Mattogno only ‘responded’ to Schulte after the *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte* were made available as free downloads from the IfZ website.

detail regarding the Strongpoints project⁴⁷, or the work of other authors such as Michael Thad Allen who have examined the same project and its context.⁴⁸ As we will see below, it is either Mattogno's inattentiveness and inability to read Schulte's article properly, or an act of flagrant and deliberate dishonesty, which leads him to make one of several howlers regarding Globocnik and the origins of Aktion Reinhard.

Other howlers stem from the near-systematic omission or ignorance of relevant literature. Among the many texts one might recommend to students in the English-speaking world and in Germany who were seeking to explore the origins of Aktion Reinhard are, of course, the works of Christopher Browning⁴⁹, essays by Christian Gerlach⁵⁰, the research of Bogdan Musial, above all an important article actually entitled 'The Origins of Operation Reinhard'⁵¹, as well as biographies of Odilo Globocnik and Hans Frank.⁵² Indeed, the theme has been examined in further dedicated essays by Dieter Pohl⁵³, Peter Klein⁵⁴ and Jacek Mlynarczyk.⁵⁵ Literally none of these texts are cited by Mattogno.⁵⁶ Indeed, a not insignificant interpretative controversy has erupted around the origins of Aktion Reinhard and the significance of the construction of Belzec in the autumn of 1941, partially centred around the evaluation of Eichmann's testimonies, with Musial and Browning ranged on one side against Gerlach, Pohl and Mlynarczyk on the other.⁵⁷ Evidently this dispute entirely

⁴⁷ Jan Erik Schulte, *Zwangsarbeit und Vernichtung: das Wirtschaftsimperium der SS; Oswald Pohl und das SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt 1933-45*. Paderborn, 2001. The Strongpoints project is examined exhaustively on pp.264-313, as indeed Schulte unsurprisingly reminds the reader of his article on p.46.

⁴⁸ Michael Thad Allen, *The Business of Genocide. The SS, Slave Labor and the Concentration Camps*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2002, especially Chapter 4.

⁴⁹ See Browning, *Nazi Policy*; Browning, *Collective Memories*; Browning, *Origins*.

⁵⁰ Gerlach, 'Wannsee Conference'.

⁵¹ Musial, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung*; as well as the essays 'The Origins of 'Operation Reinhard': The Decision-Making Process for the Mass Murder of the Jews in the Generalgouvernement', *Yad Vashem Studies* XXVIII, 2000, pp.113-153, and 'Ursprünge der „Aktion Reinhardt“: Planung des Massenmordes an den Juden im Generalgouvernement' in: Bogdan Musial (ed), *„Aktion Reinhardt“: Der Völkermord an den Juden im Generalgouvernement 1941-1944*. Osnabrück: fibre Verlag, 2004, pp.49-85

⁵² Siegfried Pucher, *'...in der Bewegung führend tätig.'* *Odilo Globocnik – Kämpfer für den „Anschluss“, Vollstrecker der Holocaust*, Klagenfurt, 1997; Popreczny, *Globocnik*; Rieger, *Globocnik*; Dieter Schenk, *Hans Frank. Hitlers Kronjurist und Generalgouverneur*. Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer Verlag, 2006

⁵³ Dieter Pohl, 'Die "Aktion Reinhardt" im Lichte der Historiographie' and 'Die Stellung des Distrikts Lublin in der "Endlösung der Judenfrage",' in: Musial (ed), *„Aktion Reinhardt“*, pp.15-47 and 87-107

⁵⁴ Peter Klein, 'Die Rolle der Vernichtungslager Kulmhof (Chelmo), Belzec und Auschwitz-Birkenau in den frühen Deportationsvorbereitungen' in Dittmar Dahmann and Gerhard Hirschfeld (eds), *Lager, Zwangsarbeit und Deportation. Dimensionen der Massenverbrechen in der Sowjetunion und in Deutschland 1933-1945*. Essen: Klartext Verlag, 1999, pp.459-81

⁵⁵ Jacek Andrzej Mlynarczyk, 'Mordinitiativen von unten. Die Rolle Arthur Greisers und Odilo Globocnik im Entscheidungsprozess zum Judenmord' in: Jacek Andrzej Mlynarczyk and Jochen Böhrer (eds), *Der Judenmord in den eingegliederten polnischen Gebieten 1939-1945*. Osnabrück: fibre Verlag, 2010, pp.27-56

⁵⁶ In fairness, Kues does cite from Musial's dissertation in MGK, *Sobibór*, p.169 n.488, in a different context. But this only begs a question: why did Kues not alert Mattogno to the existence of this book?

⁵⁷ For a summary of this controversy to the turn of the millennium, see Christian Gerlach, 'The Eichmann Interrogations in Holocaust Historiography', *HGS* 15/3, 2001, pp.428-452. On Eichmann's testimonies and memoirs in general, see Irmtrud Wojak, *Eichmanns Memoiren. Ein kritischer Essay*. Frankfurt am Main, 2001

passed Mattogno by. Instead, we are treated to the spectacle of citations from the proceedings of a conference⁵⁸ that took place *twenty-seven years ago* being passed off as the latest word on the subject,

Nor does Mattogno have much to say about the backdrop against which all decisions regarding Aktion Reinhard were taken, the radicalisation of policy and practice towards Jews in *both* eastern and western Poland as a consequence of Operation ‘Barbarossa’. The ‘Barbarossa’ build-up led to the suspension of Nazi resettlement projects, in particular the ‘third short range plan’, on the one hand, but also to a further round of ghettoisation on the other.

After all, ‘Barbarossa’ did not simply prompt further iterations of Nazi resettlement plans, but led directly to an escalation in the mass murder of Jews in Poland. Of the 1.3 million Jews of Soviet-annexed eastern Poland⁵⁹, more than 200,000 were murdered in the first six months of the occupation.⁶⁰ This wave of mass murder, already touched on in Chapter 2, had a number of implications for the radicalisation of Nazi Judenpolitik in Poland

⁵⁸ Eberhard Jäckel and Jürgen Rohwer (eds), *Der Mord an den Juden im Zweiten Weltkrieg. Entschlussbildung und Verwirklichung*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 1985, which, as Mattogno helpfully reminds us (MGK, *Sobibór*, p.227) is the proceedings of a conference held from May 3-5, 1984. This collection is cited five times in Chapter 8 of *Sobibór*.

⁵⁹ The most detailed estimate of the Jewish population of the kresy can be found in Mordecai Altshuler, *Soviet Jewry on the Eve of the Holocaust. A Social and Demographic Profile*. Jerusalem, 1998. Compared to the prewar population in 1939, the kresy saw a slight increase in Jewish population, caused by the arrival of over 300,000 refugees from western Poland. By early 1940, there were more than 72,000 refugees in Belorussia (see Emanuil Ioffe and Viacheslav Selemenev (intr.), ‘Jewish Refugees from Poland in Belorussia, 1939-1940’, *Jews in Eastern Europe*, Spring 1997, pp.45-50) and large numbers in Lithuania, whose presence was likewise tracked in the 1940 Soviet census of Wilno (cf. Victor H. Winston, ‘Observations on the Population of Vilnius: The Grim Years and the 1942 Census’, *Journal of Eurasian Geography and Economics*, 47/2, March-April 2006). Pohl, *Ostgalizien*, estimates 200,000 refugees in eastern Galicia. In June 1940, the NKVD organised deportations of many but not all of the refugees. The end of the Cold War and opening of the Soviet archives, as well as the strong interest of Polish society in the fate of Poles inhabiting the kresy, has led to the publication of more precise and also significantly *lower* figures than circulated in the Cold War era. Accordingly the fantasies of Sanning, *Dissolution of European Jewry*, as well as any negationist arguments relying on similar claims of mass deportations of Jews from eastern Poland, can be dismissed out of hand. For the older picture see Jan Tomasz Gross, *Revolution from Abroad. The Soviet Conquest of Poland’s Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia*. Oxford: OUP, 2002 (1st edition 1988) and his article ‘The Sovietization of Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia’ in Norman Davies and Antony Polonsky, Antony (eds), *Jews in Eastern Poland and the USSR, 1939-1946*. New York, 1991, pp.60-76. For the correct picture, see above all A.E. Gurianov (ed), *Repressii protiv poliakov i pol’skikh grazhdan*. Moscow: Zven’ia, 1997, as well as the comprehensive demographic survey by Andrzej Gawryszewski, *Ludność polski w XX wieku*. Warsaw, 2005. Courtesy of Professor Gawryszewski, the authors of this critique have previously published detailed transport lists of the NKVD deportations from the kresy: <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2007/10/crazy-world-of-walter-sanning-part-5.html>

⁶⁰ For regional studies, see for the Wilno region Dieckmann, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik*; for Bezirk Białystok Szymon Datner, ‘Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w Okręgu Białostockim. Strukturą administracyjną okręgu Białostockiego’, *BZIH* 60, 1966, pp.3-48; for GK Weissruthenien and the Belorussian part of GK Wolhynien Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*; for Volhynia Spector, *Holocaust of Volhynian Jewry*; for eastern Galicia Pohl, *Ostgalizien*; Sandkühler, *Endlösung in Ostgalizien*; covering both Galicia and Volhynia see also Alexander Kruglov, *The Losses Suffered By Ukrainian Jews in 1941-1944*. Kharkov: Tarbut Laam, 2005; Kruglov, ‘Jewish Losses in Ukraine, 1941-1944’, p.278, calculates that 87,500 Jews died in regions of the Ukraine which were formerly part of eastern Poland.

as a whole. Firstly, many of the units participating in the killings had in fact served as occupation forces in the western Generalgouvernement prior to 'Barbarossa'. For example, Police Battalion 309, responsible for the chaotic and violent massacre in Białystok at the start of July 1941, had been based in the Radom district during the winter of 1940-41.⁶¹ More striking still was the commitment of forces of the Security Police under the command of BdS Ost Eberhard Schöngarth, deployed to eastern Poland as the so-called Einsatzgruppe zbV. Acting under orders from Heydrich⁶² which likewise mobilised the Gestapo of East Prussia as Einsatzkommando Tilsit and an Einsatzkommando from Stapostelle Zichenau, Einsatzgruppe zbV was formed by mobilising 230 Sipo officers and men from the Security Police of the western Generalgouvernement. The largest force, 150 men from KdS Krakau, formed Einsatzkommando zbV Lemberg, divided into four troops, which took over eastern Galicia from Einsatzgruppe C and became the new KdS Lemberg in September 1941.⁶³ The Warsaw Security Police provided at least 118 men as Einsatzkommando zbV Białystok, with 4 troops slated for Białystok, Grodno, Minsk and Nowogrodek. In mid-July it was operating in all these locations with the exception of Minsk: the troop was instead to be found in Baranovichi. Meanwhile, the Lublin Security Police (KdS Lublin) detached an initial 30 men as Einsatzkommando zbV Brest, divided into troops for Brest-Litovsk and Pinsk, with a further troop at first slated for Gomel. By mid-July, Einsatzkommando zbV Brest was operating with troops in Brest, Pinsk, Luck, Rowno, Kowel and Rawa Ruska.⁶⁴ With some few exceptions, most notably Trupp Bonifer assigned to Minsk, which eventually found its way into KdS Weissruthenien, the troops of Einsatzkommandos zbV Białystok and Brest were withdrawn *back* to their home bases in Warsaw and Lublin by September 1941. Among the Sipo men who spent their summer holidays engaged in 'execution tourism' in eastern Poland was Josef Blösche, better known to survivors of the Warsaw ghetto as 'Frankenstein' and the SS man photographed in the Strop report taking a small boy prisoner.⁶⁵

⁶¹ Stefan Klemp, 'Kölner Polizeibataillone in Osteuropa: Die Polizeibataillone 69, 309, 319 und die Polizeireservekompanie Köln' in Harald Buhlan and Werner Jung (eds), *Wessen Freund und Wessen Helfer? Die Kölner Polizei im Nationalsozialismus*, Cologne: Emons Verlag, 2000, pp.277-98; Curilla, *Judenmord in Polen*, pp.244-255.

⁶² FS Chef der Sipo u.d.SD an alle Einsatzgruppenchefs, Befehl Nr. 6, 4.7.41, gez. Heydrich, RGVA 500-1-25, pp.398-9

⁶³ EM 11, 3.7.41, p.7; Pohl, *Ostgalizien*, p.73. Among the officers transferred from Cracow to Galicia was Hans Krüger, who swiftly acquired a reputation for viciousness once in the Stanislawow region. See Dieter Pohl, 'Hans Krüger and the Murder of Jews in the Region of Stanislawow (Galicia)', *YVS* 26, 1998, pp.239-264 as well as 'Hans Krüger – der 'König von Stanislau'' in Mallmann/Paul (eds), *Karrieren der Gewalt*, pp.134-144

⁶⁴ EM 11, 3.7.41, p.7; EM 25, 17.7.41, p.2; Tätigkeitsbericht Einsatzgruppe B, published in Klein (ed), *Einsatzgruppen*, p.379. Paymaster correspondence from Einsatzkommando zbV Białystok survives in RGVA 1323-2-59, giving comprehensive name lists of the assigned officers and enlisted men.

⁶⁵ Vernehmungsprotokolle Josef Blösche, 11.1-10.3.1967, BStU ZUV 15/1, p.121ff

The activities of Einsatzgruppe zbV are reported coldly and clinically in the Einsatzgruppen reports, detailing execution and arrest figures usually by Kommando and time frame, but with noticeable gaps. From July 21 to September 9, 1941, a total of 19,338 executions were recorded, overwhelmingly of Jews; but this does not fully account for the carnage wrought by Schöngarth's men.⁶⁶ Executions by Einsatzkommando zbV Białystok can be identified in SS reports⁶⁷ as well in military records⁶⁸ from the first three weeks of July. Moreover, Trupp Pinsk of Einsatzkommando zbV Brest under SS-Hauptsturmführer Hess assisted the SS-Cavalry Brigade in the notorious action of early August 1941 in Pinsk, claiming the execution of 4,500 Jews to its own account.⁶⁹ With this action, SS men stationed in the western Generalgouvernement crossed the threshold of a four figure mass murder.

Secondly, consciousness of the escalation to mass murder and genocide further east spread rapidly through the SS hierarchy in the Generalgouvernement. Not only did many of the men of Einsatzgruppe zbV return home to their postings in the Warsaw and Lublin districts, but the BdS Schöngarth as well as the HSSPF, Friedrich-Wilhelm Krüger, were on the distribution list to receive the RSHA-compiled Einsatzgruppen reports.⁷⁰ Thus all SS decision-making in the Generalgouvernement was made against the backdrop of a growing awareness of the larger and larger numbers of Jews reported as executed in the occupied Soviet Union.

This awareness can likewise be demonstrated for the prime mover within the decision-making process leading up to Aktion Reinhard, the SSPF Lublin, Odilo Globocnik. On July 17, 1941, Himmler visited Lublin to confer with Globocnik and issued a series of orders. Firstly, he nominated Globocnik as "Plenipotentiary for the Establishment of SS and

⁶⁶ EM 43, 5.8.41, NARA T175/233/2721775; EM 47, 9.8.41, T175/233/2721840; EM Nr. 56, 18.8.41, T175/233/2721972; EM 58, 20.8.41, T175/233/2721965; EM 66, 28.8.41, p.2-3; EM 67, 29.8.41, T175/233/272167; EM 78, 9.8.41, T175/233/2722248 EM 91, 22.9.41, T175/233/2722501

⁶⁷ See Polizeilicher Lagebericht Einsatzgruppe B, 9-16.7.41, published in Johannes Hürter, 'Auf dem Weg zur Militäropposition. Tresckow, von Gersdorff, der Vernichtungskrieg und der Judenmord. Neue Dokumente über das Verhältnis der Heeresgruppe Mitte zur Einsatzgruppe B im Jahr 1941', *VfZ* 3/2004, pp.527-562

⁶⁸ An unnamed Einsatzgruppen unit executed 30 male Jews in Bielsk on July 5, 1941. From known deployment locations, this was the work of Trupp Bielsk of Einsatzkommando Białystok. Der Befehlshaber der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD (Einsatzgruppe), Bekanntmachung, n.d, NARA T501/2/142

⁶⁹ EM 58, 20.8.41, NARA T175/233/2721965. As shown in Cüppers, *Wegbereiter des Shoahs*, p.158, the SS-Cavalry Brigade demonstrably lost track of its bodycounts in this operation, misfiling morning and evening signals. Eyewitness accounts estimate up to 9,000 Jews were killed at Pinsk in the course of the *Aktion*, a figure which is rendered entirely plausible by the presence of two bodycount-claiming units, of which one had as mentioned, lost track of its killings. For the context see also Rozenblat/Elenskaia, *Pinskie evrei*.

⁷⁰ Cf. Klaus-Michel Mallmann, Andrej Angrick, Jürgen Matthäus, Martin Cüppers (eds), *Die Ereignismeldungen UdSSR' 1941. Dokumente der Einsatzgruppen in der Sowjetunion*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2011

Police Strongpoints in the New Eastern Space”.⁷¹ Secondly, he ordered that “the ancient German city centre [of Lublin] should be included as part of the overall construction plan for the SS and police quarter” and that “the operation ‘In Search of German Blood’ will be expanded to include the entire Generalgouvernement; a major settlement area will be created in the German colonies near Zamosc.” In the same missive, Himmler ordered the establishment of a new concentration camp in Lublin, the future Majdanek camp, for 25-50,000 prisoners. The purpose of the camp was to supply labour for SS enterprises supporting the establishment of the Strongpoints and to support the Germanisation of the Lublin district.⁷² Thus, Himmler placed multiple tasks on Globocnik’s shoulders – the Germanisation of the Lublin district, the construction of Strongpoints in the occupied Soviet Union, and the supervision of the construction of the Majdanek concentration camp, which would serve both of the first two aims.

From the outset, Globocnik was ordered to cooperate with SS-Gruppenführer Oswald Pohl in his capacity as ultimate head of Hauptamt Haushalt und Bauten, and thus with the newly reorganised Amt II Bauten under Hans Kammler, only recently transferred to the SS from the Luftwaffe construction branch.⁷³ In similar fashion, although the future KL Lublin was to be formally subordinated to the Inspectorate of Concentration Camps, with the veteran SS-Standartenführer Karl Koch of Buchenwald assigned as commandant, Globocnik was to exert considerable influence over Majdanek in its initial development. The head of the same construction inspectorate (*Bauinspektion*), SS-Sturmbannführer Lenzer, was tasked with the construction of Majdanek while also overseeing the construction of Globocnik’s strongpoints. In August 1941, Kammler ordered Lenzer to secure Globocnik’s approval for the layout of an interim camp accommodating 6,000 prisoners.⁷⁴ This duality of command was to lead to serious conflicts between Globocnik’s staff and Kammler-Pohl’s organisation.

The purpose of both the Strongpoints and Majdanek was to lay the groundwork for an SS infrastructure in support of Himmler’s settlement plans for Eastern Europe. The Lublin

⁷¹ Himmler an Globocnik, 17.7.1941, NARA-BDC SS-OA Odilo Globocnik. On the Strongpoints project in general, see Schulte, *Zwangsarbeit und Vernichtung*, pp.264-313

⁷² Himmler, Vermerk, 21.7.1941, NARA-BDC SS-OA Odilo Globocnik, also published in Czeslaw Madajczyk (ed), *Zamojszczyzna – Sonderlaboratorium SS: zbior dokumentow polskich i niemieckich z okresu okupacji hitlerowskiej*. Warsaw, 1979, t.1, p.26ff; cf. Tomasz Kranz, ‘Das KL Lublin - zwischen Planung und Realisierung’, in: Ulrich Herbert, Karin Orth, Christoph Dieckmann (eds), *Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager - Entwicklung und Struktur*, Bd. I, Göttingen 1998, pp. 363-389

⁷³ On Kammler see Allen, *Business of Genocide*, pp.140-8; Rainer Fröbe, ‘Hans Kammler – Technokrat der Vernichtung’ in Ronald Smelser and Enrico Syring (eds), *Die SS: Elite unter dem Totenkopf. 30 Lebensläufe*. Paderborn, 2000, pp.305-319.

⁷⁴ Der Chef des Amtes II-Bauten an den Leiter der Bauinspektion beim Sonderbeauftragten des RF-SS für die Errichtung von SS- u. Polizeistützpunkte im neuen Osttraum SS-Stubaf Lenzer, Betr.: Zwischenlager Lublin, 6.8.1941, gez. Kammler, BA DH KL/Hafta, Verschiedene Nr. 7 (Getto).

district was slated for rapid Germanisation, while the newly occupied Soviet territories were to be Germanised in a long-term project, the Generalplan Ost. Two days after the start of 'Barbarossa', Himmler had met with his chief settlement expert, the agriculture professor and SS-Oberführer Konrad Meyer-Hetling of the RFKDV and tasked him with drawing up a preliminary draft of the GPO.⁷⁵ This was then delivered on July 15, shortly before Himmler's visit to Lublin.⁷⁶ Quite separately from Himmler's plans, Hitler decided the following day, at a meeting with Rosenberg, Bormann, Göring and Keitel but not attended by Himmler, that the Baltic states and Crimea would be annexed into the Reich.⁷⁷ This forced Meyer to adjust his planning, beginning a cycle of drafting and redrafting of the GPO that was to last until the end of 1942. It did not, however, affect the immediate preparations for the Strongpoints.

Globocnik's task of establishing police bases was intended to identify and carve out suitable locations for garrisons of the Ordnungspolizei which could then be used as settlement bridgeheads. The project thus harmonised security and settlement aims, and involved multiple SS main offices. The first orders for the Strongpoints project went out on July 30⁷⁸ and 31, with Globocnik outlining the organisation that would be tasked with the construction of the strongpoints.⁷⁹ To this end, he also established an 'Office of the Plenipotentiary of SS and Police Strongpoints in the New Eastern Space' on August 8, 1941. SS-Obersturmführer Hanelt was thereby tasked with the "theoretical" elaboration of the "total planning of the SS Strongpoints" as well as the "Jew-cleansing" (Judenbereinigung).⁸⁰

Far from confining himself to planning 'positive' Germanisation, Globocnik thus intended to harness the settlement plans to the solution of the "Jewish Question". Rudolf Höss, commandant of Auschwitz, wrote in his Krakow jail cell that Globocnik had concocted:

⁷⁵ *Dienstkalender*, p.179 (24.6.41)

⁷⁶ Meyer an Himmler, 15.7.1941 in: Czeslaw Madajczyk (ed), *Vom Generalplan Ost zum Generalsiedlungsplan*, Munich, 1994, p.14. The plan itself is lost, only the cover letter survives, but other sources enable its reconstruction. See Karl Heinz Roth, ' "Generalplan Ost" – "Gesamtplan Ost". Forschungsstand, Quellenprobleme, neue Ergebnisse' in Mechthild Rössler and Sabine Schleiermacher (eds), *Der "Generalplan Ost". Hauptlinien der nationalsozialistischen Planungs- und Vernichtungspolitik*, Berlin, 1993, pp.25-117

⁷⁷ Vermerk über die Besprechung am 16.7.1941, L-221, IMT XXXVIII, pp.86-94

⁷⁸ There are extant orders signed by Himmler, Daluge and Heydrich. Der RFSS und Chef der Deutschen Polizei im RMI O.-Kdo I g Nr. 23/41 (g), 25.7.1941, gez. Himmler; Der RFSS und Chef der Deutschen Polizei im RMI O-Kdo. I g Nr 22/41 (g), Planung und Bau der SS- und Polizeistützpunkte, 31.7.1941, gez. Daluge, RGVA 1323-1-50, pp.9-R, 12-13; CSSD IV A 1 d B.Nr. 573 B/41 g., Beabsichtigte Organisation der Polizei in den besetzten Ostgebieten, 30.7.41, gez. Heydrich, TsDAVOV 3576-4-116, pp.60-2.

⁷⁹ Der Beauftragte für die Errichtung der SS- und Polizeistützpunkte im neuen Ostraum, Organisations-Befehl Nr. 1, 31.7.41, gez. Globocnik, TsDAVOV 3576-4-116, pp.63-65 (USHMM RG31.002M/11)

⁸⁰ SS-Obersturmführer Hanelt, Notiz für den 9.8.1941, AIPN CA 891/6, p.11, published in full in Michael G. Esch, 'Die "Forschungsstelle für Ostunterkünfte" in Lublin (Dokument)', 1999, 11/2, 1996, pp.62-96, here pp.68ff

fantastic plans of bases stretching all the way to the Urals... He didn't see any difficulties here and rejected all criticism with a superior sweep of the hand. Insofar as he did not need them for labour at "his" bases, he wanted to liquidate the Jews in these areas on the spot.⁸¹

Höss' account of Globocnik's intentions towards Soviet Jews, their property and labour potential receives indirect confirmation from an order of mid-September 1941: Globocnik forbade the payment of wages to Jews working for the SS and Police, as "Jews undertake forced labour".⁸²

The siting, moreover, of the initial Strongpoints placed Globocnik's project in direct contact with several sites of mass extermination. Four main strongpoints were established under the auspices of Globocnik's organisation. Three were located in the territory of the planned Reichskommissariat Ostland, in Riga, Minsk and in Mogilev; the course of the battle of Moscow meant that the latter site remained under military administration. The fourth site shifted first from Starokonstantinov to Zwiachel (Novograd Volynsky)⁸³ and finally Kiev in Ukraine. Subsidiary sites were set up on the orders of the Hauptamt Ordnungspolizei and by the regional HSSPFs. For the territory of Weissruthenien, von dem Bach ordered the occupation of Strongpoints in Białystok, Baranovichi, Bobruisk and Vitebsk in addition to the major centres at Minsk and Mogilev.⁸⁴ The four main sites, however, received the most attention and resources. Globocnik's staff cooperated with the construction inspectorates set up by Oswald Pohl in the establishment of the bases. Private contract firms were sent to the occupied Soviet Union to begin construction.⁸⁵ One such contractor, Firma Macher of Munich, staged out to Ukraine from Auschwitz.⁸⁶ The SS officers tasked to lead the individual Strongpoints in the Soviet Union were all Globocnik men who later became heavily involved in Aktion Reinhardt. In Riga, the representative from Lublin was SS-

⁸¹ Rudolf Höss, *Commandant of Auschwitz*, London: Pan Books Edition, 1959, S.258 (Appendix 7)

⁸² SSPF Lublin an der Leiter der Aussenstellen des Beauftragten des RFSS für die Errichtung der SS und Pol.Stützpunkte im neuen Ostrum, 15.9.41, GPD 359, PRO HW16/32. Cf. also the British intelligence analysis in Summary of German Police Decodes 1-30.9.41, ZIP/MSG29, p.6, PRO HW 16/6 pt1: "The problem of labour for the construction of these bases has a simple solution: the Jews. A Jewish work-command (Arbeitskdo) is to be inaugurated for the construction of a troop supply depot on confiscated ground in Minsk (10.9.41/20). It is a particularly acceptable solution since by an order from SSPF Lublin it is forbidden to pay Jews any wages (15.9.41/9)."

⁸³ Schulte, *Zwangsarbeit und Vernichtung*, pp.270-2

⁸⁴ Aussenstelle Russland Mitte an SS-Brigaf. Globocnik, 11.10.41, GPD 398 (21.10.41), item 20, PRO HW16/32

⁸⁵ SS-Ostuf Conrad an Bauinspektion der Waffen SS Nord, Hstuf List, z.Hd Baugesellschaft Eigen, Ostuf Uhrmann, Riga, 20.10.41, GDP 428 (5.11.41), item 32, PRO HW 16/32.

⁸⁶ Zentrale Bauinspektion Lublin an Bauinspektion Süd, SS-Ustuf Zingraf, Kiew, 10.11.41, GPD 482 (10.12.41 No 1), item 33, PRO HW 16/32

Obersturmführer Georg Michalsen, later Globocnik's deportation expert.⁸⁷ In Minsk, SS-Obersturmführer Kurt Claasen, also a future Aktion Reinhard deportation organiser, was assigned, while in Mogilev, Sturmbannführer Dolp, former commandant of the Belzec labour camp in 1940, and Globocnik's future chief of staff Hauptsturmführer Hermann Höfle, were involved.⁸⁸ Finally, the commander of the SS-und Polizeistützpunkt in Kiev was SS-Obersturmführer Richard Thomalla, future architect of Sobibor.

Neither Globocnik nor his plenipotentiaries could have been unaware of the mass executions of Jews in Riga, Minsk, Mogilev and Kiev during the summer and autumn of 1941. Nor is it likely that Globocnik and his men were unaware of the killing experiments, including the use of carbon monoxide gas, that were carried out against psychiatric patients in Minsk and Mogilev in the same time-frame.⁸⁹ Indeed, Georg Wippern, later Globocnik's chief of administration, testified after the war to overhearing Höfle and Michalsen joking about the gassing experiments they had conducted in the Soviet Union.⁹⁰ There is no evidence that Höfle, who later hid behind his posting to Mogilev to cover up his involvement in Aktion Reinhard⁹¹, had in fact initiated or participated in the experimental gassing at Mogilev, and thus was surely boasting, but his exposure and close proximity to an experimental mass killing using carbon monoxide generated by engine exhaust is more than striking.

A fifth major site, Lwow, evolved from a Strongpoint into the major regional labour and transit camp for the Galicia district. The future Janowska camp evolved from enterprises identified by Fritz Gebauer, director of the Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke (DAW) in Lwow, as potentially useful for the "Strongpoint Lemberg".⁹² The first guards were taken from the SS-Sonderkommando Dirlewanger, then stationed in Lublin under Globocnik's command.⁹³

⁸⁷ Cf. Andrej Angrick, 'Georg Michaelson – Handlungsreisender der 'Endlösung' ' in Klaus-Michel Mallmann und Gerhard Paul (hg.), *Karrieren der Gewalt. Nationalsozialistische Täterbiographien*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2004, pp.156-165

⁸⁸ SSPF Lublin an Aussenstelle Mitte, SS Ustuf Claasen, Minsk, 14.10.41, GPD 401 (23.10.41), item 40, PRO HW16/32.

⁸⁹ On these experiments, see Chapter 4 below, as well as Angelika Ebbinghaus and Gerd Preissler, 'Die Ermordung psychisch kranker Menschen in der Sowjetunion' in Götz Aly et al (eds), *Aussonderung und Tod. Die klinische Hinrichtung der Unbrauchbaren*. Berlin, 1985, pp.75-107

⁹⁰ Vernehmungprotokoll Georg Wippern, Saarbrücken, 6.12.1962, BAL B162/208 AR-Z 251/59, Bd.9, pp.1715-1723

⁹¹ See Chapter 1 and Höfle's interrogations compiled in Ajenstat/Buk/Harlan, (eds), *Hermann Höfle*.

⁹² Fritz Gebauer an SSPF Galizien, 21.8.1941, AIPN CA 891/3, p.1. Gebauer's note was cc'ed to the Lublin Dienststelle for Strongpoints and the SS-Mannschaftshaus in Lublin.

⁹³ Thomas Sandkühler, 'Das Zwangsarbeitslager Lemberg-Janowska 1941-1944' in Ulrich Herbert, Karin Orth, Christoph Dieckmann (eds), *Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager - Entwicklung und Struktur*, Bd. II, Göttingen, 1998, pp.606-635. Globocnik men similarly provided the supervisory cadres for the nascent network of labour camps in the Galicia district. Most came from the staff of a forced labour camp in Biala Podlaska closed in the summer of 1941. Sandkühler, *Endlösung in Ostgalizien*, p.495 note 98

Thomas Sandkühler has identified circumstantial evidence that Janowska was considered as a deportation destination for Jews from the Reich in late 1941. He has also emphasised a separate development, namely contacts between the director of the health department of the Governor of the Galicia District, Dr Dopheide, and the T4 euthanasia organisation in Berlin during November 1941.⁹⁴ The combination does not indicate, as Sandkühler has speculated, that a potential extermination camp was planned for Lwow, but it does underscore the widespread knowledge inside the German occupation authorities across Eastern Europe of the availability of specialist techniques for killing: Dopheide's request was in order to eliminate the patients of the Lwow psychiatric hospital. As Linden could not supply T4 personnel, Dopheide's staff opted to starve the psychiatric patients to death: a total of 1,179 patients died by June 1, 1942.⁹⁵

This was not the first time that the T4 euthanasia program was connected to the Generalgouvernement. In 1940, Jewish psychiatric patients were collected in a waystation asylum at Wunstorf in Hannover before being transported onwards to T4 killing centres. Rather than send out death certificates from Wunstorf or a T4 centre, in order to maintain deception, the euthanasia organisation opted to notify relatives that the Jewish patients had been transferred to the 'Cholm-II' or 'Chelm-II'⁹⁶ hospital in Chelm county of the Lublin district. In actual fact the notifications were drafted in Berlin. A courier travelled to Lublin in order to mail out any correspondence, in all probability this was Erich Fettke, later the courier between T4 and Aktion Reinhard.⁹⁷ In reality, there was no psychiatric hospital at Chelm at all; its 441 inmates had been murdered on 12 January 1940 and the facility was closed for the duration of the war.⁹⁸

Whether the SS in Lublin knew of the T4 deception over Chelm or not, in September 1941, Victor Brack and Philipp Bouhler, the directors of T4, visited Globocnik in Lublin.⁹⁹ Brack, whose testimony it is from which we know of this visit, denied that the meeting had anything to do with extermination camps. A more plausible interpretation of the contact is that Brack and Bouhler wanted to discuss the possibility of setting up a new, more secret

⁹⁴ Pohl, *Ostgalizien*, p.115 and Sandkühler, *Endlösung in Ostgalizien*, p. 159, both citing Dopheide an Linden, 24.11.41; Linden an Dopheide, 10.12.41, DALO R-35-13-158, pp.1-3.

⁹⁵ Dressen/Riess, p.170; *Pacjenci i pracownicy szpitali psychiatrycznych w Polsce zamordowani przez okupanta hitlerowskiego i los tych szpitali w latach 1939-1945*, Warsaw, 1989, vol. 1, pp.90-3; Pohl, *Ostgalizien*, p.115, citing Krankenstandsmeldungen Kulparkow an Abt Gesundheit/GG, DALO R-35-9-433

⁹⁶ Chelm and Cholm can be found interchangeably in many German sources.

⁹⁷ Friedlander, *Origins of Nazi Genocide*, pp.274-283.

⁹⁸ Tadeusz Nasierowski, *Zagłada osób z zaburzeniami psychicznymi w okupowanej Polsce. Początek ludobójstwa*. Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Neriton, 2008, pp.149-153

⁹⁹ NMT, Case 1, Transcript, p.7514 (testimony of Victor Brack)

ethanasia centre in the Lublin district after the suspension of T4 for German civilian psychiatric patients on August 24, 1941.¹⁰⁰ At this time, four centres were still operational – Hadamar, Bernburg, Sonnenstein and Hartheim – while Brandenburg and Grafeneck had closed in 1940. Three of the four centres were involved in the so-called Aktion 14 f 13, the killing of concentration camp inmates in the euthanasia centres, and would continue to be so involved for some considerable time to come.¹⁰¹ Hadamar, with over 90 staff, was however not involved due to its geographical location and was thus at a total standstill.¹⁰² The T4 organisation was thus in something of a holding pattern, with one out of four facilities totally idle and the remaining three restricted to exterminating only concentration camp inmates. At the end of November 1941, a meeting of leading T4 personnel at Sonnenstein was assured that the August ‘stop’ did not mean the end of T4, which would continue.¹⁰³

Thus, the interpretation offered by a number of historians, that the end of T4 enabled a virtually immediate transfer of the personnel to Lublin, must be rejected. In actual fact, at most two T4 personnel were sent to Lublin before December 1941, Josef Oberhauser and Christian Wirth, who made at least one return trip to Germany as well. But the contacts forged in September 1941 as well as the transfer of Oberhauser created a third source of inspiration for Globocnik alongside his knowledge of the mass extermination of Jews in the Soviet Union in general and the evident knowledge of the killing experiment using gas at Mogilev. Moreover, there is some evidence that Globocnik and his staff had themselves already experimented with gas many months beforehand. According to the postwar testimony of Ferdinand Hahnzog, the Commander of the Gendarmerie of the Lublin district from January 1940 to April 1942, he knew of a “primitive facility near Belzec hidden deep in the forest bordering on Galicia... consisting of a sealed shed into which Security Police and the SD from Zamosc pumped exhaust fumes from the vehicles used to bring the ‘morituri’

¹⁰⁰ On the ‘stop’ see Ernst Klee, *“Euthanasie” im NS-Staat: Die “Vernichtung lebensunwerten Lebens”*. Frankfurt: Fischer Verlag, 1983, p.339; Hans-Walter Schmuhl, *Rassenhygiene, Nationalsozialismus, Euthanasie. Von der Verhütung zur Vernichtung „lebensunwerten Lebens“, 1890–1945*, Göttingen 1987, p. 210;

¹⁰¹ On Aktion 14 f 13 see in general Walter Grode, *Die „Sonderbehandlung 14f13“ in den Konzentrationslagern des Dritten Reiches. Ein Beitrag zur Dynamik faschistischer Vernichtungspolitik*, Frankfurt an Main, 1987; Klee, *Euthanasie*, pp.345-355. T4 doctors’ commissions continued to visit concentration camps after the ‘stop’ on civilian T4, for example Dachau was visited in September 1941, cf. Mennecke’s letter to his wife of 3.9.41, published in Chroust (ed), *Mennecke*, pp.198-200

¹⁰² Patricia Heberer, ‘Eine Kontinuität der Tötungsoperationen. T4-Täter und die “Aktion Reinhard”’, in: Musial (ed), *Aktion Reinhardt*, p.291

¹⁰³ Affidavit of Hans Bodo Gorgass, 23.2.1947, NO-3010

there.” Hahnzog dated these experiments to the “spring of 1941, if not earlier, in the autumn of 1940”.¹⁰⁴

Let us recap: in July 1941, Himmler ordered Globocnik to establish SS and Police Strongpoints in the occupied Soviet Union while he *also* issued instructions to force through the Germanisation of the Lublin district. According to Höss, Globocnik wanted to kill all the Jews other than workers for ‘his’ bases. A subordinate, Hanelt, was tasked with the *planning* of the Strongpoints and the ‘Jew-cleansing’. Through the Strongpoints in the Soviet Union, Globocnik and his staff were aware of the escalating mass extermination of Jews and also of killing experiments, a connection confirmed by Georg Wipperfurth. Men from Globocnik’s Security Police command had even participated in a high four figure massacre of Jews at Pinsk. Independently of these developments, the T4 organisation contacted Globocnik apparently with a view to restarting euthanasia in the Lublin district, and dispatched at least two T4 personnel for shorter or longer periods of time in the autumn of 1941. According to his Gendarmerie chief, Hahnzog, Globocnik’s staff had also possibly already conducted killing experiments themselves involving gas from engine exhaust.

On October 1, 1941, Globocnik sent the following letter to Himmler:

Reichsführer! In line with the implementation of your aims regarding the district, I passed on the detailed proposal to Obergruppenführer Krüger yesterday. SS-Obergruppenführer Krüger wished to present them immediately to you. He regarded this as urgent in the light of the emergency in which ethnic Germans now find themselves. This has taken such serious proportions that one can easily claim their situation in Polish times was better... Since the preparations for concentrating them are now complete, implementation could commence immediately.... In this connection, I would also like to point out that by bringing them together in concentrated settlements and by a radical and thorough forced removal of alien ethnic elements here in the Lublin district, we can achieve a substantial political pacification. Because both the political activism among the Poles and Ukrainians and the influence of the Jews, augmented by the influx of thousands of escaped POWs, have taken on a form here that here, too, simply in regard to implications for security policy, necessitates a rapid response... SS-Obergruppenführer Krüger has ordered me to request you, Reichsführer, for the possibility of an audience with you in the near future.¹⁰⁵

This audience was granted on October 13, when Globocnik and Krüger met with Himmler for two hours.¹⁰⁶ Neither a protocol of the meeting nor the ‘detailed proposal’ sent on September 30 survived, but something of their content can be inferred from a letter from the Race and Resettlement Main Office representative in the Lublin district, SS-

¹⁰⁴ Musial, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung*, pp.205-6

¹⁰⁵ Globocnik an Himmler, 1.10.1941, NARA-BDC SS-OA Odilo Globocnik

¹⁰⁶ *Dienstkalender*, p.233 (13.10.1941)

Hauptsturmführer Müller, two days after the Himmler-Krüger-Globocnik meeting, in which Müller wrote that Globocnik saw “the gradual cleansing of the entire Generalgouvernement of Jews and Poles as necessary in order to secure the eastern territories... He is full of excellent and far-reaching plans on this. The only thing that prevents him from realising them is the limited power of his present position”.¹⁰⁷

On October 17, 1941, Hans Frank visited Lublin together with Ernst Böpple, undersecretary of state in the GG administration, and held a meeting with Globocnik, the district governor, Ernst Zörner, and his administrative chief Wilhelm Engler. The third item on the agenda was the “Jewish Question”. The meeting decided that “all Jews, with the exception of indispensable craftsmen and the like, are to be evacuated from Lublin. Initially, 1,000 Jews will be transferred across the Bug River. Responsibility for this is placed in the hands of the SSPF. The Stadthauptmann will select the Jews to be evacuated.”¹⁰⁸ Two weeks later, construction work began on Belzec.¹⁰⁹

The chain of documents cited above, covering the period from 1 to 17 October 1941, has been both overinterpreted (by conventional historians) and underinterpreted (by Mattogno). Let us deal first with the overinterpretations. A number of historians, foremost among them Bogdan Musial, followed closely by Christopher Browning, as well as writers such as Jules Schelvis, have taken the sequence of documents and meetings to mean that a decision had been taken to exterminate *all* Jews of the Generalgouvernement in October 1941. Musial in particular has argued that this decision was taken separately to a more general decision to enact a Europe-wide Final Solution¹¹⁰, while others, such as Browning, see the decision-making in Poland as part of the crystallisation of a “Hitler intent” emerging in October 1941, which may or may not be distinct from a Hitler *order*.¹¹¹ As we have seen in Chapter 2, the overall decision making process was substantially more complex and evolutionary than is often assumed by those who think in terms of a simple Hitler order.

¹⁰⁷ SS-Hstuf Helmut Müller, Bericht über die Verhältnisse in Lublin, 15.10.1941, NARA-BDC SS-OA Odilo Globocnik, also NO-5875

¹⁰⁸ Musial, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung*, p.196, quoting from an unpublished portion of the Diensttagebuch

¹⁰⁹ Vernehmung Stanislaw Kozak, 14.10.1945, BAL B162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd. 6, pp.1129-30

¹¹⁰ Musial, ‘The Origins of ‘Operation Reinhard’,’ and ‘Ursprünge der „Aktion Reinhardt“.’

¹¹¹ Browning, *Origins*, pp.258-265, is the definitive statement of an argument centred around the interpretation of Eichmann’s postwar testimonies of a visit to Lublin in which Eichmann claimed to have encountered a police captain, obviously Christian Wirth, experimenting with engine exhaust gas chambers. The dating of this visit was usually given by Eichmann as the autumn of 1941, but on at least one occasion he dated the visit and the ‘sequence’ of visits to key sites to the winter. As with Höss, the fact that Eichmann often portrayed himself as a receiver rather than an initiator of murderous orders means that his datings cannot be trusted, as an earlier Hitler order (received from Heydrich) and earlier visit would relieve him of moral and historical responsibility for initiatives in the autumn of 1941.

The Musial-Browning interpretation, however, is contested by among other historians, Christian Gerlach, Jacek Młynarczyk, Dieter Pohl and Peter Longerich.¹¹² In our view, it is untenable for the following reasons. Firstly, Globocnik's proposal of October 1 as well as the Lublin meeting of October 17 refer explicitly only to the Lublin district. Thus it is more plausible to see the construction of Belzec in relation to a limited project to reduce the Jewish population of the Lublin district in conjunction with the Germanisation of the district. Indeed, the October 17 meeting refers only to the evacuation of the Jews of Lublin *city*, a town which Himmler had ordered to be rapidly Germanised in July 1941. Secondly, the plans discussed on October 17 were broached within a very tight circle consisting primarily of officials from the Lublin district. As we will see shortly, other officials in the GG administration were not initiated until December 1941. Thirdly, contrary to Musial's speculation¹¹³, the construction of Belzec was incompatible with a plan to exterminate all Jews in the Generalgouvernement even over a two or three year period. As we will see later on, Belzec was closed at the end of 1942 when the available mass grave space overflowed after 434,000 victims. Thirdly, there was an obvious shortage of manpower in the autumn of 1941, as the T4 personnel had not yet arrived and many of Globocnik's men were currently posted in the Soviet Union and caught up in the Strongpoints project.¹¹⁴ This explains why Globocnik wanted to start small by reducing the Jewish population of Lublin *city*, in contrast to the plans enacted in the Warthegau at the same time to reduce the entire Jewish population of the Warthegau by 100,000.¹¹⁵ Koppe, unlike Globocnik, disposed of a ready-made killing squad, the Sonderkommando Lange.¹¹⁶ In both cases, however, permission from Hitler was not needed as both were local solutions to specific problems arising from Germanisation and resettlement projects. All that needed to be done was to coordinate between the local SS and civil administration.

Mattogno, on the other hand, underinterprets this decision-making sequence. Indeed, he is apparently totally unaware of two of the four crucial sources involved, Globocnik's

¹¹² Gerlach, *Krieg Ernährung Völkermord*, esp.pp.269-272; Pohl, 'Die "Aktion Reinhard" im Lichte der Historiographie' and 'Die Stellung des Distrikts Lublin in der "Endlösung der Judenfrage"; Młynarczyk, 'Mordinitiativen von unten'; Longerich, *Holocaust*, pp.524 note 31 and 537-8 note 100

¹¹³ Musial, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung*, p. 207-8.

¹¹⁴ For example, the officer tasked with constructing Sobobor in early 1942, SS-Obersturmführer Richard Thomalla, was still assigned to the Strongpoint at Kiev in late December 1941. See Beförderungsvorschlag SS-Ostuf (S) Richard Thomalla, 20.12.41, gez. Globocnik, NARA-BDC SS-OA Richard Thomalla.

¹¹⁵ Peter Klein has argued that Greiser began to think in terms of extermination in the Warthegau already in July 1941. Although his argument is convincing on the gestation of genocidal intent, the preponderance of evidence dates the establishment of the killing site to October 1941. See Klein, 'Die Rolle der Vernichtungslager Kulmhof (Chelmno), Belzec und Auschwitz-Birkenau'; also Klein, *Gettoverwaltung Litzmannstadt*, for an elaboration of his thesis.

¹¹⁶ For developments in the Warthegau, see Chapter 2.

letter of October 1 and the Lublin meeting of October 17. It is in fact, difficult to see how he could be aware of these sources as he doesn't cite from any literature that discusses them. He does, however, pick up on the October 13 meeting between Himmler, Krüger and Globocnik and turns it into a strawman. Ignoring all other interpretations, he cites only Jules Schelvis claiming that "it is certain that on 13 October, Hitler ordered the Belzec extermination camp built, and probably the one at Sobibór as well."¹¹⁷ Having cast 'official historiography' in bas-relief by quoting only Schelvis, he then proceeds to try and set up as many "contradictions" as he can hallucinate. This leads him to contrast the date of 13 October 1941 with the Wetzel letter of 25 October 1941 and produce a particularly obnoxious strawman already dealt with in Chapter 2¹¹⁸, and to contrast the 13 October meeting with Globocnik's task of establishing the Strongpoints. He asks plaintively, "how can we explain that Himmler made Globocnik commissioner for the installation of SS and police agencies in the new eastern territories on 17 July 1941 and then, on 13 October of the same year, asked him to build an extermination camp while still retaining his previous function?"¹¹⁹ Well, that might be because Himmler *also* ordered Globocnik to accelerate Germanisation at the same time as he ordered the Strongpoints project, and because the decision-making in October 1941 leading up to the construction of Belzec involved a limited project relating to Germanisation, not a general extermination order across the whole of Poland. There is nothing contradictory or incompatible about the same individual being given multiple tasks.

The very fact that Globocnik continued to be closely involved in the Strongpoints project in the autumn of 1941 is a further argument against the Musial-Browning general-extermination-order interpretation. Shortly after the Lublin meeting of October 17, Globocnik in fact travelled to Berlin to meet with the chief of RuSHA, SS-Gruppenführer Hofmann.¹²⁰ He convened a meeting of Strongpoint directors on November 4¹²¹, and on November 20, visited Riga.¹²² But it was at precisely this time that Globocnik's grandiose ambitions in the occupied Soviet Union came unstuck. His organisation had failed to stake out more than a handful of Strongpoints, and was coming into increasing conflict with Pohl and Kammler's

¹¹⁷ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.243, citing from Schelvis, *Vernichtungslager Sobibór* (1998), p.33ff

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.275

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.243

¹²⁰ SSPF Lublin an Chef des Rasse- und Siedlungs-Hauptamt, SS Gruf. Hoffmann, Berlin SW 68, Ledemanstr. 23/24, 17.10.41, GPD 413 (31.10.41), item 36, PRO HW 16/32

¹²¹ SS-Brigaf. Globocnik an Aussenstellen Nord, Riga, Ostuf Michalsen, Mitte, Minsk, Stubaf Dolp, Süd, Kiew, Ostuf Thomalla, 29.10.41, GPD 435 (10.11.41), item 13, PRO HW 16/32

¹²² SSPF Lublin an HSSPF Nord, z.Hd SS Ogruf Jeckeln und SS Ostuf, Riga, 19.11.41 (GPD 529, 29.12.41., no 1, item 11), PRO HW 16/32

construction organisation.¹²³ The result was that at the start of March 1942, Globocnik was relieved of all remaining responsibilities related to the Strongpoints, which henceforth would be the task of Pohl's newly established WVHA.¹²⁴

It apparently escapes Mattogno's notice that Globocnik *stopped being* the Plenipotentiary for Strongpoints. Indeed, Mattogno gleefully seizes on an apparent typo in the German Encyclopaedia of the Holocaust and block-quotes this source saying that Himmler only appointed Globocnik in July 1942.¹²⁵ While this is merely childish obfuscation, it pales into insignificance in comparison with Mattogno invoking Globocnik's responsibility for the Strongpoints while trying to interpret a document from after March 1, 1942.¹²⁶ As Globocnik had been relieved of this tasking by the time in question, Mattogno's interpretation is a total anachronism, and thus fundamentally bogus. This howler is only compounded by the fact that Mattogno could easily have read about the handover of responsibility for the Strongpoints in one of his more frequently cited secondary sources.¹²⁷ This means that, yet again, one is forced to ask oneself whether Mattogno is just that bad at reading or if he really is that dishonest.

The legacy of the Strongpoints project can be seen very clearly in the formation of Globocnik's auxiliary force, the so-called Trawniki, recruited in 1941 largely from Soviet prisoners of war of ethnic German and Ukrainian origin. The camp at Trawniki began life as an internment camp for a variety of refugees displaced in the first weeks of 'Barbarossa' – the camp doctor was a Pole liberated from an NKVD jail in Lwow – as well as suspects under arrest, and held 676 internees in mid-July, of whom 141 were Ukrainians.¹²⁸ By September 1941, the camp had been cleared of suspects and evolved into a training centre for auxiliary guards. The identity cards of the Trawniki recruited in the winter of 1941/2 stated that they were "Guards of the Plenipotentiary of the Reichsführer-SS and Chief of German Police – Chief of Order Police – for the Establishment of the SS and Police Strongpoints in the New Eastern Space".¹²⁹ On October 27, 1941, SS-Hauptsturmführer Karl Streibel was named the commandant of Trawniki.¹³⁰ Streibel had served in a similar role in 1940, commanding the

¹²³ Aktenvermerk Pohl, 4.11.41, BA NS3/1367, pp.60-2; Schulte, *Zwangsarbeit und Vernichtung*, pp.272-8.

¹²⁴ Schulte, 'Vom Arbeits- zum Vernichtungslager', p.46

¹²⁵ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.243

¹²⁶ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.297. On the Reuter file memo, see section 'Mattogno's 'Resettlement' Shell Game' below.

¹²⁷ Schulte, 'Vom Arbeits- zum Vernichtungslager', p.46

¹²⁸ Bericht über die Besichtigung des Auffanglagers in Trawniki, 14.7.1941, published in Blumental (ed), *Obozy*, pp.258-9.

¹²⁹ "Wachmannschaften des Beauftragten des Reichsführers-SS und Chefs der Deutschen Polizei – Chef der Ordnungspolizei – für die Errichtung der SS- und Polizeistützpunkte im neuen Ostraum". Cf. Personalbogen Nr 319 (Alexander Suban), GARF 7021-148-421, pp.29-31.

¹³⁰ SSPF Lublin, Empfehlung für die Beförderung von Karl Streibel, 6.3.1942, BDC SS-OA Karl Streibel.

training battalion of the Lublin Selbstschutz (Self-Defense) militia recruited from ethnic Germans in the Generalgouvernement and thereafter the training battalion of the Sonderdienst, a police force nominally subordinated to the civil authorities.¹³¹

Although their recruitment was initiated in the context of the Strongpoints project, no Trawniki were in fact ever sent to the Strongpoints in the Ostland or Ukraine. Instead, by October 1941, Globocnik had actually secured a promise from Friedrich Jeckeln, HSSPF Ostland, to supply the Lublin district with a battalion of the Latvian Schutzmannschaft for guard duties, although the unit was seemingly never dispatched.¹³² Later in 1942, Schuma battalions would indeed be stationed in the Generalgouvernement, participating in the Warsaw ghetto action as well as guarding Majdanek. In all probability, the Latvian Schuma battalion was intended to beef up the Majdanek guard force, and a Lithuanian battalion was substituted in 1942.¹³³ Trawniki were also assigned to Majdanek from the late autumn of 1941, in part so that come could recover from the privations of German captivity in the camps for Soviet POWs.¹³⁴

Several deployments of especial significance are registered in the personnel files as taking place in the autumn and early winter of 1941. The first was the assignment of a number of Trawniki on November 5, 1941 to “SSPF Warschau”, who were rapidly sent onwards to the nascent forced labour camp at Treblinka I.¹³⁵ It is striking that this date coincided with correspondence between SSPF Warschau and Kammler’s organisation regarding the construction of the camp.¹³⁶ The establishment of the camp was announced in the district gazette on November 15, and it began to receive Jewish prisoners from Warsaw in January 1942.¹³⁷ The suggestive element to the assignment of the Trawniki to Treblinka I is that they were being deployed outside of Globocnik’s direct sphere of responsibility, and assigned to a variety of guard duties in the GG from a very early stage.¹³⁸ More significant

¹³¹ Cf. Peter R. Black, ‘Rehearsal for Reinhardt? Odilo Globocnik and the Lublin Selbstschutz’, *Central European History*, vol. 25, No. 2, 1992, 204-226, as well as Peter Black, ‘Indigenous Collaboration in the Government General: The Case of the Sonderdienst’ in Pieter Judson and Marsha Rozenblit (eds), *Constructing Nationalities in East Central Europe*, New York: Berghahn, 2005, pp.243-66.

¹³² SSPF Lublin an HSSPF Ostland, Riga, 13.10.1941, GPD 399, item 24, PRO HW 16/32.

¹³³ The 2nd Lithuanian Schuma Battalion was assigned to the camp as of July 1, 1942: Stärkenachweisung der Schutzmannschaft Stand vom 1. Juli 1942., BA R 19/266. It was replaced in March 1943 by the 252nd Lithuanian Schuma Battalion; cf. Aleksander Lasik, ‘Struktura organizacyjna oraz obsada osobowa stanowisk kierowniczych w obozie koncentracyjnym na Majdanku w latach 1941-1944’, *Zeszyty Majdanka*, 2003, t. XXII, p.148; Hilberg, *Vernichtung*, Bd 2, p.965 n.136.

¹³⁴ Personalbogen Nr 941 (Samuel Prishtsch), AIPN CA 903/1, p.4; Black, ‘Footsoldiers’, p.22.

¹³⁵ Personalbogen Nr 137 (Adolf Statkewitsch), GARF 7021-148-421, pp.49-50.

¹³⁶ Anruf SS-Standartenführer Schnabel, SSPF Warschau, 31.10.1941; H.H.u.B., D.Ch.d.A.II.B, Betr.: Arbeitserziehungslager in Treblinka, 5.11.1941, BA DH ZB6768. A.1, pp.380-1

¹³⁷ Black, ‘Footsoldiers of the Final Solution’, p.54 n.45; Czerniaków, *Warsaw Diary*, p.316 (17.1.1942).

¹³⁸ Rich, ‘Footsoldiers of Reinhard’, p.693, overinterprets this assignment somewhat.

for the evolution of the death camps, however, was the deployment of Trawniki to Belzec on November 18 and 25, 1941. Some of the men returned to Trawniki at the start of December.¹³⁹

An especially intriguing early assignment is noted in the personnel file of Nikolaus Pawlij, who was detached to the “Wasserbauwirtschaftsamt Chelm” from November 20 to December 9, 1941.¹⁴⁰ This land reclamation office was later responsible for the administration of numerous forced labour camps girdling Sobibor in Chelm county. But there are no indications from the Trawniki personnel files that Trawniki were ever assigned as guards to these camps, and there is no reason why an SS-trained auxiliary would be given away to a civilian agency. Pawlij’s assignment in fact converges with the eyewitness statement of Jan Piwonski that the SS scouted and surveyed the site of the future camp at Sobibor in late 1941. Pawlij could well have been assigned as an escort to the SS officers surveying the district for a suitable site for a camp.¹⁴¹ The commander of the Gendarmerie of the Lublin district, Major Ferdinand Hahnzog, similarly testified after the war that in November 1941 he met with Globocnik and an unnamed Obersturmführer who was tasked with the construction of a camp at Sobibor, and would require assistance from the Gendarmerie at Wlodawa.¹⁴²

Such sources are indicative of preparations towards the future, but did not yet suggest that a green light to begin Aktion Reinhard had been given. On the other hand, it cannot be ruled out, and is in fact probable, that Globocnik presented Himmler with plans for a wide-ranging extermination program in October 1941, but was told only to begin preparations, and

¹³⁹ Black, ‘Footsoldiers of the Final Solution’, p.54 n.45.

¹⁴⁰ Personalbogen Nr 727 (Nikolaus Pawlij), ASBU Stalino 6442-38260, pp.132-R.

¹⁴¹ Vernehmungsprotokoll Jan Piwonski, 29.4.1975, BAL B162/208 AR-Z 673/41, Bd 2, p.441.

¹⁴² Vernehmungsprotokoll Ferdinand Hahnzog, 31.1.1963, BAL B162/208 AR-Z 914/63, Bd.1, pp.1427-8. Construction at Sobibor began in early 1942, with the first work supervised by a *civilian* official, Baurat Moser, according to at least two witnesses. Cf. Vernehmung Hans-Heinz Schütt, 22.11.1962, BAL B162/208 AR-Z 251/59, Bd. 8, pp. 1648-9; Musial, *Zivilverwaltung*, p.217, citing Vern. B. Falkenberg, 16.7.1965, OKL Ds 12/67, Bl.19-21 and Urteil gegen A. Müller u.a., 29.10.1964, StA Hannover 2 Ks 4/63, Bl.20, also Justiz und NS-Verbrechen Bd 20, Lfd Nr 582. From March to April 1942, work was taken over by SS-Obersturmführer Richard Thomalla, who had spent the last months of 1941 building up a Strongpoint in Kiev. The first SS personnel from T4 arrived at the start of April, including the designated commandant, Hauptmann der Schutzpolizei Franz Stangl. Cf. Vernehmung Franz Stangl, 29.4.1969, BAL B162/208 AR-Z 230/59, Bd. 12, p.4464. According to Jakov Engelhardt, in early 1942, twelve Trawniki arrived at Sobibor to find the camp already wired off and work underway on the “bathhouse”. A corridor of brush was erected, the infamous ‘tube’ or Schlauch, and behind the “bathhouse”, a mass grave was dug. A test gassing was carried out in the “bath house” using an engine. Five Germans were present, including a man he identified in 1975 as a captain who “always wore civilian clothes” and an Oberscharführer, along with two men in work clothes who were constructing the gas chamber. Engelhardt returned to Trawniki, after his squad of 12 men was relieved by a much larger detachment of 40 auxiliaries under the command of an ethnic German. Cf. Protokoll doprosa, Yakov Genrikovich Engel’gard, 21.3.1961, ASBU Kiev 66437-14-31, pp.27-28a; Protokoll einer Zeugenvernehmung Jakow Genrikowitsch Engelhardt, 21.8.1975, BAL B162/208 AR-Z 673/41, Bd.3, pp.466-512.

to await further orders. In October and November 1941, Himmler was busy securing his political flanks, asserting his authority over the ‘Jewish Question’ to rivals in the Berlin bureaucracy such as the State Secretary of the Interior Ministry, Dr. Stuckart¹⁴³, while the civil administration in the Generalgouvernement also needed to be initiated. The meeting of October 17, 1941 in Lublin, at which the notion of deporting an initial 1000 Jews from Lublin “over the Bug” is especially instructive in this regard. Frank and his officials most probably understood this phrasing to mean that the deported Jews would be killed, but it is also probable that Globocnik had not informed his civilian counterparts of his precise plans; Frank’s remarks on December 16, 1941, which we discuss below¹⁴⁴, make it unlikely that he had been told by *anyone* up to that date about gas chambers as the intended means, only that the Jews would be destroyed.

Hitler’s announcement of December 12, 1941 to the Reichs- and Gauleiter in Berlin was followed by a flurry of meetings between Himmler, Hitler and other leading Nazis which confirm that it was not until this moment that the light finally turned green. On December 14, 1941, Himmler met with Victor Brack, director of T4, and discussed what his appointments diary records as “euthanasia”.¹⁴⁵ It is striking that only after this meeting did T4 personnel begin to arrive in Lublin in larger numbers, in all probability after December 22 when the construction of the basic facilities was complete. SS-Scharführer Erich Fuchs arrived at Belzec together with eight to ten other men at this time, and found a few SS already present.¹⁴⁶ There were now several officers and senior NCOs present on-site, including Christian Wirth and Gottfried Schwarz, and a command structure began to take shape. In this phase, from late December 1941 to mid-March 1942, it seems that while the T4 men were waiting for the deportations to begin, they experimented with a variety of killing methods.¹⁴⁷

Brack himself led a contingent of T4 men on a separate assignment beginning in January 1942, the mysterious ‘Osteinsatz’ deployment of euthanasia doctors, nurses and assistants to Minsk and Smolensk.¹⁴⁸ Discussed in extremely vague terms by eyewitnesses interrogated either in the context of euthanasia or Aktion Reinhard investigations after the war, there is a strong suspicion that the T4 personnel may have been used for the “mercy killing” of wounded German soldiers. The overwhelming majority of the *Osteinsatz* cadres came from the idle T4 institute at Hadamar, which gave up 40 out of 90 personnel, with far

¹⁴³ Cf. *Dienstkalender*, pp.273-4 (24.11.1941): “Jewish Question belongs to me.”

¹⁴⁴ See section ‘Extermination and Labour’ below.

¹⁴⁵ *Dienstkalender*, p.290 (14.12.41).

¹⁴⁶ Vernehmungsprotokoll Erich Fuchs, 2.4.1963, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 251/59, Bd. 9, pp.1782-1783.

¹⁴⁷ See Chapters 4 and 5.

¹⁴⁸ On the Osteinsatz, see Heberer, ‘Kontinuität der Tötungsoperationen’, p.291ff.

fewer assigned from the other institutes still engaged in carrying out Aktion 14 f 13.¹⁴⁹ After the return of the Osteinsatz from Minsk in April 1942, a number of men were reassigned to Aktion Reinhard, but only a fraction of the 92 T4 men involved in Aktion Reinhard had been sent to the Soviet Union in January 1942.¹⁵⁰ The more striking point is the initially relatively small size of the T4 contingent assigned to Belzec and its progressive reinforcement in the spring of 1942 after the operation was expanded. As Victor Brack later wrote to Himmler on June 23, 1942, “in accordance with my orders from Reichsleiter Bouhler, I have long ago put at Brigadeführer Globocnik’s disposal *part* of my manpower to aid him in carrying out his special mission (*Sonderauftrag*). Upon his renewed request, I have now transferred to him *additional personnel*.”¹⁵¹

The evidence examined so far points to the interpretation that Belzec, soon to be joined by Sobibor, were intended to carry out what was still a relatively limited killing program. Indeed, Adolf Eichmann later testified that Globocnik had at first been authorised to kill around 100,000 people, and then secured a further authorisation to murder another 150 to 250,000 from Heydrich.¹⁵² Josef Oberhauser similarly testified that at first:¹⁵³

only Jews unfit for work from various ghettos were to be liquidated. There was not yet any talk of a grand-scale extermination action. I learned of the plan to systematically exterminate the Jews when Brack went to Globocnik in Lublin in April or May 1942 and told him that the former members of Aktion T4 would be placed at his disposal for the carrying out of the extermination of the Jews

Belzec and Sobibor were constructed to test the feasibility of mass extermination; indeed Robin O’Neil has rightly called Belzec a “stepping stone” or “prototype” for the Final Solution.¹⁵⁴ Until June 1942, only Jews from the Galicia and Lublin districts were deported to Belzec and Sobibor, while the Warsaw, Radom and Cracow districts remained initially unaffected, severely limiting the geographical scope of the operation within the Generalgouvernement. Moreover, by the start of 1942, the Lublin district was the intended destination for non-Polish Jews. Although conceived as a local solution to the ‘Jewish Question’ in the Generalgouvernement, Aktion Reinhard was rapidly integrated into the pan-

¹⁴⁹ This observation refutes the silly argument in MGK, *Sobibor*, pp.272-3 about a supposed ‘contradiction’ between the Osteinsatz and the impending transfer of an initially small number of personnel to Lublin.

¹⁵⁰ Osteinsatz veterans later sent to the Aktion Reinhard camps include Otto Stadie, Werner Dubois, Heinrich Gley, Arthur Matthes, Franz Hödl, Karl Schluch, Heinrich Unverhau, Ernst Zierke and Willy Grossman.

¹⁵¹ Brack an Himmler, 23.6.1942, BA NS19/1583, p.16, also NO-205; our emphases.

¹⁵² Longerich, *Holocaust*, p.331.

¹⁵³ Pohl, *Judenpolitik*, pp.125-6, citing Vernehmung. Oberhauser, 10.11.1964, Oberhauser Bd. XV, Bl. 2918-20 (StA München 1 110 Ks 3/64); a similar description of Brack’s visit is in Vernehmung Josef Oberhauser, 14.12.1962, BAL B162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd. 9, p.1681ff, also excerpted in Klee, *The Good Old Days*, p.229.

¹⁵⁴ Robin O’Neil, *Belzec: Stepping Stone to Genocide: Hitler’s Answer to the Jewish Question* (2004): <http://www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/Belzec1/Belzec1.html>.

European Final Solution. The Jews of Vienna, Prague and Bratislava suffered the agonies of a gassing death ahead of the Jews of Warsaw and Cracow.

To understand the context in which the decision to deport Jews from Germany, Austria, the Protectorate and Slovakia to the Lublin district was taken, we must rewind our steps back to the late summer of 1941. The RSHA had begun drafting plans for a ‘complete solution’ to the ‘Jewish Question’ in Europe after Heydrich secured Göring’s signature on the infamous authorisation letter of July 31, 1941.¹⁵⁵ Within Eichmann’s office, Friedrich Suhr became the “referent for the Final Solution of the Jewish Question, in particular abroad” in July 1941, according to a notation on his personnel file.¹⁵⁶ In early August, statistics were compiled of the numbers of Jews inhabiting each country worldwide.¹⁵⁷ In the meantime, pressure grew within Germany from individual Gauleiter, not least Josef Goebbels in Berlin, to deport German Jews.¹⁵⁸ To their consternation, the Gauleiter found that Hitler was as yet unwilling to give the green light. Nonetheless, Himmler began to sound out his eastern HSSPF to investigate the possibility of accommodating Jews from the Reich in occupied Poland. On September 2, 1941, he met with Krüger, the HSSPF of the Generalgouvernement, to discuss the “Jewish Question - resettlement out of the Reich.” Two days later, he likewise met with Wilhelm Koppe, the HSSPF of the Warthegau, and probably discussed the feasibility of deporting Reich Jews to the Lodz ghetto.¹⁵⁹ But whereas the deportations to Lodz were ordered a few weeks later and carried out in the autumn of 1941, no deportations to the GG from the Reich took place. One source indicates that Himmler approached Hans Frank and used the excuse of RAF bombing to appeal to him to take in German Jews. A plan to deport two transports of Jews from Hamburg in early October was rejected by Frank.¹⁶⁰

The idea of Lublin as a destination for non-Polish Jews resurfaced the same month, when on October 20, Himmler met with the Slovak leadership – Tiso, Tuka and Mach – and broached the subject of Slovakia’s Jews. The Slovak leaders became the first government to agree with Nazi Germany to hand over the Jews of their country.¹⁶¹ According to the later

¹⁵⁵ Göring an Heydrich, 31.7.1941, 710-PS, IMT XXVI, pp.266-7.

¹⁵⁶ NARA-BDC SS-OA Friedrich Suhr; cf. Aly, *Endlösung*, pp.306-7.

¹⁵⁷ Anzahl der Juden absolut und im Verhältnis zur Gesamtbevölkerung in den einzelnen Ländern und nach Erdteilen, 7.8.1941, AIPN CA 362/218, pp.5-10.

¹⁵⁸ For a recent examination of the background to this phase, see Wolf Gruner, ‘Von der Kollektivausweisung zur Deportation der Juden aus Deutschland (1938-1943). Neue Perspektiven und Dokumente’, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Nationalsozialismus* 20, 2004, pp.21-62. This phase is also well covered in Browning, *Origins*, p.314ff as well as Witte, ‘Two Decisions’.

¹⁵⁹ *Dienstkalender*, pp.200-203 (2.9.1941), p.205 (4.9.1941).

¹⁶⁰ Browning, *Origins*, p.326.

¹⁶¹ *Dienstkalender*, p.241 (20.10.1941). In July 1941, Slovak officials had inspected the Organisation Schmelt forced labour camp complex in Upper East Silesia, and used their impressions to establish a few forced labour

account of Slovak Interior Minister Mach, Himmler had said “that they will use our Jews.” It is entirely unclear from the available sources *where* Himmler at this time thought Slovak Jews could be accommodated or what their fate would be.¹⁶² As no discussions ensued at this time with any regional authorities, either SS or civilian, regarding the reception of deportees from Slovakia, the agreement was likely simply a napkin-deal to be tucked away in Himmler’s back pocket as the Final Solution took shape.

In the autumn of 1941, as deportation trains actually left the Reich for Riga, Kaunas, Minsk and Lodz, Himmler sought out other possible destinations, including Mogilev and Borisov in Belorussia. A visit to Mogilev on October 23 took place against the backdrop of the drive on Moscow and the expectation that Mogilev would soon be handed over from military to civil administration.¹⁶³ The stalling of Operation ‘Taifun’ and the defeat before Moscow dashed these plans entirely.

Another possible solution suggested itself in the shape of the Highway IV (Durchgangsstrasse IV, DG IV) construction project. DG IV was one of several major road arteries slated for construction by the Organisation Todt and ran all the way from Galicia through the Ukraine. In Galicia, the SS swiftly reconnoitred possible camp sites for road construction purposes¹⁶⁴, and began to establish a network of forced labour camps for Galician Jews by the autumn of 1941.¹⁶⁵ Himmler also interested himself in assisting the construction of an ‘SS road’ along the Black Sea in the first weeks of 1942, discussing the matter with the commander in chief of 6th Army, Field Marshal von Reichenau, and involving the HSSPF Ukraine, Prützmann, in the plan.¹⁶⁶ Although the SS established a network of

camps in Slovakia, which survived the 1942 deportations. See Deutsche Gesandtschaft Pressburg an Auswärtigen Amt Berlin, Abteilung Protokoll, 2.7.1941, T/1075; Bericht über die Besichtigung der oberschlesischen Judenlager, 12.7.1941, NARA T175/584/80-2.

¹⁶² Schwindt, *Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslager Majdanek*, p.79, argues that the Lublin district was already foreseen in October 1941, but this is not substantiated. On Nazi-Slovak relations in general see Tatjana Tönsmeier: *Das Dritte Reich und die Slowakei 1939 - 1945. Politischer Alltag zwischen Kooperation und Eigensinn*. Paderborn: Schöningh, 2003.

¹⁶³ 339. Inf.Div. Ia, Divisionsbefehl Nr. 85, 16.10.41, NARA T315/2116/140; for the context see Christian Gerlach, ‘Failure of Plans for an SS Extermination Camp in Mogilev’, *HGS* 11, 1997, pp.60-78.

¹⁶⁴ Pol.Rgt. Galizien Ia, Jüdische Zwangsarbeitslager, 14.8.1941, RGVA 1323-2-292b, p.158.

¹⁶⁵ On the DG IV camps in Galicia, see Hermann Kaienburg, ‘Jüdische Arbeitslager an der ‘Strasse der SS’,’ *1999*, 1/1996, pp.13-39; Sandkühler, *Endlösung in Galizien*, pp.191-193; Pohl, *Ostgalizien*, p.348ff. Globocnik men from SSPF Lublin provided the supervisory cadres, most being reassigned from the staff of a camp in Biala Podlaska closed in the summer of 1941. Sandkühler, *Endlösung in Ostgalizien*, p.495 n. 98.

¹⁶⁶ *Dienstkalender*, p.314 (11.1.42); for telexes to Prützmann see Summary of Police Decodes for 16.12.1941-15.1.1942, p.11, PRO HW16/6; cf. Schulte, *Zwangsarbeit und Vernichtung*, p.360.

forced labour camps for Jews along the stretch of DG IV in Ukraine, the only transfers of Jewish slave labourers came from Transnistria.¹⁶⁷

The notion of sending the Jews “road building to the east” was thus in the air when Heydrich chaired the Wannsee conference and spelled out the fate of the *able bodied* Jews.¹⁶⁸ But in reality, Heydrich and the RSHA planners in Eichmann’s IV B 4 office were entirely uncertain as to where *any* Jews could be deported at the time of Wannsee (January 20, 1942) or in the weeks immediately following the conference. On January 31, 1942, Eichmann informed the Gestapo stations in the Reich that the deportations of the previous autumn represented the start of the Final Solution and that “new reception possibilities” were being worked out for the next phase.¹⁶⁹ Not until March 6, 1942, was Eichmann able to convene a meeting of the Judenreferenten to discuss implementation of the next wave of deportations from the Reich.¹⁷⁰ Although the Foreign Office had signalled to the Slovak government on February 16, 1942 that Nazi Germany was ready to accept 20,000 Slovak Jews as workers, the paper trail is likewise unclear until March as to *where* they would in fact be sent.¹⁷¹

At Wannsee, Frank’s state secretary Josef Bühler had urged that the Final Solution be started in the Generalgouvernement.¹⁷² By the start of March, the action had not yet begun, and it was also clear that the GG would have to accommodate Jews from the Reich and Slovakia. Bühler informed the governor of the Lublin district, Zörner, at the start of March 1942 that “in the context of the total solution of the Jewish problem in the European space the establishment of a transit camp for Jews evacuated out of certain parts of the Reich had become necessary.” and that Zörner should expect that “in the course of the next month a total of 14,000 Jews” would be “temporarily” accommodated in the Lublin district. Although sent on March 3, the letter was not registered by Zörner’s office until March 6, and was not passed on to the BuF desk in charge of supervising resettlements until March 9.¹⁷³

Far from belonging to a well-thought out plan, the initial phase of deportations thus bore all the hallmarks of a last-minute improvisation. Eichmann had been in Minsk on March 2 and 3 to organise the resumption of the deportations that had been broken off by the

¹⁶⁷ On the DG IV camps in Ukraine see Andrej Angrick, ‘Annihilation and Labor: Jews and Thoroughfare IV in Central Ukraine’ in Ray Brandon and Wendy Lower (eds), *The Shoah in Ukraine*. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2006; Lower, *Nazi Empire-Building*, pp.143-50.

¹⁶⁸ Wannsee-Protokoll, 20.1.1942, NG-2586-G.

¹⁶⁹ RSHA IV B 4, Evakuierung von Juden, 31.1.1942, 1063-PS.

¹⁷⁰ Bericht über die am 6. März 1942 im RSHA – Amt IV B 4 – stattgefundene Besprechung, 9.3.1942, T/119, also in Hans G. Adler, *Die Verheimlichte Wahrheit. Theresienstädter Dokumente*, Tübingen, 1958, pp.9-10.

¹⁷¹ Luther an Deutsche Gesandtschaft Pressburg, 16.2.1942, T/1078, simply refers to “bringing them to the east”.

¹⁷² Wannsee-Protokoll, 20.1.1942, NG-2586-G.

¹⁷³ Cited in Pohl, *Judenpolitik*, p.107 and Musial, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung*, p.223.

transport crisis of the winter of 1941/2¹⁷⁴, and then promptly convened a meeting with the Judenberater of Western Europe to begin planning *their* deportations.¹⁷⁵ From the perspective of the RSHA, the priority was to get the Jews out of the Reich, and worry later about their fate. The quotas established in March - 55,000 for Germany, 18,000 for Vienna and 20,000 for Prague – would not in fact eliminate all Jews from the Reich, but represented the next stage in what would be a lengthy process. Securing trains was a major concern: at the meeting of March 6 concerning deportations from the Reich, the Judenreferenten were told that “transports could not be scheduled precisely” and that “only empty Russian trains”, meaning trains carrying Ostarbeiter to Germany, were available, that were to be “run back into the Generalgouvernement.”¹⁷⁶

By the start of March 1942, Eichmann and his men were clear that at least some of the Jews of Slovakia would be deported to Auschwitz and Majdanek, but it is striking that in the months that followed, the majority were not, while no transports of Jews from the Reich proper were sent to Auschwitz in the first half of 1942, and virtually none sent directly to Majdanek.¹⁷⁷ The RSHA’s plans did not overlap with those of the nascent WVHA¹⁷⁸ perfectly. From the perspective of the RSHA, the priority was to expel the Jews; this goal possessed an urgency which far outstripped the requirements of the WVHA for labour anywhere in Nazi-occupied Eastern Europe. Although the heads of SS main offices had met in conference together with Himmler on January 14 to 15, 1942¹⁷⁹, the evidence suggests that the two most important main offices, were pursuing different agendas which could only be brought very crudely into line. Himmler was undoubtedly a gifted manager and successfully

¹⁷⁴ On this visit see Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, pp.693-4.

¹⁷⁵ Vermerk Dannecker, 10.3.42, RF-1224, also published in Klarsfeld (ed), *Vichy-Auschwitz*, p.374.

¹⁷⁶ Bericht über die am 6.3.42 im RSHA – Amt IV B 4 – stattgefunden Besprechung, 9.3.1942, T/119, also in Adler, *Verheimlichte Wahrheit*, pp.9-10.

¹⁷⁷ Gottwaldt/Schulle, *Judendeportationen*; Franciszek Piper, *Die Zahl der Opfer von Auschwitz*. Oswiecim, 1993, esp. table after p.144; Danuta Czech, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau 1939-1945*, Reinbek, 1989. A partial exception was the deportation – unregistered in the so-called ‘Smolen list’ (NOKW-2824) – of Jews from Gleiwitz in Silesia, cf. Gottwaldt, *Judendeportationen*, pp.393-4; the oft-cited deportation from Beuthen on 15 February 1942 is based on inaccurate information from the International Tracing Service cited by Martin Broszat in his commentary on Rudolf Höss, *Kommandant im Auschwitz*, Stuttgart, 1958, esp pp.155, 174-5.

¹⁷⁸ The Economics and Administration Main Office (Wirtschafts- und Verwaltungshauptamt, WVHA), was ordered formed on January 19, 1942 and had an official ‘birthday’ of February 1. Cf. Pohl, Befehl, 19.1.1942, BS NS19/3904, p.4ff, also NO-495. On the formation of the WVHA from Pohl’s Hauptamt Haushalt und Bauten and the Inspectorate of Concentration Camps, see Walter Naasner, *Neue Machtzentren in der deutschen Kriegswirtschaft 1942-1945. Die Wirtschaftsorganisation der SS, das Amt des Generalbevollmächtigten für den Arbeitseinsatz und das Reichsministerium für Bewaffnung und Munition/Reichsministerium für Rüstung und Kriegsproduktion im nationalsozialistischen Herrschaftssystem*, Boppard am Rhein, 1994; as well as Karin Orth, *Das System der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager. Eine politische Organisationsgeschichte*, Hamburg, 1999; Schulte, *Zwangsarbeit und Vernichtung*, p.197ff; Allen, *The Business of Genocide*, p.165ff.

¹⁷⁹ *Dienstkalender*, pp.316-317 (14-15.1.1941).

juggled many different projects – Germanisation, SS economic plans, the Final Solution – but the Reichsführer-SS was also prone to utopian flights of fantasy and issuing impracticable orders whose realisation fell far short of the intended outcomes.

In September 1941, Himmler had ordered the construction of prisoner of war camps (*Kriegsgefangenenlager*, KGL) at Auschwitz and Majdanek, seeking to exploit the labour of Soviet POWs in the context of his Germanisation and resettlement plans under the auspices of the Generalplan Ost.¹⁸⁰ This was a trade-off negotiated between Himmler, Göring and the Wehrmacht in exchange for the SS agreeing to the deployment of Soviet POWs in the Nazi war economy in the Reich.¹⁸¹ Himmler secured the agreement of the Wehrmacht to hand over 300,000 Soviet POWs.¹⁸² On September 22, 1941, Hans Kammler issued orders that Majdanek was to be constructed as a concentration camps with a capacity of 50,000 prisoners; five days later, he clarified that this would be a KGL for 50,000 POWs and would be matched by another KGL at Auschwitz, tasking SS-Obersturmführer Grosch with the supervision of both projects.¹⁸³ In the first weeks of October, a new chief of the ZBL at Auschwitz, Karl Bischoff, was assigned to oversee the project at Birkenau¹⁸⁴, and a formal construction order specifying that both camps were to accommodate 125,000 prisoners was issued on November 1.¹⁸⁵ After a inspection tour of Stutthof by Himmler on November 23, this camp, too, was added to the planning and was intended to accommodate a further 20,000 POWs.¹⁸⁶ The target capacity for Majdanek was soon raised to 150,000 POWs, so that it is clear that Himmler, Pohl and Kammler thought in terms of assigning all 300,000 POWs

¹⁸⁰ For the context of these decisions, see also Schulte, 'Vom Arbeits- zum Vernichtungslager'.

¹⁸¹ A key meeting between Himmler, Göring and the state secretary of the Labour Ministry, Friedrich Syrup, took place in August; cf. *Dienstkalender* Himmler, p.198 (20.8.41). An order loosening a ban on the utilisation of Soviet POW labour in the Reich imposed after the start of 'Barbarossa' was issued a few days later: RAM Nr VA 5135/1277, Einsatz von sowjet. Kriegsgefangenen, 26.8.41, BA R3901/20168, pp.53-4; cf. WiRüAmt/Rü IV, Vortragsnotiz für Chef OKW, 26.8.41, NA T77/1066/375.

¹⁸² The order is indicated in FS OKW/Abt. Kriegsgef an MiG, 25.9.41, NA T501/220/192-3; for internal SS discussions see *Dienstkalender*, pp.208-10, 215 (15-16.9.41, 22.9.41, 25.9.41).

¹⁸³ Chef des Amtes II-Bauten an Zentralbauleitung Lublin, 22.9.1941; Der Chef des Amtes-II Bauten, Errichtung von Kriegsgefangenenlager, 27.9.41, both BA-DH KL Hafta Nr 7.

¹⁸⁴ Bischoff's arrival is sometimes dated to 1.10.1941 on the basis of his personnel file (NARA-BDC SS-OA Karl Bischoff), but his predecessor Schlachter as well as the commandant of Auschwitz, Rudolf Höss, were only informed of the change on October 11. Cf. Kammler an Schlachter, 11.10.1941; Kammler an Höss, 11.10.1941, RGVA 1372-6-22, pp.240-3. For the earlier date, see the references in Schulte, 'Vom Arbeits- zum Vernichtungslager', p.52 n.59.

¹⁸⁵ Der Chef des Amtes II Bauten, Kriegsgefangenenlager Auschwitz, 1.11.41, RGVA 502-1-215, p.10; for KGL Lublin see Der Chef des Amtes II Bauten, Kriegsgefangenenlager Lublin, 1.11.41, BA DH KL Hafta Nr 7, p.4. This order confirmed the figure give in the first explanatory report for Birkenau, dated the previous day; cf. Erläuterungsbricht zum Vorentwurf für den Neubau des Kriegsgefangenenlagers der Waffen-SS, Auschwitz O/S, 31.10.41, RGVA 502-1-233, pp.13-21.

¹⁸⁶ *Dienstkalender*, p.271 (23.11.1941).

granted to the SS under the terms of the agreement with the Wehrmacht.¹⁸⁷ By December 1941, Kammler's construction plans envisaged camps for 150,000 POWs in the Reich – thus, presumably, 125,000 at Birkenau and up to 25,000 at Stutthof – along with 150,000 in Lublin and 5,000 at Deblin.¹⁸⁸

Despite the seeming clarity of these orders, the SS in fact dispersed their allotted Soviet POWs across many concentration camps in the Reich, including Flossenbürg, Mauthausen and Buchenwald, and thereby fatally conflated the transfer of *labouring* POWs with the handovers of commissars and other 'undesirable' POWs under the terms of Heydrich's *Einsatzbefehl* Nr 8, issued on July 17, 1941.¹⁸⁹ The result was that the Lager-SS of Auschwitz, who had murdered hundreds of Soviet POWs in two gassings under the auspices of *Einsatzbefehl* Nr 8 in September 1941¹⁹⁰, methodically decimated the allotted contingent of 8,000 Soviet POW labourers over the course of the winter of 1941/2.¹⁹¹ By the end of January 1942, Höss could only promise the construction inspectorate a daily workforce of 2,000 prisoners to help build the camp.¹⁹²

The mass starvation of Soviet POWs in the winter of 1941, the crisis in the German war effort and war economy that became apparent after the German defeat before Moscow, and the systematic maltreatment of Soviet POWs by the Lager-SS due to their indoctrination with 'anti-Bolshevism', meant that Soviet POWs were henceforth no longer an option for Himmler if he were to realise his increasingly grandiose construction plans. Accordingly, he ordered in a telex to Richard Glücks, the head of the IKL, on January 26, 1942 that 150,000 Jews "who are being emigrated from Germany" were to be transferred to the concentration camps to take the place of the POWs.¹⁹³ This contradicted Heydrich's vision of able-bodied Jews deported in the course of the Final Solution being sent 'road building to the east' outlined six days earlier at the Wannsee conference. The quota also comfortably exceeded the total potential labour force that could even theoretically have been scratched together from

¹⁸⁷ Der Chef des Amtes II-Bauten, KGL Lublin. 8.12.41, BA DH KL Hafta Nr 7.

¹⁸⁸ II/3-Allg.-55/Se./Lo., Vorläufiges Friedensbauprogramm des Hauptamtes Haushalt und Bauten, Amt II-Bauten, Berlin, 4.12.41, BA NS19/2065, p.4.

¹⁸⁹ Reinhard Otto, *Wehrmacht, Gestapo und sowjetische Kriegsgefangene im deutschen Reichsgebiet 1941/42*, Munich, 1998.

¹⁹⁰ Stanislaw Klodzinski, 'Die erste Vergasung von Häftlingen und Kriegsgefangenen im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz' in Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung (ed), *Die Auschwitz-Hefte: Texte der polnischen Zeitschrift 'Przeglad Lekarski' über historischen, psychologischen und medizinischen Aspekte des Lebens und Sterbens in Auschwitz*. Hamburg, 1987; cf. Joachim Neander and Sergey Romanov, 'Dr. Neander responds to Carlo Mattogno,' *Holocaust Controversies*, 13.2.10, <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2010/02/dr-joachim-neander-responds-to-carlo.html>.

¹⁹¹ Jerzy Brandhuber, 'Die sowjetischen Kriegsgefangenen im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz', *Hefte von Auschwitz*, 4, 1961, pp.5-62.

¹⁹² Aktenvermerk betr. Vordringliche Bauaufgaben im Jahre 1942, 2.2.42, RGVA 502-1-19, p.11.

¹⁹³ Himmler an Glücks, 26.1.42, BA NS19/1920, p.1, also NO-500.

Reich Jews, many of whom were in any case barred from deportation due to an earlier agreement between the SS and OKW to exempt Jewish armaments workers for the time being.¹⁹⁴ Indeed, Kammler's immediate requirements for labour *in the concentration camps* fell somewhat short of Himmler's figure of 150,000. According to his revised plan of February 1942, a total of 67,500 "prisoners, POWs, Jews, etc" were needed for construction in the Reich – and thus including but not limited to Auschwitz – while projects in the Generalgouvernement – and thus including but not limited to Majdanek – would require 47,500 workers. A further 60,000 prisoners, POWs or Jews were required for construction in the 'Ostraum', mainly in connection with the Strongpoints.¹⁹⁵

Himmler's figure of 150,000 was therefore simply plucked out of thin air. It did, however, help shape the course of the initial phase of deportations of Slovak and West European Jews to Auschwitz¹⁹⁶ and influence the division of deportees to the Lublin district between Majdanek and so-called 'transit ghettos'. Moreover, the substitution of Jews for Soviet POWs in what Himmler regarded as high-priority SS projects demonstrated that the SS wanted to harmonise its task of carrying out the Final Solution with its own economic and construction ambitions. Henceforth, labour and extermination would run in parallel as two sides of the same destructive coin.

Extermination and Labour

Not content with misunderstanding the origins of Aktion Reinhard, Mattogno also fails to grasp the intentions and motivations of the civil administration and SS in the Generalgouvernement. Literally almost every statement that indicates the emergence of a genocidal mentality in occupied Poland, and every statement that confirms that genocide was in fact resolved upon and carried out, is omitted from the 'trilogy'. Instead of confronting and

¹⁹⁴ The most comprehensive survey is Wolf Gruner, *Der Geschlossene Arbeitseinsatz deutscher Juden. Zur Zwangsarbeit als Element der Verfolgung 1938-1943*, Berlin, 1997; for an English summary see Wolf Gruner, *Jewish Forced Labor Under the Nazis. Economic Needs and Racial Aims, 1938-1944*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006, pp.3-173.

¹⁹⁵ SS-WVHA, Vorschlag für die Aufstellung von SS-Baubrigaden für die Ausführung von Bauaufgaben des Reichsführers-SS im Kriege und Frieden, 10.2.42, BA NS19/2065, p.29 (sent to Himmler on 5.3.42).

¹⁹⁶ In accordance with Himmler's demand for the transfer of female Jews to the camps, a women's camp was set up at Auschwitz as a satellite of KL Ravensbrück. Himmler himself coordinated this venture during a visit to Ravensbrück on March 3, 1942 – again highlighting the manner in which decisions came together in the first week of that month – while orders went out regarding the training of personnel and the physical construction of the women's section in the subsequent weeks. Cf. *Dienstkalender*, p.368 n.4 (3.3.42); FS Liebehenschel to KL Auschwitz, 10.3.42, ZIP/GPDD 46 (9.5.42) No 3, PRO HW16/17; SS-WVHA C V, Frauenzweiglager Auschwitz, 18.3.42, RGVA 502-1-6, p.2ff, referring to a telex of the IKL of 5.3.1942. See also Bernhard Strebel, *Das KZ Ravensbrück. Geschichte eines Lagerkomplexes*. Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2003, pp.340-355, on the functioning of the Ravensbrück/Auschwitz relationship at this time.

properly dealing with this evidence, Mattogno opts to substitute a strawman version of Nazi policy, an all-or-nothing caricature whereby either the Nazis implemented virtually instantaneous 100% extermination, or they did not do this at all. Yet this strawman is flatly contradicted by the extant paper trail, which makes it perfectly clear, as we have seen above, that the Nazis carried out their extermination policy in tandem with a policy of selecting and sparing an ever decreasing minority of Jews for use as forced labourers.¹⁹⁷ Ignorant as he is of recent historiography, Mattogno does not seem to realise that there were three distinct phases to Aktion Reinhard: a first phase from March to June 1942 in which the system was tested in the Lublin and Galicia districts while preparations were undertaken in other districts; a second phase of accelerated deportation and mass murder from late June to December 1942 in which every district was targeted, and a third phase from January 1943 onwards, where the surviving Jews, now reduced down to around 20% of their number at the start of 1942, were decimated piecemeal, as ghettos were reduced in districts which had fallen behind others were eliminated (e.g. in the Galicia and Bialystok districts), and other ghettos were converted to labour and concentration camps. The evolution from phase to phase, moreover, was influenced by two key variables – food and labour. Priorities demonstrably shifted over the course of 1942, decisively shaping the course of Aktion Reinhard.

From his constant repetition of the strawman of 100% extermination, it appears that Mattogno believes there is somehow a major contradiction between Nazi pronouncements wishing for the total extermination of the Jews and statements which indicate that some Jews were to be kept alive for work. Yet this contradiction exists only in his head. Had Mattogno examined the paper trail more thoroughly, he would have noted many statements from 1939 to 1941 wishing for the death of the Jews in Poland or contemplating their extermination. It is quite apparent that many Nazis in occupied Poland *wanted* the Jews to die long before mass extermination began. Others recoiled from this step for primarily practical reasons. Until early 1942, it was clear that the civil administration in particular could not quite imagine *how* the Jews would die; since starvation in ghettos and decimatory mass shootings did not seem enough to cope with the sheer number of Jews in the Generalgouvernement. Other Nazis, meanwhile, insisted that it was necessary to preserve at least some Jews for labour purposes, since Nazi policy had drained the Generalgouvernement of many Poles who had been

¹⁹⁷ On Jewish forced labour in the Generalgouvernement, see Josef Marszalek, *Obozy pracy w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie w latach 1939-1945*, Lublin, 1998; Dieter Pohl, 'Die großen Zwangsarbeitslager der SS- und Polizeiführer für Juden im Generalgouvernement 1942-1945', in: Ulrich Herbert, Karin Orth, Christoph Dieckmann (eds), *Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager - Entwicklung und Struktur*, Bd. I, Göttingen 1998, pp. 415-438; Gruner, *Jewish Forced Labor*, passim.

deported to Germany as forced labourers. The “contradictions” are thus evidence of a compromise between two competing positions. They also reflect the fact that the underlying desire was total extermination – but this still does not preclude the preservation of a minority for labour purposes. Nor do many statements even refer to ‘total extermination’. The retrospective statements that recur in 1943 regarding ‘the destruction of the Jews’ refer to the fact that the Nazis had indeed killed close to 1.5 million Jews in the preceding year in this region. Evidently historical usage of extermination was no different to how extermination is used by everyone other than Mattogno and some of his acolytes: if 80 or 90% of a population is killed, that is extermination, bust.

If Mattogno has evident cognitive problems coping with the meaning of ‘extermination’, then it is also clear that he simply does not grasp that Nazi intentions towards Polish Jews were genocidal from the outset. As it is a virtual certainty that Mattogno has never looked at the UN Convention on Genocide or comprehended its definition of this crime, it might be an idea for him to look it up now before we go any further.¹⁹⁸

Thus, whereas Mattogno seems to think that the ‘Lublin reservation’ plan was a comparatively benign measure¹⁹⁹, if one examines the actual rhetoric used by Nazi leaders when contemplating this plan – drawn up already in 1939 – then we find copious evidence of the emergence of genocidal intent and a genocidal mentality. In keeping with the strategy of the SS, in particular the SD, towards Jewish policy developed during the pre-war years²⁰⁰, from the outset of the Nazi occupation of Poland, Heydrich foresaw a more systematic solution to the ‘Jewish Question’ than could be offered by random violence and pogroms. On September 14, 1939, he told his department heads that Himmler would be presenting Hitler “with suggestions that only the Führer can decide upon since they had important foreign policy ramifications.”²⁰¹ On September 20, Hitler informed the commander in chief of the Army, Walter Brauchitsch, that “the general idea of ghettos exists, though the details were not yet cleared up. Consideration of economic interests from the beginning.”²⁰² The following day, Heydrich convened another meeting of department heads, also attended by the desk referent for the Jewish question, Adolf Eichmann, and presented the first outline of a plan: “Jews into the cities as quickly as possible, Jews out of the Reich into Poland, the rest of the 30,000 Gypsies also into Poland, systematic expulsion of the Jews from German areas

¹⁹⁸ Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide, adopted by UN Resolution 260 (III) A of 9.12.1948, online at <http://www.hrweb.org/legal/genocide.html>.

¹⁹⁹ M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.233-4.

²⁰⁰ See Michael Wildt (ed), *Die Judenpolitik des SD 1935-1938*, Munich, 1995.

²⁰¹ Protokoll der Amtschefbesprechung am 14.9.1939, BA R58/825, pp.10-12.

²⁰² KTB Halder, I, p.82 (20.9.1939).

in goods trains.” Polish Jews would be expelled from territories to be annexed into Germany into the “foreign-speaking Gau”, in other words the future Generalgouvernement, or across the Nazi-Soviet demarcation line.²⁰³ An express letter went out to the commanders of the Einsatzgruppen, informing them of the outlines of Nazi Judenpolitik in occupied Poland, and emphasised the difference between “the final goal (which will take a long time)” and “the stages by which this final goal will be reached (which can be undertaken in shorter periods of time.” The *Endziel* was to be kept “strictly secret.”²⁰⁴ The next day, Heydrich informed Brauchitsch, that a “Jewish state under German administration near Krakow” was envisaged inside Poland.²⁰⁵ By September 29, Heydrich was speaking derisively of a “nature reserve” or “Reich ghetto” located “beyond Warsaw around Lublin.”²⁰⁶ On the same day, Nazi Party theoretician Alfred Rosenberg discussed with Hitler both the location “between Vistula and Bug” as well as its future inhabitants: “the entirety of Jewry (also from the Reich), as well as all otherwise undesirable elements.”²⁰⁷

The ‘ethnic cleansing’ (*völkische Flurbereinigung*) of Poland would thus be carried out through a domino effect of expelling Jews as well as Poles from the annexed territories and the Reich into rump Poland, and within rump Poland into the ‘Lublin reservation’. To oversee the entire process, on October 7, Himmler was appointed Reich Commissar for the Strengthening of Germandom (*Reichskommissar für die Festigung deutschen Volkstums, RKFDV*)²⁰⁸, a task he divided between several SS main offices.²⁰⁹ On October 30, Himmler issued his first proper ordinance as RKF, demanding that “all Jews” and various categories of Poles were to be resettled out of the annexed territories.²¹⁰ The expulsions from the

²⁰³ Protokoll der Amtschefbesprechung am 21.9.1939, BA R58/825, pp.26-30.

²⁰⁴ Heydrich an die Chefs der Einsatzgruppen der Sicherheitspolizei, 21.9.1939, BA R58/954, pp.181-185. On this document see also Dan Michman, ‘Why Did Heydrich Write the *Schnellbrief*? A Remark on the Reason and on Its Significance,’ *Yad Vashem Studies* 32, 2004, pp.433-47.

²⁰⁵ Aufzeichnung über eine mündliche Orientierung durch Major Radtke am 22.9.1939, published in Helmuth Groscurth, *Tagebücher eines Abwehroffiziers*, Stuttgart, 1970, p.361-2.

²⁰⁶ Protokoll der Amtschefbesprechung am 29.9.1939, BA R58/825, p.36-37.

²⁰⁷ Hans-Günther Seraphim (ed), *Das Politische Tagebuch Alfred Rosenbergs aus den Jahren 1933/35 und 1939/40*, Göttingen, 1956, p.81. Although Heydrich’s *Endziel* was supposed to be kept secret, Hitler entirely open about the ‘Lublin reservation’ plan, and even discussed it with the Swedish industrialist Birgit Dahlerus on September 26 and explained his concept of ‘ethnic cleansing’ to the Italian foreign Minister Galeazzo Ciano not long afterwards. Andreas Hillgruber (ed), *Staatsmänner und Diplomaten bei Hitler. Vertrauliche Aufzeichnungen über Unterredungen mit Vertretern des Auslands, Bd. 1*, Frankfurt am Main, 1970, pp.29-30 (26.9.1939); ADAP Serie D, Bd. 7, Nr. 176, (2.10.1939).

²⁰⁸ Erlass des Führers über die Festigung deutschen Volkstums, 7.10.1939, 686-PS, IMT XXVI, pp.255-7; cf. Robert L. Koehl, *RKFDV: German Resettlement and Population Policy, 1939–1945: A History of the Reich Commission for the Strengthening of Germandom*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957.

²⁰⁹ Respectively, the Race and Resettlement Main Office (RuSHA), a new main office for the RKFDV, and the newly formed Reich Security Main Office (RSHA) under Heydrich.

²¹⁰ Anordnung I/II, 30.10.1939, published in *FGM*, pp.42-3.

incorporated territories began not long afterwards, exacerbating an existing west-east flight of Polish Jews.²¹¹

Declarations by Nazi leaders and planners concerning the ‘Lublin reservation’ make it clear that this resettlement scheme was conceived virtually from the outset in a genocidal mindset. To outside observers, fully familiar with the much discussed idea, the conclusion was that the ‘reservation’ plan would lead to a massive loss of life:

In well-informed quarters in this country the German Government’s apparent intention to form a Jewish State in Poland is regarded as a remarkable example of political cynicism... Herr Hitler now proposes to concentrate the 3,000,000 Jews of Poland in a State which is to be cut out of the body of Poland and will have Lublin for its centre.... To thrust 3,000,000 Jews, relatively few of whom are agriculturalists, into the Lublin region and to force them to settle there would doom them to famine. That, perhaps, is the intention.²¹²

This deduction can be fully confirmed from contemporary documents. Some Nazis, such as Joseph Goebbels, were already coming to the conclusion that “this Jewry must be destroyed” after seeing scenes filmed inside Polish ghettos.²¹³ After visiting Lodz, Goebbels wrote in his diary that “these are no longer people, these are animals. That is therefore also no humanitarian but a surgical task. One must make cuts here, and indeed radical ones. Otherwise Europe will go to ground from the Jewish sickness.”²¹⁴ Arthur Seyss-Inquart, the deputy governor of the Generalgouvernement, expected that the Lublin reservation would lead to a “strong decimation of the Jews.”²¹⁵ The Generalgouverneur himself, Hans Frank, stated shortly afterwards that “the more die, the better.”²¹⁶

A planning expert from the German Foreign Institute in Stuttgart, Könekamp, stated after an inspection tour of the GG at the end of November and start of December 1939 that “the destruction of this sub-humanity would be in the interests of the entire world. This extermination is however one of the most difficult problems. One cannot see it through with shootings. One cannot also shoot women and children. One reckons here and there also with losses from evacuation transports.”²¹⁷ Albrecht Haushofer, working in the Foreign Office publicity department, noted in December 1939 of a lunchtime encounter “with the man whose

²¹¹ For a short summary, see Golczewski, ‘Polen’, pp.426-432.

²¹² ‘New Jewish State in Poland’, *The Times*, 24.10.1939.

²¹³ TBJG I/7, p.177 (31.10.1939).

²¹⁴ TBJG I/3, p.612.

²¹⁵ Bericht über die Dienstreise, 22.11.1939, 2278-PS, IMT XXX, p.95; cf. Safrian, *Eichmann-Männer*, p.88, Aly, *Endlösung*, p.34.

²¹⁶ Protokoll einer Rede in Radom, *FGM*, p.46.

²¹⁷ Bericht Könekamp über Polenfahrt, cited in Götz Aly and Susanne Heim, ‘Die Oekonomie der ‘Endlösung’: Menschenverwaltung und wirtschaftliche Neuordnung’, *Beiträge zur Nationalsozialistischen Gesundheits- und Sozialpolitik 5: Sozialpolitik und Juenvernichtung: Gibt es eine Oekonomie der Endlösung?*, Berlin, 1987, pp.7-90, here p.48.

systematic task it will be to leave a substantial number of the Jews who are to be freighted out into the Lublin ghetto to freeze to death and starve there.”²¹⁸ Himmler declared that “it is high time that this scum is concentrated into ghettos and then diseases are brought in to leave them to croak.”²¹⁹ Himmler’s appointed representative in Lublin, the SS- and Police Leader (SS- und Polizeiführer, SSPF) Odilo Globocnik, foresaw instead famine as the weapon of mass destruction: “the evacuated Jews and Poles... should feed themselves and obtain support from their people because those Jews have plenty. If this should not succeed, they should be left to starve.”²²⁰ Similar sentiments were also heard from Hans Frank, discussing the food situation with the state secretary of the Agriculture Ministry, Herbert Backe, in April 1940: “I’m not remotely interested in the Jews. Whether they have something to eat or not is the last thing on earth I care about.”²²¹

The Lublin reservation plan, however, ended up as a miserable failure. Although clung to into the spring of 1940, causing a delay to proposals to establish a ghetto in Warsaw²²², the sheer disruption caused by ‘wild’ deportations was immense. Moreover, the intention to deport Jews from the Reich to the Lublin ‘reservation’ was an even more drastic failure. The so-called ‘Nisko plan’, organised and supervised by Adolf Eichmann, never succeeded in bringing more than a few thousand Austrian and Czech Jews to Lublin. After some of the deportees had been expelled across the Nazi-Soviet demarcation line and many hundreds had died of malnutrition and disease, the few remaining survivors were uniquely allowed to return home in early 1940.²²³

Nor was the ‘Lublin reservation’ plan the last time that the Nazis found themselves contemplating genocide and extermination in the early years of the occupation. Over the course of 1940-41, Nazi policies of expropriation, racist food rationing, forced labour, maltreatment, and local expulsions battered the Jewish community in the Generalgouvernement continuously and began to decimate it. Nowhere was this process more visible than in the Warsaw ghetto. After food supplies were suspended in early 1941, the GG administration commissioned a report on the economic future of the ghetto, which was

²¹⁸ Hans-Adolf Jacobsen (ed), *Karl Haushofer: Leben und Werk, Bd. 2: Ausgewählter Schriftwechsel, 1917-1946*, Boppard am Rhein, 1979, nr. 226.

²¹⁹ Dieter Pohl, *Von der ‘Judenpolitik’ zum Judenmord. Der Distrikt Lublin des Generalgouvernements 1939-1944*, Frankfurt am Main, 1993, p.49.

²²⁰ Pohl, *Judenpolitik*, p.52, citing Protokoll der Distriktsitzung, 16.2.1940, APL GDL/61, p.17.

²²¹ *Diensttagebuch*, p.186 (23.4.1940).

²²² Rückblick des Umsiedlungsreferenten im Distrikt Warschau, Waldemar Schön, 21.1.1941, *FGM*, p.108ff

²²³ On the Nisko action see Seev Goshen, ‘Eichmann und die Nisko-Aktion im Oktober 1939: Eine Fallstudie zur NS Judenpolitik in der letzten Etappe vor der Endlösung’, *VfZ* 29/1, 1981, pp.74-96; ‘Nisko – Eine Ausnahmefall unter den Judenlagern der SS’, *VfZ* 40/1, 1992, pp.95-106; Jonny Moser, ‘Nisko: The First Experiment in Deportation’, *SWC* 2, 1985, pp.1-30.

drafted by Dr. Rudolf Gater, the head of the Reich Board for Economic Efficiency, at the behest of Dr. Walter Emmerich, the head of the economics department of the GG administration.²²⁴ Recognising clearly that the ghetto consumed more than it produced, Gater spelled out the choices: to subsidize the ghetto, to harness the Jews to productive labour, to loosen restrictions on movement and allow the Jews to resume normal commercial contacts, or to accept the consequences of sealing off the ghetto and undersupplying it. The ghetto could either be “a means... to liquidate the Jews” or a source of labour.

The crisis of the Warsaw ghetto revealed a conflict between ‘attritionists’ and ‘productionists’ inside the German administration.²²⁵ The men directly assigned to supervise the Warsaw ghetto, Waldemar Schön and Adam Palfinger, belonged to the first camp, blithely insisting that further wealth could be drained out of the ghetto by suspending food supplies and forcing the Jews to turn to the black market. The district governor, Ludwig Fischer, took a rosy line that virtually ignored reality, declaring that there were 40,000 Jews employed inside or outside the ghetto, and that epidemics had been cut in half.²²⁶ In April 1941, the factions clashed at a meeting chaired by Hans Frank. Rather than 40,000 ghetto inhabitants in employment, the real number was just 19,000, of whom 12,000 worked in labour camps outside the ghetto and 7,000 in workshops inside it, versus a total of 185,000 men and women deemed fit for work (*arbeitsfähig*).²²⁷ After much mutual recrimination, the argument went against the ‘attritionists’. For Frank, maintaining the productivity of the ghetto was the “lesser evil”, especially since he had been told in March 1941 that the Generalgouvernement would be the first territory to be freed of Jews.²²⁸ Schön and Palfinger were transferred and replaced by Max Bischof as head of the Transferstelle and Heinz Auerswald as commissar of the Jewish district, who immediately began to institute somewhat more rational economic policies towards the ghetto, as the head of the Jewish Council, Adam Czerniaków, quickly noted.²²⁹ This “turnabout” was, however, entirely relative. Although the “cultural scandal” of bodies littering the streets noted by the Wehrmacht commandant of

²²⁴ Die Wirtschaftsbilanz des jüdischen Wohnbezirks in Warschau, März 1941, published in Götz Aly and Susanne Heim (eds), *Bevölkerungsstruktur und Massenmord. Neue Dokumente zur deutschen Politik der Jahre 1938-1945*, Berlin: Rotbuch, 1991, pp.74-138.

²²⁵ See Christopher Browning, ‘German Technocrats, Jewish Labor, and the Final Solution’ in *The Path to Genocide*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992, pp.59-76; Götz Aly and Susanne Heim, *Vordenker der Vernichtung. Auschwitz und die deutschen Pläne für eine neue europäische Ordnung*, Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1991, p.312-310.

²²⁶ *Diensttagebuch*, p.337 (25.3.1941).

²²⁷ *Diensttagebuch*, pp.343-6 (3.4.1941); cf. Browning, *Origins*, pp.127-9.

²²⁸ *Diensttagebuch*, pp.359-362 (19.4.1941).

²²⁹ Czerniaków, pp.230-246 (5.5-3.6.1941).

Warsaw was tidied up²³⁰, the spectacle of emaciated corpses was really only shoved under the carpet, not done away with: mortality remained high through the remainder of 1941, and a total of 43,000 Jews died in the Warsaw ghetto during that year.

By the autumn of 1941, despite high hopes, as no sign emerged of the promised removal of the Jews²³¹, and as sanitary conditions in the ghettos worsened, leading officials in the GG returned to the old theme of destroying them. At a conference in Warsaw from October 14-16, 1941, the governor of the Warsaw district, Ludwig Fischer, demanded that the ghetto be sealed completely to prevent the spread of typhus and declared that “this war is about a confrontation with Jewry in its totality... I believe that threat is answered when we annihilate the breeding ground of Jewry, from which the entire World Jewry renews itself.”²³² At another conference, this time of health officials, held at the spa resort town of Bad Krynica, a medical expert opined that the control of typhus was impossible when “without doubt the Jewish population simply broke out of the ghettos in which there was nothing to eat”, recommending that there be an increased food supply for the ghettos to solve the problem. Dr. Jost Walbaum, head of the public health department of the GG administration, replied:

You are completely right. Naturally it would be the best and simplest to give the people sufficient provisioning possibilities, but that cannot be done. That is connected to the food situation and the war situation in general. Thus shooting will be employed when one comes across a Jew outside the ghetto without permission. One must, I can say it quite openly in this circle, be clear about it. **There are only two ways. We sentence the Jews in the ghetto to death by hunger or we shoot them.** Even if the end result is the same, the latter is more intimidating. We cannot do otherwise, even if we want to. We have one and only one responsibility, that the German people are not infected and endangered by these parasites. For that any means must be right.

According to the extant protocol of the meeting, Walbaum’s words provoked “applause, clapping”.²³³

It is important to note that these blood-curdling musings took place against the backdrop of a new harvest year and the results of negotiations with Göring’s Four Year Plan over agricultural requisitioning and rationing. In the 1940/41 harvest year, the GG had not been called upon to supply food to the Reich, but this was about to change. A high-level

²³⁰ Kommandantur Warschau Qu/Ib, Monatsbericht 15.4-15.5.41, 20.5.1941, NARA T501/214/269.

²³¹ See section ‘Mattogno’s ‘Resettlement’ Shell Game’ below

²³² Quoted in David Furber and Wendy Lower, ‘Colonialism and Genocide in Nazi-Occupied Poland and Ukraine’ in A. Dirk Moses (ed), *Empire, Colony, Genocide. Conquest, Occupation, and Subaltern Resistance in World History*, Oxford: Berghahn, 2008, pp.372-400, here p.383.

²³³ Cited in Christopher R. Browning, ‘Genocide and Public Health: German Doctors and Polish Jews, 1939-1941’, *HGS* 3/1, 1988, pp.21-36, here p.27.

conference between Göring and Backe on September 15, 1941 had resolved that the newly conquered occupied Soviet territories would be ruthlessly exploited for foodstuffs, even if this came at the expense of the Soviet civilian population or Soviet prisoners of war.²³⁴ A follow-up conference the next day involving the Wehrmacht reiterated Göring's and Backe's demands.²³⁵ Immediately after the second meeting, Göring send a telegram to the GG in Cracow concerning the need to export food supplies to Poland. This was done after Backe had reported that Frank had refused to cooperate with the Agriculture Ministry. Frank's response was to insist that he had done "the most humanly possible" and that surpluses for export were simply not available.²³⁶

The food situation in occupied Poland, both in the Government-General and in the 'incorporated territories', had long been regarded as catastrophic.²³⁷ In rejecting the demands for exports to Germany made by Göring and Backe, Frank emphasised the fact that his regime was already supplying the majority of the food needed to provision the Wehrmacht garrison of some 400,000 soldiers. Negotiations to agree upon the requisitions needed for the third war year had in fact just taken place in the week before Göring's telegram of September 16.²³⁸ A series of meetings on September 11, 12, 15 and 16 ensued, which revealed that in order to meet the full demands of the Wehrmacht, rations for the civilian population would have to be cut, even though cases of typhus and tuberculosis had risen by 120% in the preceding year because of malnourishment. The civilian potato ration would be reduced from 150 kg/year to 100 kg/year, the meat ration from 100g/week to 75g/week. Rations for the projected 400,000 Soviet POWs who were to be accommodated in the Stalags of the Government-General would simply be cut in half, reducing the potato ration for prisoners of war from 9 kg/week to 4.5 kg/week. These cuts were made without reference to any overt decision from the Four Year Plan, Agriculture Ministry, OKW or the Replacement Army of OKH.²³⁹ According to the postwar memoirs of Eberhard Westerkamp, the chief of internal administration in the GG, the representatives of OKW spelled out "their calculations

²³⁴ Ministerialrat Dr.-Ing. Görnert, Besprechungsnotiz vom 15.9.41 anlässlich der Besprechung des Herrn Reichsmarschall mit Staatssekretär Backe, 16.9.41, RGVA 700-1-31, pp.7-9.

²³⁵ Ministerialrat Dr.-Ing. Görnert, Zusatz zur Besprechungsnotiz vom 15.9.41 über die Besprechung bei den Herrn Reichsmarschall vom 16.9.41, 18.9.41, RGVA 700-1-31, pp.1-5; Verb.St. d. WiRüAmt beim Reichsmarschall, Wirtschaftsaufzeichnungen für die Berichtszeit vom 15.8. bis 16.9.1941, EC-003, IMT XXXVI, pp.105-109.

²³⁶ *Diensttagebuch*, p.409 (20.9.41).

²³⁷ For contemporary references to the food situation, see Moltke, *Briefe an Freya 1939-1945*, pp.270-1 (17.7.41); Halder, KTB III, pp.142-3 (2.8.41); *Diensttagebuch*, pp. 399-400 (Regierungssitzung of 5.9.41).

²³⁸ KTB WiStab Ost Chefgruppe Landwirtschaft, 9.9.41, NA T77/1204/933.

²³⁹ MiG IVa, Vermerk über die Besprechungen am 11-12.9.41 in Lemberg bzw Krakau; Ausnutzung des Landes, n.d [after 16.9.41], NARA T501/220/236-8, 229-32; *Diensttagebuch*, pp.405-7 (12.9.41).

according to an ice-cold rationale.”²⁴⁰ The consequences of the decisions taken in September 1941 for the fate of Soviet POWs in the camps of the GG were drastic. Between June 1941 and April 15, 1942, a total of 292,560 prisoners of war died. Of the 44,000 prisoners remaining, only 3,596 were fit enough to be employed as labourers.²⁴¹

The decision to starve Soviet POWs to death – for that is what was involved in the September negotiations – represented the crossing of yet another moral and psychological threshold for the GG administration, but it was the cuts in civilian rations and general decline in the overall food situation that undoubtedly prompted Hans Frank to accede to the wishes of subordinates such as Fischer and Walbaum by decreeing on October 15, 1941 that Jews caught leaving their assigned residences (ghettos or urban quarters) would be shot, as would anyone found assisting them, after a trial by the Special Courts (*Sondergerichte*).²⁴² This decree eventually modulated into a standard shoot-to-kill order (*Schiessbefehl*) which provided a hunting license for the SS and Police to capture and kill any Jews fleeing deportations in 1942. The rigorous enforcement of the *Schiessbefehl*, however, took time to be instituted properly²⁴³; it was not until 1942 that significant numbers of Polish Jews began to be captured and killed under the auspices of this order.²⁴⁴ Increasingly trapped in the ghettos and Jewish quarters by the threat of summary execution if caught outside these spaces, the Jews of the GG were also hit hard by the decreased availability of food supplies

²⁴⁰ Cited in Musial, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung*, p.198.

²⁴¹ MiG OQu, Kriegsgefangene im Generalgouvernement, Stand am 27.11.41, 2.12.41, 16.12.41, 15.4.42, NARA T501/221/967-8, 1115, /220/923. Cf. Streit, *Keine Kameraden*, p.134. 26,068 had been released and 8,169 sent to SS, Luftwaffe and Reichsautobahn labour camps. 17,256 were “handed over to the SD”, ie shot, while 7,559 escaped. An additional 263,587 POWs were transported from Poland to camps in Germany, where many tens of thousands more undoubtedly perished. The OKW POW Department had planned in November 1941 to transport 660,000 prisoners from Poland to Germany, as there was only food available for 300,000. Cf. MiG OQu/Qu.2, Für KTB, 20.10.41, NARA T501/229/9.

²⁴² VOBIGG, 1941, p.595 (15.10.1941), also published in *FGM*, pp.128-9.

²⁴³ Early enforcement is noted in Czerniaków, *Warsaw Diary*, pp.296-300 (6-17.11.1941), p.304 (14-15.12.41, execution of 15 out of 17 Jews caught outside the ghetto), but other cases were not necessarily punished with death. On the treatment of Jews in the Sondergericht system in the Warsaw district, see Jan Grabowski, ‘Żydzi przed obliczem niemieckich i polskich sądów w dystrykcie warszawskim Generalnego Gubernatorstwa, 1939-1942’, in Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, Dariusz Libionka (eds), *Prowincja Noc. Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim*, Warsaw, 2007, pp.75-118.

²⁴⁴ The *Schiessbefehl* really began to make itself felt from the start of 1942, as numerous reports from Kreishauptmänner and Police commands indicate. The county captain of Tomaszów reported that “the drive of the Jews to escape death from hunger in the ghetto and continue their lives on the outside is once again noticeable. In the past month around 30 Jews, who had left the ghetto without permission and wanted to escape, were shot.” By March 1942, KdO Lublin recorded the execution of 215 Jews over the course of the month “in order to prevent the spread of infectious diseases”. Cf. excerpt from monthly report for March 1942 of Kreishauptmann Tomaszów, *FGM*, p.133; KdO Lublin Halbjahresbericht 1-6.42, AIPN CA 156/44, p.78.

that followed on from the September 1941 requisitioning demands, and by the outbreaks of numerous epidemics.²⁴⁵

October 1941 also saw a last bid by Hans Frank to remove the Jews of the GG by expulsion. On October 13, Frank met Alfred Rosenberg, and asked about the “possibility of deporting the Jewish population of the Generalgouvernement into the occupied eastern territories.” The Eastern Ministry was unable to help, as Rosenberg could see “no possibility for the carrying out of such resettlement plans.” But Rosenberg promised to let Frank know if things changed.²⁴⁶ Just over a week later, on October 21, Hans Frank along with his interior administration chief Eberhard Westerkamp visited Lwow, and repeated the prohibition against ghetto building decreed in July, “because the hope exists, that in the near future, the Jews can be deported out of the GG.”²⁴⁷ This was the last time that such a hope was ever expressed in the records of the Generalgouvernement administration. Plans were taking shape in Berlin as a result of the escalation to mass murder in the occupied Soviet Union for a more general solution.²⁴⁸ When the HSSPF Ost, Friedrich-Wilhelm Krüger, met with Himmler on November 28, 1941, to complain about Hans Frank’s desire to control Jewish policy perfectly, this prompted Reinhard Heydrich to extend an invitation to Frank’s state secretary Josef Bühler to attend a conference scheduled for December 9, 1941 at Wannsee in Berlin.²⁴⁹ The postponement of the conference to January 20, 1942, meant that in the meantime, Frank was present to hear Hitler make his announcement to the Reichs- and Gauleiter on December 12, 1941 that the Jews would be exterminated.

Concerning the Jewish question, the Führer is determined to make a clean sweep. He prophesied to the Jews that if they were once again to cause a world war, the result would be their own destruction. That was no figure of speech. The world war is here, the destruction of the Jews must be the inevitable consequence. This question is to be viewed without sentimentality. It is our duty to have sympathy not for the Jews but only for our own German people. If the German people have now again sacrificed 160,000 dead on the eastern front, then the authors of this bloody conflict must pay for it with their lives.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁵ Of 72,000 cases of typhus recorded in 1941, 46,000 were diagnosed in the last quarter of the year, largely because of the movement of Soviet POWs. These figures seem to exclude epidemics in the ghettos and pertain primarily to the Polish civilian population. Cf. MiG, Leitender San. Offizier, Tätigkeitsbericht, 19.2.42, NA T501/220/1213-5. On the German fear of typhus and measures organised in response to outbreaks in the GG, see also Paul Weindling, *Epidemics and Genocide in Eastern Europe, 1880-1945*, Oxford: OUP, 1999.

²⁴⁶ *Diensttagebuch*, p.413 (13.10.1941).

²⁴⁷ *Diensttagebuch*, p.441 (21.10.1941).

²⁴⁸ See Chapter 2.

²⁴⁹ For a facsimile of Heydrich’s invite to Bühler as well as the context of the letter, see Yehoushua Büchler and Richard Breitman, ‘A Preparatory Document for the Wannsee ‘Conference’, *HGS* 9/1, 1995, pp.121-9; for Krüger’s meeting with Himmler, see *Dienstkalender*, p.277 (28.11.1941).

²⁵⁰ *TBJG* II/2, pp.498-499 (entry of 13.12.1941); cf. Gerlach, ‘Wannsee Conference’, and the discussion in Chapter 2 of this critique.

Frank was in Berlin from December 10 to 13 and may also have met with Hitler privately. It is certain that he correctly understood the message conveyed by Hitler's speech to the Reichs- and Gauleiter on December 12, as on his return to Cracow, he addressed a gathering of department heads and district governors on December 16, 1941 with the following words:

We must put an end to the Jews, that I want to say quite openly. The Führer once spoke these words: if united Jewry should once more succeed in unleashing a world war, then the peoples who have been incited to this war will not be its only victims, because the Jew in Europe will also have found his end... Before I continue to speak I would ask you to agree with me on the following principle: we want to have compassion only for the German people, otherwise for no one in the whole world. Others have had no compassion for us. As an old National Socialist, I must also say: if the Jewish tribe were to survive the war in Europe, while we had sacrificed our best blood for Europe's preservation, then this war would be only a partial success. Thus vis-a-vis the Jews I will in principle proceed only on the assumption that they will disappear. They must go. I have entered into negotiations for the purpose of deporting them to the east. In January a large meeting will take place in Berlin on this topic, to which I will send State Secretary Dr. Bühler. This meeting will be convened in the RSHA by SS-Obergruppenführer Heydrich. In any case a large migration of Jews will be set in motion.

But what is to happen to the Jews? Do you believe that they will be lodged in settlements in the Ostland? In Berlin we were told: why all this trouble, we cannot use them in the Ostland or the Reichskommissariat [Ukraine] either, liquidate them yourselves! Gentlemen, I must ask you, arm yourselves against any thoughts of compassion. We must destroy the Jews, wherever we encounter them and wherever it is possible, in order to preserve the entire structure of the Reich... One cannot apply previous conceptions to such a gigantic, unique event. In any case we must find a way to achieve our goal... The Jews represent for us also extraordinarily malignant gluttons. We have an estimated 2.5 million Jews in the GG, perhaps with the half-Jews and all that that entails some 3.5 million. We cannot shoot these 3.5 million, we cannot poison them, but nonetheless we will take some kind of action that will lead to a successful destruction, and indeed in conjunction with the important measures to be discussed in the Reich. The GG must become just as free of the Jews as the Reich.²⁵¹

Frank's words were very clearly understood by those present as signalling that the Jews of the Generalgouvernement would now be exterminated. Indeed, the penny dropped with a loud clang for Eberhard Westerkamp, Frank's chief of interior administration, who took the opportunity to request a transfer out of Poland to serve in the Army. Before he left, however, Westerkamp had a meeting with the HSSPF, Krüger, in which Westerkamp complained that "certain methods and outgrowths in the treatment of the Jewish problem" caused him "headaches". Krüger responded by trying to convince Westerkamp of the necessity of the

²⁵¹ *Diensttagebuch*, pp.457-8 (Regierungssitzung of 16.12.1941).

measures. Krüger later wrote to State Secretary Stuckart of the Interior Ministry declaring that both the HSSPF as well as *Heydrich* retained a good opinion of Westerkamp, despite the obvious reasons for his request for transfer to the Army.²⁵²

With good reason, Frank's speech of December 16, 1941 is considered *prima facie* evidence of the emergence of a policy of extermination. However it is spun, the text of the speech cannot be read as indicating anything else than the enunciation of a firm commitment to do away with the Jews of the GG. The speech represented the moment when the *global*, geopolitical justifications for genocide articulated by Hitler – the escalation to a world war after Nazi Germany's declaration of war on the US, the heavy losses on the Eastern front – converged with the regional pressures and dynamics which were leading the GG administration to the conclusion that genocide was necessary to solve their *local* problems. The 'why' was utterly clear: ideological 'rationales', the impossibility of deporting the Jews to the occupied eastern territories, and the prospect of solving the food situation by eliminating "extraordinarily malignant gluttons." The only uncertainties in Frank's words relate to the 'how'. Although he had absorbed the implications of Hitler's announcement of December 12, 1941 and conveyed the full meaning of this signal from above to his subordinates, it is clear from Frank's words that he could not as yet imagine *how* they would exterminate the Jews – 'we cannot shoot them, we cannot poison them.'²⁵³

Although Mattogno is perfectly aware of this source, he manages to omit it from all three volumes of the 'trilogy', even though it is routinely quoted in comparable mainstream works on the Reinhard camps.²⁵⁴ His frantic handwave in an older brochure that "Hans Frank did nothing but emulate Hitler's 'annihilation' rhetoric with the same meaning"²⁵⁵ is not only contradicted by the actual texts – Frank made little reference to the role of 'world Jewry' in bringing about a world war, but instead emphasised that Jews were "extraordinarily dangerous gluttons" – but is also refuted by the reactions of contemporaries who, unlike Mattogno, were actually there and heard the speech, who clearly understood its meaning. Henceforth, the GG administration would work towards the goal of killing the Jews.

Mattogno has more to say about the Wannsee protocol, but as we saw in Chapter 2, his misunderstandings are copious. His main gambit to try and handwave Wannsee's significance for the GG has already been dealt with: Belzec was a pilot camp to test the

²⁵² Musial, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung*, pp.212-5, esp p.212, citing Westerkamp an Stuckart, 14.4.1942 and Krüger an Stuckart, 21.4.1942, BA DH ZA/VI, 304/A.2.

²⁵³ The statement 'we cannot poison them' seems to refer to the act of individually administering a dose of poison, rather than the method of mass gassing that was actually adopted.

²⁵⁴ E.g. in Arad, *Belzec Sobibor Treblinka*, p.12.

²⁵⁵ Mattogno, 'Denying Evidence', p.199. This is, surely, the most ironically titled of all of his brochures.

feasibility of the methods, and was joined within four months of its opening by two other camps. At Wannsee, Frank's state secretary Josef Bühler declared that the Final Solution could start in the GG

since on the one hand transportation does not play such a large role here nor would problems of labor supply hamper this action. Jews must be removed from the territory of the General Government as quickly as possible, since it is especially here that the Jew as an epidemic carrier represents an extreme danger and on the other hand he is causing permanent chaos in the economic structure of the country through continued black market dealings. Moreover, of the approximately 2 1/2 million Jews concerned, the majority is unfit for work.²⁵⁶

Reiterating the arguments advanced by Frank on 16 December 1941, Bühler's words are in fact incompatible with the well known phraseology of 'the Jews are to be utilised for work in the East', since his demand was for the 'removal' of the unfit Jews. Eichmann's sanitisation of the protocol was far from perfect; and thus this document can no more be spun for Revisionist 'resettlement' fantasies than any other source they try and mutilate.

That is an assessment which also applies to another source that Mattogno manages to bollix up repeatedly. On March 16, Fritz Reuter, an official in the BuF department of the Lublin district administration, held a meeting with SS-Hauptsturmführer Hermann Höfle, regarding the deportations now beginning in the district, including both the arrival of transports from the Reich and Slovakia as well as the deportations of Polish Jews. According to his memorandum for Dr. Richard Türk, head of the BuF desk, the following concerns were raised:

It would be appropriate if the transport of Jews that arrive in the Lublin district were split in the departure stations into those who are able to work and those who are not. If this division is impossible in the departure stations, eventually it should be considered to divide the transports in Lublin, according to the aforementioned point of view.

All the Jews incapable of work would arrive in Belzec, the final border station in the Zamosc county.

Hauptsturmführer Höfle is preparing the erection of a big camp, where the Jews capable of work will be held and divided according to their professions and from where they will be requested.

Piaski will be cleared of Polish Jews and will become a concentration point for Jews arriving from the Reich.

In the meantime Trawniki will not be populated by Jews

The Hauptsturmführer asks whether along the train line Deblin-Trawniki 60,000 Jews can be disembarked. After having been informed about the transports of

²⁵⁶ Wannsee-Protokoll, 20.1.1942, NG-2586-G.

Jews dispatched by us, Höfle announced that out of the 500 Jews who arrived from Suziec, those unable to work can be sorted out and sent to Belzec. According to a telex of 4 March 1942, a Jewish transport from the Protectorate with destination Trawniki is being run. These Jews have not been disembarked at Trawniki, but have been taken to Izbica....

In conclusion, he announced that every day he can receive four to five transports with 1,000 Jews each for the destination of Belzec station. These Jews would cross the border and never return to the Generalgouvernement.²⁵⁷

Mattogno's ever shifting comments on this document are a source of considerable amusement. In *Treblinka and Belzec*, he misreads the document and asserts that "Belzec was supposed to become a camp in which Jews were 'registered in a file system according to their occupation'. This does not conform in the least to a 'pure extermination camp'."²⁵⁸ Yet it is quite clear from the fact that Höfle was supposedly "preparing the erection of a big camp" that he was not referring to Belzec at all, but rather to Majdanek. Höfle wanted to select the foreign Jews upon arrival in Lublin, and would intern the able-bodied foreign Jews in "a large camp", namely Majdanek. This was the genesis of the idea and practice of selection, first pioneered on the 'ramp' at *Lublin*, not Auschwitz, and applied to incoming transports from the Reich and Slovakia in the ensuing months.

When called on this nonsensical misreading of the document by Roberto Muehlenkamp, Mattogno did little more than repeat the claim and retreat behind a cloud of octopus-ink obfuscation about 'total extermination'²⁵⁹, which can be ignored for the reasons previously given – not only was Belzec a test bed camp in March 1942²⁶⁰, but there is no incompatibility between exterminating one group of Jews and preserving another group for labour. Reuter's file note makes this especially clear. By the time of Sobibor, however, it seems that Mattogno had silently dropped his claim that Höfle was discussing Belzec, and now claims that "the task of the labour camp for able bodied Jews was probably the supply of manpower for the Durchgangsstrasse IV (transit road IV) in nearby Galicia."²⁶¹ This assertion makes even less sense, since it ignores the fact that Höfle had nothing to do with the DG IV construction project, whereas the correct answer – Majdanek – is staring at Mattogno right under his freaking nose. Selection on the Lublin 'ramp' was applied to transports

²⁵⁷ Vemerk, Lublin, den 17.III.1942, gez. Reuter, APL GDL 273, pp.33-34, also *FGM*, pp.269-70.

²⁵⁸ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.237 (citation); virtually identical wording in Mattogno, *Belzec*, p.104.

²⁵⁹ Mattogno, *Belzec e le controversie olocaustiche*, pp.13, 58-59.

²⁶⁰ Shortly after the completion of the first wave of deportations from the Lublin district, the propaganda office declared that "the Jewish out-settlement (Judenaussiedlung) has shown that the action can also be carried out on a grand scale for the entire GG". Pohl, *Judenpolitik*, p.115.

²⁶¹ MGK, *Sobibor*, p.297.

arriving from Germany, Austria and the Protectorate from late April onwards, as well as to at least six of 24 transports arriving from Slovakia.²⁶² One of the first to be so treated left Theresienstadt with 1,000 passengers on April 23, arriving in Piaski on April 25, minus 400 men adjudged to be *arbeitsfähig* – fit for work – who had been pulled out of the train at Lublin.²⁶³ Radio signals from KL Lublin to Berlin intercepted by Bletchley Park indicate that on April 30, there were 6,369 Jews interned in Majdanek, while two months later, on June 30, there were 9,779.²⁶⁴ Nonetheless, as projected in Reuter's protocol of his meeting with Höfle, the majority of new arrivals went to the so-called 'transit ghettos', from where they were deported onwards to the Reinhard camps over the course of the spring, summer and autumn of 1942, with few surviving the ordeal.²⁶⁵ For example, another Theresienstadt transport, departing on May 9, arrived in Siedliszcze, Chelm county on May 11/12. En route, 200-220 were pulled off the train at Lublin and sent to Majdanek. The remaining deportees were left alone for just one week before half the transport was caught up in a deportation to Sobibor on May 18. The survivors followed on October 22, with a tiny number selected for the forced labour camp (*Zwangsarbeitslager*, ZAL) at Osowa.²⁶⁶

²⁶² Büchler, 'Deportation of Slovak Jews', pp.154, 166; Zofia Leszczynska, 'Transporty wiezniów' in Tadeusz Mencil (ed), *Majdanek 1941-1944*, Lublin, 1991, p.438. On transports to Majdanek from Theresienstadt, see also Miroslav Kryl, 'Deportationen von Theresienstadt nach Majdanek', *TSD* 1994, pp.74-89

²⁶³ Gendarmerie-Posten Piaski an Gendarmeriezug in Lublin, betr, Meldung über Eintreffung von ca. 600 Juden aus der Tschechoslowakei in das Ghetto in Piaski, Kreis loublin, 25.4.42, gez. Kresse, BA R102 II/27, Bl. 35; cf. Gottwaldt/Schulle, *Judendeportationen*, p.196.

²⁶⁴ PRO HW16/10. For an analysis of these signals see Tomasz Kranz, Robert Kuwałek, Beata Siwek-Ciupak, 'Odszyfrowane radiotelegramy ze stanami dziennymi obozu koncentracyjnego na Majdanku (styczeń 1942 – styczeń 1943 r.)', *Zeszyty Majdanka* 2008, t. XXIV, pp.201-232.

²⁶⁵ For an overview of deportations from 'Greater Germany' to the Lublin district at this time, see Gottwaldt/Schulle, *Judendeportationen*, pp.137-219. On the 'transit ghettos' see On the 'transit ghettos', see two articles by Robert Kuwałek, 'Die Durchgangsghettos im Distrikt Lublin' in Musial (ed), *Aktion Reinhard*, pp.197-232 and 'Das kurze Leben "im Osten". Jüdische Deutsche im Distrikt Lublin aus polnisch-jüdischer Sicht', in Beate Meyer and Beate Kosmala (eds), *Die Deportation der Juden aus Deutschland. Pläne – Praxis – Reaktionen 1938-1945*. Göttingen, 2004, pp.112-134; also the same author's article 'Das Durchgangsghetto in Izbica', *TSD* 12, 2003, pp.321-351. The sourcing for these transports is variable; in many cases we have surviving reports, eg of the deportation of 955 Jews from Würzburg to Krasnystaw; cf. Reisebericht des Kriminaloberassistenten Gundelach, 4.5.42, facsimile in Herbert Schott, 'Die ersten drei Deportationen mainfränkischer Juden 1941/42' in Staatsarchiv Würzburg (ed), *Wege in die Vernichtung. Die Deportation der Juden aus Mainfranken 1941-1945*, Munich, 2003, pp.73-166, here pp.136-7. The transport was originally intended for Izbica, cf. FS Stapostelle Würzburg an RSHA IV B 4, BdS Krakau, SSPF Lublin, 27.4.1942, T/740. Also available are contemporary letters, for example Max and Martha Bauchwitz, German Jews from Stettin deported to the Lublin district in 1940, wrote on March 25 that "we are still 150 of about 700 here... we are still in shock from the last few days. It is desolately empty. The 1,500 from Mainz, Worms and Darmstadt have arrived in the homes of those who have departed. They have not a penny on them! It is said many people died on the way." Else Rosenfeld and Gertrud Luckner (eds), *Lebenszeichen aus Piaski. Briefe Deportierter aus dem Distrikt Lublin, 1940-1943*, Munich, 1968, p.91.

²⁶⁶ Peter Witte, 'Letzte Nachrichten aus Siedliszcze. Der Transport Ax aus Theresienstadt in den Distrikt Lublin', *TSD* 1996, pp.98-113.

Mattogno further compounds his errors over the Reuter file note by confusing himself over Höfle's prior tasking to the Strongpoints project.²⁶⁷ But as we have seen above, the involvement of SSPF Lublin in the SS and Police Strongpoints in the occupied eastern territories was ended at the start of March 1942, several weeks before this important meeting. And needless to say, Mattogno's interpretation still manages to ignore multiple sources which make it perfectly clear what was intended. Jews not fit for work would be taken to Belzec. That they would be killed there follows from (1) the simultaneous deportations from Lwow and the Galicia district and the documented Nazi lie that the Jews of Lwow were being taken to the Lublin district²⁶⁸, (2) the Polish underground report of April 1942 specifying that no Jews ever left Belzec²⁶⁹, (3) a follow up note of the BuF desk on the deportations as well as (4) the well known diary entry of Joseph Goebbels of March 27, 1942.

The follow-up note, dated March 20, 1942 and compiled by the head of the BuF desk, Dr. Richard Türk, records a conversation between Höfle and two county captains, Weienmeyer of Zamosc and Dr. Schmidt of Krasnystaw, on the deportations:

Kreishauptmann Weienmeyer has as yet been able to learn nothing about final outcome of the deportation; all that is known is the existence of a collection camp some distance from the Belzec train station on the district border that is entirely closed off and the arrival of a SS-commando of some 60 men.²⁷⁰

From this note it is clear that Höfle was being less than forthcoming about the exact fate of the deportees once they reached Belzec. This was spelled out more clearly a week later in Goebbels' diary:

Beginning with Lublin, the Jews in the General Government are now being evacuated eastward. The procedure is a pretty barbaric one and not to be described here more definitely. Not much will remain of the Jews. On the whole it can be said that about 60 per cent of them will have to be liquidated whereas only about 40 per cent can be used for forced labor.

The former Gauleiter of Vienna, who is to carry this measure through, is doing it with considerable circumspection and according to a method that does not attract too much attention. A judgment is being visited upon the Jews that, while barbaric, is fully deserved by them. The prophesy which the Führer made about them for having brought on a new world war is beginning to come true in a most terrible manner. One must not be sentimental in these matters. If we did not fight the Jews, they would destroy us. It's a life-and-death struggle between the Aryan race and the Jewish bacillus. No other government and no other regime would have the strength for such a global solution of this question. Here, too, the Führer is the undismayed champion of a radical solution necessitated by conditions and

²⁶⁷ MGK, *Sobibor*, p.297.

²⁶⁸ See section 'Mattogno's 'Resettlement' Shell Game' below

²⁶⁹ See Chapter 1.

²⁷⁰ Innere Verwaltung, U.Abt BuF, Vermerk, 20.3.1942, gez. Türk, APL GDL 273, p.35.

therefore inexorable. Fortunately a whole series of possibilities presents itself for us in wartime that would be denied us in peacetime. We shall have to profit by this.

The ghettos that will be emptied in the cities of the General Government now will be refilled with Jews thrown out of the Reich. This process is to be repeated from time to time. There is nothing funny in it for the Jews, and the fact that Jewry's representatives in England and America are today organizing and sponsoring the war against Germany must be paid for dearly by its representatives in Europe - and that's only right.²⁷¹

In previous exchanges, Mattogno has tried to claim that 'liquidate' here only means 'resettle', a gambit whose desperation is so transparent it could be photographed and placed next to the thesaurus definition of 'child caught with his hand in the cookie jar'.²⁷²

As is so often the case, Mattogno's exotic hermeneutics of the Reuter file note and Goebbels diary from March 1942 founder on his predilection for ignoring other sources and misunderstanding the actual context in which documents were produced. But the hole he has dug for himself only deepens when we consider a range of sources which record an escalation of Nazi extermination policy in the summer of 1942. The background to this acceleration has been well portrayed by Christian Gerlach in an important essay on the significance of food policy for the extermination of the Jews in Poland and Ukraine during 1942.²⁷³ Meanwhile, Christopher Browning re-examined the other side to the same coin in the light of Gerlach's findings, in an essay outlining the development of Nazi Jewish forced labour policy in the Generalgouvernement.²⁷⁴ Both authors refer back to a core chain of documents which have been repeatedly examined by several generations of historians starting with Raul Hilberg and Hanns von Krannhals in the early 1960s and continuing through the work of Ulrich Herbert and Bogdan Musial through to the current younger generation of researchers.²⁷⁵ Some of the documents have not only been cited a dozen times or more in the literature, but even appear

²⁷¹ *TBJG* II/3, p.561 (27.3.1942). In all likelihood, Goebbels learned of the plans for the Lublin district from the governor, Zörner, an old acquaintance of his. Cf. Czeslaw Madajczyk, 'Hitler's Direct Influence on Decisions Affecting Jews During World War II', *YVS* 20, 1990, pp.53-68, here p.59.

²⁷² Mattogno, *Belzec e le controversie olocaustiche*, pp.59-60, here citing back to Mattogno, *Hilberg*, pp.38-39. His other obfuscations of this diary entry, as seen for example in Mattogno, 'Denying Evidence', p.259, have been dealt with in Chapter 2.

²⁷³ Christian Gerlach, 'Die Bedeutung der deutscher Ernährungspolitik für die Beschleunigung des Mordes an den Juden 1942. Das Generalgouvernement und die Westukraine' in: *Krieg, Ernährung, Völkermord. Forschungen zur deutschen Vernichtungspolitik im Zweiten Weltkrieg*. Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 1998.

²⁷⁴ Christopher R. Browning, *Nazi Policy, Jewish Workers, German Killers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, p.75ff.

²⁷⁵ Hilberg, *Vernichtung*, Bd.2, pp.550-570; Hanns von Krannhals, 'Die Judenvernichtung in Polen und der Wehrmacht', *Wehrwissenschaftliche Rundschau* 15, 1965, pp.571-81; Herbert, 'Labour and Extermination'; Musial, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung*, pp. 273-280; Schwindt, *Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslager Majdanek*, pp.122-144; Seidel, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik*, pp.333-6.

in some of Mattogno's acknowledged sources, such as the *Faschismus-Getto-Massenmord* collection. Yet all are ignored.

The second phase of Aktion Reinhard took place against the backdrop of a major internal debate with the occupation authorities, between the SS, civil administration and Wehrmacht, regarding the conflicting priorities of food and labour. The GG was put under pressure by both the agricultural and armaments ministries at this time, so that the debate often extended beyond the confines of the Generalgouvernement itself. The State Secretary for Agriculture, Herbert Backe, who had not only Göring's but Hitler's ear, declared in June 1942 that "in the GG there are still 3.5 million Jews. Poland should already be sanitised this year."²⁷⁶

The problem that such a remark poses for Mattogno's "resettlement thesis" lies in the fact that Backe was intensely concerned with the exploitation of agriculture in the occupied Soviet territories, and had been one of the architects of the 'Hunger Plan' as well as one of the Nazi civil servants most implacably opposed to feeding Soviet POWs in 1941.²⁷⁷ Despite the mass starvation of more than 2 million POWs in the winter of 1941-2, rations for labouring prisoners of war in the Reich were only grudgingly raised, and the scales fixed for the newly arriving Ostarbeiter deported from the occupied Soviet Union were also miserly.²⁷⁸ Both German civilian and military rations were cut in May 1942. "Before we starve," Goebbels had noted in May after a meeting with Backe and Himmler, "a series of other peoples will be first, and indeed those whose governments forced us into this war." This principle was rigorously applied. "If there must be hunger, then first the foreigners will starve," an army official noted Göring saying on August 6.²⁷⁹

Göring's pronouncement was made at two major meetings involving representatives from all of the occupied territories as well as the Gauleiter in the Reich.²⁸⁰ The immediate

²⁷⁶ Chef Wi Z, Aktenvermerk über die Besprechung bei Staatssekretär Backe am 23.6.42 mit den landwirtschaftlichen Sachbearbeitern der besetzten Gebiete, 24.6.42, NARA T77/419/1689242, also NI-6194.

²⁷⁷ See Chapters 2 and 4.

²⁷⁸ See the paper trail documenting a litany of complaints from production side officials and officers in Rü III, Vortrag von Min.Dir. Mansfeld, GBA, über allgemeine Fragen des Arbeitseinsatzes, 20.2.42, NARA T77/1059/1123, also 1201-PS. Cf. Rosenberg an Keitel, Betr: Kriegsgefangene, 28.2.42, 081-PS; Rü IV(d), Vermerk betr. Ernährung der russischen Kriegsgef. und Zivilarbeiter, 10.3.42 (Entwurf), NARA T77/1059/1090-1; cf. Herbert, *Hitler's Foreign Workers*, p.173.

²⁷⁹ *TBJG* II/4, 24.5.42, p.353ff; OKW/Chef WR, Vermerk, 7.8.42, gez. Lehmann, T77/519/1689451-2. Backe also met with Hitler in May and July 1942 to discuss the food situation. Cf. Vermerk Ministerialdirektors Riecke für Herrn Staatssekretär Backe zum Vortrag beim Führer, 3.5.42, T77/1170/783-5; Bormann-Tagebuch, 8-9.5.42, 5.7.42, IWM AL 1488/2, pp.84, 87.

²⁸⁰ Stenographischer Bericht über die Besprechung des Reichsmarschalls Göring mit den Reichskommissaren für die besetzten Gebiete und den Militärbefehlshabern über die Ernährungslage, 6.8.42, USSR-170, *IMT* 39, pp. 384-412; OKW/Chef WR, Vermerk, 7.8.42, gez. Lehmann, T77/519/1689451-2; Halder, KTB III, p.503

outcome was the raising of agricultural requisitioning quotas everywhere in Eastern Europe, including the Generalgouvernement. The Nazis were quite clear that they could not raise rations for the labouring population in the occupied Soviet territories.²⁸¹ Extreme difficulties also accompanied the feeding of the armaments workforce in the Generalgouvernement.²⁸² Thus when Göring's quotas arrived in August 1942, they led the civil administration of the Generalgouvernement to decide to exclude all but labouring Jews from the meagre ration scales. As Hans Frank declared on August 24:²⁸³

The feeding of a Jewish population component, estimated heretofore at 1.6 million, drops off to an estimated total of 300,000 Jews, who still work for German interests as craftsmen or otherwise. For these the Jewish rations, including certain special allotments which have proved necessary for the maintenance of working capacity, will be retained. The other Jews, a total of 1.2 million, will no longer be provided with foodstuffs.

Confirmation of this decision can be found in the revealing reports of a representative of the Party Chancellery attached to a manpower comb-out commission that was touring the Generalgouvernement at this time. "It is planned from 1 January to give the Jews no more food at all and to reduce the rations for Poles considerably, and no longer to allot any increases for armaments workers."²⁸⁴ In the 1942/3 harvest year, the GG delivered its largest ever quotas of agricultural requisitions:²⁸⁵

	Grain	Potatoes	Meat
Deliveries to Reich	600,000 tons	280,000 tons	35,000 tons
Deliveries to Wehrmacht	150,000 tons	244,000 tons	26,460 tons
Priority Workers	200,000 tons	813,000 tons	30,000 tons
Rest of Population	230,000 tons	246,000 tons	none

In the wake of the deportation and mass murder of the Jews, the food situation continued to be so poor that the Nazi authorities contemplated excluding hundreds of

(11.8.42); on the former *TBJG* II/5, 6.8.42, pp.257ff; Speer-Chronik, 5.8.42, p.60, BA 3/1736; Bormann-Tagebuch, 5-6.8.42, p.87, IWM AL 1488/2.

²⁸¹ OKH/GenStdH/GenQu I/IVa, Ernährung der Zivilbevölkerung in den besetzten Ostgebieten, 3.8.42, gez. Wagner, NA T77/1196/627-8; this was reiterated in later directives ordering that seedstocks, Wehrmacht deliveries took priority over the feeding of the civilian population. Der Reichsmarschall des Grossdeutschen Reiches Beauftr, VJP VP 18717/3/6g, Verteilung landwirtschaftlicher Erzeugnisse in den besetzten Ostgebieten, 1.12.42, NA T77/1170/874.

²⁸² *Diensttagebuch*, pp.524-5 (15.7.42)

²⁸³ *Diensttagebuch*, p.549 (Regierungssitzung of 24.8.42).

²⁸⁴ Beauftragter des Reichsleiters Bormann im OKW-Stab zbV, Bericht Nr. 4 (Distrikt Krakau), 27.8.42, BA NS 6/795, pp.155-6; further confirmation of the reduction in rations and the worries of the Nazi authorities over the black market can be found in Bericht über die Sitzung des Verwaltungsrats der Reichskreditkassen am 5.10.42, 7.10.42, BA R29/4, p.160ff.

²⁸⁵ Der Beauftragte für den Vierjahresplan Geschäftsgruppe Ernährung, Lieferverpflichtungen des Generalgouvernements im IV. Kriegswirtschaftsjahr, 12.12.42, BA NS 19/1995, pp.176-7.

thousands of Poles from the ration lists, a plan which was only abandoned because of the realisation that the numerically dominant Polish civilian population would probably revolt if it were enforced.²⁸⁶

Let us be quite clear on the implications of these documents. They utterly refute the ‘Revisionist’ contention that Nazi policy intended only to ‘resettle’ Jews to the occupied Soviet territories by making it perfectly obvious that any such ‘resettlement’ deportations would have resulted in fifty Belsens, as the mass starvation of Soviet POWs in the winter of 1941-2 was repeated. The declaration that non-working Jews would no longer be fed spelled out a death sentence for over 1.2 million Jews come what may. That Mattogno and his cohorts have hitherto utterly ignored these sources goes without saying; the only question is whether they possess even a residual amount of honesty and can acknowledge that genocide was the inevitable outcome of Nazi Jewish policy in Poland. For it makes absolutely no difference morally or historically whether Polish Jews died in gas chambers or because of deliberate starvation. Therefore, the Revisionist “resettlement thesis”, as we will explain further in Chapter 4, drives the Holocaust deniers into a cul-de-sac from which there is no logical escape.

At the same time as the food situation made itself felt on Nazi Jewish policy, the Generalgouvernement was placed under pressure from the Armaments Ministry to increase munitions production. From July 1942 onwards, the ‘armaments border’ for investment of capital and plant was extended to include the GG.²⁸⁷ The planning calculations of both the Wehrmacht’s Armaments Inspectorate under Lieutenant-General Maximilian Schindler as well as the civil administration had since the spring of 1942 rested on the assumption that Jews fit for work would be retained and not deported. In May 1942, the military authorities had even hoped to replace Polish and Ukrainian workers deported to Germany with Jewish workers.²⁸⁸ The drive to deport the Jews which began in its full fury during July 1942 with the Warsaw ghetto action and the subsequent actions in the provincial districts threatened to

²⁸⁶ Besprechung mit Herrn Müller, Stubaf Pehle, Bevollmächtigte des REM und dem Leiter der Hauptabteilung EuL in der Regierung des GG, Herrn Präsidenten Naumann, am 13.1.43, 15.1.43, gez. SS-Ogruf Krüger, BA NS19/2648, pp.98-9; *Diensttagebuch*, pp.573-4, 592, 598-9 (20.11.42, 14.12.42, 25.1.43); cf. Gerlach, ‘Bedeutung des deutschen Ernährungspolitik’, pp. 247-8.

²⁸⁷ Der Führer und Reichskanzler, Erlass betr.: Industrieverlagerung nach dem Protektorat, dem Generalgouvernement, und den besetzten Ostgebieten unter Federführung des Reichsministers Speer, 28.6.1942, BA R43 II/655a; cf. *Diensttagebuch*, pp.524-5 (15.7.42).

²⁸⁸ MiG OQu/Qu.2, Einsatz jüdischer Facharbeiter, 9.5.42, NA T501/220/843. On the deportation of Polish workers to Germany, see Czeslaw Luczak, *Polscy robotnicy przymusowi w Trzeciej Rzeszy podczas II wojny swiatowej*, Poznan 1974.

upset the calculations of the military planners. In the course of negotiations between the Wehrmacht and SS, the military was told in mid-August that:²⁸⁹

No commitment can be given to leave the Jews working for the Wehrmacht until the end of the war. According to the opinion of the Reichsmarschall, the idea that the Jews are irreplaceable should be got away from. Neither the Armaments Inspectorate nor the other departments will keep their Jews until the end of the war. The orders are clear and hard. They were valid not only for the Generalgouvernement, but for all occupied territories.

The clash of interests between the Wehrmacht and the SS had already led to open conflicts between Army officers and representatives of SSPF Krakau, as occurred when Captain Battel barred the way to an SS detachment seeking to begin deportations from the ghetto in Przemysl in July 1942.²⁹⁰ Continued protests saw the Wehrmacht commander in the Generalgouvernement, General von Gienanth, forcibly retired at the start of October 1942.²⁹¹ Immediately afterwards, OKW issued an order regarding the ‘replacement of Jewish labour by Aryan labour in the Generalgouvernement and occupied eastern territories’, in other words applying not only to the GG but also to the occupied Soviet Union. In this directive, the Wehrmacht was informed that henceforth, labouring Jews could only be tolerated in camps under the control of the SS, “yet, there, too, one day the Jews are to disappear in accordance with the Führer’s wish.”²⁹² In a parallel directive to Globocnik, Krüger and Oswald Pohl, Himmler used identical language. To give the German version: “auch dort sollen eines Tages dem Wunsche des Führers entsprechend die Juden verschwinden.”²⁹³

It is thus instructive that the director of agriculture for the Generalgouvernement, Neumann, protocolled a meeting with SS-Brigadeführer Katzmann, SSPF Galizien, in early August 1942 which demonstrated how the Nazi authorities intended to balance the competing demands of food and labour requirements. According to Neumann, “within half a year there would be no more free Jews in the Generalgouvernement. The people will be partly out-settled (*ausgesiedelt*), partly brought to camps. The few Jews living in the countryside would be killed (*umgebracht*) by detachments. The Jews concentrated in the towns would be partly

²⁸⁹ Vermerk MiG/OQu, 15.8.42, NARA T501/216/923-6, also in Grabitz/Scheffler, *Letzte Spuren*, p.308ff.

²⁹⁰ Aktenvermerk Stabsführer SSPF Krakau, Fellenz, 27.7.42, BA NS19/1765, also published in Longerich (ed), *Ermordung*, p.202ff; cf. Kommander des OKW-Stabes zbV/Sonderbeauftragter des Führers, Bericht Nr 8 Przemysl, 25.8.42, BA NS6/794, p.32ff; on Battel’s resistance see also Seev Goshen, ‘Albert Battels Widerstand gegen die Judenvernichtung in Przemysl’, *VfZ* 33, 1985, pp. 478-488; Norbert Haas, ‘Oberleutnant Dr. Albert Battel und Major Max Liedtke. Konfrontation mit der SS im polnischen Przemysl im Juli 1942’ in Wette (ed), *Retter im Uniform*, pp.188-190.

²⁹¹ For the letter of protest, see Gienanth an Keitel, 18.9.42, NARA T501/216/350-2, also in FGM, pp.44-6; for his retirement, see KTB MiG OQu/Qu.2, 1.10.1942, NARA T501/219/452.

²⁹² OKW, Wfst/Qu (II), Nr 02847/42 geh., Replacement of Jewish Labour by Aryan Labour in the Government General and the Occupied Eastern Territories, 10.10.42, NOKW-134, Case 12, PDB 9C, pp.246-7.

²⁹³ Himmler an Krüger, Globocnik, Pohl, 9.10.42, BA NS19/352, pp.11-12, also NO-1611.

liquidated, partly out-settled and partly in labour camps.”²⁹⁴ The fiction of ‘resettlement’ is already exposed by the fact that Jews in rural areas were to be “killed” and that part of the urban Jewish population was to be “liquidated”. Pace Mattogno, this document cannot be used as proof of his ‘resettlement’ thesis.²⁹⁵ The selection process was even more clearly spelled out by none other than Adolf Eichmann during the abortive planning of the deportation of Romanian Jews to the Lublin district. “It is planned to bring the Jews from Romania, beginning around September 10 1942, in ongoing transports to the Lublin district, where the able-bodied part will be set to work, and the rest subjected to special treatment (*Sonderbehandlung*).”²⁹⁶

Having demonstrated that the paper trail for both food and labour policy contains unmistakably genocidal utterances, it remains only to present documents which confirm this and link the motivations to the methods. One such document, a letter from Victor Brack, head of T4, to Heinrich Himmler on 23 June 1942, has long been regarded as a smoking gun proving both intentions and methods.²⁹⁷ Until *Sobibór*, Mattogno had more or less shied away from confronting this particular hot potato; it almost goes without saying that his acknowledgement in his latest work on the Reinhard camps is half-hearted, with the letter selectively cited. Rather than offer his disciples a badly needed explanation of the whole of the document, Mattogno chooses to cite only the first two lines.²⁹⁸

On instruction from Reichsleiter Bouhler I placed a part of my men at the disposal of Brigadeführer Globocnik some considerable time ago for his special task. Following a further request from him, I have now made available more personnel. On this occasion Brigadeführer Globocnik pressed the view that the whole action against the Jews should be carried out as quickly as it is in any way possible, so that we will not some day be stuck in the middle should any kind of difficulty make it necessary to stop the action. you yourself, Herr Reichsführer, expressed the view to me at an earlier time that one must work as fast as possible, if only for reasons of concealment. Both views are more than justified according to my own experience, and basically they produce the same results. Nevertheless I beg to be permitted to present the following consideration of my own in this connection:

²⁹⁴ Pohl, *Ostgalizien*, p.212, citing DALO R-35-12-42, p.70, Vermerk Neumann, 6.8.42.

²⁹⁵ M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.265-66, especially p.266. ‘Out-settlement’ (*Aussiedlung*) in the evolving Nazi jargon referred to deportations out of a district or to the extermination camps. ‘Resettlement’ (*Umsiedlung*) could be used as a euphemism to paper over mass shootings, as we have seen with an order for the ‘resettlement’ of the Slutsk ghetto whose inmates were apparently ‘resettled’ into ‘graves’ alongside which SS detachments were to work while being supplied by ‘givers out of rounds’ responsible for ‘supplying ammunition’. Thus, the Katzmann report’s well known reference to the ‘out- or resettlement’ of 434,000 Jews refers to deportations (outsettlements) and shootings (resettlements). Cf. Katzmann-Bericht, 30.6.1943, L-18.

²⁹⁶ Rinteln to Luther, 19.8.42, in Anlage Eichmann report of 26.7.42, NG-3985, also T/1023; cf. Hilberg *Vernichtung*, p.845; Longerich, *Holocaust*, p.366.

²⁹⁷ Brack an Himmler, 23.6.1942, BA NS19/1583, p.16, also NO-205.

²⁹⁸ MGK, *Sobibor*, p.271.

According to my impression there are at least 2-3 million men and women well fit for work among the approx. 10 million European Jews. In consideration of the exceptional difficulties posed for us by the question of labor, I am of the opinion that these 2-3 million should in any case be taken out and kept alive. Of course this can only be done if they are in the same time rendered incapable of reproduction. I reported to you about a year ago that persons under my instruction have completed the necessary experiments for this purpose. I wish to bring up these facts again. The type of sterilization which is normally carried out on persons with genetic disease is out of the question in this case, as it takes too much time and is expensive. Castration by means of X-rays, however, is not only relatively cheap, but can be carried out on many thousands in a very short time. I believe that it has become unimportant at the present time whether those affected will then in the course of a few weeks or months realize by the effects that they are castrated.

As with so many other sources, the document cannot be read as indicating anything other than a plan of mass murder, a plan which Brack was vainly hoping he could modify by recommending the sterilisation of 2-3 million Jews who were to be kept alive as labourers. That Brack also refers to the urgency of a rapid implementation “if only for reasons of concealment” is also highly revealing of the motivations behind the acceleration of extermination in the early summer of 1942. The fact that Brack had placed men from T4 “at the disposal” of Globocnik for “his special task” which was “the whole action against the Jews” cannot be read, as Mattogno would have us believe, as indicating that the ‘resettlement’ deportations would be accompanied by a handful of mercy killings.²⁹⁹ Not when the document you so shamelessly selectively cited refers unmistakably to the planned deaths of up to 10 million Jews.

We anticipate that now that Mattogno has been caught out yet again, he will invent a further fanciful explanation or simply reiterate his previous argument, despite the fact that it has just been blown out of the water. But as is so often the case, Mattogno is evidently unaware that there is another source, discovered by Christian Gerlach, which argues along extremely similar lines. On July 10, 1942, Philipp Bouhler, another key figure in the T4 euthanasia program, wrote to Martin Bormann and stated that he had made available personnel to Himmler “for a solution of the Jewish question going down to the final consequence” (*für eine bis in die letzte Konsequenz gehende Lösung der Judenfrage*).³⁰⁰ Once again, the negationists are faced with a source which makes it clear that the Final Solution was meant to be just that.

²⁹⁹ MGK, *Sobibor*, pp.268-281.

³⁰⁰ Gerlach, ‘Bedeutung der deutschen Ernährungspolitik’, p.214, citing Bormann an Bouhler, 10.7.1941, BA 62 Ka 1, Nr.83, Bl. 109.

Whereas during the deportations, Nazi authorities tended to euphemise their actions somewhat more, towards the end of 1942, as the second phase of Aktion Reinhard drew to a close, a number of civilian officials and SS officers dropped all pretenses towards camouflaging their intentions. In November 1942, the county captain of Stanislawow, Albrecht, announced in a speech that “Jewry in Europe has been largely destroyed in the course of this year while defending the life of Aryan peoples. The last remnants will also disappear in the near future.”³⁰¹ On December 1, 1942, the chief medical officer of Warsaw, Dr Wilhelm Hagen, wrote a personal letter to Hitler protesting against the resettlements of Poles in the Zamosc region, stating that the deportations appeared to “proceed as with the Jews, that is, to kill them.”³⁰² This was ironically and laconically answered in roundabout form when SS-Untersturmführer Heinrich Kinna, accompanying a deportation transport from Zamosc that reached Auschwitz on December 10, 1942, was told by SS-Hauptsturmführer Aumeier that “according to the guideline of the RSHA, in contrast to the measures applied to the Jews, Poles must die a natural death.”³⁰³ The day before, Hans Frank declared to a cabinet meeting that:³⁰⁴

It is clear that the work process is made more difficult when in the midst of this labour program, the order comes, leave all Jews to annihilation. The responsibility for this does not belong with the government of the Generalgouvernement. The directive for the annihilation of the Jews comes from a higher authority.

These sources alone make a mockery of Mattogno’s torturous attempt to explain away the deeply inconvenient reference to Sonderbehandlung which was partially edited out of the famous Korherr report at Himmler’s behest.³⁰⁵ This exegesis is sufficiently tedious that readers are invited to look it up for themselves to experience the full joy of watching Mattogno flail around with statistics while failing to notice that his argument rests on a flawed premise. For the statistics in the Korherr report are manifestly a compilation of materials gathered from separate agencies then synthesised into one document. The most salient figure for our purposes is, of course, the statistic of 1,274,166 Jews who were “sluiced through the camps in the Generalgouvernement” in the process of being transported to “the

³⁰¹ Pohl, *Ostgalizien*, p.233, citing DAIFO R-36-1-17, pp.24-32, Rede Albrechts an die Arbeitseinsatzstaebe im Kreis Stanislau, 2.11.42.

³⁰² Stadtarzt Warschau an Hitler, 7.12.1942, BA NS19/1210, also AIPN NTN 412, p.31 cf. Aly/Heim, *Vordenker der Vernichtung*, p.217. Hagen was, of course, sacked for daring to make such a protest to Hitler himself.

³⁰³ SS-Ustuf Heinrich Kinna, Bericht zu dem Transport von 644 Polen nach dem Arbeitslager Auschwitz am 10.12.42, Zamosc, den 16.12.42, AIPN NTN 131, p.210, also T/382. On the context of the Zamosc deportations, and also for a further facsimile of the document, see Helena Kubica, *The Extermination at KL Auschwitz of Poles Evicted from the Zamosc Region in the Years 1942-43*. Oswiecim, 2006 (Polish original: 2004)

³⁰⁴ *Diensttagebuch*, p.137 (9.12.42).

³⁰⁵ MGK, *Sobibor*, pp.311-330.

Russian east”.³⁰⁶ As however we possess a letter from Himmler to Korherr telling him to replace ‘Sonderbehandlung of the Jews’ with the cover-phrase, the document is considered an unmistakable example of Nazi attempts to camouflage and euphemise their crimes; doubly so, as ‘special treatment’ is itself a euphemism.³⁰⁷ Naturally, Mattogno soon finds a way to mistake this example for something else entirely, ignoring the fundamental logical problem that if Sonderbehandlung is as he believes, a benign term, then why is it being covered up?³⁰⁸

The provenance of the statistic of 1,274,166 Jews has for some time been quite clear: it was radioed from SSPF Lublin to the BdS in Krakow and also copied to Eichmann at the RSHA IV B 4 office.³⁰⁹ This signal, the so-called Höfle telegram, identified the ‘intake’ or ‘increase’ (Zugang) of “Einsatz Reinhard” for the last fortnight of 1942 and for the whole year:

Betr: 14-tägige Meldung Einsatz Reinhard. Bezug: dort. FS. Zugang bis 31.12.41:
L 12761, B 0, S 515, T 10355 zusammen 23611. Stand... 31.12.42, L 24733, B
434508, S 101370, T 71355, Zusammen 1274166

The signal’s reference to ‘L’, ‘B’, ‘S’ and ‘T’ are unmistakably references to Majdanek (Lublin), Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka, a logical interpretation to which Mattogno, Graf and Kues have given their assent. Yet the fact that the signal speaks only of a ‘Zugang’ and not a ‘Durchgang’ – transit – does not faze them. Mattogno’s chief line of attack is to query the significance of the inclusion of Majdanek in the signal and then to speculate wildly about the implications. Contrary to the initial interpretation of Stephen Tyas and Peter Witte, the most reasonable inference is that that the fortnightly report of 12,761 does not refer to any kind of transports arriving at Majdanek at all, but is simply a retrospective report of earlier arrivals.³¹⁰ A probable interpretation is that the figure of 12,761 refers to the number of Polish Jews deported to Majdanek, while 11,972 Jews from the Reich and Slovakia were deported, for a total of 24,733 Jews taken into the camp. No amount of

³⁰⁶ Korherr-Bericht, 19.4.43, NO-5193, online at <http://www.ns-archiv.de/verfolgung/korherr/korherr-lang.php>

³⁰⁷ Der Reichsführer-SS an den Inspekteur für Statistik, PG. Korherr, 10.4.43, NO-5197.

³⁰⁸ We leave aside for later sport and amusement the other problem with Mattogno’s gibberish on special treatment, namely the remarkable capacity for the term Sonderbehandlung to mutate at will according to his peculiar needs, as it appears in his eyes to mean sometimes ‘resettlement’ and sometimes ‘delousing’, interpretations which end up being mutually incompatible and logically incoherent.

³⁰⁹ SSPF Lublin an BdS Krakau, 11.1.43, GPDD 355a, items 13/15, PRO HW 16/22. Item 13 of same GPDD was addressed ‘Geheime Reichssache! An das Reichssicherheitshauptamt, zu Händen SS Obersturmführer Eichmann, Berlin...rest missed!!!’. For the context, see Witte/Tyas, ‘New Document’, further also Nicholas Terry, ‘Conflicting Signals: British Intelligence on the ‘Final Solution’ through Radio Intercepts and Other Sources, 1941-1942’, *YVS XXXII*, 2004, pp. 351-396, esp. pp.391-3, discussing the Bletchley Park analysis of the signal.

³¹⁰ Cf. Tomasz Kranz, ‘Eksterminacja Żydów na Majdanku i rola obozu w realizacji „Akcji Reinhardt”’, *Zeszyty Majdanek* 2003, t.XXIII, pp.7-56; even more explicitly Schwindt, *Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslager Majdanek*, pp.183-6.

contortions or gyrations can magic up a *significantly* higher total for the number of Jews deported to Majdanek in 1942.

However, it is clear that the total was somewhat higher. The Korherr report also contains a separate set of statistics evidently provided by the WVHA for the number of Jews taken into the concentration camp system, figures which manifestly exclude the ‘special transports’ to Auschwitz and are also claimed to exclude the similar transports to Majdanek.³¹¹ This statistic gives a figure of 26,528 Jews deported to Majdanek, 1,525 higher than the figure in the Höfle telegram. But it is quite obvious that the two figures originated from different agencies, one from SSPF Lublin, and one from KL Lublin passed on via the WVHA. We also don’t know *when* the WVHA passed on its statistics to IV B 4 to give to Korherr. Given that there is a manifestly belated report of 12,761 Jews for a fortnight in which no Jews are recorded as arriving at Majdanek at all, it is quite probable that the WVHA figure of 26,528 is a corrected figure compiled in the weeks or even months after the Höfle telegram was sent on January 11, 1943. The claim in the Korherr report that the statistics for Jews in the concentration camps exclude “Jews sheltered in the course of the evacuation actions” at Majdanek is evidently false.

Paying attention to the reporting mechanisms allows us to ignore Mattogno’s main gambit of kicking up a fuss over the inclusion of Jews deported to Majdanek who were evidently registered in a statistic relating to their ‘special treatment’.³¹² But this fuss-making ignores the fact that the Höfle telegram said nothing about Sonderbehandlung, only about ‘Zugang’. By the time this information reached Korherr’s desk, all context was lost. As far as Korherr and his masters at RSHA IV B 4 were concerned, the Jews had been Sonderbehandelt. It was evidently a matter of indifference to them that the majority of the ‘intake’ at Majdanek had not been killed on arrival, just as it was probably wholly unknown to IV B that a certain proportion of the deportees to Treblinka and Sobibor had been selected for labour in Treblinka I and for the labour camps orbiting Sobibor.

Indeed, much the same slippage can be demonstrated for another ‘inconvenient’ balance sheet, the well known Report No 51 on Antipartisan Warfare submitted by Himmler for Hitler’s attention during December 1942. This report accounted for SS and Police operations in the regions of Russia-South, Ukraine and Bialystok, the territories controlled by Adolf Prützmann, HSSPF in both Königsberg (covering the Bialystok district) and Kiev (covering both the Reichskommissariat Ukraine and the rear areas of Army Group B,

³¹¹ Korherr-Bericht, 19.4.43, NO-5193

³¹² MGK, *Sobibor*, p.319ff.

formerly South) from August through November 1942, a period of four months.³¹³ Alongside reporting bodycounts of 1,337 partisans killed in action and 22,822 partisans and partisans suspects executed after capture or arrest, the so-called Meldung 51 also baldly recorded that 363,211 Jews had been “executed” (*Juden exekutiert*). As we have seen in Chapter 2, the killings that took place during this period largely encompassed the slaughter of Jews in Volhynia and the Polesie, regions of eastern Poland which both came under the Generalkommissariat Wolhynien-Podolien. However, the month by month statistics as well as the known actions in the individual shtetls and towns of this region make it clear that the figure of 363,211 Jews also includes many Jews who were deported from the Bialystok district to Treblinka and Auschwitz starting in November 1942.³¹⁴ In both of these statistical documents, therefore, the Nazis explicitly wrote off ‘deported’ Jews as dead, regardless of whether they were killed immediately on arrival or not.

The reactions of the leading Nazis to the progression of their Jewish policy and its results by 1943 confirms that Mattogno’s wayward interpretation is nonsense. On March 2, 1943, Goebbels noted in his diary that it was “perfectly clear as to what would threaten us if we were to become weak in this war... especially in the Jewish question, we are so determined that there is no way back. And that’s a good thing. A movement and a people which have burnt its bridges behind itself, fights according to experience more unconditionally than those who still have the possibility of retreat.”³¹⁵ Hitler similarly informed the Romanian dictator Marshal Antonescu on April 16, 1943 that he “preferred to burn all bridges behind himself, as the hatred of the Jews was gigantic anyway.” There was “no going back on this path once it was chosen”.³¹⁶ To Admiral Horthy, Hitler opined shortly thereafter that:³¹⁷

Where the Jews were left to themselves, as for example in Poland, gruesome poverty and degeneracy had ruled. They were just pure parasites. One had fundamentally cleared up this state of affairs in Poland. If the Jews there didn't want to work, they were shot. If they couldn't work, they had to perish. They had to be treated like tuberculosis bacilli, from which a healthy body could be infected. That was not cruel, if one remembered that even innocent natural creatures like hares and deer had to be killed so that no harm was caused. Why should one spare the beasts who wanted to bring us Bolshevism more? Nations who did not rid themselves of Jews perished.

³¹³ Der Reichsführer-SS, Meldungen an den Führer über Bandenbekämpfung, Meldung Nr. 51 Russland-Süd, Ukraine, Bialystok. Bandenbekämpfungserfolge vom 1.9 bis 1.12.42, 23.12.42, NO-511.

³¹⁴ Kruglov, ‘Jewish Losses in Ukraine, 1941-1944’ comes to a similar conclusion.

³¹⁵ *TBJG* II/7, p.454 (2.3.43).

³¹⁶ Hillgruber (ed), *Staatsmänner und Diplomaten*, p.233 (16.4.43).

³¹⁷ Hillgruber (ed), *Staatsmänner und Diplomaten*, p.256; also ADAP, Ser. E, Bd. 5, p.632.

On the ground in Galicia, the results of treating Jews “like tuberculosis bacilli” were all too apparent to the local Ukrainian and Polish populations. In February 1943, the head of the Ukrainian Main Committee in the Generalgouvernement, Professor Kubijowtsch complained to Frank that “the view is current that now the shootings of the Jews come to an end those of the Ukrainians begin.”³¹⁸ Kreishauptmann Dewitz, the county captain of Stryj in Galicia, reported in June 1943 that:³¹⁹

The expulsion of the Jews has so far led to a concern among the Polish population that after the cleaning up of the Jewish question the Poles will be next, as a rumour spread by the Ukrainian side has it. From the [Ukrainian] population itself complains have arisen about the inadequate burial of the Jews. Checks by the county medical officer have revealed that some mass graves (*einige Massengräber*) were not actually prepared efficiently, so that due to limited soil covering they present a danger for public health.

By November 1943, complaints about the proliferating mass graves of Galicia were also noted because of the curiosity of officers of the Hungarian Royal Honved. As the liaison officer of the Foreign Office wrote, “constantly one encounters a strong interest in the Jewish question and/or its solution in the area of Galicia. It has been established that Hungarian officers take photos of Jewish mass graves to be found in the vicinity of Stanislawow.”³²⁰ Thus had Katzmann’s men carried out the ‘solution’ to the ‘Jewish Question’ in Galicia, in order to “master this *pest* in the shortest possible time.”³²¹

The ongoing decimations of the 300,000 Jews who remained alive in the Generalgouvernement at the start of 1943 prompted further unrest from the civil administration. On May 31, 1943, the HSSPF, Krüger, indicated that he had ‘recently again received an order to carry out the dejudaisation in a very short time.’ Acknowledging that many Jews were employed in important armaments work, Krüger replied to his civilian counterparts that “the Reichsführer-SS wished however, that the employment of these Jews also ceases.”³²² Just under a month later, Hans Frank plaintively asked aloud how he was to solve the fundamental contradictions between Nazi ideological goals and economic imperatives:³²³

How, it is often asked, can the need to cooperate with an alien culture be reconciled with the ideological aim of - say - wiping out the Polish people

³¹⁸ Kubijowysch an Frank, 25.2.43, 1526-PS, NCA IV, pp.79-95.

³¹⁹ Pohl, *Ostgalizien*, p.260 and 320, citing DALO R-1952-1-172, p.83, Lagebericht Kreishauptmann Stryj fuer Mai/Juni 1943, 2.7.43,

³²⁰ Bericht des Vertreter des Auswaertigen Amtes beim Generalgouvernement, 23.11.43, NG-3522.

³²¹ Katzmann-Bericht, 30.6.43, L-18, p.64. Emphasis in the original.

³²² *Diensttagebuch*, p.682 (31.5.43); cf. Pohl, *Judenpolitik*, pp.166-7.

³²³ *Diensttagebuch*, p.697 (22.6.43); cf. Herbert, ‘Labour and Extermination’, p.144; Pohl, *Ostgalizien*, p.264.

(*Volkstum*)? How is the need to maintain industrial output compatible with the need, for example, to annihilate the Jews?

Frank's audience had no clear answer to this. The Nazi drive to exterminate the Jews in Poland was only ever partially "rationalised" by the appeals to pragmatic, economic arguments. As the war progressed, many Nazi ideologists appealed more and more to the goal of destroying the 'breeding ground' (*Keimzelle*) of 'world Jewry'.³²⁴ In March 1944, a conference of Jewish referents and Aryanisation advisors convened by the Foreign Office was told that "the physical elimination of Eastern Jewry deprives Jewry of its biological reserves" (*Die physische Beseitigung des Ostjudentums entziehe dem Judentum die biologischen Reserven.*)³²⁵

For Himmler, too, the ultimate goal was achieving a biological solution to a racial question. His justification of the almost completed genocide at conferences in Posen during October 1943 is sufficiently well known not to need further elaboration here.³²⁶ Less well known, however, is the reaction of Josef Goebbels to hearing Himmler's speech at Posen, which the Reich Minister for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda summarised in his diary as follows:³²⁷

As far as the Jewish question is concerned, he [Himmler] gives a very unvarnished and frank presentation. He is convinced that we can solve the Jewish question throughout Europe by the end of this year. He proposes the harshest and most radical solution: to exterminate the Jews root and branch [Kind und Kegel]. It is certainly a logical solution, even if it is a brutal one. We have to take responsibility of completely solving this issue in our time.

Nine months later, Himmler further justified the extermination of the Jews in a speech to Wehrmacht generals at Sonthofen on June 21, 1944. His words are once again, unmistakable.³²⁸

It was necessary to resolve another big question. It was the most horrible task and the most awful assignment that any organization could receive: the solution of the Jewish question. I want to say a few words on the matter to this group with complete candor. It's good that we had the hardness to exterminate the Jews in our territory. Don't ask yourselves how difficult it would have been to carry out such an order, even though, as soldiers, I might say you would understand. But thinking critically as German soldiers, you can see that the order was essential.

³²⁴ Cf. Furber/Lower, 'Colonialism and Genocide in Nazi-Occupied Poland and Ukraine', p.384.

³²⁵ Auswärtiges Amt Inf. XIV Antijüdische Auslandsaktion, Betreff: Arbeitstagung der Judenreferenten und Arisierungsbereiter, 4. März 1944, 3319-PS, IMT XXXII, p.166.

³²⁶ 1919-PS.

³²⁷ *TBJG* II/10, p.72; cf. Saul Friedländer, *The Years of Extermination: Nazi Germany and the Jews, 1939-1945*. New York: HarperCollins, 2008, p.543.

³²⁸ Bradley F. Smith and Agnes F. Peterson (eds), *Heinrich Himmler. Geheimreden 1933 bis 1945*. Frankfurt am Main, 1974, p.203.

Because we wouldn't have been able to withstand the aerial bombing if we had had the Jews in our cities. I am also convinced we would not have been able to hold the Lemberg front of the Generalgouvernement if the big ghettos in Lemberg, Krakau, Lublin, and Warsaw had still been there. We cleaned out the last one, the big ghetto in Warsaw, in summer 1943. In Warsaw there were 500,000 Jews. I tell you this number confidentially. It took us five weeks of street fighting. Just the same, I want to answer a little question that surely you must have. The question is, of course you had to kill the adult Jews, I understand that, but how could you do the same to the women and children? So I have to tell you something: The children will be grown one day. Do we want to be so improper that we say, no, no, we're too weak to kill children. Our children can deal with them. Our children will fight that one out. But the Jewish hate, small today, will be big tomorrow, and the grown avengers will attack our children and grandchildren, who will then have to deal with them. I am convinced that this will be the case even if Adolf Hitler does not survive. No, we cannot shirk our responsibility to kill all the Jews. That would have been cowardly and therefore we adopted a clear solution to the problem, as difficult as it was.

Further commentary is superfluous.

Mattogno's 'Resettlement' Shell Game

Having ignored virtually every source discussed in the preceding section, and after deliberately misunderstanding the interplay of labour and extermination, it is unsurprising that Mattogno feels he can devote most of his energies to misrepresenting Nazi Jewish policy in Poland by presenting a series of documents which he misinterprets as 'proving' a resettlement program. That Mattogno deliberately omitted all indicators to the contrary is bad enough, but on closer examination, his attempt to construct a chain of documents for 'resettlement' also falls flat on its face. Firstly, it is immediately striking how little Mattogno actually has to say about the fate of *Polish* Jews. Most of the rumours, false news reports and other uncorroborated evidence that Mattogno and his younger associate Kues try to parlay into proof of 'resettlement' in fact concerns West European Jews; evidence which will be examined in the next chapter. Secondly, as Mattogno's hypothesis meanders over the course of 1942-43, it is striking how he is less and less able to find any vague indicators of transfer out of the Generalgouvernement. By mid to late 1943, he is in effect reduced to playing a shell game whereby the surviving Polish Jews are simply transferred from one part of the province to another, simply so that Mattogno can avoid admitting that the 400,000 Jews left alive in the GG and Bialystok districts at the start of 1943 were further decimated.

A more fundamental problem, however, is the constant attempt to pyramid extraordinarily vague references to 'resettlement' into hard proof of actual transfer, and the

refusal to recognise a euphemism when one is demonstrably used. The contrast with the documentation of genuine resettlements in Poland between 1939 and 1941, as well as other Nazi evacuation measures, should be manifest. Documents describing actual resettlements contain clear and precise references to transfers between point A and point B, or between administrative district X and administrative district Y.³²⁹ The glaring absence of any such details in the paper trail surrounding the deportations of the Jews in the course of Aktion Reinhard during 1942-3 is precisely why historians have ignored ‘resettlement’ as a fiction.

Moreover, it is not difficult to find examples of documents where ‘resettlement’ was manifestly being used euphemistically or which referred to the strict secrecy of the task, a secrecy which is entirely incompatible with a peaceful population transfer. In late March 1942, the office of the governor of Galicia noted that the ongoing ‘out-settlement’ (*Aussiedlung*) of “all dispensable Jews out of Galicia” was a secret state matter (*Geheime Reichssache*). Jews were to be concentrated near rail lines so that they could be moved in transports of 1000-1100. At this time, all transports from Galicia headed *westwards* to Belzec, not to the ‘Russian East’.³³⁰ In June 1942, SS-Obergruppenführer Krüger wrote to request that Helmuth Pohl, a member of SSPF Lublin and part of Höfle’s deportation staff, be promoted to an officer of the Waffen-SS as he was engaged “with important tasks in the ‘Jewish Resettlement’ desk” (*im Referat “Judenumsiedlung”*). Inverted commas were used in the original.³³¹ Krüger referred the SS Personnel Office to a communication written on June 3, 1942 about the task “Jewish Resettlement” of the Reichsführer-SS, the same day that Globocnik presented a ‘Jew folder’ (*Judenmappe*) containing his plans for the second phase of Aktion Reinhard to Himmler.³³² In September 1943, Krüger wrote to the HSSPF Niederlande, Hanns-Albin Rauter, trying to place Hermann Höfle in a new job after the completion of Aktion Reinhard. Stating that Höfle had had to carry out ‘special tasks’ (*Sonderaufträge*), Krüger elaborated by explaining that these had above all consisted of the ‘Jew Final Solution Question’ (*Judenendlösungsfrage*), a ‘purely confidential matter’ (*reine*

³²⁹ This is perfectly apparent from Götz Aly, *‘Endlösung’. Völkerverschiebung und der Mord an der europäischen Juden*, Frankfurt am Main, 1995, as well as more recent studies of Nazi resettlement policy such as Isabel Heinemann, *“Rasse, Siedlung, Deutsche Blut”*: *Das Rasse & Siedlungshauptamt der SS und die rassenpolitische Neuordnung Europas*, Göttingen: Wallstein, 2003; Philip Rutherford, *Prelude to the Final Solution: The Nazi Program for Deporting Ethnic Poles, 1939-1941*. Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2007. The contention is also confirmed by examining the records of Wehrmacht evacuation measures conducted behind the Eastern Front; cf. in addition to the many studies cited in Chapters 2 and 4, Christian Gerlach, ‘Umsiedlungen und gelenkte Bevölkerungsbewegungen in Weissrussland 1941-1944’ in Dahlmann, Dittmar and Hirschfeld, Gerhard (eds), *Lager, Zwangsarbeit, Vertreibung und Deportation. Dimension der Massenverbrechen in der Sowjetunion und in Deutschland 1933 bis 1945*. Essen, 1999, pp.553-565.

³³⁰ Pohl, *Ostgalizien*, p.189, citing DALO R-37-1-1, Bl. 72, Runderlass GDG/I.V., 24.3.42.

³³¹ HSSPF Ost, Ernennung zu Führern der Waffen-SS, 8.6.1942, gez. Krüger, BDC SS-OA Helmuth Pohl

³³² SSPF Lublin, 33/42 gRs, Lublin, den 3.6.42, gez. Globocnik, BA NS19/1755, p.2.

Vertrauenssache) that was also especially demanding.³³³ Lower down the chain of command, agricultural specialists negotiating with SS officers over the continued use of Jewish forced labour on kok-sagys farms in Galicia noted in the spring of 1943 that “hitherto no order from Berlin had been given to “resettle” the Jews here” (*die hiesigen Juden “umzusiedeln”*).³³⁴

To interpret such documents literally is a sign of nothing other than delusion. It is one thing not to realise from the context when euphemisms are being used, quite another not to notice inverted commas clearly demarcating the terms from their conventional meaning. As in the example from Jagielnica above, the overwhelming majority of uses of the terms ‘evacuation’, ‘resettlement’ and ‘outsettlement’ in the German documents are entirely intransitive, not even making a vague gesture to a fictitious destination. All too often, “evacuation” apparently became an end in itself, if we are to apply the kind of literalism that Mattogno wants us to apply in so many other cases.

So desperate is Mattogno to identify any possible exit from the GG for the deported Jews that he is not above inventing them, misreading chains of documents to fabricate a fictitious continuity out of trial balloons and policy dead ends. A good case in point is the repeated exaltation of the Pripyat marshes in southeastern Belorussia as a supposed transfer destination. That this was a plan confined entirely to 1941 and never carried out is simply ignored by Mattogno, who decontextualises the paper trail by omitting crucial sources inconvenient to his fantasy.

In the spring of 1941, Hans Frank and the civil administration of the Generalgouvernement, although hoping for the removal of Jews “within a reasonable space of time”, still reckoned on the presence of Jews in their domain for the foreseeable future, instituting economic planning for the Warsaw ghetto in the expectation that it would exist for a further five years.³³⁵ The invasion of the Soviet Union opened up the prospect that the Jews of the GG could be expelled eastwards. Indeed, Hans Frank returned from a meeting with Hitler on June 19, 1941 with a firm promise that the GG would be the first region to be made judenfrei, and would be transformed into “a kind of transit camp”. Accordingly, no more ghettos were to be created.³³⁶ The “imminent clearing” of the Warsaw ghetto was now on the cards.³³⁷ On July 22, Frank declared that he would give “the order to prepare the evacuation

³³³ Krüger an Rauter, 24.9.43, BDC SS-OA Hermann Höfle.

³³⁴ Vermerk. Vorsprache des Herrn Sonderführers Storbeck und des Herrn Lobenberg be idem Adjutanten, SS-Ustuf. Inquart, des SS-Gruppenführers in Lemberg. am Mittwoch, dem 21.4.1943, wegen Freigabe von 1 500 Juden für die künftige Staatsdomäne Jagielnica, 29.4.43, BA NS19/3921, pp.7-8.

³³⁵ *Diensttagebuch*, pp.335-6, 338-9 (25.3.1941, 26.3.1941).

³³⁶ *Diensttagebuch*, pp.386, (17.7.1941).

³³⁷ *Diensttagebuch*, p.389 (21.7.1941).

of the Warsaw ghetto in the next few days”.³³⁸ The reason for the urgency of these preparations he ascribed to the food situation: “if we establish a food and development plan, then it is clear that certain questions with which we have grappled continuously for almost two years will no longer concern us in the main. I believe that a relief in the conditions in Warsaw and other large towns will now occur.”³³⁹ Some of Frank’s hopes for an expulsion of the Jews of the GG rested with a proposal to expand the Generalgouvernement eastwards. The decision to add the traditional Habsburg territory of eastern Galicia was made without difficulty and confirmed on July 19.³⁴⁰ In fact, this was not the only territory in which Frank was interested. The civil administration of the GG had been tasked with temporarily administering the border town of Brest-Litovsk from an early stage.³⁴¹ On July 20, Frank proposed to Hans Lammers that the Pripyat marshes be annexed to his domain. By contrast to “overpopulated” eastern Galicia, the Pripyat marshes would enable Frank to “bring population elements (above all Jewish) into productive and profitable employment for the Reich”³⁴²

Hitler rejected the proposal two days later.³⁴³ Although the notion of deporting Jews to drain the Pripyat marshes was floated not long afterwards by the chief of Einsatzgruppe C, Otto Rasch³⁴⁴, both expert opinion³⁴⁵ as well as Hitler himself feared that the draining of the Pripyat marshes would lead to the “steppe-ification” of the vital agricultural acreages of Ukraine and thus the marshes were better utilised as military manoeuvre areas.³⁴⁶

Mattogno’s treatment of this episode is instructive. Aside from misdating Rasch’s suggestion twice³⁴⁷, he is utterly silent on the dead-ending of the proposal by Hitler, and

³³⁸ VEJ 4, p.683 (Protokoll der Wirtschaftstagung der Regierung des GG in Krakau, 22.7.41). The declaration and intention became widely known, as Heinz Auerswald confessed to Adam Czerniaków, among both the Polish and Jewish population. Czerniaków, *Diary*, p.178ff (28.8.41). Rumblings also reached the Swedish newspaper Tidningens by mid-July, which claimed that “the Nazis are considering the expulsion of all Jews from Poland into occupied Soviet territory”, although these reports noted that “Hitler prefers to have the Jews of Poland also sent to Madagascar instead of forcing them on Russian soil”. See ‘Nazis Reported Considering Expulsion of All Polish Jews into Russia’, *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, 15.7.1941.

³³⁹ Aly, *Endlösung*, p.317, citing from unpublished portions of the meeting of 22.7.1941.

³⁴⁰ Aly, *Endlösung*, p.293.

³⁴¹ Brest-Litovsk was eventually handed to Erich Koch’s Reichskommissariat Ukraine as part of the Generalkommissariat Wolhynien-Podolien. The Generalgouvernement also assigned a liaison officer, Ernst Kundt, to Army Group Centre, which had taken Brest. Berück Mitte Ia Br.B.Nr 135/41 g.Kdos, 23.7.41, NARA T315/1669/80.

³⁴² Frank an Lammers, BA R6/21, p.136ff.

³⁴³ *Diensttagebuch*, p.387 (22.7.41).

³⁴⁴ EM 52, 14.8.1941, NO-4540; cf. Wilhelm, *Einsatzgruppe A*, p.628; Aly, *Endlösung*, p.277.

³⁴⁵ See Aly/Heim, *Vordenker der Vernichtung*, p.251, discussing a position paper by Helmut Meinhold from July 1941.

³⁴⁶ Jochmann, *Monologe*, p.74 (28.9.1941).

³⁴⁷ In both *Sobibór* (p.246) and *Treblinka* (pp.253-4), Mattogno misdates this document to 1942 in the main text while correctly dating the reference in the footnote. Meanwhile, the document is repeated in *Treblinka*, p.205,

instead discusses the project as if it were a live concern that might well have extended into 1942, presumably in order to keep open another option for his fantasy ‘resettlement’ thesis. Later on in *Sobibór*, his co-author Graf goes one better and offers a cretinously literalist reading of a statement from 1942 by the deputy director of the Population and Welfare Department of the GG, Walter Föhl.³⁴⁸ The quote is sufficiently instructive that it is worth citing in full, in order that the reader can gauge the degree of imbecility required to take it literally:

Every day now, we have been receiving trains, each with 1,000 Jews from Europe, processing them and housing them in one way or another, and sending them on, right into the swamps of White Ruthenia towards the Arctic Ocean; that is where they will all find themselves when the war is over – if they survive (and the Jews from the Kurfürstendamm or from Vienna or Pressburg surely will not) – not without having built a few motorways. (But we should not talk about that.)³⁴⁹

To read this jumble of destinations and allusions to superseded fantasies and dead policy proposals as anything other than a blatantly obvious cipher for mass murder takes some doing. But to miss the inhumane undertone takes a special kind of stupidity. As Föhl’s remarks from 1942 indicate, the expectation in the summer of 1941 – as in 1939 with the “Lublin reservation” plan, or in 1940 with Madagascar – was that any deportation to the Pripyat marshes would decimate the Jews by working them to death.³⁵⁰ The Pripyat proposal thus represented yet another confirmation of the genocidal tendency in the planning of the *civil administration*, much less that of the SS.

In several of his brochures, Mattogno has tried to link the Pripyat marshes trial balloon to a document describing the deportation in May 1942 of 16,882 Jews from Pulawy county in the Lublin district “over the Bug River.”³⁵¹ A glance at the map apparently sufficed to allow Mattogno to take this vague expression literally, and to declare that the Jews of Pulawy county must have been resettled in the Generalkommissariat Wolhynien-Podolien, which contained the Gebietskommissariat Pinsk and thus administered the Pripyat marshes.

with the correct date in the main text. Misdating the document to 1942 would tend to go in Mattogno’s favour, so there must be a suspicion that this evident sloppiness is an expression of unconscious bias. If Mattogno wants to avoid such a suspicion, he really needs to get a better proof-reader, and stop leaping around chronologically so much.

³⁴⁸ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.358, citing from the apologetic memoir of RKF official Fritz Arlt, published after the research of Götz Aly and Susanne Heim had overturned the rock under which this Nazi resettlement expert had been hiding.

³⁴⁹ First cited in Aly/Heim, *Vordenker der Vernichtung*, p.215ff; also cited in Aly, *Endlösung*, p.275; Musial, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung*, pp.268-9.

³⁵⁰ Cf. Martyn Housden, *Hans Frank: Lebensraum and the Holocaust*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, pp.147-8.

³⁵¹ KHM Pulawy an GDL, 13.5.42, *FGM*, p.438. For the negationist presentation, see M&G, *Treblinka*, p.258; MGK, *Sobibor*, p.302.

Quite apart from the total and glaring lack of confirmation of this from any source from the Wolhynien-Podolien district, the interpretation can be dismissed for two reasons. Firstly, at least one Sobibor survivor, Stanislaw Szmajzner, was selected for the Sonderkommando from these transports, and did not report any ‘onward transports’. There is already thus a contradiction between separate sources which cannot be overcome by appealing to the supposed superiority of documents, since the documented reference is so extraordinarily imprecise and vague, and totally lacking in any kind of corroboration.³⁵²

Secondly, the phrase “over the Bug” had already been used several times as a cipher for mass murder in the Lublin district. On December 1, 1939, 5./SS-Reiterstandarte 1 expelled 1018 Jews from Chelm county to Sokal across the Nazi-Soviet demarcation line “over the Bug”, in the course of which no fewer than 440 Jews were “shot trying to escape”. The next month, on January 13, 1940, the same company murdered 600 Jewish prisoners of war deported to Chelm who it had been hoped could likewise be expelled across the border.³⁵³ Moreover, this cipher recurred in late 1941 during the transition phase to Aktion Reinhard. At a meeting on October 17, as we have seen above, the civil and SS leadership of the Lublin district together with Hans Frank decided that “all Jews, with the exception of indispensable craftsmen and the like, are to be evacuated from Lublin. Initially, 1,000 Jews will be transferred across the Bug River. Responsibility for this is placed in the hands of the SSPF. The Stadthauptmann will select the Jews to be evacuated.”³⁵⁴

It is a virtual certainty that Mattogno would see this document as further proof of his fantasy resettlement thesis, since the protocolled intention was that Jews would be “transferred across the Bug River”. Alas, neither in the protocol of the October 17 1941 meeting in Lublin nor in its later usage can Mattogno’s stultifyingly literalist interpretation be sustained. Firstly, the phrase “over the Bug” first circulated in 1939 when SS troops were busy trying to expel Jews over the Nazi-Soviet interest border. This resulted, as we just saw, in several massacres of Jews who were ostensibly to be expelled but never even reached the border. Thus the phrase may well have been understood – by the SS, by the civil administration or by both institutions – as a cipher and euphemism for mass murder already in 1941. Secondly, there is the simple problem of geography. A literalist interpretation would direct the Jews of Lublin city who were supposed to be “transferred across the Bug river” either into the Galicia district or into the Reichskommissariat Ukraine. From the perspective

³⁵² Schelvis, *Vernichtungslager Sobibor*, p.283.

³⁵³ Cüppers, *Wegbereiter der Shoah*, pp51-3; on the January 1940 incident also Shmuel Krakowski, ‘The Fate of Jewish Prisoners of War in the September 1939 Campaign’, *YVS XII*, 1977, pp.297-333.

³⁵⁴ Musial, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung*, p.196, quoting from an unpublished portion of the Diensttagebuch.

of both the SS and the civil administration, and in the light of every previous experience in Nazi Jewish policy in the Generalgouvernement, a transfer to Galicia would have been a futile exercise in rearranging deckchairs on the Titanic. Previous efforts to create the 'Lublin reservation' or to annex the Pripyat marshes to the Generalgouvernement as a dumping-ground for unwanted populations had also failed. There is no hint in any source that the Galicia district was intended to fulfil such a function, and a great deal of evidence to argue against this.

That leaves the possibility of expelling Jews from Lublin to Ukraine or another location in the occupied Soviet Union. Yet the very location of Belzec, on the border of the Lublin and Galicia districts, argues against this interpretation. Moreover, with the construction of Majdanek, there was simply no need to construct a 'transit camp' in a remote location. If the intention was at this time to simply expel and resettle the Jews of Lublin, then all that would have been needed was a temporary holding facility, which already existed in the form of the ghetto, or the camp at Lipowastrasse 7, or Majdanek, which was already being built up to a capacity large enough to accommodate 1,000 persons passing through temporarily.³⁵⁵ For all these reasons, the location of the first camp in what was to become Aktion Reinhard on the border between the Lublin and Galicia districts, in a primitive rural environment and from a transport perspective in entirely the wrong direction for any 'transit' to Ukraine, is not compatible with a 'transit camp'. And thus, the reference in May 1942 to the deportation of the Jews of Pulawy county "over the Bug River" cannot be considered evidence of actual "transit" – quite aside from the utter lack of corroboration at the putative end destination.

It is telling that Mattogno is wholly unable to provide any other source than the now debunked 'over the Bug' reference which *might* indicate 'resettlement' of the up to 180,000 Jews deported to Belzec and Sobibor from March to June 1942 in the first phase of Aktion Reinhard. The sources concerning the other nine-tenths or more of the deportations are either utterly silent on the actual destinations, or in fact name destinations which are demonstrable falsehoods, because they were Nazi deception measures. A case in point is the deportations

³⁵⁵ Contrary to a persistent negationist fantasy, a delousing facility was hardly a *sine qua non*, as both before 1941 and afterwards, quite substantial populations were transferred across Nazi-occupied Europe without necessarily being deloused at the *start* of their journeys. Besides which, there were surely ample delousing facilities available in Lublin or which could have been rapidly constructed there. From a hygienic perspective, delousing was more urgently carried out at the *end* of a journey or upon arrival at a permanent destination. This, of course, assumes that the Nazis cared enough to insist on hygiene when they had long ago transitioned to walling up or fencing off incredibly overcrowded Jewish communities inside ghettos across Poland *and* the occupied Soviet Union.

from the Galician capital of Lwow which began in March 1942.³⁵⁶ Indeed, the Jews of Lwow were misinformed that their relatives had been deported to Lublin, as the Wehrmacht commander in the Galicia district noted:

Within the Jewish population of Lemberg a noticeable unrest has spread in regard to a deportation action that has begun, through which some 30,000 elderly and other unemployed Jews shall be seized and allegedly transferred to a territory near Lublin. To what extent this evacuation can be equated with a decimation remains to be seen.³⁵⁷

None of the Jews of Lwow or any other town in Galicia ever arrived anywhere in the Lublin district, as was swiftly realised in the Galician capital:

The Jewish population displays the deepest depression, which is completely understandable because on the one hand in various locations in the district the well-known actions against the Jews occur again and on the other hand in Lemberg the temporarily interrupted resettlement of Jews resumes; in the meantime it is whispered also among the Jews that the evacuees never reach the resettlement territory that is alleged to them as the destination.³⁵⁸

Instead of ending up in Lublin – which was itself the target of a simultaneous deportation operation to Belzec – the deportees from the Lwow ghetto perished in Belzec, as was swiftly confirmed by the Polish resistance.³⁵⁹ Although confronted with these documents in an earlier exchange with Roberto Muehlenkamp, Mattogno was unable to explain what had happened to the Jews of Lwow, much less why they had been deported westwards, contenting himself with seemingly misunderstanding the remark of the Oberfeldkommandatur in Lwow that “to what extent this evacuation can be equated with a decimation remains to be seen” as referring to Belzec, rather than as is apparent to any sentient reader, referring to *the decimation of the Jews of Lwow*.³⁶⁰ It is howlers like this that make us question sometimes whether Mattogno can actually read English fluently, since the alternative is that he has absolutely no shame about lying.

References which can be spun into substantiating the ‘resettlement’ fantasy are equally thin on the ground for phase two of Aktion Reinhard, beginning at the start of June

³⁵⁶ As with so many deportation operations in the course of Aktion Reinhard, precise documentation is fragmentary. On March 27, the Ukrainian police rounded up 1,648 Jews without work passes; on March 30, 1,328 and on April 1, 903 Jews. Cf. Kommandeur der Ukrainischen Polizei in Lemberg an KdSch Lemberg, Betr. Judenaktion am 27.3.1942, 30.3.1942, 1.4.1942, DALO R12-1-37, pp.45, 52 and R12-1-38, p.14. For the course of the entire action, see Pohl, *Ostgalizien*, pp.186-188; Sandkühler, *Endlösung in Galizien*, pp.208-212.

³⁵⁷ Oberfeldkommandatur 365, Monatsbericht für 16.2-15.3.42, 19.3.42, NARA T501/215/97; cf. Pohl, *Ostgalizien*, p.188; Krannhals, ‘Judenvernichtung’, p.573.

³⁵⁸ OFK 365, Monatsbericht für 16.3-15.4.42, 18.4.42, NARA T501/216/203; cf. Pohl, *Ostgalizien*, p.192.

³⁵⁹ Zygmunt Marikowski, *Zwiazek Walki Zbrojnej, I, Armia Krajowa w Okregu Lubelskim*, London. 1973. Book Two, Documents, pp.34-35.

³⁶⁰ Mattogno, *Belzec e le controversie olocaustiche*, p.60.

1942 with the reopening of Belzec and hitting its stride in late July 1942 with the unveiling of Treblinka. This is not to say that the Nazi hierarchy and SS leadership were not using ‘resettlement’ in a manifestly euphemistic manner, however. At a speech to the senior SS leadership immediately after Heydrich’s funeral in early June 1942, Himmler announced that “the migration of the Jews we will have definitely completed within one year; then none will wander any more. For now a clean sweep must be made.”³⁶¹ The usual negationist literalism founders badly on an ambiguous statement such as this, since Himmler’s words can easily be interpreted as meaning none will be alive to wander, rather than merely that all Jews will have been migrated within one year to a final destination. If MGK were to opt for the latter, they would, of course, have to explain which part of the occupied eastern territories had been selected for the *permanent* Jewish reservation, since ‘dann wandert keiner mehr’ cannot be read as referring to the transplantation of deportees to a *temporary* holding centre, especially not when coming from the lips of a man who openly declared the extermination of the Jews to be a completed fact on several occasions in 1943 and 1944.³⁶²

That Himmler henceforth intended a total expulsion of the Jews of Poland is seemingly accepted by Mattogno, who has cited on several occasions a well known directive from the Reichsführer-SS to Krüger issued on 19 July 1942.³⁶³ The document is worth quoting in extenso, not least because Mattogno omits the two sentences bolded below from his reproduction of this document in Sobibor:³⁶⁴

I herewith order that the resettlement of the entire Jewish population of the Government-General be carried out and completed by December 31, 1942.

From December 31, 1942, no persons of Jewish origin may remain within the Government-General, unless they are in collection camps in Warsaw, Cracow, Czestochowa, Radom, and Lublin. All other work on which Jewish labor is employed must be finished by that date, or, in the event that this is not possible, it must be transferred to one of the collection camps.

These measures are required with a view to the necessary ethnic division of races and peoples for the New Order in Europe, and also in the interests of the security and cleanliness of the German Reich and its sphere of interest. **Every breach of this regulation spells a danger to quiet and order in the entire German sphere of interest, a point of application for the resistance movement and a source of moral and physical pestilence. For all these reasons a total cleansing is necessary and therefore to be carried out.**

³⁶¹ *Himmler Geheimreden*, p.159.

³⁶² See section ‘Extermination and Labour’ above.

³⁶³ Cf. M&G, *Majdanek*, note 28; Mattogno, ‘Origins of Birkenau’, note 103; Carlo Mattogno, *Hitler e il nemico di razza. Il nazionalsocialismo e la questione ebraica*, Edizioni di AR, 2009, p.106 note 3; MGK, *Sobibor*, p.249.

³⁶⁴ Himmler an den Höheren SS- und Polizeiführer Ost, 19.7.42, NO-5514. Available online at: http://www1.yadvashem.org/about_holocaust/documents/part2/doc124.html

The omitted sentences contain sentiments which, as we will see shortly, become a virtual refrain in Himmler's orders forcing through the continued deportations from the Generalgouvernement and Bialystok district in 1943. More important for our immediate purposes, however, is to note that nowhere in this document is the end destination for the 'resettlement' specified. Nor was the order copied to any other Higher SS and Police Leader than Krüger; no duplicate sent to one of the three HSSPFs in the occupied Soviet territories has come to light. The intransitive use of 'resettlement' and organisationally myopic omission of any form of coordination with the reception areas renders this document entirely useless for the purpose of proving 'resettlement'. When set against other statements by Himmler made around this same time, the intended meaning becomes even clearer. On July 28, 1942, Himmler wrote to Gottlob Berger, head of the SS-Hauptamt, declaring that "The occupied Eastern territories will be freed of Jews (*judenfrei*). The Führer has laid upon my shoulders the execution of this very difficult order. Moreover, no one can relieve me of this responsibility."³⁶⁵ As will be seen again in Chapter 4, a 'resettlement' to the very territories which are to become *judenfrei* is complete nonsense. Unsurprisingly, MGK ignore this source, too.

The ensuing Warsaw ghetto action lasting from July to September 1942 poses Mattogno enough problems that he dedicates nearly six pages of Treblinka to obfuscating it and displaying his remarkable lack of reading comprehension.³⁶⁶ Let us start by noting that the famous correspondence between Karl Wolff, head of the Personal Staff of the Reichsführer-SS, and Ganzenmüller, the state secretary for transport, simply refers to the deportation of a daily train of 5,000 Jews "from Warsaw via Malkinia to Treblinka", without mentioning any kind of onward destination or discussing the necessity of coordinating changing trains.³⁶⁷ More hilarious, however, is Mattogno's insistence that "not a single German report concerning such a large-scale displacement of population has been preserved"³⁶⁸, blithely ignoring an excerpt from a monthly report of the governor of the district of Warsaw, Ludwig Fischer, published in one of his favourite sources for quote-mines.³⁶⁹ The real belly-laugh comes from Mattogno's inept attempt to compare the percentage of Jews deemed fit for work in the Lodz ghetto as of the end of June 1942, with the number selected from the deportees from the Warsaw ghetto and sent to the

³⁶⁵ Himmler an Berger, 28.7.42, NO-626, cf. Fleming, *Hitler and the Final Solution*, p.112.

³⁶⁶ M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.273-279.

³⁶⁷ Ganzenmüller an SS-Obergruppenführer Wolff, 28.7.42, NO-2207, also T/251.

³⁶⁸ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.275.

³⁶⁹ *FGM*, pp.323-4; fuller versions are published in Polish translation in Krzysztof Dunin-Wasowicz (ed), *Raporty Ludwiga Fischera, Gubernatora Dystryktu Warszawskiego 1939-1944*. Warsaw, 1987.

‘*Durchgangslager*’, the transit camp for workers.³⁷⁰ Evidently it did not occur to Mattogno that firstly, the remaining 35,000 ‘legal’ workers who avoided deportation would have to be added to the 263,243 deported to produce a comparable statistic for the Warsaw ghetto, and secondly, that circumstances were rather different in the Generalgouvernement after Himmler’s order of 19 July 1942 than they were in the Warthegau.

Finally, then, we have a genuine ‘transit camp’ to consider. Alas, Mattogno doesn’t seem to twig that the separation of 11,315 workers from 251,545 other deportees³⁷¹ means that the subsequent bloviation about a transport of 1000 Jews arriving in Minsk at the end of July 1942 proves absolutely nothing other than his inability to perform basic arithmetic.³⁷² For until evidence is forthcoming that more than 11,315 Warsaw Jews turned up anywhere other than Treblinka, we are quite safe in concluding that any reports of transports of Warsaw Jews arriving elsewhere must have been taken from the ‘*Durchgangslager*’ only. At the end of July, at most two transports were transferred to Minsk and Bobruisk, the latter heading thereafter to Smolensk, for labour purposes.³⁷³ Between August 15 and September 17, three or four transports from Warsaw arrived at Majdanek with around 3,440 Jews and were registered there.³⁷⁴ Polish underground reports recorded two possible additional transports to Brest and Malaszewice near Brest, but no further trace of them has been uncovered.³⁷⁵ Together, these labour transports, real or fictitious, do not yet exhaust the quota of 11,315 selected for the ‘*Durchgangslager*’, even if one ignores possible double-counts and duplications.

Much trumpeted by Mattogno and Graf in their 2002 work, privately, Jürgen Graf has apparently admitted that the paper trail surrounding the arrival of the lone transport from Warsaw to Minsk on July 31, 1942³⁷⁶ does not prove that the transport had ‘transited’ through Treblinka. Indeed, elementary common sense and basic inference flatly contradict such an interpretation. Here it should be noted that in Treblinka, M&G refrain from making

³⁷⁰ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.274.

³⁷¹ ‘Likwidacja Getta Warszawskiego’, *BZIH* Nr 1, 1951, pp. 81-90.

³⁷² M&G, *Treblinka*, p.277-279; this reference is repeated in countless articles by MGK and others, too numerous to list here.

³⁷³ Cf. Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, p.762. An earlier transport of 1000 workers left the Warsaw ghetto on May 30, 1942, for the SS-Nachschubkommandantur Russland-Mitte in Bobruisk, evidently as part of a private back-channel deal, and also predating any mass deportations, and is thus as irrelevant to the issue of proving ‘resettlement’ as everything else offered by MGK.

³⁷⁴ Schwindt, *Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslager Majdanek*, pp.137-8; K.A. Tarkowski, ‘Transporty więźniów przybywające do obozu na Majdanku jesienią 1942 roku. Analiza numeracji więźniów’, *Zeszyty Majdanka*, t. XXII (2003), p. 312; Tarkowski, ‘Transport Żydów z getta warszawskiego z 15 sierpnia 1942 r.’, *Zeszyty Majdanka*, t. XXI (2001), pp. 247–275.

³⁷⁵ Marczevska/Ważniewski, ‘Treblinka w świetle Akt Delegatury’, p.137.

³⁷⁶ Kube an Lohse, *Partisanenbekämpfung und Judenaktion im Generalbezirk Weißruthenien*, 31.7.1942, 3428-PS, IMT XXXII, pp. 280-2.

any firm conclusion about their cut and pasted excerpts, preferring to save this assertion for more polemical platforms. Thus, when Graf wrote an open letter to David Irving on the subject of the Reinhard camps, he reasoned that “as the deportation of Jews from the Warsaw ghetto had commenced eight days before, and as everybody agrees that at that time all Warsaw Jews were deported to Treblinka, the 1000 Jews mentioned by Kube must by necessity have been deported to Minsk via Treblinka.”³⁷⁷ But no, Jürgen, not everyone agrees that all the Warsaw Jews were deported to Treblinka, since we have a good source, published already in 1951, from Oneg Shabes indicating that up to 11,000 were not. A source, moreover, which was still buried in a milk-can at the time of the Nuremberg trial when the complaint about the transport from Warsaw to Minsk made by Gauleiter Erich Kube, the Generalkommissar Weissruthenien, to Gauleiter Hinrich Lohse, the Reichskommissar Ostland, was uncovered.

If this critique’s discussion of Mattogno’s ‘resettlement’ gambits is beginning to resemble the tracing of a Jackson Pollock painting, that is because that is exactly what it is. No better example of how Mattogno throws paint against the wall in the hope of creating a Rembrandt can be found than the repeated invocation of a document which judging by the sheer number of times it is spammed across his many brochures and pamphlets, must be valued very highly by him. Namely, a report from Oswald Pohl to Heinrich Himmler on September 16, 1942, regarding his recent negotiations with the Armaments Minister Albert Speer about the possibility of locating arms factories in the concentration camps. One result of the negotiations was an agreement to deploy 50,000 Jews for armaments work at Auschwitz. “We will skim off the labour force necessary for this purpose mainly in Auschwitz from the migration to the east (*Ostwanderung*)... the able-bodied Jews destined for migration to the east will therefore have to interrupt their journey and perform armament work”.³⁷⁸

This document, which is cited at least nine times in Mattogno’s oeuvre, is frequently recapitulated with a crucial term omitted – able-bodied.³⁷⁹ The actual document thus refers only to *Jews fit for work* “breaking off their migration to the east” and **says absolutely**

³⁷⁷ Jürgen Graf, ‘David Irving and the ‘Aktion Reinhardt’ Camps’, *Inconvenient History*, Vol.1, No.2, 2009.

³⁷⁸ Pohl an Himmler, 16.9.1942, NI-15392 and BA NS19/14, pp.131-3.

³⁷⁹ It is cited in Carlo Mattogno, *Special Treatment in Auschwitz: Origin and Meaning of a Term*, Chicago: Theses & Dissertations Press, 2004, notes 141 and 259, M&G, *Treblinka*, note 727; Carlo Mattogno, ‘The Morgues of the Crematoria at Birkenau in the Light of Documents’, *The Revisionist*, 2/3 (2004) Part I note 7; Mattogno, ‘Origins of Birkenau’ note 115, Carlo Mattogno, ‘*Azione 1005*’ i *Azione Reinhard*, notes 9 and 11; Mattogno, *Hilberg*, note 424; Mattogno, *Hitler e il nemico di razza*, p.39 note 3 and p.100 note 1; MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.290-1, omitting ‘able bodied’; Mattogno, *Auschwitz: The Case for Sanity*, note 902. It is additionally repeated in Graf, *Neue Weltordnung*, note 510 and Rudolf, *Lectures on the Holocaust*, note 448.

nothing about Jews regarded as unfit for work. In this regard, it is of a piece not only with the Wannsee conference protocol³⁸⁰, but several other sources which remain utterly silent on the fate of the unfit, although as we have seen, there are several other documents which close this ominous gap and specify their intended fate – murder. Pohl’s poetic reference to the *Ostwanderung*, moreover, seems to have been lifted almost directly from the Wannsee protocol, which was written at a time before the actual shape of the Final Solution was crystallised in its eventual form. Thus, once again, the informed reader will shrug at Mattogno’s gyrations and say, ‘so what?’ They prove nothing other than either his sloppy typing or his dishonesty in omitting two words that change the entire meaning of the quoted statement.

However, the document does help us introduce a series of sources which are perhaps unsurprisingly omitted from Mattogno’s portrayal of ‘resettlement’, precisely because they completely refute this hypothesis. In December 1942, the head of the Gestapo Heinrich Müller telexed Himmler at his field headquarters concerning a plan to increase the labour force in the concentration camp system. 45,000 Jews were to be deported to Auschwitz, of which 10,000 were to come from the Theresienstadt ghetto, 3,000 from the Netherlands and 2,000 from the hitherto exempted Jews employed as part of the Berlin armaments workforce, while 30,000 were to come from the Bialystok district, where deportations had begun at the start of November 1942.³⁸¹ The total of 45,000 Jews included “the unfit appendages (old Jews and children)” so that Müller hoped to reap 10 to 15,000 workers from the 45,000 deportees slated for Auschwitz.³⁸² What would happen to the “unfit appendages” was not spelled out, but is crystal clear to anyone familiar with the real history of Auschwitz, as opposed to the Revisionist fantasy version. As with the deportations from Lwow to Belzec earlier on, the decision to deport Jews from the Bialystok district to Auschwitz meant that once again, the ‘resettlers’ were going in the wrong direction – a problem which MGK have yet to properly acknowledge, much less solve.

A major concern for Müller was yet another of the periodic *Transportsperren* that would prevent deportation trains from running until mid-January 1943, in order to allow the Reich Ministry of Transport the chance to concentrate the maximum resources on reinforcing the collapsing German front in the Don bend after the encirclement of 6th Army at Stalingrad.

³⁸⁰ NG-2586-G.

³⁸¹ In March 1942, 161,000 Jews were registered in the Bialystok district. Der Bezirk Bialystok (1.3.42), p.29, BA F 15024. On the deportations from the Bialystok district, see Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, pp.723-743; Sara Bender, *The Jews of Bialystok during World War II and the Holocaust*. London, 2008.

³⁸² Müller to Himmler, 16.12.42, 1472-PS, IMT XXVII, pp.251-3.

The *Transportsperre*, also reported to Himmler by the HSSPF in the Generalgouvernement, Krüger³⁸³, led Himmler to write to Ganzenmüller on January 20, 1943 with a remarkable – and for Revisionists deeply problematic – justification of the necessity of deporting the Jews:³⁸⁴

Now I wish to present another important question: a precondition for bringing peace and quiet to the General District of Białystok and the Russian territories is the deportation of all those aiding the gangs or suspected of belonging to them. This also includes, over and above all else, deportation of the Jews, as well as the Jews from the West, because otherwise we will have to take into account a rise in the number of assaults from these territories as well. Here I need your help and your support. If I wish to finish things up quickly, I must have more trains for transports. I well know what dire straits the railroads are in and what demands are always being made on them. Nevertheless I am forced to appeal to you: help me and supply me the trains.

As in his order to Krüger of 19 July 1942, Himmler emphasised that the Jews were a dangerous threat to German order and security. Just as in July, he had emphasised that failure to carry out the total deportation of the Jews in the Generalgouvernement represented “a danger to quiet and order in the entire German sphere of interest, a point of application for the resistance movement and a source of moral and physical pestilence”, in January 1943 Himmler stressed that the “precondition for bringing peace and quiet” to the “Russian territories” was the “deportation of the Jews”. From Himmler’s perspective, as sources such as these makes unmistakably clear, Jews would be a threat to security and order *everywhere*.

Nor did Himmler drop this refrain in later months. After discussing with ethnic resettlement expert SS-Gruppenführer Greifelt the urgency of ‘removing’ the remaining 300-400,000 Jews of the Generalgouvernement in May 1943³⁸⁵, Himmler reiterated this point as a necessity in a file note around the same time, stressing that “as much as the evacuation of the Jews produces unrest in the moment of its execution, so it will be the main prerequisite for a fundamental peace of the region after its completion.”³⁸⁶ Given that Himmler had arrogated to himself and to the SS the role of security commissar for the entire occupied Soviet territories and was closely engaged in planning the Nazi response to the rising tide of partisan

³⁸³ Krüger an Himmler, 5.12.1942, cited in Hilberg, *Vernichtung*, Bd.2, p.516.

³⁸⁴ Himmler an Ganzenmüller, 23.1.43, BA NS19/2774, pp.1-2, also *FGM*, p.346.

³⁸⁵ Vermerk zu einem Vortrag des SS-Gruppenführer Greifelt beim Reichsführer-SS am 12.5.43, betrifft Ansiedlung im Generalgouvernement, BA NS19/2648, p.135.

³⁸⁶ Aktennotiz über Bandenbekämpfung, Berlin, den 10.5.43, gez. H.Himmler, NARA T175/128/2654173-7. Once again, the proposed evacuation was discussed intransitively, thus Himmler spoke of “Die Evakuierungen der restlichen rund 300 000 Juden **im** Generalgouvernement”, not even talking about evacuating the Jews *out* of the Generalgouvernement. (Emphasis mine).

warfare³⁸⁷, one must honestly question the sanity of anyone who thinks they can legitimately interpret these documents as implying any kind of ‘resettlement to the east’ at a time when substantial parts of the occupied Soviet territories had become a virtual war zone due to the increased level of Soviet partisan resistance, and when Himmler had declared a state emergency in the Generalgouvernement to the west because of the rising level of Polish partisan warfare³⁸⁸, and since May 1943 had been sending a steady stream of police regiments as reinforcements to the region.³⁸⁹

Since the autumn of 1942, as we have already seen above, the only form of accommodation for Jews anywhere in eastern Europe that was acceptable to Himmler was a concentration camp or forced labour camp. In the course of 1943, the few remaining sealed ghettos were almost all converted to full-fledged *Konzentrationslager* or *Zwangsarbeitslager*, with many forced labour camps slated for absorption into the KZ system. The Lodz ghetto, seemingly the exception to this rule, was in fact the subject of efforts by Globocnik to deport its inmates to the Lublin district in order to add them to his workforce in the camps of SSPF Lublin and in Majdanek. By the end of June 1943, Globocnik had amassed a workforce of 45,000 Jews in ‘his’ labour camps alongside the expanded inmate population of Majdanek.³⁹⁰ This labour force consisted of the surviving Jews of the Lublin district supplemented from two fresh sources, the transfer of the survivors of the Warsaw ghetto to the Lublin district, and from selections conducted on newly arriving transports from the Netherlands.

After the Warsaw ghetto action of July through September 1942, a total of 35,000 Jews were left alive ‘legally’ inside the ghetto, most working for private German firms manufacturing textiles and leather goods, along with a growing number of ‘illegal’ Jews who sought refuge in one of the few locations in the entire district of Warsaw where Jews had survived the deportations of the summer and autumn. In January 1943, an abortive attempt was made to deport more Jews from the ghetto and was met with resistance for the first time. 6500 Jews were deported to Treblinka, while 1171 were shot on the spot.³⁹¹ The participation of Trawniki in the action is uncertain, but possible, as German sources described it as “a

³⁸⁷ On SS antipartisan strategy, operations and organisation, see Philip Blood, *Hitler's Bandit Hunters. The SS and the Nazi Occupation of Europe*. Dulles, VA: Potomac Books, 2006.

³⁸⁸ Der Reichsführer-SS, Vortrag beim Führer am 19.6.43 auf dem Obersalzberg ‘Bandenkampf und Sicherheitslage’, NA T175/70/2586505-6.

³⁸⁹ Aktennotiz über Bandenbekämpfung, Berlin, den 10.5.43, gez. H.Himmler, NA T175/128/2654173-7; cf. Curilla, *Judenmord in Polen*.

³⁹⁰ Globocnik an RFSS Pers.Stab, 21.6.43, BDC SS-OA Odilo Globocnik, also published in Grabitz/Scheffler, *Letzte Spuren*, p.322ff; for the context of Globocnik’s efforts to liquidate the Lodz ghetto, see also Klein, *Gettoverwaltung Litzmannstadt*, pp. 596-599.

³⁹¹ Hilberg, *Vernichtung*, pp.534-5

large action carried out by the Lublin SS, which has appeared in the strength of two companies.”³⁹² In January and February 1943, Himmler issued a string of orders to both Oswald Pohl, the head of the WVHA, as well as to the SSPF Warschau to liquidate the ghetto and transfer the machinery and workforces to forced labour camps in the Lublin district.³⁹³ The operation went ahead in April 1943, its start marked out by the relief of the previous SSPF Warschau, SS-Senior Colonel Sammern von Frankenegg, who was replaced by SS-Brigadier General Jürgen Stroop, on April 17, 1943.³⁹⁴

The police operation proceeded methodically and ruthlessly, rousting virtually all inhabitants of the ghetto from their improvised bunkers and cellars, and deporting the majority to the Lublin district, where they were put to work in Majdanek, Poniatowa³⁹⁵, Trawniki and in the property-sorting depot based at the ‘old airfield’ camp in Lublin.³⁹⁶ Stroop’s final tally counted 56,065 Jews who had been “registered”, of whom circa 7000 had been shot on the spot and 6,929 were deported to Treblinka II.³⁹⁷ Stroop further estimated that 5-6000 Jews had been killed in burning or demolished buildings, a number that is undoubtedly too high given the overall total.

German and collaborator casualties amounted to 17 dead and 93 wounded; two of the dead were Trawniki, while ten had been wounded, along with SS-Staff Sergeant Sepp Maoywski from the Trawniki training camp staff. 14 SS and Policemen had died in the fighting.³⁹⁸ The stark disparity between German and collaborator losses and the number of Jews killed in the operation was caused by the extremely poor armament of the Jewish resistance fighters, who together possessed fewer firearms than would have been available to

³⁹² Grabitz/Scheffler, *Letzte Spuren*, p.182.

³⁹³ Himmler an Pohl, 16.2.43, NO-2494; cf. Schwindt, *Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslager Majdanek*, pp.144-156, 205-220; Black, ‘Foot Soldiers’, pp.26-7.

³⁹⁴ For an overview of the course of the uprising, see Israel Gutman, *Resistance. The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1994. For the conduct of the forces involved, see Curilla, *Judenmord in Polen*, pp.606-621, 595-5; Cüppers, *Wegbereiter des Shoahs*, pp.292-304; Black, ‘Foot Soldiers’, pp.23-24.

³⁹⁵ On the labour camp at Poniatowa, see Ryszard Gicewicz, ‘Obóz pracy w Poniatowej (1941–1943)’, *Zeszyty Majdanka X*, 1980, pp. 88–104; Artur Podgórski, ‘Arbeitslager in Poniatowa, 1941-1943’, *Kwartalnik Historii Żydów*, 4/2010, pp.425-488; Evelyn Zegenhagen, ‘Poniatowa’ in: Geoffrey P. Megargee (ed), *The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos, 1933-1945*, Vol. 1, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009, pp.888-891.

³⁹⁶ The Alter Flughafen camp was administered by Josef Oberhauser, a Belzec veteran promoted to serve as Christian Wirth’s adjutant. Cf. Vernehmungprotokoll Josef Oberhauser, 20.3.1963, StA Hamburg 147 Js 7/72, Bd.48, pp.9113-5; Evelyn Zegenhagen, ‘Lublin – Alter Flughafen (Men)’ and ‘Lublin – Alter Flughafen (Women)’ in Megargee (ed), *USHMM Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos*, Vol. 1, pp.885-8.

³⁹⁷ SSPF Warschau, Ghetto-Grossaktion, 24.5.43, in Stroop Report, 1061-PS, online at <http://www.holocaust-history.org/works/stroop-report/jpg/strp075.jpg>. The population of the Warsaw ghetto was officially set at 35,000 in September 1942, but this number did not include thousands who survived the summer 1942 action and lived illegally in the ghetto, nor did it include the thousands more who escaped from other ghettos and sought refuge in Warsaw during the winter of 1942-3.

³⁹⁸ Stroop Report, 1061-PS.

a typical company of the British Home Guard in the Second World War.³⁹⁹ The majority of the casualties suffered by the Jewish resistance and the inhabitants of the ghettos did not occur in actual combat, but were the result of numerous mass executions which killed anyone suspected of having participated in the fighting.

Like his treatment of the Warsaw ghetto action of the summer of 1942, Mattogno's exegesis of the Warsaw ghetto uprising is marked out for its nitpicking tediousness as he performs a checksum to try and fuss away the documented declarations from Stroop that he was deporting some of the rounded-up Jews to Treblinka.⁴⁰⁰ His gloss on the bald statement that "by transport to T. II, 6,929 Jews were destroyed" is remarkable for its sheer desperation: instead of declaring the document to be a forgery, as his dimwitted epigones 'denierbud' has tried to do⁴⁰¹, Mattogno opts for ultra-literalism, and decides that the SS opted to use Treblinka II as an execution site for the "liquidation" of "bandit elements", therefore the reference to Jews being sent to "T II" to be "destroyed" does not prove gassing.⁴⁰² No, but it confirms and corroborates the eyewitness testimonies of Wiernik, Strawczynski and countless other survivors who reported the arrival of Jews from the Warsaw ghetto in the spring of 1943 along with their gassing.⁴⁰³ Moreover, the reference to Jews being "destroyed" at Treblinka II really does nothing to help confirm Mattogno's 'transit camp thesis', since if a 'transit camp' could also serve as a site of execution of up to 7,000 individuals, then there is no reason not to accept all the evidence confirming that the selfsame site was the place of execution for one hundred times that number in 1942. By accepting the document at face value, Mattogno manages to shoot himself in the foot once again.

Equally desperate is Mattogno's attempt to parlay the evidence that the transports from Warsaw to Treblinka were selected on arrival into a major contradiction. That a few hundred deportees were sieved out of the 6,929 sent to Treblinka during this action has been acknowledged in the literature ever since Poliakov and Reitlinger in 1951 and 1953

³⁹⁹ Although street fighting can be incredibly costly, there are many instances in military history where losses have been surprisingly light. In the Second Battle of Fallujah during November 2004, US forces retook the city from the equivalent of a regiment of Iraqi insurgents armed with automatic weapons and rocket-propelled grenades, for a loss of 54 killed and 425 wounded. The Jewish resistance coalition, the ZOB, was significantly worse armed than the insurgents in Fallujah, and still succeeded in inflicting over 100 casualties. Iraqi insurgent losses were between 1500-200, while civilian casualties were around 800, in a conflict characterised by much more devastating modern firepower. This highlights the extent to which the majority of casualties suffered by the Jews of the Warsaw ghetto did not occur in actual combat. Thomas Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*. New York: Penguin, 2007, p.400.

⁴⁰⁰ M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.279-286

⁴⁰¹ See on this Roberto Muehlekamp, 'The Stroop Report is a Forgery', (2007), series starting at <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2007/09/stroop-report-is-forgery-part-1.html>

⁴⁰² M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.283-4.

⁴⁰³ For more on witness convergences, see Chapter 6.

respectively.⁴⁰⁴ Yet Mattogno is seemingly incapable of noticing this, despite the fact that he has ostensibly read both books. Even more mysterious is how he can possibly cite the judgement of the Düsseldorf Treblinka trial stating that “several thousand people from Treblinka are said to have arrived at other camps”⁴⁰⁵ as well as the work of Tatiana Berenstein and Adam Rutkowski acknowledging the selections⁴⁰⁶, and think that he is onto anything that is either genuinely unknown or proves what he wants it to prove.⁴⁰⁷ The most detailed recent reconstruction of the deportation of the Warsaw ghetto survivors to Majdanek in the spring of 1943, by German historian Barbara Schwindt, likewise has no problem in detailing the selections at Treblinka and the arrival at Majdanek of the small contingents spared their intended fate, utilising vastly more sources than Mattogno does.⁴⁰⁸ Schwindt’s work also details the course of the final liquidation of the Bialystok ghetto, which saw a combination of transports to Treblinka and Majdanek as well as further selections.⁴⁰⁹

Mattogno’s treatment of the Bialystok ghetto liquidation⁴¹⁰ is just as noteworthy as his misunderstanding of the Warsaw ghetto liquidation. His attempted obfuscation of the deportations from Bialystok to Treblinka as mere labour transfers masks a striking silent concession. At no time does Mattogno appear to notice that he has silently abandoned almost all of his effort to locate the deported Jews in the occupied Soviet territories and is seemingly content to shuffle deportees around the Generalgouvernement a bit. In other cases, he even tries to even to misdirect deportees all the way to the west to Auschwitz.

Another example of this shell game can be found in his treatment of the deportation of West European Jews to the Lublin district and Sobibor in the spring of 1943. More or less ignoring the 5,000 French Jews deported to Sobibor and Majdanek at this time⁴¹¹, Mattogno

⁴⁰⁴ Poliakov, *Harvest of Hate*, p.197; Reitlinger, *The Final Solution*, p.142.

⁴⁰⁵ Cited from Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager*, p.198

⁴⁰⁶ Tatiana Berenstein and Adam Rutkowski, ‘Zydzi w obozie koncentracyjnym Majdanek (1941-1944)’, *Biuletyn ZIH* 58, 1966, p.448.

⁴⁰⁷ M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.284-6

⁴⁰⁸ Schwindt, *Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslager Majdanek*, pp.205-220

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid, pp.254-268; for the course of the Bialystok ghetto liquidation see also Curilla, *Judenmord in Polen*, pp.292-298; Bender, *Jews of Bialystok*, pp.243-269; *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* Bd XXVI, p.105 (Urteil Landgericht Bielefeld gegen Dr Altenloh u.a, 14.4.1967); and the memoir account by Chaika Grossman, *The Underground Army: Fighters of the Bialystok Ghetto*. New York: Holocaust Library, 1987, pp.275-305. Despite the existence of a resistance group in the ghetto, the Nazi operation achieved surprise, severely limiting the extent of the fighting. German losses totalled 9 wounded. Cf. Reichspropagandaamt Ostpreussen, *Juden-Aktion*, 24.9.43, StA Hamburg 141 Js 573/60, Bd. 80, pp.15361-2.

⁴¹⁰ M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.286-8.

⁴¹¹ The four transports with 5,003 deportees were directed to ‘Chelm’, cf. FS RSHA IV B 4 a an BdS Frankreich, Betr.: Abbeförderung der Juden aus Frankreich, 20.3.43, T/476. While 40 were selected for Majdanek from the first transport and a handful more from the second, of whom six survived by being transferred from Majdanek to Auschwitz and Budzyn, all the deportees on the last two transports went directly to Sobibor, where 31 workers were taken from the last of the transports, of whom two survived. See Serge

instead alights on wartime rumours that Belgian Jews had been sighted in the ghetto of Konskowola in the Lublin district, reports which reached Gisi Fleischmann of the 'Working Group' in Slovakia.⁴¹² Indeed, the Polish underground also transmitted a report that Belgian Jews had been interned in Deblin-Irena and Konskowola, the message reaching the outside world by July 1943.⁴¹³ However, a subsequent message from a Slovakian Jew interned in the labour camps of Chelm county refutes this rumour; despite reports that Belgian Jews were to arrive, they did not.⁴¹⁴ Likewise seized on uncritically by Mattogno were earlier false reports that Belgian Jews had arrived at the ghetto in Grodno in late 1942.⁴¹⁵ The report in question had emanated in part from the Lodz ghetto, suggesting that the reference to Belgian Jews was pure hearsay.⁴¹⁶ Wholly ignored by Mattogno, needless to say, is the fact that the Grodno ghetto began to be emptied in November 1942 and was entirely liquidated by February 1943, with many inmates deported first to Auschwitz and later on also to Treblinka; none of the survivors reported seeing Belgian Jews in the ghetto after the war.⁴¹⁷

Having struck out with the Belgians, Mattogno twice tries to make something of the deportation of Dutch Jews. The contrasting presentations in *Treblinka* (2002) and *Sobibór* (2010) are highly instructive regarding the degree to which Mattogno will distort perfectly clear evidence and well understood facts in order to spin a desperate yarn. In *Treblinka*, it suffices for Mattogno to note that there were selections at Sobibor which sent Dutch Jews to forced labour camps in the surrounding area. Blithely ignoring the fact that these selections had been discovered by the investigations of the Dutch Red Cross in 1946⁴¹⁸, and skipping over the fact that both Leon Poliakov and Gerald Reitlinger⁴¹⁹, the very first two writers to present comprehensive overviews of the Holocaust in 1951 and 1953 respectively, had noted

Klarsfeld, *Memorial to the Jews Deported from France 1942-1944*. New York: Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, 1983, pp.384-425

⁴¹² M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.251-2. The claim is mysteriously dropped from MGK, *Sobibor*.

⁴¹³ 'Deportation of Jews from Polish Cities Continues: Belgian Jews Held in Lublin District', *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, 14.7.1943.

⁴¹⁴ Tatsachenbericht eines aus der Slowakei deportierten und zurückgekehrten Juden, 17.8.43, VHA Fond 140/59, pp.41-50.

⁴¹⁵ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.252

⁴¹⁶ Maria Tyszkowa, 'Eksterminacja Żydów w latach 1941-1943. Dokumenty Biura Informacji i Propagandy KG AK w zbiorach oddziału rękopisów BUW,' *BZIH* Nr 4, 1992, p.49.

⁴¹⁷ It is probably equally needless to note that nowhere does Mattogno show the slightest awareness of even the existence of the six volume collection of sources and postwar trial materials relating to the Grodno ghetto compiled in Serge Klarsfeld (ed), *Documents Concerning the Destruction of the Jews of Grodno*, Vols 1-6. Paris, 1985-1987.

⁴¹⁸ Affwikkelingsbureau Concentratiecampen, *Sobibor*, 's Gravenhage, 1946; Informatiebureau van Het Nederlandsche Roode Kruis, *Sobibor*, 's Gravenhage, 1947; A de Haas, L Landsberger, K Selowsky, *Sobibor : rapport omtrent de Joden, uit Nederland gedeporteerd naar het kamp Sobibor*, 4de verb. en aangev. uitg., 's Gravenhage: Vereniging het Ned. Roode Kruis, 1952.

⁴¹⁹ Poliakov, *Harvest of Hate*, p.197; Reitlinger, *The Final Solution*, p.142

these selections just as they had noticed the selections from the Warsaw ghetto uprising transports, Mattogno tries to use the account presented by Jules Schelvis, one of the 18 survivors of the selections, to discredit “official historiography”.⁴²⁰ But since all his sources are “official” by Revisionist standards and the equally “official” historians acknowledged this over sixty years ago, it is truly a puzzle to work out just what his point is. So what?

By *Sobibór*, however, Mattogno has decided to try a different tack. Noting that the BdS Niederlande, Wilhelm Harster, had ordered an increased tempo of deportations of Dutch Jews to satisfy labour requirements at Auschwitz⁴²¹, Mattogno expresses puzzlement that the transports instead rolled to the Lublin district, and decides all of a sudden to expose himself as a complete ignoramus of procedures at Auschwitz by declaring that “the able bodied were kept at Auschwitz, with the remainder of the deportees moving on to Sobibor”, then adding “the selected detainees were no doubt moved directly to the Monowitz camp without being registered at Birkenau.”⁴²² That survivors of selections were registered and tattooed inside the Monowitz camp without passing through either Auschwitz or Birkenau is apparent from numerous memoirs of survivors of Monowitz⁴²³; but this does not mean they were entered into a separate number series, as all such cases can be matched to the “classic” Auschwitz number sequence recorded in the so-called Smolen list.⁴²⁴ As there are no transports registered on the Smolen list from the Netherlands arriving in the same time frame as the deportations of Dutch Jews to Sobibor, Mattogno is simply talking rubbish on this one. How anyone who is supposedly as knowledgeable on Auschwitz as Mattogno thought he could get away with a transparent piece of nonsense such as this is completely beyond our comprehension.

Why 34,000 Dutch Jews were deported to Sobibor and the Lublin district is not nearly as “mysterious” as Mattogno tries to make out, once one remembers that in the same time-period, the inmates of the Salonika ghetto were arriving at Auschwitz-Birkenau to be selected then gassed or registered, at a time when few of the four new crematoria were completed.⁴²⁵ The inference is both obvious and in our view, inescapable. Naturally, since Mattogno denies that any camp was an extermination camp, it eludes him entirely. We might sympathise, were it not for the fact that he has decided to ignore the known, documented and utterly undeniable

⁴²⁰ M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.258-260.

⁴²¹ BdS Niederlande IV B 4, Endlösung der Judenfrage in den Niederlande, 5.5.1943, gez. Harster, T/544.

⁴²² MGK, *Sobibor*, p.309.

⁴²³ Cf. among others, Hans Frankenthal, *The Unwelcome One: Returning Home from Auschwitz*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2002.

⁴²⁴ NOKW-2824, Case 12, Prosecution Document Book 9H.

⁴²⁵ Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle*, passim.

facts about prisoner registration at Auschwitz, simply to try and get out of his apparent quandary about what to do with the 34,000 deported Dutch Jews.⁴²⁶

Which brings us to an old negationist hobby-horse, the correspondence between Pohl and Himmler in June 1943 regarding the conversion of the ‘transit camp’ Sobibor into a concentration camp.⁴²⁷ The manner in which deniers from Butz onwards have cited this document without so much as bothering to parse it properly, much less consider the context, would be almost touching were it not for its sheer tediousness. Firstly, let’s just note that this is the only document related to any of the three Reinhard camps where ‘*Durchgangslager*’ is used. Secondly, it appears that Mattogno, in common with his comrades, has forgotten that there are other documents where Sobibor is given a different name. In June 1942, Lieutenant Fischmann of a Vienna police detachment accompanying a transport of Austrian Jews to Sobibor filed one of the rare surviving reports of a deportation, describing Sobibor as a ‘work camp’ (*Arbeitslager*). Given the Revisionist propensity for allowing gas chambers to mutate into morgues, air raid shelters or delousing chambers at will according to the needs of the moment, the transmogrification of Sobibor from a ‘work camp’ to a destination which had an ‘intake’ of 101,000 in 1942 to a ‘transit camp’ just over one year later probably doesn’t bother the deniers. Alas, the Vienna police reported that a selection had been conducted on the ramp at Lublin, with 51 of the deportees taken off to be sent to Majdanek, while the luggage was robbed before the Viennese Jews arrived at Sobibor.⁴²⁸ So even if Fischmann believed whatever he was told at the Sobibor camp gates about its purpose, the document itself contradicts such a notion by highlighting a prior selection of the able-bodied from the transport. Moreover, there isn’t exactly a shortage of documents referring to Sobibor simply as SS-Sonderkommando.⁴²⁹

Ah, but the Revisionists chirrup, why are Pohl and Himmler using a supposed ‘camouflage term’ in secret correspondence? That, dear Revisionists, is because the purpose of euphemising death was not primarily camouflage; it was to distance the perpetrators and senior decision-makers from the consequences of their actions. Since we are dealing here with a sample of one – no other documents exist which quote either SS officer affixing any kind of descriptive term to the Reinhard camps – then the only comparable evidence would

⁴²⁶ We examine another gambit on these deportations from Graf in Chapter 6.

⁴²⁷ NO-482, cited in Butz, *Hoax of the Twentieth Century*, note 374; Graf, *Neue Weltordnung* note 506; MGK, *Sobibor* note 875; M&G, *Treblinka* note 756; Mattogno, *Hilberg* notes 435, 436.

⁴²⁸ 152. Polizeirevier, Erfahrungsbericht betr.: Transportkommando für den Judentransport Wien-Aspangbahnhof nach Sobibor am 14.6.1942, 20.6.42, gez. Fischmann, facsimile in Schelvis, *Vernichtungslager Sobibor*, Plates XIV-XV.

⁴²⁹ E.g., SS-Sonderkommando Sobibor an die Bekleidungswerke Lublin, 25.4.43, AGK NTN 144, p.109.

be documents such as the aforementioned ‘Ostwanderung’ letter written by Pohl to Himmler, which was written in such transparently cynical language that one is entitled to be sceptical that Ozzy and Uncle Heinrich were playing it straight with ‘*Durchgangslager*’.

There are, however, further points to be made about the negationist gift-horse of ‘transit camp Sobibor’. It doesn’t seem to have occurred to any of the Revisionist gurus that the document simply doesn’t specify where deportees to Sobibor might transit *to*. Try as Mattogno, Graf and Kues might, they cannot actually use this as proof of ‘resettlement’ outside of the Generalgouvernement. And, once this fact is recognised, the term ‘transit camp’ becomes entirely explicable, for that is precisely what Sobibor had become by the spring of 1943. In stark contrast to Belzec in 1942, Sobibor was now situated in a nexus of forced labour camps run by SSPF Lublin, and functioned virtually as a pendant to the Trawniki camp. Incoming transports were frequently selected on arrival at Sobibor, with the able-bodied being transferred to Trawniki, Dorohucza or another *SS-Arbeitslager* in the region; or they were selected on arrival at Trawniki, with the unfit being dispatched to Sobibor, a fate which was also evidently experienced by exhausted and sick Jews from the labour camps who were being culled after a selection *inside* these camps.⁴³⁰ This interpretation is further supported by the fate of incoming transports deported from the Reichskommissariat Ostland, most especially from the Minsk ghetto, in September 1943. Several surviving witnesses as well as contemporary diaries⁴³¹ confirm that the Jews of the Minsk ghetto were selected on arrival at several destinations in the Lublin district, including Sobibor, with at least several hundred sent to forced labour camps in the Lublin district.

In *Sobibór*, Mattogno plays dumb and insists that these selections and the testimonies reporting them are “in disagreement with the thesis of nearly total extermination of the deportees taken to Sobibor and lends credit to the hypothesis that the Polish Jews selected for work were far more numerous than mainstream historiography asserts”⁴³² As we have seen, this strawman argument can be refuted simply by referring Mattogno to his ostensible sources

⁴³⁰ Ref.Zeg/IX, Informacja tygodniowa, 30.6.1943, AAN 202/XV-2, fols. 341-42.

⁴³¹ See the diary of Helene Chilf, reproduced in Grabitz/Scheffler, *Letzte Spuren*, p.252, and the postwar testimony of Minsk ghetto survivor Zina Czapnik, 28.3.1966, reproduced in *ibid.*, p.269ff, both speaking of groups of 200-250 selected deportees transferred from Trawniki to Sobibor. Heinz Rosenberg, another survivor of the Minsk ghetto, spoke of being deported to ‘Treblinka’ from Minsk in September 1942, and thereafter being selected along with 250 others and being sent to the Budzyn labour camp. The naming of ‘Treblinka’ might be ascribed to a postwar confusion by the witness, were it not for the fact that Francizek Zabecki, the Treblinka stationmaster, referred to a transport arriving on 17 September 1942 from “Minsk Litewski”, the Polish name for the Belarusian capital (to distinguish it from Minsk Mazowiecki in Mazovia), which owing to the condition of the camp was sent on to “Chelm”. Cf. Heinz Rosenberg, *Jahre des Schreckens... und ich blieb übrig, daß ich Dir's ansage*. Göttingen: Steidl Verlag, 1985, pp. 72-8; Protokół, Francizek Zabecki, 21.12.1945, AIPN NTN 70, p.4R.

⁴³² MGK, *Sobibor*, p.311.

as well as to books he claims elsewhere to have read, all of which belong to the “mainstream historiography” he is misrepresenting. Leaving aside the apparently incorrigible myopia from which Mattogno suffers, the fact that there were indeed numerous selections on arrival at Sobibor, more than at any other Reinhard camp, renders the designation of ‘transit camp’ much more plausible and comprehensible. Nor, as we have seen with other examples of violent ‘transit camps’, does the designation rule out the extermination function at Sobibor so amply testified to by so many witnesses and confirmed indirectly by so many documents discussed above. And *still* the Revisionists’ problem of trying to locate the deportees remains unsolved...

Mattogno fares little better when in his 1998 monograph on Majdanek, he tries his hand at etch-a-sketching away the violent end to Aktion Reinhard, the ‘Erntefest’ massacres at Majdanek, Trawniki and Poniatowa at the start of November 1943. The selections from the incoming transports from the Ostland are far from the only indicator that the SS authorities, both at the WVHA in Berlin as well as in Lublin itself, fully intended to continue exploiting Jewish forced labour in the Lublin district, until the contingency of the revolt at Sobibor prompted a dramatic volte-face. In August 1943, the WVHA had taken over the Trawniki training camp for administrative purposes, removing it from Globocnik’s direct aegis.⁴³³ Globocnik’s impending promotion and transfer as HSSPF to Trieste also prompted negotiations with Oswald Pohl to subordinate the *SS-Arbeitslager* to Majdanek.⁴³⁴ However, the revolt at Sobibor on October 13, 1943, coupled with the general deterioration of the security situation and the growing threat from partisans, created fears of similar revolts in other camps.⁴³⁵ Accordingly, Himmler ordered the new SSPF Lublin, SS-Major General Jakob Sporrenberg, to organise the largest mass shooting action in the history of the Third Reich, Operation ‘Erntefest’ or ‘Harvest Festival’. This action would target the Jewish inmates of Majdanek while also liquidating the majority of ZALs in the Lublin district.⁴³⁶

The forces assembled for this series of shooting actions were considerable. Sporrenberg was even supplied with a contingent of SS from Auschwitz to assist in the action at Majdanek.⁴³⁷ Several police battalions were tasked to the operation, including units

⁴³³ SS-WVHA, Betr.: SS-Ausbildungslager Trawniki, 13.8.1943, gez. Pohl, NARA-BDC SS-OA Georg Wipperf.

⁴³⁴ Aktenvermerk, 7.9.1943, gez. Pohl, NO-599. A formal order to this effect was issued on October 22, 1943, cf. Globocnik an Himmler, 18.1.1944, NO-057.

⁴³⁵ *Diensttagebuch*, p.741 (19.10.43).

⁴³⁶ On the course of ‘Erntefest’, see in addition to the sources named below, Schwindt, *Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslager Majdanek*, pp.268-286.

⁴³⁷ Report on the Interrogation of PW SS-Gruppenfuehrer Jakob Sporrenberg, 25.2.1946, PRO WO208/4673 (also for the most comprehensive account of the planning of ‘Erntefest’); Statement of Erich Mussfeldt,

deployed from outside the Lublin district. Thus, Reserve Police Battalion 41 was transferred from the Radom district to Lublin, and from there staged out to Trawniki on November 3, 1943, where it participated in the mass execution of 10-12,000 Jews.⁴³⁸ The action at Trawniki was also carried out by forces from Reserve Police Battalion 67, normally stationed in the Lublin district⁴³⁹, as well as Gestapo officials belonging to KdS Lublin.⁴⁴⁰ The mass shooting at Trawniki also swallowed up the Jewish slave labourers remaining at nearby Dorohucza.⁴⁴¹ At Poniatowa, Police Cavalry Battalion III and the separate Police Cavalry Squadron Lublin were deployed alongside another detachment from KdS Lublin, possibly together with forces from Police Battalion 67, and executed 14,000 Jews.⁴⁴² Companies from Gendarmerie Battalion (mot.) 1 were split between Poniatowa and Majdanek itself.⁴⁴³ At the latter site, Reserve Police Battalion 101 provided the lion's share of the force of executioners and guards screening off the killing sites, along with Majdanek camp staff and the detachment from Auschwitz. The mass execution at Majdanek claimed 18,000 lives.⁴⁴⁴

Mattogno's attempt at "debunking" the massacres in his 1998 brochure on Majdanek is fairly feeble in its grasp of the available sources; the claim that "all descriptions of the alleged massacre are based on the account of SS-*Oberscharführer* Erich Mußfeldt" is nonsense, as the above *brief* recapitulation of *some* of the sources should indicate.⁴⁴⁵ Moreover, his total omission/ignorance of the parallel massacres at Trawniki and Poniatowa mean that we will simply send him back to the library and archives to deal with all the evidence rather than cherrypick it.⁴⁴⁶ For our purposes here, the interesting thing is noting the sheer desperation with which Mattogno tries to confabulate a 'transfer' of prisoners from Majdanek to labour camps in the Krakow district, citing as usual a single vague wartime

Freising, 5.7.1945, AIPN NTN 126, p.173; Testimony of Otto Moll, taken at Nürnberg, 16.4.46, NARA M1270/12/655-9.

⁴³⁸ Curilla, *Judenmord in Polen*, pp.621-2; *DDR-Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, Bd I, pp.145-7.

⁴³⁹ Curilla, *Judenmord in Polen*, pp.745-7; *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* Bd. XLI, pp.670-1.

⁴⁴⁰ See the report of an SD NCO noting the shattering of his rifle butt in the course of the operation. SS-Hauptscharführer, signature unreadable, with KdS Lublin Abt III, Betr.: Waffenschaden – Gewehr Nr. 6682, Lublin, den 31.1.44, NARA T175/248/2739778.

⁴⁴¹ Schelvis, *Vernichtungslager Sobibor*, pp. 140-143.

⁴⁴² Curilla, *Judenmord in Polen*, pp.763-5; *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* Bd. XXXVIII, p.658-662. Units of this battalion had also participated in the manhunts and clean-up after the Sobibor revolt, cf. Schelvis, *Vernichtungslager Sobibor*, pp.204-5; Wojciech Zysko, 'Eksterminacyjna działalność Truppenpolizei w dystryktie lubelskim w latach 1943-1944', *Zeszyty Majdanka* t.VI, 1972, pp.186-7.

⁴⁴³ Curilla, *Judenmord in Polen*, p.756.

⁴⁴⁴ Browning, *Ordinary Men*, pp.133-142; Curilla, *Judenmord in Polen*, p.725-9.

⁴⁴⁵ M&G, *Majdanek*, pp.209-230; citation on p.214.

⁴⁴⁶ In addition to the sources enumerated above, one can also add the 480-page Wojciech Lenarczyk and Dariusz Libionka (eds), *Erntefest 3-4 listopada 1943 – zapomniany epizod Zagłady*. Lublin, 2009.

report which he hopes will somehow weigh more heavily in the balance than the mountain of testimonies and other evidence which exists concerning 'Erntefest'.⁴⁴⁷

The problem with the 'transfer' argument should be immediately apparent: if prisoners were transferred to another camp, then they would sooner or later show up in the records of those camps, or in testimonies from survivors of those camps, whereas nothing of the sort can be shown. To the contrary: there were parallel liquidations at camps in the Galicia district, where the remaining survivors of the *SS-Arbeitslager* Janowska in Lwow were murdered in two actions on October 25/26 and November 12-19, 1943⁴⁴⁸, and in the Krakow district, which saw the camp at Szebnie liquidated and its inmates transferred to Auschwitz, with 2,889 disappearing into the gas chambers of Birkenau.⁴⁴⁹ There *were* also transfers for labour purposes at this time. The camp at Plaszow transferred a contingent of 2,500 prisoners to the large ammunition factory at Skarzysko-Kamienna on November 16; another 1,400 labour camp inmates were transferred to other forced labour camps in the Radom district two days later.⁴⁵⁰

But the fact that other prisoners were transferred at this time helps us illuminate the fundamental problem with Mattogno's "transfer" argument: he ignores the fact that a mere "transfer" of inmates could be accomplished utilising existing guard forces. The movement of up to 4,000 prisoners from Plaszow and camps in the Krakow district evidently did not require the deployment of multiple battalions of Order Police as did the actions at Majdanek, Poniatowa and Trawniki. Since those camps disposed of several thousand Trawniki men alone, there was absolutely no shortage of manpower to carry out a mere transfer. The deployment of a full battalion of police from outside the Lublin district as well as the mobilisation of five battalions and a separate squadron from inside the district, alongside the deployment of the full strength of the Security Police command and the involvement of the camp staffs of Majdanek and Auschwitz meant that the 42,000 victims of 'Erntefest' were killed using exclusively German manpower; despite the presence of several battalion equivalents of Trawniki in the vicinity of all three shooting sites.⁴⁵¹ The deployment of

⁴⁴⁷ M&G, *Majdanek*, p.230.

⁴⁴⁸ Pohl, 'Zwangsarbeitslager', p.428; Pohl, *Ostgalizien*, pp.359-60; Eisenbach, *Hitlerowska polityka*, p.553.

⁴⁴⁹ Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle*, p.520; cf. protokół doprosy, Roza Iuzefovna Langsam, 15.2.1945, GARF 7021-108-1, pp.144-R.

⁴⁵⁰ Felicja Karaj, *Death Comes in Yellow. Skarzysko-Kamienna Slave Labor Camp*. Amsterdam, 1996, p.60; Angelina Awtuszevska-Ettrich, 'Plaszow', in: Benz/Distel (eds), *Ort des Terrors* Bd. 8, p.276. On Plaszow in general see also Ryszard Kotarba, *Niemiecki oboz w Plaszowie 1942-1945*. Warsaw/Krakow: IPN, 2009.

⁴⁵¹ This was emphasised in almost all postwar investigations in West Germany. See Jochen Böhrer, 'Totentanz. Die Ermittlungen zur "Aktion Erntefest"', in Klaus-Michel Mallmann and Andrej Angrick (eds), *Die Gestapo nach 1945. Karrieren, Konflikte, Konstruktionen*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2009, pp.235-254. There are contradictory testimonies regarding the presence of Trawniki in the sentry screens

outside forces totally militates against Mattogno's pathetic handwave of an explanation, and points directly to the real purpose: the slaughter of 42,000 Jewish prisoners in order to assuage the security paranoia of Heinrich Himmler.

The Reichsführer-SS, however, was unable to force through the mass murder of Jews employed in armaments factories or in directly war-related production. Osti, the major employer at Majdanek, Poniatowa and Trawniki, did not manufacture armaments, and accordingly could not hold on to its workforce when the SS panicked.⁴⁵² Nor could the Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke at Janowska justify its continued existence as its output involved light manufacturing only.⁴⁵³ By contrast, the forced labour camps at the oil refineries of Boryslaw and Drohobycz in the Galicia district⁴⁵⁴, as well as the forced labour camp at Budzyn in the Lublin district which produced aircraft components for Heinkel⁴⁵⁵, were all left untouched by 'Erntefest', as were the forced labour camps for heavy industry and armaments in the Radom district.⁴⁵⁶ Indeed, the number of Jewish forced labourers employed in what was adjudged 'direct' armaments work rose from 22,444 in October 1943 to 27,439 in May

surrounding the execution sites at Poniatowa and Trawniki. According to one SS NCO at Poniatowa, none were present. Vernehmungsniederschrift Stephan Baltzer, 14.4.1970, StA Hamburg 147 Js 43/69, Bd.85, p.16115. According to one Trawniki also stationed at Poniatowa, the shooting was done by Germans while the Trawniki guards remained at their posts around the camp. Protokół doprosa, Ivan Vasilevich Lukanyuk, 12.4.1948, ASBU Ivano-Frankivsk 5072-2123, pp.10-22. However, a rare survivor testimony from the same camp suggests that Trawniki were involved in rousting Jews from hiding places in the barracks. Andrzej Żbikowski, 'Texts Buried in Oblivion. Testimonies of Two Refugees from the Mass Grave at Poniatowa', *Holocaust. Studies and Materials*, 1/2009, pp.76-102, here p.89. At Dorohucz, the camp was surrounded by a police unit who demanded that all Germans as well as Ukrainians surrender their weapons while the inmates were rounded up. The use of troops who had had no personal contact with the inmates was thus evidently a deliberate strategy. Cf. Vernehmung Robert Jühns, 13.10.1961, BAL B162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd.8, pp.1486-7. Jühns had previously served at Belzec.

⁴⁵² On the Osti firm, see see Jan-Erik Schulte, 'Zwangsarbeit für die SS. Juden in der Ostindustrie GmbH' in: Norbert Frei et al (eds), *Ausbeutung, Vernichtung, Öffentlichkeit. Neue Studien zur nationalsozialistischen Lagerpolitik*. Munich: KG Saur, 2000, pp.41-74.

⁴⁵³ Jahresbericht 1943 DAW Lemberg, BA NS3/146, p.34.

⁴⁵⁴ On these camps see Rainer Karlsch, 'Ein vergessenes Grossunternehmen. Die Geschichte der Karpaten Oel-AG', *Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, 2004/1, pp.95-138, as well as the older work by East German historian Hanns-Heinz Kasper, 'Die Ausplünderung polnischer und sowjetischer Erdöllagerstätten im Gebiet der Vorkarpaten durch den deutschen Imperialismus im zweiten Weltkrieg', *Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 1978/II, pp.41-64.

⁴⁵⁵ Lutz Budrass, ' "Arbeitskräfte können aus der reichlich vorhandenen jüdischen Bevölkerung gewonnen werden". Das Heinkel-Werk in Budzyn 1942-1944', *Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 1, 2004, pp.41-64; Wojciech Lenarczyk, 'Budzyn' in Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel (eds), *Der Ort des Terrors. Geschichte der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager*. Band 7. Munich: C.H. Beck, 2007, pp.89-92.

⁴⁵⁶ Adam Rutkowski, 'Hitlerowskie obozy pracy dla zydw w dystrykcie radomskim', *Biuletyn ZIH* 17/18, 1956, pp.106-128; cf. Seidel, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik*, pp. 353-365. There are now several detailed studies of individual camps. On Skarzysko-Kamienna see Felicja Karaj, *Death Comes in Yellow. Skarzysko-Kamienna Slave Labor Camp*. Amsterdam, 1996; on the Kielce camp see Felicja Karaj, 'Heaven or Hell? The Two Faces of the HASAG-Kielce Camp', *Yad Vashem Studies* XXXII, 2004, pp.269-321 ; on Starachowice see Browning, *Remembering Survival*.

1944⁴⁵⁷, as Jewish slave labourers engaged in non-armaments work were transferred to the arms factories, including the aforementioned 4,000 prisoners transferred from the Krakow district to Skarzysko-Kamienna in November 1943, and after 1,500 Jews were transferred from the Lodz ghetto to Skarzysko-Kamienna in March 1944.⁴⁵⁸

That Mattogno thinks citing this fact can in any way negate the murder of 42,000 prisoners is eloquent testimony to the hopeless, desperate position in which he finds himself when attempting to play shell games with ‘resettled’ and ‘transferred’ Jews. In 1942, at the height of Aktion Reinhard, he is wholly unable to prove that the mass deportation of more than 1.2 million Jews was anything like a ‘resettlement’ to the ‘Russian east’, as we will see further in Chapter 4. In 1943-44, he also cannot account for the progressive decimation of the surviving 400,000 Jews of the Generalgouvernement and Bialystok district down to an insignificant fraction of the former size of the Jewish population of these regions. If the survivors were more and more productively employed in direct armaments work, then this only demonstrates how labour and extermination could be at least partially harmonised, even as Himmler forced through the progressive destruction of the remnant population to satisfy his ideologically driven paranoia.⁴⁵⁹ In the summer of 1944, the remaining few tens of thousands of Jewish armaments workers were evacuated into the concentration camp system, largely via Auschwitz – whereupon their fate was submerged into another context entirely.⁴⁶⁰

This chapter has exposed Carlo Mattogno for his ignorance of the sources and literature concerning Aktion Reinhard and raised serious questions about his honesty on a number of occasions. Mattogno’s approach to the sources bears all the signs of pseudoscholarship: bizarrely contorted interpretations of documents which do not find any support in the texts or which are flatly contradicted by the texts; the extremely selective use of sources, omitting anything which might prove inconvenient to his thesis; and a failure to

⁴⁵⁷ Piotr Matusak, *Przemysł na ziemiach polskich w latach II wojny światowej*, Tom 1, Warsaw/Siedlce, 2009, p.207; Hilberg, *Vernichtung*, p.563.

⁴⁵⁸ H.Biebow and Hauessler, Litzmannstadt, 18.3.1944, published in Tatiana Berenstein, Artur Eisenbach and Adam Rutkowski (eds), *Eksterminacja Żydów na ziemiach polskich w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej. Zbiór dokumentów*, Warsaw, 1957, p.256; Karaj, *Death Comes In Yellow*, p.66.

⁴⁵⁹ When Mattogno claims apropos ‘Erntefest’ that “the alleged mass executions make no sense economically” (M&G, *Majdanek*, p.226ff), he will do little more than provoke a hollow laugh from *anyone* familiar with the personality and ideology of Heinrich Himmler. Evidently, Mattogno has not grasped several basic facts about the Holocaust which are apparent to one and all, not least of which was its immense *irrationality*.

⁴⁶⁰ On the evacuation of the surviving camps see Golczewski, ‘Polen’, pp.481-9; on the evacuation of the Radom district labour camps, see Seidel, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik*, pp.367-370. Only the camp at Czestochowa remained unaffected by the evacuations, and was liberated with 5,200 survivors, of whom 1518 were from Czestochowa itself. The only other location in the whole of occupied Poland where Jews were liberated from Nazi captivity was Lodz in the Warthegau, where 877 survivors retained for clean-up work after the liquidation of the ghetto were freed.

substantiate his own claims of ‘resettlement’ and connect them to hard, meaningful evidence. In this regard, our scrutiny of his arguments about the origins, planning and implementation of Aktion Reinhard has come to much the same result as the previous chapter’s examination of his portrayal of Nazi Jewish policy and the origins of the Final Solution in general.

Several points need to be reiterated at this stage. Firstly, if Mattogno wishes to take part in debates with the big boys, he needs to demonstrate a far greater familiarity with the literature and sources than is currently the case. He also needs to acquaint himself with both the organisational culture of the SS and the polycratic structure of the National Socialist regime, since time and again his (quite possibly deliberate) misunderstandings are based on a flawed grasp of both of these things. In *Sobibór*, for example, he advances an absolutely nonsensical understanding of the chain of command involved in Aktion Reinhard and other extermination camps which is simply laughable to anyone familiar with Nazi-era German military, police or SS organisational structures.⁴⁶¹ It is perhaps harder to criticise his lack of grasp of the economic context of Aktion Reinhard, simply because he doesn’t have any grasp whatsoever of how the food and labour factors alternately accelerated then marginally slowed the process of destruction.

Although we have demonstrated Mattogno’s ignorance and duplicity on a great many points, this chapter has not touched on many quite important incidents and sources – in part deliberately. For if Mattogno and his colleagues wish to be taken seriously, they will have to do considerably better than dig into their bag of tricks for an ‘undebunked’ point, but must instead show how the totality of the evidence is to be interpreted. We do not anticipate that this will happen, but that’s the price of admission, folks.

Much the same, of course, can be said for MGK’s attempts to spin out their ‘resettlement thesis’ into the occupied Soviet territories, to which this critique now turns.

⁴⁶¹ MGK, *Sobibor*, pp.251-2. The key flaw in his comprehension lies in not realising the distinction between line commands and technical lines of communication. Support agencies like the Kriminaltechnische Institut of the RSHA provided logistical support and advice. They were not in the *vertical* chain of command at all, but instead stood horizontally in relation to other agencies. Much the same can be said for the role played by the T4 organisation vis-a-vis the Aktion Reinhard camp staff; these men continued to receive pay via T4, i.e. the euthanasia organisation remained involved *administratively*. If this does not compute with either Mattogno or his fans, then we will make the following analogy: placing agencies such as the KTI into the chain of command for the extermination camps is as utterly moronic as claiming that the Heereswaffenamt was in charge of a panzer division on the Eastern Front.

Chapter 4

So Where Did They Go? “Resettlement” to the East

The Excruciatingly Slow Evolution of the Revisionist “Resettlement” Thesis

As with their fixation on physical evidence (graves and gas chambers), the denier “hypothesis” of Nazi resettlement of Jews through transit camps is a relatively recently phenomenon as it underwent an excruciatingly slow evolution through Revisionist writings. Arthur Butz was the first Revisionist to detail such an argument, writing in 1976 that instead of an extermination program, “the German policy was to evacuate the Jews to the East.”¹ Butz primarily drew this conclusion from the minutes of the Wannsee Conference², a few wartime newspaper articles³, and the 1943 document referencing Sobibor as a transit camp.⁴ In sketching out this supposed resettlement policy, Butz speculates that the destinations of the deportees (whom he counts one million non-Polish Jews) were stretched along a connected line in the occupied Soviet territories, including areas such as Riga, Minsk, Ukraine, and the Sea of Azov.⁵ The ultimate fate of these deportees varied, according to Butz, but his work suggests that the majority were either assimilated into the Soviet Union, or emigrated to the United States and Israel.⁶

While Butz’s work proved to be popular among deniers, the particular argument on resettlement appears to not have been well received, judging by its omission from other Revisionist works during the 1970s and 1980s. Indeed, the major denier work to explain the fate of European Jews during the war was by German-American Walter Sanning, who wrote

¹ Butz, *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century*, p.260.

² See Chapter 2, section The Europe-Wide Final Solution.

³ Most of the ones Butz cites (p.260 n.371) are dated from 1941 and early 1942, no doubt related to the deportation of German Jews.

⁴ Himmler an Pohl, 5.7.43, NO-482. As was noted in Chapter 2, this is an irrelevancy because, for example, Soldau had previously been referred to as a “transit camp” but was also a gassing site.

⁵ Butz, *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century*, p.267. Butz is unclear on the total figure of Jewish deportees for his resettlement program, excluding Polish Jews from his count due to their alleged similarity with Soviet Jews, as well as pre-1941 deportations and evacuations.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.271-276.

The Dissolution of Eastern European Jewry in 1983. Even in 2002, Mattogno wrote that Sanning's work was "the most comprehensive" Revisionist study regarding Jewish population losses during the war.⁷ Sanning is also recommended as a source in *Sobibór*.⁸ In contrast to a supposed Nazi resettlement policy (which was ignored completely in his work), Sanning used demographic arguments in order to state that Nazi Germany never ruled enough Jews in order to kill six million. The chief target of his analysis was Polish Jews, who were the primary victims of the death camps, and hence, also the majority of the deportees in a resettlement hypothesis. Sanning's feeble attempts to arbitrarily lower the number of Polish Jews under Nazi rule have already been refuted, so no extra comments on his work are necessary.⁹ Such an effort by Sanning to reduce the number of Jews living in Nazi occupied Europe is also reminiscent of similar efforts by Paul Rassinier, whose work *The Drama of European Jews* originally appeared in 1964 and similarly ignored a "resettlement" hypothesis.¹⁰ Still, the arguments by Sanning, particularly his claim that only some 757,000 Polish Jews lived in the General Government¹¹, clash with MGK's belief that more than twice that number of Polish Jews was resettled.

During the late 1980s, 1990s, and even the 2000s, the Revisionist scene showed clear variations regarding the issue of resettlement, perhaps set back by the strictly demographic argument of Rassinier and Sanning. This manifested itself through levels of ambivalence and confusion in Revisionist works. Some efforts during this time period reflect Sanning-type arguments to show that Jewish populations remained in Europe, or were unharmed. Such was the case with Rudolf and Graf's reliance upon a February 1946 news report which mistakenly added a zero to the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry's total of Jews living in postwar Poland.¹² Indeed, Sanning was held up in tandem with propositions of resettlement by both Rudolf and Graf.¹³ For some Revisionists that accepted Jewish deportations to the occupied

⁷ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.295 n.916.

⁸ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.58 n.1063.

⁹ Cf. the blog series by Jonathan Harrison, 'The Crazy World of Walter Sanning,' *Holocaust Controversies*, <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2006/04/quick-links.html#sanning>.

¹⁰ Rassinier, *Drame des juifs européens*.

¹¹ Walter N. Sanning, *The Dissolution of Eastern European Jewry*, Costa Mesa: Institute for Historical Review, 1990, p.44.

¹² The Committee's report reported 80,000 Jews left in Poland. Graf and Rudolf cite the news article's figure of 800,000. 'Appendix II: European Jewry-Position in Various Countries,' Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry: Report to the United States Government and His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, 1946; Graf, *Giant*, p. 110; Germar Rudolf (ed.), *Dissecting the Holocaust*, 2nd revised edition, Chicago: Theses & Dissertations, 2003, 'Holocaust Victims: A Statistical Analysis: W. Benz and W.N. Sanning', p.195.

¹³ Rudolf (ed), *Dissecting the Holocaust*, pp.207-208; Jürgen Graf, *Der Holocaust auf dem Prüfstand. Augenzeugenberichte versus Naturgesetze*. Basel: Guideon-Burg-Verl., 1993, pp.61-62. For a study of the real postwar situation of Polish Jews, see Lucjan Dobroszycki, *Survivors of the Holocaust in Poland: A Portrait Based on Jewish Community Records, 1944-1947*. New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1994.

Eastern territories, the issue of what actually happened to them following their alleged arrival in the East was entirely elided, despite Butz’s suggestions. One such example can be found in Mattogno’s two part essay on ‘The Myth of the Extermination of the Jews’ in the late 1980s, where deportations are briefly discussed, largely based on the Korherr report, but nothing is stated over the deportees’ eventual fate.¹⁴

Confusion over the fate of the deported Jews remained even after more detailed arguments for “resettlement” appeared. In 1990, Steffen Werner published a book theorizing that the Third Reich had deported millions of Jews (a set figure is not clear in the work) into Belorussia, and that those Jews were still held captive by the Soviet government at the time of his writing.¹⁵ As Werner makes clear, his argument is entirely based upon “circumstantial evidence,” and very weakly at that.¹⁶ In 1993, although Graf wrote that Werner’s book had to be used “with caution,” overall he supported the thesis of Jews being transported and left in the occupied Soviet territories, simply noting that numerous unanswered questions about the fate of the missing Jews existed.¹⁷ Werner’s thesis has not been officially supported by leading Revisionist writers, but instead has been used as a “first step” of research into the subject of resettlement.

In the early 1990s, some arguments of resettlement were focused directly upon the Aktion Reinhard camps, specifically Treblinka (which was also included by Werner).¹⁸ In 1990 Udo Walendy published an article arguing that a transit camp (Malkinia) existed just a few miles north of the Treblinka death camp, and that deportees actually arrived in the Malkinia transit camp to be deported to the East (not Treblinka).¹⁹ Over time Walendy’s Malkinia gambit has been picked up by some deniers,²⁰ including Mattogno and Graf,²¹ but not all (such as Kues).²² Another article from the same period (1992) by Mark Weber and Andrew Allen utilized some of Walendy’s arguments to support their view that Treblinka

¹⁴ Carlo Mattogno, ‘The Myth of the Extermination of the Jews: Part I’; Carlo Mattogno, ‘The Myth of the Extermination of the Jews: Part II,’ *Journal of Historical Review*, 8/3, 1988, pp.261-302.

¹⁵ Steffen Werner, *The Second Babylonian Captivity: The Fate of the Jews in Eastern Europe Since 1941*, Pfullingen, 1990, p.5.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 180. Not even MGK support Werner’s thesis, *Sobibór*, p.359.

¹⁷ Graf, *Der Holocaust auf dem Prüfstand*, p 62.

¹⁸ Werner, *The Second Babylonian Captivity*, pp.70-71, p.171.

¹⁹ Udo Walendy, ‘Der Fall Treblinka,’ *Historische Tatsachen*, 44, 1990.

²⁰ Cf. Arnulf Neumaier, ‘The Treblinka Holocaust,’ in Germar Rudolf (ed), *Dissecting the Holocaust*, 2nd revised edition, Chicago: Theses & Dissertations, 2003, pp.477, 500.

²¹ See their section title ‘Deportations from the ghetto of Bialystok and the Transit Camp Malkinia,’ on p.288 of *Treblinka*.

²² As previously mentioned, CODOH poster ‘Laurentz Dahl’ is revisionist writer Thomas Kues. <http://www.codoh.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=2&t=4715&start=0> .

was a “transit camp.”²³ Weber and Allen used “mainstream” sources (historians and court judgments) to show that some Jews deported to Treblinka were selected and transferred to other concentration camps. The duo also cited letters and postcards from Jews deported from the Warsaw ghetto to settlements in the occupied Soviet territories (presumably transported through Treblinka, according to Weber and Allen).²⁴

More detailed argumentation was offered for the resettlement “hypothesis” in the early/mid 1990s by Enrique Aynat and Jean-Marie Boisdefeu.²⁵ Both authors largely relied upon wartime news reports in order to support their notions that Jews were transported en masse to the East through the extermination camps. Boisdefeu plainly admitted that documents were severely lacking to support such a resettlement program (hence he declares it a “hypothesis”) and recognized that news reports were all that was available.²⁶ Many of the contemporary and clandestine sources of evidence that these deniers used were later employed by MGK in their works (both with and without proper reference), as directly admitted in the praise for the two “undaunted revisionist researchers” offered in *Sobibór*.²⁷ Aynat and Boisdefeu both found areas of eastern Poland and the western USSR (particularly Belarus, Ukraine, and the Baltic) to be the likely resettlement destinations. Boisdefeu also theorized that western Jews were forcefully deported by the Soviets after the war into Siberia for labor.²⁸

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, no doubt inspired by a sense of optimism from the work of Aynat and Boisdefeu, there was a resurgence of interest among Revisionists in the fate of Jews deported to the Nazi extermination camps. In 1999, Jürgen Graf published a piece on the fate of unregistered Hungarian Jews who were deported to Auschwitz in 1944.²⁹ After citing, from Boisdefeu and Aynat, several of the wartime news reports referencing European Jews in the occupied Soviet territories (which Graf calls “all the same” as wartime German documents in support of a resettlement thesis), a documented May 1944 transport of

²³ Mark Weber and Andrew Allen, ‘Treblinka,’ *Journal of Historical Review*, 12/2 (1992), pp.133-158.

²⁴ These postcards are also discussed by Kues in ‘Evidence for the Presence of “Gassed” Jews in the Occupied Eastern Territories: Part II’, *Inconvenient History*, 2/4, 2010. In both cases, the deniers show gullibility and excessive credulity towards the provenance of a dubious source that suits their arguments.

²⁵ Enrique Aynat, ‘Considérations sur la déportation des juifs de France et de Belgique à l’est de l’Europe en 1942,’ *Akribeia*, <http://www.vho.org/F/j/Akribeia/2/Aynat5-59.html>; Jean-Marie Boisdefeu, ‘La Controverse Sur L’Extermination des Juifs par les Allemands,’ 1996 VHO lecture, <http://www.vho.org/aaargh/fran/bsdf/jmb21.html>.

²⁶ Aynat, ‘Considérations sur la déportation des juifs de France et de Belgique à l’est de l’Europe en 1942,’ sect.6.

²⁷ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.364.

²⁸ Boisdefeu, ‘La Controverse Sur L’Extermination Des Juifs Pas Les Allemands,’ pp.88-90.

²⁹ Jürgen Graf, ‘Insights on the 1944 Deportations of Hungarian Jews: What Happened to the Jews Who Were Deported to Auschwitz But Were Not Registered There?’ *Journal of Historical Review*, 19/4, 2000: http://www.ihr.org/jhr/v19/v19n4p-4_Graf.html .

French Jews to the Baltic containing children, as well as falsely interpreting a handful of German documents,³⁰ Graf proclaims that “almost certainly” Auschwitz and the Reinhard camps served as transit camps to deport Jews into the occupied Eastern territories. Graf also used the argument of Weber and Allen, citing the transfer of a few hundred laborers from Treblinka to concentration camps (i.e., Majdanek) as proof of its transit purpose. To explain the ultimate fate of these deportees, Graf suggests that Polish Jews voluntarily stayed in the Soviet Union and approvingly references Werner and Boisdefeu’s speculation that Jews from Western Europe were rounded up and deported to Siberian labor camps by the Soviets after the war. Graf recognized though that without proper documentation, such a far-fetched scenario would only remain a “thesis.”

Graf’s brief summary of the Revisionist arguments for resettlement would set the tone for the works he co-authored on the Reinhard camps during the 2000s with Carlo Mattogno and Thomas Kues, wherein most of the points offered in support of an alternative function to the camps were unoriginal in Revisionist literature. While some Revisionists still quibble with addressing the resettlement issue and the ultimate fate of Jews under Nazi occupation,³¹ the important step that MGK have taken in their books and articles is to spend substantial time addressing such issues in connection with more negationist-type arguments.³² Such efforts can be viewed as a part of Mattogno’s push for a new “affirmationist” Revisionism.³³ Of course, the fact that MGK have given the issue more prominence than others should not be taken to mean that their arguments are valid or truthful, as the reader shall quickly see.

“Resettlement” for MGK

In attacking the work of Holocaust historians regarding the death camps, MGK deride them for “creating a historiographical picture out of selected pieces of eyewitness testimony and a handful of arbitrarily interpreted documents.”³⁴ Unfortunately, the trio’s resettlement thesis is guilty of exactly that, as will be shown throughout the remainder of this chapter. Contrary to their finger pointing at historians’ selective use of witness testimony, for example, MGK are

³⁰ Graf’s reliance on the few documents also comes as he feels “convinced” that the Allies destroyed Nazi documents related to resettlement.

³¹ Wilfried Heink, ‘Well, where are they then?’ *Inconvenient History* Blog, May 31, 2010, <http://www.revblog.codoh.com/2010/05/well-where-are-they-then/>. Thomas Kues also justified such hesitancy over the issue, stating that revisionists are not under a “moral obligation” to address such an issue. See his first section in his ‘Evidence for the Presence of “Gassed” Jews in the Occupied Eastern Territories’: Part 1, *Inconvenient History*, 2/2, Part 2 *Inconvenient History*, 2/4, 2010.

³² See M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.275-299; MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.347-374; And see Kues, ‘Evidence’, Parts 1 & 2.

³³ Mattogno uses such a term to describe his recent works on the Auschwitz camp. Of course, serious history (as opposed to pseudohistory) needs no such designation, as detailing actual events already forms the basis of it.

³⁴ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.106.

brazen enough to spin witness accounts of the death camps and gas chambers as evidence of transit camps.³⁵ Indeed, despite their recognition of “the necessity of comparing the witness accounts with available material evidence,” MGK fail to properly use either type of evidence in their own propositions.³⁶ They also exhibit not only ignorance of the realities behind the Eastern front, where they think some two million Jews could easily be resettled into, but they also ignore several documents which clearly dispel such notions.

One of the many glaring deficiencies of their resettlement hypothesis is MGK’s reliance upon a handful of wartime news sources referencing deportations to the East, which the trio takes to be part of a resettlement program. The actual destinations of the deportees are very rarely specified in the reports, an indication of how weak the information was to MGK’s sources (due to the limited amount of available information), and how feebly such articles serve as evidence.³⁷ Also, as has been noted earlier, such sources tend to be some of the least reliable forms of evidence that one could use in retrospect for an event, due to the limited and speculated information available at the time of their writing. An analogy would be to study and cite American news reports during the run-up to the 2003 invasion of Iraq in the period of 2002 and early 2003; of course one might well conclude from the reports that weapons of mass destruction existed in Iraq at the time of the invasion. Such a conclusion would be based solely on an artificially limited (and hence, distorted) survey of available sources.

Similarly to the 2003 Iraqi war comparison, many news reports during the Second World War changed their conclusions as more information was made available to them. The American Jewish Yearbook, one source which MGK quote-mine and distort in their works, focused more and more on the Nazi extermination policy against the Jews as time went on.³⁸ The *Judisk Krönika* similarly described Nazi killings of Jews later in the war through shooting as well as gassing, as Kues admits (but, of course, disagrees with).³⁹ Kues has even

³⁵ See the section Hypocritical Use of Witness Evidence, Chapter 6.

³⁶ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.106.

³⁷ Some articles cited by Kues in part II, section 3.1 of his series: 1943 American Jewish Yearbook, “sent farther east”; 1944 American Jewish Yearbook, “occupied Soviet territories,”; October 1942 Israelitisches Wochenblatt für die Schweiz, “occupied Russian territory,” “other destinations”; November 1942 Israelitisches Wochenblatt für die Schweiz, “former Polish-Russian border zone,” June 1943 New York Times, communiqué from Belgian exile government stating Belgian Jews sent to concentration camps in Germany, Poland, and occupied Russian territories.

³⁸ Jason Myers, ‘MGK’s Distortion of a Source in support of ‘Resettlement’,’ *Holocaust Controversies*, 2.6.11, <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2011/06/mgks-distortion-of-source-in-support-of.html>.

³⁹ Kues, ‘Evidence, Part II,’ 3.1.3.

used two Soviet and communist reports describing the shooting of European Jews in the Baltic as evidence for resettlement, so desperate he is from a lack of sources.⁴⁰

One of the most popular wartime sources for 'resettlement' among deniers at the present time is the 1943 work of Canadian demographer Eugene Kulischer, who wrote a study on population movements at the time in Europe with information that was made available to him by various institutions.⁴¹ In Kulischer's report he accepted that hundreds of thousands of Jews had been transported to the occupied Eastern territories by the Third Reich, not certain that any other fate was possible.⁴² The credibility of these institutions' limited information from wartime Europe, as common sense would dictate, was questionable due to its clandestine nature. Rumours and hearsay statements were placed on an equal level with direct testimonies and sources, thus muddling fact and fiction. Kulischer also lacked any official and independent demographic sources to corroborate the wartime reports regarding wartime population movements, and thus was only presented an extremely narrow picture of the contemporary events in Europe. Despite Mattogno's claim that the work was written "with scientific exactitude and is undergirded by a copious documentation,"⁴³ Kulischer wrote in the introduction to his work that the limits of the evidence for his work meant that his study "must necessarily be regarded in many ways as of a preliminary and provisional nature."⁴⁴

MGK's heavy reliance on Kulischer (who recognized the limitations of his own study, and even suspected Nazi exterminations) shows how desperate the trio is for evidence of resettlement. Indeed, Kulischer himself discarded his former ideas once better information came out of Europe, calculating in a 1948 publication that 5.5 million Jews had been exterminated by the Nazis.⁴⁵ This does not stop MGK from spamming thousands of words from Kulischer's 1943 report in their books and articles (a common feature of Mattogno and

⁴⁰ See Kues, 'Evidence, Part II,' 3.2.2 - 3.2.3. Kues cites them to show European Jews in the Baltics that 'should not have been there' without resettlement. The possibility of the Baltics serving as a resettlement site will be looked at in some depth later on.

⁴¹ Eugene M. Kulischer, *The Displacement of Population in Europe*, Montreal: International Labour Office, 1943. For further debunking of the Kulischer gambit, see Roberto Muehlenkamp, '«Evidence for the Presence of "Gassed" Jews in the Occupied Eastern Territories» (3, 1),' *Holocaust Controversies*, 15.6.10, http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2010/06/evidence-for-presence-of-gassed-jews-in_15.html.

⁴² Despite M&G's claim that Kulischer never spoke of an extermination policy against the Jews (M&G, *Treblinka*, 273), on p.111 of his *The Displacement of Population in Europe*, Kulischer wrote that "It is hardly possible to distinguish how far the changes in the Jewish population of the General Government are due to deportation and how far they are attributable to **"ordinary" mortality and extermination**. Moreover, the number of Jews remaining in the General Government is in any case uncertain." Emphasis added.

⁴³ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.268.

⁴⁴ Kulischer, *The Displacement*, p.4.

⁴⁵ Eugene Kulischer, *Europe on the Move: War and Population Changes, 1917-1947*, New York: Columbia University, 1948, p.279.

Kues' work).⁴⁶ It is likely that MGK picked up on the Kulischer gambit from Enrique Aynat in his 1994 *Considérations sur la déportation des juifs de France et de Belgique à l'est de l'Europe en 1942*, which was the first denier work to reference Kulischer in support of the resettlement thesis.⁴⁷ Aynat's reference was then used by Jean-Marie Boisdefeu in a 1996 VHO lecture as well.⁴⁸ The recent usage of Kulischer stands in stark contrast to the comments of early denier David Hoggan, who called Kulischer's demographic work "pure guess-work," and declared it to be "a highly untrustworthy source for serious scholars."⁴⁹ As Hoggan's comments related to Kulischer's post-war work, when more sources of better evidentiary value were available, one can treble such comments regarding his 1943 work.

MGK also have attempted to provide documentary evidence for their counterfactual scenario. It should be noted at the onset that MGK themselves admit that the handful of documents they utilize still do not prove resettlement.⁵⁰ Indeed, as shown earlier, they misinterpret several documents related to the deportations of Jews.⁵¹ One of their misconstrued points relates to the deportation of French Jews in 1942, which although indirectly relevant to the Aktion Reinhard camps, are still appropriate to the wider resettlement issue. As Mattogno is fond of pointing out⁵², French Jews were initially deported to Auschwitz primarily for labor purposes during that year, as shown by the large numbers of French Jews selected to stay in the camp.⁵³ While Mattogno believes that children were originally deported into the General Government instead of only Auschwitz, the documents that he cites do not bear this out; while there originally may have been such a plan⁵⁴, once

⁴⁶ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.334-344 (3,298 words of quotes from Kulischer); M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.268-273 (1,515 words); Kues, 'Evidence, Part 1,' 3.2.1 (344 words).

⁴⁷ Enrique Aynat, 'Considérations sur la déportation des juifs de France et de Belgique à l'est de l'Europe en 1942,' *Akribeia*, 2, March 1998, pp.5-59. The scant earlier references (such as in Sanning or Werner) regarded issues tertiary to direct resettlement.

⁴⁸ Boisdefeu, 'La Controverse Sur L'Extermination Des Juifs Pas Les Allemands.'

⁴⁹ David Hoggan, *The Myth of the Six Million*, 1969, p.37.

⁵⁰ Cf. Carlo Mattogno, 'Belzec or the Holocaust Controversy of Roberto Muehlenkamp': "If there were documents on "at least 434,000 Jews" being transported from Belzec "to the east", the controversy which has caused me to write my study would not exist: Belzec would unquestionably be considered nothing more than a transit camp"; "Regarding their precise destination (of Jewish deportees to the East) there exist – as noted by me – no documentation, but there are several indications, as shown in my book on Treblinka, and in particular the sixth section of Chapter VIII."

⁵¹ See Chapter 3.

⁵² M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.247-250; MGK, *Sobibór*, p.294.

⁵³ Czech, *Kalendarium*, passim. Of course, those not selected were gassed.

⁵⁴ Dannecker's 21 July 1942 record of a prior telephone conversation with Adolf Eichmann records that "as soon as transportation into the General Gouvernement is again possible, transports of children can get moving." Trial of Adolf Eichmann file T/37(26), Minutes by Eichmann and Dannecker on their discussion concerning the deportation of Jews from France; Paris, 1.7.1942, RF1223, also T/429. As argued in Graf, 'What Happened to the Jews'; M&G, *Treblinka*, p.251; MGK, *Sobibór*, p.295; Mattogno, *Auschwitz: The Case for Sanity*, p.654.

children began to be deported from France, their only destination was Auschwitz.⁵⁵ By mid August, a transport departed Drancy to Auschwitz containing "children for the first time."⁵⁶ Theodor Dannecker's goal of a final solution with a "total extermination of the (Jewish) adversary" was thus coming true.⁵⁷

Furthermore on the French Jews, Mattogno cites a September 1, 1942 note from SS-Untersturmführer Ahnert in the RSHA department IV B 4, recorded in the wake of a 28 August 1942 conference at the RSHA.⁵⁸ The document records Eichmann's wish to include material in the transports so as to build barracks for the deportees, as a "camp is supposed to be set up in Russia."⁵⁹ On the face of it, the document looks to be a smoking gun of transports into the occupied Soviet territories. Unfortunately for Mattogno, there is more to the source than meets the eye. First of all, if a camp was still to be set up in Russia in September 1942, then one could effectively rule out any previous resettlement camps for the supposed hundreds of thousands of deportees already resettled by that period. However, a pre-meeting instruction to Ahnert from Paris Gestapo chief Heinz Roethke speaks of the construction of barracks at a camp in Düsseldorf (in the Rhineland).⁶⁰ Even before Roethke's August 26, 1942, message to Ahnert an August 17, 1942 document from RSHA financial officer Standartenführer Dr. Siegert speaks of French Jews being evacuated into a "special collection camp" in the western part of the Reich, due to safety concerns.⁶¹ The materials for the construction of this camp were to be sent from France, in order to save on costs. Given the documents from Roethke and Siegert, Ahnert's mention of a camp in Russia is certainly a mistake for the Rhineland, where Düsseldorf is located (Rheinland for Russland in German). Thus, there was no camp in Russia, as the French Jews were not even going to make it that far east.

⁵⁵ See Günther's 13 August 1942 telegram to SS officials in Paris regarding the deportation of Jewish children, where he states that such children could "gradually be deported to Auschwitz", T/443.

⁵⁶ Roethke to Eichmann reporting the departure of a train from Le Bourget-Drancy to Auschwitz with 1,000 Jews, Paris, 14.8.42, T/444.

⁵⁷ IV J, Abstellung von rollendem Material fuer Judentransporte, 13.5.1942, gez. Dannecker, in Serge Klarsfeld (ed), *Die Endlösung der Judenfrage in Frankreich. Deutsche Dokumente 1941-1944*. Paris, 1977, p.56 (CDJC XXVb-29), also in Hilberg, *Sonderzüge nach Auschwitz*, pp.153-4.

⁵⁸ The document is also cited as evidence of resettlement by Graf, 'Insights on the 1944 Deportations of Hungarian Jews.'

⁵⁹ Report of the SS-Untersturmführer Horst Ahnert of 1 September 1942, T/451. The document has been cited in M&G, *Treblinka*, p.251; Mattogno, *Hilberg*, p.74.

⁶⁰ As discussed on Day 26 of the Irving-Lipstadt trial, the eighth point of the document read: "When can we count on the construction of the barracks of the Düsseldorf camp? Has construction already been commenced? Where exactly will the camp be situated?" See the trial transcripts for p.46, available at: <http://www.hdot.org/en/trial/transcripts/day26/pages46-50>.

⁶¹ Cf. Kurt Pätzold and Erika Schwarz, *Auschwitz war mich nur ein Bahnhof*, Berlin: Metropol 1994. It is likely from this point that able-bodied Jews could be sent to Auschwitz or other necessary destinations, while non-capable Jews could be sent to other destinations.

Another hurdle for MGK's resettlement thesis is the ambiguity that exists over who were to be deported. In sections that Matogno writes, he makes several points specifying those to be deported beyond the AR camps and Auschwitz as being unfit for labor.⁶² Kues and Graf, however, often refer to deportations from the death sites to labor camps or related work projects in the occupied Soviet territories. Such examples include a reclamation scheme with the Pripyat Marshes⁶³, the Vievis labor camp⁶⁴, harvest work in the Ukraine⁶⁵, the Vaivara labor complex in Estonia⁶⁶, the Lenta labor camp in Latvia⁶⁷, and other general military work projects⁶⁸, including those in close proximity to the frontline.⁶⁹ We suggest that before offering their baseless speculation of resettlement, MGK actually confer with one another to decide who was actually to be resettled in such a program.

While MGK often cite the deportations of German Jews in 1941-1942 to selected areas in the occupied Eastern territories as evidence against extermination⁷⁰, they do not seem to realize the significance of these deportations in relation to their idea of resettlement. Despite their own admission, MGK never grapple with the fact that the deportation of 66,200 Jews from the Altreich, Ostmark, and the Protectorate proceeded to their destinations without stopping in Auschwitz or the AR camps.⁷¹ Why 3% of the "number of Jews deported to the occupied Eastern territories" would not travel through one of the Revisionist deemed transit camps (Auschwitz, Treblinka, Belzec, Sobibor, or Chelmno) remains unexplained in their work. Several transports using the Bialystok to Minsk line travelled just 4 km away from Treblinka, but never stopped in the camp for any type of delousing, which MGK assume occurred there for hundreds of thousands of others. Instead, MGK believe that these trains were deported directly to their destinations in the East (i.e. Riga and Minsk), "w/o (sic) any stop-over in a camp."⁷² Unfortunately, this is not correct, as some of the Jews deported to Minsk actually changed trains at Wolkowysk station in what is today western Belarus.⁷³

MGK never significantly discuss the hundreds of transports that travelled westwards to the death camps, whilst they argue that these deportees were all sent eastwards. This led

⁶² Cf. MGK, *Sobibór*, p.291, pp.296-297, p.298, p.326; M&G, *Treblinka*, p.230, p.237, p.248, p.290.

⁶³ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.358.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.367-368; Kues, 'Evidence, Part I,' 3.3.1.

⁶⁵ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.361.

⁶⁶ Kues, 'Evidence, Part I,' 3.3.7.

⁶⁷ Kues, 'Evidence, Part II,' 3.3.14.

⁶⁸ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.361.

⁶⁹ Kues, 'Evidence, Part I,' fn. 1.

⁷⁰ M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.191-199, 241; MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.214-215, 348.

⁷¹ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.307.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p.353; Kues, 'Evidence, Part I,' 2.5.

⁷³ RBD Königsberg, Fahrplananordnung Nr. 62, 13.7.42, NARB 378-1-784, p.234.

several groups of Jews (i.e. from Galicia, Romania, Bialystok, Ostland, etc) to head in the completely wrong direction from the eastern territories in 1942 and 1943, something illogical from the perspective of a resettlement program. Indeed, a reasonable estimate would be that at least 500,000 Jews were transported westward to the extermination camps during these years.⁷⁴ These westward transports to the camps have been discussed in Holocaust literature for decades, including in works that have been cited (and we hope read) by MGK.⁷⁵ Mattogno has only briefly discussed a fraction of these westward transports (those from Bialystok in August 1943), where he says they were simply deported into the Lublin area via Treblinka.⁷⁶ Despite the incorrect statement⁷⁷, one should not expect Lublin to be the ultimate resettlement destination for hundreds of thousands of Jews. It should also be remembered that at a time when there was a transport moratorium of eastbound trains into the occupied Soviet territories from December 1942 to January 1943, thousands of Jews were being brought westwards to Treblinka. These are the 10,335 Jews brought to Treblinka during the last weeks of 1942, as recorded in the Höfle telegram. These Jews could not have been redirected back east due to the transportation difficulty.⁷⁸ The only supportable and reasonable explanation of their fate is death inside the camp.

In detailing the supposed resettlement program, MGK intentionally leave a gaping hole in their argument by refusing to discuss the fate of Jews deported to the death camps in 1944 (when Nazi territories were swiftly shrinking due to the advancing Soviet armies), most specifically the 320,000 Hungarian Jews who were deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau but never registered and never classified as "transit Jews" (*Durchgangsjuden*).⁷⁹ Anti-Zionist and Revisionist sympathizer Peter Myers has declared these deportations to be the "fatal flaw in Holocaust denial," signifying its "End-Game."⁸⁰ As MGK write in Sobibor, "no Hungarian

⁷⁴ This estimate is based on approximations of 200,000 people from Distrikt Bialystok (to Auschwitz and Treblinka), 250,000 from Distrikt Galizien (to Auschwitz and Belzec), several thousand from Reichskommissariat Ostland (to Sobibor), at least 10,000 from Thrace (to Treblinka), 30,000 from Regierungsbezirk Ziechenau (to Auschwitz), and about 16,000 from Distrikt Krakau (to Auschwitz).

⁷⁵ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, pp.131-137; Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, pp.723-743.

⁷⁶ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.289.

⁷⁷ See section 'The Lublin Labour/Extermination Camp Complex in 1943' in Chapter 3.

⁷⁸ Alfred Mierzejewski, *Most Valuable Asset of the Reich: A History of the German National Railway, Volume 2: 1933-1945*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000, p.123. This fact also refutes MGK's hope that the Höfle figure of Majdanek arrivals in the last two weeks of 1942 (12,761) were transported to the east. MGK, *Sobibór*, p.324.

⁷⁹ Sergey Romanov, 'The Number of Hungarian Jews Gassed Upon Arrival at Auschwitz,' *Holocaust Controversies*, 2.12.09, <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2009/12/number-of-hungarian-jews-gassed-in.html>.

⁸⁰ Peter Myers, 'The Fatal Flaw in Holocaust Denial,' *Neither Aryan Nor Jew*, February 6, 2009, <http://mailstar.net/holocaust-denial.html#Flaw>.

Jews ever reached the eastern areas, which were rapidly shrinking in size at the time.”⁸¹ In addition to the Hungarian Jews must be added tens of thousands of Polish Jews deported both to Chelmno and Auschwitz throughout 1944. With regard to Chelmno, MGK totally ignore a crucial document from Greiser to Pohl in February 1944 which stated that “The reduction of the [Lodz ghetto] population will be carried out by the Sonderkommando of SS Hauptsturmfuehrer Bothmann, which operated in the area previously.”⁸² Where would these Jews have been sent at such a late stage in the war?

Two earlier studies by Graf and Mattogno (nearly a decade old) on the Hungarian Jews failed to arrive at any realistic conclusions (after denying homicidal gassings).⁸³ Instead of investigating the fate of these Jews further throughout the decade, they simply declared that as they were not sent to the east “we do not have to consider Hungary” with respect to their argument.⁸⁴ Such a neglectful ignorance by the proponents of ‘historical-technical’ analysis appears intellectually dishonest, plain and simple. It also contradicts a point made by Revisionist ‘headmaster’ Germar Rudolf, who demanded that people understand a subject so as not to use their ignorance as a “justification” for failure to act upon such knowledge.⁸⁵ Indeed, even Revisionist Arthur Butz recognizes the tremendous problem posed by the fate of Hungarian Jews if they were transported to Auschwitz-Birkenau: “It is however a problem for Graf, and he does not solve it. For him it is not just an unresolved detail, but a consideration challenging the credibility of his entire thesis.”⁸⁶

MGK also fail to use any statements from German railway workers in support of resettlement. Walter Mannl, a chief operating officer in Kattowitz (responsible for Auschwitz’s rail station), was told in early 1942 by the Auschwitz stationmaster that a concrete gas chamber was being used to kill Jews in the camp.⁸⁷ Eduard Kryschak, a conductor who often led trains to the Treblinka camp, recalled a Jewish maid in Bialystok

⁸¹ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.352.

⁸² Greiser an Pohl 14.2.44, NO-519.

⁸³ Graf, ‘What Happened to the Jews’; Carlo Mattogno, ‘Die Deportation ungarischer Juden von Mai bis Juli 1944,’ *VffG* Vol. 5 No. 4 (2001). Graf said in 2000 that “One of the most crucial unsolved problems is the question of where the unemployable Hungarian Jews were billeted,” and that “under the present circumstances, it is of course not possible to determine the number of victims among the deported Hungarian Jews, but it was probably on the order of several tens of thousands.” Mattogno, in a section titled ‘what was the fate of unfit Hungarian Jews?’, says “The current state of knowledge does not allow us to answer this question with certainty and supported by documents.”

⁸⁴ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.353. Kues, ‘Evidence, Part I,’ 2.2.3 repeats similar points, including an extension to all Jews deported to Auschwitz in 1944, see fn 15.

⁸⁵ Germar Rudolf, *Rudolf Report: Expert Report on Chemical and Technical Aspects of the ‘Gas Chambers’ of Auschwitz*, Chicago: Theses & Dissertations Press, 2003, pp.270-271.

⁸⁶ Arthur Butz, “A Reply to Jürgen Graf: On the 1944 Deportations of Hungarian Jews,” *Journal of Historical Review*, 19/4, p.19.

⁸⁷ If Mannl’s chronology is correct (easily could be off by a year due to memory lapse), then a 1942 statement would refer to gassings in Crematorium I in the main camp.

with a great fear of Treblinka, and who prophesized that one day she would be gone and no longer able to clean rooms; Kryschak noted that the maid's fear came true. In the Reichsbahn canteen at Malkinia, Hans Prause, a staffworker at the Ostbahn divisional headquarters in Warsaw, joined a discussion between the Malkinia stationmaster and an SS officer 'Michaelsen'.⁸⁸ Michaelsen told Prause and the stationmaster of the "humane" Treblinka killings and offered both workers the chance to tour the camp, an invitation that Prause declined. Bialystok based conductor Richard Neuser heard from co-workers about the fate of the Jews after their deportation, and quickly requested from his operations master that he avoid such duty. Rolf Rückel, who worked in the highest Reichsbahn operations office (responsible for overall operations and the freight train schedules), stated after the war that knowledge of the killing operations among the leading Reichsbahn officials was widespread.⁸⁹

While these statements are more of an indirect nature and thus do not conclusively prove the existence of gas chambers, their significance against MGK's belief of resettlement is trebled as these would constitute some of the best sources for their case. Indeed, as there was no coherent defense of resettlement offered by any Nazi defendants in their postwar trials, or any other relevant statements, it is rather absurd that MGK wish to defend something that the Nazis didn't even bother with even when their lives and legacy depended on it.⁹⁰ Indeed, if resettlement were a reality one would expect informative statements from numerous groups of sources, such as German witnesses, including the entire SS/Police hierarchy, as well as Slavic eyewitnesses from Ukraine and Belarus (at least since 1991 with the break-up of the Soviet Union). The reason for this should be fairly obvious, as no such evacuation program took place. As will be shown in the next three sections, the hopeful resettlement sites that MGK fantasize about were anything but in reality.

⁸⁸ This was SSPF Georg Michalsen, who was sentenced to 12 years by a court in Hamburg in 1974; see JuNSV Bd. XXXIX, Nr. 812; cf. Angrick, 'Georg Michalsen'.

⁸⁹ Mierzejewski, *Most Valuable Asset of the Reich*, pp.124-126, citing Uchmann, Interrogation of Walter Mannl, 4 Js 564/64, Siegburg, 24.4.1967, ZSL II 206 AR-Z 15/1963, vol. 4, f. 477.; Schwedersky, Interrogation of Eduard Kryschak, UR I 21/59, Bremen, 12.12.1960, pp. 2-3, ZSL 208 AR-Z 230/59, vol. 7, ff. 1526-27.; Schwedersky, Interrogation of Hans Prause, UR I 4/67 (G), Düsseldorf, 9.10.1968, pp. 1, 4, ZSL 208 AR-Z 230/59, vol. 15, ff. 4274, 4277.; Landgericht Düsseldorf, Interrogation of Richard Neuser, UR I 21/59, Siegen, 4.7.1961, p. 2, ZSL 208 AR-Z 230/59, f. 1835.; Anklageschrift Ganzenmüller, 8 Js 430/67, p. 291, ZSL VI (420) 107 AR-Z 80/61. Cf. further examples in Hilberg, *Sonderzüge nach Auschwitz*, pp. 95, 98-105.

⁹⁰ This has not come to pass despite available opportunities, such as Eichmann's statements in an interview to the sympathetic Sassen. On Eichmann's interviews with Sassen, see Wojak, *Eichmanns Memoiren*; David Cesarani, *Eichmann: His Life and Crimes*, London, 2004.

Realities in the Occupied Soviet Territories

MGK exhibit a stunning lack of knowledge regarding the circumstances of the occupied eastern territories, where nearly two million Jews were supposedly deported in 1942 and 1943.⁹¹ Food conditions in these areas have been highlighted in Holocaust scholarship over the past decade as a crucial factor in the extermination of Jews, another area which MGK have ignored across their work.⁹² As mentioned earlier, German officials had already devised a ‘Hungerplan’ to starve the Soviet population for the practical and ideological benefit of the Reich, a plan modified once realities of the occupation set in.⁹³ Starvation and malnourishment existed across the areas in the winter of 1941-1942, with urban dwellers being provided with meagre rations (even less for Jews) and those in rural areas left to fend for themselves. Millions of Soviet prisoners of war were also purposefully left to starve, in addition to liquidations.⁹⁴ These types of policies were conducted to, as Himmler’s associate Peter-Heinz Seraphim noted, bring about the “extermination of useless mouths.”⁹⁵ Such circumstances would continue on throughout 1942, when MGK expect that hundreds of thousands of ‘useless mouths’ (*unnütze Esser*) were resettled into the same territories.⁹⁶

While these areas were suffering from malnourishment (no small part from German policies), they were also the site of large population movements even without MGK’s hoped for Jewish resettlement scheme. In the areas of Army Group Center, between 1942 and the spring of 1943 more than 650,000 Russian civilians were displaced and evacuated westwards by the army group for various purposes (combat zone, withdrawal, labor, food shortages, etc.).⁹⁷ This movement created havoc among the occupation bureaucracy, with the total of evacuees being divided amongst several regional administrations due to fears of overburdening the locations in terms of food, transportation, and other issues. Collection and

⁹¹ The classic work on the occupied territories is Alexander Dallin, *German Rule in Russia 1941-1945*, 2nd edition, London, 1981.

⁹² Cf. Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*; Herbert, *National Socialist Extermination Policies*; Aly/Heim, *Vordenker der Vernichtung*, pp. 365-393; Gerlach, ‘Bedeutung der deutschen Ernährungspolitik’.

⁹³ See the section Extermination of Soviet Jews, Chapter 2; also Alex Kay, *Exploitation, Resettlement, Mass Murder: Political and Economic Planning for German Occupation Policy in the Soviet Union, 1940-1941*, Oxford: Berghahn, 2006.

⁹⁴ Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, pp.774-859; Pohl, *Herrschaft der Wehrmacht*, pp.201-242; Longerich, *Holocaust*, pp.247-250; Streit, *Keine Kameraden*.

⁹⁵ Bericht Prof. Seraphim mit Anschreiben der Rüstungsinspektion Ukraine, November 29 and December 2, 1941, PS-2174 merged in PS-3257 (IMT, Vol. XXXII, pp. 79-83). On Seraphim in general see Hans-Christian Petersen, *Bevölkerungsökonomie - Ostforschung - Politik. Eine biographische Studie zu Peter-Heinz Seraphim (1902-1979)*, Osnabrück: fibre Verlag, 2006.

⁹⁶ Cf. the conditions in Kiev in Karel Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair: Life and Death in Ukraine under Nazi Rule*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2008, pp.164-186; in Belorussia, Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, pp.265-319.

⁹⁷ Wirtschaftsstab Ost, Chefgruppe Arbeit, KTB-Beitrag 4-10.12.43, NARA T77/1091/156; cf. Nicholas Terry, *The German Army Group Centre and the Soviet Civilian Population, 1942-1944*, PhD, King’s College London, 2006, p.202, p.209.

transit sites had to be established to accommodate and transfer these evacuees, in addition to offering hygienic measures; these sites are documented along with witness accounts, neither of which can be said for MGK's resettlement hypothesis. The regions which grudgingly accepted several tens of thousands of refugees (i.e. Reichskommissariat Ostland, Generalkommissariat Wessruthenien) would obviously have faced a logistical nightmare if they had served as further destination for hundreds of thousands of Jews. The problems of a large population displacement can also be seen in the rejection of Hitler's July 1942 plan to evacuate the entire Crimean population of several hundred thousand into the Ukraine by OKW (the German military command).⁹⁸ It is interesting that in the reasons for such a rejection, the explanation that 'the Jews are going there' was never mentioned.

There also was not a need for Jewish labor inside the occupied Soviet territories, if MGK were to agree that Jewish laborers were deported.⁹⁹ Throughout 1942, both the Ukraine and Ostland were filled with Soviet prisoners of war, with totals varying from a low of 617,000 and a high of 989,000.¹⁰⁰ Indeed even in mid-1943, 300,000 Soviet prisoners and partisans were requested by Gauleiter Sauckel to work in the mines of the Reich, while Gauleiter Koch suggested transferring the 1.5 million *Hilfswilligen* (Soviet helpers to the German military) to the Reich for labor purposes.¹⁰¹ In addition to all of the above must be added the millions of Ostarbeiters, laborers taken from across the occupied Eastern territories and sent west to the Reich.¹⁰²

Resettlement fantasies are also directly refuted by documents from the Nazis themselves. On July 28, 1942, shortly after start of deportations from the Warsaw ghetto to Treblinka, Himmler wrote to SS Main Office chief Gottlob Berger as follows:

The occupied eastern territories will be cleared of Jews. The implementation of this very hard order has been placed on my shoulders by the Führer. No one can release me from this responsibility in any case. I forbid all interference.¹⁰³

⁹⁸ Angrick, *Besatzungspolitik und Massenmord*, pp.533-539. The 1939 Soviet census recorded some 1.1 million living in the Crimea, but this figure no doubt dropped by several hundred thousand after the German invasion and subsequent battles affecting the territory.

⁹⁹ MGK are divided on the issue, see the section 'Resettlement' for MGK in this chapter.

¹⁰⁰ VO/WiRüAmt und WiStab Ost bei GenQu, Übersicht über Bestand an russischen/sowjetischen Kriegsgefangenen, 27.5.42; Stand 1.6.42, 1.7.42, 1.8.42, 1.9.42, BA R3901/20172; BA R3901/20173, p.63.

¹⁰¹ Sitzungsvermerk v. 20 August 1943 des ORR Hermann über eine Tagung am 13.7.43 im RmbO zum Thema: Arbeitseinsatzfragen des Reiches unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Verhältnisse in den besetzten Ostgebieten, NO-1831, IMT XIII, p.1019.

¹⁰² Ulrich Herbert, *Hitler's Foreign Workers: Enforced Foreign Labor in Germany under the Third Reich*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

¹⁰³ Himmler to Berger, 28.7.1942, NO-626; cf. Gerald Fleming, *Hitler and the Final Solution*. Berkely: University of California, 1987, p.185.

It is also notable that MGK have failed to address the Himmler-Berger letter across all of their works. Needless to say it, MGK's belief that hundreds of thousands of Jews were being resettled into the occupied eastern territories at the same time that Himmler was announcing his intent to clear said territories refutes their fantasy. Prior resettlement plans of Jews had also been abandoned prior to summer 1942, as can be seen in Wetzel's April 1942 memorandum on Generalplan Ost where he states that the evacuation of Jews earlier planned "is no longer necessary due to the solution of the Jewish question." Wetzel clearly knew of the killings of Jews as he stated later in his memo that "one cannot solve the Polish question by liquidating the Poles like the Jews."¹⁰⁴

The Ostland

A recent article by Kues argues that RK Ostland contained four "transit points for at least part of the large numbers of Jews deported east via the "extermination camps" in Poland."¹⁰⁵ These transit points were the camps Vievis, Vaivara, Salaspils and Maly Trostenets. However, this contradicts the assertion in *Sobibór* that the Jews deported to the Ostland arrived "w/o a stop-over in any camp."¹⁰⁶ In *Treblinka*, M&G had stated that: "It is valid to suggest that the direct transports to Minsk arrived first in Warsaw and ran over the Siedlce-Czeremcha-Wolkowusk line, so that they were travelling past Treblinka at a distance of approximately 80 km (Siedlce railway station) and about 140 km from Sobibor."¹⁰⁷ Kues and his colleagues are therefore fundamentally split on how the deportees arrived in the Ostland.

MGK are unaware of the literature concerning the mass unemployment and starvation in Belorussian cities. The need for skilled labor was very low because German air attacks and the Soviets in retreat had destroyed, dismantled and relocated many factories and the Germans did not replace the capacity. Thus in Mogilev, starvation forced skilled non-Jews into the countryside, whilst Jews starved in Vitebsk.¹⁰⁸ It is notable that, in ignoring this literature, MGK also display amnesia towards the earlier generation of deniers, who had embraced Walter Sanning's thesis that the retreating Soviets deployed a "scorched earth" policy. How does "scorched earth" support resettled Jews?

Overcrowding and food shortages were two of the reasons that Kube and Lohse fiercely resisted deportation into their area and only relented when it became clear (as

¹⁰⁴ Heiber, 'Der Generalplan Ost', pp.305, 308.

¹⁰⁵ Thomas Kues, 'The Maly Trostenets "Extermination Camp"-A Preliminary Historiographical Survey, Part 2,' *Inconvenient History*, 3/2, summer 2011.

¹⁰⁶ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.353.

¹⁰⁷ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.245.

¹⁰⁸ Gerlach, 'German Economic Interests', pp.210-39.

discussed in Chapter 2) that deported Jews would eventually be killed. Documents written by Kube and Lohse are used selectively by MGK. They thus omit Lohse's statement of August 6, 1942 that "Only a small part of the Jews are still alive; umpteen thousand have gone."¹⁰⁹ On July 31, 1942, Kube protested to Lohse about the arrival of 1,000 Warsaw Jews in Minsk and insisted that further transports from the General Government would be liquidated.¹¹⁰ This was at a time when many deported Reich Jews were in transit ghettos in the General Government. M&G perversely interpret Kube's protest as supporting resettlement but they do this by citing an alternative document from the same date in which the threat to liquidate the Jews was apparently omitted.¹¹¹

Kues contradicts himself with regard to proving that Polish Jews were resettled in the Ostland. On the one hand, he admits in his initial article that it is difficult to prove that Polish Jews did not arrive in the Ostland by means other than deportation:

Hersh Smolar, the Jewish partisan leader operating near Minsk whose memoirs are discussed below (Section 3.3.3.), was one of the Polish Jews who had fled to Belarus in 1939 and remained there at the time of the German invasion. It is thus very difficult to use references to the presence of Polish Jews in the occupied eastern territories as a mean to verify the revisionist hypothesis. For their presence to be of significance, the mentioned Jews would have to be reported as deported from Poland to the east from December 1941 onward, following the opening of the first "extermination camp" Chełmno (*Kulmhof*) in the Warthegau District.¹¹²

On the other hand, Kues totally disregards this logic in his subsequent articles by insisting that "[Grünberg's] statement that most of the Jews in the camp at the time of his arrival were Polish implies one or more undocumented Jewish transports from Poland." He also overlooks the fact that his witnesses who claim to have seen Jews arriving "straight from Poland"¹¹³ may simply have referred to Wilno, which was in Poland at the start of the war. Moreover, his reliance on such witnesses is of course hypocritical, because MGK insist elsewhere that enquirers "must recognize the necessity of comparing witness accounts with the available material evidence."¹¹⁴ There is, of course, no material evidence of resettlement; otherwise Kues would not be reliant on these witnesses.

¹⁰⁹ Stenographisches Protokoll ueber Besprechung Görings mit den Reichskommissaren und den Militärbefehlshabern der besetzten Gebiete, 6.8.1942, USSR-170, IMT XXXIX, pp.384-412; Gerlach, 'Bedeutung der deutschen Ernährungspolitik', pp.216-17.

¹¹⁰ Kube an Lohse, 31.7.42, 3428-PS, IMT XXXII, pp.279-82, also facsimiled in Weinreich, *Hitler's Professors*, pp.188-190.

¹¹¹ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.278.

¹¹² Kues, 'Evidence, Part I,' 2.2.1.

¹¹³ Kues, 'Evidence, Part 2,' 3.3.14.

¹¹⁴ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.106.

Kues uses his witnesses in a highly dishonest way. For example, his use of Grünberg¹¹⁵ ignores his account of selections (including his wife's) and the fact that he heard people being shot.¹¹⁶ He disregards witness anomalies (which he would normally view as proof of unreliability) when it suits his purposes to do so. For example, Moses L. Rage stated in a written testimony to a Soviet commission that in the spring of 1942 or later "there began to arrive in Riga a series of trains with Jews from Poland, Germany, Belgium, Denmark, Holland and other countries." Because no Danish Jews were deported to extermination camps, Kues reasons that the witness "could have mistaken Norwegian Jews for Danish Jews."¹¹⁷ Kues never shows such latitude towards testimonies describing extermination, so this is a clear double standard, as is the fact that he is hereby relying on Soviet sources that he has dismissed elsewhere.¹¹⁸

Kues' reliance on Vaivara and Vievis ignores the fact that the Nazis shot such Jews when they retreated. For example, around 2,000 were killed at Klooga, where their remains were photographed and published in western sources soon after liberation. Foreign journalists were shown the unburied corpses of partially burned victims on October 2, 1944. The *New York Times* journalist W.H. Lawrence wrote that he had personally "seen and counted recognizable parts of 438 complete and partly burned bodies of men, women and children."¹¹⁹ Kues himself is forced to rely on a mass grave witness account by M. Morein in which "while looking for the corpses of his parents in 1946 near the village of Kukas near Krustpils, [Morein] discovered, in a mass grave, corpses whose clothes bore French labels."¹²⁰ However, Kues' own secondary source reveals that these Jews were actually killed in 1941:

At that time, all the Jews of Viesite, together with those of Jekabpils (Jakobstadt) and Nereta, were murdered by an execution squad of the Perkonkrusts in the village of Kukas.¹²¹

Kues commits another distortion when citing a diarist in Lithuania, Herman Kruk, specifically his sentence, "Today a rumour is circulating that there are about 19,000 Dutch

¹¹⁵ Kues, 'Evidence, Part 2,' 3.3.10.

¹¹⁶ Christoph Lind, *Bericht von Isaak Grünberg über seine Haft in Maly Trostinec*, "... sind wir doch in unserer Heimat als Landmenschen aufgewachsen..." Der "Landsprengel" der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde St. Pölten: Jüdische Schicksale zwischen Wienerwald und Erlauf. St. Pölten: Inst. für Geschichte der Juden in Österreich, 2002.

¹¹⁷ Kues, 'Evidence, Part 2,' 3.3.12.

¹¹⁸ Kues, "The Maly Trostenets "Extermination Camp."

¹¹⁹ *New York Times*, 6.10.44, p.6.

¹²⁰ Kues, 'Evidence, Part 2,' 3.3.13.

¹²¹ Bernhard Press, *The Murder of the Jews in Latvia 1941-1945*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2000, p.49.

Jews in Vievis.”¹²² This is an isolated line in Kruk’s diary, supported only by a related entry about two trainloads of objects, “apparently from the Dutch Jews.”¹²³ Given that the real fate of Dutch Jews has been copiously documented, it is bizarre that Kues should regard Kruk’s obviously equivocal language – “rumour”, “apparently” – as firm evidence of anything except the existence of that which Kruk himself defines as “gossip.”¹²⁴

Given his propensity for schoolboy errors such as these, it is incredible that Kues should then refer to Gerlach as an “armchair historian”¹²⁵, when it is in fact Kues who cannot grasp the basics of the historian’s craft.

The earlier work of Mattogno and Graf shows a high level of ignorance concerning Nazi ghetto policy in the Ostland. This leads them to interpret Nazi ghetto statistics and Riga-Stutthof transport data in a misleading way. M&G’s Einsatzgruppen chapter in *Treblinka* discusses a report by Einsatzgruppe A that lists the number of Jews remaining in three ghettos:

- Kauen approximately 15,000 Jews
- Vilna 15,000 Jews
- Schaulen 4,500 Jews.¹²⁶

They commit two howlers when interpreting these figures. Firstly, they compare the figures with those for Lithuania in the 1929 Soviet census, but they forget that Wilno Voivodship was not in Soviet Lithuania in 1929, but appeared instead in the 1931 Polish census (108,900 Jews) and was swelled by other Polish Jewish refugees in 1939-40.

Secondly, they compare the figures for Vilna [Wilno] with a census of the Vilna ghetto from May 1942 that lists 3,693 children in a population of 14,545. They conclude that the survival of the children disproves that there was any order to shoot the unfit. However, the Jäger Report cites the same figures for the three ghettos and explains clearly why these children survived:

I can state today that the goal of solving the Jewish problem for Lithuania has been achieved by Einsatzkommando 3. In Lithuania, there are no more Jews, other than the Work Jews, including their families. They are:

In Schaulen around 4,500

¹²² Kues, ‘Evidence, Part 1,’ 3.3.1.

¹²³ Herman Kruk, *The last days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania. Chronicles from the Vilna Ghetto and the camps 1939-1944*. Yale University Press, New Haven/London, 2002, p.518.

¹²⁴ Kruk, *Last Days*, p.430.

¹²⁵ Kues, ‘The Maly Trostenets “Extermination Camp.”’

¹²⁶ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.209, citing Einsatzgruppe A, Gesamtbericht vom 16 Oktober 1941 bis 31 Januar 1942, RGVA, 500-4-92, pp.57-59.

In Kauen	“	15,000
In Wilna	“	15,000

I also wanted to kill these Work Jews, including their families, which however brought upon me acrimonious challenges from the civil administration (the Reichskommissar) and the army and caused the prohibition: the Work Jews and their families are not to be shot!¹²⁷

Jäger simply confirms what was known in the ghetto itself: in October 1941, the Nazis issued yellow permits (*Gelbschein*) that entitled 3,000 essential workers to select three family members who would be temporarily spared from killing actions.¹²⁸ Moreover, Jäger advocated that the males among these worker Jews should be sterilized, thereby continuing the sterilization discourse that had begun with Wetzel back in 1939.

In the same chapter M&G point out that, in Minsk, "In a list from 1943 (month not given) of 878 Jews from the ghetto of Minsk, there are...about a dozen elderly persons."¹²⁹ However, this simply confirms that old people were disproportionately targeted for liquidation, because 12/878 is not a ratio that would exist in a normal civilian population.

M&G's subsequent incredulity about the inclusion of children and the elderly in evacuation transports from Riga to Stutthof can therefore be dismissed as the result of ignorance. Furthermore, the inclusion of those children actually argues in favour of a Nazi policy of total evacuation that refutes MGK's assumption in *Sobibór* that the Nazis failed to almost totally evacuate the Ostland when they retreated. The Nazis did not leave behind hundreds of thousands of Jews for the Soviets to find.

M&G's treatment of Riga, Minsk and Wilno can be contrasted with sources concerning those cities that have mostly been in the public domain since the Nuremberg and Eichmann trials. In April 1943, the Foreign Office representative in Riga, Adolf von Windecker, pointed out to his colleagues in Berlin that, in the Ostland, "the local population, as is known, has in spontaneous actions in connection with the arrival of the German troops removed numerous Jews, amounting to an almost total extermination of Jewry in some places", and that many thousands of local and Reich Jews had been shot in the Riga region over time [*vieler tausend der hiesigen und reichsdeutschen Juden im Bereich von Riga im*

¹²⁷ Gesamtaufstellung der im Bereich des EK. 3 bis zum 1. Dez. 1941 durchgeführten Execution. RGVA 500-1-25.

¹²⁸ Kruk, *Last Days*, p.150. Mattogno also ignores evidence that Wehrmacht officers used the tactic of 'salvation through work in Wilno; see Kim C. Priemel, 'Wirtschaftskrieg und 'Arbeitsjuden'. Möglichkeiten zur Rettung von Juden in Vilnius, 1941-1944' in Wolfram Wette (ed), *Zivilcourage. Empörte, Helfer und Retter aus Wehrmacht, Polizei und SS*. Frankfurt am Main, 2003, pp.305-322 and 'Into the grey zone: Wehrmacht bystanders, German labor market policy and the Holocaust', *JGR* 10/3 2008, pp.389-411.

¹²⁹ M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.214-15.

Verlauf der Zeit erschossen worden sind]. He concluded that "it seems very questionable whether any Jews can be considered for exchange purposes, without the executions carried out here being thereby used against us."¹³⁰ This echoed a reply given by Günther the previous November to a request, forwarded to him from the Italian General Consul Giuriatti in Danzig, that the 'Jewess' of Italian citizenship, Jenni Cozzi, be returned from the Riga ghetto to Italy. Günther asserted that she had to remain in the ghetto "because it must certainly be feared that the Jewess Cozzi will exploit the conditions in the Riga ghetto for purposes of atrocity propaganda in Italy."¹³¹

In January 1943, a former colleague, on leave from Wilno, told Karl Dürkefälden about the almost total extermination of the city's Jewish community: only 10% of the population was left.¹³² German documentation shows that Jews from the Wilno region were subjected to a "special treatment" that claimed over 4,000 victims in early April, 1943.¹³³ On May 15, 1943, Rademacher's successor von Thadden noted:

Mr. Legation Counsellor Rademacher informed me that on occasion of a visit by Fascist representatives in Minsk Gauleiter Kube had also shown a church that had been used by the Communists for worldly purposes. Asked by the Italians what the little parcels and suitcases piled up there meant, Kube had explained that these were the only leftovers of Jews deported to Minsk. Thereafter Kube had shown the Italians a gas chamber in which the killing of the Jews was allegedly carried out. Supposedly, the Fascists had been most deeply shocked.

Mr. Rademacher learned of this incident through Mr. Koeppen, adjutant of Reichsleiter Rosenberg. In his opinion General Consul Windecker in Riga is likely to also be informed about this incident, for as far as he, Rademacher, could remember, the incident had occurred on occasion of the Fascist representatives sent east to take care of Italian workers.¹³⁴

The gas chamber in this highly reliable official wartime hearsay account, concerning senior German officials discussing recent events, was contained in the gas van that was mentioned by the documents and Becker's testimony discussed in Chapter 2. The source is too high up the political chain to be construed as rumour, and every link in this chain had nothing to gain by inventing the method of murder.

By June 1943, most Jews in the Ostland were dead but the Nazis were still ruthlessly hunting down non-Jewish partisans. Their methods led to a complaint from Lohse to

¹³⁰ Windecker an Auswärtigen Amt Berlin, 5.4.43, NG-2652; T/311.

¹³¹ Günther an Auswärtigen Amt Berlin, 10.11.42, T/348.

¹³² Karl Dürkefälden, *Schreiben, wie es wirklich war...: Aufzeichnungen Karl Dürkefäldens aus den Jahren 1933–1945*, edited by Herbert Obenaus and Sibylle Obenaus, Hannover, 1985, pp.107ff.

¹³³ Arad, *Ghetto in Flames*, p.365, citing E. Rozauskas et al (ed), *Documents Accuse*, Vilnius, 1970, pp. 271-272.

¹³⁴ Auswärtigen Amt Berlin, 15.5.43, T/341.

Rosenberg that compared the methods used against bandits with those that had been used in the 'special treatment' of Jews:

The fact that Jews receive special treatment requires no further discussion. However, it appears hardly believable that this is done in the way described in the report of the General Commissioner of 1 June 1943. What is Katyn against that? Imagine only that these occurrences would become known to the other side and be exploited by them! Most likely such propaganda would have no effect only because people who hear and read about it simply would not be ready to believe it.

Also the fight against the bandits it taking forms that give reason for much concern if pacification and exploitation of the various regions is the goal of our policy. Thus the dead banditry suspects, which according to the report dd. 5.6.43 from Operation "Cottbus" number 5,000, could in my opinion with few exceptions have been used for labour service in the Reich.

It shall not be denied that due to communication difficulties and generally in such mopping-up operations it is very hard to tell friend from foe. But it should nevertheless be possible to avoid cruelties and to bury those liquidated. To lock men, women, and children into barns and to set fire to them does not appear to be a suitable method of combating bands, even if it is desired to exterminate the population. This method is not worthy of the German cause and hurts our reputation severely.¹³⁵

Lohse also passed to Rosenberg a report by prison warden Günther on the killing of a few remaining Reich Jews in the Minsk prison and the removal of gold from their teeth after death.¹³⁶

The demographic consequences of Nazi killing actions are documented in population statistics produced by the German administration. In January 1942, Stahlecker reported that "The systematic mopping up of the Eastern Territories embraced, in accordance with the basic orders, the complete removal if possible, of Jewry" and that "This goal has been substantially attained-with the exception of White Russia-as a result of the execution up to the present time of 229,052 Jews"¹³⁷ An Operational Situation Report of the same month revealed that 139,000 Jews remained alive in GK Weißruthenien:

In White Ruthenia the purge of Jews is in full swing. The number of Jews in the Territory handed over to the civil authorities up to now, amounts to 139,000. 32,210 Jews were shot meanwhile by the Einsatzgruppen of the Security Police and the SD.¹³⁸

¹³⁵ Lohse an Rosenberg, 18.6.43, R-135, IMT VIII, p.205.

¹³⁶ Günther an Kube, 31.5.43, R-135, IMT VIII, p.208.

¹³⁷ Stahlecker, Report of Einsatzgruppe A, n.d., 2273-PS.

¹³⁸ EM 155, 14.1.42, NO-3279.

On August 26, 1942, Fenz estimated that 95,000 Jews had thus far been "shot under martial law" whilst 6,000 had escaped to the partisans.¹³⁹

KdS Strauch reported a working population of 27,660 Jews remaining in White Ruthenia on November 6, 1942. Kube informed Lohse on October 23, 1942 that "In the course of the first year of civil administration, Jewry in the general district [White Ruthenia] has been reduced to about 30,000 in the entire general district."¹⁴⁰ In a meeting of Gebeitskommissars on April 8-10, 1943, Strauch explained the problems he had encountered in attempting to complete the extermination of the GK's Jews, but nonetheless confirmed that 130,000 had been killed:

When the civil administration arrived it already found economic enterprises operated by the Wehrmacht aided by Jews. At a time when the Bielorussians wanted to murder the Jews, the Wehrmacht cultivated them. In that way Jews reached key positions and it is difficult today to remove them completely, for then the enterprises are liable to be destroyed, something we cannot allow ourselves. I am of the opinion that we can confidently say that of the 150,000, 130,000 have already disappeared. 22,000 are still alive in the area of the Gebietskommissariat.¹⁴¹

He suggested that the surviving 22,000 could be reduced by 50%:

I therefore want to request of you that, at least, the Jew disappear from any place where he is superfluous. We cannot agree to Jewish women polishing shoes... We will cut the number down to half without causing economic difficulties.

In the same month, the Head of the German Security Police and Security Service in Lithuania informed the RSHA that 44,584 Jews were left in the Lithuanian General District of the Ostland - including 23,950 in the Vilnius ghetto, 15,875 in the Kaunas/Kovno ghetto and 4,759 in the Šiauliai ghetto - of which about 30,000 Jews doing jobs needed by the German army¹⁴². The surviving population of Latvia as of January 1943 was given as between 13,584 and 14,784.¹⁴³ Estonia had been declared "free of Jews" on January 14, 1942.¹⁴⁴

An Ostministerium conference report of July 13, 1943 stated that the Jewish population of White Ruthenia was 16,000, consisting of 8,500 for Minsk and 7,500 for

¹³⁹ Hauptkommissariat Baranowitschi to GK Weißruthenien, Arbeitspolitische Fragen, 26.8.42, NG-1315; cf. Haberer, 'The German police, Part II,' p.271n.; Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, p.706.

¹⁴⁰ Strauch an BdS Ostland, 6.11.1942, LVCA 1026-1-3, p.331; Angrick/Klein, *Riga*, p.376.

¹⁴¹ Protokoll über die Tagung der Gebietskommissare, Hauptabteilungsleiter und Abteilungsleiter des Generalkommissars in Minsk vom 8.April bis 10.April 1943, NARB 370-1-1263, pp.126-45; cf. Shalom Cholawsky, *The Jews of Bielorrussia during World War II*, Amsterdam, 1998, p.64; Haberer, 'German Police', Part I, p.13.

¹⁴² Arūnas Bubnys, 'The Holocaust in Lithuania: An Outline of the Major Stages and their Results', in: Alvydas Nikžentaitis, Stefan Schreiner & Dariusūnas Štaliūnas (ed.), *The Vanished World of Lithuanian Jews*, Amsterdam/New York: Editions Rodopi B.V., 2004, p.216.

¹⁴³ Angrick/Klein, *Riga*, p.369.

¹⁴⁴ EM 155, 14.1.42, NO-3279; cf. Weiss-Wendt, *Murder Without Hatred*.

Lida.¹⁴⁵ The total for the whole of the Ostland was 72,000 (Wilno 20,000, Kovno 17,000, Siauliai 5,000, and Riga 15,000). Of this 72,000, the conference stated that 22,000 were to be ‘resettled’ and 50,000 placed in SS concentration camps, as per Himmler’s order of June 21, 1943.¹⁴⁶ Kube requested an exemption for 4,000 Jews employed by the Wehrmacht in Minsk, but Himmler ordered that these Jews be sent “to Lublin or to another place.”¹⁴⁷ On July 20, 1943, Strauch wrote a file note on Kube’s protest about the execution (which he referred to in different paragraphs as *Sonderbehandlung* and *Executionen*) of 70 Jews being used for labour by Kube.¹⁴⁸

There was clearly no option to keep these Jews in the Ostland, so it must be concluded that Himmler’s intention was to totally clear White Ruthenia of Jews by sending them westwards to the General Government. This documentation therefore converges with the evidence that, of the 15,500 Jews remaining in Minsk and Lida, the vast majority were deported to the Lublin region between August and October, 1943. Gerlach cites a testimony by Isselhorst giving a figure of 12,000-13,000 deported from “Minsk and Baranovichi”. Kues¹⁴⁹ overlooks Gerlach’s footnote clarifying that Isselhorst probably meant Lida, not Baranovichi.¹⁵⁰ Isselhorst’s testimony therefore converges with the demographic data that Kues is attempting to deny.

Ukraine

MGK also see the Ukraine as a destination for ‘resettled’ European Jews during the war. As discussed earlier, local Jews in this area were subject to heavy exterminations during 1942, the same year when Jews would have supposedly been deported into this area.¹⁵¹ The Wehrmacht’s arms inspector Ukraine estimated at the end of 1941 that 150,000-200,000 Ukrainian Jews under the German civil administration had already been killed.¹⁵² Massacres of such scale continued into the next year. For instance, although MGK cite a September 1942 wartime news report (the general unreliability of such a source has been discussed) in

¹⁴⁵ Sitzungsvermerk v. 20 August 1943 des ORR Hermann über eine Tagung am 13.7.43 im RMbO zum Thema: Arbeitseinsatzfragen des Reiches unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Verhältnisse in den besetzten Ostgebieten, NO-1831, NMT XIII, pp.1018-19; cf. Safrian, *Eichmann’s Men*, p.124; Yitzhak Arad, *Ghetto In Flames*, Ktav, 1982, p.402.

¹⁴⁶ Der Reichsführer SS an HSSPF Ostland, SS-WVHA, 21.6.1943, NO-2403.

¹⁴⁷ Memorandum by Gottlob Berger, 14.7.43, NO-3370; cf. Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, p.737ff.

¹⁴⁸ Strauch, Aktenvermerk, Minsk, 20.7.43, NO-4317 and T/1413; also published in Helmut Heiber (ed), ‘Aus den Akten des Gauleiters Kube’, *VfZ* 4, 1956, pp.65-92.

¹⁴⁹ Kues, ‘The Maly Trostenets “Extermination Camp”’.

¹⁵⁰ Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, p.742 n.1285.

¹⁵¹ See the sections The Europe-Wide Final Solution as well as Killing of Soviet Jews, Chapter 2.

¹⁵² Bericht Prof. Seraphim mit Anschreiben der Rüstungsinspektion Ukraine, 29.11.41 and 2.12.41, 2178-PS; cf. Pohl, ‘The Murder of Ukraine’s Jews,’ p.44.

Judisk Krönika regarding German Jews being shipped to Ukraine to work on the fall harvest, they ignore the recorded execution of hundreds of thousands of Jews in Ukraine during the same period.¹⁵³ Indeed, Mattogno's claims to the contrary aside, in the wake of the Nazi withdrawal from their occupied territories Soviet officials found mass graves containing thousands of corpses in Ukraine.¹⁵⁴

In late 1941/early 1942, the Ukraine was indeed planned to be a destination for the deportation of German Jews. A circular was sent out by HSSPF Ukraine in early January 1942 to regions in the territory, asking the localities to prepare for the establishment of ghettos and barracks to accommodate Jews from the Altreich and report back on their circumstances.¹⁵⁵ The circular occurred prior to the crystallization of policy after the Wannsee conference, upon which such wide-ranging deportation schemes fell through.¹⁵⁶ As Kues recognizes, despite dozens of recorded transports of Altreich Jews to the Ostland, "none of the documented transports were sent to the Ukraine."¹⁵⁷ Indeed, the only documentation connected to Jewish resettlement and the Ukraine is the delivery of stolen Jewish clothes to ethnic Germans in the territory, clothes which were stolen at Auschwitz and the Reinhard camps.¹⁵⁸

Despite a lack of documented transports, MGK try to create deportations to this region based on other (weaker) forms of evidence. For instance, they use a May 1942 letter to the governor of the Lublin district from the county chief at Pulawy, in which he states that 16,822 Jews from his county had been "expelled across the Bug river," as proof of their resettlement into Ukraine.¹⁵⁹ Although they never specify, we presume that MGK mean GK Wolhynien-Podolien, which included the cities of Pinsk and Kovel (which they use for other supposed resettlement destinations as well).¹⁶⁰ This GK was the site of heavy slaughters in late summer, with nearly three hundred thousand being slaughtered from August-November

¹⁵³ Report of HSSPF, 26.12.1942; Der Reichsführer-SS, Meldungen an den Führer über Bandenbekämpfung, Meldung Nr. 51 Russland-Süd, Ukraine, Bialystok. Bandenbekämpfungserfolge vom 1.9 bis 1.12.42, 23.12.1942, NO-511, also translated in NMT, Vol. XIII, p. 269-272, also T/338.

¹⁵⁴ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.223; Roberto Muehlenkamp, 'The Atrocities committed by German-Fascists in the USSR (1),' *Holocaust Controversies* blog, 30.4.11, <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2011/04/atrocities-committed-by-german-fascists.html>; Roberto Muehlenkamp, 'The Atrocities committed by German-Fascists in the USSR (2)', *Holocaust Controversies*, 3.5.11, <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2011/05/atrocities-committed-by-german-fascists.html>; Roberto Muehlenkamp, 'Drobitski Yar,' *Holocaust Controversies*, 28.6.10, <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2010/06/drobitski-yar.html>; Roberto Muehlenkamp, "June 22, 1941" *Holocaust Controversies* blog, 22.6.2011, <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2011/06/22-june-1941.html>.

¹⁵⁵ RKU, Der HSSPF, Einrichtung von Ghettos, 12.1.43, DAZhO P1151-1-137.

¹⁵⁶ See The Europe-Wide Final Solution, Chapter 2.

¹⁵⁷ Kues, 'Evidence,' 2.1.

¹⁵⁸ Report by Pohl to RFSS, 6.2.43, NO-1257. NMT Vol. 5, pp. 699-704.

¹⁵⁹ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.302.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. MGK, *Sobibór*, p.362.

1942.¹⁶¹ Extermination in Ukraine was thus largely complete by early 1943, when the Ukrainian Main Committee complained to Frank that "The view is current that now the shootings of the Jews come to an end those of the Ukrainians begin."¹⁶²

One specific region to which Kues claims European Jews were deported was GK Nikolayev. Kues cites a hearsay report published in the June 1943 issue of the Contemporary Jewish Record suggesting 14,000 Jews from Belgium and Holland had been deported to Kherson in April of that year.¹⁶³ This is an odd location for Jews to be sent, as a year before the county commissar had happily reported that "there are no longer any Jews or half-Jews in GK Nikolayev."¹⁶⁴ To achieve such a cleansing of the region, the Jews were murdered. For instance, in early February 1942 some two hundred Jews of the Zlatopol ghetto were killed "by gassing with Lorpocrin" on the orders of the county commissar.¹⁶⁵ MGK also fail to corroborate the hearsay report with either eyewitnesses or documents.

One could also rule out other possible 'resettlement' territories inside Ukraine, further decreasing the available territory in which to resettle hundreds of thousands of Jews. The General Commissariat of Zhitomir, located to the west of Kiev, was the target of several liquidations during 1942. As construction was underway for Hitler's field headquarters (often called the Wolf's Lair), nearby Jews not actively working on the project were regarded as security threats and killed. A member of the Reich Security Service, Hitler's personal security staff, reported that "the Jews living in Vinnitsa were knocked off on April 16, up to 4,800 (in all)."¹⁶⁶ The murders in the commissariat continued throughout the spring, with several actions launched simultaneously in the Gaissin district and other operations occurring in Monastyrka.¹⁶⁷

Perhaps as their strongest evidence (and most popular by their numerous repetitions and quotations), MGK utilize an April 1944 report from the French communist newspaper *Notre Voix*.¹⁶⁸ The report states, citing Radio Moscow's declarations, that 8,000 Parisian

¹⁶¹ Report of HSSPF, 26.12.1942; Der Reichsführer-SS, Meldungen an den Führer über Bandenbekämpfung, Meldung Nr. 51 Russland-Süd, Ukraine, Bialystok. Bandenbekämpfungserfolge vom 1.9 bis 1.12.42, 23.12.1942, NO-511, also translated in NMT, Vol. XIII, p. 269-272, also T/338. Many more documents related to the exterminations in GK Wolhynien-Podolien can be found in Jonathan Harrison, Volhynia-Podolia series <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/search/label/Volhynia-Podolia>.

¹⁶² Kubijowysch an Frank, 25.2.43, 1526-PS, NCA IV, pp.79-95.

¹⁶³ Kues, 'Evidence, Part II,' 3.7.5.

¹⁶⁴ GK Nikolajew, Lagebericht für April 1942, CDJC CXLIV-474.

¹⁶⁵ Fragment of a situation report from BdO Ukraine (gez. Müller-Brunkhorst), ca. March 1942 (title page missing); TsADAVOV, R-3676-4-317, p.71; cf. Pohl, 'The Murder of Ukraine's Jews,' p.48.

¹⁶⁶ Reichssicherheitsdienst, Sicherungsgruppe Eichenhain an Rattenhuber, 12.1. 1942; 16.5.1942 (citation), TsADAVOV 3637-4-116, pp.28ff.

¹⁶⁷ Longerich, *Holocaust*, p. 349, Spector, *Holocaust of the Volhynien Jewry*, p.184.

¹⁶⁸ M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.257-258; MGK, *Sobibór*, p.365; Kues, 'Evidence,' 3.1.5.

Jews had been liberated in the Ukraine by the “heroic Red Army.”¹⁶⁹ No testimonies or documents regarding these alleged thousands of French Jews have appeared since their “liberation.” MGK do not see the report’s propaganda aim, clearly portraying the Red Army as saviours of the Jewish people, thus welcomed news by Jewish and communist sympathizers in France. Particularly, they ignore the perpetual Soviet efforts to internationalize the Nazi victims. As Pierre Vidal-Naquet appropriately remarked regarding one denier’s use of a similar source, “those who speak at every turn of war propaganda should have been able to perceive that we have in this case a rather typical example.”¹⁷⁰ MGK also ignore the paper’s emphasis on the Jews’ escape from “the SS bandits (whom) wanted to shoot them.”

The Ukraine was hardly a realistic prospective site for the resettlement of hundreds of thousands western European Jews. Already in January 1942, RK Ukraine reported the food situation as so poor as to have “led to a decrease in dog ownership” among the people.¹⁷¹ Such a situation would persist, despite complaints from the civilian administration.¹⁷² The same area was later charged to meet extraordinary food production demands for the Reich at the expense of the local population. Reich Commissioner for Ukraine Erich Koch told his staff in late August 1942 that “the feeding of the civilian population in this situation (securing food quantities from the Ukraine) is therefore completely immaterial.”¹⁷³ In July 1943, when MGK would have hundreds of thousands of Jews ‘resettled’ into the East, State Secretary Herbert Backe reported “the amount of (food) supply to be furnished by the Occupied Eastern Territories will still have to be considerably increased.”¹⁷⁴ The population who the Nazis cared least about (i.e. Jews) would obviously have fared the worst amongst all Ukrainian civilians.

Nor is there evidence to suggest that Jews served as a substantial part of the industrial labor force in throughout 1942 and 1943, despite the important projects that were going on in

¹⁶⁹ The newspaper article was first brought to light by Annette Wieviorka, *Deportation et genocide. Entre la memoire et l’oubli*. Paris, 1992, p.55, and was seemingly first treated as a Crucial Source by Jean-Marie Boisdefeu.

¹⁷⁰ Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *Assassins of Memory*, New York: Columbia University Press, p.36.

¹⁷¹ RK Ukraine IIc, Lagebericht, 14.1.42, TsDAVOV 3206-2-27.

¹⁷² RK Ukraine III b, Die Lage der Landwirtschaft in der Ukraine unter Berücksichtigung der soeben neu aufgetretenen Schwierigkeiten, 10.4.42, NA T77/1171/1048.

¹⁷³ IMT Vol. XXV, p.318.

¹⁷⁴ Sitzungsvermerk v. 20 August 1943 des ORR Hermann über eine Tagung am 13.7.43 im RmbO zum Thema: Arbeitseinsatzfragen des Reiches unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Verhältnisse in den besetzten Ostgebieten, NO-1831, IMT XIII, p.1018-19.

the Ukraine.¹⁷⁵ For instance, no Jews are mentioned as taking a role in the ‘Iwan-Programm’ for building ammunition factories in the Donets Basin.¹⁷⁶

Indeed, as mentioned earlier, this was the period when hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian Jews were being slaughtered. Counties were pushing to eradicate the Jews in their localities. As one General Commissariat reported at the end of 1942, “Jewry. The cleansing of the territory is in its final stages.”¹⁷⁷ By April 1943 Jews had disappeared entirely from the monthly reports of both GK Wolhynien and RK Ukraine.¹⁷⁸ On June 8, 1943, Hitler was able to remark to Keitel and Zeitzler, quoting Erich Koch, that in Ukraine “the Jews are all gone.”¹⁷⁹ Such evidence rules out the resettlement of Jews into Ukraine.

The Alleged Fate of the ‘Resettled’ Jews

If the Nazis really had resettled some two million Jews into the occupied Soviet territories, the question then remains over the ultimate fate of the deportees. Instead of evacuating the surviving Jews back into German occupied Europe, as the Germans did in many other cases (including more than 20,000 from Kaunas and Riga¹⁸⁰, two sites claimed to be primary resettlement destinations by Revisionists), according to MGK the Nazis left the Jews to be liberated by the advancing Red Army. Such a liberation would necessarily leave traces in the form of numerous mentions in the Soviet news stories, internal Soviet documents (such as Red Army reports and NKGB reports), and memoirs and interviews by the former Soviet servicemen and locals. Given the numbers of people involved and the scale of the events, even if one wanted to suppress such information for some incomprehensible reason, it wouldn't have been possible even during Stalin's reign (rumor always finds a way to spread), much less in subsequent years, and especially not after the fall of the USSR and opening of the archives in Russia and other former Soviet republics (most of which use these archives effectively to expose Soviet crimes, including deportations). The Soviet censorship system was powerful, but to hide the liberation of hundreds of thousand of Jews it would have to have been omnipotent. Lacking any corroboration for their story of Soviet liberation of the

¹⁷⁵ Cf. Tanja Penter, ‘Arbeiten für den Feind in der Heimat – der Arbeitseinsatz in der besetzten Ukraine 1941-1944’, *Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 2004/1, pp.65-94.

¹⁷⁶ Reichsminister für Bewaffnung und Munition, Der Beauftragte für die Munitionsfertigung in der Ukraine Edmund Geilenberg, Vorhaben Iwan, Niederschrift über die Iwan-Besprechung am Freitag, d 18. Dezember 1942, 21.12.42, BA R3901/20271, pp.65-7.

¹⁷⁷ Pohl, ‘The Murder of Ukraine’s Jews,’ p.51, citing CDJC CXLVIIa-29, Lagebericht GK Wolhynien-Podolien, 31.12.42.

¹⁷⁸ GK Wolhynien-Podolien, Lagebericht für Monat April 1943, 30.4.1943; RK, Lageberichte für die Monate März und April 1943, 14.5.1943, NARA T454/26/1-36, 37-59.

¹⁷⁹ Helmut Heiber (ed.), *Lagebesprechungen im Führerhauptquartier, 1942-1945*, Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1963, pp.115-118; also 1384-PS.

¹⁸⁰ Graf, ‘What Happened to the Jews’; cf. Aly/Heim, *Vordenker der Vernichtung*, p.285.

resettled Jews, one could easily reject MGK's thesis as without foundation on that basis alone. As will be seen, however, their hypothesis fails on every evidentiary aspect.

To explain the disappearance and silence of the two million 'resettled' Jews, MGK speciously claim that the majority of Polish and Western European Jews had been captured and transported to the eastern areas of the country, secluded from the outside world, where MGK "assume that they disappeared in camps they would never leave."¹⁸¹ While the postwar deportations in the Soviet Union had for decades been marred in obscurity (an obscurity MGK manipulate to their advantage), the fall of the Soviet state has opened the relevant files to researchers over the last two decades which help present a picture of what truly happened during the time period. These newly available documents certainly refute MGK's conjecture to explain the disappearance of Jews, for instead of an anti-Jewish deportation scheme the efforts were largely related to a renewed dekulakization program and other Sovietization efforts. While a few researchers believed in a *planned* anti-Jewish deportation program in the postwar years, a detailed analysis of the evidence finds that such a plan was more mythical than actual, with no reliable or conclusive evidence to support the existence of such plans.¹⁸² Such a theory also contradicts other statements in *Sobibór* where Polish Jews who were 'resettled' by the Nazis were able to return to Poland from the Soviet Union.¹⁸³

To support their belief in massive Soviet deportations of Jews to Siberia in the late 1940s Graf quotes the 1950 *American Jewish Yearbook*, seemingly as an ultimate proof of their occurrence, as he does not source any other evidence.¹⁸⁴ The Yearbook merely relayed information on the deportations as reported by some Jewish organizations in Eastern Europe. The American Jewish League against Communism (AJLAC) for instance, as quoted by Graf in the Yearbook, estimated the number of Jewish deportees at 400,000. However, Graf leaves out crucial but (for him) inconvenient pieces of information in his quote of the Yearbook. First, the Yearbook reported that the American Committee of Jewish Writers, Artists, and Scientists described the AJLAC's estimate on the deportations as "fantastic" and "without foundation." Also, Graf doesn't disclose the fact that the Yearbook itself declared that, "At

¹⁸¹ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.373.

¹⁸² G. V. Kostyrchenko, *Tajnaya politika Stalina: vlast' i antisemitizm*, Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia, 2003, pp. 671-685; "Deportatsiya – mistifikatsiya" in *Lekhaim*, 2002, no. 9 (125), <http://www.lechaim.ru/ARHIV/125/kost.htm>; also see his review of Brent and Naumov's book about the Doctors' plot – "Mezhdu mifom in naukoj", *Lekhaim*, 2004, no. 10 (50), <http://www.lechaim.ru/ARHIV/150/n2.htm>.

¹⁸³ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.355: "Thus it is most likely that the returnees were part of the Jews who had been moved to the eastern areas by the Germans three or four years earlier." More accurate information on the repatriations can be found in Jonathan Harrison, 'The Crazy World of Walter Sanning (Part 6),' *Holocaust Controversies*, 7.10.07, <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2007/10/crazy-world-of-walter-sanning-part-6.html>.

¹⁸⁴ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.356.

the time of writing it was impossible to ascertain with any degree of certitude to what extent the reports (of Soviet deportations of Jews) were true.”¹⁸⁵ Such a statement, of course, severely undermines MGK’s reliance upon the publication as proof of such deportations.

One of the foremost researchers of Stalin’s era antisemitism Gennady Kostyrchenko writes about these deportation rumours:

The scale of rumours about impending mass deportation of Jews by the authorities increased significantly during the anti-cosmopolitan campaign to such an extent that that foreign press began mentioning this. On the pages of Jewish publications (especially in Israel, USA and UK) during the 1949-1952 period there were numerous reports about either an alleged decision taken by the Soviet authorities to deport the entire Jewish population of the country to Siberia, or about the completed resettlement of 400 thousand Jews from Russia to Siberia, or of the prepared deportation in the same direction of another 1 million Jews from the Ukraine and Belorussia. The appearance of such information in the Western press was largely due to the latent propaganda pressure, which since the end of 1949 the Israeli leaders began exerting towards the USSR, seeking thereby to induce Stalin to meet their requirements to allow the mass emigration of Jews from the USSR. Particularly insistent in this case was the Israeli Foreign Minister M. Sharett. On October 5 he was informed by the ambassador to the USSR Namir that Soviet Jews "live in fear and lack confidence in tomorrow" and "many" of them "fear deportation from Moscow is about to begin". Ten days later Sharett replied with a coded telegram sent to Moscow, which contained the following statement:

"We should start a campaign in the international Jewish press, especially in the U.S., as well as in non-Jewish press on the issue of the Soviet Jewry, allowing the leaks to the press of all the correct information at our disposal, as well as rumours."

And although later the same Namir, as well as a director of East European Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel A. Levavi repeatedly informed Sharett of the unfounded nature of the rumours about the preparation of the deportation of Soviet Jews, publications about it in the Western press did not stop.¹⁸⁶

While deportations did occur in the Soviet Union during the late 1940s, they are nothing like MGK make them out to be. Instead of an effort to hide Polish and western European Jews that were ‘resettled’ into the occupied Soviet territories¹⁸⁷, the deportations were organized against perceived opponents of the state, with the deportees being sent to special settlements in the eastern Soviet Union. One of the regions most targeted during these deportations was the Baltic, perhaps the most popular destination for the Nazi ‘resettlement’ of Jews (as described by MGK). According to Soviet documents however, some 139,604

¹⁸⁵ *American Jewish Yearbook*, 51, 1950, p.340.

¹⁸⁶ Kostyrchenko, *Tajnaya politika Stalina*, pp. 673-674.

¹⁸⁷ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.356-357, p.373.

persons were relocated from the Baltic countries throughout the late 1940s.¹⁸⁸ This figure is obviously dwarfed by the alleged hundreds of thousands of Jewish resettlers sent to this region according to Kues.¹⁸⁹ Nor do Soviet documents relate any focus or emphasis regarding Jewish persons to be removed during the deportations, as they instead targeted nationalist and anti-communist elements. One must conclude, therefore, that no Jews ‘resettled’ by the Nazis in the Baltic countries were deported by the Soviet Union.

A similar conclusion can also be drawn regarding Belorussia and the Ukraine, two other suggested destination of Nazi resettlement. Most of the Soviet deportations from western Ukraine occurred prior to 1948, with those operations launched between 1944 and 1946 largely focused against anti-communist guerrillas (nearly 37,000 such persons). In 1947, while targeting “nationalist and bandit families” in Ukraine, the Soviets deported nearly 78,000 people.¹⁹⁰ Up until 1955, a decade after the end of the Second World War, a total of 203,662 persons (kulaks and “bandit accomplices”) had been deported from the Ukraine¹⁹¹, a fact which clearly does not square with MGK’s thesis that hundreds of thousands of resettled Jews were deported to Siberia from Ukraine. While Belorussia produced the largest number of “voluntary” resettlers in 1946 to occupy newly acquired Kaliningrad, there does not appear to have been any substantial amount of deportation of peoples from the country in the immediate postwar years.¹⁹²

The largest hole in MGK’s thesis is the absolute lack of evidence to support the existence of such concentration camps for the ‘resettled’ Jews. They are unable to cite a single witness or document to support their speculation. While MGK might object that none of the two million ‘resettled’ Jews were able to present such an account, this does not save MGK’s fantastic scenario. The continued presence of Jews in camps would generate even more information than their supposed initial liberation. It is sometimes said that absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. But this rule is only applicable when we can’t expect presence of evidence. This is clearly not the case here. We would expect literal tons of documents about these Jews in numerous archives spread throughout the Soviet republics – the documents which were impossible to eliminate or hide completely, as numerous other cases (like Katyn) demonstrate. The number of various agencies and people that would be

¹⁸⁸ N.F. Bugai, *The Deportation of Peoples in the Soviet Union*. New York: Nova Science, 1996, p.166.

¹⁸⁹ Kues, ‘Evidence’, Part II, see sections ‘Partial List of Camps with Jewish detainees in Lithuania’ and 3.4.

¹⁹⁰ Alexander Statiev, *The Soviet Counterinsurgency in the Western Borderlands*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010, p.178.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p.190.

¹⁹² Pavel Polian, *Against Their Will: The History and Geography of Forced Migrations in the USSR*. New York: Central European University Press, 2004, p.163.

involved at one time or another is mind-boggling. Aside from official documents, we would expect at least some mentions of the issue in memoirs and interviews of former Soviet officials – Politburo members, security officers, railway workers, guards – all the thousands of people that would have been involved in such an utterly impossible cover-up as well as their relatives and friends.

We would also expect an enormous rumor trail. We know from the camp memoirs such as Solzhenitsyn's *The GULAG Archipelago* that information (even information that ordinary citizens and prisoners were not supposed to know) spread far and wide. Like a stone thrown into water causes circles to spread, so such a massive event as a deportation and continuous confinement of foreign Jews would cause ripples of rumours that would sooner or later reach dissidents and Samizdat.

Finally, the supposed imprisonment of Jews doesn't even begin to solve MGK's problem. Stalin died in 1953, leading to the Thaw and to the partial exposure of Stalin's crimes, as well as to liberation of numerous GULAG inmates and deported groups. At this point in time it is utterly ridiculous to suggest that Khrushchev wouldn't let the Jews out of this imaginary imprisonment and wouldn't use this information to further condemn Stalin. Yet we see not even a trace of discussion of this issue in numerous volumes of declassified documents on the rehabilitation era.

This line of argument can be continued (consider, for example, that it would be impossible to hide this mass of people from foreign intelligence services), but by now we hope that the reader sees that MGK are completely divorced from reality in suggesting such a scenario. We will only reiterate that whatever documents there are directly refute MGK, as has been already shown above. Case in point is the statistics of the special settlements.

The "special settlers" - *spetspereselentsy* or *spetsposelentsy*, was a special category of repressed groups of people. These special settlers were exiled from their homes and lands into faraway regions of USSR as punishment for alleged misdeeds. The decision was taken not by courts, but by Stalin. The mass deportations began with the so-called "kulaks", then, since mid-1930s, people began to be deported according to ethnic category as well. All the deported peoples, such as Chechens and Ingushs, Koreans, Germans and many others were classified as "special settlers". Deportation of ethnic groups became an established procedure and therefore we know that if Jews were to be ever deported *en masse*, they would have figured in the secret "special settlements" statistics.

The issue of "special settlements" has been studied at length by historians on the basis of archival documents. Works by Zemskov, Bugai, Polian and others reconstructed the full

picture of the deportations and presented statistical information about the deportees.¹⁹³ The totality of documentary evidence completely refutes the notion of Soviet mass deportation of surviving foreign Jews to unknown destinations in USSR and thus, automatically, destroys the "transit camp" thesis.

It should be noted that Stalin was not averse to deporting peaceful foreign citizens as a matter of principle. In 1940-41, he deported approximately 315,000 people from eastern Poland in four sets of deportations.¹⁹⁴ Around 80,000 former Polish citizens who escaped from the Nazis (more than 60,000 of them - Jewish) were sent to work mostly in People's Commissariat of Forestry special settlements. They were amnestied in August 1941. The Soviets documented both the deportation and subsequent results.¹⁹⁵

After the amnesty of former Polish citizens, the number of Jews among the special settlers was always insubstantial. There was no separate category for Jewish special settlers (like there were categories for Germans, Greeks, Chechens, etc.). The Jewish *spetsposelentsy* always fell under other categories, such as people resettled from the Western parts of Ukraine and Belorussia, people resettled from Moldavia, etc. However the Soviet authorities also kept count of ethnicities, so we can also ascertain that there weren't hundreds of thousands Jews hidden under other labels.

According to MVD SSSR memo issued in January 1953, on January 1, 1953, there were 2,753,356 special settlers, among them 1,810,140 adults (17 years old and older). Among these adults there were 5168 Jews.¹⁹⁶ In January 1955 among 1,690,049 special settlers there were 4547 Jews.¹⁹⁷ In 1958 among 145,968 special settlers there were 1054 Jews.¹⁹⁸

The presence of hundreds of thousands of foreign Jews among the special settlers can also be excluded because we have the data on how many foreigners were resettled. In October of 1951 there were 17,285 citizens of other states or people without citizenship

¹⁹³ V. N. Zemskov, *Spetsposelentsyy v SSSR, 1930-1960*, Moscow: Nauka, 2003; works by N. F. Bugai are too numerous to list, but of special interest to us is his article about the deportations of Jews in USSR: N. F. Bugai, "Pereseleniya i deportatsii evreyskogo naseleniya v SSSR", *Otechestvennaya istoriya*, 1993, no. 4, p. 184; P. M. Polian, *Ne po svoey vole...*, Moscow: O.G.I.-Memorial, 2001; T. V. Tsarevskaya-Dyakina (ed.), *Spetspereselenitsy v SSSR*, vol. 5 of *Istoriya Stalinskogo GULAGa* series, Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2004.

¹⁹⁴ Aleksander Gurjanov, 'Cztery deportacje 1940-1941', *KARTA*, 12, 1994, pp. 114-136

¹⁹⁵ Zemskov, *Spetsposelentsyy*, pp. 84-90, 97; Altshuler, *Soviet Jewry on the Eve of the Holocaust*, pp.325-326; N.S. Lebedeva, *Katyn. Mart 1940 - sentyabr' 2000. Rasstrel. Sud'by zhivyykh. Ekho Katyni*, Moscow: "Ves' mir", 2001, pp.381-4 (document 184; GARF 9401-2-64).

¹⁹⁶ Zemskov, *Spetsposelentsyy*, pp. 205, 213.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 239.

¹⁹⁸ Bugai, 'Pereseleniya i deportatsii', p. 184.

among the special settlers (most of them - Greek citizens), while in January 1953 there were 28,388 foreigners (most of them Greeks).¹⁹⁹

Moreover, the number of special settlers began to decrease in mid-1950s as the Thaw began - on January 1, 1956 there were 904,439 special settlers, on July 1, 1956 - 611,912, on January 1, 1957 - 211,408, on July 1, 1957 - 178,363 (mostly "anti-Soviet" contingent like OUN members).²⁰⁰

To give the illustration of what real deported groups were among the special settlers it is sufficient to present a couple of tables excerpted from the original summary documents (of which the many are available for different years). The first one gives the statistics of the special settlers from January 1 to April 1, 1945²⁰¹:

Category	On 01.01.1945	On 01.04.1945
Chechens and Ingushs	440,544	433,394
Karachays	63,477	62,529
Balkars	35,839	35,106
Kalmyks	83,981	82,397
From Crimea	208,828	204,502
<i>Ssylnoposelentsy</i> (exiles)	44,222	43,787
Germans	496,811	503,411
Mobilized Germans	105,268	114,998
Former kulaks	631,173	622,062
From Georgia	91,986	90,538
OUN members	12,490	16,200
Volksdeutsche	913	1,071
German collaborators	782	766
"True Orthodox Christians" sect	1405	1365
Total:	2,217,719	2,212,126

The second one gives similar statistics for January 1, 1953²⁰²:

Category	No. of people
1. GERMANS	1,224,931
evicted	855,674
repatriated	208,388
local	111,324
mobilized	48,582
others	963
2. FROM NORTH CAUCASUS	498,452
Chechens	316,717
Ingushs	83,518
Karachays	63,327
Balkars	33,214
others	1,676
3. FROM CRIMEA	204,698
Tatars	165,259

¹⁹⁹ Zemskov, *Spetposelentsy*, p. 184.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., pp. 256-260.

²⁰¹ Ibid., p. 119. We give only an excerpt of a more complete table which includes deaths, escapes, arrivals, releases, etc.

²⁰² Ibid., pp. 210-212.

So Where Did They Go? "Resettlement" to the East

Greeks	14,760
Bulgarians	12,465
Armenians	8,570
others	3,644
4. OUN MEMBERS	175,063
5. FROM BALTICS IN 1945-1949	139,957
Lithuanians	81,158
Latvians	39,279
Estonians	19,520
6. FROM GEORGIA	86,663
Turks	46,790
Kurds	8,843
Hemshins	1,397
others	29,633
7. KALMYKS	81,475
8. FROM BLACK SEA COAST IN 1949	57,142
Greeks	37,352
"Dashnaks"	15,486
Turks	1,794
others	2,510
9. VLASOVITES	56,746
10. POLES EVICTED IN 1936	36,045
11. FROM MOLDAVIA IN 1949	35,838
12. ACCORDING TO ORDER FROM 02.06.1948	27,275
13. FORMER KULAKS	24,686
14. KULAKS FROM LITHUANIA IN 1951	18,104
15. FROM BALTICS IN 1940-1941	14,301
16. FROM GEORGIA IN 1951-1952	11,685
17. FROM MOLDAVIA IN 1940-1941	9,793
18. JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES	9,363
19. FROM KRASNODAR KRAI AND ROSTOV OBLAST IN 1942	6,057
20. FROM WESTERN REGIONS OF USSR AND BSSR IN 1940-1941	5,592
21. VOLKSDEUTSCHE AND GERMAN COLLABORATORS	4,834
22. IRANIANS	4,707
23. ANDERS ARMY MEMBERS	4,520
24. KULAKS FROM WEST BELORUSSIA IN 1952	4,431
25. BASMACHI	2,747
26. KABARDAY	1,717
27. KULAKS FROM WEST UKRAINE IN 1951	1,445
28. FROM PSKOV OBLAST IN 1950	1,356
29. KULAKS FROM IZMAIL OBLAST IN 1948	1,157
30. "TRUE ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS" (IPKh)	995
31. FROM IRANIAN AND AFGHAN BORDERS IN 1937	916
32. ACCORDING TO ORDER FROM 23.07.1951	591
33. INTERNED FROM THE TERRITORY OF POLAND	74
TOTAL:	2,753,356

These and many other documents demonstrate how exhaustive is the Soviet documentation for various deported groups and people. Not a single sign of the allegedly resettled Jews can be found among this mass of documents.

Of course, when cornered, the deniers may claim that for some reason the resettled Jews weren't designated as "special settlers" and were sent not to special settlements but to GULAG camps. This "hypothesis" doesn't pass the smell test, since the Soviet *modus*

operandi in regard to deported peoples is quite clear from the historical record and there is no reason to suppose that the Jews would constitute a separate case. However let us close this final loophole. First of all, here's the summary statistics for GULAG camps, colonies and prisons of USSR for January 1 of each year from 1943 to 1960²⁰³:

Year	Inmates in camps	Inmates in colonies	Inmates in prisons	Total number of inmates:
1943	983,974	500,208	237,534	1,721,716
1944	663,594	516,225	151,296	1,331,115
1945	715,506	745,171	275,510	1,736,187
1946	600,897	509,696	245,146	1,355,739
1947	808,839	894,667	293,135	1,996,641
1948	1,108,057	1,061,195	280,374	2,449,626
1949	1,216,361	1,140,324	231,047	2,587,732
1950	1,416,300	1,145,051	198,744	2,760,095
1951	1,543,382	997,378	164,679	2,705,439
1952	1,713,614	796,174	152,614	2,662,402
1953	1,731,693	740,554	152,290	2,624,537
1954	884,040	440,963	149,082	1,474,085
1955	748,489	326,791	98,574	1,173,854
1956	557,877	223,753	143,509	925,139
1957	492,092	315,885	139,456	947,433
1958	409,567	312,332	118,704	840,603
1959	388,114	474,593	160,893	1,023,600
1960	276,279	306,438	71,084	653,801

These numbers clearly cannot support continued presence of many hundreds of thousands of foreign Jews in Soviet detention locations. Moreover, the data about the ethnicity of GULAG inmates is also available. Here's the statistics for January 1, 1951²⁰⁴:

Ethnicity	Inmates in camps	Inmates in colonies	Total
Russians	805,995	599,516	1,405,511
Ukrainians	362,643	143,578	506,221
Belorussians	63,863	32,608	96,471
Azerbaijani	6,703	17,001	23,704
Georgians	6,968	16,615	23,583
Armenians	12,029	14,735	26,764
Turkmens	2,257	3,086	5,343
Uzbeks	14,137	15,892	30,029
Tajiks	2,884	2,842	5,726
Kazakhs	12,554	13,352	25,906
Kyrgyzs	3,628	2,796	6,424
Finns and Karelians	2,369	1,925	4,294
Moldavians	16,008	6,717	22,725
Lithuanians	35,773	7,243	43,016
Latvians	21,689	6,831	28,520
Estonians	18,185	6,433	24,618
Tatars	28,532	28,396	56,928

²⁰³ V. N. Zemskov, "Demografiya zaklyuchyonnykh, spetsposelentsev i ssylnykh (30-50-ye gody)", *Mir Rossii*, 1999, vol. VIII, no. 4, p. 115. Cf. J. A. Getty, G. T. Rittersporn, V. N. Zemskov, "Victims of the Soviet penal system in the pre-war years: a first approach on the basis of archival evidence", *The American Historical Review*, 1993, vol. 98, no. 4, pp. 1048-1049.

²⁰⁴ V. N. Zemskov, "GULAG (istoriko-sotsiologicheskii aspekt)", *Sotsiologicheskkiye issledovaniya*, 1991, no. 7, p. 9.

So Where Did They Go? "Resettlement" to the East

Bashkirs	3,619	4,228	7,847
Udmurts	2,993	2,472	5,465
Jews	14,374	11,051	25,425
Germans	21,096	11,173	32,269
Poles	19,184	4,343	23,527
Romanians	1,318	321	1,639
Iranians	262	344	606
Afghans	100	31	131
Mongols	70	13	83
Chinese	1,781	258	2,039
Japanese	852	250	1,102
Koreans	1,692	820	2,512
Greeks	1,558	768	2,326
Turks	300	62	362
Others, of them:	48,351	38,679	87,030
native to USSR	41,688	37,144	78,832
non-native	6,663	1,535	8,198
Total:	1,533,767	994,379	2,528,146

And for completeness sake, in January 1942 there were 23164 Jews in GULAG, in January 1943 - 20230, in January 1944 - 15317, in January 1945 - 14433, in January 1946 - 10839, in January 1947 - 9530 (with the data for 1946 and 1947 being incomplete).²⁰⁵

MGK's theory is thus categorically refuted through each step of its expected evidentiary chain: instead of discovering two million 'resettled' Jews, the Red Army reported only of its discoveries of the death camps²⁰⁶; instead of those 'resettled' Jews being deported by the Soviet Union, a much smaller amount of deportations took place in the years after the war and were not anti-Jewish in their aim. Such a specious explanation, proposed without evidence and obviously conjured up on a whim by MGK to explain the disappearance and silence of supposed 'resettled' Jews, is a classic illustration of why Holocaust Revisionism is actually a form of pseudohistory. It also forces MGK to delineate the workings of a "hoax," for although the term is avoided by MGK in their works, they do argue for a conspiracy between the Soviet Union and (unnamed) Zionist leaders to cover up the fate of the 'resettled' Jews.²⁰⁷ Such a fantastic theory is not sourced to any piece of evidence, and can thus be safely discarded until such is provided.

²⁰⁵ V. N. Zemskov, "GULAG (istoriko-sotsiologicheskii aspekt)", *Sotsiologicheskiiye issledovaniya*, 1991, no. 6, p. 26. For 01.01.1946, data about ethnicities of 145,974 inmates is lacking, and for 01.01.1947 the data for 22,398 inmates is lacking. It is clear, however, that this incompleteness doesn't help the deniers.

²⁰⁶ Cf. Sergey Romanov's multi-part series, 'What the Soviets knew about Auschwitz-and when,' *Holocaust Controversies*, <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2006/04/quick-links.html#sovau>

²⁰⁷ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.373.

Chapter 5

Gas Chambers at the Aktion Reinhard Camps

[Investigation Commission]

So the day of deliverance for the patient arrives. Before an investigative committee under the direction of the asylum doctor, the personal and medical details of the patient are examined and assessed.

[Photograph]

For archival purposes, photographs are taken of the patient.

[Gas Chamber (Cuts to turning on of the valve, gasometer, and observation by the doctor)]

In a hermetically sealed room the patient is exposed to the effects of carbon monoxide gas. The incoming gas is completely odourless and initially robs the patient of their powers of judgement, and then their consciousness.

Completely unknown by the patient, without pain and without struggle, the deliverance of death takes effect.

1942 draft for a Nazi documentary on mercy killings of mentally sick persons by German director Herman Schweninger¹

A “Humane” Solution: Poison Gas and the Development of the Gas Chambers

Poison gas had been a method chosen by Nazi leaders since 1939 for purposes of ‘racial hygiene’, to exterminate those deemed to be ‘unfit’. On December 12-13, 1939, for instance, SS chief Heinrich Himmler visited Posen, probably in the company of RKPA deputy chief Werner, and was shown a model gassing at the experimental euthanasia facility in Fort VII, Posen. His adjutant Joachim Peiper recalled this in two accounts given in 1967 and 1970.² In the genocidal climate that reigned during the late summer/autumn of 1941, the idea to extend the use of poison gas on a widespread scale against social and political enemies grew in popularity among Nazi officials.³ On July 16, 1941, SS-Sturmbannführer Rolf-Heinz Höppner, head of the Security Service (SD) in Poznan, wrote a memo to Adolf Eichmann

¹ NARA T-1021, Record Group 242/338, Roll 12, ‘Entwurf für den wissenschaftlichen Dokumentarfilm G.K.’, 29.10.1942, p. 127171. The script is marked ‘Geheime Reichssache!’

² Volker Riess, *Die Anfänge der Vernichtung “lebensunwerten Leben” in den Reichsgauen Danzig-Westpreussen und Wartheland 1939/40*. Frankfurt am Main, 1995, p.307, citing Peiper testimony, 1970.

³ This is a subject that is almost entirely ignored by MGK in their publications.

regarding possible solutions to problems inside the Warthegau. Höppner suggested to Eichmann the following:⁴

A danger persists this winter that not all of the Jews (of the Warthegau) can be fed. It should be seriously considered if the most humane solution is not to finish off those Jews incapable of work by some quick working means. In any case, this would be more pleasant than letting them starve to death.

The wording of the document clearly refers to some type of poisoning act. Höppner also recommended that employable Jewish women capable of bearing children in the Lodz ghetto be sterilized, in order to “solve the Jewish problem within this generation” (*damit mit dieser Generation tatsächlich das Judenproblem restlos gelöst wird*).⁵ With the memo to Eichmann, Höppner was pushing for the complete extermination of any Warthegau Jew not employed at that point in time.⁶

While Höppner was reacting to local circumstances inside the Warthegau, poison gas was also seen as a solution to the problems in the occupied Soviet territories. As the open-air shootings escalated to include more Jewish women and children among the victims, the psychological effects grew immensely upon the shooters. Poison gas was seen as a means to overcome the trauma experienced by the executioners in these shootings. This is supported by, among other things, the memoirs Auschwitz Kommandant Rudolf Höss who records a discussion with Eichmann:

We further discussed how the mass annihilation was to be carried out. Only gas was suitable since killing by shooting the huge numbers expected would be absolutely impossible and would also be a tremendous strain on the SS soldiers who would have to carry out the order as far as the women and children were concerned.⁷

Walter Rauff similar testified voluntarily in 1972 about the development of gas vans:

The main issue for me at the time was that the shootings were a considerable burden for the men who were in charge thereof, and this burden was taken off them through the use of the gas vans.⁸

The testimony of Dr. August Becker, inspector of the gas wagons, confirms Rauff's statement:

⁴ Höppner an Eichmann, 16.7.41, T/219, also published in *VEJ* 4, pp.680-1.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ It is noteworthy that Höppner was close to both Warthegau Gauleiter Arthur Greiser and Warthegau SS and Police Chief Wilhelm Koppe. Kershaw, ‘Improvised Genocide?’, p.66.

⁷ Höss, *Death Dealer*, p.28.

⁸ Rauff deposition to West German investigators, Santiago, Chile, 28.6.72. The deposition is on-line; English translation by Roberto Muehlenkamp: <http://nizkor.org/ftp.cgi/people/r/rauff.walter/Rauff-deposition-translation> (ZSL, II 415 AR-Z 1310/63-E32, Bl.534-549, StA Hamburg Az. 147 Js 31/67).

The leaders of the Einsatzgruppen in the East increasingly complained that the shooting commandos couldn't withstand the psychological and moral stress of the mass shootings in the long run. I know that the people of the commands were even in mental houses, and that therefore a new and better killing method needed to be found (...) When I was transferred to Rauff in December 1941, he explained to me the situation that the psychological and moral stress on the shooting commandos was no longer sustainable and that therefore the gassing operation had been started.⁹

As early as August 11, 1941, in a travel report on the economic situation in the Baltic, Major von Payr included a description of the "Jewish question" in Riga. Von Payr recorded the execution of Jewish men in the area ("mehrere tausend Juden 'liquidiert'") as well as talk that the Jewish women were "later to be eliminated by gassing."¹⁰

In early-mid August, developments regarding homicidal gassings also developed in the occupied Belorussian territory. Reichsführer-SS Himmler visited the area in this timeframe, witnessing a morning execution in Minsk of "Jews and partisans" on August 15, followed by a tour of the psychiatric asylum of Novinki, just north of the Belorussian capital.¹¹ Just prior to Himmler's visit Einsatzgruppe B commander Arthur Nebe ordered the assistance of a chemist from the Criminal Technical Institute (KTI) in Berlin.¹² Shortly after Himmler's visit, HSSPF Bach-Zelewski also twice requested the assistance of SS-Sturmbannführer Lange, who had experience with poison gas technology in occupied Poland.¹³

In mid-September 1941, following further requests for KTI personnel, discussions were held regarding how to kill the inmates at the Novinki asylum. Nebe requested that the experts consider using explosives or poison gas. As chemist Dr. Albert Widmann discussed with his superior, Heeß, carbon monoxide bottles were ruled out due to the probable transport problems.¹⁴ Instead, the idea of sealing victims into a building and pumping engine exhaust inside was accepted as a method worth exploring. Along with two experiments with explosives at Novinki, exhaust gas was successfully tested on mental patients in Mogilev,

⁹ Klee/Dressen, *Schöne Zeiten*, p.71.

¹⁰ "Man sprach davon, dass sie spaeter durch Vergasung beseitigt werden sollen." Reisebericht des Ia des Wehrwirtschafts- und Ruestungsamts des OKW ueber seinen Besuch im Abschnitt der Wirtschaftsinspektion Nord, 11. August 1941, published in Kulka/Jaeckel (eds), *Die Juden in den geheimen Stimmungsberichten 1933-1945*, p.454.

¹¹ *Dienstkalender*, p.195 (15.8.1941).

¹² Engelmann an KdS Warschau, 8.8.41, BA Dahchwitz-Hoppegarten ZR 7, Bl. 120; cf. Browning, *Origins*, p.513 n. 329. Nebe was director of Amt V of the RSHA (Chief of the Reich Criminal Police Office), to which the KTI was subordinated.

¹³ FS von dem Bach an Koppe, dates, PRO HW16/32; cf. Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, p.648; Lange, for whatever reason, was unable to help HSSP Bach-Zelewski.

¹⁴ Interrogation of Dr. Albert Widmann on 11 January 1960, *Archives of the Holocaust* Vol.22, p.478.; cf. Beer, 'Development of the Gas-Van.'

following the request of Einsatzkommando 8.¹⁵ There also are multiple testimonies that Himmler visited the Mogilev site during the testing period.¹⁶

From these experiments, and with the need of the Einsatzgruppen to remain as mobile as possible, work soon began on homicidal gas vans, which would cycle their engine exhaust into an attached cabin filled with people.¹⁷ RSHA chief Reinhard Heydrich quickly turned to Walter Rauff, head of the RSHA office of technical affairs (including motor vehicles), who in turn summoned motor pool chief Friedrich Pradel to discuss the possibility of such vehicles. Rauff mentioned that a “more humane method of execution” was needed in the East.¹⁸ Such a method was described in a May 1942 letter to Rauff as “death by dozing off” instead of suffocation.¹⁹

Pradel then commissioned Security Police chief mechanic Harry Wentrutt, who testified about the set-up of the vans:

A flexible exhaust pipe was installed at the truck’s exhaust, with a diameter of 58 to 60 millimeters (2.26 to 2.34 inches), and a hole of the same size was drilled in the van floor; a metal pipe was soldered into the hole from the outside to which the flexible exhaust pipe was fixed. When the various parts were connected, the truck engine was started and the exhaust fumes were channeled into the van, through the pipe leading from the exhaust to the hole in the van floor.²⁰

After gaseous samples were taken to test the carbon monoxide concentration in the engine exhaust, in early-mid November 1941 an experimental gassing with some thirty persons was conducted at Sachsenhausen concentration camp, where the KTI had a workshop. KTI chemists Leidig and Hoffman as well as KTI head Heeß were present. Leidig testified that after the gassing, “the corpses had, as we chemists determined, the pink appearance which is typical for people who have died of carbon monoxide poisoning.”²¹

By year’s end, half a dozen such vans had been produced and distributed to various units and locations (one with Einsatzgruppe C, one with Einsatzgruppe D, two to Riga, and two to Chelmno), with more ordered around that time. Eye-witnesses in the occupied territories reported the appearance of gas vans late in 1941, serving to assist in the murder of

¹⁵ Angrick, *Besatzungspolitik und Massenmord*, p.368 ff. and Christian Gerlach also suggests a gassing experiment at Novinki, see Gerlach, ‘Mogilew’, p.65.

¹⁶ Beer, ‘Development of the Gas-Van,’ citing Karl Schulz, Nebe’s adjutant, deposition on 9.3.59, StA Stuttgart, Az.13 Js 328/60; ZSL, Az.439 AR-Z 18a/1960, Bl.48; deposition by B.Wechners on 26.1.60, StA Bremen, Az.6 Js 3/6; ZSL, Az.202 AR-Z 152/1959, Bl.57f..

¹⁷ Beer, ‘Development of the Gas-Van,’ cutting deposition by A. Widmann on 27.1.59 and on 12.1.60.

¹⁸ Browning, *Origins*, p.355, citing Pradel/Wentrutt trial, Pradel testimony and Rauff testimony.

¹⁹ Becker an Rauff, 16.5.1942, 501-PS.

²⁰ Beer, ‘Development of the Gas-Van’; Deposition by H. Wentrutt on 2.2.61, (n.46), B1.260d ff.

²¹ Beer, ‘Die Entwicklung der Gaswagen’, 411; Deposition by Leidig on 6.2.59 (note 52), B1.49.

Jews.²² At the beginning of June 1942, automotive official Willy Just of the Security Police recorded that since December 1941 “ninety-seven thousand have been processed, using three vans without any defects showing up in the vehicles.” Just was coldly referring to victims of three gas vans in the Warthegau.²³

The planning of murders with poison gas gathered pace in October 1941 due to the imminent deportation of Jews from the Reich and the Protectorate. In a speech in Prague, Heydrich had referred to the need “to gather the plans and the raw material” and to “test the material.”²⁴ The gas vans were highly valued for Riga as on October 25, 1941, the Ostministerium Jewish expert, Erhard Wetzel, drafted a letter in Minister Rosenberg’s name to be sent to Reich Kommissar for the Ostland Hinrich Lohse. The letter concerned discussions that Wetzel had with Viktor Brack and Adolf Eichmann.²⁵ Brack, former head of the T4 institution, declared his willingness to aid in the “production of the required shelters and gassing apparatuses (“Vergassungsapparate”)” in Riga, which was considered more efficient than transporting some from the Reich.²⁶ For Eichmann’s part, he must have agreed to the killing of Jews unfit for work in Riga in the gassing units, as there were no objections “if those Jews who are not fit for work are removed by Brack’s device.” On the same day that Wetzel drafted the letter, Lohse showed up in Berlin to protest the imminent deportations of Reich Jews to Riga. During his stay, Lohse almost certainly discussed the relevant points of the letter with Ostministerium officials.²⁷ Either way, gas vans were soon sent from Berlin to Riga.

The push for alternative methods of murder was fuelled by the circumstances and experience of numerous Nazi officials across Eastern Europe. The July 16, 1941 memo by Poznan Security Services chief Höppner highlights the horrible state of Jewish living conditions in the Warthegau, with the enormous expected losses due to starvation. Too squeamish to watch the Jews slowly perish from deprivation, Höppner pushed for another way to achieve the end result upon those Jews unfit for work. Lohse was similarly presented in Berlin with the more “humane” option against Jews unfit for work in order to ease the acceptance of Jewish deportations from the Reich to Riga. The mental stamina of the Nazi executioners in the open-air shootings in the occupied Soviet territories was also wearing thin

²² Beer, ‘Die Entwicklung der Gaswagen.’

²³ Just an Rauff, 5.6.1942, BA R 58/871, also T/1390; cf. Kogon, *Nazi Mass Murder*, pp.228-335.

²⁴ Heydrich, Rede, 2.10.1941, published in Karny et al (eds), *Politik im 'Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren' unter Reinhard Heydrich 1941-1942*, pp. 107-22.

²⁵ RMO, Sachbearbeiter AGR Dr. Wetzel, Lösung der Judenfrage, 25.10.41, NO-365.

²⁶ Such devices were noted to not yet have been manufactured, which fits neatly into the gas van development chronology described, with the first prototype being tested in November.

²⁷ This would explain why the letter was neither formally signed nor sent.

at this time especially as more Jewish women and children were being included among the liquidations. A less personal, less direct method was requested for all parties involved with the “Jewish Question.” Formerly general ideas of a “quick-working means” soon cemented into the use of engine exhaust. As shown, these developments paved the road to the construction of homicidal gas vans. Parallel to the origins of the gas vans are the stationary homicidal gas chambers which would come into service in the spring of 1942, also employing engine exhaust. They are the subject of the next section.

While gas vans were being constructed in Berlin to aid in the mobile killing actions in the occupied Soviet territories, agreements were also made regarding the murder of Jews in the district of Lublin, part of the General Government in occupied Poland.²⁸ Following the decision in October 1941 to construct an extermination camp in Belzec, the SS *Zentralbauleitung* (Central Building Directorate) acquired twenty local Polish residents and several Ukrainians to take part in the construction of the camp, located off the main Lublin-to-Lwow railway line, southeast of the main Belzec station. Polish labourer Stanislaw Kozak later testified to a postwar Polish investigative committee about the construction of three barracks at the Belzec camp site in November and December 1941.²⁹

Next to this we built a third, 12 meters long and 8 meters wide. This building was divided into three timber partitions, rendering each section 4 meters wide and 8 meters long. They were 2 meters in height. The internal walls of the barracks were constructed by nailing the boards onto the frame and filling in the cavity with sand. On the inside of the barracks, the walls were covered with board, and the floors and walls were then covered with zinc up to a height of 1.10 meters. (...) The north facing side of each section had a door, which was about 1.80 meters high and 1.10 meters wide. The doors had rubber seals. All the doors opened outwards. The doors were very strong, made out of 7-cm-thick boards, and, to avoid them being pushed open from the inside, they were secured by a wooden bar resting in two iron hooks put up specifically for the purpose.

The Belzec barracks that Kozak most likely refers to are the living quarters for Jewish prisoners, the undressing barrack, and the gas chamber, with three chambers measuring close to 8 x 4 meters.

After the completion of the three buildings described by Kozak, and as a result of Heinrich Himmler’s agreement with Philip Bouhler in mid-December 1941 to make former Euthanasia personnel available to Odilo Globocnik, head of Aktion Reinhard, an initial wave of former T4 personnel arrived in Belzec towards the end of December 1941. Among this

²⁸ See the section Odilo Globocnik, SS Planning and the Origins of Aktion Reinhard, Chapter 3.

²⁹ Vernehmung Stanislaw Kozak, 14.10.1945, BAL B162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd. 6, pp.1129-30. MGK rely upon Kozak’s testimony in support of their thesis that Belzec was a delousing-transit camp. This argument will be analyzed in the next section.

first wave of personnel was Polizeihauptmann Christian Wirth, who was given command of the Belzec extermination camp. SS-Scharführer Erich Fuchs went with Wirth to Belzec:

One day in the winter of 1941 Wirth arranged a transport to Poland. I was picked together with about eight or ten other men and transferred to Belzec in three cars...Wirth told us that in Belzec "all the Jews will be bumped off." For this purpose barracks were built as gas chambers. In the gas chambers I installed shower heads. The nozzles were not connected to any water pipes because they would only serve as camouflage for the gas chamber. For the Jews who were gassed it would seem as if they were being taken to baths and for disinfection.³⁰

The background of Wirth is crucial. In early 1940, Wirth and Eberl had attended a test gassing at Brandenburg.³¹ Stangl and Wirth had commanded the Hartheim 'euthanasia' camp before their spells in Aktion Reinhard. Stangl had testified about gassing protocols at Hartheim during his interrogation in Linz in 1947.³² In September 1945, Hartheim stoker Vinzenz Nohel revealed that Wirth had shot four Jewish women who were too sick to walk to the gas chamber.³³ Hermann Merta and Karl Harrer also stated that they received the belongings of gassed victims as gifts from Wirth.³⁴

The affidavit of Gorgass makes an explicit connection between these gassing activities and Wirth's transfer to Aktion Reinhard:

Police Captain WIRTH, whom I knew personally and who was administrative director in several Euthanasia institutions, told me late in summer 1941 that he had been transferred by the "foundation" to a Euthanasia institute in the Lublin area.³⁵

It is likely that around the same time construction was underway for the Belzec extermination camp, preparations and planning had also begun at the site of the future Sobibor camp, also in the Lublin district. Polish railway worker Jan Piwonski testified:

In the autumn of 1941 German officers arrived at the station of Sobibor on three occasions. During their visit to the station they took measurements of the platform, and the sidings leading away from the platform, and then went into the woods nearby. I have no idea what they were doing there. Sometime later some very thick doors, which had rubber strips around them, arrived by train. We

³⁰ Erich Fuchs, 2.4.1963, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 251/59, Bd. 9, 1782-1783.

³¹ Burleigh, *Death and Deliverance*, pp.133-34.

³² Peter Schwarz, 'Der Gerichtsakt Georg Renno als Quelle für das Projekt Hartheim', *Doew Jahrbuch*, 1999, pp. 80-92.

³³ Testimony of Vinzenz Nohel, 4.9.45, DÖW, E18370/3. The date and location of this testimony, and the national jurisdiction of the Austrian police over their own euthanasia cases, disprove Samuel Crowell's claim that the euthanasia 'narrative' was concocted for the Nuremberg trials. For an English translation of this and other parts of Nohel's testimony, see Herwig Czech, 'Nazi Medical Crimes at the Psychiatric Hospital Gugging: Background and Historical Context', (DÖW), no date, pp.7-8.

³⁴ Friedlander, *The Origins of Nazi Genocide*, pp.234-35, citing Bezirksgericht Ybbs, interrogation of Hermann Merta, 3.12.45 and LG Linz, interrogation of Karl Harrer, 6.3.47. Both located at DÖW E18370/3.

³⁵ Affidavit of Hans Bodo Gorgass, 23.2.47, NO-3010.

speculated on what purpose the doors might be serving, and it dawned on us that the Germans were building something here, especially when trainloads of bricks were also being delivered, and they started to bring Jews over as well.³⁶

SS-Scharführer Fuchs, after helping with the installation of gas chambers at Belzec, was then employed in the construction of the Sobibor gas chambers in early spring 1942:

Sometime in the spring of 1942 I drove a truck to Lemberg on Wirth's orders and picked up a gassing engine, which I took to Sobibor. Upon my arrival at Sobibor I found near the station an area with a concrete structure and several permanent houses. The special commando there was led by Thomalla. Other SS men present included Floss, Bauer, Stangl, Friedl, Schwarz and Barbl. We unloaded the engine. It was a heavy Russian petrol engine (presumably an armoured vehicle or traction engine), at least 200 HP (V-engine, 8-cylinder, water cooled). We installed the engine on a concrete base and connected the exhaust to the pipeline. Then I tried the engine. It hardly worked. I repaired the ignition and the valves, and finally got the engine to start.³⁷

Along with the homicidal gas vans, the gas chambers at Sobibor and Belzec were based upon the lethal effects of engine exhaust introduced into an area where human beings were trapped. carbon monoxide, one of the toxins in engine exhaust, was a favoured method in its bottled form in mobile and stationary gas chambers against mentally ill patients following the occupation of Poland in 1939.

The use of engine exhaust for mass murder had also been exemplified since 8 December 1941 in Chelmno, where Warthegau officials stationed several gas vans employing such means to gas thousands of Jews. Gassings by Sonderkommando Lange (including at the Soldau "transit camp") during 1940 were discussed in Chapter 2, where we showed how these paved the way for the same unit's involvement in the gassing at Chelmno. Thus, when T4 personnel were assigned to help establish homicidal gas chambers at the Reinhard camps, the idea of engine exhaust was the method most offering itself.

Of course, there were other gaseous methods accessible to Nazi officials to use in order to poison unwanted persons. For the Auschwitz camp staff, the newly available cyanide-based pesticide Zyklon-B presented itself as a suitable method to dispose of the increasing number of Soviet prisoners of war, sick prisoners, and Jewish laborers who were "unfit for work."³⁸ In early September 1941, a provisional gassing test was undertaken in cell block 11 in the main Auschwitz camp. After sealing the block and making it airtight, several hundred Soviet prisoners of war, in addition to a large group of sick inmates were brought

³⁶ Schelvis, *Sobibor*, p.27.

³⁷ Schelvis, *Sobibor*, p.100, citing Erich Fuchs, Koblenz, 8.4.1963, ZStL-251/51/9-1782/83.

³⁸ Longerich, *Holocaust*, p.280.

into the basement cells, where several SS officers with gas masks dispensed the Zyklon-B.³⁹ Several more gassings in the main camp were performed with the pesticide in the autumn/winter 1941-1942.

Unfortunately for MGK, the use of different methods by different actors in different situations to mass murder people in different locations does not preclude the truth of those events. Such complexities are not unusual to recorded human history, and in no way cast doubt on the independent sources of evidence regarding those different methods. Instead of properly addressing that evidence, MGK instead ignore, distort, and straw man the current research on the development of the Nazi gas chambers, which highlight the influence and importance of local circumstances and actions in the progression of Nazi policy against the Jews. For instance, MGK argue that it “cannot be explained why the euthanasia personnel” built gas chambers for the Reinhard camps, but not for Auschwitz-Birkenau.⁴⁰ Such poor quality arguments of incredulity stem from MGK’s ignorance and incomprehension of the literature, for historians have indeed explained such matters, as we have above.

The Original & Second Gas Chambers at Belzec and Sobibor

On March 17, 1942, the first deportation trains carrying Jews from Lublin arrived at the Belzec camp. As the capacity of the ramp was limited inside the Belzec camp, the trains were often separated into two or three sections, all driven into the camps individually. Only a select few locomotive drivers were allowed to bring the trains into the Belzec camp, while the others had to stop just outside the entrance. Polish railway worker Stefan Kirsz testified to these events after the war:

As a co-driver of a locomotive, I led the Jewish transports from the station of Rava-Russkaya to Belzec many times...These transports were divided in Belzec into three parts. Each part, which consisted of twenty freight trains, was taken to the railway spur inside the camp pushed by the locomotive, and stopped near the former border wall of 1939/1940. Immediately after the freight cars stopped inside the camp, they were emptied of Jews and their luggage. I saw that in addition to the living, corpses were taken out...The Germans did not allow us to watch the camp, but I was able to see it when I approached the camp and deceptively pretended that I must put the coal closer to the entrance gate.⁴¹

³⁹ Cf. Klodzinski, ‘Die erste Vergasung’, also Joachim Neander and Sergey Romanov, ‘Dr. Neander responds to Carlo Mattogno,’ *Holocaust Controversies*, 13.2.10, <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2010/02/dr-joachim-neander-responds-to-carlo.html>. Dr. Neander’s response and Sergey Romanov’s postscript demolish the fallacies and distortions in Mattogno’s account on the first gassing at Auschwitz.

⁴⁰ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.272-273.

⁴¹ Stefan Kirsz, 15.10.1945, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd. 6, pp.1147-1148; cf. Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.69.

Those Jews who survived the transport to Belzec were unloaded into the reception area (Camp I) and separated by gender. During this time, assurances were being made by SS staff (usually camp commander Wirth) that the arrivals would be bathed, clothed, and then sent on to other camps in the East. All prisoners were then made to undress. Former T4 associate SS-Unterscharführer Karl Alfred Schluch, who had been deployed to Belzec when the killing operations began, attests:

In the morning or noon time we were informed by Wirth, Schwartz, or by Oberhauser that a transport with Jews should arrive soon...The disembarkation from the freight cars was carried out by a group of Jewish prisoners under the command of their capos. Two or three Germans from the camp staff supervised this action. It was my obligation to carry out such supervisions. After the disembarkation, the Jews were taken to the assembly square. During the disembarkation, the Jews were told that they had come here for transfer and they should go to baths and disinfection. This announcement was made by Wirth and translated by a Jewish capo.⁴²

SS-man Kurt Franz⁴³ also testified about the unloading procedure at Belzec:

I heard with my own ears how Wirth, in a quite convincing voice, explained to the Jews that they would be deported further and before that, for hygienic reasons, they must bathe themselves and their clothes would have to be disinfected. Inside the undressing barrack was a counter for the deposit of valuables. It was made clear to the Jews that after the bath their valuables would be returned to them. I can still hear, until today, how the Jews applauded Wirth after his speech. This behaviour of the Jews convinces me that the Jews believed Wirth...⁴⁴

As the women were given haircuts, the men were sent to the gas chambers first in order to decrease the chance of rebellion. Following the haircuts, and once the gas chambers had been cleaned from the previous batch of victims, the women with children were sent on. In order to reach the gas chambers, victims were sent along a “tube” (*Schlauch*), a forested and fenced pathway leading from the reception area to the extermination area. A recent analysis of wartime aerial photographs of the Belzec camp revealed indications of fencing matching the description of this “tube” (see image 5.1). These lineations are likely the result of fallen needles and other foliage which was interwoven into the fence to help camouflage the march to the gas chambers.⁴⁵

⁴² Karl Alfred Schluch, 11.11.1961, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd. 8, p. 1511-1512; cf. Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.70.

⁴³ A witness who MGK fail to discuss in any substantive fashion in all of their works.

⁴⁴ Kurt Franz, 14.9.1961, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd. 7, p.1421; cf. Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.70.

⁴⁵ Alex Bay, ‘Belzec: Reconstruction of the Death Camp,’ *Holocaust History Project*, <http://holocaust-history.org/belzec/deathcamp/index/>

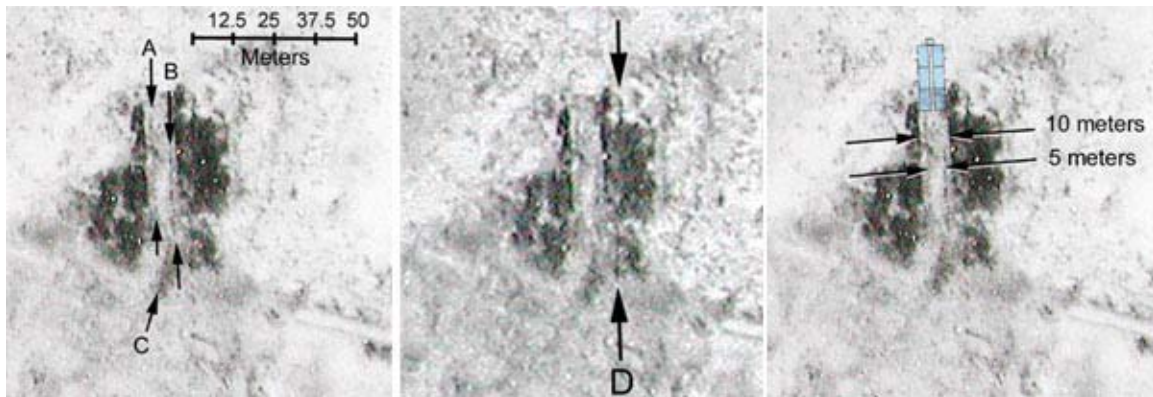


Image 5.1: Traces of the “Tube” at Belzec, with an image showing the possible location of the Gas Chambers

Source: <http://holocaust-history.org/belzec/deathcamp/Figure464.html>

Witness SS officer Schluch described the extermination procedure as follows:

After the Jews entered the gas chambers, the doors were closed by Hackenholt himself or by the Ukrainian subordinate to him. Then Hackenholt switched on the engine which supplied the gas. After five or seven minutes - and this is only an estimate - someone looked through the small window into the gas chamber to verify whether all inside were dead. Only then were the outside doors opened and the gas chambers ventilated... After the gas chambers were ventilated, the Jewish Work Kommando under the leadership of a Kapo and removed the corpses out of the chamber. Occasionally, I had to supervise at this place; therefore, I can describe the whole process, which I saw and witnessed personally...

The Jews inside the gas chambers were densely packed. This is the reason that the corpses were not lying on the floor but were mixed up in disorder in all directions, some of them kneeling, according to the amount of space they had. The corpses were besmirched with mud and urine or with spit. On the corpses I could partially see that lips and also nose tips had a bluish discoloration. Some of them had their eyes closed, others' eyes rolled. The bodies were dragged out of the gas chambers and inspected by a dentist, who removed finger rings and gold teeth...After this procedure, the corpses were thrown into a big pit.⁴⁶

The most serious criticism raised against Schluch's testimony by MGK has been for allegedly plagiarizing the Gerstein report.⁴⁷ This charge is simply unconvincing for the many distinctions in Schluch and Gerstein's testimonies. Whereas Schluch describes bodies in disorder inside the gas chambers, in various directions, and with some kneeling on other bodies, Gerstein is clear that the bodies were so packed that they had no space "to fall down

⁴⁶ Karl Alfred Schluch, 11.11.1961, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd. 8, p. 1512-1513; cf. Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, pp.70-71.

⁴⁷ Mattogno, *Belzec*, pp.67-68. Mattogno refers to similar descriptions on position and appearance of gassed bodies.

or even lean forward.”⁴⁸ Schluch and Gerstein diverge on the degree to which gassed corpses were blue; Gerstein refers to the whole corpses as blue, while Schluch only refers to a bluish tinge on the victims’ lips and nose. While Schluch was very uncertain on the type of engine used for the gassings, Gerstein showed no hesitancy to state that it was a diesel later on in his accounts. For the size of the gas chambers, Schluch describes the size of the original/old gas chambers (4 x 8 m) while Gerstein refers to that of the new ones (6 chambers, 5 x 5 each) On the size of burial pits, Schluch’s very rough estimate (30 x 20 x 5/6 m) is not close to that reported by Gerstein (100 x 20 x 12). Schluch and Gerstein also discuss details ignored by the other; Schluch discusses the victims’ eyes, while Gerstein discusses menstrual blood. It is clear that Schluch was not drawing his testimonial evidence from the Gerstein report, despite the best wishes of MGK to disregard Schluch’s testimony.

Several weeks behind in its construction, Sobibor was planned similar in its general layout to Belzec. Victims would be brought in through rail, unloaded on a ramp, brought to the reception camp (Camp II), separated by gender, undressed, shaven, gassed, and then buried. SS-Obersturmführer Franz Stangl, chosen by Globocnik as the first Commandant of Sobibor, was given a taste of his future task in a required visit to Belzec, where he was to meet Belzec Commandant Wirth. Stangl later discussed the visit:

I can’t describe to you what it was like... I went there by car. As one arrived, one first reached Belzec railway station, on the left side of the road. The camp was on the same side, but up a hill. The Kommandantur was 200 metres away, on the other side of the road. It was a one-storey building. The smell...Oh God, the smell. It was everywhere. Wirth wasn’t in his office. I remember, they took me to him... he was standing on a hill, next to the pits ... the pits ... full... they were full. I can’t tell you; not hundreds, thousands, thousands of corpses ... oh God. That’s where Wirth told me - he said that was what Sobibor was for.⁴⁹

At Sobibor, the gas chambers were finished in mid-April, a month after the start of operations at Belzec. Three chambers, measuring approximately 4 x 4 meters according to some accounts, were housed in a wooden structure atop a concrete base. Erich Bauer (who MGK incorrectly identify once as ‘Ernst’ Bauer)⁵⁰, self-proclaimed *Gasmeister* (gas master), described the newly constructed Sobibor gas chambers:

When we arrived, Lager 3 had not been completely fenced off yet, certainly not on the right hand-side, and I am not sure whether any fence had been put up through the woods. The gas chamber was already there, a wooden building on a concrete base, about the same size as this courtroom though much lower, as low

⁴⁸ Affidavit by Gerstein, 25.4.1945, 1553-PS.

⁴⁹ Sereny, *Into that Darkness*, p.111.

⁵⁰ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.172.

as a normal house. There were two or three chambers, in front of which there was a corridor that, from the outside, you accessed via a bridge. The doors were indeed wooden; they were changed later, when the gas chamber was completely rebuilt. The airtight doors arrived only later; I collected them myself from Warsaw, but that was not until the new building went up.⁵¹

The descriptions of the first gas chamber building and the first gassing experiment at Sobibor have been heavily criticized by MGK in their writings, particularly by Kues.⁵² MGK highlight variations among the testimonies of Bauer, Fuchs, and Stangl regarding these items to cast doubt on the veracity of the gassing claims (though no coherent arguments are made, simply well poisoning on sources).

Regarding the building, in contrast to Bauer, Sobibor Commandant Stangl declared to Gitta Sereny that the first gas chamber “was a new brick building.”⁵³ While this testimony was provided nearly three decades after the event (with the profound impact such a time can have on one’s memory), it must also be remembered that Stangl was later transferred to Treblinka in early September, around the time that new brick gas chambers were being constructed at his new camp, which could be the source for the confusion.⁵⁴ The statement by Fuchs⁵⁵ regarding the building itself is ambiguous, as Kues recognizes⁵⁶, and hard to pinpoint which building Fuchs’ is referring to as the gas chamber building, and what he meant by “concrete structure.” Even so, Fuchs is in agreement with Bauer in that the supporting structure of the gas chamber was made (at least partially) of cement, for the gassing engine had been installed on a “concrete base.”

Kues similarly highlights the variations in memory between Fuchs and Stangl regarding the first gassing at Sobibor. According to Fuchs, following the installation of the engine a trial gassing was performed:

If my memory serves me right, I think 30 to 40 women were gassed. The Jewish women had to undress in a clearing in the woods near the gas chamber and were herded into the gas chamber by the aforementioned SS men (Floss, Bauer, Stangl, Friedl, Schwarz and Barbl) and Ukrainian Hilfswilligen. Once the women were inside, I operated the engine with Bauer. At first the engine was in neutral. We both stood by the engine and switched the dial to Freiauspuff auf Zelle (open exhaust to chamber), so releasing the gas into the chamber. As directed by the chemist, I adjusted the engine to a set RPM, making any further accelerating

⁵¹ Erich Bauer, 6.10.65, StA.Dortmund, Verfahren gegen Bolender, p.176.

⁵² MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.262-269. This text incorporates Kues’ article, ‘The Alleged First Gas Chamber Building at Sobibor.’

⁵³ Sereny, *Into that Darkness*, p.109.

⁵⁴ See previous section.

⁵⁵ See previous section, note 36.

⁵⁶ Kues, ‘Alleged First Gas Chamber Building at Sobibor’: “The “concrete structure” is apparently the gas chamber building.”

unnecessary. After about ten minutes the 30 to 40 women were dead. The chemist and the SS Führer gave the signal to shut down the engine. I packed my tools and saw how the bodies were taken away. They were transported by means of a Lorenbahn (narrow gauge railway) leading from the gas chamber to an area farther away.⁵⁷

Stangl, on the other hand, details a different version:

Wirth was screaming and shouting again. He was around the back of the building, where the exit doors were. He was ranting and raving about the doors being too small. The people who were to be gassed had been pushed into the gas chambers through the exit doors. If they had gone in on the entrance side, they might have been spotted by someone outside the camp. (...) I think the bodies were buried near the brick building. No grave had been dug. I am certain that the bodies were not naked, but were buried with their clothes still on. I heard at the time that the people had resisted being locked inside the gas chamber. That was another reason why Wirth was so furious.⁵⁸

In a later interview with Gitta Sereny (which Kues quotes), Stangl later states that the first Sobibor gassing was performed on 25 work Jews, implying males.⁵⁹ However, Kues ignores Stangl's admission that his information on the gassing was hearsay. This is why Stangl constantly refers to his conversation with Michel regarding the gassing ("Michel told me later", "Michel said", "I heard at the time"). Only in regards to the burial of bodies does Stangl purport his own beliefs, suggesting his arrival near the gas chambers didn't come until after the gassing, if he came at all (and didn't simply learn of the event from Michel).

These variations, easily explainable as errors of memory (the testimonies were recorded many years after event), incorrectly reported events (Stangl admits hearsay from Michel), or as a result of two separate gassings (Fuchs does not list presence of Stangl, Wirth, or Michel at gassing), hardly substantiate MGK's thesis that a conspiracy was determining or providing answers for the Nazi perpetrators during their trials in order to fabricate the Holocaust.

Following the successful test gassing(s), Sobibor was ready to handle transports of Jews starting in late April/early May. The opening of the Sobibor camp coincided with the liquidation of whole Kreise (counties) in the district of Lublin. Activity at Sobibor was substantially increased as a result of the sudden closure of Belzec in mid-April due to Wirth

⁵⁷ BAL 162/208 AR-Z 251/59, Bd. 9, pp. 1784-1785; cf. Schelvis, *Sobibor*, pp.100-101.

⁵⁸ BAL 162/208 AR-Z 230/59, Bd. 12, pp.4464-4465; cf. Schelvis, *Sobibor*, p.101.

⁵⁹ Sereny, *Into that Darkness*, pp.113-114. Stangl's statement: "When I got there, Wirth stood in front of the building wiping the sweat off his cap and fuming. Michel told me later that he'd suddenly appeared, looked around the gas chambers on which they were still working and said, 'Right, we'll try it out right now with those twenty-five work-Jews: get them up here.' They marched our twenty-five Jews up there and just pushed them in, and gassed them. Michel said Wirth behaved like a lunatic, hit out at his own staff with his whip to drive them on. And then he was livid because the doors hadn't worked properly."

and other German officials leaving their post at the camp.⁶⁰ SS-Oberscharführer Kurt Bolender, who was stationed at Sobibor, described the extermination process:

Before the Jews undressed, Oberscharführer Hermann Michel (deputy commander of the camp) made a speech to them. On these occasions, he used to wear a white coat to give the impression (that he was) a physician. Michel announced to the Jews that they would be sent to work. But before this they would have to take baths and undergo disinfection so as to prevent the spread of diseases...After undressing, the Jews were taken through the so-called Schlauch. They were led to the gas chambers, not by the Germans but by the Ukrainians...After the Jews entered the gas chambers, the Ukrainians closed the doors...The motor which supplied the gas was switched on by a Ukrainian called Emil and by a German driver called Erich Bauer from Berlin. After the gassing, the doors were opened, and the corpses were removed by a group of Jewish workers.⁶¹

Erich Bauer also testified after the war about the Sobibor gassings:

When a transport came that I worked with, I was with Fuchs and with Askaris (Ukrainian volunteers) in Lager 3. The undressed Jews from the transport came to the gas chambers in Lager 3. Meanwhile, Fuchs and I ran the engine. Later on the motor was already started, but at first not until people were already in the gas chamber as no Freiauspuff (open exhaust) option was available. It always took two people to start the engine; the battery was not sufficient by itself. Fuchs had built a special device. There was an old magnet. One man turned the crank, starting the engine. The flywheel had a sort of tire iron, which was used to start it, while another person had to operate the magnetic ignition; that is why two men were required to start the engine. (...) The gassing lasted about 20 to 30 minutes and I have seen the bodies as they were brought out. They looked like normal bodies, many came with some blood out their nose and mouth.⁶²

As can be easily understood, figures regarding the amount of Jews put into the three approximately 4 x 4 meter gas chambers vary among the witnesses. Bauer estimated 50 to 60 people per chamber; Bolender estimated 40 to 50 people per chamber; Karl Frenzel estimated the total capacity of the three chambers between 150 and 250, thus around 50 to 80 people per chamber; Hubert Gomerski also recalled the figure of 250.⁶³ These estimates give an idea of the initial capacity for the three original Sobibor gas chambers. Despite the constant attacks on such estimates by MGK, these are very realistic for such a space.⁶⁴ Fluctuations in

⁶⁰ Vernehmungsniederschrift Josef Oberhauser, 12.12.42, BAL B162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd.9, p.1682; cf. Rückler, *NS-Vernichtungslager*, pp. 136-137. Oberhauser described returning to the camp following a trip to Lublin, with the German camp leadership absent.

⁶¹ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.76; Belzec-Oberhauser, Band 7, pp.1320-1321.

⁶² Protokoll vom 15.11.1965, StA Dortmund 45 JS 27/16, Ordner November 1965, p558.

⁶³ Schelvis, *Sobibor*, p.114 n.30.

⁶⁴ Attacking witness estimates on the number of gassing victims in a single chamber is a trademark of Holocaust "revisionists" in general, and is usually one of the primary means of witness criticism employed. Witnesses are known to have a poor ability to be exact on such quantifiable details, especially as time progresses. In this case,

figures were likely to depend upon the size of the arriving transports, which would determine the density of Jews put inside the gas chambers. A higher capacity was possible as the chambers could be “densely packed” as Schlauch said of Belzec. Nazi documents regarding the gas vans described the “normal capacity of the vans is nine to ten per square meter.”⁶⁵

In *Sobibór*, Graf writes that a density of 9 persons per square meter is “vaguely possible,” while in *Treblinka* he writes that 10 people per square meter is the “highest density theoretically possible.”⁶⁶ Modern mass transportation and crowd gatherings put the lie to Graf’s rejection: during the Hajj, the Jamaraat Bridge has had measured crowd densities of 10 people per square meter⁶⁷, as has also been observed at Wembley stadium⁶⁸; buses in China occasionally reach up 13 persons per square meter⁶⁹; buses in the Brazilian city São Paulo can carry twelve passengers per square meter⁷⁰; trains in Mumbai reach up to 14 to 16 standing passengers per square meter during peak hours.⁷¹ As these examples occur largely amongst adults, likely to be males who are fully clothed, even higher capacities would be possible at the gas chambers in the Aktion Reinhard camps, where an over proportional number of women, children, and elderly in the transports were stripped of their clothes, with the deportees already suffering from dangerous malnourishment.

MGK also fail to deal with the relationship between Fuchs and Bauer. In 1965, Fuchs faced charges devoted to the installation and operation of the murder weapon. He is the only defendant to have been charged in that manner. The charge is summarized in JuNSV as:

Installing and tuning of [an] engine, whose exhaust fumes were led into the gas chamber. ‘Trial gassing’ of about 30 Jewish women as well as subsequent gassing of Jews arriving in 3-4 transports. Instruction of camp supervisor (Lageraufseher) Bauer - cf. Case Nr.212 - how to operate the engine.⁷²

even the higher victim estimates by the perpetrators (80 victims inside a 16 sq m room = 5 victims per sq meter) are easily achievable, especially with a substantial portion of children and women among the gassing victims.

⁶⁵ Willy Just to Walter Rauff, 5.6.1942 BA R 58/871; cf. Kogon, *Nationalsozialistische Massentötungen durch Giftgas*, pp.333-337. This number is entirely realistic, as some modern German train manufacturers specify the maximum standing capacity of their passenger cars (obviously full bodied, fully clothed adults) at 8 persons per square meter. See the advertising brochure from Tatra Trains, available at <http://www.tatrawagen.de/werbeprospekt.pdf>.

⁶⁶ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.36; M&G, *Treblinka*, p.156.

⁶⁷ Stephan Trüby, *Exit-Architektur. Design Zwischen Krieg Und Frieden*. Vien: Springer, 2008, p.91.

⁶⁸ G. Keith Still, *Crowd Dynamics*, PhD, University of Warwick, 2000, Chapter 5, available at: <http://www.crowdmodelling.com/PhD-Chapter-5.html>.

⁶⁹ Jeff Kenworthy and Gang Hu, ‘Threat to Global Survival? A Case Study of Land Use and Transportation Patterns in Chinese Cities’, Murdoch University, 2000, available at http://www.istp.murdoch.edu.au/ISTP/casestudies/Case_Studies_Asia/china/chinese.html.

⁷⁰ ‘Schöne neue Welt,’ *Profil*, Bd. 25 (1994), p.160.

⁷¹ John Pucher, Nisha Korattyswaroopam, Neenu Ittyerah, ‘The Crisis of Public Transport in India: Overwhelming Needs but Limited Resources,’ *Journal of Public Transportation*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (2004), p.101.

⁷² Urteil gegen Fuchs. JuNSV Bd. XXV, Lfd. Nr. 641.

Fuchs' admissions should therefore be given high priority because they relate most directly to the offence with which he was charged. He should also be given priority over Bauer in any matters of dispute between them because he was instructing Bauer. MGK's methodology is therefore flawed because it fails to examine the relative expertise of the witnesses and their access to information about the engine.

MGK claim that Fuchs gave testimony in return for a light sentence.⁷³ However, although Fuchs was released from the Belzec proceedings, he received four years for Sobibor, which was commensurate with an accessory to murder charge.

Following discussions by euthanasia head SS-Oberführer Viktor Brack and Aktion Reinhard chief Globocnik in Lublin, Wirth eventually returned to his post in Belzec sometime in mid-May. As larger deportations to Belzec were extended into the Krakow district at the beginning of June, Wirth decided that Belzec's gas chambers were in need of an overhaul. The camp was closed for a month, from mid-June to mid-July 1942, in order to construct newer, larger, and more effective gas chambers. It is also likely that the old wooden gas chambers had been tarnished by the sweat, blood, urine, and excrement of the many thousands of gas chamber victims.⁷⁴

Following the dismantling of the three old wooden gas chambers, a solid concrete or brick building was constructed which housed six gas chambers.⁷⁵ Estimates on the size of the new gas chambers vary but were likely in the neighbourhood of 5 x 5 meters, an increase in gas chamber space by nearly half. Rudolf Reder, who arrived in Belzec in mid-August 1942, described the new gas chambers:

In the small yard you went up the steps to the entrance door, above which there was a sign saying *Bade und Inhalationsraeume* as well as a large flower basket, which made it look as though it was really the entrance to a health spa. From the entrance a corridor, which had three solid and tightly sealed single doors one either side, ran the length of the building. These doors led into the windowless chambers, which at the far end wall, adjoining the loading ramps I described earlier, had double sliding doors. On the other side of the building, i.e. behind the wall at the far end of the corridor, there was a small room where the engines were.⁷⁶

⁷³ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.185.

⁷⁴ Schelvis, *Sobibor*, p.103.

⁷⁵ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.73; cf. Vernehmung Petr Browzev, 19.8.1974, ZStL 208 AR-Z 643/71, Vol. 2, pp.458-463, here p.460; Protokol doprosa, Vasili Shuller, 15.12.1964, ASBU Dnepropetrovsk 44-32132-1, pp.113-6.

⁷⁶ Rudolf Reder, 29.12.45, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 252/59, p.1177-1176; cf. Schelvis, *Sobibor*, p.105.

Following the construction of new gas chambers at Belzec, the camp was also famously visited by SS Officers Kurt Gerstein and Professor Wilhelm Pfannenstiel. Gerstein described his inspection of the new gas chambers prior to a gassing as follows:

After ascending a few small steps, we saw three rooms to our left and right, which looked like garages; 4 by 5 meters, 1.90 meters high. At the back, indiscernible, wooden exits. On the roof a Star of David made of copper. In front of the building a plaque with *Hackenholt-Stiftung*. That is all I saw that particular afternoon.⁷⁷

Pfannenstiel later described the gassing on the next day:

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.⁷⁸

In Sobibor, for many of the same reasons as at Belzec, new gas chambers were constructed during a period when swampy soil conditions during the summer prevented widespread deportations to Sobibor. SS-Unterscharführer Erwin Lambert took part in the construction work at Sobibor:

As I already mentioned earlier, I spent between 14 days and three weeks at the Jewish extermination camp Sobibor. It may have been in the autumn of 1942. I cannot remember the exact dates though. Wirth had assigned me the task of enlarging the gas installations at Sobibor; I was supposed to build them using the example of Treblinka. I traveled to Sobibor with Lorenz Hackenholt. Hackenholt was at Treblinka at the time. We first traveled to a sawmill near Warsaw. Hackenholt ordered a large quantity of wood for the rebuilding works at Sobibor. Then we traveled on to Sobibor. We reported to camp commandant Reichleitner, who gave us the appropriate instructions for building the gas installation. The camp was already operational when we arrived and already had a gas chamber as well. The rebuilding was probably necessary because the old construction was either not big enough, or not solid enough.⁷⁹

Franz Hödl also described the new gas chambers at Sobibor:

There was a gas chamber with an attached room for an engine. The exhaust gases were directed into the chambers to gas the Jews. In the engine room there were two engines. There was a gasoline engine, probably from a Russian tank, and a diesel engine. The latter was not used. The gas chamber building contained 4 or 6 chambers on both sides of a corridor, 3 on the left and 3 on the right (or 2 left and

⁷⁷ PS-1553, also in Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager*, pp. 62-63.

⁷⁸ Wilhelm Pfannenstiel, 6.6.1950, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd. 1, 43; also cited in Mattogno, *Belżec*, 56.

⁷⁹ Erwin Lambert, 2.10.1962, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 251/59, Bd. 8, pp.1542-1543; cf. Schelvis, *Sobibor*, p.104.

2 right). The people were forced into these rooms from the corridor. After the gassing the outside doors could be opened and the bodies removed.⁸⁰

In his work on Sobibor, Jules Schelvis compiles several of Hödl's testimonies from the 1960s into a single statement⁸¹, which MGK have criticized as "confusing," not bothering with any further analysis.⁸² In one of these statements that Schelvis uses (above), Hödl states that there were four or six gas chambers in the camp, while in a statement made three years previously, Hödl states that there were six or eight chambers.⁸³ Both of the statements mentioned six chambers, a number largely agreed upon by other witnesses as well. Had the Revisionists gone to the original sources, a necessary measure for their very limited and specific criticisms of witness statements, they would have seen that Hödl's statements are anything but "confusing." Finally, MGK have also ignored the rest of Hödl's statement, especially the admission that both a petrol and diesel engine were present at the gas chamber, but that only the petrol motor was used for homicidal gassings.⁸⁴

In Sobibor, following the reopening of nearby railways and the completion of the gas chambers, the camp resumed its extermination activities in October 1942.⁸⁵

The Treblinka Camp

Following the construction and start of operations in Belzec and Sobibor, and just prior to Wirth's recommendations to rebuild Belzec's gas chambers, another camp was established in the summer of 1942 in the north-eastern area of the Warsaw district in the General Government. The Treblinka camp was located in a remote and forested area four kilometres from the Treblinka station on the main Warsaw-Bialystok railway line. Spread out on some 50 acres in a rectangular fashion, the camp was surrounded by a 3-4 meter high wire fence, later fitted with tree branches and brushwood to block any outside view into the camp, while the inside of the camp was further secured by an additional barbed wire fence, staffed by constant security surveillance in eight meter high watch towers in all corners of the camp.⁸⁶

The camp consisted of three similarly sized sections: a living area for the camp workers, a reception area for arrivals, and the extermination area. The reception area, which lacked any proper train platform for the arrivals but simply consisted of a 300 meter long railway spur and undressing barracks, was the site where men were separated from women

⁸⁰ Franz Hödl, 29.03.1966, StA Dortmund, Verfahren gegen Gomerski.

⁸¹ Schelvis, *Sobibor*, p.104.

⁸² MGK, *Sobibór*, p.149.

⁸³ Franz Hödl, 29.03.1966, StA Dortmund-Gom-PB-III.

⁸⁴ This issue will be discussed further on in this chapter.

⁸⁵ See Chapter 3.

⁸⁶ Mlynarczyk, 'Treblinka', p.257.

and children, and where the victims dispensed with their clothing and valuables. From the reception area, arrivals were fed through a 60 meter long “tube” (known as the Himmelstrasse/”road to heaven” at Treblinka), which was surrounded by a barbed wire fence on both sides, interwoven with tree branches and foliage to block any outside observation, and which directed arrivals to the extermination area.⁸⁷

Work began on the camp sometime in May-June 1942, following Himmler’s visit to Warsaw on April 17, 1942.⁸⁸ Nearby Jewish slave laborers and Polish prisoners were utilized to construct the camp, a project which was overseen by SS-Hauptsturmführer Richard Thomalla.⁸⁹ Pole Lucjan Puchala described the initial construction of Treblinka:

Initially we did not know the purpose of building the branch track, and it was only at the end of the job that I found out from the conversations among Germans that the track was to lead to a camp for Jews. The work took two weeks, and it was completed on 15 June 1941. Parallel to the construction of the track, earthworks continued. The works were supervised by a German, an SS captain. At the beginning, Polish workers from the labour camp, which had already been operating in Treblinka, were used as the workforce. Subsequently, Jews from Wegrow and Stoczek Wegrowski started to be brought in by trucks. There were 2-3 trucks full of Jews that were daily brought in to the camp. The SS-men and Ukrainians supervising the work killed a few dozen people from those brought in to work every day. So that when I looked from the place where I worked to the place where the Jews worked, the field was covered with corpses. The imported workers were used to dig deep ditches and to build various barracks. In particular, I know that a building was built of bricks and concrete, which, as I learned later, contained people-extermination chambers.⁹⁰

The problems experienced with the wooden gas chambers at Sobibor and Belzec must have persuaded the Treblinka staff to erect more solid structures for their operations, as testified to by Puchala, Jankiel Wiernik,⁹¹ and Abraham Krzepicki.⁹² The three original chambers each measured approximately 5 x 5 meters, and around 2 meters high.⁹³ Polish

⁸⁷ Mlynarczyk, ‘Treblinka’, p.268; Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, pp.41-42.

⁸⁸ *Dienstkalender*, p.401 (17.4.1942).

⁸⁹ Thomalla’s presence was repeatedly acknowledged by SS Unterscharführer Erwin Herman Lambert, see the interrogation of Erwin Lambert, 27.4.1964, StA Hamburg 147 Js 7/72, Bd. 73, p.14133 (Verfahren gegen Ludwig Hahn) as well as his interrogation of 22.4.1975, StA Hamburg 147 Js 43/69, Bd. 116, p.22380 (Verfahren gegen Karl Streibel); Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p. 40.

⁹⁰ Protokół, Lucjan Puchala, 26.10.1945, AIPN NTN 69, p.86ff; also published in Lukaskiewicz, *Oboz zaglady Treblinka*, p.8; cf. Chrostowski, *Extermination Camp Treblinka*, pp.25-26. Puchala obviously misremembered the year of the construction.

⁹¹ Wiernik, ‘A Year in Treblinka,’ p.157: “The brick building which housed the gas chambers was separated from Camp No. 1 by a wooden wall. This wooden wall and the brick wall of the building together formed a corridor which was 80 cm taller than the building.”

⁹² Krzepicki, ‘Eighteen Days in Treblinka,’ p.105: “longish, not too large brick building.”

⁹³ Wiernik, ‘A Year in Treblinka,’ p.157; Richard Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1995, p.37.

prisoner Jan Sulkowski, interned at the Treblinka labor-penal camp, testified about his experience in constructing the new gas chambers:

SS men said it was to be a bath. Only later on, when the building was almost completed, I realized that it was to be a gas chamber. What was indicative of it was a special door of thick steel, insulated with rubber, twisted with a bolt and placed in an iron frame, and also the fact that in one of the building compartments there was put an engine, from which three iron pipes led through the roof to the three remaining parts of the building. A specialist from Berlin came to put the tiles inside and he told me that he had already built such a chamber elsewhere.⁹⁴

While the door was more likely to be wooden with steel accessories and components rather than all steel, the description of tiles in the chambers by Sulkowski are supported by other witnesses as well.⁹⁵

Wachmann Nikolay Shalayev, who was assigned near the gas chambers at Treblinka, similarly testified:

Each chamber was 4 x 4, that is 16 square meters and was 2 meters high. The walls and floor of this chamber were inlaid with parquet slabs.⁹⁶ A gas pipe of approximately 80 millimeter diameter, which terminated with an opening of this size, passed from the attic to the ceiling of the chamber. In order to camouflage it and deceive the doomed people who had entered this chamber, three spouts hung from the ceiling, like in a real bath in shower stalls. But in actuality these "showers" were not real. In the ceiling there was a small window 40 x 40 cm in dimension made of thick (with wire inside) glass, through which a murky light entered. There were no more objects in the chamber.⁹⁷

Abraham Goldfarb worked in the original building for a few days, dragging corpses to the pits, and he described the chambers during a September 1944 testimony given to Soviet military investigators:

Approach to the building was protected by a barbed wire fence, with pine branches interwoven into the fence for disguise. The building itself was an ordinary one-story brick building with a tin roof. Climbing the stairs to the entrance you first get to the wooden annex, which looked like a corridor. The front door to the building, as well as three iron doors leading out of this annex to the three chambers of the house are hermetically sealed. Each of the three chambers had these three dimensions: length - 5, width - 4, height - 2 meters. Floor and walls are covered with tiles, the ceiling is made of concrete. In each chamber there is one hole in the ceiling. Moreover, it is covered with netting.

⁹⁴ Protokół, Jan Sulkowski 20.12.45, AIPN NTN 70, pp.163-167, also published in Lukaszewicz, *Oboz zaglady Treblinka*, p.9; cf. Chrostowski, *Extermination Camp Treblinka*, p.31.

⁹⁵ Krzepicki, 'Eighteen Days in Treblinka,' p.104; Wiernik, 'A Year in Treblinka,' p.157.

⁹⁶ Obviously tiles are meant here. Earlier Shalayev stated that the chambers were washed because "the floor and walls of each chamber were inlaid with parquet and a small amount of soot, which settled on the parquet walls, was easily washed off with water and wiped off by the workers with damp rags."

⁹⁷ Protokół doprosa, Nikolay Shalayev, 18.12.1950, in the Soviet criminal case against Fedorenko, vol. 15, p. 163. Exhibit GX-125 in *US v. Reimer*.

From a wall into a chamber comes a pipe with somewhat of a flared end and mesh bottom. The flared end is mounted near the wall. The wall at this location is significantly polluted with soot. Against the entrance door there is also a hermetically closed exit door. All three of these chambers open in the direction of the concrete ramp installed near the house.⁹⁸

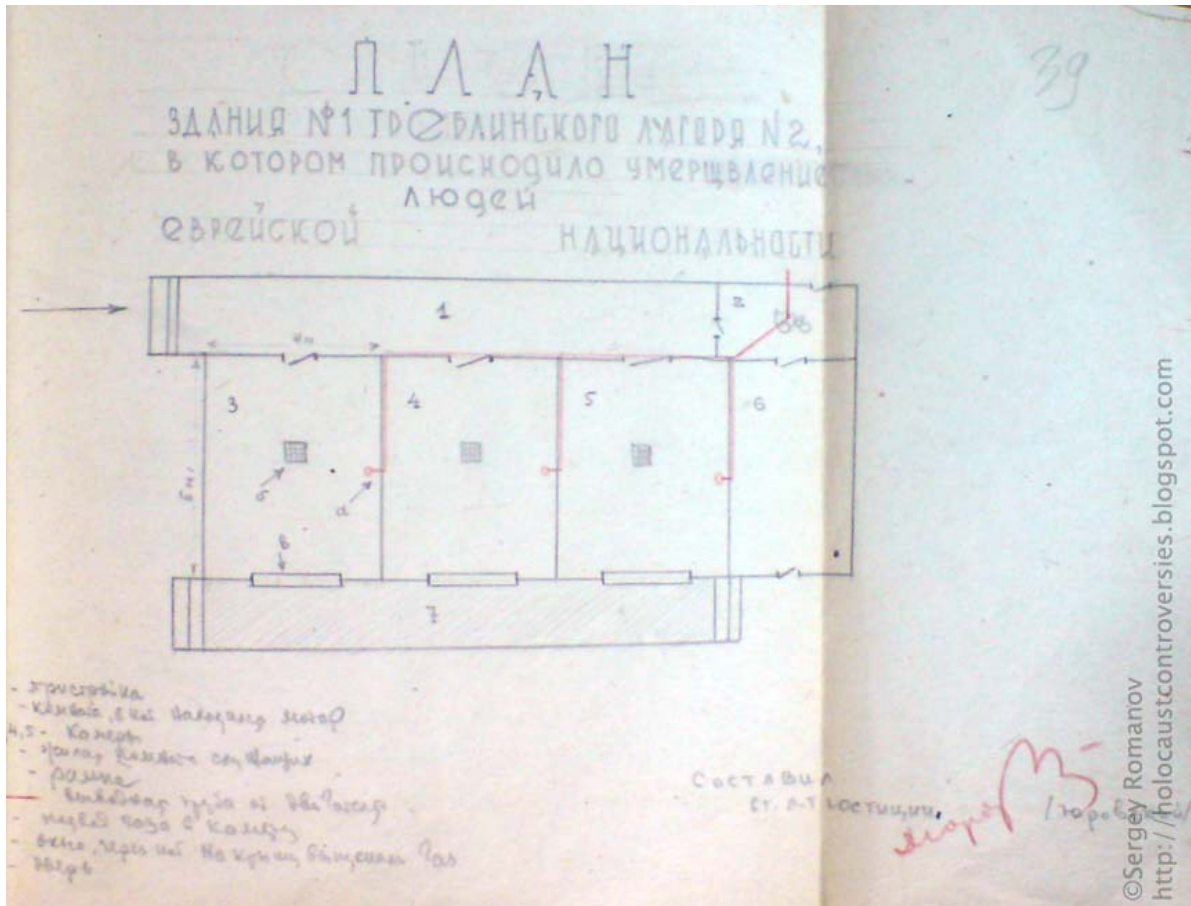


Image 5.2 Plan of the old gas chambers drawn by First Lieutenant of Justice Yurovsky in September 1944, apparently based on the testimony of Abraham Goldfarb. Source: GARF 7445-2-134, p. 39.

Legend to Image 5.2:

- 1. Annex.**
- 2. The engine room.**
- 3, 4, 5. Chambers.**
- 6. Living room for the personnel.**
- 7. The ramp.**
- The red line: the exhaust pipe from the engine.**
- a. Gas inlet in the chamber.**
- б. The window through which the gas was let out on the roof.**
- в. Door.**

⁹⁸ Protokol doprosa, Abram (Abraham) Goldfarb, 21.09.1944. GARF 7445-2-134, pp. 31, 31ob.

Another Jewish witness from the extermination part, Mendel Korytnicki, who also worked for a short period (about 5 days) in the original gas chambers, agrees with Goldfarb's description: giving the same dimensions and mentions the openings in the roof (through which a German was observing the process), the tiled floor, and the concrete platform. Korytnicki only differs with Goldfarb in regard to the roof material (saying that it was a tiled roof) and saying that the walls were whitewashed, rather than tiled – expected differences in recollection.⁹⁹

As the construction of Treblinka was underway Dr. Irmfried Eberl, a former commander during the euthanasia program, took charge of the camp and would remain so until late August. On July 7, 1942, Dr. Eberl sent a letter to the Commissar of the Warsaw ghetto Dr. Heinz Auerswald announcing Treblinka's readiness to commence operations starting July 11, 1942, obviously related to the coming deportations from the Warsaw ghetto to Treblinka.¹⁰⁰ Deportations to the camp began July 22, 1942.

During the first phase of Treblinka's role as a death camp (July 23-August 28, 1942), the extermination site lacked the same efficiency in operation as Belzec and Sobibor. The camp staff simply could not initially cope with the huge number of transports arriving day after day. As reported by State Secretary of the Reich Transport Ministry Ganzenmüller to Himmler's chief of staff, Wolff, since the opening of the Treblinka camp on July 22 "a train with 5,000 Jews goes daily from Warsaw via Malkinia to Treblinka."¹⁰¹ This daily figure of arrivals was larger than both Sobibor and Belzec's combined. It also was the cause of utter havoc at the camp.¹⁰²

Many deportation cars had to wait hours and days on end until Treblinka's gas chambers were cleared of their previous transport. As already described in the chapter on deportations,¹⁰³ during the hot summer months the many deportations of ghetto Jews to Treblinka, often with heavily crammed trains lacking food and water, produced gruesome results before even arriving at the camp. German soldier Hubert Pfoch, who happened to

⁹⁹ Protokół doprosa, Mendel Korytnicki, 23.09.1944. GARF 7445-2-134, p. 56R.

¹⁰⁰ Indicative of MGK's historical ignorance, in M&G's work on Treblinka, Mattogno incorrectly connects this and other letters from Eberl during summer 1942 to Treblinka I, the labor camp, instead of the new Treblinka II, the extermination camp.

¹⁰¹ Ganzenmüller to Wolff, 28.7.1942, NO-2207; Wolff responded on behalf of Himmler that he was "particularly pleased to learn" that 5,000 Jews were sent to Treblinka every day.

¹⁰² The problematic start of operations at Treblinka and the subsequent reorganization are areas which are largely or entirely ignored by MGK. For instance, M&G's account of Treblinka, the only reference to the change in camp leadership is a brief mention through quoting the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* (p. 13).

¹⁰³ See the section The Acceleration of Extermination and Conflicts over Jewish Labour, in Chapter 3.

follow a transport of Jews to Treblinka, recorded in his diary what he witnessed in August 1942 at the Siedlce train station:

Early next morning - August 22 - our train was shunted on to another track, just next to the loading platform, and this was when we heard the rumour that these people were a Jewish transport. They call out to us that they have been traveling without food or water for two days. And then, when they are being loaded into cattle cars, we become witnesses of the most ghastly scenes. The corpses of those killed the night before were thrown by Jewish auxiliary police on to a lorry that came and went four times (...) When some of them manage to climb out through the ventilating holes, they are shot the moment they reach the ground-a massacre that made us sick to our souls, a blood-bath such as I never dreamed of (...) Eventually our train followed the other train and we continued to see corpses on both sides of the track - children and others. They say Treblinka is a 'delousing camp'. When we reach Treblinka station the train is next to us again - there is such an awful smell of decomposing corpses in the station, some of us vomit. The begging for water intensifies, the indiscriminate shooting by the guards continues.... Three hundred thousand have been assembled here. Every day ten or fifteen thousand are gassed and burned. Any comment is totally superfluous.¹⁰⁴

Abraham Krzepicki described his experience en route to Treblinka from Warsaw:

Over 100 people were packed into our car (...) it is impossible to describe the tragic situation in our airless, closed freight car. It was one big toilet. Everyone tried to push his war to a small air aperture. Everyone was lying on the floor. I also lay down. I found a crack in one of the floorboards into which I pushed my nose in order to get a little air. The stink in the car was unbearable. People were defecating in all four corners of the car. (...) People lay on the floor, gasping and shuddering as if feverish, their heads lolling, labouring to get some air into their lungs. Some were in complete despair and no longer moved (...) We reached Treblinka. (...) Many were inert on the freight-car floor, some probably dead. We had been traveling for about twenty hours. If the trip had taken another half day, the number of dead would have been much higher. We would all have died of heat and asphyxiation. I later learned that there were transports to Treblinka from which only corpses were removed.¹⁰⁵

Oskar Berger, who was brought to Treblinka in mid-late August 1942 during the time of this havoc, spoke of his first encounter with the camp:

As we disembarked we witnessed a horrible sight: hundreds of bodies lying all around. Piles of bundles, clothes, valises, everything mixed together. SS soldiers, Germans and Ukrainians were standing on the roofs of barracks and firing indiscriminately into the crowd. Men, women, and children fell bleeding. The air was filled with screaming and weeping. Those not wounded by the shooting were forced through an open gate, jumping over the dead and wounded, to a square fenced with barbed wire.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Sereny, *Into that Darkness*, pp.158-159.

¹⁰⁵ Krzepicki, 'Eighteen Days in Treblinka,' pp.86-89.

¹⁰⁶ Hackett, *Buchenwald report*, p.102.

The camp was not as efficient as hoped. It took time before a smooth running of the gas chambers could be routinely achieved, as sometimes the gassing was stopped while the victims were still alive. Body-removal was another area which took experimentation and improvement, as hand pushed transport trolleys used to remove corpses to mass graves were found to be too inefficient and unreliable for continuous use. Meanwhile, the clothing and valuables of the victims continued to pile up, as there were no real efforts to process and remove them from the camp, yet the transports continued to pour in.¹⁰⁷ Samuel Willenberg recorded that he viewed a pile of clothing some ten meters high in the sorting yard, with thousands of other objects lying all around.¹⁰⁸

The situation was so out of control that Treblinka commander Eberl wrote to his wife Ruth on July 30, 1942 regarding the tremendous amount of work needed to be done in the camp and of working very late into the night, noting that “even if there were four of me and each day was 100 hours long, this would surely not be enough.”¹⁰⁹ Eberl further wrote that there was a limit on how much he could report to his wife about his work “since you represent for me the beautiful part in my life, you should not know everything about it.” Thomas Kues has addressed these letters by Eberl in isolation, highlighting the point that they don’t provide any direct statements referring to gassings or exterminations by themselves.¹¹⁰ This point is correct, but only stands through dishonestly de-contextualizing Eberl’s letters, removing them from the wider array of evidence showing the problematic start to operations in Treblinka and the details of those actions.¹¹¹

As the gas chambers were filled and sometimes unusable due to engine breakdowns, other methods were relied upon to eliminate the transports. In addition to Oskar Berger’s testimony on shootings upon his arrival at Treblinka, Jankiel Wiernik, who also arrived in late August 1942, described the scene at the reception area:

The place was littered with corpses. Some clothed, others naked. They were black and swollen. Their faces were expressing fear and terror. Their eyes wide open,

¹⁰⁷ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.87.

¹⁰⁸ Samuel Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, p.23.

¹⁰⁹ Michael Grabher, *Irmfried Eberl: ‘Euthanasi’-Arzt und Kommandant von Treblinka*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2006, pp.73-74.

¹¹⁰ Thomas Kues, ‘Review: Michael Grabher, “Irmfried Eberl. ‘Euthanasia’-Arz und Kommandant von Treblinka”,’ <http://www.revblog.codoh.com/2009/07/review-michael-grabher-irmfried-eberl-euthanasie-arzt-und-kommandant-von-treblinka-peter-lang-europaischer-verlag-der-wissenschaft-frankfurt-am-main-2006/> .

¹¹¹ Kues also fails to recognize the inductive implications of the letters by failing to present a plausible alternative hypothesis, but tries to dismiss its value by suggesting it could apply to anything unpleasant.

tongue stretched out, brains splattered, bodies disfigured. Blood everywhere.¹¹²

Chaos begot chaos in the Treblinka bloodbath.

These birthing pains were likely experienced in Belzec and Sobibor as well, but were not as noticeable or unbearable in these camps as they were not overloaded with deportations beyond the breaking point; Treblinka was. As SS-Unterscharführer August Hingst testified, “Dr. Eberl’s ambition was to reach the highest possible numbers and exceed all the other camps.” Hingst correctly summed up the situation at the camp: “So many transports arrived that the disembarkation and gassing of the people could no longer be handled.”¹¹³

Treblinka’s mismanagement did not go unnoticed by Eberl’s superiors. Following a bureaucratic recognition to better organize and improve the extermination process in the Reinhard camps, former Belzec commander Christian Wirth was appointed inspector of all three death camps in early August 1942. Towards the end of that same month, Wirth joined Globocnik in an inspection of the camp. Oberhauser, Wirth’s assistant, later testified:

In Treblinka the operation had broken down. It was probably that more transports arrived than the camp could cope with. I recall that a transport train was still not unloaded, also that the camp was overcrowded with Jews and that bodies of bloated Jews were also lying around everywhere.¹¹⁴

As a result of the visit, Eberl was dismissed and quickly replaced by Sobibor commander Stangl, who was available at the time as Sobibor had been closed for several weeks by that point. Upon his arrival at the camp, Stangl was shocked by the situation:

Treblinka that day was the most awful thing I saw during all of the Third Reich (...). It was Dante’s Inferno. It was Dante come to life. When I entered the camp and got out of the car on the square [the *Sortierungsplatz*]. I stepped knee-deep into money; I didn’t know which way to turn, where to go. I waded in notes, currency, precious stones, jewellery, clothes. They were everywhere, strewn all over the square. The smell was indescribable; the hundreds, no, the thousands of bodies everywhere, decomposing, putrefying.¹¹⁵

Following Stangl was his new deputy, Kurt Franz, who had worked at Belzec prior to his new promotion from Wirth. Franz also remembered that the camp was littered with corpses when he arrived, and that they had been there for some time as they “were already

¹¹² Jankiel Wiernik, *Rok w Treblince*, Warszawa, Nakladem Komisji Koordinacyjnej 1944, Bl.35; cf. Erlebnisbericht: Stanisław Kohn, 7.10.1945, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 230/59, p.1654 also AGK NTN 69, p.5ff; cf. Mlynarczyk, ‘Treblinka,’ p.262.

¹¹³ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.87.

¹¹⁴ Ruckerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager*, p. 209; Vernehmung Josef Oberhauser, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 230/59, Bd. 15, p.4266.

¹¹⁵ Sereny, *Into that Darkness*, p.157.

bloated.”¹¹⁶ Quickly calling for a halt to the madness, Wirth requested that all transports to Treblinka cease; Globocnik agreed, giving the camp a much needed respite as of August 28, 1942. With the suspension in further arrivals, the new camp leadership used the time to clear the scattered corpses and reorganize the operation of the camp, with Wirth informing the camp personnel of the new process. SS-Scharführer Franz Suchomel described Wirth’s new orders:

Wirth gave detailed instructions as to the liquidations of the transports and to the incorporation of the Jewish working commandos into his process. His instructions were detailed. For example, they described how to open the doors of the freight cars, the disembarking of the Jews, the passage through the “tube” to the upper part of the camp. Wirth personally gave an order that when the Jews were taking off their shoes they had to tie them together. ...Wirth’s instructions were carried out even after he left Treblinka.¹¹⁷

On September 3, 1942, nearly a week after halting transports to Treblinka, deportations from the Warsaw ghetto to the camp were renewed. Trains were divided into smaller sections, so that the camp did not have to process the entire load of Jews at once. Jews were now employed in the reception area to ensure a proper processing of the victims’ valuables and clothing, as well as to handle any corpses found in the transports. A ramp was also built so that arrivals could get off the railcars more easily.

Additionally, the camp began the process of selecting out those Jews incapable of walking at a hurried pace to the gas chambers (elderly, sick, some children). Instead of being herded to the gas chamber, they were taken by Jewish workers wearing Red Cross armbands to the Lazarett/“hospital,” which was hardly anything more than about a 7 meter deep grave.¹¹⁸ There they were shot and buried along with other bodies of dead arrivals.¹¹⁹ One of the executioners, SS-Unterscharführer Willi Mentz (who Mattogno and Graf misspell as ‘Metz’)¹²⁰, described the action there:

In the Lazarett area the arrivals were set or placed on the edge of the grave. When no more sick or wounded were expected, it was my task to shoot these people. This was done by a shot into their neck with a 9 mm pistol. Those shot fell into the grave or to the side and were carried down into the grave by two Lazarett work Jews. The corpses were sprinkled with chlorinated lime. Later they were

¹¹⁶ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 92; Treblinka-Franz, Band 8, p.1493.

¹¹⁷ Vernehmung Franz Suchomel, 14.9.1967, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 230/59, Band 13, pp.3779-3780.; cf. Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p. 96.

¹¹⁸ Mlynarczyk, ‘Treblinka,’ p.267.

¹¹⁹ These shootings at the site of the so-called “hospital” are amply testified to. About Sobibor, for instance, relevant statements have been made by Erich Bauer, Kurt Bolender, Karl August Wilhelm Frenzel, Hubert Gomerski, Jakob Alfred Ittner, Moshe Bahir, Jakob Biskobicz, Dov Freiberg, and Ukrainian Prokofij Businijj.

¹²⁰ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.118.

burned in the grave on the instruction of Wirth.¹²¹

Mentz's superior, SS-Scharführer August Miete, testified about the actions there, "I want to say that, in total, I shot hundreds of different people: those sick from the transport, sick and fallen from the work commandos, and other sorts."¹²²

These executions have almost entirely been ignored by MGK in their studies on the Reinhard camps. Only in the recent *Sobibór* work are a very small number of shootings conceded, which they suspect to be part of an ongoing euthanasia program upon the deportees to be sent further east.¹²³ Their theory greatly distorts the clear purpose of these shootings, and also ignores their true scale.

Despite the many problems with the initial operation at Treblinka, the camp still managed to process many thousands of Jews prior to the August-September halt of new arrivals. Within the first two and a half months, more than 250,000 Jews from Warsaw had been brought to the camp, along with tens of thousands from the Radom district.¹²⁴

Yet, the Treblinka bloodbath was not the only problem facing Aktion Reinhard chief Globocnik, as the fuel supply for his camps was not as high as wished. On September 4, 1942, Globocnik wrote to Werner Grothmann, a member of Himmler's RSHA staff, complaining about the reduction in his fuel allotment:

Dear Grothmann,

As an SS and Police Chief my engine fuel rations have once again been painfully reduced. I could carry out Einsatz 'Reinhard' until now with my allotment. This present cutback restricts the operation still further. As large foreign deliveries are imminent, please factor these circumstances into consideration. I ask you to obtain a special ration exclusively for this action from a proper Reich Office. SS-Obergruppenführer Krueger is not in the position to issue more engine fuel to me.

SS and Police Chief for the District of Lublin,

Globocnik¹²⁵

The "large foreign deliveries" (grosse Auslandsanlieferungen) that Globocnik referred to were the expected deportations of many Romanian Jews to Belzec, which were discussed in late August, but never commenced.¹²⁶ The terminology that Globocnik used (Treibstoff)

¹²¹ Mlynarczyk, 'Treblinka,' p.267; Vernehmung Willi Mentz, 19.07.1960, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 230/59, pp.1138-1139.

¹²² Mlynarczyk, 'Treblinka,' p.268; Vernehmung August Miete, 1.6.1960, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 230/59, p.1009.

¹²³ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.168.

¹²⁴ See section 'The Acceleration of Extermination and Conflicts over Jewish Labour' in Chapter 3

¹²⁵ FS SSPF Lublin an den Persönlichen Staf RFSS, z.Hd.V. SS-Hstuf Grothmann, 4.9.42, gez. Globocnik, BA NS19/3165.

¹²⁶ On the abortive plan to deport Romanian Jews to the Lublin district, see Longerich, *Holocaust*, pp.266-370. Perhaps MGK can explain why Romanian Jews would be sent north to Galicia, instead of east directly into the Ukraine or Transnistria?

explicitly refers to engine fuels, from which the gas chambers operated. It is also possible that the fuel was required for excavating work on mass graves and possibly also cremations, which began at Sobibor shortly after the time of this letter, especially with reports of corpse incinerations in August which are available from Belzec and Treblinka.¹²⁷ The two scenarios are mutually reinforcing, as opposed to contradicting of one another. Such a heavy requirement of fuel stands in stark contrast to a supposed transit camp, in which there typically were no uses of fuel besides power generators, which would not require a substantial amount.

Quickly following the reorganization of the extermination procedure at Treblinka in September, the new camp Kommandant Stangl sought to increase the camp's gassing capacity and moved to construct an additional set of gas chambers. SS-Unterscharführer Willi Mentz discussed the changes to the camp:

When I came to Treblinka the camp commandant was a doctor named Dr. Eberl. He was very ambitious. It was said that he ordered more transports than could be "processed" in the camp. That meant that trains had to wait outside the camp because the occupants of the previous transport had not yet all been killed. At the time it was very hot and as a result of the long wait inside the transport trains in the intense heat many people died. At the time whole mountains of bodies lay on the platform. The Hauptsturmführer Christian Wirth came to Treblinka and kicked up a terrific row. And then one day Dr. Eberl was no longer there...

For about two months I worked in the upper section of the camp and then after Eberl had gone everything in the camp was reorganized. The two parts of the camp were separated by barbed wire fences. Pine branches were used so that you could not see through the fences. The same thing was done along the route from the "transfer" area to the gas chambers...

Finally, new and larger gas chambers were built. I think that there were now five or six larger gas chambers. I cannot say exactly how many people these large gas chambers held. If the small gas chambers could hold 80-100 people, the large ones could probably hold twice that number.¹²⁸

Camp worker Jankiel Wiernik, who wrote about his experiences shortly after his liberation, described the construction of the new gas chambers soon after his arrival:

The new construction job between Camp No. 1 and Camp No. 2, on which I had been working, was completed in a very short time. It turned out that we were building ten additional gas chambers, more spacious than the old ones, 7 by 7 meters or about 50 square meters. As many as 1,000 to 1,200 persons could be crowded into one gas chamber. The building was laid out according to the corridor system, with five chambers on each side of the corridor. Each chamber had two doors, one door leading into the corridor through which the victims were

¹²⁷ See the section Cremation Devices, Methods and Times, Chapter 8.

¹²⁸ Klee, *The Good Old Days*, pp.245-247.

admitted; the other door, facing the camp, was used for the removal of the corpses. (...) The work on these gas chambers lasted five weeks, which to us seemed like centuries. (...) New transports of victims arrived each day. They were immediately ordered to disrobe and were led to the three old gas chambers, passing us on the way. Many of us saw our children, wives and other loved ones among the victims. And when, on the impulse of grief, someone rushed to his loved ones, he would be killed on the spot. It was under these conditions that we constructed death chambers for our brethren and ourselves.¹²⁹

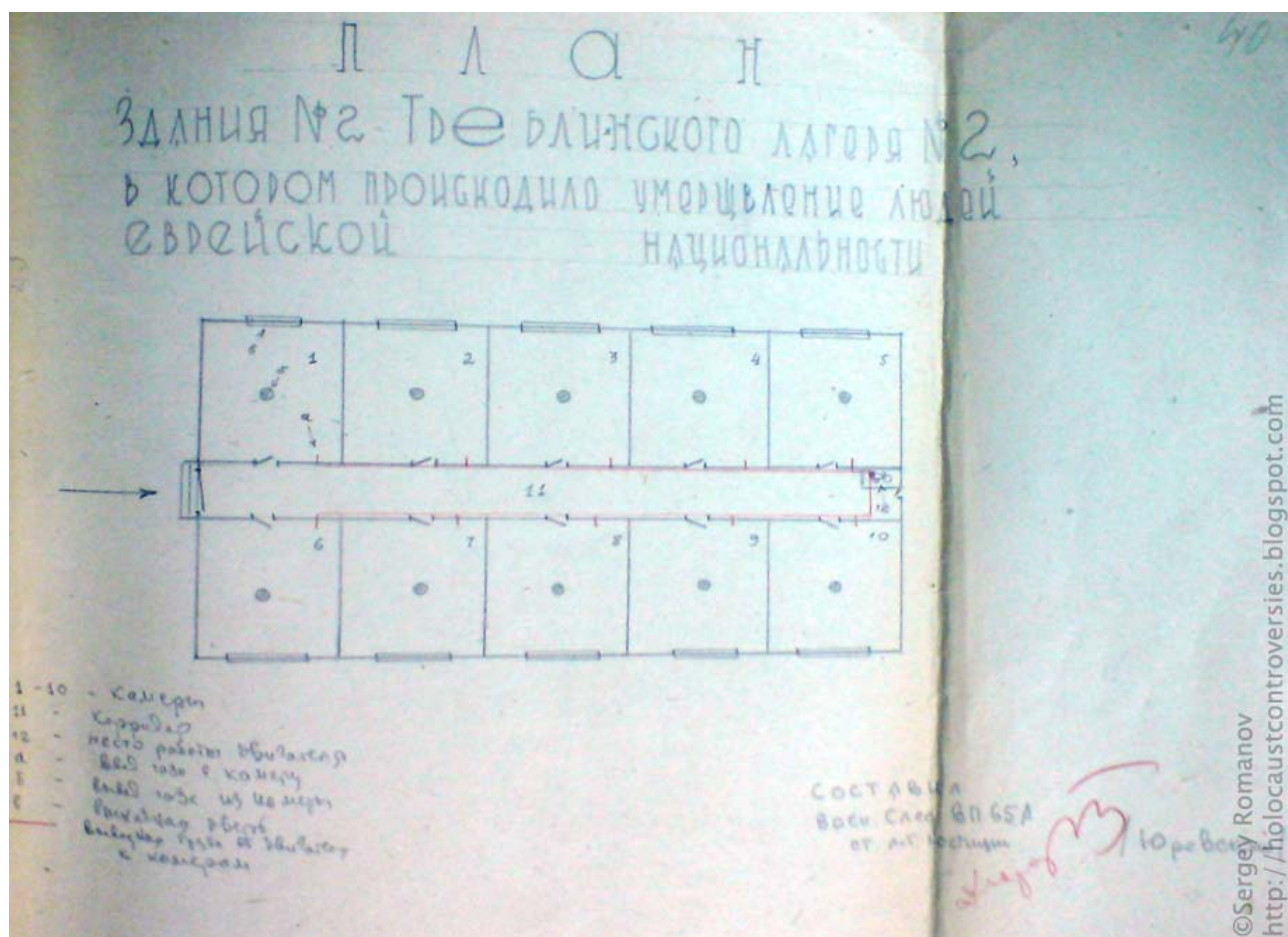


Image 5.3: Plan of the new gas chambers drawn by First Lieutenant of Justice Yurovsky in September 1944 apparently based on the testimony of Abraham Goldfarb. Source: GARF 7445-2-134, l. 40.

Legend:

1-10. Chambers.

11. Corridor.

12. The engine room.

a. Gas inlet in the chamber.

б. Outlet for exhausting gas from the chamber.

в. Exit door.

The red line: the exhaust pipe from the engine into the chambers.

¹²⁹ Wiernik, 'A Year in Treblinka,' pp.161-163.

In his Treblinka account with Graf, Mattogno criticized Wiernik for failing to include a vent opening to remove engine exhaust from the gas chambers; instead, they believe the Soviets fabricated such an opening into their drawings to make the gassing claims more technically plausible. Unfortunately, such a conclusion can only be supported through sloppy research and ignorance.¹³⁰ Treblinka worker Abraham Goldfarb, who took part in the gas chamber construction at Treblinka but who has been entirely ignored by MGK, stated for the new chambers that “there was a separate opening in the roof” for the removal of gas, while also noting that the older gas chambers had a similar vent. Wiernik himself wrote that the new gas chambers had an “outlet on the roof” with a “hermetic cap,” with the cap clearly being removable to ventilate out exhaust gas from the chambers. While Mattogno criticizes Wiernik for failing to provide for an exhaust vent¹³¹, they quote the relevant testimony from Wiernik in the same book.¹³² Such sloppiness is inexcusable.

Mattogno has have alleged that Wiernik plagiarized a map from the November 15, 1942 Treblinka report in order to “lend credibility to his claims.”¹³³ They list numerous similarities between the maps of the November 1942 report and the one included Wiernik’s 1944 account, and criticize him for failing to include cremation grills.¹³⁴ Unfortunately for the deniers, there is no evidence that Wiernik actually drew or sketched the map that was included in his book; indeed, nowhere in the text of his account does Wiernik refer to the map illustration. Instead, it is more likely that the Polish underground publisher included the map on their own accord to better help the reader follow Wiernik’s account, making Mattogno and Graf’s criticism over the map irrelevant.¹³⁵ Wiernik did testify during the Eichmann trial to drawing a map of Treblinka in 1944¹³⁶, which was subsequently published in 1945; Mattogno claims that with this map “the plagiarism shows up even more glaringly,” but does not

¹³⁰ M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.120-121, 136. On this point, Sergey Romanov has provided a comprehensive rebuttal to the sloppy and dishonest research of the Mattogno and Graf in ‘If they’re the best, what about the rest?’ *Holocaust Controversies*, 9.6.07, <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2007/06/if-theyre-best-what-about-rest.html>.

¹³¹ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.121.

¹³² *Ibid.*, p.70. They quote Wiernik stating “A gas chamber measured 5 x 5 meters and was about 1.90 meters high. The outlet on the roof had a hermetic cap.”

¹³³ Sergey Romanov, ‘Lying about Wiernik,’ *Holocaust Controversies*, 19.10.06, <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2006/10/lying-about-wiernik.html>.

¹³⁴ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.72.

¹³⁵ This makes the most sense, as the map was written in Polish despite its inclusion in the Yiddish version, Yankiel Wiernik, *A Yor in Treblinka*. New York: Unser Tsayt Ferlag, 1944, pp.32-33.

¹³⁶ Trial of Adolf Eichmann: Session 66, available at: <http://nizkor.org/hweb/people/e/eichmann-adolf/transcripts/Sessions/Session-066-04.html>.

provide any details or reasoning behind his statement. A simple comparison of the two maps (see image 5.4) shows anything but plagiarism.¹³⁷

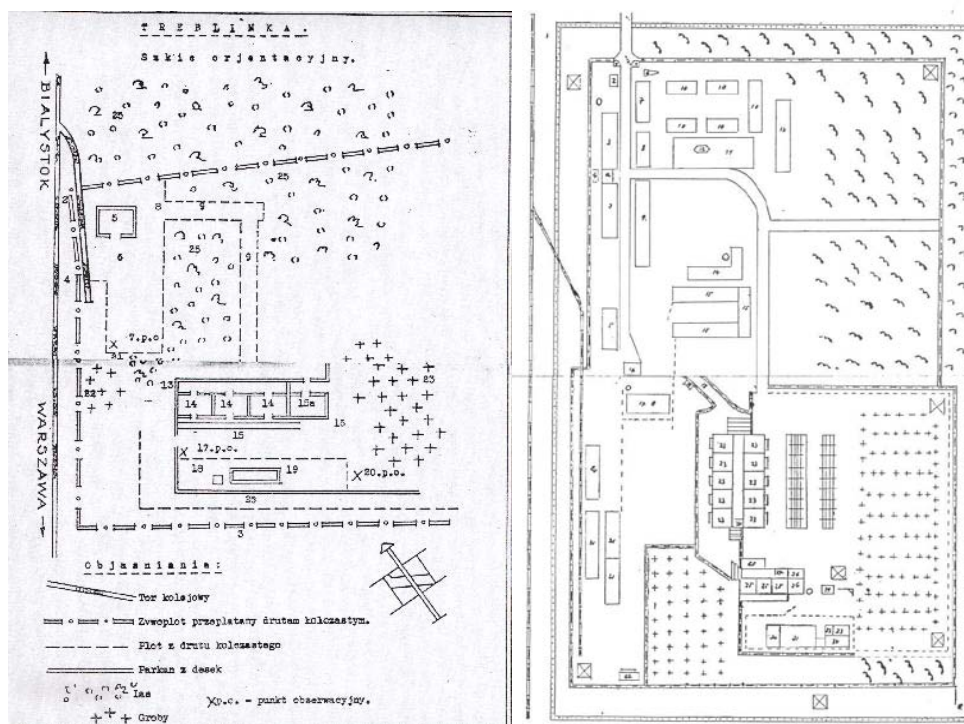


Image 5.4: Compare the map included in Wiernik’s 1944 report (left) with the map Wiernik testified to drawing (right)

Moving past Mattogno’s distorted and dishonest criticism of Wiernik, sometime in late September/early October 1942, the additional gas chambers opened for operation. Chil Rajchman (aka Henryk Reichman), who arrived in the camp on October 11, 1942, was able to witness and later work at the newly built gas chambers:

It is worth mentioning that at the time I began working in the death camp, there were two gassing structures in operation. The larger one had ten chambers, into each of which as many as four hundred people could enter. Each chamber was 7 metres long by 7 metres wide. People were stuffed into them like herrings. When one chamber was full, the second one was opened, and so on. Small transports were brought to the smaller structure, which had three gas chambers, each of which could hold 450 to 500 persons.¹³⁸

Rajchman wrote more specifically about the newly built gas chambers:

The size of the gas chamber is 7 by 7 metres. In the middle of the chamber there

¹³⁷ Among other points, Wiernik’s 1944 map has more buildings in the reception area, more buildings in the extermination area, slightly different positioning of various buildings and the path to the gas chambers, has cremation grates and differently numbered buildings, and does not have any signs of orientation. The maps also look to be drawn by two different people.

¹³⁸ Chil Rajchman, *Treblinka: A Survivor’s Memory 1942-1943*, London: MacLeHose Press, 2011, p.57.

are shower heads through which the gas is introduced. On one of the walls a thick pipe serves as an exhaust to remove the air. Thick felt around the doors of the chamber renders them airtight.¹³⁹

In a response to Rajchman's writings, Thomas Kues raised several objections to his statements on the gas chambers at Treblinka. Pertaining to the additional gas chamber building, Kues is only able to criticize the guesses of different capacities given by Rajchman and Wiernik for the 10 new chambers (Rajchman said 400 per chamber, Wiernik said 1,000-1,200).¹⁴⁰ Such variations in witness testimony, while noteworthy, do not amount to a genuine reason to discount the reliability of either witness; witnesses are notorious for providing a wide range of estimates on an un-quantified and unknown figure. More generally, the differences between Wiernik and Rajchman certainly are not evidence of a wider conspiracy or hoax that MGK ultimately conclude; instead, the variation is more realistically due to different perceptions, experiences, and memories among the witnesses regarding a figure that varied from day to day, and a victim count which was never specifically announced to the workers.

Property Plunder

As a secondary effect of the extermination process, the Aktion Reinhard staff were able to reap the rewards of their actions by confiscating the property and valuables of the Jewish deportees brought to the camps, and never heard from again. While the documentation and evidence for the theft and removal of the deportees' belongings does not itself constitute *direct* proof of homicidal gassings, it does provide strong circumstantial weight to the reality of their occurrence. The property plunder also serves as a means to test the reliability of the witness testimonies, as the available documentation bears out their statements regarding the removal of the deportees' belongings. The total theft of the deportees' property also stands in stark contrast to any alleged "transit camp" thesis that Revisionists often espouse. It is likely due to these factors that MGK have largely ignored this subject in their works.¹⁴¹ Highlighting just how pitiful MGK's brief handling of this subject is, a comparison is in order: in Yitzhak Arad's seminal work, the property plunder subject is analyzed through the open use of eight documents and fifteen witnesses¹⁴², while MGK only manage to discuss

¹³⁹ Rajchman, *Treblinka*, p.20.

¹⁴⁰ Again sticking to one of denial's primary modes of witness criticism.

¹⁴¹ In the Aktion Reinhard collection of English publications by MGK (*Treblinka, Belzec, and Sobibor*), less than four pages are devoted to this subject: *Treblinka*, pp.157-160.

¹⁴² Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, pp.154-164.

four documents (one only related to Sachsenhausen) and one witness. Even more unfortunate for MGK is that Arad did not use all the existing documentation available.

The collection, organization, and distribution of deportee property by the Aktion Reinhard staff was codified in a September 26, 1942 order from SS-Brigadeführer August Frank, a figure in the Economic and Administrative Main Office (WVHA) of Himmler's SS. The order mandated, among other things:

1. All money in bills of the Reichsbank (German currency) will be deposited in Account No. 158/1488 of the WVHA in the Reichsbank.
2. Foreign currency, rare metals, diamonds, precious stones, pearls, gold teeth, and pieces of gold will be transferred to the WVHA for deposit in the Reichsbank.
- (...)
4. Men's clothing and underwear, including shoes, will be sorted and checked. Whatever cannot be used by the prisoners in the concentration camps and items of special value will be kept for the troops; the rest will be transferred to VoMi (Department for the Volksdeutsche).
5. Women's underwear and clothing will be sold to the VoMi, except for pure silk underwear (men's or women's), which will be sent directly to the Economic Ministry.
6. Feather-bedding, blankets, umbrellas, baby carriages, handbags, leather belts, baskets, pipes, sunglasses, mirrors, briefcases, and material will be transferred to VoMi. Payment will be arranged later.
7. Bedding, like sheets and pillowcases, as well as towels and tablecloths will be sold to VoMi.
8. All types of eyeglasses will be forwarded for the use of the Medical Authority. Glasses with gold frames will be transferred without the lenses along with the precious metals.¹⁴³

Frank's order, which related to the utilization of "mobile and immobile property of the resettled Jews," formally bureaucratized the transfer of property from Jewish deportees to the Nazi state. As this entire document was included in Yitzhak Arad's 1987 seminal work on the Reinhard camps, a work which is cited in nearly every piece of writing by the members of MGK, they either failed to read the entire work or selectively omitted it from their discussions of property plunder. It is not surprising that MGK completely ignore this document, as it easily refutes their dishonest notion that the Nazi theft of Jewish property was, if it did occur, only limited to a "small portion" and was performed arbitrarily or due to

¹⁴³ Frank order, 26.9.1942, NO-724; Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, pp.154-155; Ruckerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager*, pp.109-111.

the deportees exceeding a maximum allowance of luggage.¹⁴⁴ In reality, the plunder was much more systematic, and was centralized into the extermination process.¹⁴⁵

On February 6, 1943, the head of the SS Economic and Administrative Main Office, Oswald Pohl, sent out a report on the utilization of textile materials recovered from the Jewish actions in the Aktion Reinhard and Auschwitz camps during the past year. Most of the materials would have originated with the Reinhard camps (which were transferred to Lublin), as they treated more Jewish arrivals than the Auschwitz camp in 1942.¹⁴⁶ In Pohl's report, he counted a total of 825 freight cars full of goods which were transferred to various Reich bureaucracies, which included 262,000 adult outfits, tens of thousands of pieces of bed linen and a wide variety of male, female, and children's clothing, along with 2,700,000 kg of "rags" (old and unusable clothes).¹⁴⁷

Mattogno's analysis of this and other documents are entirely unconvincing. He believes that since a document from the *Generaldirektion der Ostbahn* (Directorate General of the Eastern Railroad, Gedob for short) refers to a goods train from Treblinka containing "articles of clothing of the Waffen-SS", that it is "particularly improbable" that the train contained clothing from Jewish deportees. The designation was likely issued by the SS-Wirtschaftler of HSSPF Ost (Economic office of the HSSPF in Poland, which was de facto a Waffen-SS office) to facilitate the shipping of the clothing, as material related to the Waffen-SS held priority in transportation. Also, as Treblinka was not located anywhere near the area of operations of the various Waffen-SS units, Mattogno would be hard pressed to explain how and why the units' uniforms were brought back to Treblinka for cleaning/delousing/sorting; his conjecture lacks any type of evidentiary weight.

Mattogno also ignores other relevant documents which deconstruct his baseless assumptions regarding the deportees' property. In his discussion of documents recording goods from the Treblinka camp, Mattogno engages in the snapshot fallacy. While Mattogno argues that 1,300 freight cars would have been necessary to carry what he expects the total

¹⁴⁴ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.160. It would be entertaining to hear MGK's explanation for how the plunder of golden teeth from deported Jews's mouth figures into a supposed maximum allowance of belongings per deportee, or even glasses. MG, feeling the need to toss any possible idea that might stick and dismiss the issue, also oddly point out that there is no proof that the clothes did not originate from Treblinka I, hoping that a small labor camp could explain a massive amount of recovered goods.

¹⁴⁵ Testimonies cited earlier for the various camps have already highlighted the occurrence of undressing prior to the gassing in the Reinhard camps.

¹⁴⁶ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.160.

¹⁴⁷ Pohl to Himmler, 6.2.1943, NO-1257. Also available at <http://nizkor.org/ftp.py?camps/auschwitz/documents/no-1257>. Mattogno ignores the fact that "rags" was a term for clothing too poor to reuse.

amount of clothing to be for the Treblinka deportees (10 kg per deportee¹⁴⁸), he finds it “ridiculous” that the September 13, 1942, Gedob document only counts 50 train cars of clothing leaving Treblinka. Not included in his analysis on clothing, however, are two other available Gedob documents recording train loads of clothing departing from Treblinka: one from September 9, recording 51 such cars, and one from September 21, recording another 52 cars. Thus, within a twelve day period in September 1942, Treblinka shipped out 153 freight cars of clothing (12% of Mattogno’s assumed total). With Globocnik’s recognition that by 1 January 1944 the Reinhard program had recorded some 2,000 freight cars of textile goods, whatever deficit of textile rail cars Mattogno felt existed was thoroughly covered.¹⁴⁹

Oscar Strawczynski, a Jewish prisoner who worked sorting the belongings at the Treblinka camp, described the process:

Blankets and tablecloths are spread on the ground and all kinds of goods are collected on them. There is a huge quantity and an astonishing variety: from, the most expensive imported textiles, to the cheapest cottons, from the most elegant suits, to the cheapest worn-out rags. There are avenues of suitcases and in them everything imaginable: haberdashery, cosmetics, drugs—it seems there is no article in the world that cannot be found here. The sorted items are brought to one side of the square where they are piled into huge bales. There is also food in enormous amounts: dried noodles, sugar, soap, candles, matches, cigarettes, and sweets. There is no lack of the most expensive canned foods, tea and coffee, but also there are mouldy crusts of bread. Some poor Jews even brought a few potatoes.

A special spot is designated for suitcases with valuables. They are filled with precious gold, jewellery, chains and watches, bracelets, diamond rings and plain gold rings—most of all wedding rings. There are treasures in foreign currency—gold and paper dollars, pounds sterling and old Russian gold coins. Polish money is hardly worth mentioning; it is stacked up in mountains. From time to time the “Gold Jews” who sort these treasures appear. They remove the filled suitcases and replace them with empty ones. These too are quickly filled.¹⁵⁰

Abraham Krzepicki’s account of his stay in Treblinka also mentions the sorting of clothes:

When we were through with the bodies in the well, we were taken to clear away the things in the left-hand barracks, where the people undressed before entering the gas chamber. Here, piled up in huge mounds, were the garments, underwear, shoes and all sorts of other items left by the men, women and children who had undressed there the day before. Various amounts of cash, large and small, were also lying around on the floor. There was Polish money as well as foreign currency, securities and jewelry. It was our job to pick up the rags as they were,

¹⁴⁸ This assumption is not supported by any evidence or reasoning on the part of Mattogno.

¹⁴⁹ 4024-PS (IMT Vol. XXXIV, pp.59, 84 and 89; online copy: http://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/Military_Law/pdf/NT_Vol-XXXIV.pdf)

¹⁵⁰ Oscar Strawczynski, *Ten Months in Treblinka: October 5, 1942-August 2, 1943* (1989), p.XVI.

and to add them to the piles of clothing near the railroad tracks.¹⁵¹

After the property was organized and prepared, it was loaded onto trains, and sent off from the camp; many of the cars with textile material were brought to an old airport in Lublin, serving as a sub camp of Majdanek. This airport-turned-SS workshop became the gathering point for most of the deportees' material during Aktion Reinhard. SS man Ernst Gollak, who served at the SS workshop for several years testified after the war:

From May or June 1942, in this clothing camp of Lublin, furs and coats of Jews who were in the extermination camps of Belzec, Treblinka, and Sobibor were disinfected and sent to Germany. These articles were brought by freight trains, unloaded by the (Ukrainian) auxiliaries and later by the working Jews, disinfected, and loaded again in the freight cars. I was in charge of a group of twenty to thirty Jewish women who were trained as disinfectors....The clothing was divided according to men's, women's, and children's clothing. Then it was subdivided again; outer and under clothing, shoes, etc. Where these sorted clothes were sent I don't know exactly. I once saw on the freight cars the names of the train stations: Berlin, Glogau, Breslau, and Hirschberg.¹⁵²

The movement of goods from the Reinhard camps to Lublin is supported by several documents. On 16 April 1943 for instance, when Dutch Jews were being transported to the Sobibor camp a wide variety of personal goods (i.e. 5000 combs, 1000 toothbrushes, 6400 clippers, 12800 spectacles) were brought to "Bekleidungswerke, Lublin, Chopinstr.(asse) 27" by SS-Sonderkommando Sobibor.¹⁵³ The same location in Lublin had also sorted out some 100,000 pairs of shoes in January 1943 as well.¹⁵⁴

As shown earlier, August Frank's September 26, 1942 order to the Aktion Reinhard staff included instructions for the removal of gold teeth from Jews (see the second quoted instruction). This process has been confirmed by the testimony of several witnesses. In SS-Unterscharführer Schluch's description of the exterminations at Belzec, he relates that after the gassing "the bodies were dragged out of the gas chambers and inspected by a dentist, who removed finger-rings and gold teeth."¹⁵⁵ SS-Oberscharführer Heinrich Matthes also admitted that in the Upper Camp (extermination area) of Treblinka "there were also working Jews who had to break out the gold teeth from the corpses."¹⁵⁶ SS-Unterscharführer Gustav Münzberger also provided a description of the process in Treblinka:

I know that Matthes (who was in charge of Camp III), at the end of each day

¹⁵¹ Krzepicki, 'Eighteen Days in Treblinka,' p.91.

¹⁵² Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p. 159; Sobibor-Bolender, Band 8, pp.1556-1557.

¹⁵³ SS-Sonderkommando Sobibor an die Bekleidungswerke Lublin, 16.4.43, AGK NTN 144, p.109.

¹⁵⁴ Abt IVa, Betr. Schuhe u. Stiefel, 13.1.43, gez. Wipperm, AGK NTN 144, p.108.

¹⁵⁵ Karl Alfred Schluch, 11.11.1961, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd. 8, pp.1512-1513; cf. Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.71.

¹⁵⁶ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.121; Treblinka-Franz, Band 10, pp.2053-2055.

when a transport arrived, used to take the gold to the Lower Camp. This relates to gold teeth and valuables of gold that had been found on the corpses. This gold was brought in a small case.¹⁵⁷

A T4 courier¹⁵⁸ took cigarettes and mail to the camps¹⁵⁹ and then returned to Berlin with cases of valuables from some of the gassed victims.¹⁶⁰ Bolender testified in 1965 that Sobibor personnel were unhappy about the transfer of Jewish loot back to Berlin.¹⁶¹ This loot included gold from the teeth of victims. The judgment against T4 finance officer Friedrich Robert Lorent stated:

Ultimately, it was the central economic department that was responsible for registering money and valuables that T4 couriers brought to Berlin, and in at least one instance, that the defendant himself brought back from extermination camps in the East. The defendant stated that the value of this (booty) was approximately 180,000 Reichsmarks in 1942 and consisted mostly of dental gold, but also included coins and jewellery. He therefore brought objects to the Criminal Technical Institute [KTI] where the dental gold was resmelted and subsequently sold to Degussa.¹⁶²

Lorent admitted in his trial that he visited the AR camps in June 1942 but claimed that he had written a report to Brack expressing his disgust at “the method practiced in the Polish camps”. Among the documents that was used by the court to convict Lorent was a letter dated December 1944 returning unused carbon monoxide gasholders to I.G. Farben.¹⁶³ The delivery of gas canisters from I.G. Farben’s BASF site in Ludwigshafen has also been documented, a fact which Mattogno denies in his Chelmno book.¹⁶⁴ Lorent is thus a key link in the evidential chain that leads from gassing and robbery in T4 to the same practices in AR. Also, in 1966 Bolender’s ex-wife testified that Bolender had brought home 'goldbrücken' from Sobibor.¹⁶⁵

¹⁵⁷ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.158; Treblinka-Franz, Band 10, p.2088.

¹⁵⁸ Friedlander, *Origins of Nazi Genocide*, p.298, citing interrogation of T4 courier Erich Fettke, 2.9.65, and letter of Irmfried Eberl (Sobibor commader) to Fraeulein Dittmann (Bernburg), 26.4.42 GStA Frankfurt, Eberl Akten, II/166, 7: 86-87

¹⁵⁹ Burleigh, *Death and Deliverance*, p.232, citing interrogation of Heinrich Gley, 4.12.62. ZSL ‘Euthanasia’, Ga-Go.

¹⁶⁰ Burleigh, *Death and Deliverance*, p.232, citing interrogation of Robert Lorent, 18.10.65. ZSL ‘Euthanasia’, Li-Lz.

¹⁶¹ Burleigh, *Death and Deliverance*, p.232, citing interrogation of Kurt Bolender, 8.7.65. ZSL ‘Euthanasia’, Bi-Bq.

¹⁶² Independent Commission of Switzerland – Second World War, Switzerland and Gold Transactions in the Second World War, Interim Report, May 1998, p. 32, citing Frankfurt state court, judgment and sentence, Hans-Joachim Becker and Friedrich Robert Lorent, 27.5.70., Ks 1/69 (GStA), p.115.

¹⁶³ De Mildt, *In The Name of the People*, pp.78-94, citing JuNSV Lfd. Nr. 733.

¹⁶⁴ Friedlander, *The Origins of Nazi Genocide*, p.331 n.65, citing correspondence between the KTI, the KdF, and IG Farbenindustrie. DÖW, file E18370/1, and BAK, R58/1059. For Mattogno’s denial see *Chelmno* [English edition], 2011, p.10.

¹⁶⁵ Schelvis, *Sobibor*, p.85, citing Margarete Bolender testimony, 15.8.66, Hagen, ZStA.Do-Doppel

Pohl's earlier mentioned February 1943 report also lists the delivery to the Reich Ministry of Economics of a freight car with 3,000 kg of women's hair.¹⁶⁶ In response, Mattogno relies upon a document specific to the Sachsenhausen camp to assume (without any direct evidence) that "these 3,000 kg of hair...was therefore the harvest of a series of haircuts of the prisoners of Auschwitz and Lublin in 1942."¹⁶⁷ Unfortunately for Mattogno, not only is this supposition without evidence, it is also directly refuted by it. There does exist a Wehrmacht invoice recording the delivery of 400 kg of hair from Treblinka to the Paul Reimann Company in Friedland on November 21, 1942.¹⁶⁸ Thus, the notion that hair of Jewish deportees was shorn at the Reinhard camps and delivered elsewhere is a documented fact.

The shearing of female Jewish deportees prior to their murder in the gas chambers was a later feature for the Reinhard camps. Following the re-organization of Treblinka, Franz Stangl testified about the new procedure:

One day we received a disinfecting machine without having been told what it was for. I asked about it in Lublin. I was told in reply that from now on we were to cut the women's hair. The hair should be cleaned and packed in bags. As no one was familiar with the disinfection machine, I believe I asked someone from Lublin to come and show us how to operate this device. I believe Wirth himself even came and organized the thing to show how it should run with scissors and fumigation. I still recall that from Lublin they explained that the hair was to be used for submarine insulation.¹⁶⁹ Perhaps it was Wirth himself who told me.¹⁷⁰

By the time of Chil Rajchman's [aka Henryk Reichman's] arrival in Treblinka in early-mid October, women's hair was being cut prior to the gassings.¹⁷¹ Related to this subject is Abraham Bomba, who has selectively criticized by deniers for his 1979 statement

¹⁶⁶ Pohl to Himmler, 6.2.1943, NO-1257: "women's hair 1 car 3,000 kg"

¹⁶⁷ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.159.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. Sergey Romanov, 'Ugly Voice is Completely Ignorant About Documentary Evidence, HC blog, 6.7.2006. While MGK might wish to explain this document as due to the hair-cutting of the Treblinka labor camp, it is worth noting that Mattogno highlights a "large transport" of hair from the Sachsenhausen camp as 275 kg. MGK cannot expect anyone to seriously maintain that a much smaller labor camp was able to produce nearly 50% more hair in a cut than a larger concentration camp.

¹⁶⁹ Note should be made of Glücks' August 6, 1942 directive to several concentration camps ordering the hair of concentration camp prisoners was to be put to use if it met a specified length requirement. The hair was to be made into industrial felt, or spun into yarn. Gluck specified the use of the hair as follows: "Out of combed and cut hair of women, hair-yarn socks for U-boat crews are to be made, as well as hair-felt stockings for employees of the Reich railways." USSR-511; IMT Vol. XX, p.353.

¹⁷⁰ Vernehmung Franz Stangl., 11.7.1967, BAL B162/208 AR-Z 230/59, Bd. 13, pp.3274-5; cfRückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager*, pp.222-3.

¹⁷¹ Protokol, Henryk Reichman, 12.11.45, Lodz, AGK NTN 69, p.29R

on hair-cutting in Treblinka (for the documentary Shoah)¹⁷², and who offered a much more coherent statement in the 1960s which no Revisionist has ever bothered to check.¹⁷³

Property plunder also appears in testimonies concerning Chelmno. Biebow's associate Rudolf Kramp stated in 1945 that he had taken two leather suitcases to Chelmno Sonderkommando head Bothmann, who had filled them with looted property and took them to Greiser.¹⁷⁴

The documents and several eyewitness statements converge on several aspects of the plunder of deportee property, including hair, clothing, and gold teeth. In and of themselves, these evidentiary convergences do not conclusively prove homicidal gassings at the Reinhard camps. There is a possibility of an innocuous explanation for the transfer of this material, but unfortunately for MGK, all the available evidence only points to a more sinister interpretation, one which fits into the wider picture of the evidence so often ignored or distorted by MGK regarding Aktion Reinhard. These areas also serve to confirm the reliability of witness statements describing such procedures, and all of whom directly relate the property plunder issues directly to homicidal gassings of their Jewish owners.

While serving to indirectly confirm mass gassings at the Reinhard camps, the plunder issue also has caused a slight division among the beliefs of MGK in their few brief general references relevant to the subject. In their original account, *Treblinka*, while nowhere explicitly stating so, Mattogno and Graf suggest that Treblinka housed delousing facilities used for clothing,¹⁷⁵ presumably also including the clothing of the Jewish deportees, which were then given back to the deportees, providing no details on when or how the clothes were deloused, and when or how they were presented back to the arrivals. In *Sobibór*, a brief mention is made by MGK similarly suggesting that the deportees' clothing was deloused and given back to the arrivals following some vague and unspecified hygienic measures.¹⁷⁶ On the same page (!) in *Sobibór*, a different claim is held that following the undressing of Jews,

¹⁷² For more on the selective criticism of Bomba, see Nick Terry, 'Bradley Smith's selective citation of Abraham Bomba on Treblinka', *Holocaust Controversies*, 24.7.06, <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2006/07/bradley-smiths-selective-citation-of.html>.

¹⁷³ Vernehmung Abraham Bomba, 8.5.1963, StA Hamburg 147 Js 7/72, Bd.49, pp.9492-7.

¹⁷⁴ Epstein, Model Nazi, pp.259-60, citing Protokoll über Zeugenvernehmung, Rudolf Kramp, 1 July 1945, BA-Ludwigsburg, AR-Z 141/88, Vol. III, p.456.

¹⁷⁵ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.157.

¹⁷⁶ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.80 n.171, where they suggest according to Chaim Engel that the clothes "were picked up to be disinfested and then distributed to newly deloused deportees." This inference is based upon a faulty reading of Engel's statement, which states that members from Camp III (the extermination camp) "came sometimes over to our Lager (camp II, with the sorting barracks) to bring the clothes or bring things like that." While Engel is describing members from the extermination camp bringing discovered belongings back to camp II ("came over to bring"), MGK incorrectly read this as members from Camp III coming to Camp II and picking up clothing to bring back to Camp III in order to be deloused. One must ask then why Jews undressed in Camp II instead of Camp III, where all the delousing supposedly happened according to MGK?

prisoner clothes were issued to wear in supposed work camps in the East.¹⁷⁷ Thus, not only do MGK take no account of the 2000 railcars of textile goods confiscated during Aktion Reinhard, they also fail to coherently explain the process by which deportees were presented with (their or another's) clothing.

Given the huge amount of clothing taken from deportees during the Reinhard, in light of MGK's resettlement hypothesis are we to believe that Jews travelled to the east naked?

The Gassing Engine: Diesel or Gasoline?

Revisionist arguments in regards to homicidal gas vans and the Aktion Reinhard camps have often focused on the type of engines employed for the gassings. In particular, American denier Friedrich Paul Berg has written numerous technical articles since the 1980s attempting to refute the notion that diesel engines could have been used *effectively* for mass murder, due to a low output of carbon monoxide.¹⁷⁸ At the time of Berg's writings, diesel engines were popularly ascribed to the Reinhard camps and gas vans, sometimes with the exception of Sobibor. Some anti-Revisionists have argued in response that diesels could indeed have been used for such gassings, if properly adjusted. Instead of debating such particulars, we believe that it is more effective to first revisit the sources of engine identification within the Reinhard camps and gas vans in order to determine the strength of this claim popularly assumed by some academics and courts.¹⁷⁹

A re-examination of the relevant testimonies with the Reinhard camps and gas vans reveals an interesting feature, one long ignored by MGK: witnesses who had closer experiences to the actual gassing engine share a large agreement that they were run by gasoline/petrol, while those witnesses with only an indirect hearsay knowledge of the engine were more likely to identify it as diesel. It didn't matter whether the witness was a perpetrator, bystander, or a survivor, only the matter of direct knowledge is important in

¹⁷⁷ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.80. This argument originates from a reliance on a 1999 interview with Sobibor survivor Ber Freiberg, nearly sixty years after the Freiberg's work in the camp. MGK marvel at how this detail has never been discussed by any other Reinhard witness, including Freiberg himself prior to 1999; unfortunately for MGK, this is likely due to the distortion of Freiberg's memory so long after the actual event. It is worth mentioning that the witness was 72 at the time of the interview, and could not be expected to recount accurate details. It is also hypocritical for MGK to rely upon something only supported by a single witness' statement, but dismiss other events with a multitude of witnesses, including homicidal gassings. It can also be expected that any widespread issuing of prisoner garb to the hundreds of thousands of Jewish deportees would have manifested itself through some type of invoice or financial bill, but no such document makes any relevant references.

¹⁷⁸ Friedrich Berg, 'The Diesel Gas Chambers: Myth within a Myth,' in G. Rudolf (ed.), *Dissecting the Holocaust*, pp.435-469; this is an updated and slightly expanded version of Berg's original article, 'The Diesel Gas Chambers – Myth Within a Myth,' *The Journal of Historical Review*, Vol. 5 No. 1 (1984), pp.15-46.

¹⁷⁹ The original argument for this approach can be found in Sergey Romanov's blog post, 'Why the "diesel issue" is irrelevant,' first published on 25 June 2006, *Holocaust Controversies*, <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2006/06/why-diesel-issue-is-irrelevant.html>;

identifying the testimonies which should be used to establish the method of murder. As we shall see shortly, numerous perpetrators did claim that there were diesel engines for gassing, yet their testimonies are not necessarily stronger than the testimonies of people who claimed that petrol engines were used. First, let us list the witnesses who testified about petrol engines.

For Chelmno, multiple testimonies show that the gas vans used gasoline engines, including those of driver Walter Burmeister¹⁸⁰ and SS-Oberscharführer Walter Piller.¹⁸¹ Gasoline engines were also noted in testimonies given to the Main Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland in the 1940's by the engineers who repaired the Chelmno vans.¹⁸² For the Reinhard camps, a key example is SS-Scharführer Erich Fuchs, who took part in the construction of the gas chambers at Belzec and Sobibor¹⁸³ and stated in his testimony about Sobibor:

We unloaded the engine. It was a heavy Russian **petrol engine** (presumably an armoured vehicle or traction engine), at least 200 HP (V-engine, 8-cylinder, water cooled).¹⁸⁴

Erich Bauer, known as the "Gasmeister" of Sobibor for his operation and service work of the gassing engine, stated:

I have worked with motors. I have operated the motor and it was a **petrol engine** in my opinion, a big engine, I think a Renault.¹⁸⁵

Another operator of the Sobibor gas chambers, Franz Hödl, in his description of the new installation at the camp specifically discounted the use of diesel engines for gassing:

In the engine room there were indeed two engines. There was a **petrol engine**, probably from a Russian tank, and a diesel engine. The latter was never used, however.¹⁸⁶

Thus for Sobibor, the engine clearly ran on gasoline, as the only disagreement among the knowledgeable mechanics (Fuchs and Bauer) regarded whether the engine was a Renault motor or a Russian tank motor, and its method of ignition. These technicalities are trivial, and when recalling such details of the engine more than twenty years after the relevant event, one

¹⁸⁰ Kogon, *Giftgas*, p.114, citing StA Bonn AZ: 8 Js 52/60 (AZ. ZSL 203 AR-Z 69/59, Volume I, pages 138-41).

¹⁸¹ Kogon, *Giftgas*, p.141, citing ZSL Volume 411, Part VII, p. 16ff. Piller gave his 'gasoline' testimony to the Soviets on 19.5.45.

¹⁸² Posted by Jerzy Halbersztadt, 11.10.95 at <http://weber.ucsd.edu/~lزامosc/chelm00.htm> .

¹⁸³ See the first section of this chapter.

¹⁸⁴ Erich Fuchs, 2.4.1963, BAL162/208 AR-Z 251/59, Bd. 9, 1784.

¹⁸⁵ Erich Bauer, 15.11.1965, StA Dortmund 45 Js 27/6,1 Ordner November 1965, p.557.

¹⁸⁶ Franz Hödl, 29.3.1966, April HAP 1960 JS 27/61, p.50.

should not expect to be completely accurate on every particular.¹⁸⁷ Moreover, Fuchs and Bauer were confronted with these contradictions during the trial, and a somewhat lengthy debate between them issued, with each witness accusing another of misremembering details. At no point though did they try to deny the basic fact of the use of petrol engine for gassings.¹⁸⁸

About the engine in Belzec in September 1944 Rudolf Reder stated:

There was an annex made to the “bath” building from the side which was the farthest from the railway line, in which there was a compressor, working from a petrol engine. To this machine gas cylinders were brought. From the compressor the pipes went into each chamber. In each chamber on the wall there was a small netting to which the gas-pipe went.¹⁸⁹

As we see, at that time Reder assumed that the killing apparatus was a compressor. Whether this implies that he thought that air was pumped out is unclear, as well as it is unclear what role the gas cylinders played. Regardless of the confusion, Reder spoke of the petrol engine on which the system was based.

In December 1945, Rudolf Reder made another statement:

I myself saw that in that small room there was an engine with petrol fuel that looked very complicated. I remember that the engine had a flywheel, but I could not make out any other specific construction or technical features. This engine was always operated by two technicians, Russians from the armed camp staff. I know only that the engine used 4 cans of petrol each day, because that is how much petrol was brought to the camp every day. It was when the petrol was delivered to the engine room that I briefly had the opportunity to look inside the room.¹⁹⁰

Here he no longer calls the “complicated” engine with a “flywheel” a compressor, but reiterates that it was a petrol engine.

MGK have pointed out that Reder did state that the engine exhaust “was evacuated from the engine directly into the open air, and not into the chambers.”¹⁹¹ As has been noted elsewhere, it is likely that Reder witnessed the exhaust being channelled out of the pipe (directed away from the gas chamber), a point which was similarly made for the other

¹⁸⁷ That MGK and other revisionists often dismiss testimonies on such minutia only exposes their faulty approach to witness testimony. Such dismissals are on the same levels as discounting statements from former Allied soldiers recalling shelling from the infamous German 88s, even when it can be documented from German records that no 88 mm artillery was present. Does this mean they were not shelled? They did not fight?

¹⁸⁸ StA Dortmund 45 Js 27/61, Ordner November 1965, p. 557ff.

¹⁸⁹ Protokol doprosa, Rubin [sic!] Germanovich Reder, 22.09.1944, GARF 7021-149-99, p.17.

¹⁹⁰ Rudolf Reder, 29.12.1945, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 252/59, p.1177.

¹⁹¹ Mattogno, *Belzec*, pp.38-40; Thomas Kues, ‘Rudolf Reder’s Belzec- A Critical Reading,’ CODOH, <http://www.codoh.com/newvoices/nrtkreder.html>.

Reinhard camps through the testimony of Sobibor *Gasmeister* Erich Bauer¹⁹² as well as Treblinka worker Abraham Goldfarb.¹⁹³ The aforementioned Treblinka "motorist" Nikolay Shalayevev also explicitly testified that during the gassing "the exhaust pipe was covered up and the valve of the pipe was opened, through which the exhaust entered the "bath."¹⁹⁴ This convergence of independent testimonies about an obscure and non-obvious detail speaks well of Reder's credibility on this issue.

Either way, likely from seeing the exhaust channelled into the open air, Reder did express confusion in his memoirs over the engine's specific role in the gas chamber operation; Reder thought it could be used to kill by high pressure, air suction, or exhaust fumes. This misunderstanding over the engine's exact role does not detract from Reder's obvious point that people were brought to the chambers and were murdered.¹⁹⁵

Another witness who became closely involved with the Belzec engines was the Polish mechanic Kasimierz Czerniak, who helped establish the power supply at the camp. In his work, Czerniak happened to see the engine used for homicidal gassings:

The motor of the small power station had 15 H.V., in contrast to the large power station which had the power of 200 H.V. From this motor, pipes led underground to take away the engine exhaust. Where these pipes went, I don't know.(...) The 200 H.V. motor was mounted on a base at the back of the barrack.¹⁹⁶

Later, Czerniak had the opportunity to more closely examine this barrack.

I have seen that on this barrack there were three doors from a wooden ramp and that from this ramp, a narrow gauged railway led to another part of the camp. The aforementioned doors were sliding doors which locked with hooks/pegs; they moved with the help of wheels on a track. The "Blacks" laughingly told me that this barrack was a store. I understood that it was where the gas chamber was located.

¹⁹² Roberto Muehlenkamp, 'The oh-so-unreliable Rudolf Reder,' Holocaust Controversies blog, 5.9.10, <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2010/09/oh-so-unreliable-rudolf-reder.html>; In his testimony, Bauer stated, "The chambers were permanently connected to the engine; the way it worked was that if a wooden plug was pulled out, the fumes went outside; if the plug was pushed into the pipe, the fumes went into the chamber."

¹⁹³ Protokół doprosy, Abram (Abraham Goldfarb), 21.09.1944, GARF 7445-2-134, pp.31R, 32; Sergey Romanov, 'If They're The Best What About the Rest?', *Holocaust Controversies*, 9.6.07, <http://www.holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2007/06/if-theyre-best-what-about-rest.html>. Goldfarb clearly states that "when the engine was used for killing people, gases entered the chambers through a system of pipes, but when the main goal was the electric supply, gases were exhausted directly outside."

¹⁹⁴ Protokół doprosy, Nikolay Shalayevev, 18.12.1950, in the Soviet criminal case against Fedorenko, vol. 15, p. 164. Exhibit GX-125 in *US v. Reimer*.

¹⁹⁵ It should be noted that the fact that Reder mentioned petrol engine shows independence of his testimony from that of Gerstein. However, Kues argues at length for the possibility of influence in his 'Rudolf Reder's Belzec - A Critical Reading' mentioned above. He bases the alleged connection between the statements on the number of people per chamber – 750 in some accounts of Gerstein and in one account of Reder. However this connection is refuted by the fact that Reder mentions this number in his 1944 testimony (22.09.1944, GARF 7021-149-99, p.17): "In each chamber 750-770 people were crowded." Gerstein, of course, officially testified about 750 people per chamber only in 1945.

¹⁹⁶ Vernehmung Kasimierz Czerniak, 18.10.1945, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 252/59, pp.1171-2.

Czerniak also helped maintain and repair the engines used by the Germans at the camp during Belzec's operation. This means that when Czerniak states that, "The 200 H.V. motor was powered by gasoline, as were the three other mentioned cars,"¹⁹⁷ his statement comes with a good deal of direct knowledge and experience with the engines. Despite Czerniak's key vantage point, MGK have omitted him completely from their works, while Mattogno ignored him from a list of Belzec witnesses "known to be important" in regards to the engine.¹⁹⁸

For Treblinka the key testimony is that of a guard Nikolay Shalayev, who was one of the infamous Treblinka "motorists" (he is often mentioned in testimonies together with Ivan "The Terrible" Marchenko, usually as "Ivan and Nikolay" or "Ivan and Mykola") and who obviously knew the engine he himself operated:

It was an ordinary, four-cylinder engine which used gasoline and, according to the story of the German machine operator, was of Russian make. The engine was installed on a wooden frame and started as soon as people were herded into the gas chamber rooms, whereupon the exhaust pipe was covered up and the valve of the pipe was opened, through which the exhaust entered the "bath".¹⁹⁹

Shalayev added that he was later operating a generator that resided in the same facility as the gassing engine. The generator supplied electricity for the whole camp.²⁰⁰

There also exist testimonies about petrol engines by the people whose degree of closeness to the engine is unknown. We will list them to show that not only diesels were mentioned by such witnesses.

Ukrainian guard Ivan Semyonovich Shevchenko made a very detailed statement on September 8, 1944 to a senior SMERSH investigator of the 65th army. Among other things he reported:

A stone building, the so-called "dushegubka", had nine chambers inside, in which people were murdered by asphyxiation with gases. In the tenth chamber there was an engine of high power which pumped the gas into the chambers.²⁰¹

[...]

In the last chamber on the right side in the north-eastern corner of the building

¹⁹⁷ Statement recorded in margins of document.

¹⁹⁸ Mattogno, 'Il comitato di soccorso Zimmerman.'

¹⁹⁹ Protokol doprosa, Nikolay Shalayev, 18.12.1950, in the Soviet criminal case against Fedorenko, vol. 15, p. 164. Exhibit GX-125 in *US v. Reimer*.

²⁰⁰ Court proceedings against Nikolay Shalayev, 20.12.1951, in the Soviet criminal case against Fedorenko, vol. 15, p. 152. Exhibit GX-126 in *US v. Reimer*.

²⁰¹ Despite the highly accurate nature of his testimony, Shevchenko may be confused on the issue of the tenth chamber. It seems more probable that Abraham Goldfarb was right when he described ten chambers for gassing and a small room for the engine near the last chamber (GARF 7445-2-134, p.33). Also cf. Yurovsky's drawing of the new gas chamber building above.

there was a high-power engine which worked on petrol or ligroin.²⁰²

Treblinka inmate Oskar Strawczynski also wrote in 1944 that he heard from others that:

The doors are hermetically sealed, the motors start to work. The air from inside is sucked out and fumes from burnt gasoline forced in.²⁰³

From the testimonies of Shalayev (Treblinka), Hödl (Sobibor), Fuchs (Sobibor), Bauer (Sobibor), Reder (Belzec) and Czerniak (Belzec) it is clear that the engines in the Reinhard camps were petrol.

However, there exist lots of testimonies by survivors, perpetrators and bystanders about diesel engines. It should be noted, however, that they're not as numerous as testimonies which don't talk about the type of engine at all. How these testimonies could arise is easily explainable. For example, as we've seen, it was customary to keep generators (which likely were all diesels) together with the gassing engines, and from this arrangement, confusion about the engines among those who had no direct knowledge about them was inevitable. Even the camp commandants would not necessarily know – or care – about the type of engine used, as long as the engines did their job.

In regard to Sobibor, instead of recognizing the clear and direct evidence of petrol engines, MGK prefer to dishonestly criticize a hearsay report by Stanislaw Szmajzner, who reports of receiving a letter from a friend in the extermination area and who refers to a diesel engine.²⁰⁴ The letter is meaningless in contrast to the testimony of three perpetrators with a first hand and far superior vantage of the engine types.

In 1979 former Ukrainian guard Ignat Danilchenko testified:

Actually, this was a gas chamber where the arriving Jews were killed in six gas chambers (250 persons in each) by exhaust gasses from diesel engines which were located near the gas chamber. I remember hearing from other guards (I cannot remember their names) that there were two such diesels, supposedly from tanks. I did not personally see these engines, and I do not know precisely where they were located in the area of the gas chamber.²⁰⁵

If the witness were a bit less precise and didn't tell that he hadn't seen the engines himself, we would have another "diesel witness." This testimony shows once again that information about diesels was spread through rumours.

SS-man Hubert Gomerski, overseer of Waldkommandos in Sobibor, gave this evidence in 1965:

²⁰² Protokół doprosy, Ivan Semyonovich Shevchenko, 08.09.1944. GARF 7445-2-134, p.19.

²⁰³ Strawczynski, *Ten Months in Treblinka*, p.49.

²⁰⁴ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.29.

²⁰⁵ Interrogation of Ignat Terentyevich Danilchenko, 21.11.1979, available at <http://nizkor.org/ftp.py?people/d/danilchenko.ignat.t/danilchenko.001>.

The gassing was done with engine exhaust. The engine room was built right next to the gas chamber. This was a diesel engine that stood on a solid platform.

[...]

Near the motor were working 2 or 3 Ukrainians who serviced it. Toni Getzinger and later Hödl were there to supervise.

[...]

I remember only that it was a diesel engine. Diesel fuel was often brought to it. I had little knowledge about engines. I suppose it was a diesel.²⁰⁶

Yet Hödl testified about a petrol gassing engine and a diesel generator. This is another example that illustrates confusion of witnesses. SS-man Alfred Ittner, a bookkeeper of stolen property in Sobibor:

During the time of my activity in camp III the gassing engine – it was a captured Russian diesel engine – was serviced by Erich Bauer.²⁰⁷

Yet we have Bauer on record stating that the engine was a petrol one.

Another Sobibor bookkeeper, Hans-Heinz Schütt, also testified about the diesel engine, claiming to have seen it.²⁰⁸ Of course, in light of the above information, and not knowing about the level of Schütt's technical knowledge, his testimony cannot be taken at face value.

Finally, in 1961 Kurt Bolender told about “a small annex where the engine of a Russian T-34 tank should have resided. I don't know that exactly, because I haven't seen it. It was only what was told to us.”²⁰⁹ Deniers usually point out that engine of T-34 was a diesel. However, first of all, this is an explicit hearsay. And second, because of shortage of V-2 diesels in the autumn of 1941 it was ordered to implement the ways to install old carburettor engines M17-T in T-34 tanks, which had been done on a limited scale.²¹⁰

Perhaps most prominent among the Reinhard witnesses was Kurt Gerstein, head of the Waffen-SS disinfection office, who famously visited Belzec and witnessed a gassing in late summer 1942. In his reports, the gassing engine is ascribed to run on diesel. Gerstein referred to statements from Globocnik (hearsay) regarding the need to “improve the service in our gas chambers, which function on diesel engine exhaust.”²¹¹ Throughout his reports, while several mentions are made regarding the diesel engine, particularly its alleged

²⁰⁶ Statement of Hubert Gomerski on 30.11.1965, copy in NIOD 804/48, pp.136-137.

²⁰⁷ BAL 162/208 AR-Z 251/59, Bd. 7, p.1426.

²⁰⁸ Interrogation of Hans-Heinz Schütt, 7.6.1961, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 251/59, Bd. 4, p.666.

²⁰⁹ BAL 162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd. 11, p.193.

²¹⁰ I. Shmelyov, 'Tank T-34', *Tekhnika i vooruzhenije*, no. 11-12, 1998. Another author confirms that some T-34s had M-17, a powerful aviation motor, installed, see E. Zubov, *Dvigateli tankov (iz istorii tankostrojenija)*, 1991.

²¹¹ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p. 101; PS-1553.

breakdown, nowhere does Gerstein report actually seeing the engine. Instead, it is more likely that Gerstein passed on the diesel bit from Globocnik or Pfannenstiel (see below).²¹² It is also interesting to note that, in the publications following his discussions with Dutch resistance members in February 1943, no specific reference is made of diesel engines; instead, the engine is simply described as that of a “big tractor.”²¹³

Accompanying Gerstein to Belzec was Professor Wilhelm Pfannenstiel, director of the Hygienic Institute at the University of Marburg/Lahn. In 1959, Pfannenstiel stated:

The engine itself was not in a separate room, rather, it stood freely on a podium. It was operated with diesel fuel.²¹⁴

In a confidential interview with Holocaust denier Paul Rassinier, which MGK ignore in their work, Pfannenstiel discussed the gassing at Belzec, including the engine which he personally viewed. In the talk Pfannenstiel related the point about a diesel motor, which had six straight cylinders, and whose strength he guessed was 200 horsepower.²¹⁵

One of the perpetrators at Belzec, Karl Alfred Schluch, also thought the gas chambers used diesel:

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 certainly not a specialist, but I would say that based on the sound, it was a medium-sized diesel engine.²¹⁶

Schluch was guessing on the engine type simply based on sound, a very weak form of identification for engines when compared to any other forms, especially for a lay person (“I am certainly not a specialist”). Aural evidence in this case is also weak because it is possible that at times a diesel engine was also turned on in order to drown out noises associated with the gassing procedure. Although at present we don't have direct evidence that such a procedure was employed at Aktion Reinhard camps, we do know that it was sometimes

²¹² Mattogno has argued that Gerstein did see the engine by his description of its breakdown and the whipping of the Ukrainian helper by Hackenholt. See Mattogno, ‘Il comitato di soccorso Zimmerman’. Even in the description of the breakdown fiasco, Gerstein would not necessarily have seen the engine, and provides no details that he did. We also find it unlikely for the breakdown to have occurred, as it was emphatically denied by Pfannenstiel, who clearly stated to have seen the engine.

²¹³ Mention is made of Gerstein discussing diesels in February 1943, as J.H. Ubbink wrote to Erika Arajs, an official at the Department of Justice in Nuremberg, in September 1949. Ubbink could very well have been antedating the diesel references which cropped up after Gerstein's. See Florent Brayard, ‘An Early Report by Kurt Gerstein’, *Bulletin du Centre de recherche francais a Jerusalem* 6, 2000, pp.157-174.

²¹⁴ Wilhelm Pfannenstiel, 9.11.1959, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 25259, Bd. 1, p.138.

²¹⁵ Paul Rassinier, *Debunking the Genocide Myth*, Newport: Noontide, 1978, Chapter 13 V. Conclusion, <http://www.ihr.org/books/rassinier/debunking2-13.html> (translation of several of Rassinier's French articles); Rassinier's secret meeting with Pfannenstiel is problematic for MGK's theory as Pfannenstiel theoretically could have denied and refuted the gassing charge without punishment to the world's then foremost Holocaust denier, and instead proclaim the ‘truth’ of a delousing function at Belzec. Instead, Pfannenstiel continued to defend the historic veracity of the gassings.

²¹⁶ Karl Alfred Schluch, 11.11.1961, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd. 8, p.1514.

employed in Auschwitz and Majdanek²¹⁷, therefore this possibility can be argued for by analogy. It need not have been employed always, or even often, but only a few times for a few witnesses to associate the sound of a diesel engine with gassings.

Another German perpetrator of the exterminations at Belzec, SS-Scharführer Heinrich Gley, was unable to say what type of engine was employed during the gassings:

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 section. The exhaust fumes of this engine were fed into the chambers and caused the death of the Jews.²¹⁸

Ukrainian guard Aleksandr Semigodov was just as uncertain:

The people doomed to death were driven into these gas chambers or "dushegubki", as they were also known, where they were killed with exhaust gas from a diesel motor (found in the same building) or some other motor.²¹⁹

That there were rumours around the camp that diesel was employed is evidenced by Dubois' statement that "it was said to be a Russian tank engine (diesel)."²²⁰ He states that he himself didn't see the engine.²²¹

Ukrainian guard Filipp Babenko testified that there was a high-powered diesel motor behind the wooden gas chamber that fed the gas into the chambers.²²² However it is not clear from his testimony whether he had ever seen the engine himself or what the level his technical expertise was.

Finally, Josef Oberhauser, the leader of guard platoon in Belzec, said in 1971 that "at first the Jews were killed with a gas, but after the camp was enlarged, they were killed by diesel exhaust". He points out, however, that "by that time, though, I was already serving in Lublin and had nothing more to do with this matter [i.e. gas chamber enlargement]."²²³

²¹⁷ Pery Broad wrote in his 1945 report about a truck running near crematorium I in order to drown out screams, and during the Frankfurt Auschwitz trial witnesses Edward Pys, Gerhard Hess, Ignacy Golik and Jan Sikorski described various vehicles running near the gassing site in order to drown out noises. For references see essay "How reliable and authentic is the Broad report?" at the Holocaust Controversies blog, <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2011/10/how-reliable-and-authentic-is-broad.html>. Similar

procedure is reported by witnesses for Majdanek. In 1945 witness Willi Reinartz described a tractor motor used for this purpose (Barbara Schwindt, *Das Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslager Majdanek*, 2005, S. 231). So did Jan Nowak who was interrogated in 1947 (AIPN NTN 144, p. 162).

²¹⁸ Heinrich Gley, 8.5.1961, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 252/59, p.1291.

²¹⁹ Vernehmung Aleksandr Illarionovitsch Semigodov, 24.05.1973, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 643/71, Bd 4, p. 707. Note that in the German version Russian "dushegubki" is mistranslated as "Gaswagen" – gas vans. Although the term "dushegubki" was more often used in USSR to denote gas vans, it was also used as a general term for any gas chamber.

²²⁰ Karl Dubois, 15.9.1971, copy in NIOD 804/47, p.44.

²²¹ Karl Dubois, 16.9.1961, copy in NIOD 804/47, p.74.

²²² Protokol doprosa, Filipp Pavlovich Babenko, 12.11.1948. ASBU Kiev 6397-58240, pp.12-19.

²²³ Josef Oberhauser, 15.11.1971, in court proceedings against Hoffmann et al., 8 Ks 1/70, vol. 3, p. 881, Hessischen Hauptstaatsarchiv Wiesbaden. Exhibit GX-95 in *US v. Reimer*.

Therefore his statement about the later use of diesel is just an assumption, probably from postwar statements.

As for Treblinka, in the Central Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland's 1946 report on Treblinka, based upon the testimonies of numerous witnesses, no reference is made to the type of engine employed for the gassings at the camp. Similarly, in Yankiel Wiernik's *A Year in Treblinka*, he only describes the engine as:

A motor taken from a dismantled Soviet tank stood in the power plant. This motor was used to pump the gas, which was let into the chambers by connecting the motor with the inflow pipes.²²⁴

Not even later during the Eichmann trial did Wiernik specify an engine type. In a 1980 cross-examination regarding the Demjanjuk case, Otto Horn, who worked in the extermination area of Treblinka, did not mention an engine type either ("I don't know. There was some engine somehow").²²⁵

Also, another witness who inspected the extermination process at Treblinka was Auschwitz commandant Rudolf Höss. In his several descriptions of Treblinka, Höss only speaks of carbon monoxide from engine exhaust, though it is unclear if Höss personally saw the engines or was simply told about them.

An engine room equipped with various types of engines taken from large trucks and tanks had been built next to the gas chambers. These were started up and the exhaust gases were fed by pipes into the gas chambers, thereby killing the people inside.²²⁶

While many Treblinka witnesses don't specify an engine type, others do. Ukrainian Pavel Leleko, who served as a guard at the camp, stated in February 1945 that "people were exterminated with gas obtained from running diesel engines."²²⁷ Nikolai Malagon, another Ukrainian guard at Treblinka, stated in 1978 that people were murdered in gas chambers with "pipes carrying exhaust gas from running diesel motors."²²⁸ Yet another Ukrainian guard, Prokofij Ryabtsev, told in 1965 about diesel engines used for gassing, but without specifying any details.²²⁹ Ukrainian guard Aleksandr Skidan remembered in 1950 how Shalayev and

²²⁴ Wiernik, 'A Year in Treblinka,' pp. 157-158.

²²⁵ Extracts from Deposition of Otto Horn in the Matter of John Demjanjuk (Part 3 of 5), <http://nizkor.org/hweb/people/h/horn-otto/horn-003.html>

²²⁶ Höss, *Death Dealer*, pp. 42-45.

²²⁷ Interrogation of Pavel Vladimirovich Leleko, excerpt available at <http://nizkor.org/ftp.py?camps/aktion.reinhard/treblinka/leleko.001>

²²⁸ Interrogation of Nikolai Petrovich Malagon, available at <http://nizkor.org/ftp.py?camps/aktion.reinhard/treblinka/malagon.001>

²²⁹ Protokół doprosa, Prokofij Nikolayevich Ryabtsev, 03.02.1965. Exhibit GX-121 in *US v. Reimer*.

Marchenko were turning on the diesel gassing engine.²³⁰ In a late 1947 report, Jewish inmate Elias Rosenberg wrote that the gas chambers were supplied with “engine exhaust gas of a single diesel motor.”²³¹ Treblinka survivor Samuel Willenberg also twice stressed in his account that he was *told* that the gassing engines ran on diesel (never seeing them).²³²

In sum, the statements of witnesses who identified the gassing engine as diesel but who did not claim to have seen it or to have a sufficient level of technical knowledge to identify the engine, who were not directly involved with the engines themselves, or had little reason to establish such a trivial and unimportant (to them) detail cannot be used to establish the type of the engine.²³³ The talk of diesel can easily be ascribed to rumours and confusion within the camp by misidentifying any engine as *the* gassing engine, especially as diesel engines were regularly used as power generators. It is also possible that some of the later witnesses relied on the publicity of Gerstein’s diesel meme. However, all of the talk about a diesel engine used for gassing is simply mistaken. Those who had a direct knowledge of the engines and a sufficient level of expertise in all three camps (Fuchs, Bauer and Hoedl in Sobibor, Czerniak and Reder in Belzec, and Shalayev in Treblinka), men who helped operate, install, or worked in close proximity to the gassing engines all agree on the use of gasoline for homicidal gassings.

In response to challenges of the relevancy of the issue, Revisionists have shown themselves to be inflexible defenders of their diesel gambit without properly addressing the evidence; instead, the responses are largely *ad hominem*. Thomas Dalton criticized a limited proposal of revising the diesel issue for only citing two Reinhard gasoline witnesses (it actually cites four, in addition to four petrol gas van witnesses), and for it not being suggested by other Holocaust scholars.²³⁴ Mattogno has also parroted this latter point, suggesting that those who propose the use of gasoline instead of diesel engines for gassings have no

²³⁰ Court statement of Georgij Aleksandrovich Skidan, 26.05.1950. Exhibit GX-141 in *US v. Reimer*.

²³¹ Elias Rosenberg, *Tatsachenbericht*, Wien, 24.12.1947, pp.4 of statement. Available online at <http://www.vho.org/D/dfd/5.html>.

²³² Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 26, 35. “Now they poison the people with gas”, I was told with terrifying simplicity. “With gas made by a diesel engine (...)The ragged prisoner who had spoken before now explained...”A diesel motor from a Soviet tank is started up, producing burning gas which is piped into the chambers”.

²³³ MGK and other deniers have not been able to explain why the engine type and particulars have any special relevance to them beyond the general fact that it was an engine, and that its exhaust was used to murder people inside gas chambers. Do witnesses of mass executions need to know the details of the guns employed? Such information would only be relevant or worthwhile to individuals who requisitioned, operated, fueled, and maintained those engines; for such witnesses, they unanimously agree on gasoline. In short, such rigorous information should not be expected from lay or indirect witnesses.

²³⁴ Dalton, *Debating the Holocaust*, p.111.

reputation or dignity worthy of mention, and cannot be taken seriously.²³⁵ Graf merely asserted that the proposal exposed the “queer mindset” of the author, while quickly dismissing witness accounts (without any proper analysis or study).²³⁶ Revisionist writer Paul Grubach also dismissed such a revision on the engine type, saying that if the engines ran on petrol, than it would undermine the credibility of survivors who testified about a diesel engine.²³⁷

It is no wonder that the Revisionists are so dogmatic on this issue. Ever since Friedrich Paul Berg first proposed the argument at the 1983 International Revisionist Conference, wherein he articulated the inefficiency of diesel engines for mass murder, the diesel issue has been an integral part of the Revisionist case against the Reinhard camps.²³⁸ The point was referenced and praised in every major article and work on the camps since Berg’s presentation, including in MGK’s trilogy.²³⁹ The same technical arguments raised against diesels could not be maintained against petrol engines, as Berg himself recognized.²⁴⁰ Thus, if the engines ran on petrol (as the strongest evidence shows), then one of the central Revisionist arguments against gassings at the three Reinhard camps, as well as the nearly three decades of work Friedrich Paul Berg has put into the diesel issue, has proven to be worthless.

That deniers are so demonstratively opposed to this proper revision of history, where primary sources are re-examined with a critical approach towards their evidentiary weight

²³⁵ Mattogno, “Il comitato di soccorso Zimmerman”; “È chiaro che, per chi non ha una dignità, una reputazione e una coerenza da difendere, qualunque assurdità, qualunque idiozia è lecita. Ma per gli storici olocaustici che hanno una dignità, una reputazione e una coerenza da difendere, la cosa non è così semplice.”

²³⁶ Jürgen Graf, “David Irving and the “Aktion Reinhardt Camps,” *Inconvenient History*, 1/2, http://www.inconvenienthistory.com/archive/2009/volume_1/number_2/david_irving_and_the_aktion_reinhardt_camps.php.

²³⁷ Paul Grubach, ‘Provanian Exterminationism, the “Death Camp” Treblinka, and the Demjanjuk Case,’ <http://www.whale.to/b/grubach.html>; Grubach tried to pre-empt charges that he was nitpicking testimonies, stating that his criticisms were justified because “one of the key issues in any murder case is the type and operation of the murder weapon.” As previously mentioned, there is no reason for witnesses who weren’t directly involved in the operation of the gas chambers to know their exact technical details. Also, Grubach seems unaware that the witnesses who were directly involved with the operations in all three camps all converge on petrol as the fuel source, not diesel. Thus, Grubach’s criticism is fallacious and reveals an ignorance of those testimonies he so eagerly wishes to dismiss.

²³⁸ Berg, ‘Diesel Gas Chambers.’

²³⁹ M&G, *Treblinka*; pp. 42-43, 121-123, 132, 308; Mattogno, *Belżec*, p.56; MGK, *Sobibór*, p.29, p.258. In *Treblinka*, Mattogno and Graf praise Berg’s (now irrelevant) work as shaking the history of the Reinhard camps “right to the very foundations.”

²⁴⁰ Berg, ‘Diesel Gas Chambers.’ For example, Berg wrote, “If Gerstein had claimed that the carbon monoxide was generated by gasoline engines, his story might be more credible. Gasoline engines can, indeed, kill rather easily and with little or no warning because their exhaust is almost odorless. (...)Clearly, the logical choice between the two types of engines as a source of carbon monoxide would always have been the gasoline engine. From spark ignition or gasoline engines, one can easily get 7% carbon monoxide, but from Diesel engines one can never get even as much as 1% with liquid fuels.” Mattogno and Graf also accept this point in *Treblinka*, pp.42-43.

and significance and interpreted appropriately, exposes sheer hypocrisy on their part. In spite of the criticisms by Dalton and Mattogno over a supposed lack of scholarly support in the revision, the charge is manifestly wrong. It is true that some general Holocaust academics find the detail of an engine's fuel so trivial that few pay much attention to it, or simply rely on the famous statement by Gerstein.²⁴¹ For specialists, though, diesel engines have been rejected in favour of petrol. Peter Witte²⁴², Jules Schelvis²⁴³, Christopher Browning²⁴⁴, and Martin Gilbert²⁴⁵, have all proven willing to place petrol engines at the Reinhard camps on the basis of direct evidence. Thus, the deniers' favoured diesel gambit has been proven to be irrelevant to an objective look at the evidence.

Corpse Color

Another of MGK's criticisms of Aktion Reinhard witnesses involves the color of the gassed corpses.²⁴⁶ For them, it can be taken as a "matter of fact"²⁴⁷ that the gassing victims should have exhibited clear cherry-red features, and as no witness refers to such a color on the victims, MGK are "certain that something is not right with the gas chamber testimonies."²⁴⁸ This type of argumentation is dubious on its face, for it presupposes an exact knowledge of several things: the murderous circumstances inside the gas chambers, the factors which bring about a "bright cherry red" appearance of carbon monoxide victims, that the gassing victims would necessarily have displayed the cherry-red color, and that this discoloration is easily apparent to the untrained human eye.

To support such a claim, MGK have to rely on medical and toxicological literature regarding carbon monoxide poisoning; however, to our knowledge, none of the four deniers (including Friedrich Berg) who use this argumentation have any type of medical expertise

²⁴¹ For instance see Evans, *Third Reich At War*, p.292, p.558, or Saul Friedländer, *The Years of Extermination. Nazi Germany and the Jews 1939-1945*. London, 2007, p.431.

²⁴² Witte's remarks are available here:

http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benutzer_Diskussion:Pidou_Bleu#Vernichtungslager_.28Diskussion.29_-_Benzin-oder_Dieselmotorabgase.3F

²⁴³ Schelvis remarks throughout *Sobibor* about petrol engines.

²⁴⁴ Browning, *Evidence for the Implementation of the Final Solution*: "Gerstein, citing Globocnik, claimed the camps used diesel motors, but witnesses who actually serviced the engines in Belzec and Sobibor (Reder and Fuchs) spoke of gasoline engines."

²⁴⁵ 'Sobe', Post "Response," Thread "Letter to Sir Gilbert re. the diesel issue," RODOH forum, 22.9.07, <http://rodohforum.yuku.com/reply/8533/t/Letter-to-Sir-Gilbert-re-the-diesel-issue.html#reply-8533>; "I will study these carefully, and amend my text accordingly."

²⁴⁶ The point originated (briefly) with Berg's 1983 presentation on the toxicity of diesel exhaust, and was then developed further in Berg's 2003 contribution to Rudolf's *Dissecting the Holocaust*. In *Treblinka and Belzec*, Mattogno and Graf accept this argument in passing, while Kues expanded it in his article, 'Skin Discoloration Caused by Carbon Monoxide Poisoning', <http://www.codoh.com/newrevoices/nrtkco.html>.

²⁴⁷ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.73.

²⁴⁸ Thomas Kues, 'Skin Discoloration Caused by Carbon Monoxide Poisoning,' Inconvenient History blog, <http://www.revblog.codoh.com/2011/06/skin-discoloration/>.

from which to judge or interpret such medical discourse. In their cursory review on such a complicated topic, they are quick to jump to selective conclusions without a full appreciation of the explanations made in the literature and their applicability to the Reinhard camps.

A classic example of such a selective and faulty approach can be found in Thomas Kues' handling of reports written by Jewish physicians on bodily conditions inside the Warsaw Ghetto between 1940 and 1942. In their account on circumstances inside the ghetto, the physicians provide medical data on the residents soon to be sent to Treblinka, and the effect of the malnourished and starvation conditions on their physical health, something they termed as "hunger disease."²⁴⁹ The physicians refer to "hemodilution" and substantial decreases in the amount of haemoglobin in the blood of the Warsaw ghetto Jews.

Kues dishonestly represents the work of the Warsaw physicians. In his article, Kues cites a chart put together as a review of autopsy results of strictly hunger disease deaths. Kues includes the statistic that anaemia was found in only 5.5% of the autopsy cases as "an indication that even among fatal cases of malnutrition, anaemia was far from always present." However, Kues leaves out an important statement by the physicians related to the lack of anaemia found in the autopsies:

We must emphasize that only 5.5% of the cases showed advanced anaemia. Fairly large amounts of hemosiderin are found in livers and spleens, and it is certain that in hunger disease RBCs are being destroyed, but on the other hand as a result of the diminished size of the organs and tissues, the amount of blood left is enough to prevent the symptoms of advanced anaemia.²⁵⁰

Thus, the anaemia that Kues refers to is *advanced* anaemia, which was less present than more mild forms. Kues must realize this, for he quotes reports from the physicians examining patients of hunger disease openly stating that "anaemia was prevalent."

The points that ghetto residents suffered from anaemia and hemodilution are very noteworthy, as they greatly undermine any expectation that Aktion Reinhard victims should have exhibited a cherry-red lividity. One source makes this point explicitly about carbon monoxide victims:

When the victim is anaemic the (classical 'cherry-pink') color may be faint or even absent because insufficient haemoglobin is present to display the color. In racially-pigmented victims the color may obviously be masked, though may still be seen on the inner aspect of the lips, the nail-beds, tongue, and palms and soles

²⁴⁹ Myron Winick, ed., *Hunger Disease: Studies by the Jewish Physicians in the Warsaw Ghetto*, trans. Martha Osnos. New York: Wiley, 1979.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p.226.

of hands and feet. It is also seen inside the eyelids, but rarely in the sclera.²⁵¹
(Emphasis added)

Thus, in a medical article describing a circumstance which was applicable to the ghetto victims (insufficient haemoglobin), the appearance of cherry-red is hardly expected to be noticeable (“faint or even absent”).

Among other points, the reports detail the horrendous state of the Jews’ circulatory and respiratory systems.²⁵² Their poor health in these regards was certainly tied to the starvation conditions of the ghetto, as medical literature bears out:

Malnutrition has a tremendous impact on respiratory functions. It affects respiratory muscle performance, lung structure, defense mechanisms, and control of ventilation and predisposes to respiratory failure and prolonged mechanical ventilation.²⁵³

Residents of the ghetto had an average cardiac output (volume of blood circulated by heart to body) which was 50% of the normal output of a human being.²⁵⁴ This is an important fact as Risser et al believe that low carboxyhemoglobin levels in carbon monoxide victims (which they believe is strongly correlated with the absence of cherry-red discoloration) can be explained as due to a “compromised ability to oxygenate.”²⁵⁵ This poor inability to properly oxygenate is well reported for the future Treblinka victims by the Jewish physicians, but certainly also held true for Jews living in other ghettos across the Generalgouvernement, where similar starvation conditions abounded.

When these poorly oxygenated bodies were tightly packed into an enclosed gas chamber for a period of time, Oxygen deprivation would also certainly have played a role in the victims’ death, which would explain witness references to blue features of the gassed corpses. In a postwar statement that Mattogno dishonestly left out, Pfannenstiel specifically noted the cause of asphyxiation in testimony about his trip to Belzec as the cause of the “bluish faces” in some of the gas chamber victims.²⁵⁶ Mattogno is aware of this statement, as he quotes from the exact location in the interrogation document, but he selectively left out Pfannenstiel’s association of the blue faces with asphyxiation (not carbon monoxide poisoning) made in the sentence immediately after his quote; instead, Mattogno dishonestly

²⁵¹ Bernard Knight, *Forensic Pathology* (New York: Oxford University, 1991), p.507; See Charles Provan, ‘The Blue Color of the Jewish Victims at Belzec Death Camp,’ *The Revisionist* 2/2, 2004, pp.159-164.

²⁵² Winick, *Hunger Disease*, pp.134-137.

²⁵³ Marco Ghignone and Luc Quintin, ‘Malnutrition and Respiratory Function,’ *International Anesthesiology Clinics* 42/1, Spring 1986, pp.65-74.

²⁵⁴ Winick, *Hunger Disease*, pp.134-135.

²⁵⁵ Daniele Risser, Anneliese Boensch, and Barbara Schneider, ‘Should Coroners Be Able to Recognize Unintentional Carbon Monoxide-Related Deaths Immediately at the Death Scene?’ *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, 40/4, July 1995, p.597.

²⁵⁶ Wilhelm Pfannenstiel, 6.6.1950, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd. 1, p.44.

criticizes Pfannenstiel by alleging that carbon monoxide victims should have been cherry-red, despite the clear statement by Pfannenstiel that the blue faces were not the result of carbon monoxide.²⁵⁷ Also, among the testimonies who recall blue features on the corpses (Pfannenstiel, Schluch, and Gerstein), Schluch and Pfannenstiel restricted the bluish tinge to the victims' facial features.²⁵⁸

Kues also is incorrect to assume that the cherry-red color of carbon monoxide victims is present "in at least 95% of all fatal cases" of such poisoning.²⁵⁹ In a September 2008 publication regarding a review of ten years worth of carbon monoxide victims in Louisville, Kentucky, the authors noted:

Fatal CO intoxication has been described in persons who did not exhibit the classical cherry red cutaneous lividity (27-29). Although the presence of cherry red lividity in these victims aids in postulating a potential cause of death, it is not always a reliable characteristic feature. Twenty-eight cases in our study pool, representing c. 30% of the total cases (n=94) reviewed, failed to show classic cherry red lividity at autopsy. In the victims, who exhibited neither decompositional changes nor cherry red lividity (n=13), COHbg (carboxyhemoglobin) ranged from 29% to 71.5%. Classical cherry red lividity was absent in decomposed cases secondary to the literal rainbow of cutaneous putrefactive discoloration. From the data from our study pool, we conclude that CO intoxication often occurs without cherry red lividity, in part from decompositional color alterations manifested at autopsy.²⁶⁰

Thus, a study more recent than any cited by Kues lowers the expectation of a cherry-red appearance in corpses to 70%. Indeed, it remains unclear when the corpses should have displayed the discoloration. In Kues' article on the issue, after citing several sources of medical literature discounting the appearance of the cherry-red color in non-fatal cases as a reliable indicator of CO poisoning due to its rarity amongst patients²⁶¹, Kues finds one such example sufficient enough to declare that such an appearance is "not highly exceptional."²⁶² Despite recording many more fatal cases of CO poisoning which did not display the cherry-red discoloration, Kues writes that the discoloration occurs as soon as the poison had been

²⁵⁷ Mattogno, *Belżec*, p.56.

²⁵⁸ Pfannenstiel stated that some victims showed "a bluish puffiness about the face," while Schluch stated that the blue only appeared in "the lips and nose tips" of some corpses. It is thus likely that Gerstein's reference to "blue bodies" was due to exaggeration, something Gerstein was prone to in his accounts.

²⁵⁹ In 'Skin Discoloration Caused by Carbon Monoxide,' Kues cites two studies, one of which clearly states that it found such a characteristic in 91% of the CO cases it surveyed.

²⁶⁰ Sean M. Griffen, Michael K. Ward, Andrea R. Terrell, and Donna Stewart, 'Diesel Fumes Do Kill: A Case of Fatal Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Directly Attributed to Diesel Fuel Exhaust with a 10-year Retrospective Case and Literature Review,' *Journal of Forensic Science*, 53/5, September 2008, p.1208.

²⁶¹ i.e., Bruno Simini, 'Cherry-red discoloration in carbon monoxide poisoning,' *The Lancet*, Vol. 352 (October 1998), p. 1154; Kent R. Olson, MD, 'Carbon Monoxide Poisoning: Mechanisms, Presentation, and Controversies in Management,' *The Journal of Emergency Medicine*, Vol. 1, 1984, p. 236.

²⁶² See Kues' second bullet point in the section 'Summary of the medical evidence'.

absorbed into the blood. The visibility of such discoloration before livor mortis (the settling of blood after death), however, is not an often observed phenomenon as Kues' own sources show.²⁶³ Also, physical pressure upon a corpse either prevents or severely limits the color appearance during livor mortis; as mentioned earlier in this chapter the gas chambers, while not always filled to extreme levels, had many people per square meter which would have brought pressure upon the corpses.²⁶⁴

When these facts are combined with the unlikely chance that Poland's malnourished Jews would turn cherry-red after a gassing (due to the numerous health problems described above), the variables that determine the appearance and visibility of such a discoloration²⁶⁵, and the dishonest presumptions of the deniers' argument to this end, we can dismiss their cherry-red corpse color claims as unsubstantiated.²⁶⁶

It should also be pointed out that MGK have falsely attacked Wiernik's description of the color of gassed corpses in his experience in the Treblinka death camp. In the English translation of this account, the text states that all of the victims were "yellow from the gas."²⁶⁷ Kues then snidely remarked that yellow was a color "hardly confused with cherry red."²⁶⁸ For Mattogno and Graf, this supposed observation by Wiernik shows "beyond doubt" that the "story of the engine exhaust gas chambers lacks any kind of basis in reality", but is simply a propaganda tale.²⁶⁹

MGK have always cited the English edition of Wiernik's text, seemingly never bothering to check the original Polish. The problem that arises here is that Wiernik, in the original Polish version of 1944, uses a vernacular expression: the gassed were "żółci-zatruci."²⁷⁰ "Zatruci" means "poisoned," - "żółci" here comes from "żółć," meaning "gall," a substance often associated with "poison," (e.g. the German "*Gift und Galle speien*," not from "żółty," which means "yellow"). In Polish literature, we often find "żółć" associated with "cierpienie," "suffering." So Wiernik, who is using poetic language in this instance, wants to

²⁶³ See in Kues' article Item 2, item 3, Item 4, Item 5, Item 6, Item 7, and Item 8. All fatalities presented through his selected sources had progressed into stages of livor mortis, including those of the "fresh corpses" that Kues discusses in Risser et al ("fresh corpses...are said to show a typically cherry-pink coloring of livor mortis.")

²⁶⁴ Jason Payne-James, Anthony Busuttill, William S. Smock (editors), *Forensic Medicine: Clinical and Pathological Aspects*, London: Greenwich Medical Media, 2003, p.98, Table 9.5.

²⁶⁵ G.H. Findlay, 'Carbon Monoxide Poisoning: Optics and Histology of Skin and Blood,' *British Journal of Dermatology*, 1988, pp.45-51.

²⁶⁶ It should be kept in mind that testimony regarding the gas van experiment at Sachsenhausen reported the cherry-pink color (see pX). We doubt that such a detail will change MGK's denial of homicidal gassings.

²⁶⁷ Wiernik, 'A Year in Treblinka,' p.158.

²⁶⁸ Original version of Kues, 'Skin Discoloration Caused by Carbon Monoxide,' available at <http://www.codoh.com/newvoices/nrtkco.html>.

²⁶⁹ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.73.

²⁷⁰ Wiernik, *Rok w Treblince*, p.7.

tell us that the victims were "dead as a doornail" (or something to that extent).²⁷¹ Thus MGK had criticized Wiernik on the basis of a misunderstood translation. One would think that since MGK were the ones to focus on corpse color descriptions, that they would actually check Wiernik's original description. Revisionist scholarly standards must not be too strict. Recently however, many years after making the allegation and only after being informed of the translation problem Kues withdrew his criticism of Wiernik's statement, dismissing him as having "nothing concrete to say about the appearances of the corpses."²⁷²

Archaeology of the Gas Chambers

A relatively recent development among Revisionist writers has been a heavy focus on physical evidence in their denial; likely a sign of intellectual bankruptcy, brought about by their failure to refute countless witnesses and documents, as well as provide a coherent and supported alternative explanation of resettlement. In nearly all of MGK's writings since 2002 with the original German edition of *Treblinka* there has been a similar focal point on 'forensic' evidence, including in their criticisms of all three Reinhard camps.²⁷³

Before we explore the archaeological findings related to the gas chambers, it is important to keep in mind that the Nazis made a concerted effort to destroy all evidence in relation to the Reinhard death camps. On November 4, 1943, Globocnik confirmed the end of Aktion Reinhard in a letter to Himmler, writing that he had "dissolved (*aufgelöst*) all the camps."²⁷⁴ What Globocnik meant with such dissolution can be seen in Dubois' testimony:

In March or April 1943 the transports to Belzec and consequently the gassing operations stopped quite suddenly. Staff members of the Belzec camp were informed that the camp would be completely rebuilt. A Jewish work commando, whose size I don't remember, was in charge of the demolition work. It is worth mention that to this point in time the cremation of the corpses was finished and the graves were leveled. The camp was entirely cleared and leveled accordingly. I heard that some planting was performed there.²⁷⁵

Sobibor official Franz Hödl also described the removal of the gas chambers prior to his return to the camp in November 1943:

When I returned to Sobibor in November 1943, I learned of this (death of a camp official). By this time, the gas chambers were already torn down.²⁷⁶

²⁷¹ Perhaps another example would be the statement, "I am feeling blue today." This is not connected to the actual color blue.

²⁷² Kues, 'Skin Discoloration Caused by Carbon Monoxide', Revised version, n. 40.

²⁷³ M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.77-111, 137-152; Mattogno, *Belzec*, pp.71-97; MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.107-171.

²⁷⁴ 4024-PS; IMT Vol. XXXIV, p.77.

²⁷⁵ Karl Dubois, 16.9.1961, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 252/59, pp. 1402-1403.

²⁷⁶ Franz Hödl, 18.04.1963, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 251/59, Bd. 9, p.1823.

Globocnik was also eager to destroy as many documents related to the camps as he could, writing to Himmler in January 1944 that “all vouchers should be destroyed as soon as possible, as has been done in the case of all other documents pertaining to this operation (Reinhard).”²⁷⁷ The question must be asked, why such a strong campaign to conceal evidence for the camps’ functions would be necessary if they ultimately served as innocent transit camps for purposes of resettlement as proposed by MGK?

Polish Judge Lukaskiewicz travelled to Treblinka in late 1945 to investigate the grounds of the camp site, with the help of several Treblinka survivors. Excavations and diggings were performed between November 9 and 13, largely focusing on locating the mass graves in the camp.²⁷⁸ Briefly on one of the days, a search was also undertaken for the gas chambers of the camp. Lukaskiewicz recorded the search as follows:

November 11, 1945

A series of test excavations were performed at the place where the [gas] chambers had to have been located, in order to find their foundation walls if possible. Pits 10 - 15 meters in length and 1.5 meters deep were dug.

Undisturbed layers of earth were uncovered by this.²⁷⁹

Thus, the search for the gas chamber was unsuccessful. This should not come as a complete surprise. The witnesses who directed the brief Polish investigation on sites to excavate (Samuel Rajzman, Tanhum Grinberg, Szimon Friedman, and M. Mittelberg) were not direct witnesses to the gassings, as they did not work in the extermination sector of the camp, so there is no reason why we should expect them to know the exact location of the gas chambers, especially when they could have been confused as the site had been thoroughly devastated by the retreating Nazis and the Polish ‘gold rush’ that ensued. The investigating team also does not appear to have been exhaustive in their search for the structures, as seen by their continued work on other grave sites that same day, and the limited amount of work put towards locating the gas chambers (“test excavations”).

²⁷⁷ Globocnik an Himmler, 4.1.1944, 4024-PS; IMT Vol. XXXIV, p.71.

²⁷⁸ More on these excavations can be found in the chapter on Mass Graves.

²⁷⁹ Protokół czynności wykomanych w terenie w toku dochodzenia sądowego w sprawie obozu śmierci w Treblince, AIPN NTN 69, p.97R.



Image 5.5: Map of Graves Found to Contain Brick Rubble in Belzec

Source: <http://holocaust-history.org/belzec/deathcamp/Figure%20463.html>

During the late 1990s, Toruń University Professor Andrzej Kola led an archaeological team to perform work on the Belzec camp site. During the work, Kola discovered the remains of two buildings that he originally suspected served as the first and second phase gas chambers, which he labelled buildings “D” and “G” in his report.²⁸⁰ Kola later concluded that building “D” did not operate as a gas chamber, but held to his view that the wooden remains of building “G” could “hypothetically be regarded as the remains of the 2nd gas chamber.”²⁸¹

For building “G”, the presumed remains of the second phase gas chamber, Kola writes as follows:

The location of the building with death chambers functioning in the second stage of the camp in Belzec should be searched in the central part. R. Reder’s report says that on both sides of the loading platform along the building burial pits were situated, either filled with corpses or prepared for them. The dead bodies were

²⁸⁰ Kola, *Belżec*, pp.65-69.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p.69.

transported from the platform manually, which indicates that way was not too distanced. The drills did not prove any graves in the central part of the camp, although the other non grave structures occurred. In the place of the biggest concentration of non grave structures the archaeological survey recognized the traces of non-defined building with the size of about 15 x 3.5 m (building G). It was a completely wooden building. They may have been relicts of the second gas chamber from the second stage of the camp existence. Such an interpretation is supported by planigraphy of the camp. Reder's information, that the building was made of concrete, does not seem to be convincing, because no traces of concrete objects were spotted in the central part. The tar paper mentioned by him, which was to cover the flat gas chamber roof, is archaeologically proved in the relict layers of the building.²⁸²

As previously pointed out by Alex Bay, Kola's suggestion that the second phase gas chamber was completely wooden does not take into account the fact that several nearby graves were found to have brick rubble during the archaeological work, which can be seen in the image presented below. Three of the four graves containing bricks were located within 50-60 meters of Kola's building "G", the presumed new gas chamber.²⁸³

Bay also believes that the new gas chamber in Belzec could have been built on a wooden grade beam foundation, a system which would be efficient, cheap, and quick to build.²⁸⁴ On top of the foundation, brick walls could then be used for the building as a whole, creating and dividing it into six gas chambers. During the liquidation of the camp itself, the building could have been taken apart, if anything leaving parts of the wooden foundation behind in some areas (not necessary in all areas of the building, meaning Kola could have missed some parts of the building). Kues contested this explanation, his essential argument being that according to Bay's theory Prof. Kola would have "somehow managed to miss the major part of the building's remains."²⁸⁵ Kues rhetorically asked whether this is "really plausible", thus making an argument from incredulity. Depending on the thoroughness of the camp's dismantling and subsequent modifications of the area due to robbery-digging, Prof. Kola's not having found more than he did find need not be implausible at all. Bay considers it possible that Prof. Kola also missed several of the Belzec mass graves.²⁸⁶ On the other hand, arguments against Prof. Kola's interpretation of building "G" are also brought up by

²⁸² Ibid.

²⁸³ Bay, 'Reconstruction of Belzec: Camp II The Killing and Graves Area.'

²⁸⁴ Bay, 'Reconstruction of Belzec: Appendix A Grade Beam System of Construction of the New Gas Chamber.'

²⁸⁵ Thomas Kues, 'Traces of a Chimera, or Belzec's Vanishing Gas Chamber Building,' *Inconvenient History Blog*, 3.4.10, <http://www.revblog.codoh.com/2010/04/traces-of-a-chimera-or-belzec%E2%80%99s-vanishing-gas-chamber-building/>

²⁸⁶ Bay, 'Belzec.' Discussion in Roberto Muehlenkamp, 'Belzec Mass Graves and Archaeology - Continuation (2)', *Holocaust Controversies Blog*, 10.3.10, http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2010/03/belzec-mass-graves-and-archaeology_10.html

archaeologists Gilead, Haimi and Mazurek, who conclude that "the claim that building G is a gassing installation cannot be substantiated"²⁸⁷ It comes as no surprise that Kues gleefully refers to their conclusions, which seemingly also give substance to Mattogno's earlier euphoria:

To recapitulate: On the one hand, the archaeological 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 archaeological findings contradict the witnesses, the gas chambers of the second phase of the camp never existed.²⁸⁸

However, what neither Mattogno nor Kues tell their readers is that Prof. Kola did not investigate all objects and structures in the camp area, as he expressly pointed out in his book when writing that the examined relicts of 8 buildings were "only few of all the objects of the camp" and that further interpretation was possible "only after more detailed excavation"²⁸⁹ This means that one cannot exclude the hypothesis that traces of one or both gas chamber buildings could still have been found by "more detailed excavation" in other places in the camp area.

At the same time, Mattogno's above-quoted reasoning is a showpiece of Revisionist ill-reasoning (to put it politely). To the extent that archaeological findings contradict eyewitness testimonies, either of the two are wrong, that's all. If it's the eyewitness testimonies that are wrong, this does not mean they are "inadmissible". It only means that they cannot be relied on as concerns the particular details proven wrong by archaeology, and arguably that their reliability as concerns other details is also questionable bar corroboration by other evidence. However, the description of the gas chamber building in the camp's second phase as a concrete rather than a wooden building comes from several eyewitnesses independent of each other, and there's no reason to assume that all these eyewitnesses were wrong about the essential features of homicidal gassing at Belzec. Thus the likelier conclusion to be derived from this contradiction is that Prof. Kola's hypothesis regarding building "G" is wrong and building "G" was either the first gas chamber building or no gas chamber building at all.

²⁸⁷ Isaac Gilead, Yoram Haimi and Wojciech Mazurek, 'Excavating Nazi Extermination Centres', *Present Pasts*, 1, 2009, online: <http://presentpasts.info/index.php/pp/article/view/2/2>

²⁸⁸ Mattogno, *Belzec*, p.94

²⁸⁹ Kola, *Belzec*, p.66.

This, in turn, would mean that either Prof. Kola sought the gas chamber building in the wrong place (a distinct possibility because his investigation did not cover all objects in the camp area, as pointed out above) or that the SS understandably went to great lengths to remove all traces of the gas chamber buildings that might allow for their location and identification. Why such thorough erasure should not have been possible Mattogno does not explain, instead offering a silly argument at incredulity whereby the SS would not have thoroughly erased the traces of the gas chamber building unless they "sensed that over half a century later Kola and Robin O'Neil would come looking for them with their manual drill". Archaeologists investigating the place half a century later were certainly not the SS-men's concern, but Soviet or Polish forensic investigators employing archaeological means to identify the gas chamber buildings are likely to have been, which is why Mattogno's argument comes across as rather unintelligent.²⁹⁰

Archaeological studies have also taken place at the site of the Sobibor camp. Kola briefly conducted work at the site in 2000-2001, during which he identified mass graves and uncovered the remains of five buildings in a small section of the camp.²⁹¹ It is noteworthy that during the work, Kola did not perform excavations in the areas where he suspected the gas chambers to be, in close proximity to the mass graves, presumably for the same reasons that precluded excavations in the mass grave areas at Belzec, i.e. concerns of religious Jews about what they considered a desecration of the dead.²⁹² One of the buildings he did excavate (building "E"), estimated around 60 m long and located in the south-western section of the extermination area, was guessed by Kola to serve as an undressing barrack.²⁹³

During further studies of the camp site by archaeologist Yoram Haimi's team, the location of the gas chambers remained a key issue for the archaeologists to solve. A possible location may already have been found:

²⁹⁰ For discussion of this and other arguments of Mattogno's see Roberto Muehlenkamp, 'Belzec Mass Graves and Archaeology: My Response to Carlo Mattogno (5,1)', *Holocaust Controversies*, 31.7.09, http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2009/07/belzec-mass-graves-and-archaeology-my_31.html

²⁹¹ Andrzej Kola, 'Badania archeologiczne terenu byłego obozu zagłady Żydów w Sobiborze w 2001 r' ('Archaeological Research of the Former Jew Extermination Camp at Sobibor in 2001'), in: *Przeszłość i Pamięć. Biuletyn Rady Ochrony Pamięci Walk i Męczeństwa* 4/21 z 2001 r, pp.115-123. This article has been translated into English by Katarzyna Piotrowska; the translation is available under <http://holocaustcontroversies.yuku.com/topic/1071>

²⁹² See the Mass Graves section and the discussion in Muehlenkamp, 'Belzec Mass Graves and Archaeology: My Response to Carlo Mattogno (1)' (<http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2009/05/belzec-mass-graves-and-archaeology-my.html>) and 'Belzec Mass Graves and Archaeology - Continuation (1)' (http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2010/03/belzec-mass-graves-and-archaeology_7846.html)

²⁹³ Gilead et al, 'Excavating Nazi Extermination Centres,' mention that in later reconstructions including the map by B. Rutherford (<http://web.archive.org/web/20060303202718/http://deathcamps.org/sobibor/pic/bmap21.jpg>), this structure is considered to be the gas chamber building.

Yoram noticed a number of post holes, and he used those to target his excavations for the possible site of the gas chambers. After the Germans blew up the gas chambers, they pulled the concrete pillars out of the ground, and pieces of metal fell into the holes. Those pieces of metal became readily identified as magnetic anomalies.²⁹⁴

The above statement reflects the complex nature of the search for the gas chamber structure, given the efforts by the Nazis to destroy traces of their murderous activities.

Archaeological work at the Sobibor camp is still ongoing, with publications from the archaeological team expected to appear in 2011, along with a documentary of their work to be released in the fall through the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS). Thus, no solid conclusions can be obtained until the mentioned archaeological team's full research is published. In addition to the expected archaeological studies, Alex Bay has also been analyzing wartime photographs of Sobibor in an effort to better detect the remains of structures and aspects of the former camp.²⁹⁵

Also with Sobibor, MGK have feebly attempted to use the archaeological evidence to support their transit camp thesis by focusing on two of Professor Kola's Sobibor finds. The first, building "A", was described by Kola as a small building measuring 2.75 x 2.75 m with a basement, likely with an oven, and that probably functioned as a blacksmith's workshop. Without any evidence whatsoever, MGK instead wish to see this building as containing a hot air disinfestations furnace or a hot-water boiler, drawing a comparison (again, without evidence) to the *Zentralsauna* in Auschwitz.²⁹⁶ That this building was isolated from all other structures discovered by Kola by many meters (unlike the *Zentralsauna*), that no type of piping was discovered to carry heated water, and that there is no witness or documentary evidence for such a building (the latter is usually demanded by Revisionists) does not stop MGK from their wishful thinking. Regarding Kola's building "E", MGK capitalize on various perceived inconsistencies: while "all maps of Sobibor place the gas chamber building in the south-western part of camp III, which is exactly where Object E is located," the characteristics of Object E are "absolutely incompatible with those of the alleged second phase gas chamber building," among other things because "no witness has ever mentioned the presence in camp III of a structure the size of the larger barrack," Prof. Kola's suggestion that Object E served as an undressing or sorting barrack is dismissed because "it lacks a basis in the testimonial evidence and is in fact contradicted by the eye witnesses who claim that the

²⁹⁴ Leonard Felson, 'The Secrets of Sobibor: An Oral History,' *Reader's Digest*, August 2010, http://legacy.rd.com/content/printContent.do?contentId=183235&KeepThis=true&TB_iframe=true&height=500&width=790&modal=true .

²⁹⁵ Gilead et al, 'Excavating Nazi Extermination Centres.'

²⁹⁶ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.286.

Jewish deportees had to undress before they entered the camouflaged pathway, known as the Schlauch (tube)"²⁹⁷ (while dismissing testimonial evidence whenever it is incompatible with the Revisionist agenda, MGK have no problem with invoking testimonial evidence or the lack thereof when it suits their argument).

MGK's arguments amount to much ado about nothing if one considers the simple explanation that Object E was a building set up after the camp's dismantlement, namely that it was part of the "small farm" created on the area of Sobibor (as well as the other two Aktion Reinhard camps) "for reasons of surveillance", according to Globocnik's letter to Himmler dated January 5, 1944.²⁹⁸ Though this document is mentioned in other contexts by MGK,²⁹⁹ the inconvenient reference to the "reasons of surveillance" (why surveillance?) that these farms were meant to serve, along with other parts of 4024-PS discussed in this section, is conveniently omitted by these "inconvenient historians."

MGK and other deniers have also shown a blatant double standard in their demands and elevation of archaeological evidence, while ignoring the obvious failure of Revisionists to publish Richard Krege's report after allegedly conducting ground penetrating radar work at the Treblinka extermination camp. Krege is said to have first conducted preliminary investigations in October 1999, with more results gathered in 2000, when Graf accompanied Krege to Treblinka, Auschwitz-Birkenau, and Belzec.³⁰⁰ Krege's work was initially expected to be included with Mattogno and Graf's book on Treblinka (first published in 2002), but apparently was delayed for the purpose of its own separate publication. This work, which Graf valued as possessing "special importance," has still not appeared more than ten years after the alleged occurrence of the study, despite the publication of several other Revisionist works as well (ruling out publishing limitations).³⁰¹ In his articles, prior to discovering Kola's 2001 Polish article on the work in the Sobibor camp, Thomas Kues several times declared that without such a public article in any language, the value of Kola's archaeological work

²⁹⁷ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.161.

²⁹⁸ 4024-PS; IMT Vol. XXXIV, p.72. See also Roberto Muehlenkamp, 'On 12.05.2011, Demjanjuk was sentenced to 5 years in prison,' Holocaust Controversies, 14.5.11,

<http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2011/05/on-12052011-demjanjuk-was-sentenced-to.html>

²⁹⁹ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.250, due to its mention of "measures for the conciliation of the foreign ethnicities in the case of resettlement".

³⁰⁰ Jürgen Graf, 'Treblinka: Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?' *The Revisionist*, 2/1, 2004, p.98.

³⁰¹ The probable reason why Krege's report has not been published is that Krege realized that his GPR had discovered what it was supposed to prove the non-existence of, i.e. soil disturbances indicating the presence of mass graves corresponding to mass murder on an enormous scale. For indications in this direction see the assessment of Krege's published GPR scan by GPR expert Lawrence B. Conyers Quoted in the post dated Tue Nov 13, 2007 2:12 am by "wet blanket" on the "Atheist Parents" discussion forum, <http://www.atheistparents.org/forum/viewtopic.php?t=14940&postdays=0&postorder=asc&start=25>); regarding Conyers' GPR expertise see his website at University of Denver, <http://mysite.du.edu/~lconyer/>).

was deemed to be “highly questionable,” if worth anything at all.³⁰² Kues also took the liberty to suggest that Kola or his associates “delayed the publication of documentation in order to avoid critical scrutiny.” Of course, these comments are irrelevant as Kola did publish material on his archaeological work in the camp in 2001; however, would MGK accept similar comments regarding the failure of Krege to publish the results of his work, formerly partnered with their own?

With clear evidence of building removal and camp destruction by the Nazis, turning the sites into virtual wastelands, we are unlikely to ever get a completely accurate picture of the layout of the three Reinhard camps during their operation; this was the exact purpose of the Nazi efforts. Due to the limited or unfinished archaeological work throughout the camps the issue of the gas chambers’ locations remains unclear at this point, a situation which MGK have exploited in their criticisms of the exterminations. Even if buildings were discovered and declared to be the gas chambers, no doubt MGK would provide some excuse to continue their denials of the reality of homicidal gassings; Gilead et al point out in their article that, as the “standing gas chambers of Majdanek and Auschwitz-Birkenau are currently denied as such (by Holocaust deniers), there is a minimal chance, if at all, that future exposure of poorly preserved remains of gas chambers” will cause deniers any reason to correct their beliefs.³⁰³ The same goes for what is perhaps a more important archaeological discovery than an old structure’s traces, the enormous mass graves and huge amounts of human remains that have been located in all three Reinhard camps, corresponding to far more than the 5% of deportees that MGK assume to have perished in these camps.³⁰⁴ And yet deniers still cling to their core faith.

Gas Chamber Ventilation

In his *Belżec* book, with a reference to medical literature (published in 1931) on harmful gases, Mattogno writes:

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) 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

³⁰² Kues, ‘The Alleged First Gas Chamber Building at Sobibor’; Thomas Kues, ‘The Ground Water Level at Sobibor 1942-1943,’ CODOH, <http://www.codoh.com/newrevoices/nrtksgwl.html>.

³⁰³ Gilead et al, ‘Excavating Nazi Extermination Centres,’ pp.13-14.

³⁰⁴ See the section Mattogno et al’s Claims and Arguments, Chapter 7.

witnesses ever mentioned this.³⁰⁵

The point by Mattogno is bogus, as many Aktion Reinhard witnesses (whom Mattogno also quotes in his work) mention the ventilation of the gas chambers. Few, if any, witnesses mention gas masks, but what would be the purpose if, as those same witnesses maintain, the exhaust gas in the chambers was ventilated out naturally before workers entered?

For Treblinka, as previously pointed out,³⁰⁶ several survivors attest to the instalment of vents atop the gas chambers in order to remove the exhaust gas after a gassing. For Sobibor, *Gasmeister* Erich Bauer stated quite clearly:

After the gassing, after about 20 to 30 minutes, the engine was stopped. After the opening of the doors there was still a wait until the exhaust fumes were removed. Then the corpses were loaded onto trucks and driven to the pits.³⁰⁷

Franz Hödl, who was also present at Sobibor, similarly spoke of the doors as the agents of ventilation:

The outside walls along the building's entire length were trap doors, which would be raised after a gassing. This was also the method of ventilating the chambers.³⁰⁸

Regarding Belzec, Karl Alfred Schluch stated:

After the gas chambers were ventilated, the Jewish Work Kommando under the leadership of a Kapo and removed the corpses out of the chamber.³⁰⁹

Mattogno oddly quotes Schluch's above statement (though only focusing on his description of the gassed corpses) immediately after criticizing witnesses for failing to account for necessary ventilation measures (quoted above).

As with Auschwitz-Birkenau, Revisionists put a high emphasis on safety precautions that Jewish laborers should have been awarded in their functions during the Nazi exterminations; of course, such an emphasis is certainly misplaced, as the Nazi staff need not value the life of any Jew. As seen above, the gas chambers are said to have been ventilated after the gassings, prior to the removal of the corpses. This would have significantly reduced the concentration of carbon monoxide gas in their work environment. It should also be kept in mind that the laborers would not have been completely exposed to the gas, as they would have quickly entered and exited the chambers when removing the corpses, shortening their exposure times with the poison, and allowing time for the remaining CO concentration to ventilate out of the chamber.

³⁰⁵ Mattogno, *Belzec*, p.67.

³⁰⁶ See the section The Treblinka Camp in this chapter.

³⁰⁷ Erich Bauer, 10.12.1962, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 251/59, Bd. 8, p.1669.

³⁰⁸ Statement by Frans Hödl, StA Dortmund, Verfahren gegen Gomerski, Bd. III, p.1270.

³⁰⁹ Karl Alfred Schluch, 11.11.1961, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd. 8, p.1513.

As shown earlier on in this chapter, the path to the gas chambers at the Reinhard camps involved much more than a walk through the “tube” to the buildings; their evolution and development has never been addressed in the denier oeuvre. This chapter finds that, despite the unjustifiable obsession that deniers have shown towards the gas chambers, their arguments are abysmally ignorant of the multitude of evidence for their existence and operation. Despite mockeries and a few selected criticisms of witness statements, as Chapter 6 will detail, MGK fail to adequately and reasonably refute the credibility of the numerous witnesses (perpetrators, prisoners, and bystanders) for the gassings. Other documents related to the camps, such as related to fuel deliveries and the plunder of the victims’ property, substantiate and reinforce the witnesses’ validity. MGK’s focus on the gas chamber buildings in and of themselves without regard to the wider body of historic evidence relating to the camps, Nazi policy, or other realities in occupied Europe, also displays a surprisingly isolationist and unprofessional approach to the events.

Chapter 6

Death Camp Witnesses

Whilst they are never categorized as such by Mattogno, Graf, and Kues in their collective works, the witnesses for the Aktion Reinhard camps can be grouped in one of three ways: bystanders, victims, and perpetrators. All three of these categories had varying levels of proximity to the actual extermination area. Bystanders can range from local villagers living next to the death camps themselves, or neighbours of the Jews who were deported to said camps. Victims and prisoners of the camps were given varying jobs, which meant that some were closer to the gas chambers and mass graves than others, such as those who helped unload and prepare Jewish luggage. Perpetrators can also include an assortment of persons, such as the police officials who deported the Jews, Nazi bureaucratic officials who organized and conducted the deportations, gassings, and plunder of the victims, and also the guards and officials who ran the actual death camps.

These witness accounts are then normally looked at through several perspectives, further categorizing them by chronology in terms of a witnesses experience with the exterminations, the time when the testimony was actually given by the witness, and other such categories. Realizing the context in which a statement was given, of course as well as knowledge of the content of the statement itself, helps the historian judge the value of a testimony by determining the possible influences and circumstances of a witness. Such a basic evaluation of a witness statement seems absent from MGK's trilogy.

Instead, readers are merely treated to whole chapters of witness criticism, where several dozen witnesses of varying proximity to the camp are disparaged to differing degrees. The majority of witnesses discussed by MGK are only given a cursory treatment, allowing absurdities and alleged contradictions (with other witnesses and the "official version" of the Holocaust) to be pointed out. On many occasions, the mere act of identifying such points is

sufficient for MGK to dismiss a witness.¹ MGK (particularly Graf) do not even spare an effort to actually refute or analyze some of the quoted statements, as many simply pass without any noteworthy argumentation or analysis, but instead are largely just ridiculed with the points expected to be self-evidently understood by the reader.²

Such slipshod criticisms of several of the witnesses for the Reinhard exterminations certainly lessen the impact of MGK's criticism on the wider body of evidence derived from witnesses. One can account for more than 70 survivors from Treblinka³, 47 from Sobibor⁴, and 2 from Belzec, the overwhelming majority of whom left accounts of their experiences. The number of German perpetrators (mostly SS) who had some close connection to the camps and provided statements after the war amounts to at least 38 witnesses, out of more than 90 SS men known to have served at the camps.⁵ This figure is heavily augmented by the many Ukrainian guards, trained at Trawniki, serving at the three camps for security and operational purposes; a minimal estimate, based on the number of such statements available, exceeds 100. One must also take into account the wider German bureaucracy. To begin with, we have those who organized the Reinhard operation, including figures like Adolf Eichmann, Wilhelm Höttl, and Hermann Höfle, or those who experienced some connection to the camps through other channels, such as Kurt Gerstein, Rudolf Höss, and Wilhelm Pfannenstiel. Included in the latter category would also be those Germans who were stationed in the General Government and were able to visit the camps, such as Globocnik's successor Jakob Sporrenberg,⁶ as well as the Kreishauptmann of Rawa Ruska, Gerhard Hager, who once visited Belzec.⁷ The statements of these persons can be reasonably estimated at several dozen. The number of bystanders living or working in close proximity to the camps themselves and who recorded statements about the activities therein is more difficult to arrive at, but surely exceeds twenty.⁸

In total, the number of witnesses in immediate or close proximity to the camps and who left behind statements reaches well above 300. Obviously the number of individuals

¹ For instance Mattogno, *Belzec*, p.66 regarding Robert Jühns; *Ibid.*, p.69 regarding Erich Fuchs; *Ibid.*, pp.44, 84 regarding Heinrich Gley.

² See MGK, *Sobibór*, p.30 on Stanislaw Szmajzner; *Ibid.*, p.31 on Moshe Bahir; M&G, *Treblinka*, p.34 on Abraham Goldfarb; *Ibid.*, p.50 on Oskar Berger; *Ibid.*, pp.64, 65 on Abe Kon and Kazmierz Skarzynski; *Ibid.*, p.67 on Szymon Goldberg, Chil Rajchman [Henryk Reichman], and Stanislaw Kon.

³ Lubling, *Twice Dead*, pp.143-145, identifies 70 survivors of the revolt, excluding escapees before the revolt who survived the war (eg. Bomba) or who left written accounts but perished later (eg. Krzepicki).

⁴ Schelvis, *Vernichtungslager Sobibór*, pp.273-286; Schelvis, *Sobibor*, pp.231-242.

⁵ Some of these SS men had no connection to the T4 operation, such as Erich Lachmann.

⁶ Report on the Interrogation of PW SS-Gruppenfuehrer Jakob Sporrenberg, 25.2.1946, p.14, PRO WO208/4673.

⁷ Pohl, *Ostgalizien*, p.314.

⁸ For example, see the Belzec accounts below.

aware of activities at the three camps, or of the extermination operations in general, who did not leave statements behind would exponentially increase the number of persons aware of the murderous activities. This brief summary on the number of witnesses no doubt is incomplete, but MGK fail to provide an adequate explanation to account for all of the statements they do include, let alone anything logical or coherent about the larger figure in our count.

MGK's Methodology (or lack thereof)

In their approach to the history of the Reinhard camps, MGK fail to use any proper methodology with regard to the utilization of witness testimony. The method they and other deniers proffer on dozens of witness testimonies largely amounts to a game of 'anomaly-hunting', which also radically applies the principle of *falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus* (false in one thing, false in all things), using it to the effect that a single falsehood or mistake invalidates not only the testimony of the specific witness in question but also casts suspicion on the reliability of all witnesses. Such an amateurish and erroneous approach to testimony is not to be unexpected, as despite the crucial role that witness testimony plays in their writings, not a single member of MGK have been formally educated in any field relevant to a proper analysis of witness testimony (e.g. law, history, psychology). A lack of formal education obviously would not preclude MGK from reasonably studying witness testimony, but MGK have never cited any text detailing a proper analysis of witness testimony which has guided or supported their odd form of criticisms.

MGK, being so eager to dismiss witnesses in order to support their preconceived notions, hang the entire credibility of a witness on rather peripheral details in their statements. Graf, for instance, though recognizing a detailed and lengthy account by Moshe Bahir, included in a collection by Miriam Novitch, suggests that Bahir is not a credible witness for the hearsay statement (overheard from two camp officials) that Himmler's 1943 visit to the Sobibor camp marked the millionth Jew murdered in the camp.⁹ This number of Jews was never deported to the camp; however, how does such a camp rumour (which may or may not have been exaggerated or properly heard by Bahir) determine the credibility of the rest of the testimony? Mattogno also performs a similar act when he derisively claims that SS-Scharführer Heinrich Gley's knowledge of the gas chambers at Belzec "can be judged" by his uncertainty of the type of engine that was used.¹⁰

⁹ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.31-32. Graf briefly goes on to criticize Bahir's description of the extermination process (gas through shower pipes and collapsible floors), which were based on hearsay, another dishonest criticism.

¹⁰ Mattogno, *Belżec*, p.66.

Graf takes this *falsus in uno* type argumentation to the extreme when in *Treblinka* he writes regarding the engine type:

Whoever may object that the witnesses had possibly made false statements in regard to the weapon of the crime is simultaneously discrediting, along with the credibility of the witness testimony, the entire picture of the 'eastern extermination camps,' which is based exclusively upon just these witness statements!¹¹

Graf made this statement because Revisionists have so heavily invested in the 'diesel issue', and any proper revision of the issue, as we already saw, discredits much of the Revisionists gas chamber related arguments.¹² The proposition is also based on an illogical foundation. Why would witness statements which incorrectly identify the gassing engine (done mainly by hearsay or indirect witnesses¹³) be discredited? Should murder witnesses be ignored due to a misidentification of an M-16 as an AK-47? What would MGK say about Allied troops during the Second World War who reported being bombarded by German 88mm artillery shells, when there were no German '88's in the vicinity? Would they doubt the occurrence of the barrage, or perhaps even the battle?

Certainly the above questions are nonsense for any reasonable inquirer.¹⁴ What they show is how ridiculous MGK's approach (and the related outgrowth) to witness testimonies is, where a few errors are used to discredit the value of an entire statement. In essence, MGK's approach entails tossing out the baby with the bath-water. A German handbook for trial judges and attorneys, written by Attorney at Law and retired Presiding Judge at the Court of Assizes Rolf Bender, and German Federal Supreme Court Judge Armin Nack, discards such a method of analysis in their legal handbook:

"Him who lies once you don't believe, even if he speaks the truth"

This saying must – contrary to its customary use – be understood "quite literally", i.e. as follows:

"It is a (common) erroneous notion to assume that someone who lies about a secondary issue also tells untruths about the main issue."

[Example:] The deposition at a murder trial of a main incriminating witness from the homeless milieu, who had been subject to several criminal procedures for false accusations and who had in these procedures been considered incapable of responsibility because of lacking control over her actions, proved to be credible.

¹¹ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.43.

¹² See the section The Gassing Engine, Chapter 5.

¹³ For further examples of MGK's conflation of direct and indirect witnesses see the section Direct and Indirect Witnesses, Chapter 6.

¹⁴ The problems consist of the unreasonable assertions, demands, and claims by extreme negationists, which forms a significant part of MGK's audience.

The witness described original conversations with the perpetrator before and after the deed and provided many details, for instance how the perpetrator had previously “trained” on her the victim’s strangulation with the murder weapon, a brown leather belt.¹⁵

This is a sound guide to a proper treatment of testimony as concerns witnesses who are known to have incurred in deliberate falsehoods, which applies all the more regarding witnesses who erred in good faith. We do not believe that any of the Aktion Reinhard witnesses that we have quoted have lied in the testimony we included, but rather may be prone to exaggeration or other such errors. The same holds true for statements regarding the February 13-14, 1945 bombing of Dresden as, in addition to several other areas, many victims reported the occurrence of an Allied strafing attack that never happened¹⁶, and several witness statements suggested the death toll lay significantly above 100,000 victims, even though the actual death toll has recently been revised to around 25,000.¹⁷

These contradictions and “degrees of conflict” (as psychologist Willem A. Wagenaar termed them) among the dozens of witness statements, for sane researchers, do not provide sufficient cause to deny the reality of a historical event, especially when no other plausible alternative has been offered. For MGK, their faith requires such a misguided approach to testimony in order to discard inconvenient evidence, as the discovery of minor anomalies does not amount to proof of a hoax. Nowhere in their body of work have they connected or explained the purpose of such ‘anomaly-hunting,’ nor do they explain the surrounding body of evidence regarding the camps in relation to Nazi policy, and thus the limited anomalies essentially only amount to logical non-sequiturs.¹⁸ What MGK are ultimately left with is their hope and dogmatic belief that “contrary to what mainstream Holocaust historians and propagandists may believe, such contradictions are fatal to the Sobibor gas chamber

¹⁵ Rolf Bender and Armin Nack, *Tatsachenfeststellung vor Gericht - Band I: Glaubwürdigkeits- und Beweislehre. 2. Auflage.* (C.H. Beck Verlag, 1995), *Randnummer pp.303, 304.*

¹⁶ Frederick Taylor, *Dresden: Tuesday, February 13, 1945.* New York: HarperCollins, 2004, pp.429-442. Taylor refers to the work of Dr. Helmut Schnatz (p.439), who was one of the leading German historians on Allied air raids. Schnatz has studied witness accounts of numerous attacks, and has been intrigued by the “often quite glaring contradictions” to be found in their statements, with witnesses providing distinguished or sometimes contradictory descriptions of the same event.

¹⁷ BBC News, “Up to 25,000 died in Dresden’s WWII bombing-report,” 18 March 2010, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8574157.stm>. David Irving recorded the figures of Hanns Voigt (135,000), Klaus Mehnert (140,000), Professor Fescher (180,000), and Karl Bodenschatz (150,000). As MGK declare exaggerations of camp death tolls to be “lies,” would they do the same for Dresden victims and witnesses?

¹⁸ For instance, Kues’ criticism regarding the first gas chamber at Sobibor, with witnesses reporting different details on the victim group, and the structure of the building. Nowhere does Kues detail the ultimate point in referring to such ‘contradictions’. Is the attempt to say one witness was not there? That no witness was there? Such would be illogical. Indeed the lack of any connection among the anomalies founders even more when examining the evidence for all three camps.

allegation.”¹⁹ Kues repeats this fallacy by quoting Butz’s dictum that “These are simply the sorts of contradictions that one should expect to emerge from a pack of lies”²⁰, but Kues offers no basis for inferring lies rather than errors from the evidence he cites. Kues cannot grasp that simply presenting a list of contradictions does not prove anything with regard to the probability of hoax versus error. Nowhere in their works have MGK detailed the origins of this contradictory “pack of lies.” Ironically, the divergences on minor details in witness statements that MGK point out (which, as we have shown are to be expected with witness testimony) help to show their consistency with authenticity and truth. If the testimonies cited by MGK were coerced or scripted, one would expect consistency, not contradiction. MGK seem to expect the body of witness testimony to be expressed in a detached, academic, and mechanical fashion expressed in the same voice, stripping witnesses of their emotions and individual personality; but such a scenario would appear heavily suspicious, and rightfully so.²¹

Much of MGK’s work can be summed up as an attempt to dismiss testimonial sources altogether. Such an attitude, we contend, is entirely contrary to all known methods of inquiry or fact-determination in law or history. Indeed, Ranke’s famous dictum, that the task of history was to show “how it really was” (*wie es eigentlich gewesen war*) is immediately followed up by a list of the kinds of sources that can be used to achieve this goal: “memoirs, diaries, letters, legation reports, and original accounts from eyewitnesses.”²² No sensible historian since then has dissented from such a view. Not even at the height of the mania for positivism did Langlois and Seignobos take such an attitude. Their famous dictum “no documents, no history” turns out on closer examination to mean “no sources, no history”, as the bulk of their work is given over to articulating a method of source criticism which can recover historical truth from second-hand hearsay accounts written some time after the event – the kind of sources with which most historians are confronted when writing about most epochs in the past.²³

¹⁹ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.296.

²⁰ Kues, ‘On Rudolf Höss’ alleged visit to Treblinka’.

²¹ Things that would create suspicion of a hoax include emotionless survivor accounts, rigorous attention to details irrelevant to the witnesses, the use of literal language rather than any figurative descriptions, inflexible consistency in all details across the testimonies, and a complete absence of errors and/or exaggerations. Basically, revisionists are proclaiming ‘hoax’ because it doesn’t sound enough like a hoax, that is how their distorted logic works.

²² Leopold von Ranke, *Geschichten der romanischen und germanischen Völker von 1494 bis 1514*, Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1885 (original: 1824), p.vii.

²³ Charles V. Langlois and Charles Seignobos, *Introduction to the Study of History*, London: Duckworth, 1898. Langlois and Seignobos also rejected the falsus in uno approach of analysing sources *separately*.

Virtually every commentary on the practice or philosophy of history will instruct the historian to be *cautious* with memoirs, as for example one can see from the discussion in Marc Bloch's famous essay *The Historian's Craft*.²⁴ Bloch's discussion focuses on the memoirs of Napoleonic generals who massaged their battle narratives in order to paint themselves in a better light. What applies to generals and politicians also applies to the ego-documents produced by 'ordinary' historical witnesses, especially in what has been called 'the era of the witness'.²⁵ The outpourings of veterans' memoirs which began with the First World War are a testament to this. In the 1920s, the French-American veteran Jean Norton Cru took a literalist scalpel to the corpus of memoirs and fiction produced by the survivors of the trenches, noted many exaggerations and impossibilities in their accounts, but in the end concluded that only 7% of such accounts were entirely useless.²⁶ Nowhere, of course, did he conclude that trench warfare did not happen. Norton Cru's sample consisted of 300 personal accounts – around the same number as there are direct eyewitnesses to Aktion Reinhard.

Treatment of Witness Testimony

In a section on the "Value of Eye Witness Testimonies," Kues quotes Christopher Browning's considerations on witnesses of the Reinhardt camps:

Once again, human memory is imperfect. The testimonies of both survivors and other witnesses to the events in Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka are no more immune to forgetfulness, error, exaggeration, distortion, and repression than eyewitness accounts of other events in the past. They differ, for instance, on how long each gassing operation took, on the dimensions and capacity of the gas chambers, on the number of undressing barracks, and on the roles of particular individuals. Gerstein, citing Globocnik, claimed the camps used diesel motors, but witnesses who actually serviced the engines in Belzec and Sobibor (Reder and Fuchs) spoke of gasoline engines.²⁷ Once again, however, without exception all concur on the vital issue at dispute, namely that Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka were death camps whose primary purpose was to kill in gas chambers through the carbon monoxide from engine exhaust, and that the hundreds of thousands of corpses of Jews killed there were first buried and then later cremated.²⁸

²⁴ Marc Bloch, *The Historian's Craft*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992

²⁵ Annette Wieviorka, *The Era of the Witness*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006; see also the important study of the sociology of testimony by Renaud Dulong, *Le Témoin oculaire. Les conditions sociales de l'attestation personnelle*, Paris: Editions de l'EHESS, 1998.

²⁶ Jean Norton Cru, *Témoins*, Nancy: Presses universitaires de Nancy, 1993 (original: 1929). On the 'Norton Cru affaire' that blew up after the publication of *Témoins*, see Frédéric Rousseau, *Le Procès des témoins de la Grande Guerre. L'affaire Norton Cru*. Paris, 2003.

²⁷ Kues cuts out this sentence from Browning's paragraph. The point about witnesses for gasoline exhaust has never been addressed by MGK in their writings.

²⁸ Browning, *Evidence for the Implementation of the Final Solution: Electronic Edition*

Putting aside Kues' dishonest omission of one of his crucial points, Browning's interpretation is a common-sense approach to the treatment of witness testimonies at the Reinhard camps. If witnesses generally concur with one another about the primary purpose and operation of the camps (extermination), then any divergences regarding relatively minute details (size of gas chambers, duration of gassings, number of graves) or items that they did not directly know (specifics of gassing operation, details on burial or cremations) are essentially irrelevant to the reality of the camps' ultimate purpose. Those specific variations in testimony, as Browning notes, result from the basic shortcomings with all witnesses, who are forced to recall events years after their occurrence. This fact does not appear to be disputed by MGK, as Kues recognizes innocuous witness inaccuracies in testimony as a "truism."²⁹

Foibles of witness recollections are commonly regarded as typical among judicial authorities as well. In their legal handbook, German experts Nack and Bender list several subjects by reliability as they are often recalled in witness statements. They write:

The reliability of recollection also depends on the kind of object that the informing person is to remember.

The sequence (with increasingly weaker recollection) is the following:

- (1) **Persons and their actions**, especially towards and with the informing person
- (2) **The (mere) presence of objects**, especially such that play a central part in the course of the action
- (3) **The number of persons participating**, if it is smaller than 7
- (4) **The spatial conditions**, especially insofar as they are important for the fitting-together of the actions
- (5) **The state of objects**, especially insofar as important for the fitting-together of the actions
- (6) **The sequence of events**
- (7) **Colors**
- (8) **Magnitudes and quantities**
- (9) **Sounds**
- (10) **Duration**

[From item 6 onward the reliability of recollection is especially diminished.]
(Emphases in original)³⁰

It is remarkable that the areas of testimony whose reliability is deemed "especially diminished" by legal authorities Nack and Bender are precisely the areas that MGK and other

²⁹ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.106.

³⁰ Bender and Nack, *Tatsachenfeststellung vor Gericht*, *Randnummer 137*.

Revisionists most criticize; this simply highlights their flawed and disingenuous approach to witnesses.³¹

By recognizing the inevitability of witness mistakes in their testimony, Kues is forced to take on an odd position to support his Revisionist belief system. For Kues, who builds up mistakes made by witnesses to be “contradictions,” the clear consensus that exists among testimonies regarding the exterminations in the Reinhard camps is “in fact nothing but a mesh of contradictions, held together by mere belief.”³² This is a clear rejection of Browning’s common sense statement that variances on small details among the witnesses do not refute the clear agreement in their account on the fate of the Jews deported to the camps.

Kues also raises another excuse in which to discredit Browning’s statement: the possibility of uncoerced false confessions and memories. It is important to note that, as with so many other areas, MGK avoid making any direct statements or propositions that camp witnesses recalled false memories, and perpetrators made false confessions without coercion. To support this open possibility, Kues cites one work (Gisli Gudjonsson) regarding the occurrence of false confessions in modern criminal cases.³³ What Kues cannot cite, and what is regarded as important among Gudjonsson, is a retraction of such a false confession by perpetrator witnesses and defendants.³⁴ Kues also leaves out Gudjonsson’s discussion of an empirical study for false confessions in Iceland (at an estimated rate of false confession per interrogation below 1%), which found that just 7% of all offences falsely confessed to were violent.³⁵ The Iceland study also found that the overwhelming majority of false confessors were under the age of 21.³⁶ None of this information supports Kues’ hope (never declared, but simply suggested) that hundreds of Nazi perpetrators and auxiliaries falsely confessed to extremely violent crimes across the globe for several decades, and the overwhelming majority of whom never bothered to retract them, in public or private.³⁷

Another point that MGK fail to discuss is the research of previously mentioned psychologist Wagenaar, who was an expert witness for the defense in Demjanjuk’s trial in

³¹ Such areas of dishonest criticism focus on the numbers of those gassed, both in a chamber and in a camp’s existence, the color of gassed corpses, the sounds of the victims, the length of a gassing, etc. Bender and Nack’s work clearly shows that these areas are not accurately recalled by witnesses.

³² MGK, *Sobibór*, p.106.

³³ Gisli H. Gudjonsson, *The Psychology of Interrogations and Confessions*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2003, pp.179-186; cited in MGK, *Sobibór*, p.106.

³⁴ Gudjonsson, *Psychology of Interrogations and Confessions*, pp.173, 198.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.176-177. The majority of crimes falsely confessed to, property offences (59%) and serious traffic violations (20%).

³⁶ *Ibid.* 64% of false confessors were under the age of 21.

³⁷ This is why Pfannenstiel’s private admission to revisionist Rassinier on the reality of homicidal gasings is so lethal to MGK’s belief.

Israel. In an article penned with Jop Groeneweg on “The Memory of Concentration Camp Survivors,” Wagenaar analyzed the testimony regarding a Nazi labor camp (camp Erika in the Netherlands) from 78 witnesses.³⁸ Statements were originally recorded in the 1940s, and then given once again in the 1980s, with 15 witnesses providing evidence during both periods; Wagenaar compared the statements by witnesses in order to determine the amount of forgetfulness that affects camp survivors, and the distortion of memory over time. Wagenaar’s study of these later statements revealed both an accurate recollection of certain verifiable facts (punishment techniques, meals duration, roll call brutalities, the harsh treatment of Jewish prisoners), but also a lack of recollection on specific information.³⁹

The specific information that was incorrectly remembered later on included dates of entry into Camp Erika⁴⁰, the names of camp officials⁴¹, an infamous camp official’s appearance⁴², the witnesses’ camp registration number⁴³, and the housing circumstances of Jewish prisoners.⁴⁴ Witnesses were also asked in the 1980s about maltreatment incidents they described in the 1940s, with all but one forgetting the experience until reminded of their statements.⁴⁵ Despite the witness mistakes on occasional details, Wagenaar writes:

There is no doubt that almost all witnesses remember Camp Erika in great detail, even after 40 years. The accounts of the conditions in the camp, the horrible treatment, the daily routine, the forced labour, the housing, the food, the main characters of the guards, are remarkably consistent.

Thus, the situation with the Camp Erika survivors closely parallels that of the Aktion Reinhard witnesses: there are subjects on which witnesses vary, but in crucial elements, they are consistent. Wagenaar then goes on to conclude about the reliability of Holocaust witnesses in general as time progresses:

The intensity of the emotion at the encoding of information is no guarantee for accurate eyewitness testimony after a long retention period. It is not only true that people can, as in the case of John Dean’s memory, make reconstructions in which the details are arranged to create a false impression. It is also possible that people completely lose access to such details. (...) The extreme situation of being

³⁸ Willem A. Wagenaar and Jop Groeneweg, ‘The Memory of Concentration Camp Survivors,’ *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, Vol. 4 (1990), pp.77-87.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p.80.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p.80. Witnesses who recalled their entry date in the 1940s overwhelmingly errored within a month of their actual entrance date. In the 1980s, the majority of witnesses were off by a month or more.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p.81. Excluding the name of De Rijke, who was spoken of in the 1940s but whose name had publicity in the 1980s for his trial, there was less than a 30% recall of other members of the camp staff.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p.83. Twenty said De Rijke wore a uniform, while 28 said he did not.

⁴³ *Ibid.* 16 of 30 witnesses recalled their correct registration number.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* When the witnesses themselves recalled, they overwhelmingly choose tents, but when prompted through questioning, barracks were spoken of nearly half the time.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p.84.

victimized in a Nazi concentration camp does not create an exception to this rule. Does this mean that eyewitness testimony must be discounted in cases of Nazi crimes? The answer is no: there is no reason to distrust such testimony more than in other violent crimes. The degree of conflict between the testimonies in the De Rijke case is probably quite normal. But the extreme horrors of the concentration camp experiences do not dismiss the courts of their task to question the evidence critically.⁴⁶

Wagenaar is correct to value witness testimony despite degrees of conflict on specific areas, which is accepted as normal within the historical and legal fields. When Graf looks to deny “any value at all” to postwar statements made by witnesses due to these normal errors and memory lapses that developed over time (specifically with perpetrator recognition), he does so unjustifiably.⁴⁷ Indeed, it is necessary for Graf’s Revisionist position that such testimony be devalued and dismissed, for if such testimony contains any validity, then the Revisionist case is bankrupt. In contrast, any hoaxing of witnesses and perpetrators would have led to a rigid and stringently consistent body of testimony. In such an instance, that is where one could legitimately suspect a coordination of testimony; such can be seen in noted defense attorney Max Steuer’s successful cross-examination of Kate Alterman in the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire trial.⁴⁸

Direct and Indirect Witnesses

One of the typical distortions in the works of MGK is a conflation of direct and indirect (or hearsay) witness statements regarding the death camps. These criticisms of witnesses for hearsay statements seem to be highly regarded as effective by MGK due to the sheer number of them in their work.⁴⁹ This deceptive technique serves to provide false targets for their criticisms of witness statements from which to cast doubt on direct witnesses; attacking the rumour of an indirect witness only reflects upon the actual rumour, and not the credibility of the witness. These distortions are usually found in the disparagement of points that are not accepted by proper Holocaust historians (e.g. electrocution chambers, vacuum chambers, etc.⁵⁰), and then artificially extended to cover the mechanisms attested to from direct

⁴⁶ Wagenaar and Groeneweg, ‘The Memory of Concentration Camp Survivors,’ p.87.

⁴⁷ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.52-53. Graf assumes that Schelvis has a similar position “without realizing it,” but this is manifestly not the case.

⁴⁸ Tim Dare, *The Counsel of Rogues? A Defence of the Standard Conception of the Lawyer’s Role*. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2009, pp.16-17.

⁴⁹ There are many such examples, not all of which will be discussed here. For instance, the notion of a ‘soap factory’ at Belzec was criticized by Mattogno in *Belzec* (pp.33-34), but without any direct witnesses being cited to support such a rumour.

⁵⁰ Thus, when in *Belzec* Mattogno writes that, “The abandonment of methods of murder prevailing until then (steam at Treblinka, chlorine at Sobibor, electricity at Belzec) 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

witnesses (engine exhaust gas chambers). Readers should thus be offended by MGK's slight of their intelligence, expecting the audience to be unable to distinguish between a hearsay testimony and a genuine eyewitness.

The issue of inner versus outer camp witnesses, and thus direct versus more indirect witnesses, also bears a brief discussion. For the Treblinka camp, there were a very small number of prisoners who worked in the extermination area and were able to successfully escape from the camp, largely due to the August 2, 1943 revolt.⁵¹ For Belzec, only one prisoner who worked with the gas chambers returned alive from the camp⁵², while for Sobibor there are literally no witnesses who survived from the inner (extermination) area. The reasons for the low number of witnesses should not be surprising, given the secretive and deadly work with which the prisoners were engaged. While those witnesses who worked in the outer areas of the camps (i.e. the reception area) cannot provide as conclusive statements about the fate of those Jews deported to the Reinhard camps as those who worked around the gas chambers and mass graves, the information they gained by their own experiences, as well as discussions with other prisoners, is still valuable when its limitations are recognized, such as an increased proneness to confusion about specific details about the exterminations (due to their indirect nature).

Kues attempts to point out these limitations, such as a lack of direct knowledge about the origin of the stench and smoke emanating from the extermination area (caused by the cremations of bodies), in an attempt to brand outer Sobibor camp witnesses as inconclusive about the fate of those Jews who disappeared into the extermination area.⁵³ Kues even argues that Jews marched into the extermination area could have left unnoticed by persons in other areas of the camp.⁵⁴ To reach this conclusion, Kues spins many of the observations that the outer camp witnesses observed (smoke, stench, screams, engine noise, hearsay discussions, etc.), largely focusing upon the limitations caused by the lack of the witnesses' direct eyesight. All of these factors, in addition to the utter disappearance of all incoming Jews, led outer camp witnesses to interpret their location as a death camp. Indeed, Sobibor perpetrator Erich Lachmann even recognized as much while still assigned to the Trawniki camp:

Every Polish child knew at the time that these were extermination camps. It could

evidence, or of new material findings, even if only out of opportunistic motives" (p.41), he is being extremely disingenuous, as no direct witnesses testified to the 'abandoned' murder methods.

⁵¹ These include Jankiel Wiernik, Chil Rajchman [Henryk Reichman], Szya Warszawski, Jerzy Rajgrodzki, Eliyahu Rosenberg, Sonia Lewkowicz, Abraham Goldfarb, Chaim Steir, Pinchas Epstein, and Abraham Bomba.

⁵² Rudolf Reder.

⁵³ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.77-84, pp.93-98.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.97-98.

not be concealed that transports of Jews were constantly going into the camps, and that no Jews were coming out of the camps. It became clear, thereafter, that the Jews were being killed there. We ourselves were able to watch the transports of the Jews, which were passing on the railroad tracks along the Trawniki camp. These transports may have gone to Belzec or Sobibor. We were all aware; I surmise that there was no German or Ukrainian at Trawniki who did not know what was going on with the Jews. It was obvious that Jewish transports kept arriving at the camp and that no Jews ever came back out. Clearly, they were being murdered there. We could see the transports going past the camp at Trawniki, [they] would be bound for either Belzec or Sobibor. We all knew what was going on...⁵⁵

However, what makes Kues' interpretation even more problematic is that rather than try to reinterpret the witnesses' experience, he isolates the Sobibor camp and its outer camp witnesses from the other two Reinhard camps. As previously remarked, both the Treblinka and Belzec camps have had witnesses survive from their extermination areas, none of whom are brought into consideration in Kues' argument. Thus, in spite of Kues' weak attempt to portray the extermination area of the Sobibor camp as a black hole devoid of all possible information and knowledge, outer Sobibor camp witnesses have had their interpretations and judgments confirmed by the activities reported by more direct sources from the other two Reinhard camps, as well as SS-men and Trawniki guards at Sobibor itself.

A good example of the importance and possible usefulness of indirect witnesses can be seen in regards to the burial and cremations that took place in the three camps, from which the surrounding localities suffered through stench, smoke, and sometimes an overcast of firelight.⁵⁶ Belzec resident Maria Daniel, whom Mattogno derisively and ignorantly labels as "an insignificant witness who never put her feet into the camp,"⁵⁷ reported:

We could see a machine that took out the corpses from the graves and threw them into the fire. There were a few such fires going simultaneously. At that time a dreadful smell dominated the whole area, a smell of burned human bones and bodies. From the moment they began burning the corpses, from all directions of the camp came the smell of the corpses. When the Germans completed the burning of the corpses, they dismantled the camp.⁵⁸

Janusz Peter, who lived in Tomaszow Lubelski some 9 km away from Belzec, wrote in his memoir that people on passenger trains arriving near the death camp often "had to vomit or pass out" due to the smell, while others had to leave the area because they constantly suffered

⁵⁵ Vernehmung Erich Lachmann, 3.3.1969, StA Hamburg 147 Js 43/69, Bd. 81, p.15461; cf. Schelvis, *Sobibor*, p.34-35, citing from the Anklageschrift (indictment) against Streibel quoting the same interrogation.

⁵⁶ For more information on the cremations in the camp see Chapter 8.

⁵⁷ Mattogno, *Belzec*, p.85.

⁵⁸ Vernehmung Maria Daniel, 16.10.1945, BAL B162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd. 1, p.1154.

“severe headaches, weight loss, loss of appetite, or anaemia.”⁵⁹ Another Pole from Tomaszow Lubelski stated that the townspeople kept rags soaked in cologne for when the stench became unbearable.⁶⁰ Josef L., a Pole from Rawa Ruska some 14 km away from Belzec, reported before the end of the war that fires were visible at night with the smell of burning flesh, while certain wind gusts would cause human hair to be blown to his town⁶¹; such a distance is supported by Belzec construction worker Stanislaw Kozak, who reported smelling the stench of burnt corpses up to 15 km away from the camp.⁶²

Of course, Belzec was not the only camp whose cremations were noticed by locals, although it was the least secluded of the Reinhard camps. Around Sobibor there were similar observations. Pani Gerung stated that people in Chelm knew what was going in the camp, as “They could smell it-the air was rancid even though it was 20 miles away. And the sky lit up in the night with their terrible fires.”⁶³ In a contemporary 1943 report written by Slovakian Jewish deportees who were selected for labor at Sobibor and worked in nearby camps, one Jew who worked in ZAL Krychow reported that in the vicinity around Sobibor one could always see a fire at night, and that in the wider area there was a perceptible stench from the burning of hair.⁶⁴ Such a stench from Sobibor was not limited to the noses of nearby Jews and Poles. Hans Wagner, the commander of Sicherungsbattalion 689 in Chelm and who was later ordered to respond to the revolt in the Sobibor camp, stated after the war that his soldiers discussed amongst themselves and with him the smoke and stench that originated from the extermination camp.⁶⁵ The stench was so bad that SS-Scharführer Lachmann told of persons sent to Sobibor from the Trawniki camp who were forced to return with illness due to the smell of corpses;⁶⁶ when Lachmann actually was stationed at the camp and witnessed the mass graves being filled with corpses and a chlorine substance for himself, he stated that the smell was “excruciating.”⁶⁷

Regarding Treblinka, the August 24, 1944 report by a Soviet investigative commission found that there were “statements of hundreds of inhabitants of villages” within a 10-15 km radius of the death camp who saw giant columns of black smoke from the camp,

⁵⁹ Peter, W Belzcu, p.196, cited in Kuwalek, Belzec, p.351.

⁶⁰ Kuwalek, ‘Belzec,’ pp.355-6, citing Aussage Wladyslawa G., 17.12.1959, BArch Ludwigsburg B 162/208, Bd.3, S.404.

⁶¹ Kuwalek, ‘Belzec,’ p.356, citing Aussage Josef L., 1.10.1945, BArch Ludwigsburg B 162/19 276.

⁶² Stanislaw Kozak, BAL B 162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd.1, p.1227.

⁶³ Gitta Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, p.116.

⁶⁴ Tatsachenbericht eines aus der Slowakei deportierten und zurückgekehrten Juden, 17.8.43, VHA Fond 140/59, p. 50; Schelvis, *Sobibor*, p.258.

⁶⁵ Vernehmungsniederschrift Hans Wagner, 21.10.1960, 208 AR-Z 251/59, Vol. III, p.562.

⁶⁶ Schelvis, *Sobibor*, pp.34-35, citing Anklageschrift (indictment, Streibel trial, ZStL-643/71-120/121.

⁶⁷ Verantwortliche Vernehmung von Erich Gustav Willi Lachmann, 21.6.1961, 208 AR-Z 251/59, Vol. 4, p.680.

while inhabitants as close as 2 km to the camp (in the village of Vul'ka-Kronglik) stated that they actually heard the cries of people.⁶⁸ This information was contained in a report heavily quoted by Mattogno, but these lines were perhaps unsurprisingly omitted from his own publication.⁶⁹ There also exists another piece of indirect information which Mattogno has long ignored, the documented complaint from the Wehrmacht commander of Ostrow, located 20 km away from Treblinka, which states that “Jews in Treblinka were not adequately buried and as a result an unbearable smell of cadavers pollutes the air.”⁷⁰ Despite Mattogno’s feeble attempts to blame the stench on the few thousand of bodies buried at the Treblinka I labor camp⁷¹, inmates at that same labor camp had no problem identifying the source of terrible smells from nearby death camp. Treblinka I prisoner Mieczyslaw Chodzko stated that “the spring winds brought with them the smell of burning bodies from the nearby extermination camp. We breathed in the stench of smouldering corpses...At night we gazed at skies red from the flames. Sometimes you could also see tongues of flames rising into the night.”⁷² Another Treblinka I inmate, Israel Cymlich, wrote in 1943 that “smoke was billowing from the pits and the terrible smell of burning human bodies spread through the air.”⁷³ Obviously the smells that Cymlich and Chodzko experienced were from the cremation of the mass graves filled with hundreds of thousands of Jews in the Treblinka extermination camp, which the Wehrmacht command of Ostrow believed were “not adequately buried.”

Bystander witnesses have also given more recent evidence of witnessing shootings and smelling the cremations. Father Patrick Desbois interviewed the village priest of Belzec, aged 91, who described how, along with other villagers, he had watched executions from his roof. He also stated that his mother "couldn't bear the smoke" so had to shut herself up in the cellar. Another Desbois interviewee, a peasant, explained that the commander of Belzec camp requisitioned his wheat and barley sorting machine. When he went back to collect his machine, after the deportations had finished, he found that ten such machines were being

⁶⁸ Akt, 24.8.44, GARF 7021-115-9, p.109.

⁶⁹ M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.77-80. The relevant information fell between the paragraphs beginning with “The oven” and “The Germans” and p.79.

⁷⁰ KTB Wehrmachtbefehlshaber im GG OQu, 10.10.1942, NARA T-501/219/461; cf. Browning, *Evidence for the Implementation of the Final Solution: Documentary Evidence concerning the Camps of Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka*.

⁷¹ Mattogno, ‘Belzec or the Holocaust Controversy of Roberto Muehlenkamp.’ Mattogno states “Moreover, nothing excludes that the document in question referred to the abovementioned 6,800 corpses buried near Treblinka I, a possibility which renders Muehlenkamp’s comparison still more ridiculous.”

⁷² Mieczyslaw Chodzko, ‘Wspomnienia Treblinkarza’, *BZIH* 27, 1958, p.93

⁷³ Cymlich and Strawczynski, *Escaping Hell in Treblinka*, p.38.

used to sift Jews' ashes.⁷⁴ At least three Polish villagers testified to the investigators of Belzec in 1945 that they heard about the test gassing at Belzec from the Trawniki.⁷⁵

Hopefully it has been made apparent to the reader that bystander witnesses can possess great value as sources of evidence, especially when they are not the only, or even primary, form of evidence that is available on a subject.⁷⁶ One could hardly, in an honest way, describe the above evidence from the indirect sources as “insignificant.”⁷⁷ Perhaps the inability to refute such witnesses is why Kues has once suggested that local Poles who reported about their indirect experiences with the extermination camps after their liberation had been “threatened with imprisonment, deportation or even execution as a punishment for “collaboration with the enemy” if they did not affirm the general outline of the death camp allegations.”⁷⁸ While Kues is unable to offer the slightest shred of evidence to substantiate his conspiratorial argument, for the burial and cremation smell issue discussed above such an argument can easily be shown as faulty as it is obviously ignorant of the number of confirmations of Polish villagers produced by the Germans themselves in their statements and documents.

While they seem to ignore bystander and indirect accounts when it suits them, as Mattogno did in *Treblinka*⁷⁹, one of the points which MGK heavily deride in their works is only supported by indirect witnesses: the subject of the supposed collapsible floors in some of the Aktion Reinhard gas chambers. In *Belżec*, Mattogno can only cite two statements by non-witnesses for such a floor at the Belzec camp, which he quotes without comment.⁸⁰ In *Sobibór*, MGK cite indirect witness statements from Ya’akov Biskovitz, Alexander Pechersky, Zeldia Metz, Ursula Stern, Chaim Engel, Ber Freiberg, and Moshe Bahir mentioning a collapsible floor at that camp.⁸¹ No effort is made by MGK to locate these sources within the

⁷⁴ Father Patrick Desbois, *The Holocaust by Bullets*, Houndmills, 2008, pp. 22, 154.

⁷⁵ Browning, *Origins*, p.543 n.163. Names and dates of testimonies given by bystanders to the Polish Commission in 1945 include Kazimierz Czerniak, 18 October 1945. Further testimonies relating to the construction of the camp and the gassing facilities can be found in the testimonies of: Edward Luczynski, 15.10.1945; Michael Kusmierczak, 16.10.1945; Eustachy Ukrainski, 11.10.1945; Jan Busse, 23.5.1945; Marie Wlasink, 21.2.1945; Jan Glab, 16.10.1945; Edward Ferens, 20.3.1945; and Eugeniusz Goch, 14.10.1945; cf. O’Neil, *Belżec*, chapter 8 n.19: <http://www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/belzec1/bel080.html>.

⁷⁶ The primary sources of evidence for the burial and cremation of Jews in the Reinhard camps will be discussed in Chapters 7 and 8.

⁷⁷ Mattogno, *Belżec*, p.85.

⁷⁸ Kues, ‘Belzec-The dubious claims of Michael Tregenza.’

⁷⁹ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.152. He did so by artificially limiting the possible source base to merely Polish resistance reports, which have already been discussed.

⁸⁰ Mattogno, *Belżec*, p.20. He quotes a Rozalja Schelewna Schier, who was told by her husband who worked at the Belżec railway station, and who thus had to hear about such a floor through rumour. Mattogno then quotes witness Jan G., who operated a railroad workshop, and who witnessed the fashioning of 48 pairs of unique hinges, and concluded that they were to be used for a collapsible floor.

⁸¹ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.77-78.

camp, perhaps due to the inconvenient fact that none of these witnesses worked in the extermination area (for instance, Zelda Metz worked to knit, launder, and iron clothes⁸²). As MGK recognize, the only witness who claims to have seen the gas chambers, and who testified to the existence of a collapsible floor, is Biskovitz.⁸³ However, they do not seem to recognize the strenuous circumstances under which Biskovitz was able to see the installations (likely for only a few seconds), and thus is unable to have gotten a close look at the scene.⁸⁴ Moreover, in their quote of Biskovitz, MGK disingenuously leave out the witness' admission that he did not see the floor underneath the gas chamber opened up ("I did not see that").⁸⁵ Thus, more than just a distortion, they actually invert the meaning of Biskovitz's testimony.

One of the indirect witnesses most cited and attacked by MGK is Alexander Pechersky, a former Soviet POW who was sent to Sobibor and who led the 1943 uprising in the camp.⁸⁶ Pechersky, as often quoted by MGK, reported that in the gas chambers of the camp "a heavy, blackish substance poured down in spiral shapes."⁸⁷ Pechersky learned of this information, as he records in the same passage but which is often left out in the relevant quotes by MGK, from another inmate in the camp who had been there longer, but who also had not seen the inside of the gas chambers.⁸⁸ The relevant portion of Pechersky's account states:

He was an old inmate who worked at sorting out the clothing of those who were killed. He was well-informed. From him we learned where our comrades had disappeared and how the whole thing operated.

[...]

⁸² Zelda Kelberman geb. Metz, 15.5.1963, BAL 162/208 AR-Z 251/59, Bd. 10, 1929. This fact also discredits MGK's criticism of Metz for her description of the use of chlorine in the gas chambers. See MGK, *Sobibór*, pp. 23-24, 71; Mattogno, *Belżec*, p.10.

⁸³ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.77-78.

⁸⁴ The Trial of Adolf Eichmann, Session 65 (Part 4 of 6): <http://nizkor.org/hweb/people/e/eichmann-adolf/transcripts/Sessions/Session-065-04.html>.

⁸⁵ Ibid. Biskovitz came to his conclusion of a collapsible floor because he viewed bodies allegedly lying underneath the gas chambers "from a distance." We believe it is more likely that, being too far to see underneath the gas chambers and in a panic to leave the area, Biskovitz viewed corpses in proximity to the chambers, which he confused as underneath (probably as a result of rumours around the camp). MGK dishonestly give the impression that Biskovitz personally witnessed the floor in operation, which he clearly did not see. Kues (under the CODOH forum handle 'Laurentz Dahl') has also been made aware of these facts since 2007 by way of an exchange with Sergey Romanov his 'More CODOH silliness,' *Holocaust Controversies*, 11.6.07 <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2007/06/some-denier-who-for-some-reason-reminds.html>. Kues has decided to toss these criticisms down the 'memory hole' and continue to perpetuate his fraudulent argument.

⁸⁶ Pechersky is discussed in Jürgen Graf, *Holocaust or Hoax?*, VHO, Chapter XII; MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.52, 69-70, 78, 89, 95; Mattogno, *Belżec*, p.10. Graf's treatment of Pechersky's testimony has been discussed in S. Romanov, "He sure is", *Holocaust Controversies*, 21.05.06, <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2006/05/he-sure-is.html>.

⁸⁷ Pechersky, 'Sobibor Revolt.' MGK trip up the hearsay statement by Pechersky, quoting it as a "black fluid" in *Sobibór*, 52.

⁸⁸ As Pechersky relates, the older inmate states "I myself have not seen what it looks like inside but people who know have described it."

‘As soon as you were separated from them,’ he said, ‘they were taken to a second yard where everyone, without exception, must gather. There they are told to lay down their bundles and undress before going to the ‘bath.’ The women’s hair is cut off. Everything is done quietly and efficiently. Then the bareheaded women, wearing only their undergowns, and the children go first. About a hundred steps behind them go the men, completely naked. All are heavily guarded. There is the ‘bath’ he pointed with his hand, ‘not far from where you see the smoke. Two buildings are standing there, one for the women and children, the other for men. I myself haven’t seen what it looks like inside, but people who know have described it. At first glance, everything looks as a bath should look – faucets for hot and cold water, basins to wash in... As soon as the people enter, the doors are clamped shut. A thick dark substance comes spiraling out from vents in the ceiling. Horrible shrieks are heard, but they don’t last long. They are soon transformed into gaspings of suffocation and convulsive seizures. Mothers, they say, cover their little ones with their bodies.’⁸⁹

Thus, the description of the gassings that Pechersky learned of was passed through multiple people before he learned of it, likely varying with every transmission. He was not an “eyewitness” to the exterminations, as Graf once deceitfully declared.⁹⁰ Indeed, only once and very briefly do MGK, in their references to Pechersky’s description, recognize that it is not his own statement (though still not recognizing that it was at least second-hand hearsay).⁹¹ Even so, the “heavy, blackish substance” that Pechersky discussed (and which likely grew heavier and darker in description as the rumour grew) can certainly be understood as a reference to the engine exhaust utilized at the camp.

The early testimony of Samuel Rajzman, in which he described exterminations by vacuum chambers, chlorine, and ‘Cyclon-gas’ (presumably Zyklon-B), is cited as an example of the “hopeless confusion” of early survivor accounts.⁹² In reality, and as Mattogno’s quote of Rajzman shows but which he fails to recognize, Rajzman was passing along hearsay testimony that was at least second or third hand.⁹³ Mattogno and Graf then go on to criticize Rajzman for adapting his information on the Treblinka exterminations as more reliable information came out and remaining vague in details on the gassings; this is irrelevant as Rajzman was not a direct witness to the exterminations. The “hopeless confusion” in this instance then is only from Mattogno and Graf.

Another example illustrating the difference between direct witness testimony and hearsay are the witness statements about vacuum chambers, which witnesses later changed

⁸⁹ Pechersky, ‘Sobibor Revolt’.

⁹⁰ Graf, *Holocaust or Hoax?*, Chapter XII.

⁹¹ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.89: “If we follow Pechersky, we learn that, according to his informer...”

⁹² M&G, *Treblinka*, p.67.

⁹³ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.68.

into statements about gas chambers. Mattogno and Graf quote two witnesses⁹⁴ mentioning that people were killed by pumping the air out of chambers – the August 17, 1944 testimony of Abe Kon⁹⁵ and August 22, 1944 testimony of Kazimierz Skarzyński.⁹⁶ It turns out that Kon gave another statement on August 22 in which he described the method of murder as gassing ("They let the gas in. After 6-15 minutes - death"), while Skarzyński gave a further statement on August 23 wherein he mentioned gas chambers ("the Jews who were led to gas chambers").⁹⁷ No doubt MGK would use this to prove some sort of a conspiracy, with new information dictated to the witnesses. However, this example just shows that the relative value of indirect testimonies about technical details can be quite low - both Kon and Skarzyński obviously had known about the method only from rumours, and later, when they were summoned for interrogation, they apparently met other survivors who had a more direct knowledge. Thus they changed their statements accordingly. In fact, in the first official Soviet report about Treblinka composed on August 24, 1944, i.e. already after the statements had been taken, we still read only about the pumping out of air as the murder method, which fact shows that there was no conspiracy, only understandable confusion.⁹⁸

That speculations about miscellaneous methods were floating around the camp is evident from survivors' testimonies themselves. For example, in 1944 Tanhum Grinberg gave a rather accurate description of the extermination process while clearly stating that he wasn't a direct witness and only tells this from the words of others. Among other things he stated:

In which way the people were asphyxiated I don't know, but Jewish man Goldberg said that when the engine was turned on, at first it pumped the air out from the chambers, and then the engine exhaust was pumped into the chambers. How all this happened is not known to me.⁹⁹

By the way, it would be all too easy for the "pumping out" part to split away from the whole description (which in itself was partially a speculation).

MGK's ignorance of human social interaction, as well as the problematic nature of secretive and indirect communication leads them to wonder why rumours were off base from the reality inside the extermination camps.¹⁰⁰ Such a weak argument is easily refuted by the childhood game 'Chinese Whispers'. The witnesses were also prone to misunderstandings

⁹⁴ M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.64, 65.

⁹⁵ Statement of Abe Kon, 17.8.1944, GARF 7021-115-11, p.16

⁹⁶ Statement of Kazimierz Skarzynski, 22.8.1944, GARF 7021-115-9, p.108.

⁹⁷ Published in F. D. Sverdlov (ed), *Dokumenty obvinayut. Kholokost: svidetel'stva Krasnoj Armii*; Moscow, 1996, pp.106-7. Abe Kon's name is given as "R. Kon", but the testimony is evidently from the same person.

⁹⁸ Akt, 24.8.1944, GARF 7021-115-9, pp.103-110.

⁹⁹ Protokol doprosa, Tanhum Grinberg, 21.9.1944, GARF 7445-2-134, p. 69.

¹⁰⁰ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.78, 83.

from their perceptions, problems from language differences, as well as pollution from outside or postwar sources; and when this information is passed from person it is liable for exaggeration, confusion, or other variances. It is also important to note that in their criticism of inmate knowledge of the exterminations, nowhere do MGK offer any positive argument to somehow explain the existing rumours in the camps; instead, it is all negative argumentation, almost entirely based on incredulity.

Dishonest Treatment of SS Witnesses

While the overwhelming majority of witness criticisms produced by MGK are aimed at survivors, they have also attempted to deal with some of the accounts by former SS men who served at the camps. Several of their interpretations on those witnesses will be examined below, all of which fail to provide an honest treatment of the statements.

In *Sobibór*, Kues argues that SS camp official Gustav Wagner "adamantly denied the existence of gas chambers at Sobibor."¹⁰¹ He bases this claim on an article in the newspaper *Folha de São Paulo* on June 6, 1978, which quoted Wagner stating to the police: "I never saw any gas chamber at Sobibor" (*Eu nunca vi nenhuma camara de gas em Sobibor*).¹⁰² However, Kues has lifted this quote from a series of reports in which Wagner contradicted this denial with a number of damaging admissions. On May 31, 1978, the *Journo de Brazil* reported:

Wagner said: - No Jews were killed at Sobibor. There were other orders ---
Wagner said to the DOPS (of São Paulo) yesterday, shortly before contradicting himself by saying: "Stangl did not kill anyone. Those who killed the Jews came out and they executed the orders, without which we knew nothing of it." New contradiction: "there were no gas chambers in Sobibor."¹⁰³

The original news source on Wagner's arrest therefore noted contradictions in Wagner's account, which Kues has omitted, such as the obvious contradiction between "No Jews were killed at Sobibor" and "Those who killed the Jews came out and they executed the orders." A similar contradiction suppressed by Kues in an article he uses is from *Der Spiegel*, which noted on the one hand that Wagner claimed "not a single Jew was killed, neither by him nor by others. His role in Sobibor was with the production of barracks"; but on other hand quoted this exchange between Wagner and Szmajzner:

¹⁰¹ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.191

¹⁰² MGK, *Sobibór*, p.105, n.285

¹⁰³ Translated by Roberto Lucena and posted at 'Kues on Gustav Wagner (Revised and Updated)', 11.1.2011. Other sources listed below are linked in the same article:
<http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2011/01/kues-on-gustav-wagner-part-2.html> .

Wagner...then committed one of his biggest mistakes. "Yes, yes, I remember you well. I had you taken out from the transport, and I have saved the lives of you and your two friends who were goldsmiths."

"So," said Szmajzner, "and my sister, my mother, my father and my brothers? If you say you saved my life, then you have indeed known that others had to die." Wagner did not answer.¹⁰⁴

Kues (as Dahl) even posted this exchange in February 2007 by including it in a quoted passage that appears in Richard Rashke's *Escape from Sobibor*.¹⁰⁵ Rashke's work was also cited in MGK's *Sobibór*.¹⁰⁶ The Brazilian article had noted that Wagner had already attempted suicide several times (*ele tentou o suicídio várias vezes*). Moreover, American reports, easily available to Kues through online archives, contain more damaging admissions. *The New York Times* of June 11, 1978, quotes Wagner's admission of May 30 that "I knew what happened there but I never went to see - I only obeyed orders. You would not want to see what they did there either." Thus, Kues knowingly engages in dishonesty when he selectively quotes Wagner's statements. In one of his many articles, Kues also gives a dishonest paraphrase of one of Erich Bauer's statements. Kues states as follows:

According to Bauer's "confession", written while serving a life sentence in a Berlin prison, he had at one occasion overheard camp commandant Franz Stangl mention that 350,000 Jews had been killed at Sobibor (quoted in Klee et.al. *The Good Old Days*, p. 232). Since Stangl left Sobibor for Treblinka in September 1942, it follows that the final death toll would be much higher - that is, if we are to believe Bauer's testimony rather than the documentary evidence of the Höfle telegram.¹⁰⁷

Bauer's actual statement, taken from the same source cited by Kues, does not say the 350,000 figure came from Stangl:

I estimate that the number of Jews gassed at Sobibor was about 350,000. In the canteen at Sobibor I once overheard Karl Frenzel, Franz Stangl and Gustav Wagner. They were discussing the number of victims in the extermination camps of Belzec, Treblinka and Sobibor and expressed their regret that Sobibor 'came last' in the competition.¹⁰⁸

The figure of 350,000 was therefore Bauer's estimate, made in the 1960s, not (as Kues states) Stangl's contemporary estimate. The purpose of this false paraphrase¹⁰⁹ is to

¹⁰⁴ *Der Spiegel*, 24/1978, 12.6.78: <http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-40615582.html> .

¹⁰⁵ See the initial post of 'Laurentz Dahl' (Kues' CODOH forum handle) in the thread 'Richard Rashke's "Escape from Sobibor," <http://forum.codoh.com/viewtopic.php?f=2&t=4056>.

¹⁰⁶ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.34-35

¹⁰⁷ Thomas Kues, 'Review of Sobibor. A History of a Nazi Death Camp, by Jules Schelvis.'

¹⁰⁸ Klee, *Good Old Days*, p.232.

¹⁰⁹ This same distortion also appears in Thomas Dalton, *Debating The Holocaust*, p.237, suggesting a degree of collaboration and showing how quickly a lie spreads in the denier pool.

mislead the reader into assuming that Bauer's 350,000 was taken from a conversation in 1942, and only covered the period when Stangl (the supposed source of the figure) was at the camp, and thus artificially raise the estimate of deaths at the camp. Taken in isolation, such a false paraphrase may appear to be a minor case of dishonesty. However, this instance is highly significant because Kues is attacking a perpetrator who he clearly regards as one of the most dangerous to the denier's case on Sobibor. He bases his attack on an unsupported assumption (a 'begging the question' fallacy) concerning the amount of knowledge that Bauer 'must' have had:

It seems curious that Bauer, who, if the gassing story was indeed true, must have known with accuracy the capacities of the gas chambers as well as the average number of daily gassings, could have been so wide off the mark as to put credence in the figure reportedly mentioned by Stangl.

Kues does not explain why Bauer must have known "with accuracy the capacities of the gas chambers as well as the average number of daily gassings." Did Bauer keep a diary and write down the number of transports and their passenger contents? Did he measure the capacity of the chambers? The obvious answer has to be no, because his estimate was far too high. There are several reasons why such an error could be made (lack of access to some necessary data; misremembering the dimensions; not being aware of gaps in the transport schedule; miscalculating the number of days the gas chambers were in use; the variance of transport figures to the camp) that do not make the witness unreliable on the fact of whether Sobibor was a death camp.

This attempt to discredit Bauer through an anomaly-hunting technique is therefore incoherent. It does not alter the fact that Bauer was already serving life with no immediate prospect of release, so cannot be accused of taking a 'plea bargain' (even ignoring the fact that West Germany did not have an American-style plea-bargaining structure¹¹⁰). Kues makes no attempt to explain why Bauer chose to co-operate, because Kues knows that any such explanation will come across as a transparently faith-based assumption rather than a deduction from any actual evidence concerning how the West German legal system really worked. In the absence of any motive to lie, the only plausible assumption is that Bauer decided to tell the truth, but that the time which had elapsed between the end of the war and the date of his statement caused him to make minor errors. Kues cannot make these errors into a narrative, so he has to settle for well-poisoning and obfuscation, which fools nobody

¹¹⁰ J.H. Langbein, 'Land without plea bargaining: How the Germans do it.' *Michigan Law Review*, 78 (2) (December 1979), pp.204-225.

except his gullible fellow deniers. In *Sobibór*, the only reference to the 350,000 made in the work is directly attributed to Bauer (in a section authored by Graf); we can take this drop, especially given the numerous remarks against Bauer in the work, as an implicit admission of guilt by Kues.¹¹¹

Kues also makes an accusation of ‘scripting’ concerning the testimony of SS-Unterscharführer Hubert Gomerski, who served at the Sobibor camp. Regarding Gomerski’s 1950 trial, Kues wonders:

Did he really receive a fair trial back in 1950, as implied by Schelvis? Was he able to speak his mind openly to his interrogators and lawyers, or was he, like Auschwitz SS man Hans Aumeier, handed a number of leading questions, demanding that he stated what he “knew” about the “gas chambers”?¹¹²

Kues is, of course, unable to substantiate any of his concerns about the coercion of Aumeier or Gomerski with any shred of evidence (as evident by the lack of footnotes in the section). We know for instance that SS-Unterscharführer Heinrich Unverhau admitted to his participation in the Aktion Reinhard camps “on his own accord...during his first police interrogation in March 1948.”¹¹³ Indeed Kues’ point is directly contradicted by the available evidence, as after his release Gomerski himself stated in an interview that his crimes deserved a sentence of 8-10 years and acknowledged, "After all, I was there (Sobibor). I cannot deny that."¹¹⁴

Where charges are not made of ‘scripting’, there often are claims of retribution against Nazi perpetrators who refused to incriminate themselves about the extermination camps. Graf claims that Franz had always persistently denied the official Treblinka picture, and thus spent 35 years behind bars in retaliation.¹¹⁵ In reality, this is how Franz described the scene upon his arrival at Treblinka:

It was late summer or the beginning of autumn 1942, when I came from Belzec to Treblinka. I went by foot from the railway station of Malkinia to Treblinka; when I arrived it was already dark. Every-where in the camp there were corpses. I remember that these corpses were already bloated. The corpses were dragged through the camp by working Jews...¹¹⁶

Franz also stated after his life sentencing:

¹¹¹ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.60.

¹¹² Kues, ‘Review of Sobibor.’

¹¹³ De Mildt *In The Name of the People.*, p.294.

¹¹⁴ De Mildt, *In The Name of the People*, p.392, citing Elie Aron Cohen, *De negentien treinen naar Sobibor*, Elsevier, 1979, interview with Gomerski in 1978.

¹¹⁵ Graf, *Der Holocaust auf dem Prüfstand*, p.54.

¹¹⁶ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, pp.92-93; citing Treblinka-Franz, Band 8, p.1493.

The Treblinka camp was split into three parts, there was the reception camp, where the transports arrived, the Todeslager (extermination area), and then where the camp staff and leaders were accommodated. Some two and two and a half kilometers away from the extermination camp (Venichtungslager) there was also a labor camp. The uprising was in the extermination camp, it had nothing to do with the labor camp. After the uprising there were still between 25 and 30 Jews in the extermination camp.¹¹⁷

Obviously Franz was describing the operations of the death camp, yet he received a life sentence, and despite his later statements, was never released early or given leniency by the court. During his time in jail, Franz corresponded with Michael Tregenza about the gas chambers and was visited by Demjanjuk's defence lawyer, Jerome Brentar. David Irving gave an example of the Franz-Tregenza correspondence:

Mike Tregenza [sic] wrote to Kurt Franz (deputy Kdt, owner of the Saint-Bernard dog called Barry, originally Stangl's; arrested 1959 and sentenced to life index, he died 1998) and Franz said to Mike from prison in a letter ca. 1980s he thought it was diesel, but never operated it himself).¹¹⁸

Brentar, in a speech to a Revisionist IHR conference, described a meeting with Franz:

In Germany, I met with the wartime commandant of the Treblinka camp, Kurt Franz, who was then serving a sentence in a prison near Düsseldorf. During our meeting, Franz told me: "Mr. Brentar, several years ago six of your people were here, and I told them that this man [Demjanjuk] is not the Ivan of Treblinka. The Ivan of Treblinka was much older, had dark hair, and was taller. He had a stoop because he was so tall. So why do you come here again to ask me the same questions?"¹¹⁹

If Franz had been framed by the West German authorities, Brentar would have been a perfect advocate for his justice: an international lawyer with connections to deniers, who could have publicized his case and presented the evidence that Jews were not exterminated at Treblinka. Conversely, if Franz were being coerced or in fear for his life, he would not have denied that Demjanjuk was Ivan of Treblinka.

Both Gomerski and Franz's admissions in private about the Aktion Reinhard camps are reminiscent of Adolf Eichmann's similar statements to journalist Willem Sassen prior to his arrest by Israeli police. Though not a member of the SS, as previously mentioned Wilhelm Pfannenstiel also provided confirmation of the gassings at the Reinhard in private to Holocaust denier Paul Rassinier. There also is the private *Shoah* interview that Claude Lanzmann conducted with Franz Suchomel, who was falsely promised anonymity by

¹¹⁷ Statement of Kurt Franz, Sta. Do. Sob 56, June 1966, No. 1477, p.3.

¹¹⁸ David Irving, 'A Radical's Diary', 2.3.2007, <http://www.fpp.co.uk/docs/Irving/RadDi/2007/020307.html>

¹¹⁹ Jerome Brentar, 'My Campaign for Justice for John Demjanjuk', adapted from his address to the Eleventh IHR Conference, October 1992. The Journal of Historical Review, Nov.-Dec. 1993 (Vol. 13, No. 6).

Lanzmann; this interview has been ignored across MGK's entire 'trilogy'.¹²⁰ These and other private admissions, in which the relevant witnesses had easy opportunities to deny the reality of homicidal gassings but never did, are extremely damaging to MGK's negationist beliefs. Perhaps due to the difficulty which they cause the three Revisionist writers, the confirmation of exterminations by perpetrators in such open and allowing circumstances has never been adequately addressed in MGK's writings.

Of course, there are also some SS witnesses who have never been discussed in MGK's collective trilogy. One such example is Joseph (Sepp) Hirtreiter, who was the first SS man to be charged for crimes committed at Treblinka. Hirtreiter was arrested in Frankfurt on July 2, 1946 and, whilst being interrogated about his role in the euthanasia project at Hadamar, revealed that he had worked at a death camp in 'Malkinia' in which Jews had been killed in gas chambers. His interviewer did not know that Hirtreiter was referring to Treblinka, and thus did not pursue the matter.¹²¹

In addition to dishonesty, one could easily classify some of MGK's handling of SS testimonies as sloppy. The clearest example of such is Carlo Mattogno's discussion of Lorenz Hackenholt in *Sobibór*. Mattogno states that Hackenholt's involvement with the gas chambers at Belzec is "mentioned only in the "Gerstein report"!"¹²² Unfortunately, such a claim is simply and unequivocally not true. Mattogno himself would realize that Hackenholt's involvement has been supported by more than just Gerstein if he would read his own writing within the same chapter in *Sobibór*, where he quotes the statement of Josef Oberhauser¹²³, and in *Belżec*, where he quotes the statements of both Oberhauser and Karl Alfred Schluch.¹²⁴ Such carelessness is surprising, but not unusual for MGK. The notable feature about such sloppiness is that it always serves to further their criticism of the Holocaust, which betrays MGK's dishonesty in their treatment of the available evidence.

Hypocritical Use of Witness Evidence

An area which manifests itself due to the lack of a proper methodology (as well perhaps intellectual honesty) from MGK is their almost comedic reliance upon witness statements that they simultaneously seek to discredit through their work. This dependence exposes just how

¹²⁰ Claude Lanzmann, *Shoah: An Oral History of the Holocaust*. New York: Pantheon, 1985, pp.52-57.

¹²¹ De Mildt, *In The Name of the People*, p.249; citing Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager*, p.39; JuNSV Lfd. Nr. 270, p.262

¹²² MGK, *Sobibór*, p.277.

¹²³ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.255; citing interrogation of Josef Oberhauser on 12 December 1962, ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, vol. IX, p.1685.

¹²⁴ Mattogno, *Belżec*, pp.65, 66; citing interrogation of Karl Alfred Schluch on November 10, 1961. ZStL, 208 AR-Z 252/59, p.1512.

weak the Revisionist evidence of delousing/transit camps really is, with deniers having to utilize sources which they deride and pour scorn on throughout their writings. Their desperation is aptly established by Mattogno in *Treblinka*: “If one assumes that Treblinka was a transit camp, then one can also interpret the description of the alleged extermination facilities by the witnesses.”¹²⁵ MGK are only able to conduct this bizarre interpretation of statements by inverting the meaning of the witness, such as their understanding of the camouflage measures that witnesses detail for the gas chambers as being literal, but misconstrued or misreported by the witnesses.¹²⁶ They even do this for persons whom they label as “discredited.”¹²⁷ They also highlight testimonies as being given under oath when it suits their hypothesis of resettlement (even when it is discredited through documentary evidence), but mock other statements given under oath describing exterminations as having no validity.¹²⁸

An example of how desperate Revisionist researchers are in support of evidence for their resettlement thesis, Mattogno is even forced to use the mission of Kurt Gerstein, perhaps the witness most discussed and criticized by deniers for his description of the Reinhard exterminations. In *Treblinka*, Gerstein is referred to in support of delousing at the three camps, although Mattogno does so without referencing his testimony (which also does not even hint at an alleged delousing function of the camps).¹²⁹ Indeed, Mattogno can only cite very weak circumstantial evidence (Gerstein was an expert in disinfection), which he considers sufficient enough to conclude that Gerstein’s August 1942 mission served a hygienic purpose; why, if Gerstein went for hygienic purposes, would he not be sent to the supposed delousing camps early in their operation (he arrived in Belzec five months after the start of operations) is not explained. Mattogno also believes such a trip would explain Rajzman’s indirect hearsay (and incorrect) statement about the use of Zyklon-B at Treblinka, despite the fact that Rajzman was criticized in *Treblinka* for exhibiting “hopeless confusion,” and testifying to things that were “pure fantasy.”¹³⁰

¹²⁵ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.290.

¹²⁶ Ibid., p.292. Mattogno cites but does not explain witness references to “baths.”

¹²⁷ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.38, 54-55. Declaring Freiberg “discredited as a witness” does not preclude them from relying on his 1945 testimony regarding a speech to the new Sobibor arrivals.

¹²⁸ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.281, Mattogno highlights the fact that Stroop’s February 1946 testimony, stating that 50-60,000 Jews from the Warsaw ghetto were sent to Lublin (as opposed to Treblinka) was “made under oath.” In MGK, *Sobibór*, pp. 177 and 188, Graf ridicules several statements made under oath regarding exterminations.

¹²⁹ Ibid., p.294. To use Gerstein’s trip, Mattogno would *have* to rely on his postwar statements.

¹³⁰ See the previous section on Rajzman’s hearsay statements. For Mattogno’s remarks on Rajzman, see M&G, *Treblinka*, p.160.

Another prime example of the distorted interpretation of MGK can be seen in their treatment of the testimony by Judith Eliazer.¹³¹ Eliazer's testimony is quoted as follows:

On 10 March 1942 we went directly from Westerbork to Sobibor, where we arrived on 13 or 15 March. There we were selected. Thirty girls and 44 men were taken out. The remainder were gassed and burned. (We have seen that the others were moved away in tilting trolleys. They may have been dumped into pits.) Sobibor was not a camp. It was a transit camp. (Mattogno's emphasis)¹³²

For Mattogno, since Eliazer "saw neither gas chambers nor cremations," and was sent to other concentration camps after her selection at Sobibor, her experience can only be understood if Sobibor served as a transit camp.¹³³ Such a conclusion is obviously a non sequitur, as Eliazer did not experience the fate of other deportees to the camp; Eliazer was not even subjected to hygienic measures in the camp (which Sobibor allegedly had, according to MGK) prior to being sent on to other concentration camps.¹³⁴ MGK also hand wave Eliazer's statement on the fate of those Jews not selected out of the transport ("the remainder were gassed and burned"), without providing any additional evidence to show another fate. The distortion of Eliazer's testimony by MGK does not move their notion of a transit camp forward at all.

In *Sobibór*, there are more such examples of Mattogno's inverted interpretation of witness statements, in more certain terms:

It is a fact that the first descriptions of the alleged extermination facilities given by the witnesses resemble more closely actual sanitary installations (showers and disinfestations) than homicidal gas chambers.¹³⁵

In *Treblinka*, Mattogno noted that if one assumed the reality of a transit camp (a matter of belief), then witness statements could be also be seen in a similar light.¹³⁶ In *Sobibór*, however, this connection becomes a certainty ("it is a fact"). This "fact" can only be accepted by a backward treatment of testimony, in which any details regarding the Nazi technique to deceive their victims are taken as real (without evidence) and the rest of the statements which refer to exterminations are ignored or discarded.

¹³¹ Eliazer is quoted in *Treblinka*, p. 259 (as Eliazar), and *Sobibór*, p.287.

¹³² MGK, *Sobibór*, p.287; ROD [Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie, Amsterdam], 200 AR-Z251/59 OV, p.904.

¹³³ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.288.

¹³⁴ Note she was sent to other concentration camps and not any alleged resettlement site "in the East." We would also ask why Eliazer would be selected out of the transport before such hygienic measures? Instead, it is more likely that she was selected out from the victims destined to the gas chambers.

¹³⁵ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.286.

¹³⁶ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.290.

One victim of such a dishonest interpretation is Ukrainian *Wachmann* Mikhail Razgonaiev, who is criticized several times in *Sobibór*¹³⁷ for his testimony regarding exterminations at Sobibor, but is quoted for his statement that “everyone would be given a piece of soap.”¹³⁸ Of course, what Mattogno leaves out is Razgonaiev’s clear connection of such a measure to part of a Nazi effort to lessen any chance of resistance by a transport:

All this was done in order to conceal the true objectives for which the people had been brought to the camp...It has to be added that Germans also thought about other details that also served as camouflage for the true reason for which the people were brought to the Sobibor camp. Thus, for example, in the “dressing room” there were train time-tables, all sorts of posters appealing to people to maintain order, etc. When the people were invited to the “bath-house,” each one was given a piece of soap.¹³⁹ The lie would end only when the people went into the gas chambers, where they would discover that there was no bath-house and that they had been taken there to be destroyed.¹⁴⁰

Thus, in the sentence immediately following the phrase quoted by Mattogno, Razgonaiev noted the ultimate fate of the deportees. Elsewhere in his testimony, Razgonaiev also specifically connected the soap to an effort by the camp administrators to “ensure security in performance of the extermination.”¹⁴¹ One can clearly see how deluded MGK are if they think Razgonaiev’s testimony (given in 1948) more closely describes sanitary installations than a death camp.

Another witness that Mattogno cites in support of his bizarre interpretation is the indirect witness Alexander Pechersky, who MGK conflate between a direct and indirect witness.¹⁴² Pechersky makes an odd source of evidence for Revisionists, as he is among one of the most targeted survivors for supposedly alleging a “fanciful” method of murder.¹⁴³ Mattogno attributes a description of the gas chambers with the appearance of a bath house,

¹³⁷ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.104-105, 116, 265-267.

¹³⁸ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.283.

¹³⁹ It is possible that Razgonaiev merely assumed that soap was given out. Tanhum Grinberg testified, “During the undressing SS-man Untersturmfuehrer Suchomel was hurrying people, saying that “in the bath the water will get cold”. He was also saying that the soap and towels will be given in the bath.” Hearing such promises some of the guards might have assumed that the soap was indeed given out to the people as a camouflage measure, although it was not necessarily so. Cf. protokol doprosa, Tanhum Grinberg, 21.9.1944. GARF 7445-2-134, p. 68.

¹⁴⁰ Protokol doprosa, Mikhail Razgonaiev, 20.-22.9.1948, ASBU Dnepropetrovsk 5858-18828, pp.40-47, English translation available at <http://nizkor.org/ftp.py/people/r/razgonayev.mikhail.a/razgonayev.001>, misspelling name to “Razgonayev.”

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² See the section on Direct and Indirect Witnesses in this chapter.

¹⁴³ Mattogno, *Belžec*, p. 10. Nearly all quotes of Pechersky’s description of the “black substance” introduced into the Sobibor gas chambers by revisionists are not analyzed or commented upon; instead, it is left for the readers to determine the author’s apparent point. For instance see Paul Grubach, ‘Revisionist Reflections on the Upcoming “Holocaust” Demjanjuk Trial in Germany,’ CODOH, <http://www.codoh.com/viewpoints/vppgdemjanjuk.html>, and Mattogno, ‘The Myth of the Extermination of the Jews: Part II.’

with faucets and wash basins, to Pechersky. Instead, as pointed out earlier, Pechersky is only quoting an “old time inmate,” who learned his information from other discussions with camp inmates. Similar such hearsay statements about the deceptive “bath” qualities of the gas chamber are also quoted by Mattogno along with Pechersky, such as Leon Feldhendler,¹⁴⁴ who never worked in the extermination area.

No doubt in response to this section, MGK would cite a 1995 article by researcher Jean-Claude Pressac, known for his technical work regarding the gas chambers and crematoria at Auschwitz-Birkenau.¹⁴⁵ In Pressac’s article, which has been quoted and cited in all of MGK’s major Reinhard works,¹⁴⁶ he posits that Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka originally served as delousing and transit installations until mid-1942, when they converted to extermination centres. To support his thesis, Pressac uses the testimony of Stanislaw Kozak (which he writes as ‘Kosak’) regarding the construction of a bath house and the placement of ovens inside the presumed gas chambers, as well as a November 1942 report from the Polish underground detailing the use of steam to kill Jews at the Treblinka camp.¹⁴⁷ In unconventionally reading these sources, Pressac comes to his conclusion that the camps originally served as delousing centres. The article, as well as his baseless estimates of the numbers killed in the Reinhard camps in a subsequent interview,¹⁴⁸ shows that Pressac was not as reliable on topics outside of his work on Auschwitz-Birkenau (of which, conversely, Mattogno is a staunch critic). Thus, Pressac’s baseless and faulty take on the Aktion Reinhard camps, in which he inverts witness statements and reports to fit a delousing operation, cannot help the credibility of MGK’s approach, which extends Pressac’s conjecture to, essentially, all witnesses.

Perhaps the most blatantly hypocritical use of witness testimony by MGK concerns Stanislaw Kozak. In support of their transit/delousing camp thesis, MGK have often relied upon the statements from Kozak, a Polish labourer who took part in the construction of the gas chambers at Belzec.¹⁴⁹ In his description of the gas chamber installation, Kozak later recounted:

¹⁴⁴ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.283.

¹⁴⁵ Jean-Claude Pressac, ‘Enquete sur les camps de la morte,’ *Historama*, 34, 1995.

¹⁴⁶ M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.291-292; Mattogno, *Belzec*, p.46; MGK, *Sobibór*, p.286.

¹⁴⁷ The November 1942 report has been discussed in the section Wartime Reports in Chapter 1. Kozak’s statement on the bath house barrack is more likely related to the camp workers, including Jews. Nowhere in his testimony does he mention Jews being bathed before being sent to the gas chambers, in contrast to Pressac’s interpretation. Mattogno also ignores this idea of Pressac’s, likely finding it incorrect.

¹⁴⁸ Pressac estimated the victim figures as 100,000-150,000 for Belzec, 30,000-35,000 for Sobibor, and 200,000-250,000 for Treblinka. See M&G, *Treblinka*, pp. 107-108; ‘Entretien avec Jean-Claude Pressac réalisé par Valérie Igounet, à la Ville-du-bois, le jeudi 15 juin 1995,’ pp.640f.

¹⁴⁹ See the section A “Humane” Solution, Chapter 5.

In each of the three rooms inside the barracks I mentioned, we installed furnaces weighing some 250 kg each. Presumably the elbow-pipes were later connected to these furnaces. They were 110 cm high, 55 cm wide and 55 cm long. Out of curiosity we looked through the door of one of these furnaces to catch a glimpse inside. I saw a grid and the furnace interior had been tiled-by the looks of it with fireproof tiles. I could see no other openings. The door was oval shaped with a vertical diameter of 25 cm, and about 50 cm above floor level.¹⁵⁰

Kozak's testimony on these ovens counts as one of the most important forms of evidence that MGK can offer in an alternative explanation of the Aktion Reinhard camps. This point is borne out by MGK's repeated references and quotations of the statement.¹⁵¹ In *Belżec*, Mattogno declares (cueing off Jean-Claude Pressac¹⁵²) that the presence of the ovens can be explained as *Heißluftentwesungsöfen*, hot air disinfestations ovens, with no other details offered.¹⁵³ Kues tries to relate Kozak's description of ovens to a proposal for the Majdanek camp (never implemented or accepted) in which coke-fuelled calorifers fed heated air into delousing chambers for clothes.¹⁵⁴ The two descriptions bear no resemblance to one another; for instance, Kozak has the ovens inside the gas chambers, while the Majdanek proposal has the heaters outside the chambers but forcefully feeding hot air into the room.¹⁵⁵

It is clear that MGK's reliance upon Kozak was the result of a desperate search, not well thought out or researched, for evidence of an alternative to homicidal gassings. In a note highlighting areas where Revisionism has been silent or ill-researched, Kues notes that Kozak's description of ovens at Belzec requires more study.¹⁵⁶ According to the article, work still needed to be done to see if "the ovens described by Kozak (can) be matched against documented *Heißluftentwesungsöfen*." Kues lists several sources to find such an answer, but it is apparent that MGK failed to address this research gap prior to the publication of *Sobibór*. Indeed, as seen with the plan for Majdanek discussed by Mattogno, and as also evident by the

¹⁵⁰ Vernehmung Stanislaw Kozak, 14.10.1945, BAL B162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd. 6, pp.1129-30.

¹⁵¹ M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.291-295; Mattogno, *Belżec*, pp.45-46; MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.285-286; Kues, "The Alleged Experimental Gassing at Belzec."

¹⁵² Pressac believed that the Reinhard camps were originally established as delousing facilities for the deportation of European Jews into the occupied Soviet territories, and operated as such until mid-1942. We strongly disagree with Pressac's idea.

¹⁵³ Mattogno, *Belżec*, p.46 n.109. In his article "The Alleged Experimental Gassing at Belzec," Kues himself recognizes that Mattogno's conclusion comes "however without providing any further documentation backing up this claim."

¹⁵⁴ Kues, 'The Alleged Experimental Gassing at Belzec.' Kues quotes Mattogno's work on "a more sophisticated hot air disinfestation facility at Majdanek." Kues ignores Mattogno's own statement (in the line immediately following Kues' quote) that the proposal "never became reality; M&G. *Majdanek*, p.130.

¹⁵⁵ MGK ignore the basic point of circulation regarding the working of hot air disinfectors in their references to Kozak. Without mechanical circulation, presumably into other rooms, interpreting Kozak's descriptions as hot air disinfectors is extremely problematic.

¹⁵⁶ Thomas Kues, 'What Remains to be Researched?', CODOH, <http://www.codoh.com/newvoices/nrtkremins.html>, which presumes that certain areas are well researched by revisionists.

hot air disinfectors at Auschwitz-Birkenau¹⁵⁷, Kozak's description bears no relation to other *Heißluftentwesungsöfen* of the period.

Still, MGK feel comfortable asserting that Kozak's description of ovens inside the gas chambers point to "actual sanitary installations (showers and disinfestations)" rather than homicidal gas chambers.¹⁵⁸ In an earlier article, Kues notes that these features served as "harmless components of a facility for hot air disinfestations."¹⁵⁹ This hypothesis is extremely weak, for not only does it lack evidence, but at the time that the Aktion Reinhard camps were built and established, camp clothing delousing facilities overwhelmingly employed HCN (Hydrogen Cyanide, poison found in Zyklon-B); hot-air and steam facilities were extremely limited at this time, and were even shunned by the SS hierarchy. According to a March 11, 1942 order from the SS Budget and Construction Office (WVHA), overriding an earlier ban on the use of HCN for delousing measures, actions were to be taken to ensure the "conversion of all delousing facilities to operate with HCN," and specifically that "delousing by means of hot air or hot steam is only permissible insofar as they involve temporary installations, in which the necessary safety for the handling of HCN is not assured."¹⁶⁰ Expansions of the Auschwitz and Majdanek camps in late 1941-1942 serve as examples to show the emphasis of HCN delousing facilities during these years. Hot-air disinfestation chambers would also still require facilities for the Jewish deportees to shower and gather their clothes, a feature for which MGK have offered no evidence. Also, it remains to be explained why hot air disinfection rooms would be located well into the camp, but arrivals had to undress immediately upon arrival in the reception area.

MGK's treatment of Kozak exposes a tremendous double standard in their approach to the historic evidence. Kozak's statement on the presence of ovens at Belzec is a feature not corroborated by any other witness who took part in the construction of the Reinhard gas chambers, including those at Belzec. It also does not fit with the wider array of evidence for the Reinhard camps, which has been showcased in this critique. Yet MGK prefer to cling onto such anomalies, and disregard or dismiss other features which have been corroborated by multiple sources and witnesses, such as homicidal gassings.¹⁶¹ It is also hypocritical for

¹⁵⁷ See Pressac's extremely well researched material on such delousing and disinfestation installations at Auschwitz-Birkenau in *Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers*, pp.15-85.

¹⁵⁸ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.285-286.

¹⁵⁹ Kues, 'The Alleged Experimental Gassings at Belzec.' This is problematic as Kozak never mentions showers in the three gas chambers, but has each room having its own oven.

¹⁶⁰ SS-WVHA C I/2 Allg - 18 Hei./Ba, Betr.: Entlausungsanlagen, 11.3.1942, RGVA 502-1-336, p.94.

¹⁶¹ Most noteworthy in this effort is MGK's attempt to disconnect and isolate Kozak's testimony from other statements regarding the construction of Belzec.

MGK to rely upon a witness who they criticize elsewhere in their work, making no explanation for the contradictory treatment.

Finally, no section on MGK's hypocritical use of witnesses would be complete without a discussion of Herman Kruk, the Jewish Bundist and library director imprisoned in the Vilnius ghetto until his deportation and subsequent death in an Estonian labor camp. In recent years the members of MGK have prominently cited Kruk's diary as evidence for resettlement, providing him a separate subsection in *Sobibór*¹⁶² and selecting him as the first "witness" discussed in their extended attempts to prove resettlement.¹⁶³ As discussed earlier in this critique, Kruk, who was through his cultural activities well connected within the ghetto, on terms with Jewish Ghetto police leader Jacob Gens and other prominent persons, was an (admitted) indirect witness in regards to events outside the Vilnius ghetto.¹⁶⁴ The revisionists' attempt to proclaim the diary as dealing "a devastating blow to the official version" of the Holocaust then seems extremely misplaced¹⁶⁵, and is similar to their continued conflation of direct and indirect witnesses as discussed in a previous section. For instance, Graf and Kues have both cited Kruk's June 1943 diary entry as evidence for the continued presence of 1,500 German and Czech Jews in the Minsk ghetto. Their claim is based upon the word of two delegates from Vilnius who had returned from Minsk after an inspection tour to the city permitted by the authorities to encourage voluntary movement of skilled workers from Vilnius to Minsk)¹⁶⁶. Graf and Kues ignore the fact that Kruk himself stated that the two individuals "were not allowed into the ghetto" and "first of all were informed that they were not permitted to talk to anyone."¹⁶⁷ Such hearsay information hardly "confirms" that the German and Czech Jews were present in the Minsk ghetto, and it misses the obvious point that thousands more German Jews had been transported to Minsk in late 1941 and early 1942. What was their fate if they were not still present in Minsk by mid-1943?

Indeed, MGK's seemingly favoured line from Kruk's diary is his April 16, 1943, entry where he mentioned in a single, short sentence a "rumor" that 19,000 Dutch Jews were in Vievis, a labor camp. This sentence followed Kruk's report of two trains, each with 25 cars filled with "objects, apparently from the Dutch Jews," halted in Vilnius.¹⁶⁸ The unattributed rumor of Dutch Jews in Vievis is regarded as "strong evidence" by Graf and Kues that Dutch

¹⁶² MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.366-369.

¹⁶³ Kues, 'Presence: Part I': 3.3.1.

¹⁶⁴ See the section The Ostland, Chapter 4.

¹⁶⁵ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.369.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.; Kues, 'Presence: Part I': 3.3.1'.

¹⁶⁷ Kruk, *Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania*, p.570.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., p.518. "Today a rumor is circulating that there are about 19,000 Dutch Jews in Vievis."

Jews transited through Sobibor to the Baltics; the reason for this contention is that the duo cannot conceive of any reason for Kruk otherwise to have mentioned such a story. Throughout the rest of April 1943, Kruk would return to the issue of the Dutch Jews, writing on April 30 about the deportation of a presumed 130,000 Jews from the Netherlands and relating his discovery of a Jewish star written in Dutch, as well as the arrival of Dutch furniture (for purposes of repair) into the Vilnius ghetto. Kruk dated the deportation of the Dutch Jews to early 1943 based on the dates on documents found in their furniture by Jewish workers in Vilnius. Upon the arrival of the beautiful furniture, and as workers scavenged through the objects and personal papers of their former owners, Kruk concluded on April 30 that “the Jews did not know they were going to be exterminated.”¹⁶⁹

Graf and Kues both point out that Kruk does not offer an explanation for why he became convinced that the Dutch Jews were killed.¹⁷⁰ Such an argument fails to properly understand Kruk’s experiences and how he was interpreting a variety of ominous events of which he had become aware. Kruk learned of the numerous shootings of Soviet Jews both from his own experiences and conversations he had with other Jews (including first hand witnesses and members of the Judenrat), and of the wider extermination measures across the continent from access he had to a clandestine radio. Such is why he was able to write of a killing site at Malkinia (close proximity to Treblinka, which is what he was obviously referring to) several times in his diary, including an entry on April 19.¹⁷¹ During April 1943 Kruk also recorded the news that reached Vilnius ghetto by radio of the liquidation of Warsaw’s ghetto, including the Jews’ resistance there¹⁷²; the disappearance of the larger part of Poland’s Jewish population and the shootings of foreign Jews near Minsk and at the Seventh Fort in Kovno.¹⁷³ Knowledgeable about the exterminations at Ponar, having interviewed survivors of the 1941 shootings, Kruk concluded on April 26 that “Lithuania alone lost 85 percent of its Jews!”¹⁷⁴; as importantly, Kruk was well informed about Gens’s Oszmiana action (in which the Vilnius Jewish police in October 1942, on Gestapo direction, had murdered several hundred Jews in the nearby community) and the “Kovno” action (in which nearly 4,000 Jews from Oszmiana, Swieciany, Ostrowiec, and a number of other towns had been slaughtered at Ponar in April 1943). All this led Kruk to declare in mid-April, in the context of the extermination of Warsaw’s Jews “in Malkinia, near Lwow or near Zamosc,”

¹⁶⁹ Kruk, *Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania*, p.525.

¹⁷⁰ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.366-369; Kues, ‘Presence: Part I: 3.3.1’.

¹⁷¹ Cf. Kruk, *Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania*, pp.350, 357, 370-371, 386, 521, 530.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, pp.520, 524.,

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, p.521.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

that “The Vilna ghetto has lost all illusions.”¹⁷⁵ Through these experiences and his interpretation of the events as best he knew, it did not take much of a leap to conclude that the articles of furniture were the loot of murdered Jews. Indeed, Kruk related in a subsequent sentence that the Dutch Jews were slaughtered “just like the Oszmiana and Swieciany Jews.”¹⁷⁶ This point was deliberately and dishonestly omitted by Graf in his quotation of Kruk in *Sobibór*¹⁷⁷, but was included by Kues in his own article.¹⁷⁸

Kues goes on to make the argument that if the furniture was from Dutch Jews murdered at Sobibor, then it contradicts the “mainstream historiography” on the camp, which has goods plundered from the victims at the camps sent back to Germany. This represents the fallacy of the excluded middle, as the furniture delivered to the Vilnius ghetto for repairs can easily be understood as belonging to the Dutch Jews murdered at Sobibor if Kues would have taken his research more seriously. Once Jews were deported from occupied Europe, their remaining property left behind in apartments was confiscated by Nazi authorities. Einsatzstab Rosenberg was in charge of such a mission, and as Raul Hilberg relates, the Minister of the Eastern Territories “laid claim to Jewish furniture in order to equip his offices in Russia and sold the surplus to the *Gauleitungen* for bombed-out people at home.”¹⁷⁹

We also wish to point out to the readers, as well as to MGK themselves, that nowhere in their collective works have MGK or any other writer ever made the absurd claim that Jews deported to the Reinhard camps and “resettled” to the East were able to bring trainloads of expensive furniture. Further, we should recall that Kruk mentioned only a rumour of 19,000 Dutch Jews taken to Vievis, with no further mention of these Jews or never any contact with any Dutch Jews at the camp. Vievis itself was a small labor camp located between Vilnius and Kaunas, whose inmates worked on highway construction and who numbered about 700 in 1942. The camp was familiar to residents of Vilnius’s ghetto, as Jews passed back and forth between the ghetto and this camp.¹⁸⁰ In fact, according to historian Neringa Latvyte-Gustaitiene, in 1943 the camp was under the jurisdiction of the German civil administration in Vilnius: “Selections at the camp continued, and groups of Jews were brought to replace others. Those who were ill were most often transferred to the Vilnius or Kaunas ghettos. ... In September, a big group of Jews arrived at the Vievis camp. Selections of those fit to work

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., p.519.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., p.525.

¹⁷⁷ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.368. Graf does so using an ellipsis. We know it to be purposeful because it is the only portion of the quote to be omitted.

¹⁷⁸ Kues, ‘Presence: Part I: 3.3.1’.

¹⁷⁹ Hilberg, *Destruction of the European Jews: Volume 2*, 2003, p.630.

¹⁸⁰ Kruk, *Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania*, p.348.

began immediately. Dzena selected able-bodied Jews, and those who had gold, to remain in the camp. The greater majority, including the elderly people and children, were transported to Paneriai [Ponar]. ... The Vievis labour camp was liquidated in December 1943. All its workers were murdered in Paneriai."¹⁸¹ In short, whatever Jews were in Vievis—and there is no evidence for Dutch Jews being among them—were killed, if they survived the harsh regime, much as the vast majority of Vilnius's Jews were killed at Ponar.

While Kruk's diary doesn't prove extermination of Jews at the Reinhard camps, it certainly is far from as supportive of resettlement as MGK would like to it to be and spin it to be: the reality it does show is the harsh and brutal conditions of ghetto life and camp incarceration in the occupied Soviet territories.

Witness Convergences

As has already been or will soon be covered in other areas of this work, witnesses agree with documents on the transport of Jews to the camps,¹⁸² of the property plunder of those deported (and gassed) Jews,¹⁸³ and on the burial and subsequent cremation of Jews in Treblinka.¹⁸⁴ In their fallacious attempts to discredit and discard witness testimony (except when it suits them), MGK are quick to point out that no blueprint or unequivocal document exists that mention the gas chambers at the Reinhard camps; thus, the witnesses are viewed as liars, and their testimony as un-credible. What MGK fail to clearly acknowledge, however, is that the witnesses who report on the gas chambers also mention things that are corroborated by documents, or other independent testimonies. This demonstrates and verifies the reliability of the witness statements, a reliability that then extends to their statements regarding the existence of the gas chambers and exterminations in the camps.

The October 14, 1943 revolt in Sobibor has also been recorded in documents, as well as attested to by several camp witnesses.¹⁸⁵ The SS-und-Polizeiführer of Lublin, Jakob Sporrenberg, immediately wired his superiors:

October 14, 1943, at about 17:00 hours, a revolt of Jews in the SS camp Sobibor, 40 km north of Chelm. They overpowered the guards, seized the armoury and after a shutout (sic) with the camp garrison, escaped in an unknown direction. Nine SS killed. One SS wounded. Two guards of non-German nationality shot to death.

¹⁸¹ See "The Genocide of the Jews in the Trakai Region of Lithuania," available at: http://www.jewishgen.org/litvak/HTML/OnlineJournals/genocide_of_the_jews.htm.

¹⁸² See Chapter 5.

¹⁸³ See the section Property Plunder, Chapter 5.

¹⁸⁴ See Chapters 7 & 8.

¹⁸⁵ See, for instance, the camp witness statements Thomas (Tovi) Blatt, Alexander Pechersky, Yehuda Lerner, Dov Freiberg, Seimion Rosenfeld, Mordechai Goldfarb, Jakob Biskowitz, Ada Lichtmann.

Approximately 300 Jews escaped. The remainder were shot to death or are now in the camp. Military Police and armed forces were immediately notified and took over the security of the camp at about 1:00 hours (1:00 AM, October 15). The area south and southwest of Sobibor is now being searched by police and armed forces.¹⁸⁶

Up to this point, MGK have never challenged the occurrence of this event. Kues has even attempted to use two perpetrators testimonies about the event, in which they refer to a few escapees voluntarily returning to the camp (later to be killed).¹⁸⁷ A German report issued six days after the revolt stated that:

In the period from 17.-19.10.43 of the Jews who fled the Sobibor camp found around Sobibor and Rozanka, 35 to 53 km north of Cholm, the military police killed (vernichtet) 44 Jews and captured 15 Jews.¹⁸⁸

There are many more documents detailing the Nazi search and discovery of Jews (and subsequent execution), but they need not be presented here. The fundamental point is that the witnesses recalled and detailed the Sobibor revolt and escape (often a crucial part in their testimony), which is substantiated and verified by several contemporary documents.

Another documented event in the history of the Aktion Reinhard camps is a February 1943 visit by Himmler to Sobibor, a visit heavily reported by witnesses in the camp. MGK accept the documentary evidence for this visit, as well as a likely visit to Treblinka as well, but believe that Himmler arrived in March, a point on which they criticize several witnesses.¹⁸⁹ Their dating of a March inspection relies upon Christopher Browning's expert report that was submitted for the 2000 Irving-Lipstadt trial, in which Browning cites a 13 April 1943 letter from Globocnik to Gruppenführer von Herff which states that Himmler "on the occasion of his visit in March had visited installations of Aktion 'Reinhard'" had approved the promotions of several Aktion Reinhard officials.¹⁹⁰ What MGK leave off from Browning's report is a crucial sentence within the same paragraph of their citation, where Browning states "Subsequent correspondence in the file concerning the recommended

¹⁸⁶ Thomas T. Blatt, 'Dagnet,' *The Forgotten Revolt*, <http://www.sobibor.info/dagnet.html>.

¹⁸⁷ Kues, 'Ground Water Level at Sobibor 1942-1943.' A similar point is made by Kues in *Sobibór*, 93. In the article, Kues quotes the testimony of Suchomel, but leaves out Suchomel's admission that the Jews in the camp (including those who he purports voluntarily returned) were killed. See Jonathan Harrison, 'Thomas Kues' Double Standards: The Sobibor Revolt,' Holocaust Controversies blog, 16.11.09: <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2009/11/thomas-kues-sobibor-revolt-and-denier.html>

¹⁸⁸ RGVA 1323-2-339, p.159.

¹⁸⁹ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.58; Thomas Kues, 'Chil Rajchman's Treblinka Memoirs, *Inconvenient History*, 2/1 http://www.inconvenienthistory.com/archive/2010/volume_2/number_1/chil_rajchmans_treblinka_memoirs.php It should be kept in mind that dates are harder to remember for witnesses, especially some time after an event.

¹⁹⁰ Browning Report, Section 5.3, 'Documentary Evidence Concerning the Camps of Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka'

promotions of Aktion Reinhard personnel confirmed Himmler's visit and inspection of Sobibor but dated it precisely to February 12, 1943.”¹⁹¹

This distortion thus undermines MGK's criticism in *Sobibór* that historians rely upon a February date for Himmler's visit based only on witness statements, and neglect documentary evidence. Graf sees this as “symbolic, showing as it does how the orthodox historians operate.”¹⁹² The only thing that can be taken as symbolic from this instance is that MGK are extremely sloppy researchers, and distort their sources when it suits them. That they expect witnesses to recall an event in its exact detail years after its occurrence without mistake, when they themselves cannot even properly read a source, exposes the weakness of the Revisionist argument.

In their works, MGK have also never systemically examined the witness testimonies in their statements outside of the gas chambers and burials/cremations. This fixation on such a limited aspect, to the utter exclusion of other information, misrepresents the body of witness testimony regarding the Reinhard camps. This is a dishonest omission by MGK, as the majority of survivors from the camps were not involved in the extermination area in the inner camp, the so-called Totenlager. Thus, in their criticisms of witnesses, they often focus on aspects that were only witnessed indirectly. They fail to provide any comparative analysis of the remainder of the witness statements, which purport other information about the camps outside of the gas chamber and cremations.

In *Treblinka*, Mattogno and Graf fail to reference the September 1942 killing of SS guard Max Bialas, who was stabbed by an inmate during a selection that Bialas was conducting of new and old arrivals to the camp. Following the subsequent death of Bialas, the barracks for the Ukrainian auxiliaries was renamed in his honour. The killing was one of the most popular episodes of resistance to the operation of the death camps, and has been reported by many Treblinka witnesses independent of one another. The incident is detailed in the accounts by Abraham Krzepicki,¹⁹³ Tanhum Grinberg,¹⁹⁴ Shalom Kohn,¹⁹⁵ Boris Weinberg¹⁹⁶, Richard Glazar¹⁹⁷ and Elias Rosenberg¹⁹⁸ among others. The killer was reported as being a certain Berliner, a Jew from the Warsaw ghetto, by witnesses such as Oscar

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² MGK, *Sobibór*, p.59.

¹⁹³ Krzepicki, 'Eighteen Days in Treblinka,' p. 130-131.

¹⁹⁴ Grinberg, 'The Revolt in Treblinka,' p.215.

¹⁹⁵ Kohn, 'The Treblinka Revolt,' p.224. Kohn arrived after the attack, so his reference is hearsay, but he did mention Bialas' name on an SS barrack.

¹⁹⁶ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, pp.98-99; YVA, 0-3/565, pp.4-5, testimony of Boris (Kazik) Weinberg.

¹⁹⁷ Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, pp. 54-55. Arrived after Bialas' killing.

¹⁹⁸ Rosenberg, *Tatsachenbericht*, Wien, 24.12.1947, pp. 3-4.

Strawczynski¹⁹⁹, Krzepicki²⁰⁰, and Rosenberg. Several survivors, in addition to many Trawnikis, also identify a grenade throwing incident from a Grodno transport to Treblinka.²⁰¹

In their accounts, the camp witnesses also identify many of the officials and camp guards that participated in Aktion Reinhard. One of those identified was SS-Oberscharführer Karl Franz, deputy commandant of Treblinka, who was sometimes referred to as “the doll” by the inmates due to his innocent looking facial features. Franz’s presence was reported by numerous witnesses²⁰², and is also recorded in Nazi documents related to the camp.²⁰³ Other figures that were spoken of by witnesses include Karl Ludwig²⁰⁴, August Miete²⁰⁵, Fritz Küttner²⁰⁶, and Herbert Floss²⁰⁷ among such officials.

In addition to exposing the double standards and dishonesty that have been used by members of MGK across their collective works, such as the conflation of direct and indirect witnesses, the above chapter has focused on the systemic flaws inherent in the deniers’ decontextualized and isolationist look at witness testimonies. The hope of this chapter is to demonstrate how legitimate and professional interpretations of witnesses can be and regularly are conducted in the social sciences, and how such an approach differs radically from that conducted by MGK. No respected researcher in a peer-reviewed publication would be able to get away with the craziness employed by the trio in their criticism of witnesses, such as their mockeries, self-evident refutations, noting of alleged contradictions amongst witnesses (without any further analysis), or hypocritical double standards. No doubt the value of the more than 300 connected witnesses varies with every witness, but the cumulative body of evidence still strengthens with every additional statement, as the source base for the extermination camps is expanded and reinforced. Despite the heavy attention devoted to witness statements in their works, MGK have so far failed to refute that substantial body of evidence to any substantial degree, or explain the statements as anything else but proof of the reality of exterminations at the three Reinhard camps.

¹⁹⁹ Strawczynski, *Memoirs: Ten Months in Treblinka*, XLV.

²⁰⁰ Krzepicki, ‘Eighteen Days in Treblinka,’ pp.130-131.

²⁰¹ Arad, *Belzec Sobibor Treblinka*, pp.254-6, cf. protokol doprosa, Yakov Karplyuk, 29.9.1961, and protokol doprosa, Nikolai Skakodub, 3.5.1961, ASBU Kiev 66437-14-9, p.164; 66437-14-31, pp.293-4.

²⁰² See, for instance, the testimonies by Krzepicki, Wiernik, Rosenberg, Willenberg, Grinberg, Rajzman, and Strawczynski.

²⁰³ SS-Sonderkommando Treblinka, Beförderungsvorschlag, 1.9.1943, gez. Kurt Franz, AIPN CA 903/2, p.11.

²⁰⁴ Glazar and Joe Siedlecki.

²⁰⁵ Strawczynski and Rajzman. Also nicknamed “Krummer Kopf.”

²⁰⁶ Rajzman, Rosenberg, and Willenberg. Also called “Kiwe.”

²⁰⁷ Wiernik and Rosenberg.

Chapter 7

Mass Graves

What is arguably the most frightful episode of Nazi mass murder took place in four camps on Polish soil that were exclusively built for and dedicated to the systematic killing of human beings – a phenomenon without precedent in human history. According to the most recent data available, these four camps accounted for at least 1,551,000 deaths.¹ All known evidence indicates that much of the remains of these camps' victims still lie under the ground once occupied by these camps, especially in what is left of the huge pits that were used to bury the corpses of those murdered before it was decided to cremate them.

This chapter starts with a presentation of what is known about the mass graves at these four camps, mainly from forensic and archaeological investigations, followed by a discussion of the main claims and arguments adduced by Holocaust deniers (so-called Revisionists) Carlo Mattogno, Jürgen Graf, and Thomas Kues, whereby the physical evidence of said mass graves is not compatible with or need not correspond to mass murder on the scale that historiography has established. The focus will be the camps of the killing operation known as Aktion Reinhard, Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka, which are the subject of a trilogy authored by the mentioned Revisionist trio or one or more of its members.² The mass graves

¹ **Belzec:** 434,508 deportees (rounded to 435,000) mentioned in the Höfle telegram, cf. Witte and Tyas, 'A New Document'. **Sobibór:** 170,165 (rounded to 170,000), thereof 101,370 until 31 December 1942 mentioned in the Höfle Report plus 68,795 in 1943, see Schelvis 2007, p. 198. **Treblinka:** 713,555 until 31 December 1942 mentioned in the Höfle telegram, plus 8,000 deportees from Theresienstadt in October 1942, mentioned in Arad, 'Reinhard', pp. 141-142, which the author assumes not to be included in Höfle's figure. In 1943 there arrived a recorded 53,149 deportees from the General Government and the Bialystok District (including 2,000 Sinti and Roma) and 14,159 deportees from Saloniki, Macedonia and Thessaloniki (Młynarczyk, Treblinka, pp. 280-1.) The total number of recorded deportees to Treblinka was thus 788,863 (rounded to 789,000). **Chelmno:** About 145,000 Jews and 5,000 Gypsies in the camp's 1st phase (December 1941 to March 1943), more than 7,000 Jews in the second phase (23 June to 14 July 1944), see the Bonn Court of Assizes' (LG Bonn) judgment of 30.3.1963 against former members of the Chelmno staff, published in JuNSV Band XXI, quoted in Rückerl, 'Vernichtungslager', pp. 252 – 295. Where these figures differ from those in chapter 3, they should be seen as minimum figures.

² Mattogno, *Belzec*, MGK, *Sobibór* and M&G, *Treblinka*. Where there is also a version in another language, references are made to the respective English version, unless otherwise stated.

at Chelmno extermination camp, and Mattogno's related claims in his book about Chelmno³, have been discussed in a blog article⁴ which will be briefly summarized in this chapter.

Number, Dimensions and Contents of the Mass Graves

Some of the mass graves of **Belzec** extermination camp were excavated in 1945 by Polish criminal justice authorities. In his book about Belzec, Carlo Mattogno provided partial translations from the related investigation reports, which speak for themselves:

On October 12, 1945, the Regional Investigative Judge of the district court of Zamosc, Czeslaw Godziszewski, presented an "Account of the diggings in the cemetery of the Belzec extermination camp," in which he set down the findings from the inspection of the Belzec camp he had made that day, aided by 12 workers. In this context, he wrote:

"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 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:

"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

³ Carlo Mattogno, *Chelmno*, 2009.

⁴ Roberto Muehlenkamp, 'Mattogno on Chelmno Mass Graves', *Holocaust Controversies*, <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2010/12/mattogno-on-chemno-mass-graves.html>

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, 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."⁵

The coroner's report about the inspection of the corpses is followed by an expert opinion not transcribed and translated by Mattogno:

Expert Opinion

On grounds of the postmortem examination made I find that the aforementioned bones and soft tissue parts as well as the ash are predominantly of human origin. A very small part comes from wood. Judging by the huge amount of ash and bones I assert that the same must be from a very large quantity of human bodies. The small soft tissue parts of human bodies that are in the ash and not completely carbonized issue a smell that is caused by the decomposition process of the remains of human soft tissue parts. This smell is also caused by the fact that the soil is soaked by the masses of decomposing human corpses that were burned

⁵ Mattogno, *Belzec*, p.79ff. Mattogno argued that the coroner's "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" – a conspiracy theory oblivious of the fact that the coroner was obviously interested in what the remains examined revealed about the victims' age and sex, especially the presence of children among the victims. For the German translations from Polish of the excavation protocol dd. 12 October 1945 and coroner Dr. Mieczyslaw Pietraszkiewicz's report and opinion of 13 October 1945, which were partially transcribed and translated by Mattogno, see BAL B162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd. VI, f. 1121 ff.

after having been extracted from the soil. Considering the sandy soil in which the human corpses were burned and the state of decomposition of the body parts found, one has to assume that these corpses were presumably buried about 3 years ago. The human body parts not carbonized and the huge amount of hair proves that some corpses were buried after the time when the corpse burning in the extermination camp was stopped, eventually they may also be corpses that were not extracted from the mass grave during cremation. Due to the fact that the skull bones show no traces of shots, it must be assumed that these people did not die from shooting.⁶

Signature: Dr. Mieczyslaw Pietraszkiewicz

Further complementing the reports partially quoted by Mattogno there is the report of an official inspection of the Belzec site on October 10, 1945, obviously by the same examining judge.⁷ The following excerpt illustrates the extent of the mess of human ashes and other partial remains, brought to the surface by robbery diggers, and especially the size of the area covered by that mess:

Along the camp's northern border, from about the middle until the point where it touches the eastern border, the camp area is churned up and plowed through in a width of about 100 meters. Also a strip along the whole eastern border is dug up and churned up in a width reaching up to the middle of the whole camp area. According to information from the assisting public servants of the citizens' militia from the militia post in Belzec, the described churning-up of the camp area comes from the neighboring population, which was searching for gold and jewels left behind by the murdered Jews. In the churned-up area there lie huge amounts of scattered human bones, skulls, vertebrae, ribs, shinbones, jawbones, tooth implants made of rubber, hair (mainly female and often braided), furthermore pieces of decomposed human flesh like hands and lower limbs of little children. Furthermore there lie on the whole area described above huge amounts of ashes from the burned victims as well as remains of the burned human bones. From the deeply dug-up holes there comes the smell of decomposing human bodies. All this proves that the camp area along the northern and eastern border is a continuous common grave of the people murdered in the camp.

A photo showing a pit made by robbery diggers can be found in the archives of the Ghetto Fighters House (Image 7.1).⁸ Another photo from the same source⁹ possibly shows some of the human remains examined by the Polish coroner whose report is quoted by Mattogno (Image 7.2).

⁶ German translation from Polish in BAL B162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd. VI, f. 1124.

⁷ Ruckerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager*, pp.143 -5.

⁸ <http://www.gfh.org.il/eng/> (icon "Archives" on lower left). Pits dug on the grounds of the Belzec camp by Poles scavenging for valuables that had belonged to the camp's victims. Catalog No.: 10891. Direct link: http://iis.infocenters.co.il/gfh/multimedia/GFH/0000005251/0000005251_1_web.jpg.

⁹ The skulls and bones of Belzec camp victims, brought to a bunker on the grounds of the camp. Catalog No.: 10892. Direct link: http://iis.infocenters.co.il/gfh/multimedia/GFH/0000005252/0000005252_1_web.jpg.

Image 7.1



Image 7.2



A detailed archaeological investigation, conducted in 1997-1999 by archaeologist Prof. Andrzej Kola of Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Poland, led to the discovery, approximate measurement, and establishment of the contents of 33 mass graves in the Belzec area. Kola's book about this archaeological investigation¹⁰ contains exemplificative core sample drawings from some of these graves, plans and sections of each grave and a description of each grave and its contents (cremation remains as well as whole corpses in some of the graves), as established by core drilling. Digital copies of the core sample drawings, plans and sections of the mass graves and descriptions of the same are available online¹¹. Kola's finds about the mass graves at Belzec have been the subject of a lengthy discussion between Mattogno and the author of this chapter.¹² The most important claims and arguments presented by Mattogno in this discussion will be addressed in the present chapter.

Descriptions of the Belzec mass graves can also be found in a report prepared by Michael Tregenza, a British researcher who accompanied the Belzec excavations¹³, and in a book by another researcher, Robin O'Neil.¹⁴ Tregenza's descriptions differ from Kola's as

¹⁰ Andrzej Kola, *Belzec: the Nazi Camp for Jews in Light of Archaeological Sources: Excavations 1997-1999*, Warsaw-Washington: The Council for the Protection of Memory of Combat and Martyrdom and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2000.

¹¹ See the thread 'Archaeological investigation of Belzec mass graves' (<http://holocaustcontroversies.yuku.com/topic/1174>) of the Holocaust Controversies forum (<http://holocaustcontroversies.yuku.com/directory>). The core sample drawings are on pages 14 to 18 of the book, the plans and sections and descriptions of the mass graves on pages 21 to 40. Page 19 includes a map of the graves and on page 70 there is a map of the core drillings whereby the graves were identified.

¹² See the blog articles collected under the link <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2006/04/quick-links.html#mattbel>.

¹³ Michael Tregenza, 'Report on the Archeological Investigation at the Site of the Former Nazi Extermination Camp in Belzec, Poland, 1997-98', Lublin, 1998. Excerpts are available on the Nizkor website under http://nizkor.org/ftp.py?camps/aktion.reinhard/belzec/Archeological_Report.

¹⁴ Robin O'Neil, *Belzec: Stepping Stone to Genocide Hitler's answer to the Jewish Question*, (2004) <http://www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/belzec1/bel000.html#Forward> Descriptions of the mass graves are in Chapter 15 (<http://www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/belzec1/bel150.html>).

concerns the graves' measurements and interpretation of their contents, and their graphic detail contrasts with the sober, aseptic descriptions of the mass graves in Kola's book.

The presence of corpses in wax fat transformation¹⁵ besides cremation remains is mentioned in Kola's description of the graves numbered 1, 3, 4, 10, 13, 20, 25, 27, 28 and 32. Core drilling by Kola's team came upon corpse layers up to 2 meters thick¹⁶ in the graves' lower parts. Why these corpses were left in the graves and not cremated by the SS is not known. Tregenza surmised that "perhaps after five months of supervising day and night the gruesome work of exhuming and cremating the hundreds of thousands of rotting remains the SS had simply had enough, and against orders, abandoned the task."¹⁷ A likelier explanation is that the SS simply found it too difficult to extract these corpses from the bottom of the graves, as is mentioned regarding Treblinka extermination camp by survivor eyewitness Oscar Strawczyński, who wrote that the graves "could never be emptied entirely, because blood mixed with water accumulated at the bottom"¹⁸.

The measurements of the mass graves reported by Kola and his estimates of the graves' volumes are shown in the Table 7.1. Where the author made assumptions because the graves do not have a rectangular shape or no measurement data were provided, this is pointed out in the notes. Kola's volume estimates are not identical with the volumes established by multiplying the values for a grave's length, width and depth in the table, but tend to be smaller, sometimes considerably so, for example in graves nos. 1 (1,500 vs. 2,304 m³), 8 (850 vs. 1,120 m³) and 20 (1,150 vs. 1,430 m³). The total volume of all graves according to Kola's estimates is 21,310 cubic meters, of which 15,840 cubic meters (line "Subtotals") correspond to graves in which the estimated volume is smaller than the calculated volume in Table 2.1.1. The sum of estimated volumes in these graves (15,840 m³) is about 86.6 % of the sum of calculated volumes in the line "Subtotals" (18,290 m³). This difference is probably due not or not only to the author's assumptions or the irregular shape of some graves (graves nos. 1, 8 and 20 are regularly shaped rectangles), but also and especially to the sloping of the graves' walls in order to achieve greater stability in the sandy soil of Belzec, which led to graves

¹⁵ Wax-fat transformation, as explained on the Australian Museum's related webpage (<http://australianmuseum.net.au/Decomposition-Body-Changes>), is as state in which grave wax, also known as adipocere, "accumulates on those parts of the body that contain fat - the cheeks, breasts, abdomen and buttocks. It is the product of a chemical reaction in which fats react with water and hydrogen in the presence of bacterial enzymes, breaking down into fatty acids and soaps. Adipocere is resistant to bacteria and can protect a corpse, slowing further decomposition".

¹⁶ Kola, *Belżec*, p.20.

¹⁷ Tregenza, 'Report', p.27, online under http://nizkor.org/ftp.py?camps/aktion.reinhard/belzec/Archeological_Report/Tregenza_Conclusions.98.

¹⁸ Cymlich and Strawczyński, *Escaping Hell in Treblinka*, p.169.

being narrower at the bottom than at the top. The deeper a grave, the higher the volume reduction due to sloping is likely to be. For a grave 50 meters long, 25 meters wide and 10 meters deep (50 x 25 x 10 = 12,500 cubic meters), Alex Bay calculated an actual volume (considering the walls' sloping) of 8,502 cubic meters, i.e. 68 % of the volume calculated by multiplying length, width and depth.¹⁹ The graves at Belzec were not that deep and the volume loss due to sloping was thus probably less. Nevertheless, it seems recommendable to apply at least the percentage mentioned above (actual volume = 86.6 % of volume calculated by multiplying measurements) when estimating the volume of a mass grave based on its length, width and depth.

Matching Kola's maps with his analysis of wartime air photographs, Alex Bay argues that Kola did not discover all of the Nazi mass graves at Belzec.²⁰ Bay's demonstration is persuasive enough²¹ to at least consider the possibility that the mass grave volume available at Belzec was somewhat higher than what becomes apparent from Kola's estimates. However, as Bay's study provides no data that would allow for calculating the size and volume of the additional graves he points out, it will be assumed in the following that the grave volume available for burial at Belzec was as estimated by Kola.

A description of the **Sobibor** site during postwar examinations by investigating judge Zdzisław Łukasziewicz is quoted in Mattogno, Graf & Kues' book about Sobibor²². Łukasziewicz mentioned that "in the central part of the area, presumably at the sites used for burial of the ashes, there is a growth of young firs covering some 1,200 square meters" and that diggings "showed the presence of ashes and of bone fragments mixed with ashes below a layer of sand half a meter thick," furthermore that over the whole area of the camp "human bones can be found here and there." He referred to an opinion prepared by the institute of forensic medicine of the Jagiellonian University whereby "the bones sent there for analysis were human bones," and an opinion of the institute of forensic medicine at Cracow indicating that "the sand removed from the diggings is mixed with bone ashes and fat."

¹⁹ Alex Bay, 'The Reconstruction of Treblinka' (<http://www.holocaust-history.org/Treblinka/>), 'Appendix D - Ash Disposal and Burial Pits (Continued)'.

²⁰ Alex Bay, 'The Reconstruction of Belzec' <http://www.holocaust-history.org/belzec/>, '4.6 - Camp II: The Killing and Graves Area'.

²¹ See the discussion in Muehlenkamp, 'Belzec Mass Graves and Archaeology - Continuation (2)' http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2010/03/belzec-mass-graves-and-archaeology_10.html.

²² MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.107-8. MGK's source is Z. Łukasziewicz, 'Obóz zagłady w Sobiborze', in: *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce*, III, Posen 1947, p.49.

Mass Graves

Table 7.1 Measurements of the Belzec Mass Graves²³

Grave #	Length (m)	Width (m)	Area (m ²)	Depth (m)	Volume (m ³)	Volume (m ³)
			calculated		calculated	Estimated
1	40.00	12.00	480.00	4.80	2,304.00	1,500.00
2	14.00	6.00	84.00	2.00	168.00	170.00
3	16.00	15.00	240.00	5.00	1,200.00	960.00
4 (1)	16.00	6.00	96.00	2.30	221.00	250.00
5	32.00	10.00	320.00	4.50	1,440.00	1,350.00
6	30.00	10.00	300.00	4.00	1,200.00	1,200.00
7(2)	13.50	27.00	364.50	4.50	1,640.00	1,600.00
8	28.00	10.00	280.00	4.00	1,120.00	850.00
9	8.00	10.00	80.00	3.80	304.00	280.00
10(3)	24.00	18.00	432.00	5.20	2,246.00	2,100.00
11	9.00	5.00	45.00	1.90	86.00	80.00
12(4)	5.50	18.00	99.00	4.00	396.00	400.00
13(5)	11.75	17.00	199.75	4.80	959.00	920.00
14(6)	37.00	10.00	370.00	5.00	1,850.00	1,850.00
15	13.50	6.50	87.75	4.50	395.00	400.00
16	18.50	9.50	175.75	4.00	703.00	700.00
17	17.00	7.50	127.50	4.00	510.00	500.00
18	16.00	9.00	144.00	4.00	576.00	570.00
19	12.00	12.00	144.00	4.00	576.00	500.00
20	26.00	11.00	286.00	5.00	1,430.00	1,150.00
21	5.00	5.00	25.00	1.70	43.00	35.00
22(7)	9.00	7.50	67.50	3.50	236.00	200.00
23	16.00	8.50	136.00	4.00	544.00	550.00
24	20.00	5.50	110.00	5.00	550.00	520.00
25	12.00	5.00	60.00	4.00	240.00	250.00
26	13.00	7.00	91.00	4.00	364.00	320.00
27	18.50	6.00	111.00	5.00	555.00	450.00
28(8)	10.00	2.50	25.00	5.00	125.00	70.00
29(9)	25.00	9.00	225.00	4.50	1,013.00	900.00
30	5.00	6.00	30.00	2.70	81.00	75.00
31	9.00	4.00	36.00	2.60	94.00	90.00
32	15.00	5.00	75.00	4.00	300.00	400.00
33	9.00	5.00	45.00	3.00	135.00	120.00
TOTALS			5,391.75		23,604.00	21,310.00
Subtotals(10)			4,084.00		18,290.00	15,840.00

²³ (1) In grave # 4 drilling was given up at the depth of 2.30 m, because of a layer of bodies in wax-fat transformation. The volume estimate refers only to the part filled with cremation remains, while the total volume of the grave was not estimated.

(2) The pit was in shape close to a high trapezoid with the base sizes 13.00 and 14.00 m and the height of about 27 m. Length in table is the medium of base sizes.

(3) The grave was very deep (the drills in particular places were stopped at the depth of 4.25 to 5.20 m, because of bodies in wax-fat transformation and underground waters presence). Depth in the table is the maximum depth.

(4) The grave has the shape of an irregular trapezoid, with edges 6.00, 16.00, 11.00, 5.00 and 18.00 m. Area was calculated according to the trapezoid formula ($A = ((a+b) \div 2) \times h$), assuming that $a = 6$ m, $b = 5$ m and $h = 18$ m.

(5) In bottom views the grave has a shape of trapezoid with the base of 12.50 and 11.00 m and the height of 17.00 m, with the depth reaching up to 4.80 m.

(6) A vast grave basin of irregular shape. Length came to 37 m, approximate width about 10 m.

(7) In the bottom view the grave has a shape close to a flattened triangle with the base of about 9.00 m and the height of 15.00 m. Height was halved for calculation.

(8) Length and width of this grave are not given by Kola, figures in table are this writer's guess based on plan and section.

(9) The grave is lengthened and has the shape of an irregular rectangle with the size of about 25.00 x 9.00 m and the maximum depth of about 4.50 m.

(10) Only graves in which Volume estimated < Volume calculated

Photos presumably related to the site inspection conducted by Polish investigators or to robbery digging in the former extermination camp's area can be found in the Archives of the Ghetto Fighters' House²⁴ including those shown in Images 7.3 and 7.4 below.²⁵



Bone fragments still littered the area around the Sobibor mass graves and memorial when the author visited it on October 14-16, 2008.²⁶

Like the area of Belzec extermination camp, the Sobibor area was also subject to an archaeological investigation headed by the same Prof. Andrzej Kola who had conducted the archaeological investigation at Belzec. The location, size and contents of the mass graves surrounding the Sobibor memorial were described as follows in Kola's report about his archaeological research:

Grave no 1 is located in the north - eastern part of hectare 17, just west from the memorial to victims. The site was excavated by 27 drills. Horizontally, it measures 20 x 20 m and is up to 4.30 m deep. It was a body burning grave.

Grave no 2 is located in the western part of the hectare 17, south from the memorial. It was excavated by 28 drills. Horizontally its shape is irregular, measuring at least 20 x 25 m – with its longer side in NS position – and with

²⁴ As note 8, the term to be inserted in the search engine being "Sobibor".

²⁵ Image 7.3: *Brief Description: Pits in the woods near the Sobibor extermination camp, in which victims were buried. Catalog No.: 11683.* Direct link:

http://iis.infocenters.co.il/gfh/multimedia/GFH/0000006229/0000006229_1_web.jpg. Image 7.4: *Brief*

Description: The woods of Sobibor, photographed after the war. Catalog No.: 11681. Direct link:

http://iis.infocenters.co.il/gfh/multimedia/GFH/0000006227/0000006227_1_web.jpg.

²⁶ See the thread 'My Trip to Sobibor', <http://rodohforum.yuku.com/topic/6369/t/My-Trip-to-Sobibor.html>, which contains numerous photos and film stills showing such bone fragments as well as the aspect of the area around the memorial.

depth up to 4 metres. It was a body burning grave.

Grave no 3 is located in the south- western part of hectare 11 and north - western part of hectare 17. It was excavated by 17 drills. Horizontally, it's irregular, measuring around 20 x 12 m - with its longer side in NS position. The biggest part of the grave is located under north - western part of the memorial. It's up to 5.80 m deep. In bottom layers, the grave is bony, with human remains in wax- fat transformation. The upper layers are a mixture of burnt body remains with layers of lime stone, sand and charcoal. The northern part of the grave is located near to northern part of the grave no 4. The more precise location of the graves requires additional research.

Grave no 4. It's a grave with significant size, located in southern part of hectare 11, as well as northern and central parts of hectare 18. It was excavated by 78 drills. Horizontally, in NS position, it measures 70 x 20-25 m with the depth of around 5m. In bottom layers the grave is bony, with human remains in wax-fat transformation. The upper layers are a mixture of burnt body remains with layers of lime stone, sand and charcoal. [...]

Grave no 5. It's not a very vast grave, located in the north-western part of hectare 18. It was excavated by 7 drills. Horizontally, it's irregular, measuring at least 10 x 12 m, with its depth up to 4.90 m. In its bottom layers the grave is bony, with human remains in wax-fat transformation. In the upper layers – burnt body remains.

Grave no 6. It's located in the central part of hectare 18, south from grave no 5. It was excavated by 22 drills. Horizontally, it's irregular, measuring at least 15 x 25 m, with its depth up to 3.05 m. In its bottom layers the grave is bony, with human remains in wax-fat transformation. The upper layers - burnt body remains.

Grave no 7. Location of body burning activity, measuring at least 10 x 3 m, with its depth up to 0.90 m, in the central part of hectare 18, around 10-12 m south from the southern side of grave 4. The vast majority of burnt body remains were found in 6 drills. Around, vast ground transformation of an uncertain genesis. Only because of the burnt body remains found, the structure was thought of as a grave. In order to state the function of the place more accurately, further archaeological research needs to be conducted.²⁷

Kola's findings about the location and shape of the mass graves are plotted on two maps on pages 122 and 123 of the cited publication, the larger of which is shown below (Image 7.5); numbering of the graves according to the above-quoted description was added by the author.

²⁷ Andrzej Kola, 'Badania archeologiczne terenu byłego obozu zagłady Żydów w Sobiborze w 2001 r' ('Archaeological Research of the Former Jew Extermination Camp at Sobibór in 2001', *Przeszłość i Pamięć. Biuletyn Rady Ochrony Pamięci Walk i Męczeństwa* Nr. 4/21 z 2001 r, pp.115-123; descriptions of mass graves on pages 116/117. Translated into English by Katarzyna Piotrowska. The translation is available on the thread 'Archaeological Research of the Former Jew Extermination Camp at Sobibor in 2001', <http://holocaustcontroversies.yuku.com/topic/1071>.

The mapping of archaeological finds is corroborated by the coincidence of some of these graves with greener areas clearly visible on a satellite photograph of the Sobibor memorial area, as shown in Image 7.6 below.²⁸

Image 7.5



²⁸ The satellite photograph on which the author wrote the numbers of the graves is an enlargement of a Google satellite map available under <http://maps.pomocnik.com/satellite-maps/?map=4194>, as it looked in October 2008; see Muehlenkamp, 'Mass Graves at Sobibor – 10th Update' - <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2008/10/mass-graves-at-sobibor-10th-update.html>). Graves 2, 3, 4 and 6, and to a lesser extent also grave 1, can be distinguished as areas where vegetation grows more strongly than in their surroundings. John Hunter and Margaret Cox, *Forensic Archaeology*, New York: Routledge, 2005, p. 34, write that "The disturbance created by a grave, although relatively insignificant in volumetric terms in the context of a wider landscape, can induce various strong visual effects and can be long-term (...). These can include color change (i.e. from stressed vegetation), enhanced or inhibited flowering, shadows from increased or stunted growth with the presence of a low sun (e.g. winter months or summer mornings or evenings), and spreads of subsurface material in plough soil according to the timing of the agricultural cycle". The wording suggests that this can but need not always happen, which means that, while the visibility of such changes on air or satellite photography signals the presence of graves, the non-visibility thereof does not necessarily signal their absence.

Image 7.6



They are also corroborated by air photos published in an article by archaeologists Isaac Gilead, Yoram Haimi and Wojciech Mazurek, who are carrying out further investigations on the Sobibor site.²⁹

Kola's descriptions of the mass graves contain the information required to calculate the available burial volume, applying the percentage established above (ca. 86.6 %) to take account of volume loss due to sloping of the grave walls. Grave # 7, which according to the archaeologist's description was obviously a cremation site or a pit to dump cremation remains but never a burial grave, was not included in the list.

According to Kola's description, two of the graves in Table 7.2 – nos. 1 and 2 – were mere body-burning graves, never used to bury whole corpses. Assuming that the archaeologist's findings are correct, this means that only graves 3, 4, 5 and 6, with a total volume (corrected for sloping) of 9,525 cubic meters, were used for burial at Sobibor extermination camp. A look at the annotated satellite image above (Image 7.6) shows that graves nos. 3 and 4 were next to each other, and so were graves nos. 5 and 6. This suggests the possibility that each of these pairs was a single grave during camp times, which would

²⁹ Isaac Gilead, Yoram Haimi and Wojciech Mazurek, 'Excavating Nazi Extermination Centres' in *Present Pasts*, I, 2009.

explain why former SS-man Bolender spoke of two graves in his deposition on December 18, 1963 in Hagen.³⁰

Table 7.2 Measurements of the Sobibor Mass Graves

Grave #	Length m	Width m	Area m2	Depth m	Volume m3 (length x width x depth)	Volume corrected for sloping
1	20.00	20.00	400.00	4.30	1,720.00	1,489.50
2	20.00	25.00	500.00	4.00	2,000.00	1,732.00
3	20.00	12.00	240.00	5.80	1,392.00	1,205.50
4	70.00	22.50	1,575.00	5.00	7,875.00	6,819.80
5	10.00	12.00	120.00	4.90	588.00	509.20
6	15.00	25.00	375.00	3.05	1,143.75	990.50
Total			3,210.00		14,718.75	12,746.50

Unlike the areas of the other two extermination camps of Aktion Reinhard, the area of **Treblinka** extermination camp has not yet been subject to an archaeological investigation. The most thorough investigation of the Treblinka site to this day was carried out in November 1945 by Judge Zdzisław Łukasziewicz. The thoroughness of this investigation is acknowledged even by Mattogno & Graf (M&G), who provide what they claim to be a complete translation of the report of November 13, 1945 signed by Examining Judge Łukasziewicz and State Attorney Maciejewski.³¹ M&G also quote parts of Łukasziewicz' protocol dated December 29, 1945, which was presented by the Soviets at the Nuremberg Trial as Document USSR-344.³² The parts of either report referring to a mass graves area are transcribed hereafter.

From the report of November 13, 1945:

The largest of the craters produced by explosions (numerous fragments attest to the fact that these explosions were set off by bombs), which is at maximum 6 meters deep and has a diameter of about 25 meters – its walls give recognizable evidence of the presence of a large quantity of ashes as well as human remains – was further excavated in order to discover the depth of the pit in this part of the camp. Numerous human remains were found by these excavations, partially still in a state of decomposition. The soil consists of ashes interspersed with sand, is of

³⁰ Quoted in Schelvis, *Sobibor*, pp.110-1. In his deposition in Hagen on 18.12.1963 (StA.Do Sob 35-116), Bolender mentioned that the second grave started being used when it was not yet completely finished because the first grave was completely full. The second grave's not having been completely finished may be the explanation for grave # 6 being considerably less deep than grave # 5 (3.05 m vs. 4.90 m). Another former SS-man, Hubert Gomerski, mentioned that there had been three huge pits, of which the third was no longer used to bury corpses as the camp's body disposal method was changed from burial to cremation (depositions of Hubert Gomerki in Butzbach prison, 24.2.1964, BAL B162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd. VII, f. 1254-8 and on 30.11.1965 in the main proceedings of the trial against Kurt Bolender et al. in Hagen, StA Dortmund XI 1965, f. 709, 712). It is possible that graves nos. 1 and 2 identified by Kola are parts of said third pit, which Gomerski referred to as "die obere Grube", the upper pit, presumably by reference to the map drawn by former SS-man Erich Bauer and used at the Hagen trial. The map is in Urteil LG Hagen v. 20.12.1966, 11 Ks 1/62, JuNSV XXV Lfd. Nr 642.

³¹ Protokół czynności wykomanych w terenie w toku dochodzenia sądowego w sprawie obozu śmierci w Treblince, AIPN NTN 69, pp.97-98; cf. M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.84-86.

³² *Ibid.*, p.87.

a dark gray color and granulous in form. During the excavations, the soil gave off an intense odor of burning and decay. At a depth of 7.5 meters the bottom was reached, which consisted of layers of unmixed sand. At this point the digging was stopped here.

From the report of December 29, 1945:

With the assistance of an expert land surveyor and witnesses, I made an exact inspection of the terrain. According to the measurements, the area of the camp is approximately 13.45 hectares and had the shape of an irregular quadrilateral. [...] In the northwestern section of the area, the surface is covered for about 2 hectares by a mixture of ashes and sand. In this mixture, one finds countless human bones, often still covered with tissue remains, which are in a condition of decomposition. During the inspection, which I made with the assistance of an expert in forensic medicine, it was determined that the ashes are without any doubt of human origin (remains of cremated human bones). The examination of human skulls could discover no trace of «wounding. At a distance of some 100 m, there is now an unpleasant odor of burning and decay.

Mattogno & Graf claimed that Łukasziewicz' investigations had failed to produce evidence of mass murder, obviously failing to take into account what a) the depth of the crater in which Łukasziewicz' ordered further excavations "to discover the depth of the pit[s]³³ in this part of the camp" (7.5 meters!), and b) the size of the area he found to be covered by human ashes and larger partial human remains, which was obviously the burial area or one of the burial areas of the Treblinka extermination camp sector (2 hectares = 20,000 m²), revealed about the enormous amount of burial space that had existed at that camp. The aspect of the Treblinka site and the robbery digging there was also conveyed by Karol Ogrodowczyk, member of a delegation from Warsaw that inspected the site:

The fields are dug up and rummaged through, the pits are about 10 meters deep, bones are lying around and objects of all kinds, shoes, spoons, forks, chandeliers, hair of wigs worn by Jewesses. In the air hangs the stench of decomposing corpses. ... The foul smell so numbed me and my colleagues that we vomited and felt an unusual rasping in the throat. (...) Under every tree seekers of gold and gems have dug holes (...) Between the trees cavort local peasants, eager to find treasures. When we ask them 'What are you doing here?' they give no answer.³⁴

³³ The German text of M&G, *Treblinka*, p.107 reads: "um die Tiefe der Gruben in diesem Lagerteil zu ermitteln" - "to discover the depth of the pits in this part of the camp". Łukasziewicz obviously assumed that the crater had been blown into one of the pits used to bury the corpses in "this part of the camp" – his earlier mention of searching for the gas chamber building shows that he was in the former extermination sector of Treblinka – and that, by digging below the bottom of the crater to the bottom of this pit, he would establish how deep the burial pits in the extermination sector had been.

³⁴ Piotr Głuchowski and Marcin Kowalski, 'Gorączka złota w Treblince', *Duży Format* Nr. 1/760, 7.1.2008, attachment to *Gazeta Wyborcza*, pp.2-4.

A number of photos illustrating the above-quoted descriptions of the Treblinka site are included in a collection of photographs put together by the author³⁵. Four of these photos – showing, respectively, a moonscape of holes and what seem to be bones (Image 7.7), upturned soil/ash saturated with white shards that are obviously bone fragments (Image 7.8), a close-up of skulls and bones (Image 7.9) and a larger pit in the camp area (Image 7.10) – are reproduced below. Neither of the aforementioned investigations provided information about the number of mass graves and the shape and size of each of them. However, a contemporary map related to Łukasziewicz investigation (Image 7.11)³⁶ shows a 1.8 ha area in the camp's south-eastern part called the "area of cremation."

Image 7.7³⁷



Image 7.8³⁸



Image 7.9³⁹

Image 7.10⁴⁰

³⁵ 'Photographic documentation of Nazi crimes':

<http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2009/03/photographic-documentation-of-nazi.html>, photos numbered 1.1.79, 1.1.84, 1.1.85, 1.3.1 to 1.3.7, 2.7.1 and 2.7.2.

³⁶ 'Survey Map 1945', shown on the webpage 'Mapping Treblinka'

<http://web.archive.org/web/20030311014138/http://www.deathcamps.org/treblinka/maps.html>. Direct link: <http://web.archive.org/web/20040227174014/http://www.deathcamps.org/treblinka/pic/bmap1.jpg>.

³⁷ *Heaps of ashes on the grounds of the Treblinka camp. Catalog No.: 11337.* Direct link: http://iis.infocenters.co.il/gfh/multimedia/GFH/0000005809/0000005809_1_web.jpg.

³⁸ *A heap of ashes in the Treblinka camp. Catalog No.: 11341.* Direct link: http://iis.infocenters.co.il/gfh/multimedia/GFH/0000005814/0000005814_1_web.jpg.

³⁹ *Ibid. Brief Description: Human skeletal remains in the Treblinka camp. Catalog No.: 11338.* Direct link: http://iis.infocenters.co.il/gfh/multimedia/GFH/0000005810/0000005810_1_web.jpg.

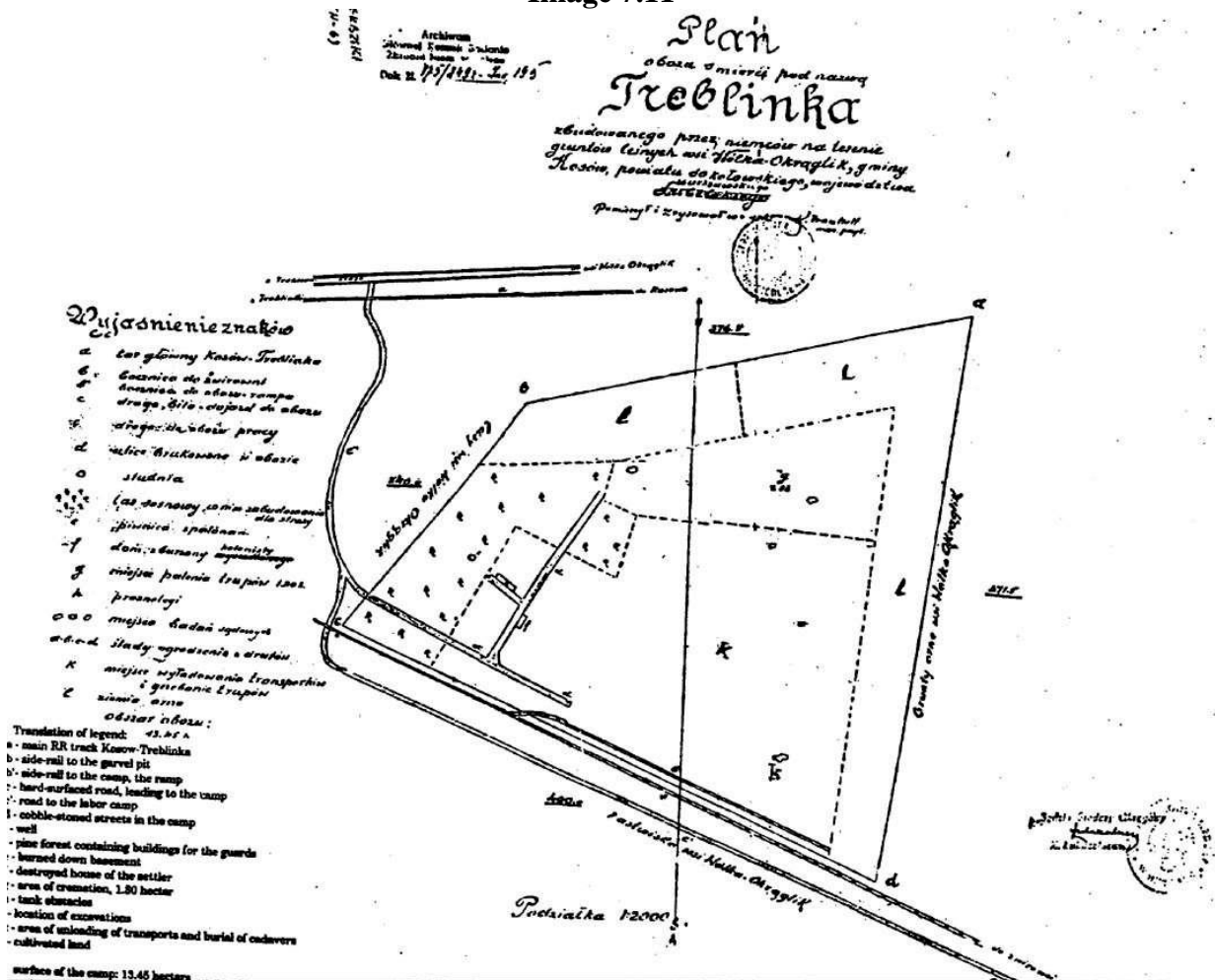
⁴⁰ Webpage 'Treblinka - Last Traces',

<http://web.archive.org/web/20050313143210/http://www.deathcamps.org/treblinka/lasttracks.html>. Photo is captioned "HUMAN REMNANTS AND BELONGINGS #2". Direct link: <http://web.archive.org/web/20060303170646/http://deathcamps.org/treblinka/pic/bigp43.jpg>.



This must have been the area covered by ashes and larger human remains that was described by Łukaszewicz in his report of December 29, 1945, where its size is rounded upwards to the nearest full hectare and its location is wrongly (maybe due to a misreading of the map) given as being the northwestern part of the camp.

Image 7.11



On a copy of an air photo of the (by then long dismantled) Treblinka extermination camp taken in September 1944⁴¹, the author has highlighted an area with the aspect of what he would expect the "area of cremation" to look like on an air photo, considering Łukaszkiwicz description (Image 7.12). The soil in this area is thoroughly churned up – so thoroughly that, according to Alex Bay, it is no longer possible to make out the shapes of individual mass graves.⁴² In the camp's former "reception" area/sorting yard, on the other hand, Peter Laponder, author of a model of Treblinka⁴³ and three maps of the camp⁴⁴ identified several mass graves on the September 1944 photograph (Image 7.13).⁴⁵

Image 7.12



According to Peter Laponder, arrow "1" in Image 7.13 shows the position of the high earth mound between the camp's sorting yard and the "death camp" extermination sector, arrow "2" shows the position of the "Lazarett" (where sick and infirm people arriving at Treblinka, who would otherwise slow down the march of the other arrivals to the gas

⁴¹ As note 35; direct link:

<http://web.archive.org/web/20060303104430/http://deathcamps.org/treblinka/pic/bmap8.jpg>.

⁴² Bay, Treblinka, 'Reconstruction of the Death Camp'.

⁴³ Presented on the webpage 'The 2004 Laponder Model',

<http://web.archive.org/web/20040824122551/http://deathcamps.org/treblinka/laponder1.html>.

⁴⁴ 'Treblinka Extermination Camp Pre-October 1942',

<http://web.archive.org/web/20060303104804/http://deathcamps.org/treblinka/pic/bmap11.jpg>, 'Treblinka Extermination Camp August 1943',

<http://web.archive.org/web/20060303104437/http://deathcamps.org/treblinka/pic/bmap9.jpg>, and 'Treblinka Death Camp Memorial Map',

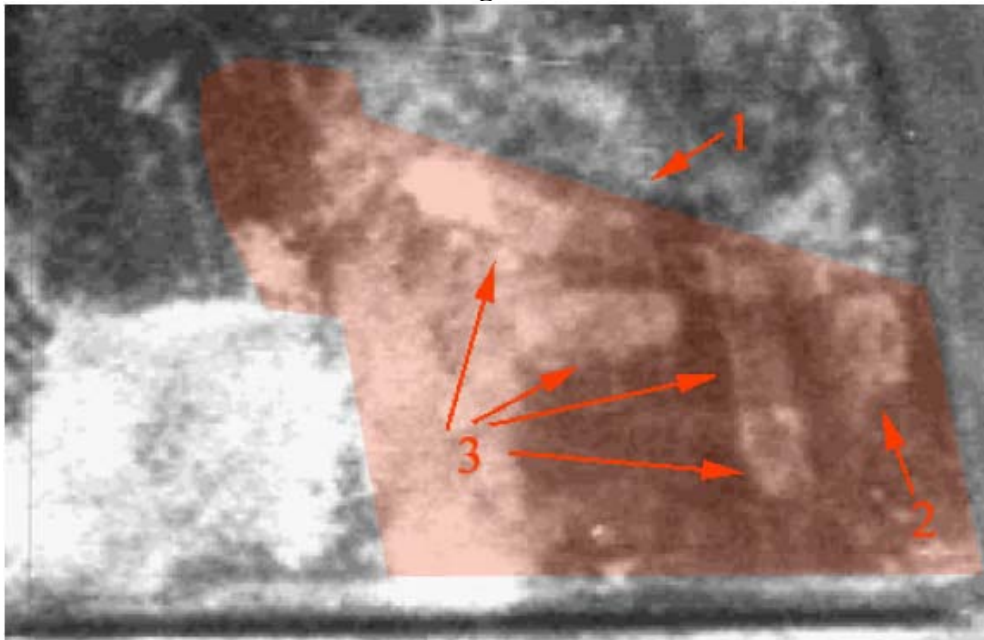
<http://web.archive.org/web/20060303104809/http://deathcamps.org/treblinka/pic/bmap12.jpg>.

⁴⁵ Peter Laponder, 'RECONSTRUCTING THE RECEPTION CAMP – SORTING YARD AREA - 29 PIT FOR CORPSES', part of the considerations underlying the making of the model, sent to the author as attachment to a private message on 28 November 2006.

chambers, were shot and their bodies burned inside a pit) and arrows "3" shows "In all probability the Pits for Corpses which were used during the first phase of Treblinka."

Unlike at least one of the pits in the "death camp" sector, excavated during Judge Łukasziewicz' investigation in November 1945, the early burial pits identified by Laponder and shown in his map of Treblinka before October 1942⁴⁶ don't seem to have been excavated by investigators, with the possible exception of the one that later became the body disposal pit of the "Lazarett". Łukasziewicz mentioned having ordered digging in a bomb crater 4 to 5 meters deep at the location where according to the witness Rajzman the "camp hospital" had stood and a mass grave was supposed to be, and found numerous coins as well as broken pieces of various containers but no human remains.

Image 7.13



If indeed Łukasziewicz's workers had been digging in the mass grave by the "Lazarett", the reported absence of "human remains" (a term that, as the previously quoted excerpt from his report of November 13, 1945 shows, Łukasziewicz used only for human remains larger than ashes) must have been due to the fact that the pit was completely cleared of human remains at some time during the camp's dismantlement and subsequently used merely as a pit for discarding objects that the SS considered useless. An archaeological investigation such as has been conducted at Belzec and Sobibor could provide further information to help remove this uncertainty.

Archaeological investigations conducted in the burial areas of **Chelmo** extermination camp in 2003/04 led to the identification of four mass graves, which are

⁴⁶ 'Treblinka Extermination Camp Pre-October 1942', see note 44.

described in detail in a report about these and other investigations by archaeologist Łucja Pawlicka-Nowak.⁴⁷ The graves' measurements are the following:

First grave: Length 62 meters, width 5 to 8 meters, depth not stated.

Second grave: Length 254 meters, width 4 to 10 meters, depth 3 meters.

Third grave: Length 174 meters, width 8 meters, depth not stated.

Fourth grave: Length 182 meters, width 10 meters, depth not stated.

Assuming that all graves were as deep as the second grave was determined to be, i.e. 3 meters, and that the average width of the irregularly shaped first and second graves was the medium of their largest and smallest width, one can thus calculate the area and volume of these graves as follows:

Table 7.3 Measurements of the Chelmno Mass Graves

Grave #	Length m	Width m	Area m ²	Depth m	Volume m ³
1	62.00	6.50	403.00	3.00	1,209.00
2	254.00	7.00	1,778.00	3.00	5,334.00
3	174.00	8.00	1,392.00	3.00	4,176.00
4	182.00	10.00	1,820.00	3.00	5,460.00
Total			5,393.00		16,179.00

Due to the comparatively small depth of the graves, it doesn't seem necessary to apply a correction factor to take account of volume loss from sloped walls, as was done regarding the mass graves of Sobibor.

Besides these four graves archaeologists found a line of 11 pits referred to as the "fifth grave" in the aforementioned report. These pits, covering a distance of 161 meters and located 2-3 meters from one another, are 9 to 15.5 meters long, 7.5 to 8.5 meters wide and, according to a post-war judicial investigation referred to by Pawlicka-Nowak, 4 meters deep. They are considered to have been used only for dumping cremation remains but not for burying whole corpses.⁴⁸

Mattogno et al's Claims: Nature and Purpose of Archaeological Investigations

In his book about Belzec, Mattogno tried to present the archaeological investigations carried out in the area of that camp by Kola in 1997-1999 as a (failed) attempt to "*furnish the material proof of the alleged extermination at Belzec.*" Kola is supposed to have been hired in order to obtain corroboration of eyewitness testimonies through physical evidence, and the reason why he restricted his work on the mass graves to core drilling instead of excavating

⁴⁷ Łucja Pawlicka-Nowak, 'Archaeological Research', available on the website of the *Museum of the former Extermination Camp in Chelmno-on-Ner*, <http://www.muzeum.com.pl/en/chelmno.htm>.

⁴⁸ See Muehlenkamp, 'Chelmno Graves'.

the graves and exhuming the corpses, according to Mattogno, was a concern – motivated by the core drilling results - that excavation would lead to conclusions incompatible with the historical record of Belzec extermination camp.⁴⁹

Mattogno's insinuations ignored the stated purpose of Kola's archaeological work, which not only was not about furnishing material proof but also ruled out excavating graves and exhuming corpses because such would have had the very desecrating effect that Kola's employers intended to avoid:

In 1997, the jurors of the competition for the Belzec memorial selected the work proposed by a team of artists led by Andrzej Solyga. In the selected project, the entire area of the camp becomes the memorial. The artists are of the opinion that the most appropriate way of commemorating the victims is to honour the earth that harbours their ashes. Indeed, it is difficult to think of a more meaningful symbol. **For its message, it was necessary to conduct archaeological research in order to thoroughly examine the topography of the former camp, so as to exclude areas with human remnants. So that we, in commemorating, do not violate the memory of those whom we want to commemorate.**⁵⁰

Even core drilling was considered a desecration of the dead in violation of religious principles by some Orthodox Jews, one of whom, Rabbi Avi Weiss, spoke of a "*monumental failure*" under this aspect.⁵¹ Though too late to interfere with Kola's archaeological investigations at Belzec and Sobibor, this protest seems to have had the unfortunate long-term effect of barring further investigations of this nature. As it stands now, it seems that mass graves at the Nazi extermination centres will not be excavated in the foreseeable future. Information regarding their location and extension will be obtained by remote imagery and non-invasive geophysical methods that are standard tools of forensic archaeology⁵²

Confronted with the fallaciousness of his claims⁵³, Mattogno brought up a conspiracy theory whereby the "official" purpose had been mere window-dressing for the actual purpose, which was to try finding physical proof of the mass murder at Belzec, the "official" purpose having had the function of providing an alibi in case the investigation did not yield the desired results.⁵⁴

⁴⁹ Mattogno, *Belżec*, p.90. The pertinent passages are quoted in Muehlenkamp, 'Carlo Mattogno on Belzec Archaeological Research - Introduction and Part 1' <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2006/05/carlo-mattogno-on-belzec.html>.

⁵⁰ Kola, *Belżec*, p.3 (foreword by Miles Lerman, Chairman Emeritus of the United States Holocaust Memorial Council), emphasis added.

⁵¹ Avi Weiss, 'A Monumental Failure at Belzec', April 2003, <http://www.hir.org/amcha/belzec.html>.

⁵² Gilead et al, 'Extermination Centres', citing Cheetham et al., 2007: pp.196-206

⁵³ Muehlenkamp, 'Carlo Mattogno on Belzec Archaeological Research, Part 1' <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2006/05/carlo-mattogno-on-belzec.html>.

⁵⁴ Carlo Mattogno, 'Belżec e Le Controversie Olocaustiche Di Roberto Muehlenkamp', http://ita.vho.org/BELZEC_RISPOSTA_A_MUEHLENKAMP.pdf, pp.1-4; English translation: 'Belzec or the

The chief argument presented in support of this conspiracy theory was that it would not have been necessary to do an archaeological survey of the whole camp area to build a structure covering just one part of that area. However, the above-quoted foreword of Kola's book also mentions that the memorial was to cover the entire former camp area, rather than be restricted to a building structure somewhere in that area. Photos of the memorial site show that the memorial was actually implemented in this manner⁵⁵, a fact that Mattogno was obviously aware of.⁵⁶ This means that identifying the parts of that area containing human remains in order to avoid their disturbance when building the memorial was a pertinent purpose, and that Mattogno's objection is moot.

In a later blog response⁵⁷ to the refutation of his claims about the nature and purpose of the Belzec archaeological survey⁵⁸, Mattogno tried to save his objection by arguing that the only building structure in the area whose construction could have disturbed the mass graves is a kind of trench that runs obliquely from the south-western to the north-eastern side, about 180 meters long and about 5 meters wide. According to Mattogno, it would have been sufficient to check for mass graves in the projected area of the trench, if the purpose of the archaeological investigations had been of an ethical-religious nature as was "officially" stated.

This argument, first of all, flies in the face of professional design and construction procedures, as it postulates that the people in charge of designing and constructing the trench would have put the cart before the horses, planning the location and course of this building structure before checking whether conditions on site fit their planning, thereby risking the inconvenience and expense of having to redo their design every time it turned out to be incompatible with site conditions.

Holocaust Controversy of Roberto Muehlenkamp' (<http://codoh.com/gcgv/gcgvhcrm.html>). Quotes are from the English translation.

⁵⁵ See for instance Dr. Bonnie Harris, 'Holocaust Memorialization in Poland and the Czech Republic', <http://www.bonniesbiz.com/25001/36539.html>, and the web page 'Belzec Death Camp', <http://www.scrapbookpages.com/poland/Belzec/Belzec01.html>. An air photo of the Belzec camp memorial area is included in Barbara Buntman, 'Tourism and Tragedy. The Memorial at Belzec, Poland', in: *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 14/5, September 2008, pp.422-488.

⁵⁶ "As can be seen from photographs published online[178] the intense activities in connection with the construction of the memorial have disturbed the soil of the former Belzec camp. A trench with walls of reinforced concrete, serving as a path, intersects the camp, and the surface of the camp has been covered with large stones[179], so that any verification of Kola's data has now become impossible." – Mattogno, 'Controversy' (original Italian text in 'Controversie', p.56).

⁵⁷ Carlo Mattogno, 'Le Ulteriori Controversie Olocaustiche di Roberto Muehlenkamp, Parte I', <http://revisionismo.splinder.com/post/20951185/LE+ULTERIORI+CONTROVERSIE+OLOC>, refuted in Muehlenkamp, 'Belzec Mass Graves and Archaeology - Continuation (1)', http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2010/03/belzec-mass-graves-and-archaeology_7846.html.

⁵⁸ Muehlenkamp, 'Belzec Mass Graves and Archaeology: My Response to Carlo Mattogno (1)'

Second, a look at an air photo of the Belzec camp memorial area (Image 7.14)⁵⁹ shows that, besides the trench (= item 8: *The Interstice*) there are the museum buildings and a perimeter walkway surrounding the area covered by stones, and that inside this area there are darker spots marking the location of mass burial pits.

Image 7.14



Figure 2 Aerial view of Belzec Memorial. Key: 1: mesh site fence; 2: parking area; 3: entry point and inscription; 4: museum buildings; 5: *The Ramp Monument* and Dan Pagis poem; 6: crossing point; 7: perimeter walkway; 8: *The Interstice*; 9: Memorial Wall and walls with engraved names; 10: this and other dark areas mark the location of mass burial pits; 11: trees in the memorial. (Photo: Tomasz Stepien/KUMULUS.)

It is hard to imagine for whoever has seen construction work in progress how all this could have been made without disturbance of the mass graves if their location had not been known. Third, the building of the *Interstice* was closely connected to the mass graves in the area, insofar as the soil excavated from the "trench" seems to have been placed above the graves and sealed together with them.⁶⁰ And fourth, honoring the earth that harbors the victims' ashes also implied giving the mass graves a special treatment as concerns protection after the memorial's completion, through measures described by the geotechnical consultant hired for implementing them.⁶¹ Mattogno may want to explain how this desired protection could have been achieved without identifying the mass graves.

⁵⁹ Included in Buntman's article (note 54).

⁶⁰ Joe Berkovsky, 'Memorial project in Poland sparks a lawsuit from Holocaust survivor', 25 June 2003, <http://web.archive.org/web/20030811040045/http://www.deathcamps.org/belzec/belzeclawsuit.html>; Joe Berkovsky, 'Lawsuit Over Belzec Memorial Withdrawn', 8 July 2003, <http://web.archive.org/web/20030811040322/http://www.deathcamps.org/belzec/lawsuit.html>.

⁶¹ A. Klein, 'Covering the mass graves at the Belzec Death Camp, Poland; geotechnical perspectives', in: R.W. Sarsby and A.J. Felton (eds), *Geotechnical and Environmental Aspects of Waste Disposal Sites*, London: Taylor & Francis, 2007, pp.149 ff.; p.155; see also Buntman, as above, note 40: "At Belzec site 'work was carried out in order to avoid even the smallest disturbance of the mass graves', which are now permanently protected with layers of 'geo-textile covering, gravel and sand' (Andrew Baker, e-mail, 18 December 2006)".

Mattogno furthermore claimed that the religious/ethical considerations of respect for the peace of the dead underlying the "official" reason for Kola's investigation were a mere pretext, arguing that, as it is desirable for Jews to be buried in Israeli land or with some soil of Israel if in the Diaspora, it would make more sense, from the point of view of Jewish religious beliefs, to exhume the corpses in wax-fat transformation buried in the Belzec mass graves and rebury them according to Jewish rites.⁶²

Notwithstanding the considerations of this self-appointed expert in Jewish religious matters, the fact is that regarding the victims of the Nazi genocide of the Jews there are rulings of Orthodox Jewish courts whereby their remains should be left in peace. These rulings, which may have been related to the fact that exhuming and duly reburying the remains of millions interred throughout Eastern Europe was an impracticable task, were explained to Father Patrick Desbois by Orthodox Jewish legal experts including Rabbi Schlesinger, "people determined to scrupulously respect the prescriptions emerging from the laws of Judaism."⁶³

In his aforementioned blog response⁶⁴, Mattogno saw it fit to lecture Rabbi Schlesinger about the permissiveness of exhumation under certain circumstances according to Jewish religious laws, and to this effect quoted a related article by Rabbi Myron S. Geller⁶⁵ and four web pages containing photos and/or accounts of postwar exhumations of Jews murdered by the Nazis.⁶⁶

The article by Rabbi Geller doesn't help Mattogno's argument, for it summarizes the applicable *halakhah* rules as follows:

From the perspective of halakhah, the removal of remains from a grave is generally barred because of concern for the dignity of the dead. Under certain circumstances, remains may be transferred

- A. to move the remains to a family burial plot;
- B. to move the remains to Eretz Yisrael;
- C. for the security of the remains against vandalism or natural catastrophe;
- D. for public need; or,
- E. if the remains were buried in a plot belonging to someone else.

⁶² Mattogno, 'Controversie', pp. 2-3; Mattogno, 'Controversy'.

⁶³ Father Patrick Desbois, *The Holocaust by Bullets*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, pp.129-130.

⁶⁴ As note 56.

⁶⁵ Rabbi Myron S. Geller, 'Exhuming the dead', http://web.archive.org/web/20080521011605/http://www.rabbinicalassembly.org/teshuvot/docs/19912000/geller_exhuming.pdf.

⁶⁶ Discussed in Muehlenkamp, as note 56.

Mattogno may want to explain which of the above-mentioned exceptions could have justified disinterring the remains of the victims buried in the Belzec mass graves within the scope of an archaeological investigation connected with preserving the graves on site.

As to the websites containing photos and/or accounts of postwar exhumation of Jews buried by the Nazis, in all these cases the purpose of exhumation was or included burying the dead in the Jewish cemetery of the location to which they presumably belonged, thus arguably matching one of the exceptions ("move the remains to a family burial plot") mentioned by Rabbi Geller. But even if that were not so, if the reburials in question had been at odds with the Orthodox rulings referred to by Father Desbois by Rabbi Schlesinger, this would only mean that, like in religious matters everywhere and at all times, there are different views and interpretations within the Jewish religious community, with more restrictive ones being currently entertained by more influential members of that community like Rabbi Schlesinger and his sources. Such differences also become apparent from the aforementioned protests of Rabbi Avi Weiss against what he considered a desecration, which Mattogno tried to use to his advantage omitting that, in the very article referred to for this purpose⁶⁷, Weiss laments disagreeing with other Jewish religious leaders and what he considers insufficient care and diligence in safeguarding compliance with Jewish religious principles.

Further evidence of "the falseness of the officially stated purpose" was seen by Mattogno in the archaeological work done by Kola on the remains of former camp buildings. Why, Mattogno rhetorically asked, was excavation done in these buildings if the construction of the memorial was the sole motive behind the archeological investigations?⁶⁸

Indeed the excavations in question seem to have resulted from a posterior "as we're at it, let us also" – extension of Kola's original task, as is suggested by the following passage of the latter's book (emphases added):

The archaeological works at the Belzec camp area taken up by The Council of Protection of Memory of Struggle and Martyrdom **had originally the only aim to locate the mass graves by probing drills**. The method, which in a minimum degree touched anthropogenic structures, enabled us to obtain the basic knowledge on the subject. Revealing the other structures, coming from the camp building, which traces were not visible on the surface, because of the complete decomposition during the camp closing 1943, **opened a chance to widen the research programme**. Archaeology could be helpful to reconstruct the camp building and establish the functions of located objects.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Avi Weiss, 'A Tribute That Desecrates Rather Than Sanctifies', 22 August 2003, <http://www.forward.com/articles/7973/>.

⁶⁸ Mattogno, 'Controversie' p.3; Mattogno, 'Controversy'.

⁶⁹ Kola, *Belżec*, p.69

This doesn't validate Mattogno's conjectures and insinuations, however. For independently of whether identifying the mass grave areas was Kola's only task or he was eventually *also* commissioned to attempt an archaeological reconstruction of the camp's buildings, the archaeologist was bound by his employers' religiously motivated concerns about disturbing the dead to keep physical contact with human remains to the minimum indispensable for identifying the areas containing such remains.

As concerns Kola's archaeological investigations at Sobibor, Mattogno, Graf & Kues briefly hint at similar conspiracy theories when writing that, while the "officially stated purpose" of the survey was "basically the same as for the 1997-1999 excavations at Belzec", the search for "artifacts 'linked to the organization of the genocide' – in other words remains of the alleged gas chambers - is also recognized as 'important'" in Kola's report.⁷⁰

Regarding the ongoing archaeological investigations at Sobibor, Gilead et al forestalled such conjectural humbug by stating very clearly that they consider Sobibor and the other Nazi extermination camps a past reality amply supported by written and oral documentation, which does not need to be proven by archaeological excavations, that archaeology has "the role of supplementing information on the layout of the sites, structures and artefacts in use there, thus providing data for the historical reconstruction of the sites" but "is not and cannot be an instrument to show deniers how wrong they are", and that "professors of geography, and archaeologists as well, should not waste time debating with people who think that the earth is flat."⁷¹

This wholly reasonable approach – assuming that archaeological research is required to prove that Sobibor was what all known eyewitness, documentary and physical evidence show it to have been, i.e. an extermination camp, would be at least as far-fetched as assuming that archaeological excavations were required to prove the amply documented existence of Pompeii – is attacked in the strongest terms by MGK, who accuse Gilead et al of dishonesty and "pseudoscience"⁷² - apparently unaware of what they are thereby calling themselves. For if duly taking into account all known evidence in establishing the purpose and importance of an archaeological survey is pseudoscience, what should one call ignoring, distorting or unreasonably dismissing all known evidence, in support of a thesis that is not supported by any and at odds with all known evidence and based on mere preconceived notions and conspiracy theories?

⁷⁰ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.110.

⁷¹ Gilead et al, 'Extermination Centres'

⁷² MGK, *Sobibór* , pp.166-167

Human Remains Found

The term "human remains" is used in this subsection as referring only to whole corpses or larger human body parts not or only partially burned, to the exclusion of the human cremation remains like ashes and bone fragments that most of the Nazi extermination camps' victims were turned into.

In his *Belzec* book Mattogno claimed that out of 137 core drilling samples from mass graves visually represented in Kola's book, "obviously the most significant ones of the 236 samples taken altogether" in mass graves, only 5 out of 17 visualized samples from graves nos. 3, 10 and 20 contained human remains - "Thus, from all 236 drilling samples, we have only 5 'positive' cases, that is, 2%!". These 5 samples resulted from the drill penetrating a layer of 3 or 4 corpses on each occasion, 15 to 20 corpses in total. Allowing for "the presence of other layers of corpses near those identified by Kola," one may conclude that "the most probable interpretation is that the graves contained at most several hundred corpses," rather than many thousands as considered by Robin O'Neil or at least 15,000 as estimated by Michael Tregenza. These meager core drilling results, in the conspiracy theory discussed in the previous subsection, were the reason why Kola or his employers refrained from excavating the graves and exhuming the corpses, because they feared discoveries contrary to what Mattogno calls the "official historical version."⁷³

Just about everything in Mattogno's above-mentioned claims is wrong if not a downright falsehood. First of all, Mattogno himself mentions two samples (482/XV-30-60 and 486/XV-25-50, both from grave no. 10) bearing the explicit designation "human corpses", plus another four 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") that contain the symbol designating "human bones and wax-fat mass." That's 6 and not 5 samples.

Second, there is another core sample - 484/XV-30-55 in grave 10, visualized in Kola's Figure 13⁷⁴ – that shows the stylized "x" shapes designating "human bones and wax-fat mass", and mentions a "canine tooth" and a "blockade". The "blockade" in sample 484/XV-30-55, although this is not expressly mentioned as it is in sample 486/XV-25-50, is probably also a spot where the drill couldn't go further because of bodies in wax-fat transformation, as such blockades were encountered at various depths of grave # 10 according to the grave's description ("The grave was very deep (the drills in particular places were stopped at the depth of 4,25 to 5,20 m, because of bodies in wax-fat transformation and underground waters

⁷³ Mattogno, *Belzec*, pp. 76-79; see also 'Controversie', pp. 6-12; 'Controversy'.

⁷⁴ Kola, *Belzec*, p. 15.

presence)."⁷⁵). It is unlikely that the blockade in sample 484/XV-30-55 is due to underground waters, because the adjacent drills came upon bodies in wax-fat transformation at a greater depth and only 485/XV-30-50 touched ground water (after passing at least two layers of bodies in wax-fat transformation). An omission of the mention "human corpses" behind "blockade" in the drawing of sample 484/XV-30-55 is more probable. This would mean that 7 out of the core samples visually represented in Kola's book, and not 5, contain human remains.

Third, there is no indication that the 137 visually represented samples are necessarily "the most significant ones of the 236 samples taken altogether" in mass graves. On the contrary, they are

a) Expressly stated to be "examples of graphic illustration of the results",

b) Not samples from all graves – they include samples showing corpse layers from only 3 out of 10 graves in which corpse layers were found, and samples from only 11 out of 33 graves altogether – , and

c) Not exclusively samples from graves. Actually only 77 of the 137 samples are from graves, whereas the other 60 are from areas other than graves. Mattogno's claim to the contrary was obviously made against better knowledge.

Fourth, by far not all drillings were so deep that they could even have hit layers of corpses, which as a rule were at the bottoms of the graves. For instance, in the case of grave # 10, only 4 of the 7 drills were so deep that they could hit corpses lying at the bottom of the grave, and all of these four (including sample 484/XV-30-55 according to the above considerations) actually did hit layers of corpses. In the case of grave # 20, one notes in Kola's Figure 16⁷⁶ that only the drill that hit a corpse layer (sample 1042/XIV-45-80) actually penetrated to the depth in which this corpse layer was located. The drill samples shown on either side of this sample stop at the very place at which the corpse layer starts in the "neighboring" sample, which suggests that in this case Kola tried to avoid *again* drilling into a corpse layer, perhaps mindful of "desecration" criticism such as was made by Avi Weiss.

Mattogno's "5 out of 236 = 2%" – juxtaposition is thus not only as wrong, but also dishonest. An honest juxtaposition would have been to set the shown samples containing human remains only against those out of the shown samples from graves 3, 10 and 20 that were deep enough to reach layers of human remains at the bottom of the graves, which was

⁷⁵ Kola, *Belżec*, p. 27.

⁷⁶ Kola, *Belżec*, p. 18.

the case with only 4 of the drills in grave # 10 visualized in Figure 13 (all of which hit layers of corpses, a "positive" ratio of 100 %), 1 of the drills in grave # 20 visualized in Figure 16, which hit a corpse layer (a "positive" ratio of 100 %), and the two drills in grave # 3, visualized in Figure 15, which hit human remains (286/XVI-90-40 and 332/XVI-85-40 – again a "positive" ratio of 100 %).

What is more, Mattogno high-handedly ignored the corpse layers in graves 1, 4, 13, 25, 27, 28 and 32, for which no visual representations of core samples are shown but which are clearly mentioned in Kola's descriptions of these mass graves. When the fallaciousness of this approach was pointed out⁷⁷, Mattogno retorted that his exclusive focus on the published core sample drawings was due these being the only documents from which he could derive quantitative indications to refute the estimates of O'Neil and Tregenza with.⁷⁸ How he derived these quantitative indications from the core sample drawings Mattogno didn't reveal, and it's also rather hard to understand why the core sample drawings are considered a source to derive quantitative indications from but Kola's precise descriptions of the mass graves' contents are not.

The only description Mattogno briefly mentioned in his book (before stating that he had not taken it into account "because A. Kola has not provided the diagram of his probes, and verification is thus impossible"⁷⁹) was that of mass grave # 27. The reason why he mentioned this description but omitted those of mass graves nos. 1, 4, 13, 25, 28 and 32, thereby creating the impression that they contain no mention of corpse layers and thus contradict Kola's assertion that corpses were found in these mass graves, is supposed to have been that the description of grave # 27 is the only one that contains quantitative information (1 layer of corpses in wax-fat transformation 1 meter thick), whereas the others do not. Actually Kola's descriptions of 5 graves (numbers 3, 13, 25, 27 and 32) contain information about the thickness of the corpse layers, which together with information about the area of these graves allows for estimating the number of corpses contained therein, under the assumption that the layers of corpses are as extensive as the graves' surface area⁸⁰ (see Table

⁷⁷ Muehlenkamp, 'Carlo Mattogno on Belzec Archaeological Research - Part 3', http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2006/05/carlo-mattogno-on-belzec_114842756007754580.html.

⁷⁸ Mattogno, 'Controversie', p.9; 'Controversy'; addressed in Muehlenkamp, 'Belzec Mass Graves and Archaeology: My Response to Carlo Mattogno (3)', <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2009/06/belzec-mass-graves-and-archaeology-my.html>.

⁷⁹ Mattogno, *Belzec*, p.78 n.239.

⁸⁰ Mattogno (Ibid., p. 78) argues that this assumption is not warranted "*in the light of the approximating method used by Kola (one sample every 5 meters)*". However, if one drills into human remains every five meters it is reasonable to assume that the area in between drills also contains human remains, unless there is the possibility of something else in between. This possibility was not present in the Belzec mass graves area. The method

7.4). The total volume of corpse layers in these five mass graves is 607.75 cubic meters. Assuming a density of 15 corpses per cubic meter, this volume corresponds to 9,116 corpses. Even with the density of 8 corpses per cubic meter that Mattogno proclaims to be a maximum assuming that one third of the deportees were children, it corresponds to 4,862 corpses. As will be shown in the next subsection, even the higher concentration considered in Table 7.4 is a conservative assumption as concerns the Belzec mass graves.

Table 7.4 Corpse Layers in Belzec Mass Graves

Grave #	Area (m2)	Thickness of corpse layer (m)	Volume of corpse layer (m3)	Number of corpses at 8 corpses per m3	Number of corpses at 15 corpses per m3
3	240.00	1.00	240.00	1,920	3,600
13	199.75	1.00	199.75	1,598	2,996
25	60.00	0.45	27.00	216	405
27	111.00	1.00	111.00	888	1,665
32	75.00	0.40	30.00	240	450
Subtotal	685.75		607.75	4,862	9,116

These are only five of the ten graves in which layers of corpses in wax-fat transformation were identified, and they do not include the biggest such graves. The other five graves containing human remains, in layers the thickness of which is not clearly stated in Kola's book, have a total area of 1,319 square meters. If the layer of corpses in each of these graves was only 40 cm thick as in grave # 32, the volume of the corpse mass in these graves would be 527.60 cubic meters, corresponding to 4,221 corpses at a density of 8 corpses per cubic meter or 7,914 at a density of 15 corpses per cubic meter. All 10 graves would thus contain 9,083 to 17,030 corpses, the latter a higher figure than the estimate of Michael Tregenza that Mattogno decried as wildly exaggerated. Kola's descriptions of graves nos. 1 ("The pit was filled with bodies in wax-fat transformation; from the depth of about 2,00 m burnt human bones and charcoal were mixed together."), 4 ("The drilling was given up here at the depth of 2,30 m, because of a layer of bodies in wax-fat transformation."), 10 ("The grave was very deep (the drills in particular places were stopped at the depth of 4,25 to 5,20 m, because of bodies in wax-fat transformation and underground waters presence") and 28 ("In the drill in its bottom part 2 clear layers of bodies in wax-fat transformation covered with lime were reported [...]") suggest that the corpse layers in these graves were way thicker than

applied by Kola was the same he had applied in his investigation of the Soviet "Katyn crime" killing sites at Kharkiv and Miednoje (Kola, *Belżec*, p.13 n.14).

40 cm. In his description of the archaeological work Kola mentions that in some of the graves the layer of corpses reached a thickness of ca. 2 meters.⁸¹

Human remains in wax-fat transformation were also found in the lower layers of graves nos. 3, 4, 5 and 6 at Sobibor. Their quantity cannot be estimated because Kola's comparatively brief report⁸² contains no information about the thickness of the layers of human remains. These four graves have a total area of 2,310 square meters, so if the corpse layers in each are only 40 cm thick (as in Belzec grave # 32) and cover the same area as the graves' surface, the graves contain 924 cubic meters of corpse mass, i.e. 7,392 to 13,860 corpses considering the same densities (8 or 15 corpses per cubic meter) that were considered above regarding the Belzec mass graves.

Mattogno, Graf & Kues claim that corpses are not distributed over the entire area of the mass graves, in support of which they invoke Kola's preliminary survey report from 2000, which is supposed to contain the information that "Of the initial 15 core samples taken on the eastern side of the memorial mound, 6 encountered human remains; 4 of those contained 'fragments of burnt human bones and charcoal,' whereas 2 contained both human ashes and remains of saponified corpses."⁸³

This argument is fallacious for various reasons. First of all, the only conclusions that can be derived from preliminary coring were those presumably derived by Kola: that there were human remains in the area and further coring was therefore necessary. Second, without knowledge of the depth of each preliminary core drill (as in Belzec, only such core drills could hit human remains that went to a depth at which there are layers of human remains), juxtaposing the number of drills that also found saponified corpses with those that only found cremation remains is meaningless. Third, Kola's above-quoted description of the graves suggests that unburned corpses are present throughout each grave. One should bear in mind that it would be rather improbable and coincidental to hit such remains by core drilling, moreover in a reduced number of drills, if they were only scattered here and there.

MGK try to explain the corpses in the Sobibor mass graves as being those of the 380 to 420 "detainees" of Sobibor who were shot during the revolt on October 14, 1943 or executed afterwards. The first problem with this scenario is the number, for it is reasonable to assume that the number of corpses lying in the Sobibor graves is in the thousands rather than the hundreds. The second, as the corpse layers are at the bottom of the graves, is the

⁸¹ Kola, *Belżec*, p.20.

⁸² Kola, *Sobibór*.

⁸³ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.121.

counterintuitive and illogical notion that the SS should have emptied the graves, after they had already been backfilled with soil and cremation remains, in order to place a few hundred corpses at their bottom, instead of simply placing the corpses on top of what was already in the graves. MGK try to save their scenario by arguing that it might have saved time and labor to dig to the bottom of existing graves rather than open new ones because "infill soil is significantly less compact than undisturbed soil; it takes less time and effort to dig through it, and there are no roots in the way."⁸⁴ Now, the sandy soil of the swampy Sobibor area was never hard to dig into in the first place⁸⁵, so MGK are asking their readers to believe that it was easier to dig down to 5 or even 5.8 meters (the respective depths of the two largest graves, nos. 3 and 4), through a mixture of loosened sandy loam mixed with cremation remains, than to dig a fresh grave just two meters or so deep like the graves found by the Soviets at the Treblinka labor camp.⁸⁶

Apparently aware that this dog won't hunt, MGK suggest another reason why the bodies were buried at the very bottom of the graves: "after the discovery of the Soviet massacre victims in the Katyn forest, the Germans would have been careful when carrying out mass burials of their own, so as not to risk having mass graves with corpses usable for atrocity propaganda fall into Soviet hands."⁸⁷ What a big deal for just 380 to 420 corpses, relatively easy to hide on account of their small number already! Where else did the Nazis go through such pains (digging up 5 meters of soil and human cremation remains) just to hide a few hundred corpses? Certainly not at Treblinka I labor camp, where the Soviets found 305 bodies in comparatively small mass graves no more than 2.5 meters deep and the Poles found mass graves no more than 3 meters deep that they estimated to have contained at least 6,500 dead bodies. Certainly not at many killing sites throughout the occupied territories of the Soviet Union where the advancing Soviets found corpse-filled pits as they re-conquered their territory.⁸⁸ The genocide of the Jews in the occupied Soviet and Polish territories had been

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ MGK themselves point out, in the context of scavenger activity, that diggings at Sobibor "are naturally aided by the fact that the soil at the former camp site is soft and sandy" – *Sobibór*, p.122.

⁸⁶ In the area of the Treblinka I labor camp, according to Mattogno & Graf, Soviet investigators in August 1944 found three mass graves with the dimensions 10x5x2, 10x5x1.9 and 10x5x2.5 meters, respectively containing 105, 97 and 103 bodies (M&G, *Treblinka*, p.77). Two years later a Polish investigating commission found 41 graves, of which 40 had been desecrated and the bodies removed, with a total area of 1,607 m³. The graves were up to 3 meters deep and had contained the bodies of at least 6,500 people according to the commission's estimate (M&G, *Treblinka*, p.88).

⁸⁷ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.121-122.

⁸⁸ Examples see Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, pp.770-771, 852; Ernst Klee and Willi Dreßen (eds), »Gott mit uns« *Der deutsche Vernichtungskrieg im Osten 1939-1945*, Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1989; *Ein Schuld, die nicht erlischt. Dokumente über deutsche Kriegsverbrechen in der Sowjetunion*, Cologne: Paul Rugenstein Verlag, 1987.

largely accomplished by the time the Katyn graves were discovered in April 1943, but many Nazi massacres of now mostly non-Jewish civilians took place after that time in the occupied Soviet territories, especially in the context of anti-partisan operations in Belorussia.⁸⁹ Yet there's no documented instance from all these killings in which the Germans tried to hide a few hundred corpses 5 meters deep or deeper let alone dug to such depths in a backfilled mass grave for this purpose. Concern about what might happen if the Soviets discovered these atrocities becomes apparent from at least one surviving contemporary document.⁹⁰

The attached special reports that came in from General Commissar Kube require very special attention. The fact that Jews receive special treatment requires no further discussion. However, it appears hardly believable that this is done in the way described in the report of the General Commissioner of 1 June 1943. **What is Katyn against that? Imagine only that these occurrences would become known to the other side and be exploited by them! Most likely such propaganda would have no effect only because people who hear and read about it simply would not be ready to believe it.**

Also the fight against the bandits it taking forms that give reason for much concern if pacification and exploitation of the various regions is the goal of our policy. Thus the dead banditry suspects, which according to the report dd. 5.6.43 from Operation "Cottbus" number 5,000, could in my opinion with few exceptions have been used for labor service in the Reich.

It shall not be denied that due to communication difficulties and generally in such mopping-up operations it is very hard to tell friend from foe. But it should nevertheless be possible to avoid cruelties **and to bury those liquidated**. To lock men, women, and children into barns and to set fire to them does not appear to be a suitable method of combating bands, even if it is desired to exterminate the population. This method is not worthy of the German cause and hurts our reputation severely.

Sometimes those liquidated weren't buried, even when they numbered in their thousands. Yet at Sobibor the Nazis are supposed to have dug 5 meters and deeper through soil and cremation remains to bury a mere 400-odd people killed during and after a revolt. MGK must be counting on their readers' ignorance. Besides being implausible to the point of absurdity, MGK's theory as to the corpses found in the Sobibor mass graves is also contradicted by evidence that the Jews who remained in the camp after the revolt on 14.10.1943, as well as the Jews later brought from Treblinka to work in the dismantling of Sobibor, were not buried but *cremated* after being shot by the SS.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, pp.859 ff.

⁹⁰ Lohse an Rosenberg, 18.6.1943, R-135.

⁹¹ Regarding the Jews who perished during or after the revolt see the deposition of Felix Gorny (member of German Security Battalion 689 in Cholm (Chelm), Poland from 28 March 1942 to 26 July 1944) in Dortmund on 6.9.1962 (BAL B162/208 AR-Z 251/59, Bd. VIII, f. 1517-21). Gorny mentioned having been informed by Sobibor SS-men that all Jews who had not managed to escape had been shot and then burned with gasoline in a

As previously mentioned, Treblinka has not yet been subject to an archaeological investigation. Yet is it known from site inspection and investigation reports what the extermination camp site looked like in late 1945, with cremation remains as well as skulls, bones and other parts of human bodies covering an area of at least 1.8 hectares and saturating a huge bomb crater in which Judge Łukaszkiwicz ordered further digging in order to establish how deep the mass graves in the camp's extermination sector had been (see section one of this chapter). Mattogno felt that this enormous mess of human remains required an explanation, and in trying to put together one that fit Revisionist notions they concocted the amusing theory that the skulls and body parts described by Łukaszkiwicz were from inmates of the Treblinka I labor camp who had died during a typhus epidemic in 1943, musing that this could also "furnish an explanation for the odd circumstance that Treblinka II was bombed."⁹² What readers are asked to believe here is that the Soviets used explosives to scatter the body parts of a few hundred typhus victims from the Treblinka I labor camp over an area of at least 1.8 ha (the size of the "area of cremation") and to a depth of 7.5 meters (the depth to which human ashes and larger body parts were found in the crater that Judge Łukaszkiwicz ordered to be further excavated) at Treblinka II, which was located around 2 km to the south of the Treblinka I labor camp. This is supposed to have made for the countless human bones found throughout those 18,000 square meters that are mentioned in the judge's report of December 29, 1945. And what is more, it seems that the Soviets are also supposed to have covered this huge area with ashes and bone fragments as described by Łukaszkiwicz and visible in Image 7.8, even though the bodies at Treblinka I labor camp had not been cremated.

Two pages later Mattogno & Graf indulged in further musings about the bomb craters. In their tortuous reasoning the Soviets may have tried to lay "false tracks" by doing exactly what the Germans would not have done because "the craters produced by the bombs would have rendered visible the traces of the alleged mass murders". M&G may want to explain how those manipulating Soviets could possibly have spread "false tracks" over 18,000 square meters and to a depth of 7.5 meters by bombing an area which the SS had made all efforts to give the look of innocuous agricultural or forest land, unless the human remains later found by Łukaszkiwicz **were already there** when the bombs exploded. It is also hard to

pyre near the ramp by the branch line, and having himself seen the place of this cremation. Regarding the working Jews taken from Treblinka to Sobibor see the deposition of Arthur Matthes in Cologne on 04.07.1962 (BAL B162/208 AR-Z 251/59, Bd. VII, f. 1385 ff.), and the deposition of Franz Suchomel in Altötting on 07.11.1962 (BAL B162/208 AR-Z 251/59, Bd. VIII, f. 1613 ff.).

⁹² M&G, *Treblinka*, p.90

understand what "traces which could in no way be made compatible with the thesis of mass extermination" those manipulating Soviets could have hoped to "obliterate" by bombing that area.

The only reasonable explanation for the aspect of the site described by Łukaszkiwicz is that the bombs brought to the surface ashes and larger human remains buried where the bombs had exploded, as was recognized by Rachel Auerbach. This lady, who as member of a delegation of the Jewish Central Historical Commission had toured the site with Łukaszkiwicz on November 6, 1945⁹³, was quite explicit in this respect in a vivid account that she left of her impressions:

All kinds of scavengers and marauders come here in droves, shovels in hand. They dig, search and ransack; they sift the sand, they drag parts of half-rotted corpses from the earth, bones and scattered refuse in the hope that they may come upon at least a coin or a gold tooth. These human jackals and hyenas bring along live artillery shells and unexploded bombs. They explode several of them at once, tearing huge craters into the desecrated, blood-drenched soil which is commingled with the ashes of Jews.⁹⁴ [...] But the physical evidence was not limited to objects. As we moved further into the grounds, we walked over a field which was sown with human bones. The bombs had uncovered the contents of the desecrated soil. Leg bones, ribs, pieces of spine, skulls big and small, short, and long, round and flat.⁹⁵

Auerbach didn't reveal who those bomb-toting scavengers were, though, perhaps for good reason: the bombs had indeed been exploded by Soviet troops – but not in order to "obliterate traces" or "lay false tracks", as conspiracy theorists Mattogno & Graf would have it:

In the autumn of 1944 Ukrainian and Russian guards appeared again, but this time in Stalin's service. With their arrival the peasant digging became an enterprise. From Ceranów airport, 10 km away, the Soviets brought along mines and blind bombs. The explosive charge was lowered into a mass grave, a Soviet fellow detonated it, and the Jewish corpses flew through the air.⁹⁶

Soviet participation in the gold rush at Treblinka may also have been the reason why the bomb craters' provenance was not mentioned in Łukaszkiwicz' report of November 13, 1945. The judge may have been trying to stay out of trouble, or then he was compelled to leave references to the robbery-digging context of the craters out of the report.

⁹³ M&G, *Treblinka*, page 82.

⁹⁴ Rachel Auerbach, 'In the Fields of Treblinka', in Alexander Donat (ed), *The Death Camp Treblinka. A Documentary*, New York 1979, pp.17-76. The quoted excerpts are from pp. 69-70.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

⁹⁶ Głuchowski and Kowalski, 'Gold Rush'.

Capacity of the Graves

The mass graves identified by Kola at Belzec were way too small to take in the bodies of all the camp's victims, Mattogno claimed in his *Belzec* book. He wrote:

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 Belzec 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?⁹⁷

The reference for the "experimental data", according to which "the maximum capacity of a mass grave can be set at 8 corpses per cubic meter, assuming that one third of them are children", is Mattogno & Graf's Treblinka book, where one reads that "On the basis of his investigations of the mass graves of Hamburg (Anglo-American terror-bombardment of July 1943), Katyn (Soviet mass murder of Polish officers, 1940) and Bergen-Belsen (mass dying from typhus in spring 1945), John Ball came to the conclusion that one could assume a maximum of six bodies per cubic meter in a mass grave", and that "in order to take into account the hypothetical existence of children as comprising one-third of the victims, we assume a density of a maximum of 8 bodies per cubic meter."⁹⁸ Readers had to wait until Mattogno's response to this writer's criticism for an explanation of how this "maximum" was calculated:

Above I have presented the experimental data. As for the percentage of children, according to demographer Jakob Leszczynski [40], the percentage of children aged 14 or under among the Jewish population of Poland in 1931 amounted to 29.6%, that is little less than 1/3.

Based on scientific tables on weight increase, the medium weight of children aged 17 and under is approximately 35 kg [41]. If for a normal adult a medium weight of 70 kg is assumed, the medium weight of 3 persons (two adults and a child) is $([70 + 70 + 35] : 3 =)$ 58.3 kg. Therefore 6 adult corpses, weighing $(70 \times 6 =)$ 420 kg, are equivalent to $(420 : 58.3 =)$ 7.20 corpses of adults and children in the relationship of 2:1. According to other tables, the medium weight of children aged 14 and under is approximately 25.4 kg, which in turn gives us a medium weight of 55.1 kg and a density of $(420 : 55.1 =)$ 7.6 corpses per cubic meter. The figure of 8 corpses per cubic meter which I have assumed for my calculations is

⁹⁷ Mattogno, *Belzec*, p.85.

⁹⁸ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.137.

thus rounded off upward.⁹⁹

So Mattogno expects his readers to believe that Jewish adults deported to Belzec weighed 70 kg on average and Jewish children aged 14 and under weighed 25.4 kg on average. According to Broca's table¹⁰⁰, 70 kg is the ideal weight of a male 1.78 meters high or a female 1.82 meters high. It is also the normal weight of an adult person 1.70 meters high. Mattogno's readers are thus asked to believe that Jewish adults in starving Polish ghettos in the early 1940s were 1.70 meters high on average and had a normal weight, or a lower ideal weight. The height of the average German adult in the 1940s can be safely assumed to have been no more than 1.68 meters.¹⁰¹ According to anthropological sources referred to by Charles Provan¹⁰², the Jews of Poland were about three inches shorter than the average German. 1.68 meters equal 66 inches, so if the Jews of Poland were about three inches smaller than the average German, according to Provan's source Dr. von Verschuer, their average height was 63 inches or 1.60 meters.

Besides being considerably smaller than would correspond to the average weight postulated by Mattogno, the Jews of Eastern Poland, where most deportees to Belzec extermination camp came from, were ill-fed and even starving.¹⁰³ According to the Body Measurement Index table¹⁰⁴, a person with a height of 1.60 meters is underweight at 38 to 48 kg. Assuming that the average weight of adult Jews in Polish ghettos at the time was in between the upper and the lower value of what the BMI table considers underweight, it would be $(38+48) \div 2 = 43$ kg. According to Mattogno's "other tables", the weight of an adult is 2.76

⁹⁹ Mattogno, 'Controversie', page 14; 'Controversy'.

¹⁰⁰ German webpage 'Gewichtstabelle nach Brocca',
<http://web.archive.org/web/20090122132035/http://clunes.de/etp/daten/etp-20.htm>.

¹⁰¹ In 1890, according to an article in *La Gazette de Berlin* No. 29 Du 20 decembre 2007 au 6 février, <http://www.lagazettedeblerlin.de/index.php?id=4406>, the average body height of German army recruits was 1.64 meters. In a thread about average heights in the Wehrmacht on the "Forum der Wehrmacht" (<http://www.lexikon-der-wehrmacht.de/wbb2/thread.php?threadid=6665>), a poster ("BernieW71", 15.05.2008 21:57) refers to a racial examination chart for the Waffen-SS according to which average height (*mittelgross*) was considered to be 1.61 to 1.70 for men and 1.51 to 1.60 for women (which would mean an average of 1.61 meters for two men and two women with the respective highest and lowest average height). A German book published in 1969 (Roland Göock, *Die grossen Rätsel unserer Welt*, Bertelsmann Sachbuchverlag Gütersloh), mentions on page 1 that statisticians established the average body height of Germans to be 168 cm. This average was probably higher than in the 1940s, as results from the known fact that humanity has grown taller over time and is also suggested by the sources mentioned before, so 1.68 meters is probably on the high side regarding the height of the average German in the early 1940s.

¹⁰² Charles D. Provan, 'Kurt Gerstein and the Capacity of the Gas Chamber at Belzec', http://holocaust.skeptik.net/documents/provan_gerstein.html. Provan points out that "according to ethnological studies done by Dr. Otto Von Verschuer, the Jews of Poland were about three inches shorter than the average German" and that "This comparative smallness is confirmed by other authorities, notably John R. Baker and Lothrop Stoddard."

¹⁰³ Provan, 'Capacity', referring to Shonfeld, *The Holocaust Victims Accuse*, pg. 43ff.; Wells, *The Death Brigade*, pg. 49.

¹⁰⁴ 'Gewichtstabelle nach BMI'.

times that of a child up to 14. This relation would mean a weight of $43 \div 2.76 = 15.6$ kg for ill-fed or starving children in Polish ghettos. Rounding up the latter value, a group of two adults and one child 14 years and younger from a Jewish ghetto in Poland would thus weigh $(43+43+16)/3 = 34$ kg on average, instead of the 55.1 kg calculated by Mattogno. The average weight of deportees to Belzec was probably even lower as children made up a higher proportion of deportees from Galicia, at least 42.1%.¹⁰⁵ According to Mattogno's formula, $420 \div 34 = 12.4$ (12) corpses with this average weight could fit into 1 cubic meter of grave space.

Now to Mattogno's reference weight based on "experimental data" (6 adults a 70 kg per cubic meter = 420 kg per cubic meter). Alex Bay¹⁰⁶ calculated the space that would be occupied by a human being having the measurements of proportions of Leonardo Da Vinci's "Vetruvian Man", and concluded that 91,000 corpses with the proportions of the "Vetruvian Man" and an assumed height of 68 inches (1.73 meters) could have fit into 8,502 cubic meters of grave space - 10.7 (11) per cubic meter. The ideal weight of a person 1.73 meters high would be 66 kg for men and 62 kg for women. Taking the lower value, 10.7 human bodies with the measurements and weight of an ideal adult person 1.73 meters high would have a weight of $10.7 \times 62 = 663.40$ kg, instead of Mattogno's 420 kg. Using the former value as a reference, the unrealistically high weights assumed by Mattogno for an adult+adult+child group, i.e. $(70+70+25,4) \div 3 = 55.13$ kg, would mean $663.40 \div 55.13 = 12.03$ (12) corpses per cubic meter. With the more realistic weights for malnourished Polish ghetto Jews that the author established above, the average would be $663.4 \div 34 = 19.51$ (20) corpses per cubic meter.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ Muehlenkamp, 'Belzec Mass Graves and Archaeology: My Response to Carlo Mattogno (4,1)', http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2009/06/belzec-mass-graves-and-archaeology-my_28.html.

¹⁰⁶ Bay, Treblinka, 'Appendix D - Ash Disposal and Burial Pits (Continued)'

¹⁰⁷ With Charles Provan's test group (Provan, 'Capacity'), the average would be $663.4 \div 33.25 = 19.95$ (20). Provan's box had a volume of $21 \times 21 \times 60.5 = 26,680.50$ cubic inches or 0.44 cubic meters, and he managed to squeeze 8 people (including the doll representing a baby) into that space - a concentration of 18.2 per cubic meter. These were living people, and they were "able to breathe just fine" according to Provan, meaning that there was still some space left in the box not filled by their bodies. Provan's photos suggest that the box could have taken in one or two more bodies, at least of children, if the bodies had needed no breathing space because they were dead. The difference between the realistic calculated concentration for an adult+adult+child group of ill-fed or starving Polish Jews (19.51 corpses per cubic meter) and the concentration calculated for Provan's test group with the same reference parameter of 663.40 kg, i.e. 19.95 corpses per cubic meter, is not very big because Provan's test group, while consisting mostly of children, was made up of healthy and well-fed (though not overweight) present-day Americans. Applying Polish ghetto weights to Provan's test-group members (i.e. 43 kg for each of the three adults and 16 kg for each of the five children), the average weight would be $[(3 \times 43) + (5 \times 16)] \div 8 = 26.13$ kg, and the calculated concentration would be $663.40 \div 26.13 = 25.39$ corpses per cubic meter. This means that, if the age and sex distribution of half-starved Polish ghetto Jews deported to Belzec had been like that of Provan's test group, the 21,310 cubic meters of grave space estimated by Kola could have taken in over 540,000 dead bodies.

With this calculated concentration for an adult+adult+child group weighing as much as half-starved Polish ghetto Jews can realistically (even somewhat optimistically) be expected to have weighed, the number that could be buried at one time in the space estimated by Kola for the 33 graves he found was $19.51 \times 21,310 = 415,758$.¹⁰⁸ This is close to the total number of victims of Belzec extermination that is now accepted by historiography, the 434,508 mentioned in the Höfle Report).¹⁰⁹

The Belzec mass graves were not filled all at once but during a period of about eight months between the arrival of the first transports in mid-March 1942 and early December of that year, when the last load of deportees was murdered at Belzec. This means that mass grave space must thus have been "recovered" due to bodies in the graves' lower layers losing volume through the effects of quicklime and decomposition. There is evidence suggesting that the mass graves at Belzec were filled to or even beyond the rim, the upper layer being covered with further layers of bodies or with sand after the corpses had sufficiently matted down due to decomposition. In his report dated May 4, 1945, Kurt Gerstein wrote the following:

The naked corpses were carried on wooden stretchers to pits only a few meters away, measuring 100 x 20 x 12 meters. After a few days the corpses welled up and a short time later they collapsed, so that one could throw a new layer of bodies upon them. Then ten centimeters of sand were spread over the pit, so that only a few heads and arms still rose from it here and there.¹¹⁰

Despite the obviously exaggerated statement about the depth of the pits, Gerstein's description is interesting in its reference to a procedure, that of filling the graves to the rim and then adding further bodies when the collapse due to decomposition of those already inside the grave freed some space at the top, which was probably at the root of the following ghastly phenomenon at Belzec described by the later commander of Treblinka, Franz Stangl:

Wirth was not in his office, they said that he was up in the camp. The man I talked to said that one of the pits had overflowed. They had thrown too many bodies inside, and the decomposition had gone too fast, so that the liquid gathering below had pushed the bodies up, to the surface and above, and the corpses had rolled down the hill. I saw some of them. – Oh God, it was awful
¹¹¹
 ...

¹⁰⁸ Notwithstanding their claim that 8 bodies per cubic meter is a maximum, Mattogno & Graf seem to consider an even higher density plausible, for in another context they tell their readers that "3,000 bodies take up a volume of about $(3,000 \times 0.045 =) 135 \text{ m}^3$ " (M&G, Treblinka, p. 147). The concentration they are assuming here is $3,000 \div 135 = 22$ bodies per cubic meter.

¹⁰⁹ Witte and Tyas, 'A New Document'.

¹¹⁰ 'Augenzeugenbericht zu den Massenvergasungen', p.192.

¹¹¹ Kogon, *Nationalsozialistische Massentötungen durch Giftgas*, p.169.

A human body's changes in the course of the decomposition process can be studied by observing the decomposition of an animal with a very similar organism, the pig:

At the stage of **putrefaction**, the corpse or carcass bloats up. This bloating, which in Belzec and other camps of *Aktion Reinhard* led to the phenomenon described for Belzec by Franz Stangl, is due to the formation of gasses inside the body, such as methane, hydrogen sulphide, cadaverine and putrescine.

At the stage of **black putrefaction**, the bloated corpse collapses, and a large volume of body fluids drain from the body and seep into the surrounding soil.

At the stage of **butyric fermentation**, the body loses the remaining flesh and dries out. At this stage the body issues a cheesy smell due to the formation of butyric acid.

Finally, at the stage of **dry decay**, the body is reduced to just bone and hair.¹¹²

The four phases described above take place in the open air respectively 4 to 10 days, 10 to 20 days, 20 to 50 days and 50 to 365 days after death. If the corpses are buried, these processes take four times longer.¹¹³ However, in the open Belzec mass graves the corpses – at least those in the upper layers – were still in contact with air, so decomposition must have been faster than with bodies buried underground, if not necessarily as fast as with bodies lying in the open. Forensic anthropologist Arpad A. Vass and his colleagues have "worked out a simple formula, which describes the soft tissue decomposition process for persons lying on the ground. The formula is $y=1285/x$ (where y is the number of days it takes to become skeletonized or mummified and x is the average temperature in Centigrade during the decomposition process). So, if the average temperature is 10 °C, then $1285/10 = 128.5$ days for someone to become skeletonized."¹¹⁴ According to Vass's formula, the time to skeletonization at Belzec in the late spring, summer and autumn of 1942, at temperatures presumably ranging between 20 and 30 degrees Celsius, would have been 43 to 64 days for bodies exposed to air and insects, as bodies lying in open mass graves can be expected to have been. The time until the bodies were reduced to less than half their original volume and weight through loss of fluids and other factors would be even lower.

Modeling the effects of corpse decomposition on the amount of grave space available at Belzec should ideally be done on the basis of a day-by-day or at least month-by-month

¹¹² Australian Museum webpage, 'Stages of Decomposition', <http://australianmuseum.net.au/Stages-of-Decomposition>.

¹¹³ Webpage "How long does it bring for a human body to completely disintegrate after it's be embalm?", <http://www.health2009.com/medicine/33711-36.html>: "Decomposition in the atmosphere is twice as fast as when the body is lower than water and four times as hastily as underground." See also Alan Gunn, *Essential Forensic Biology*, Chichester: Wiley, 2009, p.30: "Buried corpses decay approximately four times slower than those left on the surface, and the deeper they are buried, the slower they decay (Dent et al., 2004)."

¹¹⁴ Arpad A. Vass, 'Beyond the grave – understanding human decomposition', http://www.sgm.ac.uk/pubs/micro_today/pdf/110108.pdf.

breakdown of the 434,508 deportees delivered at that camp according to the Höfle Report. Unfortunately no such breakdown is available. The next best thing is a table in Appendix A of Arad's study on the Reinhard camps¹¹⁵ that adds up to a higher number (513,142, according to the author's summation) and allows for a day-by-day breakdown of this number, albeit with certain assumptions and the inaccuracies inevitably resulting from such assumptions. Based on this table, the author modeled a scenario of mass grave space management at Belzec taking into account the loss of body volume due to decomposition, the results being that even 513,142 dead bodies could have been buried in 20,670 cubic meters of burial space (= total volume of all mass graves estimated by Kola minus graves with a volume below 150 m³ or expressly referred to by Kola as crematory graves, which were not considered as burial graves in the model) considering decomposition-related grave space economy, and that it was therefore also possible to bury the much lower number of documented deportees to Belzec (434,508) in the same burial space.¹¹⁶ The model assumed a density of 14.8 non-decomposed corpses per cubic meter¹¹⁷, which means that with the density calculated above (19.51 per cubic meter) the saving of burial space due to decomposition would be even higher. While of reduced relevance to demonstrating sufficiency of the burial space estimated by Kola for the number of corpses corresponding to Höfle's report of January 11, 1943 (as the concentration of 19.51 bodies per cubic meter established above means that 415,758 out of 434,508 bodies could have been buried in all Belzec mass graves even if all bodies had been buried at the same time or maintained their original mass and weight), the model shows what significant contribution the decomposition process could have made – and probably did make – to the camp staff's management of the burial space they had available at Belzec.

The model does not take into account another factor that may have further stretched the volume available for body disposal at Belzec, the partial burning of bodies in the graves mentioned by witness Dr. Wilhelm Pfannenstiel:

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

¹¹⁵ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, pp.383-389.

¹¹⁶ Muehlenkamp, 'Belzec Response 4 (1)'.

¹¹⁷ As calculated in Muehlenkamp, 'Carlo Mattogno on Belzec Archaeological Research - Part 4 (1)'.

then fresh corpses were placed into the same pit.¹¹⁸

Wehrmacht non-commissioned officer Wilhelm Cornides also noticed the smell of something burning when passing Belzec extermination camp in a train on 31.08.1942, being informed by a co-passenger that this smell was from the "crematory". The burning of the corpses was mentioned by a policeman that Cornides talked to on September 1, 1942, as recorded in Cornides' diary.¹¹⁹

In conclusion, there is no reason to assume that the volume of the mass graves at Belzec estimated by Kola was not sufficient to take in the corpses of the 434,508 Jewish deportees to Belzec mentioned in the Höfle Report.

At Sobibor extermination camp the bodies of the murdered deportees were buried only until late July/early August of 1942. After that, the camp stood still for a period of two months due to reconstruction work on the railway line between Lublin and Chelm.¹²⁰ When operation resumed in October 1942, the bodies were no longer buried but burned right after being taken out of the gas chambers.¹²¹ The number of people killed in the first phase of the camp's operation is given by Arad as "90,000 to 100,000"¹²² or as "one third of the 250,000 victims in this camp"¹²³, i.e. about 80,000 victims; the latter is also the figure mentioned by Gilead et al¹²⁴ and used by Mattogno, Graf and Kues in their *Sobibór* book. The Revisionist authors seem to have given up on claiming that the Belzec mass graves identified by Kola could not have held the documented number of deportees, for they write the following¹²⁵:

The Sobibor mass graves have an average depth of $14,718.75 \div 3,210 = 4.58$ m and a total area of 3,210 m². With a 30 cm layer of sand covering the interred corpses, the available burial space would have amounted to $([4.58 - 0.30] \times 3,210 =)$ approximately 13,739 m³, resulting in a density of $(80,000 \div 13,739 =)$ approximately 5.8 bodies per cubic meter. On the other hand, at Belzec the mass graves were estimated to have a total area of 5,490 m² and an average depth of 3.88 m, which means that $([3.88 - 0.30] \times 5,490 =)$ 19,654 m³ of burial space would have been available. Since it is claimed that 434,508 uncremated corpses were buried at Be³æec, the density would have been $(434,508 \div 19,654 =)$ 22.1 bodies per m³.

If the alleged Belzec victims had been buried with the same density as the alleged Sobibor victims, they would have occupied an effective volume of $(434,508 \div 5.8 =)$ 74,915

¹¹⁸ As quoted in Mattogno, *Belzec*, p. 61, after Pfannenstiel's interrogation on April 25, 1960. ZStL, Z 252/59, Vol. I, pp.583-588.

¹¹⁹ 'Zur "Umsiedlung" der Juden im Generalgouvernement', *VfZ*, 1959, pp.333-6.

¹²⁰ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.80.

¹²¹ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.177.

¹²² Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.80.

¹²³ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.177.

¹²⁴ Gilead et al, 'Extermination Centres'.

¹²⁵ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.125.

cubic meters, i.e. 3.5 times the total size of mass graves discovered at Belzec! This clearly contradicts the notion that the Sobibor camp staff did their best to utilize the available burial space as effectively as possible. If 22.1 corpses per m³ was the average grave volume for Belzec, the Sobibor staff certainly fell behind what their colleagues at Belzec managed to achieve which may be related to Sobibor having handled much less "traffic" than Belzec and the Sobibor body disposal procedure having changed from burial to burning at a relatively early stage. But the difference in efficient use of burial space was not as large as MGK make it out to be, for only graves 3, 4, 5 and 6, with a total volume (corrected for sloping) of 9,525 cubic meters, were used for burial at Sobibor extermination camp. The total area of these graves was 2,310 m², so deducting $2,310 \times 0.3 = 693$ m for the 0.30 cm sand cover assumed by MGK¹²⁶ there would be 8,832 cubic meters available for burial. Assuming 80,000 buried corpses this would mean a density of 9.1 corpses per cubic meter –more than the "maximum" claimed by Mattogno & Graf in their Treblinka book and by Mattogno in his book about Belzec.

At Treblinka, the people killed during the year 1942 and buried in mass graves amounted to 713,555 mentioned in the Höfle Report plus some 8,000 deportees from Theresienstadt on October 5-25, 1942¹²⁷, which are probably not included in the Höfle figure because that figure only included deportees from the General Government¹²⁸. The Belzec mass graves identified by Kola had an area of 5,391.75 square meters and a volume of 21,310 cubic meters (see Table 7.1), with 5,101.75 square meters corresponding to the graves considered burial graves in the author's model, whose volume was 20,670 cubic meters. If all 434,508 victims of Belzec extermination camp were buried in these graves¹²⁹, this would correspond to an average of 85 bodies for each square meter of grave area and 21 bodies for each cubic meter of grave space. Burying the total number of 721,555 Jews killed at Treblinka in 1942 would have required $721,555 \div 85 = 8,489$ square meters and $721,555 \div 21 = 34,360$ cubic meters, if the same density that was achieved at Belzec could also be achieved at Treblinka (the deportee population was also essentially from miserable ghettos in the General Government, and the victims that had been killed between July and October 1942 had been lying in the mass graves for at least four months when the overall exhumation and incineration of the corpses began after Himmler's visit in late February/early March 1942).

¹²⁶ Gerstein (as note 109) mentioned that ten centimeters of sand were spread over the pits at Belzec.

¹²⁷ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, pp.141-142.

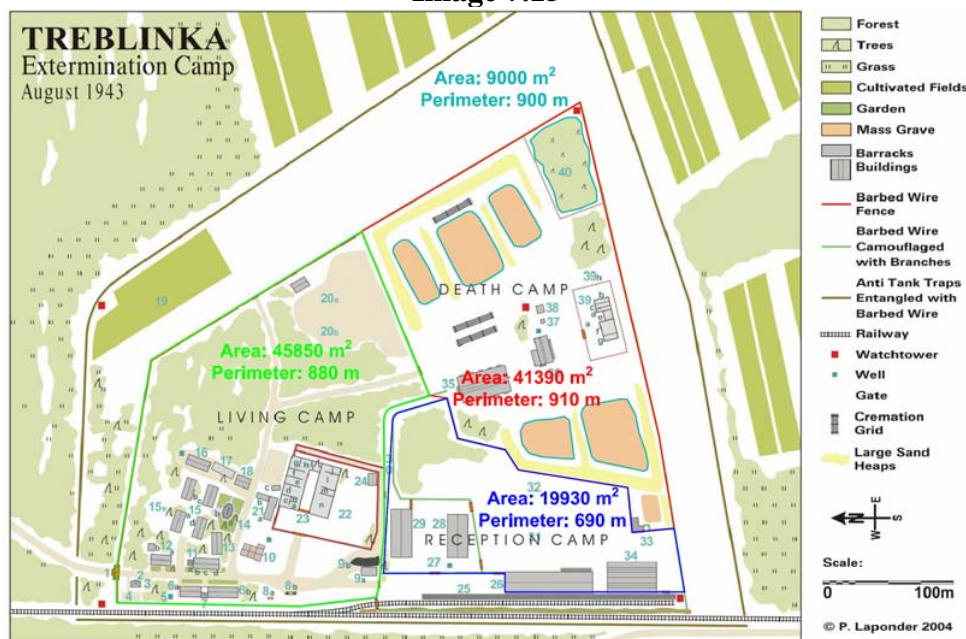
¹²⁸ See note 1 and chapter 3.

¹²⁹ As mentioned in this chapter's first section, air photo analysis by Alex Bay suggests that there were further mass graves, not identified by Kola.

However, the fact that ashes, bone fragments and larger remains covered an area of at least 1.8 ha when Judge Łukasziewicz investigated the site in November 1945 suggests that the mass graves alone covered an area larger than 8,489 square meters, while on the other hand the depth to which human remains were found in the crater that Łukasziewicz ordered to be further excavated (7.5 meters) suggests that the burial pits at Treblinka were deeper than the deepest burial pits at Belzec.

Based on Peter Laponder's scaled map of the Treblinka area as it looked in August 1943¹³⁰, Sergey Romanov calculated by AutoCad the following dimensions, among others (Image 7.15): area of the "Death Camp" sector: 41,390 m²; total area of mass graves drawn by Laponder: 9,000 m²; total area inside Treblinka's inner perimeter: 45,850 m² ("Living Camp") + 19,930 m² ("Reception Camp") + 41,390 m² ("Death Camp") = 107,170 m². The measured mass graves area does not include the mass grave by the "Lazarett" (number 33 on the map). It neither includes the pits in the "Reception Camp" that are shown on Laponder's map of Treblinka extermination camp prior to October 1942.¹³¹

Image 7.15

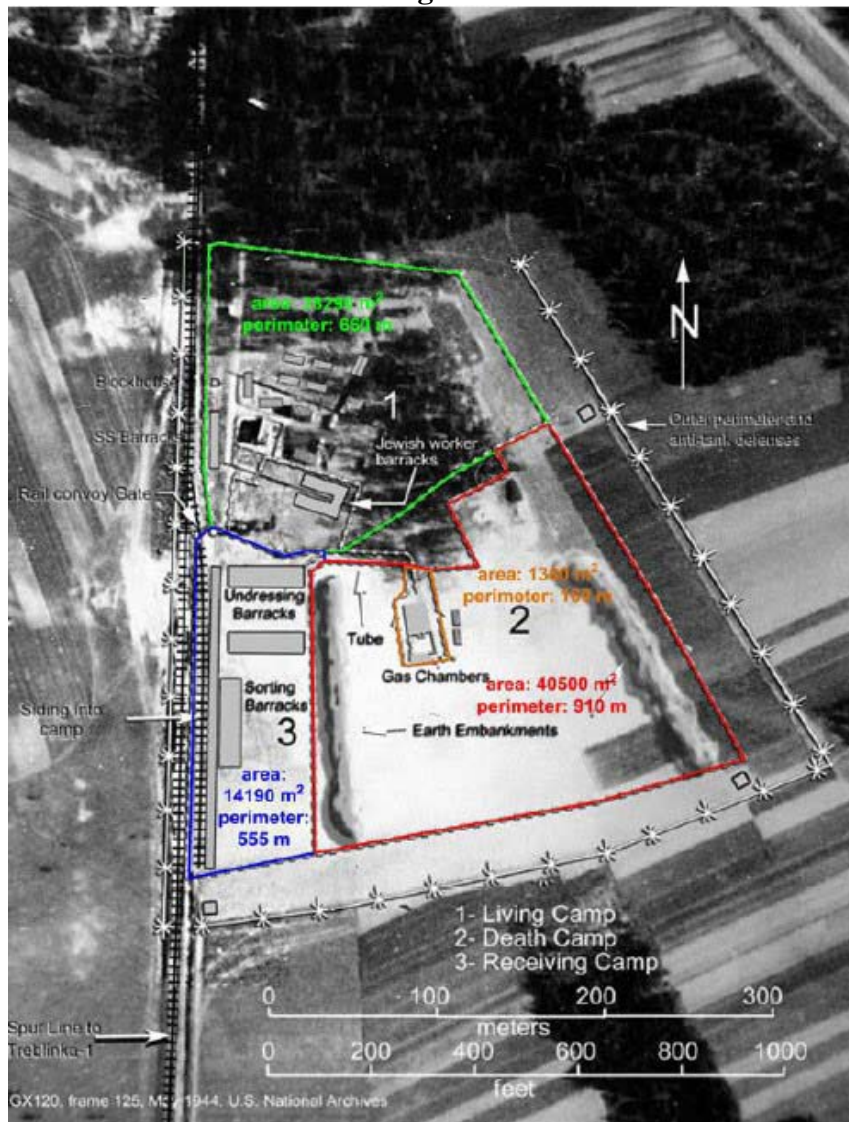


Mattogno & Graf claim that Treblinka's "Camp II", the "alleged" extermination sector, had an area of only 14,000 m² (little more than 10 % of the total camp area of 13.45 ha. = 134,500 m² mentioned in Łukasziewicz' report of December 29, 1945) and was thus way too small to harbor the mass graves area of 19,800 m² that they claim would have been

¹³⁰ <http://web.archive.org/web/20060303104437/http://deathcamps.org/treblinka/pic/bmap9.jpg>; the original image was provided by Peter Laponder and is used by permission.

¹³¹ <http://web.archive.org/web/20060303104804/http://deathcamps.org/treblinka/pic/bmap11.jpg>.

Image 7.17



The Düsseldorf Court of Assizes at the trial against Kurt Franz et al concluded that Treblinka extermination camp measured about 600 x 400 meters and was divided into three about equally large parts, the so-called living camp, the so-called reception camp and the so-called upper camp or camp of the dead (*Totenlager*), the latter covering the southeastern part of the camp area.¹³⁵ According to Arad¹³⁶, the upper camp was approximately 200 x 250 meters, which corresponds to an area of 50,000 m². M&G did not explain why they ignored these sources and based themselves only on the aforementioned map as concerns the size of the extermination sector, which is not surprising as convenience to their argument was obviously their only criterion.

¹³⁵ Judgment LG Düsseldorf vom 3.9.1965, 8 I Ks 2/64, published in JuNSV Band XXII, Lfd.Nr.596.

¹³⁶ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.41.

According to Romanov's measurements shown in Image 7.17, the "Death Camp" sector on Bay's Figure 14 has an area of $(40,500 + 1,380 =) 41,880 \text{ m}^2$ (Laponder: $41,390 \text{ m}^2$), whereas the area of the "Receiving Camp" is $14,190 \text{ m}^2$ (Laponder: $19,930 \text{ m}^2$) and the area of the "Living Camp" is $38,290 \text{ m}^2$ (Laponder: $45,850 \text{ m}^2$). The sum of these three areas inside Treblinka's inner perimeter is $94,360 \text{ m}^2$ (Laponder: $107,170 \text{ m}^2$). We see that two researchers (Alex Bay and Peter Laponder) reached very similar results independently of each other, especially as concerns the size of the "Death Camp" sector.

Bay projected 9 areas representing mass graves with an area of 50×25 meters into the "Death Camp" sector just to show that that the same could comfortably fit into the "Death Camp."¹³⁷ These mass graves could take in at least 900,000 corpses, according to Bay's calculations and estimate.¹³⁸ The surface area of these projected graves is $9 \times 1,250 = 11,250 \text{ m}^2$, and their volume was calculated by Bay as being $9 \times 8,502 = 76,518$ cubic meters. The grave space accordingly required to bury the ca. 721,555 Jews murdered at Treblinka in 1942, with the density of ca. 12 corpses per cubic meter assumed by Bay, was somewhat smaller: $721,555 \div 12 = 60,130$ cubic meters, corresponding to a surface area of $60,130 \div 76,518 \times 11,250 = 8,841 \text{ m}^2$ (roughly 21-22 % of the "Death Camp" sector's entire area).

Soil Removed from the Graves

The grave volumes that Mattogno claimed for Treblinka would have led to amounts of excavated soil that, according to these authors, would have caused major problems to the camp organization. The volume of soil excavated from a pit or grave is usually 10-25% larger than the volume of the pit itself, according to M&G's source, so with mass graves having a total volume of 118,800 cubic meters of soil (i.e. what M&G considered necessary to bury 860,000 bodies), the excavated soil would have had a volume of at least $(118,800 \times 1.1 =) \text{ca. } 130,700$ cubic meters. M&G claimed that "If this mass were arranged in the form of a pile 6 m high, with sides each having an angle of 30 degrees and a width of 10 m, then its length would have amounted to $(130,700 \div 30 \cong) 4.4$ kilometers, covering some $44,000 \text{ m}^2$!"¹³⁹

M&G assumed a pile narrowing towards the top to such a degree that half the cross-section area of a 6×10 m even rectangle is lost, which is hardly what one sees at construction

¹³⁷ Bay, Treblinka, 'Reconstruction of the Death Camp (Continued)', Figure 42.

¹³⁸ Bay, Treblinka, 'Appendix D - Ash Disposal and Burial Pits (Continued)'. The number of bodies with the measurements of the "ideal man" that could fit into each these mass graves is 91,000. As many of the deportees were women and children, Bay considers it reasonable to estimate that "the contents of a mass grave $50 \times 25 \times 10$ meters is at least 100,000 people."

¹³⁹ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.139.

sites. A more reasonable assumption is a pile narrowing towards the top in the same manner as a pit with sloped walls narrows towards the bottom.

According to the author's calculations above, the Treblinka grave pits would have had a volume of 60,130 m³ at most, but their volume might also have been just 34,360 m³ if corpses were buried as densely as at Belzec. The maximum expanded soil volume would thus have been 60,130 x 1.25 = 75,163 m³ (66,143 m³ with a 10 % dilation) or 34,360 x 1.25 = 42,950 m³ (37,796 m³ with a 10 % dilation). According to Alex Bay's calculations¹⁴⁰, 9 pits with a total length of 9x50 = 450 m, a width of 25 meters, a depth of 10 meters and 60 degree slope angles would have a total volume of 9 x 8,502 = 76,518 m³, roughly 68 % of the volume (450x25x10 = 112,500 m³) that they would have if they had an even rectangular shape. Dividing the calculated sand pile volumes by this percentage, one obtains roughly the volume that sloped pits with these volumes would have if they were even rectangles. Dividing these volumes by an assumed pit width and depth of respectively 10 and 6 meters (corresponding to the width and depth of the sand pile assumed by M&G), one obtains the length of the sand pile corresponding to each of the aforementioned sand volumes, as shown in Table 7.5.

Table 7.5

a) Dilation factor 1.25					b) Dilation factor 1.10				
Length m	Width m	Depth m	Volume of even rectangle m ³	Volume with walls at 60% slope angles m ³	Length m	Width m	Depth m	Volume of even rectangle m ³	Volume with walls at 60% slope angles m ³
450	25	10	112,500	76,518	450	25	10	112,500	76,518
1,842	10	6	110,534	75,163	1,621	10	6	97,269	66,143
1,053	10	6	63,162	42,950	926	10	6	55,582	37,796

These lengths are presumably on the high side, as the calculation assumes that the same sloping angle is required for a pit 6 meters deep as for a pit 10 meters deep.

Much of the sand removed from the mass graves was used for the embankments on either side of the extermination sector, which Alex Bay estimated to be at least 4 meters high.¹⁴¹ What sand was not used for the embankments could be left by the mass graves, or it could be taken out of the extermination sector or out of Treblinka extermination camp altogether. The removal of sand from the camp by train is mentioned in the Soviet 65th Army report from August 1944: "Dozens of witnesses attest to have seen how up to three transports of Jews, with 60 cars each, arrived in the camp on a daily basis. The trains left the camp

¹⁴⁰ As note 138.

¹⁴¹ As note 137, Figure 43.

either loaded with sand or empty".¹⁴² Mattogno quotes this report in Treblinka, including this excerpt.¹⁴³ So Mattogno's removed soil "problem" comes across as rather artificial and even self-contradictory.

The same applies as concerns Belzec, regarding which Mattogno calculated an extracted sand mass of 82,500 m³ considering a 10% dilation, which would, if "spread evenly throughout the camp in a layer 2 m thick", have covered an area of 41,250 m², "equal to the total area of the camp minus the mass graves", and weighed "(82,500×1.4=) 115,500 tons, or the equivalent of more than 4,600 freight cars or more than 24,000 truckloads."¹⁴⁴

Actually, considering the volume of the mass graves identified by Kola (which, as we have seen, were perfectly sufficient to bury the bodies of the camp's ca. 435,000 victims), the amount of sand was more like 21,310 x 1.1 = 23,441 m³ (assuming a dilation of 10 %, as Mattogno does). If there had been no space to pile up the sand in a layer 2 meters thick (i.e. covering 23,441 ÷ 2 = 11,721 square meters, little more than ¼ of "the total area of the camp minus the mass graves"), they could have piled it up in a layer 4 meters thick (the minimum height of the embankments at Treblinka, according to Bay) covering just 5,861 square meters. 23,441 m³ of expanded sand have a weight of 23,441 x 1.4 = 32,817 tons, or 6,563 truckloads of 5 tons each. With 10 daily trips to a nearby storage place, 656 trucks could manage this load in a single day, 66 trucks in 10 days and 7 trucks in 100 days. Even the much higher quantity claimed by Mattogno could have been removed within 100 days, which was much less than the gassing operations at Belzec lasted, with no more than 24 trucks. Not exactly an insurmountable logistical problem.

Groundwater Pollution

In a German-language online pamphlet preceding their *Sobibór* book, Mattogno, Graf and Kues tried to take their readers for a ride, arguing that the depth of the mass graves identified at Sobibor by Kola (grave # 4 is about 5 meters deep, grave # 3 up to 5.80 meters) is not compatible with the high groundwater level in the camp's area. They deliberately misrepresented an excerpt from Kola's report about his Sobibor investigation to claim that excavations in a well "not far from the graves" supposedly had to be stopped at a depth of 3.60 meters because of a ground water stream.¹⁴⁵ What Kola actually had written was that

¹⁴² Akt, 24.8.1944, GARF 7021-115-9, p.108; cf. M&G, *Treblinka*, p.78.

¹⁴³ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.78

¹⁴⁴ Mattogno, *Belzec*, pp.87-88.

¹⁴⁵ MGK, *Die Akte Sobibor*, p.87.

excavation in the well had to be stopped at a depth of **5.00 to 5.10 meters** because of underground waters that had started appearing at a depth of 3.60 meters.¹⁴⁶

This misrepresentation was not repeated in MGK's *Sobibór* book, perhaps because they realized, after reading this author's comments¹⁴⁷, that they had been caught with their hands in the cookie jar. Now they write that "ground water was encountered already at a depth of 3.60 m, and the work had to be halted at a depth of 5 m because of the steady inflow of ground water", and go on to explain that the ground water level in the area is probably that of nearby Lake Spilno, 164 meters high, and Sobibor's extermination sector "Camp III", with a height of 170 m, is 6 meters above that level.¹⁴⁸

While no longer arguing against the compatibility of the graves' depth with the groundwater level, MGK now use the groundwater's proximity to the bottom of the larger graves and the swampy nature of the area, with the resulting risk of water contamination, to argue that the Germans would have been stupid to set up an extermination camp in such an area, and that this is evidence against Sobibor having been an extermination camp.¹⁴⁹ Indeed, there was concern among the Sobibor camp staff that their drinking water might be polluted by leachate from the corpses, and indeed this seems to have been the reason, or one of the reasons, why Sobibor changed its body disposal procedure from burial to burning at a relatively early stage.¹⁵⁰ According to MGK, this "inevitable" situation was entirely predictable, as the danger of contaminating the ground by the products of decomposed corpses had been known for decades. They support this claim with a quote from a 1904 publication, where the following is stated:

Ground water, even more so than soil or air, is suitable for the propagation of decomposition products. It is all the more dangerous as the subterranean currents can take on changes which are not noticeable on the surface. Thus, it is entirely possible for wells on the cemetery itself or close to it to have good water, free from organic substances, whereas the secretions of the graves may be carried away by underground currents to reach wells or other types of usable water and then exercise their harmful potential.¹⁵¹

Apparently MGK didn't realize that the above-quoted information harms rather than helps their argument, for it means that the SS could hope that ground water pollution by

¹⁴⁶ Kola, *Sobibor*, description of object "C".

¹⁴⁷ See Muehlenkamp, 'Mass Graves at Nazi Extermination Camps: Sobibor', http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2010/05/mass-graves-at-nazi-extermination-camps.html#_Sobibor.

¹⁴⁸ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.127.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p.130.

¹⁵⁰ See Judgment LG Hagen vom 20.12.1966, 11 Ks 1/64; Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.172.

¹⁵¹ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp. 128/129. The source quoted is Max Pauly, *Die Feuerbestattung*, Leipzig, 1904, pp.19f., 24.

leachate from the corpses would not occur at the site of the graves because underground currents carried such leachate away. Whether people elsewhere in Poland got dysentery or other sanitation-related diseases from contaminated water carried their way from Sobibor wasn't necessarily the concern of the SS. Set against the possibility of ground water pollution on site, on the other hand, was the ease of digging graves in the sandy soil of Sobibor, its relative remoteness and, most important for operating an extermination camp, its good railway connections with places that Jews were to be deported from, factors that would probably prevail even if the people in charge (presumably from the lower echelons of the chains of command, as higher-ranking decision makers would hardly bother themselves with technical execution details) had recognized the risk of on-site ground water pollution as considerable.

Regarding Treblinka extermination camp there is no evidence of concern about groundwater pollution leading to a change in body disposal procedures, even though the presence of a disease referred to as typhus or typhoid fever among the inmates suggests the possibility of contamination. This may have been related, besides the possibility mentioned by MGK's above-quoted source, to the lower groundwater level in that camp and to the presence of other factors that determine whether and to what extent leachate from corpses reaches and contaminates the groundwater at the site of mass graves.¹⁵²

Without taking all these factors into consideration, Mattogno & Graf bluntly claimed that there can be "no doubt" that "hundreds of thousands of bodies allegedly buried in 'Camp II' would have completely poisoned the ground water, which supplied the wells." The only indication they provided in support of this contention is the fact that the mass graves pertaining to the Treblinka I labor camp were located in the forest of Maliszewa, about 500 m away from the camp. Without evidence regarding the reasons for the placement of these graves, M&G postulated that it had been "due to obvious considerations of hygiene and sanitation."¹⁵³

The "Actual" Surface of the Graves

Independently of the unrealistic calculations and considerations by which he tried to demonstrate the incompatibility of Kola's findings with the mass murder he denies, Mattogno

¹⁵² These factors include environmental conditions like temperature, desiccation (increased virus reduction in drying soils), soil PH, cations and soil texture, the depth of the unsaturated zone separating the groundwater table from the bottom of the mass graves, bodies in wax-fat transformation at the bottom of the graves hindering the filtration of leachate, and the disinfecting effect of quicklime, which also hastens decomposition and thus reduces the time during which leachate leaves the bodies. See Andrew Mathis, Roberto Muehlenkamp, Sergey Romanov, 'Well. Well? Well!', <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2006/12/well-well-well.html>.

¹⁵³ M&G, *Treblinka*, pp.139-140.

obviously didn't feel comfortable with graves of such area and volume having been found at all at Belzec. So he tried to put in question the reliability of Kola's findings about the area of the graves, invoking the robbery digs also mentioned by Kola as his key argument for this purpose. There was robbery digging in the area over a period of 20 years after Judge Godzieszewski's investigation in October 12, 1945, and these 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", whose drawings show that "the individual graves nearly always show a highly irregular bottom, with bumps and holes", which is "evidence of the activity of wildcat diggers, certainly not of excavations of mass graves aligned in military fashion", while the core samples show that "there is often a difference between samples in a single grave, with very thin and very thick layers", which "can only be explained by the inclusion in the grave of soil from an area that did not initially belong to it". Kola supposedly failed to take these "facts" into account, and because of this "the layout he gives for the graves is completely random, as is their surface area, their volume, and even their number".¹⁵⁴

Contrary to Mattogno's accusations, Kola's team was well aware of the difficulties created by postwar robbery digs in identifying the mass graves at Belzec, and can thus be assumed to have duly considered the possibility of a modification of the original shape and/or size of the graves due to robbery digs. Thus the observed damages to the original grave structure in the area between graves 12, 13, 14 and 24 are expressly mentioned in the description of grave # 13.¹⁵⁵ Moreover 26 out of the 33 graves identified by Kola have a regular geometrical shape, which can hardly have been the work of robbery diggers, and in six irregularly shaped graves the original regular shape that was later modified can be made out.¹⁵⁶ As to the bottoms of the graves, the only ones in which the author could make out "bumps and holes" are graves nos. 8, 14 and 20, which are expressly mentioned by Kola as having resulted from a connection between previously neighboring graves.¹⁵⁷ The bottoms of all other graves, as the author sees them, are shaped either like a tub with a fairly regular bottom or like a swimming pool progressively deepening towards a certain spot. These shapes may be related to the composition of the soil at Belzec, which was made of sand or sandy loam and would thus make steep rectangular walls inadvisable as these would more

¹⁵⁴ Mattogno, *Belzec*, pp.88ff.

¹⁵⁵ Kola, *Belzec*, p.28.

¹⁵⁶ For details see Muehlenkamp, 'Carlo Mattogno on Belzec Archaeological Research - Part 4 (4)', http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2006/05/carlo-mattogno-on-belzec_31.html.

¹⁵⁷ Kola, *Belzec*, pp.25, 28, 30, 32/33.

easily cave in. It should also be borne in mind that SS personnel of Aktion Reinhard were not military trained specialists in grave digging, but predominantly non-military supervisors who had previously worked in the *Aktion T4* murder program¹⁵⁸, and were gaining their first experience in organizing and running an extermination camp. If indeed there is "a difference between samples in a single grave", as Mattogno claims to have made out, this may just signal that the alternating pouring of cremation remains into the graves (when these were backfilled after exhumation and burning of the corpses) did not always occur in layers equally thick and/or equally distributed throughout the grave. And the "inclusion in the grave of soil from an area that did not initially belong to it" is also hardly an indication against the accuracy of Kola's finds, insofar as the SS need not have refilled the graves with exactly the soil that had originally been taken out of them.

In response to the deconstruction of his above-mentioned claims, Mattogno complained that Kola's allowance for modifications of the original grave structures due to subsequent factors like robbery digging did not translate into a quantitative reservation as to the number and volume of graves he established¹⁵⁹ – true, but probably related to the difficulty of establishing said quantitative effect plus the not unreasonable consideration that this effect must have been minimal, as backfilling, covering up the traces of the camp and robbery digging (especially with pits as small as the one shown in Image 7.1) could cause grave walls to collapse only between graves that were very close together.

Mattogno furthermore claimed that "the geometric forms of the mass graves delineated by Kola does not constitute factual data, but are merely arbitrary conjecture."¹⁶⁰ In support of this claim he did a somewhat puerile dot-connecting exercise, which supposedly demonstrates that the outlines of the graves drawn by Kola are "purely fictitious and do not correspond at all to the result of the drillings."¹⁶¹

Mattogno obviously made things easy for himself, especially failing to take into account Kola's information about the number of drills that were used to estimate the shape and size of a mass grave in each case.¹⁶² Taking this information into account helps to group (to the extent permitted by the accuracy of Kola's map of core drillings and the author's poor drawing skills) the dots presumably corresponding to drills on the basis of which Kola

¹⁵⁸ See Patricia Heberer, "Von der 'Aktion T4' zum Massenmord an den europäischen Juden", in: Günter Morsch, Bertrand Perz, Astrid Ley (editors), *Neue Studien zu nationalsozialistischen Massentötungen durch Giftgas*, 2011 Metropol Verlag Berlin, pp.165-175.

¹⁵⁹ Mattogno, 'Controversie', p. 52; 'Controversy'.

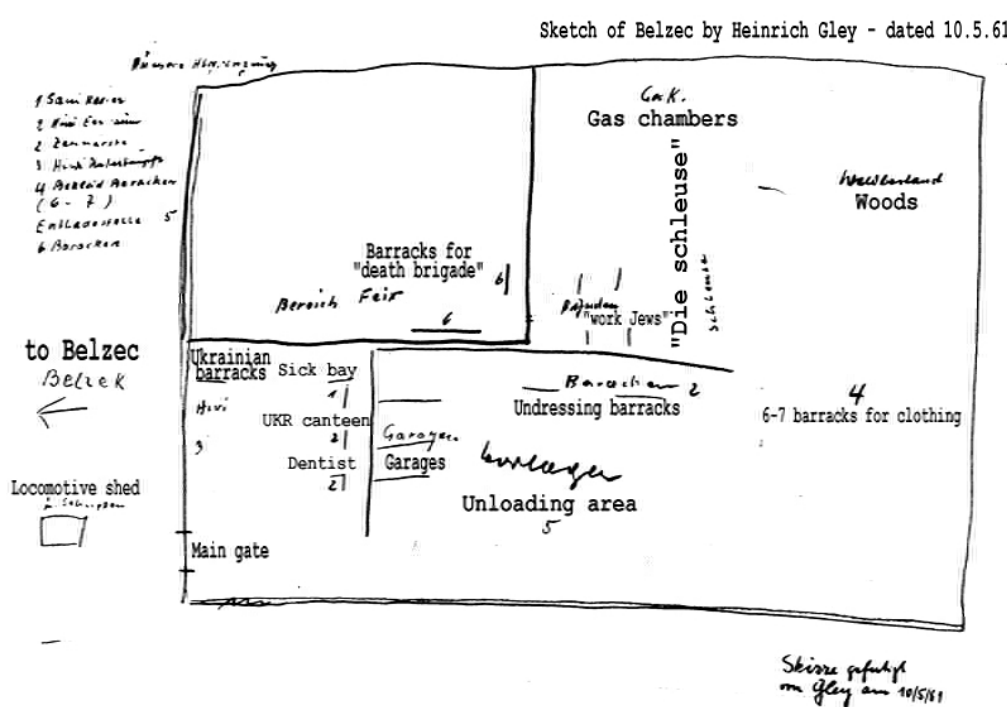
¹⁶⁰ Ibid., p.53.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., p.53 and Documento 8 on p.70.

¹⁶² Kola, *Belżec*, pp. 21 to 39.

estimated the shape and size of each mass grave into units that a) bear some resemblance to the mass grave shapes shown on page 19 of Kola's book and b) match the number of these shapes (33).¹⁶³ This alone already shows that Kola's estimating the shapes and sizes of the mass graves on the basis of his core drilling finds was not nearly as "arbitrary" as Mattogno would like his readers to believe.

Image 7.18



Mattogno's last straw in this context was to invoke the map drawn by former SS-Unterscharführer Robert Jühns¹⁶⁴, which shows only one area of mass graves in the camp's north-western corner. From this one is apparently supposed to conclude that those of the graves identified by Kola that are not in the area of what Jühns called the "field of graves" (Gräberfeld) – nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 15, 18, 19 and half of grave no. 14, with a total volume of 7,775 cubic meters, according to Mattogno – were not graves made to bury corpses during camp times but holes that subsequently came into being and into which cremation remains (and apparently also the whole corpses found by Kola in graves 1, 3 and 4) somehow made their way from the original graves. By this somewhat-less-than-logical reasoning, one would have to conclude that the sketch made by SS man Heinrich Gley in 1961 (image 7.18), which is even more incomplete than Jühns' in that it shows no mass graves at all, means there were

¹⁶³ The image resulting from this exercise, which is based on the reproduction of Kola's core drilling map in Mattogno, 'Controversie', p. 69 (Documento 7), is included in Muehlenkamp, 'Belzec Mass Graves and Archaeology: My Response to Carlo Mattogno (4,4)'. An enlargement of the image is available under <http://i27.photobucket.com/albums/c166/cortagravatas/MattognoDocument7edited.jpg>.

¹⁶⁴ 'Controversie', Documento 10 on page 72.

no mass graves at Belzec during the camp's operation – yet it was Gley who provided a detailed description of the emptying of the mass graves and the burning of the corpses.¹⁶⁵

Thomas Kues surmised another "possible cause of grave pit enlargement" besides robbery-digging, the downhill movement of human cremation remains in a south-westerly direction from the mass graves in the northern portion of the camp area during heavy rain falls due to an absence of tree cover.¹⁶⁶ This problem is reported to have occurred when all the trees on site were removed and their roots killed as part of the building of the new memorial site in 2003/2004, and Kues speculates that it may also have occurred in the postwar period and "caused the enlargement of the soil volume containing human remains, half a century later leading Kola's drills to detect (yet) larger graves than were originally present at the site." To his credit, however, Kues readily acknowledges that the extent of this presumed phenomenon is unknown and "might be not very significant", in which he is probably right: while one can imagine cremation remains lying in upper soil layers to be swept downhill during heavy rain falls (certainly a reason of concern for memorial-builders wanting to protect the remains in the soil against perceived desecration), the downhill movement of whole layers of soil and cremation remains up to 5 meters deep, moreover maintaining the regular geometric shape that most of the identified Belzec graves have, is somewhat harder to fathom.

Regarding the Sobibor mass graves, MGK bluntly claim that, due to the activity of robbery diggers on site and "the unknown number of diggings carried out by the surveyors of the Central Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland", one may "conclude with high probability that the original size of the mass graves was considerably smaller" than becomes apparent from Kola's measurements.¹⁶⁷ They may want to explain why, then, the size of the graves that archaeological investigations points to is in line with what becomes apparent from eyewitness testimonies, such as led the Hagen District Court to conclude that in the camp's first extermination phase the corpses were buried in large pits, each of them with a length of about 50-60 meters, 10-15 meters wide and about 5-7 meters deep.¹⁶⁸ While it is probable that posterior digging in the area somewhat altered the shape of the mass graves in the surface layers, a wholesale enlargement of graves up to 5 meters or more deep down to the bottom is not so likely, moreover if robbery diggers made small pits

¹⁶⁵ Deposition of Heinrich Gley on 7 January 1963; Kogon et al, *Massentötungen*, p.188 after StA München I, AZ: 22 Js 64-93/61.

¹⁶⁶ Thomas Kues, 'Grave pit enlargement at Belzec caused by soil movement?', <http://www.revblog.codoh.com/2009/05/grave-pit-enlargement-at-belzec-caused-by-soil-movement/>.

¹⁶⁷ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.122f.

¹⁶⁸ Judgment LG Hagen vom 20.12.1966, 11 Ks 1/64

like the one shown in Image 7.3. Things might be different if robbery diggers had blasted big holes with explosives like Red Army scavengers did at Treblinka. MGK are understandably interested in making the most of robbery digging, which is why they refer to Polish witness Parkola's describing "one of the first wildcat excavations – carried out by a single man – as covering an area of about fifteen square meters."¹⁶⁹ However, their source provides a less dramatic image of these excavations than MGK's rendering suggests:

People from the local area suspected that the Jews might have buried valuable items in the ground where the camp had once been. Shortly after the departure of the Germans and Ukrainians they came flocking to dig over the earth. The stationmaster observed how a local road builder staked out an area of about fifteen square meters and dug up several gold rings – including wedding rings – and gold coins. He said they now belonged to him.¹⁷⁰

In trying to overstate the impact of postwar excavation, MGK also swiftly convert what the 1947 Central Commission Report described as a pit filled with chloride of lime "close to the eastern limit of the camp" into a lime pit close to the eastern limit of *the camp's burial area*, to then speculate that grave # 4 (the largest grave in the camp with a surface area of 1,575 m² and an estimated volume of 6,819.80 m³, see Table 7.2), which contains lime (as does grave # 3), might have resulted from a 300 m² lime pit's being "drastically enlarged by various diggings, including those of the commission surveyors."¹⁷¹ The lime pit is supposed to have been enlarged to more than five times its original area. MGK are obviously grasping at straws.

Regarding Chełmno, Matogno's main contention against the 2003/04 archaeological investigation is that this investigation essentially confirmed three graves in the area called Plot IV that had been "arbitrarily established before", and that it "could not have been otherwise."¹⁷² In other words, he is accusing the archaeologists who carried out said investigation of having manipulated their findings to vindicate a predetermined result, moreover one that – as he points out later¹⁷³ – had not even been based on archaeological investigation.

¹⁶⁹ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.122; citing Schelvis, *Sobibor*, p.191.

¹⁷⁰ Deposition of Franciszek Parkola (head official of Sobibor train station) regarding Sobibor before deputy district attorney Gorgol in Lublin on 05.05.1967; StA.Do Sob 85 PM V NO f. 127 ff.. Parkola mentioned a German from some road-building enterprise who staked out an area of 15 m² and, after having dug through this area (nach Durchgraben der abgezeichneten Fläche), which he called his, extracted several golden objects by moving the soil one [spade] cut deep (einen Stich tief).

¹⁷¹ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.125.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Ibid., p.130.

This accusation is not only baseless but also disingenuous, for a closer look at Pawlicka-Nowak's report about the 2003/04 investigation and a related map, on which the grave boundaries that had been incorrectly assumed before are also drawn, shows that the investigation in 2003/04 led to major corrections in regard to the previously assumed boundaries of two graves, furthermore established that one previously assumed grave area contained no grave, and discovered 11 ash disposal pits that had not been previously marked.¹⁷⁴

Density of Corpses in the Graves

Karl Alfred Schluch, a former member of the SS staff of Belzec extermination camp, described one of the graves in that camp as follows:

The size of a pit I can only indicate approximately. It should have been about 30 meters long and 20 meters wide. The depth is difficult to estimate because the side walls were at an angle and on the other hand the earth taken out had been piled up at the edge. I think, however, that the pit may have been 5 to 6 meters deep. **All in all one could have comfortably placed a house inside this pit.**¹⁷⁵

Schluch's description roughly matches the measurements of the larger among the Belzec mass graves (see Table 7.1), but what is especially noteworthy is the impression that the size of the pit described made on the witness: he remembered it as a pit so large that one could have comfortably placed a house inside. Elementary common sense tells us that who makes graves this big a) does so because he needs them to bury large numbers of bodies and b) intends to use them to the maximum of their capacity. Especially when all known evidence shows that this was what the graves at Belzec and the other Nazi extermination camps were made for and how they were used – evidence including but not limited to vivid eyewitness descriptions like the following from Sobibor extermination camp:

The first grave had been covered with a layer of sand. As this grave was completely full, the other bodies had to be taken elsewhere, even though the new grave was not yet ready. I still clearly remember arriving for work at the second grave one morning, to find that the bodies which had already been piled up along one side had decomposed to such an extent that in the sweltering heat blood and body fluids had run all along the bottom of the unfinished grave. It was clear that we could not continue to work under such circumstances. I remember giving directions to build a kind of bank, about 30 cm high perhaps, right across the bottom of the grave. Ittner was there as well; I spoke to him about it. In this context I can also give an impression of the extent of deterioration of the bodies in the first grave. The layer of sand covering the grave cracked and rose up to the

¹⁷⁴ See Muehlenkamp, 'Chełmno Mass Graves'.

¹⁷⁵ Deposition of Schluch, B162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd. VIII, f. 1504 ff, description of grave on f. 1513; cf. Kogon et al, *Massentötungen*, p.168. Translation from German and emphasis are by the author.

point where some of the bloated bodies were being pushed to the surface, rolling out sideways. So I had the Arbeitsjuden build a proper sand bank all around the grave. The sight of it all was intolerable, and the stench also unbearable.¹⁷⁶

Mattogno, Graf & Kues disagree with elementary common sense. In their book, the reasoning that enormous graves are made for enormous numbers of bodies is "fallacious" because "if there were no hundreds of thousands of corpses to dispose of, there would also exist no pressing need to save burial space," and there were "several documented mass graves that have a density of 1-2 corpses per cubic meter."¹⁷⁷ To be sure, if there were no enormous numbers of corpses to dispose of, there would also exist no pressing need to save burial space. But what need would there have been, then, to create such an enormous amount of burial space in the first place? Why make gigantic pits like grave # 4 at Sobibor, which was 70 meters long, 20-25 meters wide and 5 meters deep and had a volume (corrected for sloping) of 6,819.80 m³, when a few much smaller and more shallow graves would have been sufficient to dispose of the camp's mortality?¹⁷⁸

The "several documented mass graves that have a density of 1-2 corpses per cubic meter" were the three graves found by Soviet investigators at Treblinka in August 1944, with the dimensions 10x5x2, 10x5x1.9 and 10x5x2.5 meters.¹⁷⁹ Only one of these graves was a little deeper than the proverbial "six feet below ground", and this grave – the biggest of the three – had a volume of merely 125 cubic meters, i.e. it was about 55 times smaller than Sobibor grave # 4. People may make relatively small graves in order to toss a relatively small number of bodies inside, but who would expend the time, effort and resources required to dig five meters below ground and make a grave with a volume of 6,819.80 m³, only to then squander the grave space so laboriously created by burying corpses at a density of no more than 1-2 corpses per cubic meter? According to Alex Bay, a pit 50 by 25 meters with a volume of 8,500 cubic meters would "require weeks or months to dig by manual methods using picks, shovels, and wheelbarrows, depending on the number of laborers available"; even with mechanical excavators "the time needed to complete these large pits would have

¹⁷⁶ Deposition of former SS-man Kurt Bolender in Hagen on 18.12.1963 (as note 29).

¹⁷⁷ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.123f.

¹⁷⁸ On p.167 ff. of their *Sobibór* book, MGK treat their readers to an "estimate" whereby "the number of Sobibor victims is in the vicinity of 10,000" over a period of 16 months, i.e. ca. 600 per month. To bury 600 corpses at a density of only 3 per cubic meter (half the "maximum" concluded on by Ball according to Mattogno, and corresponding to the minimum density estimated by medical expert Mieczysław Piotrowski in an investigation of the Treblinka I labor camp's mass graves in August 1946, see M&G, *Treblinka*, p.88), a mere 200 cubic meters of grave space would have been required. The volume of Sobibor grave # 4 alone (corrected for sloping) was 36 times larger.

¹⁷⁹ See note 85.

been on the order of a two or three weeks."¹⁸⁰ The time required for the 6,819.80 m³ of Sobibor grave # 4 would be a little but not much less.

One might think that Mattogno, Graf & Kues would like their readers to believe that the SS made graves big enough for a house to comfortably fit in because they liked to keep their Jewish labor force digging all the time, or because they enjoyed the healthy exercise themselves or were so fond of handling excavators that they made enormous graves just for the fun of it.

¹⁸⁰ Bay, Treblinka, 'Reconstruction of the Death Camp (Continued)'.

Chapter 8

Burning of the Corpses

The corpses of most people murdered at Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka and Chelmno extermination camps were burned, which means that what is left of most victims are cremation remains like ashes and bone fragments. Carlo Mattogno, Jürgen Graf and Thomas Kues do not deny that bodies were burned at these places, but dispute the historically accepted scale of corpse cremation on grounds that it would have been logistically impracticable in what concerns fuel requirements and the duration of cremations and is incompatible with the available evidence, especially the amount of cremation remains found. Where (as in the case of Chelmno) particulars about the cremation devices and methods are known from archaeological research, the accuracy of research finds is also questioned.

This chapter starts with a presentation of what is known about the cremation devices and methods applied as well as the duration of cremations at each of these four camps, including a discussion of Mattogno's arguments regarding archaeological research finds at Chelmno extermination camp. There follows a discussion of the deniers' other arguments mentioned in the preceding paragraph. Finally the deniers' alternative explanations for the undisputed cremation of corpses at these camps are examined. As concerns Belzec extermination camp the related arguments have been amply debated between Mattogno and the author¹, with Mattogno's reply to the author's last submission still outstanding. Although without referring to the author, the recent *Sobibór* book by Mattogno, Graf and Kues tries to address some of the author's arguments in said debate. Being their latest publication on the subject, this book is deemed to contain their most up to date arguments and will thus be the main focus of the author of this present chapter

¹ See the blog articles collected under the link <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2006/04/quick-links.html#mattbel>.

Cremation Devices, Methods and Times

Burning of corpses at **Belzec** took place as early as August 1942, according to the testimony of Dr. Pfannenstiel.² At that time cremation was not yet used as a means of body disposal per se but probably in order to help stretch the available burial space (judging by Dr. Pfannenstiel's description whereby the corpses burned just partly and fresh corpses were placed on top of them thereafter), perhaps also for reasons of hygiene.³

Wholesale cremation of corpses extracted from the Belzec mass graves only started in November 1942, according to the deposition of former SS-man Heinrich Gley:⁴

The gassings, as far as I remember, were stopped at the end of 1942, when there was already snow on the ground. Then began the general exhumation and burning of the corpses; it should have lasted from November 1942 until March 1943. The burnings were carried out day and night without interruption, first at one and then at two fireplaces. One fireplace allowed for burning about 2,000 corpses within 24 hours. About two weeks after the beginning of the burning action the second fireplace was erected. Thus on average there were burned about 300,000 bodies at the one fireplace over a period of 5 months and 240,000 bodies at the other fireplace over a period of 4 months. Of course these are only approximate estimates. It should be correct to put the total number of corpses at 500,000. [...] Again a short time later I was assigned to the burning detachment; the incineration of the dug-out corpses was a process so abominable humanly, esthetically and in what concerns the smell, that the fantasy of people who today are used to live under civil conditions probably is not sufficient to imagine this horror.

The time given by Gley for the start of cremations, November 1942, is corroborated by the testimonies of Polish civilians living near the camp⁵ and the depositions of another Belzec SS-man⁶ and of one of the camp's non-German guards⁷; these witnesses also tend to confirm

² See Chapter 7.

³ O'Neil, *Belzec*, chapter 15.

⁴ Deposition of Heinrich Gley in Munich on 07.01.1963, BAL B162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd. IX, f. 1697 ff. Gley's estimate of the number of bodies cremated must be considered too high in light of the Höfle Report, whereby the total number of Jews deported to Belzec was 434,508.

⁵ Eugeniusz Goch, in his deposition before examining judge Godziszewski in Zamość on 14.10.1945, BAL B162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd. VI, f. 1134-36, stated that the corpses were burned at the end of 1942 and the beginning of 1943, and mentioned having seen three heaps burning simultaneously. The same time span was given by Stefan Kirsz, who in his deposition before examining judge Godziszewski in Zamość on 15.10.1945 (translation from Polish to German as above, f. 1147-49) also mentioned several fires at once. According to Eustachy Ukraiński's deposition before examining judge Godziszewski in Zamość on 11.10.194, BAL B162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd. VI, f. 1117-20, corpses were burned starting December 1942 and throughout the spring of 1943, with several fires burning at the same time. Stanislaw Kozak, questioned by Godziszewski on 14.10.1945 (translation from Polish to German as above, f. 1129-33), recalled two to three fireplaces and that the burning had started in late autumn 1942 and lasted for three months without interruption.

⁶ In his deposition in Munich on 18.12.1963 (BAL B162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd. IX, f. 1831 ff), former Belzec SS-man Fritz Tauscher stated that upon his arrival in Belzec at the end of October 1942 camp commandant Hering had put him in charge of exhuming the corpses from the mass graves and burning them. He had gone to work immediately, and the corpses had thereupon been burned day and night without interruption, first at one and then at two fireplaces, until March 1943. Tauscher mentioned that some transports had arrived while the

that cremations ended in March 1943 as stated by Gley. On the other hand, erasing the traces of the camp lasted until June 1943, and a witness noticed the stench of exhumed corpses as late as April of that year⁸, so it is possible that corpses were burned at Belzec beyond March 1943⁹.

Little is known about the construction of the fireplaces mentioned by Gley and the method applied to burn the corpses, though it stands to reason that they resembled the devices and methods applied at the other two camps of *Aktion Reinhard*, Sobibor and Treblinka. According to a Polish investigation report, the corpses had been extracted from the soil with special cranes and burned on heaps doused with an easily flammable substance; later the procedure had been improved by building structures from railway rails on which the corpses were placed alternately with layers of wood drenched in an easily flammable substance.¹⁰

Cremation remains were crushed with a special machine, the description of which suggests a ball mill¹¹. According to O'Neil, this machine was borrowed from Janowska concentration camp and resembled a cement mixer with heavy iron balls inside the revolving drum; as the drum revolved at high speed, the metal balls crushed the bone material into small fragments. If this is accurate, the machine must have looked like the one shown in Image 8.1 below.¹²

burning operation was going on and the corpses of their occupants had been burned together with the exhumed corpses.

⁷ Deposition of Aleksandr Illarionovich Semigodov in Penza, 24.05.1973, BAL B162/208 AR-Z 643/71, Bd. IV, f. 704-11. The witness stated that the corpses extracted from the mass graves had been burned starting at about the end of autumn 1942, together with the corpses of newly gassed deportees. At the time Semigodov had left Belzec in March 1943, according to this deposition, the extermination and burning had still been under way (f. 709).

⁸ Gerald Reitlinger, *The Final Solution. The Attempt To Exterminate The Jews Of Europe, 1939-1945*, 2nd revised edition, Cranbury: Thomas Yoseloff, 1968, p.148: "In April, 1943, a Jewish doctor, who later escaped to Switzerland, noticed the appalling stench of the exhumed bodies as he passed the spot by train."

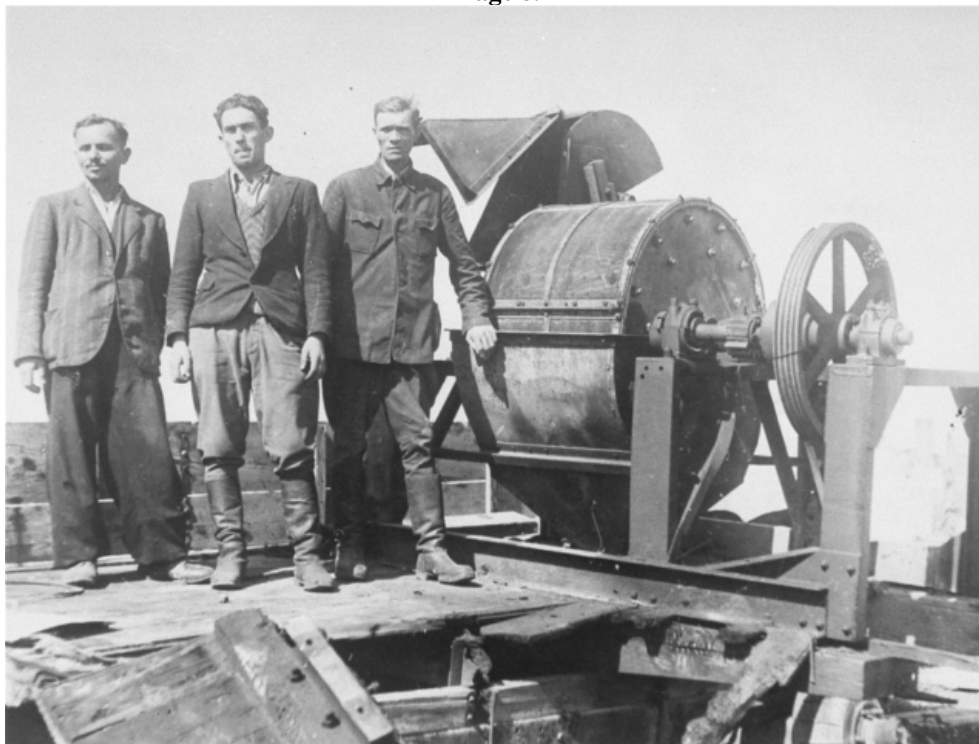
⁹ According to Eustachy Ukraiński (as note 5), cremation lasted throughout the spring of 1943.

¹⁰ Report about investigation results in the Belzec extermination camp case, signed by state attorney Witkowski, German translation from Polish in BAL B162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd. VI, f.1185-88. The report refers to several witnesses including Eustachy Ukraiński, Tadeusz Misiewicz, Stanislaw Kozak and Kazimierz Czerniak. The machine(s) extracting the corpses were mentioned by witnesses Goch, Kirsz, Ukraiński and Kozak (depositions as note 5); Kirsz and Kozak mentioned the pyres being doused with a liquid, while Ukraiński stated that the fires had constantly been "fueled with a certain powder" ("mit einem bestimmten Pulver verstärkt", in the deposition's German translation, as note 5, f.1119).

¹¹ A ball mill is a cylindrical device used in grinding (or mixing) materials like ores, chemicals, ceramic raw materials and paints. Ball mills rotate around a horizontal axis, partially filled with the material to be ground plus the grinding medium. Different materials are used as media, including ceramic balls, flint pebbles and stainless steel balls. An internal cascading effect reduces the material to a fine powder. Cf. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ball_mill.

¹² O'Neil, *Belzec*, Chapter 10. O'Neil mentions that the machine was operated by a Janowska inmate, an Hungarian Jew named Szpilke; this was obviously the same Szpilke, or Szpilka, who told Belzec survivor Rudolf Reder about having set up and operated this machine, as mentioned by Reder in his report about Belzec (German translation in BAL B162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd. II, f.258 ff., mention of Szpilke on f. 286-287) and in his deposition before examining judge Jan Sehn in Krakow on 29 December 1945, BAL B162/208 AR-Z 252/59, Bd. I, f.1175 ff.; mention of Reder's acquaintance Scharf – Szpilka on f. 1180. The machine used at

Image 8.1



Heinrich Chamaides, David Manuschewitz and Moische Korn (f.l.t.r.) on the platform of the bone mill in the Janowska camp in Lwow.

Sobibor was the first of the three camps of *Aktion Reinhard* to change its body disposal procedure from burial to cremation, the main reason being probably a concern that the camp's water supply might be polluted by leachate from the graves due to the camp area's relatively high groundwater level.¹³ The corpses of the victims killed after the camp resumed operation in October 1942 following a two-month interruption were taken directly from the gas chambers to places of cremation, while the corpses of the victims killed and buried until the end of July/early August 1942 were disinterred with a mechanical excavator for this purpose.¹⁴

As in the case of Belzec, little is known about the cremation sites at Sobibor. According to Schelvis¹⁵, rails were criss-crossed over the top of a pit excavated for this purpose, forming a rudimentary grid. This configuration is also mentioned by survivor eyewitness Leon Feldhendler.¹⁶ SS-Sturmbannführer Streibel, who visited Sobibor in 1942,

Janowska concentration camp is mentioned in the testimonies before the Lvov Deputy District Attorney of Heinrich Chamaides on 21.9.1944 and of Moische Korn on 13.9.1944, quoted in Klee/Dressen (eds), *Gott mit uns*, p.226 ff. The photo in Image 8.1 is shown on p.225 of the same collection. It was taken in 1943 and resides in Belarusian State Archive of Documentary Film and Photography according to the USHMM database, from which the digital public domain image was taken.

¹³ See Chapter 7.

¹⁴ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.177; Schelvis, *Sobibor*, p.111f.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.172.

recalled a roaster made of railway lines, supported by a stone base; he mentioned having seen "the cremation sites", which suggests that there was more than one of them.¹⁷ The Judgment LG Hagen vom 20.12.1966, 11 Ks 1/64 mentions (several) huge grids *inside* a pit.¹⁸

The latter description is corroborated by the research findings of Andrzej Kola.¹⁹ Graves nos. 1 and 2 were considered to be body-burning graves, presumably because (unlike graves nos. 3, 4, 5 and 6) they contained only cremation remains but no human remains in wax-fat transformation. The surface area of these graves is respectively 400 m² and 500 m²,²⁰ which means that cremation grids of considerable size could fit into them. The mention of a single pit by eyewitnesses suggests the possibility that graves nos. 1 and 2 are actually part of what was one single grave in camp times, just like graves 3 and 4 and graves 5 and 6 may have been respectively one grave.²¹ Kola's team also identified a possible smaller location of body-burning activity with an area of 30 m², which is called grave no. 7 in Kola's report.

Few particulars about the body-burning procedure at Sobibor are known because no inmate from the Sobibor extermination sector "Camp III" survived.²² Witnesses mentioned the pyres being doused with gasoline or another flammable liquid²³, and huge fires flaring up so high that they could be seen far and wide; Ukrainian guards in their watchtowers found it hard to breathe when the wind blew in their direction from the burning grids.²⁴ The smell of

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ The already decomposed corpses were extracted from the pits with the excavator's help and burned on huge grids in an already dug, but still empty pit." Former SS-man Erich Bauer mentioned that the corpses were burned in pits on grids made of railway rails ("In den Gruben wurden die Leichen auf Rosten, die aus Eisenbahnschienen hergestellt waren, verbrannt."), see Bauer's deposition in Berlin on 10.12.1962, BAL B162/208 AR-Z 251/59, Bd. VIII, f.1663 ff. (f.1669). A deep pit containing burning grids was mentioned by survivor witness Chaim Engel, see Engel's deposition before the Information Bureau for Jews in Westerbork, Netherlands, BAL B162/208 AR-Z 251/59, Bd. V, f.889-92 (f.890). Survivor eyewitness Kurt Thomas mentioned what was translated as a "Krematoriumsschacht" (crematorium shaft) or "Verbrennungsschacht" (burning shaft) in the German translation of his letter to the World Jewish Congress dd. 3.12.1961 (as above f. 1024 ff., namely f.1027, 1036 and 1043-44). In his letter to the Dutch Red Cross dd. 3.9.1946, written under the name Kurt Ticho, the witness mentioned a "Kremationsgrube", i.e. a cremation pit (digital copy of the letter see NIOD 804/20, p.95 http://files.archieven.nl/298/f/804/NIOD_804_INV_20.pdf, pp. 91 ff., p. 95). Jan Piwonski, turnout setter at Sobibor train station, learned about the burning of corpses in a pit from a non-German camp guard named Waska, according to his deposition in Lublin on 10.5.1984 (StA. Do Sob 85 PM III NO 99, pp.8-9 of the interrogation protocol).

¹⁹ Kola, *Sobibor*, translation and digital copy under <http://holocaustcontroversies.yuku.com/topic/1071>. See also Chapter 7.

²⁰ See chapter 7.

²¹ See chapter 7.

²² Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.172.

²³ Report of Berisch Freiberg (inmate) taken down by Bluma Wasser in Łódź on 25.7.1945, StA.Dortmund Js2//61 Aktenband VIII, f.2630-79 (f.2638); deposition of Jan Krzowski (inhabitant of Włodawa) in Lublin on 07.08.1974, BAL B162/208 AR-Z 643/71, Bd. III, f.410-418 (413-14); deposition of Bronislaw Lobejko (railway worker) in Olesnica on 08.01.1946, StA. Dortmund Sob 85 PM IV NO 178 (the witness mentioned having smelled burning petroleum); deposition of Jan Piwonski in Lublin on 10.5.1984, as note 18.

²⁴ Schelvis, *Sobibor*, p.112, referring to the testimonies of Ukrainian guard Daniltsjenko (deposition on 25 January 1985 in Lisakowsk, Kazakh SSR, StA Dortmund Sob 85 PM V NO 96) and Polish villager Piwonski (deposition in Lublin on 29 April 1975, BAL B162/208 AR-Z 643/71, Bd. IV, f. 441-452, f.443-44).

burned flesh prevailed throughout the camp and its vicinity.²⁵ The bones that survived cremation were crushed with hammers.²⁶

From **Treblinka** extermination camp there are reports of corpse burning as early as August and September 1942.²⁷ These cremation procedures don't seem to have been aimed at destroying all corpses in the graves, but rather at carbonizing the upper layers to stretch burial space and for hygienic purposes.²⁸ The same may have applied to reported cremations in the months of October, November and December 1942, another possibility being that these were early and not very successful attempts at wholesale cremation, perhaps motivated by shortage of burial space and/or by complaints such as one from the Wehrmacht local commandant in Ostrow about the unbearable stench of corpses emanating from Treblinka because the Jews there were not sufficiently buried.²⁹ Nevertheless, wholesale systematic, continued and eventually successful cremation of corpses at Treblinka started only after a visit of Himmler's at the end of February/beginning of March 1943.³⁰ Oskar Strawczyński described the exhumation of the corpses for cremation as follows:

While we in Camp I were busy building and beautifying, the work of exhuming and burning the bodies of the first victims of the Warsaw ghetto continued intensively in Camp 2. There were a few tremendously huge mass graves, each one filled with tens of thousands of murdered people. The layers of corpses were covered with chlorine. At the beginning, the chlorine used to arrive in wagonloads. The bodies were now being dug out and burnt in order to erase the evidence. It was not an easy job. For many months, three bulldozers growled away from 4 o'clock in the morning until nightfall. The work went on with great intensity, in two shifts. The bulldozers would constantly dig up earth mixed with body parts. The body parts had to be carefully picked out and taken on wooden

²⁵ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p. 172.

²⁶ Ibid., quoting Feldhendler.

²⁷ Krzepicki, 'Eighteen Days in Treblinka', p.92; Eddi Weinstein, *Steel Quenched in Cold Water, The Story of an Escape from Treblinka*, Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2001, online excerpt under <http://www.zchor.org/losice/weinstein.htm#treblinka>; deposition of Samuel Rajzman on 26.09.1944, quoted in M&G, Treblinka, p.141f.

²⁸ Rajzman's mention of pyres suggests otherwise, but it is possible that he mixed up the burning he witnessed upon arriving at the camp with the later wholesale cremation in his recollection.

²⁹ Strawczyński, 'Escaping Hell', pp.129 ff.; Glazar, *Trap With A Green Fence*, p.29 f.; Mendel Korytnicki, 23.09.1944, GARF 7445-2-134, pl.57ob, quoted in Sergey Romanov, "The Clueless Duo and early corpse incineration in Treblinka and Belzec" (<http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2010/01/clueless-duo-and-early-corpse.html>). The Wehrmacht commandant's complaint is documented KTB MiG OQu, 24.10.42: "OK Ostrow meldet, dass die Juden in Treblinka nicht ausreichend beerdigt seien und infolgedessen ein unerträglicher Kadavergeruch die Luft verpestet." – "OK [local commandant] Ostrow reports that the Jews in Treblinka are not adequately buried and as a result an unbearable smell of cadavers pollutes the air.", cf. Christopher Browning, 'Evidence for the Implementation of the Final Solution'. Regarding the connection between this complaint and the start of systematic corpse exhumation and cremation see Jens Hoffmann, *Das kann man nicht erzählen: "Aktion 1005" - Wie die Nazis die Spuren ihrer Massenmorde in Osteuropa beseitigten*, Hamburg: Konkret, 2008, p. 234.

³⁰ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, pp. 173; see also the discussion by Romanov, as previous note.

carriers to be burnt in the great ovens.³¹

Camp commandant Stangl remembered the exhumation and burning procedure as follows:

It must have been at the beginning of 1943. That's when excavators were brought in. Using these excavators, the corpses were removed from the huge ditches which had been used until then [for burial]. The old corpses were burned on the roasters, along with the new bodies [of new arrivals to the camp]. During the transition to the new system, Wirth came to Treblinka. As I recall, Wirth spoke of a Standartenführer who had experience in burning corpses. Wirth told me that according to the Standartenführer's experience, corpses could be burned on a roaster, and it would work marvelously. I know that in the beginning [in Treblinka] they used rails from the trolley to build the cremation grill. But it turned out that these rails were too weak and bent in the heat. They were replaced with real railroad rails.³²

About the "great ovens" mentioned by the witness more information is available than about their equivalents at Belzec and Sobibor. They are described as follows in the judgment at the Düsseldorf trial of Treblinka's commandant Franz Stangl:

Around the turn of the year 1942/1943, following instructions from higher up, the bodies started being burned. At first a burning grid was made out of the trolley rails still available. However, these could not bear the weight of the mountains of corpses. Thereupon a bigger grid was erected by the gas chamber building, which was made of railway rails placed on concrete foundations. At first there were difficulties also with this burning installation. As a specialist for such burnings an Unterführer by the name of Floss came to Treblinka, who after some experiments brought the grid into the right position. In a pit underneath the grid a wood fire was maintained. The corpses were now placed upon the grid in layers and burned.³³

The presence of a pit underneath the grid, in which a fire was made in order to set the corpses on the grid on fire, also becomes apparent from the description provided by Ukrainian guard Pavel Vladimirovich Leleko:

An incinerator from the burning of bodies was situated about 10 meters beyond the large gas chamber building. It had the shape of a cement pit about one meter deep and 20 meters long. A series of furnaces covered on the top with four rows of rails extended along the entire length of one of the walls of the pit. The bodies were laid on the rails, caught fire from the flames burning in the furnaces and burned. About 1000 bodies were burned simultaneously. The burning process lasted up to five hours.³⁴

³¹ Strawczynski, 'Escaping Hell', p. 169.

³² Quoted in Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.174.

³³ JuNSV, Bd. XXXIV (Urteil LG Düsseldorf vom 22.12.1970, 8 Ks 1/69; Lfd.Nr.746).

³⁴ Deposition of former Ukrainian guard Pavel Vladimirovich Leleko on 20.02.1945, English translation online under <http://nizkor.org/hweb/people/l/leleko-pavel-v/leleko-001.html>.

Details about the construction of the grid were also mentioned in the judgment at the 1st Düsseldorf Treblinka trial (Kurt Franz et al)³⁵, which contains the following description:

After the most diverse burning attempts had been made for this purpose, a large burning facility was constructed. It consisted of concrete bases about 70 cm high, on which 5 to 6 railway rails about 25 to 30 meters long lay in small intervals.

A comparison between Leleko's description and the ones contained in the above-mentioned Düsseldorf judgments suggests that the "furnaces" mentioned by Leleko were subdivisions of the pit by concrete blocks placed at certain intervals across the pit, which gave this witness the impression that each part of the pit between its ends and a concrete block or in between concrete blocks, in which fire was burning, was a "furnace". The description in the first Düsseldorf judgment suggests that the concrete blocks stood 70 cm above ground, which can be matched with Leleko's description by assuming that these were either blocks 1.70 meters high placed inside the pit and protruding from the pit for 70 cm, or blocks 70 cm high placed on the rims of the pit, the distance between the bottom of the rails and the bottom of the pit being, in any case, 1.70 meters.

The area of the grid can be roughly estimated on hand of the above-quoted data, the author's estimate being ca. 66 square meters.³⁶ The volume of space available underneath the grid, considering the calculations in the previous paragraph, would be about $66 \times 1.70 = 112$ cubic meters.

Eyewitness descriptions of the burning procedure suggest that corpses considered to burn better than others were placed at the bottom of the pile of bodies so that they would help combustion of the corpses above them, and that the operators endeavored to create a huge and very intensive fire so that the corpses on the grid would quickly be engulfed by the fire and start burning themselves:

At that time SS Oberscharführer or Hauptscharführer [Herbert] Floss, who, as I assume, was previously in another extermination camp, arrived. He was in charge of the arrangements for cremating the corpses. The cremation took place in such a way that railway lines and concrete blocks were placed together. The corpses were piled on these rails. Brushwood was put under the rails. The wood was doused with petrol. In that way not only the newly accumulated corpses were

³⁵ JuNSV, Bd. XXII, (Urteil LG Düsseldorf vom 3.9.1965, 8 I Ks 2/64; Lfd.Nr.596).

³⁶ See Muehlenkamp, 'Incinerating corpses on a grid is a rather inefficient method: Size and Configuration of the Roaster', <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2006/12/incinerating-corpses-on-grid-is-rather-18.html>. The link to the site providing measurements of various types of flat bottom rails is now <http://www.tkgftgleistechnik.de/oberbauhandbuch/oberbaustoffe/schienen/vignolschienen.html>. The author's estimate of $65.625 \approx 66$ m² is a comparatively conservative one. Mattoigno & Graf assume an area of 90 m² (M&G, *Treblinka*, p.148).

cremated, but also those taken out from the graves.³⁷

The SS "expert" on body burning ordered us to put women, particularly fat women, on the first layer of the grill, face down. The second layer could consist of whatever was brought – men, women, or children – and so on, layer on top of layer ... Then the "expert" ordered us to lay dry branches under the grill and to light them. Within a few minutes the fire would take so it was difficult to approach the crematorium from as far as 50 meters away.³⁸

It was genuine hell. From a distance it looked like a volcanic eruption boiling up through the earth's surface and spreading flames and lava. Everything around was caught up in the noise and turmoil. At night the smoke, fire, and heat were unbearable.³⁹

About the number of cremation grids in operation at Treblinka there are no precise data. Arad mentions that at the height of cremation operations the number of cremation sites was increased to six and the roasters "occupied a good portion of the area east of the gas chambers, which was clear of mass graves and buildings"⁴⁰. Yet according to the judgment at the 1st Düsseldorf Treblinka trial⁴¹, the number of cremation roasters could not be established exactly in the main proceedings.

The result of the cremation process was not complete combustion of all bodies. Arad writes that the corpses were taken to and arranged on the roasters during the daytime and burned throughout the night, and that when the fire went out there were "only" skeletons or scattered bones on the roasters, and piles of ash underneath. Ukrainian guard Leleko testified that

After the bodies had been burned, the prisoners belonging to the "working crews" passed the ashes and remains of the bodies through a sieve. The parts of the body that had burned but had preserved their natural shape were put into a special mortar and pounded into flour. This was done in order to hide the traces of the crimes committed. Later on the ashes were buried in deep pits.⁴²

Arad writes that round wooden sticks were then used to break the remaining bones into small fragments, which were then run through a tightly woven screen made of metal wire; those bone fragments which did not pass through the screen were then returned for further smashing. Unburned bones which proved too difficult to fragment were returned to the roaster and re-ignited with a new pile of bodies.⁴³ What Arad calls "round wooden sticks"

³⁷ SS-Oberscharführer Heinrich Matthes, quoted in Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.174.

³⁸ Yechiel Reichman, member of the inmate "burning group", quoted in Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.175.

³⁹ Jacob Wiernik, quoted in Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.175.

⁴⁰ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, pp.175-176.

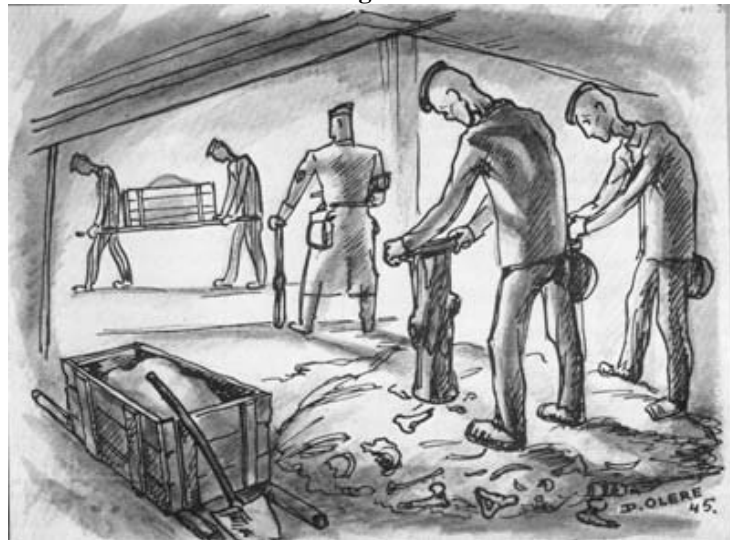
⁴¹ As note 35.

⁴² Leleko's deposition on 21.02.1945, English translation under <http://nizkor.org/hweb/people/l/leleko-pavel-v/leleko-002.html>.

⁴³ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.176.

are likely to have been not sticks but wooden logs similar to those portrayed in this drawing from Auschwitz-Birkenau by David Olère:⁴⁴

Image 8.2



In another article by Arad, these objects are more correctly referred to as *Holzpflocke*, i.e. wooden logs.⁴⁵

The ash and bits of bone left after cremation and crushing were returned to the mass graves that had previously held the bodies, where they were scattered in several layers, interspersed with layers of sand, and covered by a top layer of earth 2 meters thick.⁴⁶ Some of the cremation remains were taken away from the camp area, as is mentioned in the Soviet investigation report about Treblinka I and Treblinka II dated August 24, 1944.⁴⁷

After the Soviet army overran the camp area these remains were largely brought to the surface by robbery diggers searching for valuables supposedly buried with the victims, which included Red Army troops using explosives.⁴⁸ As becomes apparent from contemporary investigation reports and photographs⁴⁹, these activities unearthed not only ashes and bone fragments but also huge amounts of larger human remains such as bones (sometimes still with tissue on them) and skulls. This shows that the results of the exhumation, burning and crushing procedure were not nearly as complete as certain descriptions suggest.⁵⁰

⁴⁴ Pressac, *AUSCHWITZ: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers*, p.390.

⁴⁵ Arad, 'Reinhard', p.189.

⁴⁶ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.176.

⁴⁷ Akt, 24.8.1944, GARF 7021-115-9, p.109.

⁴⁸ See Chapter 7.

⁴⁹ See Chapter 7.

⁵⁰ The presence of larger human remains may be explained by insufficient burning/crushing and/or by the incomplete emptying of the burial pits mentioned by Oscar Strawczyński ('Escaping Hell', p.169, quoted in see chapter 7).

Chelmno extermination camp operated in two phases. During the first phase, between December 1941 and March 1943, at least 150,000 people were killed. In the second phase, which lasted from June 1944 to January 1945, a total of 7,176 Jews were deported from Łódź to Chelmno and killed there between June 23 and July 14, 1944.⁵¹

In the 1st phase the murdered deportees were initially buried in large mass graves in the Rzuchów forest.⁵² In the summer of 1942, decomposition gasses emanating from the graves polluted the whole surrounding area, whereupon burning instead of burial became the camp's body disposal method, which starting in the autumn of 1942 was also applied to the corpses previously buried in mass graves.⁵³ The change of this camp's body disposal method coincided with the start of the operation known as *Aktion 1005*, an attempt to eliminate the traces of the Nazis' massacres in Eastern Europe by exhuming and burning the corpses, which was entrusted to SS-Standartenführer Paul Blobel.⁵⁴ Blobel experimented with various types of cremation devices, one of which was described by SS-Untersturmführer Dejaco as having the aspect of a round coal furnace (*Kohlenmeiler*)⁵⁵, while another was mentioned by Fritz Ismer, a member of the Chelmno staff, who had witnessed a failed experiment of Blobel's with a flamethrower-like apparatus.

Ismer also mentioned the more effective cremation method that was eventually adopted; pointing out that "a certain technique in burning corpses on the grids" had been developed after some time.⁵⁶ Former police officer Frank Sch., who for a time had been part of the guard detachment in the Rzuchów forest section of Chelmno (known as the *Waldlager*, or forest camp) testified that the bodies extracted from the mass graves had been burned in three or four pits about 5 meters long, 4 meters wide and three meters deep.⁵⁷ The descriptions of Ismer and Frank Sch. suggest a method of burning corpses on grates inside of pits, akin to the one applied at Sobibor extermination camp. Archaeologist Łucja Pawlicka-Nowak mentions "repetitive accounts about burning corpses in bonfires, which took place in the initial phase of opening the mass graves and was aimed at quick liquidation of the

⁵¹ See chapters 3 and 7.

⁵² Regarding the size and capacity of these graves see Chapter 7.

⁵³ Ruckerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager*, p.273.

⁵⁴ Rudolf Höss, "Die »Endlösung der Judenfrage« im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz", written in Krakow in 1946, published in: *Rudolf Höss, Kommandant in Auschwitz. Autobiographische Aufzeichnungen*. Edited by Martin Broszat, 19th edition April 2004 by Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag GmbH & Co. KG, Munich, pp.237-259, here pp.244-245; Hoffmann, *Aktion 1005*, pp.74ff.

⁵⁵ Jean-Claude Pressac, *Os Crematórios de Auschwitz. A Maquinaria do Assassinio em Massa*, Lisbon: Editorial Notícias, 1993, p.100.

⁵⁶ Hoffmann, *Aktion 1005*, p.81 (interrogation of Fritz Ismer on 1 August 1961, criminal case 141 Js 204/60 Vol. 4, f. 1419ff.).

⁵⁷ Ruckerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager*, pp.273-4.

decomposing bodies."⁵⁸ Whether or not it was Blobel who developed or at least contributed to the development of this method – Ismer's testimony suggests otherwise – Blobel seems to have claimed the credit for it, judging by the above-quoted deposition of Treblinka commandant Stangl, who mentioned having been told by Wirth about the experience of a Standartenführer whereby "corpses could be burned on a roaster, and it would work marvelously." The Standartenführer in question must have been Blobel⁵⁹, as is further corroborated by the fact that the method of burning on roasters was adopted not only at the Aktion Reinhard camps but also by Blobel himself at places like Babi Yar, where the corpses were cremated on funeral pyres built on iron rails.⁶⁰

The witness Frank Sch. also mentioned a large oven with a chimney 4 to 5 meters high, built by craftsmen. Two such ovens with chimneys were mentioned by the Central Commission for Investigation of German Crimes in Poland⁶¹, which however couldn't establish any details about these ovens. These furnaces were blown up by the camp authorities on April 7, 1943. Two new ones were, however, constructed in 1944, when the camp activities were resumed. The witnesses Zurawski and Srebrnik, and the captured gendarme Bruno Israel, who saw them in 1944, described them as being shaped like inverted cones with rectangular bases, measuring 6 x 10 meters at the top on ground level and 1.5 x 2 meters at the bottom by the ash pit and having a depth of 4 meters, with grates made of rails and a channel to the ash-pit that ensured the admittance of air and permitted the removal of ashes and bones. The furnaces burned alternate layers of chopped wood and corpses, space being left between the corpses to facilitate combustion. They could hold 100 corpses at a time, new corpses being added as the previous ones burned down. Larger bones remaining after cremation were crushed in a ball mill before being buried, scattered or thrown into the Ner River.⁶²

After the end of transports from the Łódź Ghetto, which in August 1944 went no longer to Chelmno but to Auschwitz-Birkenau, the remaining Jewish slave laborers had to

⁵⁸ Pawlicka-Nowak, 'Chelmno Museum'.

⁵⁹ This is also the opinion of Arad, 'Reinhard', p.174.

⁶⁰ Reitlinger, *Final Solution*, p.146, wrote that, after the visit of Höss et al, "Blobel adopted the method which he was to introduce at Treblinka death camp and at the immense mass graves outside the larger towns of the Baltic States, White Russia and the Ukraine, a vast pyre constructed of iron rails and wooden sleepers". Regarding Babi Yar see the relevant parts of the translated accounts of witnesses David Budnik (<http://www.ess.uwe.ac.uk/genocide/budnik05.htm>) and Yakov Kaper (<http://www.ess.uwe.ac.uk/genocide/kaper06.htm>).

⁶¹ Central Commission, Chelmno: "Those who lived near had only noticed two constantly smoking chimneys within the enclosure."

⁶² Hoffmann, *Aktion 1005*, p.223; Central Commission, Chelmno.

work in removing all remaining traces of the extermination activity, including further burning of corpses in the forest camp.⁶³

Archaeological research has corroborated the scarce eyewitness information about the Chełmno cremation devices and provided much additional information. In 1986/87, relics of a blown-up cremation oven were found. Described as probably rectangular in shape, with a measurable size of 17x17m, walls obliquely narrowing towards the inside, concrete pipes supplying air to the hearth, a depth of 4.5 meters, and a bottom layer of brick and concrete debris, it is believed to be one of the two furnaces with chimneys observed by outside witnesses during the 1st phase. Blocks of concrete in the foundations were found to have survived the blowing up of this construction at the end of the 1st phase.⁶⁴ Five objects found in 2003/04 are presumed by archaeologists to have been "most likely built in order to liquidate quickly the decomposing corpses from the mass graves".⁶⁵ **Object 2/03** is square on the surface (8x8 m) and narrows towards the bottom, with the depth slightly exceeding 5 m. It contains traces of preserved concrete pipes, which were probably meant to supply air to the furnace interior. **Object 3/03** has the shape of an 8x9 m rectangle, lumps of concrete as well as pieces of chamotte brick and concrete pipes having been found when uncovering the object. Such objects were also found when uncovering **Object 4/03**, which has the shape of a 7x8 m rectangle. **Object 5/03** has a rectangular outline with the measurements 3.50 x 4 m. **Object 20/03** is an 8x8 m square in horizontal projection and includes lumps of concrete and blackened chamotte bricks. All objects except Object 5/03, which was not explored, were found to be filled with soil containing burn waste, ashes, and pieces of burned and/or crushed bones.

The descriptions of objects 3/03, 4/03, 5/03 and 20/03 bring to mind the three or four pits about 5 meters long, 4 meters wide and 3 meters deep that were mentioned by Frank Sch.⁶⁶, whose size estimate comes across as below the mark. The identical square shape and measurements of Object 2/03 and Object 20/03, on the other hand, suggest that these were identically built objects narrowing towards the bottom, even though such narrowing is not mentioned regarding Object 20/03.

⁶³ Ruckerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager*, p. 286; Hoffmann, *Aktion 1005*, p.229.

⁶⁴ Pawlicka-Nowak, 'Chełmno Museum'.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Pawlicka-Nowak mentions an apparent contradiction between the testimonies of Dejaco and another witness, whereby the Chełmno field ovens had a round shape, and the rectangular shapes of the cremation objects archaeologically identified in 2003/04. These eyewitness observations suggest that they were watching experimental devices that, unlike those identified by archaeologists, never saw much operational use.

Further possible archaeological evidence to the burning of corpses on grids (as mentioned by Fritz Ismer) in pits (as mentioned by Frank Sch.) was found in the mass grave referred to as the second grave.⁶⁷ A larger object found in 2003/04, on the other hand, was believed by archaeologists to probably be the relics of a furnace "used for liquidating corpses during the systematic center operation" (a function also attributed to an object called "10/03", which can be seen next to "21/03" in the map of Plot IV linked to in Pawlicka-Nowak's online article⁶⁸ and is described in a printed version of that article.⁶⁹ **Object 21/03** is described as having the shape of a 25x9 m rectangle and being over 6.30 m deep, 2 pipes supplying air to the inside having been found together with a shaft about 4 m wide, presumed to have been used for removing ash from the ash pit, and pieces of concrete as well as nearby fence posts. The object is "filled with gray, very sandy humus, mixed with inclusions of burn waste, ash, and crushed burned bones."⁷⁰

Mattogno's attempt to tackle this inconvenient evidence (insofar as he addresses it at all) starts with a feeble argument that two incriminating documents were not related to Chełmno. The documents are Dejaco's report of September 17, 1942 about his trip the previous day as member of a delegation from Auschwitz-Birkenau including camp commandant Rudolf Höss for the purpose of inspecting a *Sonderanlage*, a "special installation", and the corresponding travel authorization of September 15, 1942, whereby the "special installation" to be inspected was a *Versuchstation für Feldöfen Aktion Reinhard*, an experimental station for Aktion Reinhard field ovens.⁷¹

As the Auschwitz delegation's trip to Chełmno (a.k.a. Kulmhof) is mentioned in the notes later written by Rudolf Höss in Polish captivity⁷², Mattogno further claims that Höss's account – which he maintains is the only evidence about Blobel's activities at Chełmno, ignoring the testimonies of Fritz Ismer and others⁷³ - is false because in another part of his

⁶⁷ Pawlicka-Nowak, 'Chełmno Museum'. The description of this grave is summarized in Muehlenkamp, 'Chełmno Mass Graves'.

⁶⁸ The map is available under http://www.muzeum.com.pl/en/chelmno_plan.htm.

⁶⁹ Łucja Pawlicka-Nowak, "Archaeological Research in the Grounds of the Chełmno-on-Ner Former Extermination Center", in: Łucja Pawlicka-Nowak (ed.), *Chełmno Witnesses Speak*, 2004 Konin and Łódź, pp.42-67, here p.65.

⁷⁰ Pawlicka-Nowak, 'Chełmno Museum'.

⁷¹ This argument, together with Mattogno's subsequent arguments addressed in this section, is discussed with more detail in the blog article Muehlenkamp, "Mattogno on Chełmno Cremation (Part 1)", <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2010/12/mattogno-on-chemno-cremation-part-1.html>.

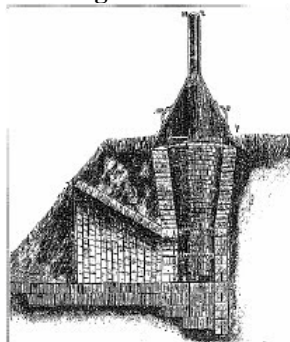
⁷² Höss, 'Endlösung', *Kommandant in Auschwitz* p. 244.

⁷³ Ruckerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager*, p 274 n.64; Hoffmann, *Aktion 1005*, pp.80f., referring to criminal case 141 Js 204/60, Vol. 13, f.4935 ff., interrogation of Julius Bauer on 4/5 July 1963 (p.81 n. 98; the date of Bauer's interrogation is mentioned in n.93). Julius Bauer was Blobel's driver, to whom Blobel mentioned that the new task he had been given was a "Secret Reich Matter" (*Geheime Reichssache*) and that Bauer was to keep strictest silence about all matters related thereto (Hoffmann, *Aktion 1005*, p.80).

notes Höss stated that Kulmhof was no longer in operation when he visited it, while according to the established historical record the camp functioned until April 1943 in its 1st phase. Unfortunately for Mattogno, Höss was actually correct in his statement, insofar as the flow of transports to Chełmno stopped following the deportation of 15,700 Jews from the Łódź ghetto between September 1-2 and September 7-12, 1942, and a final deportation from the Żelów ghetto on 14 September 1942, after which the camp was dedicated to removing the bodies.⁷⁴ As concerns killing operations the camp had indeed stopped operating by the time of Höss's visit on September 16, 1942.

Following this unfortunate attempt to get rid of Höss's testimony about Blobel's activities at Chełmno and a peculiar "demonstration" that the Chełmno *Sonderkommando* used a ball mill (*Kugelmühle*) and not a bone mill (*Knochenmühle*), as if the two were mutually exclusively propositions and the former were not incriminating evidence to the crushing of bones, Mattogno reproduces without comment Judge Bednarz's description of the 1st phase cremation devices in the Central Commission's report and a more detailed description from a later book authored by Bednarz, which besides the two crematorium ovens with chimneys mentions enormous fireplaces (*focolari*) on which the accumulated corpses (which presumably means those extracted from the mass graves) were cremated.⁷⁵ The detailed descriptions of the 2nd phase cremation devices in the Central Commission's report (see above) and in Bednarz's book get more attention from Mattogno, as he argues that these devices resemble a 19th century contraption for incinerating animal carcasses known as the Feist apparatus, a brick furnace that had the aspect of an inverted cone and was covered by a chimney-like metal funnel, as shown in Image 8.3 below.⁷⁶

Image 8.3



⁷⁴ Krakowski, *Chełmno*, p.122. The last transport from the Żelów ghetto is mentioned on pp 95-96, the dates of the Łódź deportations in September are stated in a ghetto statistic published on 1 October 1942, transcribed on p.119. See also Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager*, p.280 (where it is stated that transports diminished considerably since the autumn of 1942) and p.290 (where an absence of documents and reliable testimonies about transports from October 1942 to March 1943 is mentioned); Hoffmann, *Aktion 1005*, pp.223-224.

⁷⁵ Mattogno, *Chełmno*, pp.107f. The second source cited is W. Bednarz, *Obóz straceń w Chełmnie nad Nerem*.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 108 ff. Image 8.3 is a drawing provided by Mattogno as Document 11 in the appendix to his book.

After musing about supposed "contradictions regarding the activity of the crematory furnaces," Mattogno then turns his guns against the archaeological investigations carried out in the Rzuchów forest in 1986/87 and in 2003/04. Regarding the described cremation sites uncovered in 2003/04⁷⁷ (objects 2/03, 3/03, 4/03, 5/03, 20/03 and 21/03), Mattogno's essential claim is that their interpretation as cremation sites is highly disputable.⁷⁸ This claim ignores the above-mentioned descriptions of the objects (perhaps because these descriptions, especially the mentioned inclusions of burn waste, ashes, and pieces of burned bones, are hard to reconcile with the notion that the objects in question were not cremation sites) and is based on the objects having been individualized by what Mattogno considers too few probing excavations or, according to Mattogno, no probing excavations at all in two cases. However, Mattogno's reading of the pertinent map leaves much to be desired. According to the author's assessment⁷⁹, the number of probing excavations corresponding to a given object is the following:

Object 2/03: 1 probing excavation (n° XV). Mattogno claims zero probes.

Object 3/03: 2 probing excavations (nos. XVI and XXVI). Mattogno claims just one probe.

Object 4/03: 1 probing excavation (n° XVII). Mattogno claims zero probes.

Object 5/03: 1 probing excavation (n° XIV).

Object 20/03: 2 probing excavations (nos. XXVII and XXVIII).

Object 21/03: 4 probing excavations (numbers XLV, XXXIX, XLVI and XLIV), with probing excavations XLIII and XLVII possibly also belonging to this object. Mattogno claims just one probe.

As to the criteria underlying Mattogno's claim that the number of probing excavations is too small for the size of the objects, all his readers get to see is an exclamation mark. Mattogno's criticism – if such it can be called – also seems to be based on a misunderstanding of the archaeological method applied, which according to its description in Pawlicka-Nowak's article (not quoted by Mattogno) provided for a reduced number of boreholes or excavations:

The research in the cemetery was carried out with the application of methods which did not disturb the layers and places where human remains were expected to be found. We adopted the method of intersecting objects on the photointerpretations with 1-meter long probes, thus obtaining a legible horizontal

⁷⁷ Pawlicka-Nowak, 'Chelmno Museum'.

⁷⁸ Mattogno, *Chelmno*, p.128.

⁷⁹ Muehlenkamp, 'Chelmno Cremation 1'.

stratigraphy, that is a photograph of sod and a humus layer, only sporadically reaching deeper, when stratigraphy was disturbed. Due to the large extend of the research, it was decided to make boreholes in the places where clarifications were needed.⁸⁰

Mattogno claims that the above-mentioned object identified in 1986/87 was the only crematorium furnace used at Chełmno⁸¹, which implies the baseless accusation that the archaeologists who identified seven other cremation objects in 2003/04 (objects 2/03, 3/03, 4/03, 5/03, 10/03, 20/03 and 21/03) manipulated their finds or (unlike self-appointed master archaeologist Mattogno) didn't know what they were doing. Another claim is that the 1986/87 object was not as big as stated in Pawlicka-Nowak's article, because a photo supposedly taken of this object by Mattogno in 1997 suggests a somewhat smaller size and there is a plaque by the object reading that the furnace's contours were reconstructed on the surface with authentic fragments from the furnace.⁸² A more reasonable conclusion would be that the reconstruction covers only a part of the object's identified size and the text on the plaque is inaccurately formulated.

Mattogno also holds that the object cannot have had a brick chimney, based on nothing other than its claimed similarity with the Feist apparatus⁸³, which like this object narrowed towards the inside. He doesn't explain why a larger furnace built according to the Feist principle couldn't have had such chimney instead of the funnel that can be seen in Image 8.3, which presumably had the function of a chimney. Moreover, if Mattogno were right about the object found in 1986/87 being a cremation device without a brick chimney rather than one of the 1st phase crematoria (which is unlikely insofar as the object was a construction with a concrete foundation that could not be fully destroyed by explosions), it would still be entirely possible that objects 10/03 and 21/03 are the remains of the crematoria with chimneys observed by witnesses in the 1st phase. The other oven similar to the one uncovered in 1986/87 would then be Object 2/03, which like the former object is described as narrowing towards the inside, thus matching the description of the second-phase furnaces in the Central Commission's report, whereas objects 3/03, 4/03, 5/03 and 20/03 would be traces of open-air cremation grates similar to those used at the *Aktion Reinhard* camps, corresponding to the above-mentioned descriptions of Frank Sch. and Fritz Ismer. Another possibility (considering that Object 20/03 has the same square surface area as Object 2/03, though unlike the latter it is not described as narrowing towards the inside) would be that the

⁸⁰ Pawlicka-Nowak, 'Chełmno Museum'.

⁸¹ Ibid., p.131.

⁸² Ibid., p.124.

⁸³ Ibid., p.130.

second-phase furnaces were objects 02/03 and 20/03, that only three objects (3/03, 4/03 and 5/03) correspond to grate structures described by Ismer and Sch. (which doesn't exclude the possibility of there having been more such structures, considering the above-mentioned traces of open-air cremation found in the second grave), and that besides the crematoria with chimneys (objects 10/03 and 21/03) there was another furnace (the 1986/87 object) also used for cremating corpses right after gassing in the latter stages of the first phase.

Fuel Requirements

Mattogno and Kues claim that burning the victims' corpses at Nazi extermination camps would have required enormous quantities of fuel that are at odds with the evidence, if such were logistically obtainable at all. The main parameters on which this claim rests are the average weight of the corpses to be burned and the average amount of wood or wood equivalent required for cremation per kg of corpse weight.

As concerns the first parameter, the Revisionist authors present various deportation data in their *Sobibór* book according to which children up to the age of 16 made up just 17.05 % of deportees to that camp from the Netherlands, 5.5 % of deportees from France, 27 % of deportees from Polish and Soviet territories, 25 % of deportees from Slovakia, 6.91 % of deportees from Germany and Austria, and 11.5 % of deportees from Prague. Considering the numbers of deportees from each place of provenance, this means that 36,400 out of 169,000, or about 21.5 % of the total, were children below the age of 16.⁸⁴

The percentage assumed for Polish and Soviet territories is based on figures about the Jewish population in the Łódź Ghetto on June 30, 1942, whereby out of a total of 96,874 inhabitants 25,947, or 26.8 %, were children under the age of 16.⁸⁵ This is hardly an appropriate yardstick insofar as children – especially younger ones – were among the first to be deported due to their uselessness for physical labor. Thus in the Warsaw ghetto 99 % of all children had been removed by November 1942 according to a ghetto statistic.⁸⁶ As concerns the Łódź Ghetto and the surrounding areas, the history of deportations up to the end of June 1942, reconstructed by the Bonn District Court, suggests a similar situation: according to a report of the Łódź Gestapo dd. June 9, 1942, a larger number of Jews not able to work were "evacuated from the ghetto and handed over to the special detachment", including 44,152 Polish Jews and 10,993 deportees from the Old Reich, the *Ostmark* (Austria) and the

⁸⁴ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.130ff. The number 169,000 is the total of deportees according to Schelvis, *Sobibor*, minus 1,000 selected for work (MGK, *Sobibór*, p.132 footnote 383.)

⁸⁵ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.131.

⁸⁶ Mentioned in "Hölle des Judentums", article in about the Ringelblum Archive in *Spiegel* magazine Nr. 29/2010, pp 46-7, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/0,1518,707506,00.html>.

Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia (Czechoslovakia). 9,000 Jews were "evacuated" from the Lentschütz district, 1,000 being left behind because they were urgently required for carrying out Wehrmacht tasks. Of the about 6,000 Jews in the Löwenstadt Ghetto, around 3,000 were "evacuated" as not able to work, while the remainder, which consisted of skilled workers, was taken to the Łódź Ghetto. A report from the same office dated October 3, 1942, reported the "evacuation" in September of about 15,700 Jews sick and unable to work from the Łódź Ghetto.⁸⁷ It stands to reason that, in transports of people unable to work, children, especially such of younger ages, were more strongly represented than in the general population. According to a source quoted by Mattogno, demographer Jakob Leszczynski, the percentage of children aged 14 or under among the Jewish population of Poland in 1931 amounted to 29.6%, which is little less than 1/3.⁸⁸ Though still far below the presumable actual proportion of children in transports from Polish ghettos to Nazi extermination camps⁸⁹, assuming that one-third of these deportees were children aged 14 or under is not as far-fetched as MGK's suggestion.

Assuming that one third of deportees from Polish ghettos were children under 14, and considering that Polish Jews in the 1940s tended to be smaller-sized than Germans and were furthermore seriously malnourished, the author estimated the average weight of an adult+adult+child group of deportees from a Polish ghetto to be **34 kg**.⁹⁰ This can be considered the average weight of arrivals at the three extermination camps that overwhelmingly received deportees from Polish ghettos – Belzec, Treblinka and Chełmno. Deportees to these camps also included Jews from the German Reich and the Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia previously deported to Polish ghettos, who had been subject to the miserable conditions of ghetto life prior to their deportation to an extermination camp.⁹¹ There were also a few long-range transports that reached Treblinka directly from Theresienstadt in 1942 and from Greece and Yugoslavia in 1943, but the number of deportees from these places was too low, in comparison to that of deportees from Polish ghettos, to require considering a significant impact on the average weight of deportees⁹², moreover as

⁸⁷ Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager*, p.288f.

⁸⁸ Mattogno, 'Controversie', p.14; Mattogno, 'Controversy'.

⁸⁹ According to the author's calculations, children made up at least 42.1 % of deportees to Belzec from the Galicia district of the Generalgouvernement (Muehlenkamp, 'Belzec Response 4 (1)')

⁹⁰ See Chapter 7.

⁹¹ In the Łódź ghetto, for instance, about 4,000 of the ca. 20,000 Jews deported there in October 1941 from the Old Reich, the Ostmark (Austria) and the Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia had died hunger and disease by the end of May 1942 (Rückerl, *NS-Vernichtungslager*, pp.288-9; Krakowski, *Chełmno*, p.74).

⁹² Arad, 'Reinhard', pp.141-42, mentions some 8,000 deportees from Theresienstadt between 5 and 25 October 1942, which are probably not included in the figure of 713,555 Jews delivered at Treblinka until the end of 1942 according to the Höfle Report. In 1943 there arrived a recorded 53,149 (including 2,000 Sinti and Roma, whose

the proportion of children among the deportees from Polish ghettos must have been somewhat higher than among the general population.

At Sobibor the proportion of deportees taken to the camp from Polish ghettos was somewhat lower, making up less than one third of the total according to one estimate. Table 8.1 shows the breakdown of deportees to Sobibor by periods and places of origin according to the estimates of German historian Wolfgang Scheffler (submitted at the 1965-66 Sobibor trial in Hagen, Germany)⁹³ on the one hand and Dutch historian Jules Schelvis⁹⁴ on the other.

Table 8.1

Origin of transports	Time	Scheffler/Hagen Court			Schelvis		
		All deportees	%	Thereof	All deportees	%	Thereof
			Total	children		Total	children
GG	1942/43	72,799	47.74%	24,266	54,486	32.02%	18,162
GG	1942	68,499	44.92%	22,833	39,586	23.26%	13,195
GG	Abr-42	2,600	1.71%	867	1,503	0.88%	501
GG	Mai-42	32,930	21.59%	10,977	19,030	11.18%	6,343
GG	Jun-42	13,769	9.03%	4,590	7,957	4.68%	2,652
GG	Jul-42	400	0.26%	133	231	0.14%	77
GG	4 to 7/1942	49,699	32.59%	16,567	28,721	16.88%	9,573
GG	Ago-42						
GG	Set-42						
GG	Out-42	14,850	9.74%	4,950	8,582	5.04%	2,861
GG	Nov-42	2,450	1.61%	817	1,416	0.83%	472
GG	Dez-42	1,500	0.98%	500	867	0.51%	289
GG	10 to 12/1942	18,800	12.33%	6,267	10,865	6.38%	3,622
GG	1943	4,300	2.82%	1,433	14,900	8.76%	4,967
SV	1942	24,378	15.99%	6,095	28,284	16.62%	7,071
PBM	1942	6,000	3.93%	690	10,000	5.88%	1,150
RA	1942	10,000	6.56%	691	23,500	13.81%	1,624
NL	1943	34,313	22.50%	5,850	34,313	20.16%	5,850
FR	1943	2,000	1.31%	110	3,500	2.06%	193
SU	1943	3,000	1.97%	1,000	13,700	8.05%	4,567
Skopje	1943				2,382	1.40%	596
TOTAL		152,490	100.00%	38,702	170,165	100.00%	39,213
GG+SU		75,799	49.71%	25,266	68,186	40.07%	22,729
Other origins		76,691	50.29%	13,436	101,979	59.93%	16,484

Abbreviations:

GG = General Government

SV = Slovakia

PBM = Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia

RA = German Reich and Austria

NL = Netherlands

SU = Soviet Union

size and physical condition resulting from privation is assumed to have been similar to that of the Jews) from the General Government and the Bialystok District and 14,159 from Saloniki, Macedonia and Thessaloniki (Młynarczyk, 'Treblinka', pp.280f.) So out of a total of 788,863 deportees to Treblinka, only 22,159 – less than 3 % - did not come from places of utter misery on former Polish territory.

⁹³ Urteil LG Hagen, 20.12.1966, 11 Ks 1/64. The Hagen Court expressly pointed out that the total figure it arrived at made no claim to historical completeness but was merely a minimum number established for judicial purposes, and that the actual number might well be up to 100,000 higher.

⁹⁴ Schelvis, *Sobibor*, p.197 ff.

In the following Schelvis' figures shall be used because they are the ones that MGK refer to, even though they are probably on the low side as concerns deportations from the General Government.⁹⁵ The respective distribution between children and adults, assuming that for the deportees from the occupied Soviet territories it was the same as for the deportees from Polish ghettos, and that for deportees from other places of origin it was as claimed by MGK, would thus be 39,213 children (23.04%) vs. 130,952 adults (76.96%), with transports from the General Government and the occupied Soviet territories carrying 68,186 deportees, thereof 22,729 children (one-third), while transports from other places of origin carried 101,979 deportees, thereof 16,484 children.

As concerns the stature of Jews from outside the occupied Polish or Soviet territories, the author assumes that it was similar to that of other Europeans at the time. In this respect a contemporary article⁹⁶ reveals that the average weight of Scottish males in 1941 was 138.2 lb (62.7 kg), while a recent online article⁹⁷ informs that "The women in the 40's weighed an average 61 kg while the women of today weigh an average 65 kg." Assuming that adults on transports to Sobibor were equally divided into men and women (actually women predominated on transports from the Netherlands, according to Schelvis)⁹⁸; their average weight was thus about 62 kg.⁹⁹ Assuming that children weighed half that much¹⁰⁰, their average weight was about 31 kg.

Considering the aforementioned calculations regarding deportees from the occupied Polish or Soviet territories, the average weight of deportees to Sobibor can thus be established as shown in Table 8.2 below.

The figures for all other four camps, assuming an average weight of 34 kg for Belzec, Treblinka and Chełmno and of 48 kg for Sobibor, would thus be approximately as shown in Table 8.3 below.

⁹⁵ See Chapter 3.

⁹⁶ E.M.B. Clements and Kathleen G. Picket, 'Body-Weight Of Men Related To Stature, Age And Social Status. Weight Of Scotsmen Measured In 1941', *Brit. J. prev. soc. Med.*, (1954) 8, pp.99-107, online under <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1058543/pdf/brjprevsmed00035-0019.pdf> . The average weight for all age groups is stated in Table I on p.100.

⁹⁷ 'Women's Anatomy - The 40s and the present', <http://hubpages.com/hub/Women-have-matured-with-age-indeed>.

⁹⁸ As note 94.

⁹⁹ $(63 + 61) \div 2 = 62$.

¹⁰⁰ MGK claim that children in long-range transports from outside the occupied Polish or Soviet territories were predominantly above the age of ten and that their weight was thus about half that of adults (MGK, *Sobibór*, p. 132).

Table 8.2

Origin	Number of adults	Average weight of adults kg	Total weight of adults kg	Number of children	Average weight of children kg	Total weight of children kg	Number of deportees	Average weight of deportees kg	Total weight of deportees kg
GG and Soviet Union	45,457	43.0	1,954,651	22,729	16.0	363,664	68,186	34.0	2,318,315
Other places of origin	85,495	62.0	5,300,690	16,484	31.0	511,004	101,979	57.0	5,811,694
	130,952		7,255,341	39,213		874,668	170,165	47.8	8,130,009

Table 8.3

Camp	Number of deportees	Average weight of deportees kg	Total weight of deportees kg
Belzec	435,000	34	14,790,000
Sobibór	170,000	48	8,160,000
Treblinka	789,000	34	26,826,000
Chelmno	157,000	34	5,338,000
	1,551,000		55,114,000

How much wood was required to burn this mass of human bones and tissue?

This question takes us to the second parameter of logistical feasibility, the amount of wood or wood equivalent required for cremation per kg of cremated corpse mass. Mattogno, who conducted various experiments burning small amounts of animal flesh, claims that he used 3.5 kg of dry wood per kg of cremated flesh and holds that this ratio reflects wood requirements when burning animal carcasses or human corpses.¹⁰¹ In their *Sobibór* book, MGK present several data from the burning of animal carcasses or human corpses that point to similar ratios¹⁰², while not taking into account sources whereby the wood weight to carcass/corpse weight ratio can be much lower. The data they don't take into account include the following, without limitation:

- a) The Texas Animal Health Commission's General Guidelines for the Disposal of Carcasses dated January 2005¹⁰³;

¹⁰¹ Carlo Mattogno, 'Combustion Experiments with Flesh and Animal Fat on cremations in pits in the alleged extermination camps of the Third Reich', *The Revisionist* 2/1, pp.64-72.

¹⁰² MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.133-136.

¹⁰³ Online under

http://web.archive.org/web/20060929080547/http://www.aphis.usda.gov/NCIE/oie/pdf_files/tahc-carcass-disp-jan05.pdf . MGK (*Sobibór*, p.135) claim that the only reliable data regarding fuel requirements in (open-air) carcass burning refer to the use air curtain burners, devices for the cremation of carcasses that consist of a burner and a powerful blower linked to an enclosure of refractory material or to a ditch into which the carcasses are placed. They mention a case in which the burning of 16.1 tons of carcasses required 49 tons of timber with

- b) The fuel requirements recommendations of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations¹⁰⁴, which according to the author's calculations, converting various types of fuel into wood equivalents¹⁰⁵ imply a wood to carcass ratio of 1.84:1;
- c) The burning of 600 rams and 218 other sheep carried out in March 2001 near Lille, France, with a wood to carcass ratio of 2.19:1 using dry wood and 2.41:1 using fresh wood¹⁰⁶;
- d) Other incineration cases mentioned by fellow Revisionist Heinrich Köchel,

an average humidity of about 20 percent, a wood weight to carcass weight ratio of 3.04 to 1. However, air Curtain incinerators are not noted for fuel efficiency, according to the TAHC's aforementioned General Guidelines for the Disposal of Carcasses, whereby air curtain incineration is "fuel intensive" (p.9). These guidelines on the other hand mention fuel-to-carcass ratio much lower than MGK claim for the experiment they mention: "The materials required are wood (in a wood: carcass ratio of from 1:1 to 2:1), diesel fuel for both the fire and the air-curtain fan, and properly trained personnel. For incineration of 500 adult swine, the requirements are 30 cords of dry wood and 200 gallons of diesel fuel." (p.8) The mentioned ratios are in line with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)/TAHC report on an experiment of burning swine carcasses at Pilot Point, Texas, on 19-20 December 1994, available under http://www.airburners.com/DATA-FILES_Tech/ab_swine_report.pdf. They are also in line with a communication sent to the author by Mr. Norbert Fuhrmann, sales manager of Air Burners LLC in Florida, USA, which is quoted in Muehlenkamp, 'Carlo Mattogno on Belzec Archaeological Research - Part 4 (2)'. According to Mr. Fuhrmann: "A good rule of thumb is that you need roughly in tons the same amount of wood waste as the weight of the carcasses for bovines, pigs, horses, sheep, etc. For 5 tons of carcasses you need 4-5 tons of wood waste." These equally reliable sources conveniently omitted by MGK show that carcasses can be burned at a much lower wood-weight-to-carcass-weight ratio than in the cases they mention.

¹⁰⁴ William A. Geering, Mary-Louise Penrith, David Nyakahuma, *Manual on Procedures for Disease Eradication by Stamping Out*, FAO Animal Health Manual, Part 2, Chapter 3 'Methods of Disposal', available at <http://www.fao.org/DOCREP/004/Y0660E/Y0660E02.htm#ch2.3>.

¹⁰⁵ Muehlenkamp, 'Belzec Mass Graves and Archaeology: My Response to Carlo Mattogno (4,2)'. MGK (*Sobibór*, p.135) claim that this and other directives "cannot be utilized as such, either because they also mention fuels other than wood (straw, coal, liquid fuels) or because they refer to the initial layout of the pyre, allowing for the addition of fuel depending upon the progress of the incineration" – hardly a convincing argument insofar as the wood-weight equivalents of fuels other than wood can be calculated and the theoretical possibility to add additional fuel doesn't mean that any more fuel than recommended in the directives was or needs to be used. This argumentation, however, doesn't keep MGK from trying to use one such directive to their advantage, as they refer to IAEA guidelines for carcass burning (Mercer J.A., Hesketh N., Hunt J., Oughton D.H, 'Burning of Carcasses', online under [http://www-infocris.iaea.org/en/w3.exe\\$EAFull?ID=67](http://www-infocris.iaea.org/en/w3.exe$EAFull?ID=67)) to claim that 350 kg of ashes per ton of animal from the burning of a beef carcass, mentioned in that article, contain 60 kg of carcass ash (6 % of 1,000 kg) and 290 kg of wood ash, which are supposed to correspond to $(290 \div 0.08 =) 3,625$ kg of wood, signifying a wood-to-carcass weight ratio of 3.6 to 1. This calculation fails to consider the fact that solid flammables other than wood (namely coal) are used in the procedure recommended by Mercer et al, besides the possibility that the carcass residue factor in cremation according to this procedure was higher than assumed by MGK. For further discussion of this issue see the section regarding cremation remains below.

¹⁰⁶ According to the author's calculations in Muehlenkamp, 'Belzec Response 4 (2)'. MGK (*Sobibór*, p.136) mention the incineration of 2,268 tons of poultry carcasses in Virginia by means of 10,000 tons of wood, a wood weight to carcass weight ratio of 4.4 to 1. However, a look at M&G's source (Peer, Robert W., Gary A. Flory and Eric S. Bendfeldt, 'Incineration of Mass Quantities of Poultry Carcasses: Lessons Learned from the Virginia Avian Influenza Outbreak in 2002', online under <http://www.deq.virginia.gov/export/sites/default/vpa/pdf/CarcassIncinerationPres-NatCarcassDisposalSymp-12-2006.pdf>) shows that incineration of poultry carcasses can hardly be taken as a representative case. For according to the contractor hired to burn the poultry carcasses, the same were difficult to burn - more difficult than swine "because the swine have more fat and do not have feathers that can retain water". In this particular case, furthermore, the quality of the wood used left much to be desired: "rotted wood", "small diameter (brush)", "saturated wood", "too much metal". The management of the operation was also not the most efficient, leading MGK's source to point out that "Once the fire has reached operating temperatures, carcasses need to be loaded across the length of the fire box to avoid cooling of the fire by "clumps" of cool carcasses" - apparently this was not possible because the contractor didn't have "enough trained operators to load no more than 2 - 3 hours per shift."

which according to Mattogno show that a wood or wood equivalent weight of 140 kg is required to burn a human corpse weighing 70 kg, i.e. a wood-to-corpse weight ratio of 2:1¹⁰⁷;

e) The Mokshda Green Cremation System, an innovative device introduced in India for human funeral pyres with the express objective of considerably reducing fuel consumption.¹⁰⁸ The description suggests that it's a rather simple device, and an open-air pyre rather than a cremation oven¹⁰⁹. It should also be noted that its inventor, Vinod Kumar Agarwal, thinks it should be possible to burn a human body with no more than 22 kg of wood (ratio assuming a body weight of 70 kg as Mattogno does: 0.31 to 1), and that he managed with 100 kg per body (ratio: 1.43 to 1) using the "raised human size brazier" he unsuccessfully (obviously not because of its efficiency but because it failed to gain acceptance among tradition-minded Hindus) tried to introduce in 1993. An essential feature of this brazier was its elevation, which "allowed air to circulate and feed the fire".¹¹⁰

However, MGK's most grievous omission in this context concerns a source that has not only been mentioned by the author on several occasions¹¹¹, but was also first pointed out, ironically, by Carlo Mattogno himself. In his otherwise unremarkable article about his combustion experiments with flesh and animal fat¹¹², Mattogno did his critics the favor of copiously quoting the writings of German engineer Wilhelm Heepke. Particularly interesting in Heepke's writings quoted by Mattogno is the reference to burning experiments carried out in the early 20th Century by two German veterinarians, Dr. Lothes and Dr. Profé of Cologne.

¹⁰⁷ Mattogno, 'Controversie', p.30, referring to Heinrich Köchel, «Leichenverbrennung im Freien», in: *Vierteljahreshefte für freie Geschichtsforschung*, 8 /4, 2004, pp. 427-432; Mattogno, 'Controversy'.

¹⁰⁸ Jeremy Elton Jacquot, 'More Eco-Friendly Funeral Pyres Introduced in India', 6.12.2007, http://www.treehugger.com/files/2007/06/more_eco-friendly_funeral_pyres.php; Bruce Wallace, 'Hindus Urged to Adopt "Green" Cremation', *Los Angeles Times*, 3.9.2007, <http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/la-fg-ashes3sep03.1.1746700.story>; Tripti Lahiri, "New 'green' pyre to cool planet while burning India's dead" AFP, 13.6.2007, <http://www.livemint.com/2007/06/13003051/New-green-pyre-to-cool-plane.html>; Aarti Dhar, 'Making funeral pyres eco-friendly', *The Hindu*, 15.5.2005, <http://www.hindu.com/2005/05/15/stories/2005051504721000.htm>.

¹⁰⁹ "Wood is integral to Hindu cremation rites, a symbolic connection between the body and the earth, which is why the first layer of wood is laid on the ground. The Mokshda system's innovation is to place that first layer of wood on a raised metal grate, allowing for better air circulation. A chimney is placed over the pyre to cut heat loss." (Wallace, as previous note)

¹¹⁰ Jacquot, 'More Eco-Friendly Funeral Pyres'. MGK (*Sobibór*, p.133ff.) mention the Mokshda Green Cremation System together with a cremation oven known as the *Teri* apparatus and an "improved open fire system using a metal grate" known as the "Fuel Efficient Crematorium". Combustion efficiency is best in the *Teri* oven, with a wood weight to corpse weight ratio of 1.8 to one; next comes the Mokshda Green Cremation System with a ratio of 2.14 to 1, a combustion efficiency that MGK consider "good", and the "Fuel Efficient Crematorium" with a ratio of 3.9 to 1, which means "poor" fuel efficiency for MGK. The latter is postulated to be a standard value for the cremation of corpses on the grates at Sobibor, without MGK explaining on what basis, other than convenience, they consider the comparatively inefficient "Fuel Efficient Crematorium" to be what most resembles the grates of Sobibor. On page 6 of MGK's source about the Mokshda Green Cremation System ('Global Environment Facility', CEO's notification to GEF Council Members dd. March 13, 2008, online under http://207.190.239.148/uploadedFiles/India_Mokshda_Green_Cremation_System.pdf), one reads that "due to unscientific design, poor quality of material of construction [...], such IWC could not achieve the desired fuel efficiency [...]." Aren't the camp's SS supervisors supposed to have done things efficiently?

¹¹¹ Muehlenkamp, 'Belzec Response 4 (2)'; 'Animal Carcass Burning Experiments by Dr. Lothes and Dr. Profé', <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2009/12/animal-carcass-burning-experiments-by.html>.

¹¹² Mattogno, 'Experiments'.

These professionals managed to burn carcasses on grids over pits in a rather short time and with rather low fuel expenditure, their most satisfactory results being achieved by a method in which a pit was excavated from the sole of a larger pit and the carcass was placed on a grid upon the inner, smaller pit (which contained the burning material ignited to set the carcass on fire) below ground inside the outer, larger pit.

There are some striking similarities between the carcass burning methods applied by Dr. Lothes and Dr. Profé on the one hand and the methods applied for burning the corpses of those murdered at the *Aktion Reinhard* extermination camps Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka, which come across as applications on an enormous scale of Dr. Lothes and Dr. Profé's methods, or some of those methods. The Sobibor roasters, according to the evidence on which the Hagen court based its findings of fact, were inside a pit. The Hagen court's description quoted earlier in this chapter is reminiscent of the grid burning procedure that Heepke considered the most efficient, that with the grid inside the pit.

As concerns Treblinka, the above-quoted descriptions of the cremation devices in the judgments at the Düsseldorf trials of Treblinka commandant Franz Stangl and Treblinka staff members Kurt Franz et al, and by Ukrainian guard Pavel Vladimirovich Leleko, mention a pit underneath the grid in which a fire was lit in order to set the corpses on the grid on fire. The procedure adopted at Treblinka seems to have been similar to those of Dr. Lothes & Dr. Profé's experiments in which the carcass was placed on a pit above ground, except that at Treblinka there was a space between the bottom of the grid and the top of the pit, corresponding to the above-ground height of the concrete blocks mentioned by Leleko and at the trial of Franz et al. The reason for this is not clear, but it is possible that the creator of this structure wanted more air assisting the incineration than was provided by the grid structure anyway. The importance of good air circulation has been mentioned above in connection with the "raised human size brazier" that the inventor of the Mokshda Green Cremation System tried to introduce in 1993. It should also be pointed out that a very abundant supply of air is what makes for high temperatures and very complete combustion in air curtain incineration.¹¹³

As concerns Belzec and Chełmno, not much is known about the configuration of the grid cremation facilities used at these camps, but it stands to reason that it must have been similar to the one at Sobibor or at Treblinka, as mentioned before. If the open-air incineration systems applied at the *Aktion Reinhard* camps and at Chełmno were versions of the grid-

¹¹³ Alan R. Shapiro, 'The Use of Air Curtain Destructors for Fuel Reduction', <http://www.fs.fed.us/eng/pubs/html/02511317/02511317.htm>.

burning systems described by Heepke on a massive, enormous scale, this means that cremation of corpses at the Nazi extermination camps may have been done with at least the same fuel efficiency that was achieved by veterinarians Dr. Lothes and Dr. Profé of Cologne, who obtained the following results:

Experiment I (carcass placed on pit above ground): 4.5 E.U. per kg of carcass (= 0.5 kg of wood per kg of carcass)

Experiment II (carcass placed on pit above ground): 3.88 E.U. per kg of carcass (= 0.43 kg of wood per kg of carcass)

Experiment III (carcass placed on pit above ground): 6.75 E.U. per kg of carcass (= 0.75 kg of wood per kg of carcass)

Average of experiments I to III: 5.04 E.U. per kg of carcass (= **0.56 kg** of wood per kg of carcass)

Experiment IV (carcass placed on inner pit below ground): 3.65 E.U. per kg of carcass (= 0.41 kg of wood per kg of carcass)

Experiment V (carcass placed on inner pit below ground): 4.76 E.U. per kg of carcass (= 0.53 kg of wood per kg of carcass)

Experiment VI (carcass placed on inner pit below ground): 4.50 E.U. per kg of carcass (= 0.5 kg of wood per kg of carcass)

Average of experiments IV to VI: 4.30 E.U. per kg of carcass (= **0.48 kg** of wood per kg of carcass)¹¹⁴

The effect of higher quantities of carcass mass on the fuel-to-carcass ratio is visible in the data from animal incinerators shown in Heepke's Table 3¹¹⁵:

Type of Oven	Maximum Load (kg)	Coal Consumption (kg)	Kg of Fuel per Kg of Carcass
1a	250	110	0.44
1b	310	130	0.42
2a	370	150	0.41
2b	450	170	0.38
3a	540	200	0.37
3b	650	225	0.35
4a	750	265	0.35
4b	900	300	0.33
6a	70	50	0.71
6b	100	60	0.60

¹¹⁴ See Muehlenkamp, 'Animal Carcass Burning'.

¹¹⁵ Mattogno, 'Experiments'; table shown under <http://www.vho.org/tr/2004/1/Tabelle3.gif>

If, as these data suggest, the incineration of numerous carcasses requires less fuel per kg of carcass than the incineration of just one carcass, it stands to reason that the rates achieved by Dr. Lothes and Dr. Profé could also be improved upon when incinerating not one, but several hundred carcasses. It would also not be surprising, under this assumption, if mass incineration of corpses at the Nazi extermination camps achieved better fuel consumption rates than the grid burning experiments conducted by these two veterinarians.

Mattogno has a problem with Dr. Lothes and Dr. Profé's experiment results referred to by Heepke, insofar as they point to the possibility of burning animal carcasses and human corpses with comparatively small amounts of wood. He tried to solve this problem by assuming that Dr. Lothes and Dr. Profé had not achieved a complete combustion of the carcasses but only "more or less complete carbonization", and by burning small chunks of meat in his backyard to demonstrate a weight-to-weight ratio more suitable to his argumentation, which he postulated as being a "more reliable" indicator of fuel consumption in cremating animal carcasses or human corpses.¹¹⁶

However, Mattogno could have saved himself the trouble of his experiments, the results of which (if accurately rendered by Mattogno) are irrelevant because the experiments were carried out with small amounts of flesh and bone (data from mass cremation of animal carcasses would have been a better basis) and according to methods somewhat different and obviously much less efficient than those applied by Lothes & Profé, if he had obtained the contemporary article written by the two veterinarians¹¹⁷, in which the results of their experiments are described throughout as "complete combustion" (*vollständige Verbrennung*) of the respective carcass. What exactly is meant by "complete combustion" becomes apparent from the veterinarians' detailed description of one of their experiments on July 15, 1902 (author's translation and emphasis):

On 15 July the skinned carcass of a horse together with the viscera, weighing 12 cwt, was burned in an open fire. The fire was burning inside a pit about 1 meter deep. The carcass was placed on two iron T-carriers two meters long placed across the pit. Besides low amounts of straw 2 cwt of wood, 3 cwt of briquettes and 25 kg of coal tar served as burning material. At first a ½ cwt of wood and 1 cwt of briquettes were set on fire below the carcass drenched in tar, the remaining part of the burning material being gradually added as necessary. The whole thing was set on fire at 6 hours in the afternoon. In the following afternoon at 2 hours,

¹¹⁶ Mattogno, 'Experiments'.

¹¹⁷ Dr. Lothes und Dr. Profé, 'Zur unschädlichen Beseitigung von Thiercadavern auf dem Wege der Verbrennung', *Berliner Thierärztliche Wochenschrift*, Nr.37, 1902, pp.557-560, online translation and digital copy under <http://rodohforum.yuku.com/topic/10353>.

that is 20 hours later, **only a weakly smoking heap of ashes was left**. The smoke developed was considerable only as long as the tar was burning. The costs were 2.40 marks for 2 cwt of wood (at 1.20 marks per unit), 2.10 marks for 3 cwt of briquettes (at 0.70 marks per unit) and 2.25 marks for 25 kg of coal tar (at 0.09 marks per unit), altogether 6.75 marks.

The carcass was reduced to a weakly smoking heap of ashes, and it is unlikely than any lesser result would have satisfied Lothes & Profé, considering that they were looking for a means to render harmless the carcasses of animals killed by anthrax. As the authors pointed out in their article, anthrax bacilli can form extraordinarily resistant spores, which can remain in the soil for "years and decades." As experimentally demonstrated by Lothes & Profé, these bacilli are able to survive in dry spleen pulp and to pass with the help of water through strata six feet thick of very compact sand and gravel in about thirty hours. One therefore shouldn't take any chances with anthrax bacilli, but Lothes & Profé were confident of having developed a method whereby it would be possible to safely destroy anthrax carcasses with relatively limited means - and also in a rather short time, at least when applying the "double pit" burning method they recommended. The experiments of Lothes & Profé were duly noted at the time also outside Germany, as is shown by an excerpt from the 1902 Eighth Annual Report of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.¹¹⁸

The conclusions that the above leads to are the following:

- a) Fuel expenditure in cremating corpses or carcasses essentially depends on applying the correct method.
- b) MGK presented no arguments that would make a wood weight to corpse/carcass weight ratio of 2:1 seem inappropriate.
- c) There are good reasons to assume that the fuel-weight to carcass-weight ratio achieved in burning corpses at Nazi extermination camps was much lower than 2:1. Aggarwal's "raised human-sized brazier" may have achieved a ratio of 100 kg of wood vs. 70 kg of corpse = 1.43:1, and the carcass-burning experiments I to III conducted by Dr. Lothes and Dr. Profé in the early 20th Century (the comparatively *less* fuel-efficient of their experiments) achieved an average ratio of 0.56:1. Descriptions of the burning process at Sobibor actually suggest a similarity to the more fuel-efficient of Dr. Lothes & Dr. Profé's experiments, the ones at which a ratio of 0.48:1 was achieved.

¹¹⁸ Online transcription and digital copy under <http://rodohforum.yuku.com/reply/239538/t/About-the-Safe-Removal-of-Animal-Carcasses-through-Burning.html#reply-239538>.

d) There's no reason why SS expert Floss (the man who according to the Stangl judgment "brought the grid into the right position"¹¹⁹ at Treblinka) could not have achieved in mass burning a ratio equal to or lower than what had been achieved by Dr. Lothes & Dr. Profé burning individual carcasses in the early 20th century.

Therefore the ratio of 0.56:1 that the veterinarians achieved in the comparatively less fuel-efficient of their experiments – ignoring the possibility of a lower ratio at Sobibor, for good measure – shall in the following be considered as the likely expression of wood or wood-equivalent expenditure on cremation grids at Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka and Chelmno, as soon as they had been properly arranged.

The importance of bringing the grid into the "right position", one that provided for good air circulation and in which the corpses burned largely on their own combustible substances because they were suspended over a fire fed by body fat, is illustrated by the experimental burning of two carcasses in two different cars described in a 1969 scientific article by Bruce V. Ettlting.¹²⁰ One of the experimental carcasses burned rather incompletely whereas the other was mostly consumed by fire. The reason for the difference was that the latter carcass "was still suspended on the seat springs with a lot of char and ash underneath. The fat being rendered from the carcass dripped onto the char which acted like a candle wick and kept the fat burning." This burning rendered more fat, which in turn kept alive the fire consuming the carcass. Ettlting concluded that a carcass, and presumably also a human body, "can be rather thoroughly consumed by fire from its own fat", a necessary condition being that "the body be suspended in such a way that it is over the fire which is fed from the body fat". He drew the following parallel with burning procedures at the Aktion Reinhard camps (emphasis added):

Some related information was found in an article concerning a Nazi extermination camp and its trouble destroying the corpses (3). Burning gasoline on piles of corpses on the ground did not consume the corpses. **Eventually an "expert" was brought in who arranged the bodies on a rack with the corpses that appeared to contain some fat being placed on the bottom of the pile. A good fire beneath the rack caused fat to drip down and burn. The corpses which were thus over the fire instead of on the ground were reduced to ashes.**¹²¹

Considering the numbers and average weights of corpses to be burned established above (Table 8.3), the amounts of wood required for cremation would thus be as shown in

¹¹⁹ LG Düsseldorf vom 22.12.1970, 8 Ks 1/69.

¹²⁰ Bruce V. Ettlting, 'Consumption of an Animal Carcass in a Fire', *The Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology, and Police Science*, Vol. 60, No. 1, Mar., 1969, pp.131-132.

¹²¹ Ibid. The Nazi extermination camp source referred to by Ettlting is Jean-Francois Steiner, *The Revolt at Treblinka*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1967.

Table 8.4. The average life weights of deportees¹²² and the wood weight to corpse weight ratio assumed by MGK lead to considerably higher wood requirements, as also shown in this table for the same numbers of deportees.

Table 8.4

Camp	Number of deportees	Average weight of deportees kg	Total weight of deportees kg	Wood weight per kg of corpse weight, kg	Total weight of required wood kg
Belzec	435,000	34	14,790,000	0.56	8,282,400
MGK	435,000	55	23,925,000	3.50	83,737,500
Sobibór	170,000	48	8,160,000	0.56	4,569,600
MGK	170,000	60	10,200,000	3.50	35,700,000
Treblinka	789,000	34	26,826,000	0.56	15,022,560
MGK	789,000	55	43,395,000	3.50	151,882,500
Chelmno	157,000	34	5,338,000	0.56	2,989,280
MGK	157,000	60	9,420,000	3.50	32,970,000
	1,551,000		55,114,000		30,863,840
MGK	1,551,000		86,940,000		304,290,000

The conclusion is that one would overestimate wood requirements by a factor of almost ten using the life weights and wood to corpse weight ratios assumed by MGK. To be fair, it should be pointed out that regarding Chelmno, Belzec and Treblinka the respective authors (Mattogno in the former two cases, Mattogno & Graf in the latter) don't use the corpses' assumed life weight for their calculations but what they claim was the corpses' decomposed weight – 45 kg.¹²³ This leads to the question what impact the corpses' decomposition - the corpses at Belzec, most of the corpses at Treblinka and a significant part of the corpses at Sobibor and Chelmno were in some stage of the decomposition process at the time of cremation – is likely to have had on wood requirements for cremation.

In the later stages of the decomposition process, butyric fermentation and dry decay¹²⁴, a corpse is left without most, and finally without all, of the water that makes up most of the human organism.¹²⁵ One would expect this to positively influence external fuel

¹²² Regarding Belzec, see above Mattogno, 'Controversie', p.14. As Mattogno here explained the calculations underlying his assumption regarding the maximum capacity of the mass graves (8 corpses per cubic meter), which is stated in Mattogno & Graf's Treblinka book (M&G, *Treblinka*, p.137), the live weight he considered for Belzec was also used for the Treblinka calculations in Table 8.4. Regarding Sobibor, see MGK, *Sobibór*, p.136. Regarding Chelmno, Mattogno mentions an average weight of 60 kg (Mattogno, *Chelmno*, p.114).

¹²³ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.145.

¹²⁴ Australian Museum webpage, 'Stages of Decomposition', <http://australianmuseum.net.au/Stages-of-Decomposition>; 'Butyric fermentation', <http://australianmuseum.net.au/image/Butyric-fermentation-20-to-50-days>; 'Dry decay', <http://australianmuseum.net.au/image/Dry-decay-50-365-days>. See also the further sources mentioned in Muehlenkamp, 'Belzec Response 4 (2)'.
¹²⁵ The human body is 61.8 percent water by weight. Protein accounts for 16.6 percent; fat, 14.9 percent; and nitrogen, 3.3 percent of human body weight. Other elements constitute smaller percentages of body weight. Webpage 'The Human Body - What Percent Of Human Body Weight Is Water?', <http://www.enotes.com/science-fact-finder/human-body/what-percent-human-body-weight-water>. According to a German encyclopedia site (<http://www.seilnacht.com/Lexikon/Wasser.htm>), a human being weighing 70 kg

requirements in two respects, one being the much lower mass to be burned and the other that little or no heat is expended in evaporating body water. This assumption is supported by evidence whereby at Treblinka extermination camp corpses removed from the graves required less fuel for burning than fresh corpses.¹²⁶

Exactly the contrary is maintained by Mattogno, Graf and Kues, who argue that the positive effect of dehydration on the cremation heat balance would have been offset by a simultaneous loss of fat:

Assuming that the human body consists on average of 64% water, 14% fat and 15.3% proteins,⁴⁰⁵ a corpse of 60 kg contains 34.80 kg of water, 8.40 kg of fat, and 9.18 kg of proteins.

The heat consumption for the evaporation of body water and the superheating of the steam to 800°C thus amounts to $[640+(0.493\times 700)]\approx 986$ kcal for 1 kg of water. Animal fat has a heating value of some 9,500 kcal/kg, hence, in the thermal balance the heat added by 1 kg of fat is equal to the heat lost by the vaporization of $(9,500\div 986=)$ 9.6 kg of water. For the proteins with a heat value of about 5,400 kcal/kg this ratio is roughly 1:5.5 in terms of weight.

Therefore, even assuming an extreme case where the alleged corpses at Sobibor would have lost their total water content over a period of 4 months, the heat of vaporization thus saved would have been $38.4\times [640+(0.493\times 700)]\approx 37,800$ kcal for each corpse.

To balance this saving in heat, a loss of, say, 40% of body fat and 12% of proteins would have been sufficient: $[(0.4\times 8.4\times 9,500) + (0.12\times 9.18\times 5,400)]$ circa 37,800 kcal.¹²⁷

The above looks quite "scientific" and is probably correct – under the assumption that the corpse's weight remains unchanged and the corpse's calorific value, expressed in kcal/kg, thus remains the same.

Of course this is not so. As shown in Table 8.5 below, MGK's 60 kg corpse has a total heating value of 91,509.60 kCal and a heating value per weight unit of 1,525.16 kCal/kg, assuming MGK's distribution by water, fat and protein, the heating values per weight unit they give for each of these substances and that the 4.02 kg of body weight that are neither water nor fat nor protein are neither an asset (like fat and protein) nor a liability (like water) in the heat balance. Now the body loses all its water, 40 % of its fat and 12 % of its proteins

carries around 42 kg of water, which means that its corpse, after the water has left it, will weigh only about 28 kg or about 40 % of its original weight.

¹²⁶ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.175: "At first an inflammable liquid was poured onto the bodies to help them burn, but later this was considered unnecessary; the SS men in charge of the cremation became convinced that the corpses burned well enough without extra fuel." P.176: The bodies of victims brought to Treblinka in transports arriving after the body-burning began were taken directly from the gas chambers of the roasters and were not buried in the ditches. These bodies did not burn as well as those removed from the ditches and had to be sprayed with fuel before they would burn."

¹²⁷ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.137f.

as per MGK's example. As MGK seem to assume that all three substances vanish completely, this of course also means that the corpse's weight is reduced accordingly. We thus get what is shown in Table 8.6. With zero water, 60 % of its original fat and 88 % of its original proteins, the body now weighs just 17.14 kg and has a total heating value of 91,503.36 kCal and a heating value per weight unit of 5,339.08 kCal/kg - very close to that of protein (and not far below that of coking coal¹²⁸) and 3.5 times higher than the heating value per unit of the fresh, un-dehydrated body.

Table 8.5				Table 8.6			
Substance	Weight in	Heating	Total	Substance	Weight in	Heating	Total
		value per	heating			value per	heating
		weight unit	value			weight unit	value
	kg	(kCal/kg)	(kCal)		kg	(kCal/kg)	(kCal)
Water	38.40	-986.00	-37,862.40	Water		-986.00	
Fat	8.40	9,500.00	79,800.00	Fat	5.04	9,500.00	47,880.00
Protein	9.18	5,400.00	49,572.00	Protein	8.08	5,400.00	43,623.36
Other substances	4.02			Other substances	4.02		
	60.00	1,525.16	91,509.60		17.14	5,339.08	91,503.36

Are MGK trying to tell their readers that burning a corpse with a heating value of 5,339.08 kCal/kg requires the same amount of wood per kg as does burning a corpse with a heating value of just 1,525.16 kCal/kg? Of course fat and proteins don't just disappear, unlike the body fluids that seep into the soil. They are transformed into glycerol and fatty acids, as MGK themselves point out.¹²⁹ Glycerol and fatty acids (the latter including butyric acid, which at the stage of butyric fermentation gives corpses or carcasses a cheesy smell¹³⁰) are flammable substances with a considerable calorific value¹³¹, which means that the heat balance asset of fat and protein is (to put it conservatively) not completely lost when both break down. The correctness of the above reasoning is confirmed by the fact that only very low amounts of additional fuel are required to burn carcasses reduced to only their bones.¹³²

Mattogno, Graf & Kues present an example supposedly corroborating their claim that burning decomposed corpses requires no less or even more fuel than burning fresh bodies.

¹²⁸ International Energy Agency webpage 'Coal' (<http://www.iea.org/stats/defs/sources/coal.asp>): "Coking coal refers to coal with a quality that allows the production of a coke suitable to support a blast furnace charge. Its gross calorific value is greater than 23 865 kJ/kg (5 700 kcal/kg) on an ash-free but moist basis."

¹²⁹ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.137.

¹³⁰ <http://australianmuseum.net.au/image/Butyric-fermentation-20-to-50-days>

¹³¹ See the sources mentioned in Muehlenkamp, 'Belzec Response 4 (2)', n.253.

¹³² See the examples mentioned in Muehlenkamp, 'Belzec Response 4 (2)', especially the technical report 'Elimination of the carcasses of animals that have died from anthrax',

http://www.laboratorioazul.com.ar/laboratorioazul/html/carbunclo/eliminacion_de_cadaveres_muertos_por_carbunclo_%28ingles%29.html.

The burning of 21,000 decomposing carcasses at Epynt in Wales between April 24 and the end of August 2001, they write, required an amount of fuel and a timeframe far in excess of those that had been observed with fresh carcasses.¹³³ However, a look at the source referred to reveals that this claim is a half-truth at best. The Epynt Enquiry Report¹³⁴ describes a rather disastrous, badly mismanaged procedure on page 4. After a failed attempt to burn them in the burial pit, the carcasses were moved to the burn site "in their deteriorated state, mixed with mud and stones." The pyre temperature was too low for safe burning, for the pyre "was built on the flat with no trench to create the draft usually necessary to ensure high temperatures for burning." Moreover the pyre "was in fact over 400 metres long (whereas according to the EA's report it should have been 250 metres long) and was so wide that the machines used to stoke up the fire could not reach the centre which left much of the carcasses only partly burnt." Those machines caught fire themselves, leading to the use of "fire hydrants alongside the pyres to douse down burning machines."

One can see that the outrageously high fuel expenditure¹³⁵ was due to several factors at play here besides the deterioration of the carcasses.¹³⁶ First of all, the carcasses in their deteriorated state were burned together with mud and stones, meaning that the coal expenditure was not due to the carcasses alone. Second, the pyre was inadequately wide and didn't allow for air circulation, which rendered the burning very inefficient. Third, fire hydrants alongside the pyre dousing down burning machines would hardly have improved the already low burning efficiency. In sum, this showpiece of incompetence can hardly be used as evidence in support of the counterintuitive proposition that burning decomposed corpses requires more fuel than burning fresh ones.

A more pertinent argument of the Revisionist authors is derived from the so-called Minnesota Starvation Experiment (November 1944 through December 1945), in which 36 volunteers underwent a restricted diet over 24 weeks and saw their weight dropping from an initial average 69.4 kg in the last week of the control period to 52.6 kg at the end of 24 weeks of semi-starvation, a loss of 16.8 kg. Water eventually represented 37 % of the lost body

¹³³ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.138.

¹³⁴ Available for download as a Word document at <http://epynt-disaster.co.uk/enquiry.doc>.

¹³⁵ In this respect the report contains contradictory information, first mentioning 4,000 tons of coal for the burning of 21,000 carcasses weighing 1,050 tons and then speaking of 20,000 tons of ash, an amount well in excess of the combined weight of carcasses and coal.

¹³⁶ As concerns the carcasses' deterioration, it is possible that the previous failed attempt to burn them, rather than decomposition, was the main hindrance factor in this respect. According to "the intelligent woman's guide to cremation" (<http://www.cremate-me.net/process2.html>), people who have died in fires are difficult to cremate "as the charring makes a crust that doesn't ignite well."

mass (6.2 kg), protein 9 % (1.5 kg) and fat 54 % (9.1 kg).¹³⁷ MGK argue that "the loss of 6.2 kg of body water saves some $6.2 \times (640 + 0.493 \times 700) = 100$ kcal in terms of fuel requirements, as opposed to a loss of available fuel of $(9.1 \times 9,500 + 1.5 \times 5,400) \approx 94,500$ kcal caused by the loss of body fat and proteins. This results in a negative balance of some 88,400 kcal, the equivalent of 23 kg of dry wood."¹³⁸ MGK are right, of course in that burning the fresh corpse of a person that has lost most of its fat but a lesser part of its water due to malnutrition will require more wood and/or other external fuel than burning the fresh corpse of a person with a normal fat and water content, even though the mass and weight to be burned has been reduced. Quantifying how much more wood is required, however, must take into account the weight loss and the impact thereof on the calorific value in kCal/kg.

Table 8.7 shows the original weight of the *Minnesota Starvation Experiment* (MSE) test subjects, broken down into water, fat, protein and other substances according to the ratio applied earlier by MGK (64 % water, 14 % fat and 15.3 % proteins, other substances the balance between the sum of these three substances' weight and the test persons' original weight of 69.4 kg). It is assumed that burning such corpse on a grid with the method applied by Dr. Lothes & Dr. Profé, and arguably on a much larger scale at the *Aktion Reinhard* camps, would take 0.56 kg of wood per kg of corpse weight, or 38.86 kg of wood in total. In the above-quoted statement MGK consider 23 kg of wood to correspond to 88,400 kcal, which means that they are assuming wood with a calorific value of 3,843.48 kCal/kg. 0.56 hereof is 2,152.35, which raises the corpse's calorific value per weight unit from 1,525.16 to 3,677.51 kCal/kg. This is assumed to be the calorific value per weight unit at which the normal-weight corpse combusts.

In the next table (8.8), the corpse has the weight of an MSE test person at the end of the experiment (52.6 kg) after losing 6.2 kg of water, 1.5 kg of protein and 9.1 kg of fat. It's calorific value per weight unit is down to 330.98 kCal/kg, which means that wood must contribute an additional 3,346.53 kCal/kg to reach the 3,677.51 kCal/kg required for combusting the corpse. These 3,346.53 kCal/kg correspond to 0.87 kg of MGK's wood, which means that the wood weight to corpse weight ratio goes up from 0.56:1 to 0.87:1, and the total amount of wood required for cremation rises from 38.86 kg to 45.80 kg.

¹³⁷ Flaminio Fidanza, 'Effects of starvation on body composition', *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 33: July 1980 pp.1562-1566, online reprint under <http://www.ajcn.org/cgi/reprint/33/7/1562.pdf>, cited in MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.138f.

¹³⁸ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.139.

Table 8.7				Table 8.8			
Substance	Weight in	Heating	Total	Substance	Weight in	Heating	Total
		value per				value per	
		weight unit	heating			weight	heating
	kg	(kCal/kg)	value (kCal)		kg	(kCal/kg)	(kCal)
Water	44.42	-986.00	-43,794.18	Water	38.22	-986.00	-37,680.98
Fat	9.72	9,500.00	92,302.00	Fat	0.62	9,500.00	5,852.00
Protein	10.62	5,400.00	57,338.28	Protein	9.12	5,400.00	49,238.28
Other substances	4.65			Other substances	4.65		
	69.40	1,525.16	105,846.10		52.60	330.98	17,409.30
Wood, kg	38.86			Wood, kg	45.80		
Wood, kg per kg of corpse	0.56	2,152.35		Wood, kg per kg of corpse	0.87	3,346.53	
		3,677.51				3,677.51	

The next table (8.9) shows how much water loss due to the corpse's decomposition would be required to bring wood consumption back to the original 38.86 kg in absolute terms. A water loss of merely 5.72 kg (ca. 15 %) from 38.22 kg to 32.50 kg, bringing the corpse's weight down to 46.88 kg, would be sufficient for this purpose, the wood weight to corpse weight ratio improving from 0.87:1 to 0.83:1. For the original wood weight to corpse weight ratio of 0.56 to be restored, a higher but not a total water loss is required. In the following table (8.10), the corpse's water content has gone down from 38.22 kg by 25.02 kg (ca. 65.5 %) to 13.2 kg. The corpse now weighs 27.58 kg, and 15.45 kg of wood are required to burn it.

Table 8.9				Table 8.10			
Substance	Weight in kg	Heating	Total heating	Substance	Weight in	Heating	Total
		value per				value per	
		weight unit				weight unit	heating
		(kCal/kg)	value (kCal)		kg	(kCal/kg)	value (kCal)
Water	32.50	-986.00	-32,045.00	Water	13.20	-986.00	-13,015.20
Fat	0.62	9,500.00	5,852.00	Fat	0.62	9,500.00	5,852.00
Protein	9.12	5,400.00	49,238.28	Protein	9.12	5,400.00	49,238.28
Other substances	4.65			Other substances	4.65		
	46.88	491.54	23,045.28		27.58	1,525.34	42,075.08
Wood, kg	38.86			Wood, kg	15.45		
Wood, kg per kg of corpse	0.83	3,185.97		Wood, kg per kg of corpse	0.56	2,152.17	
		3,677.51				3,677.51	

What this exercise shows is that the negative effect of emaciation on fuel requirements is compensated when the corpse has been decomposing long enough to have lost a substantial part of its remaining water content.

Applying this exercise to the average weights of deportees to Nazi extermination camps established above (34 kg for deportees from ghettos in Poland or the Soviet Union, 57 kg for long-range deportees from outside these areas), and considering how many of the deportees had been decomposing in mass graves for how long before being cremated, it is possible to roughly estimate the presumable wood expenditure at each of these camps.

The first camp for which this will be done is Sobibor as the most complex case, with a significant if not predominant influx of deportees from outside malnourished Polish and Soviet ghetto areas. According to the Hagen Court's list (see above Table 8.1), 72,799 out of 152,490 deportees to Sobibor were from the General Government. Of these 68,499 arrived in 1942, and of these in turn a total of 49,699 (72.55 %) arrived before the August-September break preceding the start of cremations in October 1942, 32,930 thereof in May 1942 alone. Schelvis gives no figures for arrivals from the General Government in 1942, so the figure of 39,586 in Table 8.1 was arrived at by deducting from Schelvis' total the figures he gives for deportees from the GG in 1943 and for deportees from places of origin outside the GG.

Applying the percentage derived from the Hagen Court's list to these 39,586 one gets 28,721 deportees from the GG who arrived until the end of July 1942, thereof 19,030 in May 1942, as shown in Table 8.1. These bodies would have been lying in the mass graves for at least two months by the time they started being cremated. Those that had arrived in May 1942 would have been lying in the graves twice that long. Considering the timeline of the stages of decomposition¹³⁹, and the fact that the mass graves were obviously not closed until they had been filled to the brim¹⁴⁰, it is assumed that the speed of decomposition was closer to that of decomposition above ground than to that of decomposition below ground¹⁴¹ and that these corpses had at least reached the stage of butyric fermentation¹⁴² and most of their water had gone.

This, in turn, means that whatever negative influence these victims' malnourishment before being murdered may have had on fuel requirements was at least compensated by the loss of water. If the deportees upon arrival, weighing 34 kg on average due to malnutrition,

¹³⁹ Australian Museum webpage <http://australianmuseum.net.au/Stages-of-Decomposition>.

¹⁴⁰ See e.g. Bolender, as quoted in Schelvis, *Sobibor*, pp.110 f.: "The first grave had been covered with a layer of sand. As this grave was completely full, the other bodies had to be taken elsewhere, even though the new grave was not yet ready."

¹⁴¹ See Chapter 7

¹⁴² As note 130.

consisted of water, fat and protein in the same proportions as an MSE test person after the same¹⁴³, their calorific profile was as shown in Table 8.11, meaning that burning these corpses immediately after death would have required 29.60 kg of wood per corpse (a weight ratio of 0.87 to 1). But if after some months in the grave most of the remaining water had vanished, as in the example of Table 8.12, the body would weigh just 17.83 kg and require only 9.98 kg of wood for burning (corresponding to the weight ratio of 0.56 that has been assumed for burning the non-decomposed corpse of a sufficiently nourished person).

Assuming an (unrealistically high) loss of 40 % of the remaining fat and 12 % of the remaining protein (as considered in MGK's example calculation regarding decomposed bodies¹⁴⁴) together with the water loss considered in Table 8.12, the amount of wood required to burn the corpse would be accordingly higher (weight ratio: 0.62 to 1), as shown in Table 8.13. In the following it will be considered that not all water and a significant portion of the fat and protein was lost (lost completely, that is, which in actual fact doesn't happen because fat and protein break down into substances with a considerable calorific value like glycerol and butyric acid, see above), which corresponds to the scenario shown in Table 8.13.

Table 8.11				Table 8.12			
Substance	Weight in	Heating	Total	Substance	Weight in	Heating	Total
		value per	heating			value per	heating
		weight	value			weight unit	value (kCal)
	kg	(kCal/kg)	(kCal)		kg	(kCal/kg)	value (kCal)
Water	24.70	-986.00	-24,356.52	Water	8.53	-986.00	-8,412.87
Fat	0.40	9,500.00	3,782.66	Fat	0.40	9,500.00	3,782.66
Protein	5.89	5,400.00	31,827.03	Protein	5.89	5,400.00	31,827.03
Other substances	3.01			Other substances	3.01		
	34.00	330.98	11,253.16		17.83	1,525.34	27,196.82
Wood, kg	29.60			Wood, kg	9.98		
Wood, kg per kg of corpse	0.87	3,346.53		Wood, kg per kg of corpse	0.56	2,152.17	
		3,677.51				3,677.51	

¹⁴³ The semi-starved test person's weight of 52.60 kg was made up by 38.22 kg of water (72.65%), 0.62 kg of fat (1.17%), 9.12 kg of protein (17.33%) and 4.65 kg of other substances (8.84%).

¹⁴⁴ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.138.

Table 8.13

Substance	Weight in kg	Heating value per weight unit (kCal/kg)	Total heating value (kCal)
Water	8.53	-986.00	-8,410.58
Fat	0.24	9,500.00	2,280.00
Protein	5.18	5,400.00	27,972.00
Other substances	3.01		
	16.96	1,287.82	21,841.42
Wood, kg	10.54		
Wood, kg per kg of corpse	0.62	2,389.69	
		3,677.51	

The 28,721 decomposed deportees from the GG assumed above as having arrived until the end of July 1942 would thus have weighed 16.96 kg on average at the time of cremation, which would have required 10.54 kg per corpse (weight ratio: 0.62 to 1).

If about 80,000 deportees arrived at Sobibor while the disposal method was still burial¹⁴⁵, this would mean that either the 28,721 figure for GG Jews in 1942 derived from Schelvis is too low or that the balance of 51,279 arrived in this period from Slovakia, the Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia and the Reich and Austria. In the latter case, the calorific profile of an average deportee in this balance, who is assumed to have not been suffering from malnutrition like Polish and Soviet Jews, would be as shown in Table 8.14, considering the average weight of 57 kg established for deportees from places outside Poland or the Soviet Union (see Table 8.2) and a distribution between water, fat and proteins as assumed by MGK.¹⁴⁶ Burning these bodies immediately after death would thus have required 31.92 kg of dry wood or wood equivalent per body.

After losing about 65.5 % of their water (like the bodies in Tables 8.12 and 8.13), 40 % of their fat and 12 % of their protein as was assumed for the Polish or Soviet Jews (Table 8.13), these neither Polish nor Soviet Jews would have the calorific profile shown in Table 8.15. The average body weight would have gone down to 28.88 kg, and as the body would have lost most of its water but still have considerable amounts of fat and protein, unlike the body of a person that had suffered from malnutrition before being murdered, burning such body would require only 8.25 kg of wood.

¹⁴⁵ See Chapter 7.

¹⁴⁶ 64 % water, 14 % fat, 15.3 % proteins and the rest other substances – MGK, *Sobibór*, p.137.

Table 8.14

Substance	Weight in kg	Heating value per weight unit (kCal/kg)	Total heating value (kCal)
Water	36.48	-986.00	-35,969.28
Fat	7.98	9,500.00	75,810.00
Protein	8.72	5,400.00	47,093.40
Other			
substances	3.82		
	57.00	1,525.16	86,934.12
Wood, kg	31.92		
Wood, kg per kg of corpse	0.56	2,152.35	
		3,677.51	

Table 8.15

Substance	Weight in kg	Heating value per weight unit (kCal/kg)	Total heating value (kCal)
Water	12.60	-986.00	-12,423.60
Fat	4.79	9,500.00	45,486.00
Protein	7.67	5,400.00	41,442.19
Other			
substances	3.82		
	28.88	2,579.67	74,504.59
Wood, kg	8.25		
Wood, kg per kg of corpse	0.29	1,097.84	
		3,677.51	

The bodies that were not buried before cremation are divided into two categories, assuming the breakdown of Schelvis' figures in Table 8.1 and that the number of ca. 80,000 buried corpses is correct: 39,465 from areas where Jews were subject to severe malnutrition (10,865 from the GG between October and December 1942, 14,900 from the GG in 1943 and 13,700 from the occupied Soviet territories in 1943) and 170,165 – 80,000 – 39,465 = 50,700 from areas whose Jewish population was more or less normally fed prior to deportation.

The categories of dead bodies according to calorific profile that have been established above are the following, by increasing absolute amount of required wood:

A - Decomposed/dehydrated corpses of sufficiently nourished deportees (Table 8.15). Average weight: 28.88 kg. Weight of wood required for cremation: **8.25 kg**. Weight ratio: 0.29.

B – Decomposed/dehydrated corpses of malnourished deportees (Table 8.13). Average weight: 16.96 kg. Weight of wood required for cremation: **10.54 kg**. Weight ratio: 0.62.

C – Non-decomposed corpses of malnourished deportees (Table 8.11). Average weight: 34 kg. Weight of wood required for cremation: **29.60 kg**. Weight ratio: 0.87.

D - Non-decomposed corpses of sufficiently nourished deportees (Table 8.14). Average weight: 57 kg. Weight of wood required for cremation: **31.92 kg**. Weight ratio: 0.56.

Table 8.16 shows the distribution of deportees to Sobibor according to the above categories and the respective wood weights required to burn the corpses.

Burning of the Corpses

Table 8.16

Category	Number of	Average	Total	Wood	Total wood	Total wood
of corpses	corpses	weight (kg)	weight (kg)	required for cremation per corpse	required	required
				(kg)	(kg)	(tons)
A	51,279	28.88	1,480,938	8.25	423,052	423.1
B	28,721	16.96	487,108	10.54	302,719	302.7
C	39,465	34.00	1,341,810	29.60	1,168,164	1,168.2
D	50,700	57.00	2,889,900	31.92	1,618,344	1,618.3
	170,165	36.43	6,199,756	20.64	3,512,279	3,512.3

These average wood weights will in the following be used to estimate wood requirements at the other three Nazi extermination camps.

Regarding Belzec, the author's chronological breakdown of deportations based on Arad's deportation list, assuming a similar temporary distribution of the 434,508 deportees mentioned in the Höfle Report¹⁴⁷ leads to the figures shown in Table 8.17.

Table 8.17

Deportations to Belzec (Arad/Höfle Report)				
Month	(a) Monthly arrivals according to Arad	(b) % of monthly arrivals	(c) % according to Arad applied to Höfle figure	(d) Cumulated figures from (c)
Mar-42	41,072	8.00%	34,760	34,760
Abr-42	39,600	7.72%	33,544	68,304
Mai-42	2,210	0.43%	1,868	70,172
Jun-42	18,300	3.57%	15,512	85,684
Jul-42	50,300	9.80%	42,582	128,266
Ago-42	160,170	31.21%	135,610	263,876
Set-42	87,050	16.96%	73,693	337,569
Out-42	56,990	11.11%	48,274	385,843
Nov-42	49,450	9.64%	41,887	427,730
Dez-42	8,000	1.56%	6,778	434,508
	513,142	100.00%	434,508	

Applying the same criterion as in regard to Sobibor, it is assumed that the corpses buried until August 1942 inclusive were in an advanced state of decomposition in which they had lost all or most of their water content (category "B"), while those buried later, despite having presumably also undergone significant dehydration, are for good measure counted as non-decomposed corpses of malnourished deportees (category "C"). Wood requirements would thus have been as shown in Table 8.18.

¹⁴⁷ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, pp.383-389; Muehlenkamp, 'Belzec Response 4 (1)'

Table 8.18

Category of corpses	Number of corpses	Average weight (kg)	Total weight (kg)	Wood required for cremation per corpse (kg)	Total wood required (kg)	Total wood required (tons)
B	263,876	16.96	4,475,337	10.54	2,781,253	2,781.3
C	170,632	34.00	5,801,488	29.60	5,050,707	5,050.7
	434,508	23.65	10,276,825	18.02	7,831,960	7,832.0

As concerns deportations to Treblinka, a similar exercise as was done regarding Belzec can be done for the year 1942, applying the monthly percentages of arrivals according to a chronological breakdown based on Arad's deportations list¹⁴⁸ to the 713,555 deportees in 1942 mentioned in the Höfle Report, and assuming that Höfle's figure does not include the 8,000 deportees from Theresienstadt in October 1942 mentioned by Arad.¹⁴⁹ The result is shown in Table 8.19 below.

Table 8.19

Deportations to Treblinka in 1942 (Arad/Höfle Report)						
Month	(a) From GG/Bialystok (Arad)	(b) Equivalent Höfle Report	(c) Cumulated figures from (b)	(d) Long-range transports (Arad)	(e) Total month = (b)+(d)	(f) Cumulated figures from (e)
Jul-42	52,500	45,454	45,454		45,454	45,454
Ago-42	257,820	223,217	268,671		223,217	268,671
Set-42	174,739	151,287	419,958		151,287	419,958
Out-42	213,582	184,916	604,874	8,000	192,916	612,874
Nov-42	94,854	82,123	686,997		82,123	694,997
Dez-42	30,675	26,558	713,555		26,558	721,555
	824,170	713,555		8,000	721,555	

Regarding 1943 the latest breakdown is that of Polish historian Młynarczyk¹⁵⁰, who calculated a minimum death toll of 780,863 for Treblinka, considering 713,555 deportees in 1942 according to the Höfle Report and another 67,308 documented deportees in 1943.¹⁵¹ The latter figure consists of 53,149 deportees from the General Government or the Bialystok District and 14,159 deportees on long-range transports from Saloniki, Macedonia and Thessaloniki in later March, early April and May 1943.

Given that wholesale systematic cremation of corpses at Treblinka started only after a visit of Himmler's at the end of February/beginning of March 1943 (see section 1 of this chapter), one doesn't go wrong in assuming that the all bodies buried in the previous year had reached an advanced state of decomposition corresponding to categories "A" (deportees from

¹⁴⁸ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, pp.392-395.

¹⁴⁹ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, pp.140-142.

¹⁵⁰ Młynarczyk, 'Treblinka' (as note 92).

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.* The total of 788,863 Treblinka victims considered for these calculations is based on the assumption that the 8,000 deportees from Theresienstadt in October 1942 are not included in the Höfle figure and were thus not considered by Młynarczyk.

Theresienstadt) and "B" (deportees from the General Government). Deportees from the GG or the Bialystok District in 1943 are considered in category "C", long-range transports in that year in category "D". The corresponding wood requirements calculation for Treblinka is shown in Table 8.20 below

Table 8.20

Category of corpses	Number of corpses	Average weight (kg)	Total weight (kg)	Wood required for cremation per corpse (kg)	Total wood required (kg)	Total wood required (tons)
A	8,000	28.88	231,040	8.25	66,000	66.0
B	713,555	16.96	12,101,893	10.54	7,520,870	7520.9
C	53,149	34.00	1,807,066	29.60	1,573,210	1573.2
D	14,159	57.00	807,063	31.92	451,955	452.0
	788,863	18.95	14,947,062	12.18	9,612,035	9,612.1

Deportations to Chelmno extermination camp during the 1st phase (December 1941 to March 1943) can be roughly broken down into 104,360 deportees until July 1942 vs. 45,640 in August and September 1942.¹⁵² Assuming that corpses were buried until July 1942 inclusive and cremation of previously interred bodies started in October 1942, the bodies killed at Chelmno until July 1942 inclusive (of malnourished Polish ghetto Jews) would be category "B", and the bodies of people killed in August and September 1942 would be category "C". The wood requirements calculation for Chelmno's 1st phase, assuming that disinterred bodies were burned on grates like those used at the *Aktion Reinhard* camps and that burning "fresh" bodies in the cremation ovens proper built in the summer of 1942 was no less fuel-efficient than burning on the grates¹⁵³, would thus be as shown in Table 8.21.

The ca. 7,000 bodies burned right after gassing in the camp's second phase (1944/45) were of category "C" (non-decomposed corpses of malnourished deportees - Table 8.11), so their cremation, under the same fuel-efficiency assumptions as regarding the 1st phase¹⁵⁴, would have required $7,000 \times 29.60 = 207,200$ kg or 207.2 tons of wood.

Table 8.22 shows the results of wood requirements calculations for all four camps, assuming the average wood weight per corpse established above for each camp (rounded to the second decimal) and the rounded numbers of corpses as in Table 8.4.

¹⁵² See Muehlenkamp, 'Mattogno on Chelmno Cremation (Part 2)'.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

Table 8.21

Category of corpses	Number of corpses	Average weight (kg)	Total weight (kg)	Wood required for cremation per corpse (kg)	Total wood required (kg)	Total wood required (tons)
B	104,360	16.96	1,769,946	10.54	1,099,954	1,100.0
C	45,640	34.00	1,551,760	29.60	1,350,944	1,350.9
	150,000	22.14	3,321,706	16.34	2,450,898	2,450.9

Table 8.22

Camp	Number of corpses	Average wood per corpse (kg)	Total wood required for cremation (kg)	Total wood required for cremation (tons)
Belzec	435,000	18.02	7,838,700	7,838.7
Sobibór	170,000	20.64	3,508,800	3,508.8
Treblinka	789,000	12.18	9,610,020	9,610.0
Chełmno 1st phase	150,000	16.34	2,451,000	2,451.0
Chełmno 2nd phase	7,000	29.60	207,200	207.2
	1,551,000	15.23	23,615,720	23,615.7

The above calculations assume the use of dry, seasoned wood such as was used by Dr. Lothes and Dr. Profé in their carcass burning experiments. With freshly cut wood the amount required would have been somewhat higher. According to Mattogno, Graf & Kues, "1 kg of dry wood (20% humidity) with a calorific value of 3,800 kcal/kg is the equivalent of 1.9 kg of green wood."¹⁵⁵ Assuming this is correct, and that the extermination camps could only obtain green wood for burning the corpses, the wood quantities in Table 8.22 would have to be multiplied by the factor 1.9, yielding the figures in Table 8.23.

Table 8.23

Camp	Number of corpses	Average wood per corpse (kg)	Total wood required for cremation (kg)	Total wood required for cremation (tons)
Belzec	435,000	34.24	14,893,530	14,893.5
Sobibór	170,000	39.22	6,666,720	6,666.7
Treblinka	789,000	23.14	18,259,038	18,259.0
Chełmno 1st phase	150,000	31.05	4,656,900	4,656.9
Chełmno 2nd phase	7,000	56.24	393,680	393.7
	1,551,000	28.93	44,869,868	44,869.8

The assumption underlying these calculations is that wood required for burning was wholly or mostly procured by inmate woodcutting teams from the respective camp in the forests surrounding that camp. This is the assumption made by several historians and

¹⁵⁵ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.143.

gratefully taken up by Revisionists¹⁵⁶ but it is hardly a given that the camps were dependent on what wood they could obtain by their own workforce, and to the extent that what this workforce could obtain was not sufficient it is likely that additional wood was brought in by train or truck from lumberyards elsewhere.¹⁵⁷ Obtaining up to ca. 24,000 tons of dry wood or 45,000 tons of green wood from labor camps or forestry enterprises, over a period of roughly one year¹⁵⁸, cannot have been much of a problem in a lumbering country like Poland, which had an enormous wood production as far back as 1921: according to an article written that year by then Polish Prime Minister Wincenty Witos¹⁵⁹, Poland's state forests alone furnished 3,439,047 cubic meters of building timber and 2,019,758 cubic meters of fuel wood. Privately owned wood preserves, according to the same article, yielded 25,000,000 cubic meters of wood per annum, of which only 12,000,000 cubic meters were used to satisfy domestic requirements of reconstruction, fuel, mining etc. while the rest could be exported. According to a source mentioned by Mattogno, Graf & Kues¹⁶⁰, the weight of freshly cut red pine (the kind of wood abounding in the Sobibor area) is 880 kg per cubic meter, which means that 45,000 tons of fresh wood would have a volume of ca. 51,000 cubic meters, a mere 0.39% of the export yield of 13 million cubic meters or 0.20% of the total yield of Poland's privately owned wood preserves of 25 million cubic meters in 1921. Dry red pine wood weighs between 370 and 660 kg per cubic meter¹⁶¹, so 24,000 tons of dry red pine wood would have a volume of about 34,000 to 65,000 cubic meters.

Transporting these amounts of wood over the aforementioned one-year period would have required a mere 4,800 to 9,000 five-ton-truckloads or 960 to 1,800 railway freight

¹⁵⁶ Thus MGK (*Sobibór*, pp.141 f.) quote Schelvis' writing whereby "The cremation of the exhumed bodies, of which there were already more than 100,000, required huge quantities of wood, but plenty could be found in the neighbouring forests. A Waldkommando was formed, consisting of about thirty Arbeitshäftlinge. They had to cut down large numbers of trees and chop up the wood under the supervision of a few SS-men and Ukrainian guards."

¹⁵⁷ Evidence to such transports is hard to come by because camp records were destroyed (see Globocnik's letter to Himmler of 5.1.1944, 4024-PS) and wood shipments were hardly a detail that would under the circumstances catch the particular attention of camp staff members, inmates or bystanders or be of interest to interrogators in the course of criminal investigations, which were about establishing the basic facts of the crime and the deeds of the perpetrators rather than the crime's logistics. However, one mention of wood brought from outside can be found in Arad, *Belzec*, *Sobibor*, *Treblinka*, p. 171: «Unterscharführer Becher Warner, who served as a driver in Sobibor from August through November 1942, testified at the Sobibor trial: "The corpses were taken out from the gas chambers and cremated on a specially prepared roaster. The ashes and the remains of the bodies were buried in a specially designated place, and later a forest was planted there ... As I have already said, I used to bring foodstuffs to the camp and also **wood for cremating the killed** ..."» (emphasis added by author). Chelmo had several external wood suppliers, including witnesses Michał Radoszewski and Heinrich May (see Muehlenkamp, 'Chelmo Cremation 2').

¹⁵⁸ October 1942 (start of cremations of disinterred corpses at Sobibor and Chelmo) to October 1943.

¹⁵⁹ Wincenty Witos, 'Prosperity in Poland', *New York Times*, 7 August 1921, <http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?res=9D01E6DD1439E133A25754C0A96E9C946095D6CF>.

¹⁶⁰ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.144 n.430.

¹⁶¹ Webpage 'Weight of various types of wood', http://www.simetric.co.uk/si_wood.htm.

cars¹⁶² for, respectively, 24,000 tons of dry wood or 45,000 tons of fresh wood. Sobibor extermination camp, with a calculated requirement of about 3,500 tons of dry wood (Table 8.22) or 7,000 tons of fresh wood (Table 8.23) would have required 700 to 1,400 truckloads (2 to 4 per day) or 140 to 280 railway freight cars (one every two or three days, or one nearly every day) to satisfy its cremation wood requirements. When the author was at Sobibor in October 2008¹⁶³, he incidentally witnessed the loading onto a freight train of wood that, according to these calculations, could have kept that camp's corpse pyres burning for several days (Image 8.4 shows a wood-loaded train standing at the Sobibor side track on October 16, 2008).

The realistic possibility of wood supplies being mostly brought into the camp by rail and/or truck renders irrelevant Revisionist considerations about the incompatibility of cremation wood requirements with available woodcutting labor and deforestation around the camp observable on air photos¹⁶⁴, as it means that only a part of the required wood had to be cut by each camp's own inmate lumbering teams. However, considering the wood requirements established above these teams made or could have made a larger contribution to cremation wood supply than Mattogno, Graf & Kues would like them to.

Image 8.4



According to the Revisionist authors, a team of 30 inmates of the Sobibor forest detail would have been able to handle (0.55 x 30 =) 16.5 tons of wood per day.¹⁶⁵ The camp's daily requirements of fresh wood between October 1942 and October 1943 would have been ca. 18.3 tons (6,666.7 ÷ 365), i.e. Sobibor would have been nearly self-sufficient as concerns

¹⁶² Mattogno (*Belżec*, p.85 f.) claims that burning 600,000 corpses at Belzec between December 1942 and March 1943 would have required "for each and every day about 1,064 tons of wood – over 42 freight cars or over 200 trucks". He is obviously considering a load of 25 tons per freight car and 5 tons per truck.

¹⁶³ See Chapter 7.

¹⁶⁴ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.151f.; Mattogno, *Belżec*, p.85; Thomas Kues, 'Tree-felling at Treblinka', *Inconvenient History* 1/2; MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.144f.; Mattogno, *Chełmno*, pp.114f., 131ff.

¹⁶⁵ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.144.

cremation wood. Assuming that the forests in the area at the time contained only 224 m³ of wood per ha¹⁶⁶, corresponding to 197 tons of wood¹⁶⁷ the total amount of wood required would correspond to ca. 34 hectares.¹⁶⁸ According to Arad¹⁶⁹, the Sobibor *Waldkommando* was 40 men strong, which according to MGK's considerations would mean a capacity of about 22 tons of wood per day, in excess of the camp's daily requirements of fresh wood for cremation.

At Treblinka, the forest team originally consisted of a few dozen prisoners but was enlarged when the cremation of the corpses started.¹⁷⁰ To how many men the team was enlarged does not become apparent from the source, but it seems reasonable to assume that a detachment starting out with at least 24 members (a few dozen is at least two dozen) and then reinforced ended up numbering 60 to 80 of the permanent inmates of Treblinka extermination camp, which numbered between 500 and 1,000 in total.¹⁷¹ The burning of the bodies at Treblinka lasted at least from March or April to August 1943, but probably until the end of October 1943, i.e. 5 to 7 months.¹⁷² In this period a team of 60 to 80 men could, according to MGK's above calculations, have handled 33 to 44 tons of wood per day, corresponding to between 4,950 and 6,600 tons within 150 days (five months) and between 6,930 and 9,240 tons within 210 days. These amounts would correspond to at least 27 % but possibly as much as 51 % of the camp's cremation wood requirements as shown in Table 8.23. The area of forest thus felled by the Treblinka forest team, assuming 197 tons of wood per hectare, would be between 25 and 47 hectares.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁶ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.144, referring to a Polish source.

¹⁶⁷ Assuming 880 kg of fresh wood per cubic meter (MGK, *Sobibór*, p.144.)

¹⁶⁸ MGK (*Sobibór*, p.144f.) claim that "the aerial photographs of the Sobibór region, taken on July 1940 and 30 May 1944, do not show any apparent reduction in the wooded area around the camp – even indicating an increase of the vegetation on the southern side". If so, this could mean that wood was cut further away from the camp. Wood-felling related to the conversion of Sobibor ordered by Himmler in July 1943, took place in a forest several kilometers away from the camp – see Yitzhak Arad, "Jewish Prisoner Uprisings in The Treblinka and Sobibor Extermination Camps" Part 4, online under <http://jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsourc/Holocaust/resistad4.html>.

¹⁶⁹ Arad, 'Uprisings'.

¹⁷⁰ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.110.

¹⁷¹ LG Düsseldorf vom 3.9.1965, 8 I Ks 2/64 (as note 35).

¹⁷² Muehlenkamp, 'If they did it the simple way, they didn't do it!', http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2006/12/if-they-did-it-simple-way-they-didnt_19.html, based on Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, pp.170, 177, 280, 288 and 373.

¹⁷³ Kues ('Tree-felling at Treblinka') claims that the zones showing traces of deforestation north of the liquidated Treblinka II camp in 1944, if compared to a 1936 map of the area, amount to "10 hectares at the very most". 10 hectares, assuming 197 tons of wood per hectare, would correspond to 1,970 tons of wood – sufficient, at the ratio shown in Table 8.23, to cremate about 85,000 corpses. According to Alex Bay, comparison of air photos from 1940 and 1944 reveals that "more than half of the Treblinka's 53 acres [21 hectares] were cut" and that "even the parts which remained in 1944 had been severely thinned." Bay, Treblinka, 'Reconstruction of Treblinka: Geography of the Locale(Continued)'.

Wood could to a large extent be replaced as a combustion agent by gasoline or other liquid flammables. Mattogno, Graf and Kues inform their readers that the fuel value of gasoline is 10,500 kcal/kg and that "in order to replace the heat produced by 100 kg of fresh wood, $([2,000 \times 100] \div 10,300 =)$ 19,4 liters of kerosene (or 19 liters of gasoline)" would have been required.¹⁷⁴

Applying the 100 kg of fresh wood = 19 liters of gasoline equation to the wood amounts in Table 8.23, the amounts of gasoline required to burn the corpses at the four Nazi extermination camps would have been as shown in Table 8.24. Wholesale cremation lasted at least 5 months at each of the camps Belzec and Treblinka, at least 5 months during Chelmno's 1st phase, about 1 month during Chelmno's 2nd phase and 12 months at Sobibor, signifying the average monthly and daily requirements shown in the same table.

Table 8.24

Camp	Number of corpses	Total wood required for cremation (kg)	Gasoline equivalent (liters), 100 kg of wood = 19 liters of gasoline	Minimum cremation period (months)	Minimum cremation period (days, 1 month = 30 days)	Gasoline per month (liters)	Gasoline per day (liters)
Belzec	435,000	14,893,530	2,829,771	5	150	565,954	18,865
Sobibór	170,000	6,666,720	1,266,677	12	360	105,556	3,519
Treblinka	789,000	18,259,038	3,469,217	5	150	693,843	23,128
Chelmno 1st phase	150,000	4,656,900	884,811	5	150	176,962	5,899
Chelmno 2nd phase	7,000	393,680	74,799	1	30	74,799	2,493
	1,551,000	44,869,868	8,525,275			1,617,114	53,904

After the Allied bombing of Dresden on 13/14 February 1945, a total of 6,865 corpses were burned on the *Altmarkt* square to prevent the outbreak of epidemics. The amount of wood used to burn these corpses was minimal – just what little could fit between the bottom of the grid and the surface of the square, as can be seen on pictures like the one shown as Image 8.5 below.¹⁷⁵

The main external combustion agent at Dresden was gasoline, as described by David Irving¹⁷⁶ (emphases added by author):

The Steel girders had been winched out of the ruins of the Renner department store on the Altmarkt and these had been laid across crudely collected piles of sandstone blocks. A gigantic grill over twenty-feet long was being erected. **Under the steel girders and bars were poked bundles of wood and straw.** On top of the grill were heaped the corpses, four or five hundred at a time, **with more straw between each layer.** The soldiers trampled up and down on top of this rotting heap, straightening the victims, trying to make room for more, and carefully

¹⁷⁴ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.143 n.423 n.426.

¹⁷⁵ Bundesarchiv Bild 183-08778-0001. Foto: Hahn / Februar 1945, featured on the Wikipedia page http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Bundesarchiv_Bild_183-08778-0001_Dresden_Tote_nach_Bombenangriff.jpg.

¹⁷⁶ David Irving, *Apocalypse 1945. The Destruction of Dresden*, Focal Point, 2007, p.278f.

building the stack. [...] **Finally gallons of gasoline, sorely needed though it was throughout the whole Reich, were poured over the stacks of victims.** A senior officer cleared the Altmarkt square of all unnecessary by-standers, and set a match to the heap.

The procedure was successful in reducing the corpses to ashes, as described by British historian Frederick Taylor (emphases added by author):

Corpses were shipped in and laid out ready for registration and, if possible, identification. Searching for ways of keeping them off the ground – and allowing a draft under the planned funeral pyres – workers found a solution in the wreck of a nearby department store, where massive window shutters had survived the bombing. They carried them from the ruins and set them down on the ground, making, as a contemporary grimly expressed it, "huge grill racks."

Large amounts of gasoline were trucked into the sealed city center. Teams poured petrol over the bodies as they lay piled on the shutters. Then the dead were burned at the rate of one pyre per day, with around five hundred corpses per pyre. The task was efficiently done. To reduce that number of human remains to fine ash without access to a purpose-built crematorium is a technically problematic process. It was carried out under the supervision of outside SS experts. They were said to be former staff from the notorious extermination camp at Treblinka.

Between February 21 and March 5, when the last pyre was lit, 6,865 bodies were burned on the Altmarkt. Afterward, when the fire cooled down, it was estimated that between eight and ten cubic meters of ash covered the cobbled surface of the medieval square. The SS in charge of the burning had intended to transport the ashes out to the Heath Cemetery in boxes and sacks and bury them containers and all, but municipal parsimony triumphed. In the end the ashes were simply emptied out of their containers and into the prepared pits, thus enabling the valuable sacks and boxes to be reused.¹⁷⁷

Besides the corpses' being reduced to ashes, the above quote conveys the importance of allowing a draft under the funeral pyres, as well as the duration of each pyre – one day, the relatively small amount of corpses burned on each pyre being probably related to the relatively small size of the available grid construction and the fact that the victims were registered and, if possible, identified before burning. The Dresden grid was essentially nothing other than the less fuel efficient of Dr. Lothes and Dr. Profé's carcass-burning methods – the one in which the grid was placed above the pit, rather than on top of a smaller cavity inside the pit -, except that no pit could be made in the cobbled surface of the medieval *Altmarkt* square. So the burning process at Dresden was, if anything, less efficient than in the two veterinarians' experiments which, as explained above, were reproduced on an enormous scale by the SS at Treblinka and the other Nazi extermination camps.

¹⁷⁷ Taylor, *Dresden*, pp.350 f.

Image 8.5



Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-08778-0001
Foto: Hahn | Februar 1945

On the other hand, the possible presence of Treblinka "experts" at Dresden, mentioned by Taylor, suggests that cremation at Treblinka may also have chiefly relied on gasoline as external combustion agent. If so, the maximum average daily amount of gasoline required for cremation at Treblinka, as shown in Table 8.24, would have been roughly 23,000 liters. To put this amount into perspective, picture a small but busy gas station with 2 filling pumps having 3 fueling nozzles each, 12 cars per hour filling up at each nozzle (1 every 5 minutes) and an average of 30 liters of gasoline per filling. After 12 hours, this small gas station will have turned over $2 \times 3 \times 12 \times 30 \times 12 = 25,920$ liters of gasoline, more than the above-mentioned daily amount for cremation at Treblinka. A single large tank truck can carry 21,000 to 34,000 liters of gasoline.¹⁷⁸ A sufficiently dimensioned gas deposit provided (Treblinka is known to have had a gas deposit, which was set on fire and exploded during the revolt on August 2, 1943¹⁷⁹), this extermination camp would have had no more logistical problems than the small gas station in the above example.

But the Third Reich "could not afford to waste gasoline or other liquid fuels in such a manner", the Revisionists claim.¹⁸⁰ And they are unwittingly supported in this claim by Jules

¹⁷⁸ Wikipedia page http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tank_truck.

¹⁷⁹ See for instance the deposition of Kalman Teigman at the Eichmann Trial, session 66 transcribed under <http://nizkor.org/hweb/people/e/eichmann-adolf/transcripts/Sessions/Session-066-06.html>. The witness spoke of "several thousands litres of petrol", but this may well have been an underestimate. How many people knowing nothing of the subject would look at a large tank truck and estimate that it carries up to 34,000 liters? Visitors to the port wine caves in Porto are informed that the largest barrels of Ruby port contain 80,000 liters. Who would have guessed?

¹⁸⁰ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.143.

Schelvis, who in the German-language version of his Sobibor book shows a written request of Globocnik's request for more fuel and interprets this as meaning that Globocnik was barely able to keep his gassing engines running. Such a request took place in order to fuel the gasoline engines used for gassings¹⁸¹, and likely also brought about from work and preparations related to body disposal efforts at the camps. Such a request may have been made in order to obtain more fuel for the gasoline engines used for gassing, but is more likely (also considering that a gassing engine operated in idle mode for half an hour or so several times a day would hardly consume as much fuel as an engine in a tank or truck on combat or transportation duty, and that no more than three such engines were operating at the same time in the camps of *Aktion Reinhard(t)*) to have been primarily related to burning the victims' bodies at the camps. At the time of Globocnik's request for more fuel, partial cremations had taken place at Belzec and Treblinka, and preparations were presumably being made for cremating the corpses at Sobibor, after it had been decided to no longer bury them out of concern about possible pollution of the camp's water supply.

Did the RSHA have a problem with granting Globocnik's request? Hardly so, considering what is known about the amount of motor gasoline (*Vergaserkraftstoff*) delivered monthly to the General Government. About 6 million liters were delivered in July 1942 alone, thereof 2,935 t for civilian authorities and 3,612 t for military authorities.¹⁸² German authorities didn't consider it a waste to spend 68,000 liters of gasoline within 13 days¹⁸³ to burn the bodies of civilian air raid victims at Dresden in February/March 1945, at a time when the Reich had lost almost all of its petrol resources and its war machine was bogging down for lack of fuel. Why should they have minded allotting higher amounts of gasoline¹⁸⁴ to a state project of vital importance like the extermination of a minority of perceived dangerous subversives and useless eaters harmful to Germany, and that moreover at a time when the Third Reich still had access to its main sources of petrol, especially the Romanian oilfields? The daily petrol requirements of a single armored regiment were higher than those of corpse cremation at Sobibor if carried out with petrol as the main combustion agent, and even the daily requirements of Treblinka shown in Table 8.24 would have been below those

¹⁸¹ See the section The Gassing Engine: Diesel or Gasoline? in Chapter 5.

¹⁸² Kommandeur des OKW-Stabes z.b.V, Sonderbeauftragter des Führers, Bericht Nr. 5: Krakau (Fortsetzung), Tarnow, den 21.8.42, BA NS 3/794, p.19.

¹⁸³ See calculation in Muehlenkamp, 'Chelmno Graves 2'.

¹⁸⁴ For the cremation operations at Belzec and Treblinka; the daily amounts of gasoline required at Sobibor, as shown in Table 8.24, would have been lower than for the Dresden *Altmarkt* burnings.

of the 21st Panzer Division.¹⁸⁵ Globocnik's request would thus have hardly been outrageous. Who claims that the Third Reich could not have "wasted" gasoline or other liquid fuels "in such a manner" fails to take into account Nazi Germany's overall fuel resources and expenditure at the time on the one hand and the importance that the Nazis gave to this particular project on the other.

MGK's other objection against gasoline is "its volatility; by the time the corpses would have been thoroughly doused, ignition could have caused an explosion of the gasoline/air mixture."¹⁸⁶ If so, this risk would also have been present on the Dresden Altmarkt, where it seems to have been managed, there being no reason why it should not have been managed at the extermination camps as well – moreover as gasoline need not have been the only liquid fuel used for burning at these camps.¹⁸⁷

It can thus be concluded that, far from being the logistical nightmare that Revisionists claim with their unrealistically high estimates, fuel requirements for cremating the corpses at the Nazi extermination camps were manageable and presented no major logistical problems for the Nazis if (as can be assumed considering the Nazis' trial and error approach) an adequate cremation procedure was adopted.

Duration of Cremations

As mentioned in section 1 of this chapter, the author estimated the area of each of the grids used for burning the bodies at Treblinka extermination camp at 66 m², assuming a length of 25 meters and a width of 2.625 meters. Mattogno & Graf's estimate, also based on the grates' description in the judgment at the 1st Düsseldorf Treblinka trial (Kurt Franz et al)¹⁸⁸, is somewhat higher: 30 meters long by 3 meters wide = 90 m².¹⁸⁹ The first layer of bodies on this large area, according to the same authors, could have been no more than 4 bodies per 3 square meters, as each body would have occupied "a theoretical average surface area of the size of a rectangle of 1.75 m × 0.50 m, which also includes the necessary intervening space for the passage of the products of combustion." At 120 bodies per layer, and assuming a layer

¹⁸⁵ A regiment of the 21st Panzer Division in Africa consumed 4,400 liters of petrol per day of combat in 1941; the daily consumption of the entire division was 33,000 liters. Pier Paolo Battistelli, *Rommel's Afrika Korps: Tobruk to El Alamein*, Botley: Osprey, pp.56-57.

¹⁸⁶ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.143 n. 423.

¹⁸⁷ In the article 'Tree-felling at Treblinka', Kues points out that "The only kind of fuel mentioned by Willenberg in connection with the cremations – which he did not witness firsthand – is crude oil". Rudolf Höss, ("Endlösung", *Kommandant in Auschwitz* p.243) mentions having poured oil residues and methanol over the corpses. According to Arad (*Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.175) an "inflammable liquid" was poured over the bodies at Treblinka to help them burn.

¹⁸⁸ As note 35.

¹⁸⁹ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.148.

height of 0.30 m, a pyre of 3,500 bodies (the number that had to be burned on each of two pyres every day to dispose of about 860,000 bodies within 122 days¹⁹⁰) would thus consist of 29 layers with an impracticable total height of 8.7 m.¹⁹¹

Why and how big the "necessary intervening space" between the bodies was calculated is not explained by Mattogno, which allows for assuming that it was deemed rather low, say no more than 5 cm, and that the average body they considered was 1.70 meters long and 0.45 meters wide. These are rather unrealistic measurements, considering that the deportees to Treblinka were largely if not predominantly women and children and mostly came from Polish ghettos where they had been subject to prolonged malnutrition, an adult with the aforementioned measurements thus being a rare exception rather than the rule.¹⁹² Moreover most of the bodies had been lying in mass graves prior to cremation and lost a significant part of their volume as their water left them during the decomposition process. The average area occupied by a dead body on one of the Treblinka grids was thus considerably lower than results from Mattogno's calculations.

On the page preceding these calculations, Mattogno takes issue with an obviously misunderstood or mistranslated statement in Alexander Donat's publication of Wiernik's *A Year in Treblinka*, whereby an excavator could dig up 3,000 corpses "at one time" (the witness must have meant to say something like "in one day" or "in one shift"), derisively pointing out that "3,000 bodies take up a volume of about $(3,000 \times 0.045 =) 135 \text{ m}^3$."¹⁹³ 135 m^3 would be the volume occupied by a pile of bodies stacked on a 90 m^2 grate at a height of $(135 \div 90) = 1.5$ meters – 5 layers of bodies with an average height of 0.3 m per layer as considered by M&G, each layer consisting of $(3,000 \div 5 =) 600$ bodies. Assuming the area of 66 m^2 estimated by the author, the height of the pile would be ca. 2 meters $(135 \div 66)$, corresponding to about 7 layers, each layer consisting of ca. 429 bodies $(3,000 \div 7)$.

Assuming this lower area and the higher volume displacement of the "ideal man" calculated by Alex Bay¹⁹⁴, i.e. 3.3 cubic feet or 0.093 cubic meters (a rather conservative assumption that ignores both the presence of women and children among the corpses and the

¹⁹⁰ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.147.

¹⁹¹ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.148.

¹⁹² See Chapter 7, where the average height of an adult Polish ghetto Jew was calculated as being about 1.60 meters. According to the R&D Ergonomics webpage (<http://www.morencyrest.com/sizing.htm>), the width of people with narrow shoulders, weighing less than 100 lbs (45.3 kg, more than the average weight of a malnourished adult Polish ghetto Jew considered by the author), is less than 16 inches (0.41 meters).

¹⁹³ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.147: "If one takes into consideration the fact that 3,000 bodies take up a volume of about $(3,000 \times 0.045 =) 135 \text{ m}^3$, the claim, according to which the shovel of the excavator could be loaded with 3,000 bodies at a time, will evoke only amusement."

¹⁹⁴ Bay, *Treblinka*, 'Appendix D - Ash Disposal and Burial Pits (Continued)'.

effects of decomposition), 3,000 bodies would occupy a volume of 279 cubic meters, and the pile of bodies on the grid would have to be about 4.2 meters high ($279 \div 66$), corresponding to 14 layers consisting of about 214 bodies each.

With 3,500 bodies, the figures calculated on the basis of the above assumptions for one body's volume displacement (0.045 m^3 or 0.093 m^3) would be the following:

- Volume displacement of 0.045 m^3 per body, grate area 90 m^2 : pyre volume above grate 157.5 m^3 , pyre height above grate 1.75 m = about 6 layers of about 583 bodies each;
- Volume displacement of 0.045 m^3 per body, grate area 66 m^2 : pyre volume above grate 157.5 m^3 , pyre height above grate 2.4 m = about 8 layers of about 438 bodies each;
- Volume displacement of 0.093 m^3 per body, grate area 90 m^2 : pyre volume above grate 325.5 m^3 , pyre height above grate 3.62 m = about 12 layers of about 292 bodies each;
- Volume displacement of 0.093 m^3 per body, grate area 66 m^2 : pyre volume above grate 325.5 m^3 , pyre height above grate 4.93 m = about 16 layers of about 219 bodies each.

It follows that, if indeed there had been only two grates at Treblinka and it had been necessary to cremate about 860,000 bodies within a mere 122 days, building a pyre of 3,500 bodies wouldn't have been an impracticable undertaking as Mattogno claims.

Another approach to establishing the number of bodies that could be burned on one of the Treblinka grates is looking at the cremation grid on the Dresden Altmarkt. This grate was about 20 feet (ca. 6.1 meters) long according to David Irving¹⁹⁵, roughly one fourth or one fifth of the length of a Treblinka grate. Assuming the same proportion for the area, the Treblinka grids had an area 4 to 5 times larger than the grate on the Dresden *Altmarkt*. According to Taylor¹⁹⁶, the dead on the Altmarkt were burned at the rate of one pyre per day, with around five hundred corpses per pyre. Assuming that the height and density at which the bodies were piled up at Treblinka was no larger than at Dresden¹⁹⁷, a pyre with an area 4 to 5 times higher could thus have burned 2,000 to 2,500 bodies per day. Building a pyre this size did not necessarily take longer than at Dresden if a sufficiently large labor force was available, moreover as such labor force would be assisted by excavators (which were not

¹⁹⁵ As note 176.

¹⁹⁶ As note 177.

¹⁹⁷ Photographs such as the one shown as Image 8.5 above and on the website of the *Deutsches Historisches Museum* under <http://www.dhm.de/lemo/objekte/pict/ph003739/index.html> suggest that the height of the corpse pile above the grid was 2 to 3 meters. The volume of the pile of bodies was thus between ($66 \div 4 \times 2 =$) 33 and ($90 \div 5 \times 3 =$) 54 cubic meters, meaning that the 500 bodies in each pyre were piled up at a concentration of 9 to 15 bodies per cubic meter.

available at Dresden)¹⁹⁸ and, unlike at Dresden, no time was spent trying to identify the victims. A lower number of bodies per pyre were mentioned by Ukrainian Leleko¹⁹⁹, who testified that about 1,000 bodies were burned simultaneously. On the other hand, this witness mentioned that the burning process lasted "up to five hours", which could allow for more than one burning process per grid per day.

How many dead bodies per day did the Treblinka grids have to process on average? As mentioned above, bodies were cremated during a period of at least 5 but possibly as many as 7 months, so the average number of daily cremations, considering a total of ca. 789,000 corpses, was between 3,757 (7 months = 210 days) and 5,260 (5 months = 150 days). Two or three grids with a capacity of 2,000 to 2,500 corpses per day each would have been sufficient to achieve this daily average. However, evidence shows that the number of rosters was higher and that a correspondingly higher daily number of corpses could be burned at Treblinka:

Other efficiency measures introduced included increasing the number of cremation sites to six – thus enabling the workers to burn up to 12,000 corpses simultaneously – and placing the roasters nearer the mass graves to save time in transferring the bodies. The roasters occupied a good portion of the area east of the gas chambers, which was clear of mass graves and buildings.²⁰⁰

Mattogno mentions the statement of witness Henryk Reichman [Chil Rajchman) on 9 October 1945²⁰¹, quoted in, whereby five to six grates were built, each of which was able to accommodate 2,500 bodies at a time.²⁰² Wiernik doesn't give the number of roasters, but mentions that "the Germans built additional fire grates and augmented the crews serving them, so that from 10,000 to 12,000 corpses were cremated at one time."²⁰³

¹⁹⁸ Survivor witness Oskar Strawczynski mentions the presence of three excavators, which "growled away from 4 o'clock in the morning until nightfall" over a period of "**many months**" (Strawczynski, 'Escaping Hell', p.169). His information as concerns the number of excavators corroborates and is corroborated by Alex Bay's analysis of the excavator photographs taken by the extermination camp's deputy commandant Kurt Franz (Bay, Treblinka, 'Reconstruction of the Death Camp (Continued)'). Based on air and ground photo analysis, Bay managed to establish the place inside Treblinka extermination camp at which some of Franz's excavator photos were taken (Bay, Treblinka, Figures 36, 37, 38, 43, D2 to D8), which hinders the claim that Franz went to photograph excavators at the gravel quarry by the Treblinka I labor camp in his free time – the only argument "Revisionists" have regarding these excavator photos, as the use of excavators is incompatible with a mere transit camp.

¹⁹⁹ See notes 34 and 42.

²⁰⁰ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, pp.175 f.

²⁰¹ Protokół, Henryk Reichman, 12.11.45, Lodz, AIPN NTN 69, p.29R, also published in Z. Łukaszkiwicz, *Obóz straceń w Treblince*.

²⁰² M&G, *Treblinka*, p.148.

²⁰³ Wiernik, 'A Year in Treblinka', p.171. Mattogno & Graf (*Treblinka*, p.147) ignored the quoted passage and referred to a plan of the camp drawn by Wiernik that was presented at "the trial in Düsseldorf" to claim that there were just two cremation facilities because two are drawn on said plan. The plan, shown as Document 5 on page 319 of M&G's book, is a sketch not drawn to scale that contains two symbols representing cremation grids, which are obviously meant to give a rough idea of the location of the grids rather than make a statement as to their number. It was also understood in this sense by the judges at the first Düsseldorf Treblinka trial, who in the judgment stated that the number of cremation roasters could not be established exactly in the main

The burning time of a pyre was calculated by Mattogno as the time required for the wood to be consumed by the fire, assuming a "sustainable value" for an open pyre of 80 kg per square meter per hour, and thus that 7,200 kg of wood could be burned under their 90 m² pyre in one hour.²⁰⁴ The corresponding amount for a 66 m² pyre would be 66x80 = 5,280 kg of wood per hour. Considering the amounts of wood per corpse shown in Tables 8.22 and 8.23 (12.18 kg of dry wood or 23.14 kg of fresh wood), the average cremation times for 2,000 to 2,500 dead bodies would thus have been as shown in Table 8.25 below.

The highest burning time shown in this table is 11 hours and corresponds to the burning of 2,500 bodies with fresh wood on a 66 m² grate. With a 90 m² grate, the time would be reduced to 8 hours. Using dry wood, the time required to burn the amount corresponding to 2,500 bodies would be 6 hours on a 66 m² grate and 4 hours on a 90 m² grate.

Table 8.25 * Values rounded to nearest full hour

(1) Number of bodies	(2) Weight of dry wood = (1) x 12.18	(3) Weight of fresh wood = (1) x 23.14	(3A) Weight of wood according to M&G = (1) x 160	(4) Wood weight burned per hour with grate area = 66m ²	(5) Wood weight burned per hour with grate area = 90m ²	(6) Number of hours to burn dry wood on grate (4)*	(7) Number of hours to burn fresh wood on grate (4)*	(8) Number of hours to burn dry wood on grate (5)*	(9) Number of hours to burn fresh wood on grate (5)*
2,000	24,360	46,280	320,000	5,280	7,200	5	9	3	6
2,500	30,450	57,850	400,000	5,280	7,200	6	11	4	8

Another way to estimate the burning time of a pyre is to look at the times required for mass burning of carcasses when more or less competently handled. A related online source²⁰⁵ contains information about the burning at High Bishopton Farm, Whithorn, Scotland, of 511 cattle, 90 sheep and 3 pigs over a period of three days on two separate pyres, each of which was 50 meters long and 1.5 meters wide. Assuming average carcass weights of 500 kg for cattle, 100 kg for pigs and 50 kg for sheep²⁰⁶, the total weight of carcass mass burned was (511x500)+(90x50)+(3x100) = 260,300 kg. The area of the pyres was 2 x (50x1.5) = 75 m² = 150 m². Assuming a total cremation time of 72 hours²⁰⁷, the carcass weight cremated per hour

proceedings. M&G omit the respective passage from the judgment, even though it is at the end of the paragraph containing the description of the grids, which they quote on page 147.

²⁰⁴ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.149. The same calculation was presented in Mattogno, *Belzec*, p.86.

²⁰⁵ 'Report to Dumfries and Galloway Council about Air Monitoring of Carcass Pyre at Whithorn', by Dr. C. MacDonald Glasgow Scientific Services, 3.10.2001, <http://www.fmd-enviroimpact.scieh.scot.nhs.uk/Papers/FMD%20Whithorn.pdf>. Pyre data are on page 6.

²⁰⁶ As is done in the article 'CBA of Foot and Mouth Disease Control Strategies: Environmental Impacts' by Paul Watkiss and Alison Smith, http://archive.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/farmanimal/diseases/atoz/fmd/documents/environmental_report.pdf, p.4 n.7.

²⁰⁷ It is not clearly stated in the source mentioned in the Report to Dumfries and Galloway Council (n.207) whether the set of pyres burned for three continuous days or whether several incinerations were carried out over a period of three days, as in the swine carcass burning experiment at Pilot Point, Texas in 1994 (as note 103). An indication in the latter direction is the mention on page 6 of the Whithorn report that on the third day of the pyre (50 hours after commencement) cattle mats were added, whereas descriptions of the plume monitoring

and square meter of pyre was $260,300 \div (72 \times 150) = 24.1$ kg. At this rate a 66 m² pyre could burn 1,591 kg of carcass per hour, while 2,169 kg of carcass per hour could be burned on a 90 m² pyre.

Similar times were achieved by Dr. Lothes & Dr. Profé in their aforementioned carcass-burning experiments.²⁰⁸ In experiments IV to VI (carcass placed on inner pit below ground), the outer pit was 2 meters long and 2 meters wide, the inner pit 2 meters long and 1 meter wide. T-carriers two meters long were placed across the width of the inner pit, resting on that pit's borders, which were 0.5 meters wide on each side. The grate area was thus $2 \times 1 = 2$ square meters. Regarding experiments I to III (carcass placed on pit above ground) the length and width is not mentioned in the article, but it can be assumed that the 2-meter T-carriers also used in these experiments rested on the pit's borders in the same way as they did on the inner pit's borders in experiments IV to VI (that is, lying above 0.5 m of ground on either side) and that the area of the pit containing the combustion material, and accordingly the area of the grate, was $2 \times 1 = 2$ square meters in these experiments as well. The times required to burn the respective carcass weights, and the carcass weights consumed per hour and square meter of grate, were as shown in Table 8.26 below.

Table 8.26

Experiment #	Carcass weight kg	Time for combustion (hours)	Area of grate (m ²)	Weight combusted per hour (kg)	Weight combusted per hour and square meter of grate (kg)
I	600	20.00	2	30.00	15.00
II	850	26.00	2	32.69	16.35
III	300	8.25	2	36.36	18.18
Average I to III					16.51
IV	800	10.00	2	80.00	40.00
V	425	5.67	2	75.00	37.50
VI	300	3.50	2	85.71	42.86
Average IV to VI					40.12

The average of 16.51 kg burned per hour and square meter of carcass in the experiments I to III is below the corresponding average of the Whithorn pyres, whereas the average of experiments IV to VI is somewhat higher, further proving the efficiency of a

process suggest continuously burning pyres. Assuming the latter, it is possible that not all carcasses were on the pyre at the time it was lit but some were added later in the manner suggested by photos in the BBC articles 'Costly memories of foot-and-mouth' (3 August 2007, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/england/6930719.stm), 'Pollution fears of animal pyres' (27 February, 2002, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/england/1843860.stm) and 'Water warning over burial sites' (25 May, 2001, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/1350404.stm) and in the Sun article 'Devastation of 2001 outbreak' (4 August 2007, <http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/article262100.ece>).

²⁰⁸ As note 117.

method that combines protection of the fire against wind on the one hand and good air circulation on the other. The higher average achieved in mass cremation at Whithorn, in comparison to the burning of single carcasses in Lothes & Profés experiments I to III, suggests that the average of Lothes & Profés most efficient experiments could have been exceeded in mass cremation.

The following tables (8.27 to 8.29) calculate the number of hours required to burn 1,000, 2,000 and 2,500 corpses at Treblinka with an average weight of 18.95 kg per corpse (from Table 8.20), pyre areas of 66 m² and 90 m² and the aforementioned per hour and square meter throughputs of 16.51, 24.1 and 40.12 kg.

Table 8.27

Cremation event/experiment	(1) Average throughput of pyre (kg of carcass/corpse combusted per hour and square meter of grate)	(2) Throughput of 66 m2 pyre (kg of carcass/corpse combusted per hour)	(3) Throughput of 90 m2 pyre (kg of carcass/corpse combusted per hour)	(4) Number of corpses	(5) Weight of corpses = (4)*18.95	(6) Time required to burn all corpses on 66 m2 pyre (hours) = (5)÷(2)	(7) Time required to burn all corpses on 90 m2 pyre (hours) = (5)÷(3)
a) Lothes & Profé I-III	16.51	1,089.66	1,485.90	1,000	18,950	17	13
b) Whithorn	24.10	1,590.60	2,169.00	1,000	18,950	12	9
c) Lothes & Profé IV-VI	40.12	2,647.92	3,610.80	1,000	18,950	7	5

Table 8.28

Cremation event/experiment	(1) Average throughput of pyre (kg of carcass/corpse combusted per hour and square meter of grate)	(2) Throughput of 66 m2 pyre (kg of carcass/corpse combusted per hour)	(3) Throughput of 90 m2 pyre (kg of carcass/corpse combusted per hour)	(4) Number of corpses	(5) Weight of corpses = (4)*18.95	(6) Time required to burn all corpses on 66 m2 pyre (hours) = (5)÷(2)	(7) Time required to burn all corpses on 90 m2 pyre (hours) = (5)÷(3)
a) Lothes & Profé I-III	16.51	1,089.66	1,485.90	2,000	37,900	35	26
b) Whithorn	24.10	1,590.60	2,169.00	2,000	37,900	24	17
c) Lothes & Profé IV-VI	40.12	2,647.92	3,610.80	2,000	37,900	14	10

Table 8.29

Cremation event/experiment	(1) Average throughput of pyre (kg of carcass/corpse combusted per hour and square meter of grate)	(2) Throughput of 66 m2 pyre (kg of carcass/corpse combusted per hour)	(3) Throughput of 90 m2 pyre (kg of carcass/corpse combusted per hour)	(4) Number of corpses	(5) Weight of corpses = (4)*18.95	(6) Time required to burn all corpses on 66 m2 pyre (hours) = (5)÷(2)	(7) Time required to burn all corpses on 90 m2 pyre (hours) = (5)÷(3)
a) Lothes & Profé I-III	16.51	1,089.66	1,485.90	2,500	47,375	43	32
b) Whithorn	24.10	1,590.60	2,169.00	2,500	47,375	30	22
c) Lothes & Profé IV-VI	40.12	2,647.92	3,610.80	2,500	47,375	18	13

It is noteworthy that the burning time mentioned by Leleko (5 hours for 1,000 bodies) is feasible assuming a time-efficiency comparable to that of Lothes & Profé's experiments IV to IV – a scenario that should not be ruled out considering the possibility that accelerants like gasoline made up much if not most of the external combustion material.

Tables 8.30 and 8.31 show how long the burning of 789,000 corpses would take (considering the throughput, pyre area and corpse weight data from tables 8.27 to 8.29) with, respectively, 5 (Table 8.30) and 6 (Table 8.31) cremation grates of the sizes mentioned.

Table 8.30

Cremation event/experiment	(1) Average throughput of pyre (kg of carcass/corpse combusted per hour and square meter of grate)	(2) Throughput of 5x66 m2 pyre (kg of carcass/corpse combusted per hour)	(3) Throughput of 5x90 m2 pyre (kg of carcass/corpse combusted per hour)	(4) Number of corpses	(5) Weight of corpses = (4)*18.95	(6) Time required to burn all corpses on 66 m2 pyre (days) = (5)÷(2)÷24	(7) Time required to burn all corpses on 90 m2 pyre (days) = (5)÷(3)÷24
a) Lothes & Profé I-III	16.51	5,448.30	7,429.50	789,000	14,951,550	114	84
b) Whithorn	24.10	7,953.00	10,845.00	789,000	14,951,550	78	57
c) Lothes & Profé IV-VI	40.12	13,239.60	18,054.00	789,000	14,951,550	47	35

Table 8.31

Cremation event/experiment	(1) Average throughput of pyre (kg of carcass/corpse combusted per hour and square meter of grate)	(2) Throughput of 6x66 m2 pyre (kg of carcass/corpse combusted per hour)	(3) Throughput of 6x90 m2 pyre (kg of carcass/corpse combusted per hour)	(4) Number of corpses	(5) Weight of corpses = (4)*18.95	(6) Time required to burn all corpses on 66 m2 pyre (hours) = (5)÷(2)÷24	(7) Time required to burn all corpses on 90 m2 pyre (hours) = (5)÷(3)÷24
a) Lothes & Profé I-III	16.51	6,537.96	8,915.40	789,000	14,951,550	95	70
b) Whithorn	24.10	9,543.60	13,014.00	789,000	14,951,550	65	48
c) Lothes & Profé IV-VI	40.12	15,887.52	21,664.80	789,000	14,951,550	39	29

The worst case scenario in these two tables (5 grates with 66 m² each, throughput as in Lothes & Profé’s less efficient experiments I-III) means about 114 days (24-hour periods) required for cremation only, leaving between (150-114=) 36 and (210-114=) 96 days for building the pyres and other preparatory work depending on whether one considers a total cremation period of 5 months = 150 days or 7 months = 210 days. Assuming a grate area of 90 m² as M&G do, the period for such preparatory work is extended to (150-84=) 66 or (210-84=) 126 days. Assuming a throughput as in the Whithorn pyres, time for preparatory work would be extended to (150-78=) 72 days or (210-78 =) 132 days with 66 m² grates and (150-57=) 93 days or (210-57=) 153 days with 90 m² grates. With a throughput as in Lothes & Profé’s more fuel-efficient experiments IV-VI, time for preparatory work would largely exceed burning time proper with any grate size. With 6 instead of 5 grates, the burning times would be accordingly shorter and the time available for preparatory work accordingly longer. One can thus conclude that the SS at Treblinka could master the task of burning about 789,000 corpses within 5 to 7 months, if only they implemented an efficient cremation procedure and properly organized the preparatory work.²⁰⁹

Mattogno & Graf claimed that "if the cremation of 860,000 bodies in Treblinka had been initiated at the beginning of April 1943, then under the most favorable conditions it would have ended in December 1945, and the Soviets as well as His Honor Judge

²⁰⁹ In this context it should also be borne in mind that cremation at Treblinka did not necessarily reduce the corpses to ashes like the carcasses on the Whithorn pyres or in the experiments of Lothes & Profé (see section 1 of this chapter).

Lukaszkiwicz would have been able to personally attend the performance!"²¹⁰ Considering the above conclusions, this claim can – to use an expression of Mattogno & Graf's²¹¹ – evoke only amusement.

At Belzec the corpses cremated within a period of about 5 months weighed about 23.65 kg on average (Table 8.18), so the total corpse mass corresponding to ca. 435,000 corpses was 10,287,750 kg. Assuming the installed cremation capacity that was assumed for Treblinka in Table 8.30, one gets the burning times shown in Table 8.32.

Table 8.32

Cremation event/experiment	(1) Average throughput of pyre (kg of carcass/corpse combusted per hour and square meter of grate)	(2) Throughput of 5x66 m2 pyre (kg of carcass/corpse combusted per hour)	(3) Throughput of 5x90 m2 pyre (kg of carcass/corpse combusted per hour)	(4) Number of corpses	(5) Weight of corpses = (4)*23.65	(6) Time required to burn all corpses on 66 m2 pyre (hours) = (5)÷(2)÷24	(7) Time required to burn all corpses on 90 m2 pyre (hours) = (5)÷(3)÷24
a) Lothes & Profé I-III	16.51	5,448.30	7,429.50	435,000	10,287,750	79	58
b) Whithorn	24.10	7,953.00	10,845.00	435,000	10,287,750	54	40
c) Lothes & Profé IV-VI	40.12	13,239.60	18,054.00	435,000	10,287,750	32	24

In the lowest average throughput scenario of Table 8.32, cremation would last between 58 (90 m² pyre) and 79 (66 m² pyre) complete days, leaving between 71 (66 m² pyre) and 92 (90 m² pyre) out of an assumed total cremation period of 150 days for preparatory work.

With only three equally dimensioned cremation grates (as assumed in Mattogno's calculations²¹²), times would be as shown in Table 8.33:

Table 8.33

Cremation event/experiment	(1) Average throughput of pyre (kg of carcass/corpse combusted per hour and square meter of grate)	(2) Throughput of 3x66 m2 pyre (kg of carcass/corpse combusted per hour)	(3) Throughput of 3x90 m2 pyre (kg of carcass/corpse combusted per hour)	(4) Number of corpses	(5) Weight of corpses = (4)*23.65	(6) Time required to burn all corpses on 66 m2 pyre (hours) = (5)÷(2)÷24	(7) Time required to burn all corpses on 90 m2 pyre (hours) = (5)÷(3)÷24
a) Lothes & Profé I-III	16.51	3,268.98	4,457.70	435,000	10,287,750	131	96
b) Whithorn	24.10	4,771.80	6,507.00	435,000	10,287,750	90	66
c) Lothes & Profé IV-VI	40.12	7,943.76	10,832.40	435,000	10,287,750	54	40

The lowest installed capacity and throughput scenario (i.e. 3 pyres with an area of 66 m² with an average throughput of only 16.51 kg of corpse combusted per hour and square meter of grate) would mean 131 days of pure cremation time, leaving only 19 out of 150 days for preparatory work. In this scenario the cremation period would thus have had to be longer than 150 days, which would not be incompatible with the evidence insofar as at least one

²¹⁰ M&G, *Treblinka*, p.149.

²¹¹ See note 196.

²¹² Mattogno, *Belżec*, p.86.

bystander witness mentioned cremation throughout the spring of 1943²¹³ and the stench of exhumed bodies was still noticed by another witness in April 1943, according to Reitlinger.²¹⁴ In the other scenarios the time left for preparatory work ranges between (150-96=) 54 and (150-40=) 110 days.

According to Belzec SS-man Heinrich Gley (see section 1 of this chapter), each of the camp's first one and then two fireplaces (*Feuerstellen*) could burn about 2,000 corpses within 24 hours, the burnings being carried out night and day without interruption during a period of 5 months. This number corresponds to throughput scenario c) in Table 8.28 (Lothes & Profé's experiments IV-VI) with 90 m² of pyre area, assuming that out of 24 hours 14 were available for preparatory work and 10 were pure cremation time, or with a 66 m² pyre assuming 10 hours for preparation and 14 hours for cremation. It is not clear whether by fireplace (*Feuerstelle*) Gley meant a single pyre or a cremation site consisting of more than one pyre like there were at Whithorn and Treblinka. Testimonies of outsider witnesses mentioning 3 or an undetermined number of cremation grates at Belzec²¹⁵ point in the latter direction.

Sobibor extermination camp could afford to burn its about 170,000 corpses weighing 36.43 kg on average (Table 8.16) at a more relaxed pace than Treblinka and Belzec, as it operated for a year after having implemented cremation as its body disposal procedure in October 1942. As shown in Table 8.34 below, a single 66 m² pyre could have handled all corpses within 237 days at most (leaving 365-237 = 128 days for preparatory work), but possibly within as few as 97 days (time left for preparatory work = 268 days). With a 90 m² pyre, cremation would have lasted 174 days at most (leaving 191 days for preparatory work), but possibly as little as 71 days (time left for preparatory work = 294 days).

Table 8.34

Cremation event/experiment	(1) Average throughput of pyre (kg of carcass/corpse combusted per hour and square meter of grate)	(2) Throughput of 1x66 m ² pyre (kg of carcass/corpse combusted per hour)	(3) Throughput of 1x90 m ² pyre (kg of carcass/corpse combusted per hour)	(4) Number of corpses	(5) Weight of corpses = (4)*36.43	(6) Time required to burn all corpses on 66 m ² pyre (hours) = (5)÷(2)÷24	(7) Time required to burn all corpses on 90 m ² pyre (hours) = (5)÷(3)÷24
a) Lothes & Profé I-III	16.51	1,089.66	1,485.90	170,000	6,193,100	237	174
b) Whithorn	24.10	1,590.60	2,169.00	170,000	6,193,100	162	119
c) Lothes & Profé IV-V	40.12	2,647.92	3,610.80	170,000	6,193,100	97	71

²¹³ Eustachy Ukraiński, see note 5.

²¹⁴ See note 8. Reitlinger also writes that working inmates were "occupied in effacing the mass graves" until June 1943.

²¹⁵ See note 5.

According to Mattogno, Graf & Kues, "the only incineration site identified for Sobibor" had an area of merely 30 square meters.²¹⁶ This claim is based on Kola's description of the pit he called grave # 7²¹⁷, which translates as follows according to the Revisionist authors:

Grave No. 7 (?) is a site where corpses were burnt, with an area of at least 10 × 3m and a depth of up to 0.90 m, located in the central part of hectare XVIII, approx. 10 – 12 m to the south from the southern edge of grave No. 4. The deposits of cremated corpse remains appeared in 6 boreholes during drilling. There are soil transformations around the grave of unknown origins. The structure was classified as a grave only because of the cremated corpse remains. However, it is possible that it was just a place where corpses were burnt. In order to determine the function of the place accurately, more detailed excavations are required.²¹⁸

The above text shows that Kola considered it possible (but not certain) that this "grave" was "just a place where corpses were burned". Not *the* (only) place where corpses were burned, but *a* "place where corpses were burned", i.e. one out of several burning sites. MGK conveniently transformed this into a categorical statement that grave # 7 was *the* (only) cremation site at Sobibor.

To make matters worse, MGK also ignored the fact that Kola considered each of graves nos. 1 and 2 to have been body-burning graves, obviously on account of having found only cremation remains but no whole corpses or larger unburned remains in these pits. The available English translations of Kola's descriptions of these graves by MGK²¹⁹ and by Katarzyna Piotrowska²²⁰ don't differ significantly except as concerns the last paragraph of each grave's description, which reads "It contains the remains of burned corpses" according to MGK and "It was a body burning grave" according to the author's translator. The original Polish term in the article is "Grób ciałopalny". "Grób" means "grave" and "cialopalny" obviously refers to a property of the grave, so it doesn't look like the author's translator made a mistake here. MGK, on the other hand, translated the term "Grób ciałopalny" as "It contains remains of cremated corpses". This translation, while accurately rendering what the original text says about the contents of the grave (remains of cremated corpses), obfuscates Kola's assessment of what the grave's purpose had been, which the translation "body burning grave"

²¹⁶ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.145: "According to the official Holocaust historiography, the cremation of the corpses was carried out in a trench, on grates made of railway rails which rested on blocks of concrete. This trench, A. Kola informs us, measured 10 × 3 meters and was 90 centimeters deep." P. 146: "However, the only incineration site identified for Sobibór (cf. above) covered a surface area of 30 square meters and was 90 centimeters deep."

²¹⁷ Kola, 'Sobibór'.

²¹⁸ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.120.

²¹⁹ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.118 f.

²²⁰ Available under <http://holocaustcontroversies.yuku.com/topic/1071>

conveys. Kola obviously assumed that, as graves nos. 1 and 2 contained only cremation remains, they had never been used for burying whole corpses but only for burning corpses whose cremation remains had then been buried in them.²²¹ One cannot help the suspicion that MGK mistranslated this passage in order to conceal from their readers the fact that the archaeologist had located two other cremation sites besides grave no. 7, which belies their claim that grave no. 7 was the "only incineration site identified for Sobibor".

MGK's mistranslation is all the more understandable – from the point of view of their agenda – considering the surface areas of these graves: 400 m² for grave no. 1, 500 m² for grave no. 2. Even assuming that (as described in the Judgment LG Hagen vom 20.12.1966, 11 Ks 1/64, see section 8.2.2) the cremation grid was placed inside the pit (possibly across a smaller pit dug at the bottom of a bigger pit, like in experiments IV to VI by Dr. Lothes & Dr. Profé) and that the pit's bottom area was smaller than its surface area²²², it seems reasonable to assume that the two pits, with a combined surface area of 900 m² (or the single huge pit they originally constituted, see section 1 of this chapter), could accommodate a pyre area at least half the surface area, i.e. 450 m². So large an area would not have been required to cope with an average daily number of ca. $(170,000 \div 365 =)$ 466 cremated corpses. However, there is evidence suggesting that cremation capacity at Sobibor was high enough to cope with peak loads more than 10 times higher. A Polish witness by the name of Piwonski, living in the village of Zlobek three kilometers to the north-west of the camp, was told by some of the Ukrainian guards that one day as many as 5,000 to 6,000 bodies were disinterred at Sobibor, obviously in order to be burned.²²³ Piwonski's mention of disinterred corpses calls for assuming that the cremation performance suggested by his Ukrainian interlocutors was achieved with decomposed corpses of deportees killed and buried during the first phase of the camp's operation, until the end of July/early August 1942. The average weight of these deportees (Table 8.16, categories "A" and "B") was $(1,968,046 \div 80,000) = 24.60$ kg. With this average weight the times required to burn 6,000 corpses, assuming the same pyre areas as in Table 8.30 would have been as shown in Table 8.35 below.

Understandably uncomfortable with the idea of efficiently burning corpse pyres, MGK claim that "in mainstream Holocaust historiography the descriptions of the fires provided above speak of smoke and dust as phenomena which normally accompanied the

²²¹ As mentioned in section 1 of this chapter, Kola's find corroborate related witness testimonies.

²²² Due to the sloping of the walls, see Chapter 7.

²²³ Deposition of Jan Piwonski in Lublin on 29.04.1975, as note 24.

incinerations, but this only goes to show, as we have already noted, that the combustion proceeded poorly.”²²⁴

Table 8.35

Cremation event/experiment	(1) Average throughput of pyre (kg of carcass/corpse combusted per hour and square meter of grate)	(2) Throughput of 5x66 m2 pyre (kg of carcass/corpse combusted per hour)	(3) Throughput of 5x90 m2 pyre (kg of carcass/corpse combusted per hour)	(4) Number of corpses	(5) Weight of corpses = (4)*24.6	(6) Time required to burn all corpses on 66 m2 pyre (hours) = (5)÷(2)	(7) Time required to burn all corpses on 90 m2 pyre (hours) = (5)÷(3)	(8) Time required to burn all corpses on 66 m2 pyre (days) = (6)÷24	(9) Time required to burn all corpses on 90 m2 pyre (days) = (7)÷24
a) Lothes & Profé I-III	16.51	5,448.30	7,429.50	6,000	147,600	27	20	1.13	0.83
b) Whithorn	24.10	7,953.00	10,845.00	6,000	147,600	19	14	0.79	0.58
c) Lothes & Profé IV-V	40.12	13,239.60	18,054.00	6,000	147,600	11	8	0.46	0.33

First of all, the descriptions provided "above" don't necessarily bear out MGK's reading, for they mostly mention flames that were widely visible, especially at night, rather than smoke and dust.²²⁵ Second, smoke and dust do not necessarily indicate poor combustion but may also be due to the use of certain materials for burning, for instance tar. Dr. Lothes and Dr. Profé observed in their experiments²²⁶ that the smoke developed was considerable only as long as the tar was burning, their article further mentioning that stronger development of smoke was found to take place only at the start of the burning process. Even MGK would hardly argue that combustion proceeded "poorly" in the experiments of Dr. Lothes & Dr. Profé.²²⁷

Another of MGK's claims is that, while fresh corpses could be arranged on the grate in a somewhat orderly fashion allowing for open spaces to be provided for the passage of air, the unearthed corpses were simply dumped from the excavator in vague piles of shapeless mass.²²⁸

²²⁴ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.147

²²⁵ On p.141 of their *Sobibór* book, MGK quote an excerpt from the judgment LG Hagen vom 20.12.1966, 11 Ks 1/64, including a passage whereby *the light from the fires* was visible inside and outside the camp. On page 142 they quote an excerpt from Schelvis, *Sobibor* mentioning that the mass cremations "resulted in huge fires, which flared up so high they could be seen far and wide, especially at night", that the Ukrainians in their watchtowers "could see the flames whenever the wind blew in their direction" and that the flames "were visible even from Piwonski's house in the village of Zlobek three kilometres to the north-west". Judge Zdzisław Łukaszewicz is quoted on the same page with the following description: "The burning of the corpses was, however, difficult to hide, as the wind would spread a specific smell of fire all around and because the smoke and the fire from the burn sites were visible from far away." This is the only mention of smoke from mainstream Holocaust historiography "provided above" by MGK.

²²⁶ Lothes & Profé, as note 117

²²⁷ Smoke can often be seen rising from carcass pyres, e.g. on the photos in the BBC articles 'Dioxins: What are they?' (23 April, 2001, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/1292138.stm) and 'Focus back on foot-and-mouth pyres' (22 April, 2001, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/1290619.stm). Were those pyres combusting poorly?

²²⁸ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.147 f.

One wonders whence MGK derived the notion that at Sobibor and the other Aktion Reinhard camps the unearthed corpses were simply dumped from the excavator onto the pyre. Certainly not from related eyewitness descriptions considered by historians, according to which the corpses were placed and arranged on the pyres by prisoner-workers after excavators had extracted them from the graves.²²⁹ It's also not like the corpses in the mass graves were necessarily a gooey, indistinguishable mass of flesh and bone; they might well have looked like the decomposed corpses of civilians found by Soviet investigating commissions at many Nazi killing sites.²³⁰

To be sure, arranging decomposed bodies on the grid must have been more unpleasant than doing so with bodies of freshly killed people, but there's no reason why the prisoner-workers couldn't have arranged them in a fashion at least as "orderly" as victims of the Dresden air attack on the pyre at the *Altmarkt* (see Image 8.5), whose cremation doesn't seem to have been hampered by insufficient air circulation. The fragility of such bodies, which were likely to become separated into several pieces in the hands of their handlers, might even have helped a cremation-friendly arrangement.

Mattogno's attempt to downsize cremation capacities at Chelmno has been discussed in detail in an earlier blog article²³¹, where it was demonstrated that the installed capacity of the two cremation ovens used on the camp's 2nd phase, assuming they were comparable to the Feist apparatus as Mattogno claims, was $288 \times 2 = 576$ corpses weighing 34 kg on average within 24 hours. This was sufficient to deal with the 7,176 deportees that arrived at Chelmno between June 23 and July 14, 1944, at an average of 326 per day.

The first phase of Chelmno extermination camp produced about 150,000 corpses, which were mostly burned on grid structures resembling those applied in the experiments of Dr. Lothes and Dr. Profé, at the *Aktion Reinhard* camps and on the Dresden *Altmarkt*. In fact, the descriptions of Ismer and Frank Sch. mentioned in section 1 of this chapter suggest a method akin to the one applied by Lothes & Profé in experiments IV to VI, that of burning the corpses on grates placed inside of pits.

²²⁹ See for instance Schelvis, *Sobibor*, p.111: "The operator would drive right up to the grid, where the Arbeitshäftlinge from Lager 3 piled the bodies into human pyramids. Then they were burnt." At Treblinka the procedure was the following (Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, p.176): "After the cremation installation had been constructed, the process of removing the bodies from the pits began. The work was initiated by a single excavator; later, a second excavator was brought in. The shovel's scoop removed six to eight corpses with each dip and dumped them on the edge of the pit. A special team of prisoners, working in twos, transferred the corpses to the crematorium on stretchers."

²³⁰ See, for instance, the following photos included in Muehlenkamp, 'Photographic documentation of Nazi crimes', 1.2.27,1.2.28,1.4.2, 1.4.3, 2.3.20, 2.3.21, 2.3.22, 2.3.23, 2.5.2, 2.5.6.

²³¹ Muehlenkamp, 'Mattogno on Chelmno Cremation (Part 3)'.

The witnesses' descriptions, as also pointed out in section 1, are corroborated by the results of archaeological investigations in 2003/04, namely the descriptions of objects 3/03, 4/03, 20/03 and 5/03 and of indications that corpses were burned inside the second grave. Frank Sch.'s description points to 3 or 4 pits with an area of 20 m² each, i.e. a total pit area of 60 to 80 m². The witness's estimates may have been on the low side, or the burning pits may have been enlarged after the time of his observation, for objects 3/03, 4/03, 20/03 and 5/03 have areas of, respectively, 72 m², 56 m², 64 m² and 14 m². Considering the possibility that the square object 20/03 was one of the 2nd phase ovens (like object 2/03, which has an equally large square surface area), it will for good measure be left out of the equation. The sum of the areas of objects 3/03, 4/03 and 5/03 is 142 m². Assuming for the scenario corresponding to Lothes & Profé's experiments IV to VI that the grate area was half the pit surface area as in these experiments (i.e. 30 m² or 71 m² instead of 60 m² or 142 m² as in the scenarios corresponding to Lothes & Profé's experiments I to III and the Whithorn pyres), and considering that only the decomposed corpses extracted from mass graves (104,360 corpses weighing 16.96 kg on average and 1,769,946 kg in total, see Table 8.21) were burned in open pyres whereas the corpses of those killed after July 1942 were burned in crematoria of the kind also described by Frank Sch., the corresponding burning times would be as shown in Table 8.36. In this table one can see that even a 30 m² grate area could have been sufficient to destroy these corpses within the assumed minimum cremation period of 5 months = 150 days, time for preparatory work exceeding cremation time proper in all throughput scenarios. The remaining 45,640 corpses of the 1st phase could have been burned within about (45,640÷576 =) 79 days even with the two ovens used in the 2nd phase. It can be safely assumed that the two crematoria with chimneys used in the 1st phase had a higher capacity.

Table 8.36

Cremation event/experiment	(1) Average throughput of pyre (kg of carcass/ corpse combusted per hour and square meter of grate)	(2) Throughput of 60/30 m2 grate area (kg of carcass/ corpse combusted per hour)	(3) Throughput of 142/71 m2 grate area (kg of carcass/ corpse combusted per hour)	(4) Number of corpses	(5) Weight of corpses (from Table 12.21)	(6a) Number of days required to burn all corpses on 60/30 m2 grate area = (5)÷(2)÷24	(6b) Number of days left for preparation work = 150 days - (6a)	(7a) Number of days required to burn all corpses on 142/71 m2 grate area = (5)÷(3)÷24	(7b) Number of days left for preparation work = 150 days - (7a)
a) Lothes & Profé I-III	16.51	990.60	2,344.42	104,360	1,769,946	74	76	31	119
b) Whithorn	24.10	1,446.00	3,422.20	104,360	1,769,946	51	99	22	128
c) Lothes & Profé IV-VI	40.12	1,203.60	2,848.52	104,360	1,769,946	61	89	26	124

Cremation Remains

The remains left behind by cremation would correspond to about 5 % of the corpses' non-decomposed weight and 6 to 8 % of the wood weight, according to Mattogno, Graf & Kues.²³² With the exaggerated corpse weights and enormous amounts of wood they claim (see section 8.3), this allows them to argue that the volume of ash (assuming specific weights of 0.5 g/cm³ for human ash and 0.34 g/cm³ for wood ash) would, in some camps at least, have exceeded the established or estimated volume of the mass graves.²³³ With the more realistic corpse and wood weights explained in section 8.3, on the other hand, the problems that Mattogno and his colleagues make so much of become rather insignificant, as shown in Tables 8.37 and 8.38 below.²³⁴ The average portion of the grave volume occupied by human and wood ashes is about 10 % in Table 8.37 and 12 % in Table 8.38, Belzec being the camp with the highest density of buried ashes (16 % respectively 19 %).

One should however bear in mind the possibility that the residue percentages considered in the above tables are too low, because combustion on the extermination camp pyres was not necessarily as complete as would correspond to such residues and there are also data from open-air carcass cremation pointing to higher amounts of residue.

According to a document from the British Environment Agency (EA) referred to by MGK²³⁵, a typical pyre for 300 cows at the time of the British Foot & Mouth Disease Crisis in 2001 included 175 tons of coal, 380 railway sleepers, 250 pallets, four tons of straw and 2,250 liters of diesel. Such a pyre could leave 15 tons of carcass ash and 45 tons of other ash to be disposed of. Assuming that each cow weighed 500 kg²³⁶, the original carcass weight

²³² M&G, *Treblinka*, p.150; Mattogno, *Belzec*, pp.86 f.; MGK, *Sobibór*, p.148. On p.136 of the *Sobibór* book MGK refer to a source (<http://hubcap.clemson.edu/~blprrt/bestwoodash.html>) according to which the burning of wood results in about 6-10 % ashes on average. Having assumed the use of fresh wood for their Sobibor calculations of wood requirements, MGK generously assume the lower value "because it is fresh wood, very rich in water" (p.148).

²³³ See for instance Mattogno, *Belzec*, p.86.

²³⁴ The former table uses the amounts of dry wood per corpses from Table 8.22, the latter the fresh wood amounts from Table 8.23. The wood weight percentage of cremation residue considered is 8 % for dry wood and 6 % for fresh wood. The volume calculations from the weight of residues are based on the data about the specific weight of human and wood ashes provided by Mattogno. Regarding the grave volume figures for Belzec, Sobibor and Chełmno in column 10 see Chapter 7. The Sobibor volume is the volume of graves nos. 1 to 6 corrected for sloping (12,746.50 m³) plus the volume of the small pit called grave # 7, which had an area of 30 m² and a depth of 0.90 meters, thus a volume of 27 m³ (no correction for sloping required due to the low depth). The grave volume considered for Treblinka is the volume required to bury 721,555 at a density of 12 corpses per cubic meter (Chapter 7).

²³⁵ Environment Agency North West Region Area, 'Extracts from Submission to Cumbria County Council's Inquiry into the Foot and Mouth Crisis'. (<http://cmis.carlisle.gov.uk/CMISWebPublic/Binary.ashx?Document=6837>), section 5.2.4 on page 13, quoted in MGK, *Sobibór*, p.135 n.394.

²³⁶ As note 208.

was 150 tons, i.e. the carcass ash amounted to 10 % of the original weight. The other ash amounted to 300 kg for each ton of carcass burned.

Table 8.37

Wood residue factor	0.08											
Corpse residue factor	0.05											
Dry wood												
Camp	(1) Number of corpses	(2) Average life weight of corpses, kg	(3) Total weight of corpses, kg	(4) Weight in kg of dry wood per corpse	(4) Total weight of wood, kg	(5) Weight of corpse cremation remains = (3)*corpse residue factor, metric tons	(6) Volume of corpse cremation remains = (5)÷0.5, m ³	(7) Weight of wood cremation remains = (4)*wood residue factor, metric	(8) Volume of wood cremation remains = (7)÷0.34, m ³	(9) Total volume of cremation remains = (6)+(8), m ³	(10) Volume of mass of graves, m ³	(11) (9) as % of (10)
Belzec	435,000	34	14,790,000	18.02	7,838,700	739.5	1,479	627.1	1,844	3,323	21,310	16%
Sobibór	170,000	48	8,160,000	20.64	3,508,800	408.0	816	280.7	826	1,642	12,774	13%
Treblinka	789,000	34	26,826,000	12.18	9,610,020	1,341.3	2,683	768.8	2,261	4,944	60,130	8%
Chełmno 1st phase	150,000	34	5,100,000	16.34	2,451,000	255.0	510	196.1	577	1,087	16,179	7%
Chełmno 2nd phase	7,000	34	238,000	29.60	207,200	11.9	24	16.6	49	73		
Total	1,551,000	36	55,114,000	15.23	23,615,720	2,755.7	5,512	1,889.3	5,557	11,069	110,393	10%

Table 8.38

Wood residue factor	0.06											
Corpse residue factor	0.05											
Fresh wood												
Camp	(1) Number of corpses	(2) Average life weight of corpses, kg	(3) Total weight of corpses, kg	(4) Weight in kg of fresh wood per corpse	(4) Total weight of wood, kg	(5) Weight of corpse cremation remains = (3)*corpse residue factor, metric tons	(6) Volume of corpse cremation remains = (5)÷0.5, m ³	(7) Weight of wood cremation remains = (4)*wood residue factor, metric	(8) Volume of wood cremation remains = (7)÷0.34, m ³	(9) Total volume of cremation remains = (6)+(8), m ³	(10) Volume of mass of graves, m ³	(11) (9) as % of (10)
Belzec	435,000	34	14,790,000	34.24	14,893,530	739.5	1,479	893.6	2,628	4,107	21,310	19%
Sobibór	170,000	48	8,160,000	39.22	6,666,720	408.0	816	400.0	1,176	1,992	12,774	16%
Treblinka	789,000	34	26,826,000	23.14	18,259,038	1,341.3	2,683	1,095.5	3,222	5,905	60,130	10%
Chełmno 1st phase	150,000	34	5,100,000	31.05	4,656,900	255.0	510	279.4	822	1,332	16,179	8%
Chełmno 2nd phase	7,000	34	238,000	56.24	393,680	11.9	24	23.6	69	93		1%
Total	1,551,000	36	55,114,000	28.93	44,869,868	2,755.7	5,512	2,692.1	7,917	13,429	110,393	12%

Table 8.39 contains a calculation of the presumable original weights per ton of carcass of the substances used for burning the carcasses²³⁷ and the corresponding residue after cremation.²³⁸ The wood equivalent of the coal, straw and wood used for cremation was

²³⁷ Sleepers: the larger of the two types of new oak railway sleepers sold by the company Timber2you advertising under <http://www.limelandscapes.com/> weighs 80 kg and has a volume of 2.4 x 0.225 x 0.125 = 0.0675 cubic meters. A European railway sleeper, as considered for the wood equivalent calculations in Muehlenkamp, 'Belzec Research 4 (2)', has a higher volume (0.0975 m³) and is assumed to have a correspondingly higher weight. 380 such sleepers are held to weigh (380x80x0.0975÷0.0675) = 43,911 kg. Pallet: wood pallets sold by the company ULINE advertising under http://www.uline.com/BL_8201/Wood-Pallets, weigh up to 100 lbs = 45.36 kg; 250 pallets would thus weigh 11,340 kg.

²³⁸ Residue of coal estimated as the quotient between 130 million tons of coal ash generated by the United States each year according to the CBS News article 'Coal Ash: 130 Million Tons of Waste' (August 15, 2010, <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2009/10/01/60minutes/main5356202.shtml>) and the US coal consumption in 2008 according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) table 'Coal Consumption by Sector' (http://www.eia.gov/totalenergy/data/annual/pdf/sec7_9.pdf), which is 1,120.5 million short tons corresponding to 1,017 million metric tons. Residue of wood and straw estimated as 10 % according to Mark Risse and Glen

calculated on hand of each substance's heating value in BTU²³⁹, in order to establish the weight of wood residue, calculated as the weight of wood residue that would accrue if all flammables left the same amount of residue (which is unrealistic insofar as coal leaves a higher percentage of residue than wood when combusting). The diesel oil was left out of the calculation as its residue is assumed to be negligible.

Table 8.39

Item	Pre-combustion weight kg	Item	Pre-combustion weight kg	Residue weight kg	BTU/kg	BTU	Wood equivalent kg	Residue factor
300 Carcasses	150,000	1 Carcass	1,000	100				0.10 Carcass ash
Coal	175,000	Coal	1,167	152	24,692	28,807,333	1,728	0.13 Coal ash
Sleepers	43,911	Sleepers	293	29	16,671	4,880,269	370	0.10 Other ash
Straw	4,000	Straw big bales	27	3	13,200	352,000	21	0.10 Other ash
Pallets	11,340	Wood	76	8	16,671	1,260,328	18	0.10 Other ash
Total	384,251		2,562	291	71,234	35,299,929	2,137	
Total w/o carcass	234,251		1,562	191			2,137	0.09 Wood ash

The weight of ash other than carcass ash per ton of carcass burned is 191 kg in the above table, 109 kg short of the 300 kg per ton of carcass reportedly left by a typical pyre according to the EA. So if the EA's data are accurate, the residue left by the coal, straw and wood burned must have been somewhat higher than considered in Table 8.39. In the next table (8.40), the assumed residue ratio for these substances is multiplied by a factor so as to yield 300 kg per carcass, raising the coal residue ratio from 0.13 to 0.20 and the wood and straw residue ratio from 0.10 to 0.16.

Table 8.40

Item	Pre-combustion weight kg	Item	Pre-combustion weight kg	Residue weight kg	BTU/kg	BTU	Wood equivalent kg	Residue factor
300 Carcasses	150,000	1 Carcass	1,000	100				0.10 Carcass ash
Coal	175,000	Coal	1,167	238	24,692	28,807,333	1,728	0.20 Coal ash
Sleepers	43,911	Sleepers	293	46	16,671	4,880,269	370	0.16 Other ash
Straw	4,000	Straw big bales	27	4	13,200	352,000	21	0.16 Other ash
Pallets	11,340	Wood	76	12	16,671	1,260,328	18	0.16 Other ash
Total	384,251		2,562	400	71,234	35,299,929	2,137	
Total w/o carcass	234,251		1,562	300			2,137	0.14 Wood ash

Dividing the 300 kg of other-than-carcass ash by the 2,137 kg of wood corresponding to the flammables (except the residue-neutral diesel) used per ton of carcass in these pyres yields a theoretical wood residue factor of ca. 0.14, vs. a carcass residue factor of 0.10.

Harris, 'Best Management Practices for Wood Ash Used as an Agricultural Soil Amendment' (<http://hubcap.clemson.edu/~blpprt/bestwoodash.html>).

²³⁹ BTU/kg values from Muehlenkamp, as note 239, where straw is considered with a thermal value of 6,000 per pound according to Alex English, 'Round Bale Burner' (31 January 1997, <http://web.archive.org/web/20050321083913/http://listserv.repp.org/pipermail/bioenergy/1997-February/004492.html>). 1 kg = 2.2 pounds, so the heating value of 1 kg of straw equals (6,000x2.2=) 13,200 BTU.

As mentioned in section 2 of this chapter²⁴⁰, MGK tried to use IAEA guidelines for carcass burning²⁴¹ to support the wood-to-carcass weight ratio that underlies their wood requirement calculations, conveniently omitting the fact that the ash figure given by Mercer et al, 350 kg per ton of animal, is not just carcass and wood ash but also includes coal ash. In Table 8.41 below the exercise done in Table 8.39 is repeated considering Mercer et al's figures for amounts of external flammables and total amount of residue.²⁴² One can see that the residue weight per ton of carcass calculated with the same assumptions (317 kg including the carcass ash, 217 kg without it) falls short of the 350 kg mentioned by Mercer et al.

Table 8.41

Item	Pre-combustion weight kg	Item	Pre-combustion weight kg	Residue weight kg	BTU/kg	BTU	Wood equivalent kg	Residue factor
250 Carcasses	125,000	1 Carcass	1,000	100				0.10 Carcass ash
Coal	50,750	Coal	406	53	24,692	10,024,952	601	0.13 Coal ash
Sleepers	28,889	Sleepers	231	23	16,671	3,852,868	292	0.10 Other ash
Straw big bales	170,000	Straw big bales	1,360	136	13,200	17,952,000	1,077	0.10 Other ash
Wood	6,250	Wood	50	5	16,671	833,550	12	0.10 Other ash
Total	380,889		3,047	317	71,234	32,663,370	1,982	
Total w/o carcass	255,889		2,047	217			1,982	0.11 Wood ash

As Mercer et al – unlike the EA – give no separate weight for the carcass ash; their total residue weight of 350 kg can be reached in two ways: by leaving the carcass residue unaltered and assuming a higher amount of coal and other ash (Table 8.42) or by assuming a higher carcass residue (Table 8.43).

The calculated wood residue factor is 0.13 in Table 8.42 and 0.11 in Table 8.43, whereas the corpse residue factor is 0.10 in the former and 0.133 in the latter.

Table 8.42

Item	Pre-combustion weight kg	Item	Pre-combustion weight kg	Residue weight kg	BTU/kg	BTU	Wood equivalent kg	Residue factor
250 Carcasses	125,000	1 Carcass	1,000	100				0.10 Carcass ash
Coal	50,750	Coal	406	61	24,692	10,024,952	601	0.15 Coal ash
Sleepers	28,889	Sleepers	231	27	16,671	3,852,868	292	0.12 Other ash
Straw big bales	170,000	Straw big bales	1,360	157	13,200	17,952,000	1,077	0.12 Other ash
Wood	6,250	Wood	50	6	16,671	833,550	12	0.12 Other ash
Total	380,889		3,047	350	71,234	32,663,370	1,982	
Total w/o carcass	255,889		2,047	250			1,982	0.13 Wood ash

²⁴⁰ See note 105.

²⁴¹ Mercer J.A., Hesketh N., Hunt J., Oughton D.H, 'Burning of Carcasses', [http://www-infocris.iaea.org/en/w3.exe\\$EAFull?ID=67](http://www-infocris.iaea.org/en/w3.exe$EAFull?ID=67).

²⁴² Weight of one sleeper as in note 239; weight of 250 sleepers thus equals (250x80x0.0975÷0.0675) = 28,889 kg. Weight of straw bale considered: 1,500 pounds (heaviest bale that can be handled by Tractor Loader Hay Bale Spear LB-8 advertised by Everything Attachments (<http://www.everythingattachments.com/Tractor-Loader-Hay-Bale-Spear-LB-8-p/lb-hay-bale-spear-lb8.htm>) = 680 kg, 250 bales thus weighing 170,000 kg. BTU/kg values for calculation of wood equivalent and residue ratios are the same as in Table 8.39 (notes 239, 240).

Table 8.43

Item	Pre-combustion weight kg	Item	Pre-combustion weight kg	Residue weight kg	BTU/kg	BTU	Wood equivalent kg	Residue factor
250 Carcasses	125,000	1 Carcass	1,000	133				0.13 Carcass ash
Coal	50,750	Coal	406	53	24,692	10,024,952	601	0.13 Coal ash
Sleepers	28,889	Sleepers	231	23	16,671	3,852,868	292	0.10 Other ash
Straw big bales	170,000	Straw big bales	1,360	136	13,200	17,952,000	1,077	0.10 Other ash
Wood	6,250	Wood	50	5	16,671	833,550	12	0.10 Other ash
Total	380,889		3,047	350	71,234	32,663,370	1,982	
Total w/o carcass	255,889		2,047	217			1,982	0.11

The calculations in Tables 8.42 and 8.43 incidentally show that the amount of residue stated by Mercer et al is compatible with the author’s earlier wood equivalent calculations based on their article²⁴³, which yield a wood-to-carcass weight ratio of about 2:1, rather than with MGK’s conveniently oversimplified calculations mentioned in section 2 yielding their desired, much higher ratio.²⁴⁴

The residue factors for carcass ash and wood ash from Tables 8.40, 8.42 and 8.43 were applied to calculate the amounts of cremation remains at the extermination camps, instead of the lower residue factors considered in Tables 8.37 and 8.38. The results of this exercise are shown in Tables 8.44 and 8.45 below.

Table 8.44

Camp	(1) Total volume of cremation remains (m ³) with dry wood and residue factors from Table 8.40	(2) Total volume of cremation remains (m ³) with fresh wood and residue factors from Table 8.40	(3) Total volume of cremation remains (m ³) with dry wood and residue factors from Table 8.42	(4) Total volume of cremation remains (m ³) with fresh wood and residue factors from Table 8.42	(5) Total volume of cremation remains (m ³) with dry wood and residue factors from Table 8.43	(6) Total volume of cremation remains (m ³) with fresh wood and residue factors from Table 8.43	(7) Volume of mass of graves, m ³
Belzec	6,186	9,091	5,955	8,653	6,470	8,753	21,310
Sobibór	3,077	4,377	2,973	4,181	3,306	4,328	12,774
Treblinka	9,322	12,884	9,039	12,346	10,245	13,043	60,130
Chelmno 1st phase	2,029	2,938	1,957	2,801	2,150	2,864	16,179
Chelmno 2nd phase	133	210	127	199	130	190	
	20,747	29,500	20,051	28,180	22,301	29,178	110,393

²⁴³ Muehlenkamp, ‘Belzec Research 4 (2)’.

²⁴⁴ See note 105.

Table 8.45

Camp	A - (1) from Table 8.44 in percentage of (7) from Table 8.44	B - (2) from Table 8.44 in percentage of (7) from Table 8.44	C - (3) from Table 8.44 in percentage of (7) from Table 8.44	D - (4) from Table 12.44 in percentage of (7) from Table 8.44	E - (5) from Table 12.44 in percentage of (7) from Table 8.44	F - (6) from Table 12.44 in percentage of (7) from Table 8.44
Bełżec	29%	43%	28%	41%	30%	41%
Sobibór	24%	34%	23%	33%	26%	34%
Treblinka	16%	21%	15%	21%	17%	22%
Chełmno 1st phase	13%	18%	12%	17%	13%	18%
Chełmno 2nd phase	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
	19%	27%	18%	26%	20%	26%

The concentration of ash would be considerably lower if the burning was carried out mainly using flammable liquids rather than wood, in which case cremation remains would mostly be of human origin. There is evidence that this was indeed the case. At Treblinka, according to Judge Łukasziewicz' protocol dated December 29, 1945, examination by an expert in forensic medicine of the ashes spread across an area of about 2 hectares together with bones, skulls and other human remains revealed that "the ashes are without any doubt of human origin (remains of cremated human bones)."²⁴⁵ At Belzec, coroner Dr. Pietraszkiewicz found that the ash he examined was predominantly of human origin and only a small part came from wood.²⁴⁶

Even if substantial amounts of wood were used, on the other hand, the density of cremation remains in the mass graves must have been lower at the time of the camps' dismantling than results from the above calculations, because cremation remains were not always returned to the burial pits. At Sobibor ashes from the cremated bodies were used as fertilizer for vegetable plots, mixed with sand and spread out across the soil, or taken out of the camp area.²⁴⁷ Regarding Treblinka there is evidence that cremation remains were not

²⁴⁵ See Chapter 7.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Schelvis, *Sobibor*, p.112. Inmate witness Jakob Biskobicz mentioned having been ordered by SS-officer Wagner to scatter human ash from the extermination area in the Sobibor vegetable yard (deposition in Tel Aviv on 06.06.1962, translation to German in BAL B162/208 AR-Z 251/59, Bd. VII, f. 1471 ff. (f.1479). According to inmate witness Kurt Thomas, ash was loaded into barrels and sent to Germany as fertilizer or mixed with unburned coal and dirt and then scattered on the camp's roads (letter to the Jewish World Congress dd. 3.12.1961, translation to German in BAL B162/208 AR-Z 251/59, Bd. V, f.1024 ff., f.1044). Bystander witness Bronislaw Lobejko reported having learned from Ukrainian guards that the human ash was mixed with gravel (*Schotter*) from locomotives (?) and scattered upon the camp's roads and paths, whereas unburned bones were crushed by Jewish inmates with hammers and then mixed with grit (*Kies*) – see Lobejko's deposition before judge Zielinski in Olesnica on 08.01.1946, as note 23. According to bystander witness Jan Piwonski, the

always buried in the emptied mass graves but also moved outside the camp area (see section 1 of this chapter). Also at Chełmno part of the cremation remains was not buried in the mass graves or elsewhere on site.²⁴⁸ Regarding Belzec, the scattering of ashes in fields and woods near the camp is mentioned by at least one witness.²⁴⁹

After the Soviet army reached the camp areas – or even before that, as suggested by the mention of ashes covering a large part of the camp area in the Soviet investigation report about Treblinka dated August 24, 1944²⁵⁰ -, robbery diggers brought further cremation remains to the surface. The effects of their activity at Belzec were described as follows by Prof. Andrzej Kola:

One can suppose that the ashes filled the pits completely, and only a very thin layer of surface soil was used as a cover. Therefore during the camp closing in 1943 year and leveling works taken up at that time, as well as robbery digs around the camp area directly after the war, the most part of body ashes was placed over the surface, and even now the presence of burnt bodies' traces is quite clear in the surface structures, particularly in the western and northern part of the camp. In those very parts the zone of graves was located.²⁵¹

These facts make it somewhat-less-than-relevant to argue that the concentration of cremation remains found in archaeological investigations of mass graves is lower than would correspond to human cremation on the evidenced scale, but Carlo Mattogno nevertheless indulged in this exercise regarding Belzec and Chełmno.

In his *Belżec* book Mattogno claimed that "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", and that 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."²⁵² However, he never undertook to explain how he had managed to determine, on hand of the schematic representations of core samples in Kola's book²⁵³, how high the ash content detected in each of the samples shown was. Instead he claimed that the cover layer of

corpse's ashes were taken out of the camp by train (deposition in Chelm on 10.11.1945, translation from Polish to German in StA.Do Sob 85 PM III NO 109, p.5 of the interrogation protocol).

²⁴⁸ See section 1; Pawlicka-Nowak, 'Chełmno Museum'.

²⁴⁹ Report of Rudolf Reder regarding Belzec – BAL B162/208 AR-Z 252/59 Bd. II, p.258 ff. (p.286). Reder refers to conversations he had with local inhabitants after the area was occupied by the Soviet army.

²⁵⁰ As note 47.

²⁵¹ Kola, *Belżec*, p.20.

²⁵² Mattogno, *Belżec*, p.87. Regarding the dishonesty of Mattogno's claim that the samples in Kola's book are the only relevant core samples from mass graves, see Chapter 7.

²⁵³ Kola, *Belżec*, pp.14-18.

the Belzec mass graves after they were refilled with sand and cremation remains must have been two meters thick and therefore, according to his calculations about the area of the Belzec mass graves identified by Kola, more than half of the mass graves' volume would have been occupied by soil not mixed with cremation remains (the cover layer) whereas the layer below the cover would have mostly or almost exclusively consisted of such remains. Such concentration of cremation remains in the lower half of the mass graves, in turn, would be incompatible with Kola's finds which, as Mattogno claimed without substantiation, suggest moderate to modest rather than high concentrations of cremation remains in the mass graves.²⁵⁴ Mattogno's claim about the thickness of the cover layer – based on the author's quote of what Arad wrote about that layer at Treblinka, not Belzec – is belied by the report about the excavations at Belzec directed by judge Godziszewski's on October 12, 1945, according to which there were layers of cremation remains well above two meters below ground, which cannot have been the result of robbery digging alone.²⁵⁵ An originally thin cover layer of sand was also the conclusion of Kola (see above quote), whose findings about a resulting noticeable presence of human cremation remains above ground throughout the Belzec site Mattogno challenged by amusingly claiming that he and Graf had seen no such traces when they visited the site in 1997.²⁵⁶ This argumentation, on the other hand, didn't keep Mattogno from invoking the scattering of cremation remains throughout a large part of the camp area, as described by eyewitness Stanislaw Kozak, to call in question the accuracy of Kola's conclusions regarding the area and volume of the mass graves.²⁵⁷ Like other Revisionists, Mattogno has no problem with arguing on both sides of his mouth.

Regarding Chelmno, Mattogno claims that the cremation of 145,000 corpses would have left 326 tons of human ashes occupying a volume of 652 cubic meters, assuming a corpse mass weight of 6,525 tons and a corpse residue factor of 5 %²⁵⁸(the same as in Tables 8.37 and 8.38). Assuming the highest carcass residue factor considered above (13.3 %, Table 8.43) and the weight of the ca. 150,000 corpses from Chelmno's 1st phase according to Table 8.21, the amount of human cremation remains would be the following: $[(3,321,706 \times 0.133) \div 1,000 =] 441.79$ tons of ash weight, corresponding to $441.79 \div 0.5 = 883.58$ m³ of ash. The four Chelmno mass graves in which corpses were buried had an

²⁵⁴ Mattogno, 'Controversie', pp.48 ff.; Mattogno, 'Controversy'.

²⁵⁵ See Muehlenkamp, 'Belzec Mass Graves and Archaeology: My Response to Carlo Mattogno (4,3)'. Mattogno's translation of Godziszewski's report is reproduced in Chapter 7.

²⁵⁶ Mattogno, 'Controversie', p.50 n.158; Mattogno, 'Controversy'; commentary in Muehlenkamp, *ibid.*

²⁵⁷ Mattogno, 'Controversie', pp.52 f.; Mattogno, *Belzec*, p.89. For discussion of these arguments see Chapter 7.

²⁵⁸ Mattogno, *Chelmno*, p.134.

estimated total volume of 16,179 cubic meters²⁵⁹, which means that if the corpse's cremation remains had been wholly returned to the mass graves they would have occupied no more than 5.46 % of the graves' volume. Even if this mass of human cremation remains had been dumped only into the 11 pits called the "fifth grave" in Pawlicka-Nowak's online article, with an assumed total volume of 4,096 cubic meters²⁶⁰, they would have occupied no more than $(883.58 \div 4,096 =)$ 21.57 % of these pits' volume. This was not so, however, for human cremation remains were also found in the former burial graves as well as in the objects called "field crematoria" in Pawlicka-Nowak's article, and besides not all cremation remains were disposed of inside the camp area, as mentioned above.

Oblivious of the fact that one should thus not necessarily expect to find human cremation remains in high concentrations in the Chełmno mass graves, ash pits and cremation structures, Mattogno triumphantly announces that a 1988 examination of soil samples containing human ashes revealed a human ash concentration of just "some percent" in these samples.²⁶¹ And he further disgraces himself by speculating that these samples must have come from the ash disposal pits making up the "fifth grave". Apparently Mattogno "forgot" that these pits (in which the soil was found to contain "a significant mixture of burn waste and crushed human bones"²⁶²) were not subject to archaeological investigation before 2003/04 and soil samples examined in 1988 are thus not likely to have been from these pits.

As concerns Sobibor, MGK reduce the amount of cremation remains in that camp's mass graves by creatively interpreting their translation of Kola's descriptions of these graves. Kola's translated statement that "Particularly noticeable traces of cremation occurred in the lower parts of the graves where distinct layers of scorched bones, with a thickness up to 40-60 cm, could be identified" is first decried as contradicting the archaeologist's description whereby the lower parts of graves nos. 3, 4, 5 and 6 contained not cremation remains but corpses in wax-fat transformation (apparently it didn't occur to these keen text analysts that Kola, as the context of his quoted statement suggests, is likely to have meant the lower layers of cremation remains in graves nos. 1 and 2, which he considered to have been used for cremation only, and the layers closest to the corpse layers in the other graves, which after all were up to 5.80 meters deep). Then MGK swiftly convert Kola's "particularly noticeable" traces of cremation into the *only* such traces that were found in the Sobibor mass graves, further ignore that Kola said nothing about how many "particularly noticeable" layers of

²⁵⁹ See Chapter 7.

²⁶⁰ See Muehlenkamp, 'Chełmno Cremation 3'.

²⁶¹ Mattogno, *Chełmno*, pp.123, 134-35

²⁶² Pawlicka-Nowak, 'Chełmno Museum'.

cremation remains were in the lower parts of the graves, and postulate that each mass grave contained only one layer of cremation remains, which they generously assume to be 50 cm thick. Considering the graves' area of 3,210 m², this would mean "(3,210×0.5=) 1,605 m³, equal to (1,605×0.4=) 642 tons, corresponding to about 34,500 corpses."²⁶³

Apart from being based on a conveniently creative text interpretation, these calculations (which MGK furthermore proclaim to be a "somewhat unrealistic hypothesis", without explaining why) don't help their case, especially if one considers the cremation residue calculations in Tables 8.37 and 8.38, which are based on corpse and wood weight assumptions more realistic than those of MGK. For 1,605 m³ of corpse and wood ash is not far below the amounts calculated in these tables as corresponding to the corpses of *all* Sobibor victims - 1,642 to 1,992 cubic meters. And it is quite possible that, as established by coroner Dr. Pietraszkiewicz at Belzec, and as must have been the case on the Dresden *Altmarkt* considering the rather small amounts of wood one sees under the grate in Image 8.5, cremation ashes are predominantly of human origin also at Sobibor.

Why Cremation?

In his *Belżec* book Mattogno provided the following explanation for the human cremation remains discovered at Belzec extermination camp:

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 Belzec 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 Vinnysya against the Soviets.²⁶⁴

If, as Mattogno claims, the cremation was related to avoiding contamination of the ground water (this was actually the reason why cremation replaced burial as the body disposal method at Sobibor starting October 1942, see section 1 of this chapter), then why were the mass graves dug as deep as the ground water level in the first place, although for

²⁶³ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.148.

²⁶⁴ Mattogno, *Belżec*, p.91.

"several thousands, perhaps even some tens of thousands" of dead bodies²⁶⁵ one really didn't need pits that deep? The pits near Treblinka I labor camp, regarding which Mattogno conceded "circa 6,800" corpses in a feeble attempt to explain away the Wehrmacht local commander of Ostrow's complaint about the unbearable stench from the corpses of the "not adequately" buried Jews at Treblinka²⁶⁶ were only as deep as or not much deeper than the proverbial 6 feet below ground, besides having a much smaller overall area than the mass graves at Belzec.²⁶⁷

The major concentration camps run by the SS-*Wirtschaftsverwaltungshauptamt* may have had cremation ovens, but Belzec was not one of those concentration camps. Smaller sub-camps of the major concentration camps usually had no cremation facilities, and there are also few reported cases of open-air cremation from these camps that the author is aware of, like the bungled last-minute cremation attempt at Ohrdruf concentration camp shortly before US troops reached the area.²⁶⁸ The same goes for prisoner-of-war camps and labor camps, with some exceptions like the camp Klooga in Estonia (where a similar bungled attempt to cremate the bodies of about 2,500 inmates massacred in September 1944 took place as the Red Army was approaching)²⁶⁹, the Jewish labor camps in the Lublin area liquidated in the course of *Aktion Erntefest* ("Operation Harvest Festival", the largest single Nazi massacre of Jews, in which an estimated 42-45,000 people were shot between November 3-7, 1943)²⁷⁰, and the Janowska and Maly Trostinets camps, which also functioned as places of mass extermination.²⁷¹ If, as Mattogno surmises, concern about the Soviets using for propaganda purposes "mass graves full of corpses dead of disease or malnutrition" (as opposed to victims of mass shooting or gassing) was a reason for cremating the bodies of camp inmates in open pyres, then why were the corpses of Soviet prisoners of war at a number of camps in the occupied Soviet territories, where there were tens of thousands of them, victims of executions, starvation or exposure²⁷², not removed by incineration? Why were the mass

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Mattogno, 'Controversie', p.55; Mattogno, 'Controversy'; for discussion of this claim see Muehlenkamp, 'Belzec Response 4 (4)'.

²⁶⁷ See Chapter 7

²⁶⁸ USHMM webpage about Ohrdruf, <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10006131>.

²⁶⁹ USHMM, photograph query 'Klooga', http://resources.ushmm.org/inquiry/uiia_query.php/photos?query=kw113012. Graphic images!

²⁷⁰ Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, pp.368-69; Golczewski, 'Polen', p.478.

²⁷¹ Janowska: testimonies of Heinrich Chamaides on 21.9.1944 and of Moische Korn on 13.9.1944. Klee/Dreßen (eds), *Gott mit uns*, pp.225-229, Sandkühler, *Endlösung in Galizien*, p.183; Maly Trostinec: Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, pp.768-774.

²⁷² Gerlach (*Kalkulierte Morde*, p.856) lists a number of POW camps in present-day Belarus with death tolls ranging from about 10,000 to over 100,000. According to Gerlach, a total of at least 633,000 Soviet POWs perished at these camps – more than the number of deportees killed at Belzec and Sobibor combined. Even if the

graves found by the Soviets or Poles at Treblinka I labor camp not removed by incineration? Why would the Germans at Belzec (and for that matter at Sobibor, Treblinka II and Chełmno) make an effort they obviously didn't consider necessary at Treblinka I, in the face of considerations that according to Mattogno's thesis would have been exactly the same?²⁷³ At many a Nazi massacre site in the occupied Soviet territories the bodies were not destroyed for lack of time or because the graves could not be found by the Aktion 1005 disposal squads.²⁷⁴ But neither of these problems existed at Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka and Chełmno.

Unsurprisingly Mattogno skipped this issue in his response to the author.²⁷⁵ Unless the author missed something, the question why the victims were cremated is neither addressed in MGK's *Sobibór* book or in Mattogno's *Chełmno* book.

Belarusian sources used by Gerlach to establish this figure exaggerated the death toll of these POW camps by a factor of two, it would still be almost twice as high as that of Sobibor extermination camp.

²⁷³ Jonathan Harrison, 'A Burning Question', <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2009/02/burning-question.html>.

²⁷⁴ Hilberg, *Destruction of European Jews*, 1985, p.153; Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde*, pp.773-74.

²⁷⁵ As pointed out in Muehlenkamp, "Belzec Mass Graves and Archaeology: My Response to Carlo Mattogno (5,2)", http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2009/07/belzec-mass-graves-and-archaeology-my_2802.html.

Conclusion

This critique has presented new sources, and cast new light on old sources, which demonstrate the many different forms of proof that exist for the Aktion Reinhard extermination program. We have clearly established in Chapters 2-4 the timeline through which policy evolved from decimation to extermination, and how the planned locations shifted from the Strongpoints to the death camps in Poland. We have synthesized documents from the Nuremberg and Eichmann trials with those in American, German and former Soviet archives to build a detailed picture of how the policy of extermination was understood and implemented at the centre and at the sites of death themselves. We have taken the twisted road to Belzec via this documentation and shown how the twists in the road can be better understood in the light of the convergence of evidence.

We have then gone into the death camps themselves in more detail on some issues than has ever been attempted before in published form by an academic historian. Four full chapters present our extensive findings from over 65 years' worth of site report, maps and excavations. We have proved conclusively that "no mass graves" is a denier fantasy, repetition of which would make MGK seem as moronic as the posts that appear from denier cheerleaders on the Internet. The perpetrator testimonies from the NIOD files and from the Trawnikis that we have presented here have enabled us to put to rest denier memes such the diesel issue, although we would expect this meme to be too big a crutch for deniers to throw away even with such a comprehensive review of the witnesses. We have also demonstrated how denial arguments concerning such technical matters as skin color, which Kues in particular has chosen to embrace, are based on misreading and mistranslation of sources.

It is important to contrast this with what we have shown to be the mediocre output and skewed logic of MGK. We can summarize the failures of their work, not only in the order of our chapters here, but also by following the perverse chapter structure which they impose on their own books, such as in *Sobibór*. Our chapter structure shows their non-existent grasp of Nazi policy, deportation realities, the political economy of Nazi occupation of the East (such as food supply, which made resettlement impossible), the nature of eyewitness testimony, and

the scope and findings of postwar site investigations. Their own structure shows a failure to document a conspiracy in World War II; their inability to confront the real sequence by which knowledge of extermination came to be accepted in the West; their lack of any methodology or internal consistency in how they treat witnesses; their reliance upon a view of West German legal processes that is taken from paranoid fiction; and their total inability to document the survival of the Aktion Reinhard deportees whom the rational world and legal system assumes to have died in the camps of Belzec, Treblinka and Sobibor.

Conspiratorial reasoning cannot explain why West German defendants gave testimonies that converge with those given by Trawniki that have been buried for decades in obscure files. It is unable to reason with the sentencing of defendants whose terms bore no relation to whether they made admissions or not. It leads them to overlook facts documented in judgments, such as the fact that Oberhauser's sentence was reduced in West Germany because he had already served a sentence in East Germany, having been convicted in Magdeburg in 1948.¹

Conspiracy also cannot grasp why evidence concerning Aktion Reinhard was given by perpetrators during postwar interrogations concerning other sites. For example, as we showed in Chapters 2 and 5, Wirth was linked to a euthanasia task in the Lublin area by the T4 testimony of Gorgass. He was shown to have already shot Jews at Hartheim by the testimony of Nohel. MGK also never discuss why Eichmann described extermination to Sassen while a free man; or why Rauff gave a deposition while free in Chile; or why Gomerski accepted after his release on health grounds that he had deserved a custodial sentence, albeit a shorter one. Kues' paranoid fantasies about defendants being 'conveniently' murdered, usually by unnamed Jews, are built on false assumptions and a selective reading of newspaper sources, deliberately omitting details that disprove his thesis.

Graf's conspiracism regarding West Germany in the 1960s exaggerates the nation-state's power to control all dissenting information at that time. This can be shown by the example of the USSR dissidents Sinyavsky, Daniel and Ginzburg whose trials were reported in the west. In 1969, Daniel and Ginzburg, "along with four other prisoners [wrote] an open letter to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, urging "corrective legislation" to change the regulations in camps like Potma, where, according to official designation, "especially dangerous political prisoners" are held [...] [The] letter was being circulated widely in

¹ JuNSV Lfd. Nr.585 Bd.XX, pp. 628-47; LG München I vom 21.1.1965, 110 Ks 3/64: <http://www.holocaust-history.org/german-trials/belzec-urteil.shtml> ; DJuNSV Lfd.Nr.1551, LG/BG Magdeburg vom 24.9.48, 11 Ks 246/48.

Moscow.”² Why couldn’t MGK’s persecuted Nazis smuggle out such letters? Why did they not give exculpatory details anonymously to third parties (sympathetic pro-Nazis like MGK themselves) who would have been only too happy to courier them? Why did these victims of the hoax not even retract their confessions on their death-beds or in private manuscripts that could later be sent to denier outlets after the perpetrator’s death?

This raises another problem: the resettlement hypothesis. If the Soviets could not eliminate dissent from three dissidents, how could they silence all the witnesses to the resettlement of the Jews? The resettlement hypothesis does not just require the state to silence most witnesses most of the time, but all of them all the time in all places, even after Jews emigrated from the USSR to Israel and the USA. State repression must attain perfection and be enforced on a global scale, which is simply a mirage of the conspiracy theorist.

This is just one of many problems that MGK have with witnesses. A further insurmountable problem is that Mattogno and Kues fundamentally disagree on the value of witnesses. Mattogno misuses Baynac out of context to insist that “testimony, if not supported by a document, is worthless from the historical point of view, regardless of the notion of “converging testimonies”, as is shown by the example of the “converging” testimonial evidence for the Auschwitz 4 million victim figure.”³ In contrast, Kues attempts to use convergence of witnesses without documents to prove resettlement, as we showed in Chapter 4. This contradiction can only be sustained through cognitive dissonance on the part of both parties. Furthermore, Mattogno breaks his own rule in his policy chapters, such as in his reliance upon Höss and Wisliceny to dispute the historiography of the spring 1942 escalation, while ignoring the copious documentation on that escalation that we discussed in chapters 2 and 3. Mattogno’s obsession with “the ‘converging’ testimonial evidence for the Auschwitz 4 million victim figure” ignores the fact that Höss gave lower figures.⁴

Such contradictions and confusions arise, in part, from MGK’s refusal to spell out their working assumptions when they discuss testimonies. They rely on the reader’s incredulity, but such reliance can only preach to the converted denier. A neutral reader will always ask why such-and-such an anomaly should matter, or why this testimony is being

² ‘A Day in the Life of Yuli Daniel’, *Life*, 6.6.69:

<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,941670-1,00.html> .

³Carlo Mattogno, ‘Rebuttal to Joachim Neander’, Inconvenient History blog, 8.2.10: <http://www.revblog.codoh.com/2010/02/rebuttal-to-joachim-neander/> ; Jürgen Graf and Carlo Mattogno, Concentration Camp Majdanek, p.239. Joachim Neander responded and pointed out Mattogno’s misuse of Baynac: Joachim Neander and Sergey Romanov, ‘Dr. Neander responds to Carlo Mattogno,’ Holocaust Controversies, 13.2.10, <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2010/02/dr-joachim-neander-responds-to-carlo.html>. Romanov’s Postscript to the article responds to Mattogno’s “Auschwitz 4 million” canard.

⁴ Höss affidavit, 20.5.46, NI-034.

highlighted while others are ignored. We are compelled to conclude that this silence is designed deliberately to permit MGK to choose methods of convenience, which then makes them unaccountable for their omissions and selective biases. This is also a major reason why MGK avoid peer review.

MGK have also, by pursuing this strategy, made themselves unaccountable to other deniers. For example, Mattogno's use of Himmler's racial policy document of May 1940⁵ to support a policy of 'emigration' can be traced all the way back to his first 'Myth' essay of 1985⁶, but this was implicitly rejected by Walendy, who declared it a forgery in 1991.⁷ If Mattogno cannot defend his case against refutations by Revisionists with whom he concurs elsewhere in his texts, why should we expect him to engage with opponents such as ourselves who deal with the evidence in good faith? Or is Mattogno brushing this Revisionist dissensus under the carpet in the knowledge that such open disagreements on method expose negationism as actually having no method except negation?

This leaves MGK grasping at the "no mass graves" straw, but this rings more hollow every year. The attempt to poison the well by blaming the Soviet investigators for effectively hoaxing mass graves ignores the fact that western journalists were shown human remains at Babi Yar⁸, Klooga⁹ and near Majdanek, and a huge store of plundered property in Lublin.¹⁰

The misrepresentations in MGK's work are too systematic to be simply due to misreading and miscomprehension. There are numerous occasions when their statements about a text are contradicted by the very text that is front of their noses. For example, *Sobibór* attacks Henry Friedlander and claims there is no documentary proof, only post-war testimony, of the use of gas chambers in the euthanasia program¹¹, yet the Friedlander book

⁵ Himmler an Hitler, 25.5.40, NO-1880.

⁶ Mattogno, 'The Myth of the Extermination of the Jews: Part I'.

⁷ Udo Walendy, 'Lügen um Heinrich Himmler. 1. Teil', *Historische Tatsachen* 45, 1991, pp.3-11.

⁸ *New York Times*, 29.11.43; the reporter, W.H. Lawrence, was sceptical about the number of deaths claimed: Laurel Leff, *Buried by The Times: the Holocaust and America's most important newspaper*, Cambridge, 2005; Bill Lawrence, *Six Presidents, Too Many Wars*, New York, 1972, p.92.

⁹ 'Nazi Death Camp: A Scene of Horror,' *New York Times*, 6.10.44, p.6; John Hersey, 'Prisoner 339: Klooga', *Life*, 17/18, 30.10.44, pp.72-83, including photographs.

¹⁰ 'Nazi Mass Killing Laid Bare in Camp', *New York Times*, 30.8.41, p.1. The journalist, again W.H. Lawrence, expressed uncertainty regarding the reliability of the Soviets' 1.5 million death estimate, but personally witnessed "three of ten opened mass graves and looked upon 368 partly decomposed bodies of men, women and children who had been executed individually in a variety of cruel and horrible means" at nearby Krepiecki. He also visited "a warehouse in downtown Lublin in which I saw hundreds of suitcases and literally tens of thousands of pieces of clothing and personal effects of people who died here"; and he "had the opportunity of questioning a German officer, Herman Vogel, 42, of Millheim, who admitted that as head of the clothing barracks he had supervised the shipment of eighteen freightcar loads of clothing to Germany during a two month period and that he knew it came from the bodies of persons who had been killed at Maidanek." Vogel was later executed by the Poles.

¹¹ MGK, *Sobibór*, pp.276-81.

they cite has such a document clearly spelled out, in which gas canisters were delivered from I.G. Farben's BASF site.¹²

The numerous mistakes found in MGK can be classified under the following types: contradictions amongst themselves and within their own arguments, quote-mines of various material (documents, witnesses, and secondary literature), selective citations of the available evidence or historiography, blatant misrepresentations of the evidence of historiography, arguments based on incomprehension and incredulity, and various other types of logical fallacies (e.g. *falsus in uno*). Many of the mistakes arise from the basic shortcomings found in their work, most notably a lack of reading, a lack of archival research, as well as their piecemeal approach to the evidence. In short, MGK have failed to address the evidence, let alone do so in a reasonable fashion. This critique then has demonstrably proven their works to rely largely on ignorance and dishonesty, two attributes most associated with Holocaust denial by the public at large. Which flaw is more central to MGK's work, the present authors shall leave as an open question.

As MGK are the most prolific and research driven of all active Revisionists, and are also typically the most praised authors among the few deniers that actually read their own literature, the downfall of MGK then serves as a telling sign about the state of Revisionism. If they are the best, what does that say about the rest? Nothing good, as should be fairly obvious. Indeed, as the only Revisionists left who have visited an archive, and producing the most credible attempts to rewrite the history of the Holocaust, MGK's failure to honestly and openly argue the available evidence should remove all possible doubt to any 'skeptics' about the lack of professional integrity and accuracy of Holocaust denial. Simply refuting their work, however, misses a crucial part of a proper analysis of MGK, namely the driving force behind MGK's fraudulent work.

This need to misread Holocaust historians, in order to defame their work, derives partly from envy of genuine academic achievement but also, most strongly, from a commitment by all three authors to neo-Nazi politics and/or antisemitic beliefs. *Sobibór* is dedicated to Jürgen Rieger, the deceased former deputy chairman of the National Democratic Party of Germany. The final chapter of the same work contains a eulogy to Horst Mahler¹³, who once stated that "billions of people would be ready to forgive Hitler if he had murdered

¹² Friedlander, *The Origins of Nazi Genocide*, p.331n.65, citing correspondence between the KTI, the KdF, and IG Farbenindustrie. DÖW, E18370/1, and BAK, R58/1059. See also De Mildt, Dick, *In The Name of the People*. Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1996, pp.78-94, citing JuNSV Bd. 733.

¹³ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.400.

only the Jews."¹⁴ *Sobibór* also has unsourced speculation by Graf that Zionists were “unhesitatingly prepared to sacrifice hundreds of thousands of their own brethren.” The same page then blames Zionists for “firing up” German anti-Jewish feeling in 1933.¹⁵ Graf is happy to play the typical racist blame-the-victim game.

Indeed, among the three authors Graf’s political statements and beliefs emerge as the strongest. He joined the pro-Stalinist Institute of the Russian Civilization, a group that spreads antisemitic positions, such as through reprinting and defending the authenticity of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion and accusing Jews of using Christian blood in their rituals.¹⁶ In a 2002 interview, Graf asked, “What to do with those Jews? We’re cultured people, we can’t exterminate them. What to do with them? I don’t know.”¹⁷ Graf has stated that he believes that we are living in “a globalist system of pseudo-democratic régimes in which Jews control the government and the opposition at the same time (the classic examples being the U.S., Great Britain, and France)” and that “in any European society the Jewish Community will attempt to continue its destructive work.”¹⁸ He deplores the “fallacious doctrine of racial equality”, which he believes “made possible the catastrophe of forced racial integration in the USA, which has done immeasurable harm to both the white and the black populations...”¹⁹

Furthermore, in a recent response to Christian Lindtner, a Revisionist who later became convinced about the truth of exterminations, Graf unleashed a barrage of horrid antisemitic attacks. In desperately trying to explain why some German perpetrators who provided confirmation of exterminations and gassings were given life imprisonment (instead of leniency or pardons, as Graf argues as a method of coercion, see Chapter 1), Graf writes that such long sentences arose because “after all, the Jews wanted their pound of flesh!”²⁰ Graf provides no evidence that Jews had any power over the German judiciary system in the postwar period, while such a reference to “pound of flesh” harks back to many centuries old religious attacks on Jews of the blood libel type. Graf then goes on to accuse Lindtner of

¹⁴ ‘Berufsverbot für Horst Mahler’, *Die Welt*, 20.4.04: http://www.welt.de/print-welt/article308012/Berufsverbot_fuer_Horst_Mahler.html .

¹⁵ MGK, *Sobibór*, p.373.

¹⁶ Graf is listed as a member to the Institute on their webpage, available here: <http://www.rusinst.ru/contents.asp?id=1>.

¹⁷ See the interview with Graf here: <http://www.svenlib.sandy.ru/pugovichki/vesti/graf.htm>.

¹⁸ Jürgen Graf, “‘The New Jewish Question,’ or The End of Guillaume Faye”, CODOH, 29.10.07: <http://www.codoh.com/viewpoints/vpfaye.html>.

¹⁹ Jürgen Graf, ‘Review of Vladimir Avdeyev: Rasologia’, 30.11.07: <http://www.velesova-sloboda.org/misc/graf-avdeyev-rasologia-review.html>.

²⁰ Jürgen Graf, ‘The Moral and Intellectual Bankruptcy of a Scholar: Dr. Christian Lindtner and Holocaust Revisionism,’ *National Journal*, 22.7.11, Part four: “‘Eyewitness evidence’ and ‘confessions’”

identifying with “the Jewish version” of events, and even using “Jewish newspeak” by labelling Revisionism as denial.²¹ Thus, in his fit of rage against Lindtner, Graf further exposed his antisemitic beliefs.

Mattogno is much more guarded in his statements but, in 2010, wrote an article on the Protocols of the Elders of Zion which stated that the “aspiration to world domination by the Jews...is already expressed explicitly” in rabbinical texts and constitutes “the very essence of Jewish messianism.” Mattogno cites approvingly the claims by Bernard Lazare and his own brother that Jews have, throughout history and across all societies in which they have settled, brought persecution upon themselves through their own behaviours.²² His brother has also given an interview in which he has stated that:

From the Talmud, the Midrash and other rabbinical texts of the tradition we learn that the murder of non-jew [sic] is not only permitted but also required, and that this murder could take the form of an actual ritual sacrifice offered to Yahweh. It is a subject that deserves to be investigated, starting from the concept of "cherem", anathema, the extermination of votive enemies of Israel, the annihilation of the Jewish goyim consecrated to God.²³

Distaste for Jews was expressed by Mattogno when he wrote the following regarding van Pelt in 2003:

[Jean-Claude Pressac] was no longer a valuable goldmine to the guardians of the 'Holocaust' orthodoxy, but had turned into a more and more rebellious and uncontrollable *Goy*, jeopardizing the official historiography with each new publication.[...]

For this reason, the position as the "world's leading Auschwitz expert," until then occupied by Pressac, was taken by a trustworthy *Yehudi*, who was to take Pressac's theses - cleaned from all revisionist waste - and embed them into an unalterable, definitive version of Auschwitz.²⁴

It is very noteworthy that Mattogno identifies the two historians most damaging to his work on Auschwitz, Jean-Claude Pressac (‘uncontrollable Goy’) and Robert Van Pelt (‘trustworthy Yehudi’), with Jewish names and terms.

Perhaps the most elusive of the trio in terms of antisemitism is Thomas Kues. Kues sees the global community, particularly the European Union and NATO, as being run by

²¹ Ibid., see Part 7 on “The ‘Vergasungskeller’ letter.” Graf should also have a conversation with pseudonym Denierbud and Friedrich Paul Berg over their use “Jewish newspeak,” as both readily identify themselves as ‘deniers’.

²² Carlo Mattogno, ‘I Falsi Falsi Protocolli Scopo E Significato Dei “Protocolli Dei SaVi Anziani Di Sion”’, parte 3. <http://olo-dogma.myblog.it/archive/2010/06/22/i-falsi-falsi-protocolli-scopo-e-significato-dei-protocolli2.html>.

²³ <http://sololislam.blogspot.com/2011/04/giovanna-canzano-intervista-gian-pio.html>

²⁴ Carlo Mattogno, ‘My Memories of Jean-Claude Pressac’, *The Revisionist* 1(4) (2003), pp. 432-435.

“Zionist masters.”²⁵ Kues offers no proof that Israel controls such entities, but simply assumes that this is the case based on a 2008 letter from the chairman at Yad Vashem to the Lithuanian prime minister²⁶; not any statement from a US, EU, or NATO figure. Kues attacks Jewish historian Yitzhak Arad as an “NKVD hangman”, without any shred of evidence.²⁷ He plays up Jewish guilt for various things, such as serving as “butchers” during the Second World War (presumably in the form of partisans or NKVD officials), while also chastising Israel for being “a haven for any criminal who can prove Jewish ancestry.” This is a strawman of the real history of the Law of Return, which has in fact been used to exclude persons “with a criminal past, likely to endanger public welfare.” Kues also ignores the fact that the Law of Return is a subject of controversy in Israel itself; like all antisemites, he treats Israeli politics as monolithic.²⁸ It seems that Kues is happy to neglect basic research and crucial distinctions when he has a polemical agenda. Kues understands his audience and the support they would offer to such statements; for instance, see Kues’ requests for revisionist information from Brazilian white nationalists on Stormfront.²⁹

When asking his readers to decide between two groups of intellectuals on whose work our civilization rests (creating an artificial division which no respectable philosopher or intellectual historian would allow, as ideas from the given writers transgress such divides), Kues lists the lesser intellectuals as “Freud, Marcuse, and Elie Wiesel.”³⁰ Is it just coincidence that these three are all Jewish?

It is an easily observed point that conspiracy theorists (such as Holocaust deniers) have a strong propensity to believe in more than one conspiracy. Obviously, if the world and its history are not as we are told for one instance, then every agency involved with that

²⁵ Thomas Kues, ‘Troubling Symptom of Revisionism’, <http://www.codoh.com/newrevoices/nrtkarad.html>.

²⁶ The letter involved Lithuania’s investigation of former Yad Vashem chairman Yitzhak Arad for war crimes while fighting as a partisan in Lithuania against Nazi Germany. Kues never bothers to consider the public relations interest that Yad Vashem had over the issue involving its former personell, but instead identifies the institute with a Zionist control over Europe.

²⁷ The investigation mentioned in the previous footnote was stopped due to insufficient evidence.

²⁸ Law of Return (Amendment No. 2) 5730-1970:

http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Politics/Other_Law_Law_of_Return.html . ‘In Search of Meyer’, *Jewish Magazine*, February 2009, on-line:

http://www.jewishmag.com/130mag/meyer_lansky/meyer_lansky.htm.

²⁹ See Post of ‘Thomas Kues’ on 3-7-2008 here <http://www.stormfront.org/forum/t467370/>.

³⁰ Thomas Kues, ‘Speaking about Satan-A Note on Yehuda Bauer’s foreword to Filip Müller’s *Three Years in the Gas Chambers*’, <http://www.codoh.com/newrevoices/nrtkbauer.html>. Kues offers the superior thinkers as Aristotle, Voltaire, and Nietzsche. Nietzsche would hardly enjoy being invoked by Kues. As Nietzsche once wrote to his sister in the 1880s, “Your association with an anti-Semite expresses a foreignness to my whole way of life which fills me ever again and again with ire or melancholy...It is a matter of honor to me to be absolutely clean and unequivocal in relation to anti-Semitism, namely opposed as I am in my writings...My disgust with this party (which would like all too well the advantage of my name!) is as outspoken as possible. And that I am unable to do anything against it, that in every Anti-Semitic Correspondence Sheet the name of Zarathustra is used, has already made me almost sick several times.”

Conclusion

instance should be interpreted differently. As no occurrence is wholly independent from its circumstances, conventional reasons for previous and subsequent events are then to be altered to reflect a different trajectory of historical development, better reflecting reality if the original conspiracy were true. This brings about a cascade or avalanche of conspiracies and fringe beliefs in the continued attempt to establish a true history of events, based on the core conspiracy claim. The idea that conspiracy theorists “live in their own world” thus is not simply criticism of their mental capacity, but also a statement sufficiently describing reality and historical events as they are typically understood by conspiracy theorists.

It is in this light that one should view the conspiracy claims that MGK make across their work regarding the hoax of the Holocaust, many of which have been discussed in the chapters of this critique. This also accounts for the conspiracy claims made by the trio beyond the years of 1933-1945. For instance, Graf and Mattogno’s defense and association with the Protocols of the Elders of Zion fits this pattern, as does Kues’ belief that “sick Jewish gangsters and their ilk” were behind the suicide of German death camp perpetrators far into the postwar years.³¹ So too does Graf’s belief that the September 11, 2001 terror attacks upon the United States (one of the states dependent on the lie for the Israeli state, allegedly) were an example of a “self-inflicted” attack, which he fears is part of the possible wider “response of democracies to Revisionism.”³² No doubt these conspiracy claims are fuelled by antisemitism, as already shown, to varying degrees amongst the three authors.

These antisemitic and conspiratorial politics, combined with systematic lying, are clearly a major factor in the refusal of Holocaust historians to debate MGK, yet they continue to play the role of the aggrieved party. The Holocaust Handbooks series carries this promotional spiel:

These books are designed to have the power to both convince the common reader as well as academics in this field. And it is very successful with this approach! The final goal is to eventually tip the academic scale, so that academia will start doing its duty: to demand and pursue public scrutiny of this most influential topic of all western societies. Because as long as academics don't do this, the media and politicians certainly will not do it either.³³

If MGK subscribe to this belief, we must question their ability to acquire any self-awareness over a lifetime of failure to convince any academic historian that they may have a point.

³¹ See post of ‘LaurentzDahl’ (aka Thomas Kues) of January 25, 2007 at <http://revforum.yourforum.org/viewtopic.php?t=3674&start=15>.

³² Graf, *Neue Weltordnung*, pp.145-146. Graf actually misspells revisionism in the section title.

³³ <http://holocausthandbooks.com/>

In the light of their politics and dishonesty, and the hammering their work has received in our foregoing chapters, we must also ask: where now for the Three Stooges of Revisionist pseudohistoriography? A major problem they face is simply the lack of an audience. The crew at Holocaust Controversies are now virtually the only people taking more than a passing interest in the writing of Mattogno as he enters his second quarter-century as an author. For example, according to an Internet search done by ourselves, in the twelve months spanning August 2010 to July 2011, Mattogno was mentioned only 112 times at CODOH, whilst Kues received 70 mentions and Graf, who has become the runt of this litter, only 48. Many of these mentions were generated by Internet exchanges between HC authors and Mattogno or Graf, thereby confirming that MGK are dependent on traffic from HC to a degree that must cause them discomfort. Ironically, however, Kues, Graf and Mattogno have failed to respond to the vast majority of points made in articles which we wrote about them between 2006 and the present.

Moreover, what does the term ‘research’ mean to MGK? For Kues, it does not yet seem to have included visiting an archive, although his reading of the up-to-date secondary literature seems to be more thorough than that of Mattogno. Although Mattogno has visited archives, his bibliography in Sobibor is missing entire collections that would be essential to such a project. In other cases, he has visited relevant archives in Warsaw and Lublin but evidently did not spend long enough there to find a number of frequently cited files widely used by genuine specialists in the field. The greatest omission is really his ignorance of the core captured German documents and BDC materials, available in the USA and in Germany. In the entire trilogy, Mattogno cites from just one file from the Bundesarchiv and two from the German Foreign Office archive. This is a sufficiently low number that one could justifiably doubt whether Mattogno has even seen the files in question. He cites from just one file from the National Archives of Belarus which is misnumbered in *Treblinka*. Would Mattogno expect us to believe that he stopped off in Minsk and asked to see a single file?

It is therefore to be expected that MGK’s work will continue to decline in quality, and will lean increasingly on Kues’ IH outlet, where he can focus narrowly on just one piece of the jigsaw at a time. Meanwhile, potential converts to their work will continue to become disaffected and walk away from their circle, as one founding member of IH has already done.³⁴ Comments from that former member can be found in the Afterword.

³⁴ Jason Myers, ‘CODOH: The Forum That Moderated Itself to Death’, Holocaust Controversies blog, <http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com/2010/02/codoh-forum-that-moderated-itself-to.html>.

Conclusion

In case MGK have the courage to respond to this critique, we would like to set some provisions required for us to take any 'risposta' into serious consideration. We will not accept any effort that only deals with our critique in a piecemeal and isolated fashion, hence we will be little concerned with any response that just focuses on the technical minutiae of the camps without recognizing the importance of Nazi policy. The Reinhard camps weren't created in a vacuum, and we expect MGK to recognize that fact. That is why we dare MGK to follow the structure of the present critique, so as to put things in proper perspective. As mentioned, arguments not told in narrative form often fail a simple bullshit test.

While we don't expect MGK to deal with all of the evidence (we haven't either, which goes to show how much exists), we do insist that they deal with far more than they have so far in their previous failed attempts. It is also incumbent upon them to include all relevant contexts for the evidence they do select, and thus avoid isolating documents as if they too were created in a vacuum. For example, in looking at Korherr's use of "Sonderbehandlung" in his famous report, the understanding that such a phrase meant killing does not stand on its own but exists inside a wider pattern of abductive inferences from many other sources related to Nazi-Jewish policy. A reversion by MGK back to old ways of decontextualization and isolation of the evidence is simply unacceptable to us, and will meet a grade of *non sufficiente*.

We also expect MGK to take note of many of the serious errors which we have spotlighted in this critique. We have demonstrated that they are unequivocally wrong on innumerable occasions. Simply adapting or omitting their mistakes from future versions of their work will not be good enough; instead, we would hope that MGK admit their mistakes in an honest fashion, open to their readers and the public.

The late Raul Hilberg once said, deniers "are like children who say: prove it! And so we must, prove it!" Hilberg could have added that deniers are asking historians to reinvent the wheel, because the Holocaust was already proven in the 1940s. We have therefore responded to a child who is not asking for proof beyond reasonable doubt, but is instead insisting on proof beyond unreasonable doubt. We have shown that the unreasonable doubts are based on bad faith, yet we have still managed to overcome them by providing proof that even a manic hyper-positivist would find hard to deny. We therefore request MGK to make a reasonable response to this critique, but we can only predict that their response will be unreasoned, hysterical and not fully honest.

Afterword: A Special Note by Jason Myers

“I am not a Jew and I was at one time a ‘revisionist.’” So said Jean-Claude Pressac in the postface to his monumental and technical study of the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp.¹ This writer can sympathize with Pressac, as I too identify with such a statement. A detailed history of my earlier Holocaust denial and subsequent ‘road to Damascus’ moment will not be offered here, as a brief account will be more than sufficient.

My acceptance of revisionism occurred at a young and defiant age, as I’m sure most people experience in high school. Of course, few would see Holocaust denial as an opportune or desirous way to get back at the standard-bearers, but as a student fascinated with modern European history it presented itself as such. While I initially took interest in denial for contrarian reasons, I spent much time studying the writings of revisionists. As a naïve youth, without an adequate knowledge of the Holocaust itself, and seeking to show my ‘superior’ knowledge compared to the rest of the world, I came to honestly accept the revisionist arguments based on (what I viewed at the time as) their evidentiary merit. Greatly influenced by the *CSI* TV series popular around this time, I was quickly taken in by the deniers’ focus on technical and ‘forensic’ issues, such as cyanide residue in the gas chambers and the remains left from open-air cremations. My revisionist beliefs neither began nor were fuelled by any prejudice against Jews, although I certainly recognized an anti-Semitic presence among the majority of deniers.

As the years went on, far too confident in my own cleverness, I began to take an active role propagating Holocaust denial on the internet.² In college, on my own initiative I organized and helped found the Inconvenient History blog, to which Thomas Kues belonged and now runs.³ While working on the blog, I also assisted in miscellaneous research efforts, and helped edit the English translation of one of Carlo Mattogno’s articles.⁴ I was proud to offer such assistance, as I had avidly read and studied Mattogno’s work.

¹ Pressac, *Auschwitz*, p.537.

² See Myers, ‘CODOH: The Forum That Moderated Itself to Death’ for more details on my activities.

³ <http://www.revblog.codoh.com>

⁴ Mattogno, ‘Belzec or the Holocaust Controversy of Roberto Muehlenkamp’.

Hopefully as all other honest and open-minded researchers do, I kept running into ‘stumbling blocks’ that were hard for me to rationalise in keeping with revisionist beliefs; these problems arose from both documents (many of which have been quoted or cited in this critique), as well as hard to impugn witness testimony. When such instances occurred, I would search works of Mattogno, Graf, Kues, as well as other revisionists to ease my concerns about the validity of revisionism in general. These episodes were not initially too bothersome to me; one can’t expect answers to everything, I thought. However, as my knowledge of historical methods grew (I majored in history at undergraduate) and as I became more familiar with current research on the Holocaust, as well as the evidence used by historians to support their interpretations, the more uncomfortable I felt about my revisionist stance.

After learning to separate the wheat from the chaff and as I became increasingly convinced that the revisionist position was deeply flawed, I expressed doubts about my own past positions, first in private and then in public. As I did so, I became ever more ostracized from the blog team at Inconvenient History, leading me to leave that blog in late 2009. One year later, as I continued to find substantial flaws to denier arguments, I joined the already underway effort to critique the writings of MGK. I can safely and unhesitantly state that my abandonment of revisionism was the correct choice, as I believe any impartial and objective look into the evidence would attest.

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Archival and Journal Abbreviations

AAN	Archiwum Akt Nowy	Archive of New Files, Warsaw
AFSB	Arkhiv FSB (oblast)	provincial FSB archive, Russia
AIPN	Arkhiv Instytut Pamieci Narodowej	Institute of National Memory, Warsaw
APMS	Archiwum Panstwowemu Muzeum Sztutthof	Archive of State Museum of Stutthof
ASBU	Arkhiv SBU (oblast)	archive of SBU
BA	Bundesarchiv	German Federal Archive (Berlin)
BAL	Bundesarchiv, Zweigstelle Ludwigsburg	archive of the former Zentrale Stelle
Bd	Band	Volume
BDC	Berlin Document Center	microfilm copies available at NARA
BStU	Bundesbeauftragte für die Stasi-Unterlagen	East German Stasi Archives
GARF	Gosudarstvennoi Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii	State Archive of the Russian Federation
IWM	Imperial War Museum	
LCVA	Lieutvos Centrinis Valstybes Archyvas	Lithuanian State Archives, Vilnius
NAC	National Archives of Canada	
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration	College Park, Maryland
NTN		Supreme National Tribunal, Poland
PRO	Public Record Office	The National Archive, Kew, UK
RG	Record Group	-
RGVA	Rossiiskoi Gosudarstvennoi Voennyi Arkhiv	Russian State Military Archive,
TsADAVOV	Tsentrāl'nii derzhavnii vishchikh organov vladi ta upravlinnia Ukraini	Central Archive of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government in Ukraine
TsAFSB	Tsentralnyi Arkhiv FSB	Central FSB Archive, Moscow
ZStL	Zentrale Stelle, Ludwigsburg	-

Journals

BZIH	Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego
HGS	Holocaust and Genocide Studies
TSD	Theresienstädter Studien und Dokumente
VfZ	Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte
YVS	Yad Vashem Studies

Frequently Cited books

FGM	Faschismus-Getto-Massenmord
TBJG	Die Tagebücher Joseph Goebbels