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# AUSCHWITZ: THE FIRST GASSING

Rumor and Reality



**BY CARLO MATTOGNO**

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# **Auschwitz: The First Gassing**

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**Carlo Mattogno**



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Cover Illustrations: Bottom: Part of a 1944 photo shows high-ranking SS officers gathered at Solahütte, the SS retreat outside of Auschwitz. Other photos (left to right; all © Carlo Mattogno): Block 11, inside, right side, door to cell no. 25; Block 11, outside, wall facing NE, entry door; Block 11, inside, Bunker, right side, cell no. 21.

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## Preface to the Fourth Edition

This work is the first of a set of four studies which were prepared at different times, yet which lay out the same general theme in a chronological and logical sequence: the genesis and development of the alleged homicidal gas chambers at Auschwitz-Birkenau.

The orthodox history of Auschwitz<sup>1</sup> is known to be based on an order to exterminate the Jews of Europe – allegedly sent by Hitler to Himmler in the spring of 1941 and from there to the Auschwitz Camp’s commandant Rudolf Höss. This order is said to have materialized in the construction of the alleged extermination camp of Birkenau. This order, according to the interpretation that has become canonical, was implemented progressively in four stages:

1. In September 1941 the first experimental homicidal gassing was allegedly carried out at Auschwitz using Zyklon B, which is said to represent the “discovery” of the chemical weapon for the subsequent mass extermination.
2. At the beginning of 1942 the activity of homicidal gassing is said to have been transferred to the morgue of the crematorium at the Auschwitz Main Camp.
3. In the following months, two houses located outside the Birkenau Camp were purportedly converted into homicidal gas chambers (the so-called “bunkers”) and began the mass extermination of Jews and sick prisoners.
4. Finally, in March 1943, the extermination activities are claimed to have been moved into the four crematoria of Birkenau, all allegedly equipped with gas chambers.

I have investigated these four stages in four extensive studies as mentioned above, namely:

- *Auschwitz: The First Gassing*, the present study (the first Italian edition by Edizioni di Ar, Padua, 1992)

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<sup>1</sup> By this I mean the version disseminated by the Auschwitz Museum, which is the repository of orthodox historiography on Auschwitz.



- *Auschwitz: Crematorium I and the Alleged Homicidal Gassing*, 2nd ed., Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield, September 2016 (the first edition was published under the imprint of Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago, December 2005)
- *Debunking the Bunkers of Auschwitz: Black Propaganda versus History*, 2nd ed., Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield, February 2016 (the first edition had appeared with the title *The Bunkers of Auschwitz*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago, December 2004)
- *The Real Case for Auschwitz: Robert van Pelt's Evidence from the Irving Trial Critically Reviewed*, 3rd ed., Castle Hill Publishers, Uckfield, August 2019 (the first edition had appeared in two volumes with the title *Auschwitz: The Case for Sanity: A Historical and Technical Study of Jean-Claude Pressac's "Criminal Traces" and Robert Jan van Pelt's "Convergence of Evidence,"* The Barnes Review, Washington, D.C., September 2010)

The last entry in this list has 692 pages, which is more than twice as voluminous as any of the other three books, as it deals with the fourth, best-documented and most-important stage, the alleged gassings in the crematoria of Birkenau.

The first entry is herewith published in a fourth, expanded edition.

## Introduction

Since the original Italian version of this book was published in 1992, there have been numerous new developments in the subject's historiography, although none of them has been important enough to mandate a change of this book's conclusions.

Even today, 30 years later, orthodox historiography has not only failed to produce a reply to this study, although it has been translated into French (Mattogno 1999), English (2005, 2012, 2016d) and German (2007, 2014, 2016c), but in its obdurate historical dogmatism has not even found it necessary to address the topic in greater depth. It is, however, more-important than ever before.

The first homicidal gassing in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp was allegedly carried out between 3 and 5 September, 1941, in the basement of Building (Block) 13. This building was later named Block 11 because of an administrative change in the numbering of the buildings. This first gassing is said to have been the starting point of the alleged mass extermination process at Auschwitz. After having gone through the intermediate stages of the mortuary in Crematorium I of the Auschwitz Main Camp and the so-called "bunkers" at Birkenau, this claimed extermination process later led to the alleged homicidal gas chambers of the Birkenau Crematoria II through V. As such, the first homicidal gassing, if true, would therefore constitute the birth of the homicidal gas chambers and mark the "official" introduction of Zyklon B into the Auschwitz Holocaust history. Moreover, it would also constitute the archetype of the alleged "selections" of registered detainees in the camp hospitals for the "gas chambers." But if nothing like this monumental event occurred in any place or time near to those of this tale, then the entire Zyklon-B-extermination narrative would be called into serious question.

A book published in 2005 underlines the importance which this presumed event has for orthodox historiography (Friedler *et al.* 2005, p. 24):

*"This first mass gassing was no longer just a mere experiment in order to find out whether Zyklon B was really suited for the systematic mass*

*murder of humans. During those September days the basic test run took place for mass extermination with gas in Auschwitz. During those moments the killing procedure was established, which was later refined and adjusted as needed.”*

From this event the principle of the division of labor during the alleged mass-extermination process may also be seen to have originated – that is, assigning specific tasks to various teams of prisoners – and the strategem of using a code language (*ibid.*, p. 25).

The consequence of this notable inertia on the part of official historiography is that any scholarly literature on this topic is, as yet, practically non-existent. Up until 1992, only a single Polish article of 1972 had been dedicated to this subject (Kłodziński 1972), aside from my own contribution presented at the “Ninth International Revisionist Conference” of 1989 (Mattogno 1989), which I later expanded to the first Italian edition of the present study (Mattogno 1992). Because Kłodziński’s article mentioned above had appeared in a Polish journal, it remained practically unnoticed by western Auschwitz scholars until 1987, when an abridged translation became available in German (Kłodziński 1987). Hence, for decades – and practically even today – the main and almost-sole historical source for this topic has been Danuta Czech’s *Auschwitz Chronicle*, a work teeming with conjectures, distortions, inventions and omissions, which are the result of a deliberately misleading method, as I demonstrated in my specific analysis (Mattogno 2022).

Only an exceedingly small number of specialists of the camp’s history later looked into the first gassing at Auschwitz, and then only in a very-perfunctory way, although the enormous documentation contained in the archives of the Central Construction Office as preserved in Moscow has meanwhile been studied extensively. There is a very simple explanation for this: this documentation does not contain even the vaguest indication in support of an alleged homicidal gassing in the basement of Block 11 (nor does it contain anything about gassings in the morgue of the Main-Camp crematorium or in the imaginary “bunkers” of Birkenau).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> On the crematoria of Birkenau, the documentation contains the alleged “criminal traces” as listed again by Jean-Claude Pressac in his 1989 book (on this, see Mattogno 2019 and Rudolf 2019). Although the alleged gassing in the basement of Block 11 would not have required any particular permanent remodeling work, the documentation of the Central Construction Office not only concerns the construction of the camp, but also contains documents on other important aspects of its activities (such as documents of the headquarters, the Protective-Custody Camp’s leadership, of the camp administration, the Po-

Having searched those archives, Jean-Claude Pressac devoted half a page to the topic in 1993, writing (Pressac 1993, p. 34):

*“Today, the first homicidal gassing in the Auschwitz Camp is considered to have taken place in the basement of Block 11 between 5 December and the end of that month (earlier on, it was dated 3 to 5 September).*

*Witnesses claim that it concerned 250 inmates judged to be terminally ill and some 600 Soviet prisoners who arrived at the camp on October 7. During the month of November, a special Gestapo commission from Kattowitz was in session in the concentration camp aiming to identify among the prisoners ‘fanatical’ communists for liquidation; by the end of November, 300 had been selected.*

*The openings of the basement having been covered with dirt, Zyklon B was introduced and the door was closed. According to Höss (who was not present) death is said to have occurred immediately. Others speak of a gassing that took two days, involving a second load of toxic [gas], the first not having killed all victims.*

*The fact that hydrogen cyanide has a vaporization point of 27°C, that it was used in an as-yet-unheated basement in the middle of the Silesian winter, and a lack of knowledge concerning the lethal dose might explain the overly long duration of this gassing.*

*The victims, somewhere between 550 and 850, were incinerated in the two double-muffle furnaces of the crematorium over a period of one to two weeks of intensive work, which damaged the second furnace.”*

The change of date proposed by Jean-Claude Pressac has no foundation in documents. He has simply taken as a historical fact a hypothesis of mine, which appears on p. 159 of the Italian edition of the present study (cf. below, Chapter V.1.). The sources Pressac cites in Note 110 on p. 101 – Jan Sehn and Kazimierz Smoleń – are the very sources from which I drew the said conclusion.

Concerning the “overly long duration” of the gassing, I refer the reader to what I have written in Chapter IV.6.3. Here, I must point out another error of J.-C. Pressac’s which will deliver the *coup de grâce* to his explanation: it is not true that Block 11 was unheated in December 1941. In fact, a heating device had been installed in this building by the end of May 1941.<sup>3</sup>

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litical Department, the Department of Labor Deployment, and the SS garrison physician), so at least some reference to this first gassing ought to be expected somewhere.

<sup>3</sup> “Block 13 (Zellengebäude) Heizungsanlage fertiggestellt,” (“Block 13 (cell building)

Pressac's reference to the damage to the second furnace has no documented connection to the cremation of the corpses of those allegedly gassed. In the letter of 31 January 1942, quoted by Pressac, Maximilian Grabner, the head of the Political Department at Auschwitz, did not mention in any way an "intensive load" on the furnace. He merely requests the Construction Office to repair the second furnace by making use of the presence of a cremation-furnace engineer, who was at that time installing the third furnace.<sup>4</sup> In fact, the cremation furnaces installed at Auschwitz were not designed for the kind of loads they were made to cremate at Auschwitz in general, even when ignoring the victims of any claimed mass-gassing claims (850 victims cremated within "a few more days" according to Czech 1990, p. 87). For example, as early as 8 January 1941, Head of Construction August Schlachter wrote to the furnaces' manufacturer, the Erfurt company Topf & Sons:<sup>5</sup>

*"The SS New Construction Office already informed you by telegraph that the first furnace has already become defective as a result of heavy use and can therefore no longer be fully utilized. It is therefore urgent that the expansion of the facility be started. You are requested to telegraph when you will start the preliminary works of the extended facility."*

From the start-up of this furnace on 15 August 1940 until 31 December of the same year, about 2,000 inmates had died at Auschwitz and had been cremated, an average of just 15 corpses per day, which was evidently enough to damage the device (see Mattogno 2021, pp. 11-13).

I will address the question of the "lack of knowledge about the lethal dose" of hydrogen cyanide in Chapter I.

J.-C. Pressac returned to the argument in an interview given by him in 1995, which, however, was obviously edited prior to its publication. Referring specifically to my study, he expressed a reasonable skepticism:<sup>6</sup>

*"Mattogno has also looked into the first homicidal gassing at Auschwitz, which the Poles claim to have taken place between 3 and 5 September in the basement of Block 11 of the Main Camp. According to the*

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heating installation completed"). "Tätigkeitsbericht vom 5. bis 10. Mai 1941," RGVA, 502-1-214, p. 52. The numbering of the Blocks was later changed (Block 13 became Block 11).

<sup>4</sup> RGVA, 512-1-312, p. 77.

<sup>5</sup> RGVA, 502-1-327, p. 180.

<sup>6</sup> "Entretien avec Jean-Claude Pressac réalisé par Valérie Igounet, à la Ville du Bois, le jeudi 15 juin 1995," in: Igounet, p. 644.

*Poles, this gassing is the direct consequence of the order given to Commandant Höss by Himmler himself in Berlin; in the summer of 1941 to be precise. Except that [the gassing] involved Russian prisoners and terminally ill patients, but not Jews. Initially, Mattogno concluded that this was a simple invention, later, that this incident did not have a historical basis. I have talked to the Poles about this question. Here is the somewhat-off-handed reply: 'This gassing began on the anniversary of an inmate who was present and who therefore remembers the date precisely.' The inmate in question by the name of Michał Kula had declared to remember it very well, because it was the day of his arrival at the camp, 15 August ... and not 3 September. It is now known that Höss did not receive the order to kill the Jews in the summer of 1941, but at the beginning of June 1942.*

*If this gassing did take place, it was in December of 1941 or even in January of 1942 and had nothing to do with the massacre of the Jews."* (Emp. added)

In the five-volume anthology *Auschwitz 1940-1945. Fundamental Problems of the History of the Camp*, which appeared in 1995 and which represents the authoritative history of the Auschwitz Museum, just five pages are devoted to the first homicidal gassing in the section written by Franciszek Piper titled "Gas chambers and crematoria" (Długoborski/Piper, Vol. III, pp. 116-121).

An abridged version of this section, published a year earlier in English, deals with the question on half a page.<sup>7</sup>

The year 1995 also saw the publication of the three volumes of the *Death Books of Auschwitz (Sterbebücher von Auschwitz; Staatliches Museum...)*, which made possible a more accurate analysis of the fate of those 135 inmates of Block 28 who are said to have been gassed in Block 11 (cf. below, Chapter V.2), but the historicity of the first homicidal gassing has not been strengthened in any appreciable way by this token. The first volume of this work contains, in fact, a long article by Kazimierz Smoleń on the "Soviet Prisoners of War in Auschwitz Concentration Camp" (*ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 127-161), which also deals with the first homicidal gassing in Block 11, but without contributing an original idea – let alone new documents – to this topic. Smoleń limits himself to the well-known sources of Danuta Czech's *Auschwitz Chronicle*, Rudolf Höss, and Wiesław Kielar (*ibid.*, pp. 132f.).

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<sup>7</sup> F. Piper, "Gas Chambers and Crematoria," in: Gutman/Berenbaum, pp. 157f.

In his *summa holocaustica* on Auschwitz, Robert Jan van Pelt has treated the question of the first gassing with conspicuous brevity, making use only of an article dated 1 July 1942, of a single eyewitness, Wojciech Barcz, and of a pamphlet published in 1943 (van Pelt, pp. 88, 144, 146). I shall analyze these sources in Chapter III.

In the 2011 German anthology with the translated title *New Studies on Nazi Mass Killings by Poison Gas: Historical Significance, Technical Development, Revisionist Denial*, van Pelt tried to provide some new evidence in favor of the “first gassing” in his contribution on Auschwitz (Morsch/Perz, pp. 196-218), which I will deal with below.

Sandra Holtermann’s 2005 essay on this topic is a 20-page simple compilation of well-known literary sources and provides no new information.

In 2014, the Auschwitz Museum published a bilingual book (Polish and English) that is the result of a careful study of all the documents in the Museum’s possession. In the series of 74 documents reproduced and commented on in that study, only one was (mendaciously) linked to the “first gassing”: Document 4 is in fact a list dated 1 December 1941 and headlined “Consumables. Deliveries in the month of November 1941. From 1 Nov. to 30 Nov.” It includes the following entry (Bartosik *et al.*, p. 51):

“3000 (kg) of Zyklon (hydrocyanic acid) wagon Munich 19931 – Dessau.”

The authors interpreted this entry as follows (*ibid.*, p. 50):

“The document notes the delivery to the camp of three tons of Zyklon B from Dessau. Lists of this kind for 1941 are only partially extant; this document is the first one recording the delivery of Zyklon B to the camp. It is evident that, because Zyklon B was used in September of that year to murder Soviet POWs, there must also have been earlier deliveries.”

From this delivery, the authors deduced without the slightest proof a previous delivery that they claim would have been partly used for the “first gassing,” which is therefore said to be “confirmed” by this document! Hence, we can be certain that the archives of the Auschwitz Museum contain no document in support of claims relating to the alleged “first gassing.”

As I have underlined above, the principal historiographic source for the topic of the first homicidal gassing is still the *Auschwitz Chronicle*. In the first German edition of this work, its author Danuta Czech described the event as follows (Czech 1959, p. 109):

“3 September. For the first time tests were done at Concentration Camp Auschwitz for the mass killing of human beings by means of gas – Zyklon B. Ordered to do so by the SS, paramedics moved 250 sick inmates from the inmate hospital into the basement cells of Block 11. Some 600 Soviet prisoners of war were herded into these cells as well. (In the POW camps, officers and political commissars had been singled out in accordance with Order No. 8 of 17 July 1941). Once they had been lodged in the cells of the bunker, the basement windows were closed by means of dirt, SS men poured in the Zyklon-gas, and the doors were shut.

4 September. Section leader Palitzsch, wearing a gas mask, opened the doors of the bunker cells and discovered that a number of inmates were still alive. Another load of Zyklon B was therefore introduced and the doors were shut once again.

5 September. In the evening, 20 inmates from the Penal Company (Block 5a) and paramedics from the inmate hospital were led to the yard of Block 11. Previously, they had been told that they were to do a special type of work and were not to speak to anyone about what they would see, under threat of death. They were also promised a suitably increased food ration once the work was done. The officers Fritzscher, Mayer, Palitzsch, Camp Physician Entress,<sup>[8]</sup> and others were present in the yard of Block 11. The inmates were issued gas masks and were ordered to go into the basement and to carry the corpses of the gassed into the yard. The uniforms of the gassed Soviet prisoners were removed and the corpses thrown on wagons. The gassed inmates wore camp uniforms. The transfer of the corpses to the crematorium lasted well into the night. Among those gassed were the 10 inmates moved into the bunker on account of the escape of Detainee Nowaczyk.”

In the second German (and first English) edition of the *Auschwitz Chronicle*, Danuta Czech added new details to the account – many contradicting those of the previous edition – and indicated also the archive references (mostly testimony from the Höss Trial). I quote from the published English translation (Czech 1990, pp. 85-87):

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<sup>8</sup> According to another publication of the Auschwitz Museum, Friedrich Karl Hermann Entress was camp physician at the Gross-Rosen Camp from 3 January to 10 December 1941. On 11 December, he was transferred to Auschwitz in the same position, which he held until 20 October 1943. Therefore, he was not yet in Auschwitz on 5 September 1941. Bezwińska/Czech, pp. 300f. D. Czech corrected the error in the 1989/1990 editions of her *Chronicle*.



*“September 3.*

*After the success of the experiment of killing the small group of Russian prisoners of war with gas, ordered by Karl Fritzsch a few days earlier, the camp administration decides to repeat the experiment in the cellar of Block 11. This no doubt has to do with the news that the Gestapo is planning to send a large transport of officers, People’s Commissars, and Russian prisoners of war for liquidation. In this connection, Camp Doctor SS Captain Dr. Siegfried Schwela orders a selection in the prisoners’ infirmary, in which about 250 inmates are selected. The attendants are instructed to take the selected prisoners to the bunker of Block 11 and to bring a few of them there on stretchers. In the bunker they are crammed together in a few cells. The cellar windows are blocked up with earth. Then about 600 Russian POW’s, officers, and people’s commissars are driven into the cellar. They have been chosen in the camp’s prisoner-of-war section by special Gestapo commandos. As soon as they are pushed into the cells and the SS men have thrown in the Zyklon B gas, the doors are locked and sealed. This operation takes place after evening roll call, after announcement of a so-called camp [block] curfew, during which prisoners are forbidden to leave the blocks and move around in the camp.*

*September 4.*

*In the morning Roll Call Leader Gerhard Palitzsch, protected by a gas mask, opens the doors and discovers that one of the POW’s is still alive. More Zyklon B is poured and the doors are closed once more. [...]*

*In the afternoon all the doors of the bunker in Block 11 are opened and unsealed after it is ascertained that the second dose of Zyklon B has killed the Russian POW’s and the Polish prisoners. There is a wait until the gas has evaporated. After evening roll call, another camp curfew is ordered.*

*In the evening Roll Call Leader Palitzsch summons 20 prisoners from the Penal Company in Block 5 a as well as all the hospital orderlies and two prisoners, Eugeniusz Obojski and Teofil Banasiuk, who are to be put to work as corpse bearers. They are given two carts to transport the bodies to the morgue and the crematorium. All are taken to the courtyard of Block 11. They are told in advance that they have been put on a special work detail and are not to tell anyone what they see, under penalty of death. At the same time they are promised that after performing this work they will receive larger portions of food.*

*In the courtyard of Block 11, SS Officers Fritzsich, Maier, and Palitzsch, the Camp Doctor Schwela, and SS men who occupy positions as Block Leaders are already there. Prisoners Obojski and Banasiuk receive gas masks and go with Palitzsch and the SS men, who also wear gas masks, to the cellar of Block 11. They return from the cellar without gas masks to show that the gas has evaporated. The prisoners are divided into four groups. One group, with gas masks, hauls the bodies of the murdered men out of the cellar to the ground floor; the second group strips the bodies; the third group carries the bodies to the courtyard of Block 11, where they are loaded onto the trucks by the fourth group. The Russian prisoners of war are dressed in uniforms; in the pockets are documents, family photos, money, various trinkets, and cigarettes. In the courtyard, under the supervision of the SS men, seven dentists extract gold crowns and teeth from the corpses. The prisoners pull the cart loaded with the bodies of the prisoners of war and the Polish prisoners from the courtyard of Block 11 to the crematorium, accompanied by Obojski and Banasiuk and under the supervision of the SS men. Among the murdered are also the bodies of the 10 inmates who were locked in the bunker and condemned to death by Fritzsich on September 1 in retaliation for the escape of Jan Nowaczek. The bodies of the prisoners selected in the hospital are in underwear. The hauling, stripping, searching, and transporting of the bodies lasts until dawn and is not finished.*

*September 5. [...]*

*After evening roll call, a camp curfew is ordered. The same prisoners who were detailed the night before march into the courtyard of Block 11 to complete the transporting of the bodies to the crematorium. There, the corpses are laid in a big, long hall which is already half full. The crematorium unit cannot keep up with the cremation of the corpses. It is a few more days before all the bodies are incinerated."*

As we will see in the following chapters, this version was produced by the investigating Judge Jan Sehn in 1946 on the basis of Michał Kula's testimony.

The aim of this study is to verify the reliability of this account and, in so doing, the historical reality of the first homicidal gassing in the basement of Block 11 of Auschwitz.

The text presented here in English is an updated, corrected and enhanced version of the original Italian edition, augmented by new sources, which I have discovered over the last 30 years, some of which have been

published already in the previous English and German editions of this book.

Some arguments, which had a novel character in 1992 (in particular the critique of Rudolf Höss's declarations), can now be regarded as having been accepted at least by revisionist historiography and known to all. I have therefore decided to leave them aside, since they are covered by other studies of mine.<sup>9</sup>

In addition, several hypothetical arguments that have not been sufficiently confirmed have been omitted in this revised text.

\* \* \*

Before proceeding, it is necessary to clarify the subject of this study, the actual "first gassing," because some claim that there was an even-earlier "first gassing'." This is based on the fantasies of Danuta Czech, who claims in her *Auschwitz Chronicle* that there was a test gassing before the infamous "first gassing." That test gassing is said to have occurred on an unspecified day in August 1941, which she describes in the following terms (Czech 1990, p. 84):

*"In Höss's absence, Camp Commander SS Captain Karl Fritzsch uses the gas Zyklon B to kill Russian POW's."*

However, as I have demonstrated in another study (Mattogno 2022, pp. 54f.), these are not two distinct gassings, but a misunderstanding based on a gross contradiction by Rudolf Höss, as Czech herself and her colleague Jadwiga Bezwińska explicitly explained in a later publication when commenting the respective text passage they quoted from Höss's statement (Bezwińska/Czech 2007, Note 112, p. 92):

*"In the light of present research it appears that the first attempt to kill with gas took place in the cellars of Block 11. Another attempt at gassing prisoners in the cellars of that block was not recorded. Although Höss in that sentence denied having been present at the first attempt to kill with gas, nevertheless a few sentences further he stated that he had been present when for the first time gas had been used. He wrote: 'During this first experience of gassing people, I did not fully realize what was happening, perhaps because I was too impressed by the whole procedure.'"*

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<sup>9</sup> See in this regard my critique of the post-war statements made by Rudolf Höss in Mattogno 2020, esp. pp. 209-213.

Therefore, Höss declared that he had personally witnessed the first gassing protected by a gas mask, which means that he must have attended the first homicidal gassing carried out at Auschwitz during his absence from Auschwitz!

In further contradiction to this, he told the Nuremberg Psychologist Leon Goldensohn (Goldensohn, p. 309; see Mattogno 2020, pp. 126f.):

*“Who invented gas chambers? ‘They developed out of the situation. The courts brought in a lot of people who had to be shot. I always objected to having to use the same men for firing squadrons over and over again. During that period one day my camp leader, Karl Fritzsich, came to me and asked me whether I could try to execute people with Zyklon-B gas. Until that time Zyklon B was used only to disinfect barracks which were full of insects, fleas, et cetera. I tried it out on some people sentenced to death in the cell prison and that is how it developed. I didn’t want any more shootings, so we used gas chambers instead.’”*

According to this, it was not Fritzsich who carried out the first gassing during Höss’s absence and without his knowledge, but Höss himself at Fritzsich’s suggestion!

Franciszek Piper, who wrote Volume III of the general history of Auschwitz several years after the publication of the book edited by Bezwińska and Czech, not only ignored their correction mentioned earlier, but further muddled the matter with an additional error (Długoborski/Piper, Vol. III, p. 117):

*“Trials of Zyklon B for killing people were begun in the summer of 1941, in the basement of Block 11 (at the time, it bore the number 13). The SS man Pery Broad witnessed one of these tests, probably the first one. An unknown number of Soviet POWs were killed in one of the windowless basement chambers. Here is Broad’s recollection of the event: [...].”*

This is followed by an excerpt taken from “‘Reminiscences of Pery Broad,’ p. 172,” and by Piper’s following conclusion (*ibid.*, pp. 117f., and Note 366, p. 118):

*“This experiment was probably carried out in August 1941”.*

Piper’s source is the book by Bezwińska and Czech just quoted, but as mentioned earlier, it is explicitly stated in that book that only one gassing took place in the basement of Block 11!

I will deal with Pery Broad’s testimony in Chapter III of this study. In the present context, it suffices to anticipate that he was transferred to

Auschwitz only on 8 April 1942. In consequence, he cannot have been an “eyewitness” to the alleged gassing fantasized about by Piper, which he claims took place in August of 1941 – a date Piper evidently took from Czech’s misunderstanding in her *Chronicle*, as pointed out earlier.

Piper continues as follows (*ibid.*, p. 118):

*“Another experiment was carried out later in the same month, using six cells containing around a hundred Soviet POWs. The former prisoner Glowacki, employed at transporting corpses, testified:*

*‘It was a dreadful sight. I saw all those corpses. They had all pushed towards the door, struggling for air. They grasped each other’s heads. They had torn each other’s hair out, for there was hair in their hands. You could see that they had suffered horribly, that was visible from their faces. The corpses lay atop each other. They had bitten each other on the arms and legs. It was a gruesome sight.’”*

His source for this is the “Testimony of Czesław Głowacki, APMAB, Höss Trial, vol. 24, p. 121” (*ibid.*, Note 367). But this testimony does not support Piper’s claim at all, because it mentions neither the date nor the place of the alleged gassing.

Czesław Głowacki testified on 14 March 1947 during the fourth session of the Höss Trial.<sup>10</sup> In his testimony, which will be examined in detail in Chapter III, he stated that the event in which he had allegedly participated as a member of the corpse-carrying squad referred to the first gassing at Auschwitz, and it concerned the first transport of Soviet POWs to the camp. He asserted that it took place in 1941, without specifying the month. However, in an interrogation of 27 July 1945, conducted by deputy prosecutor of the Special Criminal Court in Krakow – which Piper should be familiar with – Głowacki stated:<sup>11</sup>

*“From November 1941 [od listopada 1941] until 20 June 1943, i.e., up to the time of my transfer from the Auschwitz I Camp to the Auschwitz II Camp, I took part as a nurse in the so-called ‘Leichenträgerkommando’ [corpse-carrying squad].”*

Therefore, according to this witness, the “first” gassing took place in November of 1941, not in August, as Piper claims.

But there is more bungling going on. Commenting on the alleged “first” gassing in September 1941, this splendid historian of the Auschwitz Muse-

<sup>10</sup> United Nations Archives. Security Microfilm Program, 1988, Reel No. 62. Höss Trial, 4th Session, pp. 336-355. The passage quoted by Piper is on p. 339.

<sup>11</sup> Interrogation of Cz. Głowacki dated 27 July 1945. AGK, NTN 84, Vol. 3, pp. 153f.

um exudes a entire series of nonsensical lucubrations (Długoborski/Piper, Vol. III, Note 368, p. 118):

*“It has previously been assumed that this was the first and only test of the use of Zyklon B gas on people in Block 11. However, an analysis of all the assembled source material indicates that there were at least three such tests. Among the reasons for doubting that this was the first experimental murder carried out with gas are the fact that far more prisoners and prisoners of war were killed than would have been necessary in an experiment, that as many as 28 cells were used, and that no effort was made to vary the numbers of prisoners in the cells or the dosage of gas applied. The fact that several different tests of the use of Zyklon B were carried out explains the significant differences in the source materials as to the number of victims killed, the dates and the times of day, and other details supplied by prisoner witnesses about what were in fact several different incidents, and not one, as previously believed.”*

This is merely a puerile attempt to explain away an alleged fact that is inexplicable from the orthodox perspective. Technically speaking, the alleged “first” gassing is inexplicable not only for the reasons given by Piper, but primarily because it is ridiculous in the light of contemporary German chemical technology that I will discuss later. The alleged event is also based exclusively on testimonies – and in this study I will present the most-comprehensive review of them that has ever appeared in Holocaust literature, over sixty of them. All of these testimonies are contradictory on all essential points, as I will show in Chapter III. Anticipating the conclusion of this study, the “first” gassing is a gross invention of black propaganda created by the Auschwitz resistance movement, and this alone explains the aforementioned inconsistencies and contradictions.

If Piper had been consistent himself, he could not have stopped at claiming that there had been “at least three such tests,” which according to his narrative consisted of the two fictitious gassings in August 1941 (those “witnessed” by Broad and Głowacki) and the alleged gassing in early September, but in order to explain all inconsistencies and contradictions, he should have claimed “at least” sixty such test gassings.

That Piper’s attempt to explain away the disconcerting testimonial inconsistencies and contradictions is indeed a very specious argument is evident from the fact that it has not only not been explored in depth, but has been completely abandoned in later studies published by the Auschwitz Museum.

For example, in the opening chapter “Crematorium I and the First Tests of Killing with Zyklon B gas” of the 2011 book *The Auschwitz Crematoria and Gas Chambers* by Piotr Setkiewicz, only the “first” gassing “in the first days of September” of 1941 is mentioned (Setkiewicz, p. 8).

Even in the already-mentioned study *The Beginnings of the Extermination of Jews in KL Auschwitz*, co-authored by Igor Bartosik with Piotr Setkiewicz and Łukasz Martyniak, only this alleged gassing is mentioned (Bartosik *et al.*, p. 26).

From the very beginning of orthodox Auschwitz historiography, Rudolf Höss was has been its chief witness. The birth of this historiography can be said to coincide with the 1956 publication of a Polish translation of the writings which Höss had penned while held in Krakow Prison (Główna Komisja...). The following year, the Auschwitz Museum presented the first issue of its series *Zeszyty Oświęcimskie*, which was translated into German under the title *Hefte von Auschwitz* from 1959 on. At the Warsaw Trial against several former members of the Auschwitz Camp Garrison, which took place between 11 and 29 March 1947, Höss was interrogated several times about the first gassing. During the second session of this trial on 12 March 1947, the following exchange between him and Polish Prosecutor Cyprian ensued:<sup>12</sup>

*“Prosecutor Cyprian: Who was first gassed?”*

*Defendant: Russian prisoners of war.*

*Prosecutor Cyprian: How many and how?*

*Defendant: I don't know the number of these gassed Russian prisoners of war. During a trip of mine, my deputy, Fritsch [sic], for the first time used the gas to kill these people. Until then, prisoners of war transferred to the camp or those arriving there were shot. When I returned, my deputy reported to me that he had used the gas. It was 'Cyklon B' [sic], and thanks to this gas, killing people was possible. We had a sufficient quantity of this gas, which was supplied by a Hamburg firm, who had to use the gas to exterminate vermin in the camp. Initially, the disinfection [disinfestation] of premises was carried out by employees of this Hamburg firm, then paramedics were used, the so-called disinfectors [dezynsektorów]. of premises was carried out by employees of this Hamburg firm, then paramedics were used, the so-called disinfectors. They were sent to this Hamburg firm to learn how to use this gas.*

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<sup>12</sup> United Nations Archives. Security Microfilm Program, 1988, Reel No. 62. Höss Trial, pp. 110f. The next two page numbers in the text from there.

*Prosecutor Cyprian: The defendant says how this very gassing operation was carried out.*

*Defendant: After the first gassing in Block No. 11 – this was the prison building – the gassings were transferred to the old crematorium, in the so-called morgue.”*

During the 6th Session on 17 March 1947, we have this exchange (p. 688):

*“Prosecutor Cyprian: The defendant explains how about 400 of these detainees [Soviet POWs] were gassed?*

*Defendant: The first part of the 400 – I don’t know if there were that many – because a few hundred were gassed – were not part of the contingent that arrived from the Lamsdorf Camp; this contingent was assigned to work.*

*Prosecutor: Does the defendant, as a colonel, know how prisoners of war were to be treated?*

*Defendant: Yes.*

*Prosecutor: Were Soviet prisoners treated according to these instructions?*

*Defendant: No. They were delivered to the concentration camp – as far as I know – because they had to perform very heavy work there. If they were political officers of the Soviet army, they were to be exterminated at Auschwitz. The latter transports arrived by order of the Gestapo, and were gassed. How many there were in total, I do not know.”*

During the 11th Session on 22 March 1947, we have this exchange between Höss and the presiding judge (p. 1158):

*“Defendant: The first gassing was carried out on Soviet prisoners and took place at Auschwitz.*

*Presiding Judge: On what date?*

*Defendant: It was in the autumn of 1941. I cannot give the exact date. The first gassing – of which I have spoken several times – was carried out by my deputy Fritsch [sic], and at that time even the Reich Security Main Office did not know the gas that was to be used for gassing people. It was from then on that the Russian prisoners were gassed like the Jews.”*

Therefore the former commandant of the Auschwitz Camp knew of only one alleged gassing in Block 11.

In conclusion, the only alleged “first gassing” that has any historiographical semblance and can be discussed seriously is that which Czech



has dated to 3-5 September 1941. Thus, I will deal only with this claimed gassing in the present study.

The last question that remains to be clarified is whether transports of Soviet prisoners of war destined for execution had arrived at Auschwitz prior to that date. From Höss's statements it can be deduced that two categories of Soviet prisoners of war were sent to Auschwitz: those selected for execution (the political commissars), and those destined for work. But this statement (like almost all of his "Holocaustic" statements) is not supported by anything. I will return to this issue in Section V.2.

Carlo Mattogno  
Rome, January 2022

## Chapter I: Genesis and Significance of the First Gassing

Because of what the account of the first homicidal gassing at Auschwitz describes and what it has come to mean, it has its place in a little known historical context, which must be outlined briefly before we can approach the subject in greater detail.

The First World War brought with it the massive use of poisonous airborne chemicals by all belligerents, initially undertaken by Germany.

Since 1914, the research on war gases (German: *Kampfgase*) in Germany was entrusted to the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Physical and Electro-Chemistry, directed by the famous Prof. Fritz Haber. In the same year, a chemist of this Institute, Prof. Walther Nernst, studied a projectile that, on exploding, released a fine powder consisting of o-dianisidine which acted as a sneezing agent. The Germans produced 20,000 such projectiles. Also in 1914 Fritz Haber recommended the massive use of chlorine gas as a weapon of war. This triggered the development of a staggering plethora of aggressive chemicals subsequently used by both sides in this conflict. I list the best-known among them:

- phosgene, first used by the Germans (*C.G.-Stoff*)
- thiophosgene, French (*Lacrimite*)
- 50% hydrogen cyanide, 30% arsenic trichloride, 15% stannic chloride and 5% chloroform, French (*Vincennite*)
- cyanogen chloride, French (*Mauguinite*)
- cyanogen bromide, Italian (*Campillit*)
- monochloromethyl chloroformate, French (*Palite*) and German (*K- or C-Stoff*)
- trichloro acetyl chloride, French (*Superpalite*)
- trichloromethyl chloroformate (diphosgene), German (*Perstoff*)
- chloroacetone, French (*Tonite*)
- bromoacetone, German (*B-Stoff*), French (*Blotite*)
- bromomethyl ethyl ketone (*Bn-Stoff*), German
- dimethyl sulphate, German (*D-Stoff*), French (*Rationite*)

- methyl chlorosulphonate, French (*Villantite*), German (*C-Stoff*)
- trichloro nitromethane (chloropicrin), German (*Klop*), French (*Acquinite*)
- ethyl dichloroarsine, German (*Dick*)
- 2-chlorovinyl dichlorarsine, American (*Lewisite*)
- bis(2-chloroethyl) sulfide, French (*Yprite*), British (Mustard Gas), German (*Lost*, *Senfgas*)
- acrolein, French (*Papite*)
- benzyl bromide, French (*Cyclite*)
- bromobenzyl cyanide, French (*Camite*)
- chloroacetophenone, German (*C.N.-Stoff*)
- diphenyl chloroarsine, German (*Clark I*)
- diphenyl cyanoarsine, German (*Clark II*)
- diphenylamin chloroarsine, American (*Adamsite*)

Between 1914 and 1918, some 250,000 tons of such materials were fabricated, and the casualties due to gas were about one million soldiers, of whom 78,000 died (Kalthoff/Werner, pp. 11-15; Izzo, p. 7). In the summer of 1917, between Neuilly and the left bank of the Maas River on a frontline ten kilometers (about six miles) wide, some 400,000 gas grenades were launched, thousands more in August and October near Verdun, and in December of 1917 on the Russian front (Izzo, p. 31). By 1918, gas grenades made up 50% of the projectiles stocked in the arsenals of the German artillery. In a single day during the spring offensive of 1918 the Germans launched 200,000 rounds of Yprite (*ibid.*, p. 32).

After the end of the war, toxic chemicals were further developed – especially for tactical purposes – in all countries that had been involved in the conflict. Instruction manuals and government publications were issued, as well as a wide array of technical literature (*ibid.*, pp. 445-448). From a scientific point of view, the most-fundamental work was undoubtedly the German book *Toxic Gases, Vapors, Fogs, Smoke and Particulates* by Ferdinand Flury and Franz Zernik.<sup>13</sup>

Even though the use of aggressive chemicals had been banned by the 1925 Geneva Convention on gases,<sup>14</sup> they were considered by all former belligerents for a possible future war. An Italian book dated 1935 opens

<sup>13</sup> Similar information in Italian can be found in the 1933 works by Giua and by Sartori.

The latter was a chemist at the Center for Military Chemistry in Rome. Two years later, his book was published in German translation.

<sup>14</sup> The relevant protocol prohibits the use of “asphyxiating, toxic or other types of gases and bacteriological methods of warfare.” United States..., p. 30.

with the following lines, which reflect the spirit of the time (Gusman, p. 11):

*“Recent air exercises in various countries have demonstrated that it is impossible to prevent bombardments and the use of gas against an open city by means of anti-air defenses.”*

The preface of a 1937 manual about the defense against noxious gases by the British government stated (Home Office, p. 3):

*“The measures for safeguarding the civil population against the effects of air attack which these Handbooks describe have become a necessary part of the defensive organisation of any country which is open to air attack. The need for them is not related to any belief that war is imminent. It arises from the fact that the risk of attack from the air, however remote it may be, is a risk that cannot be ignored, and because preparations to minimise the consequences of attack from the air cannot be improvised on the spur of the moment but must be made, if they are to be effective, in time of peace.”*

The extent to which the protection against toxic gases was an issue is testified by a German periodical whose title translates to *Gas Protection and Air Protection. Journal for the Entire Field of Gas and Air Protection of the Civilian Population*.<sup>15</sup> It was established in 1931, and from the outset collected prestigious contributions on the subject of protection against chemical weapons.

On 20 April 1942, the British War Cabinet received a detailed report dated 13 April from the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs on possible future chemical warfare that was feared, with precise descriptions of the British chemical arsenal, including 95,000 phosgene-loaded shells.<sup>16</sup>

As will be seen in Chapter III, the story of the first gassing arose in 1941 from these ideas and black propaganda related to it, which had reared its ugly head already during the First World War, as is well known.

The first Polish reconstruction of the alleged event can be read in the Polish government’s Indictment No. 5 against Hans Frank, which was pre-

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<sup>15</sup> *Gasschutz und Luftschutz. Zeitschrift für das gesamte Gebiet des Gas- und Luftschutzes der Zivilbevölkerung.*

<sup>16</sup> War Cabinet. Chemical Warfare. Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, and Annex I. Report. TNA, CAB 66-24. War Cabinet. Memoranda W.P. (42) 171 – W. P. (42) 220, Vol. XXIV, pp. 4-28.

pared for the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal on 5 December 1945:<sup>17</sup>

*“In the night from November 5th to 6th, 1941, an abominable mass-crime was committed by the Germans in the Oświęcim Camp, when about 600 Soviet-Russian prisoners, together with about 200 Poles, were crammed into a bunker and suffocated, and then cremated. Russian prisoners were exterminated in another way too, being forced to run for miles in the direction towards Rajsko, with no clothes on, until they died of frost and exhaustion.”*

In 1946, the Polish investigating judge Jan Sehn, in his famous report on the results of the inquiry into the Auschwitz Camp, elaborated the fundamental idea which was to guide orthodox historiography in decades to come. Sehn placed the first gassing within the framework of an alleged plan for the extermination of the Jews that was to be implemented in that camp (Sehn 1946, p. 120):

*“All these methods of assassination could not, however, eliminate those detainees who were unfit for work; in particular, they could not accomplish the enormous tasks associated with the annihilation of giant transports of hundreds of thousands of Jews who were almost exclusively destined to be exterminated on the spot.*

*For this reason, the Germans organized the mass murder of people by means of gas. These methods were tested during the summer of 1941 in the bunker of Block 11 on 250 inmate patients brought in from the camp sickbays, and on 600 prisoners of war. Once the victims had entered, the windows of the basement were covered with earth, and an SS man with a gas mask emptied the contents of the Zyklon B cans through the door and closed it. The next day, around noon, Palitsch [sic], wearing a gas mask, opened the door of the bunker and discovered that some inmates were still alive. More Zyklon was then added, and the door was closed again.<sup>[18]</sup> It was opened only in the evening of the following day. By then all inmates were dead.”*

Jan Sehn’s interpretation was then re-elaborated by Rudolf Höss, the former commandant of the Auschwitz Camp, in his Polish prison, and fur-

<sup>17</sup> Charge No. 5 of the Polish Government against Hans Frank. TNA, WO 311-749, p. 5.

<sup>18</sup> According to Jan Sehn the gassing took place in the entire basement, including the hallway, yet for Danuta Czech, it occurred only inside the prison cells. Therefore the former stated “the Bunker door” (see Photos 9-11 in the Appendix), whereas the latter wrote, “the cell doors of the Bunker.”

nished the basis for the description of the extermination of Soviet POWs (see Mattogno 2020, pp. 209-213).

In the text “The final solution of the Jewish question in Auschwitz concentration camp” prepared in Krakow in November of 1946, Rudolf Höss describes his well-known alleged meeting with Himmler in Berlin “In the summer of 1941.”<sup>19</sup> On that occasion the *Reichsführer* SS had allegedly informed him that the Führer had decided on “the final solution of the Jewish question” – or rather, in a blatant historiographic anachronism, on the alleged extermination of the Jews<sup>20</sup> – and that Auschwitz was to become the central place for that extermination (Hoess, pp. 206-208):

*“Shortly afterward Eichmann came to Auschwitz and disclosed to me the plans for the operations as they affected the various countries concerned. [...]*

*We discussed the ways and means of effecting the extermination. This could only be done by gassing, [...]*

*Eichmann returned to Berlin to report our conversation to the Reichsführer SS. [...]*

*At the end of November a conference was held in Eichmann’s Berlin office, attended by the entire Jewish Section, to which I, too, was summoned. [...] I could not find out when a start was to be made, and Eichmann had not yet discovered a suitable kind of gas.*

*In the autumn of 1941 a secret order was issued instructing the Gestapo to weed out the Russian politruks, commissars, and certain political officials from the prisoner-of-war camps, and to transfer them to the nearest concentration camp for liquidation. Small drafts of these prisoners were continually arriving in Auschwitz and they were shot in the gravel pit near the Monopoly buildings or in the courtyard of Block II. When I was absent on duty my representative, Hauptsturmführer*

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<sup>19</sup> Hoess, p. 205. The inescapable chronological contradictions within Rudolf Höss’s statements led orthodox Holocaust historian Karin Orth to date his alleged meeting with Himmler a year later (Orth 1997). But this thesis had already been proposed by Jean-Claude Pressac four years earlier (Pressac 1993, p. 41). This expedient does not resolve the contradictions, though, because this thesis presupposes that Höss started the alleged “extermination machine” before having received the order from Himmler to do so. See in this regard Mattogno 2020, pp. 184-186.

<sup>20</sup> As late as 10 February 1942, the term *Endlösung* (final solution) certainly still referred to the Madagascar project, as is irrefutably demonstrated by the letter written by Franz Rademacher (Head of the Jewish Department in the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs) to minister Bielfeld in the same Ministry. NG-5770. See Mattogno 2021a, p. 18.

*Frit[z]sch, on his own initiative, used gas for killing these Russian prisoners of war. He crammed the underground detention cells with Russians and, protected by a gas mask, discharged Cyclon B gas into the cells, killing the victims instantly. [...]*

*During Eichmann's next visit I told him about this use of Cyclon B and we decided to employ it for the mass extermination operation.*

*The killing by Cyclon B gas of the Russian prisoners of war transported to Auschwitz was continued, but no longer in Block II, since after the gassing the whole building had to be ventilated for at least two days."*

Rudolf Höss later came back to this topic in his "Autobiography," which he wrote in February of 1947 (*ibid.*, pp. 161f.):

*"Before the mass extermination of the Jews began, the Russian politruks and political commissars were liquidated in almost all the concentration camps during 1941 and 1942.*

*In accordance with a secret order issued by Hitler, these Russian politruks and political commissars were combed out of all the prisoner-of-war camps by special detachments from the Gestapo. When identified, they were transferred to the nearest concentration camp for liquidation. [...]*

*The political officials of the Red Army thus identified were brought to Auschwitz for liquidation. The first, smaller transports of them were executed by firing squads.*

*While I was away on duty, my deputy, Fritzsich, the commander of the protective custody camp, first tried gas for these killings. It was a preparation of prussic acid, called Cyclon B, which was used in the camp as an insecticide and of which there was always a stock on hand. On my return, Fritzsich reported this to me, and the gas was used again for the next transport.*

*The gassing was carried out in the detention cells of block 11. Protected by a gas mask, I watched the killing myself. In the crowded cells death came instantaneously the moment the Cyclon B was thrown in. A short, almost smothered cry, and it was all over. During this first experience of gassing people, I did not fully realize what was happening, perhaps because I was too impressed by the whole procedure."*

Let us now consider the consequences arising from the above statements as far as the present study is concerned. First of all, as Rudolf Höss declared

after having been summoned by Himmler in June of 1941<sup>21</sup> and as Eichmann traveled to Auschwitz “shortly afterward,”<sup>22</sup> Eichmann had not been able to identify a suitable gas for the planned mass murder of the Jews during the five months between June and the end of November 1941.

Secondly, because Eichmann had not yet been able to find such a gas at the time of the meeting in late November 1941, and because Rudolf Höss informed him about Fritzsche’s experiment “during Eichmann’s next visit,”<sup>23</sup> the first gassing can have taken place only *after* the end of November 1941. This dating is, however, in explicit disagreement with the official entry in Danuta Czech’s *Auschwitz Chronicle*: 3 September 1941.

Moreover, as we shall see in Chapter V, the first Soviet POWs arrived at Auschwitz only *in early October of 1941*. From November on, they were being examined by a Gestapo commission that identified some 300 political commissars among them, some of whom were then executed in small groups. Considering the rather small number of prisoners affected, and leaving aside the chronological contradiction with respect to the official texts, there was therefore no compelling motive for gassing these detainees rather than shooting them.

The assertion that Eichmann, working under highest orders, had been unable to find a suitable gas for the exterminations over a period of five months is quite unbelievable. Any layman would have easily been able to find texts concerning toxic gasses in any German technical library; in particular the comprehensive work by Ferdinand Flury and Franz Zernik. In this compendium of over 600 pages, technical and chemical details are given for all the toxic gases known in the early 1930s, including the 34 poison chemicals used by the belligerents during the First World War (24 of which I listed earlier). An Italian researcher at the time noted (Izzo, p. 66):

“[I]t is undeniable that Germany, at the beginning of the war, was far superior in chemistry, both scientific and technical or industrial. [...] the scientific section, i.e. the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute in Berlin, directed by Professor Haber, who can be said to have been the mastermind behind the initiative for and the research into the means of chemical warfare, [...] was the official center for development and can be credited

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<sup>21</sup> NO-1210/D-749a; PS-3868.

<sup>22</sup> No known document confirms this visit. Eichmann declared that he went to Auschwitz on three occasions, but during the “*Ungarn-Angelegenheit*” (“Hungarian matter”), i.e. in 1944. State of Israel, Vol. VII, p. 220.

<sup>23</sup> This visit is not confirmed by any documents either.



*with many brilliant discoveries in the chemical, physical, and medical fields.”*

Among the toxic gasses tested during World War I was also hydrogen cyanide, which the French called “Vincenite,” a chemical of which 4,000 tons were manufactured during the war. It contained a mixture of 50% hydrogen cyanide, 30% arsenic trichloride, 15% stannic tetrachloride, and 5% chloroform, and was used as a warhead in ordnance shells (*ibid.*). Other cyanides, such as cyano-chloride (*Mauguinite*) and cyano-bromide (*Campbellite*) were also used (*ibid.*, pp. 67f.).

Thus, Eichmann could have solved his problem within a week, even if he had had to do all the work himself. Having received the order from Himmler, as Rudolf Höss tells us, he could have found the solution without any effort whatsoever and even faster by turning to the Hygienic Institute of the *Waffen-SS* in Berlin (see Mattogno 2021a, pp. 178-182), headed from 1943 onward by *SS Standartenführer* Joachim Mrugowski. The competence of this body in the field of highly toxic gases for disinfection is borne out, *i.a.*, by one of its publications of 1943 (Mrugowski 1943).

Moreover, hydrogen cyanide, said to have been accidentally “hit upon” by Fritsch, was in normal use for disinfections at Auschwitz in the form of Zyklon B, and all the regulations regarding its use stress its extreme toxicity (see Mattogno 2004a). Thus, the gas for the alleged exterminations was already known and available to everyone concerned.

Jean-Claude Pressac initially attributed to the first gassing the character of a first experimental testing of hydrogen cyanide for mass exterminations (Pressac 1989, p. 184):

*“Because the lethal dose for humans was not known, the SS had made a botched trial gassing in the basement of Bunker 11 of the Main Camp on 3rd, 4th and 5th September 1941, the victims being 850 Soviet POWs and other prisoners. It was subsequently seen to be more convenient to gas people as required in the very place where all corpses inevitably had to go eventually: the morgue of Crematorium I.”*

Some testimonies summarized by Stanisław Kłodziński go even further (Kłodziński 1972, p. 82):

*“The detainee Dr. Eng. Artur Krzetuski (ID 1003) recalls that the preparations for the use of gas (Zyklon B) on humans began by observing the effect of gassings on pests, mostly bugs and fleas. This information is confirmed by the detainee Jan Liwacz employed in the metal workshop of the Industriebhof [industrial area]: he remembers that a few*

*weeks prior to the events that took place in the bunker of Block 13, Camp Commandant Höss, his deputy Fritsch, Section Leader Palitzsch, and SS Man Lachmann from the Political Department came to the workshop. They sent away all the detainees and ran a test gassing of the shop with Zyklon B. The next day, opened gas containers were found in the area.”*

These statements are patently false, because – as I will explain later – only trained personnel who had obtained the relevant certification were allowed to handle Zyklon B, and these personnel would never have left empty Zyklon cans on site.

At the Frankfurt Auschwitz trial, the former Polish detainee Eugeniusz Motz declared:<sup>24</sup>

*“In 1941, I spent three months in the clothing depot, between August and October, give or take a month. My boss there was Breitwieser, his deputy Reichenbacher; the capo came from Silesia; his successor was Walter Petzold. During that time, a first test was run for the delousing of the dirty laundry by means of gas. We had to patch up all cracks in the room; Breitwieser took a gas mask and sprinkled the gas on the laundry, after which we also had to seal the door. The next day, Breitwieser got his gas mask, opened the door and the window(s), the room was ventilated, and the laundry was then taken away to be washed. In our presence, Breitwieser said to Reichenbacher: ‘Now we also have something to exterminate the inmates with.’”*

Hence, the SS would have tested the effect of hydrogen cyanide on bugs and fleas in preparation for the first homicidal gassing!

Jean-Claude Pressac’s explanation is without foundation, because the lethal dose of hydrogen cyanide on humans had been clearly known for several years. The scientific work by Ferdinand Flury and Frank Zernik mentioned above gives an accurate description of the toxicological symptoms of hydrogen cyanide on humans and states, *i.a.* (Flury/Zernik, p. 404):

*“Low concentrations (around 0.05 mg/l or 45 ppm) cause only headache, nausea, vomiting, palpitations; these symptoms disappear after some time. Higher concentrations from around 0.1 mg/l or 90 ppm on up are life-threatening or rapidly fatal. At intermediate concentrations, first symptoms will appear only after some minutes. Death usually oc-*

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<sup>24</sup> Fritz Bauer Institut, pp. 25679-25681. The witness was deposed through an interpreter. The quote contains only his answers. Cf. Langbein, Vol. 2, p. 788.

*curs within an hour. If respiration still exists at that time, recovery is possible. Occasionally, though, delayed death occurs even after 24 hours. High concentrations – around some 0.3 mg/l or 270 ppm – cause death quickly: with a feeling of compression and sudden screams, the so-called ‘hydrocephalic scream’ (Lewin), there is collapse, cramps ensue, breathing stops after a few minutes, and death occurs after 6-8 minutes.”*

The authors then include a table titled “Toxicity of inhaled hydrogen cyanide according to Lehmann-Hess,” which shows that a concentration of 0.3 mg of hydrogen cyanide per liter of air (about 270 ppm) – the highest one considered – is “immediately fatal” (*ibid.*, p. 453; cf. Doc. 1). Two further tables concerning the effect of toxic gasses and vapors on human beings – which would have solved Eichmann’s research problems immediately – confirm that a concentration of 0.3 mg/l of hydrogen cyanide is “immediately fatal,” a concentration of 0.2 mg/l being fatal within 5-10 minutes (*ibid.*, p. 454; cf. Doc. 2). These concentrations correspond to about 0.2 and 0.3 g/m<sup>3</sup>, respectively.

Since the Auschwitz camp authorities were in touch with the Tesch & Stabenow Company, which supplied the camp with Zyklon B for disinfestation purposes, and because disinfestations were carried out in the camp by appropriately trained personnel as mentioned earlier, all data concerning the toxicological effects of hydrogen cyanide were readily available. Hence, there was no need to run tests in order to find out something that was extensively documented.

Germar Rudolf noted that a study carried out for the Edgewood Arsenal of the U.S. Army in the mid-1970s concluded that the lethal concentrations of hydrogen cyanide mentioned in toxicological literature since the 1930s were based on experiments with rabbits, which cannot be transferred to humans (Rudolf 2020, pp. 231f.).

However, this in no way detracts from the fact that these concentration/effects, at the time, were considered valid by everyone, starting with the technicians in charge of disinfestation with Zyklon B, and would therefore have constituted the essential prerequisite for any homicidal gassing carried out with a minimum of criteria.

Seen from this perspective, the results of those alleged experiments (and of alleged later tests in the morgue of Crematorium I and in the so-called “Bunker 1”) are quite surprising. Concerning the amounts of Zyklon

B normally used for the alleged homicidal gassings at the crematoria, Rudolf Höss declared:<sup>25</sup>

*“Of Zyklon B, between 5 and 7 cans with one kg [hydrogen cyanide] each were needed for the gassing of 1,500 people; the number of cans varied depending on the size of the chamber and the weather, that is to say, during cold and humid weather, 2 or 3 additional cans were needed.”*

And again:<sup>26</sup>

*“Furthermore, one needed – it was different in the crematoria, 7 in the large crematoria, in other rooms 5 cans. But it also depended on the weather. If it was very cold and wet, 2-3 more cans had to be used.”*

Hence, in order to gas 1,500 persons in Crematoria II and III (the “large crematoria”), at least seven cans of Zyklon B were needed, or 7 kg of hydrogen cyanide.<sup>27</sup> The alleged gas chambers of those crematoria – Morgue 1 – had a volume of 506 m<sup>3</sup>, from which we must deduct the volume of the seven concrete columns (0.4×0.4×2.01m<sup>3</sup>),<sup>28</sup> which supported the central longitudinal beam of the ceiling, and this beam itself (0.4×0.4×30m<sup>3</sup>), or a total of 7 cubic meters. If we assume that the body of an average adult weighs some 75 kg and thus occupies some 75 liters of space, 1,500 persons occupy about 112 m<sup>3</sup>, leaving an effective volume of air of about 387 m<sup>3</sup>.

Hence, if seven kg of hydrogen cyanide would have been poured into this alleged gas chamber, a theoretical concentration of about (7,000÷387=) 18 g/m<sup>3</sup>, or 18 mg/L, would have resulted after all the hydrogen cyanide had evaporated. This is (18÷0.3=) 60 times higher than what the expert literature at that time considered to be “immediately lethal.” This must be compared with the concentrations used in real US-American execution gas chambers, which killed within about ten minutes and operated with a hydrogen-cyanide concentration of just 3.6-4 mg/L (Rudolf 2020, p. 235), hence only 12-13 times the lethal concentration. Of course, the difference here is that, in the US gas chambers, the victim was engulfed by the maximum concentration of hydrogen cyanide right from the start of the execution, whereas in the alleged Auschwitz gas chambers, the liquid hydrogen cyanide absorbed on the gypsum pellets of Zyklon B first had to evaporate

<sup>25</sup> Affidavit by Höss dated 20 May 1946. NI-034.

<sup>26</sup> Affidavit by Höss dated 14 May 1946. NI-036.

<sup>27</sup> The weight indicated on Zyklon B cans referred to the net HCN content.

<sup>28</sup> Height up to the base of the beam.

and spread throughout the chamber, a process that would have taken considerable time, depending on the way Zyklon B was introduced, and on the ambient temperature and humidity (see Irmscher 1942; Rudolf 2020, pp. 236-271). In other words, the way these gassings are said to have been carried out was very inefficient and wasteful. Considering the drastic efforts exerted in the German war economy to save material wherever possible,<sup>29</sup> the SS administration at Auschwitz would have wasted during each alleged gassing a large quantity of Zyklon B, which back then cost 5 RM per kg.<sup>30</sup>

One could argue that the SS had adopted this enormous overdose in order to calm their conscience, meaning that they did not want to be discomforted by their victims' hours-long agony. But leaving aside that the SS presumably had no conscience, if we follow the orthodox narrative, it would be inexplicable how the amount needed to achieve a defined overdose could have been established, since no witness mentions gassing experiments precisely to ascertain the correct dosage of Zyklon B, the one to be used in all "gas chambers." From this it can be deduced that this overdose was not an experimental result, but simply a figment of an imagination perhaps fired with a propagandistic aim.

In addition, during World War Two, Germany possessed the world's best gassing technology with hydrogen cyanide: the well-known Degesch Circulation System for disinfestation chambers (Peters/Wüstinger; see also Berg 1986). This technology had enormous advantages compared to traditional disinfestations: a Zyklon-B can was placed in a receptacle inside the chamber and was opened by a mechanism from the outside. Its contents fell into a wire-mesh basket, into which a fan blew warmed air. The air inside the chamber was constantly circulated by this fan. This caused the swift evaporation and dispersion of the toxic gas. The ventilation of such a gas chamber required only some 10-15 minutes.

As is well-known, 19 such delousing chambers using the Degesch Circulation System had been planned since 1941 to be installed in the "laundry and reception building with delousing facility and inmate bath," Building No. 160. It appears in one of the first drawings of that structure, Drawing No. 916 of 30 December 1941 (Pressac 1989, p. 34). The Friedrich

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<sup>29</sup> The *Sonderbefehl* of 21 December 1942, concerned for example the exhortations of the head of the SS Economic and Administrative Main Office (*Wirtschaft-Verwaltungshauptamt*, WVHA) "to save coal." APMO, Kommandantur-Befehl, sygn. D-AuI,1, p. 106.

<sup>30</sup> The cost of Zyklon B in 1944 was 5 RM per kg. PS-1553, pp. 15-26.

Boos Company, which received the order to erect this building, compiled a cost estimate for it on 12 September 1942.<sup>31</sup>

In anticipation of this construction project and on the “initiative of the Friedrich Boos Company,” the Company Heerd-Lingler had sent a copy of the article by Peters and Wüstinger on the Degesch Circulation System to the then SS New Construction Office at Auschwitz as early as 1 July 1941, where it was received on 3 July.<sup>32</sup> If it was governmental policy to implement mass extermination by means of Zyklon B, then why was the Degesch Circulation System not adopted? The responses of mainstream Holocaust historians to this question are absolutely inadequate.

Pressac claims that the above-mentioned article concerning disinfestation chambers with the Degesch Circulation System was requested by the SS for the construction of the alleged “Bunker 2,” but the only feature allegedly adopted was the parallel arrangement of four small gas chambers “without mechanical ventilation” (Pressac 1993, pp. 41f.), although the configuration was absolutely irrelevant for the delousing system in question.

Regarding van Pelt’s explanation, who presumes to provide a broad, comprehensive answer to the above question, I refer to my earlier-mentioned study (Mattogno 2019, pp. 167-169). Here it matters only that in van Pelt’s view, “in the case of the gas chambers it was the cremation process which invariably went considerably slower than the gassing” (van Pelt, p. 380). This brings us back to the starting point: if a short duration of the gassing procedure was not decisive because the cremation proceeded much more slowly, then why did the SS at Auschwitz take 7 kg of Zyklon B to obtain a gassing time of five to ten 10 minutes while wasting 90% of the toxic material?

Apart from safety and efficiency considerations, already this economic reason would have inevitably led the SS at Auschwitz to choose the Degesch Circulation System not just for disinfestation purposes, but for the alleged mass extermination as well.

At the Irving-Lipstadt libel trial, the main objection to the *Leuchter Report* (see Leuchter *et al.*) was the ridiculous claim that “the gas chambers were operated with a low (but lethal) hydrocyanide concentration of 100 ppm” (van Pelt, p. 388), a concentration equivalent to 0.12 g/m<sup>3</sup>, or 0.12

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<sup>31</sup> F. Boos, “Kostenanschlag V über die Einrichtung von 19 Stück Entlausungskammern für die Blausäure-Entlausungsanlage im K.L. Auschwitz.” RGVA, 502-1-137, pp. 13-16.

<sup>32</sup> RGVA, 502-1-332, pp. 86-90.

mg/L, and thus ( $18 \div 0.12 =$ ) 150 times *lower* than the one ultimately resulting from R. Höss's declarations!

Therefore, the first claimed homicidal gassing did not serve to establish the lethal concentration of HCN for human beings, which was already known. As far as the time is concerned that it took for all victims to die, this claimed test would have been a grotesque failure, because it took two complete days for all of them to die! In spite of that, the SS of Auschwitz is said to have decided to use Zyklon B for homicidal purposes anyway, without even considering the option to use the Degesch Circulation System for their alleged machinery of mass murder!

In conclusion, it can be said that the first gassing has no relation to the alleged plan to exterminate Jews, to the execution of the Soviet political commissars, or to the testing of the toxicity of hydrogen cyanide.

Then what were the origin and the significance of the account of the first homicidal gassing?

As we shall see in Chapter III, the first reports by the secret resistance movement supply us with an answer to this question.

## Chapter II: The Setting of the First Gassing: Block 11

Before we examine the historical credibility of Danuta Czech's account, it is necessary to describe the layout and the other aspects of the buildings in which the first gassing is said to have occurred, in particular the basement of Block 11. This is necessary not only for a better understanding and a critical analysis of the testimonies which we will quote below, but also in order to ascertain the technical feasibility of the described gassing procedure. The present chapter thus constitutes an indispensable prerequisite for the critical evaluation of the sources to be discussed in Chapter IV.

Block 11 was located in the southwest corner of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp (cf. Documents 3f.). Initially it had been known as No. 13, but after the construction of eight new blocks in the years 1941 through 1943, the numbering was changed, and it came to be labeled No. 11, as it is now known (cf. Photo 1).

A publication of the Auschwitz National Museum describes it as follows (Brol *et al.*, p. 7):

*“The block, known as No. 11 after the enlargement of the Auschwitz Camp and the renumbering, differed from the other blocks externally by a permanently locked entrance door and a yard<sup>[33]</sup> that was separated from all other parts of the camp by high walls.<sup>[34]</sup> No detainee, other than those employed in Block 11, was allowed to enter or leave this block.*

*As early as 1940, Block 11 housed a Penal Company, and its basement became the camp stockade, the so-called bunker.<sup>[35]</sup> From the ground floor,<sup>[36]</sup> a steel door,<sup>[37]</sup> permanently locked, led into this basement. The*

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<sup>33</sup> cf. Photo 2.

<sup>34</sup> cf. Photos 3f.

<sup>35</sup> cf. Documents 5-7.

<sup>36</sup> cf. Photos 5-8.

<sup>37</sup> cf. Photos 9-11.



*bunker's left and right sides were separated by steel bars.*<sup>[38]</sup> *Cells 1 through 14 were on the left, Cells 15 through 28 on the right side.*<sup>[39]</sup>

*The cells were of the following kinds:*

*1) Cells with a window, which opened into a light-shaft on the outside.*<sup>[40]</sup> *They contained wooden bunks and buckets of galvanized steel. The cells destined for the SS had wooden floors, those for the detainees had a concrete floor.*

*2) Dark cells, without windows, having only air-holes*<sup>[41]</sup> *closed on the outside by means of metal grids. Their only furniture was a galvanized steel bucket. There were two such cells in the bunker.*

*3) Stand-up cells that had been put into the normal Cell No. 22.*<sup>[42]</sup> *They were the size of a telephone booth and could be entered only from below through a small opening close to the floor."*

An inspection of the site done by the Auschwitz National Museum, presumably in 1959, yielded the following information (Brol *et al.*, p. 44):

*"It was seen that the windows of Cells 7, 9, 16, 18, 23, and 24 vary with respect to the windows of other cells and show traces of having been altered. Furthermore, iron bars protrude on the outside of the wall of Cell 18; a basket covering the opening of the air-holes was attached to them. On Drawing No. 1152 dated 16 March 1942, [Document 6] Cells 7, 8, 9, and 10 are labeled 'dark cells.' There are 4 small stand-up cells in Cell 22. No window openings are indicated for these cells in the drawing.*

*When comparing the findings of the inspection with the present state of the basement of Block 11, it would appear justified to think that the number of dark cells varied and that this [designation] applied not only to the present Cells 8 and 20, but also to Cells 7 and 9 (Drawing 1152) and to Cell 18 (as shown by the protruding iron bars for the baskets, which existed only in dark cells and stand-up cells).*

*As far as the alterations to the windows of Cells 23 and 24 are concerned (the windows have been walled up by a single layer of bricks with a crudely placed hole), it can no longer be ascertained whether*

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<sup>38</sup> cf. Photos 12f.

<sup>39</sup> cf. Photos 14-20.

<sup>40</sup> cf. Photos 21-28.

<sup>41</sup> cf. Photos 29-31.

<sup>42</sup> cf. Photo 32.

*this was done in connection with a transformation of these cells into dark cells.”*

From Drawing No. 4056 dated 26 June 1944 (Document 7), one can take the following data: The basement of the block had a floor area of 45.10 by 13.84 meters. Cells 1-7, 9-20, and 23-28 had an almost-identical floor area, which varied between a minimum of 8.41 m<sup>2</sup> (2.62×3.21 m<sup>2</sup>) and a maximum of 8.66 m<sup>2</sup> (2.70×3.21 m<sup>2</sup>). Cells 8, 21, and 22 had floor areas of 6.5, 6.0, and 12.3 m<sup>2</sup>, respectively. The total cell area was 238 m<sup>2</sup>. The central hallway had a floor area of 70.46 m<sup>2</sup> (36.70×1.92 m<sup>2</sup>). The total surface area of the two lateral corridors came to about 86 m<sup>2</sup>. The ceiling height of the basement was 2.18 meters.<sup>43</sup> Summarizing, the dimensions of the rooms mentioned were:

**Table 1:** Dimensions of the Bunker

Location	Floor area (approx.)	Volume (approx.)
Cells	238 m <sup>2</sup>	518 m <sup>3</sup>
Central hallway	70 m <sup>2</sup>	154 m <sup>3</sup>
Lateral corridors	86 m <sup>2</sup>	187 m <sup>3</sup>
Total	394 m <sup>2</sup>	859 m <sup>3</sup>

Cells 1-7, 9-13, 15-19, and 22-28 show windows barred by means of a steel grid in the upper part of the outside walls (cf. Photos 24 & 28), measuring 75 × 65 cm<sup>2</sup>, except for Cells 7 and 9 (50×50 cm<sup>2</sup>) and 22 (32×42 cm<sup>2</sup>). Cell 20 has no window but an air-hole (10×10 cm<sup>2</sup>) covered by a metal grid, as in the stand-up cells.

Because the ground floor of the block is at a level higher than the street (6 steps lead up to it), the bunker is, in fact, only partly below ground, that is to say, its floor is some 150 cm below street level, whereas its ceiling is some 70 cm above it. The windows of the cells are therefore open to the outside, but occluded by a brick structure some 90 cm high and having a base of about 50 cm × 140 cm (cf. Photos 21-23 & 26f.). Cell 21 has a window covered by a grid but no outside wall (cf. Photos 17 & 29). The doors of the cells measure 92 cm × 205 cm (cf. Photos 19f.).

In front of the entrance to the basement, on the wall opposite the central hallway, a sign in four languages states (cf. Photo 33):

*“In September 1941 first experimental mass killing of people with Cyclon B took place in this basement. 600 Soviet prisoners of war and 250 sick prisoners perished then.”*

<sup>43</sup> Measurements taken on site by the author.



## Chapter III: The Sources of the First-Gassing Accounts

### 1. Wartime Sources (1941 – 1943)

The story of the first homicidal gassing at Auschwitz was originally not placed into the context of a plan for the mass extermination of Jews, Soviet POWs or sick inmates, but into a putative project involving the testing of combat gases on human beings within the framework of toxic chemicals used during WWI, as already mentioned. It was, in a way, the virtual continuation of such activities. Its propaganda antecedent was an article published by the London *Daily Telegraph* on 22 March 1916 headlined “Atrocities in Serbia, 700,000 victims”, which purported to have been transmitted by the newspaper’s correspondent in Rome. It said that two Italian prisoners of war had escaped from Austria through Serbia and had taken refuge in Romania. They had reported that the Austrians and Bulgarians had killed 700,000 people: women, children and old people had been locked up in churches and stabbed with bayonets or “suffocated by means of asphyxiating gas,” and 3,000 people had also been murdered in this way in a church in Belgrade. The article continued:

*“Serbian refugees not on oath, have stated that they were present at a distribution of bombs and machines for producing asphyxiating gas to the Bulgarians by the Germans and Austrians, who instructed the former how to utilise these instruments to exterminate the Serbian population. The Bulgarians used this method at Nish, Pirot, Prizrend, and Negotin, the inhabitants of which places died of suffocation. Similar means were employed by the Austrians in several parts of Montenegro.”*

The “first gassing” is mentioned in a number of reports from the Auschwitz Camp’s resistance movement, the first one dating from 24 October 1941 (“Obóz koncentracyjny...”, p. 11):

*“At Oświęcim [Auschwitz], in early October, 850 Soviet officers and noncoms (POWs) that had been taken there were killed by gas as a test of a new type of combat gas, which is to be used on the eastern front*

[jako próbę nowego typu gazu bojowego, który ma być użyty na froncie wschodnim].”

In the later sources the motive of testing of combat gases remains essentially unchanged, although there is some uncertainty with respect to the interpretation of the alleged event. In the “Report on the situation for the period of 15 August through 15 November 1941” dated 15 November 1941, one can read (*ibid.*, p. 14):

“The camp has been the scene of an abominable crime when during the night of 5-6 September some 600 Soviet inmates, among them ‘Politruks’ of the army, and about 200 Poles were herded into the bunker [do bunkra] and, when the bunker had been hermetically sealed, were poisoned with a gas and their corpses taken to the crematorium and burned.”

On 17 November 1941, the clandestine newsletter *Informacja bieżąca* (*Current News*), No. 21, carried the story with some more details (*ibid.*):

“Oświęcim. The news of the nefarious crime committed in the camp has been confirmed. During the night of 5-6 September 1941, some 600 Soviet civilian prisoners of war that had been taken there were herded into the bunker at Oświęcim [w bunkra w Oświęcimiu] with their arms and legs broken. Added to them were some 250 Poles. The openings of the bunker were hermetically closed, and the inmates shut in were poisoned with gases [gazami]. The corpses of the poisoned detainees were moved during the night on 80 carts to the crematorium, where they were cremated.”

The “Attachment to Annex No. 21 for the Period 1st through 15 December 1941” echoes the first version of the note (*ibid.*, p. 16):

“In the concrete shelter [w betownym schronie] 500 POWs have been poisoned by means of a combat gas [za pomocą gazu bojowego].”

This is repeated a few months later in a report produced by a Czech teacher who escaped from the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia in May of 1942.<sup>44</sup>

“The worst reputation is enjoyed by the concentration camp at Oswiecim near Krakow. Not only are the victims of German cruelty tortured and mishandled in the usual German fashion, but the efficacy of German poison gases is even tried on them and other experiments are made with them.”

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<sup>44</sup> TNA, 371-30837, 5365, “Conditions in Czechoslovakia,” pp. 157f.

On 1 July 1942, the *Polish Fortnightly Review* published a more-detailed account of the first homicidal gassing with additions and quite-material variations with respect to the report of 24 October 1941, but still in line with the account in hand at the time:<sup>45</sup>

*“Among the other experiments being tried on the prisoners is the use of poison gas. It is generally known that during the night of September 5th to 6th last year about a thousand people were driven down to the underground shelter in Oswiecim, among them seven hundred Bolshevik prisoners of war and three hundred Poles. As the shelter was too small to hold this large number, the living bodies were simply forced in, regardless of broken bones. When the shelter was full, gas was injected into it, and the prisoners died during the night. All night the rest of the camp was kept awake by the groans and howls coming from the shelter. Next day other prisoners had to carry out the bodies, a task which took all day. One hand-cart on which the bodies were being removed broke down under the weight.”*

In the last reports of 1942, the motive of the testing of combat gases is joined by the alleged mass killing of Soviet prisoners of war. The “Report on the situation in the country for the period 25 August through 10 October, 1942,” dated 10 October 1942, stated in this regard (“Obóz koncentracyjny...,” pp. 45f.):

*“From July 1941 on, Bolshevik POWs were brought to the camp where almost all of them, several tens of thousands, have been poisoned in gas chambers.”*

And the *Informacja bieżąca* No. 39 of 23 October 1942, wrote (*ibid.*, p. 52):

*“[...] and finally Russian POWs; in 1941, some 60,000 arrived and none survived: on them, the effect of combat gases was tested [próbowano na nich działania gazów bojowych].”*

It is worthwhile to note that the accepted number of Soviet prisoners of war brought to Auschwitz amounts to 11,964 persons (Piper 1993, p. 102). During his first interrogation at the hands of his British captors, Rudolf Höss took up this item of Polish propaganda when he was forced by torture to “confess”<sup>46</sup>:

<sup>45</sup> *Polish Fortnightly Review*, London, No. 47, 1 July 1942, p. 2.

<sup>46</sup> Declaration by R. Höss, dated 14 March 1946, NO-1210.

*“I personally remember to have gassed 70,000 Russian POWs during my tour of duty as commandant of Auschwitz, ordered to do so by the respective Gestapo chiefs.” (sic)*

Later, at Nuremberg, during the pre-trial interrogation of 2 April 1946, Höss disavowed such nonsense:<sup>47</sup>

*“I do not believe that even the figure of 70,000 is possible.”*

The story of the testing of combat gases, but without specific reference to Auschwitz, was echoed in France toward the end of 1942, with a few adjustments. In its edition of 10 October 1942, the French underground newspaper *J'accuse* wrote the following (Courtois/Rayski, p. 155):

*“The news which is reaching us in spite of the silence of the official press has it that the tens of thousands of Jewish men, women, and children deported from France have either been burned alive in sealed [railroad] cars or asphyxiated to test a new type of toxic gas.”*

A flyer of the French Communist Party repeats the news in the following terms (*ibid.*, p. 156):

*“And in order to test the toxicity of the gases they produce in their chemical laboratories, the Germans have committed a terrible crime, which causes indignation among all decent people. We have in fact learned from a reliable source that out of the Jews deported from the occupied zone and out of those, whom Laval and Pétain have handed over to them from the non-occupied zone, the Germans have selected 11,000 men, women, old people, and children and have tested on them poison gases. These unfortunate people have all died a horrible death.”*

In the special edition of February 1943, *J'accuse* returns to the question and states (*ibid.*, p. 173):

*“Thus we have learned that 11,000 of them [Jews deported to the east from France] have been used as guinea-pigs for the testing of a poisonous gas which the Nazis intend to use.”*

As late as September 1945, the witness Werner Krumme, an ex-detainee at Auschwitz, ID 99166, declared:<sup>48</sup>

<sup>47</sup> NARA, RG 238, M1270, OCCPAC. Interrogation Records Prepared for War Crimes Proceedings at Nuernberg 1945-1947, Rudolf Höss. Testimony of Rudolf Hoess, taken at Nurnberg, Germany, 2 April 1946, 1000 to 1230, by Mr. S. Jaari, Interrogator. Also present: Mr. Leo Katz, Interpreter, and Charles J. Gallagher, Court Reporter, p. 8. See Mattogno 2020, pp. 32, 52, 206-208.

<sup>48</sup> Declaration by Werner Krumme dated “Glenn, August 1945.” NO-1933, p. 3.

*“Above the ground level the buildings had small windows, through which the SS guards then threw a substance, developing into poisonous gas. It was here where the Nazis tried out all kinds of new poisonous gasses, which they needed for their war effort.”*

From 1943 onwards, other sources ignore the subject of war-gas experiments, which was completely abandoned by subsequent Polish historiography. After all, poison gases were never used in World War II by either side.

On 27 April 1943, Witold Pilecki escaped from Auschwitz, and the following year he wrote the so-called “Report W,” headed “Czerwiec [June] 1943,” but at the end it is dated with “22 July 1944” (“dnia 22 lipca 44 r.”). It contains the following account:<sup>49</sup>

*“The gassing of healthy people caused a greater impression only the first time. A couple of months after the beginning of the war with the Bolsheviks, the camp authorities received several hundred of the first prisoners, of whom 700, in the presence of a certain committee, were forced into a room in Block XI [do jednej sali w bloku XI] /the gas chambers were not yet ready for use/ [komory gazowe nie były jeszcze gotowe do użytku]. After the room had been closed, and in the presence of the entire procession [the committee mentioned above] wearing gas masks, [these] 700 people – crowded together in such a way that there was [no more] room – were gassed. Those who were allowed to enter the room after the ventilation stated that they had Dante-like impressions. Judging by the uniforms worn by those gassed, it must have been the Bolshevik hierarchy itself, from various units. Apparently, this was a test of the gas.”*

In August of 1943, a pamphlet in Polish, written by Natalia Zarembina, was published in London under the title *Obóz śmierci*. It contains a section on the first gassing (Zarembina 1943). It is not clear whether the author is a former detainee, since the pamphlet is not written in the way of a personal account. The style is more narrative, as in a novel, and the author is an omnipresent, detached observer. An English version appeared in 1944 in London, titled *The Camp of Death*, from which the following passage is taken:<sup>50</sup>

<sup>49</sup> The original report can be found in the Warsaw New Records Archives (*Archiwum Akt Nowych*), 2/2514/0/-/1/2566, pp. 63-86; the quoted passage is on p. 72. The report was partially reproduced, with minor revisions, in Pawłowicz 2009.

<sup>50</sup> Zarembina 1944, pp. 22f.; an improved US edition was published that same year (Za-



*“In the corner of the rectangle, where the camp’s buildings are situated, there are the barracks for penal detention. They hardly differ from the other blocks in this row. They are built in the same style as the old barracks which were in use during the Austrian régime, where they housed the Royal Imperial artillery, and the new ones, built by the prisoners, for the ever-increasing number of new companions, arriving from the world outside. They are all the same dull shape and of the same dreary red brick.*

*The ones for penal detention are twin-barracks, consisting of two blocks, connected with each other. That is the first variation from the rest of the camp’s design. The second is the number of small windows at the bottom. They look sinister and secretive, those little windows – and no wonder, because behind them are the dark vaults from which no one has ever returned. To-day it is unusually lively in the neighbouring barrack. Removal. The whole detachment, about 300 people, are [sic] being transferred to the next block, built recently. Into the empty building they are going to bring the seriously ill from the hospital.*

*‘They must be enlarging it,’ one prisoner supposes. ‘High time, too; it was incredibly cramped.’*

*The activity around the barracks for penal detention does not stop even when night falls. The gravel grinds the steps of many people; their sound echoes [in] the stairs and gets lost in the vaults.*

*A new batch of prisoners is arriving: 500 Bolsheviks. Who is it, who is not yet included with the Polish nucleus? There are already Czechs, Germans, Jews, and Serbs, and now they have brought in those Russians. But why are they going to be housed with the seriously ill? They cannot be ill – they came marching into the camp.*

*The prisoners in the nearby barracks don’t even attempt to sleep; they listen to what is going on in the next house that has been emptied so hurriedly and refilled again.*

*A short interval separates the noise of the steps on the gravel from the inhuman screams that follow, penetrating through every crack of the windows. The dominating note in these screams is that of a shock, but the prisoners’ ears, experienced in listening, are able to discern precisely the notes of pain, cries for help, and the final despair. Several times this ‘tune’ is repeated: first the rhythm of the steps, and then the*

*chords of the screams. And then there is silence. The silence of the grave. It creeps sinisterly around the twin-barracks. The next day, these barracks, now silent, give the impression of a tombstone over a huge grave.*

*For three days the stillness around the barracks for penal detention remains undisturbed. The fourth night lifts the veil of secrecy. The gravel grinds again, this time under the wheels of carts that drive up in front of the barracks. Another removal – but not of people, only of objects. Clothes which a few days ago had been worn by the sick Poles brought in from hospital, and others that had belonged to the Russians – they will all, the Russian army uniforms and the camp's drill overalls, find their way to the storeroom blocks.*

*After some time, the carts carry other loads and roll off in the opposite direction. Naked human bodies are piled up high. The carts move towards the crematorium.*

*Five minutes are sufficient to cover the distance between the corner barracks and the green, turf-covered hill of the crematorium. Even the prisoners, through pushing the carts, heavily loaded with the corpses, do not need much more time; they are in a hurry to get rid of their ghastly load. But their work will not be finished very soon, for the twin-barracks continuously supply them with fresh loads. For several nights the men will have to push the heavy carts from the camp to crematorium and back. During the day there is deadly silence around the barracks for penal detention, but at night the turning wheels speak of the secret of the vaults.*

*The naked bodies, thrown in disorderly fashion along and across the carts, take their ride. The pale moonlight is their only shroud. In this light their dead faces look even more dead and the pallor of their limbs is intensified. The men to the carts are not driven on by anybody, but they quicken their steps by their own impulse. One cart, unevenly loaded and clumsily handled, sways and turns over. For a moment the corpses seem to come to life once more; they jump one over the other, roll down the road, wave their hands, turn on their sides, and then again lie motionless, their faces turned skywards or towards the ground.*

*The moon in the west throws a feeble light on the scene; it is already mingled with the light of the dawn, but the greenish tinge [zieloność] on*

*the dead bodies does not disappear: it seems rather to become more distinct now in the new light of day.*

*One of the grave-diggers, holding a corpse in his arms to throw it back on the cart, gazes into the greenish-grey face for a while. Years ago he saw similar faces: a deserted trench with corpses of soldiers. The same ghostly pallor. It is the discolouration of poison gas.*

*The secret of the vaults, from which nobody ever returned, filters through with the dawn of a new day. The secret of 800 people killed is revealed.*

*To the short 'tune,' beginning with the steps on the gravel, the words are found. They killed them with gas."*

The essential merit of this account is to have identified Block 11 as the place of the alleged event, as Pilecki had already done, for whom the alleged gassing had taken place in a "room" (!) of this Block. Previously, the event was said to have taken place in an undefined "bunker" or "concrete shelter." But it also contains several obvious mistakes. First of all, the punishment cells existed only in Block 11, whereas N. Zarembina's account also places them in Block 10, which was next to it. As a matter of fact, Block 11 did not differ from all the other blocks of the camp in "the number of small windows at the bottom" – they were all built that way. The 300 sick inmates who were "transferred to the next block," *i.e.* Block 11, did not come from the block next door. The nearest hospital block was No. 21, which was across from Block 12. Moreover, if we follow the official texts, many detainees came from Block 28, which was situated in a different part of the camp, near the northern corner. Finally, the description of the corpses is proof that the story is completely invented:<sup>51</sup>

*"Years ago he saw similar faces: a deserted trench with corpses of soldiers. The same ghostly bluish corpses. This hallmark of poison gases."*

As mentioned in Chapter I, both sides employed aggressive chemicals of various types during the First World War. Each one had a different way of action, and only a naive and uninformed novelist could describe them all as having one identical effect, such as the "greenish tinge" and the "ghostly bluish" discoloration of the corpses. Actually, as we shall see in Subsection IV.6.5., the effect on skin color of a poisoning by hydrogen cyanide is completely different. All this is not surprising: Natalia Zarembina did not know that the alleged first gassing would be said to involve Zyklon B. As

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<sup>51</sup> Polish text: "O takich samych widmowych sinych ciałach. To piętno gazów trujących."

we shall see in the following chapter, that was decided on only after the war. Therefore Zarembina's Polish text uses the term "gazami," in the plural (Zarembina 1943, p. 18), embracing in this way both the toxic chemicals of WWI and the story of the testing of poison gases on the detainees.

## 2. Post-War Sources

### 2.1. Testimonies of 1945

In February and March of 1945, the Soviet Commission of Investigation at Auschwitz questioned, among many others, the former detainee Zbigniew Baranowskij,<sup>52</sup> who declared:<sup>53</sup>

*"On 15 August 1941, 400 Soviet prisoners of war were brought in before my eyes and taken into the prison at Block 11. The same day, 1000 inmates from the [camp] hospital who had tuberculosis were also taken there. All of them – the POWs and the sick – were asphyxiated with gases."*

On 8 May 1945, at Buchenwald, the Czech national Josef Vacek, a former detainee at Auschwitz under ID 15514, declared (Jäckel/Rohwer, p. 167):

*"In early September, Soviet prisoners of war were brought into the camp, more than 500 of them. In addition to those, SS Physician Jungen selected 196 sick inmates, and they were gassed together with the Russian POWs in the gas chamber of Block 11. We paramedics who accompanied them there were told that this was only a temporary housing measure until they would depart with a [certain] train. The following night, when everyone was asleep and nobody was allowed to leave the block, I was called up together with other 30 paramedics, and for three nights in a row we took the gassed corpses to the crematorium."*

On 17 May 1945, Walter Petzold, a German ex-detainee at Auschwitz (ID 10212), drew up a six-page report at Mauthausen titled "Report about the first gassing of prisoners in German concentration camps," in which he

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<sup>52</sup> The name is transliterated from Russian. A Zbigniew Baranowski had the Registration Number 20904 (Piper/Strzelecka, Vol. 1, pp. 336, 349), hence he had been deported to Auschwitz on 15 September 1941 (Czech 1990, p. 89). If this is the same person, Zbigniew Baranowski or Baranowskij was a false witness.

<sup>53</sup> "Conclusion of the Investigation into the Misdeeds of the Germano-Fascists in the Concentration Camp of Auschwitz/Oświęcim" by Military Deputy Prosecutor Machimow, 19 March 1945. GARF, 7021-108, pp. 29f.

claimed to be the only witness of the first gassing. We quote the essential sections:<sup>54</sup>

*“The foundations for the first gassing of inmates carried out in German concentration camps were laid in Auschwitz Concentration Camp in July of 1941 during a general disinfection implemented with Cyklon ‘B,’ a blue gas [Blaugas<sup>55</sup>] supplied by the Hamburg firm of Tesch & Stape-now [sic]. This firm delegated a number of specialists, because the application of this poison required official clearance, and those involved had to possess an official poison license. The rules were such that the rooms to be disinfected had to be air-tight. The duration had to be at least 72 hours; even after the 48-hour ventilation period they could only be entered with a gas mask.*

*The experience gained during this large-scale disinfection at Auschwitz formed the basis for the start of the industrialized murders that were implemented later that year in all German concentration camps. In the early stages of this general disinfection, SS units were acquainted with the poison substance to be used and trained by the employees of the supplier. The experience gained in this way would be put to use for the first time for the extermination of people on 9 October 1941.*

*As early as 3 days before the planned extermination of people, a general unrest spread through the camp on account of the permanent threat of death, caused by the removal of all prisoners in the camp prison, located in Block 11, but no one knew what was to come. A clarification of this uncertainty occurred only a day later, on 7 October 1941, when a commando of detainees was formed and given the task of placing shutters on all windows of Block 11, making them gas-tight and taping them. In the morning of 9 October 1941, the paramedics of the in-*

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<sup>54</sup> “Bericht über die erste Vergasung von Gefangenen in deutschen Konzentrationslagern,” Staatsanwaltschaft beim LG Frankfurt (Main), Strafsache beim Schwurgericht Frankfurt (Main) gegen Baer und Andere wegen Mordes, Ref. 4 Js 444/59, Vol. 31, pp. 5309-5314.

<sup>55</sup> In various documents, the term “Blaugas” is an abbreviation for “Blausäuregas” meaning hydrogen-cyanide gas. These documents mention *Blaugas-Entwesungsanlage*, *Blaugaskammer*, *Blaugasentlausungsanlage* or simply *Blaugasanlage*. See the “Aufstellung über die im KL und KGL Auschwitz eingebauten Entwesungsanlagen, Bäder und Desinfektionsapparate” dated 30 July 1943. RGVA, 502-1-332, pp. 9f.; letter of the Central Construction Office to the Construction Office Concentration Camp and Agriculture with the subject “KL Auschwitz – Wäschereigebäude” dated 12 May 1944. RGVA, 502-1-347, p. 30; memo of the Central Construction Office dated 7 Dec. 1944. RGVA. 502-1-255 (illegible page number).

*mate hospital received the order to take some 220 sick persons to Block 11, who were listed in a paper put together by the political department of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp; they were to wear only trousers and a shirt.*

*Among the patients moved in this way, the rumor was spread that in the future Block 11 was also to be used as a back-up hospital. The move had to be finished within two hours. In the afternoon, a few more selected detainees from the camp were taken to the bunker. The death candidates were mainly detainees from intellectual circles, made up by all nations then present at Auschwitz, predominantly Poles.*

*At roll-call that same day, strict curfew was ordered for all detainees without exception from 20:00 hours, i.e. no detainee was allowed to leave his quarters after 20:00 hours. Apparently the aim was [for the SS] to stay among themselves, because it was the first test of this kind of extermination of people; depending on how things would go, it would be kept secret. This strict curfew prohibiting the detainees from leaving their quarters obviously increased the curiosity of the inmates to an unbearable extent. No one in the camp, except this author, had a precise knowledge of what was in store.*

*I had gained this knowledge by having secretly witnessed a conversation between my boss at the time, SS Unterscharführer Breitwieser, who was to carry out this first gassing and who had the necessary qualification, and the head of the political department, SS Unterscharführer Grabner. This conversation took place in the room next to the one in which I worked, and I was able to overhear it, because the walls were made up of sanded glass. The gist of the conversation was that at night, around 21:00 hours, some 1,000 Russian prisoners of war were to arrive who would all be housed in the bunker of Block 11 and gassed.*

*Furthermore, the conversation stated that all preparations for the annihilation of the unfortunate victims were finished and the gas to be used was available in the amount needed; when all prisoners would be lodged in the bunker [the gas] would be thrown in through specially placed window flaps. After introduction, only the connecting doors would have to be made air-tight in order to prevent the gas from escaping.*

*To give more precise information, the space available for the gassing has to be described in more detail. Block 11 had a total length of about 45 meters and a width of 15 meters. In the basement, where the gassing*

*was to be accomplished, there were 28 cells of normal size, some 3.50 by 2.00 meters. There were also some stand-up cells, an invention of the then commander of Auschwitz, SS Hauptsturmführer Fritsch [sic]. If the walls of those cells could speak, they would relate the story of the most cruel and most horrifying crime committed by the SS regime in power at that time.*

*Those 28 normal cells would see 1,078 dead inmates during the night of 9 to 10 October 1941. Around 21 hours on 9 October 1941, the first detachment of these unfortunate POWs was led through the gate of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp. All available SS noncoms who were on duty at the camp stood ready to receive this sad cortège. As soon as the first Russian prisoner came through the gate, there was a wild melee, which soon took on the character of a terrible orgy. Anyone available hit, stabbed, and slashed the prisoners, who were led on the double across the roll-call square to the bunker. I can still hear the sonorous voice of one of the prisoners in the first group, who supported a sick buddy and called out to him 'keep running, the German hits.'*

*I must add the remark that I was able to observe all those events from a well-chosen and safe hide-out. Under terrible beatings the 850 prisoners were herded into the bunker. By the time they had all been pushed in, 35 minutes had elapsed. By now, if we add the 220 patients from the hospital and the 8 inmates, 1,078 persons had been pressed into the narrow space of those 28 cells; even without any gas they would soon have died in those sealed rooms from suffocation. Once all preparations had been finished, gassing was implemented through the window lids already mentioned.*

*The gas containers were emptied by SS Unterscharführer Artur Breitwieser, born 10 August 1910, latest place of residence at Litzmannstadt, as well as by a second SS Unterscharführer, whose name I have unfortunately forgotten. Also present was the whole team running the Auschwitz Camp with SS Obersturmbannführer Rudolf Höss at its head, Hauptsturmführer Fritsch, Untersturmführer Grabner, and SS Hauptsturmführer Palitzsch, who all presented this cruel mass murder to other SS leaders as the latest achievement of German culture. When the cans had been emptied and the flaps and steel doors closed, the fate of 1,078 representatives of nearly all countries in Europe, among them 850 Russian POWs, was sealed, and they were dying a terrible death.*

*That was the beginning of a gigantic genocide which, according to my private notes that I was able to keep because of my position at Auschwitz, reached the enormous, almost unbelievable figure of at least 3.2 million people. Once their evil deed was done, the executioners drove off in their cars and celebrated this victory in the officers' mess in their own way.*

*Because of a lack of experience, the procedure at that time followed strictly the rules laid down by the supplier of Cyklon B. The corpses were left in the cellar of Block 11 for 72 hours, removal from the cellar started after 2 days of ventilation. For the removal during the sixth night after this crime, 30 inmate paramedics from the sickbay were brought in, whose task was to take the corpses out of the cellar and move them by cart to the crematorium. Prior to that, two SS dentists had to examine all corpses and break out any gold teeth. Later, with increasing routine, this practice was entrusted to 4 dentists specially delegated from the main sanitation office in Berlin, having the ranks of Unter- and Obersturmführer, to supervise and organize this desecration on a grand scale.*

*At that time, there was only one crematorium at Auschwitz, which was completely inadequate for this kind of mass cremation. For the first gassing, they had made the fatal mistake of gassing the prisoners with their clothes on so that it became necessary to undress the corpses in the prison yard, because they could not have been burned fully clothed and because the crematorium was already overtaxed by the continuous executions.*

*Also, the effect of blue gas on the human body was as yet not so well known as was the case later on, when enough experience had been acquired. Before the corpses would be burned, 72 hours had passed for the gassing and another 48 hours for the ventilation. I have had the opportunity to observe the corpses in the prison yard at such a moment. I shall never forget the sight. The nature of the corpses, on account of the terrible effect of the poison gas, was such that one could see only blue-black, bloated, and mushy flesh that had once belonged to human beings. Cyklon 'B' has the property of disintegrating a human body almost completely, of causing the human lung to burst and of turning the rest of the body into a jelly-like state. Only a person who has been present can imagine the sort of effort required to bring the corpses up from the cellar and take their clothes off [...].*



*Cremation of the corpses of the first murder by gas on 9 October at Auschwitz took three days and three nights, because of the low capacity of the crematorium then in use and the circumstances described.”*

The basic thesis of this report – that the experience gained during the first major disinfestation of the camp with Zyklon B had been the basis for the first homicidal gassing – has no basis in fact, as we have already seen in Chapter I. It is also at variance with Rudolf Höss’s account, because otherwise Eichmann’s laborious search for a gas suitable for the extermination would have made no sense. The witness furthermore states that the Auschwitz commandant himself was present at the first gassing, whereas Höss claims that Fritzscher ran the experiment while he himself was away. Absolutely unfounded, finally, is what the witness has to say with respect to the application of the official guidelines for disinfestations. The “Guidelines for the application of hydrogen cyanide (Zyklon) against pests (disinfestation),”<sup>56</sup> published by the Institute for Sanitation of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, specified an application time of up to 32 hours in the most adverse cases and a ventilation of *at least 20 hours*.

However, as I have explained in Chapter I, contrary to what the witness asserts, the lethal concentration of hydrogen cyanide for human beings was well known at the time, so that the alleged duration of 72 hours for the gassing is decidedly absurd.

The “blue-black” discoloration of the corpses, as I will show later, does not comport with hydrogen-cyanide poisoning. The alleged capability of this substance “of disintegrating a human body almost completely,” on the other hand, is pure fantasy. The alleged duration of the cremation of the 1,078 corpses – three days and three nights – is technically impossible, because at that time the crematorium of the Main Camp possessed only two furnaces of two muffles each,<sup>57</sup> which could theoretically incinerate 96 corpses in 24 hours at most. Hence, the cremation of the alleged victims would have taken more than eleven days. Finally, the statement regarding the total number of victims at Auschwitz – 3,200,000 – furnishes us with yet another element by which to assess the credibility of the witness.

Petzold’s declarations are important, however because framed in the real historical context, they make the absurdity of the story of the “first gassing” stand out even more.

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<sup>56</sup> NI-9912.

<sup>57</sup> The SS Construction Office at Auschwitz confirmed to the Topf Co. the order for the third double-muffle furnace on 3 October 1941. RGVA, 502-2-23, p. 269.

First of all, it should be emphasized that the Hamburg company which, according to Höss, had already carried out disinfestations with Zyklon B at Auschwitz, was the Tesch & Stabenow Company. In the course of preliminary investigations for the subsequent trial of this company's managers, the British questioned some of the "master disinfestors" ("*Durchgangsmeisters*") of this company who confirmed the fact: August Marcinkowski, Willy Max Rieck and Heinrich Pietsch carried out a disinfestation at Auschwitz in March 1940, using about 120 kg of Zyklon in the process, according to Marcinkowski. Rieck and Johannes Müller carried out another disinfestation at the beginning of summer 1941.<sup>58</sup>

At the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial, former SS *Unterscharführer* Arthur Breitwieser provided further essential clarifications on this subject during his testimony of 24 January 1964 (Fritz Bauer Institut, pp. 4854-4856):

*"I came to Auschwitz in May 1940 as an SS private. I was initially employed in the administration's typing pool. In August 1940, I came to the clothing chamber. There I had to clothe the prisoners. I also had to exchange their linen and clothing. For this purpose, I had a prisoner squad of 20 men who were employed in the chamber. In the summer of 1941, I had to take part in an instruction course in the use of Zyklon B. The shelters were to be disinfested with this gas. First the troop quarters, then the prisoners' camp were disinfested. The instruction was given by two civilians from the Tesch & Stabenow Company from Hamburg in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp. About 12 to 15 SS men and some medics took part in the course. Zyklon B came in small 1-kg cans. Initially, cardboard discs that were rough to the touch were soaked with the gas. Later, small cubes were soaked with the gas. These cubes felt like starch that housewives use to starch their shirts. Finally, a granular mass was used for Zyklon B. Before disinfesting lodgings, all windows and doors had to be closed. Then the SS men, who had to put on a gas mask with a special attachment, opened the Zyklon-B cans outside with an iron cutter, and put a rubber cap over the opened can. Then they went with the cans into the rooms to be disinfested, took off the rubber cap, and scattered the material in the room. Irritants were not added to this product. The gas worked very quickly. In the fall of*

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<sup>58</sup> TNA, WO 309-1603. Affidavit of A. Marcinkowski, Production No. 20, 24 October 1945. Summary of evidence of Rieck Willy Max, Production No. 19, 22 October 1945. Summary of examination of Pietsch Heinrich, Production No. 15, 13 October 1945. Affidavit of Johannes Müller, Production No. 21, 24 October 1945.

*1941, a small house was prepared near the German Outfitting Works (DAW) within the Outer Guard Perimeter, where garments were to be disinfested. There, the garments of Russian prisoners of war were initially disinfested. My task was to carry out this disinfestation. The clothes were hung up in the house by prisoners, and I then had to throw the gas into the rooms. In each case, a second SS man helped me. I was always present during these disinfestations, while the second SS man was always a different one. The clothes usually remained hanging in the disinfestation room overnight, and the doors and windows were opened in the morning, the rooms aired out, and the clothes taken out again.”*

The fact that the “first gassing,” according to Czech’s narration, was not planned and carried out by Breitwieser (or by any other SS man adequately instructed by the Tesch & Stabenow Company in the use of Zyklon B), but was carried out by untrained SS men<sup>59</sup> in the crude manner criticized even by F. Piper as quoted in the Introduction (“the fact that far more prisoners and prisoners of war were killed than would have been necessary in an experiment, that as many as 28 cells were used, and that no effort was made to vary the numbers of prisoners in the cells or the dosage of gas applied”: see p. 21) but above all the fact that basement rooms were used which were extremely difficult to ventilate, all this is further proof that this was simply black propaganda.

On a date prior to 10 June 1945, the British interrogated a certain Major Zamoyski. The witness had been arrested by the German wartime authorities in Lublin on 7 March 1941, and he was subsequently interned at Auschwitz, where he remained until November 1941, when he was transferred to the Dachau Camp. During his interrogation, Zamoyski stated:<sup>60</sup>

*“There was a gas chamber in the camp, and during October – November, 1941, I was made to help remove 470 (four hundred and seventy) bodies from this chamber to the crematorium. They were all Poles who had been removed from the invalids’ block, where they had been taken owing to injuries received in the camp. They had been kept on starvation rations and finally destroyed as they were [of] no further use to the Reich.*

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<sup>59</sup> This is not a marginal aspect. If an unauthorized SS man had handled Zyklon B and accidentally caused his own death or that of other SS men, criminal responsibility would have fallen on the camp leader and the camp commandant.

<sup>60</sup> TNA, WO 311-24. Secret. Parco Hotel, Naples. Statement of: – Major ZAMOYSKI 1st Lancers (Tank) Polish base.

*I saw the Poles leaving the sanatorium each carrying a towel, as if going for a wash. They went to the bath room, which was in fact a gas chamber, and after they had passed through it I had to transport the bodies on trailers to the crematorium. These were large motor vehicle trailers, and it took 15 -20 of us to pull them along, I then had to assist in the unloading of the bodies at the crematorium.*

*At the end of November 1941, about 11 o'clock at night, I was looking through the wire and saw a batch of 500 Russian prisoners of war running naked to the Punishment Block of the Police Section. I knew they were Russians because they were screaming terribly, and shouting in Russian, 'We are being beaten.' On the following morning I saw hundreds of bodies being taken from the Punishment Block (which was a gas chamber). I knew they had been gassed as the SS guards were wearing gas masks, and I saw them waving them about trying to get rid of the fumes. I was told by prisoners who had to remove the bodies that they were so tightly packed they were found dead in a standing position. Furthermore, the bodies had been counted and there were 500 of them."*

The confused witness picked up on various black-propaganda themes circulating about Auschwitz: "a gas chamber" presumably already existed at the camp in October-November 1941, which he identified as the "Punishment Block" and that resembled or was passed off by the SS as a "bath room," so that the victims went there "carrying a towel, as if going for a wash." In that facility, first 470 Poles were gassed, and then, "at the end of November 1941," in another instance "500 Russian prisoners of war" were gassed – and this is said to have been the "first gassing" of which orthodox Holocaust literature speaks!

In 1945, a booklet by a certain "O. Augustyn" (in fact Augustyn Manowski) was published in Krakow bearing the translated title *Behind the Walls of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp*. It contains the following passage (Augustyn, p. 15):

*"In Block 11, the Germans experimented on Soviet prisoners with gassing people. For the first time in the history of the camp, more than 500 Soviet prisoners were gassed in its famous basements, as well as an equal number of patients from the camp hospital. Their corpses were taken away by inmates in vehicles over several successive nights. A terrible fear reigned, heightened by the screeching of the nighttime wheels of the transporters of the dead. The chimney of the crematorium even strained from exertion, and choked with smoke."*

## 2.2. Polish Trial Witnesses (1945-1947)

In 1946, Investigating Judge Jan Sehn published a report on his investigation of the Auschwitz Camp, which he had commenced already in April of 1945, which contains the passage already quoted in Chapter I. The report became the basis for the indictment in the trial against Rudolf Höss (Warsaw Trial from 11-29 March 1947), and the passage in question appears *verbatim* in the indictment.<sup>61</sup> This text also became part of the verdict of that trial (2 April 1947), with only the opening words being changed:<sup>62</sup>

*“Basing themselves on the principle that the use of poison gas was the most efficient means for mass extermination of persons from other races, like Jews and Gypsies, or of other nationalities, like Poles and Czechs, the Germans tested this method of murder for the first time in the summer of 1941 in the bunkers of Block No. XI.”*

A few months later, the indictment in the trial against the camp garrison of Auschwitz (the Krakow Trial from 25 November to 16 December 1947) dealt with this alleged event in two lines, but with a change of the date from summer to autumn:<sup>63</sup>

*“The first gassing tests were run in the autumn of 1941 in the bunkers of Block 11 on some 600 prisoners of war and 250 sick persons.”*

During the preparation of the trial against Höss and during the procedures in court, various persons testified on the subject of the first homicidal gassing at Auschwitz. On 11 June 1945, Michał Kula – deported to Auschwitz on 14 August 1940, and registered under ID 2718 – was questioned by Jan Sehn and declared:<sup>64</sup>

*“According to my information, the first gassing took place during the night of 14-15 and the day of 15 of August 1941 in the bunkers of Block 11. I remember that very clearly because it coincided with the first anniversary of my arrival at the camp and because the first Russian prisoners of war were then gassed. In the evening of 14 August the paramedics took 250 sick inmates from the hospital blocks to Block 11. Then, into that block were herded several hundred Russian prisoners who – as we were told when they arrived at the camp – were political*

<sup>61</sup> AGK, NTN, 104, Höss Trial, Vol. 22, p. 84.

<sup>62</sup> AGK, NTN, 114a, Höss Trial, Vol. 31, p. 41.

<sup>63</sup> GARF, 7021-108-39, p. 37.

<sup>64</sup> Deposition of Michał Kula, 11 June 1945. APMO, sygn. Dpr.-Hd/2, Höss Trial, Vol. 2, pp. 97f.

*commissars. Both the sick inmates and the Russian POWs were lodged in the bunker of Block 11.*

*The little windows of those bunkers were covered with fine earth to make them air-tight. An SS man, a Blockführer, whose name I do not know but who was called 'Tom Mix' by the detainees threw the gas into the bunkers through the door to the corridor. After that, the door was closed. On 15 August, around 4 p.m., Palitzsch walked across the roll-call yard directly to Block 11 with a gas mask. Because it was the Feast of the Assumption, we had the afternoon off and could thus observe the scene which I will now describe. Mietek Borek and Waclav Ruski, two assistants at Bunker 11, told me that Palitzsch put on his gas mask, opened the door of the bunkers, and discovered that the people inside were still alive.*

*Actually, they moved around only on all fours and were very weak, but they were still alive. So, Tom Mix was called and he threw in the contents of another can of gas. The bunkers were reopened only in the evening of 16 August 1941. None of those who had entered was still alive. The paramedics from the hospital blocks took the gassed into the yard where they were undressed, loaded on carts, and taken away in the direction of Brzezinka [Birkenau].*

*I spent the night in Block 21, in the practice of the dentist Janusz Kulczbara. From there, I was able to observe the transportation of the corpses very well. The cart broke down below the window of the practice, the corpses fell on the ground, and I then saw that they had a greenish color.*

*The paramedics told me that the corpses were gluey and that the skin came off; in many cases they had chewed-up fingers and mangled throats. From that it is obvious that these people had died a horrible death. The succeeding gassings already took place in the [mortuary] chamber of Crematorium I. The man in charge of the gassings in that crematorium was Hössler. [...] The corpses of the sick inmates and of the Russians gassed in August of 1941 in the bunkers of Block 11, as I have already stated, were not cremated in the crematorium but taken away towards Brzezinka where they were buried.”*

The declarations of the witness on the subject of the first gassing were the specific topic of another interrogation, also dated 11 June 1945, which is, however, a mere abstract of the declaration cited above.<sup>65</sup>

On 15 March 1947, Kula declared the following before the tribunal:<sup>66</sup>

*“In 1941 the shootings, the executions began. In July of 1941, at 5:30 in the morning, Russian prisoners of war arrived. They were assembled in front of the kitchen, 50 of them were killed behind the kitchen; the 60 who remained alive were taken to Block 11 on Saturday. That is where the first gassing took place. Also lodged in Block 11 were 260 patients from the hospital; the paramedics had taken them there on Saturday night – after removing their bandages, most of them had abscesses – and put them in with the others in the basement.*

*On Sunday, in the afternoon, when all the detainees were free from work and were thus sitting on the ground exposing their bones and their wounds to the sun, Section Leader Palitzsch walked across the roll-call yard towards Bunker 11 with a gas mask. Another SS man was with him, tall and blond, whom the detainees called ‘the strangler.’ A few minutes later they came back quickly carrying with them two cans. The cans were larger than [the case of] the gas mask, of the same color. With the two cans they ran towards Block 11. The detainees were pulled out of that block and shut up in the gas chamber. The gas chamber was opened on Monday. As some people were still alive, they were gassed again. The paramedics took the corpses to Brzezinka to be buried, because the crematorium could not handle the cremation.”*

This testimony contains a number of contradictions with respect to the deposition made two years earlier. First of all, the event takes place in July of 1941, rather than on 14 August, and in the afternoon rather than in the evening. The day of the week, a Sunday, is furthermore in disagreement with the date of 14 August 1941, which was a Thursday. The victims, who were originally 250 patients and “several hundred Russian prisoners,” have become 260 patients and 60 Russian prisoners. Palitzsch’s assistant whom the detainees used to call “Tom Mix” has now become “the strangler.” Very significant is the use by the witness of the expression “gas chamber” to designate the basement of Block 11, which was subdivided into multiple cells and a corridor.

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<sup>65</sup> Deposition of Michał Kula, 11 June 1945. AGK, NTN, 93, Höss Trial, Vol. 11, pp. 98-101.

<sup>66</sup> AGK, NTN, 107, Höss Trial, Vol. 25, pp. 480f.

A few months later, at the trial of the Auschwitz camp garrison, Kula told his story again, still placing it in July of 1941 (“w lipcu 1941”), but this time there were 200 patients:<sup>67</sup>

*“Instead, 200 detainees were selected from the sickbay blocks, their bandages were removed and they were taken to Block 11, i.e. into the bunker. The remaining Russians were also taken there and they were all gassed together. This was the first test gassing at Auschwitz.”*

On 5 February 1946, the witness Zygmunt Smużewski, who had been deported to Auschwitz on 14 June 1940, stated the following in this regard:<sup>68</sup>

*“In September 1941, the first transport of Russian prisoners arrived, and at that time the first experiment of gassing prisoners was carried out. It took place in the bunker of Barracks 11 [w bunkrze 11 baraku]. On this occasion, 980 people were gassed, mostly Russian prisoners, but also other inmates – sick inmates and those unfit for work: throughout the following night, the corpses were transported to the crematorium in Old Auschwitz [w Starym Oświęcimiu].”*

During a later interrogation on 29 May 1946, the witness merely stated:<sup>69</sup>

*“Hössler worked on the killing of people at the gassing plant [gazowni]. Approximately 10,000 people were murdered there every day. Aumeier held the position of camp leader. He also worked at the gassing plant.”*

The witness Jan Krokowski, who had been deported to Auschwitz on 14 June 1940, made his deposition on 17 July 1946:<sup>70</sup>

*“I was an eyewitness one night in the autumn of 1941 when near Block 24, in which I was housed at the time, several hundred Russian inmates were herded towards Block 11. That they were Russians I could gather from the Russian words they uttered while they were pushed and beaten by the SS. The following day, I learned that 600 Russian POWs and 400 sick Poles had been gassed the night before in the basement of Block 11; at first they had used too little gas, and many were still alive when the chamber was opened, so that the dose was increased, and they were all killed in this way. As far as I know, that was the only gassing in Block 11.”*

<sup>67</sup> AGK, NTN, 162, Krakow Trial, pp. 45f.

<sup>68</sup> Deposition of Zygmunt Smużewski, 5 Feb. 1946. AGK, NTN, 135, Krakow Trial (Vol. 53), pp. 7f.

<sup>69</sup> AGK, NTN 135, Krakow Trial (Vol. 53), p. 14.

<sup>70</sup> Deposition of Jan Krokowski. APMO, Dpr.-Hd/4, Höss Trial, Vol. 4, p. 21.



The deposition by Józef Koczorowski, given on 6 September 1946, is even more laconic:<sup>71</sup>

*“I wish to state that the first gassing at Auschwitz occurred in the cellars of Block 11. I think it was in October of 1941. At that time, some 600 Russian prisoners of war and about 200 Tbc-patients from the sickbay were gassed.”*

On 7 September 1946, the witness Ludwik Rajewski, deported to Auschwitz on 22 September 1940, (ID 4217) declared somewhat laconically, when speaking of the Russian prisoners deported to Auschwitz:<sup>72</sup>

*“They came to Auschwitz in the autumn of 1941 and were killed there over a period of some five months in late 1941 and early 1942. The first lot were killed over three days in the gravel pit<sup>[73]</sup> near the Blockführerstube (block elder’s room) of the Main Camp. Another 600 were gassed in October of 1941 in the basements of Block 11.”*

The witness Roman Taul, deported to Auschwitz on 24 June 1940 (ID 1108), stated on 10 September 1946:<sup>74</sup>

*“I remember that later in 1941, in August I think, Grabner told his staff after a meeting with Höss that a transport of Soviet commissars had arrived which would have to be gassed. That was the first action of this kind on the grounds of Auschwitz; in conformity with this announcement, they were led into the basement of Block 11. At that time, several hundred patients selected for this purpose at the camp sickbay were gassed as well besides this group of Russians. In his capacity as camp physician, Dr. Schwela was in charge of the event.”*

The witness Feliks Myłyk, who was deported to Auschwitz on 14 June 1940, and who worked in the political department of the camp, declared on 21 September 1946:<sup>75</sup>

*“In early autumn of 1941 the first transport of Russian prisoners of war arrived at Auschwitz. All were officers, about 600 of them. They were all pushed into Block 11 – at that time Block 13, according to the old numbering system – and were gassed there, together with a certain number of patients selected in the inmate sickbay. The corpses of those*

<sup>71</sup> Deposition of Józef Koczorowski. APMO, Dpr.-Hd/4, Höss Trial, Vol. 4, p. 34.

<sup>72</sup> Deposition of Ludwik Rajewski. APMO, Dpr.-Hd/4, Höss Trial, Vol. 4, p. 56.

<sup>73</sup> The term “*Kiesgrupie*” used here stands for the German “*Kiesgrube*” (gravel pit).

<sup>74</sup> Deposition of Roman Taul, 10 Sept. 1946. APMO, Dpr.-Hd/4, Höss Trial, Vol. 4a, p. 99.

<sup>75</sup> Deposition of Feliks Myłyk. APMO, Dpr.-Hd/4, Höss Trial, Vol. 4a, pp. 127f.

*gassed were taken to the crematorium on trucks during the night and were burned there.”*

In the course of the Warsaw Trial, other witnesses besides Kula testified on the subject of this study. Ludwik Rajewski was examined at the second day of the trial and stated (12 March 1947):<sup>76</sup>

*“From October 1941, inmates began to flow into Auschwitz – Soviet prisoners.”*

They were recorded in a card file, and were divided into three groups.

*“Group A – these were the fanaticken Komunisten [sic], fanatical communists; about 1,500 of them were chosen, and these were partly shot by Unterscharführer Seidler, and about 500 were gassed – this was the first gassing experiment in Block 11. Group B – these were the harmless ones, and Group C – those fit for labor.”*

Czesław Głowacki, who was deported to Auschwitz on 22 September 1940 and received the registration number 4661, was interrogated on 14 March 1947 (fourth session) and stated:<sup>77</sup>

*“I remember 1941, when Soviet prisoners were gassed in Block No. 11. [...]*

*I remember exactly the first gassing experiment in Block 11. Bunkers were set up in the basement, hermetically sealed with sandbags. One hundred – this is the number I remember – Soviet prisoners, who had arrived at the camp with the first transport, were pushed into these bunkers. A bar was attached to the door, which locked it. When the prisoners were pushed into these chambers, Kler [Klehr], who was an SS-man paramedic in the camp area, arrived and poured out two cans of gas, and closed the chamber. There were these Soviet prisoners in there.*

*Presiding Judge: How many could there have been?*

*Witness: There were six bunkers, into which about one hundred people were pushed. These bunkers were not reopened until three days later, and we, that is, our Kommando, were called to remove the corpses. I therefore witnessed the opening of the bunkers by Kler, and we had to transport the corpses of the gassed persons to the courtyard of Block*

<sup>76</sup> Deposition of Ludwik Rajewski. Höss Trial, 2nd Session, 12 March 1947. United Nations Archives. Security Microfilm Program, 1988, Reel No. 62, pp. 166-168.

<sup>77</sup> Deposition of Czesław Głowacki. Höss Trial, 4th Session, 14 March 1947, *ibid.*, pp. 337f.

11, and from there they were taken to the crematorium, which was in Auschwitz I [Oświęcim I], at the Kommandantur.

Presiding Judge: Was the crematorium operational at that time?

Witness: Yes, in this crematorium there were two furnaces, where the corpses were cremated. There were 20 corpses in each furnaces.<sup>[78]</sup>

Presiding Judge: Did the witness serve in this crematorium?

Witness: No, I served in the Kommando in charge of taking away the corpses, and I was in the crematorium to unload them, so I saw this.”

And later:<sup>79</sup>

“Attorney Umbreit: Please witness, may the witness describe to us the course of the first gassing of these 100 unfortunate prisoners of war. The defendant Höss said that he knows nothing about this gassing, that it was an arbitrary act of one of his closest associates, Fritsch [Fritzsch]. Does the witness recall whether this took place in the presence of the witness [i.e., whether he was an eyewitness]; can the witness recall whether the defendant was there?

Witness: At the actual gassing action, the defendant was not there. But we knew, because we knew that there had to be a gassing, that he often went by car to Fritsch, went down to the bunkers and examined the manner of the hermetic sealing, that everything was ready.”

During the fourth session of the trial, Jan Krokowski also took the stand:<sup>80</sup>

“I am also familiar with the circumstance of the first gassing, which took place on the camp grounds in the fall of 1941. At that time, I was working at the officers’ club at the station. We were lodged in Block 44 over there. One day we were informed that there would be a total Lagersperre [camp lockdown]. In that case no one was allowed to leave the Block under penalty of death. In the evening hours we did not go to sleep, because we were waiting for what was to happen. We opened the gate; the roll-call square was illuminated by floodlights, and a group of people were being pushed through the main gate. As it turned out, they were Russian prisoners. This was confirmed by the fact that, while they were being led – running and getting beaten – at the end one prisoner was being dragged this way, one comrade dragged him by a leg, another

<sup>78</sup> Hence ten corpses per muffle – an absurd claim.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 355.

<sup>80</sup> Deposition of Jan Krokowski. Höss Trial, 4th Session, 14 March 1947, *ibid.*, pp. 383f.

*er by an arm. Then we heard the words: ‘Pamiłujšia i pažalejsia.’<sup>81]</sup> From this we deduced that these were Russian prisoners. As the comrade nurses working in the hospital told us, and we saw it for ourselves, a gassing experiment was carried out. 60<sup>[82]</sup> Soviet prisoners and 400 Poles were the victims. As the comrade nurses later told us, a small dose of gas was used. After two hours, when the doors of the Block were opened, it appeared that many of the prisoners were half stunned but still alive. An [additional] dose of gas was added – naturally with a more-effective result. The scenes that unfolded in the Block-11 chamber [w komorze bloku 11] were, it seems, frightening. One German told a comrade that inmates were found strangling each other to shorten their torments. Of course, the primary blame lay with the camp commandant, who saw this and witnessed all these terrible things all the time.”*

Adam Kuryłowicz (deported to Auschwitz on 24 July 1941) made a brief statement during the sixth session of the trial (17 March 1947):<sup>83</sup>

*“It was in August 1941 when for the first time hospital patients were designated for the first gassing experiment in Block 11 – about 700 inmates, the majority of whom were Soviet army officers – Norbert Barlicki was also chosen with me by the SS doctor for the first gassing.”*

During the eighth trial session (19 March 1947), two witnesses spoke about the first gassing. The first was Czesław Rychlik (deported to Auschwitz on the night from the 5th to the 6th of January 1941):<sup>84</sup>

*“The first gassing took place during my stay in Block 11. When the Kommandos assigned for this purpose took away the corpses of the gassed persons after 3 days, it turned out – and many of us saw it – that they had gnawed off their fingers and gnawed off their ears. This testifies to the terrible, long struggle without air after inefficient gassing as a result of the still-primitive installation of this gas chamber [gazkammer] in Block 11.”*

The other witness who testified that day was Jan Chlebowski (deported to Auschwitz on 16 June 1940):<sup>85</sup>

*“If it comes to the gassing of the Soviet soldiers in Block 11 and 200 Polish officers, for the first time the so-called Bedruhe [Betruhe],*

<sup>81</sup> пожалуйста (pozhaluysta) and помилуйше (pomiluyshe): please have mercy.

<sup>82</sup> In the deposition of 17 July 1946, the number is 600; it is probably a typo here.

<sup>83</sup> Deposition of Adam Kuryłowicz. Höss Trial, 6th Session, 17 March 1947, *ibid.*, p. 593.

<sup>84</sup> Deposition of Czesław Rychlik. Höss Trial, 8th Session, 19 March 1947, *ibid.*, p. 796.

<sup>85</sup> Deposition of Jan Chlebowski, *ibid.*, p. 864.

*which means quiet night, was adopted. On Sunday afternoon, we were ordered to rest, we had to go to bed under [threat of] penalty, because then the Polish officers and the Soviet soldiers [later] gassed were taken to Block 11.”*

The witness also testified during the Eleventh Session of the Krakow Trial (5 December 1947), where he elaborated more on this:<sup>86</sup>

*“I return to the Russian transports. In September, or perhaps early October 1941, a transport of Russian officers arrived, and they were locked up in the bunker of Block XI, and were gassed there. From the hospital, about 200 Poles [who were to be gassed] were brought along with these Russians. I then worked for a few days as a painter together with others, and with my own eyes I saw written in blood the names of Soviet soldiers, written in blood the names of Poles, who were then gassed there. From that moment, on Sundays, in order to pretend that the prisoners were being taken care of, the so-called ‘Bettruhe’ was established at the camp. On Sunday afternoons, so as not to arouse any doubts or suspicions whatsoever that people were being killed in Block XI, poisoned and taken away, the so-called ‘quiet time’ in bed was instituted, and we could not move. We had to stay in bed during that Sunday, and then all the block leaders together with the Kapo took out the poisoned people in Block XI.”*

First the claimed victims were Soviet soldiers and 200 Polish officers, then they were Russian officers and 200 Polish patients. The narrative contains a digression regarding alleged subsequent gassing events (the gassings took place only on Sundays!), but at the end the witness returns to the “first gassing”: it too was carried out on a Sunday, and the corpses were taken away the same day.

Władysław Tondos, deported to Auschwitz on 29 July 1941 (ID 18871), described the alleged event during the Ninth Session of the Höss Trial (20 March 1947):<sup>87</sup>

*“Before returning to the phenol injections, I would like to elaborate this is sequence – because it was in the fall of 1941, in September to be precise – the question of the first gassings at the camp. At the time of the so-called medical commission, 280 patients were selected at the hospi-*

<sup>86</sup> Deposition of Jan Chlebowski. Krakow Trial, 11th Session, 5 Dec. 1947. AGK, NTN, 164, Vol. 81, pp. 200f.

<sup>87</sup> Deposition of Władysław Tondos. Höss Trial, 9th Session, 20 March 1947, UN Archives. Security Microfilm Program, 1988, Reel No. 62, p. 988.

*tal. We had to carry them on our shoulders in front of the hospital because they could not walk on their own. There [their] numbers were checked, and we were ordered to take them to Block 11, the Penal Company's block – I emphasize that the Penal Company had been transferred to another block a couple of days earlier. We took the sick down to the bunker. They were taken over by us in the corridor, and in the bunker they were placed on the concrete, in layers, one on top of the other, like wood in the forest. Then, after midday, we saw from [our] block that about 600 Soviet prisoners were being taken to Block 11. Towards the evening, we saw SS men with gas masks sneaking around the bunker. After 4 or 5 days, at about 11 o'clock in the evening, we were taken, 30 of us prisoners – I was one of them – from the hospital, were lined up in groups of five, and taken to Block 11. We knew that gas had been used. We did not know whether they [the SS] would want to have witnesses. We only knew that we were going to work. After going down to Block 11, we pulled the corpses of these gassed people out of the bunkers into the courtyard and stripped them. The corpses were slimy, full of putrid subcutaneous gases. I remember a small room where about 60 Russian prisoners were lying. The impression was that they all lay as if asleep, as if death had caught them in their sleep. Two had their caps on their noses. One was lying across another. When we undressed these prisoners and also the Russian prisoners, we pondered why they had been gassed.*

*We pondered that, since they were prisoners, they were people who had been gassed [because of this]. We were able to pull the documents of a dozen prisoners out of their pockets. Then we looked at these documents. It turned out that they were kolkhoz workers, blacksmiths, drivers – in other words, ordinary people, not commissars, as we expected, because at first we thought that maybe they would have gassed the commissars.*

*Then we loaded the corpses onto the platform of a truck, more-or-less 70 of them, and at night, we took them quietly through the camp to the crematorium, so that the camp would not know about it. In 1941, there was still only one crematorium in the Main Camp in Auschwitz. This crematorium was too small, so a new electric crematorium [nowe elektryczne krematorium] was built.”*

No electric crematorium was ever built at Auschwitz.

During the Ninth Trial Session, Władysław Fejkiel testified, who had been deported to Auschwitz on 8 October 1940. Here is his exchange with the presiding judge on this topic:<sup>88</sup>

*Presiding Judge: The witness now speaks of the crematorium, did the witness see a gassing action [there]?*

*Witness: No, I only saw the gassing in Block 11.*

*Presiding Judge: Can the witness recount from his own direct observation how it took place?*

*Witness: Sick people and Soviet prisoners were crowded together [there]. Then they were crammed in, so that everyone stood upright. The door was bolted. It was a bunker cell.*

*Presiding Judge: What was its capacity, more or less?*

*Witness: I was in the bunker in 1943. The capacity was 40 people.*

*Presiding Judge: No more than that?*

*Witness: No.*

*Presiding Judge: How many people were crammed into this cell at that time, more or less?*

*Witness: As many as possible. In total, about 1,000. Then Cyklon B was thrown into it.*

*Presiding Judge: After how long?*

*Witness: Immediately. I know this because the SS then talked about it.*

*Presiding Judge: How long did the gassing last?*

*Witness: They were kept there for a few days, then the bunker was opened.*

*Presiding Judge: Does the witness know this?*

*Witness: Yes, it was the first experiment.*

*Presiding Judge: Can the witness provide any observations as to how the bunker was opened, what the situation was like inside the bunker?*

*Witness: The people were blue-green [sino-zieleni], foaming at the mouth. I saw these people because we were ordered to undress them and take them to the crematorium.*

*Presiding Judge: The witness was instructed to undress these corpses. Where were they taken?*

*Witness: They were cremated.*

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<sup>88</sup> Deposition of Władysław Fejkiel, *ibid.*, pp. 1028f.

*Presiding Judge: In the open air?*

*Witness: It seems that it was in our crematorium.”*

The witness Ludwik Banach, deported to Auschwitz on 29 August 1941, who had been part of the Penal Company, gave his account on 18 July 1947:<sup>89</sup>

*“On that same day, all those who occupied Block 11 were moved to Block 5a, which was still under construction. We stayed there three days, continuing to go to work. During that time, I was taken to Block 11 together with several tens of colleagues in order to clean the block of corpses. This work was supervised by Oberscharführer Gehring – who resembles the man in the photograph shown to me. [...]*

*After we had entered the block, we saw a horrible sight. There were some 800 Russians in fatigue uniforms without insignia, but some of them had ID tags; I don't read Russian, but among us there were some who did. They told me that from the tags one could see that they were officers – I remember ranks of lieutenant colonel etc. When we entered, we were given gas masks. The corpses were bluish [sine], one could see traces of blood around their mouths and noses. On the floor there was something like broken lumps of sugar, also something green the shape and size of sweets. Lastly, on the floor there were tin cans or cartons with 'Gas' written on them. We carried the corpses into the yard, and then other detainees took them to the crematorium on carts. That was on 15 September 1941. After we had cleaned the block, the whole Penal Company moved back into that same block. I wish to add that among the 800 gassed there were 120 political detainees.”*

Even this description is purely fanciful. Leaving aside the color of the corpses, no pest-control specialist would have left the cans of Zyklon B on display on the floor, much less the loose gypsum pellets (which were soaked with liquid hydrogen cyanide).

On 19 September 1947, the witness Bogdan Gliński, deported to Auschwitz on 5 April 1941 (ID 11958), declared:<sup>90</sup>

*“When I was sick and was staying in the Detainee Sickbay in Block 21, I saw one night that a group of several hundred Russian prisoners were led into the yard of Block 11, which was on the other side of the street –*

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<sup>89</sup> Deposition of Ludwik Banach, 18 July 1947. APMO, sygn. Drp.ZOd/55, Krakow Trial, Vol. 55, pp. 101f.

<sup>90</sup> Deposition of Bogdan Gliński, 19 Sept. 1947. AGK, NTN, 135, Krakow Trial, Vol. 54, pp. 210f.



*some 600, if I remember correctly. While they were being moved in there, one could hear the screams, because the SS escorting them were hitting them with whips and kicking them. I distinctly saw – and other fellow inmates of mine did, too – that the SS escort was equipped with gas masks, which aroused our curiosity strongly.*

*Among the SS men I saw Grabner, Plagge, and Lachmann. I could see clearly that they, too, were beating these men. From the way they behaved – I had never seen Grabner and Lachmann beating anyone in the camp – and also from the fact that they were screaming, I concluded that they had been drinking and were acting under the influence of alcohol.*

*After the evening roll-call, before nightfall, all the detainee-sickbay blocks were emptied of the sick and the convalescent, and those selected by a doctor were led, or, in the case of those who could not walk, were carried, into the block and down into the cells. I know this from what I was told by fellow inmates who carried those patients. The convalescents were also taken downstairs. Two days earlier, this block had been completely cleared, and the detainees had been moved to another block. I didn't know anything, and I didn't know the purpose of it all.*

*Three days after that night, in which the Russian prisoners had been taken there, Section Leader Palitzsch brought in a group of inmates from the hospital block – paramedics and doctors, more than 20 persons. I, too, was in that group. We entered the bunker and carried out the corpses of the Russian prisoners of war and those of the patients or convalescents selected from the sickbay. The corpses of the Russians still had their uniforms on. Those of the detainees were in their underwear because they had been taken there in their underwear, which at the time had aroused our attention.*

*In the cells there were piles of corpses, and a stifling odor irritating the eyes reigned in the basement. From the appearance of the corpses – eyes shut or wide open – we concluded that all these people had been gassed. Even though the bunker had been ventilated for three days, gas vapors were still present. On the floor there were documents of various kinds written in Russian, photographs, banknotes, and Russian coins.”*

As to a series of basement cells with partially screened windows and a single interior access door, one may rightly wonder to what extent any natural ventilation by draft would have been possible, and how long it would have required to clear the atmosphere.

### 2.3. Witnesses outside of Court (1945-1949)

In a book of memoirs published in 1948, Zenon Rozanski, deported to Auschwitz on 7 January 1941 (ID 8214), who had been a member of the Auschwitz Penal Company, described in minute detail the first gassing at Auschwitz as follows (Rozanski, pp. 40-44):

*“One day in September after we had finished for the day, we were led back not to our usual Block 11, but to the attic of Block 5, still under construction. The block elder told us that disinfection of the former block was the reason for this incomprehensible move.*

*Because the 5th Block was within the confines of the general camp, this move pleased us greatly. Here, we were safe from ‘surprises’ by the capos, and besides, the absence of a wall enabled our comrades from the general camp to pass us some food. After a uneventful roll-call, the capos, elders, and group leaders formed a separation, setting off our block from the general camp, but many comrades did receive appreciable amounts of ‘food waste.’ [...] The next day, we heard that one had pushed a whole transport of Russian POWs into Block 11. We had differing points of view regarding this. Some had it that the Penal Company would be dissolved entirely; others had learned from a ‘reliable source’ that the Russians would be moved in with us; others still made a face as if to say that they knew a lot but were not in a position to tell. One thing was certain: we would not go back into the ‘11’ that day.*

*And in the morning of the third day before we moved out for work, Wacek, who had room duty for that day, selected those of us who were well-built and who could still be called strong. I, too, found myself among the twenty selected. The company moved out for the day; we stayed behind in the block.*

*No one knew what all this was about. Wacek came to see us after half an hour.*

*‘Listen everybody! You are still in the camp and you will get ‘seconds’ at meal-time. But you will have to do a ‘special job.’ You will also be able to pocket this or that, but you will have to keep your mouths shut. Ok?’*

*No one had actually understood what he was talking about, but still we all shouted: ‘Jawohl!’*

*For the next 15 minutes we stood in line waiting for Gerlach. He inspected us, nodded, and addressed himself to us in vague terms, as Wacek had done.*

*'In a few minutes you will have to do 'confidential work.' If anyone lets out even one word about what you will get to see' – he moved his hand across his neck in an unmistakable gesture – 'kaputt! A pile of ash in the crematorium! There will be enough food... Got it?'*

*We had not gotten it at all. Only one thing was clear: the work we had to do could make us lose our heads. This, everyone understood. In any case, the prospect of sufficient food was a consolation. That was ok.*

*A few minutes later we moved by twos into the yard of Block 11. In the yard, we could see the deputy camp commander Fritsch, SS Obersturmführer Mayer, the section leader of the camp Hauptscharführer Palitzsch, the camp physician SS Obersturmführer Entreß [sic], SS Oberscharführer Clair, SS Unterscharführer Stark, Assistant Inspector Woznica from the Political Department, and our two block leaders Gerlach and Edelhardt.*

*Wacek gave the customary order 'caps off!' and announced to Mayer: 'Twenty inmates ready for work!'*

*Mayer exchanged a few words with the detail head and then said something to Mayer.*

*The room elder shouted 'Jawohl!' and turned to us: 'Each of you will get a gas mask. Make sure it fits, so that one does not have to call the others to carry you out. Ok?'*

*'Jawohl!'*

*Near the wall, there was a big box full of gas masks. They were handed to us quickly.*

*Three minutes later we were ready with our gas masks on. Clair checked to see if each of us had the proper fit.*

*Things went so fast that we had no time to think. We just stared at each other without understanding anything.*

*The 'uniformed ones' also put on their gas masks. Wacek and the bunker capo ran back and forth to the bunker a few times, talked to Palitzsch, who shook his head negatively; the two of them came back, and so they moved around.*

*Finally all SS men drew their pistols. In Palitzsch's hand the chromium-plated barrel of a submachine gun sparkled threateningly.*

*'They want to shoot us!' was our first thought. Our throats tightened, our eye-lids burned. The air inside the mask is thick and respiration is hard.*

*Instinctively, we move closer together. Somebody tries to rip off his mask. He gets hit in the neck with a pistol-butt and falls to the ground. The seconds are ticking away slowly.*

*They won't shoot! Not yet...*

*Maybe we are not to be shot at all?*

*This new thought calms me, I look around. The SS men have their guns at the ready, but they don't shoot.*

*Palitzsch waves to Wacek.*

*'All right! Let's move!'*

*The room elder comes running toward us.*

*'Don't be scared, come along!'* He turns in the direction of the block. We follow him on the double, followed by Palitzsch, Stark, and some other SS man. I am at the back of the group. The barrel of some 'pop-gun' touches my back. I move ahead and follow Wacek directly.

*He moves down the stairs. For a second we all stop... bunker!... But the SS men give us no time to think. Someone at the back of the group is already lying on the floor.*

*'Move! Move!'*

*Wacek stops in front of the door to the bunker. He has an axe in his right hand. He passes it to the left and takes a key from his pocket with his right hand.*

*Clearly, he cannot find the key-hole, it takes a few seconds. From the back one can hear Palitzsch's voice: 'Get on with it!'*

*At last he has gotten it right. The key turns in the lock. Wacek seizes the doorknob. I hold my breath, I pass my tongue over my parched lips. What will there be?*

*Wacek comes back. He holds the axe with his right hand once again. What does that mean?*

*Why the axe?*

*Why is he scared?*

*He grabs the doorknob once again, this time with his left. With his right hand he holds up the axe, as if preparing a blow.*

*I feel cold and suddenly I feel scared. But it is a different kind of fear from what I felt before. I am not afraid for myself, no, I panic seeing this door. My heart thumps, I can feel each beat against the rubber of the mask.*

*Wacek turns the knob while taking a step back and yanks the door open. The door opens and at the same time I feel that the stubbles of hair on my head stand on end.*

*One meter in front of me there are people standing! Pressed together, somehow horribly twisted, their eyes bulging out, scratched, covered with blood, immobile...*

*The ones who had been leaning on the door, strangely stiff, fall towards us and hit the hard concrete floor with their faces right in front of our feet. Corpses... corpses standing tall and stiff. They fill the whole corridor of the bunker. They are so tightly pressed together that they cannot fall down.*

*For a moment, I feel like vomiting.*

*Wacek's voice calls me back to life:*

*'That's it!' he calls out to Palitzsch through his mask and drops the axe on the floor.*

*'Ok! Take them out!'*

*Now I can think clearly again and I understand it all.*

*The corpses are wearing Red Army uniforms. It is surely the transport we talked about yesterday while working. They have all been herded into the bunker and gassed. That's what our gas masks were for, now we know!*

*Wacek seizes the first corpse under the arms and passes it on to us.*

*'So that's it!' I say to myself. 'our job is to move the gassed out of the bunker.'*

*'Get in line!' Wacek shouts once more, 'form a chain!'*

*'The chain' was the standard way of unloading bricks from a freight car, but I never thought, while I was doing it, that one could 'unload' people in the same way.*

*We worked late into the night.*

*Once the bunker had been emptied, there were still the dead to be stripped naked and the clothing to be put aside properly. The next day, it went into the 'clothing depot' and increased the stock there.*

*We counted 1,473 Russian uniforms and more than 190 sets of camp clothing. They belonged to the patients from the sickbay, whom SS Obersturmführer Entreß had designated as 'unfit for work' and who were gassed together with the Russian POWs at this 'opportunity.' [...]*

*When the 'work' was done, the twenty of us were given a 50-liter pail full of soup, and each one got half a loaf of bread.*

*The pail went back to the camp nearly full.*

*That was the first time gas was used at Auschwitz to liquidate detainees."*

In a book published in Czechoslovakia in 1945, republished in 1957 and translated into German a year later, one can find the following account by Jiří Beranowský, deported to Auschwitz on 1 March 1941<sup>91</sup> (Kraus/Kulka, p. 158):

*"Around September we heard rumors that Soviet prisoners of war – political officers – had been secretly moved into the camp. A test killing with gas was run on them in bunker 11. This could be ascertained by other detainees who found the names of some of these prisoners on the walls of their cells."*

Bruno Baum was a major figure in the secret resistance movement at Auschwitz, who was aware of all the things going on in the camp, because he had organized a network to pass information to the outside. According to his book published in 1949, Baum did not know anything about the first homicidal gassing in the bunker of Block 11. He says only that

*"at one time, 12,000 Russian POWs were exterminated within three days, except for a few who had been hidden by comrades. One day we heard that a test had been run in the crematorium of the Main Camp to kill detainees with gas. Soon this message was confirmed."* (Baum, p. 11)

The story of the extermination of 12,000 Soviet prisoners of war was a blatant untruth.

## 2.4. Witness Testimony at the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial

This trial took place from 20 December 1963 to 20 August 1965, but the preliminary investigations had already started upon the arrest of the first of the 22 defendants, Wilhelm Boger, which occurred on 8 October 1958. This trial was undoubtedly a major event, but certainly not a historiographical one, because the witnesses testified 21-23 years after the alleged "first gassing." This alleged event had already been turned into a "historical fact"

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<sup>91</sup> Allegedly he received ID No. 20940, but this number was assigned on 15 September 1941. Beranowský's number was in fact 10904, assigned on 5 March 1941.

by Danuta Czech in 1959, in No. 2 of the Auschwitz Museum's Polish-language periodical *Zeszyty Oświęcimski*. Polish-speaking witnesses could read about this alleged event in Czech's article whose title translates to "Chronicle of the Events of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Concentration Camp" ("*Kalendarz wydarzeń w obozie koncentracyjnym Oświęcim-Brzezinka (1940-1941)*," and German-speaking witnesses could read about it in No. 2 of the German edition of this periodical, *Hefte von Auschwitz*, where the same article appeared a year later with the headline "*Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau (1940-1941)*."

The publication of the "*Kalendarium*" in German was completed in 1964 (*Hefte von Auschwitz*, Nr. 8), so that it could be (and was) used by the Frankfurt Tribunal (and by the witnesses) as a sort of "historical" play-book, and this fact does not seem accidental, all-the-more-so since there were and are few German-language readers in Poland who would have had an interest in a German-language edition of that nature.

The witness Erwin Bartel was deported to Auschwitz on 5 June 1941, and received the ID 17044. After three months, he was assigned to the political department of the camp, where he became the subordinate of SS *Unterscharführer* Hans Stark und SS *Untersturmführer* Maximilian Grabner, head of the political department. More on these two persons will be said in the next section.

In 1959, during the preparation of the Frankfurt Auschwitz trial, where Hans Stark appeared as a defendant, Erwin Bartel made the following deposition:<sup>92</sup>

*"I remember the first gassing of people at Auschwitz, which took place sometime in September/October 1941. Stark at that time came into the office and told the other SS men that there would be a celebration. We could hear all this because we were working in the next room; there was no door [closure] between the rooms. About 2-3 days later, Stark and Grabner arrived; Stark remained in the office, sweating, and said 'thank God we have finished.' We gathered from the conversation that some 350 people had been gassed in Block 11. They were Russian POWs and patients from the inmate hospital of the Main Camp. I know only that aside from Stark, Grabner was present at this gassing as well. Palitzsch was there too, I cannot remember anyone else."*

Erwin Bartel had already been questioned by Jan Sehn on 27 August 1947, during the preparation of the trial against the camp garrison as witness for

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<sup>92</sup> ZStL, IV 402 AR-Z 37/58, p. 618.

the prosecution against Maximilian Grabner, but at the time he was still unaware of the story of the first gassing. On this occasion, he testified as follows:<sup>93</sup>

*“In the spring of 1942, Stark and Palitsch [sic], while carrying out an execution by shooting in the courtyard of Block 11, shot a prisoner by mistake who should not have been shot, caused by the similarity of surnames. After returning from Block 11, Stark became angry and scolded Palitsch, and then concurred with Grabner, who ordered the shooting of this [correct] prisoner, which Stark then carried out in Block 11. Grabner participated in the shootings of prisoners in the Kiesgrube [gravel pit] or in Block 11. I personally witnessed him watching the killing of inmates with gas in the gas chamber of Crematorium I. He watched the gassing process from above, through the Cyklon openings. He was the mainspring and driving force behind all the terrorist actions perpetrated at the Auschwitz Camp, and all the extermination actions carried out on the grounds of this camp. Among other things, some transports of people, mentally ill people, were gassed in 1942 in this camp, who had been transported to Auschwitz from various institutions for the mentally ill.”*

The witness misinterpreted the story of the alleged dispatch of a transport of invalids and chronically sick persons – supposedly selected by Dr. Schumann – to the Sonnenstein Euthanasia Center, asserting the opposite: transports of mentally ill persons were directed from the euthanasia center to Auschwitz to be killed there!

Here it is necessary to anticipate that Bartel also testified during the 82nd Session of the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial (27 August 1964), where he stated:<sup>94</sup>

*“Witness Erwin Bartel [P]: And now so specifically. I experienced my first period of gassing in the year [19]41, at the time when they were testing whether Zyklon B or something of this type was capable of killing. The test took place on Block 11 in the basement.*

<sup>93</sup> AGK, NTN, 135, Krakow Trial, Vol. 53, pp. 237-244, here p. 241. Cf. Section V.1.

<sup>94</sup> Fritz Bauer Institut, pp. 15952-15957, 15960. Subsequent page numbers in the text from there unless stated otherwise. In the trial minutes, the witnesses' statements are also reported in their own language, in this case Polish. The sworn interpreter sometimes discussed things with the witnesses without translating what they said, and sometimes merely summarized their statements. For this reason, I add the translation of the Polish statements, marked with a [P]. See the source cited for the original Polish text.



Interpreter Kapkajew: *I experienced the first gassing in 1941, when they wanted to test whether gassings could be carried out with Zyklon B or something similar. This gassing took place in the basement of Block 11.*

Presiding Judge: *And what did you experience there?*

Interpreter Kapkajew [P]: *What did you experience in the process?*

Witness Erwin Bartel [P]: *So, Stark was very excited and edgy, because with Grabner's aide, I mean he as Grabner's aide was going around, checking the preparations and then he himself, Grabner, he, Lachmann, witnessed this gassing..*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *Stark was very excited at that time, because as Grabner's assistant, he was supposed to supervise all the preparations. And then Grabner, Stark and Lachmann took part in the gassing.*

Witness Erwin Bartel [P]: *That he did and that he witnessed, fact: he came back with a mask.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *That it was so, that he was a witness to this gassing, is indicated by the fact that he came back with a gas mask.*

Witness Erwin Bartel [P]: *And he said that he took, I mean, 'that I'm about to do the first act.'*

Interpreter Kapkajew [P]: *That he has accomplished it?*

Witness Erwin Bartel [P]: *That no, that the first act has been done.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *And he said that the first gassing took place. He said, Stark said that the first gassing had just taken place.*

Presiding Judge: *Yes. Now, during your earlier interrogation you said: 'This attempt was carried out by Rapportführer Palitzsch.'*

Witness Erwin Bartel [P]: *Yes.*

Presiding Judge: *'As far as I can remember, Stark and Lachmann were also involved, as well as Grabner and some members of the camp leadership. About 200 prisoners of war were killed during this experiment.'* Why do you make a difference when you say that the experiment was carried out by Palitzsch, and then you say that Stark, Lachmann and Grabner were involved?

Interpreter Kapkajew [P]: *In your testimony, you said that...*

Witness Erwin Bartel [interrupts] [P]: *I understand, may I respond?*

Interpreter Kapkajew [P]: *That experiment was carried out by Palitzsch, and they [the others] participated, why do you make that distinction?*

Witness Erwin Bartel [P]: *I'm sorry, I'm so sorry! I know Palitzsch is dead, Grabner is dead. The defendant is in the courtroom. In view of that, I apologize to the court and would like to say that they participated under the direction there [of Palitzsch].*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *I know that among these people Palitzsch and Grabner are no longer alive. And only Stark is here. So I beg your pardon, I would like to say that they participated in the gassing under the direction of Palitzsch.*

Presiding Judge: *Yes. And who, for example, threw this poison gas into the bunker at that time?*

Interpreter Kapkajew [P]: *And who, for example, was throwing in gas back then?*

Witness Erwin Bartel [P]: *[Pause] I am unable to answer at this time.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *I am unable to answer.*

Witness Erwin Bartel [P]: *I wouldn't, I wouldn't, let's say compromise one of them, the truth [is] I am unable to.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *I'm unable to. I don't want to [conjure up] an image somehow. I am unable to answer.*

Presiding Judge: *Today you no longer know who did that. I assume you never knew, because you were probably not there?*

Witness Erwin Bartel: *No.*

Presiding Judge: *Yes, well. What makes you think that on this occasion Palitzsch was in charge of this experiment, and let's say, the others were only involved?*

Interpreter Kapkajew [P]: *So on what do you base this claim that this experiment was carried out by Palitzsch and that the others were merely present at it?*

Witness Erwin Bartel [P]: *The extermination was in the hands of the camp leadership. He was the first, let's say, lowest rank as far as the camp leadership was concerned.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *The extermination in the camp was the responsibility of the camp management, and he was the lowest of the camp management.*

Presiding Judge: *Palitzsch?*

Witness Erwin Bartel [P]: *Yes.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *Palitzsch.*

Witness Erwin Bartel [P]: As Rapportführer.

Interpreter Kapkajew: As Rapportführer.

Witness Erwin Bartel [P]: Thus, if orders came in, it is known that Höss, as camp leader, the commandant, never carried out these things.

Interpreter Kapkajew [P]: By himself.

Witness Erwin Bartel [P]: The same would not be performed by Fritzsich himself, but he may have been present.

Interpreter Kapkajew: So when the orders came, it was clear that it was not the camp commandant who was going to do it, nor Fritzsich, although he could be present.

Witness Erwin Bartel [P]: So there had to be people carrying this out.

Interpreter Kapkajew: So there had to have been people who had done that...

Presiding Judge: Yes. Well, that was the first gassing, and this first gassing was followed by other gassings. Did they also take place in Block 11?

Interpreter Kapkajew [P]: It was, I mean, the first gassing...

Witness Erwin Bartel [interrupts] [P]: Yes.´

Interpreter Kapkajew [P]: Later others followed, did they also take place on Block 11?

Witness Erwin Bartel [P]: No, the next ones took place in Crematorium I at Auschwitz.

Interpreter Kapkajew: Any – hence the later ones: No. The later gassings already took place in Crematorium I in Auschwitz.

Presiding Judge: Yes. The later gassings in Crematorium I.”

At first, the witness knew nothing about the “first gassing”: if in fact this experiment was directed by Grabner, while Palitzsch and Fritzsich were only material executors in his wake, Bartel would have made this accusation against Grabner at the Krakow Trial of the camp garrison as well, since he was testifying against him.

According to Bartel, the victims were first 350 Soviet prisoners of war and sick inmates, then only 200 Soviet prisoners of war, without mentioning any sick inmates. But at least Bartel declared that only one presumed gassing occurred in Block 11; the following gassings were allegedly carried out in the Main Camp’s crematorium.

The issue of the first gassing was also raised during the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial. The indictment states in this regard (p. 15200):

*“The first gassing of this kind was conducted on 8 October 1941, in the basement of Block 11 mainly with Soviet prisoners of war, who had been transferred to Auschwitz to be liquidated.”*

This claim was primarily based on statements by the witness Petzold, which the indictment gave ample space (pp. 15200-15205), and which primarily aimed at Arthur Breitwieser, then a *Rottenführer* and SS disinfectant who had been in charge of Zyklon-B disinfestations of camp buildings and of the detainees’ clothes in the disinfestation chamber at the so-called Kanada I section. The indictment by Prosecutor Georg Friedrich Vogel against Breitwieser (as stated during the 159th session on 17 May 1965; p. 33446) was based essentially on Petzold’s interrogation of 26 March 1964:

*“The participation of the defendant Breitwieser in this [gassing] procedure was mainly described by the former detainee Walter Petzold, who was interrogated on 26 March 1964.”*

Breitwieser firmly rejected the accusations, claiming that he had never participated in homicidal gassings and that he knew nothing of the first gassing (p. 4857):

*“I do not know that people were gassed in Block 11 in October 1941.”*

The validity of the charges against him will be investigated later.

Other witnesses also talked about the first gassing. Wojciech Barcz, deported to Auschwitz on 10 June 1940 (ID 754) testified on 9 April 1964 (34th trial session):<sup>95</sup>

*“Raabe, representing joint plaintiffs: When did the first gassings at Auschwitz start?”*

*Barcz: Sometime in late 1941. They took place in the cellar of Block 11. We paramedics had to take patients into this block. The night before we heard how Russian prisoners of war were being herded along the blocks. They screamed, because they were being beaten, and we recognized them by their language. I remember the scream: ‘Have pity on me!’ That was after the evening roll call.*

*Raabe: How did you know that these people were later gassed?”*

*Barcz: Three days later, the inmate personnel of the sickbay had to go into Block 11 in order to empty out the basement area. I have myself seen that a large number of people had been pressed into a very small space. Plainly, they had tried to reach the openings, hoping for fresh*

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<sup>95</sup> Langbein, p. 70. I could not locate this testimony in the documentation of the Fritz Bauer Institut.

*air. We could enter the rooms only three days later. Prior to that ventilation was necessary. There were several hundred dead. The corpses were taken by means of carts to an area where mass graves had been prepared by inmates the day before.”*

At the time of the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial, the witness gave the following account during a German radio broadcast:<sup>96</sup>

*“The first gassing was carried out in the autumn of 1941, a few months after the beginning of the war against the Soviet Union. One day, we paramedics were ordered to take seriously ill patients into the bunker cells of Block 11. They were locked up in those cells. Around 10 o’clock at night, we heard how a large group was being herded towards the bunker by the SS. We heard screams in Russian language, orders by the SS, and beatings.*

*Three days later we paramedics were ordered, in the middle of the night, to go to Block 11. We had to move the corpses out of the bunker cells. That way, we were able to see that they had simply gassed in those cells a large number of Russian inmates together with the patients we had taken there.*

*The sight we faced when the doors were opened was something like opening a tightly packed suitcase. The corpses fell towards us. I think that there were perhaps 60 corpses in one of those small cells, packed so tightly that even though they were dead they could not collapse. One could see that they had tried to get near the ventilation flap, through which, by the way, the gas had been thrown in. All the signs of a terrible agony were still visible.*

*We paramedics had to place the corpses on carts, by which they were moved out of the camp. There they were buried. We who had to do this work were convinced that they would kill us right away near the graves or that we would be assassinated later, in the usual way at Auschwitz, because we knew this secret. But nothing happened to us. Later on, too, I have often seen that with the SS you could never tell; there were always surprises and unexpected things.”*

Czesław Głowacki, deported to Auschwitz on 22 September 1940 (ID 4661), declared on 23 April 1964 (40th trial session; pp. 6502f.):

*“I experienced the first gassing in Block 11 in early 1942. Together with all the other physicians and nurses we were employed to carry the*

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<sup>96</sup> Wojciech Barcz, “Die erste Vergasung” in: Adler *et al.*, pp. 17f.

*corpses out of the bunkers of Block 11 after the gassing had taken place there. The corpses were loaded onto carts and brought to the crematorium. It was a macabre sight; we saw terrible scenes. The corpses had stiffened, some inmates had chewed up their fingers during their death struggle, others had tufts of hair in their fists, again others were tightly entangled. The gassed [inmates] had remained in the bunker for roughly two days. Therefore shreds of the corpses remained in our hands. The corpses had already started to decompose, since it was very hot. This gassing in Block 11 remained the only one to ever be performed in this block.”*

During the 44th trial session on 11 May 1964, Leon Czekalski, who had been detained at Auschwitz since 15 August 1940 (ID 2955), had the following exchange with Assisting Judge Hummerich (pp. 7049-7078):

*“Assisting Judge Hummerich: Then you described the first gassing in Block 11. From where did you see all this?”*

*Interpreter Kapkajew [P]: So besides that, you talked about the first gassing in Block 11, where did you see that from? This gassing at Block 11?*

*Witness Leon Czekalski [P]: It wasn't a secret, dear madam, it was the 3rd [of September], they brought us, and I could see from the block where we slept, because it was by the blockführerstube, how they led the way.*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: That was no secret. And how they were led away on 3rd September, I watched from our block where we slept.*

*Witness Leon Czekalski [P]: And they woke us up, because there was such a noise, and they led the way.*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: We woke up due to the noise.*

*Witness Leon Czekalski [P]: And we saw some Russian officers coming.*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: We watched as the Soviet officers were led past.*

*Witness Leon Czekalski [P]: And Block 11 had already been emptied 2, 3 days earlier.*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: Block 11, however, had already been emptied three or two days earlier.*

*Assisting Judge Hummerich: And what block were you living on at the time?*

*Interpreter Kapkajew [P]: And what block did you live in then?*

*Witness Leon Czekalski: W 24a*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: In Block 24a”*

Stanisław Kłodziński, deported to Auschwitz on 12 August 1941 (ID 20019), stated during the 46th trial session, on 15 May 1964 (pp. 8346f.):

*“Witness Stanisław Kłodziński [P]: At the beginning of September 1941, a large group of patients, mainly those suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis, were sent to Block 11, where the first test gassings of patients and Soviet POWs were carried out.*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: In September 1941, those seriously ill, primarily tuberculosis patients, and Soviet prisoners of war were selected and taken to Block 11, where the first experimental gassing took place.”*

Kłodziński, who had been a very-well-informed detainee about the events at Auschwitz and had sent numerous “Kassibers” (secret messages) to Teresa Lasocka-Estreicher in Kraków under the pseudonym “Stakło,” knew virtually nothing about the “first gassing.”

Władysław Fejkiel, deported to Auschwitz on 8 October 1940, stated the following during the 50th trial session on 29 May 1964 (pp. 9533-9535):

*“Prosecutor Vogel: I have another question in another context: Do you still remember the first gassing that was carried out in Auschwitz, in the fall of 1941 in Block 11? [...]*

*Witness Władysław Fejkiel: 1941. Yes, this was...*

*Interpreter Kapkajew [interrupts] [P]: Yes, first gassing.*

*Witness Władysław Fejkiel [P]: It was the first gassing...*

*Interpreter Kapkajew [interrupts] [P]: The first gassing in ‘41...*

*Witness Władysław Fejkiel [interrupts] [P]: They were prisoners of war.*

*Interpreter Kapkajew [P]: In the fall. – [German:] Yes, these were prisoners of war.*

*Witness Władysław Fejkiel [P]: Prisoners of war and about 200 patients with tuberculosis.*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: and about 200 tuberculosis patients.*

*Witness Władysław Fejkiel [P]: Poles and Germans.*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: Poles and Germans.*

*Prosecutor Vogel: These 200 sick prisoners were selected from the prisoner infirmary...*

*Witness Władysław Fejkiel [interrupts] [P]: selected*

Prosecutor Vogel [interrupts]: And gassed. Do you also have any idea how large the number of Russian prisoners of war was?

Interpreter Kapkajew [P]: Can you, more or less...

Witness Władysław Fejkiel [interrupts] [P]: About 700.

Interpreter Kapkajew: Some 700.

Witness Władysław Fejkiel: About, about. [...]

Prosecutor Vogel: Thank you.

Prosecutor Großmann: in total?

Prosecutor Vogel: No. 700 prisoners of war and 200 sick inmates.

Witness Władysław Fejkiel [P]: 200, or 150. [German:] — Yes, something like this.

Interpreter Kapkajew: Yes, so about 150 to 200 sick people added to that.”

It is worth remembering that the witness had stated during the Höss Trial that 1,000 sick inmates and Soviet prisoners had been gassed in one cell (!) of the bunker. At the time, six years after the alleged event, he did not know or remember how many were sick and how many were prisoners of war, but 23 years later he knew the respective numbers: 150-200 sick inmates and 700 prisoners of war, all in all 850-900 persons.

Stanisław Głowa, deported to Auschwitz on 12 August 1941 (ID 20017), stated during the 54th trial session on 11 June 1964 (pp. 10239f.):

“Witness Stanisław Głowa [P]: At the turn of ‘41 to ‘42 [there were] the events that were important to me. It was the first or maybe [subsequent] trial gassings in Block 11.

Interpreter Kapkajew: Yes, at the end of 1941 and the beginning of ‘42, one or two such cases occurred which made a particularly strong impression on me, and these were the first trial gassings in Block 11.

Witness Stanisław Głowa [P]: They were sick ‘Muslims,’ and some [among] them Soviet prisoners of war, numbering several hundred.

Interpreter Kapkajew: Some of them were sick “Muslims,’ and also Soviet prisoners of war. All together there were several hundred who were gassed.

Witness Stanisław Głowa [P]: I participated directly with a group of colleagues.

Interpreter Kapkajew: I took part in it directly with the group of my comrades.



Witness Stanisław Głowa [P]: While pulling out the bodies from the already ventilated bunker.

Interpreter Kapkajew: And that was because we had to get the bodies of these killed, gassed people out of the bunker, which was already ventilated.

Witness Stanisław Głowa [P]: The corpses were not lying down, but they were all standing, that's how compressed they were.

Interpreter Kapkajew: The corpses were not lying down; they were all standing up because they were so pressed together.

Witness Stanisław Głowa [P]: We were loading [them] on the carts.

Interpreter Kapkajew: We loaded them onto the carts.

Witness Stanisław Głowa [P]: And they transported them to the ditches dug at Birkenau.

Interpreter Kapkajew: And took them to the graves that had already been dug in Birkenau.”

Emil de Martini, deported to Auschwitz on 18 July 1940 (ID 1402), stated during the 51st trial session on 4 June 1964 (pp. 9707-9710, 9712):

“Prosecutor Kügler: Yes. Mr. Martini, were you able to make any observations when a gassing was carried out in Block 11?

Witness Emil de Martini: Yes, these were Russians. They were Russians, and that was, I think, ‘41 approximately. At that time, I was already a clerk in the infirmary, and after the evening roll call, 200 or however many sick people who were unable to walk had to be transferred... to the bunker of Block 11. And this was done by nurses who brought them on stretchers to Block 11. And the next day the rumor suddenly spread, the terrible news: ‘Block 11 is under gas.’ The Russians, these Russian soldiers, had been locked up in the bunkers, the sick people were crammed in as well, the windows, i.e. the air shafts, were filled up with earth, and then this Zyklon B was sprinkled in.

Prosecutor Kügler: Were you able to observe this yourself, or were you told about it?

Witness Emil de Martini [interrupts]: I was able to observe the following: First of all, the Russians going in. Of course, we didn't know yet what this was about. Then, in the evening, the sick inmates, also from Block 21 where I was a clerk initially, were taken away, were carried over, and then one became uncertain that something was happening that one could not explain. But at that time we had not yet thought of

gas; this was not yet known. That was the first gassing that was carried out on an experimental basis. And the next day, of course, several SS men came – and who was the camp leader then? I think the camp leader at that time was Fritzsch, if I'm not mistaken. And they came with gas masks, and then some prisoners came, were called in; they also had gas masks put on them, and then they had to go into the block.

Prosecutor Kügler: Was one of the defendants, whom you knew by name and as a person at that time, present?

Witness Emil de Martini: You mean at this gassing operation?

Prosecutor Kügler: At this gassing operation.

Witness Emil de Martini: No, I only knew – that is, what I remember, what I saw – the camp leader Fritzsch. [...] There were more SS people there, but I don't know anymore today who else was...

Prosecutor Kügler [interrupts]: You once said – if I may hold this against you – at the Special Commission during your interrogation – on sheet 4,283 of the files: 'I also saw Stark at the first gassing in Block 11. What role he played in the gassing, I do not know.'

Witness Emil de Martini: Yes, that may be true, insofar as the Political Department was always present during such actions.

Prosecutor Kügler: Can you still remember that today?

Witness Emil de Martini: Whether he was there at that time?

Prosecutor Kügler: Yes.

Witness Emil de Martini: If I admitted that at that time, he will probably have been there. But the people didn't do anything. [...] They stood around with gas masks on, and then two prisoners were sent ahead, they had to go in (...).

Defense Counsel Zarnack: Mr. Witness, can you give any figures concerning the first gassing of the Russians?

Witness Emil de Martini: Yes, numerically insofar as, at that time, there were perhaps 200, between 200 and 300 sick people. The Russians, of course, were not counted by me. But there was talk of several hundred or a total of a thousand who were locked up in these bunkers at that time."

Edward Pyś, deported to Auschwitz on 13 June 1940 (ID 379), stated during the 55th trial session on 12 June 1964 (pp. 10818-10822):

"Presiding Judge: You explained to us earlier that the two Unterscharführer Schmucker and Riegenhagen were not active in these gas-

sings, but were mainly designated as disinfectors with regard to the clothing. This gassing in the Old Crematorium, which you described to us earlier and which, if I am not mistaken, is supposed to have taken place in the second half of 1942, was that the first gassing that was ever carried out in Auschwitz, or had there already been gassings before that? [...]

Witness Edward Pys [P]: This was not the first gassing.

Interpreter Kapkajew: This was not the first gassing.

Presiding Judge: Not the first, but? What was the first gassing? Did you see any of this there?

Witness Edward Pys [P]: The first gassing was on Block 11.

Interpreter Kapkajew: The first gassing took place in Block 11.

Witness Edward Pys [P]: As I recall, in the fall of '41.

Interpreter Kapkajew: As far as I remember, that was in the fall of 1941.

Presiding Judge: Fall of 1941. And where?

Interpreter Kapkajew: In Block 11.

Presiding Judge: In Block 11. And who was gassed at that time?

Interpreter Kapkajew [P]: Who was gassed then?

Witness Edward Pys [P]: Several hundred [Soviet] prisoners of war were gassed then.

Interpreter Kapkajew: Several hundred Soviet prisoners of war were gassed at that time.

Witness Edward Pys [P]: And about 200 sick prisoners from the Krank-  
enbau [infirmary].

Interpreter Kapkajew: And about 200 prisoners, sick people from the infirmary.

Witness Edward Pys [P]: I know this because, first of all, it was impossible to hide this kind of action, and in the camp we were all excited about it.

Interpreter Kapkajew: I know because, first of all, such a fact could not be hidden in the camp. We got all excited about it.

Witness Edward Pys [P]: Secondly, in the evening of one day, then in the autumn of '41, I saw several SS men with gas masks coming out of Block 11. I recall then.

Interpreter Kapkajew: *And secondly, I know this because one evening – this particular evening when the gassing took place – I saw some SS men with gas masks leaving Block 11.*

Witness Edward Pys [P]: *I remember exactly, because it was a shock to us. I remember exactly that there was Doctor Entress, Camp Leader Fritzsch.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *I remember very clearly, because it had a shocking effect on us, that among them was Doctor Entress, Camp Leader Fritzsch.*

Witness Edward Pys: *And the 2nd Camp Leader Maier.*

Presiding Judge: *Yes. These men have you seen where?*

Interpreter Kapkajew [P]: *So where did you see these people? Coming out...*

Witness Edward Pys [interrupts] [P]: *Coming out of Block 11 with gas masks.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *I saw them coming out of Block 11 with the gas masks.*

Witness Edward Pys [P]: *I mean, the gas masks were obviously not on their faces, but in their hands.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *And of course they had not yet had the gas masks on their faces, but in their hands.*

Presiding Judge: *Yes.*

Witness Edward Pys [P]: *Also, a colleague, a personal friend of mine, was killed in that gassing.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *In addition, my personal friend was also killed during this gassing.*

Witness Edward Pys [P]: *He also came with me on the first transport. Grzyb, Zdzislaw.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *Who also arrived with me in the first transport. A man named Grzyb, Zdzislaw.*

Presiding Judge: *Yes. You did not witness the gassing itself?*

Witness Edward Pys: *No. ”*

This testimony is very general and does not provide any important details. Pyś dated the alleged event to the fall of 1941; according to him, Camp Physician Dr. Friedrich Entress, who arrived at Auschwitz only on 11 De-

cember 1941 (Lasik, p. 305), also took part in it, which means the alleged “first gassing” must have occurred after this date.

Bartosz Oziemkowski, deported to Auschwitz on 15 August 1941 (ID 22362), stated during the 56th trial session on 18 June 1964 (pp. 10907-10909):

*“Witness Bartosz Oziemkowski [P]: So, it was still in that period, at that time, there was the first gassing. The first gassing in Block 11, where there were several hundred Soviet POWs and 200 or 300, I think, Poles selected from the Krankenbau [infirmary], from the typhus and tuberculosis ward, among them my gymnasium professor was also gassed with this group. And I saw the ‘cleansing’ of the TB patients..*

*Interpreter Kapkajew [P]: One moment please. [German:] – During this time, I would like to emphasize, the first gassing took place in Block 11. During this gassing, several hundred Soviet prisoners of war were gassed, as well as about 200 sick people selected from the typhus and tuberculosis wards. Among them was a student councilor of mine.*

*Presiding Judge: When was that approximately?*

*Interpreter Kapkajew [P]: When was that more or less?*

*Witness Bartosz Oziemkowski [P]: It was probably, it was either the beginning of, it’s difficult to remember exactly, the exact dates, but I know it was either September or October.*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: It’s very difficult to give the exact date now and remember it. But I think it was September or early October.*

*Witness Bartosz Oziemkowski [P]: Yes.*

*Presiding Judge: Nineteen hundred?*

*Interpreter Kapkajew [P]: What year?*

*Witness Bartosz Oziemkowski: ‘41.*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: 1941.*

*Presiding Judge: Yes.*

*Witness Bartosz Oziemkowski [P]: So, moving on now to the person Klehr. In addition to, let’s say...*

*Interpreter Kapkajew [interrupts] [P]: Sir, you did not finish. You spoke of the fact that you saw the dead bodies being carried away.*

*Witness Bartosz Oziemkowski [P]: Yes, yes. Well, so I saw, right, the gassing itself and then, right, the clearing of the bunkers and the removal of the corpses.*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: I saw the gassing myself and then also...*

Witness Bartosz Oziemkowski [interrupts] [P]: *No, I didn't see the gassing itself.*

Interpreter Kapkajew [P]: *You said, I saw the gassing.*

Witness Bartosz Oziemkowski [P]: *No, I did not see the gassing itself. What I saw after the gassing were the corpses taken out, 'cleared' from the bunker, taken out of the bunker. And taken away, these corpses.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *I did not see the gassing itself. I only saw the emptying of the bunker, how the corpses were carried out of the bunker and taken away. And now to the person of Klehr.*

Witness Bartosz Oziemkowski [P]: *And now I'll turn to the person of Klehr. Sometime, I think, in the month of either October or November, I can't say exactly either, '41 of course.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *That was in October or November 1941. It is difficult for me to state it exactly."*

The witness was evidently confused. First he said he had seen the alleged gassing itself, then he denied it. He was also uncertain about the date, September, October or November. He stated that he had witnessed the removal of the gassed bodies from the Bunker, but did not add a word about it.

Friedrich Hirsch, deported to Auschwitz on 2 January 1942 (ID 25172), stated the following during the 75th trial session on 7 August 1964 (pp. 14416f.):

"Presiding Judge: *From conversations in the camp. [Pause] Do you know anything about gassings which had taken place on an experimental basis at first? That is, not in the crematoria, but beforehand?*

Witness Friedrich Hirsch: *Yes, I also know that only from hearsay.*

Presiding Judge: *Yes? And what do you know there from hearsay?*

Witness Friedrich Hirsch: *Well, that these prisoners – primarily Russians – were locked into a few holding cells in Bunker Block 11; that they were locked in naked; that they were filled up tightly, and then a can of Zyklon B was poured over them, and the bunker was closed again. That it was winter, and that they then froze to ice. And that they were hammered out with a pick.*

Presiding Judge: *And are you saying that you got that from hearsay?*

Witness Friedrich Hirsch: *Yes.*

Presiding Judge: *And do you know who arranged this and who was instrumental and responsible for it?*

Witness Friedrich Hirsch: *At that time [Fritsch] was camp leader.*

*Presiding Judge: [Fritzsich]. You once testified: 'I was told the following about this procedure: Boger had a cell of Bunker 11 sealed,' and they were so-and-so big. 'Boger had 20 to 30 inmates locked in this cell. In the midst of the inmates, he threw an opened can of cyclone gas and closed the door.'*"

Hirsch explicitly stated that he knew of the first gassing "only from hearsay," but his testimony is nevertheless important because it shows the inevitable variations of the related fable. It is worth noting that the witness dated the alleged event to the winter of 1941, hence close to the time when he was admitted to the camp (2 Jan. 1942), which means that this alleged "hearsay" related to an event that happened around the time of his arrival at the camp.

Alexey Lebedev (Lebedjew), deported to Auschwitz on 16 January 1943 (No. 88349), stated during the 95th trial session on 1 October 1964 (I omit the witness's Russian answers; pp. 19861-19869):

*"Interpreter Kapkajew: That was a professor of medicine. They were watching how they were gassed.*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: He worked in Block 20.*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: They saw how 600 or 700 Soviet prisoners of war were forcibly driven into underground bunkers on 13 September 1941.*

*Presiding Judge: On the 13th?*

*Interpreter Kapkajew [interrupts]: September.*

*Presiding Judge: September.*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: 1941.*

*Presiding Judge [interrupts]: '41, yes.*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: Were driven into the bunkers by force.*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: And I think, on top of that, a part of sick people, Poles probably.*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: When this man from Block 27 told me about this, I was already in the camp, and the blocks were two-storied.*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: I then said, 'How was it possible that from Block 27 you could see through Block 20 what was happening in the bunkers of Block 11?'*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: And I was informed that at that time the blocks were still single-storied, that they [the second levels] were added on later.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *So they said that in this experiment with Zyklon gas, Höss and Fritzsich or Förtsch – the deputy of Höss – participated.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *Palitzsch.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *Palitzsch, Stark were there.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *And other members of the Political Department.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *They did not mention any other names.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *They mentioned some other names, such as Baretzki or Dalezki, but I can't remember the exact names.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *But the first three, four names, I remember them well.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *They told us that, on the second day, when the doors were opened, some of the prisoners of war were still alive.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *And that allegedly Stark and Palitzsch threw in additional quantities of Zyklon.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *Later, the Polish Officer Rasiński was there when they cleared these bunkers.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *He told terrible things about it.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *That the people were packed together like herrings.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *When the door was opened, they simply fell apart (...).*

Presiding Judge: *Tell me, please, was the first gassing on 13 Sept. or on 3 Sept.?*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *In the camp there were two versions about it: one that it was on 13 September, and the second that it was on 3 September '41.*

Presiding Judge: *So you were told this.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *I personally always heard about 13 September."*

Lebedev arrived at Auschwitz about 16 months after the alleged event, so he was not an eyewitness to anything. He told a variant of the Kula version of the story, with his own modifications: The alleged gassing had taken place on 15 September 1941 (instead of 15 August), the doors of the Bunker were opened "on the second day" (instead of the same day) and "additional quantities of Zyklon" were thrown in, because some prisoners of war were still alive.



The witness did not explicitly say that this was the “first gassing,” but the context clearly points to it (the victims were Soviet POWs and sick inmates).

Michael Kruczek, deported to Auschwitz on 14 June 1940 (ID 218), stated the following during the 103rd trial session on 22 October 1964 (pp. 22185f.; 22189f.):

*“Presiding Judge: Mr. Witness, do you recall that in October 1941 people were gassed in the basement of Block 11?”*

*Witness Michael Kruczek: Yes. Probably they were Soviet prisoners of war. We were told that these were the political...*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: The political commissars.*

*Witness Michael Kruczek: Political commissars. One day before, I knew that we [+ would have] a gassing, probably by the colleagues. It had to be at night, because the next day after the gassing – that was probably Sunday – there was a midday roll call. We were standing on the roll-call square, and one of the SS men – one of the guards of Block 11, I don’t know his name, but I can remember him, he was a tall guy – went to Block 11 with the gas mask. We said, ‘It’s already after the gassing. He goes to verify.’ And I thought, and now I think, that he had to go along with that. That was one of the two guards – strażników [guards of] 11.*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: That was one of the guards in Block 11 (...).*

*Presiding Judge: Mr. Witness, we now want to stick with the defendant Breitwieser. The defendant Breitwieser is accused of having introduced poison gas Zyklon B into the basement rooms during the first gassing, which was carried out in the basement of Block 11, so that the people then died from it. Do you know if that is true, or do you know if it is not true? Or do you not know anything about it?*

*Witness Michael Kruczek: The defendant Breitwieser had the [+ responsibility for the] disinfection chamber. He often went with the gas mask, he gassed our clothes and prisoners’ linen and our rooms. But no, I don’t think so, because he was not – He’s like, he wasn’t meant to be that. On jak by miał inną rolę. [He’s like, he had a different role.]*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: After all, he was not meant for that. He had another task.*

*Witness Michael Kruczek: I on tego na pewno nie robił. [And he certainly wasn’t doing that.]*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *He certainly didn't do that.*

Witness Michael Kruczek: *Mnie się wydaję, że on nie był zdolny do tego. [I have the impression that he was capable of it.]*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *It seems to me that he would not be able to do that.*

Presiding Judge: *But positive knowledge you don't have of it? Positive knowledge whether he did it, whether he didn't do it?*

Witness Michael Kruczek: *No, no.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *Dokładne dane nie są [znane] [The exact details are not (known)]?*

Witness Michael Kruczek: *Nie są [znane] [They are not (known)]. – I didn't hear anything, I don't know whether he did that."*

It is clear that the witness knew little or nothing about the alleged event, which the presiding judge dated to October 1941, a date that Kruczek accepted without objection.

The already-mentioned Walter Petzold testified on 26 March 1964 (31st trial session) as follows (pp. 6303-6306, 6274):

*"The disinfection of the blocks began in the summer of 1941. I still remember those disinfections well, because the blocks were emptied and the prisoners were transferred from one block to another. In September or October 1941 the first gassing was prepared. In the bunker of Block 11 numerous preparations were made. The same day on which the first gassing took place the hospital was emptied of prisoners in the morning. The prisoners were transferred from the hospital to the bunker. They wore only shirts and underpants. They also received a towel. In the evening there was a strict curfew. At around nine or half past nine a group of about 850 prisoners of war was taken to the bunker. I personally watched them from the gable room of Block 27, which was the clothing store. Between Block 27 and the courtyard between Blocks 10 and 11 was Block 21, but that hadn't been raised yet. So from the gable window I could see the courtyard between Blocks 10 and 11 well. The camp road on which the prisoners of war were driven was lit. It was not dark. It may be that the lighting had been lowered. Above the door leading from the courtyard to Block 11 shone a light bulb. The prisoners of war were first taken to the courtyard between Blocks 10 and 11 and then through the stairs into Block 11. They were crowded into the bunker. Then the bunker was made airtight. In the bunker there*

were some trapdoors. They were basically the basement windows, fitted with perforated plates.

After the prisoners of war had been pushed into Block 11, the courtyard between Blocks 10 and 11 was almost empty.

I saw only two SS men who busied themselves with the gas. One of the SS men was Breitwieser, my former boss. [...]

Then there was the provision that the fumigated room had to be under the influence of the gas for 72 hours, and then some more time had to pass until the end of the ventilation.

If I remember correctly, the room was to remain under the influence of gas for 72 hours, and it could be ventilated only 24 hours later. This was what happened with the first gassing. I myself was in the courtyard after the bodies had been taken out of the bunker. The corpses gave off a pestilential stench. Dentists tore gold teeth out of the corpses. I had to stay in the yard, because I had to judge whether the clothes were still usable. But they were not. I stayed only briefly in the courtyard. Then I threw up right away.”

The witness elaborated further:

“In an attempt to strip the corpses it turned out that the flesh was gelatinous and remained attached to the clothes, so it was impossible to strip them.”

The former Auschwitz Inmate Eugeniusz Motz (ID 9589), who had served in the same *Kommando* as Petzold, was interrogated on 20 November 1964 (114th session). I have already quoted the initial part of his declaration about the first gassing in Chapter I. Motz continues as follows:<sup>97</sup>

“One or maybe two days later a transport of 200, 150 [sic] Soviet prisoners of war arrived. [...]

They were officers. We saw that. There was a curfew [Blocksperrre], and we saw it from the clothing depot. They were driven into Block 11. [...]

When they were inside Block 11, the curfew ceased and things went on normally. [...]

But on that same day the selection of inmates at the hospital began. [...]

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<sup>97</sup> Fritz Bauer Institut, pp. 25681-25690. Only the passages translated by the interpreter are quoted here.

*I personally saw Entress,<sup>[98]</sup> Scherpe and Klehr together with Bock, the Lagerälteste [camp eldest<sup>99]</sup> of the hospital, running from block to block. [...]*

*In this case I mean the blocks of the sick. [...]*

*I saw therefore that they were running from block to block and rounded up 100-150 sick inmates. Some of them were carried to Block 11, while the others went on their own. [...]*

*After these sick inmates had been selected from the individual hospital blocks, the following people came from Breitwieser to us at the clothing depot: Grabner, Lachmann, Dylewski, Stark, Hössler, Stiwitz and Palitzsch.*

*We at the clothing depot were all very scared, thinking that there would certainly be a selection among ourselves. [...]*

*But there was no selection among us. They came from Breitwieser. And Breitwieser had with him two or three cans. He also gave one or two cans to an SS man. And then they all went together to Block 11.”*

Then an exchange ensued with the presiding judge about the total number of cans brought along from the clothing depot (three to five). Then Motz continued:

*“About an hour went by. After an hour they returned. [...]*

*Perhaps even more than an hour. [...]*

*In any case, Breitwieser returned to the clothing depot, and he was angry, because something had not worked there. [...]*

*The next day, or maybe even two days later – that day never ended – the nurses of the hospital blocks were assembled. [...]*

*They had to bring carts. [...]*

*And went to Block 11. [...]*

*And when they came back with the carts, these carts were full of corpses, namely officers and inmates all intermingled. They drove the carts to the camp gate. [...]*

*[They came] to the camp gate, and when they crossed it, most likely – I suppose – [they went] to the crematorium. [...]*

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<sup>98</sup> As I have already indicated, Entress could not have been present, because he arrived at Auschwitz only on 11 December 1941.

<sup>99</sup> Incorrect term, since the “Lagerälteste” was an inmate responsible for a camp or for a camp sector, the highest position within the inmate hierarchy assigned by the SS.

*I do know, though, that the first experiment with gas on the first day had failed and was repeated the next day, because some of those people who had been gassed had not died immediately, since no good provisions for an effective isolation existed and [fresh] air could enter.”*

Pressed by the presiding judge to explain the contradiction between his declaration and the one given by Petzold, Motz responded evasively, clinging stubbornly to his version (pp. 25691-25720). But the verdict was merciless for both witnesses:<sup>100</sup>

*“The witness Petzold is [...] untrustworthy. [...]*

*He claims to have observed this from the gable window of Block 27, where the clothing depot was located. He claims that Block 21 was located between Block 27 and the courtyard between Block 10 and 11. That building did not yet have a 2nd level back then. He therefore claims to have been able to look into the courtyard between Blocks 10 and 11 from the gable window. [...]*

*The witness’s affirmation that he observed the events in the courtyard between Blocks 10 and 11 from a window in the gable of Block 27 cannot be true. In fact, from Block 27 one could not see the courtyard between Blocks 10 and 11 at all. The on-site inspection of the area of the former Auschwitz Concentration Camp by the assigned judge ascertained that the courtyard between Blocks 10 and 11 could not be seen from any of the windows of Block 27 due to the wall located in front of that courtyard. From Block 27 one cannot even see the windows of the basement or the central access staircase to Block 11. At best, one can merely see the top edge of the windows of the ground floor of Block 11 from Block 27. The on-site inspection finally determined that Block 27 does not have a gable window. [...]*

*Hence the Witness Petzold must have invented the description of the alleged events in the courtyard between Blocks 10 and 11.”*

*“The Witness Motz is also untrustworthy. Apart from the fact that his statements contain many improbabilities, he – as has been explained in the discussion of the crimes of the defendant Dylewski – has falsely accused the defendant Stark. Therefore, the Court has already given no credit to the two allegations made against the Defendant Dylewski. Again, there is a suspicion that the witness, just as with the Defendant*

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<sup>100</sup> Fritz Bauer Institut, pp. 38379, 38381f. for Petzold, and 38383f. for Motz.

*Stark, invented the things he described, or that he has assembled rumors and stories of others during or after his stay at the camp.”*

Józef Mikusz, deported to Auschwitz on 20 December 1940 (ID 7794), stated the following during the 151st trial session on 26 April 1965 (pp. 32325-32329):

*“Presiding Judge: Well, you told us earlier that you had been in the infirmary at the end of August 1941. Did you also meet the Defendant Klehr there?”*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: You told us in the course of the interrogation that you were still in the infirmary at the end of August 41. Did you meet the Defendant Klehr there?*

*Witness Józef Mikusz: So I saw him, I was there, [+ when] I got sick with typhus. It was still 1941.*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: I have met him. I saw him. I became sick with typhus at that time.*

*Witness Józef Mikusz: That’s where my father got in, about a week earlier, also with typhus.*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: A week earlier, my father came there as well, who was also sick with typhus.*

*Witness Józef Mikusz: And it was the beginning of September, already after the convalescence, I mean after the typhus crisis, they read out 12 names there. Doctor Soliborski was there at that time. He read out, and by accident he read out [my] name, so I came up, not [my] father. After all, [my] father was older. And later they replaced me [with him], because everyone had a large number drawn here on their chest with a chemical pencil [sic]. They withdrew me, put me in place of [my] father. And those 12, they were on the second floor, they left at that time. That was [the] first gassing. And I saw it, because it was on the second floor, how those guests dressed, I mean those prisoners were wrapped...*

*Presiding Judge [interrupting]: So. Now we would first translate.*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: Just [let him] finish the sentence.*

*Presiding Judge: Go ahead.*

*Witness Józef Mikusz: Wrapped in blankets they were led there by Lewandowski, who was the one from Stubendienst [room service], and I saw an SS man at that time, and they said it was Klehr.*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: Your father?*

*Witness Józef Mikusz: [My] father was being led there at the time.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *So that was at the beginning of September. And my father, who was also sick with typhus, that was all after he had already survived typhus. And the doctor who was there, a Polish doctor, Suliborski, read out twelve names. Among others, our name was mentioned. And I volunteered because I was younger, and my father was older. But they noticed that I had a different number, because we had the numbers here in front, written so large in pencil. And I was replaced by my father. Lewandowski, who was the room service at that time, he then led these twelve people to the...*

Witness Józef Mikusz [interrupts]: *Not 12, more were there.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *By the way, there were more, I think, than twelve. Just a moment.*

Witness Józef Mikusz: *There were more, there were 12 just from our room, and there were more, close to about 200.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *There were twelve people from our room. But there were many more, I think about 200 people. And they were led to the first gassing. From the second floor I saw how they were led, all these people. Clothed only with blankets.*

Witness Józef Mikusz: *He led them to Block 11, and then they said that this was an SS man, this was Klehr.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *They were taken to Block 11, and at that time they said, this is an SS man, this is Klehr.*

Witness Józef Mikusz: *They told us that these names had been given by Oberscharführer Klehr at the time, they were given for selection.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *We were told that these names of them had been given at that time by Oberscharführer Klehr for selection.*

Witness Józef Mikusz: *Will Your Honor allow me at this moment to be told by Klehr what it was about that these names went to the gas at that time?*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *I would like to ask the High Court to ask Klehr the question: How did you just choose these twelve names at that time, according to what principles? How was that?*

Presiding Judge: *Well, we will do that later. First of all, I would like to ask you when your father was taken away to be gassed.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *When was it, please, that your father was selected to be gassed?*

Witness Józef Mikusz: *So it was early September, because a telegram went to his sister that he had died of heart disease on 9 September.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *The year.*

Witness Józef Mikusz: *'41.*

Interpreter Kapkajew: *That was at the beginning of September, because my sister got a telegram saying that he died of heart [+ failure] on 9 September, and in 1941."*

This witness said nothing of historical relevance. The question of the father's alleged gassing will be examined in Section V.3.

Franciszek Brol, deported to Auschwitz on 24 June 1940 (ID 1159), did not testify at the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial, but the German translation of an interrogation protocol compiled on 28 September 1964 in Poland was read into the record during the 153rd trial session on 3 May 1965 (pp. 32697-32698):

*"In the fall of 1941, an attempt was made to liquidate the prisoners in Block 11 with gas. This attempt was carried out on a transport of Soviet soldiers, the so-called 'commissars.' This transport of soldiers was housed in the basement of Block 11. The quarters of Block 11 were hermetically sealed after chemical agents had been thrown in, from which gas escaped. The prisoners of Block 11 (Penal Company) were transferred to the quarters of Block 18 for the duration of the gassing. I personally took part in the cleaning of the basements, i.e. in carrying out of the corpses of the gassed prisoners as well as in the ventilation of the cells of the quarters. Among the SS officials who took part in the gassing of the prisoners in the bunker of Block 11 were Stark, Dylewski, and others employed in Block 11."*

The witness was unable to give a more-precise date than one season ("In the fall of 1941"), although he was the scribe of the basement detention cells in Block 11 at the time. He apparently did not even know the name Zyklon B, since he spoke of "chemical agents" "from which gas escaped." Finally, he claimed to have personally participated in the ventilation and removal of the corpses of those presumably gassed, but on this fundamental issue he did not provide any details.

Franciszek Targosz, deported to Auschwitz on 18 December 1940 (ID 1325), did not testify at the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial either, but here as well, the German translation of an interrogation protocol compiled on 23 August 1964 in Poland was read into the record during the 153rd trial session on 3 May 1965 (pp. 32637f.):



*“Arthur Breitwieser. For some time he worked in the warehouse where the cans with the gas ‘Zyklon’ (Polish expression) were located. He was one of the first to bring this ‘Zyklon’ to Block 11 on Fries’ [Fritzsch’s] orders. There he was seen in a gas mask together with Fries, as they carried out the gassing of the prisoners. There were 600 Soviet prisoners and over 300 Polish prisoners who had been selected in the camp hospital. My comrades Erwin Olszówka, who lived in Chorzow, and Tadeusz Paczula can provide more-detailed information about this.”*

The Court rejected as inconclusive all the testimonies incriminating Breitwieser, and ruled with regard to him as follows (p. 38387):

*“Indeed there is, as before, the profound suspicion against the defendant Breitwieser that he had participated in the first gassing. Indeed, the fact that he, as a member of the pest-control Kommando, was trained in the use of Zyklon B, makes this participation appear likely. In support of this supposition is the fact that at this time it was said among the SS and the inmates that he had been present at a gassing. But with the existing evidence, this has not been demonstrated with sufficient certainty for a conviction. So for lack of evidence he had to be acquitted.”*

Consequently the Court, in its verdict, was not only forced to abstain from any precise dating of the alleged event and to give no indication of the number of the first-gassing victims, but also to provide a ludicrously generic reconstruction which brings no new element to the framework created by Danuta Czech (p. 38378):

*“In the fall of 1941, when the defendant Breitwieser worked at the so-called pest-control Kommando, the first gassing of Soviet prisoners of war and inmates from the prison hospital was conducted in the basement of Block 11. Prior to this the prison cells were emptied and the doors and windows of the so-called detention bunker were made gas-tight. Then in the prison cells and in the basement, in a very narrow space, a few hundred Russian prisoners of war and inmates from the camp hospital who were no longer useful were crowded and locked up. Then Zyklon B was thrown into the sealed rooms through openings. The developing gas killed the persons locked up in the bunker.”*

In 1969, the former Auschwitz inmate-turned-Auschwitz-historian Stanisław Kłodziński ran a survey, sending a questionnaire to 250 former detainees of the camp who had been registered prior to September of 1941, and asking them to furnish their testimony regarding the first homicidal gassing at Auschwitz. He received 186 replies, and used the most-significant ones

for his article already mentioned in the Introduction, which appeared in the journal *Pamiętnik Lekarski (Medical Review)* in 1972.

A number of witnesses have described the preparations for this action.<sup>101</sup> Stanisław Pawliczek (ID 1085) reported rumors from “well-informed” sources in the potato storage where he worked, according to which secret preparations had been going on in the basement during the night: the windows and some doors had been hermetically sealed, and boxes with cans of Zyklon B had been carried in. The Engineer Stanisław Hüpsch (ID 889) reported that the hermetic sealing (*uszczelnianie*) of Block 11 had been done by the *Kommando* that had previously disinfested the camp. Edward Sobczyk (ID 203) noted that in front of Block 11 there had been sand, lime, and cement and that work had been going on in the basement.

Marian Zawodny (ID 8366) asserted that from the *Industriehof* where he worked building materials had been taken to wall up the windows of the basement in Block 11. Tadeusz Kopyt (ID 2151) reported that in early September 1941 a capo named Job had ordered him to fill the windows of the bunker with earth. The Engineer Leon Mackiewicz (ID 3618) said that three inmates had been ordered to check the central heating system of Block 11. Jan Wolny (ID 15496) stated that in front of Block 11 a truck had dumped earth, with which several detainees had covered the windows of the basement of the block (Kłodziński 1972, p. 83).

Some witnesses speak of the selection of patients in the sickbay blocks, others describe the transport of the Russian prisoners of war into Block 11. According to Władysław Tondos, there were altogether 257 selected patients (*ibid.*, p. 85). Edward Liszka noted that the windows of Bunker 11 were covered with sand once the POWs were inside. Kazimierz Hałgas asserted that, after the Russian POWs had been herded into Block 11, three or four SS men went in there with gas masks on and carrying cans (*ibid.*, p. 88).

The most-important statements are those about the procedure of the gassing and about the removal of the corpses. Zbigniew Tryczyński (ID 276) declared that “the following day, Palitzsch, wearing a gas mask, threw in another load of gas after having opened the bunker and found that some were still alive. Then the bunker was closed again. Other than Palitzsch, there was Fritzsich and the camp physician” (*ibid.*).

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<sup>101</sup> The witnesses refer to Block 13, in the old numbering system. For greater clarity, I have used Block 11 throughout.

Other witnesses relate what happened after the alleged homicidal gassing. Stanisław Kłodziński reproduced large sections that he considers to be of fundamental importance. According to Kłodziński, Kazimierz Hałas related the following (*ibid.*, p. 89):

*“We observed Block 11 discreetly throughout the day after the gassing, but nothing happened there. In the evening, some SS people came to the yard but left again soon. The lights were out, and on the morning of the third day the doors and the windows of Block 11 going out onto the yard were already open. During the day, some SS men arrived, and when they left they checked some details, which we could not distinguish. After the evening roll call, at sundown, all the paramedics were called out (sämtliche Pfleger antreten [German in the text])! We were about 120. Camp Commandant Höss arrived with the section leader [Palitzsch] and the inmate interpreter Baworowski; he gave us an order something like this:*

*‘Tonight you will have to do a job that nobody must know about. Only a skeleton crew will stay in the sickbay. After the job, you will wash and disinfect, and then back to work. If you work well, there will be an extra ration of bread and sausage.’*

*At least 80 of us went to do this job. It was difficult to avoid doing so, because, after all, the Surgeon Dr. Dering went with us, as did a few who worked in the dietary kitchen. Of course, the SS was in charge [of the work]. We arrived in the dark yard.<sup>102</sup> There, we were split up into groups. Some took the corpses out from the block, others undressed them and put the clothing aside, a further group placed the corpses on a cart, still others moved the cart to the crematorium.*

*For most of the night, I placed the corpses on the cart. Along the path to the crematorium there were several posts of SS men with arms at the ready, checking the windows of the blocks. The work was very strenuous and dirty. Altogether there were 870 murdered people, of which over 600 were Soviet POWs and 257 of our detainees. The corpses were already in a state of decomposition, green [zielone] and smelly. Almost all of the Soviet prisoners were very young, not older than 18, and without military rank insignia. The greater part of them was of Polish origin, from the Stanisławów and Tarnopol areas. We could see this from the military documents that most of them carried. They had a mili-*

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<sup>102</sup> The yard between Block 11 and Block 12.

tary document in the shape of a tag, 5 by 10 cm, rolled up and carried in a small pocket of their trousers, near the belt (like a watch) in a little Bakelite box, something like our needle boxes. We also found other objects. These, like the other things we found, watches etc., had to be turned over to the SS men who were watching us. There were also names which sounded Russian and Ukrainian. One could see granules spread around in the corridors and the cellars in which the corpses were lying. The corpses were in various positions and were densely packed. Our [camp's] detainees were pulled out last.

They had probably guessed they were being gassed, because we found them with the cotton from their bandages in their hands and in their mouths. The SS men had us work fast. In the morning, the groups were changed: I was in the last group, taking the corpses to the crematorium. In the morning, around 4 or 5 a.m., the sidewalls gave way on one cart and the cart overturned right in front of the kitchen, spilling all the corpses on the ground. The SS got mad and we had to carry those corpses one at a time on our shoulders. I carried at least two in this way, and even Dr. Dering carried one as well, after having done nothing except giving us orders all night.

The corpses would no longer fit into the crematorium, and so we left them near the door and along the walls. Then, just a little before the wake-up call, we returned to the sickbay. Only a few stayed behind to wash and disinfect the block and the rooms. We took a bath and changed, and then went back to our work. At lunch, we each got an extra quarter of bread and 150 grams of sausage. The work had been finished by about 5 a.m.”

Władysław Tondos furnished this account to describe what happened after the gassing (Kłodziński 1972, p. 90):

“When the paramedics were called in to remove the corpses from Block 11, I feared that the witnesses of the massacre could not survive. In a dimly lit room I saw 24-30 corpses. They were Soviet soldiers. They were all sitting, as if they were asleep. Two of them held their caps in their mouths. [...] Then, in the yard they were undressed. The corpses already had the gases under their skin.<sup>103</sup> As we could see from the documents found, they were simple people – farm hands, truck drivers etc. Then the bodies were loaded, 70 at a time, on a platform, covered

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<sup>103</sup> This means that the corpses were already in an advanced state of decomposition, hence forming gasses of putrefaction, as the witness had testified during the Höss Trial.

*with a tarpaulin, and hauled to the crematorium. Three corpses at a time were put into the furnace. The transportation to the crematorium took two nights.”*

During the Höss Trial, he had stated that the patients allegedly gassed were 280, not 257, and that he had seen 60 corpses in one room, not 24-30.

Jan Wolny had this to say (*ibid.*, pp. 89f.):

*“For two days in a row, everything was quiet around Block 11, only some SS men went there from time to time. But one day, after the roll call, an SDG<sup>[104]</sup> and the Camp Elder Bock recruited a number of paramedics from each of the sickbay blocks, and this group, to which I belonged as well, was taken on the double to the yard of Block 11. There were a few SS men, and one of them told us that we were to bring the dead up from the cellars and undress them. After having done that, we were to lay them out in the center of the yard. I can never forget what I saw after I had gone into the basement. This sight is haunting me even today, and when I think back to those days in the camp I cannot sleep all night. [...]*

*The bodies of the detainees and those of the gassed Soviet prisoners were lying every which way, lifeless and packed. Their eyes and mouths were open. While we moved and undressed them, I noticed that many bodies of those gassed had rags stuffed into their mouth and nose, as if to protect themselves from suffocating or poisoning. The sockets of their eyes were swollen, their fingers, toes, and abdomen sky-blue [niebieskie]. At first, we tried to place the corpses on stretchers and take them up the stairs in that way into the yard. But because the corridor was a labyrinth and had tight corners, that was very difficult, all-the-more-so as we were tired and the prisoners [corpses] were still quite heavy.*

*The SS were in a hurry. They ordered us to work faster. Therefore, Obojski suggested it would be quicker and easier to move the bodies without a stretcher. It turned out that this was a better way, less strenuous, because we did not have to hold the stretcher at both ends. One group moved the bodies, another undressed them and laid them out in the yard. When I was tired from dragging the bodies, I went with the group that did the undressing [...]. While we took the clothes off, we checked discreetly what was in the pockets and found money, photographs, letters, watches, etc.*

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<sup>104</sup> Sanitätsdienstgrad, rank of paramedic.

*The next day, we had to place the bodies on a cart and take them to the Auschwitz Crematorium. There was curfew in the camp. Each body was taken by the arms and legs by two paramedics and thrown onto the cart with a heave-ho. The paramedics who were on the cart laid the lifeless and stiff bodies out in layers on the floor of the cart. We then pushed the loaded cart through the entire camp as far as the crematorium. The SS who were supervising us and the men who were employed in the crematorium showed us how to unload the corpses from the cart and take them into the large hall. They opened the sides of the cart, tied straps around the hands and feet [of the bodies] and then, yelling 'one-two,' unloaded a dozen bodies at a time on the concrete floor. The noise of the corpses tumbling down was very scary.*

*We dragged the corpses into the crematorium across the floor that had been sprayed with water, dragging them by one hand. Another group stacked them up as far as the ceiling. The hall of the crematorium was filled within a day, but in the area of Block 11 there were still many more corpses. As the personnel in the crematorium probably realized that the other bodies would not fit [into the hall], a mass grave was dug in the woods at Birkenau, near the triangulation tower, and over the next few days we buried there the rest of the corpses of the Soviet prisoners. Camp Commandant Höss himself went into the little wood by car, accompanied by Palitzsch, Boger, and others from the SS. They ordered us to put more lime into the trench and to cover it with a thick layer of earth. It had rained that day and mud had formed.*

*Dinner was potatoes with the skin. There was no place to wash our hands; we had worked without gloves. We had to eat the food like that, ridiculed by the SS who asked us whether we liked it. I remember very well that, when I first saw the corpses of the detainees and the prisoners as they lay poisoned in the bunker of Block 11, I thought that those criminals had used chlorine for this massacre, because on the floor there was a kind of white powder that smelled like chlorine. But the next day we learned that the SS had used for the first time a gas – Zyklon B – to kill 600 Soviet prisoners of war and some 250 patients.*

*All of us who took part in the removal of those gassed, in their transportation to the crematorium, and in their burial in the mass grave were afraid for a long time that they would kill us, too, to keep things secret. In October of 1942, I was transferred to Birkenau; we were housed in the men's camp, but worked in the women's camp. At that time, I saw a detail of Jewish inmates who had to dig up the inmates*

[bodies] from the mass grave, pile them up and burn the decomposing bodies. The wind blew the smoke over to Birkenau, and the stench was horrible. The burning piles of bodies could be seen from Birkenau. The Jews who had to do this job were probably sent into the gas to wipe out any traces.”

The reason given by the witness to explain why part of the bodies had to be interred in a mass grave at Birkenau – the fact that the crematorium did not have enough space for 850 corpses – is clearly false. The crematorium had a mortuary measuring 17 by 4.60 meters and two more rooms for corpses, the laying-out room (*Aufbahrungsraum*, 4.60 m × 4.10 m) and the corpse-washing room (*Waschraum*, 4.60m × 4.17 m). This was altogether some 116 m<sup>2</sup>,<sup>105</sup> clearly enough space for the corpses without stacking them “up to the ceiling.” Also, the area of the mass graves – located near the present monument for the Soviet prisoners of war – was absolutely invisible from Sector BI of the Birkenau Camp with its men’s and women’s sections. Therefore, the witness could not have seen the exhumation of the corpses from that observation point.

Tadeusz Kurant, who had the ID 4593, states that transportation of the bodies “took all night” (Kłodziński 1972, p. 91). The witnesses Józef Weber (ID 15386), Aleksander Germański (ID 715), and also Tadeusz Kurant declared independently from one another that the corpses of the victims were “bluish” (*ibid.*).

Konrad Szweda’s testimony merits our particular attention. According to what Stanisław Kłodziński has to say, Szweda was a priest (ID 7669) who worked as a paramedic in Block 16 in September 1941. In January of 1942, in a barracks of the *Kommando* attached to the Buna factory, he wrote a “*gryps*” (a secret message), which was taken out of the camp by a civilian worker and later made its way to Kłodziński. After having described the selection of patients in Block 15 in early September of 1941, Konrad Szweda goes on to say (*ibid.*, p. 85):

*“Some 300 patients in thin shirts and underwear were waiting for orders, standing, sitting, lying on the ground.*

*‘Take them to the Penal Company,’ somebody shouted up ahead. I trembled, I literally trembled with fear. But I quickly became quiet: the companions explained to me that [the patients] had been waiting at the SK [Penal Company] for a nocturnal transport. We took up the stretchers with the sick patients. We entered the yard, and then – horror – they*

<sup>105</sup> Plan of Crematorium I No. 1241 dated 10 April 1942. RGVA, 502-2-146, p. 21.

*move us downstairs, into the bunker. [...] I felt sick to my stomach in this stinking prison. We placed one of the unfortunate people on the cold concrete floor. Presently another one would be placed on him, a third, a fourth. They were arranged in layers, literally stacked! In a cell [meant] for one, detainees were piled 30, 40, finally 50! One lying on top of the other. The weakest ones were carried in, the healthy ones entered by themselves. Oh, if you had seen this column of condemned men, their horrified faces, they were suspecting that they were going to their graves. [...] I moved from one to the other, giving absolution, blessing them all. I caught a glimpse of the face of the Reverend Szulc, an old man from Poznan, seventy years old. [...] Within half an hour the steel door of the last cell fell shut. The bolt was pushed.”*

The continuation of this account, it appears, is not in the “secret message” mentioned above, but in an unpublished typescript titled “Images of Dachau,” Fragment No. 4, “The first gassing test at Auschwitz Concentration Camp” (*ibid.*, p. 88):

*“After one o’clock at night, when the door to the last cell had been closed, the gassing started. Several SS men, through small openings above the doors, dumped into each [cell the contents of] two cans, which contained the gas in the form of small blue crystals. Then the openings were hermetically closed. [...] The wailings, the screams, the weeping that had been heard since six in the afternoon gradually stopped, until there was only a dreadful silence in the end. The main door was then closed and secured with a padlock: the villains could take a break.”*

Wiesław Kielar, who in 1941 was a paramedic in Block 16 (ID 290), described the various aspects of the first gassing at Auschwitz in a particularly extensive way in a memorandum published in 1972. I repeat here the essential sections (Kielar, 1979, pp. 90-98; cf. 1972):

*“One day, several hundred of the newly arrived Soviet prisoners of war were herded into Block 11. The same day, quite unexpectedly, Camp Physician Entreß appeared and, as he had done a few weeks before, passed attentively through all three sickbay blocks, inspecting all rooms where there were patients.*

*The seriously ill selected by him had to be taken to the yard in front of Block 16. Paramedics then took them to the Penal Company, the members of which had previously been moved to a different block. We had to*



*carry most of the patients on stretchers. Later, detainees from the Penal Company selected for this purpose took care of them.*

*We went back to our jobs.*

*After the evening roll call, a curfew was ordered. Because of that, there was no more work in the out-patient section, and everyone went to bed earlier than usual. Before we fell asleep, we commented loudly on the events of the day, which did not augur well. The patients had apparently been moved in with the Soviet POWs in the bunkers, where they had been locked up in an incredibly dense fashion. General dejection spread among us. No one started to tell stories about the time before the war, as had been the case on other nights. All illusions were to be shattered the next day.*

*Teofil and Gienek were sure. All had been killed with gas. Palitzsch was seen walking around in the camp with a gas mask over his shoulder. It seemed that the windows and the doors of the bunker rooms, that had been made air-tight before, had already been opened. They had to be ventilated, before the corpse carriers could start their work. And there was to be a lot of work. Some one thousand corpses. The Dresden tragedy was nothing compared to what the SS had done in our camp, right before our eyes.*

*There was a curfew again the following evening. We were already in bed, somebody was telling something about his life. Suddenly, the entrance door to the block banged and we could hear the rhythmic noise of hobnailed boots, which made us shiver.*

*'It's Jarem,' someone said with fear in his voice.*

*'All paramedics out! Get going!' Palitzsch's screaming order resounded through the empty hall.*

*We jumped up as if stung by scorpions. We hurriedly dressed and ran into the hall, which was lit up. Peter was already downstairs, arranging us in files of two. I pressed myself into the second row, to be less prominent. But Palitzsch did not want to bother with any of us. There were more-important things to do. This time, he needed us. He gave brief orders to the block elder next to him, who in turn addressed the corpse carriers: 'Obojski, Teofil, get men for two platforms. To the SK and hurry!' Palitzsch was waiting for us outside Block 11. Twilight was falling.*

*The heavy wooden gate to the yard of the Penal Company opened. We pushed the carts into the yard and turned them around to face the gate.*

*In the yard, the whole crew of the SS was already there, with Commandant Fritzsch and Camp Physician Entreß in charge. We waited around, while the SS people were still arguing; then they called Gienek and Teofil. They were given gas masks. Palitzsch and some block leaders put on gas masks as well. All of them went to the entrance of the block basement. They stayed down there for quite some time. We waited silently. Night fell. It became completely dark in the yard. Only above the entrance to the bunker there was a weak light-bulb, which threw some light on the group of SS men who were waiting next to the steps leading into the block.*

*The first one to come back out was Palitzsch, behind him the other men from the SS. They had taken off their masks. Hence, the gas from the bunker had already dissipated. After some time, Obojski and Teofil turned up.*

*We were now split up into groups, each one with a different task. Some of us were to go into the bunkers to get the corpses out of the cells, others carried them up the stairs, yet others had to undress them. The rest of us had to move the naked corpses further into the yard for them to be loaded onto the waiting carts.*

*I pressed myself into the group that had to do the work in the basement, so as to be far away from the SS and from Palitzsch; I was very much afraid of him.*

*Down below the air was sticky, and it was hot; the smell of corpses was everywhere. All cells had been opened, and we could see the corpses of the gassed inside all pressed together. Where the patients had been put, there was a little more space. Some bodies were right in the door, [they had] collapsed, one on top of the other. With those we started. The bodies were clinging to one another and were hard to separate. We dragged them into the corridor, one by one, for the others to move them upstairs.*

*The deeper we advanced into the cells, the more difficult it was to get the bodies out. The impression was macabre. Pressed together in those tiny cells, they still stood in the same position they had been in two days ago. Their faces were blue, almost purple-black. Their wide-open eyes seemed to pop out of their sockets, their tongues stuck out from their mouths, the exposed teeth gave them horrible faces.*

*At first, two of us would carry one corpse, but that created a jam on the stairs with everyone getting in the way of everyone else. Work proceed-*

*ed slowly, and so we started to work separately. Instead of carrying them, we now dragged the corpses behind us by one hand or one foot. That was quicker and easier. For disinfection, the whole bunker was sprinkled with chlorine [chlorinated lime], which made the work easier yet. The smell of chlorine would bite our noses, but it reduced the stench that the decomposing corpses were giving off. The stairs were the most difficult stretch. The heavy heads banged against the steps, the limp extremities caught on the steps and the thresholds, causing us much trouble.*

*Upstairs in the hall next to the washroom we dropped the corpses on the floor; other detainees then started to undress them, while we went back for more bodies. I noticed that there was much more air upstairs, and the work of undressing seemed to be easier, and so when I brought in my next corpse, I began to undress it, making use of the fact that there was already a pile of corpses there which the detainees working on them had not yet been able to deal with. But it turned out that the removal of the clothing from those slack and bloated trunks was not at all easier than carrying them, but the air was still fresher and cooler here.*

*The pockets released their loads of money, notes, pictures, little things, souvenirs, and cigarettes, in short, all those things one was allowed to retain in a camp. Now all that was on the floor, mixed with the excrement and the wet chlorine, a real mess. Occasionally, an SS man would kick the pile with his boot, stepping on what might have been a precious possession while its owner was still alive, perhaps his only souvenir; if the man saw something valuable, he acted as if he were disgusted, picked it up, played around with it for a while and then slipped it into his pocket. We were happy with the belts, which we needed for our work and which we were officially allowed to keep.*

*The first flat cart of Teofil's group left the yard fully loaded. Now Gienek beefed up his crew, to which I belonged as well. The naked corpses that we had moved over the steps into the yard underwent a special treatment. The dentists, watched by the SS, checked the mouths of the dead, and if there were any gold teeth or golden jaws [sic] they pulled them out with their pliers. [...]*

*The load grew and grew. It became more and more difficult to lift up the corpses. Gienek placed them closely together, like sheaves of wheat. One, two! The corpse, held by its hands and feet, flew up in a finely*

*controlled arc, for Gienek to catch. With his legs spread apart, he stood among those trunks, those arms, those feet, and those heads. He stacked the corpses tidily in layers, to get as many as possible on one cart. That way he saved us time and effort; we all wanted to get over with the job quickly.*

*I hid on the other side of the overloaded cart in order to get some rest and to be safe from the all-seeing eyes of those drunken SS guards. Gienek announced 'the cart is ready and loaded,' jumping down from the top layer of those dozens of corpses. 'Then move the baggage out!' yelled one of those boozed-up Scharführers.*

*One, two!... We carted them off well into the morning. Later, at our block, we got extra rations. But no one was in a position to eat anything. What we needed was sleep, to be able to go back to work the next night.*

*We knew that we would not be spared this. In the evening, we marched back to Block 11 as before. We no longer needed any instructions. We hitched ourselves up to the cart. The yard of the Penal Company vanished in the dark behind us, night fell earlier than before. The chlorine and the dirt melted into a slimy and smooth surface. The stench stayed in the air, with its nauseating smell of decomposing bodies. [...]*

*The corpses were already partly decomposed. We made our job easier by tying belts around the hands, the feet, or the neck of the gassed bodies, so as not to touch them with our hands, and then we dragged the gluey and bloated corpses across the concrete or the dirt of the yard up to the cart. Then, in the usual way, we swung the bodies on the cart. [...]*

*At the entrance to the crematorium, the water glistened on the concrete wet with rain. [...] That was the last load. On the double, we dragged the corpses, first through the large hall, then to the right, past the room where autopsies were performed on the corpses. Another alcove with urns and then this long hall, already half-full of bodies, a body reservoir, in a way. A second door led to the furnace hall with its furnaces. Detainees stripped down to their waists ran back and forth. The crew of the small crematorium could not keep up, so they fed two bodies simultaneously into the furnaces. Our work was done, but they had work to do for the next so-many days."*

### 3. Testimonies of the SS Personnel

Besides Rudolf Höss, whose testimony has already been examined in Chapter I, other members of the SS made statements concerning the first homicidal gassing at Auschwitz.

Hans Aumeier, then *SS Hauptsturmführer*, had been moved to Auschwitz on 16 February 1942, where he held the position of 1st leader of the Protective-Custody Camp at the Main Camp until 15 August 1943.<sup>106</sup> From October 1943 onwards, he was commandant of the Vaivara Camp in Estonia. In February of 1945 he commanded the Mysen Camp in Norway, the country in which the British arrested him on 11 June 1945. In a report written on 25 July 1945, he states:<sup>107</sup>

*“If I remember correctly, it was in November or December of 1942 that the first gassing of some 50 – 80 Jewish detainees was undertaken. It took place in the mortuary of the Crematorium in Lager I, under the direction of the camp surgeon, of Untersturmführer Grabener [Grabner], the L.K. [the camp commandant] and some medical personnel. I was not present myself, and I did not know in advance that this gassing would be implemented.”*

Pery Broad was transferred to Auschwitz on 8 April 1942, and assigned to the Political Department of the camp on 18 June of that year.<sup>108</sup> On 13 July 1945, he drew up a memorandum, which disappeared immediately. It resurfaced on 20 April 1964 during the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial. The Yad Vashem Institute in Jerusalem has an undated typescript of 75 pages titled “KL-Auschwitz” which is supposed to be the original document.<sup>109</sup> The text of this document was published by the Auschwitz Museum in 1966. We read there (here quoted from the published English translation by Bezwińska/Czech 2007, p. 173):

*“In Block 11 there were cells with one tiny window through which one could not look outside, as the windows lay below the ground level, still some air was available thanks to them. But there also were windowless dark cells. A narrow vent, ending in the mysterious iron baskets, affixed to the outer wall, allowed so little air that breathing was made difficult. Forty Russians one day suffocated in such a cell. They were forcibly*

<sup>106</sup> Regarding this witness see Mattogno 2016e, pp. 52-54.

<sup>107</sup> TNA, File WO.208/4661. Report by H. Aumeier dated 25 July 1945, p. 5.

<sup>108</sup> Regarding this witness see Mattogno 2016e, pp. 57-63.

<sup>109</sup> YVA, O51-101, pp. 1-75.

*crowded into the cell and literally could not move there at all. The devices for torturing men which existed in that building were completed by four standing cells.”*

*“One day corpses of Russian p.o.w. ’s were tugged out from a dark cell. As they lay in the yard, they looked strangely bloated and had a bluish tinge, though they were relatively fresh. Several older prisoners who had been through the World War I remembered to have seen corpses like that during the war. Suddenly they understood... gas!*

*The first attempt at the greatest crime which Hitler and his helpers had planned and which they committed in a frightening way, never to be expiated, was successful.” (Ibid., p. 174)*

Maximilian Grabner, former SS *Untersturmführer*, was head of the Auschwitz Camp’s Political Department from 18 June 1940 to 1 November 1943. Due this position, and together with Höss, he should have been the best-informed person about the “first gassing,” all-the-more-so since, according to some witnesses, he had personally participated in it. Grabner was arrested by the Vienna Police Department on 4 August 1945 on the basis of an arrest warrant issued by the Austrian State Police the day before.<sup>110</sup> In the course of the criminal investigation against him, some former Auschwitz inmates, including Hermann Langbein, were summoned as witnesses. Grabner himself was interrogated several times by the Austrian authorities in August and September 1945. On 12 July 1947, he was extradited to Poland, where he was one of the main defendants during the Krakow Trial. With the verdict of 22 December 1947, he was sentenced to death.

Given Grabner’s importance, it is appropriate to place his statements about the “first gassing” in their larger context. In his first interrogation, dating back to August 1945, he stated the following:<sup>111</sup>

*“In 1941, I think in the month of September, an SS man of the Kommandantur secretly showed me a telex from Berlin sent by Glücks, of which I made a copy as always. On it was written succinctly that a Dr. Schumann and a Dr. Müller were to arrive in Auschwitz, that the prisoners they wanted were to be presented along with their documentation,*

<sup>110</sup> GARF, 7021-108-34, p. 12.

<sup>111</sup> “Abschrift der Eigenhändigen Niederschrift des Obersturmführers Grabner”. GARF, 7021-108-34, pp. 29-31. Taken from the website of Holocaust Controversies (2016). Of his three known depositions, only this one contains personal data (date and place of birth, school education, professional activities, etc.), from which I infer that this was his first deposition.

*and that prisoners selected by them were then to be made available. Höss, as I found out later, already knew about the details. The action, as far as I can remember, was called 'Operation Cripples, Incurables, Incurables, Especially Hardened Criminals'.*

*The selected prisoners were then brought by the troops and the leadership of the protective-custody camp to the vicinity of Dresden by means of transport, and [these] were about 4-500 prisoners. The files had to be handed over as far as I can remember. Later I learned that they were supposedly gassed. [...]*

*And after about 2-3 months, there came again allegedly a doctor with a secretary who did the same thing, under the same cover telex Berlin Glücks – Liebehenschel.*

*There were also about 300 prisoners, and they were to be picked up by buses. I could not find out the destination. This transfer did not take place, and so the gassings began. Here, Höss carried out an experimental gassing in the cells of the headquarter's prison together with SS Hauptsturmführer Dr. Schweler [Schwela], back then the [garrison] physician. The prisoners slated for transfer were gassed apparently with blue gas [hydrogen cyanide] in 2 successive shifts. They worked with gas masks. These [victims] were then allegedly, I was on leave for a few days, burned in the first crematorium, near the former SS hospital in the Main Camp. They [their bodies] were hauled out of the camp at night.*

*Since the gassings apparently did not work out so well in the camp detention Block 11, or were too cumbersome, as well as could be seen, Fritsch [sic], on orders or on his own initiative, had 3 squares broken through in the morgue of the aforementioned crematorium at the Main Camp, and then used the hall as a so-called gas chamber for continuous gassing.*

*The holes in the ceiling were then used to introduce the gas. And so the continuous gassing began. Dr. Schweler supervised these gassings under the overall supervision of Höss."*

Danuta Czech, however, writes that an alleged "special committee" headed by Dr. Schumann arrived at Auschwitz on 28 July 1941 (Czech 1990, p. 75; see Section IV.1.), not in September, and does not mention the arrival of another doctor two to three months later, resulting in the alleged selection and transfer from Auschwitz of about 300 inmates "by buses."

According to Grabner, the first gassing in Block 11 concerned only inmates under the “euthanasia” program, not Soviet prisoners of war. It was carried out by Höss together with SS *Hauptsturmführer* Dr. Schweler, meaning Siegfried Schwela, but he was SS garrison physician of Auschwitz only starting on 21 March 1942 (Lasik, p. 300), so the alleged gassing could not have taken place before this date.

Grabner spoke of “gassings” in Block 11, but without giving any details. During an interrogation on 1 September 1945, Grabner stated:<sup>112</sup>

*“Auschwitz detainees were murdered by gassing from early 1942 on, initially in Block 11. I saw those gassings myself, the SS personnel walked around with gas masks, the detainees, 20-40 of them at a time, were herded into the cells. Then the cells were made [air-]tight and gas was fed in. Later, gassings were carried out in the old crematorium, which is located opposite the SS infirmary.”*

He also mentioned the gassing of Soviet prisoners of war, but in an indeterminate context (p. 26a):

*“In the winter of 1941/42, 12,000 Russian prisoners of war were also brought to the camp. Some of them were gassed immediately, others were killed in other ways shortly afterwards.”*

This one sentence alone is enough in to assess Grabner’s trustworthiness (*ibid.*):

*“During the time I was head of the Political Department in Auschwitz, about 3 to 6,000,000 people were murdered in this or similar ways.”*

He specified (incorrectly) that he had held this position from May 1940 to September 1943 (p. 26), so in this period, 3 to 6 million people had been killed in Auschwitz according to him!

However in his first interrogation, mentioned above, Grabner stated:

*“All gassings, as long as I was in the camp, should amount to 800,000 to 1,000,000 [victims].”*

During the interrogation of 12 September 1945, Grabner settled for the intermediate figure, which was no-less-absurd:<sup>113</sup>

*“But there were at least 3,000,000 while I was head of the Auschwitz Political Department.”*

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<sup>112</sup> Interrogation of Maximilian Grabner, Vienna, 1 Sept. 1945. GARF, 7021-108-34, p. 26. Next two page numbers in the text from there.

<sup>113</sup> Interrogation of M. Grabner, Vienna, 12 Sept. 1945. GARF, 7021-108-34, p. 25.



Later, in the Polish interrogation of 29 September 1947, to which I will return below, he resumed his first figures:<sup>114</sup>

*“When I thought about it in 1943, I compared the figures in the reports compiled for Berlin with the death cases at the camp and, as far as I remember, I arrived at the figure of 800,000 to 1,000,000 back then. I do not know how many victims perished in Auschwitz after my departure from there. As for the figure of about 4 million victims for the entire duration of the Auschwitz Camp’s existence, I don’t know what to think.”*

Grabner’s interrogation of 12 September 1945 begins as follows:<sup>113</sup>

*“I state that in the period around 1941/1942 alone, 300,000 dead were buried at once (within a short time), because the small crematorium did not have as much capacity as there were dead.*

*Long trenches were dug and filled with corpses. In 1942, in connection with the propaganda about Katyn, the order came from Berlin to dig up the bodies again and burn them, so that no traces could be found.”*

Here we should keep in mind that, according to Danuta Czech, the number of corpses interred was not 300,000, but 107,000 (Czech 1990, p. 277). By relating the exhumation and cremation of the corpses buried in the mass graves to the Katyn Affair, Grabner also created an obvious anachronism. The mass graves of Katyn were discovered by the Germans only on 13 April 1943. Grabner’s assertion is nothing but a commonplace of anti-German propaganda about Katyn, as is clear from the fact that Pery Broad, who had been a subordinate of Grabner, had also told a similar story in his report of 13 July 1945. After recounting that the bodies of Soviet prisoners of war who had died and been killed at Auschwitz had been buried in pits measuring 30 to 60 meters long and 4 meters deep, Broad added:<sup>115</sup>

*“But then came the time when Katyn was foremost news in all German newspapers. [...] In view of the happenings at Katyn the presence of mass graves was most compromising, particularly mass graves in which corpses evidently could not decompose properly, but came into sight.”*

Danuta Czech claims that the exhumations and cremations of corpses buried in mass graves began on 21 September 1942 (Czech 1990, p. 242), almost seven months before the “propaganda about Katyn” started.

<sup>114</sup> APMO, sygn. Dpr.-ZO /53b, Krakow Trial, Vol. 53b, pp. 350f.

<sup>115</sup> “KZ-Auschwitz”, YVA, O51-101, p. 36; Broad, p. 27; here quoted from Bezwińska/Czech 2007, pp. 170f.

At the end of the interrogation, Grabner stated:<sup>116</sup>

*“During a visit of Reichsführer SS Himmler, he watched the gassings in the crematorium. Then, in his presence, he had corporal punishment inflicted on female prisoners by caning them on the buttocks.”*

Here, too, Grabner committed a serious anachronism, because the only time Himmler is said to have witnessed a gassing was during his visit to Auschwitz on 17-18 July 1942, when – according to the orthodox Holocaust narrative – the Main Camp’s crematorium had already been abandoned as a gassing facility in favor of the imaginary “bunkers” near the Birkenau Camp, and it was there that he allegedly witnessed the gassing of a transport of Jews (Czech 1990, p. 199):

*“He attends the unloading, the selection of the able-bodied, the killing by gas in Bunker 2, and the clearing of the bunker.”*

In his interrogation on 26 September 1945, Grabner continued his imaginative tales in this way:<sup>117</sup>

*“In 1940, at the end of April, the Auschwitz Camp was established as an extermination camp by order of Berlin. [...]*

*The first gassings, ordered by Berlin under the name 14 f 13, signed by Glücks, took place in March 1942. I myself saw this order and made a copy of it. This action was directed by Chief Medical Officer Schumann, and was aimed at cleansing the Auschwitz Camp of incorrigibles, hardened criminals, the physically disabled, cripples, those with infections and the incurables. The number was about 600 men.<sup>[118]</sup> The prisoners designated for this purpose were not gassed in the Auschwitz Camp, but were probably gassed near Dresden.”*

Grabner then ventured into an exceedingly imaginative reconstruction of the early phase of the camp’s history:

*“I remember that in the summer of 1941, about May or June, a large staff meeting was held at the Auschwitz Camp. Present were: Himmler with his staff, Camp Commandant Höss, Camp Leader Aumayer [sic], Garrison Physician Wirths, Office Group D Gruppenführer Glücks, Adjutant Kramer, who was assigned to Höss at the time, and several others. At this infamous meeting, the guidelines for the Auschwitz Extermi-*

<sup>116</sup> Interrogation of M. Grabner, Vienna, 12 Sept. 1945. GARF, 7021-108-34, p. 25a.

<sup>117</sup> Interrogation of M. Grabner, Vienna, 26 Sept. 1945. APMO, sygn. Dpr.-ZOd/78, Krakow Trial, Vol. 53, pp. 63-65.

<sup>118</sup> During the first interrogation, Grabner spoke of 400-500 prisoners.

*nation Camp were laid down. Furthermore, the decision was made to evacuate the civilian population in the vicinity of Auschwitz. They were sent to other areas. At that time, the foundation was laid for Auschwitz, which used to be a mere transit camp, to become a well-known extermination camp where millions of people were executed. In this meeting, Camp Commandant Höss received his corresponding orders for the extermination actions, and the authority to do so.*

*The terrible development of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp dates from this time.*

*In the middle of summer 1941, Obergruppenführer Glücks, I correct myself, Brigadeführer Glücks came to Auschwitz for an inspection. I remember that Glücks came to Auschwitz from Berlin with the instructions of the work assignment, radical cleansing of the camp.*

*After a new meeting at the beginning of 1942, which Himmler again presided over, the decision was made to carry out mass gassings. On the basis of these meetings, the large transports of Jews from Slovakia and the Reich arrived, and subsequently the others. Thus, Auschwitz developed into a mass-extermination camp.*

*I remember that, on the basis of the above-mentioned meeting, a large-scale purge took place in the camp, during which mainly those who were unable to work and those who suffered from infectious diseases were liquidated. Under this theme, Höss and Wirths decided on their own initiative to include the sick in the extermination action.*

*In addition, 2000 Russians, probably partisans, who were kept in the bunker on Block 11, completely isolated from the rest of the camp, were gassed in two groups of 1000. They were originally meant to be shot, but at the suggestion of Höss and Dr Schwela, they were designated for gassing. This was the first real gassing operation.”*

This account is full of anachronisms, false claims and contradictions.

Grabner claims that Himmler visited Auschwitz in May or June 1941 and again in early 1942.<sup>119</sup> While it is true that the *Reichsführer* SS visited Auschwitz twice, this happened on different dates. I already mentioned earlier his second visit, which occurred on 17-18 July 1942. His first visit took place on 1 March 1941. Neither *Hauptsturmführer* Eduard Wirths could have been present, who was deployed to Auschwitz and became its

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<sup>119</sup> Grabner does not explicitly say that the meeting “at the beginning of 1942” took place at Auschwitz, but in his fictitious chronology, Himmler could have witnessed “gassings in the crematorium” only on this occasion.

garrison physician only on 4 September 1942,<sup>120</sup> nor *Hauptsturmführer* Josef Kramer, who never was Glücks's adjutant, and who at that point in time was still camp leader at the Dachau Camp, where he remained until April of 1941, after which he was deployed to the Natzweiler Camp, whose commandant he became in October or November 1942.<sup>121</sup>

There is a detailed report on Himmler's first visit by the inmate head of inmate-labor deployment SS *Untersturmführer* Heinrich Schwarz in a letter dated 17 March 1941. The topics discussed during the meeting concerned the normal activities of the camp. There is no evidence that "the guidelines for the Auschwitz Extermination Camp were laid down" during that meeting or on any other occasion, for that matter. The only true claim in Grabner's account is the part concerning the evacuation of the local populace. The aforementioned report in fact contains a paragraph headlined "evacuation," where we read:<sup>122</sup>

*"2 transports with 800 Poles and 250 Jews each have already been deported to the General Government."*

Furthermore, Grabner contradicts himself when first asserting that Auschwitz had been "established as an extermination" right from the beginning, but then that it was "a mere transit camp" initially, and that the "guidelines for the Auschwitz Extermination Camp" were issued only in May-June 1941.

The visit of SS *Brigadeführer* Richard Glücks in the "middle of summer 1941" is also purely imaginary, as is the "meeting at the beginning of 1942, which Himmler again presided over." The only important meeting of that period is the infamous Wannsee Conference (of 20 January 1942), but it was not chaired by Himmler, who in fact did not participate at all, nor was any decision made "to carry out mass gassings."

If there is any logic in Grabner's statements, then it must be assumed that the "first gassing," which presumably took place "in March 1942" within the framework of Operation 14 f 13,<sup>123</sup> were the first implementation of the orders established by Himmler during that phantom meeting.

As far as the "first gassing" is concerned, it follows that it was not the result of Fritsch's (or Höss's) initiative, but Himmler had already decreed

<sup>120</sup> TNA, HW 16-21. German Police Decodes Nr 3 Traffic: 2.9.42. ZIP/ GPDD 224b/25.2.43, n. 8. Radio message of the SS WVHA to the Auschwitz Camp announcing the arrival of Dr. Wirths.

<sup>121</sup> Affidavit by J. Kramer dated 17 May 1945. TNA, WO 309-17, p. 5.

<sup>122</sup> GARF, 7021-108-32, pp. 28-30.

<sup>123</sup> On this "Operation 14 f 13" see Mattogno 2016b, pp. 87-102.

earlier the method of extermination to be by gassing. According to Grabner, Höss and Wirths (who was not even deployed at Auschwitz at the time) decided to include “to include the sick in the extermination action,” and they did so “on their own initiative.” But this is in blatant contradiction with Grabner’s claim that “the first gassings” of Operation 14 f 13 had been “ordered by Berlin,” so Himmler had already ordered to gas sick inmates.

According to this account, the “first gassing” involved 2,000 Russians, probably partisans, who were killed “in two groups of 1000.” Grabner states that this “was the first real gassing operation.”

On 17 September 1947, after being extradited to Poland, Grabner wrote a very long “Report on the Auschwitz Camp,” in which he returned to the themes he had already dealt with in previous interrogations:<sup>124</sup>

*“Thus, in 1941, a Prof. Dr. Schumann and Chief Medical Officer Dr. Müller showed up, who had selected prisoners on the basis of a decree. It is said to have been a decree which provided: ‘Cripples, the incorrigible, the incurable, those unable to work, and those who are contagious can or should be eliminated from the world.’ After a few months, another man arrived who did the same, and who was accompanied by a lady. They filled out questionnaires and took them away. The prisoners they selected were taken away, I think in the direction of Dresden. Later, the death notifications arrived from Office D.*

*In the winter of 1941-1942, 2 transports of allegedly Russian partisans arrived. The takeover was made at that time quite secretly by Höss, Fritsch [sic], Seidler, Dr. Schweler [sic], Hössler, Pallitsch [sic], and I believe by some block leaders. The two transports, as I learned, were brought to the camp with the purpose of executing them. The implementation of this order was also carried out secretly by the above-mentioned, and allegedly took place in Block 11. The first attempt at gassing is said to have been made during this operation.”*

This account, like the previous ones, is incoherent, because it starts with the gassing of sick prisoners as part of Operation 14 f 13, and inexplicably ends with the killing of Russian prisoners of war as the “first gassing.”

On 29 September 1947, Grabner was interrogated by Investigating Judge Jan Sehn.<sup>125</sup> By this time, Grabner had adopted the Poles’ “histori-

<sup>124</sup> M. Grabner, “Bericht über das Lager Auschwitz,” Krakow, 17 September 1947. APMO, sygn. Dpr.-ZO /53b. Krakow Trial, Vol. 53b, p. 358.

<sup>125</sup> APMO, sygn. Dpr.-ZO /53b, Krakow Trial, Vol. 53b, pp. 346-354; next four page num-

cal” terminology. The description of the alleged events he gave during this interrogation is scanty and incomplete (p. 349):

*“The killing of prisoners under the Code ‘14 f 13’ began and had its greatest intensity in 1942. It was inaugurated by the so-called ‘medical commission’ [komisja lekarska/ärzte Kommission]. Members of this commission were the physicians Dr. Schumann and Dr. Meier [in previous interrogations: Müller], who were the first to arrive at the Auschwitz Camp.”*

Based on the “report sheet” on these inmates that had been sent to Berlin, Grabner claimed to have learned later that they had been “sent to extermination,” but he specified: “I do not know in what way they were killed in that nursing home” (pp. 349f.). During his first interrogation, however, he knew that perfectly well: “Later I learned that they were supposedly gassed.”

Grabner added (p. 350):

*“From the moment when the mass transports began to arrive at Auschwitz, the SS stopped using the Designation 14 f 13 in their reports, and from then on all those who were sent from the camp to the Sonderbehandlung [special treatment] were registered as having died a natural death, those from the mass transports who were killed were registered as gesondert untergebracht [accommodated separately].”*

In this narrative, the alleged extermination is centered on Operation 14 f 13, and there is no gap left for either the first gassing or any Soviet prisoners of war.

At the end of this interrogation, Grabner made a puzzling statement (p. 354):

*“I was arrested in my homeland on 4 August 1945, and the Austrian political authorities opened an investigation against me. The signatures on the reports drawn up in the course of these investigations are in my own hand, but in the formulation of the content of these reports I had no influence, because I had to sign them as a result of the methods employed during my interrogations. Now, taking advantage of the opportunity given to me to write in prison, I am describing in my own hand my experiences and activities at the Auschwitz Camp.”*

These words are eerily reminiscent of those written by Höss in Krakow Prison about his first interrogation by the British who had arrested him (Hoess, p. 193; see Mattogno 2020, pp. 12-22):

*“At my first interrogation, evidence was obtained by beating me. I do not know what is in the record, although I signed it. Alcohol and the whip were too much for me.”*

No doubt, there is some truth to Grabner’s statement. Only a madman – or a former camp inmate blinded by hatred and black propaganda – could have spoken of 3-6 million victims (until November 1943!). And among the former Auschwitz inmates interrogated by the Vienna Police Department who fit these requirements was also Hermann Langbein. He in fact declared:<sup>126</sup>

*“Of course, Grabner was present at the mass gassings of the transports that came to Auschwitz. In the course of these transports, about 5,000,000 people were gassed.”*

Former SS *Oberscharführer* Erich Muhsfeldt was sent to Auschwitz on 15 August 1940 and remained there until 15 November. At that point, he was transferred to the Lublin-Majdanek Camp, and in May 1944 back again to Auschwitz. During his interrogation by Judge Jan Sehn on 9 July 1947, he also spoke briefly about the “first gassing”:<sup>127</sup>

*“From this first period of my service at Auschwitz I, remember that in 1941, during the fall, several hundred Soviet prisoners were gassed in the bunker of Block 11. Fritsch [sic], Palitsch [sic] and others took part in this gassing, I learned about from stories, and I saw that several hundred corpses were taken out of Block 11. These corpses were buried in a mass grave in Birkenau.”*

In an interrogation of 8 September 1947, Muhsfeldt returned to the subject by talking about SS *Oberscharführer* Karl Seufert:<sup>128</sup>

*“He took part in the gassing of 600 Russian commissars, killed in the basement of Block 11 in 1941. He himself told me how the gassing took place. Open cans of cyklon were placed in the basement cells of Block 11, in which the starving prisoners had been crammed. Then the doors were quickly closed. The prisoners, believing that they had been given food, threw themselves on the cans and devoured their contents. This*

<sup>126</sup> Interrogation of H. Langbein, Vienna, 8 Aug. 1945. GARF, 7021-108-34, p. 22.

<sup>127</sup> NTN 144-60, p. 56.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 92f.

*gassing then lasted 3 days, i.e. the corpses of those killed remained in the bunker for 3 days, and Seufert told me about this on one of these three days.”*

This version from hearsay is blatantly delusional.

Hans Stark, former SS *Unterscharführer*, joined the Political Department at Auschwitz in June of 1941 and was attached to Grabner. According to several witnesses, he too had taken part in the first homicidal gassing. In 1959, during the preparation of the Auschwitz trial, he vehemently denied the accusations leveled against him by Erwin Bartel, which we have already dealt with, even though Stark had made other statements that were much-more-dangerous for himself.<sup>129</sup> Stark insisted that he was not involved in the first gassing:<sup>130</sup>

*“The Zyklon B was stored in the SS sickbay and was used for disinfection purposes. Who it was that hit on the idea of using it to gas people, I do not know, but SS personnel in the camp rumored that it had been tried for the first time on detainees in a cell of Block 11. Who ordered and who executed this test, I do not know, but Schutzhaftlagerführer Fritsch is said to have been present at the test. That is all I know.”*

During the hearing, Stark did not even refer to that rumor, asserting that the Soviet POWs had been shot, not gassed:<sup>131</sup>

*“During my stay only two transports of Russian commissars arrived. In September/October 1941 the commissars were shot at the Black Wall between Block 11 and Block 10.”*

During his pre-trial interrogation on 29 March 1961, former SS *Untersturmführer* Henry Storch, who had been an SS paramedic and a pharmacist at Auschwitz, expressed himself in vague terms on the first homicidal gassing:<sup>132</sup>

*“I think it was in the spring of 1941 that I learned of people having been killed for the first time by means of Zyklon B in the basement of Block 11 (Penal Block) of the Main Camp. Up to that time, this gas had been used exclusively for disinfestation purposes. Disinfestation being a matter handled by the administration, this Zyklon B was also procured*

<sup>129</sup> Stark declared *i.a.* to have performed a homicidal gassing in Crematorium I at Auschwitz; see Mattogno 2016e, pp. 67-71.

<sup>130</sup> Interrogation of Hans Stark on 23 April 1959. ZStL, AR-Z 37/58 SB 6, p. 948.

<sup>131</sup> Fritz Bauer Institut, p. 4816; subsequent page numbers in the text from there unless stated otherwise.

<sup>132</sup> Staatsanwaltschaft..., *op. cit.* (note 54), Vol. 46, pp. 8217-8219.



*by the administration. While I was at Auschwitz, neither the camp physician nor the pharmacy had to procure or distribute the Zyklon B. If this were to have changed later on, it should be possible to determine this on the basis of the pharmacy files – if still available – which list all incoming and outgoing pharmaceuticals and other things.*

*On the day after the gassing itself, I saw the dead in the basement, probably in the company of the then camp physician. No further gassing took place in those basement rooms.*

*As far as I remember, the dead were Polish POWs who were still completely dressed. I cannot state a precise figure, but there surely were more than one hundred of them. The corpses were lying in several rooms, in which they had probably been gassed. As far as I can say, none of them showed any signs of violence. The faces were not discolored and the bodies were not twisted up.*

*Regarding the gassing procedure as such, I was not informed about it, neither before nor after the event, because the camp leaders kept completely quiet about it, also toward staff who were not involved. I can therefore make no statements as to who ordered the gassing or who implemented it. I do know, however, that SS personnel were sent to Berlin more-or-less at the same time in order to become acquainted with the handling of this very dangerous Zyklon-B gas. As far as I know, this training took place not at some SS institution, but at a private company, the name of which I have never known.<sup>[133]</sup>*

*The people involved were medical personnel, who were detailed to this short training course in order to learn about the handling of Zyklon B for the purpose of disinfestation. I know for a fact that only disinfestation was the topic, because at that time no one had yet thought about gassing people. The idea of killing people probably arose when the gas was used for disinfestation. The dangerous character of Zyklon had become known in the camp due to the great care that had to be taken for disinfestations. [...].*

*I had entered the basement at the request of my superior, Camp Physician Dr. Popiersch, in order to confirm that there was no longer any risk of toxic gas as a result of the basement's ventilation. That was the only reason why the camp physician had asked me to come along.*

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<sup>133</sup> The Tesch & Stabenow Company, in the context explained earlier (see p. 57).

*He himself had to ascertain the death of these people and to confirm that the cellar was now safe for use. To whom he reported about our findings, I have not learned. The whole operation of the inspection took less than a quarter of an hour.*

*I must add in this connection that neither the camp physician nor I, the pharmacist, had been informed previously about the gassing as such. No one came to see me to ask for advice regarding the planned gassing. I am positive that Dr. Popiersch did not know about this, either, as he would surely have spoken to me about it.”*

During the 65th Session of the Auschwitz Trial (13 July 1964), under the leading questions of the prosecutor and the presiding judge, which implied the answers desired, Henry Storch tried clumsily to somehow make his previous statements match those of the indictment. On the other hand, he had read the so-called memoirs which Rudolf Höss wrote while incarcerated in Krakow, so that “he had learned more about this” (p. 12123). First he corrected the date of the alleged first gassing, which initially was too inconsistent with the theory of the prosecution (pp. 12146-12148):

*“Prosecutor Vogel: Do you know when this gassing was conducted in the basements of Block 11?*

*Storch [pausing]: Maybe in August*

*Vogel: But according to the testimonies we have so far it was in the fall.*

*Storch: Yes*

*Vogel: So a few months later still.*

*Storch [interrupts]: I just told you, maybe.*

*Vogel: Yes.*

*Storch: It is 25 years ago. I know very well that it took place, but...*

*Vogel [interrupts]: Yes, so, as a reminder, a help for your memory should be the fact that you left for a few weeks in November 41 ...*

*Storch [interrupts]: In November 41.*

*Vogel: 41.*

*Storch: Yes.*

*Vogel: And those gassings are said to have been several weeks before that.*

*Storch: Yes, I just said, in – what did I say?*

*Vogel: August.*

*Storch: August. Yes, August, September, I don't want to commit myself here.*

*Vogel [interrupts]: In a previous interview you felt it was in the spring. But this certainly was not the case.*

*Storch: No, I don't think so. I think it was, I do not mean late that year, but around August, September. Maybe I'm wrong here. Because like everyone I saw so much during the war years that I cannot vouch for it that it was exactly in that month."*

Storch also put in doubt that the alleged victims were Poles ("Yes, just now I did not deny that that they could have been Poles. But I cannot say in good conscience that they were Poles"; p. 12160) and tried to muddy the waters regarding the number of victims, before reiterating that they could have been about 100 ("Yes, I just said that there were several dozen. 8 times 12 is 96"; *ibid.*), then saying that they could also have numbered "several hundred" (p. 12161). He confirmed, however, that the basement cell doors had been removed and that the corpses were found in individual rooms (p. 12126). Storch also provided further details about his own task (p. 12122):

*"The gassing was probably conducted with Zyklon B. None of us knew for certain what was happening, except for those who participated directly. The next morning the camp physician, Dr. Popiersch, ordered me to go with him into the basement to ascertain from the smell, the perception, that there were no traces of Zyklon, so that the basement could be cleared."*

Since the gassing had allegedly occurred with hydrogen cyanide, whose smell remotely resembles some aspects of the scent of bitter almonds, Dr. Popiersch and Storch went down into the gassed basement to check by sniffing whether that smell could still be perceived (p. 12124). They found all the windows open and did not perceive any smell of bitter almonds (p. 12129).

Asked by the presiding judge as to what he remembered about the first gassing, the witness Kurt Leischow, deported to Auschwitz in the fall of 1940, stated during the 67th session (17 July 1964; pp. 12700-12705):

*"Yes, this must have happened immediately after the invasion of Russia. Since transports arrived, smaller and larger ones, part of which entered the camp and some also entered the crematory at Auschwitz directly.*

*Presiding Judge: And do you know where this gassing was carried out?*

*Leischow: In the small crematory at Auschwitz.*

*Presiding Judge: Can you also remember a gassing in the Block which had the Number 13 and which we designated No. 11, that a gassing was carried out there as well?*

*Leischow: I did not know that.*”

Upon this response the presiding judge quoted the text, which the witness had deposed on 14 March 1961:

*“The first gassing of prisoners was carried out in the fall of 1941 in Block 11. They were Russian prisoners of war, namely a small transport, which soon after its arrival was brought to Block 11.”*

Leischow insisted on the crematorium, and as a justification he stated that he had a good friend with whom he had discussed the matter frequently, and that it was possible that he had been “influenced in some way.” He added that the Russian prisoners of war went “directly to the crematorium,” that he saw them running to the crematorium “naked.”

I will conclude this chapter with a testimony regarding Karl Fritsch whose hearsay character is typical for the topic of this study. On Good Friday of 1945, at Dora Labor Camp, then a subcamp of the Buchenwald Camp, a staff meeting took place, in which a certain Ensign Alfred Kurske is said to have participated. He later is said to have talked to his friend SS *Hauptsturmführer* Karl Kahr, who in turn was interrogated by an unknown person at Landshut on 19 September 1945. At that time he declared:<sup>134</sup>

*“SS Hauptsturmführer Fritsch told me that he was the inventor of the Auschwitz gas chambers and claimed to have built them himself. He was always playing around with his revolver and bragged about personally having laid flat thousands of detainees at Auschwitz.”*

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<sup>134</sup> Minutes of the interview conducted at Landshut on 19 September 1945, with the former SS *Hauptsturmführer* Dr. Karl Kahr. NO-1948, p. 3.



## Chapter IV: Critical and Comparative Source Analysis

Are the testimonies presented in the preceding chapter credible and in agreement? Can we draw from them a coherent reconstruction of the alleged first homicidal gassing which is free of contradictions? And are the reconstructions undertaken so far irrefragable with regard to the historiographic method used?

An unambiguous answer to these questions can derive only from a critical and comparative analysis of the testimonies, which would examine their assertions from all essential points of view of this alleged event, beginning with the claimed crime scene itself and the date on which the crimes is said to have taken place. This chapter is devoted to such a verification.

### 1. The Location of the First Gassing

A message from the secret resistance at Auschwitz dated 2 July 1942 notes the following with respect to the first homicidal gassing (“Obóz koncentracyjny...,” p. 47):

*“The first use of gas chambers took place in June of 1941. A transport of 1700 ‘incurably ill’ patients was formed, which was [allegedly] sent to the Dresden Sanitarium, but actually went to the building that had been transformed into a gas chamber [do budynku przebudowanego na komorę gazową].”*

Polish historiography furnishes a different version of this alleged event. In the first edition of the *Auschwitz Chronicle*, Danuta Czech wrote in her entry for 28 July 1941 (Czech 1959, pp. 106f.):

*“Arrival of a special commission in accordance with Himmler’s order, a member of which was Dr. Schumann. This commission reviewed all invalids, cripples, and those chronically ill who had been selected under the pretext that they would be sent to a different camp with lighter*

*work. Section Leader Hössler took this transport of 557 detainees to the mental institution of Königstein in Saxony. Hössler reported to Höss that these detainees were gassed in the shower room by the introduction of carbon monoxide through the shower heads.”*

In a later article, whose title translates to “The first selection for gas at Auschwitz – the transport to the ‘sanitarium’ at Dresden,” Stanisław Kłodziński looks specifically into this alleged event. He asserts that the gassing of these detainees occurred not at Königstein, but “near Sonnenstein, some 20 km from Dresden” (Kłodziński 1970, p. 40).

In the second (German and English) edition of the *Auschwitz Chronicle*, Danuta Czech “corrects” the previous entry and writes under the same date that the detainees were gassed at Sonnenstein near Pirna (Czech 1990, p. 75). The historicity of this event is not based on any document, but only on indirect testimonies, in particular that of Rudolf Höss. We have no direct testimony from persons who might have been present at the killing or seen the corpses of the alleged victims. All the testimonies collected by Stanisław Kłodziński, in fact, refer exclusively to the departure of the transport from Auschwitz. Hence, even if such a transport actually did leave the camp, there is no proof that it was exterminated by way of a gassing.

After having spoken about the special commission of Dr. Schumann, Rudolf Höss, a key witness with respect to this alleged gassing, stated during his trial only (Kłodziński 1970, p. 40):

*“In accordance with Schumann’s orders, Hössler took these detainees to the mental-health institute at Königstein in Saxony, where patients had been liquidated before. As Hössler reported to me, the patients from Auschwitz were led into a shower room in that institution and killed by means of carbon monoxide introduced into the shower room through the openings of the showers. Only this one transport from Auschwitz went to Königstein.”*

Without giving any details, Rudolf Höss affirms in a general way that the above-mentioned special commission arrived at Auschwitz “in 1941.”

I have dwelt at length on Maximilian Grabner’s lucubrations about this alleged event in Section III.3.

Thus, Danuta Czech’s account has no greater value than the resistance movement’s message of 2 July 1942, cited initially, but it differs from the latter not only with respect to the date and number of victims, but also as to the place of this first gassing. The first message says, after all, that it occurred neither at Königstein nor at Sonnenstein, but “in the building transformed into a gas chamber,” therefore not even in the basement of Block

11 either, because the latter had undergone no architectural change for the alleged gassing. Furthermore, the witness Leon Głogowski declared explicitly that the first gassing test was implemented at Birkenau on 28 July 1941, with 50 persons (Kłodziński 1970, p. 46). Finally, according to Hans Aumeier, Bruno Baum and Kurt Leischow, the first gassing was performed in Crematorium I at Auschwitz.

Therefore, the testimonies do not even agree on the location of the first homicidal gassing: it was either Bunker 11, or the Auschwitz Crematorium I, or in Birkenau.

## 2. The Date of the First Gassing

According to the *Auschwitz Chronicle*, the first homicidal gassing was carried out in the basement of Block 11 at Auschwitz on 3-5 September 1941. Stanisław Kłodziński has corrected that date, claiming that this gassing occurred on 5 or 6 through 8 or 9 September (Kłodziński 1972, p. 89). Polish historiography of the immediate post-war period makes it 15 September. In 1945, Filip Friedman, director of the “Central Jewish Historical Commission in Poland,” published a book on Auschwitz, in which he wrote:<sup>135</sup>

*“Well, at Auschwitz the first gassing was carried out on 15 September 1941 in Block 11, in a temporary room, in a former ammunition warehouse. Then, a few hundred Russian prisoners of war (probably 600 or 700) and a few hundred Polish prisoners were used for this ‘experiment’.”*

That date was also accepted by Nachman Blumental, another member of the Commission (Blumental, Vol. I, p. 71), as well as by Ota Kraus and Erich Kulka (Kraus/Kulka, p. 157). Judge Jan Sehn, however, although he had interviewed a number of witnesses who claimed to know about the first gassing, limited himself to a general reference to the summer of 1941. This dating was also used in the verdict of the Höss Trial, whereas in the indictment in the trial of the camp garrison the alleged event was moved to the autumn of 1941 without explanation. Even the verdict of the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial, despite (or precisely because of) the numerous witnesses called, was forced to place it approximately “in the fall of 1941.”

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<sup>135</sup> Friedman 1945, p. 19. The published English translation reads here (Friedman 1946, p. 18): “The first victims were gassed on 15 September 1941, in Block II [sic], in a former munitions store building. A number of Russian prisoners, 600 to 700, and several hundred Polish prisoners were used for this first experiment.”



All these datings are completely without foundation. Strictly speaking, any kind of dating is, in principle, completely without foundation, because no archival document has been found for this first gassing, and because all available testimonies are mutually contradictory as to this and all other fundamental issues.

For Rudolf Höss, the first homicidal gassing took place after the end of November of 1941. Maximilian Grabner asserted that the gassings in Block 11 occurred “from early 1942 on,” but certainly after 21 March. Hans Aumeier placed the event “in the month of November or December 1942.” The witness Kula is certain the date was 14 August 1941, that day being the first anniversary of his deportation to Auschwitz, but two years later he stated that the event took place in July of 1941. Zbigniew Baranowski spoke of 15 August 1941; Adam Kuryłowicz generically mentioned August 1941, while Witold Pilecki stated that the alleged event had occurred a “couple of months after the beginning of the war with the Bolsheviks,” meaning toward the end of August 1941.

Some testimonies have the alleged gassing occurring in September of 1941: reports from the Resistance of 15 and 17 November 1941, and an article in the *Polish Fortnightly Review* claim 5/6 September 1941; for Ludwik Banach, “it was on 5 September 1941”; for Josef Vacek it was “early September”; for Jan Chlebowski “September, or perhaps early October 1941.” Others claimed the month of October, like the resistance report of 24 October 1941, Józef Koczorowski and Ludwik Rajewski. Walter Petzold asserted with assurance the date of 9 October 1941, while Henry Storch referred instead to the spring of 1941, but, contradicting himself, he moved that later to August or September 1941.

Major Zamoyski mentioned two alleged gassings: the first took place in “October – November 1941” and involved 470 Poles, the second “at the end of November 1941” and involved “500 Russian prisoners of war”. Charge No. 5 of the Polish Government against Hans Frank mentions the date 5-6 November 1941. Stanisław Głowa indicated the turn of the year 1941 to 1942.

At the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial, Alexander Lebedev reported that he had heard from two witnesses, a Polish officer named Rasiński and a German “professor of medicine,” that the gassing took place on 13 September 1941. Asked by the presiding judge regarding the date, Lebedev pointed out that two versions existed in this respect, the 3rd and the 13th of September, but that he had heard the second version. The witness Czesław Głowacki, however, placed this alleged event “in early 1942.”

The date of the first homicidal gassing is therefore absolutely undetermined and, in the absence of any archival documents, undeterminable. It varies within a range of at least six months, between spring or summer of 1941 and January of 1942.

Among the detainees, there is not even agreement on the time of day for the gassing. While most witnesses place it after the evening roll call and curfew for the block itself or the camp in general, Michał Kula, from whom Danuta Czech has taken the gist of her account mentioned in the introduction, asserts that the gassing was done during the day while the detainees had comfortably stretched themselves out in the sun.

### 3. The Preparations for the First Gassing

Some witnesses report that prior to the alleged gassing, building work went on in Block 11. Building materials were brought in from the *Industriehof* to wall up the windows of the block (Marian Zawodny). For this purpose, sand, lime, and cement were dumped in front of Block 11 (Edward Sobczyk). Other witnesses say only one truckload of earth was unloaded, and the windows of the basement were not walled up, only covered with earth (Jan Wolny; Tadeusz Kopyt; Michał Kula; Emil de Martini), and that this happened before the Russian prisoners of war were moved into the basement. Another witness (Edward Liszka) says it happened after they had been shut in, and it was sand, not earth, that was used. Witness Walter Petzold asserts instead that the windows were covered “with wooden shutters” (“*mit Holzverschlägen*”) before the transport of victims arrived at Block 11.

### 4. The Victims of the First Gassing

The report from the Resistance of 24 October 1941, does not mention that some of the victims were sick camp inmates, but that the victims were 850 Russian prisoners of war. In the report of 15 December 1941, there were 500 victims, all prisoners of war, but for Witold Pilecki 700. Rudolf Höss does not speak about sick inmates either and relates only that Fritzsch “stuffed the various cells located in the cellar full with Russians.” Similarly, Pery Broad spoke only of Russian prisoners of war, while Maximilian Grabner initially mentioned only sick inmates, but later only Russians.

The testimonies do not allow us to decide the exact nature (military ranks) of those prisoners, because they were either: “officers” (Eugeniusz Motz, Feliks Myłyk, Leon Czekalski, Ludwik Banach), “culture officers” (Jiří Beranowský), “officers and noncoms” (report of 24 October 1941), “probably... partisans” (Maximilian Grabner), political or Soviet “commissars” (Michał Kula, Michael Kruczek, Roman Taul), or simple soldiers (“Almost all of the Soviet prisoners were very young, not older than 18, and without military ranks.” Kazimierz Hałgas).

For Jan Chlebowski the victims were instead an unspecified number of “Soviet soldiers” and “200 Polish officers” and at the same time an unspecified number of “Russian officers” and “200 Poles,” who were sick prisoners taken from the hospital. Jan Krokowski reported 600 Soviet prisoners and 400 Poles.

Czesław Głowacki (14 March 1947) mentioned 100 prisoners of war instead. Władysław Fejkiel only gave the total number: about 1,000 Soviet patients and prisoners, as did Adam Kuryłowicz, who claimed 700 hospital patients and Soviet army officers. Władysław Tondos, on the other hand, gave exact numbers: 280 sick inmates and 600 Soviet prisoners of war. Emil de Martini gave the figure of 200-300 sick inmates and a total of about 1,000 people. Bartosz Oziemkowski also spoke of 200-300 Poles, plus a few hundred Soviet prisoners, Edward Pyś of about 200 Poles and a few hundred Soviet prisoners.

Other accounts agree on the fact that the victims were both Russian prisoners of war and sick inmates from the camp, but disagree on the respective numbers and total, and they are at variance with the testimonies that mention only Soviet POWs, as shown by the Table 2 (p. 139).

Maximilian Grabner speaks of two gassings, each involving 1,000 Russians, whereas for Pery Broad the victims of the first gassing were not more than 40, because it took place in a single cell similar to one in which 40 Russians had died from suffocation for lack of air circulation – thus, that was the greatest number of people who could be pressed into one cell. Hans Aumeier, on the other hand, mentions 50-80 Jewish inmates. Finally, according to the report of 2 July 1942, the victims were exclusively sick inmates, 1,700 to be exact.

The testimonies which include sick inmates among the victims are moreover in disagreement on the subject of which SS doctor ordered the selection in the hospital blocks for the gassing. For Roman Taul it was Dr. Schwela, but for Josef Vacek it was Dr. Jungen, whereas Zenon Rozanski

and Wiesław Kielar saw Dr. Entress, who, it must be remembered, was not yet at Auschwitz at the time in question.

**Table 2:** Claimed Victims of the First Gassing

Witness	POWs	Detainees	Others	Total
Josef Vacek	500	196		696
Report of 24 Oct. 1941	850	0	0	850
<i>Polish Fortnightly Review</i>	700	300		1,000
Witold Pilecki	700	0	0	700
Jan Krokowski	600	400	0	1,000
Józef Koczorowski	600	200	0	800
Czesław Głowacki	100	0	0	100
Adam Kuryłowicz	?	?	0	700
Władysław Tondos	600	280	0	880
Władysław Fejkiel	?	?	0	1000
Zygmunt Smużewski	?	?	0	980
Ludwik Banach	680	0	120 political detainees	800
Zenon Rozanski	1,473	190	0	1,663
Erwin Bartel	?	?	?	350
Kazimierz Hałgas	600	257	0	857
Report of 15 Nov. 1941	600	200	0	800
Report of. 17 Nov. 1941	600	250	0	850
Report of 15 Dec. 1942	500	0	0	500
Natalia Zarembina	500	300	0	800
Zbigniew Baranowski	400	1,000	0	1,400
Walter Petzold (1)	850	220	8	1,078
Walter Petzold (2)	850	200	0	1,050
“Charge No. 5”	600	200		800
Michał Kula (1)	60	260	0	320
Michał Kula (2)	?	200	0	200 + ?
Major Zamoyski	500	0	0	500
Jan Chlebowski (1)	? (soldiers)	0	200 Polish officers	?
Jan Chlebowski (2)	? (officers)	200 Polish inmates	0	?
Eugeniusz Motz	200	100-150	0	300-350
Emil de Martini	[700-800]	200-300	0	1000
Bartosz Oziemkowski	hundreds	200-300	0	?
Alexey Lebedev	600-700	?	0	?
Edward Pyś	hundreds	200	0	?
Franciszek Targosz	600	300	0	900
Wiesław Kielar	?	?	?	ca. 1,000

Finally, there is also disagreement among the witnesses with respect to the transportation of the alleged victims to Block 11. Wiesław Kielar declares that the sick were carried to Block 11 by the paramedics, but not into the

basement – that job was carried out by the detainees from the Penal Company. Konrad Szweda, on the other hand, affirms that the paramedics carried the sick right into the cells in the basement.

The henchman of the gassing was Palitzsch, if we believe Zbigniew Tryczyński, whereas for Michał Kula it was Palitzsch and “Tom Mix,” or Palitzsch and “the strangler.” For Walter Petzold and Eugeniusz Motz, however, it was Breitwieser.

## 5. The Removal of the Gassed

### 5.1. Persons Who Did the Work

Two categories of witnesses claim to have done this work, each one excluding the other: the paramedics and the members of the Penal Company. In fact, the removal of the gassed corpses was carried out:

- by Josef Vacek, paramedic, “together with 30 paramedics,”
- by Walter Petzold, paramedic, with a group of 30 paramedics,
- by Władysław Tondos, paramedic, with a group of 30 paramedics,
- by Bogdan Gliński, paramedic, with “more than 20” doctors and paramedics,
- by Kazimierz Hałgas, paramedic, with “at least 80” paramedics,
- by Ludwik Banach, detainee in the Penal Company, with “several tens of colleagues,”
- by Zenon Rozanski, also a detainee of the Penal Company, with a group of “20 men.”

As far as the method of removal is concerned, the corpses were taken out one at a time by single detainees (Witness Kielar) and at the same time passed from hand to hand in a sort of human “chain” (Witness Rozanski).

### 5.2. Beginning of the Removal

The removal of the gassed corpses from the basement of Block 11 began

- on the same day for Jan Chlebowski,
- “next day” according to the article in the *Polish Fortnightly Review* and for Emil de Martini,
- “the following night” for Josef Vacek,
- “one to two days later” for Eugeniusz Motz,
- two days later for Wiesław Kielar and Czesław Głowacki,

- “three days later” for Bogdan Gliński and for Czesław Rychlik (“after 3 days”),
- “three days later ... in the middle of the night” for Wojciech Barcz,
- in the evening of the third day, after the evening roll call for Kazimierz Hałgas and Jan Wolny,
- “the fourth night” for Natalia Zarembina,
- “after 4 or 5 days” for Władysław Tondos,
- the sixth day for Walter Petzold,
- for Władysław Fejkiel, the gassing lasted “a few days,” after which the Bunker was reopened.

### 5.3. Duration of the Removal

The removal of the gassed corpses took:

- “all day” for the article in the *Polish Fortnightly Review*,
- “one night” according to Feliks Myłyk,
- “all of the next night” for Zygmunt Smużewski,
- “until late into the night” according to Zenon Rozanski,
- “all night” for Tadeusz Kurant,
- “until 5 a.m. the next morning” Kazimierz Hałgas,
- “two nights” Władysław Tondos and Wiesław Kielar,
- “three nights through” for Josef Vacek,
- “several nights” for Natalia Zarembina,
- and Władysław Tondos declared: “Then we loaded the corpses onto the platform of a truck, more or less 70 of them, and at night, we took them silently through the camp, so that the camp would not know about it, to the crematorium.” If this refers to a single night, then there would have been  $(880 \div 70 =)$  12.5 loads on the “platform.”

### 5.4. Disposition of the Bodies Removed

Some witnesses declare that the corpses of the victims were undressed before being taken away. This happened in the yard outside Block 11 according to Kazimierz Hałgas and Władysław Tondos; or inside Block 11 in the ground-floor hall for Wiesław Kielar. But for Walter Petzold, the bodies were not undressed at all (“But those clothes could not be removed from the corpses, because their flesh had become jelly-like and stuck to the clothing.”), whereas for Kurt Leischow the Russian prisoners had been gassed naked.

As far as the disposition of the bodies is concerned, most of the witnesses maintain that they were taken to the crematorium and cremated (Josef Vacek, Feliks Myłyk, Zygmunt Smużewski, Ludwik Banach, Kazimierz Hałgas, Władysław Tondos, Wiesław Kielar, Walter Petzold). Others say they were interred at Birkenau: for Michał Kula, they “were [...] taken away towards Brzezinka [Birkenau] where they were buried”; also for Wojciech Barcz “they were moved out of the camp,” where they were buried in mass graves. Stanisław Głowa made a similar statement: the bodies were taken “to the graves that had already been dug in Birkenau.” For Muhsfeldt, too, the bodies were buried “in a mass grave in Birkenau.”

Finally, Jan Wolny combines both versions: some of the corpses were taken to the crematorium and cremated, and the remainder were buried in Birkenau in a mass grave.

## 6. The Gassing

### 6.1. Location of the Gassing

Even among the testimonies that place the first homicidal gassing in the basement of Block 11, there is disagreement as to the rooms where the alleged crime was carried out. Witold Pilecki spoke of “a room in Block XI,” Fejkiel of “a bunker cell” with a capacity of 40 people, into which 1,000 were crammed! Pery Broad and Hans Stark affirmed that the alleged gassing took place in a single cell, while Jan Krokowski recounted that this took place “in the Block-11 chamber.” Josef Vacek, Michał Kula and Czesław Rychlik mentioned the “gas chamber” of Block 11, which never existed. Even more anachronistically, Major Zamoyski mentioned a “gas chamber” that was or looked like a “bath room.” Czesław Głowacki stated that the victims were confined in “six bunkers,” that is, in six cells. Friedrich Hirsch, on the other hand, said that the alleged crime was perpetrated in “a few holding cells in Bunker Block 11” or in a single cell, in which “20 to 30 inmates” were locked up.

Some witnesses found the corpses only in the cells (Bogdan Gliński, Wojciech Barcz, Wiesław Kielar), whereas Zenon Rozanski saw so many corpses crowded into the basement *corridor*(!) that they had no room to collapse and remained standing on their feet. Similar to this, Kazimierz Hałgas claimed to have seen both corpses and remnants of Zyklon B “in the corridors and the cellars.” Major Zamoyski and Stanisław Głowa also claimed that the corpses had been “in a standing position” (Głowa: “The

corpses were not lying down, but they were all standing”), which is pure nonsense. Other invented characteristics of the corpses: they had gnawed-off fingers and ears (Czesław Rychlik); “inmates were found strangling each other to shorten their torments”! (Jan Krokowski).

Furthermore, the doors of the cells were locked and hermetically closed for the above witnesses and for Konrad Szweda, but according to Henry Storch the doors had been removed altogether.

## 6.2. Gassing Technique

Only three witnesses describe the technique used in the alleged gassing: Michał Kula, Wojciech Barcz, and Konrad Szweda. Before we look at these accounts, we must first stress some important points.

Witness Kula:

*“Both the sick inmates and the Russian POWs were lodged in the bunker of Block 11. The little windows of those bunkers were covered with fine earth to make them air-tight. An SS man – a Blockführer – whose name I do not know but who was called ‘Tom Mix’ by the detainees, threw the gas into the bunkers through the door to the corridor. After the gas had been introduced, the door was closed.”*

We will consider the rest of the account later.

Witness Barcz:

*“The sight we faced when the doors were opened was something like opening a tightly packed suitcase. The corpses fell towards us. I think that there were perhaps 60 corpses in one of those small cells, packed so tightly, that even when they were dead, they could not collapse. One could see that they had tried to get near the ventilation trap through which, by the way, the gas had been thrown in.”*

Witness Szweda:

*“After one o’clock at night, when the last cell had been closed, the gassing started. Several SS men, through small openings above the door [przez małe otwory nad drzwiami] dumped into each [cell the contents of] two cans which contained the gas in the form of small blue crystals. Then the openings were hermetically closed.”*

Hence, Kula declared that the Zyklon B was thrown into the corridor of the basement from the entrance door (cf. Photos 9-11). That makes sense only if the victims were in the corridor, which is indirectly confirmed by the witness when he says that “Palitzsch put on his gas mask, opened the door



of the bunkers<sup>136</sup> and discovered that the people inside were still alive.” Actually, if the victims had been in the cells, Palitzsch would not have been able to find out anything by simply opening the door to the basement. We have already seen that this assertion is contradicted by witnesses Gliński, Barcz, Szweda, and Kielar, according to whom the victims were in the cells. Only Witness Rozanski maintains that they were in the central corridor, piled up directly behind the access door to the basement.

Jean-Claude Pressac has this to say about the gassing technique which requires the introduction of Zyklon B “through the opening of the door prior to closing it” (Pressac 1988, p. VIII):

*“It is frankly unrealistic to imagine an SS man with a gas mask on his face and a can of Zyklon B in his hand launching the contents of the can into the space of some thirty centimeters [one foot] between the heads of the crowded prisoners and the ceiling (because the toxic granules may well fall outside the room) and then trying to close the door on them without having this operation degenerate into a desperate revolt of the victims.”*

This argument, which Jean-Claude Pressac presents with respect to an alleged homicidal gas chamber at the Majdanek Camp, applies also to our case.<sup>137</sup> It is all the more applicable to our case, since the alleged victims are said to have been to a large extent Russian prisoners of war, unsubdued men who would not have let themselves be gassed like guinea-pigs without putting up a violent fight – which no witness has ever mentioned.

Two witnesses declared that they saw the empty cans and inert residue of the Zyklon-B carrier on the floor of the basement corridor:

*“On the floor there was something like broken lumps of sugar, also something green the shape and size of sweets.”* (Ludwik Banach)

*“In the corridors and the cellars, in which the corpses were lying, one could see granules spread around.”* (Kazimierz Hałgas)

This means that, if the victims had been packed the way the Witness Rozanski described, the gassing would actually have had to be done by launching the cans of Zyklon B over their heads. Jean-Claude Pressac is perfectly accurate when he calls such a gassing technique decidedly “unrealistic.”

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<sup>136</sup> The plural designates all the rooms in the basement together.

<sup>137</sup> The ceiling of the basement of Block 11 is 15 cm higher than that of the room mentioned by Pressac, but this detail is irrelevant.

The Witness Barcz asserts, on the other hand, that the victims were shut into the cells and the Zyklon B was thrown in through the “ventilation flap,” which is no doubt the “air hole” of the “dark cells,” such as the one in Cell 20, which appears on Drawing 4056 of 26 June 1944 (cf. Document 7): an opening 10 cm × 10 cm in the outside wall, protected on the outside by a perforated sheet-metal case bolted to a metal frame set in the wall, as shown in Photos 30f. in the Appendix.

Under those conditions, a homicidal gassing would be somewhat problematic, to say the least. Once the sheet-metal case had been dismantled, it would have been necessary to introduce the Zyklon B into a horizontal aperture having a square cross-section area of 10 cm × 10 cm (ca. 4" × 4") and a length of 65 centimeters (ca. 2 ft). Whichever way one looks at the implementation of this procedure, there is no way to keep the victims from plugging the small opening from the inside with pieces of clothing, thereby preventing the Zyklon B from reaching the cells. And besides, such a procedure for introducing the material would have been applicable, if at all, in only five cells – the dark cells – but not in the others. Then what technique might have been used for them?

Witness Petzold claims that the gassing was done by means of “specially placed window flaps” and says later that “the flaps ... closed,” but mentions also that two days before the gassing the windows of the basement had been closed hermetically by “placing shutters on all windows.” It is clear that these non-existent “window flaps” are only a fabrication needed to render the description of the gassing more convincing.

All this does not even take into consideration that, according to other witnesses, the low-lying windows of the basement had previously been walled up or covered with earth or sand.

The witness Szweda asserted instead that the Zyklon B was fed into the cells through “small openings” or “little windows,” which were allegedly located above the doors of each cell. However, as shown by Photos 19 and 20 in the Appendix, such windows did not exist. The cell doors had only a small inspection hole, some 5 cm (2") in diameter, in the doors themselves and not “above” them, and it would have been impossible to use this hole for a gassing, to say nothing of an introduction of cans of Zyklon B. Friedrich Hirsch stated that a single can of Zyklon B – it is not known how – was thrown into a cell into “the midst of the inmates” (20-30 people). Finally, the sentence of the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial asserts that Zyklon B was introduced “through openings,” without bothering to specify what they were and where they were.

### 6.3. Duration of the Victims' Agony

Witness Kula, after stating that the gas had been thrown into the basement of Block 11 during the evening of 14 August, goes on:

*“On 15 August, at about 4 pm, Palitzsch walked across the roll-call yard directly to Block 11 with a gas mask. Because it was the Feast of the Assumption, we had the afternoon off and could thus observe the scene which I will now describe. Mietek Borek and Waclav Ruski, two assistants at Bunker 11, told me that Palitzsch put on his gas mask, opened the door of the bunkers, and discovered that the people inside were still alive.*

*Actually, they moved around only on all fours and were very weak, but they were still alive. So, Tom Mix was called, and he threw in the contents of another can of gas. The bunkers were reopened only in the evening of 16 August 1941. None of those who had entered were still alive.”*

Hence, the victims were still alive at least 15 hours after the introduction of the Zyklon B.<sup>138</sup>

Krokowski resumed this narrative, but shortened the timeline dramatically:

*“As the comrade nurses later told us, a small dose of gas was used. After two hours, when the doors of the block were opened, it appeared that many of the prisoners were half stunned but still alive. An [additional] dose of gas was added – naturally with a more-effective result.”*

Let us note that Kula's version has received official consecration by having made its way – via Jan Sehn – into the *Auschwitz Chronicle*. It is, however, in blatant contradiction with Rudolf Höss's version, who stated that the Zyklon B “caused the immediate death” when his deputy Fritzsch implemented the first homicidal gassing. Aside from any other considerations, we must remember that Rudolf Höss, as opposed to Witness Kula, knew the toxicology of hydrogen cyanide.

Actually, assuming the reality of a homicidal gassing, even a single 1-kg can of Zyklon B (Breitwieser: “Zyklon B came in small 1-kg cans.”) spread in the central and lateral corridors (a total of 341 m<sup>3</sup> from which we must deduct the volume occupied by the 850 victims, *i.e.*, some 64 m<sup>3</sup>, hence a net volume of some 277 m<sup>3</sup> of air), would have released within an

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<sup>138</sup> The Witness Szweda indicated that the gassing began at around 1 a.m.

hour or two a theoretical amount<sup>139</sup> of gas yielding a concentration of 3.6 g/m<sup>3</sup> or 3.6 mg/liter. Such a concentration is considered to be immediately fatal, causing the victim's death within a few minutes. To evaluate the outcome of such a gassing, we can refer to the experimental data of the U.S. execution gas chambers, where the executees lived on average some nine minutes with a hydrogen-cyanide concentration of 3,200 ppm, corresponding to 3.84 grams per cubic meter (Christianson, p. 216). Although the conditions of these two cases are very different, nobody would expect that the alleged victims in the bunker would have died within nine minutes, but certainly they would have all died within a few hours.

One could of course claim that the evaporation of the poison from the carrier material possibly took several hours because of the conditions prevailing in the basement, primarily the low temperature, and that on account of this delay the victims might have still been alive after some 15 hours, as Kula asserts. But such an assumption is groundless. First of all, two witnesses assert that in spite of a ventilation of over two days, "it was very hot" (Czesław Głowacki) and "down below the air was sticky and it was hot" (Wiesław Kielar).

Secondly, even if the temperature in the basement had been below zero centigrade (highly improbable, if not impossible, for Auschwitz in the middle of August or early September), this would not have adversely affected the vaporization of the hydrogen cyanide. From tests carried out in 1940-1941 on the disinfection of military barracks by means of Zyklon B – with temperatures between -4 and -8°C in the rooms to be disinfested – it was found that "in all cases, the essential part of the vaporization has taken place after one or two hours" (Peters/Rasch, p. 136).

Hence, even under the most adverse climatic conditions, the victims would inevitably have died within a few hours at the latest, and the first ones to die would have been the ones nearest the door to the basement (through which the Zyklon B is said to have been dumped), *i.e.*, the very people that Palitzsch is said to have found still alive after 15 hours of gassing.

The Witness Szweda asserts that two cans of Zyklon B were dumped into each cell. Assuming an average volume of some 18.5 m<sup>3</sup> for the cells and an average of 40 victims in each cell (occupying some 3 m<sup>3</sup> of space), in the remaining 15.5 m<sup>3</sup> of space, two cans containing 1,000 grams each

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<sup>139</sup> Depending on the ambient temperature. I am not taking into consideration the losses by adsorption on the walls, which in this case are of no importance.

would have yielded a final maximum concentration of 130 g/m<sup>3</sup> or 130 mg/L of air after an hour or two, and the death of the victims would have occurred within several tens of minutes at the latest.

As far as the quantity of Zyklon B employed for the alleged homicidal gassing, it was three cans (=kg) according to the witness Kula (two in the first phase and one more in the second phase of the gassing), two cans (=kg) per cell (there were 28 cells in the basement) according to Szweda, or at least three to five cans according to Motz. Głowacki spoke of two cans in each of the “six bunkers.”

#### 6.4. Test for Residual Gases

The witness Storch claimed to have checked whether any gas was left in the basement of Block 11 after the homicidal gassing and the ventilation, having been ordered to do so by Dr. Popiersch. The test method described by him is somewhat suicidal, to say the least (Fritz Bauer Institut, pp. 12124, 12129):

*“Dr. Popiersch said that it was a hydrogen-cyanide preparation smelling of bitter almonds. I went down into the basement. [...] No smell was noticeable.”*<sup>[140]</sup> *All windows had been opened. My task was fulfilled.”*

The whole matter took “a quarter of an hour at the outside.” Thus, the Auschwitz Camp’s pharmacist, SS *Untersturmführer* Henry Storch, would have gone down into the basement of Block 11, obviously without a gas mask, in order to find out whether there was still a smell of bitter almonds!

As I have stressed in Chapter I, because of the extreme toxicity of the substance, the use of hydrogen cyanide for disinfestation was regulated by appropriate mandatory procedures meant to eliminate the risk of an accidental poisoning. They were known and applied by all disinfectors, including those at Auschwitz. According to these dispositions, which I will quote below in detail, when a disinfestation with hydrogen cyanide had been carried out, it was necessary to ventilate the rooms for at least 20 hours, to take outside and beat all carpets, blankets, mattresses, etc., if living quarters had been treated, and finally, before the rooms could again be made accessible, to run a residual-gas test (*Gasrestprobe*). This test was carried out by means of a special apparatus called residual-gas detection equip-

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<sup>140</sup> According to other witnesses, one could smell in the basement the stench of the decomposing bodies and the acrid odor of the chlorine spread on the floor (Kazimierz Hałgas; Jan Wolny; Wiesław Kielar). The Witness Gliński declared, moreover, that in the basement “there were still vapors of the gas.”

ment (*Gasrestnachweisausrüstung*), contained in its integrated case, issued mandatorily to personnel authorized to carry out disinfestations by means of hydrogen cyanide. Hence it was also known to, available to, and used by the authorized disinfestation personnel at Auschwitz. The test included the use of a paper strip which was soaked with a chemical solution right before the test. This solution reacted with hydrogen cyanide and took on a more-or-less-intense blue color depending on the concentration of the toxic vapors in the air. This strip was then compared with a graded color scale of different shades of blue corresponding to the various concentrations and the various degrees of risk posed by the hydrogen-cyanide vapors. That was the normal chemical method used when testing for residual gas.

But ‘going by the nose,’ as Henry Storch claimed to have done, was not only pure and suicidal folly. This testimony is even outrageous, as the Witness Storch, in his capacity as the SS pharmacist responsible for the custody of Zyklon B in the hospital, could not possibly have been unaware of this fundamental safety procedure. Furthermore, if the gassing had been performed by the Disinfector Arthur Breitwieser, as claimed by a number of witnesses, the ‘nose’ method applied by Henry Storch would appear even more absurd.

No witness mentions the test for residual gas, which was, at the time, both necessary and customary. The witnesses Gliński and Kielar claim to have entered the basement of Block 11 without a gas mask, accompanied by SS personnel likewise unprotected by a mask.

Neither does any witness mention another normal and necessary operation: the removal of the spent gypsum carrier of the Zyklon B. The witnesses Banach and Hałgas declare, rather, that Zyklon-B residues and empty cans were still on the floor of the corridors after the ventilation of the basement.

#### Discourse on Henry Storch’s “Nasal Test”

An online entry of the Swiss Institute for Veterinary Pharmacology and Toxicology, describes the human ability to smell hydrogen cyanide in this way:<sup>141</sup>

*“The ability to perceive the odor of bitter almonds is genetically determined and is present in only about 50% of the population. The odor*

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<sup>141</sup> Institut für Veterinärpharmakologie und -Toxikologie, Winterthurerstrasse 260, CH-8057 Zürich, Clinical Toxicology, entry “*Cyanverbindungen – Kleintier*”; [https://www.vetpharm.uzh.ch/clinitox/toxdb/KLT\\_060.htm](https://www.vetpharm.uzh.ch/clinitox/toxdb/KLT_060.htm).

*threshold is 0.2-5 ppm HCN. A further warning effect can be given by irritation in the throat area.”*

Therefore, if only 50% of all people have the ability to smell hydrogen-cyanide vapors in such a low range, the “nasal” method claimed by SS Pharmacist Storch is not mere suicidal folly, but an inappropriate method to ascertain whether there was any dangerous hydrogen-cyanide residue in the bunker. This reasoning presupposes:

1. that Storch belonged to that 50% of the population capable of smelling hydrogen cyanide, which is only a conjecture;
2. that in 1941 this fact was already known and could be effectively exploited;
3. that the SS, who did have a stock of Zyklon B for disinfection purposes, did not have any residual-gas detection equipment for Zyklon, whose use was mandatory under law.

Regarding Point 2, the ability to perceive the odor of hydrogen cyanide and the range of perception are the result of subsequent research concerning mainly workplaces exposed to hydrogen-cyanide vapors. The information note cited above also states:<sup>142</sup>

*“In breathing air, 200-300 ppm of hydrogen cyanide has a rapidly lethal effect, 100 ppm is life-threatening, 20-40 ppm is generally tolerated even with prolonged exposure. The TLV value is given as 4.7 ppm (5 mg/m<sup>3</sup>) to 10 ppm (11 mg/m<sup>3</sup>).”*

The 1989 German toxicological leaflet “Hydrogen Cyanide” (“Cyanwasserstoff”) explains under the headline “Perception” (“Wahrnehmung”):<sup>143</sup>

*“Hydrogen cyanide has a characteristic odor, which, however, is not equally perceptible to everyone; data on the odor threshold range from 0.2 to 5.1 ml/m<sup>3</sup>.”*

However, in the 1930s and 1940s, the “nasal” perception of hydrogen cyanide was not given any prominence in the technical literature.

In 1934, Prof. Otto Lenz (chief medical officer) and Dr. Ludwig Gassner (of the Degesch Company) informed in a manual with questions and answers for pest controllers (Lenz/Gassner, p. 7):

*“The gas is also colorless, and its faint odor is difficult to define. As a result, the perceptibility for this poison gas is quite different for differ-*

<sup>142</sup> The threshold limit value (TLV) is believed to be a level to which a worker can be exposed per shift in the workshift without adverse effects.

<sup>143</sup> Berufsgenossenschaft der chemischen Industrie, Merkblatt M 002 12/89, Cyanwasserstoff, Blausäure, Cyanide, p. 5 (1989).

*ent people. There are people who perceive hydrogen cyanide only when there is a scratching in the throat.”*

Later on, the two authors answer a number of questions related to this topic (*ibid.*, pp. 14f.):

*“15 What is the purpose of the irritant?*

*It is to announce that hydrogen-cyanide gas is in a room, and to make it difficult to enter this room.*

*16. How is this done?*

*By irritation of the eyes and nose.*

*17. What is the nature of this irritation?*

*Pungent odor and triggering of lacrimation.*

*18. Can pure hydrogen cyanide be perceived by smell?*

*Not by all people. [...]*

*25. How can the presence of hydrogen cyanide be detected properly?*

*By chemical methods.”*

Three German pest-control experts noted in 1943 (Puntigam *et al.*, p. 21):

*“Hydrogen cyanide is not perceptible to everyone through the sense of smell. In common parlance, it is referred to as having an odor similar to bitter almond. However, in the case of disinfestations, this perception cannot be relied upon, and a chemical sample must be used to determine whether hydrogen cyanide is present.”*

The most-important German legal provisions in force during World War Two on the use of hydrogen cyanide were as follows:

- “Decree on the implementation of the decree on pest control with highly toxic substances” of 22 August 1927;<sup>144</sup>
- “Decree on pest control with highly toxic substances” of 25 March 1931;<sup>145</sup>
- “Circular of the Minister of Public Welfare” of 8 August 1931 on pest control with highly toxic substances;<sup>146</sup>
- “Decree on the implementation of the decree on pest control with highly toxic substances” of 29 November 1932;<sup>147</sup>

<sup>144</sup> “Verordnung zur Ausführung der Verordnung über die Schädlingsbekämpfung mit hochgiftigen Stoffen,” *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1927, Teil I, Nr. 41, p. 297.

<sup>145</sup> “Verordnung über die Schädlingsbekämpfung mit hochgiftigen Stoffen,” *ibid.*, Teil I, Nr. 12, pp. 83-85.

<sup>146</sup> “Runderlaß des Ministers für Volkswohlfahrt,” *Amtsblatt des Preußischen Ministeriums für Volkswohlfahrt*, 1931, Columns 792-796.



– “Circular of the Reich Minister for Food and Agriculture and the Reich Minister of the Interior” of 4 November 1941.<sup>148</sup>

The “Guidelines for the Use of Prussic Acid (Zyklon) for Pest Control (Disinfestation)” published by the Health Authority of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia in Prague in the early 1940s, which are based on the above-cited decrees and circulars, prescribe the following:<sup>149</sup>

*“XI. Aeration:*

*Aeration presents a great danger for both participants and non-participants. Therefore it should be carried out carefully and gas masks should always be worn. Aeration should be done in such a way that gas-free air can be reached in the shortest possible time, that gas flows out on a side where there is no danger to non-participants. When the aeration is difficult, one man with special training should remain with the building to monitor the outflow of gas.*

*1. Make sure that no persons not involved with the gassing remain in the vicinity of the building.*

*2. Post the guards such that they can observe the entrances to the building without exposure to the outflow of gas.*

*3. Put on gas masks.*

*4. Enter the building, shut the doors, but don't lock them.*

*5. First open the windows on the side of the building away from the wind. Aerate one floor at a time. Begin with the first floor and pause at least 10 minutes after each floor.*

*6. In each room of the building the hallway doors, connecting doors and windows should be opened. If any windows are difficult to open, wait to open them until after most of the gas has blown away.*

*7. Planking and other seals that cannot be easily handled should only be removed after most of the gas has dissipated.*

*8. When there is freezing or danger of freezing, ensure that heating systems and water lines do not freeze.*

<sup>147</sup> “Verordnung zur Ausführung der Verordnung über die Schädlingsbekämpfung mit hochgiftigen Stoffen,” *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1932, Teil I, Nr. 78, pp. 539f.

<sup>148</sup> “Runderlaß des Reichsministers für Ernährung und Landwirtschaft und des Reichsministers des Innern,” in: Puntigam *et al.*, p. 108.

<sup>149</sup> “Richtlinien für die Anwendung von Blausäure (Zyklon) zur Ungeziefervertilgung (Entwesung).” NI-9912; reproduced in Mattogno 2021, Doc. 23, pp. 166-169.

9. Rooms with valuable contents such as clothes storage may be closed as soon as the windows are opened.

10. Make sure that open doors and windows do not close on their own.

11. Seals on chimneys should be removed after the provisional all-clear.

12. Aeration should last at least 20 hours.

13. The guard should remain near the building throughout the aeration.

#### XII. Provisional All-Clear:

A gassed room can be provisionally opened to access as soon as the paper strips used as trace gas detectors (Gasrestnachweisgerät) show a lighter blue than the middle of the reference color scale – windows and doors being kept open. Only aeration and clean-up work can be carried on in provisionally opened rooms. Under no circumstances should anyone rest or sleep in a provisionally opened room. The windows and doors of such rooms should be kept open.

#### XIII. Clean-up after the Provisional All-Clear:

1. Removal of spent pellets of Zyklon from the gassed rooms. Usually they should be sent back to the manufacturer along with cans and cases.”

These regulations also applied to the concentration camps, as shown in the “Service Instructions for the Hydrogen-Cyanide Disinfestation Chamber in the CC.M. accommodation Gusen” drafted on 25 February 1942 by the SS Garrison Physician of Mauthausen Concentration Camp, SS *Hauptsturmführer* Eduard Krebsbach, who was transferred to Auschwitz in August 1942.<sup>150</sup>

“1. Work with and in the hydrogen-cyanide fumigation chamber is extremely dangerous if the following operational instructions are not precisely followed.

2. During work inside the hydrogen-cyanide chamber, the supervising and working personnel must wear special work clothes, which are tied closed at the hands and feet. After completion of work the work clothes must be immediately taken off and kept in the foyer. It is strictly forbidden to take work clothing into living spaces.

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<sup>150</sup> “Dienstanweisung für die Bedienung der Blausäure-Entwesungskammer im K.L.M. Unterkunft Gusen,” Öffentliches Denkmal und Museum Mauthausen, M 9a/1; reproduced in Mattogno 2021, Doc. 24, pp. 170-172.

3. *Before entering the hydrogen-cyanide chamber in order to load it, it is absolutely necessary to test for gas residues.*

4. *Loading moist articles into the gas chamber is not allowed.*

5. *The gas-residue test equipment has to be checked weekly by the pharmacist of the Mauthausen Concentration Camp for its useability.*

[...]

13. *After 1 hour at the earliest, gas residue is to be tested for at one of the windows. Should this test prove positive, the exhaust time has to be extended. The execution of the gas-residue test can only be done with the gas mask on.*

14. *After 2 hours at the earliest, depending on the results of the gas-residue tests, the articles shall be removed from the chamber. The unloading of the chamber can only be done with gas masks on, even if the gas-residue test was negative. [...]*

16. *It is strictly forbidden to enter gas chambers alone. Everyone who enters a gas chamber has to be observed by at least one other man, so that he can assist in case of an accident. The second, of course, also has to wear a gas mask.*

17. *A first-aid kit must always be available and ready to be used. This kit is specifically for first-aid in case of accidents in the hydrogen-cyanide chamber. It contains, besides the necessary medications, accurate instructions for their use. Everyone who is working with the hydrogen-cyanide chamber has to be thoroughly familiar with these instructions.”*

Considering that the case under discussion is said to have been the first (alleged) homicidal gassing in a basement (the bunker) of a masonry building at the Auschwitz Main Camp (Block 11), for which neither the lethal dose of Zyklon B nor the duration of the ventilation was known, these directives must have been all-the-more-valid. Precisely for this reason, the “nasal” test by Pharmacist Storch would have been pure suicidal madness, because there could still have been a lethal concentration of hydrogen cyanide present in the bunker; no one could be certain of the contrary. In fact, from an orthodox Holocaust perspective, the SS would have forced the inmates of the corpse-carrying squad to perform such a “test” – without risking their own lives.

### 6.5. Have the Witnesses Ever Seen HCN Victims?

The witnesses who described the aspect of the corpses of the alleged gassing victims quite uniformly agreed on the fact that the bodies were “greenish” (Kula), “blue-green” (Fejkiel), “green” (Hałgas), “blue” (Wolny), “bluish” (Banach, Kurant, Weber, Germański, Broad), “blue, almost purple-black” (Kielar), “blue-black” (Petzold), whereas Natalia Zarembina spoke of a “greenish tinge.”

In the book by Ferdinand Flury and Franz Zernik mentioned in Chapter I, one can read this (Flury/Zernik, p. 401):

*“In the case of hydrogen-cyanide poisoning, the venous blood takes on a bright-red color; this is due to the fact that the oxygen transported by the arterial blood is no longer absorbed by the tissue, causing the blood to be returned into the veins in its arterial state.*

*The light-red color of the death spots, which is frequently observed after a hydrogen-cyanide poisoning, is reported to be explainable as a post-mortal oxidation of the blood caused by a diffusion of oxygen.”*

The consequence of a hydrogen-cyanide poisoning is thus “a reddening of the skin” (Forth *et al.*, p. 751).

The answer to the question raised above is therefore categorical: the witnesses mentioned never did see corpses of people who had died from hydrogen-cyanide poisoning. Their description is obviously derived from an elementary reasoning based on the German term *Blausäure* (blue acid), the German term for hydrogen cyanide: if the acid is “blue” (which it isn’t), then the corpses of any persons gassed must be “blue” as well.

Similarly, hydrogen cyanide cannot cause the skin of the victims to peel (Michał Kula), shreds of the corpses to stick to one’s hands (Czesław Głowacki), the lungs of the victims to burst, nor their flesh to turn into jelly (Walter Petzold).

## 7. Conclusion: Critical Assessment of the Testimonies

The testimonies of the former detainees and SS personnel examined in this chapter are in total, mutual contradiction on all essential points, *i.e.*:

- on the location of the first gassing,
- on the duration of the first gassing,
- on the date of the first gassing,
- on the hour of the first gassing,
- on the preparations for the first gassing,

- on the physician present at the first gassing,
- on the perpetrator of the first gassing,
- on the nature of the victims of the first gassing,
- on the number of the victims of the first gassing,
- on the persons who removed the corpses,
- on the beginning of the removal of the corpses,
- on the duration of the removal of the corpses,
- on the disposition of the corpses removed,
- on the technique of the gassing,
- on the duration of the agony of the victims,
- on the number of Zyklon-B cans used for the gassing.

Regarding the only point on which they universally agree, the skin color of those allegedly gassed, they are demonstrably wrong, thus proving that the witnesses never saw the body of a person who died from hydrogen-cyanide poisoning.

The technique of the gassing as described by the witnesses is moreover practically impossible to implement, and the result of such a gassing (the victims survived for 15 hours) is physiologically impossible.

## 8. The Value of the Testimonies

In the field of historiographic method, it is generally recognized that a direct testimony may be in error and may contain deviations from the truth. As we can read in a manual on historiographic method (Fasoli/Prodi, pp. 120f.), leaving aside intentional lies,

*“we must take into account unintended changes, real and true ‘errors’ on the part of the person speaking due to insufficient preparation, deficient information, a weakening of the memory, an interpretation of the events in the light of later events, the interpretation of the present in the light of a future hoped for but which was not to be, etc.”*

*“[Furthermore] there are also cases in which he who hears or sees may misinterpret that which he hears or sees, because he does not know the exact terms of the question that is being discussed, because he is prejudiced, or has preconceived ideas etc. He who sees may not remember correctly what he saw; he may have reconstructed the series of events in the particular perspective in which he was able to view them, drawing partly from his own direct experience and partly from what was related to him by others.”*

Finally, we need to consider

*“the involuntary errors made by the observer: errors due to a slackening of attention or inattention, to his being disturbed or excited, to the ingenuity of someone trying to piece together a coherent and logical account from a ‘mosaic’ of contrasting testimonies.”*

All this is perfectly understandable, even natural, in a way. One can also accept that direct testimonies may contain *some* contradictions on *some* point or points. But when we are facing contradictions on all essential points of the testimonies and descriptions of events that are manifestly impossible, as is the case here, may we really believe that the witnesses are acting in good faith?

What honest judge – to invoke a legal comparison – would dare condemn a defendant on the basis of testimony of this kind?

As far as the testimonies of the SS personnel are concerned, we have already seen that those of Höss and Storch are decidedly unreliable. The other witnesses cited are particularly important, because they served in the political department of Auschwitz, which was, no doubt, best informed about the events in the camp, not to mention Maximilian Grabner and Hans Stark, who are said to have participated personally in the first homicidal gassing (Zenon Rozanski and Erwin Bartel). These witnesses should have had a precise and detailed knowledge of the alleged event. However, their accounts are unbelievably terse and superficial, besides being in contradiction with each other and with the accounts of the former detainees. Nor may we assume they were reluctant or hostile witnesses, because their depositions, on the contrary, show an all-too-visible eagerness to mollify the interrogators by embracing their charges, even if this meant confirming their own guilt.

As head of the Political Department at Auschwitz at the time of the alleged gassing (in which he is claimed to have personally participated), Maximilian Grabner is the witness who ought to be best-informed on the alleged event – much better informed than the former detainees. But his multiple statements are riddled with nonsense and contradictions, and his convoluted testimony about the “first gassing” was clearly based on mere rumors. He had no direct knowledge of the alleged event.

This is all-the-more-true for Pery Broad, who arrived at Auschwitz in April of 1942. For that reason alone his testimony is based on hearsay.

Like Grabner, the witness Hans Stark, moved by the same desire to appease and cooperate with his interrogators and by his acceptance of the general thesis of homicidal gassings, had no direct knowledge and relied

on rumors that allegedly made the rounds among the SS personnel (“SS people in the camp *related*, however...” or “*it was said...*”), whereas, on account of his position in the Political Department of the camp and his alleged participation in the claimed gassing, he should have been the principal source of information for the other SS men in the camp. Instead, he knew so little about the alleged event that he, in fact, did not even mention it at the Auschwitz Trial.

The testimony of Karl Kahr is hearsay, and there is no confirmation that his source, Alfred Kurske, did in fact receive information from SS *Hauptsturmführer* Fritzsch. This in itself is reason to doubt his claims, which merely reflect the political climate of the time: Karl Kahr exhibits the same zeal for appeasing his captors that we have noticed in the case of other SS witnesses and defendants. A particularly absurd statement of the testimony is his claim that Fritzsch was not only the “inventor” of the homicidal gas chambers – a claim which is at least somewhat sustainable based on the claim that Fritzsch performed the first gassing – but that he actually had built the gas chambers himself.

Martin Broszat points out that Rudolf Höss had *Schutzhaftlagerführer* Fritzsch transferred “for incompetence” (Broszat, p. 93, note 1) – a strange way of thanking the “inventor of the gas chamber.” Fritzsch was sent to the Flossenbürg Camp in February of 1942. Rudolf Höss described him as being incapable of discipline and too fond of personal initiatives. The camp commandant alerted the Inspectorate of Concentration Camps to the behavior of his subordinate several times until Glücks finally decided to transfer Fritzsch.<sup>151</sup>

## 9. Danuta Czech’s Historiographic Method

As opposed to the first German edition of the “*Kalendarium*,” the second German edition and its 1990 English translation, the *Auschwitz Chronicle*, have their source information printed in the margins. As far as the first homicidal gassing is concerned, the sources are as follows:

### For 3 September 1941

Höss Trial: Vol. 2, p. 97 (witness Kula); Vol. 4, p. 21 (witness Krokowski); Vol. 4, p. 34 (witness Koczorowski); Vol. 4, p. 99 (witness Taul); Vol. 4,

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<sup>151</sup> AGK, NTN, 103, Höss Trial, Vol. 21, pp. 256-259.

p. 128 (witness Myłyk); Vol. 54, p. 207 (witness Gliński); Vol. 78, p. 1 (witness Smużewski).

These sources are generally identified as “Statements by former detainees.” The names are not given, but the references mentioned concern the witnesses whose names I have placed in parentheses. In Danuta Czech’s listing there is some imprecision due, no doubt, to mere oversight. The last two references certainly concern the witnesses Gliński and Smużewski who, however, testified at the trial of the camp garrison and not at the Höss Trial; also, Smużewski’s testimony is on pp. 12f., not on p. 1.

For 4 September (morning)

Höss Trial; Vol. 2, p. 21, declaration of Jan Krokowski; Vol. 2, p. 97, declaration of Michał Kula.

The names are indicated by Danuta Czech. Jan Krokowski’s deposition is, however, in Vol. 4.

For 4 September (afternoon)

Höss Trial, Vol. 2, p. 97: declaration of Michał Kula; Wiesław Kielar, (1979, p. 92).

For 4 September (night)

Höss Trial; Vol. 4, p. 21 (witness Krokowski); Vol. 54, p. 208 (witness Gliński); Vol. 55, p. 101 (witness Banach).

The names have not been indicated by Danuta Czech. Aside from the Witness Gliński, Witness Banach also testified at the trial of the camp garrison; the editor of the *Auschwitz Chronicle* mentions instead the Witness Kielar (Kielar, pp. 92-94).

For 5 September

Wiesław Kielar (Kielar, pp. 95-98).

Summarizing, we can say that Danuta Czech’s account is based on the following witnesses: Kula, Krokowski, Koczorowski, Taul, Myłyk, Gliński, Smużewski, Banach and Kielar.

In the book on historiographic method cited above, among the “unintended changes” of the truth we have “the ingenuity of someone trying to piece together a coherent and logical account from a ‘mosaic’ of contrasting testimonies,” but there are also voluntary and intentional “changes” of the truth, which consist in the compilation of a coherent and logical account starting from a ‘mosaic’ of conflicting testimonies. Danuta



Czech's account is a prime example of this kind of technique, as emerges from the following analysis of her slapdash employment of the sources:

- The date of the beginning of the first homicidal gassing (3 September 1941) is derived by Danuta Czech from Banach's testimony, according to which the removal of the corpses was done on 5 September 1941. But the Witness Kula, who is Danuta Czech's main source, says explicitly and with certainty that the date was 14 August 1941.
- The name of the SS surgeon who did the selection of patients was taken by Danuta Czech from Taul's testimony, but the witness Kielar asserts that this physician was Dr. Entress who, in the first German edition of the *Auschwitz Chronicle*, is listed as being one of the participants in the first homicidal gassing. In the meantime, Danuta Czech had learned that Dr. Entress had not yet arrived at Auschwitz by September of 1941, hence, under the date of 11 December 1941, we can read in the second edition of her work (Czech 1990, p. 115):

*"Camp Doctor SS Second Lieutenant Friedrich Entress comes from Gross-Rosen C. C. and assumes the same position in Auschwitz."*

The choice of Dr. Schwela in the second German (and first English) edition of the *Auschwitz Chronicle* was thus unavoidable.

- Danuta Czech takes the number of sick detainees selected (250) from Kula's testimony, that of the Russian POWs (600) from the testimonies of Krokowski, Koczorowski, Myłyk, and Gliński. However, the Witness Krokowski claimed that 400 sick detainees had been selected, the witness Smużewski provides a total of 980 victims, and the Witness Banach speaks of 800 Russians, including 120 political detainees.
- Danuta Czech writes that in the morning after the day of the gassing (4 September), Palitzsch opened the doors "of the cells" and noted that "some" of the Russian prisoners of war were still alive. The source is the account given by Kula, who affirms, however, that this happened in the afternoon of the following day ("on 15 August, around 4 p.m., Palitzsch, with a gas mask..."). He also stated that Palitzsch opened the door of the bunker, *i.e.* the door of the basement and not of the cells, and noted that "the people" inside – all of them, obviously, not just some – were still alive.
- Danuta Czech asserts, moreover, that during the night of 4 September, *i.e.* again the day following the gassing, Palitzsch assembled "20 detainees from the Penal Company of Block 5a, as well as all paramedics from the [inmate] sickbay" and two other detainees who started straight away to remove the corpses. But according to Kula, the basement of

Block 11 was reopened in the evening of 16 August, *i.e.* two days after the day of the gassing. Witness Kielar asserts as well that the removal of the corpses began after two days, in the evening of the second day, to be exact, whereas the Witness Gliński stated that it began after three days. This same witness asserts moreover that this operation was carried out by 20 physicians and paramedics whom Danuta Czech transforms into “20 detainees from the Penal Company of Block 5a,” whereas Witness Banach declared that it was performed by “several tens” of detainees from the Penal Company. Witness Gliński, who was a paramedic, asserts that the operation was accomplished only by physicians and paramedics, whereas the Witness Banach, who was part of the Penal Company, declared that only detainees from the Penal Company took part in it. Hence: paramedics *or* detainees from the Penal Company. Danuta Czech resolves this elegantly by speaking of paramedics *and* detainees from the Penal Company.

- Danuta Czech writes that the corpses of the gassed were taken to the crematorium and cremated, but Witness Kula affirms that they were “not cremated in the crematorium but taken away towards Brzezinka [Birkenau] where they were buried.”
- Danuta Czech asserts finally that the removal of the corpses to the crematorium took two nights and ended during the night of 5 September. But the witnesses Myłyk and Smużewski assert that this job was done in one night.

Note that Rudolf Höss is not one of the witnesses cited by Danuta Czech. The reason is simple: his testimony, easily available to – and verifiable by – pretty much everyone, is too much in disagreement with Danuta Czech’s account, because he stated that Zyklon B provoked “the immediate death” of the victims.

## 10. Historical Reconstruction of the First Gassing

The brazen manipulations to which Danuta Czech takes refuge are only one example of a method that Robert Jan van Pelt has called “convergence of proof.” Concerning the first homicidal gassing, he himself has furnished a sample of this – albeit on a much-more-modest scale. After having cited the article of the *Polish Fortnightly Review* of 1 July 1942, van Pelt comments (van Pelt, p. 144):

*“It is important to note that after the war various witnesses confirmed that in early September the Germans had used Block 11 in Auschwitz as an experimental gas chamber.”*

But of those “various witnesses,” he names only one, Wojciech Barcz (*ibid.*, Note 25, p. 144; cf. p. 519). Two pages further on, he refers to the little book by Natalia Zarembina and concludes (*ibid.*, p. 146):

*“As we know today, the account was correct: both Pery Broad and Rudolf Höss would later corroborate it.”*

Let us note, first of all, that neither of the two sources confirms the dating asserted by van Pelt (“in early September”). Barcz mentions autumn of 1941 in a general way and Zarembina gives no date at all. The article mentioned speaks of 1,000 victims: 700 Bolsheviks and 300 Poles. Zarembina has 800 victims: 500 Bolsheviks and 300 Poles, whereas Barcz has no figures. The removal of the bodies, for the article mentioned, takes place the day after the gassing; for Barcz it is three days later, for Zarembina only during the fourth day. Barcz has the corpses buried in mass graves, Zarembina has them burned in the crematorium. According to Höss, the gassing cannot have taken place before November of 1941 and concerned only Soviet prisoners of war, whereas Broad tells of the gassing of Russian POWs in a single cell.

So much about van Pelt’s “convergence of proof”!

He later returned to this topic at the 2008 historical conference in Oranienburg, Germany, where he presented a paper titled “Auschwitz” (van Pelt 2011). Regarding the chronology of the alleged event, he admitted that the “exact date of the experiment conducted by Fritsch [sic] is unknown.” The possible dates, he claimed, runs from 15 August 1941 to “early December 1941” (*ibid.*, Notes 14, p. 201), and this uncertainty certainly does not argue in favor of the historicity of the alleged gassing.

The general context of this gassing as proposed by van Pelt is as original as it is insulting (*ibid.*, pp. 200f.):

*“It is very likely that this first use of poison gas was also connected with the IKL’s<sup>[152]</sup> search, in the summer of 1941, for a suitable mass-murder method to kill the so-called Soviet ‘political commissars’. At a meeting in Oranienburg<sup>[153]</sup> at the end of August 1941, which was at-*

<sup>152</sup> *Inspektion der Konzentrationslager* (IKL) was Office Group D of the SS WVHA in charge or supervising the concentration camps.

<sup>153</sup> A northern suburb of Berlin where the WVHA’s main offices were located. The Sachsenhausen District of that town also had a concentration camp of the same name.

*tended by the commander of the SS Death-Head Division, SS Obergruppenführer Theodor Eicke, the inspector of the concentration camps, SS Gruppenführer Richard Glücks, and other senior SS officers, Eicke informed them about Hitler's order to liquidate the 'commissars.' Afterwards, those present discussed ways to carry out these massacres effectively and as unburdensome as possible for the SS executioners. [...]*

*It is not clear whether it was Höss himself or one of his deputies who participated in the Sachsenhausen [Oranienburg] meeting. It is, however, a fact that the Auschwitz Camp Commander Karl Frit[z]sch started his own killing tests a few weeks after said meeting."*

Van Pelt then correctly describes the procedure of disinfestation with Zyklon B, but for its alleged use for homicidal purposes, he invents his own system (*ibid.*, p. 203):

*"However, for a killing device in which the cubes of calcium sulfate soaked with cyanide were to be vaporized in one room, and the gas then piped through a hose into another separate room acting as a gas chamber, a pump was needed to move the cyanide quickly from the area where the vaporization took place to the gas chamber.*

*When Fritsch decided to experiment with Zyklon B as a killing agent for humans, such pumps were not available. Therefore, he planned to proceed as during ordinary delousing practice, namely, to empty the Zyklon B containers inside the gas chambers. But while with lice, of course, no resistance was to be expected when the duty officer in charge of the gas chamber entered and opened the poison container, this situation proved to be quite difficult with the planned killing of humans. The special layout of the basement in the camp's prison in Block 11 offered a way out. The main entrance led through a door into a long corridor divided into three parts by barred gates. After rounding up the victims behind the bars of the first and third corridor sections, an SS man wearing a gas mask could, without any difficulty, throw the cyanide-containing calcium sulfate cubes into the second, central section, then exit the room and close and seal the door to the basement. The gate bars posed no obstacle to the vaporizing cyanide.*

*All the victims of the first gassing were Soviet prisoners of war. After Höss returned to Auschwitz, Frit[z]sch carried out a second experimental gassing in the basement of Block 11. This time, there were 600 Soviet prisoners of war and 250 sick inmates from the camp's infirmary, selected by Dr. Siegfried Schwela. Höss was present during the gasings and, protected by a gas mask, watched from the central corridor*

*section the inmates dying behind the bars. According to his testimony after the war, death came quickly. 'Just a short, almost suffocated scream, and it was over.'*”

The context of the alleged gassing here is the fictitious meeting that allegedly took place at Sachsenhausen in August 1941, for which not the slightest documentary trace exists (see in detail Mattogno 2016f, pp. 132-136). This meeting presumably concerned only the fate of Soviet prisoners of war, more precisely of Soviet political commissars. From this perspective, the “first gassing” should have involved only Soviet POWs. But if that is so, why were sick camp patients also gassed? Van Pelt’s conjecture cannot explain this (alleged) fact.

To go into detail, van Pelt doubles the alleged “first gassing” on the basis of the contradiction in Höss’s related statements that I emphasized earlier. He thus obtains two gassings, both occurring in Block 11, one of 900 Soviet POWs, and the other of 600 POWs and 250 sick inmates.

Imaginarily putting himself into Fritzsich’s position, van Pelt then plans his own imaginary gassing. The ideal scenario, according to van Pelt, would have been to evaporate the hydrogen cyanide contained in Zyklon B in a separate room, then duct the vapors into the actual “gas chamber” “through a hose” by means of “a pump” (meaning that the vapors would have been blown through a pipe by a fan), a system that is nowhere else to be found in the entire body of Holocaust literature. Unfortunately, so van Pelt continues, such pumps did not exist at Auschwitz at the time – but how could van Pelt have known this? – so Fritzsich had to resort to the technique used during normal disinfestations. Here, van Pelt moreover makes an architectural speculation, because he bases his conjectures on the *current* situation of the basement of Block 11 (see Photos 5 through 18 in the Appendix). It is known that the two barred gates are depicted in a plan of the basement of Block 11 dated 26 June 1944, but there is no certainty that they already existed in 1941. Moreover, as is evident from the data I presented in Subsection IV.6.1 on the claimed location of the first gassing, none of the witnesses who claimed to have participated in the evacuation of the corpses from the bunker confirms the scenario invented by van Pelt. Furthermore, van Pelt contradicts himself, because on the one hand he states that the first gassing was carried out by Fritzsich in the absence of Höss, but then he says that “Höss was present during the gassings,” hence plural, meaning during both gassings. He draws the number of 900 victims of the first gassing from a gassing that, according to Höss, happened later and took place in the “mortuary of the crematorium” (Hoess, p. 208). Fi-

nally, van Pelt overlooks that the sentence he quotes from Höss's memoirs contradicts his conjectures on the gassing technique (Hoess, p. 162):

*"In the crowded cells death came instantaneously the moment the Cyclon B was thrown in. A short, almost smothered cry, and it was all over."*

Therefore, Höss insisted that the inmates were locked up in cells whose doors would have been a serious obstacle to the penetration of hydrogen-cyanide vapors from the central corridor between the two barred gates. Höss could only have witnessed the killing by looking through the inspection hole in the cell door (see Photo 20), but this further contradicts van Pelt's story of the tripartition of the corridor. His narrative is therefore completely fabricated and devoid of any historiographical value.

The sources available allow us to recreate a scene that is different than the fantastic tableau painted by Danuta Czech and Robert Jan van Pelt. It is a scene that shows us clearly what that "convergence of proof" really is: a crude deception which consists of creating a coherent and logical account on the basis of a "mosaic" of wildly contradictory and contrasting testimonies. If we abstain from any manipulation of the sources, the "reconstruction" that can be made on the basis of the testimonies looks in fact like this:

One day, at some point between the spring of 1941 and November/December of 1942, at Auschwitz, in the old crematorium or in the basement of Block 11, or else at Birkenau, the first gassing of human beings was carried out. Some witnesses speak of exact dates: it was either 14 or 15 August, 3-5 September, or 5-6 September, or 5-8 September, or 9 October, or 5-6 November 1941. The gassing was done after the evening roll call, during curfew, so that no one could see what was happening, or else in broad daylight before the eyes of the detainees who were enjoying a day off in the sun. The windows of the basement had been walled up or covered with earth or filled with sand or closed by wooden boards ahead of time.

In the half-underground basement of Block 11 either only Russian prisoners of war were locked in, who were only officers, or officers and noncoms, or simple soldiers, or partisans, or political commissars, or perhaps they were, in fact, not Russians but Poles, or they were Russian POWs and Polish detainees, or Russian prisoners and Polish officers. The victims of the gassing numbered either 60, or 100, or 200, or 400, or 500, or 600, or 680, or 700, or 600-700, or 700-800, or 850, or 1,473 Russian POWs, plus 100-150 or 190 or 196 or 200 or 220 or 250 or 257 or 260 or 280 or 300 or 400 or 1,000 Polish detainees. What is certain, in any case, is that their total number was either 100, or 200, or 300, or 320, or 350, or

500, or 696, or 700, or 800, or 850, or 857, or 880, or 900, or 980, or 1,000, or 1,078, or 1,400, or 1,663.

The sick inmates had been selected in the hospital blocks either by Dr. Schwela, or Dr. Jungen, or possibly Dr. Entress. These sick patients were carried into the cells of Block 11 by paramedics or perhaps by members of the Penal Company.

Palitzsch all by himself or together with “Tom Mix,” or with “the strangler,” or maybe Breitwieser by himself threw into the corridor or into the cells a total of three cans or perhaps two cans into each cell. The Zyklon B was introduced through the door or through the ventilation flap or through openings above the doors to the cells. Gassing was done either in the cells, or in a single cell, or in the corridor, or in the “gas chamber,” and the doors of the cells were either hermetically closed or had been removed.

The victims either died immediately or were still alive after 15 hours. The corpses were removed either the following day, or the following night, or 1 to 2 days later, or 3 days later, or on the 4th day, or the 6th day, either only by paramedics, 20 or 30 or 80 of them, to be exact, or perhaps only by 20 detainees from the Penal Company. The work took either a whole day, or a whole night, or 2 nights, or 3 nights. The corpses were undressed either in the corridor of Block 11, or in the yard outside, or not at all, or they were already naked.

The bodies of the victims were either taken to the crematorium and cremated, or perhaps taken to Birkenau and buried in mass graves, or perhaps some cremated and the others buried.

Any “historical reconstruction” different from this can only be the result of a preparatory, completely arbitrary screening of the testimonies and of the statements by individual witnesses, hence a manipulation and deception.

The only reasonable conclusion one can draw from this irresolvable mess of contradictions is the total historical and technical unreliability of the testimonies with respect to the alleged first homicidal gassing.

If there ever was one.

## Chapter V: Sources Not Speaking of the First Gassing

### 1. Testimonies

The technical and historical unreliability of the sources concerning the first homicidal gassing at Auschwitz, which we have examined in the preceding chapters, has later been confirmed by other authoritative sources which entirely fail to mention any such an event. Some of these sources are of fundamental importance. This would be inexplicable if it were true, as Jerzy Brandhuber asserts, that

*“the fact and the circumstances of the first test killings of human beings by means of gas were generally known among the detainees of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp.”* (Brandhuber 1961, p. 17)

One of the first somewhat-detailed reports about Auschwitz is an article published on 14 March 1942 by the German-language New York newspaper *Neue Volkszeitung*, drawn up on the basis of the testimony given by a detainee released from Auschwitz in November of 1941. This report speaks of the brutality with which the SS treated the detainees and describes the extremely harsh conditions in the camp. But there is no mention of the first gassing in it.<sup>154</sup>

The first detailed description of the alleged homicidal gas chambers at Auschwitz is contained in reports from five detainees who escaped from the camp. These were published anonymously by the “War Refugee Board” in November of 1944.<sup>155</sup> The detainees in question were:

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<sup>154</sup> “Eine Stätte des Grauens. Bericht aus dem Konzentrationslager Oswiecim (Auschwitz),” from *Neue Volkszeitung*, New York, No. 11 of 14 March 1942, in: Adler *et al.*, pp. 191-193.

<sup>155</sup> Executive Office of the President, *German Extermination Camps – Auschwitz and Birkenau*, War Refugee Board, Washington, D. C., November 1944: see also Aynat 1990.



- Alfred Wetzler (registered on 13 April 1942, ID 29162) and Rudolf Vrba (registered under the name of Walter Rosenberg on 29 June 1942, ID 44070) – both escaped from Auschwitz on 7 April 1944;
- Czesław Mordowicz (registered on 17 December 1942, ID 84216) and Arnošt Rosin (registered on 17 April 1942, ID 29858) – both escaped on 27 May 1944;
- and Jerzy Tabeau, writing as an unnamed “Polish major” (registered on 26 March 1942, under the name of Jerzy Wesołowski, ID 27273).

Though they are full of details regarding the most-important events in the camp, none of these reports mentions the first gassing in Block 11. To be exact, they mention no gassings in the bunker of Block 11, nor any in the old crematorium.

Of great significance in this respect is the testimony of the “Polish major,” whose identity was only revealed many years later. It narrates the story of Auschwitz from the very-early days and describes in particular the events connected with Bunker 11. The text, with its subheadlines, is as follows (Silberschein, pp. 70-76):

“IV. Executions

*From its beginnings until the summer of 1941, the Auschwitz camp was exclusively a concentration camp, never a place for executions. The first execution took place in the summer of 1941, quite unexpectedly. After the evening roll call, as far as I remember, 18 names were read out, all of them people from Krakow. These persons were led to the clothing depot, were given some old rags to wear (only shirts and trousers), taken to the gravel pit, and shot. Anyone still alive was finished off with a revolver. The other detainees had been prohibited from watching this execution. But it was handled in such a way and at such a location that, in fact, it could be seen from anywhere in the camp. After the execution, a detail of inmates were sent to bury the dead. This incident caused great desperation among all detainees, who were now convinced that being sent to the camp was equivalent to being condemned to death for crimes against the Reich.*

*Ever since then executions took place at shorter or longer intervals; usually Tuesday and Friday were set aside as execution days. In time, a special place was set up for the executions. It was on the grounds of the same camp. The location for this was between Blocks 10 and 11.*

The Preparations.

*The executions now take place always in the morning and in the following way: immediately after the morning roll call, the block secretary reads out the numbers for the individual blocks from cards that he has received from the general administration. When the cards said: 'Straight away after the morning roll call to the section leader,' it was clear that those numbers would be shot. The block secretary, after reading out the numbers, collected the persons concerned and took them to the camp secretariat, where those from the other blocks arrived as well. They checked once again the numbers, the names, the dates of birth against the general list. Then those people were put together in groups of five by the camp elder and the block men (all of them detainees) and taken to the execution site at Block 11.*

*If the execution was to take place a few hours later, they would be locked in the bunker there. If it was to be right away, they would be taken to the washroom. Here, they had to undress, their numbers were marked on their calves with a copying-pencil. After these preparations they were taken in groups of two to the black wall, where the execution was done. This walk was handled by the block man of Block 11 or by the bunker capo (a Jew).*

*The End.*

*The execution was done in the following way: the two condemned men were taken by their hands, led out from the block, and placed at either end of the wall. Initially, they had to kneel on one knee and lower their heads a little; later the execution was done with them standing. The henchman approached these people, put his revolver to their head at the place where the backbone meets the skull, and released the shot. The weapon used was an air rifle. After the shot, there was almost no sound. If death was not immediate, there was another shot when the man was lying on the ground. At these executions there were always some detainees present, from the 'corpse-carrier' detail. After each of these double executions, they placed the bodies into a large box, which they piled up near the wall. The blood on the ground was covered with sand. After that had been done, the area was free to receive the next two. When the executions were over, the remains were transferred to the mortuary at Block 28 to stay there for the rest of the day. In the evening, the corpses were loaded onto a large cart, together with other corpses of those who had died or had been slain in some other way during the day. The cart was pulled by the detainees to the crematorium. Later, the bodies were transferred immediately after the execution, if*

*there were only a few of them, or a truck was used. During the transfer of the corpses, block curfew was ordered; the detainees were not allowed to leave the block until the curfew was lifted. In general, they [the SS] tried hard – but without any success – to shroud the executions in a veil of great secrecy.*

*That was the way it started, as mentioned, in the summer of 1941. Most executions occurred in 1942, though, once the Penal Company had been moved from Auschwitz to Birkenau, end of February or early May. They took the ‘Muselmen’ along with the transports at that time (a Muselman was someone totally spent from hunger and hard physical work). Most of the healthy and strong ones came into the Penal Company. For crimes done while still free, they wore a red spot in front and back, and a black spot for crimes committed inside the camp. The company numbered some 500 men. Every few days, 10-15 of them were selected and shot. The others had to work hard and wait for their turn.*

#### Mass Murder.

*By now – say around mid-May – mass executions began at Auschwitz. Once, twice, or three times a week large groups of 40 to 60 persons were rounded up and shot. Unrest in the camp grew when the situation persisted to mid-June. Once, when 120 persons were executed, the situation became so tense that a break-out loomed. The camp administration knew this perfectly well, for one day at roll call the detainees were informed that the executions had been stopped and the death penalty revoked. This explanation was received with distrust, but calmed the situation to some extent. There was indeed a break which, however, did not last longer than a month and a half or two months. Then executions were resumed, but in small groups and not very often. Then October 1942 came and brought the most extensive execution of Poles at Auschwitz; 247 persons from the districts of Lublin and Podhale were executed. The camp reacted in terror and despair. That was the end of a series of executions of those who had been brought into the camp on the basis of death sentences. Sometimes it happened that somebody among those who were to be executed was sick or in the sickbay; then the execution was performed in the sickbay by injection. That is how the well-known artist Witold Zacharewicz was murdered. This is not to say, though, that after October of 1942 there were no more executions of people sent to Auschwitz with a death sentence. Only the method was changed. Earlier, all Aryan detainees who arrived were registered and given a number. Now, i.e. after October of 1942, they were split into two groups*

right away: one for those who were to come into the concentration camp and a second for those condemned to death. The latter no longer got a number but were moved straight away from the camp administration into the bunker at Block 11, where the execution was carried out immediately or after a few days. The idea was to keep the executions secret (they were often performed late at night) so as not to cause unrest among the detainees by shooting 'civilians.' In the camp, 'inmate' meant a detainee with a number. 'Civilian' meant a person without a number, i.e. not a member of the camp. As long as the executions are restricted to civilians, the inmates are not greatly concerned. In spite of these various changes, the execution of inmates did not stop; only a different reason was found for doing the same thing.

### Bunker

There is now a strict policy against so-called camp crimes, i.e. violations of camp rules. Even the slightest thing might get people into the bunker, with only little chance of ever coming out. The judges were the gentlemen from the Political Department (the camp Gestapo). Thus, these gentlemen were the masters of life and death for each inmate. That caused much spying in the camp. Even the mere suspicion of a political nature, or having contact with civilians, could be a reason for getting locked up in the bunker. Spreading political news, even commenting in a group on the OKW<sup>156</sup> reports printed in the newspapers, some petty larceny, an attempt to escape, all that was reason enough for getting locked up in the bunker. The latter was always overcrowded. Afterwards, it had to be 'cleaned,' which went like this: The Gestapo Head Grabner and all of his staff walked into the bunker, usually after some merriment, hence not quite sober, going from cell to cell. As soon as the cell door was opened, each inmate in succession had to state his number, the reason why he was there, and how long he had already been there. It was luck for the inmate if the camp leader had with him the list of those sentenced to death. Often this was not the case. Then the life of the inmate depended not upon his sentence but upon the humor of the commander. If the impression was good, the inmate could stay and wait for another such visit. Many, though, opted voluntarily to be executed. In such a case they were beaten and ill-treated. After such a visit, 85-90% of the bunker inmates went to the wall and so there was room for others."

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<sup>156</sup> Oberkommando der Wehrmacht = Supreme command of the Wehrmacht.

In this context, the “Polish major” also mentions Section Leader Palitzsch, an alleged perpetrator of the first homicidal gassing according to others (*ibid.*, p. 76):

*“From the beginning, these executions have been performed by one person. Now it is Oberscharführer Palitzsch.”*

Throughout 1941 and early 1942, the “Polish major” continues, there were no executions of Jews. They began only in the spring of 1942 (*ibid.*, p. 66):

*“Only from the spring onwards, the rounding up and extermination of the Jews started on the basis of their descent.”*

This most-important witness has a lot to say about the atrocities perpetrated by the SS in Block 11, but tells us nothing about the first homicidal gassing.

This alleged first gassing was likewise unknown to Stanisław Jankowski, who made a detailed deposition on 13 April 1945. This witness, who was deported to Auschwitz on 27 March 1942, spent several months in Block 11, making his ignorance of any massacre in the bunker of that block all-the-more-surprising. He declared:<sup>157</sup>

*“I was housed in Block 11, in which all the Jews at Auschwitz – a total of 50 – had been brought together. There were also Aryans in this block. In the bunkers of this block there was also the Penal Company. Furthermore, there were ‘free men’ in this block, i.e. people who were to be released and who were now undergoing a quarantine in the camp. I remember that when I was explained my work, which both Aryans and Jews were doing, the Oberscharführer, an SS man, turned to us Jews saying that this was the first time in the history of German National Socialism that Jews were working and being housed under one roof with Germans. In the yard in front of the block, there was a double gibbet and the famous ‘black wall’ where detainees were shot. Conditions at Auschwitz at the time were harsh, but when comparing them with those then prevailing at Birkenau, one is tempted to consider them something like living in a boarding school. I stayed in Block 11 until autumn of 1942, spending the first five weeks in the hospital, the so-called sick-bay.”*

Speaking of the beginning of the alleged gassings, he says only:<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> “Aussage von Stanisław Jankowski (Alter Feinsilber),” dated 13 April 1945, *Hefte von Auschwitz*, Special Issue No. I, 1972, pp. 41f.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

*“I declare that at that time, late 1942, there were as yet no gas chambers at Auschwitz. The only gassing during that period, known to me, happened in November or December of 1942. At that time, more than three hundred and ninety persons, only Jews of different nationalities who were employed with the Birkenau Sonderkommando, were gassed. This gassing was implemented in the mortuary at that time. I heard from people working in the crematorium that even earlier some gasings had taken place in that mortuary and other rooms of the crematorium.”*

The SS camp physician at Auschwitz, Friedrich Entress, who arrived at Auschwitz on 11 December 1941, asserted in his sworn statement of 14 April 1947, that “the first gasings” at Auschwitz-Birkenau began “in the summer of 1942.” He had no knowledge of the first gassing in Block 11 nor of later gasings in Crematorium I at Auschwitz.<sup>159</sup>

The first homicidal gassing at Auschwitz is noted neither in the report of the Soviet Investigating Commission drawn up in April of 1945,<sup>160</sup> published in *Pravda* on 7 May 1945, and later submitted as evidence at the Nuremberg Trial,<sup>161</sup> although this report deals specifically with the fate of Soviet prisoners of war, nor in the report on German crimes in Poland compiled by the Poles for the Nuremberg Trial, even though it mentions much less-serious crimes, such as the execution of 189 detainees on 28 May 1941.<sup>162</sup>

The lack of historical reliability of the sources regarding the first homicidal gassing in the bunker of Block 11 at Auschwitz is further confirmed by the sworn testimony of an eyewitness, who is fundamental both because of his function in the Auschwitz Camp in the latter half of 1941 and because of the authority and prestige he later enjoyed in his position as director of the Auschwitz Museum: Kazimierz Smoleń.

He was deported to Auschwitz on 6 July 1940, and in July of 1941 became “*Schreiber*” (secretary) in the Admission Section of the Political Department, *i.e.* in the Gestapo Office of the camp. In that position he was

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<sup>159</sup> Sworn statement by Friedrich Entress, Landsberg, 14 April 1947. NO-2368.

<sup>160</sup> The original text of the report, which contains a number of corrections and strike-outs, is in file 7021-116-103 of GARF. The commission did not take into account the laconic declaration by Zbigniew Baranowski cited in Chapter III.

<sup>161</sup> USSR-008.

<sup>162</sup> USSR-93. “Die Republik Polen in der Sache gegen: 1. Deutsche Kriegsverbrecher; 2. deren Körperschaften und Organisationen bezeichnet unter Anklage 1 vor dem Internationalen Kriegsgericht,” p. 43.

one of the detainees best-informed about what was happening at Auschwitz. Here is what he asserted in a sworn statement given at Krakow on 15 December 1947, specifically on the fate of the Soviet prisoners of war:<sup>163</sup>

*“In early October of 1941 the first transports of Russians came to Auschwitz. As I was already working as Schreiber in the political department, together with my comrades, I had to register the new arrivals. Within a week, 10,000 Russian POWs arrived from Stalag VIII B/Lamsdorf and from another Stalag, the number of which I have forgotten, Neuhammer-upon-Queis.*

*The POWs arrived in the camp in a terrible state; they were starving, full of lice, and had to undress outside the camp. Even though it was already very cold, they had to go into a cold disinfection bath and, naked and wet as they were, they were driven into the camp.*

*In the Auschwitz Camp, 9 blocks were separated from the rest of the camp by an electrically charged fence, and the gate had the inscription ‘POW camp – work camp.’ Thus, the Russian POW camp consisted of the following blocks: Block 1, Block 2, Block 3, Block 12, Block 13, Block 14, Block 22, Block 23, Block 24. The residential Blocks 3, 23, and 24 had [a ground floor and] an upper floor; these were called 3a, 23a, and 24a.*

*SS Oberscharführer Hans Stark was in charge of registration of the POWs, and I, in my capacity as detainee secretary, participated in it, together with several companions.”*

Having minutely described the intricacies of the registration, Smoleń goes on to say:

*“Registration of the 10,000 POWs took some 3 weeks. During that time, 1,500 of them had died already, and we sent their green cards and ID tags to Berlin.*

*In November of 1941, a special Gestapo commission from the Kattowitz Office, headed by Dr. Mildner, came to the camp. This commission consisted of Dr. Mildner and three persons from the SD [Sicherheitsdienst; Security Service] who spoke Russian. The three men from the SD were given detainees from the camp as interpreters, and I and another comrade were assigned to the special commission by the Political Depart-*

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<sup>163</sup> Sworn statement of Kazimierz Smoleń before Kurt L. Ponger, USA civilian, Interrogator Evidence Division, Office of the Chief of Counsel for War Crimes, Krakow, 15 December 1947. NO-5849.

*ment. Thus, I was able to observe all the work of this special commission."*

Smoleń relates that this special commission had the task of interrogating each one of the Russian POWs and classifying them into three groups:

- A. "politically unacceptable," a group that included the category "fanatical communist"
- B. "politically unsuspecting"
- C. "suitable for reconstruction"

The witness continued:

*"300 of the POWs were selected for being commissars and particularly important functionaries, and received the designation 'fanatical communist.' These prisoners were immediately taken away from the interrogation room to Block 24a that had been arranged as a bunker. There, they were received by Oberscharführer Stark, who took their old POW tag and replaced it with a new number, running from Au1 through Au300. These 'Au' numbers were tattooed on the left side of their chests, and they were held in complete isolation from the other prisoners of the Russian Camp.*

*The activity of the special commission came to an end after a month; as far as I can remember, the distribution of the prisoners into the various categories was approximately as follows:*

<i>Group AU:</i>	<i>300 prisoners</i>
<i>Cat. A:</i>	<i>700 prisoners</i>
<i>Cat. B:</i>	<i>8,000 prisoners</i>
<i>Cat. C:</i>	<i>30 prisoners</i>

*From my work in the Political Department, I know that the 300 prisoners marked 'Au' were executed in smaller groups.*

*The conditions in the Russian Camp were so bad that on average 250 prisoners died every day. By February of 1942, some 8,000 had died or had been executed. The 1,500 remaining were moved to the Birkenau Camp.*

*Thus, at Birkenau, there was a Russian Camp that was occasionally added to by transports which, however, never contained more than 2,000 prisoners. By the middle of 1942, all but 150 of them had died or been executed."*

At the end of his sworn declaration, Kazimierz Smoleń summarizes the crimes perpetrated by the SS against the Russian prisoners of war at Auschwitz:



*“Summarizing, I wish to say: Living conditions in the Russian POW Camp at Auschwitz were considerably worse than in the concentration camp. The Russian POWs were given less and worse food, mainly less bread, were not allowed to write, and were prohibited from using the washrooms. It was inevitable that the camp died out within a couple of months. Added to this, there were frequent selections with those unable to work being executed by the hundreds. Both the detainees marked ‘Au’ and the others to be executed were either shot in the back of the neck or gassed in Block 11.”*

This is the only time Kazimierz Smoleń mentions gassings in Block 11, very vaguely and unspecifically, clearly betraying its foundation in hearsay.

Two items in the testimony of Kazimierz Smoleń irrefutably prove the historical unreliability of the account of the first homicidal gassing given by Danuta Czech in the *Auschwitz Chronicle*.

First, if the gassing had really occurred, Kazimierz Smoleń, in view of the position he held in the Political Department at Auschwitz at the time, and especially on account of his having been assigned to Mildner’s special commission, could not have remained in the dark about it. On the contrary, he would have spoken about it with a wealth of details, as he did when he devoted an entire page of his sworn statement – rendered with the specific aim of denouncing the crimes perpetrated by the SS against the Russian POWs – to a somewhat-irrelevant topic such as the process of registering the prisoners.

This witness’s ignorance appears even more incredible if one considers that, according to Judge Jan Sehn, the first gassing was allegedly carried out in accordance with the very decisions arrived at by Mildner’s special commission (Sehn 1961, pp. 96, 99f.):

*“The first transport of Soviet POWs arrived on 7 October 1941. [...] In November 1941, a special commission, comprising three Gestapo officials led by Dr. Rudolf Mildner, chief of the Katowice Gestapo, arrived in Oświęcim from Katowice. This commission examined the POWs and, in accordance with the order of the RSHA chief dated 17 July 1941, divided them into four groups. For this process, it made use of secret lists containing information about Soviet political and official leaders. The commission decided categorically about the groupings, inclusion in the first two groups amounting to a death sentence. The entire first group – some 300 POWs – was shot in gravel pits or in the yard of Block 11.*

*The execution order was issued by SS Obersturmführer Seidler, then second camp leader.*

*On the initiative of the first camp leader, SS Hauptsturmführer Karl Fritzsch, the POWs in the second group (some 900), together with those chosen from later drafts, were massacred [sic] by means of cyclon B. Fritzsch packed the men into the cellars of Block 11, put on a gasmask, and discharged the poison among them.*

*The whole block had to be aired for two days after this gassing.”*

We must remember that Jan Sehn is the judge who questioned the witnesses from whose statements Danuta Czech drew her account of the first homicidal gassing at Auschwitz. The fact that at the end of 1947 Kazimierz Smoleń did not know anything about this alleged event can only be explained if this event never occurred.

When questioned by me on this point, Kazimierz Smoleń declared through a spokesman:<sup>164</sup>

*“As far as the testimony given for the [American] Nuremberg trial by the former concentration-camp Detainee Kazimierz Smoleń – as you certainly know – it responded to the specific questions put to him by the tribunal, therefore he could not relate exhaustively and in detail all the events which he had witnessed.”*

This justification is not acceptable. Actually, in the sworn statement mentioned, Kazimierz Smoleń did not answer “specific questions” but freely told the story of the Russian prisoners of war at Auschwitz in the years 1941-1942, stressing the crimes committed by the SS against them. The excuse that he had not described the first homicidal gassing because he had not been specifically questioned about it is therefore unfounded, because he had not been asked any questions at all. This is confirmed by his vague remark about prisoners having been “gassed in Block 11.”

Secondly, as “the first Russian transports” arrived at Auschwitz “in early October 1941,” according to his own statement, which is confirmed by Jan Sehn and by existing documents in the archives (see next section), it is not possible that 600 Russian prisoners were gassed there on 3 September 1941.

Furthermore, because, according to Judge Jan Sehn, the first gassing was of people sentenced to death by Mildner’s special commission that arrived at Auschwitz “in November of 1941” and finished its work “a month

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<sup>164</sup> Letter from the Auschwitz Museum addressed to the author, dated 4 May 1988: “odpowiadał on na konkretne, przez sąd postawione pytania.”

later,” this first gassing could not, in any case, have taken place before December.

Finally, because the number of Soviet prisoners of war selected by this commission and assigned by December to the category “Au,” sentenced to death, was 300, it is all-the-more-impossible that 600 of them were gassed on 3 September 1941.

Kazimierz Smoleń had already been questioned by Jan Sehn on 10 December 1946 in preparation for the Höss Trial. During that interview, he introduced the subject of Soviet prisoners of war as follows:<sup>165</sup>

*“In principle, the fate of prisoners interned at the camp was decided by the Reich Security Main Office (Reichssicherheitshauptamt) for the duration of their stay at the camp, regardless of which political office had sent the prisoners to the camp. Exceptionally, only the group of Russian prisoners, of whom about 12,000 passed through the Auschwitz camp, were under the control of the Oberkommando der Wehrmacht. The majority of this group, about 12,000, arrived at Auschwitz in the first days of October 1941 from the Prisoner-of-War Camp Neuhammer upon Quais /Stalag VIIIA/.”*

At that time, he described the fate of the Soviet prisoners of war in a very succinct manner, as in the sworn statement we examined earlier, but he attributes to the group “Au” a total of 1,000 prisoners instead of 300, asserting:<sup>166</sup>

*“Some 1,000 were in this first group, and the whole group, diminishing day after day, was shot or gassed in Block 11.”*

On 30 July 1947, Kazimierz Smoleń was questioned in preparation for the trial against the camp garrison at Krakow. He wrote a declaration of six pages on the crimes committed by the Political Department of Auschwitz, in particular those of Maximilian Grabner. He mentions briefly the “gassing of the detainees in the crematorium,” but does not mention the alleged first gassing in Block 11 with even one single word.<sup>167</sup>

During the 49th session of the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial, Smoleń, who at that time was the director of the Auschwitz Museum, stated (Fritz Bauer Institut, pp. 9137f.):

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<sup>165</sup> Deposition of Kazimierz Smoleń dated 10 December 1946. AGK, NTN, 89, Höss Trial, Vol. 7, p. 219.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 219f.

<sup>167</sup> Deposition of Kazimierz Smoleń dated 30 July 1947. AGK, NTN, 135, Krakow Trial, Vol. 53, pp. 192-197.

*“In the fall of 1941 the Russian prisoners of war arrived. They were in a terrible state. We made cards for them. We made cards of different colors for them. We also assigned numbers to them. The numbers began with 1. These were tattooed on the chests of the prisoners of war. Then came a commission of the Gestapo Office in Katowice. It consisted of four members. They performed selections among the prisoners of war. The prisoners of war were interrogated by this committee and were also beaten. Then they were divided into four groups: a) fanatical communists; b) politically suspect, c) not-politically suspect; d) suitable for reconstruction. Group a) contained about 300 people. Group b) consisted of about 600-800 persons. The largest group was that of the politically unsuspecting, and the last group d) was very small, numbering only 20-30 prisoners of war. The 300 fanatical communists were housed mainly in Block 24. Then they were led naked or only in their shirt to be shot in Block 11. I do not know if Stark took part in these shootings.*

*I do not know whether Stark participated in gassings. But about three million people were gassed. This figure covers the period until late 1943/early 1944. The Hungarian transports are not included in this figure.”*

This confirms that he knew nothing of the first gassing, while his final sentence resembles the Soviet fable of the four million victims.

One of the “comrades” mentioned by Kazimierz Smoleń, who had worked with him in the Political Department of the camp, was Erwin Bartel. This witness, whom we already met in Chapter III, was questioned by Jan Sehn on 27 August 1947, in connection with preparations for the trial of the camp garrison. Bartel relates all that he knew about Maximilian Grabner’s crimes, often mentioning Block 11:<sup>168</sup>

*“Within a few days, towards the middle of October of 1941, a transport of Russian prisoners of war arrived at the camp, numbering over ten thousand. During the month of November of 1941, some 200 of them, labeled by the Germans as ‘politruks,’ were selected by the political department on the basis of documents possessed by the political department and were all tattooed with the letters ‘Au’ followed by a number from 1 to about 200. All those who had been so designated were locked up in a separate cell in Block 24. They died, together with the*

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<sup>168</sup> Deposition of Erwin Bartel dated 27 August 1947. AGK, NTN, 135, Krakow Trial, Vol. 53, pp. 240f.

*greater part of the Russians. In February of 1942, hardly 300 survived from the entire transport. [...]*

*The head of the political department, up to the autumn of 1943, was SS Untersturmführer Grabner. In the police, he had held the rank of Kriminalsekretär and later Oberkriminalsekretär. He was a member of the Sicherheitsdienst and had the Letters SD on the sleeve of his uniform. In my presence in our office in the block leaders' room he very calmly signed a letter, which Stark had coolly given to me, on the basis of which several detainees were shot in Block 11."*

In the continuation of the narrative, which I cited in Subsection III.2.4., the witness referred only to "the killing of inmates with gas in the gas chamber of Crematorium I," without any mention of the "first gassing" in Block 11.

Just like his Colleague Kazimierz Smoleń, Erwin Bartel did not know anything about the alleged first homicidal gassing in Block 11 either, and his affidavit of 1959 was obviously a lie created specifically for the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial.

Kazimierz Smoleń's ignorance in this matter is not surprising. It fully reflects the ignorance of all of his inmate colleagues, such as Erwin Bartel, as well as that of his superiors in the Auschwitz Political Department, the best-informed unit in the camp.

We have already seen that the staff of this office was unable to provide anything more-substantial than conflicting and unverifiable rumors, in particular Maximilian Grabner and Hans Stark, who were Kazimierz Smoleń's direct superiors and who had personally participated in the alleged gassing, as some witnesses claimed. They had no direct knowledge of this gassing, and that would be unexplainable if this gassing had actually occurred.

Another eminent witness who did not know anything about the first gassing was Hermann Langbein, who later became one of the most-famous "historians" on Auschwitz. In his affidavit of 8 August 1945 already mentioned earlier when discussing Grabner (Section III.3.), Langbein, who was interned at Auschwitz from 21 August 1941 until 25 August 1944 (ID 60355), made a declaration of more than 150 lines of text accusing Grabner, but did not have a single word to say about the first homicidal gassing, which Grabner is claimed to have organized. In return, as I have already mentioned, Langbein spoke of 5 million gassing victims at Auschwitz. An auspicious debut for a future historian on Auschwitz!

## 2. Documents

In the first German edition of the *Auschwitz Chronicle*, the arrival of the first transport of Soviet prisoners of war at the camp is entered under the month of July 1941 (the day of the month is not indicated) in the following terms (Czech 1959, p. 106):

*“Several hundred Soviet prisoners of war were brought into the camp and housed in Block 11. These prisoners work in the gravel pit (excavating sand). Within a few days, the whole group was murdered while they were working by being shot with a short-barrel, small-caliber weapon or with shovels and hoes.”*

The historicity of this event has no support in any documents, but only on two testimonies, which Jerzy Brandhuber quotes as follows (Brandhuber 1961, Note 39, p. 16):

*“In accordance with a statement by the former Detainee Ludwik R. (H.[öss] tr[ial], vol. 4, pp. 53-58) and Bogdan G. (trial of the members of the camp garrison at the Auschwitz Camp..., vol. 54, p. 207)”*

In the second German (and first English) edition of the *Auschwitz Chronicle*, Danuta Czech has the same references under 18 July 1941, but without the names of the witnesses (Czech 1990, p. 74):

*“APMO, Höss Trial, vol. 4, pp. 53-58; Krakow Auschwitz Trial, vol. 54, p. 207.”*

The witnesses in question are Ludwik Rajewski and Bogdan Gliński. The first declared in this respect:<sup>169</sup>

*“To the same fate, over 10,000 Russian prisoners of war were sent to the Auschwitz Camp. They came to Auschwitz in the autumn of 1941 and were murdered there within the span of five months over the end of the year 1941 and early 1942. The first lot was murdered within three days in the gravel pit near the block leaders’ room of the Main Camp.”*

The witness Gliński made the following declaration:<sup>170</sup>

*“Not only I myself but other detainees as well remember well the following occurrence: a few weeks after the beginning of the German-Russian war the first large transport of Russian prisoners of war ar-*

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<sup>169</sup> Deposition of Ludwik Rajewski, 7 September 1946. APMO, sygn. Dpr.-Hd/4, Höss Trial, Vol. 4, p. 56.

<sup>170</sup> Deposition of Bogdan Gliński, 19 September 1947. APMO, Dpr.-ZOd/54b, Krakow Trial, Vol. 54b, p. 212.

*rived at Auschwitz as a group of several hundred persons. These prisoners were housed in Block 11 and went to work every day, digging sand from a large pit – the Kiesgrube [gravel pit] – which was located behind the camp kitchen, on the other side of the fence. Within a few consecutive days the entire group was killed in the most-ferocious and shameful way.”*

As the German attack on the Soviet Union took place on 22 June 1941, the chronological indication furnished by the witness (“a few weeks after”) places the event most likely in the month of July, but it is unclear how Danuta Czech was able to glean from this general statement that the exact date was 18 July, quite apart from the fact that the two statements are chronologically contradictory.

The truth regarding this event was revealed by another witness, Kazimierz Hałgas (Hałgas, p. 167):

*“On 3 July, also in the gravel pit, there was a major execution of some 70 detainees, mostly from Krakow, the last one for which an execution detail was used.*

*At that time there were as yet no Soviet prisoners of war in the Auschwitz Camp. Reports about transports of Soviet POWs in July of 1941, claimed to have been integrated into the Penal Company (SK) and then killed without having been registered (numbered), cannot be proved in the light of the events at Auschwitz. Apparently we have here a confusion with the facts just mentioned.”*

This confirms – if anyone still needed to be convinced – that historical events cannot be reconstructed solely based on testimony, and in the specific case of the first homicidal gassing there is no doubt that the testimonies absolutely do not demonstrate the historicity of the alleged event.

In Jerzy Brandhuber’s already-cited paper which, although very dated, still remains one of the best-documented contributions on the fate of Soviet POWs at Auschwitz, a similar story is reported (Brandhuber 1961, pp. 15f.):

*“In July 1941, i.e. a few weeks after Germany’s attack on the Soviet Union, the first transport of Soviet prisoners of war was brought to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp. They were lodged in Block 11, from where they were led to work in the gravel pit, which was located behind the camp kitchen, next to the block leader’s room. In the course of a few days, the prisoners were murdered at work, by SS men with pistol shots, by capos with shovels and picks.”*

Although Brandhuber refers to the same sources as Danuta Czech (“Ludwik R.[ajewski]” and “Bogdan G.[liński]”; *ibid.*, Note 39, p. 16), he does not mention her “*Kalendarium*.”<sup>171</sup>

Investigating Judge Jan Sehn had already presented the first version of this story in 1946 (Sehn 1946, p. 93):

*“Immediately upon arrival at the camp the Russians were stripped naked, pushed into a block, where on a cold autumn day in 1941 they were warmed by the heat of their own bodies. Then they were dressed in striped uniforms, some with wooden shoes, and thusly clad they were assigned to work in the Penal Company, then to the construction of the camp at Birkenau. Amidst constant harassment, beatings and kicks, they wallowed in the mud digging ditches and building roads. Half-dressed, starving and wasting away, weak day after day, a pause from work, even a momentary one, was punished by being locked naked in a shed, where frost and exhaustion finished them off. No-better conditions reigned in the blocks. Prisoners did gymnastic exercises naked outdoors in the intense cold. They bathed once a week under incessant blows. Under these conditions, death reaped a rich harvest. Half dead – after SS Rapportführer Stiwitz had ascertained with a red-hot iron whether they were still alive – they were bludgeoned to death.”*

It should be noted that these fantasies do not support the thesis of the dual category of Soviet prisoners of war (first small groups for execution, then large transports for work), because Gliński, Czech and Brandhuber explicitly state that the first alleged transport of prisoners had been sent to the camp to work (so did Sehn) and were allegedly killed precisely while working at the gravel pit. Here, therefore, any reference to the political commissars presumably sent to Auschwitz to be executed is missing.

To be certain of anything, one cannot but examine the available documents.

At the State Museum of Auschwitz, various documents relating to Soviet prisoners of war are being preserved. There are two that directly concern the topic of this chapter: the card file and the *Totenbuch* (book of deaths).

The card file contains 7,641 yellow cards, 14.7 by 10.5 cm, which run from “*Gef[angener]. Nr. 2*” (“prisoner no. 2”) through 9,997. The first 60

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<sup>171</sup> Brandhuber’s original Polish article appeared in 1960 in No. 4 of the *Zeszyty Oświęcimskie*; Czech’s original Polish “*Kalendarz*” (“Chronicle”) article covering the years 1940-1941 appeared in 1958 in No. 2 of the *Zeszyty Oświęcimskie*.



cards show the date 6 October 1941 (Brandhuber 1961, p. 35; cf. Docs. 8f.).

This book of deaths has 470 pages; it contains the names of 8,320 Soviet prisoners who died within a span of 144 days. The first entry was made on 7 October 1941 (*ibid.*, p. 32; cf. Doc. 10).

In the sworn statement already mentioned, Kazimierz Smoleń asserts that “in early October the first transports of Russians arrived at Auschwitz.” This agrees with the above documents, and it is otherwise evident that sending these transports to Auschwitz was ordered in compliance with the “directives for the treatment of Soviet prisoners of war in all POW camps” sent out on 8 September 1941 by the Wehrmacht Supreme Command. These directives specified that military and civilian Russians were to be identified in the POW camps and assigned to one of the following three groups:

- a) politically undesirable
- b) politically not dangerous
- c) politically especially trustworthy

Decisions as to the classification of the “politically undesirable” elements were made by the *Einsatzgruppen* of the *Sicherheitspolizei* and the SD.<sup>172</sup> Their authority for this was based on the Directive of 17 July 1941 (*Einsatzbefehl Nr. 8*), concerning the deployment of units of the Chief of the Security Police and the Security Service (*Kommando des Chefs der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD*; Heydrich) in the POW camps. Those units had been given responsibility to survey all the detainees of the camp, including

*“the selection and further treatment*

- a) of unacceptable elements among these [persons] for political, criminal, or other reasons, and*
- b) of those persons who can be used for the reconstruction of the occupied territories.”*

Each week the heads of the *Einsatzkommandos* had to send a report to the *Reichssicherheitshauptamt* (RSHA), which then, on the basis of these reports, specified the measures to be applied, one of them being execution (PS-502).

According to the dispositions cited, the Soviet POWs had to undergo a survey to separate – and judge – the politically dangerous elements from

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<sup>172</sup> Text in Buchheim *et al.*, Vol. 2, pp. 218-220.

those who might become collaborators. If we follow Kazimierz Smoleń, the commission that came to Auschwitz in November of 1941 had exactly this task. This is accepted even by Danuta Czech, who writes in an entry for November 1941 (no date indicated), with specific reference to the statements by Kazimierz Smoleń (Czech 1990, p. 102):

*“A special Gestapo commission comes to Auschwitz from Kattowitz. It consists of three people and is led by the head of the Kattowitz Gestapo, Dr. Rudolf Mildner. The commission, which proceeds according to the Operational Order of July 17, 1941, divides the Russian POWs into the following groups:*

- 1. Fanatic Communists—approximately 300*
- 2. Group A: politically suspect—approximately 700*
- 3. Group B: not politically suspect—approximately 8000*
- 4. Group C: suitable for habilitation—approximately 30*

*The group of so-called fanatical Communists is marked in the card index and by tattoo with the letters ‘AU.’ The prisoners of war so designated are sent to the cellar of Block 24 and are intended to be liquidated in the near future along with those of Group A, the ‘politically suspect.’ The commission’s work lasts about a month.”*

The Inspectorate of the Concentration Camps was also involved in the matter, being always on the lookout for manpower. On 15 November 1941, SS *Brigadeführer* Richard Glücks sent a secret order to the concentration camps that specified the following:<sup>173</sup>

*“The Reichsführer SS and Chief of the German Police has given his approval that execution will be deferred for those Russian POWs who, though sent to the concentration camps (commissars in particular) for execution, are in such physical shape that they can be made to work in a quarry. For this measure [to be applied], approval from the chief of the Security Police and the SD must be secured in advance.*

*Specifically, the following is ordered:*

*When execution transports arrive at the camps, the able-bodied Russians suitable for quarry work will be selected by the leader of the protective custody camp (E)<sup>[174]</sup> and the camp physician. A list of the names of the Russians thus selected is to be submitted in duplicate to this office.*

<sup>173</sup> GARF, 7021-108-47, p. 5; cf. Document 11.

<sup>174</sup> E = *Erziehungshäftlinge*, detainees in preventive custody for re-education.

*The camp physician must certify that no medical objection exists against the person concerned doing the work.*

*After approval by the chief of the Security Police and the SD, transfer of the Russian concerned into a quarry camp will be ordered by this office.”*

Two days later, on 17 November, Maximilian Grabner, head of the Political Department at Auschwitz, sent the following letter to Fritzsich, the leader of the Auschwitz Protective-Custody Camp (E):<sup>175</sup>

*“On the basis of the decree below, the names of the Russians exempted from execution are to be made known to this office. We also ask you to inform us of those who fall under the order below, as lists of them have to be sent to the IKL and the Chief of the Security Police. In this respect, cooperation with the camp physician of this camp is mandatory.*

*The persons concerned are the Russians listed in the annex<sup>[176]</sup> and the Russ[ian]. prisoners of war selected by the Sonderkommando for execution last week.”*

The “*Sonderkommando*” mentioned by Grabner was Mildner’s commission, which had drawn up a first list of Soviet POWs to be executed as early as mid-November. It is therefore obvious that the first executions cannot have taken place before 17 November.

On 23 October 1941, SS *Obersturmbannführer* Arthur Liebehenschel, representing the *Inspekteur der Konzentrationslager* (IKL, Inspector of the Concentration Camps), sent a letter to all camps, including Auschwitz, on the subject of “written notifications about Soviet-Russian POWs.”<sup>177</sup> It specified the procedures of registration and notification of death to be used for the Soviet POWs, later described by Kazimierz Smoleń.

The documents available thus confirm that the first Soviet prisoners of war reached Auschwitz on 6 October 1941, and the first mass executions of these prisoners began more than a month later.

As far as detainees are concerned, there are three documents that directly concern the subject of this study:

1. the Bunker Register (*Bunkerbuch*) for Block 11;
2. the register of the detainee sickbay in Block 28 – Block 20 of the old numbering system;
3. the Death Books (*Sterbebücher*)

<sup>175</sup> GARF, 7021-108-47, p. 5a; cf. Document 12.

<sup>176</sup> This document has not been found.

<sup>177</sup> AGK, NTN, 119, pp. 60f.

The Bunker Register does not provide us with any information regarding the alleged homicidal gassing of 3-5 September 1941.

In his article on the first gassing at Auschwitz that has been cited a number of times, Stanisław Kłodziński states (Kłodziński 1972, pp. 92f.):

*“Dr. Tadeusz Iwaszko of the Auschwitz National Museum writes in a letter dated 3 November 1969, that in the register of Block 20 [according to the old numbering system], which has been preserved, there are significant entries for the period of the gassing. On 5 and 10 September, 1941, a large number of detainees were struck from the number of patients in Block 20. This raised the suspicion – in conformity also with the assertions of Dr. Kazimierz Hałgas, Roman Taul, and the detainees employed in the central ‘writing room’ of the camp – that the detainees gassed were ‘struck from the number’ of the patients in small groups over a certain period of time. This means that these detainees, in spite of having been gassed, ‘were held’ as though alive for a while longer in the sickbay’s register and that, little by little, death notices were sent to the families on various dates.”*

The register of Block 28 does contain the names of 95 detainees “released to the camp” on 5 September 1941, of three released on 6 September, of one released on 7 September, and of 36 detainees released on 10 September,<sup>178</sup> a total of 135 detainees. If these detainees had really been gassed between 3 and 4 September, 1941, their names would have to be contained in the register of deaths as having occurred on those dates.

The first of these registers, the Death Book of 1941, Volume One,<sup>179</sup> contains the death certificates of 1,498 detainees numbered in sequence. Between 1 and 10 September, we have 502 death certificates of detainees deceased between 29 July and 8 September.<sup>180</sup> For the first week of September we have 219 deceased detainees distributed in the following way:

Date	Number	Date	Number	Date	Number
1	19	4	37	7	29
2	41	5	29	8	1
3	31	6	32	Total:	219

<sup>178</sup> Register of *Häftlingskrankenbau* in Block 28. APMO, sygn. D-AuI-5/2, pp. 4-17 ; cf. Doc. 14.

<sup>179</sup> APMO, sygn. D-AuI-D/I, No. inv.171824.

<sup>180</sup> The first certificate, dated 4 August, refers to Detainee Peter Pakosch, who died on 29 July; the last one, dated 10 September, concerns Detainee Stefan Majchrzak who died on 7 September 1941. The last registration number, 1498, was assigned to Detainee Stanisław Pinis, who died on 8 September.

Among these detainees we should be able to find the 135 detainees released from the sickbay at Block 28 and assumed gassed. If we compare the two registers, we find, however, that only 14<sup>181</sup> of the 135 names of detainees released from the sickbay are in the Death Book, see Table 3:

**Table 3:** Dead inmates released from sickbay of Block 28 registered in the Death Book

Last name	First name	ID	Date of death	Block 28 no.
Matula	Eugeniusz	11865	6 September	91
Najda	Stanisław	13866	6 September	96
Jop	Piotr	17651	6 September	97
Przepiora	Kazimierz	18219	6 September	98
Sawaszkiwicz	Zygmunt	13621	6 September	95
Wiencek	Tadeusz	8213	6 September	94
Kucharski	Edward	17804	6 September	93
Ciesielski	Kazimierz	2387	7 September	87
Turno	Edward	15807	7 September	88
Cebo	Antoni	10993	7 September	89
Miecznikowski	Piotr	11980	7 September	80
Janakiewicz	Jan	12250	7 September	82
Byra	Antoni	14238	7 September	83
Korzeniewski	Stanisław	1933	7 September	118

The suspicion raised by Stanisław Kłodziński in his article just cited therefore does not appear to be justified. Uncertainties arise, though, as the comparison of entries in other registers with those in the Death Books is necessarily based on names only, *i.e.* there may be prisoners with identical names, because the Death Books do not carry the ID numbers of the deceased detainees. The Morgue Register (*Leichenhallenbuch*; register of the deceased in the morgue of Block 28), instead, is based on ID numbers, which allows the detainees to be precisely identified. Despite this difficulty, the procedure of comparing entries with those in the Death Books is still valid, because if the 135 detainees released from the sickbay between 5 and 10 September had been gassed in the beginning of that month, their names would have come up at least once in the respective Death Book anyway.

<sup>181</sup> As opposed to the Italian edition, this list does not contain the name of Stanisław Nowak (ID 12430, released from the hospital in Block 28 on 10 September), to whom I had assigned the date of death of 3 September, because in the existing *Death Books* there are 12 persons by the name of Stanisław Nowak. As only general data, without the ID number, was reported in these registers, it is impossible to ascertain which Stanisław Nowak was Detainee No. 12430.

Instead, among the 128 names of detainees who died between 4 September (the “certain” date of death of those gassed) and 8 September, there are only 14 similarly sounding names to those of inmates released from the sickbay. Although it is highly likely that they are the same persons, it is not certain. Moreover, even if this can be demonstrated beyond doubt, there is no proof that the 14 detainees in question, who were sick inmates admitted to the sickbay, were killed – let alone gassed.

It is not possible to undertake a comparison between those released from the sickbay at Block 28 and the detainees deceased during the rest of the month, because Death Book No. 1 ends on 10 September 1941, Death Book No. 2 is currently considered lost, and Death Book No. 3 starts on 21 October 1941 (Death Certificate No. 3001 for Jan Krasicki, who died on 18 October).<sup>182</sup> But the Morgue Register, which begins with 7 October 1941,<sup>183</sup> partially makes up for the missing Death Book No. 2 as far as the Period 7 through 17 October is concerned.<sup>184</sup> It thus documents in an irrefutable manner the death at much later dates of 13 detainees released between 5 and 10 September from the sickbay of Block 28, see Table 4.

At least five detainees with matching names are registered in the Bunker Register at later dates: Borkowski, Johann; Drozd, Stanislaus; Kluzniak, Kasimir; Masdorf, Johann; Rutkowski, Stefan (Brol *et al.*, pp. 69-85). Moreover, in the surviving Death Books we find the names of the detainees listed in Table 5 (Staatliches Museum...).

For Detainee Mieczysław Krol, the date of birth gives certainty that he is the detainee of the same name released from the Block 28 sickbay (Strzelecka, p. 95). For the others, there is the same degree of probability for their identity with inmates of the same name released from the sickbay of Block 28 as for the 14 detainees of the first list.

According to the Witness Władysław Tondos, 180 sick detainees were selected in Block 28 at the beginning of September 1941 for gassing in the bunker of Block 11 (Kłodziński 1972, p. 84). Hence the victims of the first homicidal gassing would have been the 182 detainees released between 5 and 17 September, who would then have been maintained on the sickbay list for another 12 days in an effort to cover up their assassination.

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<sup>182</sup> *Sterbebuch*, Vol. 3/1941. APMO, D-AuI-2/2, p. 1.

<sup>183</sup> *Leichenhallenbuch*, APMO, sygn. D-AuI-5/3.

<sup>184</sup> The period of 8 September through 6 October remains unaccounted for.

**Table 4:** Dead inmates released from sickbay of Block 28 and registered in the Morgue Register

Last name	First name	ID	Date of death	Morgue Register		Block 28 no.
				Page	Entry no.	
Remiczewski	Edmund	12556	9 Oct.	3	6	40
Owczarz	Taddäus	17017	9 Oct.	3	9	134
Zukowski	Nikolaus	19669	10 Oct.	4	17	25
Kowalczyk	Teofil	18964	12 Oct.	7	12	17
Kozlowski	Peter	12298	13 Oct.	8	14	139
Larsata	Stanisław	6434	16 Oct.	11	3	114
Kowalczyj	Januarius	12367	18 Oct.	14	9	123
Slericki	Ludwig	18618	18 Oct.	14	34	33
Chajnacki	Andreas	18256	20 Oct.	17	16	138
Marusek	Johann	19830	23 Oct.	22	20	140
Pios	Ignatz	19830	23 Oct.	22	20	35
Wierzlowski	Johann	14005	25 Oct.	25	3	20
Ruski	Gustav	17231	27 Oct.	28	17	6

However, out of the 47 detainees released from the Block 28 sickbay between 11 and 17 September, seven died during the month of October, as is evidenced by the Morgue Register, see Table 6 (p. 192).

In the Death Books there are another three detainees with matching names who died in November of 1941 (Wieczorek, Stanislaus; Burel, Thaddeus; Jewtuck, Joseph) and another four who died between February and May of 1942 (Dakowicz, Anton; Kaczmarski, Stephan; Kepinski, Stanislaus; Koza, Kasimir).

That this group can under no circumstance have been among those allegedly gassed results from the fact that one of its potential victims, Bogdan Gliński (ID 11958), who was released from the sickbay of Block 28 on 13 September, is himself one of the self-declared eyewitnesses of the first homicidal gassing! For in his deposition of 19 September 1947, Gliński stated that he saw the arrival of the Russian POWs destined to be gassed from the sickbay of Block 21 (new numbering), which was close to Block 11. He asserted that he had fallen ill with pneumonia in June of 1941 and also had a boil on his right thigh. For that reason he was housed in the detainee sickbay in Blocks 28, 21, and 19, where he had recovered by August 1941, and then worked in those blocks as a janitor. He then contracted typhus in the winter of 1941.

**Table 5:** Inmates released from sickbay of Block 28 registered later as deceased in a Death Book

Last name	First name	Block 28 no.	Date of death
Ciesielski	Marian	87	17 June 1942
Dabala	Josef	124	4 March 1942
Dzieciol	Albert	110	14 March 1942
Heinrich	Aleksander	137	22 May 1942
Jakubowski	Wiktor	49	22 Feb. 1943
Janus	Ferdynand	122	15 April 1942
Jedrzejczy	Stanislaw	51	26 May 1942
Jelonek	Jakob	112	14 Nov. 1941
Klein	Stanislaw	34	19 Nov. 1941
Kluzniak	Kazimierz	126	25 May 1942
Krol	Mieczyslaw	125	22 April 1942
Kozlowski	Piotr	139	18 March 1942
Marczynski	Mieczyslaw	115	15 March 1942
Merker	Viktor	44	4 March 1942
Mosdorf	Jan	119	19 Oct. 1943
Polak	Edmund	18	5 May 1943
Skrzetuski	Jan	109	3 Nov. 1941
Smorongiewicz	Michal	133	5 April 1942
Stasiak	Stefan	69	7 March 1943
Szewczyk	Josef	105	2 March 1943

Although he claims to have been in Block 21 “as a patient”<sup>185</sup> in early September 1941, he was actually discharged not from Block 21 but from Block 28, where he was housed as a patient. On the register of Block 28, there is no record of the billeting dates of the detainees. It appears certain, nonetheless, that in early September Bogdan Gliński was in Block 28, not in Block 21.

If what he says were true, then sick as he was, he would have miraculously escaped the 3-September selection for gassing, but would have been recruited the next day (three days later according to his own chronology) to carry out the extremely strenuous work of removing the corpses of the gassed from the bunker in Block 11 and taking them to the crematorium, after which he would have been hospitalized again, this time in Block 28, to be finally discharged on 13 September.

It is therefore clear why the witness did not mention in his deposition that he had been billeted in Block 28. Furthermore, according to Witness Władysław Tondos, he would have been selected to be gassed along with

<sup>185</sup> Deposition of Bogdan Gliński dated 19 September 1947. APMO, sygn. Dpr.-ZOd/55, Krakow Trial, Vol. 55, p. 210.



**Table 6:** Inmates released from sickbay of Block 28, registered later as deceased in the Morgue Register

Last name	First name	ID	Date of death	Morgue Register		Block 28 no.
				Page	Entry no.	
Grzybowski	Stanislaus	18419	20 Oct.	17	15	172
Kulczycki	Ceslaus	16443	13 Oct.	8	10	165
Mateski	Ladislaus	12721	16 Oct.	11	13	184
Pokorzewski	Ladislaus	8200	9 Oct.	3	23	161
Szwarczawski	Josef	18637	17 Oct.	13	6	167
Tomozyk	Johann	10909	9 Oct.	3	3	186
Zimmol	Paul	15092	7 Oct.	1	10	152

the 47 detainees officially registered as discharged some time up to 17 September (allegedly with a post-dated entry). Bogdan Gliński's testimony is therefore unreliable and shines a light on the (negligible) value of testimonies of this type.

### 3. "Evidence" from the *Bunkerbuch*: Objections and Answers

For 5 September 1941, the deaths of three inmates is recorded in the Bunker Register (*Bunkerbuch*): Fritz Renner (11179), Benno Grosmann (15083), and Roman Drost (10992), all three of whom had been admitted (*eingeliefert*) on that same day. Next to their names, the note "ver.[storben]" ("deceased") appears.<sup>186</sup> Their names (with slight variations) were recorded in Death Book (*Sterbebuch*) No. 1 of 1941:

Name	Date of Birth	Place of Birth	Date of Death	Death-Book No.
Fritz Renner	21 Dec. 1899	Breslau	5 Sept. 1941	1436
Benno Grosmann	17 Jan. 1881	Breslau	5 Sept. 1941	1439
Roman Drozd	10 Dec. 1899	Stupno	5 Sept. 1941	1442

Some have inferred from this fact that the three aforementioned inmates were killed during the "first gassing," so that the names of three victims would be known, which would constitute "proof" of the reality of this alleged event. This interpretation is unfounded for the following reasons:

1. Assuming for the sake of the argument the validity of Czech's account, without conceding it, if this were the case, it would not explain why, of the approximately 250 detainees allegedly killed on that occasion, only

<sup>186</sup> APMO, D-AuI-3/1, *Bunkerbuch*, p. 24; see Doc. 13.

the three mentioned above would have been recorded in the Bunker Register.

2. If this were the case, the three detainees in question would have been imprisoned on 3 September, the initial day of the “first gassing,” not the final day of the event.
3. None of the three detainees’ names appears in the register of Block 28, neither on the days before nor after the alleged gassing.
4. According to the page of the Bunker Register mentioned, the Inmate Ladisl.[av] Maslak also died in the Bunker on 5 September 1941, but he had been locked up there already on 10 August.

Brol *et al.* note that an arrest in the bunker could have five different outcomes: “execution by shooting,” three different forms of releases (to the Penal Company, to the camp, or to the camp with some punishment), and “sentencing to further detention in the bunker” (Brol *et al.*, p. 20). On the mode of execution, they specify (*ibid.*, p. 22):

*“The prisoners sentenced to be shot were led out of the bunker to the washroom on the first floor or – if there were many of them – to the second part of the corridor (behind bars), where they awaited their execution completely naked.”*

They finally explain that in 1941, 148 inmates admitted to the bunker “were murdered” (*ibid.*, p. 29), none of whom has any relation to the “first gassing.”

In conclusion, Fritz Renner, Benno Grosmann and Roman Drost (but also Ladislav Maslak) were victims of an execution ordered for unknown reasons by the head of the Political Department or by the Camp Leader (with the approval of the Camp Commandant). The fact that the first three were registered in the Bunker Register on 5 September 1941, and that they were therefore locked in a cell in the basement of Block 11 at a time when the claimed removal of the corpses was not yet completed, certainly does not support the reality of the “first gassing.”

In support of the claimed date of 3-5 September 1941, Czech states that the analysis of the Bunker Register shows that “between August 31 and September 5 no entries occur regarding admission of prisoners into the bunker” (Czech 1990, note on p. 85). But as we have just seen, this is inaccurate, because the three prisoners just mentioned were admitted to the bunker exactly on 5 September. Furthermore, on the same page that contains these three names, there are two previous entries; going backwards, the first is of Gustav Naupel (30 August), the other of the already-mentioned Ladislav Maslak (10 August). Thereafter, there were no admissions

to the bunker until 10 September (eight inmates were recorded on 11 September on the Bunker Register's next page, p. 25). This is also true for 18-21 September (Bunker Register, pp. 28f.).

Therefore, intervals of several days between one group of arrests and the next were a normal occurrence and prove nothing – in this case all-the-more-so since Czech's dating is not historical, but is mere conjecture.

On the one hand, Czech overlooked an important issue: During the alleged gassing, the detainees of the Penal Company are supposed to have been transferred elsewhere, but the two former detainees who testified explicitly about this made contradictory statements in this regard.

Franciszek Brol stated that they went "into the accommodations of Block 18," while Jan Pilecki, deported to Auschwitz on 20 June 1940 (Nr. 808), stated during the 45th session of the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial on 14 May 1964 (Fritz Bauer Institut, pp. 7612f.):

*"Presiding Judge: No. [Pause] Do you know anything about whether the Defendant Breitwieser participated in the first gassing, which was carried out in the basement of Block 11?"*

*Witness Jan Pilecki: No, I don't know anything about that. At that time I was in the Penal Company, and we were transferred to Block 5a.*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: No, I don't know. At that time I was in the Penal Company, and we were transferred to Block 5a.*

*Presiding Judge: Yes. So you did not see anything of that there, nor did you witness it in any other way?*

*Witness Jan Pilecki: No.*

*Interpreter Kapkajew: No."*

On the other hand, the transfer of a Penal Company from one Block to another would have required an order from the camp's headquarters, but no such headquarters order is known to mention this (Frei *et al.*, pp. 63-76, 30 August to 31 October 1941).

Another piece of "evidence" should also be added here. At the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial, the Witness Józef Mikusz stated that at the end of August 1941 he was in the hospital recovering from typhus. At the beginning of September, 12 inmates were selected in the ward, including the witness's father. They then were allegedly killed during the "first gassing." The camp headquarters notified the family of the inmate's death in a telegram dated 9 September 1941.

In *Death Book* Nr. 1 of 1941, the death of a certain Mikusz Peter is recorded, who was born on 4 December 1874 in Ornontowitz, and died in

Auschwitz on 4 September 1941 (Death-Book No. 1356). It is a certain fact that this inmate died on this date, but along with him, 36 other inmates died at Auschwitz on 4 September 1941 as well, as I mentioned earlier. For none of them can any connection with the alleged gassing be established. For this Mikusz Peter (assuming it is the witness's father), the only correlation is the simple statement of the witness, which means that nothing proves that he was actually gassed.

#### 4. Chemical Considerations

In 1990, in response to the *Leuchter Report*, the Auschwitz Museum had the “Instytut Ekspertyz Sądowych Jan Sehn” (Jan Sehn Institute for Forensic Testing) at Krakow carry out chemical tests for the cyanide content of a number of masonry samples gathered from various points of the Auschwitz and Birkenau camps.<sup>187</sup>

In the corresponding study, dated 24 September 1990, Jan Markiewicz, Wojciech Gubała, and Jerzy Łabędź analyzed “samples of wall plaster from Block 11 at Auschwitz,” which did not show any presence of cyanides.<sup>188</sup>

The analysis for exclusively soluble cyanides<sup>189</sup> entrusted in 1994 to the same institute by the Auschwitz Museum concerned *i.a.* nine samples of plaster taken from the bunker of Block 11 and yielded the following results (Markiewicz *et al.*):

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<sup>187</sup> On contact with iron oxides contained in certain building materials (mortar and brick), hydrogen cyanide (HCN) forms soluble as well as an insoluble cyanides – ferrocyanides and finally Iron Blue or Prussian Blue (Berlin Blue):  $\text{Fe}_4([\text{Fe}(\text{CN})_6]_3)$ . The stability of this compound is basically equal to that of the material in which it forms (Rudolf 2020, pp. 204-216). Even today, at Birkenau, these insoluble iron-cyanide pigments, recognizable by their intense blue color, can be observed on extensive surfaces of brickwork areas, both internal and external, of the disinfestation installations of BW5a and b, in which hydrogen cyanide was employed (in Zyklon B).

<sup>188</sup> Instytut Ekspertyz Sądowych im. Prof. dr Jana Sehna w Krakowie. Zakład Chemiczno-Toksykologii Sądowej, Krakow, 24 September 1990. APMO, L dz. I-8523/51/1860/89. See Institute for Historical Review.

<sup>189</sup> Since only insoluble cyanides can be expected to have survived the passage of time, testing exclusively for soluble cyanides, hence excluding from the outset that which only could be present, is a (grievously) invalid method; see Rudolf 2020, pp. 338-344.

**Table 7:** Cyanide residues in masonry samples taken from the bunker

Sample number, taken from cells of Block 11	CN <sup>-</sup> concentration [µg/kg]
13	28, 24, 24
14	20, 16, 16
15	0

The scale is in micrograms, *i.e.* millionths of grams. Therefore, the highest value (Sample 13) corresponds to 28 millionths of a gram per kilogram of substance.

Markiewicz, Gubała and Łabędź took nine more samples “from dwelling accommodations, which were probably fumigated with Zyklon B only once (in connection with [a] typhoid epidemic in 1942),” the analysis of which showed no presence of cyanides (*ibid.*, p. 22). However, samples taken by Germar Rudolf in Barracks 3, 13, and 20 of Construction Sector Ia at Birkenau showed a maximum concentration of 2.7 milligrams (2,700 micrograms) per kilogram (Rudolf 2020, p. 310).

In practice, the cyanide values found in two of three samples taken from the cells of Bunker 11 do not prove anything, one way or the other, because they are so low that they can be made to fit either of the hypotheses. Therefore, the final judgment concerning the reality of the first homicidal gassing depends on the critical historical and comparative analysis of the sources.

## Conclusion

The conclusion that emerges from the analyses of the available sources we have examined in this study is unambiguous: The first homicidal gassing at Auschwitz in the orthodox “reconstruction” by Danuta Czech is supported solely by conflicting statements of self-styled eyewitnesses and is thoroughly refuted by the documents. It therefore has no historical foundation.

The story was invented in October of 1941 by one of the centers for black propaganda within the secret resistance movement at Auschwitz, from the initial idea of an experimentation with undefined combat gases on human beings in an equally undefined “bunker” or “shelter” or “concrete building” at Auschwitz. Only later, cued by the disinfections with Zyklon B that became more and more widespread with the enlargement of the camp,<sup>190</sup> did the propagandists introduce Zyklon B into their tales and place the first gassing in the basement of Block 11. The normal removal of corpses of registered detainees who had died in the camp from the morgue of Block 28 to the crematorium was used to progressively enrich the story.

In 1946, Judge Jan Sehn, undertaking the task of historicizing the utterly contradictory accounts of the witnesses to enable judicial proceedings to be launched, invented the nucleus of the story, which included the canonical literary elements of the number of victims, the various phases of the gassing, but not its date. In 1959, Danuta Czech, in an even-more-aggressive manipulation of the sources, resurrected and augmented Jan Sehn’s story and drew from a *mélange* of diverging testimonies a purely fictitious “convergence of proof” and attributed to it a precise but completely invented date.: The first gassing thus became “history.”

This “history” reveals the subterfuges employed by the inventors of the legend of the first gassing at Auschwitz. It also speaks volumes about the intellectual complicity of the orthodox Holocaust historians, who uncriti-

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<sup>190</sup> One of the first gassing operations for purposes of disinfection was carried out between 7 and 12 July, 1941 in Block 16 (= 21 according to the new numbering system): the detainees of this block were temporarily housed in Block 14 (= 19) “wegen Vergasung von Block 16” (because of gassing of Block 16). RGVA, 502-1-214, p. 28.

cally accepted this legend and transmogrified it into an “untouchable historical truth.”

# Appendix

## Documents

Vanille. Moreheln. Tabellen über die Giftwirkung von Gasen und Dämpfen. 453

	Tabelle über die Wirksamkeit giftiger Gase und Dämpfe beim Menschen. (Nach LEHMANN, HESS und ZANGGER.)											
	Sofort tödlich		In 1/2-1 Stunde tödlich		In 1/2-1 Stunde lebensgefährliche Erkrankung (Hess)		In 1/2-1 Stunde erträglich ohne sofortige oder spätere Folgen		Bei mehrstündiger Einwirkung bereits wirksam (Hess)		6 Stunden ohne wesentliche Symptome ertragen	
	mg/l	Teilchen in 1 Million (cm <sup>3</sup> /m <sup>3</sup> ) etwa	mg/l	Teilchen in 1 Million (cm <sup>3</sup> /m <sup>3</sup> ) etwa	mg/l	Teilchen in 1 Million (cm <sup>3</sup> /m <sup>3</sup> ) etwa	mg/l	Teilchen in 1 Million (cm <sup>3</sup> /m <sup>3</sup> ) etwa	mg/l	Teilchen in 1 Million (cm <sup>3</sup> /m <sup>3</sup> ) etwa	mg/l	Teilchen in 1 Million (cm <sup>3</sup> /m <sup>3</sup> ) etwa
Chlor . . . . .	2,5	900	0,1-0,15	35-50	0,04-0,06	14-20	0,01	3,5	0,001	0,35	0,003 bis 0,005	1-2
Brom . . . . .	5,5	850	0,22	35	0,04-0,06	6-9	0,022	3,5	0,001	0,15	0,005	0,75
Chlorwasserstoff . . . . .	—	—	1,8-2,6	1200 bis 1750	1,5-2,0	1000 bis 1350	0,06-0,13	40-90	0,01	7,0	0,013	9,0
Schwefelwasserstoff . . . . .	1,2-2,8	800-2000	0,6-0,84	430-600	0,5-0,7	360-500	0,24-0,36	170-260	0,1-0,15	70-110	0,12-0,18	86-130
Schwefeldioxyd . . . . .	—	—	1,4-1,7	530-650	0,4-0,5	150-190	0,17-0,54	65-245	0,02-0,03	8-12	0,06-0,1	25-40
Ammoniak . . . . .	—	—	1,5-2,7	2150 bis 3900	2,5-4,5	3600 bis 6500	0,18	260	0,1	140	0,06	85
Nitrose Gase . . . . .	—	—	0,6-1,0	320-530	—	—	0,2-0,4	105-210	—	—	(0,2)	105
Phosphorwasserstoff . . . . .	—	—	0,56-0,84	400-600	0,4-0,6	300-450	0,14-0,26	100-200	0,1	7	—	—
Arsenwasserstoff . . . . .	5,0	1550	0,05	15	0,02	6	0,02	6	0,01	3	0,01 (?)	3
Kohlenoxyd . . . . .	—	—	2-3	1800 bis 2600	2-3	2600	0,3-1,0	450-900	0,2	180	0,1	90
Kohlendioxyd . . . . .	360	200000	90-120	50000 bis 67000	60-80	33500 bis 44500	60-70	33500 bis 39000	20-30	11000 bis 17000	10	5500
Phosgen . . . . .	—	—	0,02-0,1	5-25	0,05	12,5	10-20	2500 bis 5000 <sup>2</sup>	5-10	1250 bis 2500 <sup>2</sup>	10	2500
Benzol . . . . .	—	—	30-40	7500 bis 10000 <sup>2</sup>	25-30	6250 bis 7500 <sup>2</sup>	10	3000	5-10	1500 bis 3000	5-10	1500 bis 3000
Benzol . . . . .	—	—	20-30	6000 bis 9000	—	—	30-40	6150 bis 8200	—	—	20-30	4100 bis 6150
Chloroform . . . . .	—	—	200	41000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Tetrachlorkohlenstoff . . . . .	—	—	400-600	64000 bis 80000	150-200	24000 bis 32000	60-80	9500 bis 13000	10	1600	—	—
Schwefelkohlenstoff . . . . .	—	—	15	4800	10-12	3200 bis 3900	3-5	1000 bis 1600	1-1,2	320-400	—	—
Blausäure . . . . .	0,3	270	0,12-0,15	110-135	0,12	0,15	0,05	0,06	0,02	0,04	0,02 (0,04)	20-(35)
Nitrobenzol . . . . .	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,0-1,5	200-300	0,02	0,04	0,3-0,5	60-100
Anilin . . . . .	—	—	0,5	130	0,5	130	—	—	—	—	0,15-0,2	40-55

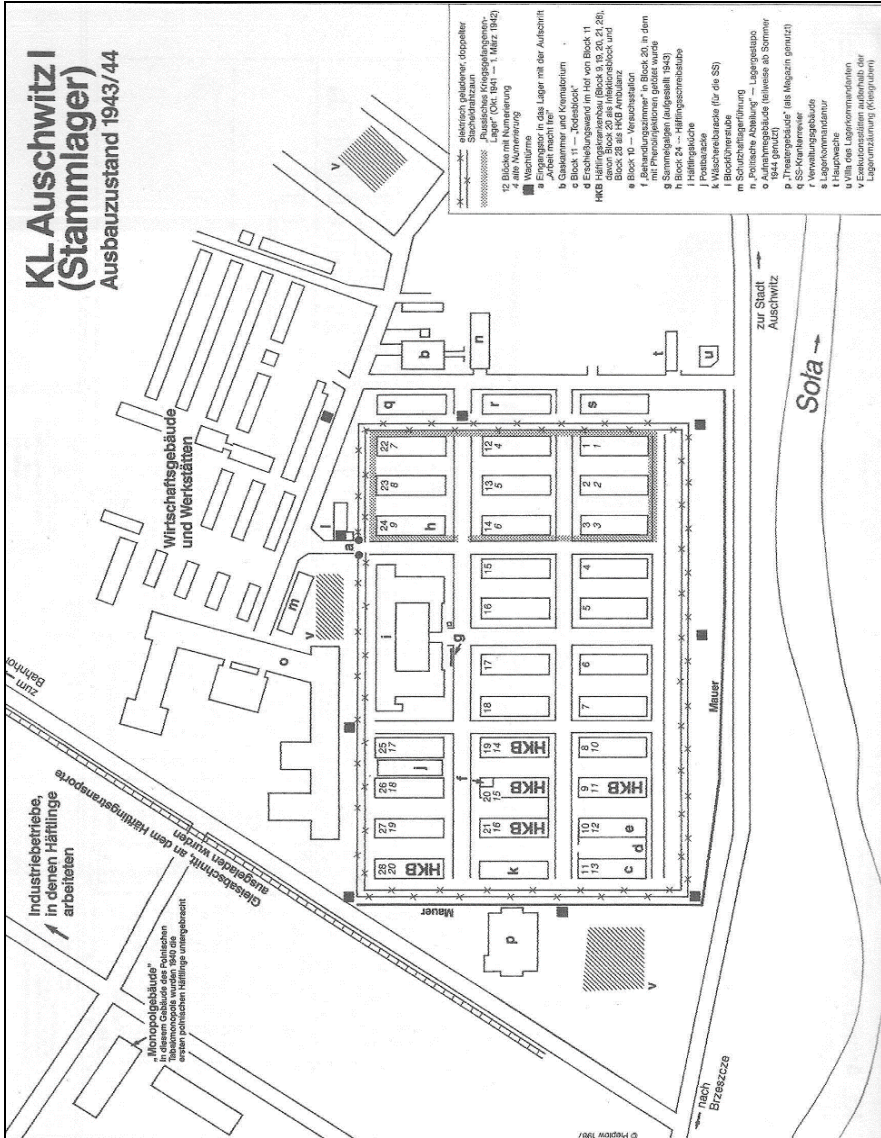
Doc. 1: Table showing the effects of various toxic gasses and vapors on human beings. Flury/Zernik, p. 453.



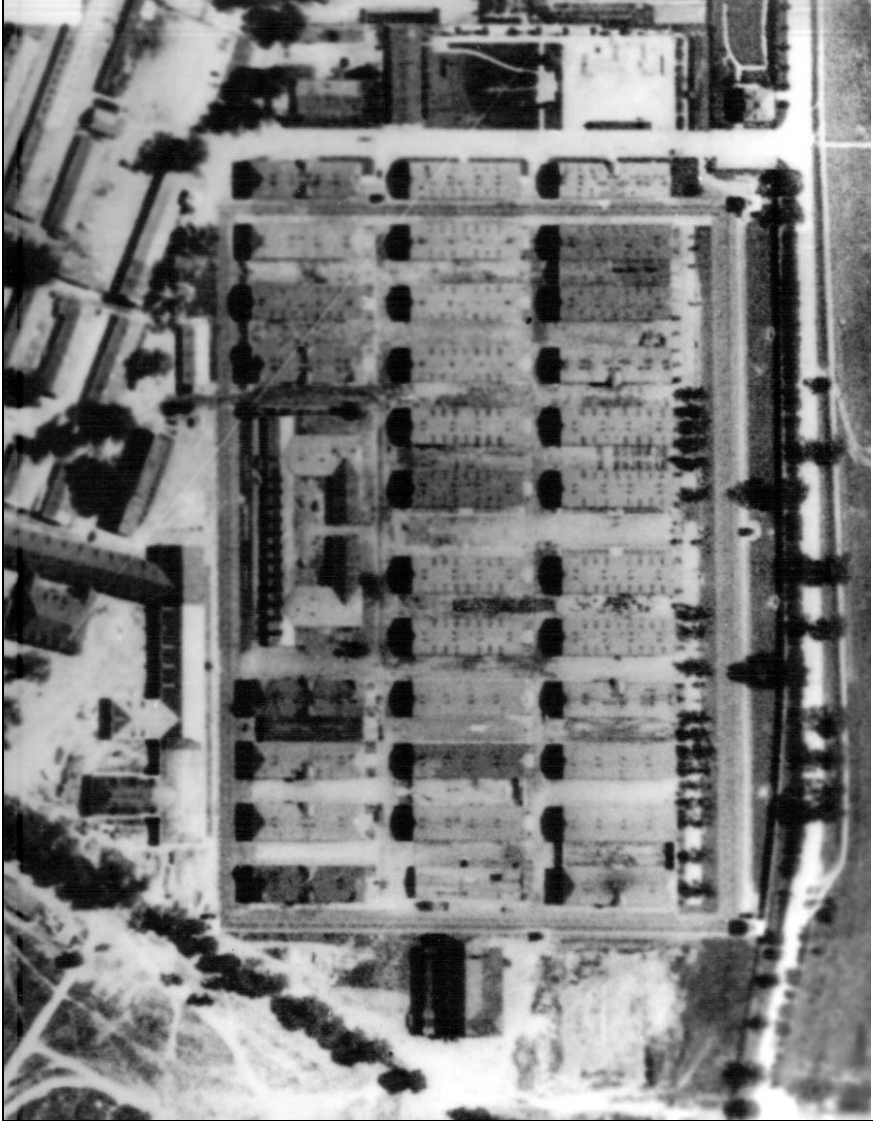
**Tabelle über die ungefähre Wirksamkeit von Gasen und Dämpfen beim Menschen.**  
(Anschließend an Angaben von K. B. LEHMANN und HENDERSON-HAGGARD  
auf Grund eigener Versuche ergänzt und abgeändert<sup>1</sup>.)

Stoff	Tödlich 5—10 Minuten lang eingesammet		Gefährlich (toxisch) $\frac{1}{2}$ —1 Stunde lang eingesammet		Erträglich $\frac{1}{2}$ —1 Stunde lang eingesammet	
	Teile Dampf oder Gas in 1 Million Teilen Luft ( $\text{cm}^3/\text{m}^3$ )	mg/l etwa	Teile Dampf oder Gas in 1 Million Teilen L. ft ( $\text{cm}^3/\text{m}^3$ )	mg/l etwa	Teile Dampf oder Gas in 1 Million Teilen Luft ( $\text{cm}^3/\text{m}^3$ )	mg/l etwa
Phosgen . . . . .	50	0,2	25	0,1	1	0,004
Chlor . . . . .	500	0,7	50	0,07	5	0,007
Arsenwasserstoff . . . . .	300	1,0	60	0,2	20	0,06
Blausäure . . . . .	200	0,2	100	0,1	50	0,05
Nitrose . . . . .	500	1,0	100	0,2	50	0,1
Schwefelwasserstoff . . . . .	800	1,2	400	0,6	200	0,3
Phosphorwasserstoff . . . . .	1000	1,4	400	0,6	100	0,15
Schwefelkohlenstoff . . . . .	2000	6,0	1000	3,0	500	1,5
Schwefeldioxyd . . . . .	3000	8,0	400	1,2	100	0,3
Chlorwasserstoff . . . . .	3000	4,5	1000	1,5	100	0,15
Ammoniak . . . . .	5000	3,0	2500	1,5	250	0,15
Kohlenoxyd . . . . .	5000	6,0	2000	2,4	1000	1,2
Benzol . . . . .	20000	65	7500	25	3000	10
Chloroform . . . . .	25000	125	15000	75	5000	25
Benzin (Gasolin) . . . . .	30000	120 <sup>2</sup>	20000	80 <sup>2</sup>	15000	60 <sup>2</sup>
Tetrachlorkohlenstoff . . . . .	50000	350	25000	175	10000	70
Kohlendioxyd . . . . .	90000	165	50000	90	30000	55
Acetylen . . . . .	500000	550	250000	275	100000	110
Äthylen (mit Sauerstoff) . . . . .	950000	1100	800000	920	500000	575

**Doc. 2:** Table showing the effects of various toxic gasses and vapors on human beings. Flury/Zernik, p. 454.

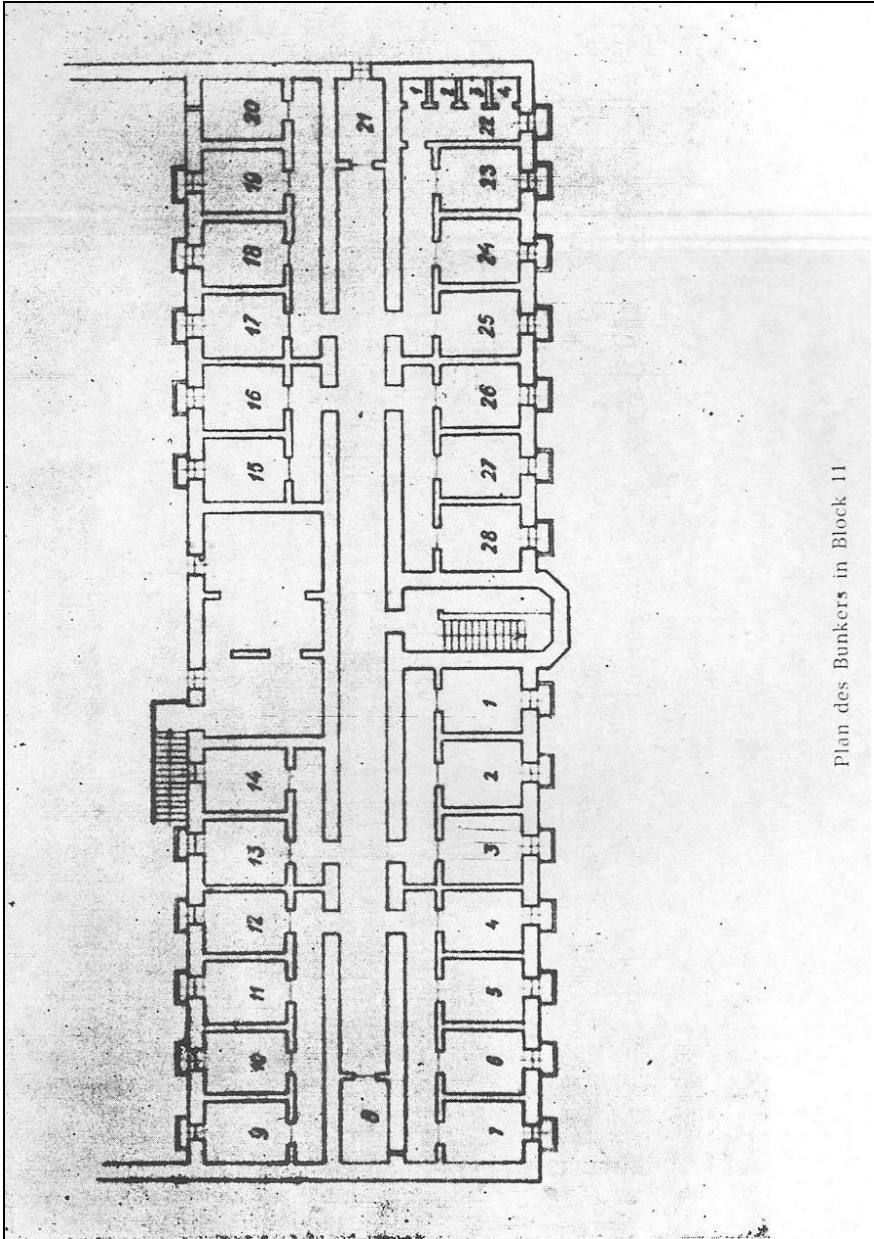


Doc. 3: Plan of the Auschwitz Camp (1943-1944). Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung, No. 2, 1987, p. 273.



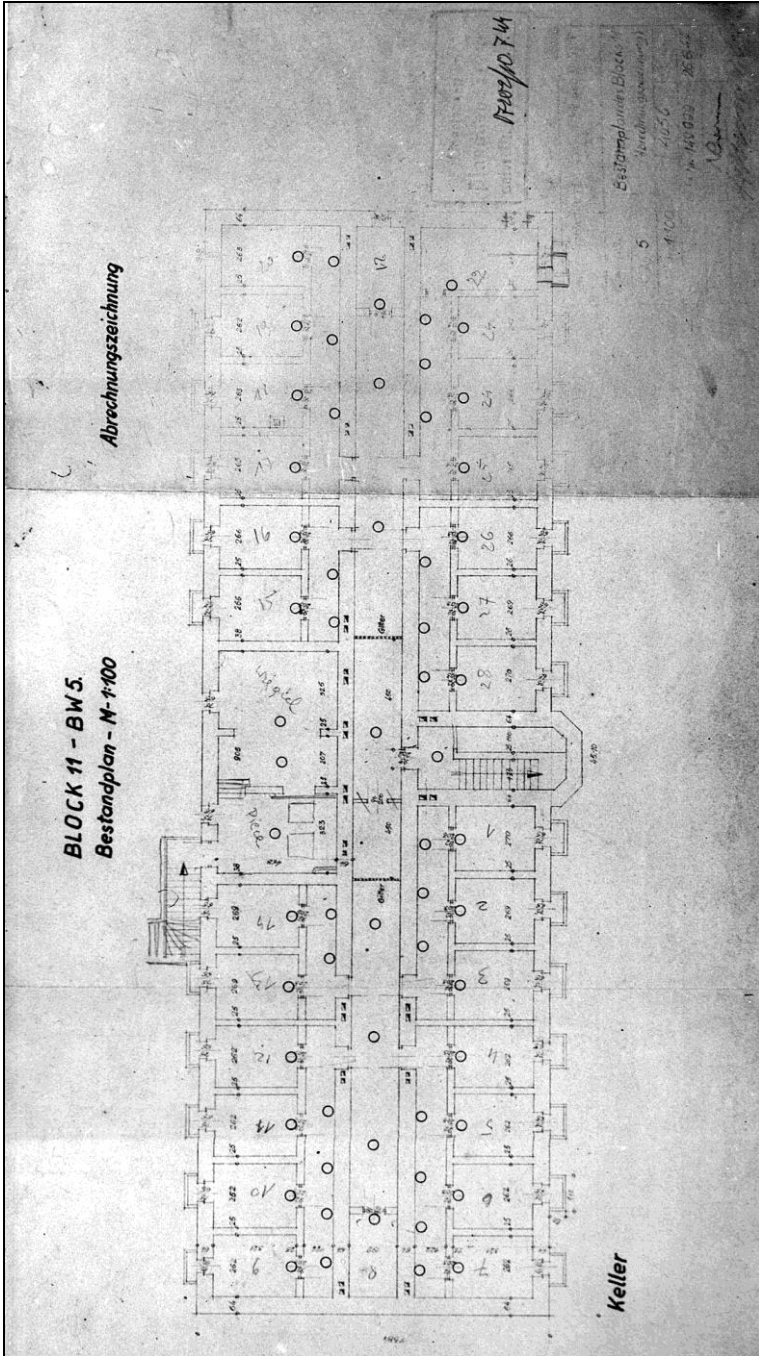
**Doc. 4:** Aerial photograph of the Auschwitz camp taken by the US Air Force on 31 May 1944. National Archives Washington. Records of the Intelligence Agency (RG 373), Aerial Photographs of Auschwitz and Birkenau. Mission 60 PRS/462 60 SQ. Can D 1509, Exposure 4057.





Plan des Bunkers in Block 11

**Doc. 6:** Plan of the bunker of Block 11 redrawn after the original plan No. 1152 of 16 March 1942. Brol et al., p. 13.



Doc. 7: Original plan of the bunker of Block 11 No. 4056 dated 26 June 1944. APMO, negative number 10270.

Gef. Nr.: <u>5</u>	Kenn. Nr.: _____
Name: <u>Kowal</u>	
Vorname: <u>Theodor</u>	geb. am: <u>10.6.1910</u>
in: <u>Charkow</u>	
Beruf: _____	Dienstgrad: <u>Soldat</u>
Religion: _____	Staat: <u>Sowjet</u>
Wohnort: _____	Stand: _____
Name der Ehefrau: _____	
Name der Eltern: _____	
Anschrift der Angehörigen: _____	
Eingeliefert: <u>6.10.41</u>	
Entlassen: _____	
Verstorben: <u>1.11.41</u>	

*ding m... ..*

Karten aus der Kartei für sowjetische Kriegsgefangene

Doc. 8: Card file of Soviet prisoners of war. Card of a prisoner registered at Auschwitz on 6 October 1941. Brandhuber 1961, p. 51.

**Gef. Nr.:** 1573 **Kenn. Nr.:** \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Name:** Grigimikon NO-5850  
208

**Vorname:** Hansij **geb. am:** 14.1.1908

**in:** Ejelogorje

**Beruf:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Dienstgrad:** Soldat

**Religion:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Staat:** UdSSR **Stand:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Wohnort:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name der Ehefrau:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name der Eltern:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Anschrift der Angehörigen:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Eingeliefert:** 7.10.41.

**Entlassen:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Verstorben:** 4.12.41  

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**Laufende Nummer im Totenbuch**  
**5145**

Doc. 9: Card file of Soviet prisoners of war. Card of a prisoner registered at Auschwitz on 7 October 1941, Nuremberg Document NO-5850.



L.Nr.		R. Nr.	Block	Dat.	Todes- strunde	Name, Vorname, Geburts.	Krankheits- gesch.
1941. NO - 5850							
1	E.M.	34087	3 <sup>a</sup>	7.10		unbekannt	Herschlag
2	EM	35217	3 <sup>a</sup>	"		"	Nierenschwäche
3	EM.	35534	3 <sup>a</sup>	"		"	"
4		449	2	"		"	Darmlatonh
5		200	2	"		"	Herschlag
6	EM.	31022		10. 16 <sup>15</sup>		"	Ally. Körpersch.
7	EM.	35510	3 <sup>a</sup>	9.10	8-	unbekannt	Nierenwinkelsch.
8	EM.	31622	12	"	8 <sup>30</sup>	"	Nierenschw.
9	EM	31544	14	"	8 <sup>40</sup>	"	Pneumonie
10	EM	31873	13	"	10 <sup>00</sup>	"	Ally. Körpersch.
11	EM.	34032	3 <sup>a</sup>	"	15 <sup>45</sup>	Zacharov Grigorij 20.4.17. ? ?	Kranke des Herschlag
12		997	KB.	10.10.	8 <sup>20</sup>	Kudincev Piotr 12.5.11. Konec Andreevich	Nierenschw.
13		1138	3	11.10	8-	Quisimov Piotr 2.5.16. Gornick	Darmlatonh
14	EM.	32321	13	"	8 <sup>15</sup>	unbekannt	Ally. Körpersch.
15	EM.	31646	13	"	8 <sup>10</sup>	"	Herschlag
16		1196	KB.	"	8 <sup>45</sup>	Bielkin Irav. 17.9.19. Gintara.	Phlegm. b. Körper.
17		2403	KB.	12.10	8-	Mojzisev Piotr 8.2.20. Belovskij Gady	Darmlatonh
18		996	KB	13.10	8-	Jerschinn Wosilij 17.3.21. Tschelkowskij	Lungenschw.

Doc. 10: Death Book of Soviet prisoners of war, first page of registrations.  
APMO, sygn. D-Aul-5/1. Nuremberg Document NO-5850.



Konzentrationslager Auschwitz  
Abteilung II

Auschwitz, 17.11.41

An die  
Schutzhaftlagerführung des KL.-Au.,  
Schutzhaftlagerführer "E",  
A u s c h w i t z .

Auf Grund des umstehenden Erlasses sind die von der Exekution ausgenommen Russen namentlich hierher zu melden. Gleichzeitig wird ersucht nach hier zu berichten welche zum umstehenden Befehl in Frage kommen, da diese listenmässig beim IKL und beim Chef der Sicherheitspolizei eingereicht werden müssen. In dieser Hinsicht das Einvernehmen mit dem hiesigen Lagerarzt unbedingt erforderlich. In Frage kommen die auf der beiliegenden Liste aufgeführten Russen und die vom Soderkommando in der vergangenen Woche zur Exekution ausgesuchten russ. Kriegsgefangenen.

Konzentrationslager Auschwitz	
„Schutzhaftlagerführer E“	
17. XI. 1941	
Anlagen: 2	Sachbearbeiter:

Der Leiter der Abteilung II

*Grabner*

Wachsturmführer u. Krim.Sekr.

*2 Anlagen*

Doc. 12: Letter from Grabner dated 17 November 1941 to leadership of the protective-custody camp of Auschwitz CC. GARF, 7021-108-47, p.

24

Dat.	Nr.	Zu. u. Vorname	Einl.	Grund	Tag	Entl.
10/8.	31174	Maslak Ladisl 2.2.20. kurnik fabrik.			14. 5. 9. 41.	
30/8.	3267	Kaupel Gustav 1.4.10. Fertig Fabrik			in die Sek. am 31.8.41.	
5/9.	11779	Renner Fritz 21.12.99 Breslau Maschinenarbeit.			ver. 5.9.41	
5/9.	15089	Grossmann Bruno 14.1.31 Breslau Schuhmacher			ver. 5.9.41	
5/9.	10792	Drost Roman 10.12.99 Lupno Landwirt			ver. 5.9.41	
9/9.	2076	Blöck ?			made den B.B. le entlassen am 22.9.41.	
10/9.	31174	Frau Tadeuz 20.8.22. de Krausamstadt			fabrikant verst 16.9.41.	
10/9.	17157	Kokoroski Terfit 2.2.16. Klein			3 Tage auf. 11.9.41.	

Doc. 13: Bunker Register, p. 24. APMO, sygn. D-Aul-3/1, p. 24.



⑥					⑦						
Zahl	Hilfss. Familien-Nr.	HAUSE Nr.	Namen	Entlassen nach	Bemerkung	Zahl	Hilfss. Familien-Nr.	HAUSE Nr.	Namen	Entlassen nach	Bemerkung
16	2107	19443	Sokolki Karl			13	-	18618	Lencki Ludwig		
17	1874	18964	Komlonyk Trefil			14	-	18666	Klein Stanislaus		
18	-	16713	Falk Edmund			15	-	19830	Pis' Ignatz		
19	5002	12509	Kopciński Aleksius			16	1912	11086	Calmer Stanislaus		
20	-	14005	Kucinski Johann			17	-	5107	Pawlowski		
21	-	18514	Milewski Stanislaus			18	1757	7229	Przyj' Stanislaus		
22	-	14620	Matek Karl			19	-	10102	Lyderson Josef		
23	1762	5298	Kawocki Czesław			20	-	12556	Romowski Stanislaus		
24	-	17217	Karkowski Bogusław			21	-	1924	Wajsa Stanislaus		
25	-	19561	Zukowski Nikolaus			22	1910	14711	Likora Eugen		
26	-	11253	Walerak			23	-	7767	Brymajto		
27	-	14439	Pawlic			24	-	18083	Makus D.ktor		
28	-	8502	Baniera			25	-	10806	Waczi Stanislaus		
29	-	12765	Łajz			26	-	9886	Tranowski Eugen		
30	-	14322	Rychlowski			27	-	10539	Wlodek Joseph		
31	-	8839	Mazur'ski			28	-	12913	Łomacki Joseph		
32	-	12905	Łęczyński Karol			29	2004	12481	Jakubowski Robert		

Entlassen in das Lager.

Entlassen in das Lager.

⑧					⑨						
Zahl	Hilfss. Familien-Nr.	HAUSE Nr.	Namen	Entlassen nach	Bemerkung	Zahl	Hilfss. Familien-Nr.	HAUSE Nr.	Namen	Entlassen nach	Bemerkung
50	1761	10133	Łukasiński Paul			67	1958	3662	Bożek Gustav		
51	-	11756	Jedrzyński Stanislaus			68	1957	15152	Morison Anton		
52	-	4055	Solalick Gabriel			69	-	14300	Kasiak Stephan		
53	1810	9740	Ruswick Stanislaus			70	2138	12831	Łemelcki Stanislaus		
54	1710	19236	Kotwicki Alia			71	-	17029	Łubicki Stanislaus		
55	-	17110	Karpinski Stanislaus			72	1738	15740	Foltka Stanislaus		
56	-	12120	Łeminski Johann			73	-	2620	Łeminski		
57	-	15114	Pawlowski Stephan			74	1553	13844	Łeminski		
58	-	11261	Jastrzebski Adam			75	-	16968	Muska Joseph		
59	-	13569	Byniec Stanislaus			76	1846	14917	Łedzko Andreas		
60	-	12902	Kabonki Joseph			77	-	8163	Kaminski Mykolas		
61	-	11044	Kulawick D.ktor			78	-	8324	Łydzij Richard		
62	-	14175	Kubicki Stanislaus			79	1921	11626	Pamus Joseph		
63	261	11115	Wiaz Johann			80	-	11980	Kramkowski Felx		
64	-	17086	Paszycki Wiktor			81	-	13420	Tranowski Wiktor		
65	-	16509	Malyzack Franz			82	-	12250	Jankowiak Johann		
66	-	12320	Łubicki Stanislaus			83	-	14238	Byra Anton		

Entlassen in das Lager.

Entlassen in das Lager.

Doc. 14 continued.

10					11						
Roll	Age at death	Roll #	Name	Enslav. num.	Remarks	Roll	Age at death	Roll #	Name	Enslav. num.	Remarks
84	-	8115	Samborski Johann						G. 9. 41.		
85	-	4188	Thomarski Stanislaus			101	-	8065	Chudobski Stanislaus	nach Bl. 19	
86	-	1933	Korzeniowski Johann			102	-	11735	Klak Stanislaus	entlassen im Lager	absperrung von dem Arbeitst.
87	1833	2387	Lesielski Karim's			103	-	13842	Thoma. Mark. Karim.	-	
88	-	15807	Turno Leonard						F. 9. 41.		
89	-	10993	Libt Anton			104	-	12910	Lebuck Julian	nach Bl. 19	
90	-	16108	Pajka Joseph		Entlassen im Lager.						
91	-	11865	Katula Eugen			105	1291	11537	Wilmann August		
92	-	13000	Kimmin'ski Theodor			106	-	19005	Kempel Karim's		Arbeitst.
93	-	7107	Michalski Edward			107	-	5422	Plaka Konrad		
94	1667	8213	Kienicki Karim's			108	-	10532	Niedzielski Eugen		Entlassen im Lager.
95	-	13621	Sarnacki Karim's			109	-	19826	Stratinski Johann		
96	111	13155	Szyja Stanislaus			110	-	10735	Wojciszewski Stanislaus		
97	-	7100	Wojciszewski Stanislaus			111	-	6452	Wojciszewski Stanislaus		
98	2198	10219	Rupis Karim's			112	-	16173	Jelonek Jakob		
99	-	5796	Rupa Stephan			113	-	14793	Szyja Stanislaus		
100	-	2736	Samborski Konrad		114	-	6434	Lanota Stanislaus			

12					13						
Roll	Age at death	Roll #	Name	Enslav. num.	Remarks	Roll	Age at death	Roll #	Name	Enslav. num.	Remarks
115	-	16761	Narceyński Marjtan		Entlassen im Lager.	132	-	17717	Wolcanski Joseph		
116	-	10143	Belinski Adam			133	-	17579	Smorgoniewski Michael		Entlassen im Lager.
117	2010	12105	Kompasa Josef			134	-	17017	Uracas Theodor		
118	-	12430	Wozak Stanislaus			135	-	14209	Antonski Wojciech		
119	-	8230	Nordorf Johann			136	2197	7313	Strelczyk Stanislaus		
120	-	14004	Kolasiński Theodor			137	-	10000	Kennrich Alex		
121	-	16781	Radwan'ski Karim's			138	-	12256	Chyacki Stanislaus		
122	117	10826	Janus Ferdinand			139	-	12291	Wojciszewski Stanislaus		
123	-	12367	Stawicki Karim's			140	-	13965	Karim's Johann		
124	-	15857	Tabala Joseph						H. 9. 41.		
125	189	5710	Wiel Stanislaus		141	1550	8067	Antonski Richard	nach Bl. 20	abst. Lager	
126	1715	1574	Kienicki Karim's		142	-	16112	Wojciszewski Johann	nach Bl. 20	abst. Lager	
127	-	13079	Wiel Eugen								
128	-	15220	Kane Alex		143	-	17221	Kosten'ski Georg	nach Bl. 1.		
129	-	16353	Wiel Karim's								
130	-	7104	Wiel Stanislaus		144	-	11958	Wiel'ski Bogdan	nach Bl. 1.		
131	-	14388	Kane Georg		145	-	11491	Kane Alex			

Doc. 14 continued.

99					100						
Roll	Age Anzahl	Age Jahre	Namen	Einwesen nach	Bemerkung	Roll	Age Anzahl	Age Jahre	Namen	Einwesen nach	Bemerkung
146	-	11858	Majch Joseph	B.L.		162	2396	12496	Kosa, Jasinica		
			16.9.41.			163	-	4230	Chelkowski, Jasinica		
147	-	13331	Jakowicz Stefan	Tulajt Bl. 19		164	2082	13673	Hucorck, Barbara		entlassen
148	-	11582	Kosciuszko, Stefan	- - -		165	2300	16443	Julczycki, Barbara		
149	-	7791	Luzia, Herbert			166	-	17016	Murzynski, Bernard		
150	2338	16763	Julczycki, Jozef			167	1722	11637	Lawraczki, Jozef		
151	-	12442	Kosciuszko, Stefan			168	2133	7586	Przemyski, Jozef		
152	1025	5092	Kimmel, Paul	Tul. nach Bl. 27		169	1928	17911	Zasawa, Viktor		
153	1724	10022	Felipack, Maria			170	-	14066	Burck, Theodor		
154	1673	12411	Luzia, Franz			171	-	3457	Policki, Jasinica		
155	-	2474	Morawski, Jasinica			172	-	11419	Szymanski, Stanislaw		
156	2146	14055	Julczycki, Jozef			173	-	11574	Gricki, Stanislaw		
157	-	1322	Janicki, Boleslaw			174	1617	11760	Fogystek, Stanislaw		
158	1849	19367	Bucinski, Jozef			175	-	9351	Brack, Stanislaw		
159	-	16130	Parula, Joseph			176	2141	5074	Witowski, Karl		
160	1885	15981	Hypinski, Stanislaw			177	-	13430	Szymanski, Jozef		
161	-	8200	Julczycki, Jozef			178	-	19074	Lawraczki, Stanislaw		

101					102						
Roll	Age Anzahl	Age Jahre	Namen	Einwesen nach	Bemerkung	Roll	Age Anzahl	Age Jahre	Namen	Einwesen nach	Bemerkung
179	-	13792	Jankel, Alex			193	-	4070	Kozynski, Johann		entlassen
180	2261	16619	Simpson, Joseph			194	-	1007	Michalica, Peter		
181	-	15514	Salce, Franz			195	-	11686	Bardala, Adam		
			17.9.41.			196	-	14337	Klos, Edward		
182	226	13072	Markiewicz, Stefan			197	-	1581	Lebelski, Stanislaw		
183	2501	20562	Michalski, Jasinica			198	-	14411	Leonki, Jasinica		
184	113	12321	Michalski, Stanislaw			199	2335	15664	Regalski, Boleslaw		
185	1125	11023	Kosch, Jasinica			200	-	16051	Hojaschowa, Viktor		
186	-	10919	Tomczyk, Johann			201	-	2473	Schanski, Johann		
187	-	11643	Kulczycki, Jozef			202	1525	16924	Furke, Alexander		
			18.9.41.			203	-	11525	Luzia, Viktor		
188	-	13221	Lebelski, Stanislaw		entlassen	204	-	17115	Schanski, Stanislaw		
189	-	4082	Kosciuszko, Stanislaw		entl. 21.11	205	5206	18534	Kosicki, Daniel		
			19.9.41.			206	-	14228	Luzia, Jozef		
190	2491	19089	Morawski, Franz		entlassen	207	1813	11746	Janicki, Jozef		
191	-	15315	Michalski, Leon		- - -	208	5082	5730	Morawa, Stanislaw		
192	-	40338	Wickler, Johann		- - -	209	2761	3711	Morawski, Jozef		

Doc. 14 continued.



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P\_r\_o\_t\_o\_k\_ó\_ł\_.

Dnia 19 września 1947 r. w Krakowie . Członek Krakowskiej Okrę-  
gowej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce , Sędzia  
grodzki dr Henryk Gawacki , na pisemny wniosek Pierwszego Proku-  
ratora Najwyższego Trybunału Narodowego z dnia 25 kwietnia 1947  
Ldz. Prok. MTN. 719/47 , na zasadzie i w trybie dekretu z dnia  
10 listopada 1945 (Dz.U.R.P. nr 51, poz. 293 ) , w związku z art.  
254 , 107 , 115 kodeksu postępowania karnego przesłuchał w cha-  
rakterze świadka niżej wymienionego byłego więźnia obozu koncen-  
tracyjnego w Oświęcimiu , który zeznał co następuje : - - - -

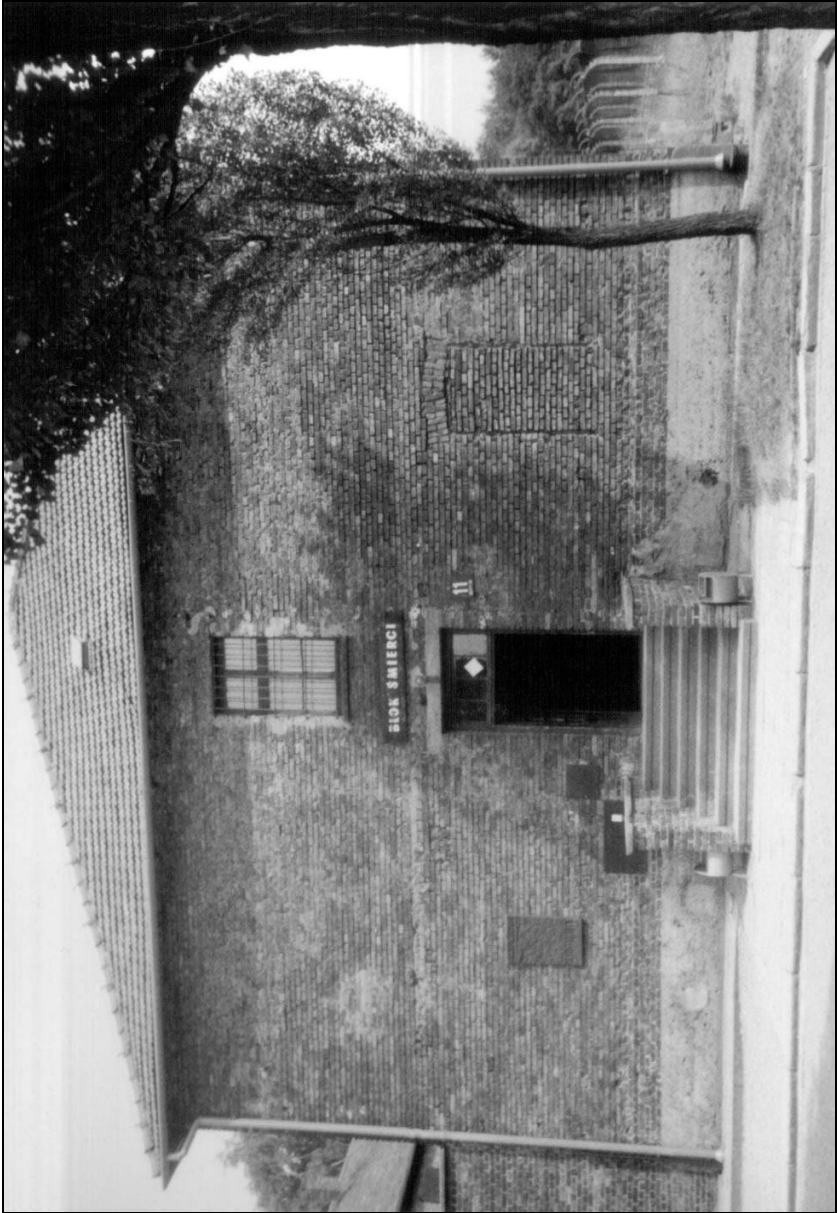
Nazywam się : Bogdan G l i ń s k i , liczę  
lat 26 , religii -rzymskokatolickiej , naro-  
dowości i przynależności państwowej : pol-  
skiej , student medycyny UJ. w Krakowie ,I.  
Dom Akademicki , ul. Jabłonowskich 10/12,  
bez przeszkód : - - - - -

W lutym 1941 zostałem aresztowany w Miechowie , potem siedziałem  
w więzieniu Montelupich w Krakowie i następnie w dniu 5 kwiet.1941  
zostałem osadzony jako więzień polityczny w obozie w Oświęcimiu  
pod numerem więziennym : 11958 . Dnia 4 lub 5 marca 1943 - nie  
pamiętam dokładnie , gdyż przebywałem przez przeszło 4 miesiące  
do tego czasu w bunkrze - zostałem z karnym transportem przenie-  
siony do obozu w Buchenwald , gdzie pozostawałem do końca . Do  
Oświęcimia zostałem odstawiony z Krakowa w grupie , liczącej oko-  
ło 1.000 mężczyzn .Wieziono nas w wagonach kolejowych francuskich,  
blaszanych , szczelnie zamkniętych , bez żadnej wentylacji i usku-  
tek silnego upału , a braku powietrza w wozach , wielu więźniów  
w drodze zmarło lub też oszalało . W obozie oświęcimskim najpierw  
pracowałem na tzw. " Neubau " , w czerwcu 1941 zachorowałem na  
zapalenie płuc , a nadto miałem flegmę na prawym udzie , przeby-

*Bogdan Gliński*

## Photographs

All photographs taken by Carlo Mattogno in October 1991.



**Photo 1:** Block 11, outside, wall facing NE, entry door.



**Photo 2:** Block 11, outside, wall facing NNE, yard.



**Photo 3:** Block 11, outside, wall facing NE, wall and gate of the yard.



**Photo 4:** Block 11, outside, walls facing NE and SSW.



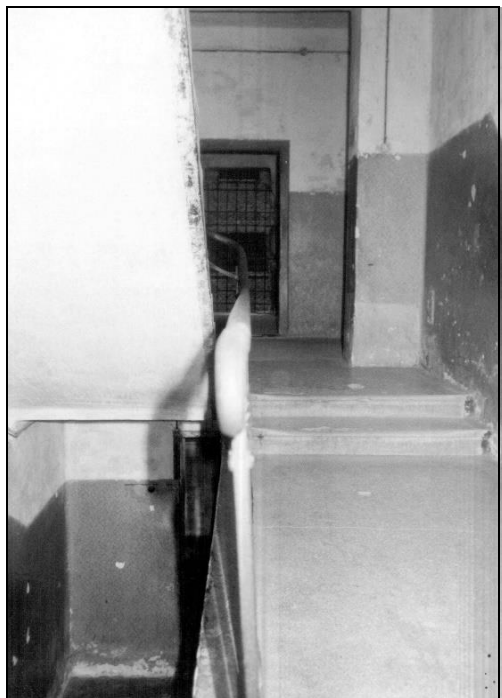
**Photo 5:** Block 11, outside, wall facing NE, entry door and hallway.



**Photo 6:** Block 11, inside, ground floor, hallway seen from the entrance.



**Photo 7:** Block 11, inside, ground floor, hallway seen from the opposite side toward the entrance door.



**Photo 8:** Block 11, inside, ground floor and exit to the yard (top right); entrance door to bunker (bottom left).



**Photo 9:** Block 11, inside, steel door of the bunker seen from the stairs.

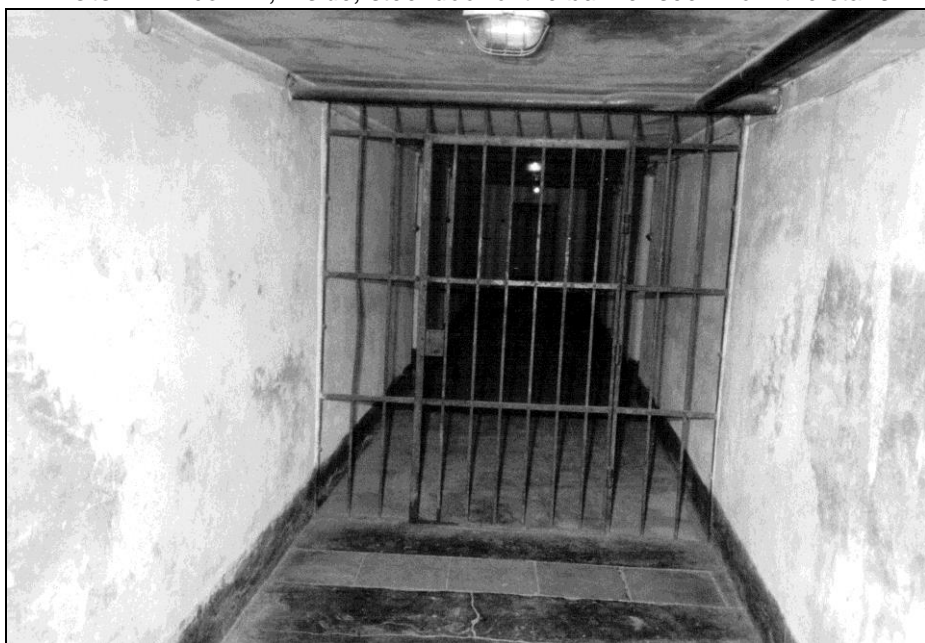


*Photo 10: Block 11, inside, steel door of the bunker seen from the stairs.*

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**Photo 11:** Block 11, inside, steel door of the bunker seen from the stairs.



**Photo 12:** Block 11, inside, bunker, iron grid separating the left side of the bunker from its right side.

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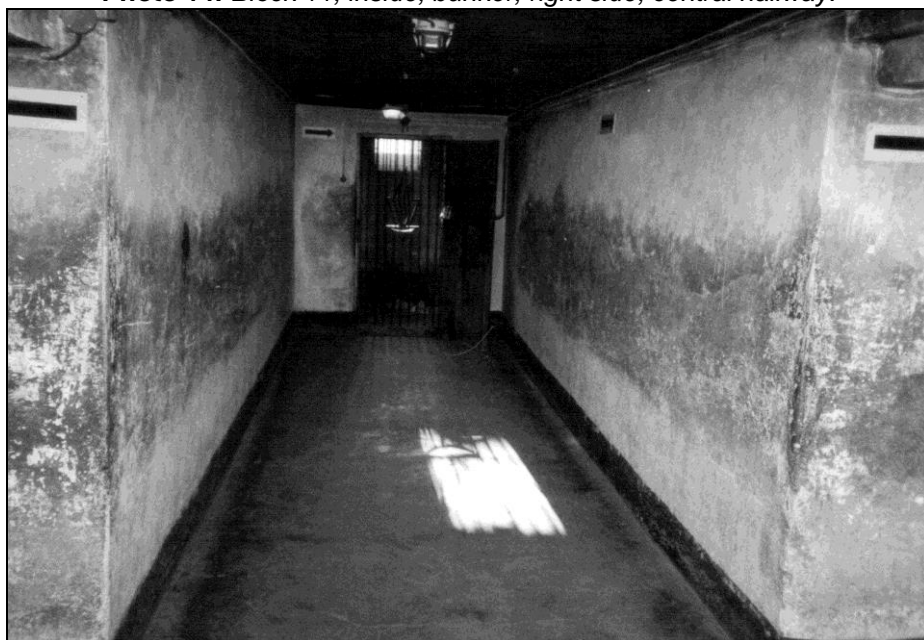




*Photo 13: Block 11, inside, bunker, left side, central hallway.*



*Photo 14: Block 11, inside, bunker, right side, central hallway.*



*Photo 15: Block 11, inside, bunker, right side, central hallway.*



**Photo 16:** Block 11, inside, bunker, right side, central hallway.



**Photo 17:** Block 11, inside, bunker, right side, cell no. 21.



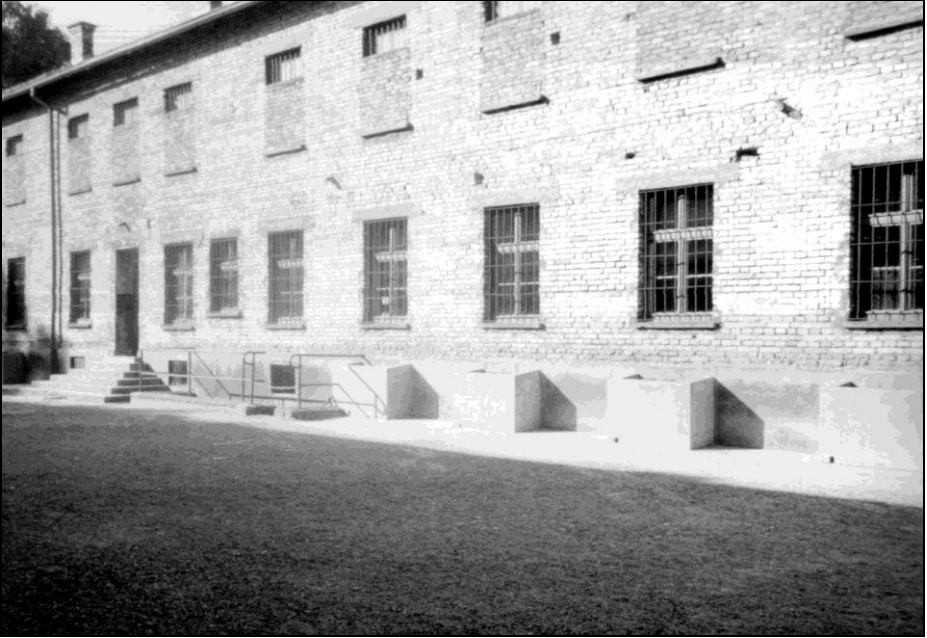
**Photo 18:** Block 11, inside, right side, left-side lateral corridor (cells nos. 17-20).



**Photo 19:** Block 11, inside, bunker, right side, door to cell no. 16.



*Photo 20: Block 11, inside, right side, door to cell no. 25.*

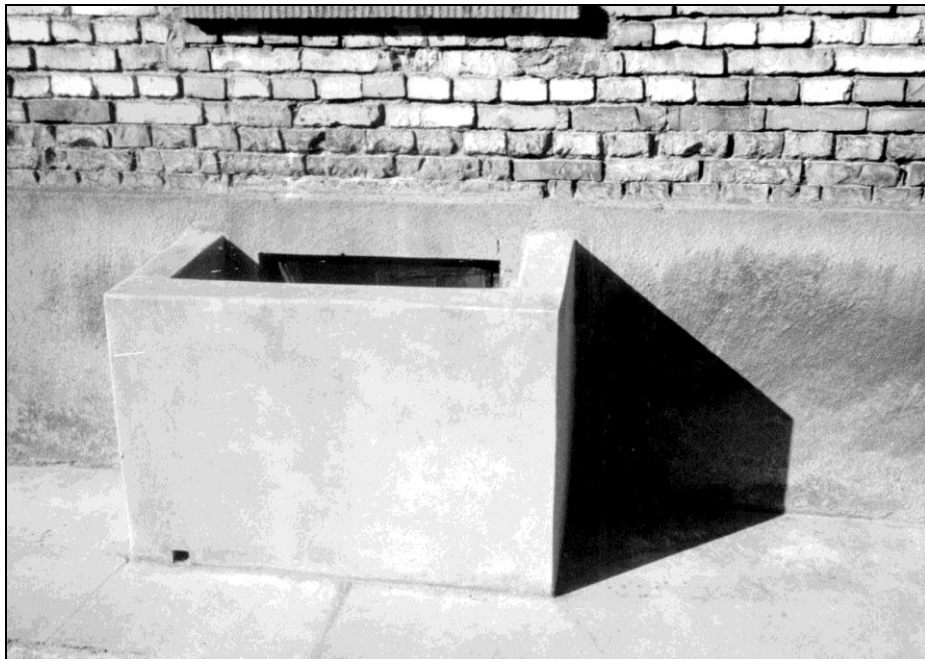


**Photo 21:** Block 11, outside, wall facing NNE, concrete screens around the window wells of the bunker cells.

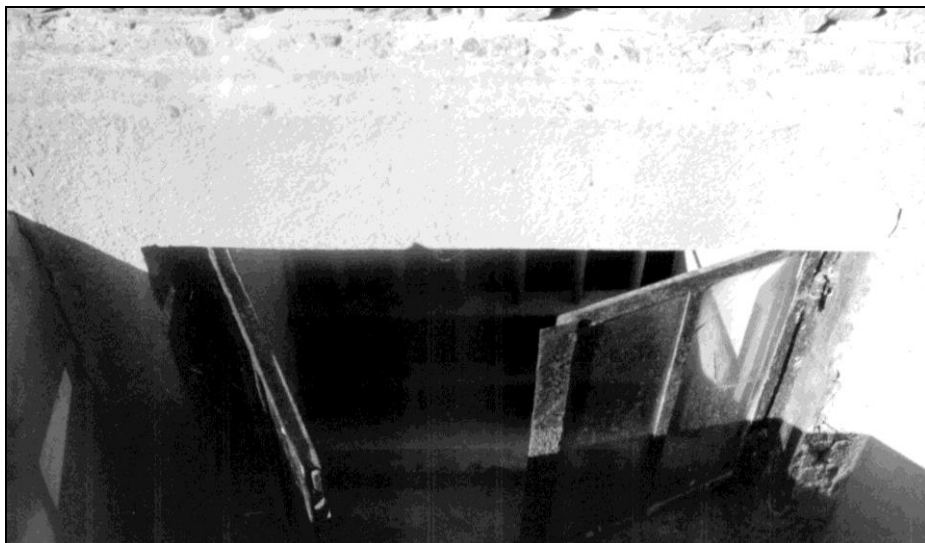


**Photo 22:** Block 11, outside, wall facing NNE, concrete screens around the window wells of the bunker cells.

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**Photo 23:** Block 11, outside, wall facing NNE, one of the concrete screens around the window well of a bunker cell.



**Photo 24:** Block 11, outside, wall facing NNE, window of one of the bunker cells surrounded by a concrete cover.

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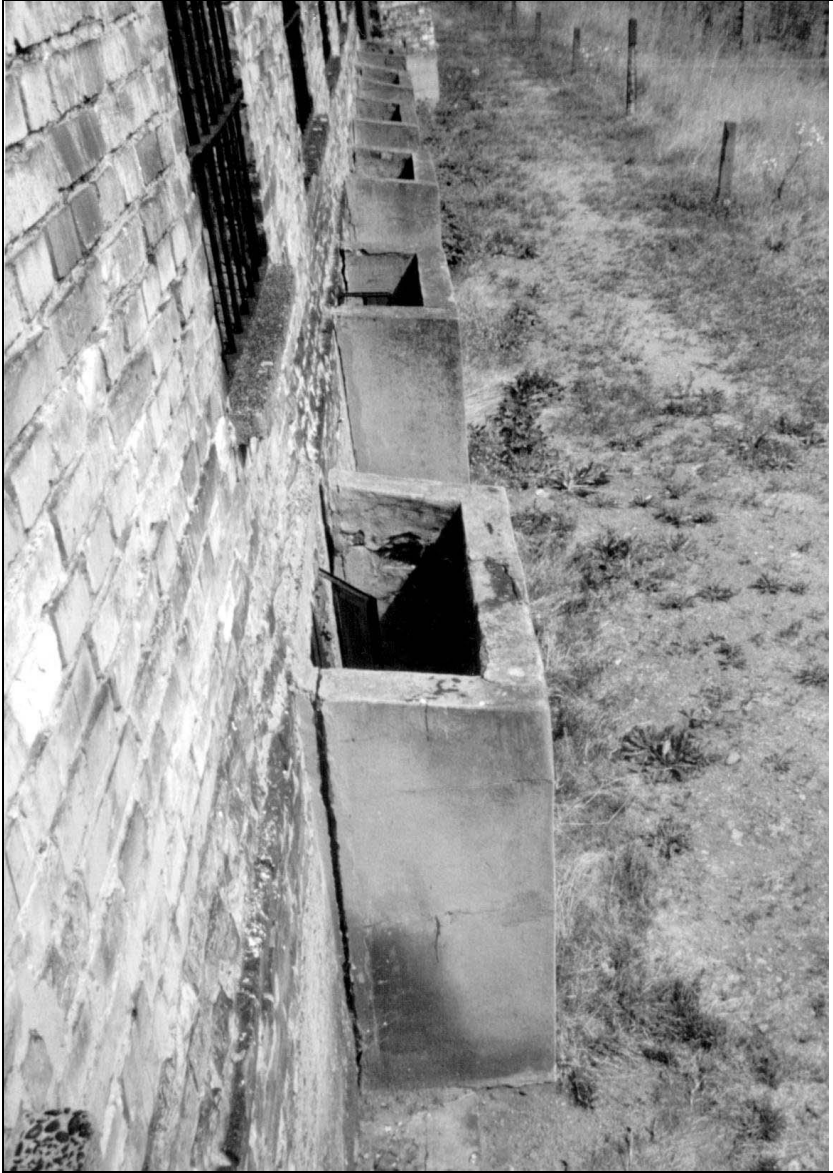




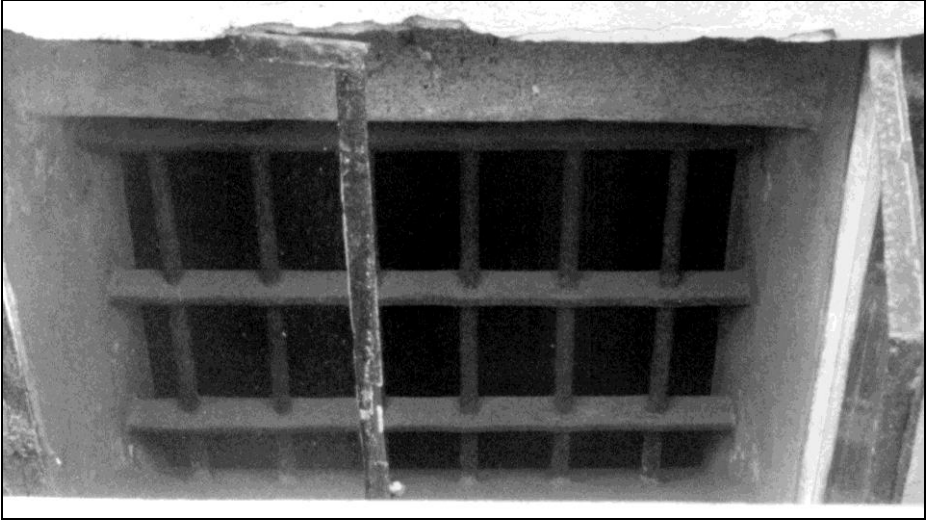
*Photo 25: Block 11, outside, wall facing NNE, window of cell no. 14.*



*Photo 26: Block 11, outside, wall facing SSW, concrete screens around the window wells of the bunker cells.*



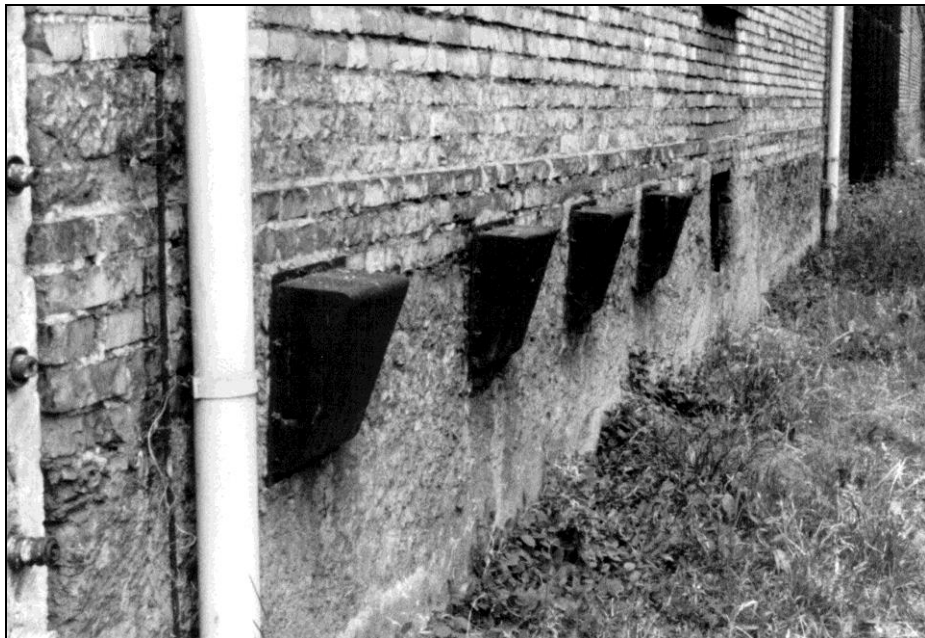
**Photo 27:** Block 11, wall facing SSW, close-up of concrete screens around the window wells of the bunker cells.



**Photo 28:** Block 11, outside, wall facing SSW, window of one of the bunker cells surrounded by a concrete screen.



**Photo 29:** Block 11, outside, wall facing SE, sheet-metal boxes covering the air-supply holes of the 4 stand-up cells (Stehzellen) of the bunker. In the center underneath the large window: window of cell no. 21 (see Photo 17).



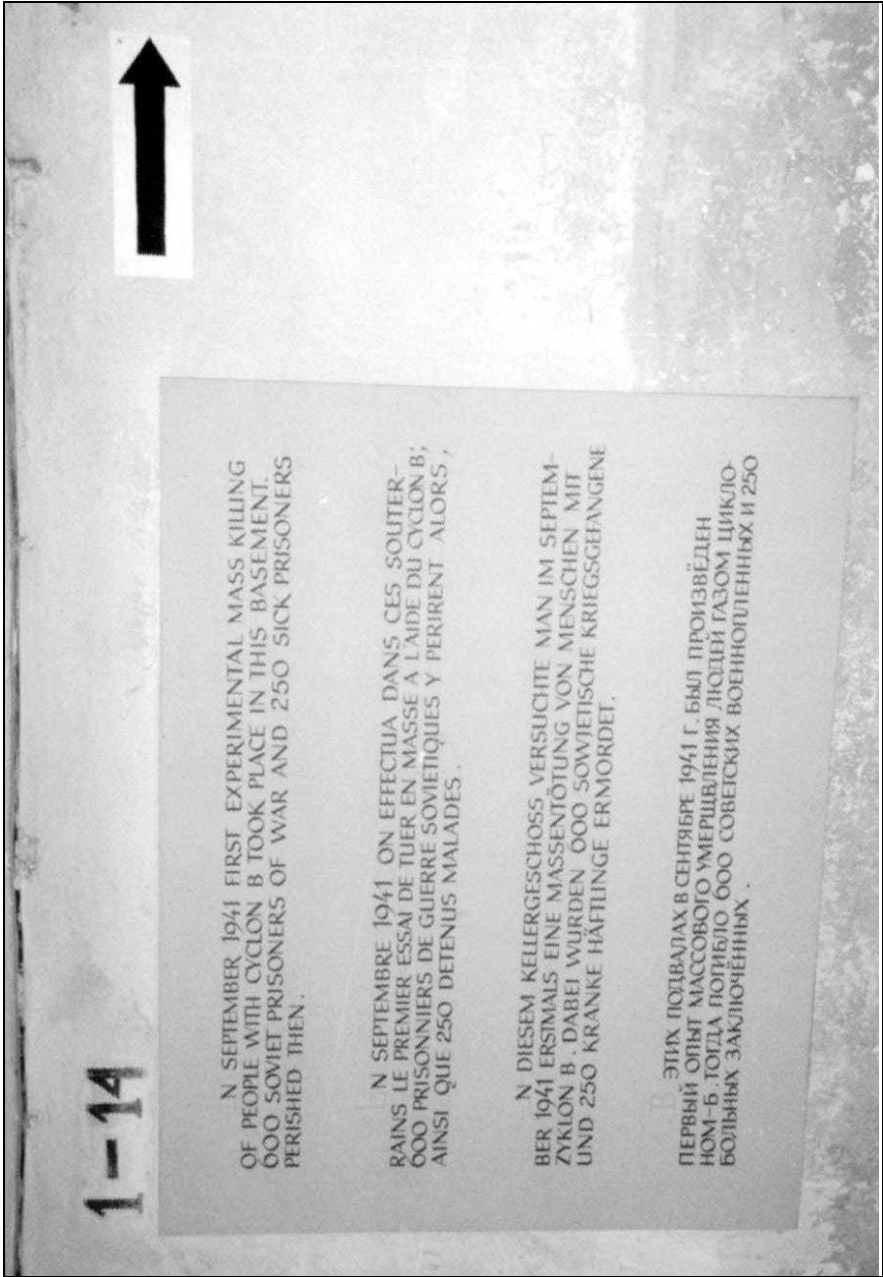
**Photo 30:** Block 11, outside, wall facing SE, sheet-metal boxes covering the air-supply holes of the 4 stand-up cells of the bunker.



**Photo 31:** Block 11, outside, wall facing SE, close-up of one of the sheet-metal boxes.



*Photo 32: Block 11, inside, bunker, right side, stand-up cells.*



**Photo 33:** Block 11, inside, bunker, right side, central hallway, plaque commemorating the alleged homicidal gassing of September 1941.

## Abbreviations

- AGK: *Archiwum Głównej Komisji Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu* (Archive of the Central Investigating Commission of the Crimes Against the Polish people – National Monument) Warsaw
- APMO: *Archiwum Państwowego Muzeum w Oświęcimiu* (Archive of National Museum Auschwitz)
- GARF: *Gosudarstvenni Archiv Rossiskoi Federatsii* (State Archive of the Russian Federation) Moscow
- RGVA: *Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennii Vojennii Archiv* (Russian State War Archive)
- TNA: The National Archives, London
- ZStL: *Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen*, Ludwigsburg.

## Note on Polish Sources

The documents of the Höss Trial (*Akta Krakowskiej Okręgowej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w sprawie byłego komendanta obozu koncentracyjnego w Oświęcim-Brzezince Rudolfa Hössa*) consist of 21 volumes (Vols. 1-21).

The documents of the trial of the camp garrison (*Akta sprawy byłych członków załogi obozu koncentracyjnego Oświęcim-Brzezinka*) consist of 67 volumes (Vols. 1 – 67), which include also the 21 volumes of the Höss Trial. The originals are in Warsaw in the Archives of the Central Commission of Investigation into the Crimes against the Polish People – National Monument (*Archiwum Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni w Polsce, aktualmente Główna Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu*) with a copy in the Auschwitz Museum.

The classification system of these documents varies between the two institutions. In the Warsaw Archives they are classified under the reference “NTN” (= *Najwyższy Tribunal Narodowy*, Supreme National Court) and the numbers 82 through 150, but some volumes that refer to the trial of the camp garrison have their own numbering (151 through 175). This does not facilitate the identification of the respective volumes. Where this identification became impossible, I have given only the archival reference. I have done the same for the references that I have taken from the Auschwitz Museum, indicating, wherever possible, the relevant volume in brackets.

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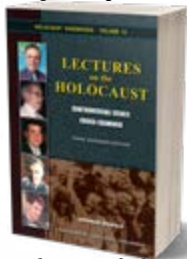
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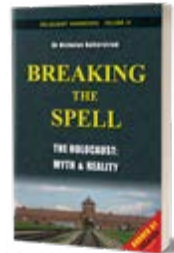
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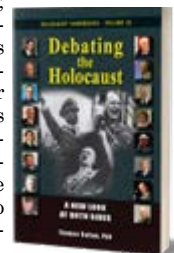
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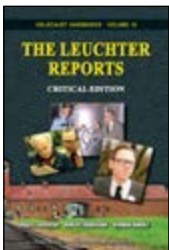
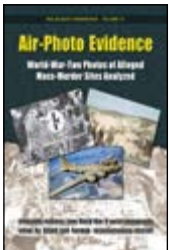
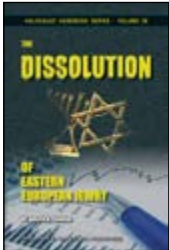
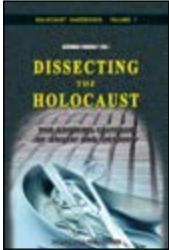
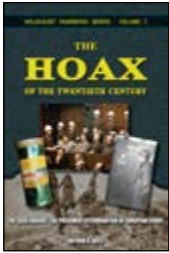
refutes the orthodox “Holocaust” narrative. It reveals that the Germans were desperate to reduce the death rate in their labor camps, which was caused by catastrophic typhus epidemics. Dr. Kollerstrom, a science historian, has taken these intercepts and a wide array of mostly unchallenged corroborating evidence to show that “witness statements” supporting the human gas chamber narrative clearly clash with the available scientific data. Kollerstrom concludes that the history of the Nazi “Holocaust” has been written by the victors with ulterior motives. It is distorted, exaggerated and largely wrong. With a foreword by Prof. Dr. James Fetzner. 5th ed., 282 pages, b&w ill., bibl., index. (#31)



#### ***Debating the Holocaust. A New Look at Both Sides.***

By Thomas Dalton. Mainstream historians insist that there cannot be, may not be, any debate about the Holocaust. But ignoring it does not make this controversy go away. Traditional scholars admit that there was neither a budget, a plan, nor an order for the Holocaust; that the key camps have all but vanished, and so have any human remains; that material and unequivocal documentary evidence is absent; and that there are serious problems with survivor testimonies. Dalton juxtaposes the traditional Holocaust narrative with revisionist challenges and then analyzes the mainstream’s responses to them. He reveals the weaknesses of both sides, while de-





claring revisionism the winner of the current state of the debate. 4th ed., 342 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#32)

**The Hoax of the Twentieth Century. The Case against the Presumed Extinction of European Jewry.** By Arthur R. Butz. The first writer to analyze the entire Holocaust complex in a precise scientific manner. This book exhibits the overwhelming force of arguments accumulated by the mid-1970s. Butz's two main arguments are: 1. All major entities hostile to Germany must have known what was happening to the Jews under German authority. They acted during the war as if no mass slaughter was occurring. 2. All the evidence adduced to prove any mass slaughter has a dual interpretation, while only the innocuous one can be proven to be correct. This book continues to be a major historical reference work, frequently cited by prominent personalities. This edition has numerous supplements with new information gathered over the last 35 years. 4th ed., 524 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#7)

**Dissecting the Holocaust. The Growing Critique of 'Truth' and 'Memory.'** Edited by Germar Rudolf. *Dissecting the Holocaust* applies state-of-the-art scientific techniques and classic methods of detection to investigate the alleged murder of millions of Jews by Germans during World War II. In 22 contributions—each of some 30 pages—the 17 authors dissect generally accepted paradigms of the “Holocaust.” It reads as excitingly as a crime novel: so many lies, forgeries and deceptions by politicians, historians and scientists are proven. This is the intellectual adventure of the 21st Century. Be part of it! 3rd ed., 635 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#1)

**The Dissolution of Eastern European Jewry.** By Walter N. Sanning. Six Million Jews died in the Holocaust. Sanning did not take that number at face value, but thoroughly explored European population developments and shifts mainly caused by emigration as well as deportations and evacuations conducted by both Nazis and the Soviets, among other things. The book is based mainly on Jewish, Zionist and mainstream sources. It concludes that a sizeable share of the Jews found missing during local censuses after the Second World War, which were so far counted as “Holocaust victims,” had either emigrated (mainly to Israel or the U.S.) or had been deported by Stalin to Siberian labor camps. 2nd ed., foreword by A.R. Butz, epilogue by

Germar Rudolf containing important updates; 224 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography (#29).

**Air-Photo Evidence: World-War-Two Photos of Alleged Mass-Murder Sites Analyzed.** By Germar Rudolf (editor). During World War Two both German and Allied reconnaissance aircraft took countless air photos of places of tactical and strategic interest in Europe. These photos are prime evidence for the investigation of the Holocaust. Air photos of locations like Auschwitz, Majdanek, Treblinka, Babi Yar etc. permit an insight into what did or did not happen there. The author has unearthed many pertinent photos and has thoroughly analyzed them. This book is full of air-photo reproductions and schematic drawings explaining them. According to the author, these images refute many of the atrocity claims made by witnesses in connection with events in the German sphere of influence. 6th edition; with a contribution by Carlo Mattogno. 167 pages, 8.5”x11”, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index (#27).

**The Leuchter Reports: Critical Edition.** By Fred Leuchter, Robert Faurisson and Germar Rudolf. Between 1988 and 1991, U.S. expert on execution technologies Fred Leuchter wrote four reports on whether the Third Reich operated homicidal gas chambers. The first on Auschwitz and Majdanek became world-famous. Based on various arguments, Leuchter concluded that the locations investigated could never have been “utilized or seriously considered to function as execution gas chambers.” The second report deals with gas-chamber claims for the camps Dachau, Mauthausen and Hartheim, while the third reviews design criteria and operation procedures of execution gas chambers in the U.S. The fourth report reviews Pressac's 1989 tome about Auschwitz. 4th ed., 252 pages, b&w illustrations. (#16)

**Bungled: “The Destruction of the European Jews”. Raul Hilberg’s Failure to Prove National-Socialist “Killing Centers.”** By Carlo Mattogno. Raul Hilberg's magnum opus *The Destruction of the European Jews* is an orthodox standard work on the Holocaust. But how does Hilberg support his thesis that Jews were murdered *en masse*? He rips documents out of their context, distorts their content, misinterprets their meaning, and ignores entire archives. He only refers to “useful” witnesses, quotes fragments out of context, and conceals the fact that his witnesses are lying through their teeth. Lies and deceptions permeate Hil-

berg's book, 302 pages, bibliography, index. (#3)

**Jewish Emigration from the Third Reich.** By Ingrid Weckert. Current historical writings about the Third Reich claim state it was difficult for Jews to flee from Nazi persecution. The truth is that Jewish emigration was welcomed by the German authorities. Emigration was not some kind of wild flight, but rather a lawfully determined and regulated matter. Weckert's booklet elucidates the emigration process in law and policy. She shows that German and Jewish authorities worked closely together. Jews interested in emigrating received detailed advice and offers of help from both sides. 2nd ed., 130 pages, index. (#12)

**Inside the Gas Chambers: The Extermination of Mainstream Holocaust Historiography.** By Carlo Mattogno. Neither increased media propaganda or political pressure nor judicial persecution can stifle revisionism. Hence, in early 2011, the Holocaust Orthodoxy published a 400-page book (in German) claiming to refute "revisionist propaganda," trying again to prove "once and for all" that there were homicidal gas chambers at the camps of Dachau, Natzweiler, Sachsenhausen, Mauthausen, Ravensbrück, Neuengamme, Stutthof... you name them. Mattogno shows with his detailed analysis of this work of propaganda that mainstream Holocaust hagiography is beating around the bush rather than addressing revisionist research results. He exposes their myths, distortions and lies. 2nd ed., 280 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#25)

## SECTION TWO: Specific non-Auschwitz Studies

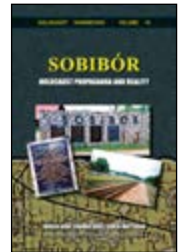
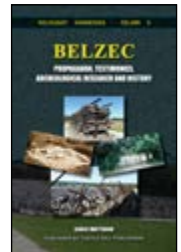
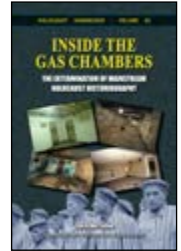
**Treblinka: Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?** By Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf. It is alleged that at Treblinka in East Poland between 700,000 and 3,000,000 persons were murdered in 1942 and 1943. The weapons used were said to have been stationary and/or mobile gas chambers, fast-acting or slow-acting poison gas, unslaked lime, superheated steam, electricity, Diesel-exhaust fumes etc. Holocaust historians alleged that bodies were piled as high as multi-storied buildings and burned without a trace, using little or no fuel at all. Graf and Mattogno have now analyzed the origins, logic and technical feasibility of the official version of Treblinka. On the basis of numerous documents they reveal Treblinka's true identity as a mere transit

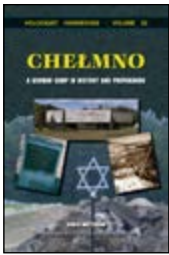
camp. 3rd ed., 384 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#8)

**Belzec: Propaganda, Testimonies, Archeological Research and History.** By Carlo Mattogno. Witnesses report that between 600,000 and 3 million Jews were murdered in the Belzec Camp, located in Poland. Various murder weapons are claimed to have been used: Diesel-exhaust gas; unslaked lime in trains; high voltage; vacuum chambers; etc. The corpses were incinerated on huge pyres without leaving a trace. For those who know the stories about Treblinka this sounds familiar. Thus the author has restricted this study to the aspects which are new compared to Treblinka. In contrast to Treblinka, forensic drillings and excavations were performed at Belzec, the results of which are critically reviewed. 142 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#9)

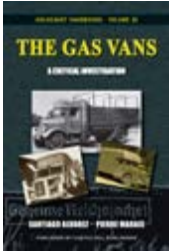
**Sobibor: Holocaust Propaganda and Reality.** By Jürgen Graf, Thomas Kues and Carlo Mattogno. Between 25,000 and 2 million Jews are said to have been killed in gas chambers in the Sobibór camp in Poland. The corpses were allegedly buried in mass graves and later incinerated on pyres. This book investigates these claims and shows that they are based on the selective use of contradictory eyewitness testimony. Archeological surveys of the camp are analyzed that started in 2000-2001 and carried on until 2018. The book also documents the general National-Socialist policy toward Jews, which never included a genocidal "final solution." 2nd ed., 456 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#19)

**The "Operation Reinhardt" Camps Treblinka, Sobibór, Belzec.** By Carlo Mattogno. As an update and upgrade to the Volumes 8, 9 and 19 of this series, this study has its first focus on witness testimonies recorded during the World War II and the immediate post-war era, many of them discussed here for the first time, thus demonstrating how the myth of the "extermination camps" was created. The second part of this book brings us up to speed with the various archeological efforts made by mainstream scholars in their attempt to prove that the myth based on testimonies is true. The third part compares the findings of the second part with what we ought to expect, and reveals the chasm that exists between archeologically proven facts and mythological requirements. 402 pages, illustrations, bibliography, index. (#28)





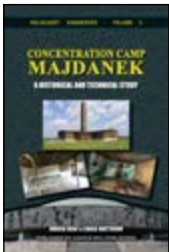
**Chelmo: A Camp in History & Propaganda.** By Carlo Mattogno. At Chelmo, huge masses of Jewish prisoners are said to have been gassed in “gas vans” or shot (claims vary from 10,000 to 1.3 million victims). This study covers the subject from every angle, undermining the orthodox claims about the camp with an overwhelmingly effective body of evidence. Eyewitness statements, gas wagons as extermination weapons, forensics reports and excavations, German documents—all come under Mattogno’s scrutiny. Here are the uncensored facts about Chelmo, not the propaganda. 2nd ed., 188 pages, indexed, illustrated, bibliography. (#23)



**The Gas Vans: A Critical Investigation.** By Santiago Alvarez and Pierre Marais. It is alleged that the Nazis used mobile gas chambers to exterminate 700,000 people. Up until 2011, no thorough monograph had appeared on the topic. Santiago Alvarez has remedied the situation. Are witness statements believable? Are documents genuine? Where are the murder weapons? Could they have operated as claimed? Where are the corpses? In order to get to the truth of the matter, Alvarez has scrutinized all known wartime documents and photos about this topic; he has analyzed a huge amount of witness statements as published in the literature and as presented in more than 30 trials held over the decades in Germany, Poland and Israel; and he has examined the claims made in the pertinent mainstream literature. The result of his research is mind-boggling. Note: This book and Mattogno’s book on Chelmo were edited in parallel to make sure they are consistent and not repetitive. 398 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#26)



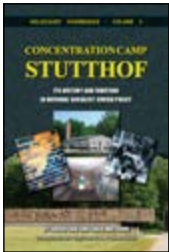
**The Einsatzgruppen in the Occupied Eastern Territories: Genesis, Missions and Actions.** By C. Mattogno. Before invading the Soviet Union, the German authorities set up special units meant to secure the area behind the German front. Orthodox historians claim that these units called *Einsatzgruppen* primarily engaged in rounding up and mass-murdering Jews. This study sheds a critical light onto this topic by reviewing all the pertinent sources as well as material traces. It reveals on the one hand that original war-time documents do not fully support the orthodox genocidal narrative, and on the other that most post-“liberation” sources such as testimonies and forensic reports are steeped in Soviet atrocity propaganda and are thus utterly unreliable. In ad-



dition, material traces of the claimed massacres are rare due to an attitude of collusion by governments and Jewish lobby groups. 2nd ed., 2 vols., 864 pp., b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#39)

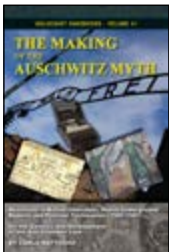
**Concentration Camp Majdanek. A Historical and Technical Study.** By Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf. At war’s end, the Soviets claimed that up to two million Jews were murdered at the Majdanek Camp in seven gas chambers. Over the decades, however, the Majdanek Museum reduced the death toll three times to currently 78,000, and admitted that there were “only” two gas chambers. By exhaustively researching primary sources, the authors expertly dissect and repudiate the myth of homicidal gas chambers at that camp. They also critically investigated the legend of mass executions of Jews in tank trenches and prove it groundless. Again they have produced a standard work of methodical investigation which authentic historiography cannot ignore. 3rd ed., 358 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#5)

**Concentration Camp Stutthof and Its Function in National Socialist Jewish Policy.** By Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf. Orthodox historians claim that the Stutthof Camp served as a “make-shift” extermination camp in 1944. Based mainly on archival resources, this study thoroughly debunks this view and shows that Stutthof was in fact a center for the organization of German forced labor toward the end of World War II. 4th ed., 170 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#4)



### SECTION THREE: Auschwitz Studies

**The Making of the Auschwitz Myth: Auschwitz in British Intercepts, Polish Underground Reports and Post-war Testimonies (1941-1947).** By Carlo Mattogno. Using messages sent by the Polish underground to London, SS radio messages sent to and from Auschwitz that were intercepted and decrypted by the British, and a plethora of witness statements made during the war and in the immediate postwar period, the author shows how exactly the myth of mass murder in Auschwitz gas chambers was created, and how it was turned subsequently into “history” by intellectually corrupt scholars who cherry-picked claims that fit into their agenda and ignored or actively covered up literally thousands of lies of “witnesses” to make their narrative look credible. 2nd edi-



tion, 514 pp., b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#41)

**The Real Case of Auschwitz: Robert van Pelt's Evidence from the Irving Trial Critically Reviewed.** By Carlo Mattogno. Prof. Robert van Pelt is considered one of the best mainstream experts on Auschwitz. He became famous when appearing as an expert during the London libel trial of David Irving against Deborah Lipstadt. From it resulted a book titled *The Case for Auschwitz*, in which van Pelt laid out his case for the existence of homicidal gas chambers at that camp. This book is a scholarly response to Prof. van Pelt—and Jean-Claude Pressac, upon whose books van Pelt's study is largely based. Mattogno lists all the evidence van Pelt adduces, and shows one by one that van Pelt misrepresented and misinterpreted every single one of them. This is a book of prime political and scholarly importance to those looking for the truth about Auschwitz. 3rd ed., 692 pages, b&w illustrations, glossary, bibliography, index. (#22)

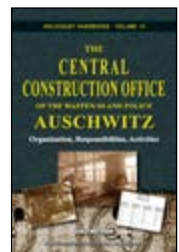
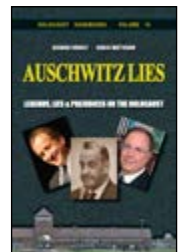
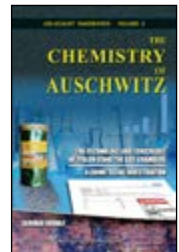
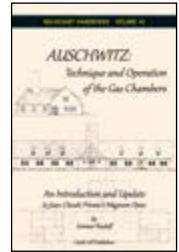
**Auschwitz: Plain Facts: A Response to Jean-Claude Pressac.** Edited by Germar Rudolf, with contributions by Serge Thion, Robert Faurisson and Carlo Mattogno. French pharmacist Jean-Claude Pressac tried to refute revisionist findings with the “technical” method. For this he was praised by the mainstream, and they proclaimed victory over the “revisionists.” In his book, Pressac's works and claims are shown to be unscientific in nature, as he never substantiates what he claims, and historically false, because he systematically misrepresents, misinterprets and misunderstands German wartime documents. 2nd ed., 226 pages, b&w illustrations, glossary bibliography, index. (#14)

**Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers: An Introduction and Update.** By Germar Rudolf. Pressac's 1989 oversize book of the same title was a trail blazer. Its many document reproductions are still valuable, but after decades of additional research, Pressac's annotations are outdated. This book summarizes the most pertinent research results on Auschwitz gained during the past 30 years. With many references to Pressac's epic tome, it serves as an update and correction to it, whether you own an original hard copy of it, read it online, borrow it from a library, purchase a reprint, or are just interested in such a summary in general. 144 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography. (#42)

**The Chemistry of Auschwitz: The Technology and Toxicology of Zyklon B and the Gas Chambers – A Crime-Scene Investigation.** By Germar Rudolf. This study documents forensic research on Auschwitz, where material traces and their interpretation reign supreme. Most of the claimed crime scenes – the claimed homicidal gas chambers – are still accessible to forensic examination to some degree. This book addresses questions such as: How were these gas chambers configured? How did they operate? In addition, the infamous Zyklon B can also be examined. What exactly was it? How does it kill? Does it leave traces in masonry that can be found still today? The author also discusses in depth similar forensic research conducted by other scholars. 4th ed., 454 pages, more than 120 color and over 100 b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#2)

**Auschwitz Lies: Legends, Lies and Prejudices on the Holocaust.** By Carlo Mattogno and Germar Rudolf. The fallacious research and alleged “refutation” of Revisionist scholars by French biochemist G. Wellers (attacking Leuchter's famous report), Polish chemist Dr. J. Markiewicz and U.S. chemist Dr. Richard Green (taking on Rudolf's chemical research), Dr. John Zimmerman (tackling Mattogno on cremation issues), Michael Shermer and Alex Grobman (trying to prove it all), as well as researchers Keren, McCarthy and Mazal (who turned cracks into architectural features), are exposed for what they are: blatant and easily exposed political lies created to ostracize dissident historians. 4th ed., 420 pages, b&w illustrations, index. (#18)

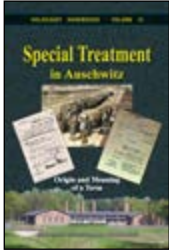
**Auschwitz: The Central Construction Office.** By Carlo Mattogno. Ever since the Russian authorities granted western historians access to their state archives in the early 1990s, the files of the Central Construction Office of the Waffen-SS and Police Auschwitz, stored in a Moscow archive, have attracted the attention of scholars who are researching the history of this most infamous of all German war-time camps. Despite this interest, next to nothing has really been known so far about this very important office, which was responsible for the planning and construction of the Auschwitz camp complex, including the crematories which are said to have contained the “gas chambers.” This emphasizes the importance of the present study, which not only sheds light into this hitherto hidden





aspect of this camp's history, but also provides a deep understanding of the organization, tasks, and procedures of this office. 2nd ed., 188 pages, b&w illustrations, glossary, index. (#13)

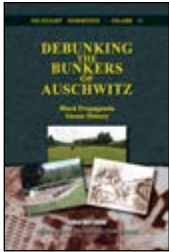
**Garrison and Headquarters Orders from the Auschwitz Camp.** By Germar Rudolf and Ernst Böhm. A large number of all the orders ever issued by the various commanders of the infamous Auschwitz camp have been preserved. They reveal the true nature of the camp with all its daily events. There is not a trace in these orders pointing at anything sinister going on in this camp. Quite to the contrary, many orders are in clear and insurmountable contradiction to claims that prisoners were mass murdered, such as the children of SS men playing with inmates, SS men taking friends for a sight-seeing tour through the camp, or having a romantic stroll with their lovers around the camp grounds. This is a selection of the most pertinent of these orders together with comments putting them into their proper historical context. 185 pages, b&w ill., bibl., index (#34)



**Special Treatment in Auschwitz: Origin and Meaning of a Term.** By Carlo Mattogno. When appearing in German wartime documents, terms like "special treatment," "special action," and others have been interpreted as code words for mass murder. But that is not always true. This study focuses on documents about Auschwitz, showing that, while "special" had many different meanings, not a single one meant "execution." Hence the practice of deciphering an alleged "code language" by assigning homicidal meaning to harmless documents – a key component of mainstream historiography – is untenable. 2nd ed., 166 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#10)



**Healthcare at Auschwitz.** By Carlo Mattogno. In extension of the above study on *Special Treatment in Auschwitz*, this study proves the extent to which the German authorities at Auschwitz tried to provide health care for the inmates. Part 1 of this book analyzes the inmates' living conditions and the various sanitary and medical measures implemented. Part 2 explores what happened to registered inmates who were "selected" or subject to "special treatment" while disabled or sick. This study shows that a lot was tried to cure these inmates, especially under the aegis of Garrison Physician Dr. Wirths. Part 3 is dedicated to this very Dr. Wirths. His reality refutes the current stereotype



of SS officers. 398 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#33)

**Debunking the Bunkers of Auschwitz: Black Propaganda vs. History.** By Carlo Mattogno. The "bunkers" at Auschwitz, two former farmhouses just outside the camp's perimeter, are claimed to have been the first homicidal gas chambers at Auschwitz specifically equipped for this purpose. With the help of original German wartime files as well as revealing air photos taken by Allied reconnaissance aircraft in 1944, this study shows that these homicidal "bunkers" never existed, how the rumors about them evolved as black propaganda created by resistance groups in the camp, and how this propaganda was transformed into a false reality. 2nd ed., 292 pages, b&w ill., bibliography, index. (#11)

**Auschwitz: The First Gassing, Rumor and Reality.** By Carlo Mattogno. The first gassing in Auschwitz is claimed to have occurred on Sept. 3, 1941 in a basement. The accounts reporting it are the archetypes for all later gassing accounts. This study analyzes all available sources about this alleged event. It shows that these sources contradict each other about the event's location, date, the kind of victims and their number, and many more aspects, which makes it impossible to extract a consistent story. Original wartime documents inflict a final blow to this legend and prove without a shadow of a doubt that this legendary event never happened. 4th ed., 262 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#20)



**Auschwitz: Crematorium I and the Alleged Homicidal Gassings.** By Carlo Mattogno. The morgue of Crematorium I in Auschwitz is said to be the first homicidal gas chamber there. This study investigates all statements by witnesses and analyzes hundreds of wartime documents to accurately write a history of that building. Where witnesses speak of gassings, they are either very vague or, if specific, contradict one another and are refuted by documented and material facts. The author also exposes the fraudulent attempts of mainstream historians to convert the witnesses' black propaganda into "truth" by means of selective quotes, omissions, and distortions. Mattogno proves that this building's morgue was never a homicidal gas chamber, nor could it have worked as such. 2nd ed., 152 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#21)



**Auschwitz: Open-Air Incinerations.** By Carlo Mattogno. In spring and summer of 1944, 400,000 Hungarian Jews were deported to Auschwitz and allegedly murdered there in gas chambers. The Auschwitz crematoria are said to have been unable to cope with so many corpses. Therefore, every single day thousands of corpses are claimed to have been incinerated on huge pyres lit in deep trenches. The sky over Auschwitz was filled with thick smoke. This is what some witnesses want us to believe. This book examines the many testimonies regarding these incinerations and establishes whether these claims were even possible. Using air photos, physical evidence and wartime documents, the author shows that these claims are fiction. A new Appendix contains 3 papers on groundwater levels and cattle mass burnings. 2nd ed., 202 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#17)

**The Cremation Furnaces of Auschwitz.** By Carlo Mattogno & Franco Deana. An exhaustive study of the early history and technology of cremation in general and of the cremation furnaces of Auschwitz in particular. On a vast base of technical literature, extant wartime documents and material traces, the authors can establish the true nature and capacity of the Auschwitz cremation furnaces. They show that these devices were inferior makeshift versions of what was usually produced, and that their capacity to cremate corpses was lower than normal, too. This demonstrates that the Auschwitz crematoria were not evil facilities of mass destruction, but normal installations that barely managed to handle the victims among the inmates who died of various epidemics ravaging the camp through its history. 2nd ed., 3 vols., 1201 pages, b&w and color illustrations (vols 2 & 3), bibliography, index, glossary. (#24)

**Curated Lies: The Auschwitz Museum's Misrepresentations, Distortions and Deceptions.** By Carlo Mattogno. Revisionist research results have put the Polish Auschwitz Museum under pressure to answer this challenge. In 2014, they answered with a book presenting documents allegedly proving their claims. But they cheated. In its main section, this study analyzes their "evidence" and reveals the appallingly mendacious attitude of the Auschwitz Museum authorities when presenting documents from their archives. This is preceded by a section focusing on the Auschwitz Museum's most-coveted asset: the alleged gas chamber inside the Old Crematorium, toured every

year by well over a million visitors. *Curated Lies* exposes the many ways in which visitors have been deceived and misled by forgeries and misrepresentations about this building committed by the Auschwitz Museum, some of which are maintained to this day. 2nd ed., 259 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#38)

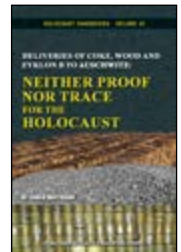
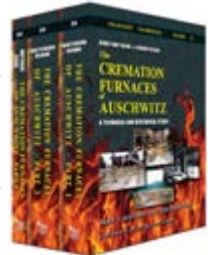
**Deliveries of Coke, Wood and Zyklon B to Auschwitz: Neither Proof Nor Trace for the Holocaust.** By Carlo Mattogno. Researchers from the Auschwitz Museum tried to prove the reality of mass extermination by pointing to documents about deliveries of wood and coke as well as Zyklon B to the Auschwitz Camp. If put into the actual historical and technical context, however, as is done by this study, these documents prove the exact opposite of what those orthodox researchers claim. 184 pages, b&w illust., bibl., index. (#40)

**Mis-Chronicling Auschwitz. Danuta Czech's Flawed Methods, Lies and Deceptions in Her "Auschwitz Chronicle".** By Carlo Mattogno. Danuta Czech's *Auschwitz Chronicle* is a reference book for the history of Auschwitz. Mattogno has compiled a long list of misrepresentations, outright lies and deceptions contained in it. This mega-fraud needs to be retired from the ranks of Auschwitz sources. 324 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#47)

## SECTION FOUR: Witness Critique

**Elie Wiesel. Saint of the Holocaust: A Critical Biography.** By Warren B. Routledge. The world's first independent biography of Elie Wiesel shines the light of truth on this mythomaniac who has transformed the word "Holocaust" into the brand name of the world's greatest hoax. Here, both Wiesel's personal deceits and the whole myth of "the six million" are laid bare for the reader's perusal. It shows how Zionist control of the U.S. Government as well as the nation's media and academic apparatus has allowed Wiesel and his fellow extremists to force a string of U.S. presidents to genuflect before this imposter as symbolic acts of subordination to World Jewry, while simultaneously forcing school children to submit to Holocaust brainwashing by their teachers. 3rd ed., 458 pages, b&w illustration, bibliography, index. (#30)

**Auschwitz: Eyewitness Reports and Perpetrator Confessions.** By Jürgen Graf. The traditional narrative





of what transpired at the infamous Auschwitz Camp during WWII rests almost exclusively on witness testimony. This study critically scrutinizes the 30 most-important of them by checking them for internal coherence, and by comparing them with one another as well as with other evidence such as wartime documents, air photos, forensic research results, and material traces. The result is devastating for the traditional narrative. 372 pages, b&w illust., bibl., index. (#36)



**Commandant of Auschwitz: Rudolf Höss, His Torture and His Forced Confessions.** By Carlo Mattogno & Rudolf Höss. From 1940 to 1943, Rudolf Höss was the commandant of the infamous Auschwitz Camp. After the war, he was captured by the British. In the following 13 months until his execution, he made 85 depositions of various kinds in which he confessed his involvement in the "Holocaust." This study first reveals how the British tortured him to extract various "confessions." Next, all of Höss's depositions are analyzed by checking his claims for internal consistency and comparing them with established historical facts. The results are eye-opening... 2nd ed., 411 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#35)



**An Auschwitz Doctor's Eyewitness Account: The Tall Tales of Dr. Mengele's Assistant Analyzed.** By Miklos Nyzsli & Carlo Mattogno. Nyzsli, a Hungarian physician, ended up at Auschwitz in 1944 as Dr. Mengele's assistant. After the war he wrote a book and several other writings describing what he claimed to have experienced. To this day some traditional historians take his accounts seriously, while others reject them as grotesque lies and exaggerations. This study presents and analyzes Nyzsli's writings and skillfully separates truth from fabulous fabrication. 2nd ed., 484 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#37)



**Rudolf Reder versus Kurt Gerstein: Two False Testimonies on the Belzec Camp Analyzed.** By Carlo Mattogno. Only two witnesses have ever testified substantially about the alleged Belzec extermination Camp: The survivor Rudolf Reder and the SS officer Kurt Gerstein. Gerstein's testimonies have been a hotspot of revisionist critique for decades. It is now discredited even among orthodox historians.



They use Reder's testimony to fill the void, yet his testimonies are just as absurd. This study thoroughly scrutinizes Reder's various statements, critically revisits Gerstein's various depositions, and then compares these two testimonies which are at once similar in some respects, but incompatible in others. 216 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#43)

**Sonderkommando Auschwitz I: Nine Eyewitness Testimonies Analyzed.** By Carlo Mattogno. To this day, the 1979 book *Auschwitz Inferno* by alleged former Auschwitz "Sonderkommando" member Filip Müller has a great influence on the perception of Auschwitz by the public and by historians. This book critically analyzes Müller's various post-war statements, which are full of exaggerations, falsehoods and plagiarized text passages. Also scrutinized are the testimonies of eight other claimed former *Sonderkommando* members: D. Paisikovic, S. Jankowski, H. Mandelbaum, L. Nagraba, J. Rosenblum, A. Pilo, D. Fliamenbaum and S. Karolinskij. 304 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#44)

**Sonderkommando Auschwitz II: The False Testimonies by Henryk Tauber and Szlama Dragon.** By Carlo Mattogno. Auschwitz survivor and former member of the so-called "Sonderkommando" Henryk Tauber is one of the most important witnesses about the alleged gas chambers inside the crematoria at Auschwitz, because right at the war's end, he made several extremely detailed depositions about it. The same is true for Szlama Dragon, only he claims to have worked at the so-called "bunkers" of Birkenau, two makeshift gas chambers just outside the camp perimeter. This study thoroughly scrutinizes these two key testimonies. 254 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#45)

**Sonderkommando Auschwitz III: They Wept Crocodile Tears.** By Carlo Mattogno. This book focuses on the critical analysis of witness testimonies on the alleged Auschwitz gas chambers recorded or published in the 1990s and early 2000s, such as J. Sackar, A. Dragon, J. Gabai, S. Chasan, L. Cohen and S. Venezia, among others. Ca. 240 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#46, September 2022)



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# BOOKS BY AND FROM CASTLE HILL PUBLISHERS

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**The Holocaust: An Introduction.** By Thomas Dalton. The Holocaust was perhaps the greatest crime of the 20th Century. Six million Jews, we are told, died by gassing, shooting, and deprivation. But: Where did the six-million figure come from? How, exactly, did the gas chambers work? Why do we have so little physical evidence from major death camps? Why haven't we found even a fraction of the six million bodies, or their ashes? Why has there been so much media suppression and governmental censorship on this topic? In a sense, the Holocaust is the greatest murder mystery in history. It is a topic of greatest importance for the present day. Let's explore the evidence, and see where it leads. 128 pp. pb, 5"×8", ill., bibl., index.

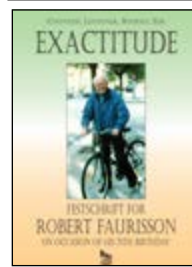
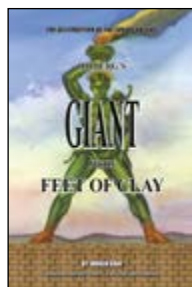
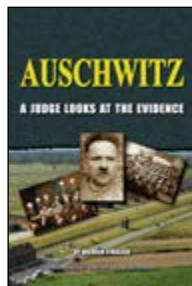
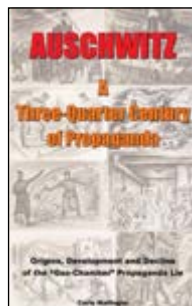
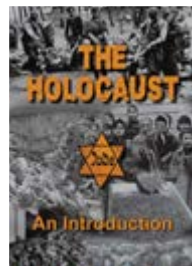
**Auschwitz: A Three-Quarter Century of Propaganda: Origins, Development and Decline of the "Gas Chamber" Propaganda Lie.** By Carlo Mattogno. Wild rumors were circulating about Auschwitz during WWII: Germans testing war gases; mass murder in electrocution chambers, with gas showers or pneumatic hammers; living people sent on conveyor belts into furnaces; grease and soap made of the victims. Nothing of it was true. When the Soviets captured Auschwitz in early 1945, they reported that 4 million inmates were killed on electrocution conveyor belts discharging their load directly into furnaces. That wasn't true either. After the war, "witnesses" and "experts" added more claims: mass murder with gas bombs, gas chambers made of canvas; crematoria burning 400 million victims... Again, none of it was true. This book gives an overview of the many rumors and lies about Auschwitz today rejected as untrue, and exposes the ridiculous methods that turned some claims into "history," although they are just as untrue. 125 pp. pb, 5"×8", ill., bibl., index, b&w ill.

**Auschwitz: A Judge Looks at the Evidence.** By Wilhelm Stäglich. Auschwitz is the epicenter of the Holocaust, where more people are said to have been murdered than anywhere else.

The most important evidence for this claim was presented during two trials: the International Military Tribunal of 1945/46, and the German Auschwitz Trial of 1963-1965. In this book, Wilhelm Stäglich, a former German judge, reveals the incredibly scandalous way in which Allied victors and German courts bent and broke the law in order to come to politically foregone conclusions. Stäglich also exposes the superficial way in which historians are dealing with the many incongruities and discrepancies of the historical record. 3rd edition 2015, 422 pp. pb, 6"×9", b&w ill.

**Hilberg's Giant with Feet of Clay.** By Jürgen Graf. Raul Hilberg's major work *The Destruction of the European Jews* is generally considered the standard work on the Holocaust. The critical reader might ask: what evidence does Hilberg provide to back his thesis that there was a German plan to exterminate Jews, to be carried out in the legendary gas chambers? And what evidence supports his estimate of 5.1 million Jewish victims? Jürgen Graf applies the methods of critical analysis to Hilberg's evidence, and examines the results in the light of revisionist historiography. The results of Graf's critical analysis are devastating for Hilberg. Graf's analysis is the first comprehensive and systematic examination of the leading spokesperson for the orthodox version of the Jewish fate during the Third Reich. 3rd edition 2022, 182 pp. pb, 6"×9", b&w ill.

**Exactitude: Festschrift for Prof. Dr. Robert Faurisson.** By R.H. Countess, C. Lindtner, G. Rudolf (eds.) Faurisson probably deserves the title of the most-courageous intellectual of the 20th and the early 21st Century. With bravery and steadfastness, he challenged the dark forces of historical and political fraud with his unrelenting exposure of their lies and hoaxes surrounding the orthodox Holocaust narrative. This book describes and celebrates the man and his work dedicated to accuracy and marked by in-submission. 146 pp. pb, 6"×9", b&w ill.



### **Auschwitz – Forensically Examined.**

By Cyrus Cox. Modern forensic crime-scene investigations can reveal a lot about the Holocaust. There are many big tomes about this. But if you want it all in a nutshell, read this booklet. It condenses the most-important findings of Auschwitz forensics into a quick and easy read. In the first section, the forensic investigations conducted so far are reviewed. In the second section, the most-important results of these studies are summarized. The main arguments focus on two topics. The first centers around the poison allegedly used at Auschwitz for mass murder: Zyklon B. Did it leave any traces in masonry where it was used? Can it be detected to this day? The second topic deals with mass cremations. Did the crematoria of Auschwitz have the claimed huge capacity? Do air photos taken during the war confirm witness statements on huge smoking pyres? This book gives the answers, together with many references to source material and further reading. The third section reports on how the establishment has reacted to these research results. 124 pp. pb., 5"×8", b&w ill., bibl., index

### **The Second Babylonian Captivity: The Fate of the Jews in Eastern Europe since 1941.**

By Steffen Werner. "But if they were not murdered, where did the six million deported Jews end up?" This is a standard objection to the revisionist thesis that the Jews were not killed in extermination camps. It demands a well-founded response. While researching an entirely different topic, Steffen Werner accidentally stumbled upon the most-peculiar demographic data of Byelorussia. Years of research subsequently revealed more and more evidence which eventually allowed him to substantiate a breathtaking and sensational proposition: The Third Reich did indeed deport many of the Jews of Europe to Eastern Europe in order to settle them there "in the swamp." This book, first published in German in 1990, was the first well-founded work showing what really happened to the Jews deported to the East by the National Socialists, how they have fared since, and who, what and where they are "now" (1990). It provides context and purpose for hitherto-obscure and seemingly random historical events and quite obviates

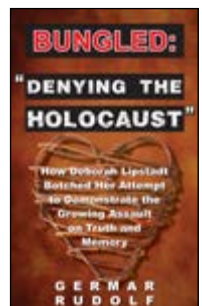
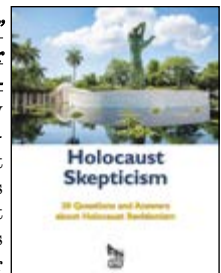
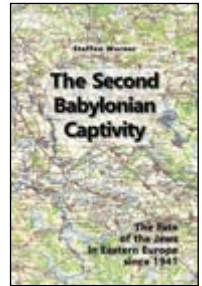
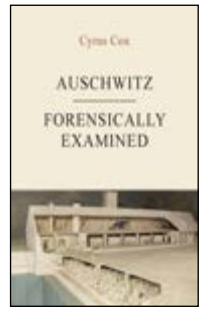
all need for paranormal events such as genocide, gas chambers, and all their attendant horrors. With a preface by Germar Rudolf with references to more-recent research results in this field of study confirming Werner's thesis. 190 pp. pb, 6"×9", b&w ill., bibl., index

### **Holocaust Skepticism: 20 Questions and Answers about Holocaust Revisionism.**

By Germar Rudolf. This 15-page brochure introduces the novice to the concept of Holocaust revisionism, and answers 20 tough questions, among them: What does Holocaust revisionism claim? Why should I take Holocaust revisionism more seriously than the claim that the earth is flat? How about the testimonies by survivors and confessions by perpetrators? What about the pictures of corpse piles in the camps? Why does it matter how many Jews were killed by the Nazis, since even 1,000 would have been too many? ... Glossy full-color brochure. PDF file free of charge available at [www.HolocaustHandbooks.com](http://www.HolocaustHandbooks.com). Option "Promotion". This item is *not* copyright-protected. Hence, you can do with it whatever you want: download, post, email, print, multiply, hand out, sell... 20 pp., stapled, 8.5"×11", full-color throughout.

### **Bungled: "Denying the Holocaust" How Deborah Lipstadt Botched Her Attempt to Demonstrate the Growing Assault on Truth and Memory.**

By Germar Rudolf. With her book *Denying the Holocaust*, Deborah Lipstadt tried to show the flawed methods and extremist motives of "Holocaust deniers." This book demonstrates that Dr. Lipstadt clearly has neither understood the principles of science and scholarship, nor has she any clue about the historical topics she is writing about. She misquotes, mistranslates, misrepresents, misinterprets, and makes a plethora of wild claims without backing them up with anything. Rather than dealing thoroughly with factual arguments, Lipstadt's book is full of *ad hominem* attacks on her opponents. It is an exercise in anti-intellectual pseudo-scientific arguments, an exhibition of ideological radicalism that rejects anything which contradicts its preset conclusions. **F for FAIL.** 2nd ed., 224 pp. pb, 5"×8", bibl., index, b&w ill.



**Bungled: “Denying History”.** **How Michael Shermer and Alex Grobman Botched Their Attempt to Refute Those Who Say the Holocaust Never Happened.** By Carolus Magnus (C. Mattogno). *Skeptical Magazine* editor Michael Shermer and Alex Grobman from the Simon Wiesenthal Center wrote a book claiming to be “a thorough and thoughtful answer to all the claims of the Holocaust deniers.” As this book shows, however, Shermer and Grobman completely ignored almost all the “claims” made in the more than 10,000 pages of more-recent cutting-edge revisionist archival and forensic research. Furthermore, they piled up a heap of falsifications, contortions, omissions and fallacious interpretations of the evidence. Finally, what the authors claim to have demolished is not revisionism but a ridiculous parody of it. They ignored the known unreliability of their cherry-picked selection of evidence, utilized unverified and incestuous sources, and obscured the massive body of research and all the evidence that dooms their project to failure. 162 pp. pb, 5”x8”, bibl., index, b&w ill.

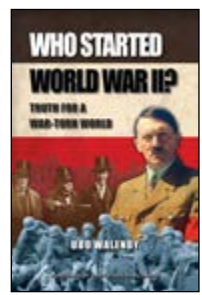
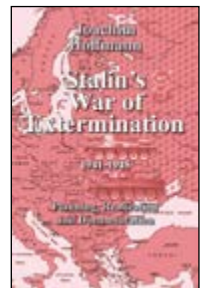
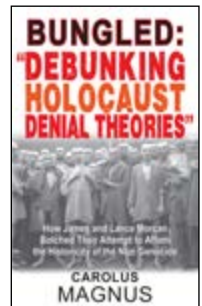
**Bungled: “Debunking Holocaust Denial Theories”.** **How James and Lance Morcan Botched Their Attempt to Affirm the Historicity of the Nazi Genocide.** By Carolus Magnus. The novelists and movie-makers James and Lance Morcan have produced a book “to end [Holocaust] denial once and for all” by disproving “the various arguments Holocaust deniers use to try to discredit wartime records.” It’s a lie. First, the Morcans completely ignored the vast amount of recent scholarly studies published by revisionists; they don’t even mention them. Instead, they engage in shadowboxing, creating some imaginary, bogus “revisionist” scarecrow which they then tear to pieces. In addition, their knowledge even of their own side’s source material is dismal, and the way they back up their misleading or false claims is pitifully inadequate. 144 pp. pb, 5”x8”, bibl., index, b&w ill.

**Stalin’s War of Extermination 1941-1945.** By Joachim Hoffmann. A German government historian documents Stalin’s murderous war against the German army and the German people. Based on the author’s lifelong study of

German and Russian military records, this book reveals the Red Army’s grisly record of atrocities against soldiers and civilians, as ordered by Stalin. Since the 1920s, Stalin planned to invade Western Europe to initiate the “World Revolution.” He prepared an attack which was unparalleled in history. The Germans noticed Stalin’s aggressive intentions, but they underestimated the strength of the Red Army. What unfolded was the cruelest war in history. This book shows how Stalin and his Bolshevik henchman used unimaginable violence and atrocities to break any resistance in the Red Army and to force their unwilling soldiers to fight against the Germans. The book explains how Soviet propagandists incited their soldiers to unlimited hatred against everything German, and he gives the reader a short but extremely unpleasant glimpse into what happened when these Soviet soldiers finally reached German soil in 1945: A gigantic wave of looting, arson, rape, torture, and mass murder... **428 pp. pb, 6”x9”, bibl., index, b&w ill.**

**Who Started World War II: Truth for a War-Torn World.** By Udo Walendy. For seven decades, mainstream historians have insisted that Germany was the main, if not the sole culprit for unleashing World War II in Europe. In the present book this myth is refuted. There is available to the public today a great number of documents on the foreign policies of the Great Powers before September 1939 as well as a wealth of literature in the form of memoirs of the persons directly involved in the decisions that led to the outbreak of World War II. Together, they made possible Walendy’s present mosaic-like reconstruction of the events before the outbreak of the war in 1939. This book has been published only after an intensive study of sources, taking the greatest care to minimize speculation and inference. The present edition has been translated completely anew from the German original and has been slightly revised. 500 pp. pb, 6”x9”, index, bibl., b&w ill.

**The Day Amazon Murdered Free Speech.** By Germar Rudolf. Amazon is the world’s biggest book retailer. They dominate the U.S. and several foreign markets. Pursuant to the 1998 declaration of Amazon’s founder Jeff Bezos



to offer “the good, the bad and the ugly,” customers once could buy every title that was in print and was legal to sell. However, in early 2017, a series of anonymous bomb threats against Jewish community centers occurred in the U.S., fueling a campaign by Jewish groups to coax Amazon into banning revisionist writings. On March 6, 2017, Amazon caved in and banned more than 100 books with dissenting viewpoints on the Holocaust. In April 2017, an Israeli Jew was arrested for having placed the fake bomb threats. But Amazon kept its new censorship policy: They next culled any literature critical of Jews or Judaism; then they enforced these bans at all its subsidiaries, such as AbeBooks and The Book Depository; then they banned books other pressure groups don't like; finally, they bullied Ingram, who has a book-distribution monopoly in the US, to enforce the same rules by banning from the entire world-wide book market all books Amazon doesn't like... 2nd ed., 172 pp. pb, 5”x8”, bibl., color illustrations throughout.

**The First Zündel Trial: The Transcript.** In the early 1980s, Ernst Zündel, a German immigrant living in Toronto, was indicted for allegedly spreading “false news” by selling copies of Richard Harwood's brochure *Did Six Million Really Die?*, which challenged the accuracy of the orthodox Holocaust narrative. When the case went to court in 1985, so-called Holocaust experts and “eyewitnesses” of the alleged homicidal gas chambers at Auschwitz were cross-examined for the first time in history by a competent and skeptical legal team. The results were absolutely devastating for the Holocaust orthodoxy. For decades, these mind-boggling trial transcripts were hidden from public view. Now, for the first time, they have been published in print in this new book – unabridged and unedited. 820 pp. pb, 8.5”x11”

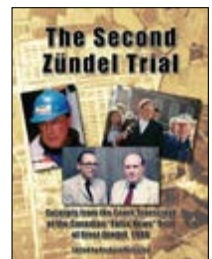
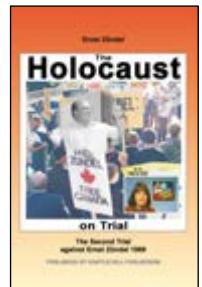
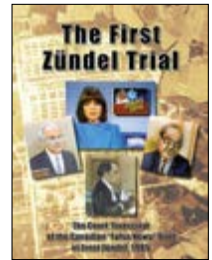
**The Holocaust on Trial: The Second Trial against Ernst Zündel 1988.** By Ernst Zündel. In 1988, the appeal trial of Ernst Zündel for “knowingly spreading false news about the Holocaust” took place in Toronto. This book is introduced by a brief autobiographic summary of Zündel's early life, and an overview of the evidence introduced

during the First Zündel Trial. This is followed by a detailed summary of the testimonies of all the witnesses who testified during the Second Zündel Trial. This was the most-comprehensive and -competent argument ever fought in a court of law over the Holocaust. The arguments presented have fueled revisionism like no other event before, in particular Fred Leuchter's expert report on the gas chambers of Auschwitz and Majdanek, and the testimony of British historian David Irving. Critically annotated edition with a foreword by Germar Rudolf. 410 pp. pb, 6”x9”, index.

**The Second Zündel Trial: Excerpts from the Transcript.** By Barbara Kulaszka (ed.). In contrast to Ernst Zündel's book *The Holocaust on Trial* (see earlier description), this book focuses entirely on the Second Zündel Trial by exclusively quoting, paraphrasing and summarizing the entire trial transcript... 498 pp. pb, 8.5”x11”, bibl., index, b&w ill.

**Resistance Is Obligatory!** By Germar Rudolf. In 2005 Rudolf, a peaceful dissident and publisher of revisionist literature, was kidnapped by the U.S. government and deported to Germany. There the local lackey regime staged a show trial against him for his historical writings. Rudolf was not permitted to defend his historical opinions, as the German penal law prohibits this. Yet he defended himself anyway: For 7 full days Rudolf gave a speech in the courtroom, during which he proved systematically that only the revisionists are scholarly in their approach, whereas the Holocaust orthodoxy is merely pseudo-scientific. He then explained in detail why it is everyone's obligation to resist, without violence, a government which throws peaceful dissidents into dungeons. When Rudolf tried to publish his public defence speech as a book from his prison cell, the public prosecutor initiated a new criminal investigation against him. After his probation time ended in 2011, he dared publish this speech anyway... 2nd ed. 2016, 378 pp. pb, 6”x9”, b&w ill.

**Hunting Germar Rudolf: Essays on a Modern-Day Witch Hunt.** By Germar Rudolf. German-born revisionist activist, author and publisher Germar Rudolf describes which events made



him convert from a Holocaust believer to a Holocaust skeptic, quickly rising to a leading personality within the revisionist movement. This in turn unleashed a tsunami of persecution against him: lost his job, denied his PhD exam, destruction of his family, driven into exile, slandered by the mass media, literally hunted, caught, put on a show trial where filing motions to introduce evidence is illegal under the threat of further prosecution, and finally locked up in prison for years for nothing else than his peaceful yet controversial scholarly writings. In several essays, Rudolf takes the reader on a journey through an absurd world of government and societal persecution which most of us could never even fathom actually exists in a “Western democracy”... 304 pp. pb, 6”x9”, bibl., index, b&w ill.

***Tell the Truth & Shame the Devil.*** By Gerard Menuhin. This Jewish author says the “Holocaust” is a wartime-propaganda myth turned into an extortion racket. Far from bearing the sole guilt for starting WWII as alleged at Nuremberg, Germany is mostly innocent and made numerous attempts to avoid and later to end the confrontation. During the 1930s, Germany was confronted by a powerful Jewish-dominated world plutocracy out to destroy it... Yes, a Jew says all this. The author is the son of the great US-born violinist Yehudi Menuhin, who, though from a long line of rabbinical ancestors, fiercely criticized the foreign policy of Israel and its repression of the Palestinians. 4th edition 2017, 432 pp. pb, 6”x9”, b&w ill.

***Hitler's Revolution: Ideology, Social Programs, Foreign Affairs.*** By Richard Tedor. Defying all boycotts, Adolf Hitler transformed Germany from a bankrupt state to the powerhouse of Europe within just four years, thus becoming Germany's most popular leader ever. How was this possible? This study tears apart the dense web of calumny surrounding this controversial figure. It draws on nearly 200 published German sources, many from the Nazi era, as well as documents from British, U.S., and Soviet archives that describe not only what Hitler did but, more importantly, why he did it. These sources also reveal the true war objectives of the democracies

– a taboo subject for orthodox historians – and the resulting world war against Germany. This book is aimed at anyone who feels that something is missing from conventional accounts. 2nd ed., 309 pp. pb, 6”x9”, index, bibl.

***Hitler on the Jews.*** By Thomas Dalton. That Adolf Hitler spoke out against the Jews is beyond obvious. But of the thousands of books and articles written on Hitler, virtually none quotes Hitler's exact words on the Jews. The reason for this is clear: Those in positions of influence have incentives to present a simplistic picture of Hitler as a blood-thirsty tyrant. However, Hitler's take on the Jews is far more complex and sophisticated. In this book, for the first time, you can make up your own mind by reading nearly every idea that Hitler put forth about the Jews, in considerable detail and in full context. This is the first book ever to compile his remarks on the Jews. As you will discover, Hitler's analysis of the Jews, though hostile, is erudite, detailed, and – surprise, surprise – largely aligns with events of recent decades. There are many lessons here for the modern-day world to learn. 200 pp. pb, 6”x9”, index, bibl.

***Goebbels on the Jews.*** By Thomas Dalton. From the age of 26 until his death in 1945, Joseph Goebbels kept a near-daily diary. It gives us a detailed look at the attitudes of one of the highest-ranking men in Nazi Germany. Goebbels shared Hitler's dislike of the Jews, and likewise wanted them removed from the Reich. Ultimately, Goebbels and others sought to remove the Jews completely from Europe—perhaps to the island of Madagascar. This would be the “final solution” to the Jewish Question. Nowhere in the diary does Goebbels discuss any Hitler order to kill the Jews, nor is there any reference to extermination camps, gas chambers, or any methods of systematic mass-murder. Goebbels acknowledges that Jews did indeed die by the thousands; but the range and scope of killings evidently fall far short of the claimed figure of 6 million. This book contains, for the first time, every significant diary entry relating to the Jews or Jewish policy. Also included are partial or full transcripts of 10 major essays by Goebbels on the Jews. 274 pp. pb, 6”x9”, index, bibl.



**The Jewish Hand in the World Wars.**

By Thomas Dalton. For many centuries, Jews have had a negative reputation in many countries. The reasons given are plentiful, but less-well-known is their involvement in war. When we examine the causal factors for wars, and look at their primary beneficiaries, we repeatedly find a Jewish presence. Throughout history, Jews have played an exceptionally active role in promoting and inciting wars. With their long-notorious influence in government, we find recurrent instances of Jews promoting hard-line stances, being uncompromising, and actively inciting people to hatred. Jewish misanthropy, rooted in Old Testament mandates, and combined with a ruthless materialism, has led them, time and again, to instigate warfare if it served their larger interests. This fact explains much about the present-day world. In this book, Thomas Dalton examines in detail the Jewish hand in the two world wars. Along the way, he dissects Jewish motives and Jewish strategies for maximizing gain amidst warfare, reaching back centuries. 2nd ed., 231 pp. pb, 6"x9", index, bibl.

**Eternal Strangers: Critical Views of Jews and Judaism through the Ages.**

By Thomas Dalton. It is common knowledge that Jews have been disliked for centuries. But why? Our best hope for understanding this recurrent 'anti-Semitism' is to study the history: to look at the actual words written by prominent critics of the Jews, in context, and with an eye to any common patterns that might emerge. Such a study reveals strikingly consistent observations: Jews are seen in very negative, yet always similar terms. The persistence of such comments is remarkable and strongly suggests that the cause for such animosity resides in the Jews themselves—in their attitudes, their values, their ethnic traits and their beliefs.. This book addresses the modern-day "Jewish problem" in all its depth—something which is arguably at the root of many of the world's so-

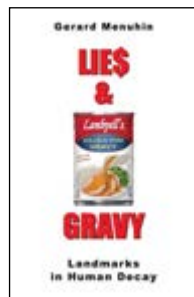
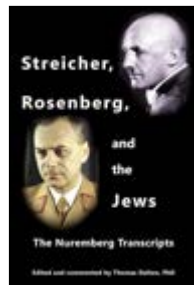
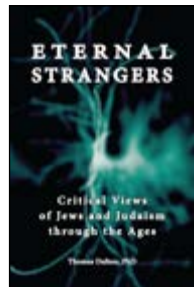
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**Streicher, Rosenberg, and the Jews: The Nuremberg Transcripts.**

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**Lies & Gravy: Landmarks in Human Decay – Two Plays.**

By Gerard Menuhin. A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away, the hallucination of global supremacy was born. Few paid it any attention. After centuries of interference, when the end is in sight, we're more inclined to take it seriously. But now, we have only a few years of comparative freedom left before serfdom submerges us all. So it's time to summarize our fall and to name the guilty, or, as some have it, to spot the loony. Sometimes the message is so dire that the only way to get it across is with humor – to act out our predicament and its causes. No amount of expert testimony can match the power of spectacle. Here are a few of the most-telling stages in the chosentites' crusade against humanity, and their consequences, as imagined by the author. We wonder whether these two consecutive plays will ever be performed onstage... 112 pp. pb, 5"x8"



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