

Carlo Mattogno

Chelmno

**A German Camp
in History and Propaganda**

THE BARNES REVIEW

P.O. Box 15877, Washington, D.C. 20003, USA

November 2011

HOLOCAUST HANDBOOK SERIES—VOLUME 23:

Chelmno: A German Camp in History & Propaganda

Originally published in Italian in 2009 as *Il campo di Chelmno tra storia e propaganda*, by Effepi, Genoa.

First U.S. edition by THE BARNES REVIEW: November 2011

By CARLO MATTOGNO

Translated from the Italian by Albert Richardson & Santiago Alvarez

ISBN: 978-1-59148-101-0

ISSN: 1529-7748

Published by THE BARNES REVIEW

Copyright 2011 by Carlo Mattogno and THE BARNES REVIEW

Manufactured in the United States of America

Distribution USA/America:

THE BARNES REVIEW, P.O. Box 15877
Washington, D.C. 20003, USA
1-877-773-9077 toll free charge line

Distribution Europe/Africa: Castle Hill Publishers
P.O. Box 243
Uckfield, TN22 9AW, UK

Distribution Australia/Asia: Peace Books,
P.O. Box 3300, Norwood, 5067, Australia

www.BarnesReview.com • www.HolocaustHandbooks.com
If these sites are inaccessible, try an anonymizing website.

Set in Times New Roman

ON THE COVER: Top: A photo of the remains of the Waldlager Crematoria at the Chelmno camp. It is alleged that tens of thousands—if not over a million—Jewish prisoners were gassed to death and their bodies burned in cremation ovens. Left, a plaque pays homage to those who died at Chelmno (photo © by Carlo Mattogno). Right, a memorial to the “forest victims.” This forest location near the prison is also alleged to be a site of mass murder. Panorama at bottom shows the city of Chelmno.

Contents

	Page
Introduction	7
1. The Orthodox “Gas Van” History	9
2. The Alleged Hitler Order, Zyklon B & CO	17
3. The Construction Order for the Chelmno Camp	23
4. “Gas Vans” in Chelmno?	32
5. The “First Systematic Extermination of Jews in the Warthegau”	47
6. The First Testimony: The “Szlamek” Report	51
6.1. Origin of the Report	51
6.2. General Characteristics of Report	52
6.3. Structure and Function of a “Gas Van”	53
6.4. The Color of the Corpses	55
6.5. The Mass Graves	56
7. Postwar Witnesses	59
7.1. The SS	59
7.2. The Inmates	61
7.2.1. Mordechai or Mordka or Mieczysław Żurawski	61
7.2.2. Shimon Srebnik	63
7.2.3. Michał or Mordka Podchlebnik	67
7.2.4. How Many and What Kind(s) of “Gas Vans” Operated in 1944?	69
7.2.5. The “Testament” of the Last Prisoners of Chelmno	70
8. The Cremation of the Bodies of the Alleged Victims	73
8.1. The Purpose of Cremation	73
8.2. The Alleged Mission of Blobel at Chelmno	74
8.3. Höss’s Visit to the <i>Aktion</i> Reinhardt Field Ovens	76
8.4. Did Höss Visit the Chelmno Camp?	78
8.5. “Bone Mill” or “Ball Mill”?	79
9. The Chelmno “Crematoria”	83
9.1. Construction and Operation	83
9.2. The Oven’s Capacity and Wood Requirement	89
9.3. Contradictions Surrounding the Activity of the Crematoria	89
9.4. The Chelmno “Crematoria” and “Field Ovens <i>Aktion</i> Reinhardt”	91

10. Excavations and Archaeological Findings	95
10.1. Investigations of Judge Bednarz and the Koniń Museum	95
10.2. The Map of the Camp.....	97
10.3. Investigations of 2003-2004	99
10.4. The Results of the Investigations.....	101
11. The Alleged Number of Victims.....	107
12. Jewish Deportation Transports to Chelġmno.....	113
12.1. Transports from Warthegau to the Łódź Ghetto.....	113
12.2. The Deportations to Chelġmno.....	114
12.3. Who Was Evacuated and Why?	117
12.4. Operations Ceased in 1943 and Resumed in 1944 – Why?	121
13. The Alleged Gassings in 1944: Chelġmno and Auschwitz.....	123
14. The Alleged Murder of Gypsies and the Children of Lidice	131
14.1. The Gypsies.....	131
14.2. The Children of Lidice	134
15. The Destination of the Deported Jews.....	137
16. The Value of the Content of the Court Verdict	143
17. Conclusions	147
18. Appendices	149
18.1. Łódź Ghetto Children Deported from Auschwitz to Stutthof...	149
18.2. Documents.....	151
18.3. Abbreviations	179
18.4. Bibliography.....	181
18.5. Index of Names.....	187

Introduction

The alleged extermination camp at Chełmno (German: Kulmhof), a town in Poland in the region of Warta, called Warthegau by the Germans during the Second World War, is of major importance in orthodox Holocaust historiography, because it is claimed to be the first “death camp” built to serve the genocidal agenda of which the Germans are accused. Unlike other camps established afterward, it is not said to have been equipped with stationary gas chambers, but with “*Gaswagen*” (gas vehicles), mobile gassing trucks which allegedly used engine exhaust gas to kill human beings. The camp is said to have operated, with occasional periods of inactivity, in two phases: from 8 December 1941 – the day it opened – to 7 April 1943, and again from April 1944 to January 1945, killing a total of 152,000 to 340,000 people (Jäckel *et al.*, vol. I, p. 280; see chapter 11).

Documentation about it is almost nonexistent, which is why the picture outlined by orthodox Holocaust historiography is based almost exclusively on court records, which is to say, it is in practice based on testimony. But even these data are rather limited: they have only permitted the preparation of the odd leaflet by some Polish historians and a few articles by Western historians. As Israeli historian Shmuel Krakowski, who is currently the world’s leading Holocaust expert of the orthodox persuasion, wrote (Krakowski 1995, p. 55):

“Research on the extermination camp at Chełmno upon Ner occupies a very small place in Holocaust historiography.”

His 2007 study of this camp, despite its stated intention to “expand the state of knowledge” and to “try to complete what has not been taken into account in the existing literature” (Krakowski 2007, p. 10) actually reflects the total historical-documentary inconsistency of the orthodox Holocaust historiography about Chełmno. He reaffirms, among other things, that “sources on the Chełmno camp are extremely few, hence the insignificant number of publications on the topic” (*ibid.*, p. 11). In the revisionist school, the most important historiographic contribution is the 2003 article by Ingrid Weckert “What Was Kulmhof/Chełmno?” These

studies have inevitably left many gray areas, and the history of the Chełmno camp is still in many aspects enigmatic.

One of the most important issues, raised in 1999 by Bertrand Perz and Thomas Sandkühler, concerns the relationship between Chełmno and “Aktion Reinhardt,” but even more important is the relationship between the “field ovens” of Chełmno and cremation at Auschwitz (see Mattogno 2008). The existence of “gas vans” during the Second World War is very controversial and is disputed by Revisionist scholars (see Marais 1994; Weckert 2003; Alvarez 2011). However, the interpretation of documents relating to the alleged “gas vans” (called *Sonderwagen*, *Sonderfahrzeuge*, and *Spezialwagen*) is not the direct object of this study, which restricts the scope of its investigation to determining whether such vehicles might have actually been used for the purpose of extermination at Chełmno. Yet even in this limited scope, it is important to initially examine the decision-making process and technical development that would be required to lead to the construction of the “gas vans.”