

Air Photo Evidence

World War Two Photos of Alleged
Mass Murder Sites Analyzed

By John C. Ball



Castle Hill Publishers
P.O. Box 243, Uckfield, TN22 9AW, UK
3rd edition, January 2015

HOLOCAUST HANDBOOKS Series, Vol. 27:

John C. Ball:

Air Photo Evidence:

World War Two Photos of Alleged Mass Murder Sites Analyzed.

Uckfield, East Sussex: CASTLE HILL PUBLISHERS

PO Box 243, Uckfield, TN22 9AW, UK

3rd, corrected and expanded edition, edited by Germar Rudolf, January 2015

The first edition appeared in 1992 under the title *Air Photo Evidence: Auschwitz, Treblinka, Majdanek, Sobibor, Bergen-Belsen, Belzec, Babi Yar, Katyn Forest—World War II photos of alleged mass murder camps! Does evidence confirm or dismiss eye witness stories? Were gas chamber marks put on by C.I.A. workers?*, self-published by the author, Ball Resource Services Ltd., Delta, BC, Canada.

The second edition of January 2015 has the same title as the current one and is a marginally corrected reprint of the first edition with a preface similar to the present one plus a number of footnotes added (ISBN10: 1-59148-075-2).

ISBN10: 1-59148-076-0

ISBN13: 978-1-59148-076-1

ISSN: 1529-7748

Published by CASTLE HILL PUBLISHERS

Manufactured in the United States of America and in the UK

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Distribution: Castle Hill Publishers
PO Box 243
Uckfield, TN22 9AW, UK

Distribution USA: TBR Books, The Barnes Review
P.O. Box 15877
Washington, D.C. 20003, USA
1-877-773-9077

Cover illustrations:

Front: top left: Auschwitz Birkenau Camp, May 31, 1944 (see p. 55); top right: Babi Yar Ravine, Fall 1941 (see p. 153); bottom: U.S. bomber B-17 “Flying Fortress” over Germany.

Back: right (from top to bottom): Babi Yar, Sept. 26, 1943 (see p. 155); Belzec Camp area, May 16, 1944 (see p. 143); Sobibor Camp area, May 30, 1944 (see p. 148); Treblinka Camp area, Nov. 1944 (see p. 131); left: Majdanek Camp, Sept. 18, 1944 (see p. 151).

Background: Auschwitz area, June 26, 1944 (see p. 36)

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Foreword

In his 1976 book *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century*, Dr. Arthur R. Butz explained in detail that, during the Second World War, the German industrial activities around the infamous Auschwitz concentration camp were of great strategic importance to the Allies. Hence he concluded that Allied reconnaissance aircraft must have taken many photos of the area, which to this day could be very revealing regarding the true nature of the Auschwitz camp, as certain activities claimed by many eyewitnesses would have been so vast that they could not have been missed by Allied intelligence.¹ But no such photos had been released by 1976. That changed three years later, when the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency published a slender brochure containing a few such aerial photos. The authors (Brugioni/Poirier) claimed that these photos do indeed prove the claims made by many witnesses in terms of containing evidence for an ongoing mass murder. At that time, revisionism was not yet well organized in the Anglo-Saxon world, so no thorough refutation of the C.I.A.'s claims was published at that time in English. I know only of reactions by German revisionists who undertook to debunk the C.I.A.'s claims (see Stäglich & Walendy.)

The matter changed in 1992 when John Clive Ball published the first edition of the present book. This book was a game changer. Rather than reacting to what others had claimed, it set a new standard of historical forensics by which all future publications about the Holocaust had to be tested.

Almost every revisionist book that appeared after Ball's epoch-making study also included analysis of relevant air photos. The most important book in this regard is probably Mattogno's *Auschwitz: Open Air Incinerations*. It investigates the claims made by many Auschwitz witnesses that, from May through August 1944, gargantuan cremation pyres in huge pits were burning day and night at the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp, upon which the corpses of hundreds of thousands of murdered Hungarian Jews were being turned into ashes. It is claimed that during this time the entire area was blanketed in thick smoke. Of course pictorial evidence of such large undertakings would have been captured on air photos taken by Allied reconnaissance planes. But as the reader of the present study will discover, the extensive photos of the place and time show nothing unusual at all.

It goes without saying that some of the few orthodox historians who dared to confront revisionist research had to deal with these air photos as well (foremost Shermer/Grobman and Zimmerman), although their attempts at papering over the huge cracks in orthodox historiography were swiftly exposed as seriously flawed by leading revisionists.²

A few more air photos of the Auschwitz camp taken by the Allied and German air forces have been discovered since the first edition of the present study had appeared, but they show much the same thing. A few of them require our attention, though, as they show a column of smoke rising from a small area of the Birkenau camp. I have added them and a brief discussion of what we see there to chapter 5.9. Also, the subject of massive open air incinerations allegedly going on between mid-May and late summer 1944 in an area west of the Birkenau camp near the so-called

¹ In the 3rd U.S. edition of 2003, see the chapter "Auschwitz of Great Interest to Americans," pp. 77-81, and "Where are the pictures?," pp. 187f.

² See Carlo Mattogno, "Denying Evidence," in: Rudolf/Mattogno, pp. 199-267, in particular pp. 224-231; and "The Elusive Holes of Death," *ibid.*, pp. 279-393; especially pp. 290-292, 367-371.

“Bunker 2” – a makeshift homicidal gas chamber of legendary proportions – has been dealt with in this new issue with the new chapter 5.10. It also features two new air photos. None of them show any smoke in this area, though, hence no trace of any incinerations at all...

In 1994 a paper by John Ball was published which summarized the present book and added a few more aspects, which the interested reader might want to consult as well.³ One particularly interesting issue is Ball’s suspicion that the air photos released in 1979 by the C.I.A. have been tampered with, as he describes in the present book (chapter 5.4). In his 1994 paper he wrote about this:⁴

“After realizing these facts of the matter, I went to the National Archives and requested to see the originals, since the photos given to me as originals had clearly been altered. And in fact I was then given air photos which I was assured were the originals. These were indeed of better quality than the negatives I had been given first: due to the better focus, the work of the forgers was considerably more clearly apparent at the same places on the photos. When I pointed this out to the Archives staff, I was told that these were the negatives which the National Archives had received from the CIA in 1979, and that they had always believed that they were in the precise state in which they had been taken from the reconnaissance planes in 1944. I was told that I was the first member of the public ever to have seen these negatives. Now they would be returned to the archives forever, to be handed out only at the request of government agencies such as the CIA.”

A year later, an Austrian publication attacked Ball for these statements, insinuating that these negatives are available to anyone on request:⁵

“He [Ball] surrounds this claim [re. the alterations] with a graphic account of his research in the National Archives in Washington, where these photos, he claims, are now locked away for all time because he had proved that they were falsified. He withholds from his readers the fact that these same photos may be viewed in the State Museum of Auschwitz [...]”

It is needless to say that there can be only *one* original negative of each photograph, namely the one that was in the camera when the photo was taken (and which the C.I.A. might have destroyed). All the other negatives are copies, of which in this case many may exist at various locations, each of them of course subject to loss of quality and alteration.

An interesting episode about the question whether or not these air photos have been tampered with occurred in the context of the second Zündel trial.⁶ During that time, Dino Brugioni approached Ernst Zündel privately and told him “off the record” that he himself does not believe that the air photos published by him prove the orthodox Holocaust narrative and that he, too, has the suspicion that the photos he was given by his superiors to analyze in 1979 had been tampered with.⁷ For me, of course, this is not much more than hearsay, so not much weight can be put onto it.

Fact is, however, that in 1999 Brugioni published a book entitled *Photo Fakery* which explored “The History and Techniques of Photographic Deception and Manipulation,” according to

³ John C. Ball, “Luftbildbeweise,” in: Gauss, pp. 235-248; English: “Air Photo Evidence,” in: Rudolf, *Dissecting the Holocaust*, pp. 269-282.

⁴ Here quoted from the English ed., *ibid.*, pp. 278f.

⁵ Bailer-Galanda/Benz/Neugebauer, p. 25 (translation mine).

⁶ On that trial see Kulaszka.

⁷ Ernst Zündel, private communication.

the subtitle of the book. The book exposes and explains a wide variety of tampered-with photos of political importance. Only one set of photos in the entire book is claimed to be original, un-tampered and authentic: the Auschwitz air photos Brugioni had published 20 years earlier. Why would Brugioni include those *exceptions* in a book about forgeries which otherwise doesn't even remotely touch upon the Holocaust topic?⁸

I leave that to the reader's imagination.

John Ball and I started working on a new edition of his book in late 2003/early 2004, when he started sending me new aerial photos not discussed in the first edition of the present study. At that time we also considered enabling the reader to look at some of the Auschwitz air photos taken in rapid succession with 3D glasses in order to get a three-dimensional impression. The project was delayed, as I was working on other projects, and then, in October 2005, I was actually arrested by the U.S. authorities and deported back to Germany, allegedly for an immigration violation, but really because my revisionist work had made me many powerful enemies (see Rudolf, *Resistance Is Obligatory*). At that time three other leading revisionists were also thrown in jail (Ernst Zündel, Siegfried Verbeke, David Irving). Although that is an entirely different story, fact is that John Ball probably got scared by this sudden spike in persecution of peaceful dissidents. Around that time he must have decided to simply disappear. To this day I still don't know where he is, but I have decided to go ahead and revive our project of a new, updated, expanded edition of his book, albeit without any fancy photos with 3D effects.

The present study has 34 pages more than the first edition. This is due to the fact that I have included a few more air photos addressing issues not discussed in earlier editions of this work – as mentioned before – but also because all the pertinent material which John Ball had published in his 1993 16-page brochure *The Ball Report* has been integrated. That brochure consisted mainly of Ball's schematic drawings of the crime scenes investigated plus a brief summary of chemical analyses of wall samples he had taken at Auschwitz in early 1993. I have expanded that subject with a brief introduction into the relevance of analyzing such samples, and by summarizing the analytic results obtained by other author who preceded Ball with their sampling.

Several sections of Ball's original work have been extensively edited for this current edition, as they were erroneous to the point where keeping them as they were would have been irresponsible. When writing this I do not mean to criticize Ball for the mistakes he made back then. In the early 1990s John Ball was a novice in Holocaust research (as was I at the time). It was therefore to some degree inevitable for him to make a number of mistakes. Some of them he probably could have avoided, had he communicated with more experienced researchers in the field prior to publishing the first edition of his book. Other errors, however, became apparent only due to subsequent research published in later years, upon which I could rely for this edition. One of these issues – whether the black lines around the Birkenau crematoria are due to thick fences or the result of C.I.A. manipulations – is addressed in this edition by Carlo Mattogno.

I am grateful to Jett Rucker for carefully proofing this edition, and to Carlo Mattogno for his critical and constructive peer review, in particular for his input regarding potential mass graves near the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp as discussed in chapter 5.13.

Germar Rudolf
December 27, 2014

⁸ See the review by Widmann.

About the Author and Book



April, 1992: Myself at the National Archives Air Photo Library in Alexandria, Virginia.

A brief history:

Residence: Residence: I have lived in British Columbia, Canada, almost all my life and now live in Delta, just outside of Vancouver.

Training: In 1981 I received a Bachelor of Science degree in Geology from the University of British Columbia.

Air photo experience: With my work as a mineral exploration geologist I have interpreted air photos using stereo magnifying equipment since 1976.

Air photos:

- (1) I selected the 1939 to 1945 air photos of Europe and western Russia during April and May 1992 from the collection at the U.S. National Archives Air Photo Library in Alexandria, Virginia.
- (2) The photos were interpreted in Vancouver using a Jena Interpreterscope and a table stereo viewing magnifier, and
- (3) I then enlarged selected photos using a Pro-Lab 4 x 5 inch enlarger, and had them scanned for publication at 150 lines per inch.

Acknowledgement:

I wish to thank the staff at the National Archives Air Photo Library for their patient assistance in helping me locate the photographs reproduced in this book.

Irony of using *German* air photos:

It is ironic that half of the air photos in this book, which are being used to determine the truth about accusations that Germans systematically murdered people in detention camps, are those which were exposed by the *German* military from 1939 to 1945 when they were taking photos of targets such as railway lines and access roads.

Air photos taken from 1939 to 1945 by the Americans and British are only available for Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen; all of the other 1939 to 1945 photos in this book were exposed by Zeiss Jena cameras in German air force planes.

Caveat

In 1998 John C. Ball started a website called www.air-photo.com. Due to the present book and this website, increasing social and legal pressure was exerted against Ball, who saw his livelihood as a mineral exploration geologist threatened. He therefore decided eventually to move from his old home to an unknown place, and later he apparently even changed his name. A revisionist friend maintained the website for a number of years, but it is now defunct.



Introduction:

1. Objective when I started research:

My objective was to analyze aerial photographs of World War II German controlled detention camps in Poland for evidence to confirm the claims that mass murders, burials, and cremations had been conducted there, and to compare this evidence with information from other locations where mass executions or deaths together with mass burials had occurred.

2. Method:

I reviewed the books listed in the references and then compared these allegations for each of the alleged mass murder camps with the evidence revealed from studying the air photos. Enlargements were made of important pictures.

3. Chapter arrangement:

Chapters 2 to 4 review areas like the Katyn Forest where mass burials occurred, **Chapter 5** reveals air photo evidence about whether mass murders and cremations were being conducted at Auschwitz or Birkenau, **Chapter 5.4** shows evidence which I believe proves marks were added to 1944 Auschwitz air photos before their public release in 1979, and **Chapters 6 to 10** show the Treblinka, Belzec, and Sobibor camps from 1940 to 1944 and the Babi Yar Ravine as it looked in 1943.

4. Nothing is hidden from air photos:

Looking at the air photos will be just as if we went back in time to World War II to take a series of airplane flights over the different areas.



Photo 1: Myself looking at a few of the 1.2 million German air photo prints in the U.S. National Archives collection from which half the photos in this book are taken.



Photo 2: Using a microscope to inspect one of the thousands of rolls of 23 centimeter (9 inch) negatives taken by the American military from which the other half of the photos are taken.