

Debunking the Bunkers of Auschwitz

Black Propaganda
versus History

Carlo Mattogno



Castle Hill Publishers
P.O. Box 243, Uckfield, TN22 9AW, UK
2nd, revised edition, February 2016

HOLOCAUST HANDBOOKS, Volume 11:

Carlo Mattogno:

Debunking the Bunkers of Auschwitz: Black Propaganda versus History

Translated by Henry Gardner

2nd, revised edition. The first edition had the title *The Bunkers of Auschwitz*

Uckfield, East Sussex: CASTLE HILL PUBLISHERS

PO Box 243, Uckfield, TN22 9AW, UK

February 2016

ISBN10: 1-59148-126-0 (print edition)

ISBN13: 978-1-59148-126-3 (print edition)

ISSN: 1529-7748

Published by CASTLE HILL PUBLISHERS

Manufactured in the United States of America and in the UK

© by Carlo Mattogno

Distribution: Castle Hill Publishers, PO Box 243

Uckfield, TN22 9AW, UK

shop.codoh.com

Set in Times New Roman

www.holocausthandbooks.com

Cover Illustration: top: current memorial at the claimed location of ‘Bunker 1’ northwest of the former Auschwitz-Birkenau camp; left: remnants of foundation walls of a building to the west of the ‘Central Sauna’ near the former Birkenau camp, falsely labeled as ‘Bunker 2’; right: drawing of the alleged ‘Bunker 2’ by former Auschwitz detainee David Olère, see Document 14 in the Appendix; bottom background: section of an aerial photo of the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp of May 31, 1944, see Photo No. 9. in the Appendix.

Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction	9
Part One: Reality	13
1. The Alleged Extermination of Jews at Auschwitz: Origins of the Decision and Its Execution	15
1.1. The Beginnings	15
1.2. Danuta Czech's Interpretation.....	15
1.3. Jean-Claude Pressac's Interpretation	16
1.4. Debórah Dwork's and Robert Jan van Pelt's Interpretation.....	17
1.5. Dating the Himmler-Höß Meeting	18
1.6. Dating 'Bunkers' 1 and 2	20
1.7. The Location of the Birkenau 'Bunkers'	21
2. The 'Bunkers' in the Planning of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Camp	23
2.1. The Bureaucratic Procedure for the Construction of the Installations at Auschwitz-Birkenau	23
2.2. Plans and Cost Estimates for the Auschwitz-Birkenau Camp (June 1941–July 1942)	28
3. The 'Bunkers' in the Construction of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Camp 35	
3.1. The Construction Reports of the Camps at Auschwitz and Birkenau	35
3.2. A Striking Example: House No. 44 / <i>BW</i> 36C	36
3.3. The 'Bunkers' on the Birkenau Maps	39
3.4. The Logistics of the 'Bunkers'	40
3.4.1. Water Supply.....	41
3.4.2. Sewage	41
3.4.3. Fencing and Watchtowers	41
3.4.4. Installation of a Power Line	42
3.4.5. Installation of Undressing Barracks for the Victims	42
3.4.6. Transportation of Materials	42
3.4.7. Laying of a Camp Railway.....	43
3.4.8. Road Works.....	43
3.4.9. Gastight Doors.....	44
3.5. The So-Called "Code Language"	44
3.5.1. "Baths for Special Actions".....	44
3.5.2. "House for Special Measures".....	45
3.5.3. "Barracks for Special Treatment"	45
3.6. Two Recently Discovered "Bunker" Documents.....	46
3.7. Conclusion	48

Part Two: Propaganda.....	51
4. The Origin of the Propaganda Story of the ‘Bunkers’ – Wartime Rumors.....	53
4.1. The First Reports.....	53
4.2. An Anonymous Report from the Secret Resistance Movement at Auschwitz.....	60
4.3. The Reports from 1943	62
4.4. The Report of the “Polish Major” (Jerzy Tabeau)	64
4.5. The Report of Alfred Wetzler	67
4.6. Anonymous Reports from 1944	69
4.7. Conclusions	71
5. The Propaganda Is Consolidated: Postwar Testimonies	73
5.1. Szlama Dragon’s Testimony	73
5.2. Comparative and Critical Analysis of the Two Depositions of Szlama Dragon	77
5.2.1. Terminology	77
5.2.2. ‘Bunker 1’	79
5.2.3. ‘Bunker 2’	80
5.2.4. Critical Analysis	81
5.2.5. The Topographical Location of the ‘Bunkers’	84
6. Literary Variations on the Propaganda	87
6.1. Witnesses Who Stayed behind at Auschwitz	87
6.2. Witnesses Transferred Away from Auschwitz before the Soviet Occupation of the Camp.....	89
6.2.1. David Olère	90
6.2.2. Miklos Nyiszli	94
6.2.3. Sigismund Bendel.....	98
6.2.4. André Lettich.....	100
6.2.5. Adolf Rögner.....	103
6.2.6. Wilhelm Wohlfahrt.....	106
6.3. Later Accounts	108
6.3.1. Dov Paisikovic	109
6.3.2. Franciszek Gulba.....	113
6.3.3. Filip Müller	116
6.3.4. Moshe Garbarz	117
6.3.5. Milton Buki	119
6.3.6. Maurice Benroubi.....	123
6.4. The Latter-day Witnesses.....	126
6.4.1. Josef Sackar	126
6.4.2. Jaacov Gabai	127
6.4.3. Eliezer Eisenschmidt	128
6.4.4. Shaul Chasan	129
6.4.5. Leon Cohen	131
6.4.6. Szlama (Shlomo) and Abraham Dragon.....	132

6.4.7. Shlomo Venezia	135
6.5. The Contributions of the SS Witnesses	136
6.5.1. Maximilian Grabner	137
6.5.2. Hans Aumeier.....	138
6.5.3. Rudolf Höß.....	142
6.5.4. Pery Broad.....	145
6.5.5. Friedrich Entress	147
6.5.6. Hans Erich Mußfeldt	148
6.5.7. Hans Stark	150
6.5.8. Richard Böck.....	151
6.5.9. Karl Hölblinger	155
6.5.10. Johann Paul Kremer	156
6.5.11. Horst Fischer	156
6.6. Conclusions.....	159
Part Three: Propaganda Becomes Historical “Reality”	161
7. Making History Out of Propaganda.....	163
7.1. The ‘Bunkers’ in Soviet Investigations (February – March 1945)	163
7.2. Location of the ‘Bunkers’	164
7.3. The ‘Bunkers’ in Polish (May 1945 – November 1947) and German (1949 – 1965) Investigations	167
7.4. Józefa Wisińska’s Declaration on the Location of ‘Bunker 1’	171
7.5. Wisińska vs. Dragon: New Contradictions	173
7.6. The Timetable of the Birkenau ‘Bunkers’	173
8. The Development of Orthodox Historiography of the ‘Bunkers’	175
8.1. Early Historiographic Attempts	175
8.2. Jean-Claude Pressac’s Contribution.....	178
8.3. Franciszek Piper’s Contribution.....	180
8.4. R.J. van Pelt’s Contribution	182
8.5. Marcello Pezzetti’s ‘Discovery’ of ‘Bunker 1’	186
9. Material Proof, Aerial Photos, and Archeological Findings.....	189
9.1. The Aerial Photographs of 1944	189
9.2. The Architectural Design of ‘Bunker 2’ in Relation to Its Alleged Homicidal Activity	190
9.3. The “Undressing Barracks” of ‘Bunker 2’	192
9.4. The “Cremation Pits” in the Area of ‘Bunker 2’	194
9.5. The “Cremation Pits” of the ‘Bunkers’: Origins of the Propaganda Story	195
10. Conclusion	199
Historiographic Consequences.....	199
11. Editor’s Epilogue	203
12. Appendix.....	213
Documents	213

Photographs	240
Abbreviations.....	254
Tables.....	255
Bibliography	277
Index of Names.....	282

Introduction

It is well known that the orthodox historiography on Auschwitz hinges on an order to exterminate the European Jews – supposedly given by Hitler to Himmler and then transmitted to Rudolf Höß – which took on concrete shape when the Auschwitz extermination camp was built.

According to the interpretation that has now become dogma, this order was carried out in four successive stages:

1. In September 1941, the first experimental homicidal gassing by means of Zyklon B was performed at Auschwitz; this represented the ‘discovery’ of the instrument of extermination.
2. In early 1942, the homicidal gassing activity was moved to the mortuary of the Auschwitz crematorium (later called “Crematorium I”).
3. In the succeeding months two farmhouses located outside the perimeter of the Birkenau camp were transformed into gas chambers (the so-called ‘Bunkers’) in order to kill Jews and sick inmates.
4. The fourth and final phase started in March 1943, when the extermination activity was transferred to the four Birkenau crematoria, which all had their homicidal gas chambers.

The starting point for this assumed sequence of events is thus the first homicidal gassing in the basement of Block 11 at Auschwitz between September 3 and 5, 1941, during which (according to the version invented by Danuta Czech¹) 250 sick detainees and 600 Soviet prisoners of war were murdered. This event, or rather non-event, is very important for the orthodox historiography on Auschwitz, because it is said to have been the birth of the homicidal gas chambers.

In 1992, I dedicated to this alleged event a fairly extensive study, which later also appeared in an updated and expanded English edition, and is still the only one of its kind.² In it I demonstrated that this event has no historical foundation whatsoever.

¹ In the section entitled “La metodologia storiografica di Danuta Czech” of my book *Auschwitz: la prima gasazione*. Edizioni di Ar, Padua, 1992, pp. 140-144, I have shown that the Polish researcher has artificially constructed the orthodox version as published in the Auschwitz *Kalendarium* by fusing individual elements taken from completely contradictory testimonies. Updated English edition: *Auschwitz: The First Gassing*, 2nd edition, The Barnes Review, Washington, D.C., 2011.

² See footnote 1. Even today, there is no other book dealing with this topic. In the five-volume collective work *Auschwitz 1940-1945. Węzłowe zagadnienia z dziejów obozu (Fundamental Problems of the Camp History)*, by Danuta Czech, Tadeusz Iwaszko, Stanisław Kłodziński, et al.), Wydawnictwo Państwowego Muzeum Oświęcim-Brzezinka, 1995, which represents the historiographic peak of the Auschwitz Museum, scarcely more than four pages are dedicated to the question of the first gassing in the section by Franciszek Piper “Komory Gazowe i Krematoria” (“Gas Chambers and Crematoria”), Vol. III, pp. 97-102 (pages 97 and 102 contain in total 5 lines concerning this topic). Sandra Holtermann’s 20-page term paper titled *Die erste Vergasung in*

My book managed to shake even the confidence of Jean-Claude Pressac. In 1989, he still followed the orthodox interpretation of Danuta Czech's *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau* to the letter;³ in 1993 he still accepted the reality of Czech's account of the first gassing, but he moved it to December 1941⁴ on account of a polemical cue⁵ I had given him; in 2000 he came to doubt its historical reality. In an interview, which he gave in 1995 but which was clearly updated in 2000, Pressac referred to my study (of which a French translation⁶ had appeared in 1999) stating:⁷

"If that first gassing did occur, it happened in December of 1941, or perhaps in January of 1942, and it has no link at all with the massacre of the Jews." (emphasis added)

In the same way as does this elusive 'first gassing,' the alleged extermination activity of the Birkenau 'Bunkers' relies *exclusively* on testimonies.

As I have emphasized in a previous work,⁸ the archives of the Auschwitz Central Construction Office, which were preserved in Moscow, allow us to re-establish a complete account of the buildings that were erected in Auschwitz during the first half of 1942. Yet neither Pressac nor Robert Jan van Pelt, the new orthodox 'expert' on Auschwitz, has searched those archives for documentary proof of the homicidal Birkenau 'Bunkers,' or, shall we say, none of them has found any evidence of their existence. But common sense dictates that, if those installations actually existed, there would be documentary proof of their existence.

The present study, which relies for the most part on unpublished documents, fills this embarrassing gap in the orthodox historiography and supplies us with a solid answer to the question as to whether the alleged homicidal 'Bunkers' of Birkenau were a historical reality.

This question became more pressing in 2002. In that year, Fritjof Meyer, a former senior editor of the German news magazine *Der Spiegel* (Hamburg), wrote an article in which he advanced the thesis that the alleged mass gasings at Birkenau were conducted essentially in the so-called 'Bunkers' rather than

Auschwitz im September 1941 (The First Gassing at Auschwitz in September 1941; Grin Verlag 2005) is necessarily superficial.

³ J.-C. Pressac, *Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers*, The Beate Klarsfeld Foundation. New York, 1989, p. 184.

⁴ J.-C. Pressac, *Die Krematorien von Auschwitz. Die Technik des Massenmordes*, Piper, Munich 1994, p. 41.

⁵ Cf. in this respect my study *Auschwitz: The End of a Legend*, Institute for Historical Review, Newport Beach, Cal., 1994, pp. 37f.; reprinted in G. Rudolf (ed.), *Auschwitz: Plain Facts*, The Barnes Review, Washington, D.C., 2010, pp. 141f.

⁶ *Auschwitz: le premier gazage*, Vrij Historisch Onderzoek, Berchem, 1999.

⁷ "Entretien avec Jean-Claude Pressac" by Valérie Igounet at La Ville-du-Bois, June 15, 1995, in: Valérie Igounet, *Histoire du négationnisme en France*, Éditions du Seuil, Paris 2000, p. 644.

⁸ *Special Treatment in Auschwitz. Origin and Meaning of a Term*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago, Ill., 2004.

in the alleged gas chambers of the crematoria.⁹ That, in turn, has given rise within the official historiography to an internal dispute, which intensified in November 2003 with the involvement of Franciszek Piper, director of the history department at the Auschwitz Museum.¹⁰

According to the Auschwitz Museum, the inmates called these two presumed gassing buildings “little red house” (in Polish: *czzerwony domek*) and the “little white house” (in Polish: *biały domek*). Because these designations – as I shall show in the Part Two – were invented after the Soviet occupation of Auschwitz, I will not use them in this study and will instead continue to use the established term ‘Bunker,’ but only for reasons of clarity.

⁹ “Die Zahl der Opfer von Auschwitz. Neue Erkenntnisse durch neue William Archivfunde,” *Ost-europa. Zeitschrift für Gegenwartsfragen des Ostens*, no. 5, May 2002, pp. 631-641. Cf. in this respect my article: “Auschwitz. Fritjof Meyer’s New Revisions,” in: *The Revisionist*, 1(1) (2003) pp. 30-37.

¹⁰ Cf. in this respect my article “On the Piper-Meyer-Controversy: Soviet Propaganda vs. Pseudo-Revisionism”, *The Revisionist*. 2(2) (2004), pp. 131-139.

Part One:

Reality

1. The Alleged Extermination of Jews at Auschwitz: Origins of the Decision and Its Execution

1.1. The Beginnings

The account of the beginnings of the alleged extermination of Jews at Auschwitz rests essentially on the testimony of Rudolf Höß regarding his summons to Berlin by Himmler and on the decisions and the events that were to follow, as Höß described them in his various post-war statements.

Those declarations contain, however, a skein of chronological contradictions so entangled that historians who specialize in this field must resort to interpretations which are not only purely conjectural but also mutually exclusive. In their effort to create a coherent chronology, these scholars have had to distort the Auschwitz commander's statements in every possible way. This deformation has reached the point where – from the historiographic point of view – the safest interpretation is to say that the chronology given by Höß and the events he described are pure fiction. Although I am convinced that this latter view is correct, as I have demonstrated elsewhere with an abundance of arguments,¹¹ I shall assume in this chapter, as a working hypothesis, that the meeting between Himmler and Höß actually took place.

The specific aim of accepting such a hypothesis is to examine its consequences from the point of view of the planning and the construction of the Auschwitz camp, *i.e.*, to ascertain, by means of documents, whether the alleged extermination order actually did result in the installation of the two gassing 'Bunkers' at Birkenau.

1.2. Danuta Czech's Interpretation

In her *Auschwitz Chronicle*, Danuta Czech assigns the origin of the extermination of the Jews at Auschwitz to July 29, 1941. Under that date she writes:¹²

"The commander of KL Auschwitz, Rudolf Höß, having been called by the Reichsführer SS, reports to Berlin. Without any witnesses, Himmler discusses with him the technical aspects of the so-called 'final solution of the Jewish question.' As a result of this meeting, Höß is charged by Himmler with the execution of the extermination of the Jews at KL Auschwitz; he is

¹¹ Cf. *L' "irritante questione" delle camere a gas ovvero da Cappuccetto Rosso ad... Auschwitz. Risposta a Valentina Pisanty*, Graphos, Genoa, 1998, pp. 122-148.

¹² D. Czech, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau 1939-1945*, Rowohlt Verlag, Reinbek 1989, pp. 106f. Engl.: Danuta Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle, 1939-1945*, H. Holt, New York 1990. Since both books are organized chronologically, we did not replace the author's original page references to the German edition.

to present construction projects for the homicidal annihilation installations within four weeks. Himmler tells Höß that SS Sturmbannführer Eichmann of RSHA will give him the details when the latter went to Auschwitz in the near future.”

The date is entirely conjectural because there is no document confirming the reality of the Himmler-Höß meeting.

The dates given by Czech for Eichmann’s first visit to Auschwitz as well as the alleged first experimental gassing with Zyklon B are just as arbitrary. She places Eichmann’s first visit to Auschwitz¹³ or a meeting in Eichmann’s office¹⁴ in August of 1941, although Höß claimed that it took place in November.¹⁵ The first experimental gassing by means of Zyklon B allegedly carried out by SS *Hauptsturmführer* Fritsch is also said to have occurred in August of 1941, according to Czech.¹⁶ Again, these dates are totally arbitrary, because there are no documents to confirm the reality of any of the three events.

Eichmann’s second visit to Auschwitz cannot be used in the attempt to establish Czech’s chronology; thus, it is not even mentioned in the *Auschwitz Chronicle*. For the same reason, Höß’s alleged trip to Treblinka, as described in his ‘confessions,’¹⁷ does not appear there either.

1.3. Jean-Claude Pressac’s Interpretation

Jean-Claude Pressac openly acknowledges that Höß’ declarations are chronologically unsound, but comes to a different conclusion:¹⁸

“According to his notes, Höß is ordered to come to Berlin ‘in the summer of 1941.’ His report contains a glaring improbability in that the Reichsführer SS allegedly tells him: ‘The existing annihilation sites in the East (Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka; the killing activities of these camps started only in summer 1942^[19]) are not in a position to handle the major actions envisaged (quoted from: Rudolf Höß, Kommandant in Auschwitz. Autobiographische Aufzeichnungen, edited by Martin Broszat, dtv-dokumente, München 1963, p. 237). Hence, an obvious anachronism on Höß’ side.”

For that reason, Pressac moves the Himmler-Höß meeting to the year 1942.²⁰

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 108

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 115.

¹⁵ Steven Paskuly (ed.), *Death Dealer. The Memoirs of the SS Kommandant at Auschwitz*, Prometheus Books, Buffalo, N.Y., 1992, p. 29.

¹⁶ D. Czech, *op. cit.* (note 12), pp. 115f.

¹⁷ Statement by Höß of 14 March 1946 (NO-1210; Steven Paskuly (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 15), pp. 42f.) as well as his statement of 5 April 1946 (PS-3868).

¹⁸ J.-C. Pressac, *Die Krematorien...*, *op. cit.* (note 4), note 132 on p. 136.

¹⁹ These activities are claimed to have started in late 1941 in Belzec, in early 1942 in Sobibor, and in summer 1942 in Treblinka.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 51.

“In early 1942, Höß is ordered to report to Himmler in Berlin; the latter informs him that his camp has been selected to become the center for the mass extermination of the Jews.”

Actually, this kind of dating, as I have stressed elsewhere,²¹ creates further contradictions in chronology; the most serious one is the fact that the installation of the so-called ‘Bunker 1’ and the beginning of the extermination of Jews at Auschwitz, which, according to Höß, were the direct consequence of Himmler’s order, would thus have taken place at a date preceding that order.

1.4. Debórah Dwork’s and Robert Jan van Pelt’s Interpretation

Debórah Dwork and Robert Jan van Pelt worked out a much more sophisticated and original interpretation:²²

“According to Rudolf Höß, Himmler discussed the transformation of Auschwitz into an extermination site as early as June 1941. Is he correct? Did he have a conversation with Himmler in June 1941? If so, did they talk about the construction of killing installations at Auschwitz? And if they did, did Himmler mean, in June 1941, that this murder machinery was to be used to kill Jews?”

To this question they reply in the following way:²³

“Höß’s Nuremberg confessions seemed to close the case concerning the origins of Auschwitz as a death camp. But internal inconsistencies in his statements, as well as additional indirect but pertinent evidence, suggest that Höß reinterpreted events that had indeed occurred in the light of the ultimate outcome. Probably, he had a conversation with Himmler in June 1941. Probably, they spoke about the construction of extermination facilities at Auschwitz. But probably, in June 1941, those installations were not intended for the mass murder of Europe’s Jews.

Let us look at Höß’s statements more closely. In his affidavit saying ‘I was ordered to establish extermination facilities at Auschwitz in June 1941’^[24] he also explained that ‘At that time, there were already in the general government three other extermination camps; Belzek, Treblinka, and Wolzek. (Sobibor)’^[25] These camps, however, came into operation only in 1942. In a detailed account of the role of Auschwitz in the genocide of the Jews that

²¹ *L’ “irritante questione” delle camere a gas...*, *op. cit.* (note 11), pp. 130f.

²² D. Dwork, R. J. van Pelt, *Auschwitz 1270 to the present*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York/London 1996, p. 277.

²³ *Ibidem*, p. 279.

²⁴ PS-3868; The German original states: “Ich hatte den Befehl, Ausrottungserleichterungen in Auschwitz im Juni 1941 zu schaffen” – where “Ausrottungserleichterungen” means “extermination mitigations,” not “extermination facilities.”

²⁵ PS-3868: “Zu jener Zeit bestanden schon drei weitere Vernichtungslager in Generalgouvernement: Belzek, Treblinka und Wolzek.” A “Wolzek” camp never existed. Its identification with Sobibór by Dwork/van Pelt is completely arbitrary.

Höß wrote later that year, he again related Auschwitz to other killing sites and again made the same mistake about the dates.^[26]

‘Himmler greeted me with the following: ‘The Führer has ordered the Final Solution of the Jewish Question. We, the SS, have to carry out this order. The existing extermination sites in the East are not in a position to perform these intended major operations. I have, therefore, chosen Auschwitz for this purpose.’

In June 1941 there were no ‘existing extermination sites in the East.’ As Höß insisted on various occasions that the conversation took place in 1941, although acknowledging that he may have been confused about the exact words, it would seem plausible that there was a meeting in June 1941 and that he was ordered ‘to establish extermination facilities.’ But how large were these meant to be and for whom were they meant?”

The solution proposed by Dwork and van Pelt is that Höß was called to Berlin in 1941, but that Himmler, on that occasion, did not order him to launch the extermination of the Jews. We will see in Chapter 8, for which group of persons, according to the two authors, the ‘extermination installations,’ that is, the Birkenau ‘Bunkers’ were intended.

1.5. Dating the Himmler-Höß Meeting

Richard David Breitman has made an attempt to fix the date of Höß’s summons to Berlin on the basis of Himmler’s travels during the summer of 1941, which we know from his diary. Breitman writes:²⁷

“And Höss now dated the meeting as sometime during summer of 1941, but he could not remember exactly when.

Himmler was not in Berlin very often during the summer of 1941, especially after the invasion of the USSR. It seems most likely that he actually met with Höss sometime during July 13-15.”

In a note, the author explains:²⁸

“Various attempts to redate this meeting have been off the mark. Höss could not have mistaken a summer-1942 meeting with Himmler for 1941 – first, because Himmler’s 1942 appointment book, which exists, contains no such entry, and, second, because Höss was already gassing Jews then.

²⁶ R. Höß, “The Final Solution of the Jewish Question in Concentration Camp Auschwitz,” in: by Steven Paskuly (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 15), p. 27: “Contrary to his usual custom, his adjutant was not in the room. Himmler greeted me with the following: ‘The Führer has ordered the Final Solution of the Jewish Question. We the SS have to carry out this order. The existing extermination sites in the East are not in the position to carry out these intended operations on a large scale. I have, therefore, chosen Auschwitz for this purpose.’”

²⁷ R.D. Breitman, *The Architect of Genocide. Himmler and the Final Solution*, Knopf, New York 1991, p. 189.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 294f.

It is most unlikely that Himmler set the Final Solution in motion before 22 June. Organizing the strategy for the Waffen-SS and the Einsatzgruppen must have taken a considerable amount of Himmler's time, and he had to see how successful the initial attack against the U.S.S.R. would be. Himmler left the capital for East Prussia on 25 June and did not return [to Berlin] until 13 July. On 15 July he went back to East Prussia. At most he went to Berlin for one brief visit during August, though we cannot be sure where he was on several days late that month."

Breitman then discusses Himmler's travels in August 1942 and concludes:

"Dates in September are too late for the meeting, since the first test gassing at Auschwitz occurred on 3 Sept. What is left is 13-15 July 1941."

Danuta Czech, as we have already seen, proposes a date of July 29, 1941, for this event, justifying it in the following way: On that day, a detainee escaped from the camp and the telegram informing the cognizant SS authorities was signed by *Lagerführer* Fritzsch, in Höß's absence.²⁹ It is possible that Höß had gone to Berlin, but it is certain that he could not have met Himmler there on that day because the latter had been in East Prussia since July 15.

Debórah Dwork and Robert Jan van Pelt propose a different method of dating. They state that Höß was in Berlin on June 13 and 14, 1941, to discuss the expansion of the Auschwitz camp with Kammler of the Main Office of Budget and Buildings,³⁰ and on that occasion he also met Himmler;³¹

"Himmler, too, was in town, to celebrate the fifth anniversary of his appointment as chief of the German police. Given his personal interest in the future of Auschwitz, it seems likely that the completion of the first master plan [for construction of the camp] was an occasion for him to chat with Höss."

The document which the authors invoke is a letter from Kammler to Höß dated June 18, 1941, which refers merely to a meeting of Höß with the head of Department I of Main Office of Budget and Buildings, SS *Oberführer* Lörner, and with Kammler without indicating where it took place.³² In his Cracow 'notes' Höß tells of a visit by Kammler to Auschwitz in 1941 when the head of the Auschwitz Construction Office was still Schlachter,³³ hence before October 1, 1941, when Schlachter was replaced by Bischoff. The meeting of June 13-14 thus certainly occurred at Auschwitz.

The most probable date for the Himmler-Höß meeting is therefore 14-15 July 1941. Pressac's proposed dating of this event is historically untenable.

²⁹ D. Czech, *Kalendarium...*, *op. cit.* (note 12), p. 107

³⁰ D. Dwork, R. J. van Pelt, *op. cit.* (note 22), p. 214.

³¹ *Ibidem*, p. 280

³² RGVA, 502-1-11, p. 37. Cf. Section 2.2.

³³ Kammler profile entitled "Der Chef der Office Group C im WVHA war der SS Gruppenführer Dr. ing. Kammler" and dated November 1946. AGK, NTN, 103, p. 244

1.6. Dating ‘Bunkers’ 1 and 2

All orthodox specialists of the history of Auschwitz agree that the so-called ‘Bunkers’ of Birkenau were set up for homicidal purposes, although differences do exist among them as to the kind of victims destined for them.

The official chronology of the *Auschwitz Chronicle* regarding the start of homicidal activity in ‘Bunkers’ 1 and 2 is accepted by practically all orthodox scholars dealing with this camp. According to the *Auschwitz Chronicle*, ‘Bunker 1’ went into operation on March 20, 1942. The author notes for that date:³⁴

“Gas chambers are put into operation in a Birkenau farmhouse modified for this purpose, this is the so-called Bunker no. 1.”

The only discordant voice is that of Jean-Claude Pressac, who moves this alleged event by two months:³⁵

“The ‘red house’, after its modification, was given the name ‘Bunker 1’ and probably began to be used for this purpose from the end of May 1942 onwards.”

In the chronological summary of his book, Pressac writes:³⁶

“In May [1942]: Modification of a small farm at Birkenau. The gas chamber of the Krematorium [I] is moved there because of the impending construction work. The unit, which will later be called ‘Bunker 1,’ consists of two chambers, not equipped with mechanical ventilation.”

As for ‘Bunker 2,’ the *Auschwitz Chronicle* affirms that it became operational on June 30, 1942. The following entry for that date appears in the book:³⁷

“In connection with the impending arrival of further transports of Jews who are moved to Auschwitz by the RSHA to be annihilated there, more gas chambers are installed in a farmhouse, similar to Bunker 1. It is situated to the west of Crematoria IV and V, which will be built later, and is designated Bunker no. 2.”

Pressac does not give a precise date but accepts the period:³⁸

“The ‘white house’, Bunker 2, is put into operation at the end of June 1942.”

In the chronological summary, he adds:³⁹

“in June [1942] another Birkenau farmhouse is modified to become a gas chamber. In the process, the delousing plants of the Degesch Co. of Frankfurt a.M. are taken as a model (the chambers are arranged in parallel).”

³⁴ D. Czech, *Kalendarium...*, (note 12), p. 186

³⁵ J.-C. Pressac, *Die Krematorien...*, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 49

³⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 154f.

³⁷ D. Czech, *Kalendarium...*, *op. cit.* (note 12), p. 239

³⁸ J.-C. Pressac, *Die Krematorien...*, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 52

³⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 52

The unit, later to be called 'Bunker 2,' consists of four parallel chambers with a floor area of 105 m²; it has no mechanical ventilation."

To summarize, 'Bunker 1' went into service in March or May 1942, 'Bunker 2' in June of that year.

Having established the chronological limits of the investigation, we must now examine their implications within the general outlines of the construction of the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp as documented by the extant archival material.

1.7. The Location of the Birkenau 'Bunkers'

The location of the 'Bunkers' at Birkenau is presently considered an established fact: they have been definitively sited by the Auschwitz Museum as appears on the official map of Birkenau, published in Danuta Czech's *Auschwitz Chronicle*, where 'Bunker 1' is labeled "*1. provisorische Gaskammer*" (first temporary gas chamber), and 'Bunker 2' is called "*2. provisorische Gaskammer*"⁴⁰ (second temporary gas chamber).

That map will therefore constitute our geographical point of departure for the following historical and documentary study of the 'Bunkers.' In Part Three we will learn how the Auschwitz Museum arrived at its own position.

⁴⁰ D. Czech, *Kalendarium...*, *op. cit.* (note 12), p. 27. Cf. Document 1.

2. The ‘Bunkers’ in the Planning of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Camp

2.1. The Bureaucratic Procedure for the Construction of the Installations at Auschwitz-Birkenau

On April 27, 1940, Himmler ordered the old Polish army barracks at Auschwitz to be transformed into a concentration camp. Three days later, the first cost estimate for the camp was drawn up.⁴¹

In 1941, the Auschwitz concentration camp encompassed the construction project “SS housing and concentration camp Auschwitz” of the *Waffen* SS and Police, and as such it was subordinate, in all technical, financial and administrative aspects, to Department II, Buildings, of the Main Office of Budget and Buildings, directed by SS *Oberführer* Kammler. Since the camp was situated on the territory of the Reich – East Upper Silesia was annexed by Germany after the Polish collapse in 1939 – it came under the inspectorate of Department II for the region involved, the Construction Inspectorate of the *Waffen* SS and Police Reich East, having its seat at Posen, which in November 1941 supervised the Central Construction Offices of Auschwitz, Danzig, Posen, and Breslau.

As it related to the construction industry, the Auschwitz construction project was subordinate to the Regional Administrator for Construction Industry in Military District VIII with its office at Kattowitz, which in turn reported to Reich Minister Speer in his capacity as General Plenipotentiary for Control of the Construction Industry (*Generalbevollmächtigter für die Regelung der Bauwirtschaft – G.B.-Bau*). The realization of a construction project necessitated a preliminary administrative act: its ranking in the order of precedence of the relevant military district (*Wehrkreisrangfolgelisten*), for which a construction authorization was needed. Initially, this authorization, according to the regulations of *G.B.-Bau* of July 12, 1941, for the third year of the war economy, was given by the control commission for Military District VIII – an organ of the Regional Administrator for Construction in Military District VIII – and required the submission of a file consisting of a sketch of the location, a construction specification, and an initial cost estimate, later to be replaced by a detailed cost estimate. *G.B.-Bau* would decide on the overall construction volume, a term also including the allocation of funds.

On November 14, 1941, the Auschwitz Construction Office was raised to the level of “Central Construction Office of the *Waffen*-SS and Police Ausch-

⁴¹ “Kostenaufstellung für das Lager Auschwitz bei Kattowitz,” written by SS *Obersturmführer* Seidler on April 30, 1940. RGVA, 502-1-176, pp. 37f.

witz,” and its head, SS *Hauptsturmführer* Karl Bischoff, was promoted from head of construction to “Head of Central Construction Office of the *Waffen SS* and Police Auschwitz.”

From February 1, 1942, on, the Auschwitz Central Construction Office was attached, for all financial, technical and administrative purposes, to Office Group C, Construction, of the SS Economic and Administrative Main Office (*SS Wirtschafts- und Verwaltungshauptamt – SS WVHA*) run by SS *Oberführer* Kammler, while continuing to be subject to Reich Minister Speer in matters of construction. Within the SS *WVHA*, Office C/I (general construction tasks), headed by SS *Sturmbannführer* Sesemann, was responsible for the supervision and cost control of ordinary construction projects, whereas Office C/III (technical areas), run by SS *Sturmbannführer* Wirtz, exercised the same authority for technical construction projects.

Still within SS the *WVHA*, the supervision of the Construction Inspectorate of Office II of Main Office of Budget and Buildings was taken over by Office C/V Central Construction Inspectorate, which had a double function: technical through Office V/1a (Construction Inspections, Central Construction Offices and Construction Offices) and financial through Office V/2a (budget and accounting). The Construction Inspectorate of the *Waffen SS* and Police Reich East, which had controlled the Auschwitz Central Construction Office since November 1941, reported to these two offices; it was replaced in mid-1943 by the Construction Inspectorate of the *Waffen-SS* and Police Silesia, located at Kattowitz and likewise attached to Office C/V of the SS *WVHA*.

With respect to the construction industry, the Central Construction Office was placed under the authority of Speer’s local offices: the Regional Administrator of the General Plenipotentiary for Control of the Construction Industry in Military District VIII, located at Kattowitz, which handled administrative questions (precedence, construction authorization, etc.) and to the Regional Administrator for Control of the Construction Industry in Military District VIII, located at Breslau, responsible for the allocation of materials.⁴²

Any construction order coming from Himmler would be handled along the lines of procedure just described, including orders concerning technical and sanitary facilities. If extermination facilities existed, they too had to be constructed following the rules mentioned.

The bureaucratic channels were described in the following words by SS *Sturmbannführer* Wolfgang Grosch in a postwar ‘confession’:⁴³

⁴² For sources, cf. my study *La “Zentralbauleitung der Waffen-SS und Polizei Auschwitz.”* Edizioni di Ar, 1998; English: *The Central Construction Office in Auschwitz*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago, Ill., in preparation.

⁴³ Affidavit of Wolfgang Grosch of February 20, 1947. NO-2154. Wolfgang Grosch served from June 1941 at Main Department II/Central Construction Inspectorate of Main Office of Budget and Buildings, from November 1941 through March 1944 at Construction Inspectorate of the *Waffen SS* and Police Central Russia, located at Mogilev.

“As for building gas chambers and crematoria, that was the responsibility of Office Group C, once such buildings had been requested by Office Group D.^[44] The official path was as follows: Office Group D contacted Office Group C. Office C/I did the drawings for those installations, as far as the buildings themselves were concerned, passed them on to Office C/III, which took care of the machinery, i.e., the equipment concerning for example the ventilation of the gas chambers or the gas injection device. These specifications would then be assigned to a private company, which had to supply the special equipment or furnaces. Further along the official path, C/III would inform Office C/V, which transmitted the order to the Central Construction Office via its Construction Inspectorate West, North, South, East. The Central Construction Office then gave the construction order to the Construction Office of the concentration camp concerned, which carried out the actual project using detainees that had been supplied by D/II.^[45] Office Group D gave orders and instructions to Office Group C regarding space requirements and purposes of such buildings. The client for gas chambers and crematoria was, basically, Office Group D.”

This bureaucratic procedure was followed in the construction of all technical and sanitary installations in the concentration camps (crematoria, disinfection and disinfection equipment, etc.), but it was also valid for undisputed execution installations (gallows, ranges for firing squads, etc.) . It would also have applied to homicidal gas chambers, if they existed.⁴⁶ Whenever such installations were built, they inevitably followed the bureaucratic path described above; this is demonstrated, for example, by the fact that Jean-Claude Pressac based his thesis of the existence of homicidal gas chambers on ‘slip-ups’ in the abundant documentation of the Auschwitz Central Construction Office on the cremation installations.

The construction activities of the various Central Construction Offices were themselves subject to a bureaucratic procedure just as complex. Let us examine the pertinent case below.

From March 31, 1942, forward, each site of the construction project Concentration Camp Auschwitz was assigned an identification number preceded by the letters *BW* (*Bauwerk*=building site). All administrative acts related to a *Bauwerk* had to be marked with the reference “*BW 21/7b (Bau) 13*,” in which 21/7b identified the account, “(*Bau) 13*” the title.⁴⁷ For the Prisoner of War

⁴⁴ Office Group D/concentration camps, headed by SS *Brigadeführer* Glücks, dealt with the concentration camps.

⁴⁵ Office DII/work allocation of inmates, with its head SS *Sturmbannführer* Maurer, was in charge of the work assigned to the detainees.

⁴⁶ None of the alleged homicidal gas chambers was equipped with a “gas feeding equipment” (*Gaseinströmgerät*); this designation applied instead to the gas diffusion equipment of the hydrogen cyanide disinfection chambers using the DEGESCH circulation system.

⁴⁷ “Aufteilung der Bauwerke (BW) für die Bauten, Aussen- und Nebenanlagen des Bauvorhabens Konzentrationslager Auschwitz O/S;” March 31, 1942. RGVA, 502-1-267, p. 3.

Camp (the Birkenau camp), such dispositions had already come into force in February 1942.⁴⁸

During the course of the construction of the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp, the local population was evacuated;⁴⁹ many houses that stood in the way of the plans of the SS were demolished, but countless others located within the “area of interest” of the camp remained intact and were incorporated into the administration of the camp and entrusted to the SS New Construction Office (later to become SS Construction Office and finally SS Central Construction Office). Some, though very few, houses were neither demolished nor incorporated into the camp administration.

The SS New Construction Office carried out a census of the incorporated houses and gave a serial number to each one. Numbering proceeded by zones, and one of the last zones was that of the Auschwitz railroad station. The February 1942 report of the surveying section at SS New Construction Office mentions the following activity:⁵⁰

“Numbering of the houses between Alter and Neuer Bahnhofstrasse.”

For example, in the former village of Brzezinka (Birkenau), SS New Construction Office incorporated some 41 houses, to which it assigned the numbers from 600 to 640.⁵¹

On September 10, 1944, the Central Construction Office renumbered the houses to reflect a renaming of the streets.⁵²

All work on the houses was planned and carried out by the above office, which retained responsibility for maintaining them even after the completion of work and the handover to the camp administration. For example, in October 1944 the Central Construction Office took on the inspection and repair of the damage caused by the American aerial bombardment of September 13, 1944, creating for this purpose a special *Bauwerk* no. 167.⁵³ Among the structures destroyed or damaged were 18 buildings⁵⁴ and 63 houses.⁵⁵ For each house

⁴⁸ “Baufristenplan für Bauvorhaben: Kriegsgefangenenlager der Waffen SS Auschwitz” of March 9, 1942, for the month of February; RGVA, 502-1-22, p. 9. “Aufteilung der Bauwerke (BW) für die Bauten, Aussen- und Nebenanlagen des Bauvorhabens ‘Lager II’ Auschwitz,” copy written by Poles without indication of date; AGK, NTN-94, p. 154.

⁴⁹ As early as March 1941, 1,600 Poles and 500 Jews had been evacuated from the Auschwitz “area of interest” and moved to the Government General; GARF, 7021-108-32, p. 30.

⁵⁰ “Tätigkeitsbericht der Tiefbau- und Vermessungsabteilung. Februar 1942,” March 2, 1942; RGVA, 502-1-24, p. 416.

⁵¹ “Bebauungsplan für den Auf- u. Ausbau des Konzentrationslagers u. Kriegsgefangenenlagers, Plan Nr. 2215,” dated March 1943. Northern sector of the camp. RGVA, 502-2-94, p. 2. Cf. Document 2.

⁵² “Aufstellung. Umnummerierung von Hausnummern auf dem westlichen Sola-Ufer (Planungsgelände für Neustadt-West,” RGVA, 502-2-95, pp. 22-25. Cf. document 3.

⁵³ “Bauantrag für die Instandsetzungsarbeiten an den durch Bomben beschädigten Gebäuden und Aussenanlagen im Interessengebiet des Konzentrationslagers Auschwitz. BW. 167;” the document contains an explanatory report (Erläuterungsbericht) and a cost estimate (Kostenvoranschlag). RGVA, 502-1-159, pp. 80-90.

⁵⁴ Buildings nos. 134, 135, 136, 138, 128, 129, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 157A, 157B, 157C, 157E, 157D, 125.

and each building the Central Construction Office made a damage assessment and a cost estimate for repairs.⁵⁶ In the village of Broschkowitz some thirty houses were set aside for those who had been displaced due to the bombing.⁵⁷

Some existing Polish houses were incorporated into the construction project concentration camp Auschwitz and given the number of the corresponding *Bauwerk*. For example, houses 130, 132, 150, 151, 152 and 171 became part of *BW 36B* (housing for officers and NCOs).⁵⁸

From the administrative point of view, the creation of a *Bauwerk* enabled the accomplishment of a complex series of bureaucratic steps, embodied in the drafting of a number of documents: besides the sketch of the location, the construction specification, and the cost estimate already mentioned, they included a drawing, an explanatory report, a transfer negotiation document to the camp administration, and a notice of completion. For each *Bauwerk*, it was moreover necessary to keep a cash ledger, in which all work done on the *Bauwerk* and the accompanying payments were recorded and which reflected, so to speak, the administrative life cycle of a *Bauwerk*.⁵⁹

The construction or the modification was carried out by the Central Construction Office, using either its own detainees or civilian companies called in from the outside. Ordinary jobs were done by the workshops of the Central Construction Office, which had at its disposal a number of *Kommandos* of skilled workmen (blacksmiths, painters, carpenters, bricklayers, plumbers, etc.). The execution of those tasks brought along, in the administrative field, the filing of other bureaucratic forms: the request for materials, the order, the work sheet, the receipt, the delivery slip. The work of the detainees appeared in the accounts of the camp administration and was billed to the Central Construction Office by means of an invoice. The civilian firms also sent regular invoices to the Central Construction Office.

All these documents were issued in several copies, which were distributed to the offices concerned. The addressees of the copies were indicated in the documents under the rubric “distribution list.”

The *Bauwerke* were also registered in various reports on the construction activities, of which there were at least 14 different types. That practice was al-

⁵⁵ Houses nos. 35, 210, 36, 207, 891, 103, 115, 105, 56, 53, 52, 50, 49, 47, 44, 41, 43, 40, 27, 28, 33, 34, 16, 875, 6, 7, 8, 142, 131, 132, 133, 203, 105, 118, 118a, 149, 156, 126, 45, 25, 54, 139, 142, 46, 78, 1, 5, 9, 121, 21, 116, 117, 120, 122, 123, 125, 129, 130, 150, 152, 163, 170, 208.

⁵⁶ “Kostenvoranschlag für die Instandsetzungsarbeiten an den durch Bomben beschädigten Gebäuden und Aussenanlagen im Interessengebiet des Konzentrationslagers Auschwitz. *BW 167*.” RGVA, 502-1-159, pp. 82-90.

⁵⁷ “Lageplan über die ausgebauten Wohnhäuser für Bombenbeschädigte *BW. 166*. (Eingetragen im Planausgabebuch unter Nr. 18125/29.7.44).” RGVA, 502-2-50, p. 83. Cf. Document 4.

⁵⁸ “Baubericht für den Monat März 1942.” RGVA, 502-1-24, p. 385; “Tätigkeits- bzw. Baubericht für den Monat März 1942” by SS Schütze Jothann (Abteilung Hochbau). RGVA, 502-1-24, p. 398.

⁵⁹ Cf. in this regard my study cited in note 42, pp. 32 and 38.

so applied to the Polish houses that were taken over by the Central Construction Office, as is shown by the drawing of House 647 located at Budy.⁶⁰

From the detailed bureaucratic procedures outlined above, it follows that the Birkenau ‘Bunkers,’ too, if in fact they existed, had to have appeared in the documents of Central Construction Office. All we have to do, therefore, is to look for documentary proof of their existence. The investigation must be directed at four essential criteria:

1. Number of the *Bauwerk*: In contrast to the alleged homicidal gas chambers of the crematoria, which were included in the corresponding *Bauwerke*, that is, the Crematoria II, III, IV and V (*BW* 30, 30a, 30b, 30c), the gassing ‘Bunkers’ would have constituted a *Bauwerk* in themselves. Therefore, their respective numbers must appear in the documents of the Central Construction Office.
2. Designation: Like all *Bauwerke*, the ‘Bunkers’ had to have a specific designation, which would have to appear in the documents. According to the postulates of the orthodox historiography, that designation was necessarily ‘encrypted’ and was indicated by “*sonder-*” (special), as for example “*Haus für Sondermassnahmen*” (house for special measures).
3. The ‘Bunkers’ were existing houses, so the unanimous view of orthodox historians, which were converted to homicidal gas chamber. The modification of such houses is characterized in the documentation of the Central Construction Office as “*Ausbau*” or “*Umbau*” (finishing, conversions) followed by the mention “*eines Hauses*” (of a house) or “*eines Gebäudes*” (of a building), often with the adjective “*bestehend*” or “*vorhanden*” (existing, present). The transformation of the two houses into ‘gas chambers’ would therefore have to be reflected in the documents as the finishing or conversion of two existing houses.
4. The alleged undressing barracks near the two ‘Bunkers’ would, in turn, belong to the respective *Bauwerke* and appear as such in the documents.

2.2. Plans and Cost Estimates for the Auschwitz-Birkenau Camp (June 1941–July 1942)

As we have seen, Debórah Dwork and Robert Jan van Pelt have the Himmler-Höß meeting take place on June 13–14, 1941, because (in their opinion) Höß was in Berlin on those two days to discuss the projects for the enlargement of the camp with Kammler. The object of the discussion is confirmed by a letter from Kammler to the camp commander dated June 18, 1941, which refers to “KL Auschwitz – construction projects 2nd and 3rd year of war economy.” Kammler writes.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Cf. Document 5.

⁶¹ RGVA, 502-1-11, pp. 37f.

“Taking into account the construction measures ordered locally by SS Gruppenführer Pohl, and referring to your meeting with the head of Amt I and myself on 13 and 14 of this month, I inform you as follows:

1) The construction measures listed below will be punctually registered by Amt II with plenipotentiary general for control of the building industry [Speer] for the 3rd year of the war economy (1.10.41 – 30.9.41).”

This is followed by a list set out below:

- “a) Completion of utility buildings*
- b) 30 new accommodations for detainees*
- c) Delousing unit*
- d) Laundry building*
- e) Admission building*
- f) Gate building KL*
- g) 5 watchtowers*
- h) Extension camp wall and wire obstacle*
- i) New-construction planning office with garages*
- k) Headquarters building*
- l) Sentry headquarters area*
- m) Motor pool headquarters*
- n) Housing headquarters staff*
- o) Housing for 1 guard battalion*
- p) Finishing of temporary officers’ club and officers’ housing in existing buildings*
- q) Work camp for civilian workers*
- r) Sewage system*
- s) Water supply*
- t) Road constructions and gardens*
- u) Electrical installations, external.”*

Kammler then states that the whole construction project CC Auschwitz could no longer be registered for the second year of the war economy but, considering that the camp was to receive 18,000 detainees by December 31, 1941, he agreed to starting the construction or, if already begun, continuation of the following items:

- “a) Adding upper stories to 14 existing accommodations for detainees*
- b) Completion of utility buildings*
- c) 30 new accommodations for detainees*
- d) Delousing unit*
- e) Laundry unit*
- f) New-construction planning office with garages*
- g) Motor pool headquarters*
- h) Housing headquarters staff*

- i) *Finishing of temporary officers' club with officers' accommodations in existing buildings*
- k) *Work camp for civilian workers*
- l) *Sewage system*
- m) *Water supply*
- n) *Roads*"

Thus, after the meeting between Himmler and Höß, Kammler's group of offices planned all kinds of construction measures except those for which the entire camp had allegedly been set up: extermination installations.

On October 30, 1941, Bischoff drew up a first cost estimate for the Auschwitz camp (*SS Unterkunft und Konzentrationslager Auschwitz*) arriving at a total of 7,057,400 RM. The document mentions the following items:

- *BW 12, 20A, 20B, 20D, 20E, 20F, 20G, 20L, 20M, 20N, 20O, 20Q, 20R: Accommodations for detainees*
- *BW 62: Kitchen barrack for detainees*
- *BW 300A-F: Housing and utility barracks of camp for civilian workers*
- *BW 300E: 1 utility barrack*
- *BW 300F: 1 washing and toilet barrack*
- *BW 172: Utility barrack for guard unit*
- *BW 100-107 and 112-132: Accommodations for detainees*
- *BW 9A: Sanitary installations in the Auschwitz concentration camp (water and sewage installation, sewers)*
- *BW 9B: Drainage pipes*
- *BW 21: Roads.*⁶²

The same day, Bischoff also elaborated an "Explanatory report to preliminary plan for the new construction of the *Waffen* SS POW camp at Auschwitz, O/S" (= Upper Silesia), which contained the following *Bauwerke*:

1. *BW 3: Prisoner housing barracks 1-174*
2. *BW 4: Utility barracks 1-14*
3. *BW 5a: Delousing barrack 1*
4. *BW 5b: Delousing barrack 2*
5. *BW 6: Washing barracks 1-16*
6. *BW 7: Toilet barracks 1-18*
7. *BW 8: Corpse barrack*
8. *BW 9: Quarantine camp, entrance building*
9. *BW 10: Headquarters building*
10. *BW 11: Guard building*
11. *BW 12: Area, fenced in, with open latrines*
12. *BW 13: Watchtowers, wood*
13. *BW 14: Barrack camp for guard unit*

⁶² "Kostenüberschlag für das Bauvorhaben: SS Unterkunft und Konzentrationslager Auschwitz," October 31, 1941. RGVA, 502-2-97, pp. 3-6.

14. *BW 15*: Warehouse
15. *BW 16*: Access road and parking area
16. *BW 17*: Road consolidation within camp
17. *BW 18*: Sewage system with treatment plant
18. *BW 19*: Water supply plant
19. *BW 20*: Power plant
20. *BW 21*: Electrical power line from Birkenau
21. *BW 22*: Telephone system
22. *BW 23*: Alarm system
23. *BW 24*: Enclosure
24. *BW 25*: Wiremesh fencing within camp
25. *BW 26*: Transformer station
26. *BW 27*: Siding from Auschwitz station

Furthermore, a new crematorium was planned as Item 30, which was, however, to be built in the Auschwitz main camp.⁶³

On February 27, 1942, SS *Oberführer* Kammler visited Auschwitz for an on-site discussion of the camp construction program for the third year of war economy. On March 2, the head of SS *WVHA*, SS *Gruppenführer* Oswald Pohl, approved the proposals listed below:⁶⁴

"I. Agricultural constructions

1. 30 to 35 horse-stable barracks for the temporary housing of animals, etc.
2. 2 permanent cow-sheds for a total of 400 head of cattle
3. 3 field barns and 4 temporary farm barns
4. Temporary greenhouse of 3000 m²
5. 4 storage buildings for potatoes
6. Completion of Raisko building as a laboratory

II. Erection of temporary buildings for Deutsche Wirtschaftsbetriebe

1. Construction of a temporary bridge across the Sola river toward detainee entrance, making use of temporary road overpass of road administration, to be dismantled
2. Adding upper stories to 6 permanent detainee buildings
3. Completion of 5 permanent detainee buildings and new construction of 15 detainee buildings to be used initially as follows:
 - 5 housing buildings as workshops
 - 5 housing buildings for storage
 - 5 housing buildings for the guard units

⁶³ "Erläuterungsbericht zum Vorentwurf für den Neubau des Kriegsgefangenenlagers der Waffen-SS, Auschwitz O/S" and "Kostenvoranschlag für den Vorentwurf über den Neubau des Kriegsgefangenenlagers der Waffen-SS, Auschwitz O/S." RGVA, 502-1-233, pp. 13-30.

⁶⁴ Letter from Pohl to Central Construction Office Auschwitz of March 2, 1942. RGVA, 502-1-319, pp. 210f.

The distance between the permanent buildings will be 14 m edge to edge

4. *Laundry building*
5. *Entrance building, detainees*
6. *Water supply system*
7. *Sewage system*
8. *Bio-gas utilization system*
9. *Finishing utility barrack, Kommandantur*
10. *Crematorium In the POW camp*
11. *4 officers' housing barracks*
12. *Construction office barrack*
13. *Roads as required*
14. *Completion of existing houses and completion of one house for the commander of the agricultural units at Auschwitz."*

On March 17, in response to this letter, Bischoff transmitted to SS Sturmbannführer Lenzer, head of Office Group C V/1 (supervision of all SS building offices and building projects) of SS *WVHA* the list of construction projects (and *Bauwerke*) submitted for approval to the Regional Administrator for Control of the Construction Industry in Military District VIII. The *Bauwerke* are listed in Table 1 in the Appendix (p. 255) without the corresponding cost estimate.

On March 31, 1942, Bischoff compiled a list of all *Bauwerke* planned for the construction project CC Auschwitz. It was later completed by hand by adding new *Bauwerke* that had not been originally planned. I have reproduced Bischoff's list in its entirety in Table 2 in the Appendix (p. 257).

The "Explanatory report on the construction project concentration camp Auschwitz O/S" written by Bischoff on July 15, 1942, covers the projects and constructions of the Auschwitz camp up to the end of the third fiscal year of the war, *i.e.*, until September 30, 1942. The document lists in order the *Bauwerke* as given in Table 3 in the Appendix (p. 261).

Between October 26 and 29, 1942, Bischoff compiled a cost estimate entitled "Project: POW camp Auschwitz (carrying out of special treatment)." It dealt with a project for the Birkenau camp and lists 12 *Bauwerke*, the first of which included only the following 18 items:⁶⁵

1. 1. 182 housing, provisions and personal storage barracks
2. 27 washing and toilet barracks
3. 10 utility barracks
4. 12 infirmary barracks
5. 10 block leader barracks
6. 3 washing barracks

⁶⁵ "Vorhaben: Kriegsgefangenenlager Auschwitz (Durchführung der Sonderbehandlung)," VHA, Fond OT 31(2)/8.

7. 6 toilet barracks
8. 3 utility barracks
9. 11 uniform store and administration barracks
10. 16 troop housing barracks
11. 2 Headquarters and washing barracks
12. Warehouse 1
13. Wire-mesh fence and watch-towers
14. Cooking kettles and stoves
- 15a. 4 crematoria
- 15b. 4 morgues
- 16a. Delousing unit
- 16b. Troop delousing unit

The other *Bauwerke* are the following:

2. Water supply installation
3. Sewage system
4. Railroad siding
5. Electric lighting
6. Alarm and telephone installation
7. Emergency power plant
8. Substation
9. Bakery
10. Workshop hall, 3 camp barracks and 1 housing barrack for supervisory personnel
11. Disinfestation plant I and 4 housing barracks for civilian workers' camp I
12. Disinfestation plant II, 2 washing and 2 toilet barracks for civilian workers camp II.

3. The ‘Bunkers’ in the Construction of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Camp

3.1. The Construction Reports of the Camps at Auschwitz and Birkenau

The first half of 1942 is the best-documented period for the projects and construction work of the Auschwitz Central Construction Office. There are two series of reports that allow us to appreciate the full scope of its building activities. There is, on the one hand, the *Baufristenplan* (construction deadline schedule), a monthly report prepared by the head of the Central Construction Office and sent to Office Group C/V of SS *WVHA*. These reports list all *Bauwerke* under construction or already built, showing the starting date and the degree of progress in percent as well as the estimated completion date or the date of completion for *Bauwerke* already terminated. Each *Bauwerk* is shown either by its identification number or by its designation (e.g., *BW 24* commandant’s residence).

The other set of documents is the series of *Bauberichte* (construction reports), monthly reports from the head of Central Construction Office to the camp commandant. These reports contain detailed descriptions of the various building sites (*Baustellenbeschreibung*) and of the individual *Bauwerke*, arranged by construction project.

The construction projects within the scope of this report were “Construction project concentration camp Auschwitz,” “Construction project POW camp Auschwitz,” “Construction project construction depot Auschwitz” and “Construction project agriculture Auschwitz.”

The documents of greatest interest for our investigation are the following:

- 1) Construction report on the progress of construction work for construction project CC Auschwitz, dated April 15, 1942, covering the period up to April 1, 1942 (see Table 4 in the Appendix, p. 264).
- 2) Construction report of March 1942 (see Table 5 in the Appendix, p. 265).
- 3) Construction schedule plan of March 1942 for construction project CC Auschwitz (see Table 6 in the Appendix, p. 267).
- 4) Construction schedule plan of April 1942 for construction project POW camp of *Waffen* SS in Auschwitz O/S (see Table 7 in the Appendix, p. 268).
- 5) Construction schedule plan of May 1942 for construction project CC Auschwitz (see Table 8 in the Appendix, p. 269).
- 6) Construction schedule plan of May 1942 for construction project agriculture (see Table 9 in the Appendix, p. 270).

- 7) Construction schedule plan of May 1942 for construction project construction depot (see Table 10 in the Appendix, p. 270).
- 8) Construction schedule plan of May 1942 for construction project POW (see Table 11 in the Appendix, p. 270).
- 9) Construction report of May 1942 (see Table 12 in the Appendix, p. 271).
- 10) Construction schedule plan of June 1942 for construction project CC Auschwitz (see Table 13 in the Appendix, p. 273).
- 11) Construction schedule plan of June 1942 for construction project agriculture (see Table 14 in the Appendix, p. 273).
- 12) Construction schedule plan of June 1942 for construction project construction depot (see Table 15 in the Appendix, p. 274).
- 13) Construction schedule plan of June 1942 for construction project POW (see Table 16 in the Appendix, p. 274).
- 14) Construction report of June 1942 (see Table 17 in the Appendix, p. 275).

If ‘Bunkers’ 1 and 2 at Birkenau started functioning on March 20 or at the end of May 1942, and on June 30, 1942, respectively, specific references to those installations would necessarily have to appear in the documents cited – references such as “Bunker,” or “*Rotes Haus*” / “*Weißes Haus*” or some kind of ‘code word.’ A thorough examination of all entries in Tables 1 through 17 in the Appendix reveals, however, that not a single entry can even remotely be interpreted as referring to any of these ‘Bunkers.’ This clearly indicates that the Birkenau ‘Bunkers’ never existed as extermination installations.

3.2. A Striking Example: House No. 44 / *BW 36C*

How decisive is the absolute lack of documentary traces becomes obvious by comparison with other houses that were taken over and modified by the SS New Construction Office (later SS Construction Office and finally Central Construction Office) at Auschwitz. The most significant example to be cited is that of house no. 44, a “*bestehender Rohbau*” (an existing building shell), which was rebuilt as *BW 36C* and assigned as living quarters to SS *Sturm-bannführer* Cäsar, head of agricultural units. Although I have not investigated this *Bauwerk* in detail, it appears in several documents in my possession, which I shall list chronologically:

March 2, 1942: Letter from the head of SS *WVHA* to Central Construction Office with reference to “Construction program 3rd year of war economy, budget year 1942 for CC Auschwitz”:⁶⁶

“modification of existing residential houses and modification of a house for head of agricultural units at Auschwitz.”

⁶⁶ RGVA, 502-1-319, p. 211.

March 17, 1942: Letter from Bischoff to Office Group C V/1 of SS WVHA with reference as before: “modification of a house for head of agricultural units at Auschwitz.” Estimated cost: 25,000 RM.⁶⁷

March 31, 1942: Individual *Bauwerke* (*BW*) for buildings, externals and secondary installations of construction project concentration camp Auschwitz: “*BW* 36C residential house modification for head of agricultural units Auschwitz.”⁶⁸

May 13, 1942: Letter from the Regional Administrator for Control of Construction Industry at Kattowitz to Central Construction Office with reference to “construction authorization”: “modification of residential house for head of agricultural units.” Cost estimate: 25,500 RM.⁶⁹

June 29, 1942: Letter from the head of Central Construction Office to the Regional Administrator for Control of Construction Industry concerning “Construction project Auschwitz – construction authorization”: “modification of an existing shell no. 36 (temporary).”⁷⁰

June 1942: Construction report from the head of Central Construction Office: “*BW* 36C residence of head of agricultural units. Continuation of modifications, roof framework mounted and covered, lighting and sewers installed.”⁷¹

June 1942: “Construction schedule plan” of the head of Central Construction Office: “*BW* 36C residence for head of agricultural units.” This document also mentions the construction order for the *BW* (item no. 178), the date work started (May 4, 1942) the degree of progress (45 percent) and the estimated date of completion (August 15, 1942).⁷²

July 15, 1942: “Explanatory report on the building project concentration camp Auschwitz O/S” written by head of Central Construction Office: “*BW* 36C finishing of an existing shell.”⁷³

July 15, 1942: “Cost estimate for construction project concentration camp Auschwitz O/S”: For *BW* 36C a detailed cost estimate is given, amounting to 29,000 RM.⁷⁴

July 15, 1942: “Construction description” of *BW* 36 C: “Completion of the existing shell.”⁷⁵

July 15, 1942: “Cost estimate for completion of existing shell *BW* 36C.”⁷⁶

July 15, 1942: Location sketch of *BW* 36C.⁷⁷

⁶⁷ RGVA, 502-1-319, p. 205.

⁶⁸ RGVA, 502-1-267, p. 6.

⁶⁹ RGVA, 502-1-319, illegible page number.

⁷⁰ RGVA, 502-1-319, p. 192.

⁷¹ RGVA, 502-1-24, p. 223.

⁷² RGVA, 502-1-22, p. 26.

⁷³ RGVA, 502-1-220, p. 4.

⁷⁴ RGVA, 502-1-220, p. 27. Cf. document 6.

⁷⁵ RGVA, 502-1-319, page number illegible. Cf. Document 6a.

⁷⁶ RGVA, 502-1-319, page number illegible. Cf. Document 6b.

⁷⁷ RGVA, 502-1-319, page number illegible. Cf. Document 6c.

July 30 [1942]: “Summary of all *Bauwerke* that are to be achieved on order of SS *WVHA* Berlin within the area of CC Auschwitz and/or under the authority of Central Construction Office of *Waffen* SS and Police Auschwitz within the third year of the war economy.”⁷⁸

July 1942: “Construction report” from head of Central Construction Office: “*BW36C* Modification of residence for head of agricultural units. Installation of floors at all levels, doors and windows put in, painting done, externals arranged.”⁷⁹

July 1942: “Construction schedule plan” of the head of Central Construction Office: “Completion of residential home for head of agricultural units.” Progress: 85%.⁸⁰

August 1942: “Construction schedule plan” of the head of Central Construction Office: “Completion of residential home for head of agricultural units.” Progress: 100 percent as of August 15, 1942.⁸¹

September 25, 1942: “Report of completion” of the head of Central Construction Office to Office CV of SS *WVHA*: “already finished [...] modification of existing shell no. 36C for CC Auschwitz.”⁸²

September 1942: “Construction schedule plan” of the head of Central Construction Office: “*BW 36C* Completion of residential home for head of agricultural units.” Construction order no. 178; start of work: May 4, 1942; progress: 100%; termination: Aug. 15, 1942.⁸³

October 1942: List of *Bauwerke* entitled “VIII U pa 1”: “*BW 36C* = modification of an existing shell, residence Cäsar.”⁸⁴

December 16, 1942: “Workshop orders (administration) starting June 1, 1942”: “Installation of window pane in House 44 *Stubaf.* Cäsar (very urgent!).”⁸⁵

April 8, 1943: “Construction schedule plan” of the head of Central Construction Office; Construction order no. 178; start of work: May 4, 1942; progress: 100%; termination: Aug. 15, 1942.⁸⁶

October 2, 1943: “Construction schedule plan” of the head of Central Construction Office; Construction order no. 178; start of work: May 4, 1942; progress: 100%; termination: Aug. 15, 1942.⁸⁷

December 14, 1943: “Construction Office Industrial Constructions. State of construction invoicing”: “*BW 36C* CC. Completion of residential home for

⁷⁸ RGVA, 502-1-275, p. 33.

⁷⁹ RGVA, 502-1-24, p. 181.

⁸⁰ RGVA, 502-1-22, p. 36.

⁸¹ RGVA, 502-1-22, p. 39.

⁸² RGVA, 502-1-319, p. 95.

⁸³ RGVA, 502-1-22, p. 48.

⁸⁴ RGVA, 502-1-317, p. 42.

⁸⁵ RGVA, 502-1-153, order n. 145.

⁸⁶ RGVA, 502-1-320, p. 4.

⁸⁷ RGVA, 502-1-320, p. 4.

head of agricultural units.” The report states that 95 percent of the cost of 38,000 RM had been disbursed.⁸⁸

This series of construction reports and construction schedule plans also documents the progress of the modification work going on in other Polish houses that predated the camp, for example those assigned as housing for officers and NCOs (*Führer- und Unterführerwohnhäuser*), later subdivided into “housing and residences for married officers” (*Führerunterkünfte und Wohnhäuser für verh. Führer*), BW 36B, and “residences for married NCOs” (*Wohnhäuser für verh. Unterführer*), BW 27. Other officers and NCOs lived in other formerly Polish houses. For example, SS *Untersturmführer* Schwarzhuber lived in house no. 53,⁸⁹ SS *Unterscharführer* Kapper in house no. 171, SS *Rottenführer* Stockert in house no. 154, SS *Rottenführer* Schulze in house no. 130, SS *Unterscharführer* Vollrath in house no. 740, SS *Sturmmann* Siebel in house no. 203.⁹⁰ Garrison order No. 19/42 of July 23, 1942, mentions “dependents of SS personnel” who lived partially inside and outside the outer surveillance perimeter.⁹¹ The register of tasks assigned to the Central Construction Office by the camp administration contains, moreover, indications of work done on various houses, as for example house 23, occupied by SS *Untersturmführer* Ziemssen.⁹² Other houses – 151, 136, 1, 25, 130, 132 – are mentioned in a report from the detainee painting detail (*Häftlings-Malerei*) for the period March 26 to April 25, 1942.⁹³

3.3. The ‘Bunkers’ on the Birkenau Maps

The certainty that we have acquired in the preceding paragraphs that the ‘Bunkers’ of Birkenau never existed as extermination installations is further enhanced by three maps of the Birkenau camp.

1) “Site Map of Area of Interest CC Auschwitz No. 1733” of October 5, 1942.⁹⁴ This map shows the area of the Birkenau camp prior to its construction. Within the area of the camp – the limits of which are indicated – 12 houses appear in the field later called construction sector III (*Bauabschnitt, BA*), numbered as follows: H[aus]. 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914. Outside the camp limits, to the north, there are three more houses (H. 586, 587, 588); to the east, in the former village of Birkenau, there

⁸⁸ RGVA, 502-1-8, p. 123.

⁸⁹ RGVA, 502-1-240, p. 27.

⁹⁰ “Standortbefehl Nr. 40/43” of November 2, 1943. GARF, 7021-108-54, p. 55.

⁹¹ RGVA, 502-1-66, p. 219.

⁹² RGVA, 502-1-153, orders no. 37 (July 1, 1942: brickwork), 39 (July 1, 1942: electrical installations), 41 (July 1, 1942: painting), 82 (Sept. 11, 1942: metal work), 88 (Sept. 23, 1942: electrical installations for mess hall), 94 (Oct. 1, 1942: wood-working), 151 (Jan. 6, 1943: hygienic services).

⁹³ “Häftl. Malerei. Arbeitsleistung in der Zeit vom 26.III.-25.IV.1942.” RGVA, 502-1-24, pp. 370f.

⁹⁴ RGVA, 502-2-93, p. 14. Cf. Document 7.

is a group of 39 houses, numbered 601 to 639. All these houses had been taken over by the Central Construction Office and had either a temporary function (those inside the camp) or a permanent one (the others). The map also shows the houses that are designated ‘Bunker 1’ and ‘Bunker 2’ by the orthodox historiography, but none of these buildings has an identification number allocated by the Central Construction Office. Thus, none of them had been pressed into service by the Central Construction Office or assigned any purpose whatsoever.

2) “Development Map for the Erection and Extension of the Concentration and POW Camp, map no. 2215,” dated March 1943.⁹⁵

This master plan shows the complete map of the Birkenau camp. To the north of section *BAIII*, just outside the camp enclosure, the houses 586, 587 and 588 are visible, together with other houses further north (H. 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 589, 590) as well as the group of houses from the former village of Birkenau to the east of *BAIII*. The house that orthodox historiography today calls ‘Bunker 1’ and the other five houses to the west of it are not shown, because they had been demolished to make room for a septic tank (“*Erdklärbecken*”). To the west of the Central Sauna, however, still appears the house which today is known as ‘Bunker 2’ by the orthodox historiography, as well as another house predating the camp in front of it, both without identification numbers. Near them on the map, the Soviets have crudely sketched in three rectangles supposed to represent the alleged undressing barracks of ‘Bunker 2,’ which, however, should have been only two in number, not three. Realizing their mistake, the Soviets struck out the third barrack with three strokes of the pen!

That those ‘barracks’ are indeed the work of the Soviets can be seen above all from their drafting technique. In the drawings of barracks done by Central Construction Office⁹⁶ the lines forming the outer edges intersect crosswise at each corner, while those drawn by the Soviets form a truncated angle and show, moreover, a thicker pen stroke. Furthermore, there is another version of this drawing, identical except for the fact that the “septic tank” was changed into a “sewage plant” (*Kläranlage*). On this map, the two houses mentioned above appear to the west of the Central Sauna, – again without an identification number – but there is no trace of any barracks.⁹⁷

3.4. The Logistics of the ‘Bunkers’

Thus, in the construction reports of the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp for the months of March, April, May, and June 1942 (or, for that matter, for the entire

⁹⁵ RGVA, 502-1-93, p. 1. Cf. Document 8.

⁹⁶ The drawing was executed by Detainee 471, the Polish draftsman Alfred Brzybylski.

⁹⁷ “Bebauungsplan für den Auf- u. Ausbau des Konzentrationslagers u. Kriegsgefangenenlagers, Plan Nr. 2215” dated March 1943. RGVA, 502-2-94, p. 2. Cf. Document 9.

year of 1942) there is not even the slightest trace of any ‘Bunker.’ Furthermore, there is no hint of them to be found in the entire documentation of Central Construction Office. This, however, would have been absolutely impossible if two farm houses had actually been taken over by this office and modified for any purpose whatsoever,

Had that actually taken place, other sets of documents of Central Construction Office would inevitably contain some sort of proof, traces, or additional indications.

The transformation of two farm houses into homicidal gas chambers would in fact have entailed a variety of structural and logistical tasks, the most important of which would have been the following:

3.4.1. Water Supply

After each homicidal gassing it would have been necessary to wash both the houses and the corpses to remove organic residues given off by the dying.⁹⁸ This would have required the two ‘Bunkers’ to be connected to the camp’s water-supply network; as late as October 28, 1942, however, such a connection was neither present nor planned, as can be seen from the “site map” for the “water supply POW Camp Birkenau,” in which the water pipes went up to the crematoria and ended there.⁹⁹

3.4.2. Sewage

This washing operation would have required a sewer for the discharge of the effluents which, however, does not appear on either of the two maps of Birkenau dated March 31, 1942, mentioned above. These drawings show all of the sewers of the camp, which came together in a single ditch, called the “*Königsgraben*” (royal ditch), which in turn ended up in the Vistula River. Even though it stood only 200 meters away from this ditch, the house that allegedly became ‘Bunker 2’ was not hooked up to it by any sewer line.

3.4.3. Fencing and Watchtowers

Fencing in the area of the ‘Bunkers’ would have been indispensable to prevent the alleged victims from fleeing. It turns out, however, that no such work was done in that area. Central Construction Office map no. 3512 displays the entire system of enclosure of the camp.¹⁰⁰ The small watchtowers (“*Kleiner Wachturm*”) are shown as well as the large ones (“*Großer Wachturm*”), and

⁹⁸ “Once we had taken out all the corpses from this house, we had to clean it up meticulously, wash the floor with water, sprinkle the floor with sawdust, and whitewash the walls.” Szlama Dragon on ‘Bunker 2.’ Cf. Section 5.1.

⁹⁹ “Vorhaben: Kriegsgefangenenlager Auschwitz (Durchführung der Sonderbehandlung),” VHA, Fond OT 31(2)/8.

¹⁰⁰ “Absteckungsskizze der Wachtürme um das K.G.L.” RGVA, 502-2-95, p. 19.

also the existing enclosure (“*Bestehender Zaun*”) and the planned one (“*Projektiertes Zaun*”). The outermost fence in the west, “*Zaun 34*,” ran a few meters beyond the Central Sauna and continued into *BAIII* as “*Zaun 38*.” There were three large watchtowers (nos. 5, 6 and 7) in this area, and 4 small ones (nos. 19, 20, 21 and 22). No ‘existing’¹⁰¹ fence appears in the zone around ‘Bunker 2’ and no known document indicates that this zone was enclosed.

3.4.4. Installation of a Power Line

Lighting in the ‘Bunkers’ and of the enclosed space would have been indispensable for nocturnal operations. For example, when the Central Construction Office realized that the construction of Crematorium II was not proceeding on the schedule ordered by Kammler, it decided to speed up the work by running night shifts. To enable this, it issued an order to the “*Electrician Kommando*” of its workshops, which was described as follows in the corresponding “work card”:¹⁰²

“*Re: Crematorium II – BW no. 30 in POW camp. Lighting for construction works in Crematorium II and focusing of searchlights for night shift / guard unit.*”

The work was carried out between January 15 and 23, 1943, and entailed 14 specialist man-hours and 28 helper man-hours for a total expenditure of 1,413.76 RM, consisting of 1,283.32 RM for materials (explicitly listed), a surcharge of 10% amounting to 128.34 RM and 2.10 RM for the 42 man-hours of the detainees. No such voucher exists for the Birkenau ‘Bunkers.’

3.4.5. Installation of Undressing Barracks for the Victims

According to the orthodox thesis, two barracks were set up next to each ‘Bunker,’ which the victims had to use as ‘undressing rooms.’ The installation of these barracks would have left evidence and references in the Central Construction Office documentation, starting with three documents of the June-December 1942 period, which deal specifically with the distribution of the barracks (*Barackenaufteilung*) for Auschwitz and Birkenau (see Section 3.5.).

3.4.6. Transportation of Materials

The motor pool (*Fahrbereitschaft*) of the Central Construction Office, commanded by SS *Scharführer* Kurt Kögel, was responsible for the use and the maintenance of all vehicles assigned to the Central Construction Office. The head of this section had to write a monthly report – “Activity Report of the Motor Pool of Central Construction Office of the *Waffen* SS and Police

¹⁰¹ If ‘Bunker 2,’ in contrast to ‘Bunker 1,’ was not demolished on account of possible future re-use, it is not clear why the fence should have been removed.

¹⁰² RGVA, 502-2-8, pp. 1-1a.

Auschwitz” – which contained, a “detailed employment of vehicles within camp area” and a “detailed employment of vehicles outside camp area.” The report contained a list of all worksites and locations to which the vehicles had been driven, the total number of trips they had made, and the reason for the trips. The report for May 1942¹⁰³ mentions 1,171 trips, the one for June¹⁰⁴ 1,532 trips. Various trips involved houses predating the camp that were being modified by the Central Construction Office: for example there were 17 trips to bring construction materials to Houses 171 and 28 in the month of May; in the June report are eight trips to the Waffen-SS building, seven to House 24, 105 to House 28, one to House 210, nine to House 170, all to transport construction materials as well. However, even though ‘Bunker 2’ allegedly belonged to the same category, there is not even the slightest hint – open or veiled – of construction materials or dismantled barracks being taken to that worksite.¹⁰⁵

3.4.7. Laying of a Camp Railway

The corpses of the alleged victims – according to the most important witness Szlama Dragon (see Section 5.1.) – were taken to mass graves (later to become incineration ditches) by means of carts running on a field railway. This device is not mentioned in any document. A field railway (*Feldbahngleis*) for a totally different purpose was offered to the Central Construction Office by the company Schlesische Industriebau Lenz & Co. in a letter dated February 2, 1944. It was used in *BW 47* – transport of materials – of *BAIII* at Birkenau.¹⁰⁶

3.4.8. Road Works

For the victims to be transported to the ‘Bunkers’ by truck (by day, all those unable to walk, and everybody by night), it was also necessary to build a suitable road. The construction reports describe the road works during the month covered in detail, but they do not contain the slightest trace of linking any ‘Bunkers’ to the camp. The construction report for March, under the entry “road works,” mentions beginning work on the road linking the “*Deutsches Haus*” to the Auschwitz camp as well as works within the Birkenau camp.¹⁰⁷ The construction report for May informs us of the continuation of work on the

¹⁰³ “Tätigkeitsbericht der Fahrbereitschaft vom 1.-31. Mai 1942.” RGVA, 502-1-24, pp. 295f. I have not found any prior documents of this type and it is probable that this was the first of the series.

¹⁰⁴ “Tätigkeitsbericht der Fahrbereitschaft der Zentral-Bauleitung der Waffen-SS und Polizei Auschwitz für den Monat Juni 1942.” RGVA, 502-1-181, pp. 282-287.

¹⁰⁵ In the report for June, the transportation of barrack parts (*Barackenteile*) is borne out for the POW camp in general (786 trips), for DAW (*Deutsche Ausrüstungs-Werke*, 27 trips), and for the disinfestation barracks (14 trips).

¹⁰⁶ RGVA, 502-1-346, p. 44.

¹⁰⁷ “Baubericht für Monat März 1942,” written by Bischoff on April 3, 1942. RGVA, 502-1-24, p. 385.

road from “*Deutsches Haus*” to the Auschwitz camp (450 meters ~1,500 ft.), of a road of 600 meters from the Main Industrial Camp to the new stables, and also of road works within the Birkenau camp.¹⁰⁸ The construction report for June, finally, refers only to the progress on the two roads just mentioned.¹⁰⁹

3.4.9. Gastight Doors

The modification of two Polish houses into homicidal gas chambers would have required, first of all, the installation of gastight doors. It is well known that documents for doors of this type exist in connection with the Birkenau crematoria (and are considered by orthodox historiography to be ‘traces’ of the existence of homicidal gas chambers in these structures). There are also documents referring to 22 gastight doors of the Birkenau disinfection plants *BWe* 5a and 5b,¹¹⁰ but no document speaks of the provision of a gastight door for the Birkenau ‘Bunkers.’

3.5. The So-Called “Code Language”

We have seen above that, according to bureaucratic practice at Auschwitz, the ‘Bunkers,’ just like all other *Bauwerke*, needed a specific designation, which would have shown up in the documents. As the existence of these installations is, in fact, not shown by the documents, Polish investigators doing research on Auschwitz invented the fiction of ‘code words’ as early as 1946, that is, by claiming that the SS allegedly used innocent sounding terms in order to camouflage the ‘real,’ but unspeakable designations.¹¹¹ Later orthodox Holocaust scholars endorsed this expedient with great relief and embarked on a quest for ‘camouflaged’ designations for the ‘Bunkers.’ After seven decades of effort, they have only been able to come up with three alleged designations, which we will examine in the following sections.

3.5.1. “Baths for Special Actions”

This designation appears only one single time in the existing documentation: in a file memo by SS *Untersturmführer* Fritz Ertl of August 21, 1941.¹¹² It was interpreted by Jean-Claude Pressac as an ‘encryption’ referring to the ‘Bunkers.’¹¹³ In this, as for all the rest of Pressac’s arguments, he was slavishly followed by Robert Jan van Pelt.¹¹⁴ Such an interpretation is groundless, as I

¹⁰⁸ “Baubericht für Monat Mai 1942” written by Bischoff on June 2, 1942. RGVA, 502-1-24, p. 263.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 222.

¹¹⁰ Cf. in this regard my study *Special Treatment...*, *op. cit.* (note 8), pp. 46-50.

¹¹¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 9f.

¹¹² RGVA, 502-1-313, p. 159.

¹¹³ J.-C. Pressac, *Die Krematorien...*, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 61.

¹¹⁴ R.J. van Pelt, *The Case for Auschwitz. Evidence from the Irving Trial*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis 2002, pp. 297-299.

have demonstrated with an abundance of evidence in a specific historical analysis, to which I refer the reader.¹¹⁵

3.5.2. “House for Special Measures”

This designation appears in two documents, rather late in the chronology of the ‘Bunkers’: the “Explanatory report on the construction project concentration camp Auschwitz/OS” of September 30, 1943,¹¹⁶ which mentions “modification of an existing house for special measures” for *BIII* and one for *BIII* at Birkenau, and the “Cost estimate for extension of POW camp of the *Waffen* SS in Auschwitz” of October 1, 1943.¹¹⁷ Both documents also mention “3 barracks for special measures” for each house. According to Fritjof Meyer, the designation “house for special measures” is the encrypted designation of the ‘Bunkers.’¹¹⁸ As I have shown elsewhere, this alleged encryption actually refers to the program for the improvement of the hygienic installations of the Birkenau camp, appropriately titled “Special measures for the improvement of the hygienic installations,” which was ordered by SS *Brigadeführer* Kammler in May of 1943.¹¹⁹ More specifically, the barracks “for special measures” bore the label *BW* 33a; they were, therefore, a sub-site of site *BW* 33 – *Effektenbaracken* (personal property barracks, storage of inmate belongings), just as *BW* 11a – “new construction chimney crem. concentration camp” – was a sub-site of *BW* 11 – crematorium.

The two houses and the three barracks constructed as an addition to them had obviously all the same function: the storage of inmate belongings. Furthermore, in 1942 no *Bauwerk* bore the designation “for special measures,” which is further confirmation of the fact that the two houses did not, in fact, refer to the ‘Bunkers.’

3.5.3. “Barracks for Special Treatment”

This designation, which appears in a number of documents in 1942, the first one dated March 31, 1942, refers to *BW* 58. By referring to the “Explanatory report on the construction project concentration camp Auschwitz/OS” of July 15, 1942, J.-C. Pressac asserts that the barracks “for special treatment of detainees” of *BW* 58, which are mentioned in this document, were the alleged undressing barracks of Bunkers 1 and 2 at Birkenau.¹²⁰ This assertion is, however, not only unconfirmed by any documents,¹²¹ but it is categorically ruled out by three documents of the Central Construction Office dealing with the as-

¹¹⁵ C. Mattogno, ““Bathing Facilities for Special Actions”” in: *op. cit.* (note 8), pp. 66-71.

¹¹⁶ RGVA, 502-2-60, pp. 80-82.

¹¹⁷ RGVA, 502-2-60, pp. 83-94.

¹¹⁸ F. Meyer, *op. cit.* (note 9), p. 632, note 7.

¹¹⁹ Cf. *Special Treatment...*, *op. cit.* (note 8), pp. 60f.

¹²⁰ J.-C. Pressac, *Die Krematorien...*, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 57.

¹²¹ C. Mattogno, *op. cit.* (note 8), pp. 25-27.

signment or allotment (*Aufteilung*) of the barracks. The first document dates from June 30, 1942, and is entitled “*Barackenaufteilung*” (barrack allotment).¹²² All barracks planned are listed here by construction project and by type of barrack. The construction project POW camp comprised 516 barracks; none of them was assigned to a worksite even remotely connectable to the ‘Bunkers.’ The sole ‘suspicious’ designation – but suspicious only in the sense of an assumed ‘encrypted language’ of the SS – belonged to the “Construction project SS housing and concentration camp Auschwitz” and concerned three “*Effektenbaracken für Sonderbehandlung*” (personal-property barracks for special treatment), which served only for the storage of personal belongings taken from inmates upon their arrival at Auschwitz (“for storage of [personal] effects”). The second document, entitled “Concentration Camp Auschwitz, Barrack Allotment,”¹²³ is dated July 17, 1942, and is a general account of the barracks of the camp, listing their purpose, their type, the number of barracks needed, the number of barracks erected, the number of barracks in storage, and the number missing. Here, too, the only ‘suspicious’ assignment concerns the barracks for ‘special treatment’: needed – 5, erected – 3; we are dealing with the 5 storage barracks of *BW 58*. The third document is a “barrack allotment” dated December 8, 1942,¹²⁴ following the same lines as the preceding document, but with the additional specification of the construction sector or *Bauwerk* to which they belonged. Again, the 5 barracks for ‘special treatment’ appear in this document, but they belong to *BAI* of Birkenau and were therefore located inside and not outside the camp. Their function was that indicated above.¹²⁵

We have thus demonstrated that in the archives of the Central Construction Office of Auschwitz, whose documents of the year 1942 are basically completely extant, there is no document at all which explicitly or implicitly refers to a building which could have been one of the so-called ‘Bunkers’; neither is there any document referring to any ‘undressing barracks’ which are said to have been erected near those ‘bunkers’ at that time.

3.6. Two Recently Discovered “Bunker” Documents

In 2014, the Auschwitz Museum published two documents which mention a “Bunker I” in passing.¹²⁶ The first is dated March 18, 1944, and is a letter from the camp headquarters at Auschwitz to the Central Construction Office relating to the installation of an alarm siren:

¹²² RGVA, 502-1-275, pp. 270-273.

¹²³ RGVA, 502-1-275, pp. 237-239.

¹²⁴ RGVA, 502-1-275, pp. 205-208.

¹²⁵ Cf. my study *Special Treatment...*, *op. cit.* (note 8), pp. 37f. and Document 10 on p. 121.

¹²⁶ Igor Bartosik, Łukasz Martyniak, Piotr Setkiewicz, *The Beginnings of the Extermination of Jews in KL Auschwitz in the Light of the Source Materials*, Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, Oświęcim, 2014, p. 101.

“For this purpose, we ask therefore to make available to the Camp Headquarters the cable – 4 x 6 qm[m] 1 KV – leading to Bunker I., Birkenau, which is no longer needed.”

On March 24, 1944, the Central Construction Office answered as follows:

“The Central Construction Office is willing to make available to the camp headquarters, for the sirens’ control line and on a loan basis, the cable 4 x 6 qmm which extends from the provisional supply line to Bunker I, Birkenau.”

In particular the following three reasons speak compellingly against the hypothesis that this “Bunker 1” had anything to do with the alleged gassing facilities:

1. According to the orthodox version of history as defended by the Auschwitz Museum, which is based on testimonies, “Bunker 1” was completely demolished in 1943. Franciszek Piper writes about this:¹²⁷

“In the spring of 1943, gassings ceased in the two bunkers after the new gas chambers and crematoria had been completed and were being used. Bunker 1 and the barracks erected next to it were demolished or disassembled, the local burning pits were filled in and leveled.”

2. Although the alleged “Bunker 2” appears together with another building next to it on the two maps “Development Map for the Erection and Extension of the Concentration and POW Camp, map no. 2215” of March 1943, there is no trace of the four buildings in the area around the alleged location of “Bunker 1.” The latter is also not included on map no. 2503 of the inmate hospital in BAIII of June 18, 1943. Under these circumstances, there is no doubt that, in March 1944, the house which was called “Bunker 1” by some of the witnesses and which is said to have served as a gas chamber, had not existed for more than a year, while the “Bunker I” mentioned in the two documents above still existed in March 1944.
3. Before the Soviets occupied Auschwitz, no witnesses ever used the term “bunker” as a synonym for alleged gassing facilities. As I will demonstrate in Para. 5.2.1., this term was coined between March 9 and April 16, 1945. The SS authorities could therefore not have used it in the sense in which it is used in today’s Holocaust literature. In other words: The “Bunker I” mentioned in the letter of 18 March 1944 could not have been the alleged gassing facility “Bunker 1.”

It should be noted here that the German term “Bunker,” according to Germany’s definitive dictionary, the *Duden*, has as its primary meaning a “large container for storing bulk material (e.g. coal, ore, grain).”¹²⁸ As a

¹²⁷ F. Piper, “Vernichtung”, in: Waclaw Długoborski, Franciszek Piper (ed.), *Auschwitz 1940-1945. Studien zur Geschichte des Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslagers Auschwitz*. Verlag des Staatlichen Museums Auschwitz-Birkenau. Oświęcim 1999, Vol. III, p. 169.

¹²⁸ www.duden.de/rechtschreibung/Bunker

secondary meaning it refers to a “military shelter facility,” frequently to a “shelter for the civilian population during war; air-raid shelter.” As a third meaning this term refers to a prison in the vernacular.¹²⁹ It never refers to an execution facility, though. It must therefore be assumed that the members of the Auschwitz camp authorities had one of these three meanings in mind when they used the term “bunker” in these documents. This was therefore either a storage building for bulk material (possibly also inmate effects), an air-raid shelter, or a prison building.

3.7. Conclusion

In the beginning of this study I assumed, as a working hypothesis, that the meeting between Himmler and Höß actually took place. It is now time to test the validity of this hypothesis. Leaving aside the obviously false chronology presented by Rudolf Höß and its insurmountable contradictions, let us turn our attention to two serious, unresolved and irresolvable problems deriving from this hypothesis about the Birkenau ‘Bunkers.’

1. Himmler’s order, Pressac assures us, made Auschwitz the “center for the mass extermination of Jews,”¹³⁰ and the entire camp was to fulfill this function. Why, then, in order to carry out this monstrous task, should the Office Group C of SS *WVHA* (and consequently Himmler himself)¹³¹ have used two miserable peasant cottages instead of building two completely new and efficient extermination installations? This is all the more surprising as the cost estimate for the Birkenau camp of October 30, 1941, totaling 7,700,000 RM, included the installation of two disinfection barracks,¹³² designated *BWe* 5a and 5b, which were equipped with a gas chamber (“*Vergasungsraum*”) using hydrogen cyanide, showers and a wash room (“*Brause- und Waschraum*”). The cost of each of them was 41,040 RM.¹³³ We must remember that, by the end of October 1941, Höß and Eichmann are alleged to have already decided, more than a month earlier, to carry out the alleged extermination of the Jews in gas chambers by means of hydrogen cyanide. Therefore, Office Group C of the SS *WVHA*, and thus Himmler himself, while prepared to spend 82,080 RM on two new gas disinfection chambers in order to *save* the lives of the Auschwitz inmates, did not bother to spend even one penny on building two new buildings for the alleged homicidal gassings, a task to which, after all, the whole camp had allegedly been dedicated!

¹²⁹ For instance, the basement gaol in Block 11 at the Auschwitz main camp was generally referred to as the “Bunker”; cf. C. Mattogno *Auschwitz: The First Gassing*, *op. cit.* (note 1), *passim*.

¹³⁰ J.-C. Pressac, *Die Krematorien...*, *op. cit.* (note 4), p. 51.

¹³¹ Oswald Pohl, SS *Obergruppenführer und Generalmajor der Waffen-SS*, in his position as head of SS *WVHA*, reported directly to *Reichsführer-SS* Heinrich Himmler.

¹³² In spite of the designation, the buildings were made of brick.

¹³³ “Kostenvoranschlag für den Vorentwurf über den Neubau des Kriegsgefangenenlagers der Waffen-SS Auschwitz O.S.,” October 30, 1941. RGVA, 502-1-233, p. 23.

Van Pelt asserts that on Birkenau drawing 885, dated January 5, 1942, the new crematorium, originally destined for the main camp, was placed at the north-west corner of the Birkenau camp instead, so as to be in ‘connection’ with the alleged ‘Bunker 1.’¹³⁴ In practice, ‘Bunker 1’ would have produced the corpses, and the crematorium would have incinerated them. This interpretation¹³⁵ is in itself nonsensical both because the ‘Bunkers’ never existed as such and because of the presence of some 10 additional morgues on the drawing mentioned: it thus renders Himmler’s and SS *WVHA*’s alleged modus operandi even more senseless. According to the construction program for the third fiscal year of the war economy dated March 17, 1942, the new crematorium was slated to cost some 400,000 RM.¹³⁶ Thus, van Pelt’s hypothesis amounts to claiming that Himmler planned on creating a conveyor-belt system for the extermination with its final link in the form of a new building costing 400,000 RM, whereas the initial, far more important link would have been a ramshackle old house to be converted into a gas chambers!

2. According to Himmler’s order – if we believe the orthodox claims – the entire camp of Birkenau was built to carry out the future mass exterminations. But then why did Himmler and the SS *WVHA* build a crematorium for the natural mortality among the detainees, while the victims of the mass extermination, whose number would be vastly more numerous, were to be simply buried?

In the first construction project for the Birkenau camp, dated October 31, 1941, there is an entry for just one crematorium with five furnaces of three muffles each to be built at the Auschwitz camp at an estimated cost of 270,000 RM.¹³⁷ On November 12, 1941, the head of the Central Construction Office described its purpose as follows:¹³⁸

“The company Topf & Söhne, incineration technical devices, of Erfurt has been given an order by this office to build an incineration plant as quickly as possible, in view of the fact that the Auschwitz concentration camp will be enlarged by a POW camp that will shortly be occupied by 120,000 Russians. The construction of the incineration plant has thus become urgently necessary in order to prevent epidemics and other risks.”

¹³⁴ R.J. van Pelt, “A Site in Search of a Mission,” in: Yisrael Gutman, Michael Berenbaum (eds.), *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis 1994, pp. 146f. See also: D. Dwork, R. J. van Pelt, *op. cit.* (note 22), pp. 302f.

¹³⁵ I will come back to this interpretation by R.J. van Pelt in Section 8.4.

¹³⁶ RGVA, 502-1-319, p. 204.

¹³⁷ “Kostenvoranschlag für den Vorentwurf über den Neubau des Kriegsgefangenenlagers der Waffen-SS Auschwitz O.S.,” RGVA, 502-1-233, p. 27. The project of the crematorium had not yet been approved.

¹³⁸ RGVA, 502-1-314, pp. 8-8a.

This crematorium, therefore, served only for deaths from natural causes among the prisoners, as Pressac, too, accepts when he writes that this crematorium had nothing directly to do with the extermination of the Jews.¹³⁹

The cremation of the alleged victims of mass exterminations in the ‘Bunkers,’ on the other hand, is said to have begun on September 21, 1942,¹⁴⁰ and to have been based on an order from Himmler himself given after his visit to Auschwitz on July 17 and 18, 1942.¹⁴¹

The inevitable conclusion is therefore that the story of the use of the Birkenau ‘Bunkers’ as a means of homicidal gassings has no foundation in the documents and is absurd from an operational point of view. It is fictitious propaganda, not historical reality.

In the second and third parts of this book we shall see how this propaganda arose and how it grew into ‘historical reality.’

¹³⁹ J.-C. Pressac, *Le macchine dello sterminio. Auschwitz 1941-1945*, Feltrinelli Editore, Milan 1994, p. 67. R.J. van Pelt, *op. cit.* (note 114), p. 72 expresses himself in the same way.

¹⁴⁰ D. Czech, *Kalendarium...*, *op. cit.* (note 12), p. 305.

¹⁴¹ F. Piper, “Gas Chambers and Crematoria,” in: Y. Gutman, M. Berenbaum (eds.), *op. cit.* (note 134), p. 163.