

Carlo Mattogno

The Real Case for Auschwitz

Robert van Pelt's Evidence
from the Irving Trial
Critically Reviewed



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Carlo Mattogno:

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Cover: background: sunset in Birkenau. The chimneys once heated inmate huts, which were dismantled after the war. Left: the entry gate at the Auschwitz Main Camp. Center: Crematorium I at the Main Camp. Right: the entry gate to the Auschwitz-Birkenau Camp.

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Editor's Prologue

When faced with demands by Congressman Ron Paul to bring our (the U.S.'s) troops home from the various wars the United States is currently waging, Senator John McCain stated during a *CNN Republican Debate* on Nov. 28, 2007:¹

"I just want to also say that Congressman Paul, I have heard him now in many debates talking about bringing our troops home and about the war in Iraq and how it's failed, and I want to tell you that that kind of isolationism, Sir, is what caused World War II. We allowed Hitler to come to power with that kind of attitude of isolationism and peace."

Of course, the real reasons for World War II can be found in the way the world ended World War I and how it treated democratic Germany between 1919 and 1933. The war was ended with the promise of free trade, ethnic self-determination, and disarmament for all – U.S. President Wilson's famous Fourteen Points.² Yet what followed was a 15 year lasting occupation, subjugation, plundering, humiliation, and forced one-sided disarmament of Germany and Austria only, whose people were denied any attempt at self-determination, frequently by use of force. What the world had been denying peaceful democratic Germany during all those years, it then conceded to National Socialism under Hitler, who had learned that the world would give Germany what was rightfully hers (and later more than that) only under the threat of violence.

That is not the point we want to make here, though. If we look into the war propaganda put forth by the U.S. before and during the wars against Serbia in 1999 and against Iraq in 1991 and 2003, plus when we look into how certain lobby groups have been pushing for a war against Iran for many years, we can see a pattern: Slobodan Milosevic, in 1999 leader of tiny Serbia, as well as Saddam Hussein and now Mahmoud Ahmadinejad are compared with – Adolf Hitler. Milosevic and Hussein were even accused of committing (or having committed) similar crimes of genocide – against the Kosovo Albanians here or the Kurds there. Hussein is even said to have used poison gas for that purpose. These claims, among others, were used to justify the wars. And there is no better justification for a war than to prevent a new Hitler – or a new threat to exterminate the Jewish people, an accusation continuously leveled against the Iranian government.

We know today that the claims about weapons of mass destruction raised against Hussein were false. But they served their purpose well, because the world is so conditioned to reacting with automatic, Pavlovian-style reflexes to

¹ See www.youtube.com/watch?v=0O9WzCrLuC4.

² See www.famousquotes.me.uk/speeches/Woodrow_Wilson/

such claims. One reason why these accusations work so well and why the world is so gullible to believe them, no matter how often they have been revealed to be wrong in the past, is because of that giant boogeyman called Hitler. Once his name is dropped and successfully put into the “right” context, there seems to be no stopping. War is the only solution to stop Hitler, Slobob-Hitler, Saddam-Hitler, Ahmadinejad-Hitler, or whatever their names may be.

Genocidal hysteria is today used to justify the wars of the U.S. and their allies, Israel being the most belligerent of them. Not that preventing genocide isn't a worthwhile goal. It actually is, and in extreme cases maybe even by military intervention. But today genocide or the (real or fabricated) threat of it is attracting the U.S. government's and military's attention only if it is about either securing the almighty dollar, the free flow of goods (mostly oil), and – well, dare we say it? – the subjectively perceived security of Israel and its interests (which includes an aggressive expansionism into Palestinian lands). Genocide in Somalia, Congo or Darfur? Who cares...

It has come to the point where summoning the evil spirits of Adolf Hitler and “his” über-genocide – the Holocaust – is the trump card needed to start just about any war the Powers That Be want to wage.

Wasn't one of the primary lessons of the world wars supposed to be that wars are evil? And wasn't another lesson that governments use propaganda tricks to drive people into discriminating against minorities, into ethnic cleansing, into genocide, and into wars?

Presentations in today's media frequently give the impression that World War II was fought to prevent or stop the Holocaust, when in fact nothing could be further from the truth. In 1939 there was only one statesman who had proven to be a gargantuan mass murderer: Joseph Stalin. Yet instead of fighting him, the U.S. and Great Britain decided to gang up with Stalin in order to fight Hitler, who in 1939 may have caused the death of several hundred innocent people, but that was an almost ridiculous amount, if compared to Stalin's peacetime(!) death toll of many millions of innocent souls.

Yet still, today's media, politicians, and even many scholars on the subject agree almost in unison that World War II really was a “good” war, where the good guys – the Allies – beat the bad guys – Hitler, plus the Japs as a collateral. But how can anyone seriously call the Allies “good guys,” when Stalin was one of them, who, in addition to his pre-war massacres, was also responsible for innumerable atrocities during the war, for the ethnic cleansing of uncounted millions in Eastern Europe at war's end, and for the subjugating of some 20 nations afterwards?

Hence:

- World War II was NOT a good war!
- The good guys did NOT win that war, as there were no good guys!

– The Holocaust was NOT the reason why it was fought.

And yet, after World War II the Powers That Be have been very successful in driving their people into one war after the other by referring to this “mother-of-all-wars.” Pacifists are dumbfounded at how good those warmongers are in using the horrors of this greatest war ever to instigate even more wars. And so have some of us been for the past decade or so.

And then we eventually stumbled over Holocaust revisionism or “Holocaust denial,” if you wish, and we suddenly knew why those warmongers are so good at it.

Mainstream media, politicians and academics depict Holocaust revisionists as evil creatures trying to re-establish National Socialism, to prepare for another Holocaust. As a consequence the world wages a constant war on Holocaust revisionists, and this even includes the United Nations, which have passed a resolution against those wicked “deniers,” urging all nations to take action against them.³ Those nations in turn pass laws to outlaw revisionist thoughts, to imprison the revisionists, to burn their books, and to ban their ideas from public fora. Every revisionist a little Hitler.

But is that true?

As far as we have found out by now, it is not true. But do you know what? We don’t care anymore.⁴ Because what we have come to understand is that the Holocaust is the secret weapon of psychological warfare of the Powers That Be, which they use to expand and maintain their militaristic empire, to justify wars and subjugations, to foist their financial, economic and cultural system upon others against their will. Summon the evil ghosts of Hitler and the Holocaust, and the world will blindly and defenselessly follow your war drums.

Against that, revisionism in general *is the key to peace*, where revisionism stands for: Be critical! Don’t take for granted what those militant Powers want you to believe in justification of their deeds! Instead, look again (Latin: revi-dere) into their claims! Review their evidence! Revise your opinion, if needed. This definition of revisionism is the opposite of what those warmongers want you to believe, isn’t it? And for a good reason: because they want to prevent with all means that we obtain and entertain a critical mind.

³ See United Nations, “Resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly on Holocaust denial,” A/RES/61/255, 26 January 2007; www.un.org/holocaustremembrance/docs/res61.shtml; cf. United Nations, General Assembly, “General Assembly adopts resolution condemning any denial of holocaust,” 26 January 2007; www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/ga10569.doc.htm; United Nations, “Ban calls on world to fight Holocaust denial, anti-Semitism and bigotry,” 27 January 2009; www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=29679

⁴ As far as we know, there are not much more active, publishing Holocaust revisionists in the world than there are fingers on one hand, with little money, little support and hardly any access to the mass media. So what threat can they pose? What’s the hubbub all about that even the U.N. feel urged to pass a resolution against them?

Holocaust revisionism is the most important one of those critical attitudes, as it is the key to understanding that governments have lied, are lying, and will always lie to us. And it is a key to understanding what modern “democratic” governments are willing to do in order to suppress ideas which threaten their nefarious ways.

The continual, annoying resorting to the Holocaust theme as a means to justify war is the reason why we became skeptical and curious. And we have found out that we are not alone with that attitude. Famous British Jewish musician and writer Gilad Atzmon, for instance, had a similar experience, as he has described on March 13, 2010, in an essay which wraps it all up nicely:⁵

“When I was young and naïve I regarded history as a serious academic matter. As I understood it, history had something to do with truth seeking, documents, chronology and facts. I was convinced that history aimed to convey a sensible account of the past based on methodical research. [...] When I was young, I didn’t think that history was a matter of political decisions or agreements between a rabid Zionist lobby and its favorite holocaust survivor. [...] When I was young and naïve I was also somehow convinced that what they told us about our ‘collective’ Jewish past really happened. [...]

As it happened, it took me many years to understand that the holocaust, the core belief of the contemporary Jewish faith, was not at all an historical narrative, for historical narratives do not need the protection of the law and politicians. [...] It took me years to accept that the holocaust narrative, in its current form, doesn’t make any historical sense. [...]

I think that 65 years after the liberation of Auschwitz, we must be entitled to start to ask the necessary questions. We should ask for some conclusive historical evidence and arguments rather than follow a religious narrative that is sustained by political pressure and laws. We should strip the holocaust of its Judeo-centric exceptional status and treat it as an historical chapter that belongs to a certain time and place.

[...] We should also ask, what purpose do the holocaust denial laws serve? What is the holocaust religion there to conceal? As long as we fail to ask questions, we will be subjected to Zionists and their Neocon agents’ plots. We will continue killing in the name of Jewish suffering. We will maintain our complicity in Western imperialist crimes against humanity.

As devastating as it may be, at a certain moment in time, a horrible chapter was given an exceptionally meta-historical status. Its ‘factuality’ was

⁵ G. Atzmon, “Truth, History and Integrity,” March 13, 2010; www.gilad.co.uk/writings/truth-history-and-integrity-by-gilad-atzmon.html; similar Daniel McGowan, <http://palestinethinktank.com/2009/09/25/daniel-mcgowan-what-does-holocaust-denial-really-mean/>

sealed by draconian laws and its reasoning was secured by social and political settings. The holocaust became the new Western religion. Unfortunately, it is the most sinister religion known to man. It is a license to kill, to flatten, no nuke, to wipe [out], to rape, to loot and to ethnically cleanse. It made vengeance and revenge into a Western value. However, far more concerning is the fact that it robs humanity of its heritage, it is there to stop us from looking into our past with dignity. Holocaust religion robs humanity of its humanism. For the sake of peace and future generations, the holocaust must be stripped of its exceptional status immediately. It must be subjected to thorough historical scrutiny. Truth and truth seeking is an elementary human experience. It must prevail.”

(In)famous political scientist Norman G. Finkelstein recently agreed to this when he stated in an interview to the 2009 documentary *Defamation* by Israeli documentary filmmaker Yoav Shamir:⁶

“The irony is that the Nazi Holocaust has now become the main ideological weapon for launching wars of aggression. Every time you want to launch a war of aggression, drag in the Nazi Holocaust.”

The most impressive thing about Shamir’s documentary, however, is that he lets his audience experience how young Jewish Israelis are being traumatized by Holocaust “education,” which should better be called brainwashing, and how many Jews in the world, due to that kind of socialization, have become thoroughly paranoid about every single Gentile being a potential anti-Semite and about a new Holocaust lurking behind every corner. This way many Jews have become prepared to do just about anything to protect themselves and their interests from both (rarely) real and (often) purely imaginary threats: ostracizing, stigmatizing, abusing, mistreating, harming, even killing Gentiles, if they stand in their way. What is all the suffering of gentiles compared to the Holocaust anyway? Nothing. So why bother?

Although the Holocaust – even the revisionist version of it, which is still filled with the horrors of persecution suffered by a religious minority – could be employed to worthwhile educational ends by teaching people to be tolerant toward individuals with other ethnic, cultural, religious, political, or philosophical backgrounds, it is actually misused to foster hatred and distrust among Jews against Gentiles in general and Germans (and in extension: Europeans and Christians) as well as Palestinians (and in extension: Arabs and Muslims) in particular. The “Holocaust” of the current prevailing notion has created a paranoia among Jews and has thus become a mental ghetto of modern-day Jewry, forcefully separating it from the rest of the world. If Jewry wants to overcome this paranoia, it needs to break out of this ghetto.

⁶ See <https://archive.org/details/Defamation>, starting at 1 hour, 15 min., 46 seconds into the movie.

Having had similar insights, we figured that the “Holocaust” version forced down our throats for obvious political ends might not be kosher at all. Hence we started reading every scholarly book written about “Holocaust deniers,” and written by them in order to make up our own minds.

And now we have taken sides, because we think we’ve found the tools needed to blunt the warmongers’ psychological wunder-weapon and to liberate Jewry from its modern ghetto: They are called Truth and Exactitude in writing history.

And we have found ample confirmation for what French mainstream historian Prof. Dr. Michel de Boüiard stated in 1986 about the mainstream version of the Holocaust (Lebailly 1988):

“The record is rotten to the core,”

which was confirmed fourteen years later by Jean-Claude Pressac, once the darling of the Holocaust establishment:

“It is too late. [...] The current view of the world of the [National Socialist] camps, though triumphant, is doomed. What of it can be salvaged? Only little.” (Igounet 2000, pp. 651f.)

Call us whatever you want – “anti-Semites,” “neo-Nazis,” or for some of us even “self-hating.” Such hollow insults don’t impress us anymore, after we have seen what revisionist scholars have to endure. Be that as it may. We will remain the pacifists that we have always been, and we will resist warmongers, be they imperialist, colonialist, nationalist, Zionist, Christian, Muslim, Jewish, anti-Revisionist, or what have you.

* * *

The original multi-author project to the present book was planned to appear in 2005 as a relatively timely response to Robert van Pelt’s 2002 book *The Case for Auschwitz*. However, in late 2005, the planned co-author, editor and publisher of it, Germar Rudolf, was unlawfully arrested by the U.S. government and deported to his native Germany. There he was put on trial for having published German translations of the prestigious revisionist series *Holocaust Handbooks*, of which the present book is Volume 22. Since trying Rudolf for that many scholarly books would have taken years – Rudolf insisted on all the evidence quoted in the books being examined by the court – the court offered him a deal: get a lenient sentence for just one of the books published, but please stop defending yourself. And so it was arranged. In early 2007, Rudolf was found guilty of having stirred up the masses by distributing a revisionist promotion brochure⁷ and for the 2005 German edition of his book *Lectures on*

⁷ He never stopped distributing that brochure, by the way; see the current edition: Castle Hill Publishers 2018.

the Holocaust.⁸ He was sentenced to a prison term of 30 months instead of the 60+ months the prosecution had envisioned.

As a result of Rudolf's predicament, Italian revisionist historian Carlo Mattogno wrote the present book all by himself – in Italian. Only when Gernar Rudolf was released in the summer of 2009 and once more took charge of editing the series *Holocaust Handbooks*, did Carlo's book get translated and in 2010 published in an English-language edition.⁹

The fact that both the U.S. and the German government went after Rudolf as the initiator, editor and publisher of the series *Holocaust Handbooks* like the devil goes after the poor soul proves that this series must be important, because it is evidently considered dangerous by the Powers That Be.

This series can proudly claim to be the *only* one of its kind in the entire world which deserves the attributes "academic," "scholarly," and "scientific," because only such research can claim to be scientific which resists external pressures to come to certain conclusions. In that sense this series does a magnificent job indeed, as it is truly the only series of books on this topic that dares to withstand the massive pressures exerted by the Powers That Be.

Since the end-1990s, Prof. Dr. Robert Jan van Pelt has been the flagship of those Powers in defending the core of their myths, and hence in justifying their imperialistic wars and shoring up their persecution of peaceful dissidents.

To underscore the statements made above, we will now quote Prof. van Pelt himself, the subject of this book. In 1999 van Pelt was preparing himself to confront British historian David Irving in court in an attempt to refute Irving's (partially) revisionist views. Irving himself got involved in revisionism after he had learned about the so-called *Leuchter Report*, which had been prepared in 1988 for a court case in Canada by Fred A. Leuchter Jr., then a specialist in the construction and maintenance of execution equipment. After Leuchter had inspected the respective facilities in Poland, he claimed in his report that the alleged homicidal gas chambers of Auschwitz and Majdanek could not have functioned as such.¹⁰ Needless to say, this didn't exactly go down well with the Powers That Be.

To the rescue of the special interests of these Powers came brave Prof. van Pelt in the late 1990s, after other attempts at staving off revisionism had

⁸ See Rudolf 2016a & 2016b for details.

⁹ Between 2009 and 2015, The Barnes Review had publishing control over the series due to Gernar Rudolf's outlet Castle Hill Publishers still struggling after his years of arrest. Hence, the first, 2010 edition of the present book titled *The Case for Sanity* appeared as a set of two volumes with The Barnes Review's imprint.

¹⁰ On the trial see Kulaszka; on Leuchter see Trombley; on his report see Leuchter et al.

failed.¹¹ When interviewed about revisionism in 1999, van Pelt stated the following:¹²

“Holocaust denial for me is so revolting, and the way for me not to immediately become sick with having to deal with Leuchter, was by saying, OK, I am going to map his journey.” [00:36:47-00:37:00]

This shows that van Pelt is obviously a person who is emotionally incapable of dealing objectively with dissenting opinions, as they make him sick. That alone is enough to render him unfit to act as an expert. But that wasn’t all. Van Pelt continued:

“Auschwitz is like the holy of holies. I prepared years to go there and to have a fool [Leuchter] come in, come in completely unprepared, it’s sacrilege. Somebody who walks into the holy of holies and doesn’t give a damn.” [00:40:59-00:41:20]

For van Pelt and persons sharing his views, Auschwitz and the Holocaust are thus not items of the real world, which can and ought to be scrutinized as every other item, but they have a religious, a sacred dimension and may therefore not be challenged. This, too, renders him unfit to pose as an expert in the matters at hand. To this van Pelt added:

“Crematorium II is the most lethal building of Auschwitz. In the 2,500 square feet of this one room, more people lost their lives than any other place on this planet. 500,000 people were killed. If you would draw a map of human suffering, if you created a geography of atrocity, this would be the absolute center.” [00:55:44-00:56:15]

Hence, for van Pelt the holiest of places is at once the one representing the absolute center of evil. What kind of a religion is that which reveres symbols of absolute evil? Yet the pinnacle of van Pelt’s insight was yet to come:

“If the Holocaust revisionists would be shown to be right, we would lose our sense about the Second World War, we would lose our sense about what democracy was. The Second World War was a moral war; it was a war between good and evil. And so if we take the core of this war, which is in fact Auschwitz, out of the picture, then everything else becomes unintelligible to us. We collectively end up in a madhouse.” [01:23:30 of original version¹³]

Here you have it: World War II was a war of good against evil, a moral war; and the Holocaust was at the core of that war.

¹¹ Mainly those by J.-C. Pressac; re. his failure see Rudolf 2016c.

¹² Documentary video by Errol Morris, *Mr Death: The Rise and Fall of Fred A. Leuchter, Jr.*, Fourth Floor Productions, May 12, 1999; online i.a. at <http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=654178281151939378#>; time given in [h:min:sec]; for a transcript see www.erolmorrison.com/film/mrd_transcript.html.

¹³ From Sundance version (Jan. 27, 1999); the revised VHS/DVD version, which is posted online, has this passage excised.

As is intelligible to anyone only somewhat familiar with just a few basic facts about World War II, these statements are dead wrong. But people like van Pelt have made up their minds and their world view, and they even made their mental sanity depend on that myth. No wonder, then, that revisionism drives these people crazy.

In his 2002 book here critiqued, van Pelt argues in a similar way. To express what he feels when confronted with revisionist arguments, which he describes as an “insult to the intellect” and a “dangerous personal abyss” (van Pelt 2002, pp. 69, 70), he approvingly cites a Jewish journalist who, after having attended a trial against the late French revisionist Prof. Dr. Robert Faurisson, wrote the following words (van Pelt, 2002, p. 70):

“Current Jewish history is deeply rooted in Auschwitz as the general symbol of the destruction of the Jewish people during the Holocaust. For someone whose past is rooted in Auschwitz, the experience of reading through the revisionists’ tortured logic and documentation is similar to the psychologically disorienting experience of sensory deprivation experiments or solitary confinement in prison, where one loses touch with reality. The insidious effect of reading this literature is ultimately to lose one’s identity as a survivor and, more generally, as a Jew. Therefore, the revisionist allegations serve to dispossess the Jews from their history, and in doing so, in seeking to destroy a people’s history, a symbolic genocide replaces a physical one.”

I wonder whether it ever occurred to van Pelt that the Germans *constantly* feel and experience exactly the equivalent of this? Because there can be no doubt that the constant exposure of the German people to Holocaust propaganda has already resulted in the Germans having lost their own identity; that they have already been dispossessed of their history; and that not merely a symbolic genocide against the German people is taking place during these decades before our very eyes, but a real one – the Germans are extinguishing themselves by giving up their identity and culture, by no longer bearing any children and by defenselessly and passively allowing themselves to be replaced by immigrants from other cultures. While Germans, since the end of the war, have been forced at gunpoint to accept Auschwitz or rather the Holocaust as the root of their history and self-exterminating identity, the Jews have made this choice themselves. No one forces the Jews to reduce their 3,000-year global history to three-years-lasting events in some German camps. The problem is therefore not that the established historiography of these camps is challenged by revisionist criticism, but the obsessive, even perverse, focus of Jewish identity on this utterly particular aspect of history.

How crazy revisionism drives these people who are obsessed with Auschwitz and the Holocaust can be seen from statements of some of the world’s

leading Holocaust peddlers. Haunted by the revisionist demands to show them or draw them a Nazi gas chamber, Elie Wiesel wrote in his memoirs (1994, p. 97):

“The gas chambers should better have stayed locked away from indiscreet gazes. And to the power of imagination.”

Claude Lanzmann, who is best known for his film *Shoah*, which is basically a concatenation of unscrutinized anecdotal statements,¹⁴ expressed a similar irrational hostility toward more reliable kinds of evidence like documents or even material evidence:

“In Shoah there is no time spent on archival material because this is not the way I think and work, and besides, there isn’t any such material. [See! Told you!...] If I had found a film – a secret film, because filming was forbidden – shot by the SS, in which it is shown how 3000 Jews – men, women, and children – die together, suffocated in the gas chamber of Crematorium II in Auschwitz, then not only would I not have shown it, I would have even destroyed it. I cannot say why. That happens on its own.” (Le Monde, March 3, 1994)

If you think that’s insane, then brace yourself for what is yet to come, because Prof. Dr. Robert Jan van Pelt has suggested during an interview with the Toronto newspaper *The Star*, published on Dec. 27, 2009,¹⁵ that the extant material traces of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Camp, the site “where the murders happened,” should be left to be “reclaimed by nature.” Or in other words: he wants them to disappear. He stated that the material traces of the alleged crimes shouldn’t be preserved, because:

“To put the Holocaust in some separate category and to demand that it be there – to demand that we have more material evidence – is actually us somehow giving in to the Holocaust deniers by providing some sort of special evidence.”

As if the demand for material evidence for the alleged biggest slaughter in the history of mankind were unreasonable. Don’t we ask for material evidence for every single case of murder or manslaughter? Then why not here? And if the deliberate destruction (or should we say premeditated abandonment?) of evidence of an alleged crime is a crime in itself, then why not here?

But read this statement again, and then ask yourself: Do the revisionists demand *more* material evidence? More than *what*? In this same interview van Pelt himself had to admit the following:

“Ninety-nine percent of what we know we do not actually have the physical evidence to prove... it has become part of our inherited knowledge.”

¹⁴ As book see Lanzmann 1985.

¹⁵ <https://archive.is/dBdP> (originally at www.thestar.com/news/insight/article/742965--a-case-for-letting-nature-take-back-auschwitz).

Yet after having read the present book, it will be clear that the remaining one percent, which according to van Pelt is based on material evidence (including wartime documents), does not prove what van Pelt asserts. So it is more accurate to say: 100% of what is claimed about industrialized mass murder in gas chambers at Auschwitz is based on... “inherited knowledge,” or in plain English: nothing but hot air – which is, however, *contradicted* and thus *refuted* by all extant material and documentary evidence. Hence there is *no* physical or documentary evidence at all for van Pelt’s claims! There is therefore nothing exceptional about asking for any kind of material evidence for an alleged crime, if nothing has been presented so far. *Not* demanding material evidence would put the Holocaust into a “separate category” from all other historical or criminological claims. So the shoe is on the other foot.

However, revisionists are indeed perfectly happy with the existing material and documentary evidence, which points in but one direction, a different one than van Pelt wants it to. The revisionists don’t need more evidence, and they don’t ask for more. The case is clear for all open-minded persons to see. It is the exterminationists who need more, in fact *any* material and documentary evidence to support their case. It is *they* who ought to ask for more evidence.

* * *

Van Pelt has titled his anti-revisionist book *The Case for Auschwitz*. This implies that revisionists are making a case *against* Auschwitz, which is of course nonsense. But that kind of suggestive insinuation is typical for the obfuscatory, misleading attitude of the exterminationists. The revisionists, too, make a case *for* Auschwitz. It merely is a different Auschwitz than what van Pelt champions. It is an image of Auschwitz based on a consistent, conclusive, rational, judicious, sensible, and indeed sane analysis of the extant evidence. The revisionist case for Auschwitz is a case for sanity.

Comparing the style of van Pelt’s book with the present book’s style, it becomes apparent that van Pelt frequently gets lost in telling anecdotes, while Mattogno confines himself to a broad and profound examination of the evidence and to weighing arguments and counterarguments. While van Pelt’s narrative style is undoubtedly more attractive to readers wishing to be entertained compared to Mattogno’s dry historical analysis, the present book’s information density is much higher than that of van Pelt’s book, and that should ultimately be decisive for readers who don’t want to be entertained but informed about the subject at hand.

As extensive as Mattogno’s critique of van Pelt may be, it is not all-encompassing – and should not be so either, for then it would get out of hand. In 2005, when I prepared to write my own contribution to the present book, I compiled a list of items I wanted to discuss. Some of these points were not even touched upon by Carlo Mattogno. But don’t worry, I will not elaborate

on them here. Mattoigno has said everything that is truly essential and important, and we want to leave it at that.

May this book be a beacon for sanity both in historiography and in society in general – by making the case against not just van Pelt’s impending insanity, for we don’t want him or anyone else to end up in a madhouse, now – do we?

May this book also contribute to the demise of the warmongers’ pivotal myth, replacing it with *real history* instead.

Gerhard Rudolf

May 17, 2010

augmented June 12, 2019

Measurement Conversions

Since the author is European, he uses metric units throughout the book. Since some U.S. readers might find it difficult to imagine lengths, areas, volumes and weights given in metric units, a conversion list of the most common units is given below:

Mass

1 kg = 2.205 pounds

1 centner/Zentner = 50 kg = 110.25 pounds

1 ton = 1,000 kg = 2,205 pounds

Length

1 mm = 0.03937 inch

1 cm = 10 mm = 0.3937 inch

2.54 cm = 1 inch

30.48 cm = 1 ft

1 m = 100 cm = 1.094 yard

1 km = 1,000 m = 0.6214 miles

1.609 km = 1 mile

Area

1 m² = 10.76 sqft/ft²

Volume

1 cm³ = 1 ml(iter) = 0.001 liter = 0.03381 fl oz.

1 liter = 0.001 m³ = 1.057 quarts = 0.2642 gallons

1 m³ = 1.308 cyd/yd³ = 35.31 cft/ft³

Temperature

Increment: 1 °C = 1.8 °F

Conversion: °F = °C×1.8 + 32

Pressure

10 mm of water column = 1 mbar = 0.0145 psi

For more detailed conversions please refer to Internet websites like convert-me.com

Author's Preface

Between January 11 and April 11, 2000, a lawsuit proceeded before the Royal Court of Justice in London as a result of David Irving having sued Deborah Lipstadt and the publishing house Penguin Books Ltd. for libel. It ended with the dismissal of the British historian's claims. Robert Jan van Pelt had been entrusted by the defense team with the preparation of an "expert opinion" which he presented in 1999. It became known as the "The Pelt Report."¹⁶ The author later rewrote it together with his affidavit for the appeal procedure,¹⁷ and in 2002 published it in the form of a book, *The Case for Auschwitz*, which became the new reference work of orthodox Holocaust historiography in this field.

In doing so, van Pelt succeeded Jean-Claude Pressac who by that time had become an uncontrollable maverick dealing official historiography blow upon blow. Pressac was therefore consigned to what might be labeled historiographic purgatory, halfway between the revisionists' hell and the paradise of the Holocaust faithful. This historiographic interdict weighed upon him until he died on July 23, 2003, to the total silence of the media, which had previously praised him to the skies. The irony of fate would have it that on his death he was eulogized only by his erstwhile opponents.¹⁸

The post of the world-wide authority on Auschwitz had thus to be filled by a trustworthy person who would promote Pressac's purified theses without the latter's annoying spirit of criticism and bring about a new metaphysical vision of Auschwitz, immutable and definitive this time – van Pelt, in short.

"The Pelt Report" and the book which resulted from it constitute what is essentially a plundering of Pressac's work, but the man himself is never mentioned as the source of the arguments which van Pelt has hijacked. The entire work rests upon two main pillars: the *corpus* of "criminal traces" assembled by Pressac, and the testimonies of the witnesses, which center, in turn, on the declarations made by Henryk Tauber (see Chapter 10), a former detainee and member of the so-called *Sonderkommando*.¹⁹ Van Pelt presents them as having "the highest evidentiary value," and makes Pressac's analysis of these declarations his own. Van Pelt, however, has greatly inflated Tauber's significance,

¹⁶ The report is available at: https://www.hdot.org/vanpelt_toc/.

¹⁷ The affidavit is available at <https://archive.is/PE5qq> (www.phdn.org/archives/holocaust-history.org/irving-david/vanpelt/)

¹⁸ Graf 2003; Mattogno 2003c, Countess.

¹⁹ At least 14 units officially called *Sonderkommandos* existed at Auschwitz, none of which had anything to do with the crematoria, though; see Mattogno 2016c, pp. 111-114. For clarity's sake, however, I keep using this term in the present study when referring to the inmate units who worked inside the Auschwitz crematoria.

making him the mainstay of his argumentation, the touchstone of all sources to the point where he even uses his own documents to bolster the “plausibility” of Tauber’s declarations. This is true as well for the other testimonies which cluster around Tauber’s statements for the sole purpose of “confirming” them.

It is easy to see why van Pelt does this. Tauber’s testimonies have constituted the seemingly unassailable basis of orthodox Holocaust historiography as far as cremations and homicidal gassings at Auschwitz are concerned – from 1945 to 1993, from Jan Sehn to Pressac. Pressac’s own “criminal traces” rely tacitly or explicitly on Tauber’s assertions and merely constitute, as it were, their (utterly baseless) documentary rendition.

Van Pelt’s strategy has another, more important motive: he had to deal with technical problems in the field of cremation and cremation furnaces with which he was entirely unfamiliar, and so he blindly followed Tauber’s statements. By accepting the absurdities uttered by this witness, however, and by making them the basis of his own reasoning, van Pelt has adopted a chain of reasoning which renders his entire argument specious.

The radical refutation of van Pelt’s argumentation therefore requires three specific approaches: one concerning the “criminal traces,” another concerning the cremations and cremation furnaces, and a third concerning Tauber’s testimony. They will constitute the first, second, and third part of the present work, respectively.

Compared to Pressac, van Pelt has introduced a new paradigm or rather a new designation for a paradigm, the “convergence of evidence” – a paradigm which Pressac had already utilized without giving it a specific name. It consists in the contemplation of allegedly independent documents and testimonies in an effort to show that everything “converges” to confirm the thesis of an extermination. Part Four examines the practical application of this paradigm by van Pelt and lays bare the serious technical and historical falsities that flow from it. Part Five finally analyzes in detail the origins of the alleged convergence of testimonies.

In the section “Preface and Acknowledgment” of his book, thanking his supporters, van Pelt says (pp. XIII-XIV):

“Writing my rebuttal to Rudolf’s affidavit, I was fortunate to have Green, Mazal, Keren, and McCarthy as partners in a daily conversation that quickly also included John Zimmerman, Kern Stern, Peter Maguire, and Stephen Prothero.”

The present study will deal with a number of examples concerning the competence and intellectual honesty of some of these persons. Van Pelt also speaks with much self-assurance of the task he had in the Irving-Lipstadt Trial (p. IX):

“It was my task, therefore, to help the defense barristers Richard Rampton, Heather Rogers, and Anthony Julius convince the judge that no serious historian who had considered the evidence would have serious cause to doubt that there were gas chambers at Auschwitz.”

This arrogant statement was refuted by Justice Gray himself in his sentence of April 11, 2000. On this subject, he writes in Section 13.71:²⁰

“I have to confess that, in common I suspect with most other people, I had supposed that the evidence of mass extermination of Jews in the gas chambers at Auschwitz was compelling. I have, however, set aside this preconception when assessing the evidence adduced by the parties in these proceedings.”

Unbelievably, this point of view was shared by van Pelt (p. 100):

“My first problem was rather straightforward: the evidence for Auschwitz was undoubtedly problematic.”

In Section 13.73 he adds:²⁰

“I recognise the force of many of Irving’s comments upon some of those categories. He is right to point out that the contemporaneous documents, such as drawings, plans, correspondence with contractors and the like, yield little clear evidence of the existence of gas chambers designed to kill humans. Such isolated references to the use of gas as are to be found amongst these documents can be explained by the need to fumigate clothes so as to reduce the incidence of diseases such as typhus. The quantities of Zyklon B delivered to the camp may arguably be explained by the need to fumigate clothes and other objects. It is also correct that one of the most compromising documents, namely Muller’s [recte: Bischoff’s] letter of 28 June 1943 setting out the number of cadavers capable of being burnt in the incinerators, has a number of curious features which raise the possibility that it is not authentic. In addition, the photographic evidence for the existence of chimneys protruding through the roof of morgue 1 at crematorium 2 is, I accept, hard to interpret.”

In Section 13.74, Gray accepts furthermore the validity of several of Irving’s arguments:²⁰

“Similarly Irving had some valid comments to make about the various accounts given by survivors of the camp and by camp officials. Some of those accounts were given in evidence at the post-war trials. The possibility exists that some of these witnesses invented some or even all of the experiences which they describe. Irving suggested the possibility of cross-pollination, by which he meant the possibility that witnesses may have repeated and even embellished the (invented) accounts of other witnesses

²⁰ https://www.hdot.org/judge_toc/ sub “The Judgement,” § XIII.

with the consequence that a corpus of false testimony is built up. Irving pointed out that parts of some of the accounts of some of the witnesses are obviously wrong or (like some of Olère's drawings^[21]) clearly exaggerated. He suggested various motives why witnesses might have given false accounts, such as greed and resentment (in the case of survivors) and fear and the wish to ingratiate themselves with their captors (in the case of camp officials). Van Pelt accepted that these possibilities exist. I agree."

The justice's conviction with respect to the reality of the homicidal gas chambers at Auschwitz derived solely from the presumed "convergence of evidence," as he stated in Section 13.78:²⁰

"My conclusion is that the various categories of evidence do 'converge' in the manner suggested by the Defendants."

This book constitutes the first complete and radical dismantling of the intrinsically false argumentative structure and of the spearhead of orthodox Holocaust historiography about Auschwitz by demonstrating, on the one hand, that Pressac's "criminal traces" have no value as evidence and, on the other, by documenting the fact that van Pelt's "convergence of proof" is purely void of argumentative meaning.

As against this, the present work furnishes a coherent and *actually* converging set of evidentiary elements which show that the orthodox Holocaust thesis regarding the existence of homicidal gas chambers at Auschwitz is historically, documentarily and technically unfounded.

²¹ Pressac 1993, pp. 71f.; cf. Section 13.3.2.

Part One: “Criminal Traces” Concerning Homicidal Gas Chambers

A Historical and Critical Discussion of Jean-Claude Pressac’s and
Robert Jan van Pelt’s Theses²²

Introduction

Jean-Claude Pressac may rightly be called the founder of orthodox Holocaust historiography on the subject of Auschwitz, which previously had functioned without documentation and without any method. He himself called the “traditional” treatment of the subject “a history based for the most part on testimonies, assembled according to the mood of the moment, truncated to fit an arbitrary truth and sprinkled with a few German documents of uneven value and without any connection with one another.” (1989, p. 264)

He applied a new historiographic method which, at least in its intentions, slighted testimony in favor of documentary material. Actually, though, he again relied on testimony to retrace the history of the alleged initial installations for homicidal gassings, which are said to have preceded those of the Birkenau Crematoria. His chapters on the gassings in Crematorium I (*ibid.*, pp. 123-159) and in the so-called “bunkers” of Birkenau (*ibid.*, pp. 161-182) are, in fact, *exclusively* based on testimony.

The new method was actually applied solely to the Birkenau Crematoria. Whereas Pressac should have been able to discover proof of the planning, construction and use of the alleged homicidal gas chambers in those installations, in the pertinent documentation preserved at the Auschwitz Museum, he found no proof of any kind. He was merely able to identify some “criminal traces” which somehow, by their number and their presumed convergence, had to fill the void.

Later on, in the early 1990s, when he was able to peruse the enormous trove of documents secured by the Soviets at Auschwitz and held in Moscow, Pressac wrote a new book in which he succeeded in adding nothing but a few more circumstantial indicators to his existing collection (Pressac 1993). But at precisely that point Pressac’s historiographic fortunes started to decline.

²² In his book van Pelt normally designates the Birkenau Crematoria by the Arabic numerals 2, 3, 4, 5 instead of using the more common Roman numerals II, III, IV and V. On the other hand, he attributes to the so-called Birkenau bunkers the numerals I and II, whereas common historiographic practice has been to label them 1 and 2.

Van Pelt's assault began the following year, when his name was inexplicably added to Pressac's in a massively abridged English translation of the above book (Pressac/van Pelt 1994). It continued in 1996, when van Pelt appropriated Pressac's "criminal traces" as his own in a book he wrote with Debórah Dwork (Dwork/van Pelt 1996), and culminated in 2000 at the Irving-Lipstadt Trial. By 2002 the expropriation was complete. *The Case for Auschwitz* presents a full-fledged rehash of Pressac's "criminal traces," which now constitute the framework of orthodox Holocaust historiography concerning Auschwitz.

Whereas Pressac was an investigator, van Pelt is first and foremost a compiler with a much weaker critical bent and much less-gifted for historical and documental analyses. His reassessment of the "criminal traces" represents a simpler way of spreading Pressac's theses and does not take into account their complexity and variations.

Hence, replying directly to van Pelt's purloined arguments makes no sense. Various revisionist scholars have examined Pressac's theses (see in particular Verbeke; English as Rudolf 2016c), but until now there has been no systematic and comprehensive assessment of the value and the significance of the "criminal traces," an analysis which would, at the same time, confer a new character to van Pelt's comments.

One of van Pelt's few merits was to have pointed out the importance of Auschwitz in the plans of the SS for the colonization of the occupied eastern territories. In his book coauthored with Debórah Dwork he asserted (p. 254):

"The creation of the camp at Birkenau, which by the end of 1942 had become a major center for the annihilation of Europe's Jews, was directly connected to Himmler's program to transform Auschwitz into a paradigm of German settlement in the East."

Van Pelt had tried to develop this thesis before (1994), but further research showed that this paradigm was only a part of a much larger plan, the "*Generalplan Ost*" (General Plan East; see Schulte), which involved the camps at Birkenau, Lublin and Stutthof merely as collection centers of forced labor, initially made up of Soviet prisoners of war, but later primarily of Jews. This new historical perspective left no room for the presumed extermination of the Jews, though (see Mattogno 2010).

1. “Criminal Traces”

1.1. Historical Background

In the 1980s Pressac visited Auschwitz frequently. On one such occasion, under the guidance of the then head archivist Tadeusz Iwaszko – who was to come to a tragic end on December 2, 1988 – and while perusing Volume 11 of the proceedings of the Höss Trial, Pressac hit upon an account written by the engineer Roman Dawidowski. Between May 10, 1945, and September 26, 1946, Dawidowski had worked together with the investigating Judge Jan Sehn (Höss Trial, Vol. 11, pp. 1-57). This account already contains the better part of all of Pressac’s “criminal traces,” especially in the second section, the translation of which reads (*ibid.*, pp. 7-9):

“All of these installations constituted the so-called ‘Spezialeinrichtungen’ (letter of 16.12.1942), ‘Durchführung der Sonderbehandlung’ (Files VIII Upa 2, making up Annex 2) for the implementation of the special action / ‘Sonderaktion’ (Garrison Order^[23] No. 31/43), based on ‘Sondermassnahme’ (letter of 13.1.1943, No. 21242/43) concerning the detainees taken to the Auschwitz Camp with special transports ‘Sondertransporte’ (letter of 10.4.1943, No. 26823/43, and of 12.7.43, No. 32269/43), with a detail of detainees called ‘Sonderkommando’ (letter of 4.2.1944, No. Bi-Sch./alg/66 b/8/1994/44 Bia/Ha) being engaged as well.

In the letters which make up Annexes 3 and 4, the crematoria and the rooms equipped with gas-tight doors having a double-glass spy-hole and gasket, absolutely necessary for implementing the special action, are referred to as ‘zur Durchführung der Sondermassnahme.’ According to the work order^[24] of 3.8.1944, 900 detainees were working that day in the Sonderkommando assigned to the four Birkenau Crematoria.

In the drawings and in the official correspondence the crematoria were called, in the German terminology, Krematorium (also abbreviated as ‘Krema’), Einäscherungsanlage or Einäscherungsofen, depending on their structure and use; the gas chambers, however, were hidden under the designations Leichenhalle (Blueprint of 25.9.1941, No. D. 59042 – Photograph No. 18 and Worksheet No. 243 of 27.3.1943^[25]), also Halle (Worksheet No. 323 of 16.4.1943), Leichenkeller 1 (Blueprint 932 of 27.1.1942 – Photograph No. 23 – and correspondence concerning construction of BW

²³ Standortbefehl Nr. 31/43 of August 6, 1943.

²⁴ Reference to the series of reports of Arbeitseinsatz.

²⁵ Reference to the order by Zentralbauleitung to Schlosserei W.L. no. 243 of March 27, 1943; Leichenhalle = corpse hall = morgue.

30, 30a-c^[26]), also abbreviated as L-Keller 1 (letter of 11.2.1943, No. 22957/43), Keller 1 (Worksheet No. 192 of 13.3.1943) and finally Badeanstalt für Sonderaktion (file memo of 21.8.1942, Nno. 12115).^[27]

The rooms for the [gas] chambers were labeled bath (Bad) or disinfection (Desinfektionsraum), and these designations were written in various languages on large sign-boards on the doors leading to the gas chamber. Crematoria II and III had two half-basements called Leichenkeller 1 and Leichenkeller 2 in the official correspondence. In the letter of 29.1.1943, No. 22250, one of these half-basements is called 'Vergasungskeller' (Annex 5), and the other, in the letter of 6.3.1943, 'Auskleidungsraum.' If these letters are compared to the blueprints of Photograph No. 23 and to the drawings of Photographs No. 24, 25, and 26, then one can see that the designation 'Vergasungskeller' applied to 'Leichenkeller 1.'

As opposed to 'Leichenkeller 2,' this half-basement had a double array of ventilation channels, the upper one being called 'Belüftung,' the lower one 'Entlüftungskanal' (blueprint of Photograph No. 23) fed by a blower (Gebläse),^[28] and it was to be heated by means of a heat-shunt duct of one of the chimneys (Warmluftzuführungsanlage – letter of 25.3.1943, No. 25629/43).

In the Letters^[29] No. 103 and 192, the openings of the lower channel, called 'Abluftlöcher,' were protected by wire-mesh grids (Schutzgitter) with a mesh width of 10 mm. The outlets of the upper channels were closed by means of grids of galvanized steel sheets (Zinkblechsiebe).

Leichenkeller 1 was equipped – like all other gas chambers – with gas-tight doors (Annex 15). According to the statements of the witnesses, this chamber had Zyklon feed devices in the form of wire-mesh columns. The witness Kula has described the design of this device (Annex 16). According to the letter of 11.2.1943 mentioned above, 'Leichenkeller 2' had only a de-aeration system powered by a 7.5 HP blower (Abluftgebläse). The designation 'Gaskammer' appears only in Worksheet No. 459 of 28.5.1943 ('1 Tür mit Rahmen, luftdicht mit Spion für Gaskammer') and in the map for the Groß-Rosen concentration camp. In the latter case, [it applies] to the designation of the structure located in the immediate vicinity of the building labeled 'Krema' (Blueprint No. 4067 of 5.7.1944 signed by Bischoff)."

As I have pointed out in a specific study (2016c, pp. 9f.), all terms containing the prefix "Sonder-" ("special") were taken by the Polish investigators to be

²⁶ In the administrative documents, Crematoria II, III, IV and V are designated by the abbreviations BW 30 and 30a-c; Leichenkeller = corpse cellar = underground morgue.

²⁷ In this document, both terms of this designation are in the plural: Badeanstalten für Sonderaktionen, bathing establishments for special actions. Cf. Subchapter 7.3.

²⁸ The ventilation of Morgue 2 had two blowers, one in pressure one in suction. Cf. Subchapter 1.8.

²⁹ Orders by the Zentralbauleitung to Schlosserei W.L.

“code words” referring to homicidal gassings. For their purported “deciphering,” they started with the assumption of the existence of homicidal gas chambers in the Birkenau Crematoria and then inferred the criminal significance of the “*Sonder-*” terms mentioned in accordance with that assumption. Later on official historiography proceeded the other way round: starting out from the assumption that the terms in question had a criminal significance, the existence of homicidal gas chambers at Auschwitz was inferred. Not even Pressac was able to extricate himself from this impotent circular reasoning when taking over the “criminal traces” listed by Dawidowski. Fact is, though, that the terms “*Sonderbehandlung*” (special treatment), “*Sondermassnahmen*” (special measures), “*Sondertransporte*” (special transports), “*Sonderkommando*” (special detail), “*Sonderaktion*” (special action), “*Sonderkeller*” (special basement), “*Spezialeinrichtungen*” (special installations), “*Badeanstalten für Sonderaktionen*” (baths for special actions) have nothing to do with any alleged homicidal gassings (*ibid.*, Part Two, pp. 29-105). As far as the term “*Gaskammer*” (gas chamber) is concerned, the Worksheet No. 459 of May 29, 1943, refers to a chamber for disinfestation of textiles with hydrogen cyanide (see Subchapter 1.5.), and so does Blueprint No. 4067 of July 5, 1944.³⁰ The same is true for the “*Gaskammer*” shown on the blueprints of a disinfestation unit (*Entlausungsanlage*) at Birkenau, later to become *Bauwerke*³¹ 5a and 5b (Pressac 1989, pp. 55-57).

From the account mentioned above, Pressac draws not only the major portion of his “criminal traces,” but also other important clues, such as the reference to Michał Kula’s description of Zyklon-B-introduction devices and the fundamental information concerning the ventilation system. Moreover, he presents practically all of the photographic material contained in this source (pages refer to Pressac 1989):

- Photograph 3 (ruins of Crematorium II in 1945): Photo 93 on p. 261;
- Photograph 7 (ruins of Crematorium II in 1945): Photo 96 on p. 261;
- Photograph 10 (yard of Crematorium III with a wooden box in the foreground): Photo 72 on p. 251;
- Photograph 11 (fence allegedly used to “hide” the crematoria): Photo 46 on p. 501;
- Photograph 18 (Blueprint D 59042 of Crematorium I): p. 152;
- Photograph 19 (Blueprint 4287 of Crematorium I): p. 156 and 157;
- Photograph 20 (label of a can of Zyklon B): Photo 13 on p. 17;
- Photograph 21 (label mentioning Zyklon B): Photo 12 on p. 18;
- Photograph 23 (Blueprint 933 of future Crematorium II): p. 282;

³⁰ According to holocaust historiography, the Groß-Rosen camp never had a homicidal gas chamber (“Eine solche Anlage hat es in Groß-Rosen nicht gegeben”). Sprenger 1996, p. 205.

³¹ *Bauwerk*, BW: building or group of buildings of the same type.

- Photograph 24 (Blueprint 109/16A of Crematorium II): p. 329;
- Photograph 25 (Blueprint 109 of Crematorium II): p. 323;
- Photograph 26 (Blueprint 109/15 of Crematorium II): p. 327;
- Photograph 27 (temporary lift for Crematorium II): Photo 20 on p. 488;
- Photograph 28 (Blueprint 1678 of Crematoria IV-V): p. 393;
- Photograph 30 (benches allegedly located in the “undressing room” of the crematoria): Photo 10 on p. 486;
- Photographs 31 and 32 (gas-tight door): Photos 29 and 30 on p. 50;
- Photograph 33 (open-air cremation): Photo 16 on p. 422;
- Photograph 34 (women allegedly on their way to the gas chambers): Photo 17 on p. 423.

In keeping with the Polish investigations, Pressac made an extensive search of those parts of the archives of the Auschwitz *Zentralbauleitung* (central construction office, hereinafter abbreviated as *ZBL*) which the Soviets had left in the camp, but was able to add only four more items to the list originally compiled by Dawidowski. After 1989 he also viewed the more-extensive portion of the archives which the Soviets had taken to Moscow. Although this collection contains some 88,000 pages, Pressac found no more proof concerning the existence of homicidal gas chambers at Auschwitz-Birkenau and managed only to glean another four “criminal traces.” Before we examine these traces in greater detail, we must first clarify two essential points.

1.2. The Archive of the Auschwitz *Zentralbauleitung*

First of all, if that documentation actually did contain traces which would provide indirect proof of the reality of homicidal gas chambers, why was it not destroyed by the SS? Secondly, if the documentation is complete, how can we explain that it does not contain any direct proof? In the introduction to his second book on Auschwitz, Pressac answers the first question in the following manner (1993, p. 1):

“As opposed to another department of the camp, the Political Department, which burned its files almost totally before evacuating the camp in January 1945, the Bauleitung^[32] left theirs intact. The reason for this abandonment in an unexpurgated manner could reside within the personality of the second and last head of the Auschwitz Bauleitung, lieutenant Werner Jothann. A civil engineer (‘Hochbau’), he had not been personally involved in the homicidal transformation of the crematoria which had been the work of the first head of the department, SS captain Karl Bischoff, between the end of 1942 and early 1943. Being ignorant of the ‘explosive’ content of the files

³² Recte: *Zentralbauleitung*.

in this respect, Jothann departed without worrying about this and without taking any measures to have them destroyed.”

This explanation does not explain anything at all.

On October 1, 1943, the beginning of the fifth fiscal year of the war economy, *SS-Sturmbannführer* Karl Bischoff was replaced by *SS-Obersturmführer* Werner Jothann as head of the ZBL. Bischoff himself was promoted and became head of the *Waffen-SS* and Police Inspectorate for Silesia (*Leiter der Bauinspektion der Waffen-SS und Polizei “Schlesien”*), which reported to *Amt V* of *Amtsgruppe C* within the *SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt* (SS-WVHA) and constituted the agency which directly controlled the Auschwitz ZBL. In actual fact, Bischoff remained Jothann’s immediate superior within the hierarchy of the SS-WVHA and stayed in permanent contact with him. All new *Bauwerke* had, in fact, to be approved by the *Bauinspektion “Schlesien.”*³³

Furthermore, on January 5, 1944, Bischoff and Jothann carried out the official handover which listed all documentation, including File No. 15 concerning Crematoria II and III with 7 drawings, correspondence, and payment for jobs done.³⁴ If that documentation really contained anything “explosive,” would Bischoff not have told Jothann so? And would Bischoff, his immediate superior, not have ordered him to destroy any such files?

Let us move on to the second point. The organization of the Auschwitz ZBL was very complicated and decentralized. As early as the beginning of 1943, this department was split into five *Bauleitungen* (see Section 2.6.4.). The ZBL itself comprised 14 *Sachgebiete* (technical departments). Each *Bauleitung* and each *Sachgebiet* had its own files, and what we now call “the *Zentralbauleitung* archive” consisted at the time of several dozen archives. Documents concerning the crematoria, like all other documents, were prepared with several copies (the recipients were listed under the heading “*Verteiler*” [distribution]), and each copy was routed to the department concerned, where it was filed.

The original archive comprised many files (“*Ordner*”), each one of which served for the conservation of the documents relating to one or several *Bauwerke*. Upon a simple order given by Bischoff via Jothann, each *Bauleiter* could easily have destroyed his own collection of files or – even more easily – the files containing the documentation regarding the crematoria. This was not done, however, and the documentation survived. It contains the drawings of the crematoria and a wealth of correspondence, but there are also obviously missing portions, for example all the detailed drawings regarding the furnaces themselves, the reports on the test firings, or the data on coke consumption in

³³ For a general treatment of this question cf. Mattogno 2015a.

³⁴ RGVA, 502-1-48, pp. 42-49.

1944. The documentation has clearly been *filtered* by the people who were the first to use it for show-trial purposes, *i.e.* the Soviets and Judge Jan Sehn. It is indeed hard to imagine that the SS, rather than destroying the whole lot of this allegedly “explosive” documentation, would have taken the time to plough through all the ramifications of the crematoria file with great patience, removing and destroying individual documents they judged to be dangerous, but leaving the rest intact, down to the blueprints of the crematoria themselves! They are then said to have blown up the crematoria to hide the traces of their “crimes” while, at the same time, abandoning to the Soviets thousands of eyewitnesses of those “crimes”!

Van Pelt’s explanation for the survival of the archive, on the other hand, is dumbfounding in its incredibility (2002, p. 207):

“When the Germans burned the archives of the camp Kommandantur prior to their evacuation from Auschwitz in January 1945, they overlooked the archive of the building office that had been closed some months earlier, and as a result the materials in this archive were found more or less intact.”

It would not be worthwhile to bother with this, if van Pelt had not committed a further blunder – the allegation that the *ZBL* closed “months earlier” than January 1945 (which was needed to explain why the SS “overlooked the archive”). Actually, this office continued to function at least through December 29, 1944, the date which appears on a stamp imprint made by the civilian employee Rudolf Jährling in respect of a Topf invoice dated December 2.³⁵

The selection carried out within the *ZBL* archive has created the void surrounding the greater part of the “criminal traces,” which nowadays show up in the documentation like so many erratic blocks. And it is their very isolation from their original context which today allows them to be interpreted in a criminal sense. This fact alone hints at the perpetrator of this archival cleansing: *Cui bono?*

1.3. Methodical Premise

In the chapter “‘One proof... one single proof’: Thirty-nine criminal traces,” (1989, pp. 429-457) Pressac addresses Robert Faurisson’s call of February 26, 1979, for even a single piece of evidence of the existence of homicidal gas chambers (Faurisson 1980, pp. 96-100). The subtitle of the chapter in question is “A complete list of the ‘criminal traces’ or ‘slips’ found in the archives of the Auschwitz State Museum and the Warsaw Central Commission concerning the homicidal gas chambers in Birkenau Krematorien II, III, IV and V” (*ibid.* p. 429).

³⁵ RGVA, 502-1-96, p. 33a.

Before we look at these “criminal traces,” we must consider the methodical principle employed by Pressac and taken over by his successors. He retraces primarily the events immediately prior to the question and expresses at the same time a negative verdict on the method of orthodox Holocaust historiography of his era (*ibid.*):

“Faurisson asked for ‘one proof... one single proof’ of the existence of homicidal gas chambers. The ‘traditional’ historians provided him with an ‘abundance of proofs’ which were virtually all based on human testimony, from SS and surviving former prisoners and Sonderkommando men. But human testimony is fallible. It is unreliable, and Faurisson wanted a CONCRETE historical proof, that is proof based on incontestable and irrefutable documents. Four types of historical documents would meet these stringent criteria:

photographs and

films made between 1942 and 1944 in KL Auschwitz.

German letters and documents,

original drawings concerned with the camp.”

But there is no film showing an extermination going on at Auschwitz, and the existing photographs “cannot be presented as definitive proof” (*ibid.*). Of the drawings for the crematoria, “NOT ONE explicitly mentions in so many words anything like: Blausäure (prussic acid) Vergasungs- or Gaskammer or -keller [gassing or gas chamber or cellar],” which means that there “remain only the various items of correspondence and official documents of German origin” which, thanks to the “slips” they contain, “form a convincing body of presumptive evidence and clearly indicate the presence in the four Birkenau Krematorien (II, III, IV and V) of gas chambers using a prussic acid disinfection agent under the name of ‘Zyklon B.’” (*ibid.*) Then Pressac goes on to expound his methodical principle (*ibid.*):

“In the absence of any ‘direct,’ i.e. palpable, indisputable and evident proof (lacking so far as we know at present) such as a photograph of people killed by a toxic gas in an enclosed space that can be perfectly located and identified, or of a label on a Krematorium drawing of a ‘Gaskammer um Juden zu vergiften/gas chamber for poisoning Jews,’ an ‘indirect’ proof may suffice and be valid. By ‘indirect’ proof I mean a German document that does not state in black and white that a gas chamber is for homicidal purposes, but one containing evidence to the effect that, logically, it is impossible for it to be anything else.”

Hence, for Pressac an indirect proof is a document which cannot be explained in any manner but homicidal. This is a clear admission that until 1989 there

existed *no proof* of the reality of *homicidal* gas chambers at Birkenau,³⁶ nor later either, for that matter, because an “indirect” proof is not a proof, only a simple trace. And Pressac actually does not pretend to have discovered any “proof,” only – and precisely – certain “criminal traces.” While maintaining the reservations I have expressed above on the subject of the documentation, I could accept Pressac’s methodical principle, but only as long as it is *objectively* impossible to explain the “criminal traces” in a non-homicidal manner. In fact, however, Pressac’s proclaimed impossibility of a different, non-homicidal explanation is not *objective* but *subjective*, which means that Pressac decrees such an impossibility only because *he has been unable* to come up with a different explanation. Hence, as I shall demonstrate in the course of this study, if such an impossibility is purely fictitious, the value of the “criminal traces” as an “indirect” proof is completely nil.

With respect to Pressac’s method, we must consider another aspect. He is proud, and rightly so, to have discovered that at Auschwitz nothing was permanent and immutable and that, on the contrary, everything – especially the planning – was in a constant state of flux. It often happened – and the history of the Birkenau Camp is a very concrete example of this – that a project was reviewed and changed several times before it was finally implemented. This means that, if we want to know the real purpose of some installation, we must retrace the history of its evolution and, specifically, its final stages.

Pressac is very good at applying this principle, for example to the architectural description of the disinfection and disinfection units or to the history of the development of the Birkenau Crematoria. However, when it comes to the discussion of the criminal traces in connection with the crematoria, he drops this methodical principle and, in a fit of imposing metaphysical stasis, considers the installations as fixed and usable only for one unique purpose. But, as he says himself, “plans evolved according to needs” (p. 512), and at Birkenau the needs evolved at an impressive rate. It is therefore not clear why one could not plan the use of particular units for various ends, depending upon the requirements of the moment. This tendency to impose stasis on things enables Pressac to consider as “incompatible” certain installations or devices which actually could have complementary or independent functions.

Pressac’s most serious methodical mistake, however, is to base himself on Henryk Tauber’s testimony (which he also discovered in Volume 11 of the Höss Trial papers) as an unassailable verity, which he then projects backwards on his “criminal traces.” Conversely, for him the “criminal traces” are directed *a priori* toward a final goal – the alleged homicidal gas chambers – which forms the initial hypothesis, not the conclusion, of his interpretations. Not on-

³⁶ RIP the assertion by Georges Wellers (1978): “Abondance de preuves.”

ly this: on this fragile array of traces he then weaves a dense tissue of events whose significance he systematically deforms to get them to fit his preconceived “criminal” framework, in which fantasy overflows onto reality and finally submerges it completely.

Van Pelt obediently follows Pressac’s method of the impossibility of “all alternative explanations” (2002, p. 406) and adds nothing new himself.

1.4. 39 “Criminal Traces”

Pressac lists “thirty-nine criminal traces,” which I reproduce in his own manner (if no year is given for quotes from Pressac, all page numbers from here on until further notice refer to 1989).

1.4.1. Traces for Crematorium II:

- 1) “Vergasungskeller/gassing cellar” (p. 432, Photo 1.);
- 2) “10 Gasprüfer/gas detectors”; (*ibid.* and Photo 2 on p. 433);
- 3) “1 Stck Handgriff für Gastür D 12/handle for gastight door, 12 [mm] diameter” (p. 432, Photo 3 on p. 433.);
- 4) “Auskleideraum/undressing room”; (*ibid.* and Photo 4 on p. 433);
- 5) “Auskleidekeller,” 4 mentions; “Auskleidekeller II,” 1 mention / “undressing cellar” (p. 434, Photos 5-7 on pp. 434f.);
- 6) Gastür 100/192 für *Leichenkeller* 1/gas(tight) door 100×192 for underground morgue 1”; (*ibid.* and Photo 8 on p. 436);
- 7) “1 Gasdichttür/1 gas-tight door” (p. 436, Photos 9f., p. 437);
- 8) “4 Drahtnetzteinschiebvorrichtung/4 wire mesh introduction devices” (p. 436, Photo 3 on p. 438.);
- 9) “4 Holzblenden/4 wooden covers” (*ibid.*)

1.4.2. Traces for Crematorium III:

- 10) “Auskleideraum/undressing room” (p. 438 and Photo 4 on p. 433);
- 11) “Gastür/gas(tight) door 100×192; (*ibid.* and Photo 8 on p. 436);
- 12) “Auskleidekeller/undressing cellar,” twice (*ibid.* and Photos 12f. on p. 439);
- 13) “Flacheisen für (1)/5 Stück Gastürbeschläge/flat iron bar for (1)/5 sets of fittings for gas(tight) doors”; (*ibid.*, Photos 14f., p. 439);
- 14) “Beschläge für 1 Stück Gastür/fittings for 1 gas(tight) door” (p. 439 and Photo 16 on p. 441);
- 15) “1 Gasdichttür/1 gas-tight door” (p. 439 and Photos 17f. on p. 438, 441);
- 16) “14 Brausen/14 (dummy) showers.” (*ibid.* and Photo 18 on p. 438);

1.4.3. Traces for Crematoria IV and V:

- 17) “12 Stück gasdichte Türen ca. 30/40 cm/12 gas-tight doors approx. 30×40,” 4 mentions (p. 443 and Photo 19 on p. 444);
- 17a) “12 Stück gasdichte Türen ca. 30/40 cm”; (*ibid.* and Photo 20);
- 17b) “Delivery note for the door fittings of 24th February 1943” (p. 443 and Photo 21);
- 18) “Gas[s]dichte Fenster versetzen/fit gas-tight windows” (p. 445 and Photos 22f.);
- 19) “betonieren im [*sic*] Gas[s]kammer/[apply] concrete in gas chamber,” first mention (p. 446 and Photos 24f.);
- 20) “Gas[s]dichte Fenster versetzen/fit gas-tight windows” (p. 447 and Photos 26-28 on p. 448-450), mentioned twice;
- 21) “betonieren im Gas[s]kammer,” 2nd mention (p. 447 and Photos 29, 30, p. 450);
- 22) “4 Gasdichte Türen/4 gas-tight doors”; (*ibid.* and Photos 32f., pp. 451f.);
- 23) “Gastüren Verankerungen 210 Stk/210 anchors for gas-tight doors” (p. 448 and Photo 31 on p. 451);
- 24) “3 dichte Türe (Türme, Türen)/three gas-tight doors (towers, doors)” (p. 452 and Photo 32 on p. 451);
- 25) “drei gasdichte Türe (Türme, Türen)/three gas-tight doors (towers, doors)” (*ibid.*, and Photos 33-35 on pp. 452f.);
- 26) “Flacheisen für (4)/5 Stück Gastürbeschläge/iron bar for (4)/5 sets of gas(tight) fittings” (p. 454 and Photos 14f. on p. 440);
- 27) “für 4 gasdichte Türen/for 4 gas-tight doors: WL Schlosserei liefert für 4 gasdichte Türen: Die Beschläge wie bereits schon einmal geliefert/ WL metal workshop to supply for 4 gas-tight doors: fittings as already once supplied” (p. 454 and Photo 16 on p. 441);
- 28) “24 Ankerschrauben für gasdu[i]chte Türen lt. Skizze/24 anchor bolts for gas-tight doors as per sketch” (p. 454, Photo 36 on p. 455);
- 29) “Gastüren einsetzen/fit gas(tight) doors,” (*ibid.*, and Photo 37, p. 455) twice.

1.4.4. Further Traces (Crematoria II and III)

- 30) “Der (Leichen)Keller 1 mit der Abluft aus den Räumen der 3 Saugzuganlagen vorgewärmt wird/The (corpse) cellar 1 will be preheated with the exhaust air from the rooms of the 3 forced draft installations” (p. 454 and Photo 4 on p. 433.);
- 31) “Die Warmluftzuführungsanlage für Leichenkeller 1/The hot air supply installation for Leichenkeller 1.” (*ibid.* and Document 39 on p. 230)

1.4.5. Other Traces

- 32) “Beschlage fur gasdichte Tur/fittings for gas-tight doors” (p. 456 and Photo 38 on p. 457);
- 33) “1 Schlussel fur Gaskammer/1 key for gas chamber” (p. 456);
- 34) “Die Beschlage zu 1 Tur mit Rahmen, luftdicht mit Spion fur Gaskammer/The fittings for 1 door with frame, air-tight with peephole for gas chamber” (p. 456 and Photo 39 on p. 457).

By counting a few items twice, Pressac arrives at the inflated number of 39 “criminal traces.”

1.5. Preliminary Considerations

Pressac considers Item 33 to be a real and true example of a dubious trace. He underlines that the order to get in touch with the pharmacist at the SS sick-bay and the reference to a *block* “make the order incomprehensible with our present state of knowledge” and concludes by saying that “the doors to the homicidal gas chambers of the crematoriums were not fitted with locks” (p. 456). Hence, the respective document does not refer to crematoria and is not a criminal trace. Item 34 concerns an order that “has nothing to do with the Birkenau Krematorien, but was destined for one of the disinfestation gas chambers of the Main Camp, probably the one in block 1,” (*ibid.*) hence this is not a criminal trace either. One fails to understand why Pressac included both items in his list of “criminal traces” in the first place.

Item 10 is identical to Item 4, but Pressac counts it once for Crematorium II and again for Crematorium III, because he states that the respective document refers to Crematoria II and III, and therefore the trace in question is applicable to both. This is all the more arbitrary, as Crematorium II was practically finished at the time (March 6, 1943), whereas Crematorium III was still in a very early stage of construction.

Item 32 concerns “metal fittings for gas-tight door” (*Beschlage fur gasdichte Tur*) and is dated 17 June, 1943 (p. 457, Photo 38). Pressac comments (p. 456):

“This order was issued by the Birkenau Krematorium maintenance service, but does not mention the destination of the fittings. In view of the date, a new door was probably being fitted to replace a faulty or damaged one.”

Actually, “the Birkenau Krematorium maintenance service” does not appear at all on the work-sheet. The order came, in fact, from “*Verwaltung V 4*,” *i.e.* Section V4 of the camp administration, the garrison surgeon (*SS-Standortarzt*). The same office appears also on an order dated May 28, 1943, concerning “the metal fittings for 1 door with frame, air-tight, with peephole for gas chamber” (*Die Beschlage zu 1 Tur mit Rahmen, luftdicht mit Spion fur Gas-*

kammer) to be installed at “disinfestation chamber, KL Auschwitz” (*Entweusungskammer K.L. Auschwitz*).³⁷ It is therefore clear that the order of June 17, 1943, concerned a disinfestation chamber as well.

Pressac takes Items 8 and 9 to constitute parts of the same device, and it therefore makes no sense to count them separately. To all this, Pressac applies the curious procedure of counting as separate any repeated reference to the same items. Items 13 and 14, on the other hand, are not even two references to the same item, but two instances of the same order taken from two separate registers: “work orders of *Zentralbauleitung*” (*Bestellscheine der Zentralbauleitung*) and the succeeding one (which assembled various orders contained in this register) of the “metal workshop” (*Schlosserei WL*). This is true as well for Items 19 and 21, which refer to the same job (“[apply] concrete in gas chamber”) recorded on two different forms of the firm Riedel & Sohn (see Subchapter 5.11.). It is only on account of such manipulations that Pressac was able to boost his list up to 39 items.

If we actually eliminate the false items mentioned and group the repetitions under one heading, the “criminal traces” can be reduced to a total of *nine*. The following table gives their designation and the respective place on Pressac’s list:

Designation	Item nos.
1. Vergasungskeller	1
2. Gasprüfer	2
3. Gastür	3, 6, 11, 13, 14, 23, 26, 29
3a. Gasdichte Tür	7, 15, 22, 24, 25, 27, 28, 32
4. Auskleideraum	4, 10
4a. Auskleidekeller	5, 12
5. Drahtnetzeinschiebvorrichtung	8
5a. Holzblenden	9
6. Brausen	10
7. Gasdichte Fenstern	18, 20, 17 ³⁸
8. Gas[s]kammer	19, 21
9. Warmluftzuführungsanlage	30, 31

After his search in the Moscow archives, Pressac added another six items:

10. Elimination of the slide for the corpses
11. *Sonderkeller* (special basement)
12. *Durchführung der Sonderbehandlung* (implementation of special treatment)
13. *Sperrgebiet* (off-limits zone)

³⁷ Excerpt from the register of orders by ZBL to Schlosserei W.L., Höss Trial, Vol. 11, p. 93.

³⁸ The index has 12 gas-tight “doors” 30 by 40 cm; they are obviously windows.

14. *Holzgebläse* (wooden blower)
15. *Normalgaskammer* (normal gas chamber)

Furthermore, Pressac lists a series of secondary criminal traces which I shall examine in Chapter 3.

Van Pelt's own contribution to this collection has been exceedingly small: he has brought in a single new "criminal trace": a document referring to "*Verbrennung mit gleichzeitiger Sonderbehandlung*" (incineration with simultaneous special treatment) in the *Aktenvermerk* of SS-Unterscharführer Heinrich Swoboda dated January 29, 1943,³⁹ which I shall discuss in Subchapter 6.3.

1.6. Chronological Sequence of the "Traces" and Its Significance.

As early as 1994 I had noticed oddities in the assembly of "traces" presented by Pressac, which no historian has since looked at more closely. By this I mean the fact that all the "criminal traces" are concentrated in the construction phase of the crematoria. If we arrange them by their dates, the items can be grouped chronologically as listed in Table 1 for the four crematoria.

It is conspicuous that no suspicious reference to Crematorium II is dated later than the handover of the building from the ZBL to the camp administration (March 31, 1943). If we follow Pressac, this building is said to have served as (p. 183):

"a homicidal gas chamber and incineration installation from 15th March 1943, before its officially coming into service on 31st March, to 27th No-

Table 1: Chronology of Alleged "Criminal Traces" at Auschwitz

CREMATORIUM II		CREMATORIUM III		CREMATORIA IV AND V	
Completion: * Mar. 19, '43		June 24, 1943		V: Mar. 19, '43; IV: Apr. 4, '43	
Item no.	Date [d/m/y]	Item no.	Date [d/m/y]	Item no.	Date [d/m/y]
1	29/1/1943	10	6/3/1943	17	13/2/1943
2	2/3/1943	11	31/3/1943	17a	13/2/1943
3	6/3/1943	15	31/3/1943	23	15/2/1943
4	6/3/1943	12	14/4/1943	22	18/2/1943
30	6/3/1943	13	16/4/1943	24	19/2/1943
5	8-13/3/1943	16	24/6/1943	17b	24/2/1943
31	25/3/1943	14	16/4/1944	20	28/2/1943
6	31/3/1943			19	2/3/1943
7	31/3/1943			21	2/3/1943
8	31/3/1943			18	28/3/1943
9	31/3/1943			25	31/3/1943
				28	6/4/1943
				26	16/4/1943
				27	16/4/1943
				29	17/4/1943

* Date of turnover transaction

³⁹ Aktenvermerk by SS-Unterscharführer Swoboda of January 29, 1943. RGVA, 502-1-26, p. 196.

vember 1944, annihilating a total of approximately 400,000 people, most of them Jewish women, children and old men."

While it is true that Pressac later reduced this number drastically, it is also true that van Pelt assigns to this installation 500,000 victims (2002, pp. 68, 458, 469). This means that this alleged gas chamber would have operated for more than 20 months and caused the death of some 500,000 persons without generating even a scrap of a "criminal trace" during its operation!

For Crematorium III no trace is dated later than the handover date of this installation either (June 24, 1943). According to Pressac, 350,000 persons were gassed and cremated here (p. 183). The latest trace for Crematoria IV and V is dated only a couple of weeks after the handover of the last installation (April 4, 1943). Pressac tells us that 21,000 persons met their death and were cremated in these two crematoria (p. 236). Hence, 771,000 persons are said to have been gassed in these four crematoria over a period of more than 20 months without leaving anything like a "criminal trace" in the archives of the *ZBL* (see Subchapter 15.5), whereas there is a multitude of documents attesting to the frequent breakdowns occurring in the cremation devices (see Section 8.8.1.).

To this we must also add the fact that there is not the slightest "criminal trace" for the early alleged homicidal gassings – not only for the first alleged gassing in the basement of Block 11 and for the experimental ones in Crematorium I of the Main Camp (*Stammlager*), but also for the mass gassings in the so-called "bunkers" of Birkenau which, supposedly and according to van Pelt, went on for some 15 months and led to the annihilation of "over 200,000 Jews" (p. 455).⁴⁰

"Criminal traces" are thus totally absent for both the "testing" and the main phases of the alleged mass gassings. They are limited to the Birkenau Crematoria and to their construction period. They could possibly refer to the planning and the construction of homicidal gas chambers, but certainly not to their use. Actually, as will be shown in this book, they refer to normal plans of non-criminal character, were often not implemented, and depended upon the conditions prevailing at various moments. For those reasons they in fact disappear completely from the documentation covering the period after May 1943, *i.e.* the time when the new project of the "special measures for the improvement of the hygienic conditions" at Birkenau was implemented. Actually, the "criminal traces" for Crematorium III have not only no nefarious significance, but were part and parcel of those very measures (see Chapter 4).

⁴⁰ For that reason I have titled Chapter 7 "The Alleged 'Criminal Traces' for the 'Bunkers' of Birkenau." Cf. the respective explanations in Subchapter 7.1.

1.7. Fundamental Contradictions

On the basis of his “criminal traces,” Pressac proposes a model for the alleged mass gassings which, however, turns out to be historically unfounded. Pressac himself formulates the first objection to be raised (p. 184):

*“It may appear surprising that the ‘industrial’ extermination of Jews at Auschwitz-Birkenau was planned and put into practice so late: planned **between June and August 1942** and actually implemented **between March and June 1943** by the entry into service of the four Krematorien.”* (Pressac’s emphases)

The matter is all the more surprising as Höss declared explicitly to have been given Himmler’s order to exterminate the Jews at Auschwitz in June 1941. Under the date of March 1946 he stated in his own handwriting and signed that:⁴¹

“I personally arranged on orders received from Himmler in May 1941 the gassing of two million persons between June/July 1941 and the end of 1943 during which time I was commandant of Auschwitz.”

But if Himmler had really decided to make Auschwitz the center of the extermination of the Jews as early as May or June 1941, why were the four crematoria later built without any homicidal gas chambers? In his second book Pressac answered this embarrassing question by moving Höss’s alleged meeting with Himmler in Berlin by one year to June 1942 – which, however, would still have been earlier than the beginning of construction of any of the new crematoria.⁴² In doing so, though, he created a long list of historical anachronisms and contradictions, which invalidate this re-dating from the very start.

Debórah Dwork and Robert Jan van Pelt, on the other hand, retain Höss’s date while asserting, however, that Himmler did not order the Auschwitz *Kommandant* to implement the Jewish extermination at that time, but only to prepare extermination installations (Dwork/van Pelt, pp. 277-282.). But for whom? This is what the two authors have to say about the matter (p. 282):

“Hitler had made it clear that, if revolution was attempted during this war as it had been at the close of the last war, the participants and camp inmates were to be killed in extermination installations in the concentration camps.”

Hence, when Himmler ordered Höss to come to Berlin, he allegedly did nothing but anticipate the *Führer’s* wishes. I will not dwell on the ramifications of this fanciful hypothesis, which will be discussed further on in this study (Subchapter 18.4.), and will limit myself to van Pelt’s claim that the decision to ex-

⁴¹ NO-1210; PS-3868. Photocopy of the note in: Lord Russell 1954, outside the text between pp. 180f.

⁴² The contract with the civilian firm Huta to build the first crematorium in Birkenau (Crematorium II) was signed only on July 29, 1942, as Pressac writes himself (1989, p. 187).

terminate the Jews at Auschwitz was made by Himmler sometime in mid-July 1942 and that “the camp architects got the order to design crematoria equipped from the outset with homicidal gas chambers on August 20, 1942” (van Pelt 2002, p. 80). Needless to say, this assertion is entirely gratuitous and lacks any evidence in the sources.

Pressac’s main thesis of a subsequent transformation of Crematorium II in a criminal sense leads to irresolvable contradictions as well, though. He asserts (1993, pp. 53f.):

“The various steps and meetings which had led to these two days, during which the construction of the four Birkenau Crematoria was definitively decided – at the time still without any gas chambers – can be summarized as follows: even though Crematorium II had served as a catalyst in the choice of Auschwitz for the liquidation of the Jews, it is not directly linked to that extermination, but is considered as a useful means that happened to be available. Crematorium III was only a complement to Crematorium II; it was built in the light of the 200,000 (expected) detainees and was ‘criminalized’ only because of the needs of the SS-bureaucracy. Crematoria IV and V, designed without much fuss, are linked directly to Bunkers 1 and 2, and even if their initial layout was not criminal (no gas chambers), their destination was, as they marked the end of a killing process of which they were part.”

Pressac asserts that Crematorium III had a “sanitary vocation” (1993, p. 50), as did Crematorium II, the direct mirror image of which it was. He states moreover that Crematoria II and III were not designed for homicidal gassings (1993, p. 63). On the other hand, Crematoria IV and V were “linked to Bunkers 1 and 2” (1993, p. 50), they stood “in connection with Bunkers 1 and 2” (1993, p. 54).

Thus, initially Crematoria II and III had a normal sanitary and hygienic function, whereas Crematoria IV and V, although devoid of homicidal gas chambers, had a criminal function, because they incinerated the corpses of the gassed from “Bunkers” 1 and 2. Aside from the fact that the so-called “bunkers” never existed as extermination sites – I have demonstrated this elsewhere in a specific study (2016b) – Pressac’s thesis leads to the nonsensical conclusion that the ZBL engineers at Auschwitz specified 30 muffles (with an alleged daily capacity of 2,880 corpses) for the normal, sanitary needs of the camp and only 16 muffles (with an alleged daily capacity of 1,536 corpses) for the mass exterminations, and thus allegedly expected the “natural” mortality of the camp to be twice as high as the mortality stemming from mass exterminations!

Another nonsensical consequence is that, although Auschwitz had allegedly been chosen by Himmler to be the center of mass exterminations precisely

because of the new crematorium with its alleged capacity of 1,440 corpses per day (1993, p. 41), the ZBL engineers, rather than using this crematorium and its future twin, Crematorium III, as the main tools for this extermination, fell back on two other crematoria with significantly lower capacities.

Furthermore, the crematoria's mode of operation and their equipment are irreconcilable with Pressac's basic tenets. This applies especially to the ventilation system of *Leichenkeller* 1 and 2 of Crematoria II and III, to the transportation system for moving corpses from the morgues in the half-basements to the furnace hall on the ground floor of these buildings, and to the claimed gassing procedure of Crematoria IV and V, which will be discussed in their full context in Chapter 4.⁴³

1.8. The Ventilation System of Crematories II and III

Pressac states that the initial ventilation system planned for the new crematorium (the future Crematorium II) consisted of

- a ventilator (in pressure) No. 450⁴⁴ for the “B-Keller” (the future *Leichenkeller* 1) with a capacity of 4,800 m³/h (Pressac 1993, p. 41)
- a ventilator (in suction) No. 450 for the “B-Keller” with a capacity of 4,800 m³/h
- a ventilator (in suction) No. 550 for the “L-Keller” (the future *Leichenkeller* 2) with a capacity of 10,000 m³/h.

Pressac goes on to say that the capacity of the blowers was subsequently raised to

- ventilator (in pressure) for “B-Keller”: 8,000 m³/h
- ventilator (in suction) for “B-Keller”: 8,000 m³/h
- ventilator (in suction) for “L-Keller”: 13,000 m³/h.

The purpose is said to have been an increase in the number of air exchanges for the alleged gas chamber over those of the alleged undressing hall. Pressac states that *Leichenkeller* 1 of Crematoria II and III was equipped with blowers having a capacity of 8,000 m³/h (1993, p. 74, 118) and cites as proof Invoice No. 729 of May 27, 1943, concerning the ventilation system of Crematorium III (*ibid.*, note 184, p. 105). He insinuates that the increase in the ventilation capacity from 4,000 to 8,000 m³/h was decided on in order to compensate for the arrangement of the ventilation ducts which had been planned and built for an ordinary morgue. In his opinion the arrangement was unsuitable for a homicidal gas chamber, because it had the aeration section near the ceiling and the de-aeration near the floor. With respect to the “*Gasprüfer*” (see Subchapter 2.6.) he states that “the SS wanted to find out whether the capacity of the ven-

⁴³ Cf. in this respect Mattogno 1994a, pp. 59-63; Rudolf 2016c, pp. 186-191.

⁴⁴ This number indicates the diameter in millimeters of the blower connection openings.

tilation for *Leichenkeller 1* would have compensated its original arrangement, with the aeration on top and the de-aeration down below, as in a morgue, whereas a gas chamber would have required the reverse, an aeration below and a de-aeration above” (1993, pp. 71f.).

These are actually mere conjectures, refuted by the documents. Topf Invoice No. 729 quoted by Pressac, dated May 27, 1943,⁴⁵ does in fact provide for the “*B-Raum*,” the alleged homicidal gas chamber, one ventilator in suction and one in pressure with capacities of 4,800 m³/h, and for the “*L-Raum*,” the alleged undressing room for the victims, a ventilator in suction with a capacity of 10,000 m³/h. Identical ventilation capacities are given also in Invoice No. 171 of February 22, 1943, for the ventilation system of Crematorium II.⁴⁶

Two conclusions refuting the thesis of the transformation of these rooms in a criminal sense derive from these facts. The first one concerns the number of air exchanges in the two rooms. *Leichenkeller 1* measured 30 m in length, 7 m in width and 2.41 m in height, giving it a total surface area of 210 m² and a volume of 506 m³, without taking into account the small volume occupied by the concrete beams and pillars. *Leichenkeller 2* was 49.49 m long, 7.93 m wide and 2.30 m high, yielding a floor area of 392.5 m² and a volume of 902.7 m³, again without beams and pillars. Hence, for the alleged homicidal gas chamber the ZBL engineers had planned on (4,800÷506=) 9.48 exchanges of their entire air volume per hour and on (10,000÷902.7=) 11 changes per hour for the alleged undressing room – which means that the gas chamber would have been less well ventilated than the undressing room.

The second conclusion is that the number of air exchanges was what applied to normal morgues, if not lower. In Heepke’s classic work on the design of crematoria it is said that morgues require at least 5 exchanges of air per hour, even 10 in case of intensive use.⁴⁷ But Topf themselves had specified on December 9, 1940, for the morgue of Crematorium I, 20 exchanges of air per hour:⁴⁸

“For the autopsy room, we have decided on 10 exchanges of air and for the corpse cell on 20 exchanges of air.”

For the disinfestation chambers using hydrogen cyanide in the *Degesch-Kreislauf* system a full 72 air exchanges per hour had been specified.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ RGVA, 502-1-327, pp. 16 and 16a. Cf. Document 1.

⁴⁶ RGVA, 502-1-327, pp. 25 and 25a. Cf. Document 2.

⁴⁷ Heepke 1905b, p. 104; page reproduced in Mattogno 1994a, p. 114; Rudolf 2016c, p. 201.

⁴⁸ Letter from Topf to SS-Neubauleitung at Auschwitz of December 9, 1940 concerning a “Entlüftungsanlage für Leichenzellen und Sezierraum.” RGVA, 502-1-312, p. 136.

⁴⁹ Degesch (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Schädlingsbekämpfung) was the distributor of Zyklon B via two daughter companies, Heli (Heerd and Lingler) and Testa (Tesch & Stabenow); for their disinfestation device see Peters/Wüstinger, pp. 194f. (pages reproduced in Mattogno 1994a, pp. 115f., Rudolf 2016c, p. 202).

As I have shown in another book, Richard Green and Jamie McCarthy, advisors to van Pelt, at first tried to prove this demonstration wrong by using a silly trick. They had accused me of having “misrepresented” the capacity of the ventilation system in Crematoria II and III by writing 4,800 instead of 8,000 m³/h, even though in the book reviewed by them I had reproduced the two originals which give the capacity of the blowers to be 4,800 m³/h (1994a, pp. 110-113; Rudolf 2016c, pp. 197-200). In the end they had to admit, albeit reluctantly, that the documents showed I was right (see Mattogno 2006a, pp. 73-77).

This, however, has not kept van Pelt from using Green and McCarthy’s wrong capacity of the ventilators of 8,000 m³/h in his effort to “demonstrate,” on the basis of a table, that the ventilation system could “quickly remove the gas.” (2002, p. 365f.)

But the problem is less one of efficiency than one of design: the fact that even after their alleged transformation into something criminal the ventilation system of the two *Leichenkeller* in Crematoria II and III stayed what it had been when planned for two normal morgues and the fact that the alleged undressing hall was ventilated more strongly than the alleged homicidal gas chamber contrast glaringly with such an alleged transformation.

1.9. The Freight Elevators of Crematoria II and III

1.9.1. The History of the Freight Elevators of Crematoria II & III

Within the framework of an assumed mass extermination, the freight elevators of Crematoria II and III would have had a particular significance, as they would have constituted the first bottleneck for such a process (the second one being the cremation capacity of the furnaces). According to the initial plans, Crematoria II and III were to be equipped with freight elevators described as follows in the order given to Topf on February 28, 1943, by the ZBL:⁵⁰

“2 compl. electrical elevator machines incl. electric motors for three-phase 220/380 V, 7.5 HP each, special design, with overload protectors, limit switches, braking devices, platforms 2.10×1.35× 1.80 m with safety device, otherwise as per above mentioned cost estimate at 9,371 RM each = 18,742 RM.

I patented Demag electro lift for 750 kg capacity, single cable, to be raised to 1500 kg capacity by addition of second cable, at 968 RM. This Demag electro lift must be supplied at once, as it will have to be used pending the arrival of the elevators mentioned in Item 1.”

⁵⁰ Letter from Zentralbauleitung to Topf of February 28, 1943. APMO, BW 30/34, p. 69.

Delivery for the first position was to be about seven months. Pressac shows Drawing 5037 which was attached to the cost estimate. It had been established by *Gustav Linse Spezialfabrik f. Aufzüge* of Erfurt on January 25, 1943, and has the title “*Lasten-Aufzug bis 750 kg Tragkraft für Zentralbauleitung der Waffen SS, Auschwitz/O.S.*” (freight elevator up to 750 kg capacity for *Zentralbauleitung der Waffen SS, Auschwitz/O.S.*; Pressac 1993, Document 25). This freight elevator was installed only in Crematorium III, between May 17 and June 6, 1943, by the Topf engineer Heinrich Messing (Pressac 1989, p. 371). In Crematorium II, a very crude makeshift elevator was installed which was ordered from the *Schlosserei WL* on February 15, 1943. The order reads as follows (Höss Trial, Vol. 11, pp. 82f.):

“February 15, 1943, PoW camp,^[51] Crematorium I, BW 30. Object 1 platform elevator for min. 300 kg payload incl. installation of respective reel device, cable and motor as well as guide-rail. Order no. 2563/146:/ of January 26, 1943 from Zentralbauleitung. Order taken over from former detainee metal workshop, terminated March 13, 1943.”

As can be seen from a Polish photograph of 1945 presented by Pressac (1989, Photo 20, p. 488), this elevator was very primitive. It had to be repaired right away by Messing on April 12, 1943, who needed 11 hours for the job,⁵² but it still worked poorly. On July 23, 1943, Topf wrote a letter to the ZBL in which we can read:⁵³

“In the recent telephone conversation with your site superintendent, Sturmbannführer Bischoff, the latter stated that the elevator in Crematorium II, as well, has been giving rise to permanent problems. We have, however, not built this elevator; rather, it was assembled and installed by your own people. We are, therefore, at a loss to see how you can make us responsible for a device not built by us.”

Nonetheless, this poorly functioning elevator stayed in place until the end. The order for the two definitive freight elevators underwent a number of changes. On May 25, 1943, Topf thanked the ZBL for having checked, approved and sent on to Berlin for payment four invoices. One of these was for the *Demag-Elektrozug*, another was “Crematorium II/III. Order no. 43/145/3. [for] 2 electrical elevators. RM 9,391.”⁵⁴

A Topf *Aufstellung* (list), dated July 2, 1943, referring to the above order, shows a first down payment of 9,371 RM, half the total amount (18,742 RM)

⁵¹ KGL – Kriegsgefangenenlager: camp for prisoners of war. Official designation of the Birkenau Camp through March 31, 1944, when it was designated “Lager II Birkenau.” Kirschneck’s file memo dated March 31, 1944. AGK, NTN, 94, p. 60.

⁵² “Bauwerk 30 Kr II Fahrstuhl repariert”: Arbeits-Bescheinigung Messing for the period 12-18 April 1943. RGVA, 502-1-306, p. 93a. Cfr. Pressac 1989, p. 370.

⁵³ RGVA, 502-1-313, p. 29.

⁵⁴ RGVA, 502-1327, p. 83.

("1. Anzahlungs-Hälfte von RM 18,742... RM 9,371"), but a handwritten entry by Jährling states that the down payment had only amounted to 1,876.43 RM.⁵⁵ However, the freight elevators had not yet been supplied and even ran the risk of never being actually delivered. On August 4, 1943, more than five months after the order for these devices, Topf informed the ZBL that the manufacturing permit for them had not yet been granted:

"We have learned today from our sub-supplier that the plenipotentiary for machine construction has not yet granted the construction permit. The application has been forwarded to the Reich minister for armaments and munitions [Albert Speer] requesting his decision."

Topf added that the plenipotentiary for machine construction had voted against the construction of the devices, and Topf therefore asked the ZBL to get in touch with the Berlin authorities in order to have the request granted, speaking of serious consequences otherwise:⁵⁶

"For your information please note that our sub-supplier has already assembled the better part of the elevators. There is the danger, however, that the order has to be stopped immediately if the Reich minister for armaments and munitions does not give his approval."

This incident is in stark disagreement with the thesis that the Birkenau Crematoria were the instruments for the implementation of Himmler's extermination order: in such a case any opposition on the part of the Plenipotentiary for machinery construction would obviously have been considered sabotage.

On September 9, the ZBL sent to SS-Hauptsturmführer Prinzl of Amt C V of the SS-WVHA a copy of the Topf letter of August 4, with the request to get in touch with the Reich minister for armaments and munitions in order "to obtain [the approval for] the realization of the elevators urgently required."⁵⁷ On May 12, 1944, the ZBL sent Topf an "urgent telegram" saying:⁵⁸

"installation of the 2 elevators cannot be done now. Installation will be done later, together with installation of de-aeration equipment in 4 and 5."

It is not clear, however, whether the two elevators were ever installed at all.

1.9.2. The Freight Elevators in the Irving-Lipstadt Trial

Van Pelt provides us with a long account of the discussion about the freight elevators in the Irving-Lipstadt Trial (2002, pp. 468f.):

"Irving stayed close to the brief provided by the anonymous architect. The most important discussion concerned the elevator connecting the basement to the main floor of Crematorium 2." (Emphasis added)

⁵⁵ RGVA, 502-1-327, p. 74.

⁵⁶ APMO, BW 30/34, p. 19.

⁵⁷ APMO, BW 30/34, p. 78.

⁵⁸ RGVA, 502-1-313, p. 10.

The brief in question contained a computation of the time needed to transport 2,000 passengers, “assuming a carrying capacity of 200 kilos.” The time was stated to be 4 hours and 48 minutes for live persons, but transporting corpses would obviously have taken twice or three times as long, and the slightest mishap would have halted the whole sequence of gassings and incinerations (p. 469). Van Pelt then describes his own reactions (*ibid.*):

“I had read this reasoning the night before and had found that one of its flaws was the assumption that the elevator could only have carried 200 kilos. In fact, I had a copy of a document from February 1943 stipulating that the carrying capacity of the elevator should be doubled from 750 kilos to 1,500 kilos. Taking the calculation of the anonymous architect as his point of departure, Irving presented the elevator as the crucial bottleneck in the whole operation.” (Emphasis added)

Then van Pelt shows an excerpt from the trial records which contains two of his replies (p. 470):

“They immediately asked to increase the carrying capacity of that elevator by providing extra cables to 1,500 kilos.”

“The 750 kilograms was installed by the time the building was finished and immediately they asked to double the capacity.” (Emphasis added)

During the trial, van Pelt assumed an average weight of 60 kg per corpse, which means that the elevator could accommodate 25 bodies at a time (p. 470, 472). Van Pelt concluded (p. 470):

“Irving did not return to the carrying capacity. It was clear to me that an important assumption on which he planned his attack [sic] had been proven wrong.”

Van Pelt’s reply is based on a historically false hypothesis. As I have shown in the preceding section, the “*Demag-Elektrozug für 750 kg Tragkraft*” was not installed in Crematorium II, but only in Crematorium III.

Van Pelt asserts moreover that the SS “immediately asked” for the capacity of the elevators to be doubled to 1,500 kg and then assumes that this was actually done, because he speaks of 25 bodies being moved at one time (p. 472). But the document he mentions says only that the capacity of 750 kg “is being [or will be] brought to a capacity of 1,500 kg by the installation of the second cable,” which is an indication of intent at best, but certainly not a specific request – and even less the realization of such an intent. Nothing tells us, in fact, that the capacity of the elevators was ever actually doubled.

The most serious matter, however, is van Pelt’s complete silence about the fact that the freight elevator installed in Crematorium II was the “*Plat-eauaufzug*” (platform elevator) with a capacity of 300 kg. Therefore an extermination of 500,000 people in Crematorium II would have been implemented using this primitive and poorly functioning device. As its capacity was 300 kg

or an average of 5 bodies of 60 kg at a time, the elevator would have had to do a total of 200,000 runs, 100,000 up and 100,000 down!

If we assume an average duration of five minutes for one complete operation (loading, upward journey, unloading, downward journey) the transportation of 2,000 bodies from the half-basement to the furnace hall (the hypothesis discussed by Irving, see van Pelt 2002, p. 470) would have taken $(2,000 \div 5 \times 5 =)$ 2,000 minutes or some 33 hours. Such an average duration, which corresponds to 1 minute for the transit time up and down⁵⁹ and 4 minutes for the loading and unloading of the bodies (*i.e.* an average of 24 seconds for loading and another 24 seconds for unloading one corpse), is definitely too short for two reasons:

First of all, the elevator worked poorly; therefore one has to allow for lost time due to breakdowns, blockages, and delays. Secondly, according to the witness Henryk Tauber, in Crematorium II (and III) four detainees were assigned to the elevator, two for loading, and two for unloading, they worked in 12-hour shifts (Tauber 1945a, p. 9). Even if we assume, for the time being, an average transit time of 5 minutes per load, these detainees, by mid-shift, *i.e.* after 6 hours, would have handled and moved $(6 \times 60 \div 5 \times 300 =)$ 21,600 kg, and the sustained exertion would have reduced their efficiency more and more.

It is thus clear that the average transit time for one load was higher, which makes the alleged movement of 500,000 corpses even more grotesque. As the maximum number of days during which Crematorium II was operational was 433, the elevator would have had to perform $(500,000 \div 5 \div 433 =)$ 231 trips per operating day, each of which would have required on average $(1,440 \div 231 =)$ a little over 6 minutes (*i.e.* 1 minute for each round trip and 30 seconds each for loading and unloading each corpse), without interruption over 433 days (see Section 8.8.1.), 24 hours a day – a truly absurd idea!

In conclusion, the freight elevator is in perfect agreement with the *actual* number of cremations, something like 20,000 for Crematorium II, but is absolutely out of proportion when it comes to the gigantic figures of a mass extermination cited by van Pelt.

⁵⁹ Van Pelt's anonymous engineer assumed a duration of 30 seconds but, surprisingly, considered only the upward journey of the elevator. Van Pelt 2002, p. 469.