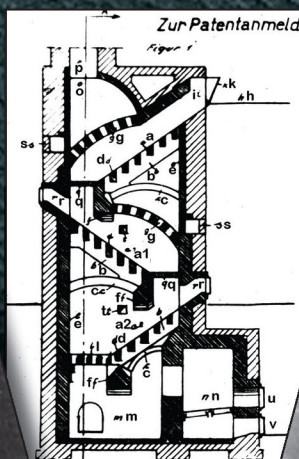


HOLOCAUST HANDBOOKS · VOLUME 52

AUSCHWITZ ENGINEERS IN MOSCOW



**The Soviet Postwar Interrogations
of the Auschwitz
Cremation-Furnace Engineers**

CARLO MATTOGNO and JÜRGEN GRAF

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The Soviet Postwar Interrogations of the
Auschwitz Cremation-Furnace Engineers.

The Statements of Kurt Prüfer, Karl Schultze, Fritz Sander and Gustav
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Cover Illustration: left: Topf’s Chief Engineer Kurt Prüfer in 1935; center: Fritz Sander’s schematic drawing of a “Continuously operating corpse-cremation furnace for mass use” (see Document 10 in the Appendix); right: Kurt Prüfer in Soviet custody in 1946.

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Introduction

“*Habent sua fata libelli*” – Books have their own destiny. This adage applies not least to the present book.

It all began in October 1993, on the fourth of that month, when the German news magazine *Der Spiegel* published an article with the lurid title “The Engineers of Death” (“*Die Ingenieure des Todes*”). Based on the British-Jewish researcher Gerald Fleming, who had conducted research in Moscow archives, the Hamburg news magazine published excerpts from the interrogation records of three engineers from the Erfurt engineering company Topf and Sons, who had been arrested by the Soviet occupying forces in March 1946. They were Kurt Prüfer, chief engineer for cremation furnaces and heating systems, Karl Schultze, chief engineer for ventilation systems, and Gustav Braun, production manager at Topf. (In addition to Prüfer, Schultze and Braun, the Soviets also caught a fourth engineer, Fritz Sander, chief engineer at Topf & Sons).

All four defendants were accused of participating in an outrageous mass murder. A huge number of people, it was said, had been murdered in gas chambers at Auschwitz, and the bodies of those killed had been burned in cremation furnaces. Through their involvement in the construction and installation of the cremation furnaces and in setting up the ventilation equipment, the Topf engineers were accused of having actively aided and abetted this mass murder.

However, the prosecutors were unable to provide any documentary or material evidence for the claimed gas-chamber genocide. In reality, the crematoria at Auschwitz Main Camp and Auschwitz Birkenau had been built for hygienic reasons. The death rates in those camps had been terrifyingly high, mainly due to recurrent epidemics of typhus in the camp, and the capacity of the Main Camp’s crematorium (Krema I) proved to be insufficient. Initially, the corpses that could not be cremated were simply buried, but because this was associated with considerable danger due to the high groundwater level near Auschwitz, it was decided to build four more crematoria in the Auschwitz Birkenau Camp. The Topf Company was commissioned to provide the furnaces for these facilities.

The engineers in question had not extinguished a single human life through their work. Quite to the contrary, they had certainly *saved* thou-

sands of people, because without these crematoria, the death toll at Auschwitz and Birkenau undoubtedly would have been even higher. Under normal circumstances, no one would have thought of accusing these men of a crime, but in 1946, the circumstances were not normal. The nascent “Holocaust” story was in urgent need of cementing, and in the absence of documentary or forensic evidence, this could only be achieved through witness statements and perpetrator confessions.

According to *Der Spiegel*, the spontaneity and accuracy of these confessions is beyond the shadow of a doubt:

“It is unlikely that the confessions were made under pressure. Already having been incriminated by written documents, they may have hoped to influence the verdict with their frank confessions.”

The leading German disinformation media outlet did not deign to tell its readers what “written documents” had been used to “incriminate” the engineers.

While Fritz Sander died of heart failure just three weeks after his arrest, his three colleagues were each sentenced to 25 years of forced labor in 1948. Kurt Prüfer did not survive the Gulag, but Braun and Schultze were released in 1956 thanks to an amnesty. We have no information about their further fate.

Since the interrogation transcripts are of extraordinary historical interest, Carlo Mattogno and I made an effort to locate these documents at the end of 1995, when we were conducting research in Moscow archives. According to *Der Spiegel*, Fleming had found them in the “Central State Archives,” but an archive of this name does not exist in Moscow. There is a “State Archive of the Russian Federation,” but Fleming had never been there, as results from the fact that the archive’s ledgers recording each visitor have no entry with Fleming’s name or signature. The archive’s management moreover assured us that the protocols we were looking for were not in their possession. Fleming had been to the storage center for historical-documentary collections (now the Russian State Military Archive), but no trace of the relevant documents could be found there either. As we suspected that the interrogation records might be kept in the archives of the Federal Security Service, we submitted a request for authorization during a subsequent visit to Moscow in spring 2001, which was granted a few months later. In February 2002, I was able to inspect and copy the documents. I will always remember vividly the two days I spent there; the incredibly friendly director gave me every conceivable help. In return for the admission and permission to copy the much sought-after documents, he asked for a vacuum cleaner, which we bought together for some \$400. At

that time, Russia was still suffering badly from the consequences of the disastrous 1990s, and there was a general shortage of all kinds of supplies and devices.

This vacuum cleaner turned out to have been a rather profitable investment, because the protocols actually proved to be incredibly significant. With unsurpassed clarity, they illustrate the fragility of a view of history based on “confessions.” From the outset, the engineers used Soviet terminology in their statements: they spoke of “Hitlerite Germany” and “Nazi Germany” as well as of the “war that Germany waged against the peoples of Europe” – a clear indication that their statements were either made under pressure or simply put into their mouths by their interrogators.

Just as the defendants at the Moscow show trials of 1937 and 1938 admitted to crimes that they could not possibly have committed (for example, meetings with imperialist agents in hotels that had been demolished long before the date of the alleged meetings), the Topf engineers also put things on record that could not be true under any circumstances. Fritz Sander, for example, testified on 7 March 1946 that his colleague Prüfer had told him in the summer of 1942, after a visit to Auschwitz, that a colossal number of Jews, including Greek Jews, had been murdered in that camp. In reality, the first Greek Jews were deported to Auschwitz only in March 1943. According to Sander, the bodies of those murdered were burned “in crematoria” (plural). The fact is, however, that only one crematorium existed in Auschwitz in the summer of 1942 – that of the Main Camp. Fleming replaced the year “1942” with “1943” to eliminate this anachronism. The wrong date also appears in the *Spiegel* article, which relies on Fleming. These forgers work with such shabby tricks.

Another striking feature of the interrogations is that the engineers’ memory improved continuously. On 5 March 1946, Prüfer had given the following testimony:

“I saw [in Auschwitz] a gas chamber from the outside; there was a wooden barracks, I saw a connection to the gas chamber, from this gas chamber, there was a connection to the crematorium.”

Even from the perspective of orthodox historiography, none of this makes any sense. The gas chambers were supposed to have been *inside* the crematoria – what possible connection could there be with “the crematorium”? And which one did he mean anyway?

Exactly two years later, on 4 March 1948, Prüfer’s memory had miraculously improved, and he provided a very precise description of Crematorium II at Birkenau, including the gassings that allegedly took place there. Prüfer had obviously received some private lessons in contemporary histo-

ry from his jailers. In 1946, the Auschwitz picture was still very blurred, so that the Soviet officers did not really know what they actually wanted to hear from Prüfer. By early 1948, however, the orthodox Auschwitz picture had already taken on clear contours thanks to two trials held in Poland in 1947 – the Warsaw Trial of the first camp commandant Rudolf Höss, and the Krakow Trial of 40 former members of the camp staff. In early 1948, therefore, the interrogators could easily foist a version of events onto Prüfer, which he then regurgitated during this interrogation.

The fact that the advocates of the orthodox Holocaust narrative are still forced to this day to resort to such incredible confessions, obviously obtained under duress, in order to “prove” their monstrous fantasy of a gigantic massacre in chemical slaughterhouses, shows the full extent of their despair.

Jürgen Graf, December 2013.

Part One:
Historical and Technical Analysis
of the Interrogations

1. Background: Gerald Fleming's Visit to a Moscow Archive

On 18 February 1990, Russian journalist Ella Maximova published an article in the *Izvestia* newspaper titled "Five Days in the Special Archive: Under Lock and Key." She revealed in it the existence in Moscow of a "special archive" containing the records of the Auschwitz Central Construction Office. Upon learning of the article, Gerald Fleming (1921-2006), then emeritus reader in German at the University of Surrey, United Kingdom, immediately contacted the Russian authorities to obtain permission to visit this archive. In 1982, the German edition of Fleming's book *Hitler and the Final Solution* was released (*Hitler und die Endlösung*). This book was a response to the well-known thesis set forth five years earlier by British historian David Irving that Jewish extermination had been carried out on Himmler's orders and without Hitler's knowledge.

In mid-May 1990, Fleming received a phone call telling him the name and "the address of the archive in Moscow where the documents (some 9,000 papers in all) are lodged" (Fleming 1991, p. 10). What happened next was described by Fleming as follows (*ibid.*, p. 11):

"On 30 October, I flew to Moscow, hoping that, in eight or nine working days, I would have analysed sufficient material to be in a position to add some significant new 'criminal traces' to those thirty-nine established from among already known German war-time documents by Jean Claude Pressac in his important work Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers, published by the Beate Klarsfeld Foundation in New York in 1989. On arrival at the Special Archive at Vyborgskaya ulitsa 3, I was informed that all the papers of special interest to me would at once be driven to the Central State Archive at B. Pirogovskaya 17, where I could start the following morning after I had obtained the necessary pass. This also applied, interestingly enough, to the archives assistant assigned to me for the full working period.

I managed to deal with some 800-900 papers per day and examined about 85 percent of the total Zentralbauleitung holdings during my Moscow stay."

In another article that appeared a few months later, Fleming reported (1992, p. 18):

"Over a period of five weeks, I managed to deal with 800 papers a day and succeeded in locating a number of entirely unknown criminal indicators in

the correspondence between the SS Central Building Administration Auschwitz and its immediate superiors in the SS construction hierarchy, the Amtsgruppenchef C, headed by SS Brigadeführer Dr Hans Kammler.”

But a few days earlier, in an article evidently based on an interview with Fleming, British journalist Brian Cathcart had written (1992, p. 17):

“Working in a special room at the government archive in Moscow, he tackled the mountain of 7,000 documents, reading hundreds every day and photocopying many.”

Fleming’s stay in Moscow for five weeks is (inexplicably) inaccurate, because then he would have viewed (taking into account the closure of the archives on Saturdays and Sundays) no less than 20,000 documents, but he claimed to have examined about 7,000, or roughly 85 percent of the 9,000 documents brought to him. I will return to this essential point later. The balance of his research can be summarized as follows (Fleming 1991, p. 12):

“Among the photocopied documents which I brought back to London, I found at least eighteen previously unknown ‘traces of criminality’ in wartime official correspondence relating to ‘Sonderaktionen’ and ‘Sonderbehandlung’ in the crematoria of Auschwitz-Birkenau – eighteen new indicators of mass crimes, over and above the thirty-five ‘criminal traces’ generally agreed to exist in documents previously known, relating to this terrible camp.”

In reality, these alleged “criminal traces” are completely insubstantial. Fleming considered them to be so only by virtue of his ignorance of the meaning and historical context of the documents, as I have demonstrated in two of my studies dealing with the issues involved (Mattogno 2016a&b).

For the present book, Fleming’s discovery of the Soviet interrogations of four engineers from the company J.A. Topf and Sons of Erfurt is of far greater value. These engineers devised and built the cremation furnaces set up at the various crematoria at Auschwitz and Birkenau: Gustav Braun, Kurt Prüfer, Fritz Sander and Karl Schultze.

Fleming announced his discovery on 18 July 1993 in an article titled “Engineers of Death.” In it, he quoted excerpts from the interrogations of Prüfer, Sander and Schultze, noting (Fleming 1993):

“In ‘Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers,’ published in 1989 by the Beate Klarsfeld Foundation in New York, Jean-Claude Pressac noted that the four disappeared from the records with their arrest. ‘For the historian,’ he wrote, ‘the trace ends there for the moment.’

In May 1993, I discovered documents detailing both the fate of these engineers and the full extent of their knowing, sober participation in the Holocaust. The facts are detailed in File 17/9 of the Red Army’s intelligence

branch, never before made available to any historian. Since 1990, when I read an article in Izvestia noting that the Auschwitz Central Building records had been captured by Soviet troops and were still in Soviet archives, I have been studying these papers with the permission of the Russian authorities. My search for related material in the Russian Central State archive turned up File 17/9."

On 4 October 1993, the German news magazine *Der Spiegel* published a lengthy account of Fleming's findings under the title "Protocols of Death" ("Protocols..."). In the new English edition of his book on *Hitler and the Final Solution*, which appeared in 1994, Fleming published lengthy excerpts from some of the Topf engineers' interrogations, presenting them as follows (1994, p. 193):

"Then, in May 1993, in a Moscow Central State Archive depository, I discovered File 17/9, Topf and Söhne, Erfurt, which dealt with the wartime activities and fate of the senior Auschwitz-Birkenau crematorium engineers from that firm."

The puzzling fact should be noted, however, that Fleming never mentioned this discovery in any paper or book. He was the first Western researcher to be admitted to the Moscow archives, but he made no use of its results. He was soon followed by others, who were far more serious with their ambitions than Fleming, by giving an account of the documentary holdings they had viewed, or which otherwise existed.¹

In July 1995, Jürgen Graf, Russell Granata and I went to Moscow for the first of four visits to the archives in the Russian capital. The others took place in late 1995, 2000 and 2001.² The main purpose of our visits was to examine the archives of the Central Construction Office in Auschwitz, and less importantly to find documentation related to the work which the Soviet Commission of Inquiry carried out in Auschwitz in February and March 1945. But we were also very interested in the interrogations of Topf engineers found by Fleming.

The documentation of the Central Construction Office Auschwitz was stored in the archive on Viborgskaya Street, which was then called *Tsentr Khraneniya Istorico-documeltl'nikh Colletsii* (Documentation Center of the Historical-Documentary Collection), but until 1992, its name had been *Tsentral'ny Gosudarstvenny Osoby Archiv* USSR (Special Central Archive of the State of the USSR), referred to in German sources as *Zentrales Staatsarchiv* (Central State Archive) or *Sonderarchiv* (Special Archive), and in English sources as *Osobyi Archive* (Special Archive).³ It was re-

¹ See for example Aly/Heim 1992 and Wegner 1992.

² Russell Granata participated only in the first visit.

³ So for example by Robert Jan van Pelt.

named in 1999 to *Rossisky Gosudarstvenny Vojenny Archiv* (Russian State War Archive). Fleming did not visit this archive, but the Central State Archive on Pirogovskaya Street, i.e., the *Gosudarstvenny Archiv Rossiskoy Federatsy* (State Archive of the Russian Federation). Here were brought from the Viborgskaya Street archive “all the papers of special interest” to him, about 9,000 pages, and he viewed 85 percent of them. However, the *Zentralbauleitung* archive in fact has about 88,200 pages of documents.⁴ This fact reveals the limited scope of his research, which was more concerned with finding incriminating elements than with achieving a general view and real knowledge of the structure and operation of the Auschwitz Camp. Indeed, it is clear that he requested only those *dela* (files) such as 305-318 of *fond* (fund, collection) 502, *opis* (list, section) 1 – relating to the crematoria, in which he hoped to find “criminal traces.”

At the *Gosudarstvenny Archiv Rossiskoy Federatsy*, we located the documentation on the work of the Soviet Commission of Inquiry at Auschwitz (about 7,000 pages), in addition to other important documentary collections (such as a documentation on the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal). The interrogations of the Topf Company’s engineers, however, were not located there. They were not kept at the *Tsentr Khraneniya Istorico-dokumentl’nikh Colletsy* either, so we thought they might be found in the Russian Secret Service Archives. An attempt to gain access in 1995 failed because it required special permission that we did not have. In the spring of 2001, however, we learned that the documents in question were indeed kept there. Hence, we submitted a request to the archives of the “Federal Security Bureau of the Russian Federation” (*Federal’naya Sluzhba Bezopasnosti Rossiskoy Federatsy*: FSBRF) to view the aforementioned interrogation protocols. This request was granted six months later. In February 2002, Jürgen Graf was able to enter the archive, and photocopy the relevant records. They can be found in file N-19262. The reference given by Fleming – 17/9 – is a flawed transcription of the protocol number of the proceedings against Sander, Prüfer, Schultze and Braun (criminal case 1719).

It is quite unlikely that the errors regarding the archive’s name and the file location number were a mere oversight, all the more so since Fleming repeated them in his 1994 book. It is more plausible that, through this ruse, he had intended to mislead other researchers in order to remain the sole custodian of the documents.

⁴ I have described the archive’s filing system in Mattogno 2015, pp. 10f.

Fleming is also to be blamed for not reporting anything about the text of the minutes. In particular, he did not mention that they are written in Russian and mostly handwritten.⁵ That he viewed these very documents is in no doubt, as is clear from his citations, which refer precisely to these minutes in Russian.⁶ It is true that in his article “Engineers of Death” he mentioned fleetingly that the excerpts he presented were “translated from the Russian,” but not even this generic indication appears in his book. On the contrary, by sometimes adducing German words or expressions in parentheses in the extracts quoted, without giving any clarification,⁷ he gave the impression that the minutes in question were precisely in German.

In my opinion, this also had a very specific purpose: that of evading the complex issue arising from a re-translation from Russian of texts previously translated into Russian from German. It is clear that he was not capable of dealing with this issue, both because of his rather elementary knowledge of the history of the Auschwitz Camp, and because of his total ignorance of the history, structure and operation of the crematoria of this camp. This also explains why he limited himself to publishing brief excerpts from the minutes as a mere 26-page appendix to his book, even though he was basically the only person in the world with access to these documents at least until the year 2000,⁸ thanks to the contrivance mentioned earlier.

Another serious shortcoming of Fleming’s handling of this matter lies in the fact that he did not account for the actual substance of the documentary material. In his 1994 book, he presented excerpts from the following interrogations:

- Kurt Prüfer, 5 March (pp. 199-203) and 15 March 1946 (pp. 202f.), with a brief reference to the one on 19 March 1946 (p. 200, Note 9);
- Karl Schultze, 18 February (p. 210), 24 February (pp. 211f.) and 11 March 1948 (pp. 212-214);

⁵ There are also typed documents definitely originating from the period, but also transcripts typed later, which in some cases are not unimpeachable. See Documents 1 through 3.

⁶ For example, Fleming 1994, footnote 12 on p. 206 refers to p. 44; footnote 16 on p. 210 to pages 191-199; footnote 17 on p. 211 to pages 200-203 of the Russian manuscript/typescript text. The typed transcripts bear the same page numbers as the manuscript originals.

⁷ Fleming 1994: “*Verlagerung*,” “*Vernichtungen*” and “*Leichenkeller*” (p. 201), “*Prokurist*” (p. 203), “*Mitarbeiter*” and “*eine geheime Reichssache*”(p. 212), “*Leichenkeller*” and “*Räume*” (p. 213).

⁸ A. Schüle reports that the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., made copies of the interrogation protocols available to Jean-Claude Pressac in 2000; the latter gave them to the Buchenwald Memorial in 2003, which had them translated into German (Schüle, Note 165, p. 50). However, there is no evidence that the interviews were ever published.

- Fritz Sander, 7 March (pp. 203-205) and 13 March 1946 (pp. 207-209), with a brief reference to the one on 21 March 1946 (p. 209);
- Gustav Braun’s extended interrogations are not mentioned at all.

However, Prüfer was subjected to as many as thirteen interrogations, Schultze to eight, Sander to three, and Braun to eleven, plus one interrogation with Prüfer and Braun together.⁹ Again, out of all this material, Fleming cherry-picked what he felt was important for his quest for “criminal traces” supporting the claim that homicidal gas chambers existed at Auschwitz.

Despite the obvious historical value of the interrogations of the four Topf engineers, orthodox Holocaust historiography did not care at all to delve into this issue, so that the major studies on Auschwitz published in the decade following Fleming’s discovery – from the anthologies *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp* (Gutman/Berenbaum 1994) and *Auschwitz 1940-1945* (Długoborski/Piper 1999/2000) to the monographs *Auschwitz 1270 to the Present* by Robert Jan van Pelt and Debórah Dwork, as well as *The Case for Auschwitz* by Robert Jan Van Pelt – don’t mention them at all.

The only exception to this is Annegret Schüle (2010). Just like Fleming, she also selectively used various excerpts from the Topf engineers’ interrogations in search for incriminating evidence. However, her excerpts were taken out of the overarching context, thus disallowing their general significance to be assessed. She moreover made numerous shrewd omissions. I have dedicated Chapter 11 of the present study to discussing her approach.

The most comprehensive account that has been published so far on the subject, which also presents a good general framing of the issue, still remains Jürgen Graf’s related 2002 German paper, whose title translates to “Anatomy of the Soviet Interrogation of the Topf Engineers. The Interrogation of Fritz Sander, Kurt Prüfer, Karl Schultze and Gustav Braun by Officers of the Soviet Counter-Espionage Organization Smersh (1946/1948).” The online version of this paper also contains Graf’s German translation of an almost complete set of interrogation protocols.¹⁰

In the present study, I present for the first time the *complete* protocols of Soviet interrogations of the Topf engineers in printed form, accompanied by a critical in-depth study that, for technical aspects, is based on my study of the crematoria at Auschwitz, which to this day remains the only one in existence in the entire field of Holocaust studies (Mattogno/Deana).

⁹ See the section “The Contents of File N-19262” in Part Two of this study.

¹⁰ Once at www.vho.org/VffG/2002/4/Protokolle.html, currently offline.

2. The Company J.A. Topf and Sons of Erfurt¹¹

The Topf Company was founded in 1878 by Johann Andreas Topf (1816-1891), a master brewer who also worked on improving industrial incinerators. In 1884, his son Max Julius Ernst (1859-1914) joined the company, and the following year also his other son Wilhelm Louis, called Ludwig (1863-1914), so that on 1 April 1885 the company was renamed J.A. Topf & Sons. In the following years, the other two brothers joined the company: Albert (1857-1893) in 1886 and Gustav (1853-1896) in 1888. Ludwig remained the sole owner until his death by suicide on 15 February 1914. By a tragic irony of fate, his son, who bore the same name, also took his own life on 31 May 1945. Ludwig, the father, was a proponent of cremation, which was still in its infancy in Germany at the time. Consequently, he had himself cremated after his death. The ceremony took place on 18 February 1914, at the Gotha Crematorium. His two sons, Viktor Karl Ludwig (1903-1945) and Ernst Wolfgang (1904-1979), were still children at this time and did not take over the business until the 1930s: Ernst Wolfgang in 1929, followed by Ludwig in 1931. On 30 December 1935, the two brothers reorganized the company into a limited partnership.

At the beginning of the 1920s, Topf was known not only in Germany but also abroad. At that time, the company consisted of two main departments, one responsible for the design and construction of steam-boiler plants and the other for complete malting plants. The company's activities also extended to various firing equipment, such as mechanical firing apparatus (grate feeders), preheaters for the utilization of exhaust-gas heat, forced-draft devices, chimney constructions, industrial furnaces of all kinds, and cremation furnaces. Topf was very successful with its high-performance furnace with pre-gasification shaft for the economical combustion of lignite.

In the two decades that followed, Topf developed enormously and exported its products all over the world until the eve of the Second World War.

From 1878 to 1934, the Furnace Construction Department built about 30,000 furnaces (*Feuerungs-Anlagen*), including about 25,000 of its own

¹¹ On the history of the Topf Company, the most important work is undoubtedly that by Schüle (2010). See also Assmann *et al.* 2002; Günther 2005; moreover Pressac 1989 & 1993. In my work on the Auschwitz cremation furnaces, see the chapter "Historical Notes on the Topf & Söhne Company," from which large this chapter's text has been taken (see Mattogno/Deana 2020, Vol. I, Unit II, Chapter I, pp. 163-168; see also Vol. II, Documents 110-134, pp. 150-193).

designs, for which it manufactured various types of grate bars, grates and spare parts.¹²

Between 1924 and September 1937, Topf had delivered or had been contracted in 3,710 cases to deliver items relating to 22 different types of malting equipment and storage facilities to Germany and abroad, including 39 silo gassing systems, about 700 barley, green-malt and malt worm conveyors and 375 barley, green-malt and malt elevators.¹³

In the field of cremation, the Topf Company began its activities on the eve of the First World War. In 1914, it built two furnaces with coke-fired gas generators at the Halle (Saale) Crematorium; another furnace of the same type was inaugurated at the Freiburg Municipal Crematorium on 15 April 1914; and another was installed at the Hirschberg Municipal Crematorium, which opened on 22 August 1915. From the early 1920s, the company began its slow but inexorable rise to become the market leader among German companies in this industry over the next two decades. By 1934, 74 cremation furnaces had been built, including three abroad (two in Moscow and one in Brussels). 29 coke-fired furnaces, 44 gas-fired furnaces and one electric furnace; four of the gas furnaces had been converted from former coke-fired furnaces. Contributing to this success was the fact that Topf soon achieved a very-advanced technological standard and manufactured high-quality equipment; it is credited with building Germany's first gas-fired cremation furnace in Dresden in 1927, as well as Germany's first electric cremation furnace, which went into operation in Erfurt in 1933. In 1934, Topf patented a new type of gas-fired furnace, the "High-performance furnace with tiltable grates D.R.P."¹⁴ or "Topf Cremation Furnace 1934," which was also capable of using electric heating.

Topf's research activity is also evidenced by the numerous patents granted to it, especially in the 1930s, some of which – such as the post-combustion grate and tiltable grate – introduced important innovations in cremation technology.

At the beginning of the 1940s, the Topf Company had a very complex structure. The twelve technical departments were divided into 99 sections, but these twelve departments occupied only numbers 74-85 of the company's total of 89 departments.¹⁵

The Topf engineers of interest in the context of the present study were:

¹² Company flyer of March 1934 with the headline "Topf-Roststäbe." SE, 5/411 A 195.

¹³ Company flyer of 1937 with the headline "Zahlen sprechen..." SE, 5/411 A 191.

¹⁴ *Deutsches Reichspatentamt Patentschrift*, Patent description filed with the German Imperial Patent Office.

¹⁵ SE, 5/411 A 163, J.A. Topf & Söhne, *Organisation der Unternehmung. Katalog der Sonderakten*. See Documents 131f.

- Kurt Prüfer, born in 1891, with the Topf Company from 1920, chief engineer since 2 December 1935,¹⁶ director of Subdepartment DIV, furnace construction, crematoria, waste-incineration furnaces and recovery furnaces for the recovery of metals.
- Karl Schultze, born in 1900 in Berlin, with the Topf Company from 1928, chief engineer, director of Department B, which dealt with heating, ventilation and fan construction.
- Fritz Sander, born in 1876 in Leipzig, with the Topf Company from 1910, chief engineer, proxy of Department D, which in its four sub-departments was engaged in boiler and furnace construction.

During the investigation of the criminal case brought against Prüfer by the Soviets, which will be discussed below, he personally drew a chart of the Topf Company's organizational structure, which he explained in a brief explanatory note (see Document 4 in the Appendix). According to this chart, the company was hierarchically structured as follows:¹⁷

- Ernst Wolfgang and Ludwig Topf, proprietors of the company
- administration office
- general planning, under the direction of Heinrich Mersch, and operations management, with Gustav Braun as head
- project preparation and standards office
- accounting, preliminary and final cost calculation, purchases and assembly office
- Department D – proxies: Fritz Sander and Paul Erdmann, with Subdepartments B (headed by Karl Schultz[e]), DI, DII, DIII, DIV (headed by Kurt Prüfer)
- Department E – proxies: Hermann and Kurt Schmidt, with Subdepartments A, C, EI, EII, EIII, EIV
- locksmith shop, lathe shop, furnace shop, welding shop, carpentry shop
- materials warehouse, motor pool and garage, shipping

Prüfer's explanations of the company structure, which he set down during his Soviet imprisonment, are to be found in Prüfer's criminal file compiled by the Soviets as a typewritten transcript peppered with errors and lacking umlauts, probably prepared by the Soviets on the basis of a handwritten text by Prüfer. It reads as follows:¹⁸

“Mr. TOPF, Ludwig and Ernst-Wolfgang were the owners and bosses of the company and managed it directly.

¹⁶ Prüfer was informed of the appointment in a letter dated December 2, 1935, marked “ET” (Ernst Topf). APMO, BW 30/46, p. 2.

¹⁷ FSBRF, N-19262, Criminal Case 1719, p. 159.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 160-162.

Both gentlemen were in charge of selecting the orders to be produced by the company in the factory.

From here it was decided which orders should be accepted and which should be rejected.

The directly subordinate secretariat, staffed by two ladies, passed on the instructions of Mr. TOPF to the individual departments, and it was here that the incoming and outgoing mail was handled and the personnel matters of the employees were processed.

The General Plan Office examined the orders received, together with TOPF, on acceptance or rejection and, if accepted, assigned a level of priority. It was also here that the control tokens or bills were received and forwarded. This office was the most important in the company and was headed by Mr. MERSCH.

The plant director, as head of the entire plant (with the exception of the technical offices), had to supervise the handling of orders within the factory, and help determine which orders were urgent and which were unsuitable for the plant and had to be rejected. In addition, it was from here that the work was distributed to the individual operating units, and the method of production was discussed and determined. Workers were also accepted [hired] and dismissed here.

In the project preparation office, the machine parts to be manufactured were broken down into the individual operations, the costs for machining the parts were determined, i.e. the piecework wages were set, the parts lists and the shop drawings were checked and errors corrected, and it was checked which machine parts in stock were to be used.

This office reported directly to the plant director (BRAUN).

The standards office checked all drawings and parts lists prepared for the workshop for 'standard' and correctness, and especially for the correctness of the dimensions. This office was also under the direction of the plant director.

In the accounting department, all incoming and outgoing orders were entered into the books, and invoices were prepared.

The pre- and post-calculation checked the cost estimates and, after processing the individual machine parts, calculated the expenses and also the costs of manufacturing the machines, in order to finally determine the total costs and consequently the profit or loss.

This office was under the direction of Mr. TOPF.

In the assembly office, the assemblers for [the] individual construction sites were dispatched, and the assembly wages were determined and settled, the travel prices were prepared and the assembly duration was determined. In addition, the hand tools for the construction sites were assembled and sent off. This office was under the command of Director BRAUN.

The department head management (D) – headed by the directors and senior engineers SANDER and ERDMANN – supervised the individual Departments B-D₁-D₂-D₃-D₄, distributed the incoming mail handed over by Mr. TOPF, and consequently assigned the technical office work, checked the drawings and factory parts lists for correctness, and supervised the outgoing mail.

Department (D) handled steam-boiler hearths, bricking-in of boilers, boilers, aeration and deaeration systems, and furnaces of all designs, garbage and waste-incineration furnaces, industrial furnaces, cable incinerators and cremation furnaces, and factory chimneys

Department Management E – management by authorized signatories Hermann SCHMIDT and Kurt SCHMIDT, supervised the individual Departments A-C-E₁-E₂-E₃-E₄. This department processed brewery machinery and all machines necessary for malt production. Steel silos for grains of all kinds, whole malting plants and grain-drying plants. Both Departments (D and E) were under Mr. TOPF.

The plant, which consisted of a locksmith's shop, a lathe shop, a furnace shop, a welding shop, and a carpentry, employed about 650 workers, and here, by means of the existing machines, all the parts for the complete devices manufactured by the company and described above were made.

The raw iron and non-fabricated iron parts were stored in the materials warehouse and distributed according to need.

The sub-departments of transportation and shipping handled the machines finished for shipment in the factory.

The plant was under the direct supervision of Mr. TOPF and Director BRAUN.”

The organizational chart of the Topf Company dated 22 February 1943, however, shows a much-more-complex structure. The main departments, which were subdivided into numerous subdepartments, were thus as follows (reproduced in Schüle 2011, p. 167):

- Operations management with the two Topf brothers as bosses, including management and general administration
- commercial departments
- technical administration
- technical departments
- the operating department, including the plant production schedule, headed by Gustav Braun, the project-preparation department, and the plant floor;
- the assembly department

In 1940, the Topf Company reached its highest number of employees: 1,064 persons, of whom 766 were blue-collar workers and 298 white-collar

employees (*ibid.*, p. 78). After the beginning of the Second World War, foreign workers, prisoners of war and civilians were conscripted to the Topf Company. At the end of 1942, 270 of these conscripted workers worked for Topf, and in 1943 there were already 341 (*ibid.*, p. 76). On December 31, 1943, the company had 840 employees.¹⁹ From an “employee report” of 31 January 1944, it appears that the Topf Company had 830 employees at that time, of whom 726 were men and 104 women, including 157 salaried employees and 198 skilled workers.

After the war, the Topf Company started its activities for the Soviet Office for War Reparations and Supplies of the Soviet Administration in Germany. In October 1945, it erected a waste-incineration furnace in Arnstadt.²⁰ An order dated February 19, 1946 for a “Cartox²¹ fumigation device for 5,000-ton storage” was completed on 30 May 1948 with the site-acceptance test of the plant.²²

In April 1948, the company was still called J.A. Topf & Sons, but was now a nationalized company with the “State Owner” Max Machemehl, the plant manager Herbert Bartels and Friedrich Schiller as head of the employee organization. Günter Mann was entrusted with the construction of cremation furnaces under the direction of engineer Hans Streichardt.²³

During the same year, the company was renamed Nagema Topfwerke Erfurt VEB, and the construction of cremation furnaces was relocated to Zwickau. In 1957, the company changed its name to “VEB Erfurter Mälzerei- und Speicherbau” (EMS) and was privatized in 1993 as “Erfurter Mälzerei- und Speicherbau GmbH” (EMS).

In 1951, Ernst Wolfgang Topf moved to Wiesbaden, where he reestablished the company J.A. Topf and Sons, but it was dissolved in 1963.

¹⁹ *Beschäftigtenmeldung*, 31 January 1944. BAK, R 13III/321 H 4.

²⁰ File memo of *Betriebsdirektor* Braun added to Kurt Prüfer’s personnel file. APMO, BW 30/46, p. 21.

²¹ Cartox was a disinfection agent for grain in silos, consisting of nine parts liquid ethylene oxide and one part carbon dioxide. Topf also manufactured Areginal fumigation systems, for which it distributed the corresponding “Operating Instructions for Areginal Fumigation Systems.” SE, 5/411 A 182. Areginal was a disinfection agent based on ethyl formate.

²² Test Report No. 103/24 of 30 May 1948. SE 5/411 A 138.

²³ Letter “To the city commandant’s office, Col. Proskurin” of 6 April 1948. SE, 5/411 A 100.

3. Topf Cremation Furnaces for Concentration Camps

The Topf Company's first contacts with the SS for the construction of cremation furnaces in concentration camps took place already before World War II. The company manufactured four types of furnaces, the history of which I describe briefly.²⁴

3.1. Mobile Oil-Fired Double-Muffle Cremation Furnace

The design for this furnace was prepared by Prüfer; its drawing, D55719, is dated 17 May 1939 (Schüle, p. 109). This model had originally been requested in May 1940 by the SS's Main Office Budget and Construction for the SS New Construction Office Auschwitz,²⁵ which later opted for a coke-fired plant, and also for the Flossenbürg Camp.²⁶ A furnace from the Kori Company was installed instead in the Flossenbürg crematorium.

In 1940, the SS administration of the Mauthausen and Dachau Camps ordered from the Topf Company a mobile cremation furnace heated with oil. The first one was commissioned from Topf by the SS New Construction Office of Mauthausen Camp on 21 March 1940, but it was decided on 9 October 1940 to change its heating system from oil to coke. The two coke-gas generators were installed during the construction of the furnace, which went into operation at the end of January 1941.²⁷ This device was installed at the Mauthausen subcamp Gusen. The furnace at Dachau Camp had been delivered even earlier, as shown by Topf's letter to this camp's SS New Construction Office dated 25 July 1940. Later, at an unspecified time, this device was also converted into a coke-fired furnace.

²⁴ For a more detailed discussion of these issues, see Mattogno/Deana, Part I, Unit Two, Chapter 5, "Topf Cremation Furnaces for Concentration Camps," pp. 198-212; Chapter 6, "The Topf Co. and the Construction of the Cremation Furnaces at Auschwitz-Birkenau," pp. 212-251; and Chapter 7, "Structure and Operation of the Topf Cremation Furnaces at Auschwitz-Birkenau," pp. 251-294; see also Part II, Documents 163-241, pp. 263-402.

²⁵ Letter by Topf to New Construction Office dated 25 May 1940; RGVA, 502-1-327, p. 231.

²⁶ Letter by Topf to the administration of Flossenbürg Camp dated 3 June 1940, which refers to an earlier letter of 28 May; reproduced in Schüle, p. 127.

²⁷ Letter of Mauthausen SS New Construction Office to Topf dated 14 February 1941. BAK, NS 4 Ma/54.

3.2. Coke-Fired Double-Muffle Cremation Furnace

On 18 June 1938, the Construction Office of the SS administration for the camps of Buchenwald and Sachsenhausen sent a request to *Gruppenführer* Eicke, head of *Totenkopfverbände* (Death-Head Units) and concentration camps, asking for authorization to build a crematorium at the Buchenwald Camp. Eicke passed it on to the head of the SS administration in Munich with a note in which he supported the request, because the increase in the Buchenwald Camp census had led to a corresponding increase in the number of deaths among the inmates, whose corpses had to be taken to the municipal crematorium at Weimar for cremation (Nuremberg Document NO-4353). The request was accepted, and authorization was granted by Main Office Budget and Construction in early December of 1939.

For the erection of this “emergency crematorium” (*Notkrematorium*) as it was called in the German administrative documents, the Topf Co. at Erfurt was contacted, and on 21 December 1939, Topf submitted to the cognizant authorities a cost estimate for “1 Topf incineration furnace, oil- or coke-fired, with double muffle and compressed-air unit, as well as a draft-enhancing unit” for the price of 7,753 RM plus 1,250 RM for the draft enhancer (NO-4448). Attached to this was the Drawing D56570 “double-muffle cremation furnace with oil burner,” drawn on the same day (NO-4444).

The “Description of the structure of the new emergency crematorium building in the camp for detainees of Buchenwald Concentration Camp,” written on 10 January 1940 by the New Construction Office at Buchenwald (NO-4401), refers to a small crematorium measuring 6 m × 9 m × 4 m, equipped with a two-muffle furnace.²⁸ There are no records on the implementation of this project, but according to former inmate Erich Haase, the first cremation furnace installed at the camp in the spring of 1940 had two muffles and was heated with coke (*Kommunistische...*, p. 80).

In 1940, the New Construction Office Buchenwald also commissioned Topf to build an oil-fired double-muffle cremation furnace. However, only testimonies from former inmates exist about this device.

For the Auschwitz crematorium, the Main Office Budget and Construction chose a coke-fired double-muffle furnace in the spring of 1940, which had been patented on 6 December 1939 as a “cremation furnace with dou-

²⁸ For reproductions of NMT Documents NO-4448, NO-4444 and NO-4445, see Matogno/Deana, Part II, Documents 171-174, pp. 277-285.

ble muffle.”²⁹ This device had already been proposed to the New Construction Office³⁰ at Auschwitz in April. The pertinent cost estimate (*Kostenanschlag*) of 17 April 1940 in fact referred to the “supply of a coke-fired Topf cremation furnace with two muffles and compressed-air unit, plus 1 Topf draft-enhancing unit.”³¹ On 10 June 1940, Topf sent to the New Construction Office Drawing D57253, executed the previous day, concerning a “Cremation furnace heated by coke and plan of the foundations.”

Topf’s installers arrived at Auschwitz in early July, and immediately set to work.³² Construction was completed in early August, and a test cremation was carried out on the 15th.³³

The need for a second double-muffle cremation furnace was brought to Topf’s attention by the head of the Auschwitz Construction Office, SS *Untersturmführer* August Schlachter, in a letter dated 7 November 1940.³⁴ On 13 November, Topf drew up two estimates concerning the second furnace, which was proposed for a price of 7,753 Reichsmarks.³⁵ After approval by Office II C2 of the Main Office Budget and Construction, requested by Schlachter on 22 November,³⁶ Topf prepared Drawing D57999 on the 30th of that month, which shows the layout of the second furnace in the crematorium.³⁷ Construction work began at the end of January with the pouring of the furnace foundation,³⁸ and was completed at the end of February.³⁹ The furnace went into operation in mid-March.

Towards the end of September, Topf received a verbal order for “a double-muffle Topf cremation furnace with blower, introduction cart and rotatable platform.”⁴⁰

²⁹ List of patents of Topf’s Department “D” dated 20 November 1945; Schüle, p. 464; see Mattogno/Deana, Part I, Appendix, Table 1.5, “Patent Applications by Department “DE” of J.A. Topf & Söhne,” p. 435f.

³⁰ The New Construction Office was renamed Construction Office on 1 July 1941, and Central Construction Office on 14 November 1941.

³¹ Letter by Topf to New Construction Office dated 9 October 1940; RGVA, 502-1-327, pp. 209f.

³² Activity Report dated 12 July 1940, for the period of 5-11 July; RGVA, 502-1-214, p. 97.

³³ *Kontrollzettel für die Firma J.A. Topf & Söhne*, Erfurt; RGVA, 502-1-327, p. 215.

³⁴ RGVA, 502-1-312, p. 146.

³⁵ RGVA, 502-1-327, pp. 168-172.

³⁶ RGVA, 502-1-327, p. 173.

³⁷ RGVA, 502-1-312, p. 135.

³⁸ Activity Report dated 1st February 1941, for the period of 26 January – 1st February; RGVA, 502-1-214, p. 72.

³⁹ Activity Report dated 1st March 1941, for the period of 23 February – 1st March; RGVA, 502-1-214, p. 67.

⁴⁰ Letter from Topf to New Construction Office dated 25 September 1941; RGVA, 502-2-23, pp. 270f.

The Topf cost estimate, dated 25 September, showed a price of 7,332 RM, solely for the furnace with the blower.⁴¹ The furnace parts, having a total weight of 3,548.5 kg, were shipped by Topf on 21 October.⁴² In late November, Topf's fitter Albert Mehr laid the foundation for the new furnace,⁴³ but then the work came to a halt, because Topf's supplier, the company Collmener Schamottewerke, had been unable to ship the refractory material for the new furnace due to a freight-car lockdown (*Waggonsperr*).⁴⁴ Work resumed in January 1942, and by the end of March 1942, the third furnace of the Auschwitz crematorium was ready.⁴⁵

On 16 October 1941, the New Construction Office of Mauthausen Camp commissioned Topf to build another coke-fired double-muffle cremation furnace, but hesitated for a long time before having it installed. The construction parts for the furnace were sent to Mauthausen between 6 February 1942 and 12 January 1943,⁴⁶ but the decision to set it up was made only in late 1944. We learn from a letter from Topf dated 20 December 1944 that preliminary work was in progress at the Mauthausen crematorium on the furnace foundation and the smoke duct. Topf was waiting for the completion of this work to send their own fitter.⁴⁷ On 3 January 1945, Topf announced the arrival of their fitter, Chief Engineer Schultze, for 9 January.⁴⁸ The furnace was thus built in January-February 1945.

3.3. Coke-Fired Triple-Muffle Cremation Furnace

In October 1941, the SS New Construction Office Auschwitz contacted the Topf Company about equipping the new crematorium it planned to build in the Main Camp, which later became Birkenau Crematorium II. On 21 and 22 October, Prüfer had a meeting with the new head of construction, SS *Hauptsturmführer* Karl Bischoff, who had taken over from Schlachter on 1 October. As a result of this meeting, the latter verbally ordered from Topf five triple-muffle furnaces with a blower each, two Topf forced-draft de-

⁴¹ Cost Estimate dated 25 September 1941; RGVA, 502-2-23, pp. 264-268.

⁴² Bill of Lading dated 21 October 1941; RGVA, 502-1-312, pp. 104f..

⁴³ APMO, BW 11/1, pp. 4f.

⁴⁴ Letter from Topf to Central Construction Office dated 24 November 1941; RGVA, 502-1-312, p. 98.

⁴⁵ Construction Progress Report dated 15 April 1942; RGVA, 502-1-24, p. 320.

⁴⁶ Letter from Construction Office of Gusen Camp to Topf dated 24 October 1942; letter from Topf to Construction Office of Gusen Camp dated 16 January 1943. BAK, NS4 Ma/54.

⁴⁷ Letter by Topf to Construction Office of Mauthausen Camp dated 20 December 1944. BAK, NS4 Ma/54.

⁴⁸ Letter by Topf to Construction Office of Mauthausen Camp dated 3 January 1945. BAK, NS4 Ma/54.

vices, each with about 10,000 m³ per hour, and a waste incinerator.⁴⁹ The actual order, accurately described in a Topf letter dated 4 November, covered: 5 Topf triple-muffle cremation furnaces with blowers, 2 coffin-introduction devices with rail system for 5 furnaces, 3 Topf forced-draft systems, 1 Topf waste incinerator, and the smoke-duct system.⁵⁰ The parts for the five triple-muffle furnaces at Crematorium II are listed in the Topf bills of lading of 16 April and 18 June 1942.⁵¹

Two triple-muffle cremation furnaces were moreover installed by the Topf Company in the Buchenwald Camp's crematorium, and went into operation even earlier than those at Birkenau: one around 29 August, and the other in early October.⁵²

In Birkenau Crematorium II, however, installation of the furnaces began during September 1942.⁵³ Work, including the flue ducts and the chimney, was finished in January 1943.⁵⁴ The crematorium went into operation on 20 February 1943.⁵⁵

The order for the furnaces for Crematorium III, placed by the Central Construction Office with Topf verbally on 25 September 1942, was confirmed in writing on the 30th. It covered five triple-muffle furnaces with five coffin introduction stretchers at a cost of 39,150 Reichsmark; three forced-draft systems at 9,048 Reichsmark; plus the refractory material for the smoke ducts at 5,504 Reichsmark; hence a total of 53,702 Reichsmark.⁵⁶

Construction of the cremation furnaces began at the end of March 1943.⁵⁷ Although the crematorium was scheduled to start operating on 10

⁴⁹ Letter of New Construction Office to Topf dated 22 October 1941; RGVA, 502-1-313, pp. 36f., and APMO, BW 30/34, p. 116; BW 30/27, p. 27.

⁵⁰ Letter by Topf to New Construction Office dated 4 November 1941; RGVA, 502-1-313, pp. 81-83; see Mattogno/Deana, Part 2, Doc. 186, pp. 300-302.

⁵¹ RGVA, 502-1-313, pp. 165-170, Topf, Bill of Lading of 18 June and 16 April 1942.

⁵² The dates given by Jean-Claude Pressac – 23 August and 3 October (Pressac 1993, p. 116f.) – are calculated on Prüfer's statement in his letter to Ludwig and Ernst Wolfgang Topf dated 6 December 1941, in which he wrote that the two furnaces in question had been in operation for 12 and 6 weeks, respectively (APMO, BW 30/46, p. 6).

⁵³ Central Construction Office, Construction Report for the Month of September 1942; RGVA, 502-1-24, p. 138.

⁵⁴ Report No. 1 of Central Construction Office concerning "Crematoria, PoW camp, state of construction," sent to the SS Economic and Administrative Main Office (*Wirtschafts- und Verwaltungs-Hauptamt*, WVHA) on 23 January 1943; RGVA, 502-1-31, p. 54.

⁵⁵ Activity Report of SS-Ustuf. (F) Kirschnek, head of construction for the protective-custody camp and for agricultural construction projects. Period 1 January 1943 to 31 March 1943, dated 29 March 1943; RGVA, 502-1-26, p. 59.

⁵⁶ Letter by Topf to Central Construction Office dated 26 October 1942; RGVA, 502-1-313, p. 93 and 502-2-26, p. 216.

⁵⁷ Activity Report, as Note 55, p. 61.

April 1943, the work took more than three months. In fact, the document with which the building was officially handed over bears the date 24 June 1943.⁵⁸

In 1942, the Topf Company built two triple-muffle furnaces in the Gross-Rosen Camp on the basis of a 1941 project by Prüfer. The documents on this were in the possession of Soviet investigators in 1948, but they have been lost since.⁵⁹

3.4. Coke-Fired Eight-Muffle Furnace

For a PoW Camp in Mogilev, Main Office Budget and Construction ordered on 4 December 1941 from the Topf Company “4 pcs. Topf double-4-muffle incineration furnaces,” meaning four furnaces with eight muffles each.⁶⁰ Since coke was difficult to procure in this area, they were supplied with wood-burning hearths. Because of transportation difficulties, these devices were moreover designed without insulation. Topf confirmed receipt of the order on 9 December, but only half a furnace, *i.e.*, four muffles, was sent to Mogilev on 30 December.⁶¹

Accepting the suggestion made by Prüfer when he visited Auschwitz on 19 August 1942, the SS Economic and Administrative Main Office decided on 26 August to send two of the furnaces ordered for Mogilev to Auschwitz instead.

In accordance with Topf’s offer of 2 September concerning the changes in the type of fuel and the corresponding modifications, the Central Construction Office ordered on 15 September four wrought-iron covers for the hearths with frames, spiral handles and refractory lining, as well as 2,500 insulating bricks and 600 kg of rock wool for each of the furnace’s insulation, plus the replacement bars for the hearths of the gasifiers, at a total price of 3,258 Reichsmarks.⁶² As the two furnaces had altogether eight gasifiers, there were eight covers and not four, as Topf was quick to rectify.⁶³

⁵⁸ Central Construction Office, Transfer Negotiation for Construction Project No. 30a PoW Camp, Crematorium II, dated 24 June 1943; RGVA, 502-2-54, p. 84.

⁵⁹ See Part Two of this study, protocol of the interrogation of Kurt Prüfer on 9 March 1948.

⁶⁰ Letter by Main Office Budget and Construction to Topf dated 4 December 1941; RGVA, 502-1-327, pp. 47f.

⁶¹ Letter by Topf to Central Construction Office dated 9 December 1941; RGVA, 502-1-327, pp. 43-45.

⁶² Letter by Central Construction Office to Topf dated 15 September 1942; RGVA, 502-1-312, p. 22; letter by Topf to Central Construction Office dated 22 September 1942; RGVA, 502-1-313, pp. 127-127a.

⁶³ Letter by Topf to Central Construction Office dated 30 September 1942; RGVA, 502-1-313, p. 118.

In practice, of the four eight-muffle furnaces ordered, half a furnace (four muffles) had gone to Mogilev, two were at Auschwitz, and the remaining furnace-and-a-half was held in a Topf warehouse at the disposition of *Reichsführer-SS*.⁶⁴ On 16 August, the *SS-Wirtschaftler* (business manager) at Higher SS and Police Leader (*Höherer SS- und Polizeiführer*) of the Government General sent a note to the Central Construction Offices at Heidelager, Krakow, Lemberg, Lublin and Warsaw, as well as to the New Construction Office at Radom, explaining that “Office CIII has currently at its disposal a cremation furnace and a half = 12 muffles,” and asked to be informed by 1 September whether the offices mentioned had any use for them.⁶⁵

As Prüfer reported to Soviet investigators, one furnace was shipped to the Krakow Station, and another (the remaining half furnace) remained in Topf’s warehouses.⁶⁶

3.5. Summary

To recap, the Topf Company built the following cremation furnaces for German concentration camps:

Table 1: Topf Cremation Furnaces in German Concentration Camps
(see also Table IV in the Appendix)

TYPE	#	MUFFLES	LOCATION	CONSTR. YEAR
oil-fired mobile double-muffle	1	2	Dachau	1940
	1	2	Buchenwald	1940
	1	2	Gusen	1940 – 1941
coke-fired double-muffle	1	2	Buchenwald	1940
	1	2	Auschwitz	7/1940
	1	2	Auschwitz	1-3/1941
	1	2	Auschwitz	1-3/1942
	1	2	Mauthausen	1-2/1945
coke-fired triple-muffle	5	15	Birkenau	9/1942 – 1/1943
	5	15	Birkenau	3-6/1943
	2	6	Buchenwald	8-10/1942
	2	6	Gross-Rosen	1942

⁶⁴ Letter by Topf to Central Construction Office dated 7 July 1943; RGVA, 502-1-327, pp. 43-45.

⁶⁵ WAPL, *Zentralbauleitung*, 268, p. 132.

⁶⁶ Protocol of the interrogation of Kurt Prüfer on 13 March 1948.

TYPE	#	MUFFLES	LOCATION	CONSTR. YEAR
coke-fired four-muffle (half an eight-muffle furnace)	1	4	Mogilev	12/1941
	4	16	Birkenau	9/1942 – 4/1943
	2	8	Krakow	1943
	1	4	Topf Warehouse	

Hence, a total of 30 furnaces with altogether 90 muffles.

4. Arrest and Conviction of the Topf Engineers

Prüfer was arrested by U.S. intelligence officers on 30 May 1945, but was released on 13 June. Ludwig Topf committed suicide on 31 May. On 3 July, the American occupation forces were replaced by Soviet ones. On 11 October, Braun drafted in the third person a file memo concerning Prüfer's personal files, which I translate in full:⁶⁷

“A Red Army soldier visited us at lunchtime today and asked about Mr. Prüfer. He wanted to speak to Mr. Prüfer. Braun told him that Mr. Prüfer was not here today, but was in Arnstadt to carry out a construction inspection, as we were building a waste incineration furnace there for the Russian military government. – The Russian asked if Prüfer was ‘the right-hand man’. Braun explained to him that this was not the correct term, but that Prüfer was the head of our furnace-construction department. The Russian went on to ask whether we were [a] furnace construction company. Braun told him that our company was a machine factory. Another question was whether Prüfer carried out any other work. Braun replied that he was a specialist in this field and that, in addition to the Arnstadt waste incineration furnace, we had to build a similar one for the Blumenthal barracks in Erfurt. He also asked about the crematoria. Braun told him that we were not only building these furnaces for Erfurt, but for the whole world, including one for Russia. He also wanted to know whether similar orders had been carried out by the Americans during the occupation, to which Braun replied in the affirmative, and pointed out that we had been commissioned to build a furnace for the city of Erfurt with the approval of the military government and the Lord Mayor.

The Russian then went on to say: The one Topf is evidently dead. Braun replied in the affirmative. He asked why he had died. He was told that Mr. Topf had passed away as a result of general nervousness (he was ‘down’

⁶⁷ File memo of *Betriebsdirektor* Braun added to Kurt Prüfer's personnel file. APMO, BW 30/46, pp. 21f.

with his nerves, so to speak). This nervousness manifested itself already about a year ago in the form of ranting here and issuing orders there, which he sometimes withdrew the next day, etc. – in other words, a general nervousness that ultimately degenerated into an untenable state. – Then he asked about the other Mr. Topf. He was informed that the two gentlemen had mutually concluded a contract that one or the other would be entitled to an insurance sum in the event of the other's death, in order to be able to continue the business, because it is generally assumed that in such a case certain stagnations can occur. He traveled to Stuttgart or Frankfurt because he himself had to conduct the negotiations in this matter. He had the approval of the military government and the Lord Mayor of the city of Erfurt for this trip. – We expect Mr. Topf back in the near future, as the negotiations have dragged on for some time.

He then wanted to know what else we were making. He saw the picture of Müller, Brake. – Braun told him that we were building all of these facilities. He also asked whether elevators were also installed in these facilities, to which we replied in the affirmative. We were also working on food and malting facilities, but he wasn't interested in that.

He wants to come back here tomorrow morning at 8:00 to discuss something with Mr. Prüfer. He didn't tell us what he wanted or wanted to discuss with Mr. Prüfer."

In early March 1946, Prüfer, Schultze, Sander and Braun were arrested by the Soviets. The arrest warrants were issued on 6 March by the head of the Smersh⁶⁸ Counterintelligence Service, Colonel Zagorulony, and military prosecutor Colonel Zhmirov, of the 8th Guard Army. The four engineers were suspected of the crimes specified in Part One of the decree of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR dated 19 April 1943, which concerned "Punitive measures for German-Fascist criminals guilty of killing and torturing the Soviet civilian population and prisoners of war, for spies, traitors to the motherland among Soviet citizens and their accomplices." The validity of the decree was extended retroactively to the beginning of the war. It imposed the death penalty by hanging, or hard labor for fifteen to twenty years for crimes committed against Soviet citizens (Ginsburgs, p. 45). The arrest warrant was formally executed on 7 March, the date under which the four engineers viewed and signed it.⁶⁹ However, Schultze and Braun were first interrogated on 4 March, so Pressac is certainly correct that this was the actual day of the four engineers' arrest (Pressac 1993, p. 95): Hence; the aforementioned arrest warrants only served to legalize a *fait accompli*.

⁶⁸ Acronym for *smert shpionam*, death to spies.

⁶⁹ FSBRF, N-19262, Criminal Case 1719, p. 13. See Document 8 (Schultze). Prüfer's (p. 3) and Braun's (p. 23) arrest warrants were written on the same type of form, with the obvious difference in personal data. Sander's is not in my records.

The defendants underwent a total of 36 interrogations, of them 20 in Berlin between 4 and 28 March 1946, plus 16 more in Moscow between 11 February and 11 March 1948.

On 28 March 1946, Smersh Captain Kazantsev signed an “Order terminating prosecution due to death of defendant” for Sander. We read there, among other things:⁷⁰

“In the office of the counter-intelligence service ‘Smersh’ in Germany on 25 March 1946, defendant Fritz Sander was delivered in critical health, with signs of heart failure and symptoms of swelling in the lungs and lower extremities as a result of severe exhaustion. The sick man was given medical attention, however, despite the measures taken, the inmate Fritz Sander died on 26 March at 3 p.m. Based on the above, according to Article 4 Paragraph 1 of the Code of Criminal Procedure of the Federative Russian Socialist Soviet Republic, the prosecution of the defendant Fritz Sander, son of Karl, is dismissed due to the death of the defendant.”

On 15 March 1948, Criminal Case No. 1719 against the remaining three Topf engineers was closed with the following request for conviction, signed by three senior officers of the State Security Service:⁷¹

“Based on what has been set forth,⁷² the following are charged:

Prüfer, Kurt, born 1891 in Erfurt, Germany, German citizen, employee, since 1933 member of the Nazi Party, civil engineer, married, until his arrest residing in Bischleben, near Erfurt, and employed by the Topf und Söhne machine-building company as head of the design and construction department for heating and cremation equipment.

He is charged that:

In carrying out the orders of the SS authorities from 1940 to 1944, he personally directed the work of building and equipping crematoria and gas chambers in which mass extermination of enslaved citizens of the Soviet Union, Poland and other countries was carried out by Fascist Germany, i.e., crimes that are covered in the first part of the decree of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR [of 19 April 1943].

Schultze, Karl, born 1900 in Berlin, German, German citizen, employee, no party member, civil engineer, married, until his arrest residing in Erfurt and employed in the design department of the firm Topf und Söhne as head of the ventilation systems department.

He is charged that:

On behalf of the SS authorities from 1940 to 1944 he designed special ventilation systems for crematoria in order to increase the capacity of the crematoria that were built by the firm Topf und Söhne in the concentration

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 117f.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 444-449.

⁷² In the detailed indictments against the three defendants.

camps, and he also personally participated in the Auschwitz death camp in the equipping of the gas chambers, in which inmates were killed with gas, i.e., crimes that are covered in the first part of the decree of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

Braun, Gustav, born 1889 in Heilbronn, Germany, German citizen, employee, civil engineer, married, until his arrest residing in Erfurt and employed as company manager in the Topf und Söhne machine factory.

He is charged that:

From 1940 to 1944 in the factory of the Topf und Söhne company he ensured the execution of orders given by the SS authorities for the production of items to equip the crematoria and gas chambers that had been built by the aforementioned company in the concentration camps. He mistreated Soviet citizens whom the Germans had sent from the occupied territories of the Soviet Union to forced labor in the Topf und Söhne firm.

In 1941, as the representative of the counterintelligence delegate in the Topf und Söhne Company's factory, he directed counterintelligence activities to combat anti-fascist acts by workers and employees, about which he informed the authorities of the Security Service and the Gestapo, i.e., he committed crimes that are covered by Paragraph 58-4 of the Criminal Code of the Soviet Federative Socialist Republic.

Pursuant to Paragraph 208 of the Criminal Code of the Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, Criminal Case 1719 – the indictment against Prüfer Kurt, Schultze Karl and Braun Gustav – is forwarded for trial to the Special Chamber at the Ministry of National Security of the USSR.

For the defendants Prüfer Kurt, Schultze Karl and Braun Gustav, a sentence of 25 years of hard labor is proposed.

The sentencing petition was issued in Moscow on 15 March 1948.”

On 3 April, an “Ordinance for sending them to a special camp of the Ministry of Internal Affairs” was issued against the three engineers, imposing a sentence of 25 years.

Prüfer died on 24 October 1952. Schultze and Braun were released on the basis of a decree by the Supreme Presidium of Soviets of 28 September 1955.

On 30 June 1992, the State Prosecutor's Office of the Russian Federation decided *not* to rehabilitate the three convicted engineers. The “Decision on Non-Rehabilitation in Criminal Proceedings File Number N-19262 in the Case of Prüfer and Others” concluded as follows:⁷³

“Prüfer, Schultze, and Braun pleaded guilty. Their guilt relating to the design and construction of instruments for the mass extermination of people in concentration camps is proven by the statements of co-defendants Sander [...], Koch [...] Erdmann [...] and others, by technical documentation,

⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 463f.

by correspondence with SS authorities, and also by the materials of the Extraordinary State Commission for the Investigation and Prosecution of the Misdeeds of the German-Fascist Invaders. [...]

Also decisive for this prosecution are the statements of former Auschwitz commandant Rudolf Höss, who described exactly the mechanism of the extermination of hundreds of thousands of people by means of gas chambers and crematoria. [...] Based on the above and in accordance with Paragraphs 4 and 8 of the Law of the Federative Socialist Soviet Republic 'On the Rehabilitation of Victims of Political Repression' of 18 October 1991, I propose:

to recognize that Prüfer Kurt, Schultze Karl and Braun Gustav were justly convicted in the relevant criminal proceedings, and are not subject to rehabilitation. [...]

The prosecutor in the rehabilitation section of the General Prosecutor's Office of the Russian Federation.

A.I. Iodadis"

I will examine the merits of this decision in the Conclusion of the present study.

5. The Interrogation Protocols in their Historical Context

By March 1946, the historical propaganda picture of Auschwitz had been irrevocably fixed in its essentials for several months. The "Extraordinary State Commission for the Investigation and Prosecution of the Misdeeds of the German-Fascist Invaders and their Accomplices on the Enormous Atrocities and Crimes of the German Government at Auschwitz" had concluded its investigation in March 1945. Locations were inspected, German documents and plans examined, and 207 witnesses questioned. Among them were some who were crucial to the description of the camp's alleged extermination facilities, such as Szlama Dragon and Henryk Tauber.⁷⁴ Furthermore, dozens of "expert reports" were compiled, beginning with the one that sanctioned the mythical 4-million death-toll number.

The results of the investigations were summarized as early as 19 March 1945 in a 55-page report titled "Conclusions of the Investigation of German-Fascist Misdeeds at the Auschwitz-Oswiecim Concentration Camp."⁷⁵

⁷⁴ I have scrutinized the statements of these two witnesses in Mattogno 2022.

⁷⁵ GARF, 7021-108-29, pp. 1-55.

In April 1945, the famous report was drafted that was published in *Pravda* on 7 May 1945,⁷⁶ and later became Nuremberg Document USSR-008.⁷⁷ In the course of their investigation, the Soviet Commission of Inquiry had examined the archives of the Auschwitz Central Construction Office. Hence, they understood the important role played by the Topf Company and its engineers in equipping the crematoria at Auschwitz and Birkenau. Since – according to the conclusions of the Soviet investigators – homicidal gas chambers had existed inside the crematoria, the Topf engineers, in their eyes, were guilty of installing both the cremation furnaces and the alleged gas chambers there. The report explicitly refers to these charges.⁷⁸

*“The German company Topf & Sons in Erfurt was awarded the contract to build four powerful new crematoria and gas chambers in Birkenau. Berlin pressed for acceleration, and demanded that all work be completed by the beginning of 1943. The Auschwitz Camp’s office files contain detailed correspondence between the camp administration and the Topf & Sons Company, including the following letter: [...]*⁷⁹

There were 12 incineration furnaces with 46 retorts in four new crematoria. Each retort could hold three to five corpses. The cremation process took about 20 to 30 minutes. The baths for special purposes,^[80] i.e. the gas chambers for killing people, were located in basements or special buildings next to the crematoria. There were also two separate ‘baths’ where the bodies were burned in special outdoor fires. Dogs helped to herd the people destined to die into the ‘baths.’ On the way, they were beaten with clubs and pistons. The doors of the chambers were hermetically sealed, and the people inside were poisoned with ‘Zyklon.’ Death occurred within 3-5 minutes. After 20-30 minutes, the bodies were removed and taken to the crematoria.”

The report published in *Pravda* had a final paragraph in which, among the German criminals who should be tried and punished, was “Chief Engineer Prüfer of the firm Topf and Sons” (*Pravda*, 7 May 1945, p. 3).

The Allied press immediately echoed this report, which was translated and published in several languages.

⁷⁶ “Communiqué of the Extraordinary State Commission for the Determination and Investigation of Crimes by the German-Fascists and their Accomplices.” *Pravda*, 7 May 1945, pp. 2f.

⁷⁷ The original text of that report, which contains various corrections and deletions, can be found together with later corrected versions in fund 7021-116-103 of GARF.

⁷⁸ USSR-008; *IMT*, Vol. 39, pp. 243f.

⁷⁹ This is followed by the text of the letter by Topf to Central Construction Office dated 12 February 1943, and an excerpt from Fritz Ertl’s file memo dated 21 August 1942, to which I will return later.

⁸⁰ Retranslation of the original term “*Badeanstalten für Sonderaktionen*,” “bathing establishments for special operations.”

By March 1946, the Soviet report on Auschwitz had become a historical-propagandic dogma: what defendant would dare to challenge it? This shines through explicitly in Schultze's interrogation on 11 March 1948, when Lieutenant Colonels Doperchuk and Novikov put the following question to him:

"We present to you the report of the commission of experts dated 14 February to 8 March 1945, from which it appears that in the Auschwitz Death Camp, in addition to the gas chambers in the crematoria, there were also separately constructed gas chambers. Tell what part the firm 'Topf' had and what part you personally had in the construction and setting up of these gas chambers."

The interrogations of Kurt Prüfer, Karl Schultze, Fritz Sander, and Gustav Braun by Soviet investigators from the Smersh counterintelligence service took place in this climate, which must be kept in mind in order to understand and evaluate the defendants' responses. Understandably, they adopted the line of defense that they considered tactically most profitable to escape a death sentence: accepting the investigators' thesis completely without ever challenging it directly, and professing to be completely guilty of the crimes ascribed, modeled on the infamous Stalinist show trials in Moscow. However, as we shall see, Kurt Prüfer and Karl Schultze indirectly contested one of the basic tenets of that thesis, and this, together with the reaction – or rather lack of any reaction – by the Soviet investigators, is one of the most interesting aspects of the whole affair.

6. The Chronological Context

In order to understand and evaluate Prüfer's and Schultze's statements, the engineers directly involved in equipping the crematoria at Birkenau, it is first necessary to establish the chronological context to which they refer, i.e., the exact dates of their visits to Auschwitz, because both of them provided general and inaccurate information in this regard. Prüfer in fact stated:⁸¹

"As an engineer and head of the crematorium-construction department, I went to Auschwitz five times. The first time was at the beginning of 1943, to receive instructions from the SS on where to build the crematorium. The second time in the spring of 1943, to inspect the site and examine the reason for erecting the crematorium chimney. The third time in the fall of

⁸¹ Protocol of the interrogation of K. Prüfer dated 5 March 1946.

1943; I was requested to come by the SS leadership because errors had occurred during the construction of the crematorium chimney. The fourth time at the beginning of 1944, to examine the crematorium chimney, whose inner refractory brickwork was beginning to crumble. The fifth time in September/October 1944; I was ordered by the SS leadership to dismantle the crematoria of the Auschwitz Camp and to carefully pack up the equipment and the brickwork so that they could be transferred to another location.”

He later added that he also traveled to Auschwitz “[i]n the spring of 1942” in order to “review the project for the planned construction of a new crematorium in the Auschwitz camp sector.”⁸²

Schultze claimed to have visited Auschwitz only twice:

“I was twice in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp. Once in connection with a calculation error for the ventilation – this was in the spring of 1943 – and the second time about two months later to put the ventilation inside a newly built crematorium into operation.”⁸³

The documents show the following.

Topf’s letter to the SS New Construction Office Auschwitz dated 13 November 1940 announced Prüfer’s arrival in Auschwitz for the 19th of the month.⁸⁴ On 22 November 1940, the head of construction, SS *Untersturmführer* August Schlachter, confirmed this in a letter to the Main Office Budget and Construction, Office C2, with the subject “Crematorium expansion”:⁸⁵

“The expansion of the facility was discussed on site with Mr. Prüfer, Chief Engineer at Topf & Söhne, and the extension can be carried out under favorable conditions.”

On 11 October 1941, the SS Construction Office Auschwitz sent the following telegram to Topf:⁸⁶

“Expecting a visit from your Mr. Prüfer at the beginning of next week due to the construction of a new crematorium. Please tell us when Prüfer will arrive.”

To which the Erfurt firm responded:⁸⁷

“Prüfer arrives twenty-first 9 o’clock.”

On 22 October, Prüfer met in Auschwitz with Head of Construction Karl Bischoff, SS *Hauptsturmführer* at the time,⁸⁸ and discussed with him the

⁸² Protocol of the interrogation of K. Prüfer dated 4 March 1948.

⁸³ Protocol of the interrogation of K. Schultze dated 4 March 1946.

⁸⁴ RGVA, 502-1-312, p. 145.

⁸⁵ RGVA, 502-1-327, p. 173.

⁸⁶ RGVA, 502-1-313, p. 179.

⁸⁷ Letter by Topf to SS Construction Office dated 14 October 1941; RGVA, 502-1-313, p. 178.

supply of five triple-muffle furnaces, two forced-draft devices and one garbage incinerator for the new crematorium (the future Crematorium II).⁸⁹ A letter from Topf dated 31 October confirms that the conversation between Prüfer and Bischoff had taken place “on the 21st and 22nd of the month.”⁹⁰ This was Prüfer’s second visit to Auschwitz.

On 21 November 1941, Prüfer wrote a letter to Bischoff, in which he informed him:⁹¹

“As you have already been informed by my company, I will be there shortly and will bring you in person the complete foundation plans as well as the anchoring drawings.”

In the following days, Prüfer actually went to Auschwitz, because on 3 December, Bischoff sent to the head of Office BII of the Main Office Budget and Construction in Berlin two drawings relating to the design of the new crematorium, which had evidently been given to him by Prüfer.⁹²

Prüfer’s next visit to Auschwitz was in August 1942. On 17 August, Topf sent the Central Construction Office a laconic telegram stating:⁹³

“Prüfer arrives Wednesday.”

A file memo by SS *Untersturmführer* Fritz Ertl dated 21 August 1942 confirms Prüfer’s presence in Auschwitz on 19 and 20 August:

“Mr. Prüfer appeared before the local office on 19 Aug. 1942 at 2 p.m., ...”

The next day he was still in Auschwitz.⁹⁴

On 29 January 1943, Prüfer inspected Crematorium II and the sites of the other three crematoria under construction, and wrote his well-known “inspection report.”⁹⁵

A few days later, Bischoff sent Topf a telegram of the following content:

“Due to extensive and urgent construction work, the presence of Chief Engineer Prüfer is absolutely necessary for 2-3 days every week. Wire back approval.”

In their reply, after quoting the text of this telegram, Topf assured that they were happy to send their engineer to Auschwitz.⁹⁶

⁸⁸ Head of Central Construction Office as of 14 November 1941; promoted to SS *Sturm-bannführer* on 1 February 1943; Head of Construction Inspection of the Waffen SS and Police „Silesia” since 1 October 1943.

⁸⁹ Letter by Bischoff to Topf dated 22 October 1941. APMO, BW 30/34, p. 116.

⁹⁰ RGVA, 502-1-312, p. 103.

⁹¹ RGVA, 502-1-314, p. 178.

⁹² RGVA, 502-1-312, p. 93.

⁹³ RGVA, 502-1-272, p. 507.

⁹⁴ RGVA, 502-1-313, pp. 159f.

⁹⁵ APMO, BW 30/34, pp. 101f.

⁹⁶ RGVA, 502-1-313, p. 46.

On 5 February, Topf announced Prüfer's presence in Auschwitz "in a little while";⁹⁷ in its letter of 12 February, they specified that Prüfer would arrive "on Monday the 15th of this month in the afternoon".⁹⁸ On 22 February, Topf confirmed the presence in Auschwitz of their engineer "during the past week."⁹⁹ Topf's note of 17 February reports a communication by Prüfer "that he has to stay a few more days in Auschwitz."¹⁰⁰

Accompanied by Schultze, Prüfer went to Auschwitz again on 24 and 25 March 1943.¹⁰¹ Bischoff's letter to Topf dated 19 June 1943 reports:¹⁰²

"Already during the last visit of your Mr. Prüfer in April..."

The visit took place between 4 and 9 April,¹⁰³ but it was not the last one. On 11 May, the Central Construction Office requested by "urgent telegram" to Topf Prüfer's presence,¹⁰⁴ and they reiterated on 14 May:¹⁰⁵

"Presence of Chief Engineer Prüfer absolutely necessary immediately."

Civilian employee Rudolf Jährling telephoned Topf and learned that Prüfer was "in the Rhineland on a business trip," and that he would arrive in Auschwitz "on Monday," meaning 17 May.¹⁰⁵ Topf's letter of 9 June 1943 actually confirms a¹⁰⁶

"Meeting between your Mr. Sturmbannführer Bischoff and our Mr. Chief Engineer Prüfer on 18 May of this year."

Topf's letter of 25 May 1943 states:¹⁰⁷

"Reference to the recent visit of our Chief Engineer Prüfer and the conversation [...] with your dear Mr. Sturmbannführer Head of Construction Bischoff and Engineer Jährling."

The visit probably took place on 23 May, because the next day Prüfer was back in Erfurt and had a phone conversation with Bischoff.¹⁰⁸

Prüfer visited Auschwitz again on 10 September 1943.¹⁰⁹ On 30 January 1944, his presence was again requested by the Central Construction Office in a telegram to Topf that began as follows:¹¹⁰

⁹⁷ RGVA, 502-1-336, p. 99.

⁹⁸ APMO, BW 30/34, p. 84

⁹⁹ RGVA, 502-1-336, p. 38.

¹⁰⁰ Document reproduced in Schüle, p. 456.

¹⁰¹ APMO, BW 30/34, p. 8.

¹⁰² APMO, BW 30/34, p. 22.

¹⁰³ The letter from Topf dated 10 April 1943, in response to a letter from the Central Construction Office dated 3 April, mentions a meeting between Bischoff and Prüfer, which had therefore taken place after 3 April but before 10 April.

¹⁰⁴ APMO, BW 30/34, p. 44.

¹⁰⁵ APMO, BW 30/34, p. 41.

¹⁰⁶ RGVA, 502-2-26, p. 221.

¹⁰⁷ RGVA, 502-1-327, p. 83.

¹⁰⁸ RGVA, 502-1-313, p. 36.

“*March off Chief Engineer Prüfer and Fitter Koch to here immediately...*” They arrived in Auschwitz on 2 February. In fact, on that date, SS *Obersturmführer* Werner Jothann, the new head of the Central Construction Office, wrote to the camp commandant, SS *Obersturmbannführer* Arthur Liebehenschel, a letter with the subject line “Camp-access permits for Mr. Chief Engineer Prüfer and Mr. Holick of the company Topf and Sons, Erfurt.”¹¹¹

A handwritten list of orders commissioned from J.A. Topf, which was drawn up by the Central Construction Office on 2 December 1944, shows the invoice date, the amount in RM and the description. The last entry, dated 2 December 1944,¹¹² is an invoice for RM 232.50 for “Travel expenses for Chief Engineer Prüfer.”¹¹³

This is Kurt Prüfer’s last documented visit to Auschwitz, and evidently refers to his assignment to dismantle and pack up the cremation-furnace components. If we follow his statements, this lasted from September through October 1944, but October is much more likely.

Schultze, on the other hand, visited Auschwitz at least three times. Topf’s note of 17 February 1943 states that Schultze was in Auschwitz together with Prüfer, and was to return to the company on the following Friday, i.e., on the 19th.¹¹⁴ The second visit probably took place on 1 March 1943, as was announced by Topf in its letter to the Central Construction Office of 24 February 1943.¹¹⁵ The third visit took place on 24 and 25 March 1943 together with Prüfer.

In summary, Prüfer went to Auschwitz at least thirteen times:

1. on 19 November 1940
2. on 22 October 1941
3. between 23 October and 2 December 1941
4. on 19 and 20 August 1942
5. on 29 January 1943
6. on 15 February 1943
7. on 24 and 25 March 1943
8. between 4 and 9 April 1943

¹⁰⁹ File memo by Kirschnek dated 14 September 1943; RGVA, 502-1-26, p. 144; and letter by Topf dated 16 September 1943; RGVA, 502-1-313, p. 16.

¹¹⁰ Telegram mentioned in Topf’s letter dated 9 February 1944; RGVA, 502-1-336, p. 87.

¹¹¹ RGVA, 502-1-345, p. 50.

¹¹² Invoices were usually issued a few months after completion of the work.

¹¹³ RGVA, 502-1-96, p. 33a.

¹¹⁴ “Mr. Schultze will return in such a way that he will be back here on Friday afternoon.”

Document reproduced in: Schüle, p. 456.

¹¹⁵ RGVA, 502-1-336, p. 41.

9. on 18 May 1943
10. on 23 May 1943
11. on 10 September 1943
12. on 2 February 1944.
13. in October 1944

Schultze went to Auschwitz only three times:

1. between 17 (or a few days earlier) and 19 March 1943
2. on 1 March 1943
3. on 24 and 25 March 1943.

I will next examine the reasons for the most important visits in their respective contexts.

7. Kurt Prüfer's and Karl Schultze's "Confessions" about the "Gas Chambers" of Auschwitz-Birkenau

In the course of their interrogations, Prüfer and Schultze made important admissions about the alleged homicidal gas chambers at Auschwitz Main Camp and Birkenau. It is unclear, however, whether these are based on actual experiences, or were mere tactical concessions to the Soviet investigators' immutable dogmas. Let us therefore examine these admissions according to the chronology of the alleged events.

7.1. The "Gas Chamber" of Crematorium I, Main Camp

On 4 March 1948, Prüfer was questioned about the alleged homicidal gas chamber at Auschwitz Main Camp's Crematorium I. The interrogation went as follows:¹¹⁶

Question: Was there a gas chamber at Crematorium No. 1 in the camp sector Auschwitz?

Answer: Yes, there was one.

Question: Who set up this gas chamber?

Answer: I don't know exactly, but I assume that the gas chamber at the first crematorium in Auschwitz was set up by the Construction Office of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp itself.

¹¹⁶ Protocol of the interrogation of K. Prüfer dated 4 March 1948.

Question: When and how did you find out that there was a gas chamber at the first crematorium in Auschwitz?

Answer: I learned about it by chance in 1942 under the following circumstances: In the spring of 1942, at the request of the SS Construction Office of the Auschwitz Camp, I traveled to Auschwitz to review the project for the planned construction of a new crematorium in the Auschwitz camp sector, to present my conclusions, and also to visit the site where the construction of this crematorium was planned. I visited the planned construction site accompanied by an SS man. As we passed the first crematorium, I looked through the half-open door into one of the rooms of the crematorium building, and saw human corpses lying on the floor in various positions. There were more than ten of them. As I approached this room, someone quickly slammed the door from the inside. As I did not know the purpose of this room in Crematorium No. 1, I asked the SS man accompanying me about it. The latter replied that a gas chamber had been set up in this room, and that prisoners were being poisoned with gas there. To my subsequent question as to how this gas chamber worked, the SS man replied evasively that he did not know exactly, but he told me that he knew that there were gas chambers in the city of Łódź where the SS men killed prisoners with exhaust fumes from car engines, but then they had made improvements to speed up the killing process, and started using some kind of gas. As the SS man explained, the killing process was shortened from 10 to 15 minutes to one to two minutes as a result of the use of gases in the Łódź gas chambers. According to the SS man, the killing process in the Łódź gas chambers was as follows: the prisoners were chased into the gas chambers, the doors were hermetically sealed, and then bottles of gas were thrown through special openings. Based on this account, I concluded that the prisoners were also murdered in the same way in the gas chamber built by the SS men at Crematorium No. 1 in Auschwitz.”

I first note that the time frame given by Prüfer is incorrect: he went to Auschwitz to discuss with Bischoff the design of the new crematorium (the future Crematorium II) between late October and late November 1941, not “[i]n the spring of 1942.” At that time, the alleged mass extermination had not yet begun, if we follow the orthodox narrative. Until early December 1941, after the phantom “first gassing,” Danuta Czech’s *Auschwitz Chronicle* mentions only one gassing: 900 Soviet PoWs on 16 September 1941 (Czech 1990, p. 90).

The story told by Prüfer is therefore completely fictional.

In fact, he claims to have seen “more than ten” corpses when gazing “through a half-open door” into a room of the crematorium – that is, into the morgue, as reflected in his later identification of this room as the “gas chamber.” Prüfer claimed not to have known at the time the purpose of this

room, which is a lie. As I pointed out earlier, he had gone to Auschwitz as early as 19 November 1940 to discuss “on site” the “expansion of the facility,” that is, the construction of the second double-muffle cremation furnace. He inspected the furnace room to determine together with the deputy head of construction, SS *Rottenführer* Walter Urbanczyk, the location of this new furnace. On the basis of this inspection, the Topf Company drew Plan D57999 on 30 September 1940, which shows precisely the location of the second furnace.

On that occasion, Prüfer also inspected the morgue. In fact, as shown in Topf’s letter of 9 December 1940, which refers to the conversation between Prüfer and Urbanczyk on 19 November 1940, the SS New Construction Office had ordered from Topf a “deaeration system for the corpse cells and the autopsy room.”¹¹⁷ The “cost estimate” for this system was likewise prepared on 9 December 1940.¹¹⁸ The term “corpse cells” referred to the morgue, which at that time was still part of a larger room that was later split by a partition into two rooms, the smaller one of which was then used to store urns. Attached to the aforementioned Topf letter was a version of Drawing D57999 showing “the routing of the extraction air pipe, and the installation of the fan,”¹¹⁹ which had been established on the basis of Prüfer’s inspection. Prüfer himself admitted this in the very interrogation of 4 March 1948 when stating:

“Initially, the company Topf and Sons built one double-muffle incinerator in the crematorium in question, and then – in early 1941 – the SS Construction Office of Auschwitz raised the question of increasing the capacity of this crematorium with the company, after which another double-muffle incinerator was installed there at my suggestion. In addition, at my personal suggestion, a blower was installed for these two furnaces, thanks to which the draft in the furnaces was increased, and the incineration accelerated, which also increased the capacity of the incineration furnaces. The drawings and technical plans for this blower were prepared by chief engineer Karl Schultze, and the assembly work for its installation was carried out on Schultze’s instructions by a company fitter who traveled to the Auschwitz Camp especially for this purpose. I personally drew up technical plans and drawings for the cremation furnaces mentioned above, and also carried out the technical supervision of the work on their construction.”
(Emphasis added)

Returning to Prüfer’s account, how can one seriously believe that a cremation-furnace designer who had overseen the installation of three double-

¹¹⁷ RGVA, 502-1-312, p. 136.

¹¹⁸ RGVA, 502-1-312, pp. 138-140.

¹¹⁹ RGVA, 502-1-312, p. 137.

muffle furnaces in the Auschwitz crematorium and had taken the order for a “deaeration system” for the “morgue” was surprised to see “more than ten” corpses in this same room?

More importantly, the morgue of Crematorium I was actually invisible from the outside. In fact, the front door of the crematorium opened onto an antechamber, from which the morgue was accessed either through the furnace room or through the “washing room” for corpses. Therefore, when passing in front of the crematorium, Prüfer could not have seen the interior of the morgue “through a half-open door,” which confirms that his testimony was freely invented.

The alleged response of the SS soldier accompanying Prüfer is completely misplaced and outlandish. Instead of answering, as would have been true and logical, that the room was a morgue, this soldier, who was bound to secrecy, is said to have instantly blurted out to Prüfer the alleged “secret” of Auschwitz. But the “secret” was such that the SS soldier did not even know how the alleged “gas chamber worked.” Yet he knew perfectly well how the phantom “gas chambers” at the distant city of Łódź worked, for which no such facilities have ever been claimed by anyone else!

In fact, the orthodoxy claims that the Jews living and working in the Łódź Ghetto were deported from there in the summer of 1944 to the Chełmno and Auschwitz Camps in order to be gassed there, precisely because the Łódź Ghetto had *no means* to exterminate these Jews.¹²⁰

The murder method allegedly used – throwing in some “bottles of gas” through an opening – is reminiscent of several post-war assertions about bombs, cylinders, cartridges or capsules of gas having been thrown into the alleged gas chamber for the claimed gas murder at Auschwitz (Academic..., p. 610). This stands in stark contrast to the orthodoxy’s claim – already firmly manifested by the time Prüfer made this statement in 1948 – that the murder is said to have been committed by pouring in Zyklon-B gypsum granules from tin cans.

This all shows that Prüfer was inventing things from whole cloth as he unfolded his narrative.

¹²⁰ See my detailed analysis of the fate of the Jews deported in 1944 from the Lodz Ghetto in Mattogno 2023b.

7.2. The “Bunkers” of Birkenau

During Prüfer’s interrogation of 13 March 1948, Lieutenant Colonel Doperchuk dwelt on a file memo written by Fritz Ertl on 21 August 1942. Under Point 2, this document states:¹²¹

“With regard to the installation of 2 three-muffle furnaces each at the ‘bathing establishments for special operations,’ it was suggested by Engineer Prüfer that the furnaces be diverted from an already prepared delivery to Mogilev [i.e. an 8-muffle furnace], and the head of department, who was present at the SS Economic Administrative Main Office in Berlin, was immediately informed of this by telephone, and asked to arrange the further steps.”

The interrogation about this unfolded as follows:

“Question: At a meeting with the SS Construction Office of the Auschwitz Camp, which took place on 19 August 1942, the question of the installation of two three-muffle furnaces in the ‘bathing establishments for special operations’ was discussed with you. Explain which ‘bathing establishments for special operations’ were discussed at this meeting!

Answer: This meeting was about the installation of two three-muffle furnaces near the gas chambers that had been built by the SS men in Birkenau, completely separate from the crematoria built in that sector of the camp. I don’t know exactly where these gas chambers were, because I was never in the area where they were located and never saw them.

Based on the statements of a prisoner who worked as chief stoker of the crematoria in Auschwitz, I know that these gas chambers were three kilometers away from the Birkenau crematoria, and that the bodies of the prisoners murdered with gas in them were cremated on pyres. I would like to add to these statements by saying that no cremation furnaces were built near these gas chambers.”

Ertl’s file memo of 21 August 1942 had immediately received the attention of the Soviet Commission of Inquiry. However, only its Point 2 was translated into Russian, which concerns “bathing establishments for special operations” (rendered as “*ban’ dlya osobovo naznachenya*” = baths for special purpose), and inexplicably also the first paragraph of Point 4, which refers to the mistaken shipment to Auschwitz of parts of a double-muffle furnace intended for the Mauthausen Camp.¹²² The Commission decided *ex cathedra* that the “bathing establishments for special operations” were homicidal gas chambers that were somehow related to Crematoria IV and V.

¹²¹ File memo by SS *Untersturmführer* Ertl dated 21 August 1942; RGVA, 502-1-313, p. 159.

¹²² GARF, 7021-108-14, p. 27.

In fact, in a report on the alleged extermination installations at Auschwitz-Birkenau dated 14 February to 8 March 1945, at the end of the paragraph concerning the above-mentioned two crematoria, we read:¹²³

“It is characteristic that, in official correspondence, the Germans referred to gas chambers as ‘baths for special purpose,’ Letter No. 12115/42/Er/Ha of 21 August 1942.”

This propaganda dogma was precisely the basis of the interrogation in question, which began with this question:

“What was the camouflage term for gas chambers on the drawings and documents in the correspondence between the SS Construction Office of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp and your company?”

Of course, Prüfer hastened to reply in accordance with the Soviet propaganda script that the terms used were “morgues,” “special basements” and, indeed, “bathing establishments for special operations.” The last two terms, however, referred to anything else but homicidal gas chambers.¹²⁴ As for the first term, after Pressac’s books have been published, no serious historian claims anymore that “morgue” was a cryptonym.

Prüfer mendaciously and inexplicably equated the “bathing establishments for special operations” with the legendary gassing “bunkers” presumably located just outside the Birkenau Camp. I say mendaciously, because these “bunkers” never existed,¹²⁵ and inexplicably, because as early as 14 August 1942, the Auschwitz Central Construction Office had prepared a drawing of Crematoria IV and V that contained an eight-muffle Topf furnace.¹²⁶ But if that is so, then how could Prüfer have proposed to allocate two eight-muffle furnaces from the Mogilev order to the “bathing establishments for special operations,” if these were identical with the alleged “bunkers”?

It is a fact, however, that he knew nothing about these imaginary installations – which is impossible, if they had actually existed, due to the function Prüfer performed at Auschwitz. He was even unaware of the term “bunkers.” This is explained by the fact that, in all the records of the Soviet Commission of Inquiry into Auschwitz, what were later called “bunkers,” are always referred to simply as “gas chambers.” What little Prüfer reported in the course of his interrogation, he claims to have learned not from the head of the Central Construction Office or some member of it, but from an inmate of the Main Camp, of all people!

¹²³ Protocol, City of Auschwitz, 14 February – 8 March 1945. GARE, 7021-108-14, p. 7.

¹²⁴ For details, see Mattogno 2016a, Chapters 12 & 17 (pp. 70-76 and 102-105), as well as Mattogno 2019, Chapters 2.4. and 7.3. (pp. 73-76 and 186-190).

¹²⁵ See Mattogno 2016a for details.

¹²⁶ Plan 1678(p)(r), reproduced in Pressac 1989, pp. 392-395.

On the other hand, if Prüfer knew nothing about the “bunkers,” hence the presumed “bathing establishments for special operations,” if he knew neither their structure nor their alleged extermination capacity, how could he propose to install at them the furnaces intended for Mogilev?

Prüfer’s statement also contains an anachronism. He asserted that on 19 August 1942, the corpses of the alleged victims of the “bunkers” “were cremated on pyres,”¹²⁷ but if we follow Czech’s *Auschwitz Chronicle*, outdoor cremation started only on 21 September 1942 (Czech 1990, p. 242).

Furthermore, the location of these “gas chambers” – Prüfer did not even know that they were supposed to have been two separate installations – “three kilometers away from the Birkenau crematoria,” echoed the respective mythology of the immediate postwar period. It was perhaps a misunderstood reference to a statement by former Auschwitz inmate Szlama Dragon, who had stated in the deposition he gave to Soviet investigators on 26 February 1945 that the “Gas Chambers [= Bunkers] No. 1 and No. 2 were about 3 kilometers apart” (Mattogno 2022, p. 53). This sentence was also quoted in the Soviet report on Auschwitz, which appeared in *Pravda* on 7 May 1945, and later became Nuremberg Document USSR-008.¹²⁸ This document in turn constituted one of the Soviet investigators’ most important pieces of “evidence” against the Topf engineers.

From the orthodox point of view, the “bunkers”/presumed “bathing establishments for special operations” were directly related to the alleged mass extermination. If that is so, then Prüfer must have known about them as early as August 1942. However, he stated the following about this:¹²⁹

“During my visit to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp in 1943, I became aware that a mass extermination of prisoners was taking place in this camp, including women, children and old people who had been sent to Auschwitz by the Hitlerites in whole transports from the European countries occupied by Germany. The prisoners who arrived at the Auschwitz Concentration Camp were sent by the SS to the gas chambers, where they were murdered, and then their bodies were burned in the crematoria and on special pyres.”

The “visit” in question is that of 24 and 25 March 1943. If Prüfer learned of the alleged mass extermination only in March 1943, he cannot have been aware of it in August 1942. If that is so, then the “bathing establish-

¹²⁷ The statement was made in the context of the discussion regarding the file memo of 21 August 1942. There is nothing to indicate that the alleged information from the inmate dates from a later time.

¹²⁸ IMT, Vol. 39, p. 245: “At first, the Germans had two gas chambers three kilometers apart.” This is based on the testimonies of Shyloma (*recte*: Szlama) Dragon.

¹²⁹ Protocol of the interrogation of K. Prüfer dated 11 February 1948.

ments for special operations” cannot have had any connection to the alleged extermination, also because he, by virtue of his initial proposal to install two triple-muffle furnaces at them, could not have been unaware of the true purpose of these installations.

However, contradicting himself, Prüfer also stated that he knew “from the beginning of 1942 that the crematoria and gas chambers in the Auschwitz Camp were intended and used by the SS men for the mass extermination of prisoners.”¹³⁰ This contradicts his alleged observation of about ten corpses in the “gas chamber” of the crematorium of the Main Camp. In fact, nothing in his account suggests that a “mass extermination of prisoners” was taking place at Auschwitz. It is also not credible that Prüfer had learned directly from Bischoff “that prisoners were murdered in these gas chambers with hydrogen-cyanide vapors” only on the occasion of an order for gas testers,¹³¹ meaning in February 1943, and not already in August 1942, when he proposed to install the two simplified triple-muffle furnaces at the “bathing establishments for special operations.” If these facilities had really been the “bunkers” at Birkenau, Bischoff, and not a mere inmate (!), would have informed the Topf engineer of this at that point at the latest.

Contradicting himself even more, Prüfer asserted that he had learned that “innocent people were being exterminated and burned in the concentration camps” only “in the spring of 1943, when the bodies of people murdered in the gas chamber of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp were cremated in my presence during the testing of the furnaces in the crematorium,”¹³² meaning during his visit to Auschwitz on 24 and 25 March 1943, while Bischoff had already requested the gas testers from him the month before, explaining that, “after the poisoning of prisoners in the gas chambers, there were often cases where hydrogen-cyanide vapors remained in them even after they had been ventilated, which led to the poisoning of the operating personnel working in these chambers” (see Chapter 8.4.).

To recap, Prüfer claimed contradictorily that he *first* learned of “gas chambers” and mass exterminations at Auschwitz on four occasions:

1. in October-November 1941 (“gas chamber” of the Main Camp’s crematorium)
2. on 19 August 1942 (“bathing establishments for special operations”)
3. in February 1943 (order of gas testers)
4. on 24 and 25 March 1943 (test run of Crematorium II).

¹³⁰ Protocol of the interrogation of K. Prüfer dated 4 March 1948.

¹³¹ Protocol of the interrogation of K. Prüfer dated 9 March 1948.

¹³² Protocol of the interrogation of K. Prüfer dated 19 March 1946.

These glaring contradictions show that Prüfer did not report real experiences, but had fully adopted the Soviet's propaganda, with which he was evidently only fragmentarily familiar.

7.3. The "Gas Chamber" of Crematorium II in March 1943

In Prüfer's first interrogation, he stated with reference to his visit to Auschwitz in the company of Schultze "in the spring of 1943":¹³³

"I personally saw an SS woman with dogs herding female prisoners into the barracks. I also saw Jews digging up earth with their hands under SS guard, and carrying it from one place to another. When I was in the crematorium, at about 10 o'clock in the morning, I saw for myself that there were up to 60 corpses of men and women of various ages lying on the ground, ready to be cremated in the crematorium. Six bodies were cremated in my presence, and I came to the conclusion that the furnaces were working well."

During the interrogation on 19 March 1946, Captain Morskoi returned to the issue:¹³⁴

Question: *Were the crematoria tested during your presence in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp?*

Answer: *Of the six times I visited the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, only once, at the beginning of 1943, was a test carried out in my presence on two of the five furnaces I had set up in the newly built crematorium. Six corpses of men of different ages were cremated in all [both furnaces], and there in the crematorium were also corpses of women and children who had been murdered in the gas chambers, and who were to be cremated in the crematorium. The total number of corpses was about sixty.*

Question: *How did you participate in the cremation of the bodies of murdered, innocent people?*

Answer: *I checked whether the furnaces I had installed in the crematorium were working.*

Question: *What conclusion did you draw?*

Answer: *I concluded that the furnaces I built in the crematorium worked well and without any problems."*

As quoted earlier, Prüfer added later during the same interrogation:

Question: *When did you find out that innocent people were being exterminated and burned in the concentration camps?*

Answer: *I learned about this in the spring of 1943, when the bodies of people murdered in the gas chamber of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp*

¹³³ Protocol of the interrogation of K. Prüfer dated 5 March 1946.

¹³⁴ Protocol of the interrogation of K. Prüfer dated 19 March 1946

were cremated in my presence during the testing of the furnaces in the crematorium.”

The reference to the “testing of the furnaces” needs to be clarified: Prüfer was not referring to the testing of Crematorium II’s cremation furnaces before the plant went into operation, but to a later event, which he recounted in the 9 March 1948 interrogation as follows:¹³⁵

“I did not have to take part in the testing of the cremation furnaces, or the commissioning of the crematoria built under my leadership in Auschwitz. This was done by fitters from the company who carried out the construction and assembly work in these crematoria under my supervision. During the trips to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, I personally observed and checked the functioning of the cremation furnaces at a time when they were already in operation. At the time of these trips, the bodies of prisoners who had been murdered by the SS men in the gas chambers were cremated in my presence.

Once, probably in the spring of 1943, I went to Auschwitz at the invitation of the SS Construction Office to find out why the blowers near the furnaces^[136] of the 2nd crematorium were not working. Chief Engineer Schultze also went there to carry out the necessary repairs to these blowers and put them back into operation. Schultze did not succeed in repairing these blowers, and we were forced to dismantle them. But when we, meaning myself and Schultze, checked the functioning of the cremation furnaces without these blowers, around 25 bodies of inmates who, as Schultze told me, had been poisoned in the gas chamber, were cremated in our presence.”

Schultze provided the following account of this incident:¹³⁷

“When I was in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, I personally saw SS men from the camp herding up to three hundred people in front of me – men, women and children; I could hardly tell what nationality they were, but judging by outward appearances they had no idea where they were being led. They were all herded into a large wooden barracks without windows, which was electrically lit on the inside. From the outside, this barracks was connected to the gas chamber by a closed corridor, where I installed the ventilation. I observed this at about 4 pm. The following day at ten o’clock in the morning, I was in the crematorium, and saw sixty corpses of men, women and children of various ages. They were lying undressed on the floor, ready to be put into the cremation furnace. Judging by their appearance, they had been murdered in the gas chamber.

Question: Tell us about the interior of the gas chamber!

¹³⁵ Protocol of the interrogation of K. Prüfer dated 9 March 1948.

¹³⁶ “воздуходувок при печах,” “vozdukhoduvok pri pechiakh,” the blowers of the forced-draft devices.

¹³⁷ Protocol of the interrogation of K. Schultze dated 4 March 1946

Answer: This building^[138] was eight meters wide and thirteen meters long. It was completely empty inside. The height of the building inside was 2.6 meters. There were four square openings measuring 25 x 25 cm in the ceiling. The ventilation system exchanged air ten times [per hour], and was used to suck out the gas that had accumulated, and pump in fresh air. The ventilation pipes, which I personally designed for the gas chamber, were bricked into the walls of the chamber.

Question: Who did you talk to about the fact that the crematoria and gas chambers you designed and built were used to exterminate completely innocent people?

Answer: I want to make this clear. The designer of the cremation furnaces, Prüfer, was on a business trip to Auschwitz. When he arrived in the morning, he also saw the sixty corpses of men, women and children lying on the ground. I told him everything that had happened: how these people had been brought in, chased into the gas chambers [plural] and killed, and how their bodies were now being burned in the crematorium. Prüfer didn't respond to me on this."

A little later, Schultze stated during that same interrogation:

Answer: I stayed there for five days, because there was no transport with people destined for extermination, but I had to test the function of the cremation furnace in practice. I was only able to carry out this test when the aforementioned up to three hundred people arrived, who were then murdered in the gas chambers [plural]."

During the interrogation of 14 March 1946, Schultze repeated this:¹³⁹

"The first time I went to Auschwitz in order to correct the mistakes made when calculating the ventilation for the crematoria. The second time I went two months later to start up the ventilation in a newly built crematorium. When I was in the concentration camp mentioned above, I personally observed how the SS men herded up to 300 people – men, women and children – not far from me, who apparently had no idea where they were being led. I also saw that all these people were being chased into a wooden barracks that had no windows. This barracks was connected by a closed corridor to the gas chamber in which I had installed the ventilation system. The group of people mentioned was chased into the wooden barracks at about 4 pm. I didn't know what was done with them, but the following day, at about 10 am, when I was in the crematorium, I saw sixty corpses of men, women and children of various ages lying naked on the floor. They were all dead, and had been taken to the crematorium to be incinerated. It gave the

¹³⁸ More precisely a semi-underground room.

¹³⁹ Protocol of the interrogation of K. Schultze dated 14 March 1946.

appearance^[140] as if all sixty people lying in the crematorium had been murdered in the gas chamber.”

He then explained the reason for his visit to Auschwitz as follows:

“Because there were no people to be exterminated when I arrived at the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, I was unable to test the functioning of the ventilation system and the [furnaces of the] crematoria, and I had to spend six days there until a transport of people of different nationalities and ages was brought in. As I said before, I carried out the practical test of the crematorium’s functioning after sixty people had been murdered in the gas chamber and then burned in the crematorium with my participation. Then, after I had established that the ventilation system in the crematorium was working properly, I left the concentration camp.”

Schultze then specified that he had to wait for the arrival of a transport of people destined for extermination “so that I could test the functioning of the crematorium and the ventilation system during the incineration of the corpses of the innocent people previously murdered in the gas chambers. [plural].”

The facts provided by the two engineers make it possible to establish with certainty that their statements referred to their visit on 24 and 25 March 1943. However, Schultze also confused this with the alleged events relating to his visit on 1 March 1943. In his interrogation on 11 March 1948, he explained:

“After I had arrived in Auschwitz in March 1943 – I no longer remember the exact date; however, I know it was a Monday – I learned that the installation work on the ventilation equipment in the gas chamber of the second crematorium would be completed in one or two days; it was not until Wednesday that I was able to check it, and was convinced that it was working flawlessly. Likewise, I carried out the testing of the blower. However, the head of the SS Construction Office of the Auschwitz Camp who was there, von Bischoff, stated that the blower had to be checked when cremating corpses in the furnaces, that is, at the time when the maximum temperature was reached in these furnaces. At that time the furnaces in the second crematorium were still being dried before their use, and no corpses had yet been cremated there. Under such circumstances, von Bischoff suggested that I wait until a prisoner transport arrived at the camp; then, he said, we could carry out the check and put the blower into operation.

The transport in question arrived at the camp on Saturday, and on the same day I checked with von Bischoff the operation, more precisely the operation during the activity, of both the blower and the ventilation systems

¹⁴⁰ “по внешнему виду,” “*po vnesnemu vudu.*” Another concession to Soviet investigators: what externally visible feature could make Schultze conclude that the people in question had been “gassed”?

in the gas chamber. On that occasion, about 150-300 inmates from the newly arrived transport were pushed by the SS into the gas chamber and poisoned with gas, then their corpses were cremated in the cremation furnaces. In this group of inmates who were killed in the gas chamber were men, women and children. At the time when the SS pushed them into the gas chamber, I was in the crematorium building, next to the cremation furnaces. The corpses of these inmates were cremated in my presence. After the killing of this group of inmates in the gas chamber had been carried out (which lasted no more than 50 minutes), an SS man in my presence turned on the ventilation systems, thanks to which the poisoned air was expelled from the gas chamber, and fresh air was introduced into it. Since it turned out in this test that the blower and ventilation facilities worked well, they were put into operation the same day by the SS Construction Office, that is, that Saturday I returned from Auschwitz to Erfurt. The blower and ventilation systems that had been installed at the furnaces and in the gas chamber of Crematorium III were tested by the SS Central Construction Office of the Auschwitz Camp and put into operation in my absence.

Question: We show you a photocopy of a letter from the company 'Topf and Sons' to the SS Construction Office of the Auschwitz Camp dated 24 February 1943, in which you are informed that you would be arriving at the camp on 1 March 1943, to put into operation the aeration and de-aeration system of Crematorium II. Tell us what facilities were involved in this letter.

Answer: The above letter referred to putting into operation the ventilation devices that had been installed under my direction in the gas chamber of this crematorium, as I mentioned earlier. To what I have already stated, I want to add that at that time, in addition to carrying out the blower testing at the cremation furnaces, I also checked the ventilation systems that had been installed under my direction in the furnace room and in the corpse autopsy room."

The 1st of March 1943 was precisely a Monday. After all, the document in question, Topf's letter to the Auschwitz Central Construction Office dated 24 February 1943, announced:¹⁴¹

"We would like to take this opportunity to inform you that our Chief Engineer Schultze will be arriving there next Monday, 1 March, to put the ventilation system of Crematorium II PoW Camp into operation."

On the following Wednesday, thus the 3rd of March, Schultze tested "the ventilation systems in the gas chamber" and was convinced that they were "working flawlessly." Schultze then also tested the "blower," but Bischoff told him that it "had to be checked when cremating corpses in the furnaces," which, at that time, "were still being dried before their use, and no

¹⁴¹ RGVA, 502-1-336, p. 41.

corpses had yet been cremated there.” The following Saturday, 6 March,¹⁴² a transport of inmates arrived, and Schultze and Bischoff were able to check together “the operation the operation during the activity, of both the blower and the ventilation systems in the gas chamber.” About 150-300 inmates from this transport were then killed in the “gas chamber” of Crematorium II. After about 50 minutes, the ventilation system was put into operation, and the corpses were cremated in the furnaces.

In this account, it must first be made clear that “the ventilation systems in the gas chamber” consisted of the aeration and de-aeration system of Morgue 1, while the term “blower” refers to the three forced-draft devices.

Schultze would therefore have tested the aeration and de-aeration system with the allegedly empty gas chamber on 3 March 1943. This is in contrast to the working-hour sheets of installer Messing, who wrote on 13 March 1943, “Aeration and de-aeration system [morgue] basement I put into operation.”¹⁴³ It may be that Messing, as Braun stated in the interrogation of 26 February 1948, had performed “the assembly work under the direct guidance of Chief Engineer K. Schulze,” but the fact remains that the test took place on 13 March, hence not on the 3rd. According to the *Auschwitz Chronicle*, a transport with 2,000 Jews from the Krakow Ghetto arrived in Auschwitz on 13 March 1943, of whom 1,492 were allegedly gassed in Morgue 1 of Crematorium II (Czech 1990, p. 352).

A clarification is due here. As the then senior researcher at the Auschwitz Museum Dr. Andrzej Strzelecki informed me, the transport from Krakow actually arrived in Auschwitz on 14 March, as is attested by the arrest forms of these Jews: “Arrested on 14 March 1943 – where: Kraków /Interned /at Auschwitz Camp – note AS/ on 14 March 1943. Admitting authority: RSHA.”¹⁴⁴

Therefore, the transport arrived on 14 March, not on the 6th, and there were allegedly 1,492 gassing victims, not 150-300.

On 24 and 25 March 1943, Schultze and Prüfer were in Auschwitz together. On 25 March 1943, SS *Untersturmführer* Hans Kirschnek, head of construction of the Auschwitz Camp und Agriculture Auschwitz, wrote a file memo that had as its subject, precisely, Prüfer’s and Schultze’s visit to Auschwitz on 24 and 25 March. It referred to the “telegraphic request to come here in order to repair of defects in Crematorium II and III in PoW

¹⁴² During the interrogation of 4 March 1946, Schulze reported that he had been idle at Auschwitz for five days. During the interrogation of 14 March 1946, he definitely mentioned six days three times, so that the Saturday he mentioned could only be 6 March.

¹⁴³ Topf, *Arbeitszeit-Bescheinigung* for Messing, 8-14 March 1943. APMO, BW 30/31, D-ZBau/2540, p. 26.

¹⁴⁴ Letter by Dr. A. Strzelecki to the author dated 16 February 1990.

Camp¹⁴⁵ Auschwitz.” Crematorium II had in fact suffered a serious breakdown, about which the document reports the following:¹⁴⁶

“As the three forced-draft devices did not perform well at all, and even suffered damage after the first full use due to excessive temperatures, they were removed at the expense of Topf & Sons, and returned by this company.”

Therefore, Schultze was to check the condition of the three forced-draft devices in Crematorium II, while Prüfer was to check the efficient operation of the five triple-muffle cremation furnaces without such devices, which is why the two engineers spoke of “testing” the cremation furnaces and the “blowers.”

The three forced-draft devices initially installed in Birkenau Crematorium II consisted of three large No. 625 blowers housed in a drum-shaped metal housing, i.e., they had pressure ducts 62.5 cm in diameter, and each weighed 775 kg.¹⁴⁷ They were housed in three service rooms arranged around the chimney, and each device was connected to one of the three chimney flues by means of a dedicated opening.¹⁴⁸

At the beginning of the second decade of March 1943, serious inconveniences occurred in Crematorium II. This was due to the concurrence of two causes. On the one hand, the forced-draft devices were operated at full capacity, which, partly due to a design error in the triple-muffle furnace,¹⁴⁹ caused such an increase in the velocity of the fumes that the combustible gases that developed from the corpses placed in the central muffles and the as-yet unburned gases from the two side muffles exited the furnaces partly unburned, and the final combustion process took place essentially in the smoke ducts. This resulted in high temperatures in these ducts, which caused part of the ducts’ and the chimney flues’ refractory masonry to collapse. On the other hand, the high-temperature fumes from the muffles, passing through the forced-draft devices, caused their engines to overheat and suffer irreparable damage.

Since the two engineers went urgently to Auschwitz on 24 March as a result of the above-mentioned “telegraphic request,” it is clear that the breakdown had been discovered a few days earlier, and that the crematorium had, as a precaution, suspended its operations.

¹⁴⁵ *Kriegsgefangenenlager*, the official function of the Birkenau Camp until late 1943.

¹⁴⁶ APMO, BW 30/25, p. 8. I laid out this story in Mattogno/Deana, Part I, Unit II, Chapter 6.2., pp. 239-243.

¹⁴⁷ Bill of lading by Topf dated 18 June 1942; RGVA, 502-1-313, p. 165.

¹⁴⁸ Mattogno/Deana, Part I, Unit II, Chapter 6.2., p. 276; Part II, Docs 222a-224, pp. 377-379.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, Part I, Section II, Chapter 10.10., pp. 379-382.

In this context, once it had been ascertained that the forced-draft devices were inoperable, checking the operation of the furnaces without such devices was perfectly logical. Even the number of corpses to be cremated for the verification – 60 – seems understandable: four consecutive cremations were to be carried out in each muffle ($3 \times 5 \times 4 = 60$). On the other hand, the reference to the alleged gas chamber is completely incomprehensible in this context.

Schultze's claim is completely false that he remained in Auschwitz for 5 or 6 days waiting for a transport of victims destined for the gas chamber whose corpses were to be used for testing the furnaces.

First of all, Schultze remained in Auschwitz for only two days, 24 and 25 March, and it could not have been otherwise, because his task, as Prüfer rightly stated, "consisted of him carrying out an inspection of the ventilation equipment¹⁵⁰ [forced-draft devices] in the crematorium."¹⁵¹ This means that on these two days he inspected the forced-draft devices, and ascertained that they were inoperable, as is evident from the file memo mentioned earlier. With that, his task was over: there was no reason for him to remain in Auschwitz any longer to check the operation of the furnaces without the forced-draft blowers, a task that fell to his colleague Prüfer.

On 16 April 1943, Topf declared that they were prepared to take back the three damaged devices, crediting the Central Construction Office with RM 3,705 as reimbursement;¹⁵² they were dismantled by Topf's installer Messing between 17 and 19 May.¹⁵³

Second, according to Danuta Czech's *Auschwitz Chronicle*, one transport with 2,800 and another with 1,901 Jews from Greece arrived at Auschwitz on 24 and 25 March, respectively. Of these deportees, 1,986 and 1,206, respectively, were allegedly gassed (Czech 1990, pp. 359f.).

¹⁵⁰ The Russian text says "вентиляционных установок," *ventilyatsionnykh ustanovok*, ventilation devices, which is undoubtedly a mistranslation, because it makes no sense to speak of ventilation devices in reference to a cremation furnace; they cannot refer to the pressured-air blowers (*Druckluft-Anlagen*) for the furnaces, which, being outside the furnaces, could not have been damaged by heat, nor can they refer to Morgue 1, the alleged gas chamber, since the "ventilation devices" were in operation "during the cremation."

¹⁵¹ Protocol of the interrogation of K. Prüfer dated 15 March 1946.

¹⁵² Letter by Topf to Central Construction Office dated 16 April 1943. APMO, BW 30/34, p. 36; post card by Topf to Central Construction Office dated 16 April 1943; RGVA, 502-2-26, pp. 231-231a.

¹⁵³ Topf, *Arbeitszeit-Bescheinigung* for Messing, 17-19 May 1943: "*Im Krematorium II (Bauwerk 30) die 3 Stück Saugzuganlagen abmontiert.*" APMO, BW 30/31, D-ZBau/2540, p. 91.

However, the two Topf engineers knew absolutely nothing of these purported gassings. So, from the point of view of the orthodox Holocaust narrative, there should have been an abundance of corpses for testing. Hence, there would have been no need to gas an additional 300 inmates.

Third, at least 5,500 inmates died in Auschwitz in March 1943,¹⁵⁴ averaging nearly 180 per day, so even if there weren't any gassings at all, there was no shortage of *actual* corpses.

Prüfer's and Schultze's account is thus woven into the blatantly propagandistic claim that in Auschwitz, in order to obtain corpses that can be disposed of, one necessarily had to *kill* people in the "gas chambers," as if there had not been a very high "natural" mortality rate.

Schultze's statements are moreover contradictory and nonsensical. He claims that 300 people were gassed for testing the operation of the furnaces in Crematorium II, but there were 60 corpses brought into the furnace room for testing, of which, according to Prüfer, only six were cremated in his presence (and thus used for testing). But then, what was the need to gas 300 people? Moreover, since 294 corpses still remained available after the test, for what reason would Schultze have to wait several days for the arrival of a transport destined for the alleged gas chamber? And this to perform a task that was not his responsibility, and that had already been performed by Kurt Prüfer!

Finally, a profound contradiction in Schultze's statements should be noted. He claimed on the one hand that he had immediately carried out "the practical test of the crematorium's functioning after sixty people had been murdered in the gas chamber and then burned in the crematorium." On the other hand, he "was only able to carry out this test when the aforementioned up to three hundred people arrived, who were then murdered in the gas chambers" after five or six days of waiting in Auschwitz.

In fact, 15 corpses, three for each of the five triple-muffle furnaces, would have been sufficient to test the efficiency of the three forced-draft devices.

It is therefore clear that Schultze attributed to the visit on 24 and 25 March his alleged experiences of the 1-March visit, although that one turns out to be just as false, as noted earlier.

¹⁵⁴ See Mattogno 2023a, pp. 191f. Between the 1st and 23rd of February 1943, 4,492 deaths are documented; the missing Death Book No. 12/43, which contained 1,500 death records (consecutive numbers 16501-18000), covered the period 23 March to 4 April. For the first four days of April, about 500 deaths can be estimated, so in March 1943 there were about 5,500 fatalities.

This confusion shines through clearly in the following statements made by Schultze on 11 March 1948:

“We visited the aforementioned camp at the request of the SS Construction Office of the Auschwitz Camp to find out why the blower at the cremation furnaces of the second crematorium was not working. We found that the deformation of the blower blades of the blower fan, and consequently also the failure of the blower, had occurred, because a very high, certainly continuous temperature had been maintained in the furnaces of the crematorium all the time. After we arrived at the site, we agreed with the head of the Construction Office, von Bischoff, that we would disassemble this blower, because we did not consider it advisable to repair it. When Prüfer and I were at the crematorium, there on the floor next to the crematoria lay about 60 bodies of inmates, who, I suspect, had been killed in the gas chamber. Then, the corpses of about 25 of these inmates were cremated in our presence. After this fact, I no longer went to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp.”

This refers to the visit on 24 and 25 March 1943, but during the interrogation of 14 March 1946, Schultze asserted:

“Answer: When the sixty corpses were brought into the crematorium for incineration, I was giving instructions to the fitters of the ventilation equipment on how to put it into operation, because it was a crematorium that had just been completed.

Question: So you were directly involved in testing the function of the crematorium and the ventilation equipment you installed in the crematorium?

Answer: Yes, the newly built crematorium and the ventilation equipment I installed for the crematorium were tested with my direct involvement. At that time, all sixty corpses lying there were cremated.”

These statements pertain to the 1-March visit, but there appear mixed in the sixty corpses of the alleged gassings from the cremation test on 24 and 25 March.

In this regard, Prüfer’s statement regarding the cremation of six corpses in two furnaces is perfectly logical. The furnace room of Crematorium II was equipped with six smoke ducts, one for each furnace, the sixth for the waste incinerator. Each pair of ducts merged into a single common duct that entered into one of the three chimney flues of identical size (80 cm × 120 cm), into which the chimney was divided. Each of these three flues was connected by a short vertical branch to a forced-draft device. Therefore, to check the draft when the furnaces operated without a forced-draft device, it was sufficient to use one of the two pairs of furnaces whose fumes flowed into the same duct and thus into the same chimney flue. This is the reason why Prüfer limited himself to having the cremation of six

corpses performed in two furnaces, thus one corpse per muffle. On the basis of this experiment, Prüfer came to the conclusion that the furnaces “worked well and without any problems.”

The cremation of 25 corpses stated by Prüfer during the interrogation of 9 March 1948 (and by Schultze on 11 March 1948), on the other hand, has no logical reason.

Thus, the story of the gassing of up to 300 people, and the waiting for these deportees to arrive, so their bodies could be used to test the crematorium’s incineration equipment, has neither any historical nor technical basis for either the visit on 1 March or that on 24-25 March 1943.

7.4. Explanatory Note on the Draft of Cremation Furnaces

The chimney draft of the crematoria was measured in mm of water column (German: *Wassersäule*, abbreviated as WS). 1 mm of water column is equivalent to the pressure of 1 kg per m². The minimum value was 10 mm WS, the maximum value 30 mm WS.

The strength of the draft, by drawing combustion air through the grate of the gas-generator, also determined the grate regime of the hearth, i.e., the amount of coke burned on 1 m² of grate surface in one hour. With natural draft (10 mm WS), the grate regime was usually 120 kg of coke per m² and hour, with forced draft (30 mm WS) it was up to 180 kg (Mattogno/Deana, Part I, p. 355). The grate regime could be reduced by closing the hearth’s air door, but only slightly, because too much reduction would have resulted in a lowering of the chimney draft, and thus smoke formation and cooling of the muffles and, at the limit, shutdown of the hearth.

The value of the draft force is a function of the chimney’s height and the temperature difference between outside and flue-gas temperature, according to the following equation:

$$E = h_c \xi 1,29 \left(\frac{1}{1 + 0.00367 t_a} - \frac{1}{1 + 0.00367 t_f} \right)$$

where E is the draft value, h_c the chimney height, t_a the outside air temperature, and t_f the average flue-gas temperature.

The four gas-heated Volckmann-Ludwig furnaces installed in 1932 by the H.R. Heinicke Company in the Hamburg-Ohlsdorf Crematorium operated with average temperatures of 800-900°C. The smoke temperature, measured behind the smoke damper, was normally about 100°C lower (Manskopf, p. 775). Since these furnaces had no recuperator, the smoke gases were similar to that of the Topf furnaces in Auschwitz-Birkenau, which had an operating temperature of 800°C. However, since the smoke ducts, with a cross section of 0.42 m² (0.6 m × 0.7 m), were very long (the

shortest ones, those of the third and fourth furnaces, measured about 6.5 m and 10.5 m), the temperature at the base of the chimney was undoubtedly lower than 700°C, but certainly higher than 500°C, because the chimney had a 12 cm thick refractory lining up to a height of six meters,¹⁵⁵ and this was done when the temperature of the smoke exceeded 500°C (Beutinger, p. 146; Colombo, p. 400).

Since the chimney height was 15.46 m ($h_c = 15.46$ m), and if assuming an outside temperature of 10°C ($t_a = 10^\circ\text{C}$) and a flue-gas temperature of 500°C ($t_f = 500^\circ\text{C}$), the draft pressure difference was about 12 mm WS, sufficient for normal operation of the plant. This derives also from the fact that the furnaces of all four crematoria at Birkenau regularly carried out their operations without forced-draft devices. This fact is confirmed by an undated questionnaire on the Birkenau crematoria compiled by Bischoff in June 1943.¹⁵⁶

The three forced-draft devices planned for Crematorium III were in fact never installed, as Kirschnek reported in his aforementioned file memo dated 25 March 1943:

“Based on experience at Crematorium II, the planned and delivered forced-draft devices will not be installed, but are taken over by the Central Construction Office for storage.”

For Crematoria IV and V, however, such installations were not provided at all. Their chimneys, 16.87 m high, provided a draft of about 13 mm WS. It should be noted that the cross section of the flues was proportionally identical to that of the chimneys of Crematoria II and III. These each had a chimney with three flues, each with a cross section of $0.8\text{ m} \times 1.2\text{ m} = 0.96\text{ m}^2$ serving two furnaces (six muffles). Crematoria IV and V each had two chimneys of each $0.8\text{ m} \times 0.8\text{ m} = 0.64\text{ m}^2$ cross section, serving four muffles, so that in both cases a cross section of 0.16 m^2 per muffle was calculated.

¹⁵⁵ File memo by SS *Untersturmführer* Kirschnek dated 14 September 1943; RGVA, 502-1-26, p. 144.

¹⁵⁶ RGVA, 502-1-312, p. 8.

8. The “Gas Chamber” of Crematorium II

8.1. Location

Asked about the existence of gas chambers “near the crematoria,” Prüfer replied:¹⁵⁷

“Yes, I saw a gas chamber outside, because there was a wooden barracks, from it there was a connection to the gas chamber; from the gas chamber, there was a connection to the crematorium.”

Schultze reported in this regard:¹⁵⁸

“[The victims] were all herded into a large wooden barracks without windows, which was electrically lit on the inside. From the outside, this barracks was connected to the gas chamber by a closed corridor, where I installed the ventilation.”

Prüfer placed the “gas chamber” outside the crematorium, which shows that he did not even know at that time that the alleged gas chamber was supposed to be the crematorium’s Morgue #1. Both interviewees mentioned a “wooden barracks,” which Schultze said was connected to the crematorium. This is an unequivocal reference to the story of the barracks presumably used as an undressing facility for the victims of the alleged gas chamber as told by witness Henryk Tauber in his interrogation by Soviet investigators on 24 May 1945. I have documented the unfounded nature of this claim elsewhere.¹⁵⁹

However, it should be pointed out that Tauber did not mention the alleged “closed corridor” that allegedly connected this barracks to the crematorium. Schultze’s statement that “this barracks was connected to the gas chamber by a closed corridor” does not even make sense, because the alleged “gas chamber,” meaning Morgue #1, was only one of the rooms in the basement of Crematorium II. Therefore, if the barracks had been connected to anything, it would have been an entrance to the building’s basement, not the gas chamber. This is explicitly admitted by Annegret Schüle, who states (Schüle, Note 126, p. 272):

“Structural statements such as Schultze’s and Prüfer’s claim that a wooden barracks was connected to the gas chamber by a closed corridor are also incorrect.”

¹⁵⁷ Protocol of the interrogation of K. Prüfer dated 5 March 1946.

¹⁵⁸ Protocol of the interrogation of K. Schultze dated 4 March 1946.

¹⁵⁹ Mattogno 2019, Chapter 2.3.3., pp. 68-73; Mattogno 2022, pp. 95f.

8.2. Terms: the “Code Language”

On the terms used for the alleged homicidal gas chamber, Schultze stated:¹⁶⁰

“On the orders of the SS Construction Office of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, I installed ventilation equipment in the so-called ‘shower baths’ in these camps [plural] in 1942-1943. In reality, this ventilation was constructed and installed by me in the gas chambers.”

As shown earlier, when addressing the same topic and in response to a specific question about the “code language” used for the alleged homicidal gas chambers, Prüfer used the terms “morgues,” “special basements” and “bathing establishments for special operations.”

As for the “shower baths,” Schultze had probably learned from Soviet investigators that the “gas chamber” at Crematorium II, according to what Henryk Tauber had reported in his Soviet deposition, was to be “disguised” as a shower room:¹⁶¹

“There were installations there like in shower rooms, i.e., there were shower heads overhead.”

But perhaps Schultze was aware of the Central Construction Office’s plan for “bath facilities” in Crematoria II and III by exploiting the heat from the smoke of the cremation furnaces (Mattogno 2019, pp. 135-140).

Therefore, Prüfer and Schultze did nothing more than adopt the fictitious terms that had been suggested to them by the Soviet investigators.

It is worth clarifying that Pressac’s pertinent “criminal trace,” the one precisely concerning the presence of 14 “showers” in Morgue #1, is documented in the handover deliberations of Crematorium III to the Central Construction office of 24 June 1943,¹⁶² but not in that of Crematorium II of 31 March 1943.¹⁶³ I explained the actual history of these showers in another study (Mattogno 2019, pp. 134-142).

Here, however, I may call attention to another oddity. The deliberations to hand over Crematorium III presupposed, like that of Crematorium II, the testing of the cremation furnaces and ventilation systems, but it does not appear that Prüfer and Schultze were in Auschwitz on that occasion. If that is so, then by whom were the tests carried out? The most likely explanation

¹⁶⁰ Protocol of the interrogation of K. Schultze dated 4 March 1946.

¹⁶¹ Deposition by H. Tauber dated 27-28 February 1945 before the Soviet Commission of Inquiry; GARF, 7021-108-8, p. 31; Mattogno 2022, p. 19.

¹⁶² RGVA, 502-2-54, inventory of the basement, illegible page number.

¹⁶³ RGVA, 502-2-54, p. 8, inventory of the basement.

is that here, too, the documentation created by the Central Construction Office was purged by the Soviets.¹⁶⁴

8.3. Equipment

Schultze was accused by Soviet investigators of having built the air intake and extraction system for the “gas chambers” of Crematoria II and III. This accusation makes sense only in the context of the now historically untenable thesis that Crematoria II and III at Birkenau were designed and built for homicidal purposes from the very beginning. As is well known, from Pressac to van Pelt, the orthodoxy has abandoned this thesis, claiming instead that the two aforementioned crematoria were designed as ordinary sanitation facilities. Only from late 1942 onward are they said to have been gradually transformed into instruments of mass murder.¹⁶⁵ However, such a conjecture has no basis in fact.

In the “Cost Estimate for Air Intake and Extraction Systems” of the future Crematorium II drawn up by Topf on 4 November 1941, two blowers (one for air intake, the other for air extraction) were planned for the ventilation of the “‘B’-Raum” (= “*belüfteter Raum*,” ventilated room), meaning Morgue #1.¹⁶⁶ Each had an hourly flow rate of 4,800 m³ of air against a total pressure of 40 mm water column. They were driven by a 3-phase motor of 2 horsepower. The total cost of the system was RM 1,847.¹⁶⁷ The ventilation systems actually installed in Crematorium II are listed in Invoice No. 171 prepared by the Topf Company on 22 February 1943. According to this invoice, the “Supply of ventilation and air intake and extraction systems as they were described in detail in our cost estimate of 4 Nov. 1941” consisted exactly of the blowers and engines as listed in this cost estimate.¹⁶⁸

Therefore, the capacity of the system actually installed in Morgue #1 of Crematorium II was exactly the same as had been designed many months before the alleged criminal transformation of the crematorium. It had been

¹⁶⁴ Similar purges are evident in the documentary gaps concerning, for example, drawings of cremation furnaces, reports on test cremations, and in general all matters related to cremation, or in the documentary vacuum that has been created around individual documents, such as the one mentioning the “gassing basement” or the “bathing establishments for special operations.”

¹⁶⁵ According to van Pelt, as he communicated to A. Schüle, this transformation supposedly started in September 1942, while Pressac insists on November 1942; Schüle, p. 180.

¹⁶⁶ In this document, Morgue #2 is referred to as “‘L’-Raum” “‘L’ room”; J.-C. Pressac interprets this as “*Leichenraum*,” corpse room, meaning morgue.

¹⁶⁷ J.A. Topf & Söhne, *Kostenanschlag über Be- und Entlüftungs-Anlagen*. 4 November 1941; RGVA, 502-1-327, pp. 151-153.

¹⁶⁸ RGVA, 502-1-327, p. 25.

designed by Schultze on 10 March 1942 (Drawing D 59366) according to the above-mentioned cost estimate.¹⁶⁹ This confirms that the ventilation system could not have had any criminal purpose. Later changes from the initial design did not touch the structure or capacity of the system. After the Topf Company had received the plans for the new crematorium, they had to modify the air intake and extraction ducts of the individual rooms, and drew up a new drawing (D 59394) showing the location of the respective blowers. Since the dimensions of Morgues #1 and #2 had changed, “different air-intake and -extraction openings” had to be designed. In addition, the sections of the walled ducts were modified.¹⁷⁰

“You want to provide an extraction duct with a clear width of 600 x 500 mm for Morgue #1, and an extraction duct of 800 x 500 mm for Morgue #2.”

Schultze was thus only the designer of a normal ventilation system for a morgue, which was installed by fitter Heinrich Messing in both Crematorium II and Crematorium III. Contradicting this, Schultze made the following revealing “confession” in this regard:¹⁷¹

“This building was eight meters wide and thirteen meters long. It was completely empty inside. The height of the building inside was 2.6 meters. There were four square openings measuring 25 x 25 cm in the ceiling. The ventilation system exchanged air ten times [per hour], and was used to suck out the gas that had accumulated, and pump in fresh air. The ventilation pipes, which I personally designed for the gas chamber, were bricked into the walls of the chamber.”

The “building” [здание, *zdanie*] in question was Morgue #1, a semi-underground room measuring not 13 m × 80 m, but only 7 m × 30 m, and 2.41 m high.

As I have noted elsewhere,¹⁷² for Michał Kula, an essential witness in this regard, the four alleged square Zyklon-B-introduction openings in the roof of Morgue #1 of Crematorium II measured no less than 70 cm × 70 cm,¹⁷³ not 25 cm × 25 cm. On the other hand, neither Schultze nor Prüfer ever mentioned any wire-mesh columns allegedly used to introduce Zyklon

¹⁶⁹ See Topf Drawing D 59366 dated 10 March 1942, published by Jean-Claude Pressac (1993, Docs. 13-15). Schüle reproduces the entire project in color; Schüle, pp. 438f.

¹⁷⁰ Letter by Topf to Central Construction Office dated 8 May 1942 with subject “Be- und Entlüftungsanlage für das zu errichtende Krematorium im K.L. Auschwitz”; RGVA, 502-1-312, pp. 65-68. The mentioned drawings D 59394 and D 59389 were lost.

¹⁷¹ Protocol of the interrogation of K. Schultze dated 4 March 1946.

¹⁷² See Rudolf/Mattogno, pp. 316-319, 327f.

¹⁷³ The cross section of the alleged Zyklon-B-introduction columns described by him in his first testimony. However, Kula changed that dimension during a later testimony to 24 cm × 24 cm; see Rudolf 2020, pp. 149-154.

B, which, according to Pressac, were the four “wire-mesh introduction devices” mentioned in the documents on the handover deliberations of 31 March 1943 for Crematorium II. Indeed, in Schultze’s statement quoted already twice, he explicitly stated that Morgue #1 “was completely empty inside.” Although one could object that the alleged columns had not yet been installed on the 24th and 25th of March 1943, since they appear only in a document dated 31 March, the witness Henryk Tauber asserted that they were already present in the alleged homicidal gas chamber at the time of the first gassing, that is, as early as 14 March:¹⁷⁴

“Near the wire-mesh columns, they were less crowded. From the arrangement of the bodies, it could be seen that people had moved away from these columns and had wanted to reach the door.”

While this is undoubtedly significant, much more important is what Schultze stated about the capacity of the fans in the “gas chamber”: the system provided 10 air exchanges per hour, which was allegedly sufficient to remove the “gas” from the room, and to renew the air in it.

As I noted as early as 1993, the study of the ventilation systems of Crematoria II and III provides conclusive proof that Morgue #1 was never turned into a homicidal gas chamber. In fact, for Morgue #1, the alleged homicidal gas chamber, 9.5 (= about 10, according to Schultze’s statement) air exchanges per hour were provided, while Morgue #2, allegedly the victim’s undressing room, 11 air exchanges per hour were provided. It follows that the alleged undressing room was ventilated better than the alleged homicidal gas chamber! (Mattogno 1994, pp. 59-62; 2016c, pp. 173-176). I also noted at the time that, according to engineer Wilhelm Heepke’s classic work on the design of crematoria, a minimum of five air exchanges per hour should be provided for morgues, but up to ten exchanges in the case of heavy use (see Chapter 11.4.). However, as many as 72 air exchanges per hour were provided for the Degesch standard hydrogen-cyanide disinfection chambers (2016c, p. 175; 2019, pp. 45-47). It incontrovertibly follows from this that the ventilation system installed in Morgue #1 of Crematoria II and III was that of a normal morgue.

It should also be noted that for the project “De-aeration system for the morgue cells and for the dissection room” dated 9 December 1940 concerning Crematorium I of the Auschwitz Main Camp, which I have already dealt with earlier, Schultze had made the following decision:¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁴ Minutes of the deposition of Henryk Tauber dated 24 May 1945 before Investigating Judge Jan Sehn. Höss Trial, Vol. 11, p. 136; Mattogno 2022, p. 36.

¹⁷⁵ Letter by Topf to SS New Construction Office Auschwitz dated 9 December 1940; RGVA, 502-1-312, p. 136.

“For the dissection room, we have provided for a 10-fold air exchange, and for the morgue a 20-fold air exchange. This air exchange rate ensures good ventilation of the rooms.”

Therefore, in December 1940, nine months before the alleged “first gassing” at Auschwitz, Schultze had deemed as many as 20 air exchanges per hour necessary for a very normal morgue. But then, at the beginning of 1943, he had a ventilation system installed that allowed for only 10 air exchanges per hour, yet allegedly served to ventilate a hydrogen-cyanide-operated homicidal gas chamber,!

The above therefore also renders the following statement by Schultze nonsensical:

“The ventilation pipes, which I personally designed for the gas chamber, were bricked into the walls of the chamber.” (Emphasis added)

In fact, these walled ducts already appear in Drawing 1173-1174 of the future Crematorium II, drawn by SS *Unterscharführer* Karl Ulmer on 15 January 1942 (Pressac 1989, pp. 272f.), several months before the alleged criminal transformation of the facility.

Schultze did not specify what his alleged design of the ventilation system “for the gas chamber” consisted of, and how it differed from a system designed for a normal morgue. In fact, there was no difference, because, as I have already explained, the ventilation system for the alleged homicidal gas chamber remained the same as that which had been designed for the morgue.

Therefore, Schultze could and should have defended himself effectively by asserting truthfully that he had designed a normal ventilation system for a morgue that the SS evidently had later misused for homicidal purposes. Yet like his colleagues Prüfer and Sander, he preferred instead to mendaciously accuse himself of having designed from the beginning a ventilation system specifically designed for a homicidal gas chamber.

8.4. The “Gas Testers”

During his interrogation on 4 March 1948, Prüfer was shown a photocopy of Topf’s famous letter of 2 March 1943 regarding “gas testers” (a term rendered as “газоизмерители,” *gazoizmeriteli*: gas meters). The Topf engineer commented on it as follows:¹⁷⁶

“At the request of the head of the SS Construction Office of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp von Bischoff [sic], I searched for gas testers as mentioned in the photocopy of my letter to the aforementioned Construction Office dated 2 March 1943, in order to equip the gas chambers in the camp

¹⁷⁶ Protocol of the interrogation of K. Prüfer dated 4 March 1948.

crematoria with them. When von Bischoff approached me with this request, he explained to me that, after the poisoning of prisoners in the gas chambers, there were often cases where hydrogen-cyanide vapors remained in them even after they had been ventilated, which led to the poisoning of the operating personnel working in these chambers. That is why von Bischoff asked me to find out which companies manufactured gas testers that could be used to measure the concentration of hydrogen-cyanide vapors in the gas chambers in order to make the work of the operating personnel safe. I was unable to fulfill von Bischoff's request, because I could not find any company that manufactured such gas testers."

Prüfer's explanations are completely wrong. The issue of "gas testers" has been dealt with extensively in other studies (Lüftl 2019, pp. 76-78; Mattoigno 2004; 2016c, pp. 80-82), which I briefly summarize.

In German technical terminology, a "gas tester" ("*Gasprüfer*") was a simple combustion-gas analyzer, a mechanical device that was installed in the smoke duct of a combustion plant to determine some of the main constituents of the combustion gas. By the early 1940s, there were various instruments for analyzing flue gases, from devices for analyzing flue gases (*Rauchgasanalyse-Anlagen*) to transmitters indicating the percentage of CO₂, to indicators giving the percentage of either CO₂ or CO and H₂ (Mattoigno 2016c, Doc. 12, p. 208). Civilian crematoria were also normally equipped with gas testers.¹⁷⁷ Prüfer knew this very well, so he spoke of "equipping" (Russian: *оборудование oborudovanie*) the alleged gas chamber with "gas testers," as if these were mechanical devices to be permanently installed somewhere.

What Prüfer did not know, however, was that the test for gas residues of hydrogen cyanide could be performed exclusively by a chemical method, namely by means of the "gas-residue detection devices for Zyklon [B]", a kit containing various chemicals that were used to freshly prepare a paper strip soaked in a solution sensitive to hydrogen cyanide, which turned blue in its presence. Therefore, no room could be "equipped" with such a kit.

It is moreover obvious that Bischoff would never have asked the Topf Company for a chemical kit that it neither manufactured nor traded (the "gas-residue detection devices for Zyklon [B]"), whereas the request for

¹⁷⁷ Engineer Richard Kessler, one of Germany's foremost experts in the field of cremation in the 1920s and 1930s, recommended as "absolutely necessary" for the proper functioning of cremation furnaces, the installation of a number of "monitoring gauging devices," including "a well-functioning CO and CO₂ [= gas tester] meter to ensure economical combustion, and to observe smoke formation at the same time." "*eines gut arbeitenden CO- und CO₂-Messers [= Gasprüfer], um eine wirtschaftliche Verbrennung zu gewährleisten und hierbei gleichzeitig die Rauchentwicklung zu beobachten.*" Kessler, pp. 137f. Gas testers were installed in the smoke duct immediately behind the furnace.

gas testers – combustion-gas analyzers – fell fully within Topf’s ther-motechnical sphere of competence and activities, that is, the one concern-ing the production of combustion plants.

The chemical test kit was supplied by the firms that distributed Zyklon B, such as Tesch & Stabenow of Hamburg,¹⁷⁸ under whose commercial jurisdiction Auschwitz fell. Hence, these kits were very easy to obtain. Their vendor did not have to be searched for.

Hence, Prüfer lied while being well aware that he was lying, evidently to please the Soviet investigators.

The incomprehensible equating of gas testers in the aforementioned let-ter of 2 March 1943 as having also been called “indicator devices for hy-drogen-cyanide residues” (“*Anzeigergeräte für Blausäure-Reste*”) – a term that was completely foreign to the technical literature of the time and is moreover contradictory¹⁷⁹ – is therefore clearly absurd, because it implied both a chemical procedure and a mechanical instrument, although it cannot have been both.

The motivation for Bischoff’s alleged request for “gas testers,” namely its necessity in the context of homicidal gassings, is not substantiated by any document. On the other hand, at least two cases of hydrogen-cyanide poisoning as a result of disinfestation gassings are known: one was men-tioned by Rudolf Höss in the special order dated 12 August 1942;¹⁸⁰ the other occurred on 9 December 1943, when a civilian worker forced his way into a lodging barracks that had just been disinfested.¹⁸¹

In this affair, what is astonishing is not so much the claim of possible “gas-residue detection devices” for the alleged homicidal gas chamber, but precisely the fact that it was never used in any alleged homicidal gas chamber, either before or after, even though it was an essential kit for safe-guarding the lives of detainee and SS personnel assigned to “gassings.” And all this, even though the use of this kit was *mandatory* in disinfesta-tion chambers.¹⁸² In fact, *not a single* “eyewitness” ever mentioned a test for gas residues in the alleged homicidal gas chambers.

¹⁷⁸ A “gas-residue detection devices [for Zyklon B]” appears among the materials related to the use of Zyklon B (gas masks, filters, etc.) that were ordered on 25 July 1942 by the administration of Lublin PoW Camp from the Tesch Company. Letter from Tesch & Stabenow to the administration of Lublin PoW Camp dated 29 July 1942. APMM, sygn. I d 2, vol. 1, p. 107. I published the document in Mattogno 2016c, p. 207.

¹⁷⁹ “*Anzeigergeräte*” were mechanical indicators, usually equipped with a pointer.

¹⁸⁰ RGVA, 502-1-32, p. 300.

¹⁸¹ RGVA, 502-1-8, p. 25.

¹⁸² Mattogno 2004, “Auschwitz: ‘Gas Testers’ and Gas Residue Test Kits,” pp. 150-155.

The reason given by Prüfer, namely that Bischoff had revealed to him that poisoning cases had occurred “even after” the homicidal gas chambers had been ventilated, can only refer to the alleged “bunkers” at Birkenau, since the alleged homicidal gas chamber of Crematorium II had not yet become operational on 2 March 1943. However, for these bunker gas chambers, which had operated for many months, thus creating, according to van Pelt, “more than 200,000” victims (van Pelt 2002, p. 568), Bischoff had felt no need to procure “gas testers.” Instead, he had asked Prüfer to procure them for the alleged homicidal gas chamber of Crematorium II, precisely on the basis of Bischoff’s alleged experience with the homicidal gas chambers of the “bunkers”!

8.5. “Gas Chambers” and Morgue Chambers

In his effort to conform to the Soviet investigators’ thesis, Prüfer ran into other errors that betray the fictitious nature of his claims. One of these concerns the morgues of the crematoria. On this, Robert Jan van Pelt wrote emphatically:¹⁸³

“By the time the crematoria were finished, Auschwitz had virtually no permanently dedicated morgue capacity.”

This would make sense, if his thesis of the homicidal use of these rooms were true. As I have shown in another article, however, the morgues of the Birkenau crematoria continued to be used as such on a daily basis, even after their alleged transformation into gas chambers.

In contrast to the orthodox position on this, Prüfer made the following statement:¹⁸⁴

“In addition, special rooms were set up there [inside the crematoria] for the operating personnel recruited from among the prisoners, as well as medical cabinets, where the autopsies of the corpses took place, and morgue rooms, in which the corpses of those tortured to death in the gas chambers were piled up, because although the crematoria were in operation 24 hours a day, they were unable to burn them [the corpses].”

Right after this, he reiterated that “ventilation devices were also manufactured and installed in the gas chambers, the furnace rooms and the morgues.” Finally, after having mentioned that “ventilation devices were made to suck in and expel air in four [sic!¹⁸⁵] gas chambers at the second

¹⁸³ Van Pelt 1999, p. 210; In van Pelt 2002, p. 352, he confirms: “no morgue units.”

¹⁸⁴ Protocol of the interrogation of K. Prüfer dated 4 March 1948.

¹⁸⁵ The statement concerning the existence of four “gas chambers” in Crematoria II and III at Birkenau on which the Topf Company had worked had already been anticipated by Prüfer in the interrogation dated 25 February 1948, and was repeated by Schultze in the interrogation dated 11 March 1948, which shows its purely propagandistic character.

and third crematorium,” Prüfer let a true statement slip through when stating:¹⁸⁴

“In addition, ventilation equipment and blowers were manufactured and installed in the morgues and in the furnace rooms of the first, second and third crematorium.”

Therefore, real morgues existed in Crematoria II and III, which were equipped with real ventilation systems. But if that was so, then how does this square with the thesis of homicidal gas chambers? When Crematoria II and III went into operation, they possessed only two basement rooms: Morgue #1 and Morgue #2. If the former was a homicidal gas chamber, then the latter cannot have been an undressing room (which Prüfer never mentioned), but had to be a real morgue.

Among the documents concerning the presence of real morgues in the Birkenau crematoria, one is particularly important because of its date. On 20 March 1943, the SS garrison physician of Auschwitz, SS *Hauptsturmführer* Eduard Wirths, wrote a letter to the camp commandant, in which he noted as part of a general plan to expand the Birkenau Camp’s inmate hospital:¹⁸⁶

“For the removal of the corpses from the detainee sick-bay to Crematorium 2, covered hand carts must be procured, allowing the transportation of 50 corpses each.”

Dr. Wirths was referring to Crematorium II in Birkenau. As mentioned earlier, about 5,500 inmates died in the Auschwitz-Birkenau complex in March 1943, and about 7,640 in February (Mattoigno 2023a, Part 2, p. 193).

Another confirmation that Crematorium II had no relation to the claimed mass murder of Jewish inmates is the fact that, as mentioned earlier, this facility went into operation on 20 February 1943 according to a report dated 29 March 1943:¹⁸⁷

“Entire masonry completed and put into operation on 20 Feb. 43.”

The Topf Company installed an air-intake and extraction system in Morgues #1 of Crematoria II and III, and an air-extraction system in Morgues #2. Under no circumstances should Prüfer and Schultze have spoken of four “gas chambers,” because from an orthodox point of view, it would have been at most two “gas chambers” and two “undressing rooms.”

¹⁸⁶ Letter from the SS garrison physician to the commandant of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp dated 20 March 1943, with the subject “*Häftlings-Krankenbau – KGL*”; RGVA, 502-1-261, p. 112.

¹⁸⁷ *Tätigkeitsbericht des SS-Ustuf. (F) Kirschnek, Bauleiter für das Schutzhaftlager und für landwirtschaftliche Bauvorhaben. Zeit 1. Januar 1943 bis 31. März 1943*, dated 29 March 1943; RGVA, 502-1-26, p. 59.

This is to be understood in the sense that cremations began, at least on a reduced or experimental basis, because the forced-draft systems had been installed on the 18th and 19th of January,¹⁸⁸ so the cremation furnaces were ready for use, but the ventilation system of Morgue #1, the alleged homicidal gas chamber, was put into operation only on 13 March. Therefore, the Central Construction Office was interested in the cremation of the bodies of registered inmates who died in the camp, yet evidently not in the “gas-sing” of unregistered deportees.

At the same time, Prüfer made a disproportionate concession to the Soviet thesis by asserting that the crematoria normally operated 24 hours a day. This is blatant nonsense, because coke-fired furnaces normally required a daily pause of 3-4 hours for cleaning the hearth grates (Mattogno/Deana, Vol. I, pp. 315f.). This was even stated by Henryk Tauber:¹⁸⁹

“In Crematoria Nos. 2 and 3, the cremation of corpses in the furnaces was carried out during the entire day, except for a break to remove the slag, but for at least 21 hours.”

9. Structure and Operation of the Crematoria

9.1. Fritz Sander’s “Continuously Operating Corpse-Cremation Furnace for Mass Use”

During his first interrogation, Sander was immediately asked the following question point-blank:¹⁹⁰

“Tell us about your invention of the crematorium for mass incineration!”

The Topf engineer replied as follows:

“As a leading engineer at the Topf Company, I was head of the crematorium construction department, headed by Prüfer. The latter told me in 1942, I don’t remember the exact date, during a conversation about the capacity of the crematoria that had been built in Auschwitz Concentration Camp, that they could not cope with the number of corpses to be cremated. He cited the example that two or three corpses were inserted into the insertion openings, but that the crematorium could not cope with the workload in the concentration camps.”

¹⁸⁸ Topf, *Arbeitszeit-Bescheinigung for Messing*, 18-24 January 1943. APMO, BW 30/31, D-ZBau/2540, p. 34.

¹⁸⁹ Deposition by H. Tauber dated 27-28 February 1945 before the Soviet Commission of Inquiry; GARF, 7021-108-13, p. 10; Mattogno 2022, p. 23.

¹⁹⁰ Protocol of the interrogation of F. Sander dated 7 March 1946.

At that time, as a specialist in the field of heating, I decided on my own initiative to build a crematorium with a higher capacity for cremating corpses. In November 1942, I had finished my project for a crematorium for mass cremation of corpses, and submitted it to the Reich Patent Office in Berlin.

The crematorium for mass cremation was to be designed according to the principle of the conveyor-belt system, and corpses were to be continuously pushed into the furnace for cremation by mechanical means.

The corpses were to enter the furnace under their own weight, falling by themselves onto the grate on a refractory surface with an inclination of 40 degrees, and burning under the effect of the fire. The corpses themselves were to serve as an additional source of fuel.

This patent could not be officially registered with the state patent office because it was secret due to the war, but my invention was put into practice, and I was given the [patent] number.”

Asked during the same interrogation about the cremation capacity of the facility he designed, Sander said evasively:

“The number of corpses that can be incinerated in one hour in the crematorium I designed is significantly higher than the number incinerated in a [conventional] cremation furnace.”

Sander also explained during the interview, why and under what circumstances he had come up with such a project:

“In the summer of 1942, Prüfer and Schultze reported to me that, in the concentration camps of Auschwitz, many people were exterminated in gas chambers, and their corpses burned in crematoria, whereby the strain on the crematoria was so great that three corpses were put into one furnace opening [concurrently].”

During his second interrogation, he specified:¹⁹¹

“After his return from the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, Prüfer told me that he had been present during the testing of the crematoria built there, and had come to the conclusion that they were not very efficient and could not cope with the number of corpses that had to be cremated there.”

During his third interrogation, Sander asserted:¹⁹²

“I remember well that this conversation between me and engineer Prüfer took place in the spring of 1942 – I can’t remember the exact month – after engineer Prüfer had returned from a business trip from the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, where he had checked the furnaces in the newly built crematorium. [...]

After the engineer Prüfer had informed me that the cremation furnaces we had built in Auschwitz were too small to incinerate the corpses there, I told

¹⁹¹ Protocol of the interrogation of F. Sander dated 13 March 1946.

¹⁹² Protocol of the interrogation of F. Sander dated 21 March 1946.

him that it was essential to design cremation furnaces based on the conveyor-belt system for the mass incineration of corpses in the concentration camps.”

The reality is quite different. On 26 October 1942, Fritz Sander drafted a patent application for a “Continuously operating corpse-cremation furnace for mass use,” which he then revised on 4 November 1942.¹⁹³

No patent was evidently granted, but this has nothing to do with the fanciful reasons given by Sander, namely “because it was secret due to the war.” In fact, as Sander himself noted, mass cremation in Germany was illegal, and his project therefore had to disregard legal provisions:¹⁹⁴

“In that case it is obvious that one cannot proceed in accordance with the legal requirements in force in the Reich territory.”

For Germany’s National Patent Office, this was certainly a much more serious reason not to grant the patent.

Sander’s account is completely fabricated. He claimed to have gotten the idea for the new design after a talk about “the capacity of the crematoria” with Prüfer, who was on his way back from Auschwitz, where he had gone together with Schultze,¹⁹⁵ an unmistakable reference to Prüfer’s and Schultze’s visit to Auschwitz on 24 and 25 March 1943. Hence, on the one hand, the conversation could not have taken place “in the spring of 1942,” as Sander claimed, and on the other hand, by the time the conversation took place, Sander had already been working on his design for six months!

In fact, already on 14 September 1942, Sander wrote the Topf brothers a letter expounding to them the “new design” of the crematorium he had conceived (Mattogno/Deana, Vol. 1, pp. 288f.).

Sander’s design was nothing but an adaptation of Topf’s waste incinerator, which basically had been copied from Kori’s “Furnace with two combustion chambers” (*ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 288-291; Vol. II, Doc. 225, p. 380). The idea of a vertical cylindrical combustion chamber, on the other hand, was taken from Adolf Marsch’s patent for a “Shaft furnace for the concurrent cremation of a larger number of human corpses or animal carcasses,” dated 30 September 1915 (*ibid.*, pp. 151-153).

Pressac had drawn attention to Sander’s project in his 1989 book, but without attaching any particular importance to it (Pressac 1989, pp. 100-102).

¹⁹³ Document reproduced in Mattogno/Deana, Vol. II, Doc. 155, pp. 225-232; translation: Vol. I, pp. 188-191; see Doc. 10 (furnace drawing).

¹⁹⁴ J.A. Topf & Söhne, Erfurt, *Kontinuierlich arbeitender Leichen-Verbrennungsofen für Massenbetrieb. Patent Anmeldung* 760198, 5.11.1942.

¹⁹⁵ “What did Prüfer and Schultze tell you after their business trip to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp,” Protocol of the interrogation of F. Sander dated 7 March 1946.

Quite different was later the attitude of Robert Jan van Pelt, who, by virtue of his abysmal incompetence in the field of cremation, unbelievably insisted that this project somehow proved the veracity of the absurd cremation capacity of the Birkenau furnaces as alleged by Henryk Tauber. For an in-depth historical-technical study of this issue, I refer to a specific study of mine (Mattogno 2020, esp. pp. 17-61).

9.2. Civilian Furnaces versus Concentration-Camp Furnaces

Asked about the structural differences between the furnaces in civilian crematoria and those installed in concentration-camp crematoria, Prüfer replied:¹⁹⁶

“In civilian crematoria, there was one opening (muffle) for the cremation of the corpse, in rare cases two. In the crematoria for the concentration camps, there were three insertion openings. The size of the insertion opening was smaller in the crematoria for the concentration camps – 70 x 70 cm – and two meters long, compared to 90 x 90 cm and two meters thirty in the civil crematoria. Instead of a trolley on rails, on which the corpse in a coffin is moved into the opening, in the crematoria for the concentration camps, the corpse is pushed into the furnace on a hand-carried stretcher without a coffin. In the civilian crematoria, a special bellows is used to blow in preheated air, which causes the corpse to burn more quickly and without smoke. The construction of the crematoria for the concentration camps is different; it does not allow the air to be heated in advance, which is why the corpse burns more slowly and with smoke. Ventilation is used to reduce the smoke and the smell of the burning corpse.”

During another interrogation, he added:¹⁹⁷

“The difference between the crematoria I designed and built for the concentration camps and the other civilian crematoria I built is that in the furnaces of the former, there were three insertion openings/muffles, and in the latter there was only one, rarely two. The crematoria with three openings were built because they had a larger capacity, i.e. more bodies could be cremated in them. In addition, these crematoria also saved fuel.”

I summarize and explain. Civilian cremation furnaces had only single-muffle furnaces, usually one or two, rarely three; in the concentration camps, the Topf Company installed double-muffle, triple-muffle and eight-muffle cremation furnaces. The last two types had intercommunicating muffles.

In the following table, I give the muffle dimensions of furnaces for civilian crematoria (maximum permissible dimensions according to the 1937

¹⁹⁶ Protocol of the interrogation of K. Prüfer dated 5 March 1946.

¹⁹⁷ Protocol of the interrogation of K. Prüfer dated 15 March 1946.

German “Guidelines for the Construction of Furnaces for the Cremation of Human Corpses” (see Grossdeutscher Verband), and the dimensions of Topf furnaces as set up at Auschwitz.

Table 2: Muffle dimension of civilian and concentration-camp cremation furnaces

	Civilian	Topf 2-muffle	Topf 3-muffle ¹⁹⁸	Topf 8-muffle
Height	900 mm	700 mm	800 mm	700 mm
Width	900 mm	700 mm	700 mm	700 mm
Length	2500 mm	2000 mm	2000 mm	2000 mm

The smaller size of the muffles of the concentration-camp furnaces depended mainly on the fact that cremation was originally planned with a light coffin of rough boards that was much smaller than a regular coffin, and also on the need for material saving by reducing the overall size of the furnace.

Initially, Topf furnaces were also equipped with a “coffin-introduction device” mounted on wheels running on tracks, similar in function to that of civilian furnaces. Only from March 1943 was the system of “corpse stretchers” introduced at Auschwitz.

The civilian coke-fired crematoria were equipped with a “recuperator” consisting of a refractory-clay duct or metal pipes heated externally by high-temperature fumes. In it, the combustion air fed into the furnace was heated up to 600°C. The heated air in the recuperator entered the muffle by virtue of the chimney draft. There were no “bellows” (*mexa*, *mekha*) that performed this function, unless by that term one means blowers.

Topf’s civilian furnaces heated with gas or electricity were in fact equipped with a blower outside the furnace that blew preheated combustion air into the muffle. Concentration-camp furnaces had no recuperator, so the combustion air entering the muffle was cold.

These devices moreover had other drawbacks not stated by Prüfer; the main ones are as follows:

- absence of technical instruments: electric pyrometers to control the temperature in the muffle and at the bottom of the furnace; draft gauges to control the draft in the chimney and the hearth; combustion-gas analyzers (gas testers) to monitor the combustion;
- inability to regulate the air blower of the triple-muffle furnace, so that combustion air was blown into all three muffles simultaneously, with-

¹⁹⁸ Measurements taken from the identical triple-muffle furnaces at the Buchenwald Camp.

out the possibility of blocking or regulating the air flow in each of them independently;

- inability to regulate the chimney draft for each muffle (in the triple-muffle furnace, a single smoke damper simultaneously regulated the smoke flow of all three muffles; in the 8-muffle furnace, a single smoke damper simultaneously regulated the smoke flow of four muffles);
- inability to accelerate the coke-combustion process on the hearth grate and the cremation process in the muffle due to the absence of forced-draft devices.

As a result of these disadvantages, as Prüfer pointed out, the corpse burned “more slowly and with smoke.” To prevent the formation of smoke and foul odor, Prüfer continued, “a ventilation,” i.e., a blower was employed. Indeed, at that time it was believed that smoke depended exclusively on a lack of combustion air, and that it was sufficient to introduce sufficient air to eliminate it immediately. Prüfer himself had harshly criticized Eng. Hans Volckmann’s discovery of laminar currents (which traced the formation of smoke back to poor mixing of combustible gases and particles with the combustion air; Prüfer 1931, pp. 27-29), which did have its importance,¹⁹⁹ although it was not the only determining factor.²⁰⁰ In the case of smoke formation in the triple-muffle furnaces, introducing more cold air with a blower would certainly have worsened the situation, both because, as I have already explained, the system could not be adjusted for each individual muffle, and because the supply of cold air would inevitably have cooled all three muffles, making it more difficult for combustion air, gases, and combustible particles to mix, ignite and burn completely, and also decreasing the draft in the flue and consequently the amount of air getting drawn through the hearth, resulting in less heat being supplied into the muffles, hence a further decrease in temperature.

The “larger capacity” that Prüfer attributed to multi-muffle furnaces built in concentration camps compared to civilian furnaces thus depended not on better performance, but on the purely quantitative factor of the greater number of available muffles.

¹⁹⁹ One of the advantages of using combustion air preheated in recuperators was precisely that it promoted the mixing of the air’s oxygen with unburned gases and carbon particles, thus improving the combustion.

²⁰⁰ The formation of smoke could depend on several factors: lack of combustion air/oxygen; poor mixing of combustion air with combustible gases and particles; insufficient temperature in the muffle; excessive volumetric velocity of combustible gases and particles, which passes through the muffle too fast to burn out completely inside the muffle, and then cools too much in the smoke duct to keep burning.

One of the advantages of concentration-camp furnaces – in addition to lower cost – was lower fuel consumption. This was due to the small structure of these devices, which, having a very light refractory mass, required much less fuel to reach operating temperature and thermal equilibrium.²⁰¹

In practice, civilian furnaces were more efficient, whereas Topf's furnaces for concentration camps were cheaper.

In Schultze's description of the differences between the civilian furnaces and those at Auschwitz-Birkenau, he was even more cursory. In his view, they were limited to the number of muffles and the system of corpse introduction. Compared to Prüfer, however, he gave an indication related to his field of expertise:²⁰²

"The power of the ventilators in the ventilation systems of the concentration-camp crematoria was 5-6 hp instead of three hp as in the furnace of an ordinary crematorium."

This is an unsubstantiated claim, because the blowers of the double-muffle furnaces were driven by a 1.5-hp motor with Blower No. 120, while those of the triple-muffle furnaces had 3-hp motors with Blower No. 275.²⁰³

9.3. Cremation Capacity

During the interrogation of 5 March 1946, Soviet investigator Shatunovsky asked Prüfer the following question:

"How many corpses could be cremated per hour in a crematorium in Auschwitz?"

The Topf engineer answered:

"In a crematorium with five furnaces or fifteen openings (muffles), fifteen corpses were cremated in one hour."

This corresponds to the cremation of one corpse per muffle in one hour, or a theoretical capacity of Crematoria II/III of 360 corpses each in 24 hours. The day before, Schultze, who was perfectly familiar with the triple-muffle furnaces because he had designed and built their blowers, had stated:²⁰⁴

"There were five furnaces in each of the two crematoria, and three corpses were placed in each furnace, i.e. there were three openings (muffles) in each furnace. Within one hour, fifteen corpses could be cremated in a crematorium with five furnaces."

²⁰¹ The lower fuel consumption also depended on other technical factors related to the small size of the muffles and, for the triple- and 8-muffle furnaces, especially the heat interchange between the muffles.

²⁰² Protocol of the interrogation of K. Schultze dated 4 March 1946.

²⁰³ The blower number gives the diameter of pressure tube in mm.

²⁰⁴ Protocol of the interrogation of K. Schultze dated 4 March 1946.

He too confirmed the cremation capacity of one corpse per muffle per hour. Exactly because these statements are fully in accordance with reality,²⁰⁵ for that very reason, they stand in stark contrast to the purely propagandistic “expert report” written on behalf of the Soviet Commission of Inquiry into Auschwitz by the Polish engineers Dawidowski and Doliński and the Russian engineers Lavrushin and Shuer. According to their report, 3 to 5 corpses per muffle could be cremated simultaneously in 20 to 30 minutes in the triple-muffle furnaces. Thus, the cremation capacity of Crematoria II and III was set at 3,000 corpses per day.²⁰⁶ This absurd cremation capacity was then made official in the final report of the aforementioned Commission, which was published by *Pravda* on 7 May 1945. In spite of all this, neither Shatunovsky nor the other “Smersh” investigators ever objected to Prüfer and Schultze’s statements. Why?

This is all the more strange because, during the interrogation of 4 March 1948, Soviet investigators Doperchuk and Novikov had in their hands a photocopy of Bischoff’s famous letter of 28 June 1943 – later attached to the record – according to which Crematoria II and III could each cremate 1,440 corpses in 24 hours, exactly four times the capacity claimed by Prüfer and Schultze.²⁰⁷ Nevertheless, they used the document only for an utterly derisory dispute: Prüfer had claimed that two double-muffle furnaces had been installed in Crematorium I, whereas the investigators noted that Bischoff’s letter of 28 June 1943 mentions three.²⁰⁸ On the other hand, the two Soviet investigators knew perfectly well the contents of Prüfer’s previous interrogations; in fact, when he told the story of the gas chamber in Crematorium I, they were quick to object:²⁰⁹

“Then why did you state during the earlier interrogations that you first learned in 1943 of the real purpose of the crematoria and gas chambers in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp?”

Why then did the two investigators not also challenge him on his claim regarding the cremation capacity of the triple-muffle furnaces? The explanation for this deliberate omission lies perhaps in the fact that a closer examination of the cremation issue would have been totally at odds with the thesis of mass extermination at Auschwitz. In fact, within the mythical fig-

²⁰⁵ Mattogno/Deana, Vol. I, Unit II, Chapter 8, “The Duration of the Cremation Process in the Topf Furnaces at Auschwitz-Birkenau,” pp. 294-314.

²⁰⁶ “Akt” dated 14 Feb.-8 March 1945. GARF, 7021-108-15, p. 4. Mattogno/Deana, Vol. I, Unit II, Chapter 9.3.5, “The Soviet and Polish Reports on the Topf Cremation Furnaces at Auschwitz-Birkenau,” pp. 337-339.

²⁰⁷ Mattogno/Deana, Vol. I, Unit II, pp. 295f., 313f.; Vol. II, Docs. 248-248a, pp. 414f.

²⁰⁸ Protocol of the interrogation of K. Prüfer dated 4 March 1948.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

ure of four million victims at Auschwitz, the largest share of the alleged gassings and cremations – 3,200,000 – pertained to the crematoria at Birkenau. This share had been calculated by the above-mentioned “experts” on the basis of a claimed cremation capacity of these facilities of 270,000 corpses per month – a decidedly insane capacity, eight times higher than the theoretical one! Despite the adjustment “coefficients” introduced by the experts to take into account the periods of inactivity of the crematoria, the final result still corresponded to a cremation capacity five times higher than the theoretical one. (See in this regard Mattogno 2003.)

Bischoff’s letter of 28 June 1943 was also shown by Soviet investigators to Schultze and Braun. They asked the former on 11 March 1948:

“Question: We show you a photocopy of a report of the SS Construction Office of the Auschwitz death camp dated 28 June 1943, from which it appears that in said camp in the crematoria and gas chambers built and set up with your personal participation, 4,756 inmates were exterminated per day. What can you say about the contents of this document?

Answer: I have no reason to dispute these official figures. The document shown to me testifies in favor of the fact that in the Auschwitz crematoria and gas chambers built and equipped with my direct participation, more than 4,700 inmates were exterminated per day.”

Leaving aside the nonsensical Soviet claim that a maximum cremation capacity (however fictitious) corresponded to an extermination actually carried out, Schultze accepted the letter’s figures without objection, even though they were in open conflict with his statement that the triple-muffle cremation furnaces had a capacity of one corpse per hour per muffle. With reference to the 52 muffles mentioned in the document, this would correspond to $(52 \times 24 \text{ h/day} =) 1,248$ corpses in 24 hours versus 4,756, so Schultze had very good grounds “to dispute these official figures.”

Braun also accepted these absurd data without objection in his interrogation on 26 February 1948:

“Question: We are presenting you with photocopies of parts of a correspondence between the Topf and Sons Company and the Construction Office of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, which show that, between 1940 and 1943, the company built and equipped five powerful crematoria with gas chambers in the said camp, in which more than 4,700 prisoners were exterminated every day. What can you say about the documents presented to you?

Answer: The documents presented to me do indeed show that five powerful crematoria were built by the Topf and Sons Company with my participation in the Auschwitz death camp, in which more than 4,700 prisoners were exterminated every day.” (Emphasis added)

I will return to the issue of cremation capacity of the Birkenau crematoria in Chapter 11.7.

9.4. The “Huge Load” of the Cremation Furnaces

As is evident from what I set out in Chapter 6, Prüfer stated that two of his visits to Auschwitz – in the spring of 1943 and early 1944 – were due to damage to the crematorium chimneys. When questioned on this point, he replied:²¹⁰

“The inner fireclay lining of the crematorium chimneys in Auschwitz began to crumble after only half a year as a result of the huge load to which these crematoria were exposed in the concentration camp.”

What does this “huge load” refer to? Let us examine the facts. One must first understand the meaning of the text. The Russian term “труба, *truba*,” meaning “pipe,” here designates the smoke duct that led from the muffle to the chimney mouth (in German *Rauchkanal* or *Fuchs*) or the chimney flue (in German *Kaminzug*).

The first chimney suffering serious damage was that of Crematorium I. On 1 June 1942, Bischoff sent a letter to the camp commandant, in which he wrote, among other things:²¹¹

“Continued operation (day and night) has damaged the chimney due to overheating.”

The date is important: Until the 1st of June 1942, the claimed extermination, according to the *Auschwitz Chronicle*,²¹² was limited to the “gassing” of 6,800 Jews in the so-called “Bunker 1.” However, these corpses are said to have been buried rather than burned. Therefore, the “huge load” that caused irreparable damage to the chimney in this case was due to the corpses of inmates who had died a “natural death.” However, by May 1942, more than 3,300 inmates had died, an average of 106 per day (Matogno 2023a, Part 2, p. 190). If, as the orthodoxy claims (based on Bischoff’s letter of 28 June 1943), Crematorium I’s cremation capacity was 340 corpses in 24 hours, on average its furnaces would have worked for $([106 \times 24 \text{ h/day}] \div 340/\text{day} =)$ about 7.5 hours a day, and Bischoff’s claim regarding “day and night” operation would be absurd. But since the actual cremation capacity was only one corpse per muffle and hour (= theoretically 144 in 24 hours), it would have taken the furnaces an average of $([106 \times 24 \text{ h/day}] \div 144/\text{day} =)$ about 17.5 hours each day to cremate these 106

²¹⁰ Protocol of the interrogation of K. Prüfer dated 5 March 1946.

²¹¹ RGVA, 502-1-272, p. 256.

²¹² Czech 1990, entries for the months March to May 1942.

corpses (not including the time needed for the furnace to heat up to operating temperature). This fully justifies Bischoff's claim.

The damage to the chimney at Crematorium II, mentioned by Prüfer in connection with his visit to Auschwitz in the "spring" of 1943, had actually occurred a few days before 24 March 1943. At first, the Central Construction Office did not realize the severity of the damage. Believing that the three forced-draft devices had simply failed, it sent for Prüfer and Schultze, who, as I have already noted, visited Auschwitz on 24 and 25 March. It was soon ascertained that the refractory lining of the chimney had collapsed or become damaged, and that "whole parts of the vaults" of the smoke ducts had also collapsed.²¹³ The damage was discovered in early April, because on Prüfer's visit to Auschwitz at this time, the Central Construction Office had asked him for "a new suggestion concerning the chimney lining."²¹⁴

The Central Construction Office opened an investigation to ascertain responsibility, and summoned both Robert Koehler, the builder of the chimney, and Prüfer, who had drawn up the design. In the final report, Kirschnek noted, with reference to Prüfer:²¹⁵

"On his last but one visit, he named, in the presence of the commandant, the great stresses due to the firing of only single furnaces – something not considered in the design – to have been the cause.

In the opinion of the Central Construction Office, this may indeed be the main cause, and has now been taken into account in the new design by Topf and Sons, in that the lining contains various types of openings,^[216] which allows individual lining parts to move in a sliding manner so that the elasticity of the lining masonry takes into account the stresses that may occur when individual furnaces are heated."

The main cause of the chimney damage was thus closely related to the "firing of only single furnaces." However, if 8,328 corpses of Jews and Gypsies allegedly gassed on 14, 16, 20, 23, and 24 March 1943 (see Chapter 9.5.) were really cremated in this crematorium, all five furnaces would have had to operate at maximum capacity at all times. Even under the theoretically most favorable conditions, they would have taken over 17 actual days to accomplish this task.²¹⁷ The use of only individual furnaces in Crematorium II, for instance three of the five, on the other hand, would

²¹³ Letter by Central Construction Office to Topf dated 17 July 1943. APMO, BW 30/34, p. 17.

²¹⁴ File memo by Kirschnek dated 14 September 1943; RGVA, 502-1-26, p. 144.

²¹⁵ File memo by Kirschnek dated 14 September 1943; RGVA, 502-1-26, p. 144f.

²¹⁶ That is, air pockets within the masonry.

²¹⁷ Based on the theoretical capacity of 360 corpses within 24 hours.

have ensured the cremation of only some 189 corpses within 21 hours, a figure compatible with the daily “natural” mortality rate of about 180 deaths.

The above-mentioned case is part of the normal fuel-saving practice of periodically employing individual furnaces or groups of furnaces on a continuous basis.²¹⁸ This way, they remained hot at all times,²¹⁹ and allowed for faster reactivation and great fuel savings. This practice is documented for the Theresienstadt crematorium, which was equipped with four oil-fired cremation furnaces from the Ignis-Hüttenbau Company of Teplitz-Schönau. In fact, here only one furnace was used in rotation at a time, but continuously in two shifts for 13-14 hours a day.²²⁰

Regarding the furnaces at Birkenau Crematorium II, I have already explained that they had three smoke ducts that led to three separate chimney flues. Into the first duct and flue flowed the smoke from furnaces 1 and 2; into the second the smoke from furnaces 3 and 4; and into the third the smoke from furnace 5 and the waste incinerator. If the two furnaces of any pair were not lit, the corresponding chimney flue remained cold, while the other two heated up, which caused stresses that damaged its refractory lining.

The damage to the three forced-draft devices “due to excessive temperatures” depended instead on an error in the design of the triple-muffle furnace: fumes from the two lateral muffles flowed into the central muffle of the same size, which thus had to accommodate twice the volume of combustion gases. This doubled the speed with which the combustion gas flowed. As a result, some of the combustion gas entered the smoke duct still burning, thus increasing the temperature in the smoke duct and chimney. As I noted earlier, the three forced-draft devices were located in three separate service rooms. If all three of them were damaged, it is clear that the five furnaces were put into operation all at once. This seems to be alluded to by a sentence in Kirschnek’s file memo of 25 March 1943, which I quoted earlier, indicating that these devices were damaged “because of excessive temperatures after the first operation at full capacity.” The most likely scenario, then, is that the crematorium’s operation began “at full capacity” in order to dispose of the bodies that had accumulated in the local morgues as soon as possible. However, after a few days, when the situation

²¹⁸ This practice obviously presupposed a relatively limited number of corpses to be cremated.

²¹⁹ The daily interruption for cleaning the hearth grates caused little heat loss compared to the heat stored in the entire furnace body.

²²⁰ Mattoigno/Deana, Vol. I, Chapter 11.4, on the Ignis-Hüttenbau furnace at the Terezín Crematorium, pp. 400-405, and related documents in Vol. 2.

had normalized, operation continued with the use of only individual furnaces.

From the orthodox perspective, however, the use of individual furnaces is meaningless because, as noted earlier, all five furnaces at the crematorium would have taken more than 17 days to dispose of the bodies of the alleged 6,342 gassing victims.

9.5. Multiple-Body Cremations

Prüfer, Sander and Schultze's statements contain some references to multiple-body cremations. Prüfer stated:²²¹

"I reported to Sander that I had been present during the testing of the furnaces in the crematorium of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, and had come to the conclusion that the crematoria could not cope with the number of corpses to be cremated there, as the furnaces of the crematoria were not efficient enough. I gave Sander the example that in Auschwitz, in my presence, two corpses were shoved into an introduction opening/muffle instead of just one, and that the furnaces of the crematorium could not cope with this load because there were so many corpses to burn. At that time, I also told Sander that the corpses I had seen were of people who had previously been murdered in gas chambers."

As already quoted earlier, here is how Sander told this tale:²²²

"As a leading engineer at the Topf Company, I was head of the crematorium construction department, headed by Prüfer. The latter told me in 1942, I don't remember the exact date, during a conversation about the capacity of the crematoria that had been built in Auschwitz Concentration Camp, that they could not cope with the number of corpses to be cremated. He cited the example that two or three corpses were inserted into the insertion openings, but that the crematorium could not cope with the workload in the concentration camps. [...]"

In the summer of 1942, Prüfer and Schultze reported to me that in the concentration camps of Auschwitz many people were exterminated in gas chambers, and their corpses burned in crematoria, whereby the strain on the crematoria was so great that three corpses were put into one furnace opening [concurrently]."

Such a claim makes no sense from the orthodox point of view, because in the summer of 1942, only the so-called "bunkers" at Birkenau are said to have been in operation as homicidal gas chambers. However, their alleged victims were not incinerated "in crematoria," but buried.

Later Sander added:²²³

²²¹ Protocol of the interrogation of K. Prüfer dated 19 March 1946.

²²² Protocol of the interrogation of F. Sander dated 7 March 1946.

“This had to do with the fact that, after the construction of the crematoria, the Topf Company sent their people to the concentration camps to assemble the crematoria, and engineer Prüfer, as the construction manager and designer of the crematoria, went to the concentration camp to inspect how the assembly work was going; he was also present during the practical testing of the crematoria.

After his return from the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, Prüfer told me that he had been present during the testing of the crematoria built there, and had come to the conclusion that they were not very efficient and could not cope with the number of corpses that had to be cremated there. At the time, Prüfer gave me the example that, in his presence, two corpses at a time had been introduced into the opening of the crematoria, but the latter [the furnaces] had not been able to cope with the workload because there were so many corpses to be cremated in the concentration camp.”

Prüfer tried to keep up with Sander’s game of mendacity concerning the genesis of his new mass-cremation furnace. He allegedly reported to Sander that the five triple-muffle furnaces in Crematorium II had too small a cremation capacity in relation to the number of corpses to be cremated, so Sander would devise his “Continuously operating corpse-cremation furnace for mass use.” But as noted earlier, this concatenation of events is completely false.

On the other hand, Prüfer’s account of the multiple cremations undoubtedly refers to his visit to Auschwitz on 24 and 25 March 1943. He stated about this visit that six corpses were cremated in his presence in two furnaces, thus one corpse in each muffle, which is fully in accordance with his and Schultze’s statement that the cremation capacity of the furnaces of Crematorium II was one corpse per hour per muffle.

According to his own account, Prüfer had found in the furnace room of Crematorium II 60 corpses, which could be cremated in as little as four hours. But if that was so, then how could he claim that the amount of corpses to be cremated was such that it could not be disposed of even by multiple cremations?

Finally, Prüfer himself had designed the triple-muffle furnaces for the cremation of only one corpse at a time – as, by the way, was clearly stated in the “Operating Instructions” for these furnaces.²²⁴ Therefore, he knew perfectly well that a possible load of two or three corpses per muffle would not have increased the capacity of the furnaces at all, but would have pro-

²²³ Protocol of the interrogation of F. Sander dated 13 March 1946

²²⁴ Topf, *Betriebsvorschrift des koksbeheizten Topf-Dreimuffel-Einäscherungssofen*. March 1943; Mattoigno/Deana, Vol. II, Doc. 227, p. 383.

portionally prolonged the duration of cremation and the consumption of coke.

The significance of Prüfer's experiment, as I explained in another study (Mattoigno 2005, pp. 40-43), is this: in the passage quoted earlier, Prüfer stated that single cremations could not cope with the large number of corpses to be cremated (actually just 60, if we follow his statements). Therefore, in his presence, the cremation of multiple corpses placed concurrently in one muffle were attempted, but despite the fact that two to three corpses were loaded into each muffle together, the problem of the (allegedly) large number of corpses to be cremated could not be solved. The reason for this was the fact that the cremation capacity of the furnaces had not increased at all.

In this context, the Russian phrase "*ne spravlyalis' s toj nagruzkoj*" means that the furnaces were not up to such a load of corpses, that is, they could not cremate them as cost-effectively as they would cremate a load of only one corpse per muffle. The word "*nagruzka*," "load," corresponds to the German "*Beladung*" and refers to the contents of the muffle, while "*kolichestvo*," "quantity, number," is equivalent to "*Belastung*," which refers to the "load" of the furnace in the sense of the frequency of cremations.²²⁵

If in fact the multiple-cremation experiment had succeeded according to the orthodox perspective, that is, if it had turned out that two or three corpses together were incinerated in the same time required by one, the cremation capacity would have doubled or tripled. But then, why did Prüfer say, and Sander confirm, that the furnaces still could not cope with the alleged large number of corpses to be cremated? From this perspective, the evidence of multiple cremations would also be illogical and contradictory: if Prüfer knew in advance that even cremating three corpses placed concurrently in one muffle would still not solve the claimed problem of the large number of corpses to be cremated, why did he run the multiple-cremation experiment?

Prüfer thus experimentally confirmed just the opposite, namely, that multiple-corpse cremations did not increase the cremation capacity of the furnaces.

This fact had already been acknowledged by Sander in his letter of 14 September 1942, which I mentioned earlier (reproduced in Schüle, pp. 443-447):

²²⁵ It should be kept in mind that Prüfer and Schultze's statements were translated from German into Russian by interpreters who often mistranslated technical terms, such as when they attributed "ventilation" to the crematoria.

“In my opinion, cremation in the muffle furnaces is not fast enough to dispose of a large number of bodies in a desirably short time. This is why a large number of furnaces or muffles are used, and the individual muffles are stuffed with several corpses, without, however, remedying the root cause, namely the defects of the muffle system.

In my opinion, these deficiencies of the muffle furnaces, which are not eliminated by combining them into four-muffle furnaces (three- or eight-muffle furnaces) and by stuffing the individual muffles with several bodies concurrently, are as follows:”

Sander then listed three main flaws, the second of which mentions multiple-corpse cremations:

“(2) Problems of introduction. In any case, it is difficult and unpleasant work to insert the corpses into the muffle in the longitudinal direction, especially if several corpses have to be packed into the muffle concurrently. In the long run, it will also be impossible to avoid damaging the delicate muffle masonry.”

The reference in the above letter to “several corpses... concurrently” stuffed in one muffle, which was certainly possible albeit not economically viable, does not concern the essential issue of cremation capacity, but merely the far more marginal one of the difficulty of loading several bodies concurrently into one cremation muffle. Sander does not say whether loading multiple corpses together into one muffle increased their cremation capacity correspondingly, although he did say that this did not solve the problem. He merely reported that this practice led to difficulties when introducing the corpses into the muffle. As I have shown elsewhere, this problem (on par level with that of damage to the refractory masonry) really only and exclusively arose when two or more corpses were loaded into one muffle concurrently. To be precise, while the simultaneous introduction of two adult corpses into one muffle was difficult, loading three adult corpses concurrently was physically impossible, because the frame of Topf’s muffle door had standard dimensions of 60 cm × 60 cm, with the top half shaped as a semi-circle. Introducing one corpse at a time, either with the convenient corpse-introducing device or even with the simpler stretcher, did not cause any difficulty, because each muffle was equipped with sliding rollers for these devices.²²⁶

In order to extol the merits of his design, Sander therefore had to accentuate the flaws of multi-muffle furnaces, and to this end he was forced to introduce the flaw of the difficulty of simultaneously introducing several

²²⁶ Mattogno 2019, Chapter 10.2.3. “Loading System of the Muffle,” pp. 334-336, and Docs. 40-46a, pp. 647-650; Mattogno 2020, pp. 82-110 and Docs. 29-36.

corpses into a muffle, because he could not mention the nonexistent flaw of introducing only one corpse at a time.

The fundamental problem also remains: from whom and when did Sander learn about the simultaneous cremation of multiple corpses in one muffle? According to Sander's and Prüfer's statements, this was supposedly done by Prüfer after his return to Erfurt from his visit to Auschwitz on 24 and 25 March 1943. But as we have seen, this is impossible. On the other hand, this is the only occasion on which, according to Prüfer and Schultze, multiple corpses could have been cremated simultaneously in a furnace muffle at Auschwitz in Prüfer's presence. All of this confirms that Sander was not referring to actual experiences of multiple-corpse cremations of which he was aware as early as September 1942, but to a conjecture of convenience to attribute to the multiple-muffle furnaces a flaw that was overcome by his new design.

Seen from the general orthodox point of view, the idea of the necessity of multiple-corpse cremations to increase the cremation capacity of the furnaces seems nonsensical. Assuming as real the capacity figures listed in the letter by the Central Construction Office dated 28 June 1943, the ten triple-muffle furnaces of Crematoriums II and III could have cremated 2,880 corpses per day with single-corpse cremations. In 1942, the month of the highest actual and presumed mortality at Auschwitz was August, when about 36,000 victims are said to have been gassed (if we follow Czech's *Auschwitz Chronicle*), and about 8,600 inmates perished of a "natural" death (Mattogno 2023a, Part 2, p. 190). This amounts to a total of 44,600 deaths, averaging about 1,440 per day, hence exactly the daily cremation capacity attributed to Crematorium II when assuming single-corpse cremations.

It is documented that, as late as 3 August 1942, only one new crematorium (the future Crematorium II) was planned for the Birkenau Camp, and that the decision to build three more crematoria in that camp was made during this month (Mattogno 2019, pp. 302f.). Hence, this month's mortality was supposed to be the benchmark for the cremation capacity to be adopted.²²⁷ However, the one that was adopted, if we follow the orthodox narrative, was disproportionately higher: 4,756 corpses per day versus 1,440.

In fact, the decision to build the future Crematoria III, IV and V depended on two concomitant factors: on the one hand, the panic by which the camp administration was seized in August 1942 due to the extremely

²²⁷ In the preceding months, the number of alleged gassings was very small: about 7,000 in May, as many in June, and about 5,000 in July. Data according to the Czech 1990.

high mortality rate caused by a typhus epidemic and other infectious diseases spinning out of control; on the other hand, Himmler's July 1942 order to expand Birkenau's occupancy from the 120,000 inmates originally planned to a whopping 200,000 inmates.²²⁸

The need for the use of multiple-corpse cremations to increase the cremation capacity of the furnaces in early 1943 is particularly nonsensical even from an orthodox point of view. The time when this is said to have happened could not refer to Schultze's visit to Auschwitz on 1 March 1943, for the reasons given earlier. However, regarding Schultze's and Prüfer's visit on 24 and 25 March, I have already explained that the Central Construction Office had become aware of the damage to the forced-draft devices in Crematorium II at least a few days earlier. According to Czech's *Auschwitz Chronicle*, during this period, 1,700 Gypsies (23 March), 1,986 Greek Jews (24 March) and another 1,206 Greek Jews (25 March) were allegedly gassed. If assuming the orthodox position, then one cannot seriously believe that the Central Construction Office on the one hand had urgently requested, by telegraph, the presence in Auschwitz of the two Topf engineers to repair or replace the burned-out devices, but on the other hand had allowed the quiet continuation of mass gassings and cremations of Jews. What is more, neither Schultze nor Prüfer reported anything about the above-mentioned alleged mass gassings (of 1,986 and 1,206 persons) on 24 and 25 March. In fact, they implicitly ruled out that Morgue #1 was filled with the bodies of the 1,700 Gypsies allegedly gassed in that room on the 23rd of March, because had these dead Jews been lying around in the crematorium's basement, then the SS would not have had to carry out a gassing of 300 additional persons in order to procure corpses for the functional testing of the forced-draft devices and cremation furnaces, as Schultze had claimed.

According to the letter from the Central Construction Office dated 28 June 1943, the five triple-muffle furnaces of Crematorium II could cremate 1,440 "persons" within 24 hours, or 600 per hour.

According to Czech's *Auschwitz Chronicle*, from the opening of the crematorium (14 March 1943) to 24 March, five "gassings" of altogether 8,328 victims had been carried out, namely:

1. 1,492 Jews from Krakow on 14 March
2. 959 Jews from Krakow on 16 March
3. 2,191 Greek Jews on 20 March

²²⁸ Mattoigno 2019, Chapter 8.7.5, "Increase of Cremation Capacity at Birkenau," pp. 261f., and pp. 301-305.

4. 1,700 Gypsies on 23 March
5. 1,986 Greek Jews on 24 March,

Assuming the cremation capacity as claimed by the orthodoxy – 60 bodies per hour for Crematorium II (four bodies per muffle and hour) – the cremation of the claimed gassing victims would have been wrapped up for each gassing batch as follows:

1. $1,492 \div 60/h \approx 25$ hours, cremation finished on 15 March
2. $959 \div 60/h \approx 16$ hours, cremation finished on 16 or 17 March
3. $2,191 \div 60/h \approx 38$ hours, cremation finished on 21 March
4. $1,700 \div 60/h \approx 28$ hours, cremation finished on 24 March
5. $1,986 \div 60/h \approx 33$ hours, cremation finished on 25 March

Therefore, on 24 and 25 March 1943, Prüfer and Schultze would have witnessed the cremation of 1,986 corpses (of which they knew nothing), which supposedly caused no difficulties (and neither did the cremation of 2,191 corpses on 20 March, if we follow the orthodoxy). But if that was so, then why did Prüfer and Sander state that the furnaces “were not very efficient and could not cope with the number of corpses that had to be cremated there,” that they “could not cope with the number of corpses”?

Even from the orthodox perspective of mass gassings, this complaint of a hugely insufficient cremation capacity makes sense only if the furnaces could cremate only one corpse per muffle in one hour, as both Prüfer and Schultze stated.

Moreover, the continuous use of all furnaces for 24 hours a day, as I have already noted, is in open contrast to the Central Construction Office’s statement of 14 September 1943 regarding the heating of only individual furnaces.

Whichever way one examines it, the story of multiple-corpse cremations is therefore patently nonsensical, as is the two engineers’ entire account of the “gas chamber” at Crematorium II.

As noted earlier, Prüfer’s and Schultze’s account fits into the grossly propagandistic view that in Auschwitz, in order to dispose of corpses, one had to kill people. The reality, which sheds light on the real reason for the experiment carried out by Prüfer, is that by 25 March, several hundred corpses of registered inmates who had died a “natural death” had accumulated. Therefore, if there were “so many corpses to be cremated,” it was precisely these.

In this context, we do well to recall the 20-March request by the SS garrison physician for “2 covered handcarts” to transport 50 corpses each to

the crematorium. We can infer from this that from 21 to 25 March 1943, 500 corpses were brought there.

The Topf engineers misrepresented this reality, like almost all others, to pander to the wishes of those who interrogated them.

The story of the multiple-corpse cremations, like that of the “gas chambers,” was yet another one of Schultze’s and Prüfer’s concessions to Soviet propaganda, as contradictory as all the others. This also includes the story of people burned alive in furnaces, in the face of which the Topf engineers took different attitudes. Prüfer rejected it.²²⁹

Question: Did Willi Wiemokli talk to you about the fact that living people were burned in the furnaces of the crematorium?

Answer: Yes, there was such a conversation in recent times [presumably: at the end of the time when the camp existed], but I remember telling him at the time that this could not be true because the furnaces were too small.

The gist of the answer was that, since the door frames of the muffles were 60 cm × 60 cm in size, it was at least arduous to put a living, struggling person into them, with the muffle at 800°C.

Braun, on the other hand, accepted this claim without objection, although he admitted that he had learned it only from Allied propaganda in the immediate postwar period.²³⁰

Question: Did you know that innocent people were exterminated and burned alive in the crematoria you built in the concentration camps?

Answer: I only found out about this after Germany’s capitulation through the radio and newspapers.

Question: Did Prüfer and Schultze know about the above?

Answer: I assume that Prüfer and Schultze, who were in the concentration camps, knew that people were being exterminated and burned alive in the concentration-camp crematoria they had constructed.”

Question: Were Prüfer and Schultze aware that living people were being exterminated in the crematoria?

Answer: In my opinion, they were informed.”²³¹

Braun slipped another sliver of truth when he asserted:²³²

“The cremation furnaces manufactured by the Topf Company were delivered to the Buchenwald, Auschwitz and Dachau camps during the German-Soviet War, where, as I later learned from newspapers, Russian prisoners of war, prisoners of war from other nations, and civilians were exterminated.” (Emphasis added)

²²⁹ Protocol of the interrogation of K. Prüfer dated 5 March 1946.

²³⁰ Protocol of the interrogation of G. Braun dated 11 March 1946.

²³¹ Protocol of the interrogation of G. Braun dated 4 March 1946.

²³² Protocol of the interrogation of G. Braun dated 27 March 1946.

10. Conclusions

The Topf engineers pleaded guilty to the charges ascribed to them, but these charges were double-faceted: some aspects were real, some imaginary.

The real aspects were the objective and indisputable fact that Prüfer had designed the cremation furnaces installed at Auschwitz and Birkenau, and had directed their construction; that Schultze had designed the ventilation systems of Crematorium I, II and III; and that Sander and Braun were responsible for them by virtue of their management functions in the Topf Company.

The imaginary aspects – those that were actually incriminating – consisted of the claim that the ventilation systems of Morgue #1 of Crematoria II and III had been designed for a homicidal gas chamber, and that the crematoria were used to cremate the corpses of the gassing victims, and that the four engineers were fully aware of this.

In Chapter 5, I documented that, already by March-April 1945, this propaganda hypothesis had turned into an unquestionable dogma, so that recognition of the actual fact – the Topf engineers' activities at Auschwitz and Birkenau – necessarily implied recognition of the propaganda dogma. This is the meaning of the “confessions” of Kurt Prüfer, Karl Schultze, Fritz Sander and Gustav Braun: since they could neither deny nor downplay their actual involvement in the design and construction of cremation furnaces and ventilation systems for the crematoria at Auschwitz and Birkenau, they were forced to take on the burden of the purely propagandistic indictment: the mass extermination of – not Jews, who, to tell the truth, were never mentioned as having been the main victims during their interrogations; in fact, the Soviet investigators always spoke merely of “men, women and children.” That the Topf engineers knew nothing from personal experience of such an extermination and the use of the crematoria to carry it out is evident from their pertinent puerile, contradictory and false statements. But while trying in every way to please the Soviet investigators in the hope of having their lives saved, they sometimes, unwittingly, uttered flashes of truth in this context that were completely at odds with Soviet propaganda.

Even in the most-recent, refined versions as published by Jean-Claude Pressac and Robert Jan van Pelt, such propaganda collapses like a house of cards upon documented and systematic analysis (see Mattogno 2019;

2020). After this, not even a paltry hint of guilt remains standing against the Topf engineers.

For these reasons, they cannot be considered criminals who collaborated in making the Auschwitz “extermination machine” efficient, especially since they carried out their activities exclusively in the field of sanitation. Therefore, they all deserve a full and complete legal rehabilitation.

11. Annegret Schüle and the Topf Engineers

11.1. Uncritical Method

Annegret Schüle is considered one of the world’s leading experts on the company J.A. Topf und Söhne. She began working on the subject in 2002, helping to organize the exhibition “Technicians of the ‘final solution.’ Topf und Söhne – The Builders of the Auschwitz Furnaces,” which was opened at the Jewish Museum Berlin on 19 June 2005.²³³ By that route, she has been afforded the great fortune of having had access to a substantial body of documents, largely from Jean-Claude Pressac’s bequest to the Buchenwald Memorial and the main Thuringian archives in Weimar, but her unique merit is that she has published many of them.

In my review of her book on the Topf Company, I will focus particularly on her statements that have direct or indirect relevance to the interrogations of the Topf engineers and their activities at Auschwitz.

Following in the footsteps of Pressac’s theses, and deviating from them at times only to succumb to even more inconsistent interpretations, she flaunts the typical technical ignorance and gullibility of orthodox Holocaust historians. Schüle provides an example of this as early as in her first chapter, where she reports a technical drawing by Topf with the following caption: “Schematic diagram of an aeration-disaeration system, undated” (p. 40). The drawing shows two pairs of rooms, and each pair, intercommunicating, has a quadrangular opening in the ceiling: from the one in the room on the left (marked with No. 1) warm air comes out, in the one in the room on the right (bearing No. 2) moist air comes out. The openings in the four rooms feed into an air-extraction duct that runs above the rooms and is connected to an external suction blower located to the left of the rooms. To the right is a furnace to heat air. In each room, just above the floor, two beams support a wire-mesh-like grille. In Room 1, hot air coming out of

²³³ Schüle, p. 15; all page numbers in the text from there, unless stated otherwise.

the opening in the ceiling passes through this grille from top to bottom, and from bottom to top in Room 2, where it is drawn in through the corresponding opening in the ceiling.

I have dwelt on this incredible misunderstanding because, as I shall show later, Schüle attributes disproportionate importance to the aeration and disaeration system of Morgue #1 of Birkenau Crematoria II and III in terms of having had a homicidal function. Like other innocuous terms, such as “special facility,” she interprets this term according to the tenets of the orthodox Holocaust mythology of a “code language.”

The author’s credulity and lack of critical sense also results from her use of nonsensical testimony, as in this case (p. 153):

“Burning a person alive in a Topf furnace was the exception in Buchenwald. In Auschwitz, on the other hand, it was part of the punishment for the Sonderkommando inmates deployed in the crematoria.”

The sources are the self-declared eyewitnesses Filip Müller and Henryk Tauber!²³⁴ Her excursus on the Sonderkommando uprising, which covers six pages of text, is all based exclusively on testimonies, without the mention of a single document (pp. 221-227).

In her “Excursus: Auschwitz – from concentration camp to extermination camp,” Schüle cites the passage from Prüfer’s interrogation of 4 March 1948 concerning the alleged gas chamber in Crematorium I and the phantom gassings in Łódź (see Chapter 7.1.). Here is her commentary (p. 156):

“Even if geographical and technical details in this report are incorrect [...], his statement clearly proves that Prüfer already knew about the gas mass murder and its practice in Auschwitz in the spring of 1942.”

To an incredible lack of critical sense, she thus associates a hyperbolic and nonsensical emphasis: from the alleged observation of “more than ten” corpses, she deduces that Prüfer was aware of a “gas mass murder”!

11.2. Fritz Sander’s Mass-Cremation Furnace

On Fritz Sander’s “Continuously operating corpse-cremation furnace for mass use,” the author notes that in the relevant draft “cremation objects” are referred to as if they were “animal carcasses or garbage” (p. 169), ignoring the fact that this was the common technical term for corpse in all patents. For example, in the Volckmann-Ludwig crematorium patent issued on 30 October 1928, the corpse is precisely referred to as the “crema-

²³⁴ See in this regard Mattogno 2021a and 2022.

tion object.”²³⁵ Oddly enough, the author quotes a short excerpt from this patent (p. 58, Note 193), so her accusation is incomprehensible.

Schüle then writes, again in relation to this project, that

“with a total building height of approx. 18 meters, 50 corpses could be cremated there every hour, hence 1,200 corpses per day.”

Her reference is to an “expert report by Rolf Decker, managing director and sales manager for incineration systems at the Ruppman Company in Stuttgart,... written down by publisher Klaus Kunz” and dated 25 April 1985 (p. 172, Note 71).

This is a two-page typescript signed precisely by Klaus Kunz.²³⁶ As I have explained elsewhere,²³⁷ Decker’s calculation is based on the assumption that each of the three chutes of the furnace was 25 meters long and could hold 50 corpses at a time, and that the process of vaporizing the corpses’ water took 15 minutes. This would correspond to “a cremation capacity of about 4,800 corpses in 24 hours,” and that the temperature at the height of the second chute was 1,000°C. From where Schüle derived the figure of 1,200 corpses daily is unknown. It probably stems from the misinterpretation of Decker’s data, because the figure she adduced results from 50 corpses/h × 24 h/day, that is, from the assumption of a duration of the cremation process of one hour, whereas Decker speaks of 15 minutes.

I also found that the expert’s assumptions are all unfounded. If the three inclined planes of the furnace were 25 meters long, the furnace would be at least 100 meters high (not 18, as Schüle claims) and 40 meters wide! Moreover, a duration of the corpse-drying process of 15 minutes is contrary to practical experience, which points at some 30 minutes. Finally, the assumption of a temperature of 1,000°C in such a furnace is completely illusory, both because of the enormous amount of heat required for the vaporization of the corpse water, and because of the inevitably huge excess of air streaming through such a huge, continuously fed device. The actual capacity of a realistic facility (some 6 meters high, as Pressac correctly estimated) would be about 360 corpses within 24 hours, which is the theoretical capacity of a triple-muffle furnace, but with the added convenience of continuous operation.

²³⁵ Deutsches Reich. Reichspatentamt. *Patentschrift Nr. 506627. Klasse 24d. Gruppe I. Ausgegeben am 6. September 1930. Dipl.-Ing. Hans Volckmann und Dipl.-Ing. Karl Ludwig in Hamburg. Verfahren und Vorrichtung zur Einäscherung. Patentiert im Deutschen Reiche vom 30. Oktober 1928 ab.*

²³⁶ APMO, Akta Zentralbauleitung BW 30/44, pp. 32f., expert report by Rolf Decker.

²³⁷ Mattoigno 2019, pp. 405-406. In Mattoigno 2020, pp. 46-58, I have quoted the full text of Decker’s expert report, my related technical analysis, and an examination of the technical drawbacks of the Sander furnace.

Schüle adds (p. 172):

“After heating up for a maximum of two days, the furnace could have been kept in operation without additional fuel.”

Such a claim is technical nonsense, because any realistic device would have had enormous radiation and combustion-heat losses due to its size, and would have worked with an even more enormous excess of air because of the very large disproportion between the volume of the combustion chamber and the volume of corpses to be cremated.

The absurdity of this claim becomes even clearer when comparing it with the Topf double-muffle furnace at the Gusen crematorium (originally a mobile oil-fired furnace). From 31 October to 13 November 1941, 677 corpses were cremated in this device, an average of 52 per day (26 per muffle), with an average continuous operation of about 18 hours per day. The furnace was thus practically always in a state of thermal equilibrium. Hence, according to the above fantasy, the corpses should have burned by themselves, and in fact should have added heat to the device. In reality, however, the average consumption of coke was 30.6 kg per cremation (Mattoigno/Deana, Vol. 1, pp. 362f.).

Schüle evidently misunderstood the following statement by Sander made during the interrogation of 7 March 1946: “The corpses themselves were to serve as an additional source of fuel”; the adjective “additional” in fact means that the furnace still required regular fuel.

11.3. The “Annular Incineration Furnace”

In a chapter on the “Annular Incineration Furnace,” Schüle sets forth further unfounded assumptions.

This facility is mentioned in Topf’s letter to the Central Construction Office dated 5 February 1943:²³⁸

“You will receive the cost estimate for the large annular incineration furnace on Tuesday of next week at the latest. In case a purchase is planned, we kindly ask for an order to be placed soonest to enable us to order the cast-iron and wrought-iron parts right away or start with their fabrication [ourselves].”

Although she knows that, technically speaking, an “annular furnaces” was a circular or ring furnace for firing bricks, and she even publishes a beautiful drawing of its horizontal and vertical section, from which it is clear that the ring consisted of a circular tunnel of refractory bricks (p. 175), Schüle incredibly confuses it with the design of the “sixth crematorium” mentioned in Bischoff’s letter to the camp commandant dated 12 February

²³⁸ APMO, BW AuII 30/4/34, D-Z-Bau/2544/2 (illegible page number).

1943, and elaborated on by Prüfer. This device was characterized as “an open cremation chamber with external dimensions 48.75 x 3.76 m” and an “open cremation site” (p. 173; document on p. 455). It is not clear how Schüle could believe that an “open cremation site” can have any relation to a ring furnace, whose indispensable prerequisite of operation is that the ring, meaning the firing chamber, is closed. Apparently, for her, the adjective “open” means that the alleged “annular furnace” had to be built in the open (p. 174):

“The annular furnace planned at the beginning of 1943 was probably to be set up outdoors, as indicated by the ‘open cremation site’.”

This is a very unique observation, given that any annular furnace, by its very structure, was designed and built outdoors.

Schüle rightly says that nothing is known about this facility, other than what is said about it in the aforementioned letter:

“It is not known how this annular furnace was supposed to function when burning human corpses.”

But soon afterwards, she ventures imaginative explanations (*ibid.*):

“In any case, as with the original annular furnace, the coal could only have been thrown in from above, and would then have been spread directly over the burning piles of corpses.”

In contradiction to this assumption, she reports a statement by Rudolf Höss that the facility had “the shape of a huge brickworks with a ring kiln” and was to be placed “below the ground” (*ibid.*), which does not reconcile with either an “open,” or an “open-air” facility.

Even more imaginatively, Schüle states (pp. 175f.):

“In 1944, the plans were changed to an underground facility, presumably to make it more difficult for Allied aircraft to discover it, and to save construction materials.”

Of course, she does not cite any sources to support this nonsense. It is obvious that the “Allied aircraft” would have very easily discovered the crematoria and the alleged, huge “cremation pits” in operation, so why would the camp SS have hidden this other (alleged) cremation plant?

With further confusion, the author then attributes the design of a mass-cremation plant that appears in a “cost estimate of the Topf Company for an incineration furnace” dated 1 April 1943 (p. 339; of which Raimund Schnabel quotes only the last page, and which she reproduces in facsimile). It refers to the design of an “open cremation chamber,” asserting that its construction required 19,000 bricks and cost RM 25,148, as precisely stated in the above quotation. In fact, this included “1 wrought-iron smoke duct damper with pulleys, wire rope and hand winch,” but this presupposes

the presence of a smoke duct and thus a chimney, elements evidently incompatible with an “open cremation site.” The estimate in question therefore most likely referred to Sander’s project, which also had only one smoke duct. It is thus clear that Schüle understood little or nothing of the whole affair, as of many others.

The explanation I gave in my book on Auschwitz cremation furnaces, namely that the design was inspired by Friedrich Siemens’s “Field Furnace for the Cremation of Corpses,” no doubt known to Prüfer, still makes the most sense.²³⁹

11.4. Air-Intake and -Extraction Systems

Schüle then quotes Item 3 of the file memo written by SS *Untersturmführer* Fritz Ertl on 21 August 1942 (p. 182):

“With regard to the construction of a 2nd crematorium with five triple-muffle furnaces, as well as air-intake and -extraction systems, the result of the ongoing negotiations with the Reich Security Main Office regarding the allocation of quotas must first be awaited.”

And here is her comment on this (*ibid.*):

“The fact that air-extraction systems were planned for the furnace, mortuary and dissection rooms of a crematorium resulted from the function of the rooms. So why were the ‘air-intake and -extraction systems’ mentioned separately? Probably because they provided the ideal technical conditions for turning one of the basement rooms in each of the identical Crematoria II and III into underground gas chambers.”

This comment reveals a startling historical-technical ignorance. To begin with, Schüle misrepresents the real meaning of the reference to air-intake and -extraction system (plural), which is this: the equipment for Crematorium II as ordered from the Topf Company concerned two cost estimates: the first was for the five triple-muffle furnaces, with appendices and related items, which has been mentioned several times. It was described in Topf’s letter to the Construction Office Auschwitz dated 4 November 1941, and confirmed with Invoice No. 69 dated 27 January 1943.²⁴⁰ The other estimate concerned the ventilation systems. The latter, drafted likewise on 4 November 1941, was titled “Cost estimate for air-intake and extraction system.” It included:²⁴¹

A. air-intake system for the “B” Room (= Morgue #1) with a pressure blower and a fresh-air intake pipe;

²³⁹ Mattogno/Deana, Vol. 1, pp. 146f., 291; Vol. II, Doc. 93, p. 130.

²⁴⁰ RGVA, 502-2-26, pp. 230-230a.

²⁴¹ RGVA, 502-1-327, pp. 151-157.

- B. air-extraction system for the “B” Room (= Morgue #1) with a suction blower and an exhaust-air pipe;
- C. air-extraction system for the furnace room with a suction blower;
- D. air-extraction system for the dissecting, laying-out and washroom, with a suction blower and an exhaust-air pipe;
- E. air-extraction system for the “L” Room (= Morgue #2), with a suction blower and an exhaust-air pipe.

In practice, the construction of the future Crematorium II consisted of the five triple-muffle furnaces “as well as” the ventilation systems, so that it makes no sense to say that these were mentioned “separately” for ulterior motives.

All of these facilities, which were confirmed with Topf Invoice No. 171 of 22 February 1943,²⁴² were thus part of the equipment of Crematorium II. Because some of their components were made of metal, the project required the “allocation of [metal] quotas” exceeding those needed for the cremation furnaces.

As for the almost superstitious meaning of criminal intent that Schüle ascribes to the ventilation systems (but she does not even question the reason for the use of the plural) – as if they were installations necessarily connected to a homicidal gas chamber – two complementary considerations must be made. First, in any crematorium, corpse-storage rooms were ventilated. As early as 1905, engineer Wilhelm Heepke prescribed (Heepke, p. 104):

“Strong ventilation is also important in morgues in order to hold back the corpses’ putrefaction processes as much as possible. Here too, air extraction is more important than air intake. The corpses or coffins should not be laid directly on the floor, but should be placed hollow on trestles above the floor so that the air beneath the corpses can be drawn out of the room. Fresh air is supplied from above. At least a five-fold hourly air exchange is to be expected here; under certain circumstances, if the room is heavily used, this can even be increased to 10 times, which is achieved with the help of a ventilator.”

The recommendation regarding the preference of air extraction over air intake simply means that removing of stale and contaminated air is more important in a morgue than the supply of fresh air.

But it is clear – and here comes the second consideration – that air extraction is possible only if air intake is provided for at the same time. Therefore, an air-extraction system is always an air-intake and -extraction system, or else the air-extraction would create a vacuum. The only differ-

²⁴² RGVA, 502-1-327, pp. 25-25a.

ence is that the air intake can be mechanical – and in that case the expression air-intake *and* -extraction system is properly used – or natural, by means of simple ventilation openings or windows. Then we speak more properly of an air-extraction system. However, in both cases, an extraction fan is present.

That being said, it makes no sense to link an air-intake and -extraction system to a homicidal gas chamber, as if it could only serve this purpose, and a mere air-extraction system to an ordinary morgue. From an orthodox point of view, a room with mere air extraction would have functioned as a homicidal gas chamber just as well as a room equipped with air-intake and -extraction blowers. Indeed, as I pointed out in Chapter 8.3., the ventilation system of Morgue #1 of Crematorium II/III, which had an intake and an extraction fan, allowed for 9.5 air exchanges per hour, while the system of Morgue #2, which only had an extraction fan, had 11 air exchanges per hour. Therefore, in spite of being equipped with only an air-extraction fan, this room would have been even more suitable as a homicidal gas chamber!

11.5. Crematoria IV and V and the “Bunkers” of Birkenau

Schüle goes on to state that, in Ertl’s file memo of 21 August 1942, the future Crematoria IV and V were “planned in connection with the gas murders in Bunkers 1 and 2” (p. 182), a completely unfounded assertion, as I have already mentioned in Chapter 7.2. By the way, here she misses an excellent opportunity to mention and discuss Prüfer’s related statement on the “Bathing establishments for special operations” that I reviewed earlier.

Schüle explains in another context that “the two initially planned, simplified 3-muffle furnaces” were meant to be erected “at the Birkenau bunkers” (Note 61, p. 169). Clarification is needed here. These furnaces, of a simplified structure in the sense that they had only one gas generator placed behind the central muffle, and only one common smoke duct,²⁴³ are described in Topf’s estimate of 12 February 1942. They were originally planned for a small makeshift crematorium to be built inside the Birkenau Camp. However, on 27 February 1942, it was decided to move the new crematorium (the latter Crematorium II), which had been planned originally for the Auschwitz Main Camp, to Birkenau instead. For this reason, the makeshift crematorium with its two separate, primitive furnaces became

²⁴³ Mattogno/Deana, Vol. I, pp. 278-280 (translation of the estimate dated 12 February 1942); Vol. II, Doc. 228, pp. 384-386 (reproduction of the estimate), Docs. 229 a-c, pp. 387f. (schematic drawings).

“superfluous.” The matter is set out in Bischoff’s letter to Kammler dated 30 March 1942.²⁴⁴ Since Topf had drawn up the relevant plans already, it asked the Central Construction Office for reimbursement of RM 1,769.36. In order to avoid having to pay this amount unnecessarily, the Central Construction Office decided to purchase the project anyway. On 8 April, Bischoff notified Topf:²⁴⁵

“The two large triple-muffle cremation furnaces originally planned for the PoW Camp Auschwitz will be switched to another construction project. [...] Further details about the new construction project will be communicated.”

On 15 April, Bischoff forwarded to Office group C III/1 of the SS Economic and Administrative Main Office the invoice from Topf No. 396 dated 17 March for the above-mentioned RM 1,769.36 with a request to initiate its payment.²⁴⁶ From this time on, all traces of the two furnaces are lost. They reappear in Ertl’s file memo of 21 August 1942 as “installation of 2 three-muffle furnaces each at the ‘bathing establishments for special operations’” (see Chapter 7.2.). This expression presupposes a preliminary discussion at the Central Construction Office about “bathing establishments for special operations,” but there is no trace of this in the existing documentation. On the other hand, since only two furnaces were purchased by the Central Construction Office, it is not clear how two could be installed at each “bathing establishment” (these establishments had to be at least two, in which case at least four furnaces would have been required). I will return to this question in Chapter 11.9.

11.6. The Crematorium II Furnace Tests

In connection with the commissioning of Crematorium II and, specifically, the testing of the cremation furnaces, Schüle refers to Henryk Tauber’s nonsensical statements, and adds that “Kurt Prüfer and probably Karl Schultze” were present (p. 204). In her chronology at the end of her book, she reiterates with reference to the 5th of March 1943: “Cremation test of corpses in Crematorium II in the presence of Prüfer.” (p. 382)

Her statement is astonishing, because Prüfer explicitly denied that he participated in the testing:²⁴⁷

²⁴⁴ RGVA, 502-1-313, p. 174.

²⁴⁵ RGVA, 502-1-313, p. 173.

²⁴⁶ RGVA, 502-1-313, p. 171.

²⁴⁷ Protocol of the interrogation of K. Prüfer dated 9 March 1948.

“Question: Did you personally take part in the testing of the cremation furnaces and the commissioning of the crematoria built under your leadership in Auschwitz?”

Answer: I did not have to take part in the testing of the cremation furnaces, or the commissioning of the crematoria built under my leadership in Auschwitz. This was done by fitters from the company who carried out the construction and assembly work in these crematoria under my supervision.”

Furthermore, Prüfer’s participation in the test is not reflected in any documents. Therefore, this is nothing more than Schüle’s fantasy.

She also confuses the furnace test without forced-draft systems of 24-25 March 1943 with the actual testing of the furnaces themselves. What is more, she writes that Schultze stayed in Auschwitz from 1 to 13 March 1943, but her date of Prüfer’s return is at odds with the engineer’s statements that he left Auschwitz on 6 March. She moreover states that Prüfer told his Soviet interrogators “on the commissioning of the gas chamber in the second [March] week, and the cremation of the inmates killed there, but not on the first cremation” (p. 204, Notes 179), while Prüfer actually spoke contradictorily about both events.

Schüle then pretends not to have noticed the jarring contrast between Schultze’s and Tauber’s statements about the first test cremation. I reiterate what I have already noted in Chapter 7.3. On 3 March, Schultze tested “the ventilation equipment in the gas chamber” and was convinced that it “was working flawlessly.” Then Schultze also tested the “blower,” but Bischoff told him that it “had to be checked when cremating corpses in the furnaces,” which had never yet been used. On 6 March, a transport of 150 to 300 inmates arrived who were killed in the “gas chamber” of Crematorium II, so that Schultze and Bischoff could finally check together “the operation, more precisely the operation during the activity, of both the blower and the ventilation systems in the gas chamber.” Tauber, however, reported:²⁴⁸

“On 4 March [1943], we were in charge of firing up the gas generators. We kept them going from morning until 4 o’clock in the afternoon. In the meantime, a commission from the Political Department and senior SS officers from Berlin arrived at the crematorium. In addition to them, there were also civilians and engineers from the ‘Topf’ Company. Of the members of this committee I remember Hauptsturmführer Schwarz, Camp Commandant Aumeyer [Aumeier] and Oberscharführer Kwakernak [Quakernack]. After the arrival of the commission, we were ordered to bring out

²⁴⁸ Deposition of H. Tauber dated 24 May 1945 before Investigative Judge Jan Sehn. Höss Trial, Vol. 11, p. 134. Mattogno 2022, pp. 34f.

corpses from the auxiliary room^[249] and to throw them [sic] into the muffles. In the auxiliary room, we then found about 45 corpses of only men, very well fed and fat. At that time, I did not know when these corpses had been deposited in the auxiliary room, and from where they had been taken. But then I learned that they had been selected from the people gassed at Bunker No. II, located in the woods. In fact, an officer from the Political Department had gone there [and] had ordered to select from the corpses of the gassed persons the corpses of well-developed and fat people, [then] had commanded to take these corpses away from the bunker area on a truck. The Sonderkommando inmates who were employed there did not know where these corpses had been taken. It turned out that they were used to test the efficiency of Crematorium No. II, which was to be put into operation at that time, and to demonstrate it to the many-member commission.”

Therefore, the corpses used to test the crematoria – 45, not 60 – had been “gassed” in “Bunker 2,” not in the “gas chamber” of Crematorium II, and the peculiar thing is that the reference to “Bunker II” also appears in Schüle’s relevant quotation! (p. 204). Here one has to choose: either one lends credence to Schultze’s version or to Tauber’s (or to neither).

The author adds that Prüfer, after the testing of the furnaces (during which he was not present), advised “to maintain the fire in the empty furnaces for several days in order to dry them out properly, which the SS then actually implemented” (*ibid.*). This is a real absurdity. In his letter to Kammler dated 29 January 1943, Bischoff wrote instead:²⁵⁰

“The furnaces were fired up in the presence of Chief Engineer Prüfer from the contractor, Topf & Sons, Erfurt, and are working perfectly.”

And Prüfer confirmed this in his report prepared the same day:²⁵¹

“The five triple-muffle cremation furnaces are ready and are currently being dry-heated.”

The drying of the furnaces thus began at the end of January. Therefore, by the beginning of March it had been completed (the process generally took several weeks; Mattogno/Deana, Vol. I, pp. 43f.). Consequently, leaving the crematoria in operation for ten consecutive days, as Tauber asserted, would have provided no benefit, quite to the contrary: it would only have resulted in the waste of at least 42 tons of coke (Mattogno 2019, pp. 348-350; Mattogno 2022, pp. 87-89).

At this point, it is important to point out that orthodox Holocaust historiography practically ignores altogether the corpses of registered inmates who perished of “natural” deaths. That deficiency was even confirmed by

²⁴⁹ The auxiliary corpse-storage room.

²⁵⁰ APMO, BW 30/34, p. 100.

²⁵¹ APMO, BW 30/34, p. 101.

Robert Jan van Pelt with his aforementioned statement that “Auschwitz had virtually no permanently dedicated morgue capacity” in the crematoria.

In the specific case of Crematorium II, after the facilities were tested on 5 March 1943,²⁵² with corpses of gassing victims according to the prevailing orthodox narrative, the furnaces were fired idly until 13 March, and on the 14th they were used to cremate the allegedly gassing victims of the deportees arriving from Krakow Ghetto. But what happened with the deceased registered inmates? In January 1943, these numbered about 4,500, in February about 7,600, and in March about 4,500 (Mattogno 2023a, p. 193). Where and how were these 16,600 corpses disposed of?

The absurdity of the orthodox Holocaust reconstruction is also evident from the documents. Regarding the coke consumption by the Topf cremation furnaces, the only document, experimental and incontrovertible, is the list of cremations performed in the cremation furnace at Gusen Camp. As I mentioned earlier, from 31 October to 13 November 1941, 677 corpses were cremated in this furnace, an average of 52 per day (26 per muffle), with an average continuous operation of about 18 hours per day, and an average coke consumption of 30.6 kg per corpse (Mattogno/Deana, Vol. 1, pp. 301-306, 362-365). This, I repeat, is an experimental fact.

If we now consider the letter from the Central Construction Office dated 28 June 1943, it appears that Crematoria II and III could each cremate 1,440 corpses in 24 hours.²⁵³ Finally, the file memo by civilian employee Rudolf Jährling dated 17 March 1943 establishes (based on Topf data) that the 10 gas generators of five triple-muffle furnaces consumed 350 kg of coke per hour, but only 2/3 of this during continuous operation, or 5,600 kg in 24 hours.²⁵⁴ Thus, if we were to take the letter of 28 June seriously, it would follow that the coke consumption per corpse would have been $(5,600 \text{ kg} \div 1,440 =) 3.9 \text{ kg}$! This is blatantly at odds with the actual consumption of the Gusen furnace: 30.6 kg per corpse. How can this contradiction be explained? Not to mention the absurd cremation capacity accepted as real by Schüle: 8,000 corpses per day (see Chapter 11.7.). In that case, the coke consumption would have been $(5,600 \text{ kg} \div 8,000 =) 0.7 \text{ kg}$ per corpse!

The only attempt by an orthodox historian to explain this with some wild gyrations was ventured by Robert Jan van Pelt during David Irving’s

²⁵² This should be 3 or 4 March; see Tauber’s statement in Mattogno 2022, pp. 87: “On 4 March [1943], we were in charge of firing up the gas generators.”

²⁵³ RGVA, 502-1-314, p. 14a.

²⁵⁴ APMO, BW 30/7/34, p. 94.

libel trial against Deborah Lipstadt and her publisher Penguin Books, which took place between January and April 2000. Van Pelt argued that the difference in consumption between the 35 kilograms of coke per corpse in the Gusen furnace and the claimed 3.5 kilograms in the Birkenau furnaces (according to the erroneous data assumed in the trial) depended on the pre-heating of the Auschwitz furnaces as opposed to the Gusen furnace.²⁵⁵ However, in his mind-boggling historical-documentary and technical ignorance, van Pelt did not know what he was saying.²⁵⁶ In fact, the coke consumption of the Gusen furnace referred to an 18-hour-a-day operation. Because of their system of operation, coke furnaces could not run continuously 24 hours a day, but required a daily interruption of some of 3-4 hours for cleaning the hearth grates. Furthermore, Jährling's file memo of 17 March 1943 explicitly refers to a "continuous operation" of the furnaces "during 12 hours" a day, which was considered "one day's activity." It follows that the Gusen furnace's coke consumption of 30.6 kilograms is lower than that considered for Auschwitz, since the Gusen furnace did not run for 12 hours a day, like the Auschwitz furnaces, but for 18 hours a day. Inversely, for a lower consecutive number of cremations and thus a shorter duration of operation, the Gusen furnace consumed a greater amount of coke than 30.6 kg, even significantly more: Thus, the 193 corpses that were cremated from 26 September to 15 October, averaging only 10 per day, required 9,180 kg of coke, averaging 47.5 kg per corpse; the 129 corpses cremated from 26 to 30 October, averaging 32 per day, required 4,800 kg, averaging 37.2 kg per corpse.²⁵⁷ It should be noted that, in this Gusen furnace, the cremation of 32 corpses per day, 16 per muffle, corresponded to an activity of about 11 hours, so that the benchmark for the furnaces at Birkenau Crematorium II in the case of a continuous operation of 12 hours per day, based on the documents, would be a consumption of around 35-36 kg of coke per corpse.

This makes it clear that the 1/3 reduction in coke consumption during continuous operation of 12 hours per day (as compared to a few hours' operation per day) should not be understood in the sense that the amount of coke burned in the gas generators decreased by 1/3, i.e., dropped from 35 to 23.3 kg/h, but in the sense that it remained more or less unchanged. What did decrease significantly was the duration it took to preheat the

²⁵⁵ See his statements and my related discussion in Mattogno 2019, pp. 405-412.

²⁵⁶ I have documented the incredible incompetence of this alleged expert in Mattogno 2020, in particular in Chapter 15, pp. 145-159.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 414, table showing the consumption of the Gusen furnace at various periods of operation; see also Mattogno/Deana, Vol. 1, pp. 363

cooled-down furnaces back up to operating temperature. As the case of the Gusen furnace shows experimentally, going from 5 to 26 consecutive cremations per muffle resulted in coke savings of $(30.5 \div 47.5 =) 64.2\%$, corresponding to roughly $2/3 (= 66.7\%)$.

From the above it is clear that idle operation of the five triple-muffle furnaces of Crematorium II, even for only 12 hours a day, or for 10 days as stated by Tauber (starting on 5 March, as Schüle claimed),²⁵⁸ would have resulted in a wasted coke consumption of $(350 \text{ kg/h} \times 12 \text{ h/day} \times 10 \text{ days} =) 42,000 \text{ kg}$ of coke. Yet during the period in question (3-13 March), only 25.5 tons of coke were delivered to Crematoria I and II.²⁵⁹

Having established based on documents that the coke consumption for the cremation of an adult corpse was 30.6 kilograms, the issue of Crematorium II's activity in March 1943 can be taken up again.

As I have already noted, 8,328 people were reportedly gassed there between 14 and 24 March 1943.

It is documented that Crematoria I and II received a total of 70 tons of coke between 13 and 24 March 1943,²⁶⁰ enough to cremate $(70,000 \div 30.6 =)$ about 2,300 corpses. One can also assume that, from the orthodox point of view, there were numerous children among the 8,328 alleged gassing victims. But even if we assume that about 31 percent of all victims were children,²⁶¹ and that four children were equivalent to one adult, they would still correspond to about $(8,328 \times 0.31 \div 4 =)$ 645 adults, and the equivalent figure would be about $[8,328 \times 0.69 + 645 =]$ about 6,400 adults. On the other hand, one must also consider the camp's "natural" mortality.

Over 1,800 inmates died between 13 and 23 March,²⁶² so the total number of corpses would have been $(6,400 + 1,800 =)$ 8,200, and the coke consumption would have been $(70,000 \div 8,200 =)$ 8.5 kg per corpse. If, on the other hand, only the actual documented deaths are considered, the consumption was $(70,000 \div 1,800 =)$ about 39 kg of coke per corpse, an amount that falls well within the experimental parameters of the Gusen furnace.

²⁵⁸ But it should have started on 3 March and lasted until 13 March, if the first "gassing" occurred on 14 March. Tauber spoke instead of 4 March.

²⁵⁹ "Koks i węgiel dla krematoriów w tonach" ("Coke and coal for crematoria in tons"). APMO, D-AuI-4.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.* There were no coke deliveries on the 14th.

²⁶¹ Kubica, p. 350. The figure refers to Polish Jews.

²⁶² Mattogno 2023a, p. 193. The mortality on 23 March (29 deaths) is partial; the remaining deaths were recorded (also under 23 March) in Death Book 12/43, which has not been preserved. The deaths on 23 March were in the range of 70-80. The mortality on 24 March is unknown.

The theoretical minimum coke consumption of the triple-muffle furnace, with continuous operation, actually averaged about 20 kg (that of the double-muffle furnace about 28 kg; Mattogno/Deana, Vol. I, p. 375), but even this would have made it impossible to cremate the real corpses plus the fictitious ones of the alleged gassings.²⁶³

This goes to show that orthodox Holocaust historians are not only completely ignorant of the issues surrounding the Auschwitz crematoria in relation to the alleged gassings, but they also disregard documents from which, even without special expertise and on the basis of simple calculations, it irrefutably results that their conjectures about the duration of cremations and their coke consumption are completely unfounded.

11.7. The Furnaces' Cremation Capacity

In dealing with the issue of crematorium capacity, Schüle relies mainly on the nonsensical statements of Henryk Tauber. Starting from the absurd assumption of the cremation of three corpses per muffle in half an hour, she calculates “a maximum capacity of 2,160 corpses during a 24-hour operation period” (p. 205). By so doing, she overlooks that Tauber himself had declared a maximum operation of 21 hours per day, because of the interruption necessary for the removal of slag from the gas-generator hearths. Then Schüle considers Tauber's figure of 2,500 corpses in 24 hours for Crematoria II and III to be “realistic,” although it contradicts her own assumptions. Next, she adds 1,500 corpses each for Crematoria IV and V according to Rudolf Höss's statements, and thus arrives at a maximum capacity of 8,000 corpses in 24 hours for all Birkenau crematoria (*ibid.*). This method can only be characterized as thermo-technical delusion. This figure, as I noted earlier, implies an absolutely ludicrous coke consumption of 0.7 kg per corpse.

Most interesting in her calculation is Schüle's silence about Prüfer and Schultze's statements on the cremation capacity of the triple-muffle cremation furnaces: one corpse in one muffle in one hour.²⁶⁴ This results in a theoretical maximum capacity of 1,104 corpses within 24 hours (966 when

²⁶³ In fact, if they had all been cremated in Crematorium II, they would have required (6,900 corpses × 19 kg/corpse =) 131,100 kg of coke, not including the initial heating of the five furnaces. However, since Crematorium I was also used regularly during the period in question, the average consumption would have increased to about 21 kilograms per corpse, which would have required (6,900 corpses × 21 kg/corpse =) 144,900 kg of coke, against a supply of 68,000 kg.

²⁶⁴ This is a realistic value confirmed by multiple sources; see Mattogno/Deana, Vol. 1, Unit II, Chapter 8. “The Duration of the Cremation Process in the Topf Furnaces at Auschwitz-Birkenau,” pp. 294-314.

considering a 3-hour daily break for grate cleaning). How does she explain the statements of the two Topf engineers, and how does she reconcile them with Tauber's figure?

Since the coke consumption of the two hearths of the triple-muffle furnace was two times 35 kg/h = 70 kg/h, it is also easy to calculate that the cremation of three corpses in one hour would have required ($70 \div 3 =$) 23.3 kg of coke.

Schüle thus had good reasons for omitting these important statements by the two Topf engineers.

Likewise, she is also silent about Prüfer's statements on the differences between civilian and concentration-camp cremation furnaces as laid out during his interrogation on 5 March 1943:

"In the civilian crematoria, a special bellows [actually a blower] is used to blow in preheated air, which causes the corpse to burn more quickly and without smoke. The construction of the crematoria for the concentration camps is different; it does not allow the air to be heated in advance, which is why the corpse burns more slowly and with smoke."

When considering that one of the best cremation furnaces built by the Topf Company, the electric furnace that was installed in the Erfurt crematorium in 1936, had reduced the cremation time from the 60-90 minutes or more for coke furnaces to just 50-70 minutes,²⁶⁵ and if taking into account the fact that corpses in concentration camp furnaces burned "more slowly," Schüle's silence seems even more understandable.

She also does not discuss how the fantastic cremation capacity she assumes reconciles with the statement by Dachau inmate Karl Kirschner, which she adduced herself: that "a cremation often lasted more than an hour" in the oil-fired Topf double-muffle furnace at Dachau (pp. 128f.; although it is unclear whether the witness referred to the original oil-fired device or to the one later converted to burn coke.)

11.8. Testing the Ventilation Systems of Crematorium II

In reference to Messing's assembly activity in Crematorium II during the first ten days of March 1943, Schüle states:

"Schultze's statement during the interrogation in Moscow that he had tested the 'ventilation systems in the gas chamber' on Wednesday of that week is consistent with Messing's labor time sheet. During this time, the fire in the empty furnaces was maintained, and on the same day, Schultze 'tested' the 'blower on the cremation furnaces,' meaning the forced-draft systems,

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, Unit I, Chapter 6. "The Duration of the Cremation Process," pp. 98-109.

which had evidently not been installed or used during the first experimental cremation of corpses at the beginning of March.”

In her footnote, Schüle reiterates that “according to his own statement, Schultze returned to Erfurt on Saturday, 13 March 1943” (p. 210, Note 194). These claims are all unfounded. First of all, as I have shown above, Schulze returned to Erfurt on 6 March, not on the 13th. Second, Messing put the aeration and deaeration system of Morgue #1 into operation on 13 March, when Schulze had left Auschwitz for a week: Third, in the interrogation of 11 March 1948, Schulze explicitly stated, “Likewise, I carried out the testing of the blower.” He claims that this took place on Wednesday, 3 March, but with idle furnaces. Bischoff then asked him to do another test during a cremation, and on the following Saturday, 6 March, he tested “the operation, more precisely the operation during the activity, of both the blower and the ventilation systems in the gas chamber” during an alleged homicidal gassing.

On the damage to the forced-draft devices, as a result of which Prüfer and Schulze were summoned to Auschwitz on 24 and 25 March 1943, Schüle states that “this happened when the furnaces were in continuous operation for the second time, a few days after the first mass gas murder in Crematorium II on 13 March 1943” (Note 208, p. 214), but this is in open contrast to Kirschnek’s file memo of 25 March as quoted in Chapter 7.3., according to which the forced-draft devices had suffered damage “after the first full use.” If the first “gassing” took place on 14 March, how can it be explained that the first full use of the forced-draft devices took place only eight or nine days later?

11.9. The Interrogations of the Topf Engineers

Schüle’s chapter “The Interrogations of the Arrested Engineers by the Soviet Army,” though brief, is the most important part of her book from the perspective of the present study. Schüle writes (pp. 271f.):

“The interrogation protocols are key documents. Only there did the participants comment on the accusation of having supported the SS with technology for the mass extermination of human life. However, the protocols are also a problematic source for several reasons. On the one hand, this concerns their genesis. We do not know under what pressure the detainees were put, and whether the answers were recorded correctly, and we cannot rule out the possibility that errors were made when translating their statements into Russian. It is striking that none of the engineers Prüfer, Schultze and Sander, who were directly involved in furnace construction and ventilation technology, denied their work for the SS.”

I only observe that there is nothing surprising in the fact that the Topf engineers had admitted their “work for the SS,” because this was irrefutably established by the documents seized by the Soviets in Auschwitz and Erfurt, at the Topf Company’s headquarters. Indeed, for the reasons explained earlier, it is not surprising either that the engineers had confessed their direct or indirect participation in homicidal gassings.

Schüle then explains that Prüfer and Schultze “made false statements about details such as the time and frequency of visits to Auschwitz, the number of camps supplied, and the number of furnaces installed, as well as their incineration capacity.” (p. 272)

The allegedly “false statements” – only implied by Schüle – about the cremation capacity is Prüfer’s and Schultze’s statement that the triple-muffle furnaces could cremate one corpse per hour in each muffle, which, as noted earlier, is in blatant contrast to Schüle’s fanciful conjecture of a cremation capacity of 2,500 corpses for five triple-muffle furnaces, i.e., seven corpses per hour per muffle!

To dismiss this fundamental issue with a generic mention of an alleged “false statements” is therefore just a poor cop-out.

Schüle then discusses the issue of whether the Topf engineers rendered their confessions voluntarily or under duress and notes:

“No one could force Sander to emphasize his active part in this new development [of mass cremation] during the interrogation.”

She emphasizes the contradiction, which I pointed out earlier, regarding the dating of Sander’s knowledge of the alleged mass extermination at Auschwitz in relation to his plan for a new crematorium he set forth in his letter of 14 September 1942: in his interrogations of 2 and 13 March 1946, Sander said he was informed by Prüfer about mass extermination in the spring or summer of 1942, but the context he outlined necessarily points back to March 1943. Then Schüle continues (p. 273):

“For Jürgen Graf, author of the revisionist journal ‘Vierteljahreshefte für freie Geschichtsforschung,’ this contradiction in Sander’s statements is proof that he was ‘forced to falsely incriminate himself and his long-time collaborators Prüfer and Schultze. In the case of Kurt Prüfer, the author even insinuated that he had been ‘mentally broken, if not brainwashed’ and had therefore given the answers expected of him.”

Before examining the meaning Schüle attaches to Graf’s statement, it is appropriate to show her commentary on Sander’s aforementioned contradiction (p. 274):

“The contradictions in Sander’s statements are not proof that the interrogation records were falsified, but they must be acknowledged and can no

longer be resolved today. Perhaps the events of 1942 and 1943 became mixed up in Sander's memory, because he had frequent conversations with Prüfer about Auschwitz, and the new information became mixed up with the event that was particularly relevant to him, his patent application.

*One does historical clarification no favors if one denies these contradictions by replacing the year 1942 with 1943 when quoting Sander's statement. This is how British historian and professor of German Gerald Fleming and, following him, the magazine *Der Spiegel* proceeded. [...] The re-dating of Sander's statement to the year 1943 is also nonsensical, because Sander's patent application of November 1942 was based precisely on the fact that he knew at that time about the high demand for corpse incineration capacities in Auschwitz and its cause."*

It goes without saying that serious scholars are not content with merely dismissing an explanation of a contradiction by simply acknowledging the contradiction, even declaring it insoluble, yet without proposing an alternative explanation. It is quite useful to return to and elaborate further on the real meaning of the above-mentioned contradiction. The question is whether Sander was aware of mass exterminations at Auschwitz, for which the existing crematoria would have been insufficient, before 14 September 1942, so that he invented a new mass-cremation furnace specifically for such an alleged extermination. However, as shown earlier, this is impossible, because the orthodoxy insists that, until late September 1942, all victims of the claimed mass extermination at Auschwitz were buried in mass graves, not cremated.

It is a fact that Sander claimed to have known about mass extermination at Auschwitz in gas chambers with subsequent cremation of the corpses in crematoria, because during the interrogation of 7 March 1946 he stated that "in the concentration camps of Auschwitz many people were exterminated in gas chambers, and their corpses burned in crematoria." Therefore, if Sander can have learned of the alleged extermination from Prüfer and Schultze only in March 1943, his 1942 furnace invention could have had nothing to do with this alleged extermination. But then the claim that "no one could force Sander to emphasize his active part" in the alleged extermination process with the planning of a facility for the cremation of corpses from homicidal gas chambers must be examined in a different light: Sander told a deliberate lie that incriminated him in a very serious crime. Why would he have done this?

If Schüle is unable to account for the above contradiction and the problem related to Sander's false self-incrimination, she cannot sensibly criti-

cize Graf and revisionist researchers for providing an answer she does not like.

The contradiction in question exists and remains insuperable only as long as one remains within the framework of the orthodox Holocaust narrative. If one considers the reality of documented facts, it vanishes.

Prüfer was in Auschwitz on 19 and 20 August 1942, to discuss cremation facilities to be built at Birkenau. By the beginning of July, the first cases of typhus had appeared at Birkenau.²⁶⁶ A virulent epidemic broke out later that month, forcing Höss to order a quarantine lockdown of the camp on 20 July.²⁶⁷ Mortality among inmates increased enormously: from about 4,400 in July to 8,600 in August. Beginning in the second week of the month, mortality, which, until 6 August, had remained at an average of just over 130 deaths per day, began to increase enormously, from over 170 on 7 August to over 300 on 11 August to over 400 on 15 August and to well over 500 on 19 August; from 1 to 19 August, there were over 5,000 deaths; the average from 10 to 19 August was about 370 deaths per day (Mattogno 2023a, p. 190). Ertl's file memo of 21 August 1942, and the related decisions it reports, should be considered in the framework of this tragic historical context.²⁶⁸

Seen from the orthodox Holocaust perspective, the Auschwitz camp administration's concerns about cremation capacities not only appears to be unfounded, but also contradictory. For if we follow the orthodox narrative, mass extermination allegedly began at Auschwitz in the so-called "bunkers" of Birkenau, which are said to have started operating (according to Pressac) at the end of May ("Bunker 1") and on 30 June 1942 ("Bunker 2"). One of the many contradictions of such an interpretation lies in the fact that the Auschwitz administration had planned a crematorium with five triple-muffle furnaces for the Birkenau "Prisoner-of-War Camp" merely for the "natural" mortality of the inmates.²⁶⁹

"The company Topf & Sons, furnace technology, Erfurt, has received an order from the local authorities to build an incineration plant as quickly as possible, as a prisoner-of-war camp has been attached to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, which will be occupied by around 120,000 Russians within a very short time. The construction of the cremation plant was therefore urgently needed to prevent epidemics and other dangers."

²⁶⁶ This had happened on 1 July in the camp section for civilian employees of the company Huta & Lenz. *Bericht* by the Central Construction Office dated 2 July 1942; RGVA, 502-1-332, p. 153.

²⁶⁷ *Hausverfügung* No. 40 dated 20 July 1942; RGVA, 502-1-25, p. 61.

²⁶⁸ On this tragic event and its aftermath, I dwell in Mattogno 2021b, pp. 46-95.

²⁶⁹ RGVA, 502-1-314, pp. 8-8a

For the alleged mass extermination, on the other hand, there was no provision for cremation. All victims are said to have been buried in mass graves. It is certainly true that the alleged victims of “gassings” are claimed to have increased from over 4,600 in July to over 36,000 in August, but since the corpses were being buried, there was no need to hold a meeting with Prüfer on 19 August to discuss the question of upgrading cremation capacities at Auschwitz.

That this meeting could not have been about the alleged extermination of Jews results precisely from the orthodoxy’s Holocaust claims.

Schüle claims that Himmler, during his visit to Auschwitz on 17 and 18 July 1942, “had experienced firsthand that an unbearable stench of decomposition hung over the Birkenau grounds,” so “he ordered the opening of the pits and the cremation of the corpses *outdoors*” (p. 158, emphasis added). This is highly implausible, because, according to Danuta Czech, this exhumation and cremation activity began on 21 September 1942 (1990, p. 242), after Rudolf Höss had allegedly inspected the “field furnaces” built by SS *Standartenführer* Paul Blobel in Chełmno on 16 September (*ibid.*, p. 301; cf. Mattogno 2008; 2017, pp. 73-79, 92f.). The exhumation-cremation order would thus have arrived in Auschwitz a few days earlier. Indeed, one cannot seriously believe that Himmler’s possible order given on 17 or 18 July would have been carried out only two months later. The fact remains, however, that, seen from the orthodox Holocaust perspective, the crematoria at Birkenau, at this stage of the camp’s claimed history, could not concern at all the corpses of alleged gassing victims, for which open-air cremation was planned.²⁷⁰

In this context, the “installation of 2 three-muffle furnaces each at the ‘bathing establishments for special operations’” mentioned in Ertl’s file memo of 21 August 1942 creates more contradictions for the orthodoxy. If we assume for the sake of the argument, without conceding it, that this expression was indeed a “code word” for the two “bunkers” at Birkenau (although two furnaces for each “bunker,” as noted earlier, would have required the setup of four furnaces, while the Central Construction Office had paid only for two), then this would have represented on the one hand a late intervention. If cremation of the gas-chamber victims was considered rather than burial, these furnaces should have been installed near the two “bunkers” right when the latter were set up, meaning in May and late June 1942. However, since no such earlier cremation decision is claimed, the decision to install these furnaces was premature, because in August 1942

²⁷⁰ I discuss this topic in depth in Mattogno 2020, Chapter 2, pp. 17-33.

the order to no longer bury but exhume and burn the alleged victims of the homicidal gas chambers had not yet been issued. So here, too, the same basic contradiction pointed out above resurfaces.

Returning to Sander's furnace, on the day the Topf engineer set its design in writing, 14 September, Höss had not even (allegedly) gone to Chełmno, and since Sander had no doubt been working on his design for a few weeks, there was still no talk at all in Auschwitz at that time of cremating the corpses of the alleged gassing victims.

It follows that the only plausible historical reconstruction is as follows:

Upon his return from the meeting on 19 and 20 August 1942, Prüfer, who had returned to the company in Erfurt, told Sander about the tragic situation in Auschwitz due to the very high mortality caused by the typhus epidemic. Prüfer reported to him that the furnaces in the crematorium at the Main Camp were not capable of cremating the enormous amount of typhus victims that were dying every day.²⁷¹ Motivated by this, Sander took the initiative and designed a new mass-cremation furnace, which he drew up and completed in just over three weeks, in fact on 14 September. This way the timing coincides and is consistent. This reconstruction finds full confirmation in the beginning of Sander's reasoning for his invention as quoted by Schüle (p. 443):

“The strong demand for cremation furnaces for concentration camps – which has recently become particularly apparent for Auschwitz, and which, according to Mr. Prüfer's report, has again led to an order for 7 triple-muffle furnaces^[272] – prompted me to examine the question of whether the previous furnace system with muffles is the right one for the above-mentioned locations.”

The patent application for the “Continuously Operating Corpse-Cremation Furnace for Mass Use” dated 4 November 1942 states:²⁷³

“The collection camps in the occupied eastern territories set up on account of the war and its consequences with their inevitably high mortality do not permit the interment of the large number of deceased camp occupants.

²⁷¹ Due to extreme stress, the Main Camp's crematorium chimney had been irreparably damaged and had to be replaced in June/July 1942. By 8 August 1942, a new chimney had been completed, and the furnaces were put back in full operation too fast, which caused the new chimney's masonry to be damaged as well, as Bischoff reported to the camp headquarters. Handwritten note “*Schornstein-Krematorium. BW 11*” dated 7 December 1942; RGVA, 502-1-318, pp. 4f.; letter by Bischoff dated 13 August 1942, RGVA, 502-1-312, p. 27. See Mattogno/Deana, Vol. 1, pp. 221-227.

²⁷² When speaking of seven triple-muffle furnaces, Sander also included the two simplified furnaces, although these were never ordered.

²⁷³ Translation and reproduction in Mattogno/Deana, Vol. I, pp. 188-191; Vol. II, Doc. 155, pp. 225-232.

There is, on the one hand, a shortage of space and labor, and, on the other, the risk of exposing the vicinity, near or far, to the dangers presented directly or indirectly caused by any burial of the deceased, many of whom have succumbed to infectious diseases. The need thus exists to eliminate safely, quickly, and hygienically the corpses occurring frequently in large numbers."

The reference to "infectious diseases" clearly alludes to the typhus epidemic raging in Auschwitz in August 1942 along with other diseases. In spite of this, Schüle dares to comment as follows, in perfect disregard of the historical context (p. 171):

"[...] against better knowledge [!], the Topf Company argued that 'many people had died of infectious diseases' and thus presented its engineering achievement as safeguarding the hygienic relationship."

In this way, she distorts the reality of the facts, "against better knowledge" or in perfect ignorance.

In the historical context explained earlier, the mass-cremation projects should also be examined, particularly the "Annular Incineration Furnace" mentioned in the letter of 5 February 1943, and the "sixth crematorium" in the letter of 12 February 1943, with an "open cremation chamber." The dates are important.

What was the intended purpose of these facilities? According to orthodox Holocaust historiography, the exhumation and cremation of previously buried corpses (107,000 according to Höss) that began on 21 September 1942, ceased in early December 1942. On the 3rd of December, the inmates of the *Sonderkommando* who had performed this work were allegedly killed in the "gas chamber" of Crematorium I (Czech 1990, pp. 277f.). On 6 December, a new *Sonderkommando* was established (*ibid.*, p. 280). Eric Friedler *et al.*, who published a collection of testimonies by former members of the *Sonderkommando*, report (Friedler *et al.*, pp. 91f.):

"While the decomposing bodies were exhumed and cremated, new victims from Bunkers 1 and 2 kept arriving. These fresh corpses were no longer buried in mass graves, but burned in specially constructed cremation pits. There, too, prisoners had to alternately pile wood and corpses on top of each other. At the beginning of December 1942, there were four cremation pits behind Bunker 2. They were each about 30 meters long, 7 meters wide and 3 meters deep. [...] The gassing victims from Bunker 1 were taken to cremation pits further away, with tracks also connecting the bunker to the pits."

Therefore, in February 1943, these cremation pits were in operation. According to Czech's *Auschwitz Chronicle*, about 18,700 Jews were "gassed" in the "bunkers" that month, averaging about 670 per day. In the previous

month, the alleged gassing victims numbered about 45,700, averaging about 1,475 per day. Now, if the alleged cremation pits near the “bunkers” had disposed of this number of corpses without difficulty,²⁷⁴ what reason did the Central Construction Office have to search in February 1943 for additional mass cremation facilities for a number of corpses less than half that of January? The orthodox narrative is clearly nonsensical with respect to this question as well.

The only plausible explanation, therefore, is that the plans for mass cremation facilities in February 1943 concerned only “natural” camp mortality. In December 1942, there were about 4,600 “natural” deaths, in January 1943 about 4,500, and in February about 7,600.²⁷⁵ Work in the crematoria extended beyond the scheduled time,²⁷⁶ and the crematorium in the Main Camp was completely insufficient. To make up for the delays, the Central Construction Office considered the construction of rapidly built temporary mass-cremation facilities, which soon became redundant due to the completion of Crematoria II and IV in March.

Seen from the orthodox Holocaust perspective, these plans appear all the more senseless, because the bodies of registered inmates who died at the camp could have been cremated safely in the “cremation pits” of the “bunkers,” which, as mentioned earlier, supposedly had an extraordinary cremation capacity. In particular, the total of all alleged gassing victims of February 1943 (18,700) plus the inmates who died of “natural causes” (7,600) amounted to 26,300. This would have barely exceeded 57 percent of the bodies of the alleged gassing victims purportedly killed in the two “bunkers,” who were presumably cremated outdoors in January 1943.

The inescapable conclusion is that the mass cremation projects of February 1943, from the orthodox perspective, were perfectly useless for both the alleged gassing victims, and those of “natural mortality.”

Returning to Schüle, here is her comment regarding Jürgen Graf’s claims (p. 273):

“The revisionists, who deny the Holocaust, were alarmed when the interrogation testimonies of the men became known who had built the furnaces and equipped the gas chambers. In order to hold on to their old lies despite the new sources, they claim that the engineers were all forced to lie, which

²⁷⁴ According to the claims by witness Szlama Dragon as made in his Soviet deposition dated 26 February 1945, the total capacity of the cremation pits was 17,000-18,000 corpses per day, with peak performances of 27,000-28,000! See Mattogno 2016a, p. 75.

²⁷⁵ Mattogno 2023a, pp. 189-193.

²⁷⁶ Himmler had ordered Crematoria II and IV to be completed by 31 January 1943, Crematoria III and V by 31 March. Letter by Central Construction Office to Topf dated 22 December 1942. APMO, BW 30/27, p. 51.

they ‘prove’ with false details, contradictions and a verbatim identity of questions and answers, which was possible caused by the translation.”

The fact that entire phrases and sentences the Soviet investigators had asked were repeated verbally by the interrogated engineers as their answers is not just a common pattern in the Russian text, but is so pedantic and annoying that it is undoubtedly one of the reasons that deterred Holocaust historians from publishing a complete set of the minutes. In fact, this is one of the most significant aspects of the interrogation technique of the Soviet interrogators: in practice, especially with regard to the main indictment, the one concerning the “gas chambers,” each question already bore within itself implicitly the answer, which the defendants had only to repeat and comment on.

Also typical is the engineers’ assumption of Soviet parlance, such as the adjectives “Nazi” and “fascist” (e.g., “Nazi party” and “Nazi government,” “fascist union” and “fascist Germany”) and “anti-fascist” (e.g., “anti-fascist statements,” “anti-fascist leaflets”) or the phrases “Auschwitz death camp,” “death factories” in reference to the crematoria at Birkenau, people “completely innocent,” “tortured to death in the gas chambers,” and “Hitler’s Germany,” an expression that even Schüle considers “unlikely” (Notes 66, p. 170). In this context, it should also be noted that Sander and Prüfer, in their respective interrogation on 7 and 19 March, introduced the issue of multiple-corpse cremations with the same, unusual locution:

Sander: “При этом он привел мне тогда пример...,” “*pri etom on privel mne togda primier*,” “He then gave me an example...”

Prüfer: “При этом Зандер привел пример...,” “*pri etom Sander privel primier*,” “Then I gave Sander the example...”

The expression “*privel primier*,” in the same context, then appears again in Sander’s interrogation on 13 March 1946. It is not very likely that the two engineers, instead of using the verbs “tell” or “report” or the like, had both on their own initiative spoken of “giving an example.”

As explained earlier, never would they have dared to contradict the dogma of the Soviet expert report on Auschwitz: If they had done so, they would have proved themselves to be hardened and unrepentant “Nazis” who were making a mockery of the Soviet investigators, and would have risked the death penalty, which, I remind the reader, was provided for the crimes ascribed to them by the decree of the Supreme Presidium of the Soviets of the USSR of 19 April 1943. Therefore, they preferred to make false confessions on the charges brought against them. This is the only way to explain their blatant lies and contradictions that I described earlier.

As for the alleged “alarm” that allegedly troubled Graf and me (the aforementioned “revisionists” are in fact the two of us), this is quite ridiculous, as I explained in Chapter 1, not to mention our alleged persistence “to hold on to [our] old lies despite the new sources.” In fact, as Schüle’s book itself shows, orthodox Holocaust historians are the ones who are really alarmed: although they have possessed copies of the Topf engineers’ interrogations since 2000 and 2003, respectively, neither the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum nor the Buchenwald Memorial have ever published them. The fact of the matter is that the only work that has put all of the Topf engineers’ interrogations in their entirety into the public domain is the present one (plus Graf’s 2002 work posted online, which accidentally omitted the protocols of the last two Schultze interrogations). This shows that the revisionists had nothing to fear from these “new sources,” as opposed to the orthodoxy. This is evident from the fact that Schüle dealt with the subject in a partial, superficial and uncritical manner, taking certain statements of the Topf engineers out of their context at will, with shrewd omissions, and merely pointing out a few erroneous details and a single contradiction (that of Sander) which she moreover left unexplained, passing in silence over all the problems I have set out earlier.

Add to all this the tragic incompetence of these historians regarding the issues debated in the interrogation reports, which would inevitably expose them to ridicule. Their historical-technical ignorance is matched only by their arrogance.

One of them, Michael Thad Allen, wrote in 2007 (Note 39, p. 174):

“Dr. Schule [recte: Schüle] informs me that some of the Topf [engineers’] interrogations that are not available to historians have found their way into the websites of Holocaust ‘deniers.’ Thus somebody is granting access to these records. It is, at the very least, an irritation that deniers are gaining fuller access than professional historians.” (Emphasis in original)

To be precise, the “deniers” possess all the interrogations, not some. In the Introduction, Jürgen Graf explained how we came into possessing them, through painstaking research and great perseverance, so that this “professional historian,” if he did not have access to this documentation, has only himself to blame. He did not find them merely because he did not look for them. This Thad Allen, who prided himself on being a member of the “Georgia Institute of Technology,” understood nothing of the technology of the alleged homicidal gas chambers at Auschwitz, as is evident from the ramblings contained in his article “The Devil in the Details: The Gas Chambers of Birkenau, October 1941,” which I exposed mercilessly in my related critique (Mattogno 2004b).

In reference to Pressac's historical archive, which contains the documentation of the Topf Company which Pressac found in late 1993 at the EMS Company (the new name of the old Topf Company), Schüle makes a revealing statement that confirms what I have set forth above (p. 362):

"It is easy to imagine the irreparable damage that would have been caused if revisionists had gained access to this archive."

"Irreparable damage" to what? Certainly to orthodox Holocaust historiography. Perhaps because the Topf Company's archive contains documents running contrary to the orthodox narrative that revisionists are not supposed to see?

Part Two:
The Protocols of the Interrogations
of the Topf Engineers

Note on Archival Sources

The Topf engineers' interrogations are in the Federal'naya Sluzhba Bezopasnosti Rossiiskoy Federatsiy (Federal Security Office of the Russian Federation) in Moscow, Fund N-19262.

Translation from Russian into German by Jürgen Graf, and from German into English by DeepL. Explanatory notes and technical revision of the translation by Carlo Mattogno.

The Contents of File N-19262

I) Interrogations of Kurt Prüfer

#	DATE	PAGES	TYPE
1	5 March 1946	32-38	manuscript
2	7 March 1946	39	manuscript
3	15 March 1946	40-43	manuscript
4	19 March 1946	44-47	manuscript
5	20 March 1946	49-50	manuscript
6	27 March 1946	87-93	manuscript
7	11 February 1948	123-128	typescript
8	13 February 1948	137-142	manuscript
9	15 February 1948	143-146	manuscript
10	21 February 1948	151-154	manuscript
11	25 February 1948 ²⁷⁷	269-275	typescript
12	4 March 1948	166-178	manuscript
13	9 March 1948	179-186	manuscript
14	13 March 1948	187-190	manuscript

Other documents:

1. Declaration by Kurt Prüfer dated 19 February 1948, manuscript, pp. 149f.
2. Organigram of the Topf Company, manuscript, undated, p. 159.
3. Explanation of the organigram, typescript, undated, pp. 160-162.

²⁷⁷ Confrontation of Kurt Prüfer and Gustav Braun.

II) Interrogations of Karl Schultze

#	DATE	PAGES	TYPE
1	4 March 1946	51-56	manuscript
2	7 March 1946	57	manuscript
3	14 March 1946	58-64	manuscript
4	20 March 1946	66-67	manuscript
5	28 March 1946	94-97	manuscript
6	18 February 1948	191-199	manuscript
7	24 February 1948	200-203	manuscript
8	11 March 1948	204-222	manuscript

III) Interrogations of Fritz Sander

#	DATE	PAGES	TYPE
1	7 March 1946	108-110	typescript
2	13 March 1946	111-114	typescript
3	21 March 1946	115-116	typescript

IV) Interrogations of Gustav Braun

#	DATE	PAGES	TYPE
1	4 March 1946	68-69	manuscript
2	5 March 1946	70-72	manuscript
3	7 March 1946	73	manuscript
4	11 March 1946	74-77	manuscript
5	20 March 1946	79-80	manuscript
6	27 March 1946	98-107	manuscript
7	12 February 1948	223-228	manuscript
8	17 February 1948	229-232	manuscript
9	26 February 1948	233-243	manuscript
10	28 February 1948	246-248	typescript
11	10 March 1948	253-268	manuscript

Notes on Technical Terms

- крематорий (*krematoriy*), crematorium, *Krematorium* in German, is often used in the sense of “cremation furnace,” in German *Einäscherungsofen* or *Verbrennungsofen*.

- Вводные отверстия (*vvodnye otverstiya*), introduction opening, often stands for “muffle,” in German *Muffel*, a term sometimes transliterated into муфли (*muflī*), referring to the cremation chambers inside a cremation furnace (*Verbrennungskammern*).
- *Druckluft-Anlage* (pressured-air device or blower) of double-muffle and triple-muffle cremation furnaces is misleadingly called вентиляция (*ventilyatsiya*), ventilation, but sometimes also correctly воздуходувка (*vozdukhoduvka*), blower, which properly corresponds to the German term *Druckluftgebläse*.
- Труба (*truba*) “tubo,” and дымоход (*dymokhod*) designate the smoke duct (flue) that led from the muffle to the chimney mouth (German: *Rauchkanal* or *Fuchs*) or to the chimney flue (German: (*Kamin*-)Zug); дымоходная труба (*dymokhodnaya truba*) is generally the chimney (*Schornstein*) or the chimney duct (*Zug*).
- Нагрузка (*nagruzka*) is the muffle load (*Beladung*), meaning the contents loaded into it.
- количество (*kolichestvo*) “quantity, number, amount,” corresponding to the German term *Belastung*. It refers to the “load” of a furnace in terms of the number of cremations conducted in it.
- Камеры для трупов (*kamery dlya trupov*) means corpse chamber, hence morgue or mortuary (*Leichenkammern* in German).
- “Sonderkeller” (special basement) is rendered as специальные подвалы (*spetsialnye podvaly*)
- Вентиляционные установки (*ventilyatsionnye ustanobki*) denotes both the aeration-disaeration systems (German *Be- und Entlüftungsanlagen*) of Morgue #1 and the chimney’s forced-draft device (German *Saugzuganlage*); these are also occasionally called воздуходувки при печах (*vozdukhoduvki pri pechakh*), blowers next to the furnaces, but this expression should properly refer to the five pressured-air blowers No. 275 that were installed next to each of the five triple-muffle furnaces.²⁷⁸
- Газоизмерители (*gazoizmeriteli*), gas meters, is the translation of the German term *Gasprüfer*, combustion-gas analyzers.
- The German expression “*Badeastalten für Sonderaktionen*” is rendered in Russian as бани специального назначения (*bani spetsial'nogo naznachenya*), bathrooms for special purpose.
- *Reichspatentamt* is translated as государственное управление патентов (*gosudarstvennoe upravlenye patentov*), State Patent Office.

²⁷⁸ I have indicated the location of these blowers in Mattoigno/Dana, Vol. 2, Doc. 223a, p. 377.

- Руководство “СС” концлагереи (*rukovodstvo “SS” kontslagerei*), SS Directorate of Concentration Camps, and имперское руководство “СС” (*imperskoe rukovodstvo “SS”*), SS Directorate of the Reich, depending on the context, refers either to the *Hauptamt Haushalt und Bauten* (Main Office Budget and Construction) or to the *SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt* (SS Economic and Administrative Main Office) for dates after 1 March 1942.

I) INTERROGATIONS OF KURT PRÜFER

1) Interrogation Protocol dated 5 March 1946

Interrogator: Captain of the Guard Shatunovsky [ШАТУНОВСКИЙ], Major of the Guard Moruzhenko [МОРУЖЕНКО]

Interpreter: Negnevitski [Негневички]

5 March 1946

We, the head of the 2nd division of “Smersh” of the 8th Army, Captain of the Guard Shatunovsky, and the deputy head of the second division, Major of the Guard Moruzhenko, interrogated the prisoner

Prüfer Kurt, son of Hermann, born in Erfurt in 1891, from a working-class family, clerk, with an intermediate technical education, engineer, German, citizen of the German state, resident of Erfurt, Bischleben district, Am Kirschberg 2.

[The detainee] was warned about responsibility for false statements (signed: Kurt Prüfer).

The interpreter was warned about responsibility for the accuracy of the translation (signed: Negnevitski).

Question: As of what year were you a member of the National-Socialist Party?

Answer: I became a member of the National-Socialist Party soon after Hitler came to power, in May 1933.

Question: Since when and in what function have you been working for the Topf Company?

Answer: I have been working for the Topf Company in Erfurt since 1920. Until 1923, I was a technician; from 1923 until recently, I worked as a senior engineer in the department for crematorium construction and heating.

Question: How many crematoria were built by the Topf Company over the years?

Answer: From 1912 to 1933, they built 110 crematoria, or 110 cremation furnaces.²⁷⁹ From 1933 to 1945 [sic], up to 50 cremation furnaces were built. From 1942 to 1945, up to 25 cremation furnaces were built.²⁸⁰

Question: From what year, where and in what number were crematoria built for the concentration camps in Germany?

Answer: The Topf Company began building crematoria for the concentration camps in 1940, and they were built in the following concentration camps:

In Buchenwald: A crematorium with two furnaces in 1941.

In Dachau: A crematorium with one furnace in 1940.

In Mauthausen: A crematorium with one furnace in 1943.

In Auschwitz: four crematoria with twelve furnaces in 1943 and 1944.²⁸¹

Question: How did the crematoria for the concentration camps differ from the civilian ones?

Answer: In civilian crematoria, there was one opening (muffle) for the cremation of the corpse, in rare cases two. In the crematoria for the concentration camps, there were three insertion openings. The size of the insertion opening was smaller in the crematoria for the concentration camps – 70 x 70 cm – and two meters long, compared to 90 x 90 cm and two meters thirty in the civil crematoria. Instead of a trolley on rails, on which the corpse in a coffin is moved into the opening, in the crematoria for the concentration camps, the corpse is pushed into the furnace on a hand-carried stretcher without a coffin. In the civilian crematoria, a special bellows is used to blow in preheated air, which causes the corpse to burn more quickly and without smoke. The construction of the crematoria for the concentration camps is different; it does not allow the air to be heated in advance, which is why the corpse burns more slowly and with smoke. Ventilation is used to reduce the smoke and the smell of the burning corpse.

Question: How many corpses could be cremated per hour in a crematorium in Auschwitz?

Answer: In a crematorium with five furnaces or fifteen openings (muffles),²⁸² fifteen corpses were cremated in one hour.

²⁷⁹ The actual number, until 1934, was 74 furnaces.

²⁸⁰ These figures are also inaccurate. From 1939 to 1945, the Topf Company built 30 cremation furnaces with 90 muffles. 86 of them were delivered to German Concentration Camps. See Table 1 in Part I, Chapter 3.5.

²⁸¹ This date is incorrect; the crematoria were all finished in 1943.

Question: When were you personally commissioned to build crematoria for the concentration camps?

Answer: In 1940, the head of the company, Ludwig Topf, asked me to visit him, and suggested that I build crematoria in which each furnace should have three introduction openings (muffles). He pointed out to me that the order had come from the SS leadership. I immediately set about constructing a crematorium oven with three muffles. It should be noted that I had already designed such furnaces with three muffles together with Ludwig Topf in 1939, and had submitted my projects to the German War Ministry. In 1940, the SS accepted the crematorium with the [triple-muffle] furnaces I had designed.²⁸³ A few weeks later, I learned that the furnaces I had built had been accepted by the SS leadership for the construction of crematoria in concentration camps.

Question: Who was involved with you in the construction of the crematoria?

Answer: I designed the cremation furnace, the technician Keller²⁸⁴ drew them, but Schultze designed the air duct to the furnace and the ventilation of the crematorium. The latter took part in the work in 1941/1942.

Question: How often and for what purpose did you travel to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp?

Answer: As an engineer and head of the crematorium-construction department, I went to Auschwitz five times. The first time was at the beginning of 1943,²⁸⁵ to receive instructions from the SS on where to build the crematorium. The second time in the spring of 1943,²⁸⁶ to inspect the site and examine the reason for erecting the crematorium chimney. The third time in the fall of 1943; I was requested to come by the SS leadership because errors had occurred during the construction of the crematorium chimney.²⁸⁷ The fourth time at the beginning of 1944, to examine the crematorium chimney, whose inner refractory brickwork was beginning to crumble. The fifth time in September/October 1944; I was ordered by the

²⁸² This refers to Crematoria II/III, each of which was equipped with five triple-muffle furnaces.

²⁸³ In his letter to Ludwig and Ernst Wolfgang Topf dated 6 December 1941 Prüfer wrote: "As you know, I have worked out the triple-muffle as well as the 8-muffle cremation furnaces, mostly using my free time at home." APMO, BW 30/46, p. 6.

²⁸⁴ The Russian text says Келлер, Keller, but this is a mistranscription. Prüfer meant Hans Köhler, who was precisely a technical draftsman in the company's D IV department.

²⁸⁵ This should be 1942, because by early 1943, the new crematorium (which later became Crematorium II) was already in an advanced stage of construction.

²⁸⁶ Here, too, is must be 1942. In the spring of 1943, the crematorium was already in operation.

²⁸⁷ The design errors I explained in Chapter 7.3.

SS leadership to dismantle the crematoria of the Auschwitz Camp and to carefully pack up the equipment and the brickwork so that they could be transferred to another location. In my opinion, this was due to the fact that the front was approaching. On all my trips, I did what was necessary to carry out the instructions of the SS leadership of the concentration camp, but I couldn't do the latter because there was no manpower, so the crematoria were not dismantled.²⁸⁸

Question: Were you on a business trip to Auschwitz Concentration Camp together with Schultze?

Answer: Yes. I was on the business trip to Auschwitz Concentration Camp together with Schultze in the spring of 1943.

Question: What did you observe together with Schultze in the Auschwitz Camp?

Answer: I personally saw an SS woman with dogs herding female prisoners into the barracks. I also saw Jews digging up earth with their hands under SS guard, and carrying it from one place to another. When I was in the crematorium, at about 10 o'clock in the morning, I saw for myself that there were up to 60 corpses of men and women of various ages lying on the ground, ready to be cremated in the crematorium. Six bodies were cremated in my presence, and I came to the conclusion that the furnaces were working well.

Question: Did you see gas chambers next to the crematoria?²⁸⁹

Answer: Yes, I saw a gas chamber outside,²⁹⁰ because there was a wooden barracks, from it there was a connection to the gas chamber; from the gas chamber, there was a connection to the crematorium.²⁹¹

Question: Did you know that completely innocent people were exterminated in the gas chambers and crematoria?

Answer: From spring 1943, I knew that completely innocent people were exterminated in gas chambers in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, and that their bodies were then burned in crematoria.

Question: What did Schultze Karl tell you about the bodies you saw lying at the crematorium?

²⁸⁸ This is inaccurate. The crematoria were dismantled. Parts of the metal structure were stored in an inaccessible room in the former Auschwitz Crematorium I until the 1990s.

²⁸⁹ возле, "vozle," "near," "next to."

²⁹⁰ снаружи "snaruzhi," "outside."

²⁹¹ Шел деревянный барак, от него было сообщеине с газкамерой, от газкамеры было сообщеине с крематорием, "shol derevyanny barak, ot nego bylo soobsheine s gazkameroy, ot gazkamery bylo soobsheine s krematorem."

Answer: In the spring of 1943, Schultze told me, in the morning in the crematorium, about the bodies of up to sixty men, women and children lying there, that they had been murdered in gas chambers.

Question: What equipment did the Topf Company design for the gas chambers?

Answer: The gas chamber, where the Topf Company installed a ventilation system, was initially called a “room for corpses”²⁹² in the factory, but it later became clear that this was a gas chamber for killing people.

Question: Who was the designer of the ventilation equipment in the gas chambers?

Answer: The designer of the ventilation systems in the gas chambers was Schultze; he set them up.

Question: Explain truthfully why the inner fireclay lining [в трубах, *v trubakh*] in the chimneys of the crematorium in the Auschwitz Camp crumbled so often!

Answer: The inner fireclay lining of the crematorium chimneys in Auschwitz began to crumble after only half a year as a result of the colossal stress [нагрузки, *nagruzki*] to which these crematoria were exposed in the concentration camp.

Question: So even though you already knew in the spring of 1943 that the cremation furnaces you had designed were being used to exterminate innocent people, you continued to work in this field?

Answer: Yes, that’s right. Although I knew that the crematoria furnaces I designed and built were intended for the extermination of innocent people in the concentration camps, I nevertheless continued to work in this field, and was twice more in Auschwitz in the camps [plural].

Question: Did Willi Wiemokli²⁹³ talk to you about the fact that living people were burned in the furnaces of the crematorium?

Answer: Yes, there was such a conversation in recent times [presumably: at the end of the time when the camp existed], but I remember telling him at the time that this could not be true because the furnaces were too small.

Question: What motivated you, even after you learned that the crematoria you had designed were intended for the execution of people, to stay

²⁹² Improper translation of German *Leichenkeller*.

²⁹³ Willy Wiemokli was a *Mischling*, who was arrested in 1938 and interned in Buchenwald camp; after his release in 1939, he was employed by the Topf Company. Between 1939 and 1944, he was arrested three times by the Gestapo. The story of people being burned alive in the furnaces was simply low-grade propaganda.

with the Topf Company and continue working as a designer in the construction of these crematoria?

Answer: I had a contract with the Topf Company and realized that my work was very important for the National-Socialist state, and that, if I gave up this work, I would be destroyed by the Gestapo. I was afraid of that, and I continued to work as a designer and head of the crematorium construction department.

My statements have been correctly written down; they were read to me in German translation, and I sign in that language. (signed: Kurt Prüfer).

Interrogated by:

The head of the 2nd section of the counterintelligence service “Smersh” 8th Guard Army, Captain of the Guard, Captain Shatunovsky (signed: Shatunovsky) deputy head of the 2nd section, Major of the Guard Moruzhenko (signed: Moruzhenko).

2) Interrogation Protocol dated 7 March 1946

Interrogator: Lieutenant of the Guard Malyschko [Мальшко]

Interrogatee: Kurt Prüfer

I, Lieutenant of the Guard Malyschko, operational command 2nd section of the counterintelligence service “Smersh” of the 8th Guard Army, questioned the detainee

Prüfer, Kurt, son of Hermann, born in 1891, a native of the city of Erfurt from a working-class family, clerk, with intermediate technical education, engineer, German, German citizen.

Question: Where does your family currently live?

Answer: My family? My wife lives in the village of Bischleben, Am Kirschberg 2.

Question: What position did you hold in the NSDAP?

Answer: I joined the National-Socialist Party in 1933, but did not hold any leading positions.

[The interrogation on March 7 consisted only of these two questions.]

The transcript with my statements was transcribed accurately and was read to me and I subscribe it (signed: Kurt Prüfer).

The interrogation was conducted through the German-language interpreter Negnevitski

Interrogated by: Lieutenant of the Guard Malyschko, operational command 2nd section of the counter-intelligence service “Smersh” of the 8th Guard Army (signed: Malyschko).

3) Interrogation Protocol dated 15 March 1946

Interrogator: Captain of the Guard Morskoi [Морской], investigating judge.

Interpreter: Datsyuk [Дациук].

On 15 March 1946, I, the investigating judge of the counterintelligence service “Smersh” of the 8th Guard Army, Captain of the Guard Morskoi, interrogated the detainee

Prüfer, Kurt, son of Hermann, born 1891, native of and resident of Erfurt, Bischleben district, clerk, married, with intermediate technical education. Member of the NSDAP since 1933.

The interrogation was conducted through interpreter Datsyuk, who was warned against unfaithful translation under Article 95 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federative Soviet Republic.

Question: After you joined the NSDAP in 1933, what leading positions did you hold in this party?

Answer: During the entire time I was a member of the National-Socialist Party, I did not hold any leading positions.

Question: Apart from the NSDAP, which other fascist organizations were you a member of?

Answer: Apart from the NSDAP, I belonged to the National-Socialist organizations *Arbeitsfront* (from 1933) and NSFAU²⁹⁴ (from 1935). I did not hold any leading positions in these organizations either.

Question: What is your profession?

Answer: I am a civil engineer by profession.

Question: Where and as what did you last work?

Answer: From 1920 until recently, I worked for the Topf Company in Erfurt. Initially, I worked there as a technician, later as a senior engineer in the department crematorium construction and heating.

Question: Were you involved in the construction of crematoria?

Answer: Yes, I worked in the Topf Company as chief engineer in the department crematorium construction and heating, and designed crematoria during this time.

Question: What types of crematoria did you design?

Answer: I designed stationary and mobile types of crematoria.

Question: When did the Topf Company start building crematoria for the concentration camps?

Answer: The Topf Company began building crematoria for concentration camps in 1940 or 1941; I don't remember exactly.

²⁹⁴ “НСФАУ” in the text, presumably *Nationalsozialistische Freie Arbeiter-Union*.

Question: Who placed the orders for the construction of crematoria for the concentration camps?

Answer: The orders for the construction of crematoria came from the SS concentration camp leadership, but also from the Reich leadership [*ot imperskogo rukovodstva*] of the SS in Berlin.

Question: Were you personally involved in the design and construction of crematoria for the concentration camps?

Answer: Yes, in 1940 I began to design and build crematoria for the concentration camps. In that year, I was called to the head of the company, Ludwig Topf, who suggested that I build crematoria in which each furnace should have three introduction openings/muffles. At the time, Topf drew my attention to the fact that this order had arrived from the SS leadership, and had to be fulfilled on time. It should be noted that I had already designed furnaces with three muffles together with Ludwig Topf in 1939, and had submitted my projects to the German War Ministry. In 1940, the SS leadership accepted the crematoria with three muffles that I had designed, after which the Topf Company, with my direct involvement, went on to build these crematoria for the concentration camps.

Question: How did the crematoria you designed for the concentration camps differ from the other crematoria you built?

Answer: The difference between the crematoria I designed and built for the concentration camps and the other civilian crematoria I built is that in the furnaces of the former, there were three insertion openings/muffles, and in the latter there was only one, rarely two. The crematoria with three openings were built because they had a larger capacity, i.e. more bodies could be cremated in them. In addition, these crematoria also saved fuel.

Question: How many crematoria were built for the concentration camps with your direct involvement?

Answer: From 1940 until 1944, up to 20 crematoria were built for the German concentration camps with my direct involvement.²⁸⁰

Question: For which camps?

Answer: The Topf Company built crematoria for the following camps: Buchenwald, Dachau, Mauthausen, Auschwitz, Gross-Rosen.

Question: Who approved your projects?

Answer: The projects for the crematoria I designed were reviewed by the chief engineer of the Topf Company, Sander, who had also headed the department crematorium construction for a time. Sander reviewed my projects, and found deficiencies in them, made improvements, after which he

personally approved these projects, and then submitted them to Ludwig Topf for approval.

Question: Who took part in building the crematoria with you?

Answer: Together with me, the technician Keller [Köhler] and the engineer Schultze took part in the construction of the crematorium. I designed the cremation furnace, Keller drew, and Schultze designed the blower [воздуходувку, *vozdukhoduvku*] and the ventilation for the crematorium.

Question: When did Schultze start working with you on the construction of the blowers and ventilation?

Answer: Schultze began working with me on the construction of the blowers and ventilation in 1940 or 1941. I don't remember the exact year.

The questioning ended at 3 p.m.

The transcript with my statements was transcribed correctly, was read to me by the interpreter in my native language, and I sign it (signed: Kurt Prüfer).

Interrogator: investigating judge of the counterintelligence service "Smersh" of the 8th Guard Army, Captain of the Guard Morskoi (signed: Morskoi).

Interpreter: Datsyuk (signed: Datsyuk).

4) Interrogation Protocol dated 19 March 1946

Interrogator: Captain of the Guard Morskoi

Interpreter: Datsyuk

19 March 1946

The interrogation begins at 21:00

The interrogation is conducted through the interpreter Datsyuk, who [signs] for the penalties of an unfaithful translation under Article 95 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federative Soviet Republic (signed: Datsyuk).

Question: Tell me, did the Topf Company build gas chambers?

Answer: No, the Topf Company did not build gas chambers. Said company only built ventilation systems for gas chambers; engineer Schultze was responsible for the design and installation of the ventilation systems.

Question: How many ventilation systems for the gas chambers did Schultze install, and in which concentration camps?

Answer: Schultze only installed two ventilation systems²⁹⁵ for two gas chambers in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp; the other ventilation sys-

²⁹⁵ Prüfer thus asserted that no ventilation systems were installed in Crematoria IV and V, and he reiterated this even more explicitly in the interrogation on 4 March 1948 ("...to

tems and blowers were intended for the furnaces of the crematoria in the concentration camps.

Question: Which camps did you go to?

Answer: I went to the concentration camps Buchenwald, Auschwitz and Gross-Rosen.

Question: When did you visit these concentration camps?

Answer: I went to Buchenwald Concentration Camp at the end of 1940 or beginning of 1941, I don't remember exactly. I went to Gross-Rosen Concentration Camp in 1943, and I went to Auschwitz Concentration Camp six times between 1941 and 1944.

Question: For what purpose did you travel to the concentration camps?

Answer: I traveled to Buchenwald to install the furnaces in the concentration-camp crematorium. I traveled to Auschwitz Concentration Camp to install and set up the furnaces in the crematoria built there, but also to install the furnaces in the disinfestation chamber [*v desinfektsionnoi kamere*].²⁹⁶

Question: How many crematoria were there in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp?

Answer: There were four crematoria in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, in which I installed twelve furnaces that I had designed and built. Of these crematoria, two had one furnace each,²⁹⁷ the other two had five furnaces each;²⁹⁸ in the latter, engineer Schultze installed the ventilation systems.

Question: Were the crematoria tested during your presence in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp?

Answer: Of the six times I visited the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, only once, at the beginning of 1943, was a test carried out in my presence on two of the five furnaces I had set up in the newly built crematorium. Six corpses of men of different ages were cremated in all [both furnaces], and there in the crematorium were also corpses of women and children who

my knowledge, they did possess no ventilation system”), although they had been ordered from Topf by Central Construction Office chief Bischoff on 8 May 1943. See in this regard Mattogno 2019, Chapter 5.10., pp. 156-158.

²⁹⁶ In 1943 in the *Zentralsauna* at Birkenau (BW 32), the Topf Company installed “a disinfestation facility consisting of two furnaces with four chambers,” according to the cost estimate dated 5 February 1943; RGVA, 502-2-27, pp. 27-30. These were two hot-air disinfestation furnaces. The hot air was produced by two furnaces installed in the *Zentralsauna's* basement.

²⁹⁷ Crematoria IV and V, each of which was equipped with an eight-muffle cremation furnace (*Achtmuffel-Einäscherungsofen*).

²⁹⁸ Crematoria II and II, each of which was equipped with five triple-muffle cremation furnaces (*Dreimuffel-Einäscherungsofen*).

had been murdered in the gas chambers, and who were to be cremated in the crematorium. The total number of corpses was about sixty.

Question: How did you participate in the cremation of the bodies of murdered, innocent people?

Answer: I checked whether the furnaces I had installed in the crematorium were working.

Question: What conclusion did you draw?

Answer: I concluded that the furnaces I built in the crematorium worked well and without any problems.

Question: Who of the engineers and technicians on the staff of the Topf Company took part in the installation of the crematoria apart from you?

Answer: Apart from myself, engineer Schultze was also present in the concentration camp when the crematoria were installed in the spring of 1943.

Question: What was Schultze's part in the cremation of the corpses?

Answer: Engineer Schultze's participation in the cremation of the bodies of those murdered in the gas chamber consisted of him carrying out an inspection of the ventilation equipment [forced-draft devices]²⁹⁹ in the crematorium during the cremation of the bodies.

Question: How long did you stay in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp?

Answer: I did not stay there for more than two days after my trips to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp.

Question: Did you go there with engineer Schultze in the spring of 1943?

Answer: No, Engineer Schultze had already traveled to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp a few days before my arrival.

Question: When did you find out that innocent people were being exterminated and burned in the concentration camps?

Answer: I learned about this in the spring of 1943, when the bodies of people murdered in the gas chamber of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp were cremated in my presence during the testing of the furnaces in the crematorium.

Question: When you returned to the Topf Company from your business trip, from the Auschwitz Concentration Camp in the spring of 1943, who did you talk to about your stay in Auschwitz?

²⁹⁹ Вентиляционных установок, *ventilyatsionnikh ustanovok*.

Answer: When I returned from the business trip, from the Auschwitz Concentration Camp in the spring of 1943, I talked to the head of the company, Ludwig Topf, and to the chief engineer, Sander.

Question: What did you tell Sander about your trip to Auschwitz?

Answer: I reported to Sander that I had been present during the testing of the furnaces in the crematorium of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, and had come to the conclusion that the crematoria could not cope with the number of corpses [не справляются с таким количеством трупов: *ne spravyayutsya s takim kolichestvom trupov*] to be cremated there, as the furnaces of the crematoria were not efficient enough. Then I gave Sander the example that in Auschwitz, in my presence, two corpses were shoved into an introduction opening/muffle instead of just one, and that the furnaces of the crematorium could not cope with this load [и то печи крематория не справлялись с той нагрузкой: *i to pechi krematoriya ne spravyalis' s toy nagruzkoj*] because there were so many [очень много, *ochen' mnogo*] corpses to burn. At that time, I also told Sander that the corpses I had seen were of people who had previously been murdered in gas chambers.

Question: After the conversation with Sander, did you start designing new, improved crematoria for the concentration camps?

Answer: No, we continued to build crematoria of the same type for the concentration camps. However, I am aware that Sander was personally involved in the design of a new, improved type of crematorium, but I cannot say anything specific about this project. [This is followed by an incomprehensible, probably incorrectly transcribed half-sentence.]

Question: If you knew that innocent people were being exterminated in the crematoria you designed, why did you continue to work in this field anyway?

Answer: Firstly, I was bound by a contract with the Topf Company as a civil engineer. Secondly, I realized that my work in the field of designing and building cremation furnaces for the concentration camps was very important for fascist Germany. Thirdly, I was afraid to give up this work, because I could have been destroyed by the Gestapo;³⁰⁰ this is why I continued to design crematoria, and head the department crematorium construction.

The interrogation ends at 1:50.

³⁰⁰ This excuse is obviously completely unfounded.

The transcript with my statements was transcribed correctly, was read to me by the interpreter in my native language, and I sign it (signed: Kurt Prüfer).

Interrogator: investigating judge of the counterintelligence service "Smersh" of the 8th Guard Army, Captain of the Guard Morskoi (signed: Morskoi).

Interpreter: Datsyuk (signed: Datsyuk).

5) Interrogation Protocol dated 20 March 1946

Interrogator: Captain of the Guard Morskoi

Interpreter: Datsyuk

March 20, 1946.

The interrogation began at 21:00

The interrogation was conducted through the interpreter Datsyuk, who [signs] for the penalties of an unfaithful translation under Article 95 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federative Soviet Republic (signed: Datsyuk).

Question: As chief engineer in the department crematorium construction of the Topf Company, you have been charged with having designed and manufactured crematoria furnaces for the concentration camps, in which the bodies of innocent people of various nationalities were burned who had been tortured by the Germans in the concentration camps. You checked the functioning of the cremation furnaces in the concentration camps. The crimes committed by you are covered by the first part of the decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR of 19 April 1943. Do you understand the charges brought against you, and to what specifically do you plead guilty?

Answer: The indictment filed in accordance with the first part of the decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR of 19 April 1943 has been explained to me, and is understandable. I plead fully guilty to having worked as chief engineer in the department crematorium construction at the Topf Company in Erfurt. I personally designed crematoria furnaces, 150 of which were manufactured during the entire time I worked in this field. During the war that Germany waged against the countries of Europe, up to 20 of the aforementioned number of crematoria furnaces were built with my direct involvement by order of the SS leadership, for the concentration camps Buchenwald, Auschwitz, Dachau, Mauthausen and Gross-Rosen. In them, the bodies of completely innocent people of various nationalities were cremated who had been tortured by the Germans in the

aforementioned concentration camps. I was involved in the design and construction of crematorium ovens and their installation in the concentration camps, and for this purpose I traveled to the concentration camps. When we were present in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp in the spring of 1943, where we checked the cremation furnaces as well as the functioning of the ventilation systems,³⁰¹ the corpses of completely innocent people of various ages and nationalities, who had been tortured by the Germans, were cremated with my participation, as well as the participation of engineer Sander, who designed and installed the ventilation equipment and blowers for the cremation furnaces.

The interrogation ends at 11:30.

The transcript with my statements was transcribed correctly, was read to me by the interpreter in my native language, and I sign it (signed: Kurt Prüfer).

Interrogator: The investigating judge of the counterintelligence service “Smersh” of the 8th Guard Army, Captain of the Guard Morskoi (signed: Morskoi).

Interpreter: Datsyuk (signed: Datsyuk).

6) Interrogation Protocol dated 27 March 1946

Interrogator: Major Tereshchenko [Терещенко]

Interpreter: Garelik [Гарелик]

27 March 1946.

I, head of the 2nd section of the 4th office of the “Smersh” service of the Soviet army group in Germany, Major Tereshchenko, today interrogated through the German-speaking interpreter Garelik the defendant

Prüfer, Kurt, son of Hermann, born 1891, native of the city of Erfurt (Germany), from a working-class family, of clerical social position, with intermediate technical training, engineer, German, German citizen, married, member of the Nazi party since 1943 [recte: 1933].

The interrogation begins at 23:00 and ends at 4:00.

The interpreter was warned about responsibility for an unfaithful translation under Article 95 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federative Soviet Republic (signed: Garelik).

Question: What is your last and first name?

Answer: My last name is Prüfer, my first name is Kurt. I have no other names.

³⁰¹ In fact, the forced-draft systems of Crematorium II.

Question: Which languages do you speak, and in which [plural] do you intend to give your testimony?

Answer: I have a perfect command of German, and can speak some French. I will give my testimony in German.

Question: Who are your parents?

Answer: My father Hermann Prüfer was a railroad worker; he died in 1918. My mother was a housewife; she is also dead.

Question: Which German political parties were you a member of?

Answer: I joined the Nazi Party of Germany in 1933.

Question: What leading positions did you hold in the party?

Answer: I was a paying member of the party.

Question: What is your profession?

Answer: I am a civil engineer by profession.

Question: Tell us about your official activities.

Answer: I completed my apprenticeship in 1910, and started working for the Topf Company in the city of Erfurt, where I worked until October 1912, when I was drafted into the army. After my discharge from the army in 1918, I attended a course on reinforced concrete at the technical college for a year, and then, in April 1920, I started working for the Topf Company again, where I was employed until my arrest, and held the position of a leading engineer in the field of furnace construction.

Question: How long has the Topf Company existed, and what products does it manufacture?

Answer: The Topf Company has existed since 1878, and was run by the two Topf brothers, one of whom, Ludwig, poisoned himself and died after the capitulation of Germany, while the other, Ernst, lived in the American occupation zone. The company manufactured: cranes for loading and unloading ships; sanitary disinfestation chambers,³⁰² furnaces for incinerating the carcasses of animals that died during scientific experiments; cremation furnaces; during the war it manufactured individual parts for airplanes and shells for anti-aircraft guns, as well as machines for cleaning gasoline, and it fulfilled orders from the German authorities for the manufacture of furnaces for incinerating corpses in concentration camps. Today, the company fulfills orders of the Soviet administration for the production of aircraft parts, bomb processing, the construction of disinfestation chambers, etc.

³⁰² Санитарные дезинфекционные камеры, *sanitarnye dezinfektsionnye kamery*: allusion to hot-air disinfestation systems such as the disinfestation facility of the *Zentralsauna* mentioned earlier.

Question: When did the company receive the order from the leading German authorities to manufacture furnaces for crematoria, and from whom exactly?

Answer: The order came from the SS staff in 1940 or 1941, I don't remember exactly.

Question: What was the scope of these orders?

Answer: We had to produce two furnaces for cremating corpses for the Buchenwald Concentration Camp, one for Dachau, two for Gross-Rosen, one for Mauthausen and twelve for Auschwitz.

Question: Was this order fulfilled by the company?

Answer: By 1 April 1943, this order had been completely fulfilled by the company.

Question: Who constructed these furnaces and installed them in the concentration camps?

Answer: I designed the furnaces, and under my direction they were installed in the concentration camps Buchenwald, Gross-Rosen and Auschwitz. The company's craftsmen built the furnaces; prisoners in the concentration camps were also used for this work.

The interrogation is now finished.

My statements were transcribed exactly and read to me in understandable German. (Signed: Kurt Prüfer).

Interrogator: The head of the 2nd section of the 4th Service Office "Smersh" of the Soviet Troop Group in Germany, Major Tereshchenko.

Interpreter: Garelik.

7) Interrogation Protocol dated 11 February 1948

Interrogator: Lieutenant Colonel Doperchuk

Interpreter: Lieutenant Kush

The interrogation started at 14:00 and ended at 18:00.

Question: Tell us how long and in what position you worked at the German engineering company Topf and Sons in the city of Erfurt!

Answer: I worked continuously at Topf and Sons from 1920 until the day of my arrest as a senior engineer in the design office, Department D-1U; I was head of the design and construction group for heating equipment and cremation furnaces.

Question: To what extent were you involved in the work of the Topf Company in the production of crematoria for the German concentration camps?

Answer: As a senior engineer in the field of design and construction of heating equipment, I was directly involved in the work of the Topf Company in the field of manufacturing crematoria for the German concentration camps. For this purpose, I travelled to concentration camps several times on behalf of the company, where I organized and directed the work on the construction of cremation furnaces on site and was also involved in the installation of these furnaces.

Question: In which concentration camps did the Topf Company build crematoria, and on whose behalf?

Answer: The Topf Company built crematoria in the concentration camps on behalf of the Central Construction Office of the *Reichsführer* SS. The company first built a crematorium with two furnaces in the Buchenwald Concentration Camp in 1940/1941.³⁰³ In the following years up to the day of Germany's capitulation, the company built around 20 furnaces for the crematoria in the concentration camps Dachau, Gross-Rosen, Mauthausen and Auschwitz. I clearly remember that the company built 12 three-muffle furnaces for four crematoria in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp.³⁰⁴

Question: Did you build the furnaces for the crematoria in the concentration camps?

Answer: No, I only built the furnaces for the concentration camps Buchenwald, Gross-Rosen and Auschwitz. The construction of the crematoria in the other concentration camps [plural]³⁰⁵ was the responsibility of the Topf Company's representative in Munich. This branch was headed by the company's chief engineer Emprecht, who died in the bombing of Munich in 1944.

Question: Who from the Topf Company personally led the negotiations with the SS authorities regarding the construction of furnaces for the concentration camps, and the installation of gas chambers in the concentration camps?

Answer: I have already said that the Topf Company began building cremation furnaces in 1940. We were first approached by the head of the SS construction office of the Buchenwald Concentration Camp, a certain Grosch.³⁰⁶ On the instructions of the head of the company, Ludwig Topf, I

³⁰³ In 1940, the Topf Company delivered one coke-fired double-muffle cremation furnace and one oil-fired mobile double-muffle furnace to the camp administration.

³⁰⁴ At Auschwitz, as has already been noted, ten triple-muffle furnaces and two eight-muffle furnaces were installed.

³⁰⁵ The plural is unwarranted because only Mauthausen is missing from the list compiled by Prüfer.

³⁰⁶ *SS Obersturmführer* Gerhard Grosch, head of construction of the Buchenwald Camp.

conducted negotiations with Grosch about the construction of two cremation furnaces in Buchenwald. Soon afterwards, a representative of the SS Reich Office,³⁰⁷ whose name I can no longer remember, visited the Topf Company in Erfurt to conduct negotiations with Ludwig Topf regarding the construction of crematoria in other concentration camps. He did not specify which ones at the time. At the invitation of the head of the company, I and the head of the planning department, Mersch,³⁰⁸ also took part in these negotiations. At the time, it was contractually agreed with the representative of the SS Reich Office that the Topf Company would assume responsibility for the construction of cremation furnaces in the concentration camps, but it was also agreed that in each specific case written agreements or contracts should be concluded directly with the SS construction office of the concentration camp in question, i.e. with the clients. This is how it was subsequently handled. Apart from these two cases, I also conducted negotiations with the SS construction office of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp on the construction of cremation furnaces and ventilation equipment for the gas chambers. As a rule, all written agreements or contracts on these matters were signed by the head of the company, Ludwig Topf. In addition to what I have just said, I would like to add that, during these negotiations, the SS construction office of the concentration camps did not raise the issue of equipping the gas chambers.

Question: Were you personally aware of the purposes for which the company built crematoria and gas chambers in the concentration camps?

Answer: Until 1943, I was not informed about the actual aims and purpose of the crematoria built in the concentration camps. I only became aware of them when I visited the Auschwitz Concentration Camp. Before that, the representatives of the SS construction offices, who led the negotiations with the Topf Company, explained that the crematoria were built in the concentration camps to burn the bodies of prisoners who had died of natural causes as a result of epidemics. I only found out about the existence of gas chambers in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp when I visited the camp in 1943. Before that, I had known nothing about their existence or purpose. At the same time, I would like to emphasize that the gas chambers in the concentration camps were not built by the Topf Company. I only know that two ventilation systems for the gas chambers in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp were installed by the Topf Company.

³⁰⁷ The cremation furnaces were ordered from the Topf Company first by the *Hauptamt Haushalt und Bauten*, later by the *SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt*.

³⁰⁸ Heinrich Mersch, head of the department *Generalplan*.

Question: What specifically did you learn about the real purpose of the crematoria and gas chambers that were built during your visit to this camp in 1943?

Answer: During my visit to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp in 1943, I became aware that a mass extermination of prisoners was taking place in this camp, including women, children and old people who had been sent to Auschwitz by the Hitlerites³⁰⁹ in whole transports from the European countries occupied by Germany. The prisoners who arrived at the Auschwitz Concentration Camp were sent by the SS to the gas chambers, where they were murdered, and then their bodies were burned in the crematoria and on special pyres.

Question: So when you were involved in building the furnaces for the crematorium in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, you knew that they were intended for the extermination of completely innocent people?

Answer: Yes, I knew that.

Question: What prompted you to become actively involved in this work?

Answer: After I became aware of the actual purpose of the crematorium in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, I decided not to take part in its construction and informed company boss Ludwig Topf of this. In response, [Ludwig] Topf told me that the construction of the crematoria in the concentration camps was being carried out by the company on behalf of the Reich Office of the SS, and that, if I refused to take part in this work, I could be arrested as a saboteur and imprisoned in a concentration camp. Therefore, for fear of losing my job and being subjected to reprisals, I dropped my original plan and continued to fulfill all the company's orders to build crematoria in the concentration camps. I had no other motives.

Question: Did the fact that you had belonged to the Nazi party since 1933 not influence your decision?

Answer: Of course, my membership of the Nazi party, whose ideas I shared, obliged me to loyally support all measures taken by the German government bodies – including the SS Reich Office – and to lend a hand in the implementation of these measures. However, in the present case, I took the decision to continue work on the design and construction of the crematoria for fear of reprisals and not for any other reason. In the opposite case, I would not have asked Ludwig Topf to be released from this work.

Question: What did the Topf-and-Sons engineers Braun Gustav and Schultze Karl have to do with the construction of the crematoria?

³⁰⁹ Another typical Soviet propaganda term.

Answer: Braun Gustav was the head of production at Topf and Sons, and under his leadership, the iron structures and individual parts for the crematoria that the company built in the concentration camps were manufactured in the Erfurt factory. Chief engineer Schultze Karl was involved in the construction, and supervised the assembly of, the ventilation equipment for the cremation furnaces and gas chambers in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp.

Question: Did Braun and Schultze travel to concentration camps in connection with the construction of the crematoria?

Answer: As far as I know, Braun Gustav did not travel to any concentration camps. Schultze Karl traveled to the Auschwitz concentration camp several times, where he supervised the assembly of the ventilation equipment for the cremation furnaces and gas chambers on site, and he also inspected this equipment. I can no longer remember whether he also visited other concentration camps.

The record of the interrogation was read to me in German translation, my statements were transcribed correctly.

Interrogated by: the operations officer of the 4th section of the 3rd Central Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR Lieutenant Colonel Doperchuk (signed: Doperchuk).

The interrogation was attended as a German-speaking interpreter by the operations officer of the 4th section of the 3rd Central Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR, Lieutenant Kush.

8) Interrogation Protocol dated 13 February 1948

Interrogator: Lieutenant Colonel Deyerchun [Дейерчун]

Interpreter: Lieutenant Kush

13 February 1948

The interrogation started at 12:15 and ended at 17:20.

Question: How long have you known the Topf engineer Gustav Braun, and what was your relationship with him?

Answer: I have known engineer Gustav Braun since the day he started working at Topf, hence since about 1936.³¹⁰ I was not more-closely acquainted with him, and I only rarely met him on business matters. My relationship with Braun was purely of an official nature; there was never any private contact between us.

Question: In what position did Braun G. work at Topf and Sons?

³¹⁰ Gustav Braun started working for the Topf Company on 1 May 1935.

Answer: Braun Gustav was production manager at Topf and Sons, and was directly in charge of the company's mechanical-engineering department. As far as I could ascertain, Braun was always very close to the head of the company, Ludwig Topf, and when he and his brother (the co-owner of the company) were absent, he decided all matters relating to the company's activities.

Question: What specifically fell within Braun's area of responsibility as production manager at Topf?

Answer: Braun was responsible for all of Topf's production activities, and directly managed the company's operations in Erfurt. In particular, Braun dealt with the hiring and firing of workers; he had the right to reprimand and punish workers. Together with the planning department, Braun drew up the company's production plans.

Question: To what extent did Braun Gustav participate in the fulfillment of the orders issued by the SS authorities for the construction and equipping of the crematoria in the concentration camps by the Topf Company?

Answer: It was in the nature of his work that Braun participated directly in the fulfillment of the orders placed by the SS authorities through the Topf Company, i.e. he and the company's planning department included these orders in the production plans, and set the deadlines for their fulfillment. This also meant that, if these orders required the manufacture of any individual parts or fittings in the company's engineering plant, these were produced under Braun's supervision, i.e. he managed this plant directly. I would like to add to what has been said so far that in the situation at the time, the orders of the SS authorities were fulfilled by the company in an accelerated manner; only military orders were classified as even more urgent.

Question: What was produced in the company managed by Braun in accordance with these orders from the SS authorities?

Answer: Under Braun's management, the company produced individual parts and iron fittings for the cremation furnaces and ventilation systems, the construction and assembly of which was carried out by the Topf Company in accordance with the orders of the SS authorities in the concentration camps.

Question: Who from the Topf Company directly carried out the construction and assembly work on the cremation furnaces and the ventilation equipment for the gas chambers in the concentration camps, especially in Auschwitz?

Answer: The construction and assembly work on the cremation furnaces, chimneys, smoke ducts and ventilation equipment in the concentration camps was carried out directly on site by the assembly office of the Topf Company, whose head was engineer Schuchardt;³¹¹ I don't know his first name. The assembly office was directly subordinate to Braun as the company's production manager. I know that the construction and assembly of the cremation furnaces and smoke ducts in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp was carried out by the chief fitters of the assembly department [Wilhelm] Koch and [Martin] Holick, while the ventilation equipment for the crematoria and gas chambers was installed by fitter [Heinrich] Messing. From time to time, these fitters sent the reports and notices on the progress of this work to the company management, namely to the boss Ludwig Topf, who looked through them, and then forwarded them to Braun with his comments. I also looked through these documents with Braun's signature, i.e. I was obliged to check whether this work had been carried out correctly and in accordance with the drawings I had received.

Question: As can be seen from your statements, Braun, as head of production, was not only informed about the orders of the SS construction office of Auschwitz and other concentration camps, which were fulfilled by the Topf Company, but also participated directly in the fulfillment of these orders. Is this rendition of your statements correct?

Answer: Yes, absolutely. Braun, as head of production at the company, not only knew about the orders from the SS construction management of the concentration camps that the company was fulfilling, but also participated directly in their fulfillment. For example, the factory managed by Braun manufactured individual parts and iron fittings for the cremation furnaces and ventilation systems, and on site, in the concentration camps, the fitters from the assembly department carried out the work on the construction and assembly of these furnaces and ventilation systems in the crematoria under his supervision. The reports from these fitters on the progress of the work went to Braun via the company boss.

Question: Did Braun personally go to concentration camps?

Answer: No, Braun did not visit the concentration camps.

Question: After returning from your trips to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, did you personally report to Braun or talk to him about the construction of the crematoria in the camp?

Answer: No, I never discussed these issues with Braun. I submitted the reports on my trips to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp in connection

³¹¹ Max Schuchardt, head of the fitters' department (*Montageabteilung*).

with the construction of furnaces for the crematoria etc. directly to the head of the company, Ludwig Topf, and he forwarded these reports to Braun for his information.

Question: Who in the Topf Company was the authorized representative of counterintelligence, the counterintelligence representative?³¹²

Answer: I don't know exactly. The company employees felt and knew that they were being watched at every turn, and reported on everything to the counterintelligence and the security police, and they assumed that Ludwig Topf or Braun were dealing with this. I also suspected the latter.

The record of the interrogation was read to me in translation from Russian to German, my statements were transcribed correctly (signed: Kurt Prüfer).

Interrogated by: the operations officer of the 4th section of the 3rd Central Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR Lieutenant Colonel Deyerchun (signed: Deyerchun).

The interrogation was attended as a German-speaking interpreter by the operations officer of the 4th section of the 3rd Central Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR, Lieutenant Kush.

9) Interrogation Protocol dated 15 February 1948

Interrogator: Lieutenant Colonel Deyerchun

Interpreter: Lieutenant Kush

The interrogation started at 12:45 and ended at 16:10.

Question: What equipment was manufactured in the factory of the Topf Company for the construction of the crematoria and gas chambers in the concentration camps?

Answer: In fulfilling the orders placed by the SS authorities for the construction and equipping of crematoria and gas chambers in the concentration camps (the latter, i.e. the equipping of the gas chambers, only took place in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp), the Topf Company purchased some materials and equipment from other companies, and manufactured some of them in its factory in Erfurt. In particular, the company's factory produced: small cast-iron doors, oven flaps, hearths and all the iron fittings for the incineration furnaces, as well as all individual parts, with the exception of the electric motors and ventilation equipment, which were installed in the crematoria (near the furnaces) and in the gas chambers.

³¹² The text has the transliterations "Абвера," *Abwehr*, and "Абверbeauftragтер," "*Abwehrbeauftragter*."

Fireclay,³¹³ bricks, insulation material, electric motors, electric elevators and other electrical equipment were purchased by the company from other German companies.

Question: Who in the management of the Topf Company placed the orders for the manufacture of the above-mentioned equipment in the company's factory?

Answer: The orders received from the SS authorities for the manufacture of one or other item of equipment were reviewed by the planning department and the head of production, and entered into the general production plan of the Topf Company. The order was then placed in the accounting department, and passed through the head of the design office to me or to engineer Schultze (depending on whether the order related to the construction of ventilation equipment or cremation furnaces). On the basis of this order, we drew up a detailed list of the individual parts and equipment to be manufactured, made the necessary drawings, and forwarded these documents via the preparation office to the company's production manager, Gustav Braun, who issued instructions to the factory workshops for the manufacture of these items of equipment, and checked the deadlines within which these items had to be manufactured and shipped to the customer.

Question: This means that Braun, as head of production at the Topf Company, was directly involved in fulfilling the orders placed by the SS authorities for the construction of crematoria in the concentration camps?

Answer: Absolutely correct. As head of production at Topf, Braun was kept informed of all orders placed by the SS authorities, and was directly involved in their fulfillment.

Question: You have been presented with documents confiscated from the management of the Topf Company, in which orders received by the company from the SS authorities for the manufacture of various equipment and materials and their delivery to the concentration camps are registered. Tell us what these documents are, and what part you personally, as well as Braun Gustav and Schultze Karl, played in their creation and production!

Answer: The documents printed on the white sheets of paper are sheets of Topf's production plans, which were drawn up by the general planning office with the participation of Gustav Braun, the company's head of production. In particular, Braun, together with the planning office, discussed the deadlines for the fulfillment of this or that order, and recorded them on the plan. Neither I personally nor engineer Schultze Karl were involved in drawing up these production plans for the company. The documents print-

³¹³ Шамот, *shamot*, German *Schamotte*, refractory/fireclay; the reference is undoubtedly to fireclay bricks.

ed on green paper are copies of forms – orders with a detailed list of equipment or materials requested by one customer or another, in this case by the construction office of the concentration camps concerned. These documents were prepared by me or by Chief Engineer Schultze (this is noted on the first form) in four copies, one of which I forwarded to the production department, one to the bookkeeping department and one to the accounting department, while one remained in the files of the department I headed.

The record of the interrogation was read to me in German translation, my statements are transcribed correctly (signed: Kurt Prüfer).

Interrogated by: the operations officer of the 4th section of the 3rd Central Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR Lieutenant Colonel Deyerchun (signed: Deyerchun).

The interrogation was attended as a German-speaking interpreter by the operations officer of the 4th section of the 3rd Central Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR, Lieutenant Kush (signed: Kush).

10) Interrogation Protocol dated 21 February 1948

Interrogator: Lieutenant Colonel Deyerchun

Interpreter: Lieutenant Kush

The interrogation started at 12:45 and ended at 16:10.

Question: You were presented with the organigram of the Topf and Sons Company together with a written explanation [see Docs. 4 and 5]. Tell me, do the mutual relationships you depicted on the diagram and the subordination of the various departments and offices to the company management, in particular the boss Ludwig Topf and the head of production Gustav Braun, correspond to reality?

Answer: Having looked again at the organigram of the Topf and Sons Company that I drew, I declare to the investigating authorities with full responsibility that the mutual relationships shown graphically on it and the subordination of the various departments and offices to the company management – i.e. the head Ludwig Topf and the head of production Gustav Braun – correspond to reality.

Question: On the diagram in question, you show that the preparatory department, the standardization and assembly departments, the materials warehouse and the shipping department were headed by the company's head of production, Gustav Braun. Do you maintain that this was really the case?

Answer: Yes, I maintain that. As I have shown on the diagram, the preparatory department, the standardization and assembly departments, the materials warehouse and the shipping department were headed by the company's head of production, Gustav Braun, and he directed their work.

Question: Specify which individual parts of the fittings and equipment for the crematoria and gas chambers built in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp were manufactured by the Topf Company!

Answer: For the crematoria built in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp and other concentration camps, the Topf Company in Erfurt manufactured the following equipment and individual parts:

1. all iron and steel reinforcements (various bolts,³¹⁴ angle irons,³¹⁵ anchoring irons³¹⁶ etc.).

2. the cart-shaped devices for inserting the bodies.³¹⁷

3. cast-iron doors for the hearths,³¹⁸ slag pits,³¹⁹ muffles and grates. These individual parts of the incineration furnaces were cast in the factories of various German companies as semi-finished products, and then machined accordingly in the turning and metalworking shops of the Topf Company.

4. ventilation devices were made for the incineration furnaces and the equipment of the gas chambers (only in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp). The electric motors for these devices were ordered from other companies.

Question: Did the order forms sent to the workshops of the Topf Company for the manufacture of this or that piece of equipment indicate for whom this piece of equipment was to be manufactured?

Answer: Yes, this was indicated. In particular, it was noted in writing on every form relating to the manufacture, in the workshops of the Topf Company, of various individual parts and items of equipment for the incineration furnaces built in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, and it was stated that the orderer of this item of equipment was the SS construction office of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp. It was a general rule at the

³¹⁴ In Topf Company quotes "*Steinschrauben*," stone bolts.

³¹⁵ "*Winkelisen*," angle iron.

³¹⁶ The Russian text says планки (planki), laths, planks, slats, which did not exist in cremation furnaces. This is probably a misunderstanding of Verankerungs-Eisen, anchor bars.

³¹⁷ This device was called "*Sargeinführungswagen*," coffin-introduction cart.

³¹⁸ "*Feuer[ungs]türen*," hearth doors.

³¹⁹ The small pits in the floor at the rear of the furnaces in front of the hearth doors into which the grate slag fell when extracted with special scrapers. The triple-muffle furnaces had similar pits at the front, in front of the ash-extraction doors. See Mattoigno/Deana, Vol. III, Photos 112, 114-120, 122-125, 155, pp. 82-89, 104.

Topf Company to specify the customer when drawing up the order forms, and no one ever violated this rule.

Question: Did the company's head of production, Braun Gustav, and other people in the production department or the workshops who reported to him know from these order forms for whom this or that item of equipment was being manufactured in the company's factory?

Answer: Quite right, both Braun G. as head of production and his subordinate managers knew from the order forms for whom they manufactured this or that piece of equipment in the company's factory. In particular, they knew that the company's workshops produced equipment and fittings for the incineration furnaces that were built in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp on the orders of the SS authorities.

The record of the interrogation was read to me in German translation, my statements are transcribed correctly (signed: Kurt Prüfer).

Interrogated by: the operations officer of the 4th section of the 3rd Central Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR Lieutenant Colonel Deyerchun (signed: Deyerchun).

The interrogation was attended as a German-speaking interpreter by the operations officer of the 4th section of the 3rd Central Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR, Lieutenant Kush (signed: Kush).

11) Protocol of the Confrontation of Gustav Braun and Kurt Prüfer dated 25 February 1948

Interrogator: Lieutenant Colonel Kuzmishin [Кузьмишин], Lieutenant Colonel Doperchuk

Interpreter: Lieutenant Kush

The confrontation started at 11:40 and ended at 18:30.

Question to the defendant Prüfer K: Report what you know about Gustav Braun's official activities and his participation in the work which the Topf Company carried out in the concentration camps in connection with the construction of the crematoria and the equipping of the gas chambers!

Answer: Gustav Braun worked in the Topf and Sons Company in the position of production manager, whereby he was extremely close to the company boss Ludwig Topf. He was directly subordinate to him in his work, and directed the company's entire production activities. It happened that Braun stood in for company boss Ludwig Topf when the latter and his brother Ernst Topf – who was co-owner of the company – traveled somewhere from Erfurt for a longer period of time. The following departments were subordinate to Gustav Braun as head of production: Topf's office and

properties, preparatory department, assembly and standardization departments, shipping department, materials warehouse and operations. The Topf and Sons Company began building and equipping the crematoria in the concentration camps in 1940. The company received the orders for the above-mentioned work from the relevant SS authorities, more precisely from the SS construction offices of the concentration camps Buchenwald, Gross-Rosen, Mauthausen, Dachau and Auschwitz. These orders were incorporated into the company's general production plan, which was drawn up by the planning office with the participation of Braun Gustav. As head of production, Braun determined the deadlines for the fulfillment of these orders together with the planning office, depending on the company's production possibilities. In this way, he was always up to date on which SS authorities were accepting orders from the company and for which work, and he took the necessary measures to fulfill these orders on time. The Topf Company fulfilled these orders as follows: The necessary equipment, fittings and individual parts were manufactured in the company's factory, which the shipping department sent to the relevant concentration camp. Craftsmen from the assembly office and unskilled workers were also sent there to carry out the construction and assembly work in the crematoria on the spot, i.e. in the camp. This work was carried out with Braun's knowledge and on his instructions, as both the company factory and the assembly office as well as the shipping department were directly subordinate to him. As a rule, the Topf Company only built the incineration furnaces in the crematoria in the concentration camps I mentioned earlier; only in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp were four gas chambers³²⁰ set up in addition to the incineration furnaces for the crematoria. The factory of the Topf Company produced the following equipment and individual parts for the crematoria built in the concentration camps mentioned above: Anchors, ventilators, steel floors³²¹ for the hearths of the incinerators; furthermore, cast-iron doors for the furnaces and muffles as well as grates were made in the turning shop and the locksmith's shop of the factory.³²² Braun was in charge of the production of the individual parts and fittings listed, i.e. he directly supervised the work of the company factory.

Question to the defendant Braun: In what position did you work at Topf and Sons?

³²⁰ This contradicts Prüfer's statement during the interrogation dated 19 March 1946, repeated in that dated 11 March 1948, that Topf set up two "gas chambers at Auschwitz."

³²¹ In the Russian text *сталные поды*, *stalnye pody*, steel pipes, meaning the hearth grates (*Planroste*) consisting of square bars (*Vierkantstäbe*).

³²² Колосники, *kolosniki*, no doubt the furnaces' anchor bars (*Verankerungs-Eisen*).

Answer: I worked as head of production at Topf and Sons.

Question to the defendant Braun: Were you aware that the Topf and Sons Company carried out work for the construction and equipment of the crematoria in the concentration camps on the orders of the SS authorities?

Answer: I learned about this by chance in 1940 in a conversation with a fitter from the Topf Company, Heinrich Messing, who, when I asked him where he worked, replied that he was building cremation furnaces in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp together with Chief Engineer Prüfer. I found out about this a second time from workers in the shipping department under my command. This took place under the following circumstances: Once in 1940, when I entered the shipping department, I saw some SS men there. When I asked why they were there, the department head replied that they were conducting negotiations concerning the shipment of construction materials to the Buchenwald Concentration Camp. In that camp, Chief Engineer Prüfer was building a cremation furnace. As head of production, I was generally aware that the Topf and Sons Company manufactured incinerators, but I didn't know where and for what purpose, and I wasn't interested in this question.

Question to the defendant Prüfer: What would you like to say about the statements of the prisoner Braun Gustav?

Answer: Braun Gustav's statement that he did not know for whom and for what purposes the Topf and Sons Company had built incinerators does not correspond to reality. As head of production at the company, Braun was aware of this, and almost all the work involved in building the incinerators in the concentration camps was carried out with his knowledge. To substantiate this, I cite the following facts:

1. In 1940/1941, two cremation furnaces for the concentration camps Dachau and Mauthausen were assembled in the company's factory with the direct involvement of Braun Gustav. The place on the factory premises where these furnaces were assembled and where the workers were taken to carry out the assembly work on these furnaces had been personally selected by Braun. In addition, the individual parts (metal frames) and the fittings for these furnaces were manufactured in the factory workshops on Braun's instructions. After these incinerators had been assembled, they were shipped away from the factory on Braun's instructions – one to the Dachau Concentration Camp and one to the Mauthausen Concentration Camp.

2. In the fall of 1940 or spring of 1941 (I don't remember the exact date), the SS man von Hausen [transliterated] came to our company from Berlin to find out why a cremation furnace had not been produced on time,

and to inspect the assembly of this furnace on the spot. In this context, company boss Ludwig Topf called a special meeting to discuss the construction of this furnace. In addition to Ludwig Topf and the SS man von Hausen, this meeting was also attended by Braun, who took part in the discussions about the deadlines for the construction of this cremation furnace for the SS men. On the instructions of the SS authorities in Berlin, the company also sent the furnace to the Mauthausen Concentration Camp.

3. As head of production at the company, Braun convened a meeting of the factory foremen every morning after breakfast, at which he laid down the work schedule with them for the day ahead. Braun not only knew that various individual parts and pieces of equipment for the cremation furnaces were being produced in the factory's workshops, which were built on the orders of the SS authorities in the concentration camps, but he also gave the factory foremen instructions on the production of these or those individual parts or pieces of equipment at the aforementioned meetings, as well as the deadlines set in each case.

4. In the fall of 1942, I spoke personally with Braun Gustav about the shipment of cremation furnaces for four or five crematoria (eight-muffle furnaces) to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, parts and individual blocks of which had been manufactured by order of the SS authorities in Berlin and were stored in the factory's warehouse. At the time, Braun put a worker at my disposal, with whom I checked whether the individual parts and blocks for these furnaces were available, and instructed the shipping department to send these cremation furnaces to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, which they did.

5. In the course of 1941 and 1942, I personally approached Braun several times as head of production on the question of sending skilled workers to the concentration camps Auschwitz and Buchenwald. These skilled workers were needed to carry out a range of work on the construction of the incineration furnaces in the concentration camps. In all these cases, Braun made a positive decision, and selected for me the specialists needed to carry out the work in the concentration camps Auschwitz and Buchenwald from among the workers working for him in the company.

6. Braun, as head of production at the company, devoted himself to all the details of the work in the company factory and in the departments and offices under his control. He took an interest in their work and supervised it, and therefore he could not possibly not know for whom which items of equipment were made in the factory, and to which address they were to be sent.

Question to the defendant Braun: The testimony of detainee Prüfer Kurt, which was given here in the face of a direct confrontation, proves beyond doubt that the work of the Topf Company in building and equipping crematoria in the concentration camps was carried out not only with your knowledge, but also with your direct participation. Please stop stubbornly denying this and make truthful statements.

Answer: The statements made here by the detainee Prüfer Kurt in the face of a direct confrontation do not correspond to reality, and I cannot confirm them. I declare once again to the investigating authority that, although I knew about the construction of cremation furnaces by the Topf and Sons Company, I did not know for whom and on what order it was carried out, and that I was not interested in it.

Question to the defendant Prüfer: Do you insist on your statements?

Answer: My statements about Gustav Braun's official activities and his involvement in the construction and equipping of crematoria in the concentration camps correspond to reality, and I fully insist on them.

Question to the defendant Braun: Do you have any questions for the inmate Prüfer?

Answer: No, I have no questions for inmate Prüfer.

Question to defendant Prüfer: Do you have any questions for inmate Braun?

Answer: I would like to ask Braun two questions:

1. Does Braun remember the following incident: in the summer or fall of 1942, we received the second order from the SS construction office of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp for the delivery of five triple-muffle furnaces for Crematorium III in Birkenau. As there was no indication on this order of the urgency and sequence of execution, I met Braun in the company office, informed him and showed him the order. Braun then went with me to the head of the general planning office, Mersch, with whom we agreed on the matter in question. On the way to Mersch, Braun asked me the following question, or rather said jokingly: "Kids, who else are you going to burn?" I responded with a joke of my own.

2. Does Braun remember the incident when an SS officer from Berlin came to his company in the spring of 1942 to discuss the construction of new cremation furnaces for the SS? On this occasion, company boss Ludwig Topf convened a meeting at his premises, which was attended by Braun, the head of the planning office Mersch and the SS man. At this meeting, it was made clear that at that time the company was busy fulfilling urgent orders for the manufacture of spare parts for war planes, and

could no longer accept new orders from the SS authorities for the construction of cremation furnaces.

Answer of the defendant Braun: I do not remember any such incidents.

The minutes of the confrontation were read to us in German translation, our statements were transcribed correctly (Kurt Prüfer, Braun).

Confrontation conducted by:

The head of the 2nd [sub]section of the 4th section of the 3rd Central Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR Lieutenant Colonel Kuzmishin

The operations officer of the 4th section of the 3rd Central Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR Lieutenant Colonel Doperchuk (signed: Doperchuk).

The interrogation was attended as a German-speaking interpreter by the operations officer of the 4th section of the 3rd Central Office of the Minister of State Security of the USSR Lieutenant Kush.

12) Interrogation Protocol dated 4 March 1948

Interrogator: Lieutenant Colonel Doperchuk, Lieutenant Colonel Novikov [НОВИКОВ]

Interpreter: Lieutenant Kush

The interrogation started at 12:15 and ended at 18:20.

Question: What work was carried out by the Topf Company in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, and what part did you yourself play in carrying out this work?

Answer: In fulfillment of the orders it had received from the SS construction office of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, the Topf and Sons Company carried out work in the course of the years 1940 to 1946 [sic; obviously a transcription error] in the said camp in the construction of cremation furnaces, disinfestation facilities, but also in the assembly of ventilation equipment for the cremation furnaces and gas chambers. All this work was carried out by the company with my direct involvement, and proceeded in the following order:

The first crematorium in the Auschwitz Camp was built in the second half of 1940 in the camp section Auschwitz [Main Camp]. The crematorium was an old, semi-underground room made of reinforced concrete with an area of 80 m², which had been built by the Poles as an artillery depot or air-raid shelter.

Initially, the company Topf and Sons built a double-muffle incinerator in the crematorium in question, and then – in early 1941 – the SS Construc-

tion Office of Auschwitz raised the question of increasing the capacity of this crematorium with the company, after which another double-muffle incinerator was installed there at my suggestion. In addition, at my personal suggestion, a blower was installed for these two furnaces, thanks to which the draft in the furnaces was increased,³²³ and the incineration accelerated, which also increased the capacity of the incineration furnaces. The drawings and technical plans for this blower were prepared by chief engineer Karl Schultze, and the assembly work for its installation was carried out on Schultze's instructions by a company fitter who traveled to the Auschwitz Camp especially for this purpose. I personally drew up technical plans and drawings for the cremation furnaces mentioned above, and also carried out the technical supervision of the work on their construction. In the spring or summer of 1942, the SS construction office of the Auschwitz Camp accelerated work on the construction of four new, large crematoria in the camp sector Birkenau, which were assigned the numbers 2, 3, 4 and 5. The old crematorium in the Auschwitz Camp sector was listed as number 1.

The crematoria in Birkenau were completed and put into operation between February and April 1943.³²⁴ They were equipped with state-of-the-art technology,³²⁵ and literally proved to be death factories according to their purpose in the camp. This was particularly true of the second and third crematoria, which were equipped by the Topf Company in accordance with the requirements of the central construction office.

In the buildings of these crematoria, gas chambers were set up which looked like shower facilities and baths, and in which the SS men murdered prisoners in groups. Their bodies were then transported to the cremation furnaces by special electric elevators (lifts) and incinerated.

In addition, special rooms were set up there [inside the crematoria] for the operating personnel recruited from among the prisoners, as well as medical cabinets, where the autopsies of the corpses took place, and morgue rooms [мертвецкие, *mertvetskie*], in which the corpses of those tortured to death in the gas chambers were piled up, because although the crematoria were in operation 24 hours a day [круглосуточную, *kruglosutochno*], they were unable to burn them [the corpses].

³²³ The “*Saugzug-Anlage*” (forced-draft device) is also called “*Zugverstärkungs-Anlage*” in the documents (draft-enhancer device).

³²⁴ Recte: officially between 19 March and 25 June 1943.

³²⁵ A reckless claim, to say the least: the Topf cremation furnaces for concentration camps were cheap and economical, but much less solid and rather crude compared to the furnaces for civilian crematoria.

In the second and third crematoria of Birkenau, the Topf Company built five three-muffle furnaces each (a muffle is an opening for introducing the corpses into the furnace); electric elevators (lifts) were built to transport the corpses to the furnaces, and ventilation devices were also manufactured and installed in the gas chambers, the furnace rooms and the morgues [и в мертвецких, *i v mertvetskikh*].

In the fourth and fifth crematorium, only cremation furnaces were built by the Topf Company, four two-muffle furnaces in each crematorium.³²⁶ There were also gas chambers in these crematoria, but the Topf Company did not concern itself with their equipment, and to my knowledge, they did not possess any ventilation system.

At the end of 1943, the Topf Company built a large disinfection facility about 100 meters from the area where the gas chambers were located, in which the disinfection of the clothing and laundry of the prisoners arriving at the camp was carried out [the *Zentralsauna*].

In addition, the company built special furnaces for the incineration of waste near crematoria 2 and 3 [waste-incineration furnaces].

In this way, the Topf Company built a total of 20 cremation furnaces in 5 crematoria in the concentration camp, a disinfection facility with two furnaces, two special furnaces for waste incineration; electric elevators (lifts) were installed in two crematoria to transport the corpses from the gas chambers (morgues) to the cremation furnaces, and ventilation devices were made to suck in and expel air in four [sic!] gas chambers at the [pri] second and third crematorium.

In addition, ventilation equipment and blowers were manufactured and installed in the morgues and in the furnace rooms of the first, second and third crematorium.

All this work, with the exception of the installation of the ventilation equipment, was carried out in the warehouse by the company's fitters under my direct supervision and control.

As a specialist in cremation equipment and a person of trust to the head of the company, I checked the accuracy of the crematorium drawings that had been submitted to the company by the SS construction office for review and technical advice. I prepared drawings and technical plans of the cremation furnaces built in these crematoria, and also traveled to the

³²⁶ Recte: two 4-muffle furnaces. The 8-muffle furnace consisted of two groups of 4-muffles connected by four interposed gas generators. Each group consisted of two pairs of single-muffle furnaces conforming to drawing D 51173 arranged in reverse, so that each pair shared the rear and center walls. See Mattogno/Deana, Vol. II, Docs. 163a-c, pp. 263f., and Doc. 238-240, pp. 401f.

Auschwitz Concentration Camp from time to time, and conducted negotiations there with the construction office on all questions concerning the construction of the cremation furnaces and the equipment of the crematoria, including the equipping of the gas chambers with ventilation systems.

The practical work involved in preparing the technical plans and drawings for these facilities, as well as their assembly on site – in the camp – was carried out under the direction and with the direct involvement of the chief engineer of the Topf construction department, Karl Schultze.

Question: You previously testified that two double-muffle incineration furnaces were built by the Topf Company in Crematorium I in the camp sector Auschwitz, whereas an official report by the SS construction office of Auschwitz dated 28 June 1943, a photocopy of which you have, states that three double-muffle furnaces were installed in that crematorium. Please make a statement on this.

Answer: I now recall that in Crematorium No. 1, which was located in the Auschwitz camp sector, not two but three cremation furnaces were installed by the Topf Company with my participation, i.e. the situation is as described in the report submitted to me by the construction office. In connection with this, I would like to clarify that the Topf Company built a total of 21, not 20, cremation furnaces in five crematoria at the Auschwitz Concentration Camp.

By the way, I would like to clarify the following question: On the photocopy of the SS construction office report that I have been given, it says that there were eight-muffle cremation furnaces in Crematoria 4 and 5 at Birkenau. In reality, four two-muffle furnaces were built in each of these crematoria by the Topf Company, but as they had been combined into a square block at my suggestion, they were considered to be an eight-muffle furnaces in practice. The necessity to combine these furnaces into one block arose from the fact that the furnace rooms in Crematoria no. 4 and no. 5 were considerably smaller than in the other crematoria, and it was not possible to install four furnaces individually in them.

Question: Was there a gas chamber at Crematorium No. 1 in the camp sector Auschwitz?

Answer: Yes, there was one.

Question: Who set up this gas chamber?

Answer: I don't know exactly, but I assume that the gas chamber at the first crematorium in Auschwitz was set up by the Construction Office of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp itself.

Question: When and how did you find out that there was a gas chamber at the first crematorium in Auschwitz?

Answer: I learned about it by chance in 1942 under the following circumstances: In the spring of 1942, at the request of the SS Construction Office of the Auschwitz Camp, I traveled to Auschwitz to review the project for the planned construction of a new crematorium in the Auschwitz camp sector, to present my conclusions, and also to visit the site where the construction of this crematorium was planned. I visited the planned construction site accompanied by an SS man. As we passed the first crematorium, I looked through the half-open door into one of the rooms of the crematorium building, and saw human corpses lying on the floor in various positions. There were more than ten of them. As I approached this room, someone quickly slammed the door from the inside. As I did not know the purpose of this room in Crematorium No. 1, I asked the SS man accompanying me about it. The latter replied that a gas chamber had been set up in this room, and that prisoners were being poisoned with gas there. To my subsequent question as to how this gas chamber worked, the SS man replied evasively that he did not know exactly, but he told me that he knew that there were gas chambers in the city of Łódź where the SS men killed prisoners with exhaust fumes from car engines, but then they had made improvements to speed up the killing process, and started using some kind of gas. As the SS man explained, the killing process was shortened from 10 to 15 minutes to one to two minutes as a result of the use of gases in the Łódź gas chambers. According to the SS man, the killing process in the Łódź gas chambers was as follows: the prisoners were chased into the gas chambers, the doors were hermetically sealed, and then bottles of gas were thrown through special openings. Based on this account, I concluded that the prisoners were also murdered in the same way in the gas chamber built by the SS men at Crematorium No. 1 in Auschwitz.

Question: So from spring 1942, you were informed about the existence of gas chambers [plural] at the crematoria [plural] of the Auschwitz Camp?

Answer: Quite right. As I have already explained, I first became aware in the spring of 1942 that there was a gas chamber [singular] at Crematorium No. 1 in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, and that prisoners were murdered there by the SS men in a violent manner.

Question: Then why did you state during the earlier interrogations that you first learned in 1943 of the real purpose of the crematoria and gas chambers in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp?

Answer: I simply got the date wrong in my statements in the earlier interrogations. In reality, as I said before, I became aware of this in the spring of 1942.

Question: Thus, the investigating authority states that, although you knew from the beginning of 1942 that the crematoria and the gas chambers in the Auschwitz Camp were intended and used by the SS men for the mass extermination of completely innocent people, you continued until 1944 to direct the work on the construction and equipment of the gas chambers in the said camp, and also actively raised and solved questions concerning their technical equipment, perfecting and increasing their capacity.

Answer: I have no objection to the facts I have just stated, as they all correspond to reality, with the exception of my involvement in equipping the gas chambers. Although I knew from the beginning of 1942 that the crematoria and gas chambers in the Auschwitz Camp were intended and used by the SS men for the mass extermination of prisoners, I continued until 1944 to supervise and direct the work of building and equipping new crematoria in the Birkenau Camp sector, and I also actively raised and solved questions concerning their technical equipment, perfecting and increasing their capacity. As far as the gas chambers in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp are concerned, it was not I who dealt with their equipment, but the chief engineer of the Topf and Sons Company, Karl Schultze. He personally and under his direct supervision set up four gas chambers in the camp sector near Crematoria no. 2 and no. 3. I personally only conducted general negotiations with the SS construction office of the Auschwitz Camp about the possibility of manufacturing equipment for the so-called “special baths” (the SS men used this camouflage term to describe the gas chambers, which I later learned).

Question: You are shown a photocopy of a letter with your signature dated 2 March 1943, addressed to the SS construction office of Auschwitz, and concerning ten gas testers. Explain for what purpose you were looking for these gas testers on behalf of the SS authorities!

Answer: At the request of the head of the SS Construction Office of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp von Bischoff [sic], I searched for gas testers as mentioned in the photocopy of my letter to the aforementioned Construction Office dated 2 March 1943, in order to equip the gas chambers in the camp crematoria with them. When von Bischoff approached me with this request, he explained to me that, after the poisoning of prisoners in the gas chambers, there were often cases where hydrogen-cyanide vapors re-

mained in them even after they had been ventilated, which led to the poisoning of the operating personnel working in these chambers. That is why von Bischoff asked me to find out which companies manufactured gas testers that could be used to measure the concentration of hydrogen-cyanide vapors in the gas chambers in order to make the work of the operating personnel safe. I was unable to fulfill von Bischoff's request, because I could not find any company that manufactured such gas testers.

Question: The photocopy of the letter of 2 March 1943, which was presented to you, as well as your reply, essentially demonstrate that you took a very active part in the work of setting up the gas chambers in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp. Why did you try to deny this fact beforehand?

Answer: I only denied beforehand that I took part directly in the work of installing the ventilation equipment in the gas chambers. I do not deny that I was generally involved in equipping [в оборудовании, *v oborudovanyi*] these chambers with other objects, in particular with gas testers [газизмерител (*gazizmeritel*) = gas meter].

The record of the interrogation was read to me in German translation, my statements are transcribed correctly (signed: Kurt Prüfer).

The operations officer of the 4th section of the 3rd Central Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR Lieutenant Colonel Deyerchun (signed: Deyerchun).

Military Prosecutor of the USSR Supreme Court Guard Lieutenant Colonel Justice Novikov (signed: Novikov).

The interrogation was attended as a German-speaking interpreter by the operations officer of the 4th section of the 3rd Central Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR, Lieutenant Kush (signed: Kush).

13) Interrogation Protocol dated 9 March 1948

Interrogator: Lieutenant Colonel Doperchuk

Interpreter: Lieutenant Kush

The interrogation started at 13:10 and ended at 17:35.

Question: Do you stand by the statements you made during the interrogations prior to your transfer to Moscow?

Answer: The statements I made during the interrogations prior to my transfer to Moscow correspond to reality, and I stand by them.

Question: Explain in which concentration camps the Topf and Sons Company worked on the construction and equipment of crematoria and gas chambers!

Answer: As I have already explained during the investigation, the Topf and Sons Company was involved in the construction and equipping of crematoria in concentration camps in the period from 1940 to 1944. During this period, the company built and equipped crematoria in the following concentration camps: Buchenwald, Mauthausen, Dachau, Gross-Rosen and Auschwitz. Gas chambers were only set up in the Auschwitz death camp.

Question: The documents seized from the Topf and Sons Company and made available to the investigating authority show that work on the construction and equipment of crematoria was also carried out by this company in the concentration camps Elrich, Sachsenhausen, Lublin and Stutthof. Why are you trying to conceal this in the investigation?

Answer: The Topf and Sons Company did not carry out any work in the concentration camps mentioned above. I only know that our company sent so-called fireclay markers on the order of the management of the Stutthof Concentration Camp, which were placed in the urns with the ashes after the bodies had been cremated. I don't know for what purposes these fireclay stamps were used by the SS management of the camp.

Question: You have been shown extracts from the company's general production plan, which show that the Topf Company sent various materials to the concentration camps listed above for the construction of crematoria. Please comment on this!

Answer: As can be seen from the excerpts of the general production plan of the Topf and Sons Company that I have been given, at various times fireclay stamps were sent to the concentration camps Sachsenhausen, Lublin and Stutthof, which had been ordered by the SS management of the aforementioned camps. I do not know what these stamps were used for. As far as the delivery of spare parts for the cremation furnaces of the Elrich Concentration Camp by our company is concerned, which took place in March 1945, I also know nothing about it, because during this period I was in charge of the construction of barracks in the village of Bischleben for the Topf Company, and this order was not compiled by me.

Question: For what purposes did the Topf and Sons Company manufacture powerful ventilation equipment for sucking in and expelling air and deliver it to the Buchenwald Concentration Camp?

Answer: There was a large military factory on the site of the concentration camp in question where anti-aircraft guns were manufactured and where prisoners worked. These guns were tested and fired in a closed firing range where, under the supervision of Chief Engineer Schultze, ventilation

equipment was also installed, which had been manufactured in our company's factory by order of the SS management of the Buchenwald Camp.

Question: Were there gas chambers in this camp?

Answer: I don't know anything about that.

Question: Did you personally go to the Gross-Rosen Concentration Camp?

Answer: I went to the concentration camp mentioned twice in 1941/1942.

Question: On what matter?

Answer: In connection with the construction of the crematorium. The first time I went there at the invitation of the SS construction office of the aforementioned camp to give technical advice on the project to build a crematorium, and to select the site where this crematorium was to be erected. The second time I went there was to check the progress of the work on the construction of this crematorium. The Topf Company built a crematorium with a triple-muffle furnace in the camp in question with my direct involvement.

Question: It is known that not one but two cremation furnaces were built in the camp crematorium of Gross-Rosen. Why did you fail to mention this during the investigation?

Answer: Because it was a long time ago, I can't remember exactly how many furnaces were built in this crematorium, but it seems to me that only one furnace was installed there.

Question: You have been shown a drawing of the crematorium built by the Topf Company in the Gross-Rosen Concentration Camp. This drawing shows that two cremation furnaces were installed in this crematorium. Please provide truthful information on the matter!

Answer: Having seen the drawing presented to me, I cannot but agree, or rather confess, that two triple-muffle furnaces were built in the camp crematorium at Gross-Rosen with my direct involvement.

Question: Who drew up the project for the crematorium at Gross-Rosen, the drawing of which was submitted to you?

Answer: The project of the crematorium for the Gross-Rosen Concentration Camp, the drawing of which is now being presented to me, was drawn up by me personally.

Question: Were there gas chambers in this crematorium?

Answer: During the period in which I traveled to the Gross-Rosen Concentration Camp, there were no gas chambers at the camp crematorium. I do not know whether any were set up there later.

Question: Two drawings of crematoria built by Topf and Sons in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp have been confiscated from the company's archives. Who drew up the projects for these crematoria?

Answer: The two documents presented to me are drawings of Crematoria No. 2 and No. 4 at Birkenau, which were built and equipped by the Topf Company in the Birkenau sector of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp. These drawings were prepared by the SS construction office of the said camp, and sent to the company to check the accuracy of the technical plans, and to make calculations regarding the quantity of materials required to build these crematoria. The work shown on these drawings was carried out by me personally and by Chief Engineer Schultze.

Question: Did you personally take part in the testing of the cremation furnaces and the commissioning of the crematoria built under your leadership in Auschwitz?

Answer: I did not have to take part in the testing of the cremation furnaces, or the commissioning of the crematoria built under my leadership in Auschwitz. This was done by fitters from the company who carried out the construction and assembly work in these crematoria under my supervision. During the trips to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, I personally observed and checked the functioning of the cremation furnaces at a time when they were already in operation. At the time of these trips, the bodies of prisoners who had been murdered by the SS men in the gas chambers were cremated in my presence.

Once, probably in the spring of 1943, I went to Auschwitz at the invitation of the SS Construction Office to find out why the blowers near the furnaces of the 2nd crematorium were not working. Chief Engineer Schultze also went there to carry out the necessary repairs to these blowers and put them back into operation. Schultze did not succeed in repairing these blowers, and we were forced to dismantle them. But when we, meaning myself and Schultze, checked the functioning of the cremation furnaces without these blowers, around 25 bodies of inmates who, as Schultze told me, had been poisoned in the gas chamber, were cremated in our presence.

Question: Were prisoners murdered in the gas chambers of Auschwitz in your presence?

Answer: No, I myself did not have to be personally present when prisoners were poisoned in the gas chambers at Auschwitz. The fact that prisoners were murdered in these gas chambers with hydrogen-cyanide vapors was communicated to me by the head of the SS Construction Office of the Auschwitz Camp, von Bischoff [sic], at whose request I corresponded with

several German companies regarding the ordering of gas testers to equip [для оборудования, *dlya oborudovaniya*] the gas chambers.

The record of the interrogation was read to me in German translation, my statements are transcribed correctly (signed: Kurt Prüfer).

Interrogated by: the operations officer of the 4th section of the 3rd Central Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR Lieutenant Colonel Deyerchun (signed: Deyerchun).

The interrogation was attended as a German-speaking interpreter by the operations officer of the 4th section of the 3rd Central Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR, Lieutenant Kush (signed: Kush).

14) Interrogation Protocol dated 13 March 1948

Interrogator: Lieutenant Colonel Doperchuk

Interpreter: Kush

The interrogation started at 12:10 and ended at 17:20.

Question: What was the camouflage term for gas chambers on the drawings and documents in the correspondence between the SS Construction Office of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp and your company?

Answer: On the drawings of the crematoria and in the official correspondence between the SS construction office of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp and the Topf and Sons Company, the gas chambers bore the camouflage designation “corpse chambers,”³²⁷ “special basements,”³²⁸ “bathing establishments for special operations,”³²⁹ ecc.

Question: At a meeting with the SS Construction Office of the Auschwitz Camp, which took place on 19 August 1942, the question of the installation of two three-muffle furnaces in the “bathing facilities for special operations” was discussed with you. Explain which “bathing facilities for special operations” were discussed at this meeting!

Answer: This meeting was about the installation of two three-muffle furnaces near the gas chambers that had been built by the SS men in Birkenau, completely separate from the crematoria built in that sector of the camp. I don’t know exactly where these gas chambers were, because I was never in the area where they were located and never saw them. Based on the statements of a prisoner who worked as chief stoker of the crematoria in Auschwitz, I know that these gas chambers were three kilometers away from the Birkenau crematoria, and that the bodies of the prisoners mur-

³²⁷ Камеры для трупов, *kamery dlya trupov*, corpse chamber.

³²⁸ Специальные подвалы, *spetsialnye podvaly*, special basements.

³²⁹ Бани специального назначения, *bani spetsial'nogo naznachenia*, bathrooms for special purposes.

dered with gas in them were cremated on pyres. I would like to add to these statements by saying that no cremation furnaces were built near these gas chambers.

Question: At the aforementioned meeting, did you propose that the cremation furnaces intended for Mogilev be made available for this purpose [for the “bathrooms”]? Which crematoria for Mogilev did you bring up at this meeting?

Answer: In the first half of 1942,³³⁰ the Topf and Sons Company received an order from the SS Central Office³³¹ in Berlin for the manufacture of four eight-muffle cremation furnaces for the city of Mogilev. These furnaces were manufactured by the company and sent to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp instead of Mogilev on instructions of the SS Office. At that time, when the question of the installation of two cremation furnaces at the “bathing establishments for special operations” was raised at the aforementioned meeting, I suggested that the SS construction office of the Auschwitz Camp should coordinate the question with the corresponding SS office in Berlin, and take over some of these furnaces for their needs in Auschwitz, because they had already been built and were in the company factory at that time. This decision was subsequently made. However, these furnaces were not installed in the “bathing establishments for special operations”, but in the newly built Crematoria No. 4 and No. 5. Another of these furnaces destined for Mogilev was sent to the Krakow railroad station on the instructions of the SS, and I don’t know what happened to it there. One furnace remained in the Topf Company’s warehouse, and was not shipped anywhere until the day Germany surrendered.

Question: For what purpose and on whose behalf did you draw up the report on the state of construction of the crematoria in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp in January 1943? A copy of this report will be presented to you.

Answer: The plan in question was drawn up by me at the request of the head of the SS construction office of the Auschwitz Camp, von Bischoff, for an accountability report to the SS Main Office,³³² which was extremely interested in the pace of crematorium construction in Auschwitz, and demanded that the work on equipping and commissioning them be accelerated. Based on Bischoff’s statements, I know that Himmler was to visit the Auschwitz death camp in April 1943. Everything was therefore done to

³³⁰ Recte on 4 December 1941.

³³¹ *Hauptamt Haushalt und Bauten.*

³³² *SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt.*

complete the construction of the crematoria, and to put them into operation by that date.

The record of the interrogation was read to me in German translation, my statements are transcribed correctly (signed: Kurt Prüfer).

Interrogated by: the operations officer of the 4th section of the 3rd Central Office of the Minister of State Security of the USSR Lieutenant Colonel Doperchuk (signed: Doperchuk).

The interrogation was attended as a German-speaking interpreter by the operations officer of the 4th section of the 3rd Central Office of the Minister of State Security of the USSR, Lieutenant Kush (signed: Kush).

15) Handwritten Deposition dated 19 February 1948

The following document is a handwritten statement penned down by Kurt Prüfer on 19 February 1948 to clarify Gustav Braun's corporate responsibilities (see Doc. 11). The text is divided into six points that have no strict logical and syntactical connection. In the translation, I preserve all the ambiguities it presents.

I, Kurt Prüfer, was employed as a senior engineer in the furnace-construction department at the company F.A. Topf and Sons, Erfurt, and had the following business matter to discuss and deal with on behalf of the gentlemen with Mr. Braun, Director of Operations.

1) Provision of helpers and locksmiths [sic] in 1940, helpers for the Auschwitz construction site, as well as in 1942 and 1943 (spring).

2) Furthermore, the complaints of the fitters about mismatched iron parts, which came to the construction site either due to an incorrect shipment or drawing, were discussed and the source of the error was determined and corrected. These discussions were usually preceded by a written report prepared by Mr. Braun and submitted to the Topf brothers. As I remember, in the fall of 42 and spring of 43 concerning the Auschwitz [sic] construction site and the Mauthausen construction site.

3) For the production of fireclay bridges for the muffles of the furnaces, which were generally produced at the Erfurt plant using the fireclay mass "Monolith", a discussion took place with Mr. Braun about the production site of the bridges, as well as about the worker who carried out the production. These replacement parts were made on an ongoing basis. So in 1942, and '43, via the Auschwitz and Dachau camps.

4) Since during the war our rich stock of iron was almost depleted, and the usual types of iron such as U, angle, T, I double T and flat iron were not always available, it was necessary to discuss with Mr. Braun which

iron could be taken that was in stock and not used for other commissions. These questions were mainly concrete in the years fall of '42 and spring of '43.

5) Questions regarding deadlines were also settled with Mr. Braun, autumn '42 and spring '43.

6) Since I received the order from Mr. Topf in 1944 to build four residential buildings (smaller ones) on a lot outside the factory property, or to take over the construction management, four questions had to be settled with Mr. Braun.

- a) Provision of the scaffolding required for construction.
- b) Provision of factory bricklayers, helpers and carpenters.
- c) What supplies of materials can be taken from the factory.
- d) Provision of wagons to transport the materials to the building site.
- e) Catering for the workers employed on the construction site from the factory kitchen.

19.2.1948, Kurt Prüfer

II) INTERROGATIONS OF KARL SCHULTZE

1) Interrogation Protocol dated 4 March 1946

Interrogator: Captain Shatunovsky, Major Moruzhenko

Interpreter: Negnevitski

On 4 March 1946, I, head of the 2nd section of the counterintelligence service "Smersh" of the 8th Guard Army, Captain of the Guard Shatunovsky and deputy head of the 2nd Section of the Guard Major Moruzhenko, interrogated as a detainee

Schultze, Karl, son of Karl, born in 1900, from Berlin, son of the owner of a sugar mill, clerk, with higher education, German, German citizen, residing in Erfurt, Rudolstädterstrasse 3e.

Question: Since when and in what position have you been working for Topf?

Answer: I have been working as a civil engineer for ventilation equipment at the Topf Company in Erfurt since 1928.

Question: Tell us what you know about the design and construction of crematoria for the concentration camps!

Answer: In 1940, the SS management of the Buchenwald Concentration Camp explained that the crematorium in the town of Weimar was not suf-

ficient for the camp. The corpses from Buchenwald had to be brought to Weimar, and therefore the demand was made to build a crematorium directly on the territory of the concentration camp. The design and construction of this crematorium was assigned to the Topf Company by the *Reichsführer SS/Construction Department*. This work was carried out directly by the chief engineer of the Topf Company, Prüfer Kurt, both in terms of design and construction. As a ventilation engineer, I was called in by Prüfer to design and install the ventilation equipment³³³ for the cremation furnaces. Together with Prüfer, I also designed and built the crematoria in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp in this way in 1942/1943. I only built the part of the crematorium that was used for ventilation. Four crematoria were built in this camp during the period mentioned above. There were five furnaces in each of the two crematoria, and three corpses were placed in each furnace, i.e. there were three openings (muffles) in each furnace. Within one hour, fifteen corpses could be cremated in a crematorium with five furnaces.

Question: What was the difference between the construction of the crematoria set up in concentration camps and ordinary crematoria set up by the company in various cities until 1933?

Answer: In the ordinary crematoria there was only one large opening (muffle) into which a coffin with a corpse could be inserted without difficulty. In the crematoria of the concentration camps there was not one opening in each furnace, but three, and five furnaces in one crematorium. In this way, there were fifteen openings (muffles) in a concentration-camp crematorium instead of just one, as in an ordinary crematorium. In an ordinary crematorium, the corpse in the coffin was pushed into the opening by means of a movable cart on rollers, but in the concentration-camp crematoria, the corpse was introduced into the muffle on a hand-carried stretcher. The power of the ventilators in the ventilation systems of the concentration-camp crematoria was 5-6 hp instead of three hp as in the furnace of an ordinary crematorium.

Question: Apart from ventilation systems for the crematoria in the concentration camps, what other devices did you install?

Answer: On the orders of the SS Construction Office of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, I installed ventilation equipment in the so-called “shower baths” [бани-душевые, *bani-dushevyye*] in these camps [plural] in 1942-1943. In reality, this ventilation was constructed and installed by me in the gas chambers.

³³³ Вентиляционных установок, *ventilyatsionnykh ustanovok*,” here the pressured-air blowers (*Druckluft-Anlagen*).

Question: When did you personally go to the Auschwitz Camp to equip the crematoria and gas chambers?

Answer: I was twice in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp. Once in connection with a calculation error for the ventilation – this was in the spring of 1943 – and the second time about two months later to put the ventilation inside a newly built crematorium into operation.

Question: What did you notice during your stay in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp while you were in the immediate vicinity of the crematorium and the gas chambers?

Answer: When I was in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, I personally saw SS men from the camp herding up to three hundred people in front of me – men, women and children; I could hardly tell what nationality they were, but judging by outward appearances they had no idea where they were being led. They were all herded into a large wooden barracks without windows, which was electrically lit on the inside. From the outside, this barracks was connected to the gas chamber by a closed corridor, where I installed the ventilation. I observed this at about 4 pm. The following day at ten o'clock in the morning, I was in the crematorium, and saw sixty corpses of men, women and children of various ages. They were lying undressed on the floor, ready to be put into the cremation furnace. Judging by their appearance, they had been murdered in the gas chamber.

Question: Tell us about the interior of the gas chamber!

Answer: This building was eight meters wide and thirteen meters long. It was completely empty inside. The height of the building inside was 2.6 meters. There were four square openings measuring 25 x 25 cm in the ceiling. The ventilation system exchanged air ten times [per hour], and was used to suck out the gas that had accumulated, and pump in fresh air. The ventilation pipes, which I personally designed for the gas chamber, were bricked into the walls of the chamber.

Question: Who did you talk to about the fact that the crematoria and gas chambers you designed and built were used to exterminate completely innocent people?

Answer: I want to make this clear. The designer of the cremation furnaces, Prüfer, was on a business trip to Auschwitz. When he arrived in the morning, he also saw the sixty corpses of men, women and children lying on the ground. I told him everything that had happened: how these people had been brought in, chased into the gas chambers [plural] and killed, and how their bodies were now being burned in the crematorium. Prüfer didn't respond to me on this.

Question: After you personally and Prüfer had witnessed the murder of innocent people, how many more crematoria and gas chambers for the concentration camps did you build?

Answer: After I had observed how innocent people were exterminated in the gas chambers and crematoria in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, I set up five more cremation furnaces there, in Auschwitz, together with Prüfer, and equipped one gas chamber with a ventilation system.

Question: What motivated you to spend seven days in Auschwitz on this business trip?

Answer: I stayed there for five days, because there was no transport with people destined for extermination, but I had to test the function of the cremation furnace in practice. I was only able to carry out this test when the aforementioned up to three hundred people arrived, who were then murdered in the gas chambers [plural].

Question: When and by whom were the mobile crematoria constructed, and for what purpose?

Answer: The mobile crematoria were constructed as follows: The same [furnace] type as in Buchenwald, but they were modified by Prüfer so that they could be mounted on a truck, and they used oil as fuel. Their purpose is unknown to me. One such furnace constructed by Prüfer was sent to Berlin. I don't know to which organization, Prüfer knows about that.

Question: When did you, together with Prüfer, knowingly design, perfect and build crematoria and gas chambers for the extermination of people?

Answer: Together with Chief Engineer Prüfer, I knowingly built, designed and perfected crematoria and equipped gas chambers from 1943 onwards, i.e. from the time when I personally observed the murder of people in the gas chambers and crematoria in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp.

Question: What motivated you to continue building your constructions in Auschwitz after you had seen their purpose with Prüfer?

Answer: I and Prüfer continued to build crematoria and gas chambers because we had bound ourselves to the SS with our signature in 1942, and were committed to the Topf Company and the National-Socialist state.

My statements were transcribed accurately, they were read to me in German translation, and I signed them (signed: Schultze).

Interrogated by: The head of the 2nd section of the counterintelligence service "Smersh" of the 8th Guard Army, Captain of the Guard Shatunovsky (signed: Shatunovsky).

The deputy head of the 2nd section of the Guard Major Moruzhenko (signed: Moruzhenko).

2) Interrogation Protocol dated 7 March 1946

Interrogator: Malyschko

Interpreter: Negnevitski

I, head of the 2nd section of the counterintelligence service “Smersh” of the 8th Guards Army, Lt. Malyshko, interrogated the detainee

Schultze, Karl, son of Karl, born in 1900, from Berlin, son of the owner of a sugar mill, clerk, mechanical engineer, German, German citizen, resident of Erfurt.

Question: Where does your family currently live?

Answer: My wife lives in Erfurt at Rudolstädterstraße 3.

Question: What specialist training do you have?

Answer: I graduated from the Mechanical Engineering Institute in Berlin in 1922, where I obtained an engineering diploma.

[The interrogation consisted only of these two questions.]

3) Interrogation Protocol dated 14 March 1946

Interrogator: Captain Morskoi

Interpreter: Datsyuk

On 14 March 1946, I, investigating judge of the “Smersh” service of the 8th Guards Army, Captain of the Guard Morskoi, on this day questioned the detainee

Schultze, Karl, son of Karl, born in 1900, native of Berlin, son of the owner of a sugar mill, German citizen, resident of Erfurt, of intermediate technical education.

The interrogation began at 10:15 a.m.

The interrogation was conducted through interpreter Datsyuk, who was warned against unfaithful translation under Article 95 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federative Soviet Republic.

Question: Which political parties and organizations did you belong to?

Answer: I didn’t belong to any parties. But I was a member of the National-Socialist organization “Labor Front.” I joined this organization in 1933.

Question: What leading positions did you hold in this organization?

Answer: During the entire time I was a member of the National-Socialist “Labor Front” organization, I did not hold any leading positions in it.

Question: When did you start working for the Topf Company in Erfurt?

Answer: I started working in the factory of the Topf Company in Erfurt in 1928.

Question: What position did you hold there?

Answer: I was chief engineer for the construction of ventilation systems at the Topf Company.

Question: What kind of buildings did you design the ventilation systems for?

Answer: I designed ventilation systems for theaters, factory heating boilers and crematoria.

Question: Did you also design ventilation systems for the gas chambers in the concentration camps?

Answer: Yes, I also designed ventilation systems for the gas chambers in the concentration camps.

Question: When did you start designing ventilation systems for the gas chambers in the concentration camps?

Answer: I only designed two ventilation systems for two gas chambers in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp once, in 1943.

Question: Under whose direction did the Topf Company build the ventilation systems for the gas chambers that you designed?

Answer: The construction of the ventilation systems was carried out under my leadership.

Question: From whom did the Topf Company receive orders for the construction of the ventilation equipment for the gas chambers?

Answer: As far as I know, the Topf Company received the orders for the construction of ventilation equipment for the gas chambers, as well as the crematoria for the concentration camps, from the SS leadership in Berlin, Construction Department.

Question: Who in the Topf Company was involved in the design and construction of crematoria for the concentration camps?

Answer: The chief engineer of the department crematorium construction, Prüfer Kurt, was responsible for the construction of the crematoria for the concentration camps, and for managing the construction of these crematoria in the factory of the Topf Company.

Question: What was your part in the construction of the crematoria?

Answer: My part in the construction of the crematoria for the concentration camps consisted of designing and installing ventilation equipment³³⁴ for the cremation furnaces as a ventilation engineer.

³³⁴ Вентиляционные установки, *ventilyatsionnye ustanovki*.

Question: For which concentration camps did you design and build ventilation systems for the gas chambers as well as ventilation systems and blowers³³⁵ for the crematoria?

Answer: As I mentioned earlier, I only designed and built two ventilation systems for two gas chambers in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, and blowers for the crematorium in the Buchenwald Concentration Camp. It is possible that I also designed and built ventilation systems and blowers for other concentration camps, but I can no longer remember when and for which camps.

Question: How many crematoria were built by the Topf Company in total?

Answer: I can't answer this question because I don't know.

Question: What part did Braun and Sander play in the construction of the crematoria?

Answer: Braun, as head of production in the factory of the Topf Company, managed the construction of the crematoria, and made sure that the orders were carried out to the highest quality and on time. Sander, as chief engineer at Topf, was in charge of the department crematorium construction. Sander personally checked and approved all crematorium projects designed by engineer Prüfer, and then submitted them to company owner Ludwig Topf for approval.

Question: When did you become aware that innocent people were being exterminated in the crematoria you built together with Prüfer, and with the help of the ventilation systems you built for the gas chambers in the concentration camps?

Answer: I knew that people who had been interned in the concentration camps and murdered in the gas chambers were burned in the crematoria from the moment I personally saw people murdered in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp.

Question: When were you in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp?

Answer: I was in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp at the beginning of 1943, I don't remember the exact month.

Question: How often did you go to this camp?

Answer: I went to Auschwitz Concentration Camp twice,³³⁶ both times in 1943.

Question: For what purpose did you go there?

Answer: The first time I went to Auschwitz in order to correct the mistakes made when calculating the ventilation for the crematoria. The second

³³⁵ Воздуходувки, *vozdukhoduvki*.

³³⁶ As documented earlier, Schultze went to Auschwitz at least three times.

time I went two months later to start up the ventilation in a newly built crematorium. When I was in the concentration camp mentioned above, I personally observed how the SS men herded up to 300 people – men, women and children – not far from me, who apparently had no idea where they were being led. I also saw that all these people were being chased into a wooden barracks that had no windows. This barracks was connected by a closed corridor to the gas chamber in which I had installed the ventilation system. The group of people mentioned was chased into the wooden barracks at about 4 pm. I didn't know what was done with them, but the following day, at about 10 am, when I was in the crematorium, I saw sixty corpses of men, women and children of various ages lying naked on the floor. They were all dead, and had been taken to the crematorium to be incinerated. It gave the appearance as if all sixty people lying in the crematorium had been murdered in the gas chamber.

Question: What were you doing in the crematorium at the time when the sixty bodies were brought in for cremation?

Answer: When the sixty corpses were brought into the crematorium for incineration, I was giving instructions to the fitters of the ventilation equipment on how to put it into operation, because it was a crematorium that had just been completed.

Question: So you were directly involved in testing the function of the crematorium and the ventilation equipment you installed in the crematorium?

Answer: Yes, the newly built crematorium and the ventilation equipment I installed for the crematorium were tested with my direct involvement. At that time, all sixty corpses lying there were cremated.

Question: That means you were directly involved in the extermination of innocent people?

Answer: Yes, that's right. Because I started up the ventilation system in the crematorium just as people were being incinerated there, I was directly involved in the extermination of people.³³⁷

Question: How long were you in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp?

Answer: The first time I was in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp for one day, the second time for six days.

Question: Why were you in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp for six days the second time?

³³⁷ In fact, during his second and final visit to Birkenau, on 24 and 25 March 1943, Schultze did not "started up the ventilation system in the crematorium" at all, because the crematorium's forced-draft systems were damaged and did not work, so that they had to be disassembled.

Answer: Because there were no people to be exterminated when I arrived at the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, I was unable to test the functioning of the ventilation system and the [furnaces of the] crematoria, and I had to spend six days there until a transport of people of different nationalities and ages was brought in. As I said before, I carried out the practical test of the crematorium's functioning after sixty people had been murdered in the gas chamber and then burned in the crematorium with my participation. Then, after I had established that the ventilation system in the crematorium was working properly, I left the concentration camp.³³⁸

Question: You previously testified that you only learned that innocent people were being exterminated in the crematoria built by Prüfer together with you, when you saw sixty corpses in the crematorium, and now you state that you waited six days in the concentration camp for a transport for the extermination certain people.³³⁹ So you knew beforehand that innocent people were being exterminated in the crematoria?

Answer: Yes, I am forced to admit that, even before I saw the sixty corpses I mentioned earlier, I knew that innocent people were being exterminated in the crematoria I built together with Prüfer. That is why I sat in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp and waited until a transport of people destined for extermination arrived so that I could test the functioning of the crematorium and the ventilation system during the incineration³⁴⁰ of the corpses of the innocent people previously murdered in the gas chambers.³⁴¹

The interrogation ends at 3:40 p.m.

The transcript with my statements was transcribed accurately, was read to me through the interpreter in my native language, and I sign it (signed: Schultze).

Questioned: investigating judge of the "Smersh" service of the 8th Guard Army, Captain of the Guard Morskoi (signed: Morskoi).

Interpreter: Datsyuk (signed: Datsyuk).

³³⁸ Schultze visited Birkenau three times, in the second half of February, on 1 March and on 24-25 March 1943, but if we follow the orthodox narrative, homicidal gassings had not yet begun at the time of the first two visits. During the third visit, however, "the crematorium ventilation system," meaning the forced-draft systems were not working at all, as mentioned earlier. This is one of the many contradictions showing that the Topf engineers made Soviet propaganda their own as a defensive strategy.

³³⁹ This is another contradiction that relates to the explanation in the previous note.

³⁴⁰ По времясжигания. *po vremjaszhiganiya*: this confirms that Schultze was referring to the forced-draft systems of Crematorium II.

³⁴¹ Schultze's repeated reference to "gas chambers," plural, in connection with an alleged event that presumably took place in the alleged "gas chamber," singular, of Crematorium II, is further evidence that the Topf engineer was not recounting real experiences, but the propaganda stories he had learned from Soviet investigators.

4) Interrogation Protocol dated 20 March 1946

Interrogator: Captain Morskoi

Interpreter: Datsyuk

The interrogation began at 11:40 a.m.

The interrogation was conducted through interpreter Datsyuk, who was warned against unfaithful translation under Article 95 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federative Soviet Republic (signed: Datsyuk).

Question: You are accused of being involved in the design and construction of the cremation furnaces as an engineer and designer of ventilation equipment in the factory of the Topf Company together with the Chief Engineer Prüfer – i.e. you designed ventilation equipment and blowers for them – of which up to 20 were manufactured on the orders of the SS management for the cremation of the corpses of people tortured to death in the concentration camps. In 1943, you designed and built two ventilation systems for the gas chambers in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, in which innocent people were brutally suffocated. In the spring of 1943, you traveled to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp especially to test the ventilation equipment you had built in the crematorium furnace, and with your participation, the bodies of the people tortured to death were burned there. The crimes committed by you are covered by the first part of the decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR of 19 April 1943. Do you understand the charges against you, and to what specifically do you plead guilty?

Answer: The charges brought against me on the basis of the first part of the decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR of 19 April 1943 have been explained to me, and they are comprehensible to me. I plead fully guilty to having designed and built cremation furnaces as an engineer and designer of ventilation equipment in the factory of the Topf Company in Erfurt together with the chief engineer of the department crematorium construction, Prüfer, meaning that I designed and built ventilation equipment and blowers for these furnaces for the Buchenwald, Auschwitz, Dachau and other concentration camps on behalf of the SS leadership. I can no longer remember how many cremation furnaces were [designed and built] with my direct involvement. The bodies of people of various nationalities who had been tortured to death in the concentration camps were cremated in the cremation furnaces.

In addition, in 1943, I personally constructed two ventilation systems for two gas chambers in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, in which

completely innocent people were brutally suffocated by the Germans, who had been deported there from various countries in Western Europe.

In the spring of 1943, I don't remember the exact month, I went to Auschwitz especially to test the ventilation system I had built for the cremation furnaces. I waited six days until a transport of people destined for extermination arrived at the concentration camp. At that time, I was involved in burning the bodies of people who had been tortured to death in the gas chambers.³⁴¹

The questioning ends at 1:20 p.m. The transcript with my statements was transcribed accurately, was read to me through the interpreter in my native language, and I sign it (signed: Schultze).

Interrogated by: investigating judge of the "Smersh" service of the 8th Guard Army, Captain of the Guard Morskoi (signed: Morskoi).

Interpreter: Datsyuk (signed: Datsyuk).

5) Interrogation Protocol dated 28 March 1946

Interrogator: Lieutenant Tereshchenko [Терещенко]

Interpreter: Lieutenant Goldfarb [Голдфарб]

I, the investigating judge of the 2nd section of the 4th Ukrainian office of the "Smersh" of the Soviet army group in Germany, Lieutenant Tereshchenko, today questioned through the German language interpreter Lieutenant Goldfarb the detainee

Schultze, Karl, son of Karl, born in 1900, originally from Berlin, residing in Erfurt, Rudoldstätter Strasse 3e, son of the owner of a sugar mill, clerk, of unfinished higher education, by profession mechanical engineer, in recent times worked in the company Topf and Sons in Erfurt.

The interrogation begins at 10:00 and ends at 3:05.

The interpreter, Lieutenant Goldfarb, was warned against unfaithful translation under Article 95 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federative Soviet Republic (signed: Goldfarb).

Question: State your last name and first name!

Answer: My family name is Schultze, my first name is Karl. I don't have any other names or surnames.

Question: Which political organizations and parties were you a member of?

Answer: Apart from the fact that I was a member of the "Labor Front" organization – the fascist trade union – from 1933 to 1945, I did not belong to any other parties or organizations.

Question: Did you hold leading positions in the fascist “Labor Front” organization?

Answer: I was only an ordinary member of the “Labor Front” organization the whole time.

Question: Tell us about your professional activities!

Answer: I finished elementary school in the town of Babelsberg in 1914; then I trained as a locksmith and draftsman in the same town. From June to November 1918, I completed military training as a soldier in an artillery unit of the German army. From 1919 to 1922, I studied at a private technical college for mechanical engineering in Berlin; after graduating, I joined Siemens und Schuckert’s steam-powered equipment department in the same year. I worked there as a design engineer until 1923. From 1924 to 1926, I continued to work as a designer in the Berlin company Daniberg and Quandt, in the fans and blowers department. From 1926 to 1928, I worked successively for the companies Pulenski and Zeptner – where I designed boiler equipment for the production of sugar from cellulose – Bamol (as a designer of metal structures) and Junkers Tessar (as an engineer for fans and blowers).³⁴² From 1928 until recently, I worked for Topf and Sons as an engineer and designer of fans, extractors, boilers, blowers and heating equipment. During these years, I lived in Erfurt, where the Topf Company is based.

Question: Tell us what products the Topf Company manufactured!³⁴³

Answer: The Topf Company was a manufacturer of heating and ventilation devices and other equipment. It was divided into different departments depending on the type of products manufactured. Department D, for example, manufactured the following: complete boiler equipment,³⁴⁴ heating equipment for industrial operations,³⁴⁵ furnaces for crematoria,³⁴⁶ equipment for evaluating exhaust and industrial gases for heating.³⁴⁷ The so-called Department E produced the following: dryers for malt for beer brewing,³⁴⁸ silo equipment for storing vegetables,³⁴⁹ air-conveying systems³⁵⁰ for vegetables, dryers for silo towers, cleaning machines for grain, equip-

³⁴² Company names transcribed.

³⁴³ On the industrial production of the Topf Company, see Table II in the Appendix.

³⁴⁴ These were steam boilers (*Dampfkessel*), built by Department D I.

³⁴⁵ The heating sector was the responsibility of Department B, Heating, Ventilation and Blower Construction.

³⁴⁶ In Department D IV.

³⁴⁷ These facilities were also the responsibility of Department B.

³⁴⁸ Topf’s “dryers for cereals and grains” were made in Department A.

³⁴⁹ “*Speicheranlagen*,” of Department E II.

³⁵⁰ “*Luftförder-Anlagen*” of Department E III.

ment for disinfecting grain, etc.³⁵¹ Department F produced lifts and conveyor systems. Department B produced ventilation equipment for crematoria,³⁵² vacuum dryers for wool, wood (sawdust), hides, etc., as well as air-heating systems for apartments,³⁵³ and equipment for humidifying³⁵⁴ air in baths and laundries.

The Topf Company was founded in the sixties of the last century.³⁵⁵ It was last managed by the brothers Ernst and Ludwig Topf. Until 1941, the company employed 600 to 700 workers; during the war years, there were considerably more. At present, the Topf Company fulfills various orders for the USSR, for example silo equipment, etc.

When listing the above products manufactured by Topf, I must add that during the German-Soviet War, from 1942 onwards, Department D of Topf carried out special orders from the SS Reich leadership for the manufacture of special furnaces for the crematoria that were set up in the concentration camps Buchenwald, Dachau and Auschwitz.

Question: How do you know that the Topf Company manufactured furnaces for the crematoria at the German death camps Buchenwald, Dachau and Auschwitz?

Answer: I know about this from the chief engineer of the Topf Company, Prüfer, who was responsible for the orders, and managed the production of furnaces. I also know about it, because I myself came into direct contact with these orders, as I was responsible for the design of ventilation equipment in the crematoria. As a rule, the company was allocated a special ration of metal to fulfill these orders. The work was supervised by SS *Sturmabführer* Bischoff. After completion of the requested product, he [the inspector] drove straight from the company to the destination. The company provided qualified bricklayers³⁵⁶ who visited the concentration camps to install the furnaces.

Question: How many furnaces were made for the crematoria of the camps you mentioned?

Answer: From the drawings I was involved with, I reliably know of ten furnaces for the crematoria that were made by our company for the concentration camps. As far as I can remember at the moment, they were all sent

³⁵¹ Grain-processing equipment, including silo-gasification equipment (*Silo-Begasungsanlagen*), was manufactured in Department A.

³⁵² Proper term: forced-draft devices (*Saugzuganlagen*).

³⁵³ "*Luftbeheizungsanlagen*," air-heating devices.

³⁵⁴ In Russian as *увлажнения, uvlazhneniya*, humidifier, but it seems more logical that they were dehumidifiers.

³⁵⁵ That is, from the 1800s, to be exact in 1878.

³⁵⁶ Proper term fitters (*Monteure*).

to Auschwitz. However, I must explain that I do not know the exact number of furnaces made for the cremation of corpses that were sent to the concentration camps, because I did not learn of all the orders. I remember that the Topf Company manufactured furnaces for crematoria for Buchenwald and Dachau even before the beginning of the German-Soviet war in 1941.

Question: Who designed the furnaces for the crematoria?

Answer: This work, both in terms of design and construction, was carried out directly by the chief engineer of the Topf Company Prüfer Kurt. As an engineer for ventilation equipment, I was called in by Prüfer to design and equip the ventilation equipment for the cremation furnaces, which, as I have already said, were installed in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp in 1942-1943.

Question: Describe the technical equipment of the cremation furnaces which were sent to the camps in Auschwitz and elsewhere, and name the differences to the furnaces of ordinary crematoria which were built by the Topf Company in various towns before 1941!

Answer: In ordinary crematoria, there was only one large opening (muffle) into which the coffin with the corpse could be easily inserted. In crematoria for the camps, however, the furnaces were larger, and each had three muffles of a smaller size than the furnaces of an ordinary crematorium. Five furnaces were installed in one of the camp crematoria. The bodies were not pushed into the furnaces on movable carts mounted on rollers, but simply inserted into the muffle with the help of a hand-carried stretcher.

The interrogation was completed.

My statements were transcribed accurately in my own words, the transcript was read to me in German (signed: Schultze).

Interpreter: Lieutenant Goldfarb (signed: Goldfarb)

Interrogated by: the investigating judge of the 2nd section of the 4th Office of the Counter-Intelligence Service "Smersh" of the group of Soviet occupation troops in Germany, Lieutenant Tereshchenko (signed: Tereshchenko).

6) Interrogation Protocol dated 18 February 1948

Interrogator: Lieutenant Colonel Doperchuk

Interpreter: Lieutenant Kush

The interrogation started at 14:30 and ended at 17:25.³⁵⁷

³⁵⁷ The manuscript has the date 18 February 1948, while the typescript shows 18 March 1948.

Question: Did you report to engineer Kurt Prüfer during your work at Topf and Sons?

Answer: When I worked at the Topf Company, I and Prüfer Kurt were on the same level, and neither of us was subordinate to the other. We both worked in the design office as chief engineers, and were group leaders. I was in charge of Group B – design and construction of ventilation equipment³⁵⁸ – and Prüfer K. was in charge of Group D-IV – design and construction of cremation furnaces and heating equipment.³⁵⁹ In a number of cases, I had to coordinate the work of my group with that of Prüfer Kurt's group, because the design of ventilation equipment and blowers was linked to the design of cremation furnaces and heating equipment. The head of the design office was Engineer Sander Fritz.

Question: What was your relationship with Prüfer Kurt; were there no close personal relationships between you?

Answer: For the entire duration of my work in the company's design office, I maintained a purely professional relationship with Prüfer. There were never any closer personal relationships between us.

Question: When and in which German concentration camps did the Topf and Sons Company carry out work on the construction and equipment of crematoria and gas chambers?

Answer: As far as I know, the Topf and Sons Company carried out work on the construction of crematoria from 1940 to 1944. During this period, the company built and equipped crematoria in the concentration camps Buchenwald, Mauthausen, Auschwitz and others whose names I do not remember. Gas chambers were only set up in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp. All the work mentioned was carried out by the Topf Company on the orders of the SS authorities.

Question: What part did Prüfer and you personally play in carrying out this work?

Answer: Prüfer, as a specialist in cremation equipment, supervised and directed the work on the construction of the camp crematoria, and also constructed incineration furnaces for these crematoria. I personally designed blowers and ventilation equipment for the camp crematoria, and in some cases directly supervised the assembly work. In particular, I personally supervised the assembly of the blowers and ventilation equipment for the crematoria and gas chambers in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp. I traveled to this camp three times in 1943 for this purpose.

³⁵⁸ Proper term “heating – ventilation – blower construction” (*Heizung – Lüftung-Gebläsebau*).

³⁵⁹ Proper term “furnace construction” (*Ofenbau*).

Question: Which other camps did you go to?

Answer: Apart from Auschwitz, I also went to Buchenwald Concentration Camp, where I was in charge of installing the ventilation equipment for the heating system of the barracks in which the camp guards were housed. I designed the ventilation equipment for the crematorium in the camp, and manufactured it in the factory of the Topf Company based on my drawings. However, its assembly on site, i.e. in the camp crematorium, was not carried out by me, but by one of the company fitters. I did not visit any other concentration camps.

Question: Were there gas chambers in the Buchenwald Concentration Camp?

Answer: I don't know. I only knew that there were gas chambers in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp.

Question: You have been presented with order forms no. 43/588, no. 43/836/2 and no. 44/257/3, which show that the Topf and Sons Company manufactured powerful ventilation devices for sucking in and expelling air on the orders of the SS authorities, and delivered them to the Buchenwald Concentration Camp. Explain what these devices were used for and why they were made!

Answer: In response to orders no. 43/836/2 of 9 June 43 and no. 44/257/3 of 18 February 44 issued by the SS construction office of the Buchenwald Camp, the Topf and Sons Company manufactured powerful ventilation equipment for the roofed shooting range of the Gustloffwerke [transcription] military factory in the town of Weimar. This factory was located in the Buchenwald Concentration Camp zone, and prisoners were deployed there. Guns manufactured by this company were used in the firing range (I don't know what kind of guns). For this reason, the air in the shooting range was always contaminated with fumes. Ventilation equipment was therefore installed in the room of this firing range to clean the air. In response to order no. 43/588/1 dated 5 May 1943, the Topf Company manufactured a ventilation system for the central boiler room of the heating system, more precisely for the boiler systems of the central heating system of the Buchenwald Camp's barracks. The assembly work for the installation of the ventilators was carried out both in the Gustloffwerke shooting range and in the central boiler room of the Buchenwald Camp under my supervision. I do not know what the SS construction office of Buchenwald Concentration Camp had to do with the installation of the ventilation equipment in the aforementioned firing range.

Question: What part did you play in the construction and equipping of the crematorium in the Gross-Rosen Concentration Camp?

Answer: My part in the construction and equipping of the crematorium in the Gross-Rosen Concentration Camp was that I designed special blowers for the incineration furnaces of this crematorium, thanks to which the capacity of these furnaces was increased. This was also my contribution to the construction of the crematoria in the concentration camps Dachau, Mauthausen and Buchenwald.

Question: You have been shown a drawing of the crematorium built by Topf and Sons Company in the Gross-Rosen Concentration Camp. What part did you personally play in the production of this drawing?

Answer: As can be seen from the title of the drawing presented to me, the Topf and Sons Company did indeed design a crematorium for the Gross-Rosen Concentration Camp. However, I personally had no part in designing the project or creating the drawing of this crematorium. I assume that the chief engineer of the company's design office, Prüfer, was responsible for the technical elaboration of the project for the crematorium's furnace room.

Question: At which concentration camps did you participate in the design of the crematorium projects?

Answer: During the construction of the crematoria in the concentration camps, the Topf and Sons Company designed projects for the furnace rooms and produced drawings of them. This work was carried out by Chief Engineer Prüfer. On the drawings of these crematoria already available, I personally only drew in the blowers and ventilation equipment in the rooms shown on the drawings, where they – i.e. the blowers and ventilation equipment – had to be installed.

Question: You have been presented with two drawings of Crematoria Nos. 2/3 and Nos. 4/5, which were built and equipped by the Topf Company in the Birkenau sector of the Auschwitz death camp. What part did you personally play in the creation of the projects and drawings for these crematoria?

Answer: The documents presented to me as No. 1 and No. 2 are drawings of Crematoria Nos. 2/3 and Nos. 4/5, which were built and equipped by the Topf and Sons Company of the Birkenau sector of the Auschwitz death camp. Document 1 is the rough draft of the room of Crematoria 2/3 (they were completely identical); I had not seen this drawing until that time [presumably: until the time when I had to enter the ventilation equipment on it]. At the time, this drawing of these crematoria was sent to the Topf

Company by the SS construction office of the Auschwitz Camp, and I personally used it to work out and draw up the diagram of the ventilation ducts for the rooms of this crematorium, and also marked on this drawing the place where the ventilation equipment was to be installed. I personally used Drawing 4/5 (document no. 2) to carry out the same work as for Crematorium 2/3.

The record of the interrogation was read to me in German translation, my statements were transcribed accurately (signed: Schultze).

Interrogated by: the operations officer of the 4th section of the 3rd Central Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR Lieutenant Colonel Doperchuk (signed: Doperchuk)

The interrogation was attended as a German-speaking interpreter by the operations officer of the 4th section of the 3rd Central Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR, Lieutenant Kush.

7) Interrogation Protocol dated 24 February 1948

Interrogator: Lieutenant Colonel Doperchuk

Interpreter: Lieutenant Kush

The interrogation started at 21:15 and ended at 24:00.

Question: Since when have you known Eng. Gustav Braun, and what relations have you had with him?

Answer: I have known Eng. Gustav Braun because of our work together at the Topf and Sons Company roughly since 1936 or 1937. I had occasion only rarely to meet with him, and in such cases, this was about business matters. Our relations were only business in nature. I had and have no personal relations with him.

Question: What position did Braun hold in the Topf and Sons Company?

Answer: For the entire period that I knew him, Gustav Braun worked as production manager of the Topf and Sons Company.

Question: Were you an employee of Braun in your work at the Topf and Sons Company?

Answer: No, I was not an employee of his. I was working in the company's design department, which was not headed by Gustav Braun; my direct superior was the owner of the company, Ludwig Topf.

Question: Within the activities of the Topf and Sons Company, what was within Gustav Braun's sphere of responsibility as head of production of this company?

Answer: I cannot answer this question precisely, because it is beyond my knowledge. I only know that Braun's duties included the entire production activity of the company. Together with the general planning office, he drew up the company's general production plans, and was the direct head of the company's factory in Erfurt, in which all possible equipment was made, including cremation devices, among other things. However, military orders were also carried out.

Question: It is well known that the Topf and Sons Company also carried out work outside the company's area – directly at customers' premises, for heating and boiler devices, in the assembly of fans, blowers, etc. Say, what relationship did Braun have with these jobs?

Answer: As the company's head of production, Braun had a direct relationship with such work, because it was carried out by the workshops, installers and other specialists in the company who were subordinate to him.

Question: So Braun also had a direct relationship with those works that were carried out by the Topf Company in the concentration camps in the construction and equipping of crematoria and gas chambers?

Answer: Precisely. As production manager of the Topf Company, Braun selected and sent to the concentration camps Buchenwald, Auschwitz, etc., specialists who built crematoria and ventilation systems in these camps, and installed other equipment in the crematoria and gas chambers. At the same time, under the personal direction of G. Braun, various equipment for the crematoria and gas chambers that were located in the camps were built in the company's factory. In particular, ventilation equipment for the gas chambers in the Auschwitz Camp was built in the company's factory.

Question: Which of the Topf Company's installers was actually sent by Braun to the concentration camps to perform the above work?

Answer: I only know that, of the company's installers employed by Braun, Koch and Holick worked in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp on the construction of the crematoria, and that Messing installed the ventilation systems in the gas chambers. I personally saw these installers at the Auschwitz Camp when I went there in the spring and summer of 1943.³⁶⁰

Question: Did Braun personally go to the concentration camps?

Answer: To the best of my knowledge, Braun did not go to the concentration camps.

The record of the interrogation was read to me in German translation, my statements were transcribed accurately (signed: Schultze).

³⁶⁰ No visit in the summer of 1943 is documented.

Interrogated by: the operations officer of the 4th section of the 3rd Central Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR Lieutenant Colonel Doperchuk (signed: Doperchuk).

The interrogation was attended as a German-speaking interpreter by the operations officer of the 4th section of the 3rd Central Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR, Lieutenant Kush.

8) Interrogation Protocol dated 11 March 1948

*Interrogators: Lieutenant Colonel Doperchuk, Lieutenant Colonel Novikov
Interpreter: Lieutenant Kush*

The interrogation began at 11:10 and ended at 22:30.

Question: For how long and in what capacity did you work in the German machine-building company Topf and Sons?

Answer: I worked continuously at the Topf and Sons Company from October 1928 until the day of my arrest, that is, until 5 March 1946, holding the position of chief engineer in the machine-building department, which was called “D.” In that department, I personally headed the ventilation-equipment section, which was called section “V.”

Question: Did you ever go abroad?

Answer: I lived all the time in Germany. Only in 1942 and maybe even in 1943 – I don’t remember exactly – I had to go briefly from Germany to the occupied part of Poland.

Question: Under what circumstances did you go from Germany to occupied Polish territory?

Answer: After Germany had occupied Poland, the Topf and Sons Company was commissioned by the Reich Railway Office to partially re-equip and rebuild the boiler and ventilation systems in the railway workshops in Warsaw, Krakow and other cities. In this connection, I went on the company’s behalf to these workshops to get an idea on the spot about the progress of the work, and to make the necessary drawings and technical calculations.

Question: Under what circumstances did you return to Poland?

Answer: In addition to the above-mentioned case, I went the same year to Warsaw to install ventilation systems in a sawmill in a Warsaw suburb.

Question: Why are you silent that you went several times to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, which was located in the occupied territory of Poland?

Answer: I thought that the territory where the Auschwitz Concentration Camp is located belonged to Germany and not to Poland, because all of

Upper Silesia had been annexed to the German Reich. We Germans, including myself, considered only the regions belonging to the so-called “General Government” to be Polish territory.

Question: But still, you had to go to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp?

Answer: Yes, I had to go there.

Question: How many times?

Answer: Three times.

Question: When exactly and under what circumstances?

Answer: All three times, I went to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp in the first half of 1943, during the construction and assembly of ventilation systems in the crematoria and gas chambers. I performed this work on behalf of the Topf Company. It had received a special order for this from the SS construction office of the camp.

Question: Were you personally summoned by SS authorities in these matters?

Answer: Yes, I was summoned. After my arrival at the Auschwitz Camp, I was first summoned by an SS man, a member of the staff of this camp, who warned me by telling me that the construction and equipment work of crematoria and gas chambers carried out by the company constituted an important state secret,³⁶¹ and made me sign a declaration obliging me to keep silent. Already earlier, the owner of the company Ludwig Topf had made me sign a similar statement, because I was coming into direct contact with work that the company was performing on behalf of the SS construction office of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp.

Question: Explain exactly what work was performed by you personally or with your direct participation in the construction and equipping of crematoria and gas chambers in the Auschwitz death camp.

Answer: In the years 1941-1943 in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, or more precisely in the Birkenau sector of the camp, four crematoria were built, in which the Topf and Sons Company assembled 18 cremation furnaces³⁶² for cremating corpses, and set up four [sic] gas chambers. My personal participation in the execution of the above work consisted of this:

1) In accordance with the assignments that the Topf Company had received from the SS authorities, I executed the technical drawings of the blowers and ventilation systems for the cremation furnaces of Crematoria

³⁶¹ This claim is at odds with the one that Schultze learned about the “gas chambers” during his last visit to Auschwitz on 24 and 25 March 1943.

³⁶² The ten triple-muffle furnaces of Crematoria II and III and the two 8-muffle furnaces of Crematoria IV and V, considered by Schultze to be 8 double-muffle furnaces.

II and III, as well as for the gas chambers of Crematoria II, III, and IV³⁶³ of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, and supervised their construction.

2) Work on the installation of ventilation systems in Crematoria II and III and in the gas chambers that were located inside the crematoria was carried out under my direction and with my personal participation. I did not personally carry out any other work in the Auschwitz Camp.

Question: When exactly did you work in Auschwitz on the assembly of the ventilation systems in the aforementioned crematoria and gas chambers?

Answer: I performed this work in February-March 1943.

Question: What were the gas chambers at Auschwitz officially called in the documents?

Answer: In drawings and other documents, these gas chambers of the Auschwitz crematoria were called “corpse rooms or chambers.”

Question: We now show you a photocopy of a letter dated 9 December 1940, that the Topf and Sons Company sent to the SS Construction Office of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp. It mentions there the installation of ventilation systems in the rooms for corpses and for the autopsy of corpses then already existing in this camp. It can be inferred from the document shown to you that the Topf Company was already in charge of setting up gas chambers in Auschwitz in 1940. Answer truthfully to these findings.

Answer: The letter from the Topf and Sons Company dated 9 December 1940, of which I have now been shown a photocopy, was personally drafted by me, and sent to the construction office of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp. As it appears from this letter, the Topf and Sons Company, as a result of talks between Chief Engineer Kurt Prüfer and SS *Untersturmführer* [Walter] Urbanczyk, was commissioned to carry out a design and cost estimate for work on the fitting out of the corpse rooms and corpse-autopsy rooms then existing in Auschwitz Concentration Camp, Crematorium I, Auschwitz Camp Sector, with ventilation facilities. By order of the owner of the Ludwig Topf Company, I made a plan and cost estimate for this

³⁶³ On 18 May 1943, the Central Construction Office ordered from Topf “2 deaeration devices for Crematoria IV and V.” On 9 June, Topf confirmed receipt of the order (RGVA, 502-2-26, p. 221) and enclosed the corresponding cost estimate, which included a blower No. 450 with attachments, priced at RM 2,510 (RGVA, 502-2-26, pp. 222-225). Topf issued the corresponding invoice No. 2134 /132/ 43 D 775 on 23 December 1943 (RGVA, 502-2-26, p. 220), the final payment for which was made on 13 July 1944 (RGVA, 502-2-26, pp. 217-218a). The system was not installed in either crematorium. Given its nature (deaeration device), it was undoubtedly intended for the furnace room. The above-mentioned cost estimate was drafted by Schultze, as is evident from the caption “*Unsere Abteilung: B/Schu.*”

work, but for some reason the construction office did not accept it. I do not know for what actual purposes the SS construction office intended to equip the above-mentioned rooms with ventilation facilities. Likewise, I did not know that there were plans to use these rooms as gas chambers.³⁶⁴ Likewise, I did not know that there were plans to use these premises as gas chambers.

Question: Crematorium I in the Auschwitz sector of the camp was set up by the Topf Company in the years 1940-1941. What part did you personally have in the work of setting up these crematoria?

Answer: To the best of my knowledge, only one cremation furnace was installed in Crematorium I at Auschwitz by the Topf and Sons Company. This happened at the end of 1940, but then, in 1941, the Construction Office of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp decided to expand and enlarge the capacity of this crematorium. In this context, the company installed two more cremation furnaces in the said crematorium. In addition, by order of the owner of the firm, Ludwig Topf, I personally designed a special blower for the furnaces of this crematorium, thanks to which the capacity of these furnaces was increased.³⁶⁵ I also designed the ventilation system for the furnace room of the crematorium. I know that the blower was built in the factory of the Topf Company according to my drawings, and was mounted in the said crematorium. At the moment, I do not remember whether the ventilation system was also mounted there. I only know that it, too, was built in the factory of the company.

Question: Did you ever go to Crematorium I in Auschwitz?

³⁶⁴ Here, too, Schultze pandered to Soviet propaganda, which wanted Auschwitz to have been established from the start as an “extermination camp” in which “gas chambers” were planned from the beginning. The document in question, the Letter by Topf to SS New Construction Office Auschwitz dated 9 December 1940, concerned the “dearation device for the corpses cells and for the autopsy room” for the Auschwitz Main Camp’s crematorium, to which the relevant “cost estimate” was attached. This was the ventilation project for an ordinary crematorium, as Schultze was well aware. Even for the Polish orthodox narrative, the letter is much too early to have any homicidal implications. According to that narrative, Himmler allegedly gave Höss the order for Jewish extermination at Auschwitz only in June 1941. Therefore, linking the document in question to homicidal gas chambers is nonsensical from any perspective.

³⁶⁵ This has to be forced-draft system (*Saugzuganlage*), which, by drawing more combustion air through the hearth grates into the gas generators of the furnaces, allowed a higher grate regime (coke consumption), and thus a certain increase in the cremation capacity of the furnace. In the case of Auschwitz Crematorium I, however, one forced-draft device served all three furnaces contemporarily, which minimized the benefit when all furnaces were used together.

Answer: No, I never entered this crematorium, and did not perform any installation work there. I currently do not remember who installed the blower in the said crematorium.

Question: What part did you have in setting up the gas chamber in this crematorium?

Answer: I had no part whatsoever in setting up the gas chamber in Crematorium I of the Auschwitz camp sector.

Question: Who carried out the work of setting up the central boiler room with ventilation facilities in the Auschwitz Camp?

Answer: I do not know. I personally did not perform any such work, and, to the best of my knowledge, our company did not perform such work at all in Auschwitz.³⁶⁶

Question: How were the ventilation systems you installed in the gas chambers and the blower in the crematoria of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp used?

Answer: As I have already explained, in the Birkenau sector of the camp, under my personal direction, the blowers were installed in the cremation furnaces of Crematoria II and III, also the ventilation systems in the gas chambers, which had been set up in the basement rooms of these crematoria. Crematorium II was prepared in March 1943 and I, during my second trip to the Auschwitz Camp, personally checked the blowers and ventilation systems installed in that crematorium, and handed them over to the SS Construction Office of this camp for use. This took place as follows:

After I had arrived in Auschwitz in March 1943 – I no longer remember the exact date; however, I know it was a Monday – I learned that the installation work on the ventilation equipment in the gas chamber of the second crematorium would be completed in one or two days; it was not until Wednesday that I was able to check it, and was convinced that it was working flawlessly. Likewise, I carried out the testing of the blower. However, the head of the SS Construction Office of the Auschwitz Camp who was there, von Bischoff, stated that the blower had to be checked when cremating corpses in the furnaces, that is, at the time when the maximum temperature was reached in these furnaces. At that time the furnaces in the second crematorium were still being dried before their use, and no corpses had yet been cremated there. Under such circumstances, von Bischoff suggested that I wait until a prisoner transport arrived at the camp; then, he

³⁶⁶ The camp's remote heating plant (*Fernheizwerk*), which was construction object BW 161, was built by the company Friedrich Boos of Cologne-Bickendorf. (Letter by the Boos Company to Central Construction Office dated 24 May 1943; RGVA, 502-1-138, pp. 218-218a).

said, we could carry out the check and put the blower into operation [воздуходувку, *vozduchoduvku*].³⁶⁷

The transport in question arrived at the camp on Saturday, and on the same day I checked with von Bischoff the operation, more precisely the operation during the activity, of both the blower and the ventilation systems in the gas chamber. On that occasion, about 150-300 inmates from the newly arrived transport were pushed by the SS into the gas chamber and poisoned with gas, then their corpses were cremated in the cremation furnaces. In this group of inmates who were killed in the gas chamber were men, women and children. At the time when the SS pushed them into the gas chamber, I was in the crematorium building, next to the cremation furnaces. The corpses of these inmates were cremated in my presence. After the killing of this group of inmates in the gas chamber had been carried out (which lasted no more than 50 minutes), an SS man in my presence turned on the ventilation systems, thanks to which the poisoned air was expelled from the gas chamber, and fresh air was introduced into it. Since it turned out in this test that the blower and ventilation systems worked well, they were put into operation the same day by the SS Construction Office, that is, that Saturday I returned from Auschwitz to Erfurt. The blower and ventilation systems that had been installed at the furnaces and in the gas chamber of Crematorium III were tested by the SS Central Construction Office of the Auschwitz Camp and put into operation in my absence.

Question: We show you a photocopy of a letter from the company “Topf und Söhne” to the SS Construction Office of the Auschwitz Camp dated 24 February 1943, in which you are informed that you would be arriving at the camp on 1 March 1943, to put into operation the aeration and de-aeration system of Crematorium II. Tell us what facilities were involved in this letter.

Answer: The above letter referred to putting into operation the ventilation devices that had been installed under my direction in the gas chamber of this crematorium, as I mentioned earlier. To what I have already stated, I want to add that at that time, in addition to carrying out the blower testing at the cremation furnaces, I also checked the ventilation systems that had been installed under my direction in the furnace room and in the corpse autopsy room.

Question: So, as it appears from the above-mentioned letter, you were sent by the company to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp specifically to

³⁶⁷ Crematorium II was equipped with three forced-draft devices, one for each chimney duct. Therefore, the use of the singular here makes no sense.

put into operation the ventilation systems installed in the gas chamber of the second crematorium. Did you understand that correctly?

Answer: Absolutely correct. The company sent me to the Auschwitz Camp at the request of the SS Construction Office to carry out such work.

Question: After your return from Auschwitz, to whom did you report on the results of the testing and commissioning of the ventilation systems in the gas chamber that you performed?

Answer: Upon my return from Auschwitz to Erfurt, I reported to the owner of the Ludwig Topf Company about the testing work on the blower and ventilation system in Auschwitz Crematorium II that I had performed. On that occasion, I informed him that the SS had poisoned a group of inmates in the gas chamber, and that their corpses were then cremated in the crematorium furnaces. L. Topf then replied nothing.

Question: During the interrogation of 4 March 1946, you stated that, on your trip to Auschwitz in the spring of 1943 in the company of K. Prüfer, you had told him about this event as well. Why do you keep silent about it now?

Answer: I do not deny it. I probably did indeed report to Prüfer about this poisoning of inmates in the gas chamber, but since a lot of time has passed since then, I could not remember the circumstances and content of the conversation.

Question: Did you have to do your trip to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp together with Engineer Prüfer?

Answer: I was at the Auschwitz Concentration Camp together with Kurt Prüfer only once, in the spring of 1943.

Question: On what occasion?

Answer: We visited the aforementioned camp at the request of the SS Construction Office of the Auschwitz Camp to find out why the blower at the cremation furnaces of the second crematorium was not working. We found that the deformation of the blower blades of the blower fan and consequently also the failure of the blower had occurred because a very high, certainly continuous temperature had been maintained in the furnaces of the crematorium all the time. After we arrived at the site, we agreed with the head of the Construction Office, von Bischoff, that we would disassemble this blower, because we did not consider it advisable to repair it. When Prüfer and I were at the crematorium, there on the floor next to the crematoria lay about 60 bodies of inmates, who, I suspect, had been killed in the gas chamber. Then, the corpses of about 25 of these inmates were

cremated in our presence. After this fact, I no longer went to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp.

Question: We show you the report of the commission of experts dated 14 February – 8 March 1945, from which it appears that in the Auschwitz death camp, in addition to the gas chambers in the crematoria, there were separately constructed gas chambers. Tell us what part the Topf Company had, and what part you personally had, in the construction and setting up of these gas chambers.

Answer: As I have already stated in the course of the investigation, under my direction and with my personal participation, the gas chambers of the second and third crematoria were equipped with ventilation systems. In addition, ventilation systems were designed and cost estimates were drawn up for setting up gas chambers of the fourth crematorium. As for the other gas chambers that existed at Auschwitz besides those in the crematoria, I was not involved in their construction and set-up, and to the best of my knowledge, the Topf and Sons Company did not perform this work.

Question: How many inmates were killed daily at Auschwitz in the crematoria and gas chambers built and equipped there with your participation?

Answer: I cannot answer this question, because I have no information about it.

Question: We show you a photocopy of a report of the SS Construction Office of the Auschwitz death camp dated 28 June 1943, from which it appears that in said camp in the crematoria and gas chambers built and set up with your personal participation, 4,756 inmates were exterminated per day. What can you say about the contents of this document?

Answer: I have no reason to dispute these official figures. The document shown to me testifies in favor of the fact that in the Auschwitz crematoria and gas chambers built and equipped with my direct participation, more than 4,700 inmates were exterminated per day.

Question: This therefore means that you, by collaborating at Auschwitz in the construction and setting up of powerful crematoria and gas chambers, thereby created perfected technical instruments for the extermination of completely innocent people, and thus became an accomplice to crimes that the Hitlerites perpetrated there.

Answer: I am forced to admit that, by collaborating in Auschwitz in the setting up of the crematoria and gas chambers, I thereby effectively created perfected technical instruments for the extermination of inmates. However, when I performed this work, I thought that, in the crematoria and gas

chambers built and set up with my participation, the SS would not kill innocent people, but criminals who had been sentenced to death in Poland and other occupied territories for their activities against German troops and the German government.

Question: Your suspicions are not incorrect, because the SS, in addition to the extermination of people of the non-Aryan race of various ages and of both sexes, especially Jews, which took place in the gas chambers of Auschwitz, also killed there people who had fought for the liberation of their homeland against the German occupiers. [But] why do you consider this category of people to be criminals?

Answer: I was and am subject to the existing government in Germany and its laws. If anyone rose up against this government and the measures it took, and fought it, including, among other things, in German-occupied territories, I was of the opinion that these people were criminals, that is, that they had been convicted according to German laws, because they had killed representatives of the German authorities or groups of the armed forces.

Question: These ideas of yours do not differ in any way from those of the Nazis, who were entrenched behind their “laws” when they bestially settled accounts with anti-fascists.

Answer: I was never a member of the Nazi Party, but since I lived in Germany, I considered it my duty to observe the laws of my country, and submit to them.

Question: During the interrogation of 20 March 1946, a charge was brought against you under Item 1 of the decree of the Supreme Presidium of the USSR Soviets. You pleaded guilty to having carried out orders of the SS authorities in the years 1940-1943, to having participated directly in Auschwitz in the construction and setting up of crematoria and gas chambers, in which an extermination of completely innocent people took place, which means that you were complicit in the crimes that the Hitlerites perpetrated in the concentration camps. Explain what led you to embark on the path of this criminal activity.

Answer: I did not participate on my own initiative in the work of building and setting up crematoria and gas chambers at Auschwitz, but by order of the owner of the Topf and Sons Company, in which I was employed. If I had refused to perform this work, I would have been dismissed as a saboteur, and could have suffered retaliation. Because I feared this, I never addressed to the owner of the Ludwig Topf Company a plea to spare me from performing these jobs.

The transcript of the interrogation was read to me in German translation; my statements are recorded there accurately (signed: Schultze).

Interrogated by: The operations officer of the 4th section of the 3rd Central Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR Lieutenant Colonel Doperchuk (signed: Doperchuk).

The military prosecutor of the Supreme Court of the USSR Justice Lieutenant Colonel Novikov (signed: Novikov).

The interrogation was attended as a German-speaking interpreter by the operations officer of the Fourth Section of the Third Central Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR, Lieutenant Kush (signed: Kush).

III) INTERROGATIONS OF FRITZ SANDER

1) Interrogation Protocol dated 7 March 1946

Interrogators: Captain Shatunovsky, Major Moruzhenko

7 March 1946: We, the head of the 2nd Department of the Smersh Organization of the Eighth Guards Army, Captain Shatunovsky, as well as the deputy head of the 2nd Department of the Guards, Major Moruzhenko, interrogated the detainee

Sander Fritz, son of Karl Paul, born 1876 in Leipzig, member of a family of clerks, employee, with intermediate technical training, German, citizen of the German state, resident of the city of Erfurt, Bumontstrasse³⁶⁸ 21.

[The interrogatee] was made aware of the consequences of false statements. The interpreter was made aware of his duty to translate correctly.

Question: Were you a member of the National-Socialist Party?

Answer: I was never a member of the National-Socialist Party, and I am still not today.

Question: Since when and in what position have you worked for the Topf Company?

Answer: I have been working for the Topf Company in Erfurt since October 1910 as a leading engineer and authorized signatory of the company.

Question: Tell us about your invention of the crematorium for mass incineration!

Answer: As a leading engineer at the Topf Company, I was head of the crematorium construction department, headed by Prüfer. The latter told me in 1942, I don't remember the exact date, during a conversation about the

³⁶⁸ Perhaps Baumstrasse.

capacity of the crematoria [plural] that had been built in Auschwitz Concentration Camp, that they could not cope with the number of corpses to be cremated. He then gave me an example that two or three corpses were inserted into the insertion openings, but that the crematorium [singular] could not cope with the workload [нагрузкой, *nagruzkoj*] in the concentration camps [plural]. At that time, as a specialist in the field of heating, I decided on my own initiative to build a crematorium with a higher capacity for cremating corpses. In November 1942, I had finished my project for a crematorium for mass cremation of corpses, and submitted it to the Reich Patent Office in Berlin. The crematorium for mass cremation was to be designed according to the principle of the conveyor-belt system, and corpses were to be continuously pushed into the furnace for cremation by mechanical means. The corpses were to enter the furnace under their own weight, falling by themselves onto the grate on a refractory surface³⁶⁹ with an inclination of 40 degrees, and burning under the effect of the fire. The corpses themselves were to serve as an additional source of fuel. This patent could not be officially registered with the state patent office because it was secret due to the war, but my invention was put into practice, and I was given the [patent] number.³⁷⁰

Question: Who designed and approved the construction of the crematoria for the concentration camps Auschwitz and Buchenwald?

Answer: Prüfer was responsible for the design and construction of the crematoria, Schultze for the ventilation systems for the crematoria. I checked these projects, and after I had done so, the Topf Company approved them.

Question: What was your target capacity for the crematorium for the mass cremation of corpses?

Answer: My idea in designing the crematorium for mass cremation of corpses is that the corpses enter the furnace without interruption. The number of corpses that can be incinerated in one hour in the crematorium I designed is significantly higher than the number incinerated in a [conventional] cremation furnace.

Question: What did Prüfer and Schultze tell you after their business trip to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp?

Answer: In the summer of 1942, Prüfer and Schultze reported to me that in the concentration camps [plural] of Auschwitz many people were exterminated in gas chambers, and their corpses burned in crematoria [plu-

³⁶⁹ The proper term is "*Gleitbahn*," sliding surface, a kind of refractory-clay slide on which the corpses slid.

³⁷⁰ This is "PA (= *Patent Anmeldung*: patent application) 760198 dated 5 November 1942.

ral], whereby the strain [нагрузка: *nagruzka*] on the crematoria was so great that three corpses were put into one furnace opening [concurrently].

Question: That means you knew that completely innocent people were being exterminated in the concentration camps [plural] in Auschwitz?

Answer: Yes, from the summer of 1942, I knew that completely innocent people were being exterminated in gas chambers in the concentration camps in Auschwitz, and that their bodies were then burned in crematoria [plural]. Prüfer told me about colossal transports of people who came from Poland, Greece³⁷¹ and other countries to the concentration camps in Auschwitz, and were exterminated here.

Question: How was it that, although you knew that the crematoria in the concentration camps were used to exterminate innocent people, you nevertheless took the initiative to plan a crematorium for an even larger mass incineration?

Answer: As a German engineer and employee of the Topf Company, I considered it my duty to use all my knowledge to contribute to the victory of Hitler Germany, just like any other aircraft-design engineer, even if it meant the extermination of people.

Question: Do you know Braun?

Answer: Yes. I know Braun. He has worked as production manager at the Topf Company since 1936.

Question: Was Braun in charge of the crematorium-construction department?

Answer: As production manager, Braun also headed the department responsible for building the crematoria and setting up the gas chambers for the concentration camps.

My statements were written down accurately; they were read to me in German translation, and I sign in German.

Interrogated by: The head of the 2nd section of the "Smersh" service of the 8th Guard Army, Guard Captain Shatunovsky. The deputy head of the 2nd section of the "Smersh" service of the 8th Guard Army, Guard Major Moruzhenko.

2) Interrogation Protocol dated 13 March 1946

Interrogator: Captain Morskoi

Interpreter: Datsyuk

³⁷¹ The first transport with Jewish deportees from Greece arrived at Auschwitz on 24 March 1943.

On 13 March 1946, I, the investigating judge of the “Smersh” service of the 8th Guards Army, Captain Morskoi of the Guard, on this day questioned the detainee

Sander, Fritz, son of Karl Paul, born in 1876, native of Leipzig, member of a family of clerks, clerk, with intermediate technical training.

The interrogation began at 10:20.

The interrogation was conducted through the interpreter Datsyuk, who was warned against unfaithful translation under Article 95 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federative Soviet Republic. (Signed: Datsyuk).

Question: Your profession?

Answer: I am an engineer by profession.

Question: Where did you work in this profession?

Answer: I worked as an engineer at the Topf Company from 1910, and from 1920 until recently, I worked there as chief engineer.

Question: Which German political parties were you a member of?

Answer: I didn't belong to any party, but I was a member of the National-Socialist organizations Labor Front and NSFAU.

Question: When did you become a member of these fascist organizations, and what leading positions did you hold there?

Answer: I joined the National-Socialist organizations Labor Front and NSFAU in 1936, but did not hold any leading positions in these organizations.

Question: Who was responsible for building crematoria at the Topf Company?

Answer: The crematorium construction department at the Topf Company was headed by the chief engineer of this department, Prüfer.

Question: When did the Topf Company start producing crematoria for concentration camps?

Answer: The Topf Company began to manufacture crematoria for concentration camps around 1937/1938.

Question: Who placed the orders for the construction of crematoria for the concentration camps?

Answer: The orders to build crematoria for the concentration camps came from the SS leadership.

Question: Who was the designer of crematoria at the Topf Company?

Answer: The designer of all types of crematoria at the Topf Company, both stationary and mobile, was Engineer Prüfer. Engineer Schultze helped him with project planning and construction.

Question: What was your part in the design and construction of the crematoria for the concentration camps?

Answer: As the first engineer of the Topf Company, I headed the crematorium construction department, reviewed the crematorium projects that had been built by engineer Prüfer and Schultze, personally approved these projects, and then submitted them to the owner of the company, Ludwig Topf, for approval.

Question: When you were involved in the design and construction of the crematoria for the concentration camps, were you aware that innocent people were being burned in these crematoria?

Answer: Yes, I was aware that innocent people were cremated in the concentration camps in the crematoria built by the engineers Prüfer and Schultze with my participation.

Question: When did you become aware of this?

Answer: In 1942, I no longer remember the month, I learned in a conversation with Engineer Prüfer after his return from a business trip from Auschwitz that innocent people were being burned to death in the crematoria designed and built in the concentration camps.

Question: For what purpose did Prüfer go to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp?

Answer: This had to do with the fact that, after the construction of the crematoria, the Topf Company sent their people to the concentration camps to assemble the crematoria, and engineer Prüfer, as the construction manager and designer of the crematoria, went to the concentration camp [singular] to inspect how the assembly work was going; he was also present during the practical testing of the crematoria. After his return from the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, Prüfer told me that he had been present during the testing of the crematoria built there, and had come to the conclusion that they were not very efficient and could not cope with the number of corpses that had to be cremated there. At the time, Prüfer gave me the example that, in his presence, two corpses at a time had been introduced into the opening of the crematoria, but the latter [the furnaces] had not been able to cope with the workload [с нагрузкой: *s nagruzkoj*] because there were so many corpses to be cremated in the concentration camp.

Question: When Prüfer told you that the crematoria had not managed to cremate the corpses, were you interested and did you ask him where so many corpses came from?

Answer: Yes, I asked Prüfer why there were so many corpses in the concentration camp, and he replied that people were murdered there in gas chambers, and their bodies transferred to the crematorium [singular] for cremation.

Question: What other concentration camps did Prüfer visit?

Answer: I know that in addition to Auschwitz Concentration Camp, Prüfer also went to Buchenwald Concentration Camp. I do not know whether he visited any other camps.

Question: Did engineer Schultze go to concentration camps?

Answer: Yes, Engineer Schultze went to the concentration camps Auschwitz and Buchenwald for the same reasons as Prüfer. I do not know whether he visited any other camps.

The interrogation ended at 15:55.

The transcript with my statements was transcribed accurately, was read to me in translation into my native language, and I sign it.

Interrogated by: The investigating judge of the “Smersh” service of the 8th Guard Army, Captain of the Morskoi Guard.

Interpreter: Datsyuk.

3) Interrogation Protocol dated 21 March 1946

Interrogator: Captain Morskoi

Interpreter: Datsyuk.

The Interrogation started at 20:50.

Question: Explain in more detail when you spoke to Engineer Prüfer about the fact that the cremation furnaces you had built were too small and could not cremate the bodies in the concentration camps!

Answer: I remember well that this conversation between me and engineer Prüfer took place in the spring of 1942 – I can’t remember the exact month – after engineer Prüfer had returned from a business trip from the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, where he had checked the furnaces in the newly built crematorium.

Question: What did you talk about with Engineer Prüfer after he told you what has been explained here?

Answer: After the engineer Prüfer had informed me that the cremation furnaces we had built in Auschwitz were too small to incinerate the corpses there, I told him that it was essential to design cremation furnaces based on the conveyor-belt system³⁷² for the mass incineration of corpses in the concentration camps.

³⁷² Meaning continuously operating.

Question: Have you designed a new cremation furnace system?

Answer: Yes, after the relevant discussion between me and Engineer Prüfer, I had the idea of designing cremation furnaces based on the conveyor-belt system, and I set about realizing this project for the mass cremation of corpses in concentration camps.

Question: What was the operating principle of the new type of crematorium you designed?

Answer: The working principle of the new type of mass crematorium I designed was that, unlike the old ones, the new crematorium system was to introduce the corpses into the furnace for incineration in a mechanized way, whereby the corpses were to get there under the load of their own weight, by sliding on a refractory surface with an inclination of forty degrees. The corpses fell onto the grate, and burned under the effect of the fire. The corpses themselves were to serve as additional fuel.

Question: When did you go into mass production of the new crematorium system?

Answer: The Topf Company did not go on to manufacture the new crematorium I had designed, because in November 1942, I submitted my project to the patent office in Berlin, where it was not officially registered, and my invention was only put into practice there, but I don't know under which [patent] number, because I wasn't told.³⁷⁰

The interrogation ended at 23:20.

The transcript with my statements was transcribed accurately, was read to me in translation into my native language, and I sign it.

Interrogated by: The investigating judge of the "Smersh" service of the 8th Guard Army, Captain of the Morskoi Guard.

Interpreter: Datsyuk.

IV) INTERROGATIONS OF GUSTAV BRAUN

1) Interrogation Protocol dated 4 March 1946

Interrogator: Captain Shatunovsky, Major Moruzhenko

Interpreter: Hofmeister

4 March 1946. We, chief of the 2nd section of the "Smersh" service of the 8th Guards Army, Captain of the Guard Shatunovsky and deputy chief of the 2nd section of the Guard Major Moruzhenko, interviewed as a witness

Braun, Gustav, son of Karl, born 1889, native of Heilbronn, member of a family of clerks, with higher education, German, German citizen, residing at Erfurt, Peterstrasse, 55.

[The interrogatee] *was warned about liability for false statements (signed: Braun).*

German-language interpreter Hofmeister was warned about responsibility for correctness of translation (signed: Hofmeister).

Question: Since when and in what position have you been working at the Topf Company?

Answer: I have been working as plant manager at the factory of the Topf Company in Erfurt since 1936. In 1941/1942, I was also the deputy of the counterintelligence representative,³⁷³ i.e. from the moment the boss Ludwig Topf went to Hungary on business.

Question: Who was the counterintelligence representative?

Answer: The counterintelligence representative was the aforementioned Ludwig Topf. He assigned me the task of deputy counterintelligence representative.

Question: Where are the head of the company, Ludwig Topf, and his brother at present?

Answer: Ludwig Topf poisoned himself in June 1945³⁷⁴ when American troops moved in and the Americans wanted to arrest him. The second brother, Ernst Topf, went to a town near Kassel, stayed there and never returned.

Question: Name the most important products manufactured by the Topf Company!

Answer: The Topf factory in Erfurt produced equipment for breweries, mills and lifts for many years. It installed large factory pipes, furnaces for boiler operations in factories and furnaces for crematoria.

Question: How long has the company been producing cremation furnaces?

Answer: The company has been producing cremation furnaces for Germany and other countries for about forty years.

Question: How many crematoria were produced by the Topf Company from 1941 onwards?

Answer: I cannot give the exact number, but I know that crematoria were built in the concentration camps Buchenwald and Auschwitz, and repaired in Dachau.

³⁷³ Абверbeauftragтера, Abverbeauftragtera, transliteration of *Abwehrbeauftragter*, counterintelligence representative.

³⁷⁴ Correct: 31 May.

Question: Who was the designer of stationary and mobile crematoria at the factory?

Answer: The designer of all types of crematoria was Engineer Prüfer. Engineer Schultze worked with him on the construction of crematoria. Engineer Sander was also involved in their manufacture.

Question: Did Prüfer and Schultze go to concentration camps to set up crematoria?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Were Prüfer and Schultze aware that living people were being exterminated in the crematoria?

Answer: In my opinion, they were informed.

My statements were transcribed accurately, they were read to me in German translation, and I sign them (signed: Braun³⁷⁵).

Interrogated by: The head of the 2nd section of the “Smersh” service of the 8th Guard Army, Guard Captain Shatunovsky (signed: Shatunovsky). The deputy head of the 2nd section of the Guard Major Moruzhenko (signed: Moruzhenko).

2) Interrogation Protocol dated 5 March 1946

Interrogator: Captain Shatunovsky, Major Moruzhenko

Interpreter: Hofmeister

Question: When and by whom were you recruited to work as a deputy counterintelligence representative at the Topf Company in Erfurt?

Answer: In 1941, company boss Ludwig Topf, who was the factory’s counterintelligence representative, called me into his office, and suggested that I should take on the job of deputy counterintelligence representative in the factory, and ensure that no acts of subversion or sabotage took place in the factory. In particular, he emphasized that no destruction of machinery should be permitted.

Question: How did you manage relations with the Gestapo as deputy counterintelligence representative?

Answer: I was put in contact with the Weimar counterintelligence office by counterintelligence representative Topf, and through the authorized signatory Max Machemehl, I was put in touch with SS *Obersturmbannführer* Wolf, the Gestapo liaison officer in Erfurt. Written documents that went from the company to the counterintelligence office and the Gestapo were regularly sent by mail or handed directly to Max Machemehl/Wolf.

Question: What demands were made of you personally by the Gestapo?

³⁷⁵ In the Russian original erroneously “Schultze.”

Answer: Max Machemehl received letters from the Gestapo via Wolf, stating that they were addressed to him personally. In these letters, Wolf demanded reports on the political mood of both the German workers and the foreign workers working in the factory: their attitude to work, acts of subversion and sabotage committed by them, but also the factory's need for money and new machines.

Question: How were these Gestapo demands met?

Answer: Authorized signatory Max Machemehl, who was in direct contact with Wolf, turned to me as deputy counterintelligence representative, who, as head of all production in the factory, was in a position to have a complete overview of the political and production situation in the factory. In order to be able to inform Machemehl in detail about the political mood and cases of sabotage, I called in the workshop managers on behalf of Topf to support the work of the counterintelligence representative. In this way, I consulted the following workshop managers: The head of the metalworking shop, Begel Heinrich, 48-50 years old, non-party; the head of the carpentry shop, Liebeskind Hugo, 60 years old, non-party; the head of the aircraft-parts department, Breitruck, Willi [Beitrich, Wilhelm], 42 years old, non-party. When I asked them about the work of the counterintelligence representative, I pointed out to them that this work was carried out for the Gestapo and in their interests.

Question: Tell me about your practical work in the factory for the Gestapo!

Answer: As a result of my dealings with the Gestapo, one worker of German nationality – I don't remember his last name – and two foreign workers were arrested for sabotage. I wrote six reports for the Gestapo about the mood among the workers, and handed them over to Machemehl. I also informed the Gestapo via [Ludwig] Topf about four foreign workers who had absconded from the factory. I received information about the negative attitude of some of the workers towards their work from the workshop managers, who were called in by me for the work of the counterintelligence representative, and I passed this on to Machemehl for the Gestapo.

Question: Your official position was head of production at the factory. Were you also in charge of the crematorium [furnace] construction department?

Answer: Yes. As head of production (plant manager), I was in charge of all production in the factory, including the manufacture of furnaces for the crematoria.

My statements were transcribed accurately, read to me in German translation, and I sign them.

The interrogation was conducted through the German interpreter, who was warned about responsibility for the correctness of the translation (signed: Hofmeister).

Interrogated by: The head of the 2nd section of the “Smersh” service of the 8th Guard Army, Captain of the Guard Shatunovsky (signed: Shatunovsky). The deputy head of the 2nd section of the Guard Major Moruzhenko (signed: Moruzhenko).

3) Interrogation Protocol dated 7 March 1946

Interrogator: Second Lieutenant Malyshko

Interpreter: Negnevitski

I, operational representative of the second division of the “Smersh” service of the 30th Army, Lieutenant of the Guard Malyshko, have questioned the detainee Gustav Braun, son of Karl, born in Heilbronn in 1884. He is a member of a family of clerks, with higher education, engineer, German, German citizen.

Question: Where does your family currently live?

Answer: My family – my wife and two sons – currently live in Erfurt, Pitscherstrasse 55.

Question: What special training do you have?

Answer: I graduated from the technical college in Nuremberg in 1911, and obtained an engineering degree.

My statements are correctly reproduced in the transcript; this was read to me, which I confirm with my signature. (Signed Braun)

The interrogation was conducted through the German interpreter Negnewizki.

The interrogation was conducted by: The operational plenipotentiary of the 2nd Division of the “Smersh” Service of the 30th Army, Lieutenant of the Guard Malyshko.

4) Interrogation Protocol dated 11 March 1946

Interrogator: Captain Morskoi

Interpreter: Galkin [Галкин]

Question: In which language would you like to make your statement?

Answer: I am German. Although I speak English, I will make my statements in German.

Question: Do you understand the interpreter introduced to you, and do you have no objections to him translating your statements?

Answer: I understand the interpreter well, and have no objections to him translating my statements.

Question: Which political parties and organizations were you a member of?

Answer: I did not belong to any political parties on German territory, but I was a member of the Nazi organization Labor Front.

Question: When did you join this organization?

Answer: I joined this National-Socialist organization in 1936, i.e. when I returned from America and started working in the factory of the Topf Company in Erfurt. I was a member of this organization until the capitulation of fascist Germany.

Question: What leading positions did you hold in the fascist organization Labor Front?

Answer: During the entire time I was a member of the National-Socialist organization Labor Front, I did not hold any leading positions in it.

Question: In what position did you work in the factory of the Topf Company?

Answer: I worked in the factory of the Topf Company from 1936 in the position of production manager.

Question: What kind of products did the Topf Company manufacture?

Answer: For many years, the Topf Company manufactured equipment for breweries, lifts and mills. It installed large factory pipes, furnaces for factory boiler rooms, and furnaces for crematoria.

Question: Who placed the orders for the production of furnaces for crematoria during the war between fascist Germany and the Soviet Union?

Answer: I cannot answer this question, because the orders for the production of furnaces were received by the head of the company, Ludwig Topf.

Question: Did the Topf Company manufacture cremation furnaces for the concentration camps?

Answer: Yes, the Topf Company manufactured cremation furnaces for the concentration camps.

Question: When did the Topf Company start manufacturing cremation furnaces for the concentration camps?

Answer: 1940 or 1941, I don't remember exactly.

Question: How many crematoria [cremation furnaces] were manufactured by the Topf Company for the concentration camps until Germany's capitulation?

Answer: I cannot give the exact number of crematoria [cremation furnaces] manufactured by the Topf Company from 1940/1941 until the capitulation of Germany, but I do know that the crematoria manufactured by our company were installed in the concentration camps Buchenwald and Auschwitz, and also repaired in Dachau.

Question: Who built crematoria [cremation furnaces] in the Topf factory?

Answer: The builder of all types of crematoria [cremation furnaces], both stationary and mobile, was engineer Prüfer at the factory of the Topf Company. Together with the latter, engineer Schultze worked on the construction of crematoria. Sander also helped Prüfer and Schultze.

Question: To what extent did Sander help these people in their work?

Answer: Sander, as chief engineer of the Topf Company and head of the crematorium construction department, reviewed the drawings and plans of the crematoria [cremation furnaces] made by Prüfer and Schultze, approved them himself, and then submitted these plans to Ludwig Topf for approval.

Question: What was your involvement as head of production at the factory in the construction of the crematoria [cremation furnaces] for the concentration camps?

Answer: As head of production at the Topf Company, I supervised and monitored the design and construction of the crematoria [cremation furnaces] to ensure that the orders were completed on time and in perfect quality. I personally checked the production of the crematoria [cremation furnaces], and then told Ludwig Topf that this or that order was ready.

Question: Who of the above-mentioned persons traveled to the concentration camps to assemble the crematoria [cremation furnaces]?

Answer: I know that Prüfer and Schultze traveled to the concentration camps three or four times before the crematoria [cremation furnaces] were assembled, but even after the assembly was completed, they traveled there to test the crematoria [cremation furnaces] they had built.

Question: When and to which camps did they go?

Answer: I don't remember exactly when they went, but I do know that they, i.e. Prüfer and Schultze, went to the concentration camps Buchenwald and Auschwitz.

Question: Did you know for what purpose the Topf Company, of which you were head of production, built crematoria [cremation furnaces] for the concentration camps?

Answer: I only knew that we built crematoria [cremation furnaces] for the concentration camps to burn corpses.

Question: Did you know that innocent people were exterminated and burned alive in the crematoria you built in the concentration camps?

Answer: I only found out about this after Germany's capitulation through the radio and newspapers.

Question: Did Prüfer and Schultze know about the above?

Answer: I assume that Prüfer and Schultze, who were in the concentration camps, knew that people were being exterminated and burned alive in the concentration-camp crematoria they had constructed.

The interrogation ends at 15:40.

The transcript with my statements was transcribed accurately, was read to me in my native language through the interpreter, and I sign it (signed: Braun).

Interrogated by: the investigating judge of the "Smersh" service of the 8th Guard Army, Captain of the Guard Morskoi (signed: Morskoi).

Interpreter: Galkin (signed: Galkin).

5) Interrogation Protocol dated 20 March 1946

Interrogator: Captain Morskoi

Interpreter: Datsyuk

The interrogation begins at 14:00.

The interpreter was warned about the responsibility for unfaithful translation under Article 95 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federative Soviet Republic (signed: Datsyuk).

Question: You are accused of having been directly involved in the design and construction of cremation furnaces for the concentration camps, in which the bodies of the completely innocent people of various nationalities were burned who had been tortured to death there. In addition, from 1941, you were deputy to the representative of the counterintelligence office in the aforementioned factory. In this function, you scouted out the political mood of the workers and people who had committed acts of sabotage at work, and were suspected of subversive activities. As a result of your denunciations, the Gestapo arrested one German and two foreign workers for sabotage at work. The crimes you committed fall under Article 58-2 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Soviet Federative Republic. Do you under-

stand the charges against you, and to what specifically have you pleaded guilty?

Answer: The charges brought against me on the basis of Article 58-2 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Soviet Federative Republic have been explained to me by the interpreter in German and are comprehensible to me. I plead fully guilty to having been directly involved, during my work as head of production in the Topf company factory in Erfurt, in the design and construction of the cremation furnaces for the Buchenwald, Auschwitz, Dachau, Mauthausen and other concentration camps, in which the bodies of innocent people of various nationalities from different countries in Western Europe and the USSR were cremated, who had been tortured to death in the said concentration camps. I personally supervised the work on the construction of the cremation furnaces to ensure that the orders were carried out to a high standard and on time, after which I reported to the company boss Ludwig Topf on the fulfillment of the orders. In addition, from 1941 onwards, as deputy of the representative of the anti-espionage counterintelligence office,³⁷⁶ I scouted out the political mood among German and foreign workers and people who were suspected of sabotage and subversion at work. For this purpose, I had eight confidants among the workshop bosses. As a result of my work as deputy to the representative of the counterintelligence office, the Gestapo arrested one German and two foreign workers for sabotage at work. I also reported four foreign workers who had left the factory to the Gestapo as deputy to Ludwig Topf, the representative of the counterintelligence office.

The interrogation ended at 15:50.

Interrogated by: the investigating judge of the “Smersh” service of the 8th Guards Army, Guard Captain Morskoi (signed: Morskoi).

Interpreter: Datsyuk (signed: Datsyuk).

6) Interrogation Protocol dated 27 March 1946

Interrogator: Captain Kabanuyev³⁷⁷

Interpreter: Lieutenant Sherman

I, the investigating judge of the 2nd section of the 4th office of the counterintelligence service “Smersh” of the Soviet occupation troops group in Germany, Captain Kazantsev, questioned through the German-speaking interpreter Lieutenant Sherman the defendant

³⁷⁶ “Абверштелле,” *Abwershtelle*, counterintelligence office.

³⁷⁷ In the typewritten transcript of the interrogation appears the conjectural spelling Kabanuyev (indicated by italics), a character unknown in the criminal case records; it is more likely Kazantsev (Казанцев).

Braun, Karl, son of Karl.

Interpreter Sherman was admonished in accordance with Article 95 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federative Soviet Republic (signed: Sherman).

Interrogation began at 12:00 noon and ended at 3:00, with a break from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Question: Which German political organizations and parties were you a member of?

Answer: I was never a member of any German political parties. I was only a member of the mass organization Labor Front.

Question: Did you hold leading positions in the fascist organization Labor Front?

Answer: During my membership in this organization from 1936 until the capitulation of Germany, i.e. until May 1945, I did not hold any leading positions in it.

Question: Please tell us about your professional activities.

Answer: I was born in Germany in the town of Wartenberg. In 1926, I went to America, where I worked in New York and Chicago as a civil engineer building bridges and skyscrapers. I returned to Germany in 1936. I lived there in the city of Erfurt, and worked at the Topf Company from 1936 until Germany's capitulation in May 1945, where I held the position of production manager.

Question: What connection did you have with the German counterintelligence agencies as head of production at Topf?

Answer: When I was working as a production manager at the Topf Company, I was called in by the company boss Ludwig Topf in 1941 to work with the counterintelligence authorities, with whom I maintained relations until the beginning of 1945.

Question: What exactly was your connection with the counterintelligence authorities?

Answer: The head of the Topf Company, from whom I was called in to cooperate with the counterintelligence authorities, was at the same time the representative of the counterintelligence office, and was in charge of all the anti-espionage activities in the company. Topf Ludwig gave me the task of ensuring that there were no cases of subversion or sabotage in the factory. I also had to scout out the mood of the workers, and report on all anti-fascist statements made by the workers. In fact, I acted as deputy to the counterintelligence representative [Ludwig] Topf. If the latter was absent, I was in charge of the anti-espionage work in the company.

Question: What exactly did your practical work as deputy to the counterintelligence representative consist of?

Answer: My work as a counterintelligence representative consisted of the following: I systematically observed the mood among the workers, and reported to the counterintelligence office via the counterintelligence representative [Ludwig] Topf. I gave the foremen daily instructions to observe the workers as well, and report to me on their mood and behavior. But during the entire period of my work in the Topf Company, no cases of subversion or sabotage were discovered. The mood among the workers was always normal. Sharp anti-fascist statements were not registered. The workers behaved in a completely disciplined manner. There were no cases of arrests by the German prosecution authorities at the Topf Company.

Question: What items did the Topf Company produce?

Answer: Before the outbreak of war in 1939, the Topf Company was involved in the manufacture of crematoria, produced hand grenades and fulfilled other military orders. During the war with the USSR from 1941 to 1945, Topf fulfilled orders for the repair of airplanes, but also manufactured cremation furnaces.

Question: Where were the cremation furnaces delivered which had been built by the Topf Company?

Answer: The cremation furnaces manufactured by the Topf Company were delivered to the Buchenwald, Auschwitz and Dachau camps during the German-Soviet War, where, as I later learned from newspapers, Russian prisoners of war, prisoners of war from other nations, and civilians were exterminated.

Question: How do you know that the Topf Company built furnaces for the crematoria of the German death camps Buchenwald, Auschwitz and Dachau?

Answer: I know that the Topf Company built furnaces for the Buchenwald, Auschwitz and Dachau death camps from the correspondence that was conducted with the leaders of these camps on this occasion.

Question: Who placed the orders for the production of furnaces for the crematoria of these death camps?

Answer: I do not know from whom specifically, or from which organization, the orders came for the production of furnaces to equip the crematoria in the Buchenwald, Auschwitz and Dachau death camps.

My statements that were read to me in German were transcribed accurately in my own words (signed Gustav Braun).

Interpreter: Sherman.

Interrogated by: investigating judge of the 2nd section of the 4th office of the counter-intelligence service “Smersh” of the group of Soviet occupation troops in Germany, Captain Kabanuyev.³⁷⁷

7) Interrogation Protocol dated 12 February 1948

Interrogator: Lieutenant Colonel Doperchuk

Interpreter: Lieutenant Kush

The interrogation began at 12:30. It ended at 18:00.

Question: Do you confirm the statements you made during the previous interrogations?

Answer: The statements I made during the interrogations after my arrest correspond to the facts, and I confirm them in full.

Question: How long and in what position did you work at the German Topf and Sons Company in Erfurt?

Answer: I worked in the German Topf and Sons Company in Erfurt from 1936 until the day of my arrest, i.e. until 9 March 1946. Initially, for ten or eleven months, I worked in the company as an assembly engineer, and then I was appointed head of the product manufacturing department. In German, my function is called “*Betriebsleiter*” (plant manager). In January 1940, the owner of the company, Ludwig Topf, promoted me, and appointed me production manager of the company, in German “*Betriebsdirektor*”. I worked in this position until I was arrested.

Question: What were your duties as production manager of the Topf Company?

Answer: As production manager of the Topf Company, I was in charge of the operations of the machine-building factory in Erfurt. I was responsible for hiring and firing workers for this company, and was responsible for the deadlines and quality of product manufacture in this factory.

Question: What relationship did you have with work carried out by the Topf Company directly at the client’s premises?

Answer: As production manager of the company, I personally had no relationship with such work. Such work was carried out by the Topf Company’s assembly office, which was headed by Engineer Max Schuchardt.

Question: However, the assembly office was directly subordinate to you, and its activities were directed and controlled by you. Why are you trying to conceal this in the investigation proceedings?

Answer: The assembly office was directly subordinate to the head of the company, Ludwig Topf, and I personally had no connection whatsoever with the work carried out by this office.

Question: Your statements on this question do not correspond to reality. The organigram of the Topf Company, which is clearly presented to you, shows that the assembly office and other departments of the company, which ensured the production activities of the latter, were under your management, and were directed by you. Why are you trying to cover up this fact and conceal your role in managing the production activities of the Topf Company?

Answer: In the organigram submitted to me, my official position as production manager of the company is incorrectly presented. I only managed the production activities of the mechanical engineering department of the Topf Company. The [other] departments of the company – the work preparation department, the assembly office, the standardization office, the purchasing and shipping departments were not subordinate to me, and I had no connection whatsoever with their activities. The departments I just mentioned reported directly to the head of the company, Ludwig Topf.³⁷⁸

Question: It is known that the Topf Company's assembly office carried out work on the construction of crematoria and gas chambers in the concentration camps, and that you, as production manager, were responsible for the general management of this work. Please make truthful statements!

Answer: I do not deny that for several years, especially from 1941 to 1943, the assembly office of the Topf Company was involved in building crematoria in German concentration camps and equipping some of them, especially Auschwitz, with gas chambers. However, as I have already explained, I had no connection whatsoever with this work, because the assembly office was not under my management.

Question: The statements of witnesses – P. Ertman, G. Mairer,³⁷⁹ H. Schmidt, O. *Back* and A. *Risljand*³⁸⁰ – convict you of making false statements. Excerpts from the interview transcript of these witnesses will [now]

³⁷⁸ Braun's statements were at least partially correct. According to the organigram of the Topf Company dated 22 February 1943, the company department (*Betriebsabteilung*), headed by a company management (*Betriebsleitung*), at the head of which stood Braun precisely as company manager, was a department in its own right, on a par with the assembly department (*Montage-Abteilung*). The standards department (*Normenstelle*) depended on the general administration (*Allgemeine Verwaltung*), as did the main-purchasing department (*Hauptverkauf*), while the dispatch department depended on the technical departments (*Technische Abteilungen*). The work-preparation department (*Arbeitsvorbereitung*), on the other hand, was directly subordinate to Braun. Reproduction of the document in Schüle, p. 167

³⁷⁹ Perhaps Mayr, whose first name was Max, however, or Mähr, whose first name was Albert.

³⁸⁰ The two last names in italics are transliterations from Russian.

be read to you. Those responsible for conducting the investigation demand that you make truthful statements.

Answer: I know the witnesses Paul Ertman, G. Mairer, Hermann Schmidt, Otto Back and Albert Risljand from our work together at the Topf and Sons Company. There were and are no personal disputes between me and them. I declare once again to those charged with conducting the investigation that the assembly office was not under my control, and that I had no connection with the work carried out by this office. I am unable to explain why the above-mentioned witnesses made statements in response to the question posed that are completely contrary to mine.

The interview transcript was read to me in German translation; my statements are accurately reproduced therein (signed Braun).

The first operational plenipotentiary of the 4th Department of the 3rd Main Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR Lieutenant Colonel Doperchuk (signed Doperchuk).

The authorized representative of the 4th Department of the 3rd Main Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR, Lieutenant Kush, took part in the interrogation as a German interpreter (signed Kush).

8) Interrogation Protocol dated 17 February 1948

Interrogator: Lieutenant Colonel Doperchuk

Interpreter: Lieutenant Kush

The interrogation began at 12:10. It ended at 17:30.

Question: Where did you live before you started working for the Topf and Sons Company, and what work did you do then?

Answer: Until 1936, i.e. before I started working for the German engineering company Topf and Sons. I lived in the USA, where I worked as a metal construction engineer in various factories.

Question: When and why did you leave the USA?

Answer: I emigrated to Argentina in 1924 because of unemployment in Germany, and because of a contract with the German company Thyssen to work in their factories in Buenos Aires. I worked in these factories as a steel-construction engineer until 1927. Then I resigned and moved to New York, where I found a job as an engineer with an American bridge-construction company. I lived and worked in the USA for 9 years. Then, in April 1936, I returned to Germany, where I lived until the day I was arrested.

Question: What prompted you to leave the USA and return to Germany?

Answer: My parents, who were raising my son, were living in Germany. I actually only intended to visit them and then return to America and take my son with me. But after I arrived in Germany, the Nazi government passed a law prohibiting German citizenship specialists from traveling abroad. Because of this law, I was not allowed to return to America. As a result, I was forced to stay in Germany and look for a job there.

Question: During your stay in Argentina and the USA, did you maintain relations with German diplomats in these countries?

Answer: I did not have any relations with German diplomats in Argentina and the USA. Of course, there were cases where I contacted the German embassy to obtain a passport after emigrating to the USA. At the moment, I can't remember in which years this happened.

Question: After your return to Germany, were you summoned by the Gestapo or any other authorities in connection with your stay abroad?

Answer: After my return to Germany, I was not summoned by any authorities, and I was not questioned in connection with my stay abroad.

Question: Did you serve in the German army?

Answer: I served in the German army from 1914 to 1918 as an ordinary artilleryman. I did not serve in the German army during the Second World War, because I was no longer required to serve due to my age.

Question: Which of your relatives served in the German army during the Second World War?

Answer: In 1939, my son Hans Braun, born in 1920, was drafted into the German army. He served as a private in an anti-aircraft platoon, and was a member of his unit in France. In 1945, he became an American prisoner of war. I don't know where he is now. My son was a member of the Hitler Youth. Apart from my son, none of my relatives served in the German army during this time.

Question: Who were your parents?

Answer: My parents were of German nationality and, like me, German citizens. My father Karl Braun worked in an appliance-manufacturing factory in Heilbronn (near Stuttgart). He died in 1943. My mother was a housewife. She died in 1939.

The interrogation protocol has been read to me in German translation; my statements are accurately reproduced therein. (signed Braun)

The interrogation was conducted by: The first operational plenipotentiary of the 4th Department of the Main Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR, Lieutenant Colonel Doperchuk (signed Doperchuk).

The interrogation was attended by the operational plenipotentiary of the 4th Department of the 3rd Main Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR Lieutenant Kush as German interpreter (signed Kush).

9) Interrogation Protocol dated 26 February 1948

Interrogator: Lieutenant Colonel Doperchuk

Interpreter: Lieutenant Kush

The interrogation began at 16:00. The interrogation ended at 22:10 pm.

Question: We are presenting you with documents originating from the management of the Topf Company, in which a list of orders carried out by said company is mentioned. Tell me, what are these documents, and what part did you personally play in their preparation?

Answer: The documents presented to me, which are printed on rolled-up sheets of parchment paper, are individual pages of Topf's production plans, which were prepared by the company's general planning office. These plans contain a list of orders received by the company from various organizations, and the deadlines for their execution. These production plans were drawn up by the general planning office together with the head of the company, Ludwig Topf, and confirmed by the latter. I personally did not participate in any way in their preparation and creation.

Question: Were you made aware of these production plans?

Answer: No, these plans were considered secret, and I was not made privy to them.

Question: How could you manage the company's production activities if you didn't know their production plans?

Answer: I did not claim that I was completely unaware of the company's production plans. In those cases where the company accepted an order of any kind, the head of the company, Ludwig Topf, or his brother Ernst Topf (the co-owner of the company) informed me, and coordinated the possible deadlines for the execution of these orders with me. In some cases, the technical departments of the Topf Company, through which the orders received from customers were processed, coordinated certain issues with me, for example regarding the deadlines or the availability of material for the execution of this or that order. At the same time, in my capacity as the company's production manager, I gathered the foremen every morning for a meeting to discuss issues relating to their work over the next few days. The focus [of the meeting] was on the necessary execution of individual orders that the [work preparation department] had already handed over directly to the factory workshops. These meetings were attended by

the head of the [work preparation department], who handed over the orders to the workshops and checked the deadlines for their completion. In this way, I was generally kept up to date with the company's production plans, although I was not made aware of the plans drawn up by the company's general planning office.

Question: So you were also aware that the Topf and Sons Company was carrying out orders from SS authorities for the concentration camps?

Answer: Yes, as head of production at Topf and Sons, I knew that this company received and carried out orders from SS authorities for the concentration camps Buchenwald, Dachau and Auschwitz (KL Oswiecim).

Question: What were these orders, and what part did you play in carrying them out?

Answer: In the years 1940-1943, the Topf and Sons Company built incineration furnaces on behalf of SS authorities in the aforementioned concentration camps. As the company's head of production, I personally supervised the production of the metal parts for these furnaces in the workshops of the company factory.

Question: By whom in the Topf Company and under whose direction were the incinerators built in the concentration camps mentioned?

Answer: To carry out this work, the company's assembly office sent specialists to the concentration camps Buchenwald, Dachau and Auschwitz, mainly fitters and bricklayers. The technical supervision and management of this work was carried out by the chief engineers of the Topf construction office, Kurt Prüfer and Schulze.

Question: Were these specialists from the company's assembly office sent to the concentration camps with your knowledge?

Answer: With my knowledge, only fitters and the chief fitter Heinrich Messing, who were part of my staff, were sent to carry out the work on the construction and assembly of the cremation furnaces. Other skilled workers, such as fitters for the construction of furnaces and bricklayers, were sent to the concentration camps without my knowledge, because the assembly office was not subordinate to me.

Question: On behalf of SS authorities, two cremation furnaces for the concentration camps Dachau and Mauthausen were produced directly in the workshops of the company factory, as well as two eight-muffle furnaces for the crematoria of the Auschwitz Camp. What part did you personally play in the planning and manufacture of these furnaces?

Answer: In fact, in 1940 or 1941 (I don't remember exactly), two mobile cremation furnaces were manufactured in the factory of the Topf

Company on behalf of SS authorities, which were intended for the Dachau Camp. But when these furnaces were assembled, we sent one of them to the Mauthausen Concentration Camp on the instructions of the SS authorities in Berlin. My part in the construction of these two furnaces was as follows: I made a room available on the factory premises where the assembly of these furnaces took place, provided Prüfer with locksmiths for the assembly work, and supervised the production and machining of the metal frames and various individual parts for the aforementioned furnaces. The eight-muffle furnaces for the crematorium of the Auschwitz death camp were not manufactured in the factory of the Topf and Sons Company. The necessary metal parts and individual components for these furnaces were manufactured and machined in the workshops of the company's factory. The aforementioned work was also carried out with my knowledge and under my direct supervision. The shipment of the mobile cremation furnaces to the concentration camps Dachau and Mauthausen, and the shipment of the metal parts and spare parts for the cremation furnaces built by our company in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, were the responsibility of the so-called shipping office, which was under the control of the boss Ludwig Topf.

Question: What equipment for the gas chambers built by the Topf and Sons Company in the concentration camps was manufactured in the factory of this company?

Answer: Under my direction, ventilation devices for air intake and extraction were built in the factory of the Topf Company, which, as I later learned, were installed in the gas chambers at Auschwitz. The chief engineer of the Topf Company, Karl Schulze, was responsible for the construction and drawings of these devices.

Question: Who was in charge of the assembly of these devices in Auschwitz?

Answer: I selected the fitter Heinrich Messing to carry out the assembly of these ventilation devices, and sent him to the Auschwitz Camp. The latter carried out the assembly work under the direct supervision of Chief Engineer K. Schulze, who traveled to the Auschwitz Camp several times especially for this purpose.

Question: Did you personally have to go to the concentration camps?

Answer: No, I personally never went to a single concentration camp.

Question: What issues did you have to resolve together with Engineer Kurt Prüfer with regard to the construction and equipment of the camp crematoria?

Answer: As far as I remember, the chief engineer of the Topf Company, Kurt Prüfer, approached me with the following questions in connection with the construction and equipment of the camp crematoria:

1. Since various metal parts and individual components for the cremation furnaces built in the concentration camps were produced under my guidance in the workshops of the Topf Company's factory on behalf of the SS authorities, Prüfer turned to me in a number of cases to clarify the deadlines, within which these or those parts could be manufactured and sent to the construction site. In such cases, I always provided Kurt Prüfer with the necessary information on the issues falling within his area of responsibility.

2. There were cases where Prüfer, after the SS authorities had ordered the production of these or those metal parts for the camp crematoria, discussed with me what kind of iron or steel these parts should be made of.

There were also cases where, at his request, I provided Prüfer with fitters (2 men) for the assembly of the cremation furnaces.

Question: During this interrogation, you referred to a number of facts which prove and confirm your direct involvement in the execution of the orders by SS authorities in the construction and equipping of the crematoria in the concentration camps. Why did you deny these facts in your personal confrontation with the defendant Kurt Prüfer?

Answer: During my personal confrontation with the defendant Kurt Prüfer, I denied the facts he cited concerning my direct involvement in carrying out the orders by SS authorities to build and equip the camp crematoria, because I no longer remembered them well, and because I was afraid that a confession might incriminate me even more. After my confrontation in person, I reconsidered everything and decided to make truthful statements to the court of inquiry.

Question: How many crematoria were built and equipped by the Topf Company in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp with your involvement?

Answer: As a lot of time has passed since then, I cannot answer this question precisely. I only know that all orders from SS authorities for the construction and equipment of the crematoria and gas chambers in the Auschwitz Camp were carried out in full by the Topf and Sons Company. I have already stated my involvement in the execution of this work.

Question: We are presenting you with photocopies of parts of a correspondence between the Topf and Sons Company and the Construction Office of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, which show that, between 1940 and 1943, the company built and equipped five powerful crematoria with gas chambers in the said camp, in which more than 4,700 prisoners

were exterminated every day. What can you say about the documents presented to you?

Answer: The documents presented to me do indeed show that five powerful crematoria were built by the Topf and Sons Company with my participation in the Auschwitz death camp, in which more than 4,700 prisoners were exterminated every day. I recognize that the aforementioned documents also convict me of having participated in the work of creating and building the technical means used by the SS men to exterminate innocent people imprisoned in the concentration camps.

The interrogation protocol was read to me in German translation; my statements are accurately reproduced in it (signed Braun).

The interrogation was conducted by: Chief Operative Plenipotentiary of the 4th Department of the 3rd Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR Lieutenant Colonel Doperchuk (signed Doperchuk).

Present at the interrogation as German interpreter was the operational plenipotentiary of the 4th Department of the 3rd Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR Lieutenant Kush (signed Kush).

10) Interrogation Protocol dated 28 February 1948

Interrogator: Lieutenant Colonel Doperchuk

Interpreter: Lieutenant Kush

The interrogation started at 15:10 and ended at 18:20.

Question: At an earlier date, you were presented with the charges brought against you under Article 58-2 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic. The charges against you are as follows:

1. As head of production of the Topf and Sons Company, from 1940 to 1943, you participated directly in the organization and execution of work carried out by said company in the concentration camps for the construction and equipment of crematoria and gas chambers, in which mass extermination of completely innocent people took place.

2. You harassed citizens of the USSR and other countries who had been forcibly mobilized to work in the factory of the Topf Company: You supervised them and forced them to perform forced labor.

3. In 1941, as deputy to the counterintelligence representative, you directed the anti-espionage activities and the fight against acts of sabotage and subversion in the factory of the Topf and Sons Company, and informed the authorities of the SD and the Gestapo about the mood among the workers of the company.

Do you plead guilty to the acts of which you are accused?

Answer: Article 58-4 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic has been explained to me, and I understand the substance of the charges against me.

I plead guilty:

a) As production manager of the Topf and Sons Company, to have participated directly in the organization and execution of work carried out by said company in the concentration camps Buchenwald, Mauthausen, Dachau and Auschwitz for the construction of crematoria, and also to have organized the manufacture of the necessary equipment for these crematoria in the company factory at the order of SS authorities.

b) In compliance with the instructions of company boss Ludwig Topf, to have ordered foreign workers, including citizens of the USSR, who were forcibly mobilized to work in the company factory and who were under my command, to perform forced labor, to have ordered the workshop managers to carefully observe the behavior of these workers, and to have demanded that the workers perform the production tasks in a qualitatively flawless manner. The aforementioned foreign workers were kept under guard in the factory warehouse, called in to do various auxiliary work on my instructions, and paid 20 to 30% less than the German workers for this work.

c) After I was called in by the head of the company, Ludwig Topf, to act as deputy counterintelligence representative in the company factory, I was in charge of anti-espionage activities and the fight against acts of sabotage and subversion, and furthermore, with Ludwig Topf's knowledge, I reported to the SD representative Machemehl on the mood of the company workers.

With regard to the accusation made against me that I participated in the work of equipping gas chambers in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, I declare that, as I later learned, the equipment for these chambers was procured directly by the chief engineer of the Topf Company, Schultze Karl, on whose instructions the fitter Messing Heinrich was assigned to me for the purpose of carrying out the work of installing the ventilation equipment. I did not know that these devices were installed in gas chambers in which the SS men poisoned prisoners with gas.

Question: Were the ventilation devices mentioned manufactured by the Topf and Sons Company?

Answer: Yes, these ventilation devices were manufactured under my leadership in the factory of the Topf Company, and as the orders by the SS

authorities show, they were intended for the Auschwitz Concentration Camp. I did not know that they were intended to equip the gas chambers in Auschwitz.

The interrogation report was read to me in German translation; my statements are accurately reported there.

Interrogated by: The operations officer of the 4th section of the 3rd Central Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR Lieutenant Colonel Doperchuk (signed: Doperchuk). The military prosecutor of the Supreme Court of the USSR Justice Lieutenant Colonel Novikov (signed: Novikov).

The interrogation was attended as a German-speaking interpreter by the operations officer of the 4th section of the 3rd Central Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR, Lieutenant Kush (signed: Kush).

11) Interrogation Protocol dated 10 March 1948

Interrogator: Lieutenant Colonel Novikov

Interpreter: Lieutenant Kush

The Interrogation started at 14:30 and ended at 24:15 [sic]

Question: Explain when and by whom you were called in to work as deputy to the counterintelligence representative in the Topf and Sons Company!

Answer: I was called in by the owner of the company, Ludwig Topf, in the fall of 1941 to work as deputy to the counterintelligence representative in the Topf and Sons Company.

Question: What was Ludwig Topf's relationship to the work of the counterintelligence authorities?

Answer: As the owner of the company, Ludwig Topf was in contact with the counterintelligence authorities, and was a representative of these authorities for anti-espionage activities in the factories and buildings of his company. He apparently chose me as his deputy in the area of counterintelligence, because I was the company's head of production, directly managed the engineering factory, and had closer contact than others with the workers and workshop managers working in the company's factories.

Question: What did you do in practice as deputy to the counterintelligence representative?

Answer: On Ludwig Topf's instructions, I took measures to prevent possible acts of subversion and sabotage in the factory and other production facilities of the company. To this end, I personally instructed the workshop managers to check the machines and lathes several times a day,

but also to monitor the behavior of the workers. I demanded particularly close observation and control from them with regard to the foreign workers who had been forcibly mobilized to work in Germany. I reported all this to Ludwig Topf, as well as the mood among the workers, which the workshop managers regularly reported to me.

Question: Were you only in contact with Ludwig Topf during your counterintelligence work?

Answer: Yes, during my counterintelligence work, I was only in contact with Ludwig Topf. At the same time, with Ludwig Topf's knowledge, I gave the authorized signatory Max Machemehl verbal reports on the state and work at the factories of the Topf and Sons Company on several occasions. Machemehl was an authorized representative or agent of the Erfurt SD office.

Question: Please report on this in more detail!

Answer: In 1944, I can't remember exactly when, the authorized signatory Max Machemehl, head of the commercial department of the Topf Company, came to see me, and in a conversation with me, he was interested in the production process and the mood of the workers in the company's factory. I told him that everything was in perfect order in the factory, and that I had never heard any negative comments from the workers. After two or three months, Max Machemehl came to me again and asked the same questions. Instead of an answer, I asked him to see the head of the company, Ludwig Topf, and informed him of Machemehl's demands. In response to [Ludwig] Topf's question as to why he was so interested in these matters, Max Machemehl presented him with a letter signed by the head of the SD in Erfurt, SS *Obersturmbannführer* Wolf. This letter stated that he, meaning M. Machemehl, absolutely had to submit reports to the SD on the state of the Topf and Sons Companies. Ludwig Topf then suggested that I inform M. Machemehl about the questions that interested him. I then informed M. Machemehl, in the presence of Ludwig Topf, that workers at the company factory had expressed their dissatisfaction in conversations about the reduction in food rations and the deterioration in their food supply, and that, as a result, productivity in the factory was falling noticeably. Two to three months after this conversation, I met M. Machemehl by chance on the way to the company's management building. During the conversation, he informed me that, at the request of SS *Obersturmbannführer* Wolf, he had to report to the SD department on the existence of metal-raw-material stocks in the company, and had already received information on this from the accounting office. Machemehl apparently told me this,

because the question of the availability of metal raw materials and the supply of these to the company fell within my area of responsibility as the company's head of production. Apart from these three cases, I did not speak to Max Machemehl again and did not give him any more reports to pass on to the SD department.

In March 1946, Max Machemehl was arrested by the Soviet administration in Erfurt, after which there was a confrontation between him and myself concerning the question I mentioned.

Question: Were there any cases of sabotage or subversion in the industrial plants of Topf and Sons Company?

Question: Then why were one German and two foreign workers who worked in the Topf Company's factory arrested following your denunciation?

Answer: No Topf workers were arrested in response to my denunciation.

Question: During the interrogations on 5 and 20 March 1946, you stated that, as a result of your work as deputy to the counterintelligence representative, one German and two foreign workers were arrested by the German authorities for sabotage. Why are you now trying to cover up these facts?

Answer: During the interrogations on 5 and 20 March 1946, I stated that two of the foreign workers at the Topf Company's factory had been arrested. One, whose last name was Kusmenko, was arrested on the instructions of the company boss, because he had argued with a German worker at work and had beaten him up. The second worker, who was Russian by nationality (I don't remember his last name), was arrested at night by the Gestapo, reportedly for participating in the preparation of the distribution of anti-fascist leaflets. I also reported that a German worker who was employed as a guard was dismissed for loafing. It may be that the interpreter or the officer who interrogated me did not understand what I said and did not write it down correctly. I did not testify during the investigation that the arrests I mentioned were the result of my denunciations as deputy counterintelligence representative, because in reality I had nothing to do with these arrests.

Question: During the interrogation on 5 March 1946, you testified that you had reported to the Gestapo, via Ludwig Topf, the escape of four foreign workers from the factory, and that you had given Max Machemehl a report on the mood of the workers in the factory six times. Do these statements of yours correspond to reality?

Answer: This part of my statements largely corresponds to reality, but has not been written down correctly. I did indeed report to Ludwig Topf about the escape of four foreign workers (two Russians and two Frenchmen) from the factory in 1944, and the police and Gestapo were informed immediately, so that the necessary tracing measures could be initiated. I also told Max Machemehl about this incident. As for the reports on the mood of the workers at the Topf Company, I only gave him two such reports, as I had already testified before. I can't explain why the minutes of the interrogation of 5 March 1946 say that I reported to him six times.

Question: Did you know Johanna Büschleb, the employee of the Topf and Sons Company?

Answer: I knew the employee of Topf and Sons Johanna Büschleb. She worked as the personal secretary, typist and stenographer for the head of the company, Ludwig Topf. My relationship with Büschleb was purely business-related. There was no personal contact between us.

Question: The minutes of the interrogation of the witness Büschleb Johanna on 11 March 1946 will be read to you. Tell me in what matters you and Ludwig Topf corresponded with the Gestapo!

Answer: I never had any correspondence with Gestapo authorities. Personally, I merely informed Ludwig Topf from time to time about the mood of the workers and the condition of the equipment in the factory, as I have already stated. There is no doubt that Ludwig Topf used my information for a written report to the Gestapo. But he drew up this report without my involvement.

Question: When and in what numbers were foreign workers brought in to work at the Topf and Sons Company?

Answer: There were about 270 foreign workers in the Topf Company's factory. The first of these came to us in small groups of 20 to 30 men in 1941.

Question: What nationalities did these workers belong to, and how were they made available to the company?

Answer: The foreign workers were supplied to work in the Topf Company's factory by the employment office. The first group of foreign workers supplied to the company consisted exclusively of French prisoners of war. There were thirty of them. This was in 1941. Later, workers from Belgium, Holland, Russia and Italy joined us in small groups. By the end of 1942, there were around 270 people. They all worked in the factory until Germany's capitulation. There were about 70 Russians among these workers.

Question: To whom were these workers directly subordinate, and who distributed them to the workplaces?

Answer: All the foreign workers working in the factory were subordinate to me, and were assigned by me with the participation of the authorized representative of the Nazi party (factory manager) [Eduard] Pudenz. The majority of these workers were assigned by me to do unskilled labor in the factory workshops. Some of them were employed as metalworkers, lathe operators, etc.

Question: Where and under what conditions were these workers housed?

Answer: The foreign workers employed in the plants of the Topf and Sons Company were housed in six wooden barracks in a specially built factory camp, and guarded by the police. They were poorly fed. All these workers were assigned by me to groups of two to three skilled German workers from the company, who assigned them specific tasks on my instructions, and supervised their work. Initially, the forty-eight-hour week was set for the foreign workers, just as it was for the Germans, but later, from the end of 1942, the fifty-six-hour week was introduced for them at the behest of the German authorities. They received 25 to 30% less pay than the company's permanent workers. They were only paid a small proportion of this, as almost all of their wages were spent on their food and other benefits.

Question: Were there any conflicts between these workers and the Topf Company's administration?

Answer: During the entire period, there was only one conflict between the foreign workers and the Topf Company's administration, and that was in 1943. The following happened then: Because of the poor diet, the foreign workers refused to go to work as a group. When they reported this to me, I personally went to the camp barracks, and convinced myself that the food for the workers was very poorly prepared, whereupon I instructed the camp administration to feed them better. I then negotiated with the workers and persuaded them to go to work. In this way, I resolved the conflict without the use of force.

Question: Did you report this conflict to the Gestapo?

Answer: No, I personally reported it to company boss Ludwig Topf. I don't know whether he then reported the conflict to the Gestapo.

Question: Were repressive measures taken against the participants in this hunger riot?

Answer: No, there were none.

Question: Were there any arrests of foreign workers?

Answer: Of the foreign workers who worked at the Topf and Sons Company, only two people were arrested during the entire period, citizens of the USSR, as I have already noted. The Ukrainian worker Kusmenko, who was arrested by the police for beating up a German worker, was not detained for more than a week, and was then released. He then continued to work in the company factory until Germany's capitulation. I know nothing about the fate of the second worker who was arrested by the Gestapo, reportedly for participating in the production and distribution of anti-fascist leaflets. Rumor has it that this worker was connected to some underground organization that existed in another German factory. This organization was uncovered by the Gestapo, and the worker was subsequently arrested.

Question: As deputy counterintelligence representative in the Topf Company, did you have agents among these foreign workers?

Answer: No, I didn't have any such agents. I only asked the workshop managers to observe the behavior of the foreign workers while they were working in the company's workshops, and to monitor their work.

Question: Were there adolescents among the foreign workers employed in factories of the Topf Company?

Answer: There were 12 adolescents aged between 14 and 17 among the foreign workers employed in the factory of the Topf Company, all of them Russians. Outwardly, they all appeared physically strong and mature, which is why they were deployed under the same conditions as the adult workers. Two adolescents aged 14 to 15 worked eight hours a day, because they were assigned to the apprentice workshop, where they also learned the turning and metalworking trades.

Question: How did you personally treat the foreign workers who worked in the factory of the Topf and Sons Company?

Answer: As head of production at the company, I personally required these workers to have a positive attitude to their work, and to complete their production tasks to a satisfactory standard and on time. To this end, I assigned them to the workshop managers and individual skilled workers in the company factory, who monitored their work.

Question: What sanctions or punishments did you impose on these workers for misconduct?

Answer: We, meaning myself and the workshop managers, reprimanded and in some cases punished the foreign workers for their bad attitude to work, absenteeism, etc. No other sanctions were imposed.

Question: Were these workers beaten?

Answer: There were cases where the commandant of the factory camp [Wilhelm] Buchröder and the supervisor Wittermann, who looked after the condition of the factory equipment, beat foreign workers. I never beat any of these workers. I would like to add that Buchröder and Wittermann were arrested by the Soviet army authorities after Red-Army units marched into Erfurt.

Question: Who were Buchröder and Wittermann under?

Answer: Camp commander Buchröder was an employee of the S.A., but was paid by the Topf and Sons Company. As commander of the camp, he reported to the relevant S.A. authorities, but also to the company boss Ludwig Topf. The supervisor Wittermann was subordinate to me.

Question: The statements of Paul Erdmann, G. Mairer, H. Schmidt, O. Back and A. Risljand about the situation of the foreign workers in the Topf Company's factory and your treatment of these workers were read out to you. What would you like to say to the investigating authority about the statements of the witnesses mentioned?

Answer: The statements of the above-mentioned witnesses about the camps of foreign workers at Topf and Sons Company are essentially correct. As far as my treatment of these workers is concerned, the witnesses did not testify correctly. I have indeed always demanded a positive attitude towards work, and a qualitatively satisfactory fulfillment of production tasks from all workers. I also made these demands of the foreign workers, but I was not rude to them, and do not remember any cases where I personally scolded any of them. I have already stated that almost all foreign workers were called in by the company to do unskilled work, and were assigned by me to the workshop managers and individual skilled workers of German nationality for this purpose. Therefore, if this or that production task was not completed on time, I only discussed it with these workshop managers or skilled workers, and not with the foreign workers. There were two young people aged 14 to 15 and about ten aged 16 to 17 among the Russian citizens, or more precisely the citizens of the USSR, working in the company's factory. The two 14 to 15-year-old adolescents were assigned by me to the apprentice workshop, where they learned the lathe and locksmith trades. They worked eight hours a day.

The interrogation report was read to me in German translation; my statements are accurately reported therein (signed: Braun).

Interrogated by: The operations officer of the 4th section of the 3rd Central Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR Lieutenant Colonel Doperchuk (signed: Doperchuk). The military prosecutor of the

Supreme Court of the USSR Justice Lieutenant Colonel Novikov (signed: Novikov).

The interrogation was attended as a German-speaking interpreter by the operations officer of the 4th section of the 3rd Central Office of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR, Lieutenant Kush (signed: Kush).

Appendices

Abbreviations

- APMO:** *Archiwum Państwowego Muzeum Oświęcim-Brzezinka* (Archives of the State Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau)
- BAK:** Bundesarchiv Koblenz
- FSBRF** *Federalnaya Sluzhba Bezopasnosti Rossiskoi Federatsi* (Federal Security Office of the Russian Federation)
- GARF:** *Gosudarstvenni Archiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii* (State Archives of the Russian Federation), Moscow
- IMT** *Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal, Nuremberg, 14 November 1945 – 1 October 1946, Nuremberg, 1949.*
- RGVA:** *Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennii Vojennii Archiv* (Russian State Archives of War), Moscow
- SE** *Stadtarchiv Erfurt* (Erfurt City Archives)
- WAPL** *Wojewódzkie Archiwum Panstwowe w Lublinie* (Regional State Archives of Lublin)

Documents

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Предоставил допросы

1946 года майора Бадя. Мв, май. Дотдильмина
 «Кр. б. мерц» вв. армии сгвардии капитан
 Шалотуновский и зам. нач. Дотдильмина сгвардии
 майор Морутинко, допросили в качестве
 задержанного

Прюфер Курт Термахович,
 1899 года рождения, уроженцу города
 Эрфурт, из рабочих, служащий, со
 средним техническим образованием,
 немец, немецко-подданный,
 житель: Эрфурт, деревня Билльмбин,
 улица Вилльмбах, 2.

В ответственности за дачу ложных
 показаний предупрежден. *Kurt Prüfer*

В ответственности за правильность
 перевода предупрежден. *Kurt Prüfer*

Вопрос: С какого года Вы состоите в
 национал-социалистической партии? *Торфштейн*

Ответ: Я состою в партии с детства
 и состою в партии с детства. *Kurt Prüfer*

Document 1: Front page of the manuscript record of the interrogation of Kurt Prüfer on 5 March 1946. Source: FSBRF, N-19262, Criminal Case 1719, p. 32.

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ПРОТОКОЛ ДОПРОСА

Обвиняемого ПРЕМЬЕР Курта Германовича

От 11 февраля 1948 года

Допрос начат в 14 ч. 00 м.

—" окончен в 18 ч. 00 м.

ВОПРОС: - Уточните сколько времени и в качестве кого Вы работали в немецкой машиностроительной фирме "ТОПФ и сыновья" в гор. Эрфурт.

ОТВЕТ: - В фирме "ТОПФ и сыновья" я работал непрерывно с 1920 года по день своего ареста в качестве старшего инженера конструкторского бюро /Отдел "Д-1У"/ и руководил группой по конструированию и строительству топливных установок и печей для крематориев.

ВОПРОС: - Какое Вы имели отношение к работам фирмы "ТОПФ" по строительству крематориев в немецких концентрационных лагерях.

ОТВЕТ: : Являясь старшим инженером по конструированию и строительству отопительных установок я принимал непосредственное участие в работах фирмы "ТОПФ" по строительству в немецких концлагерях крематориев.

С этой целью, по заданию фирмы, я неоднократно выезжал в концентрационные лагеря, где на месте консультировал и руководил работами по строительству печек для крематориев, а также занимался конструированием этих печек.

ВОПРОС: В каких концентрационных лагерях фирма "ТОПФ" строила крематории и по чьему заданию.

ОТВЕТ: : Строительство крематориев в концентрационных лагерях фирмой "ТОПФ" производилось по заданию центрального

Протокол допроса

1946 года марта 5 дня. Мы, начальник 2отделения вкр. «смерш» 8гв. армии гвардии капитан Шатуновский и зам. нач. 2отделения гвардии майор Моруженко, допросили в качестве задержанного

Прюфер Курт Германович, 1891 года рождения, уроженец города Эрфурт, из рабочих, служащий, со средним техническим образованием, инженер, немец, немецко-подданный, житель г. Эрфурт, деревня Бишентич, улица Амкирбех, 2

Об ответственности за дачу ложных показаний предупрежден.

(Подпись Прюфера)

Об ответственности за правильность перевода переводчик предупрежден.

(Подпись переводчика)

Вопрос: С какого года вы состоите в национал-социалистической партии?

Ответ: Членом национал-социалистической партии я состою с первых дней прихода

(Подпись Прюфера)

Гитлера к власти, - с мая месяца 1933 года.

Вопрос: С какого времени и в качестве кого вы работаете в фирме «Топф»?

Ответ: С 1920 года я работаю у фирмы «Топф» на заводе в г. Эрфуте. До 1923 года я был техником, а с 1923 года до последнего времени я работаю в качестве главного инженера отделения строительства крематориев и отопления.

Вопрос: Какое количество крематориев было построено фирмой «Топф» по годам?

Ответ: Фирма «Топф» с 1912 по 1933 год построила сто десять крематориев, или сто десять печей для кремации

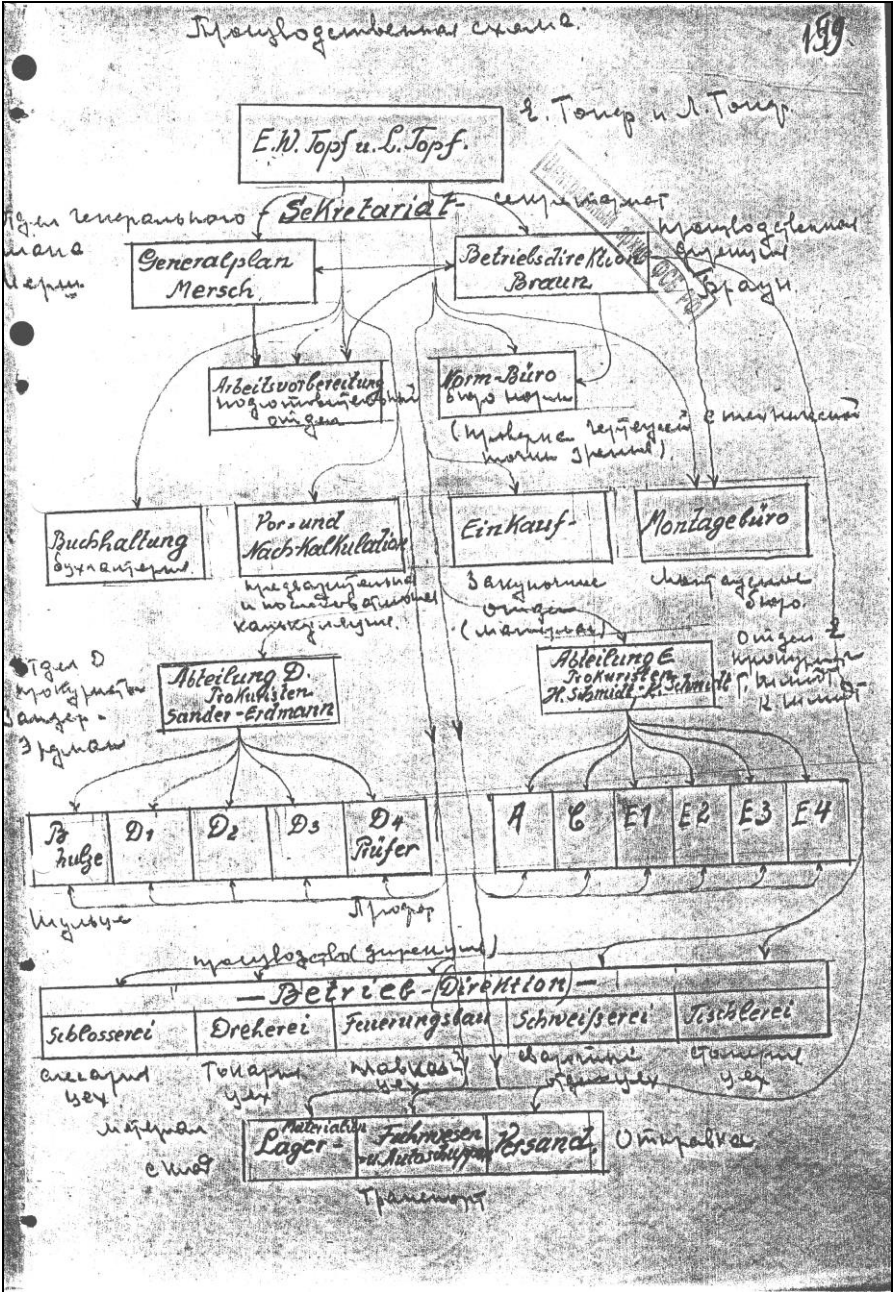
С 1933 до 1945 года было построено до пятидесяти печей для кремации

С 1942 до 1945 года построено до двадцати пяти печей – кремаций.

Вопрос: С какого года, где и какое количество крематориев построено для концлагерей Германии?

(Подпись Прюфера)

Document 3: Front page of the typescript record (subsequent transcription) of the interrogation of Kurt Prüfer on 5 March 1946. Source: FSBRF, N-19262, Criminal Case 1719, p. 32.



Document 4: Outline of the structure of the Topf Company (organigram) drawn by Kurt Prüfer. Source: FSBRF, N-19262, Criminal Case 1719, p.

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Beschreibung der Fa. F.A. TOPF & Söhne, Erfurt

Die Herren TOPF, Ludwig und Ernst-Wolfgang waren die Besitzer und Chefs der Firma und leiteten diese unmittelbar.

Beide Herren verfügten über die Bearbeitung der Aufträge, die von der Fa. in der Fabrik hergestellt werden sollen.

Von hier wurde bestimmt welche Aufträge angenommen und welche abgelehnt werden sollen.

Das unmittelbar unterstellte Sekretariat, von 2 Damen besetzt, gab die Anweisung der Herren TOPF, an die einzelnen Abteilungen weiter und hier wurde ausserdem die ein- und auslaufende Briefpost erledigt und die Personalsachen der Mitarbeiter /Angestellte und Arbeiter/ bearbeitet.

Die Stelle Generalplan prüfte die eingegangenen Aufträge, gemeinsam mit TOPF über Annahme oder Ablehnung und ordnete dies Falls angenommen, in eine Dringlichkeitsstufe. Hier wurden ausserdem die Kontrollmarken oder Scheine, entgegengenommen und weitergeleitet. Dieses Büro war das wichtigste in der Fa. und wurde von Herrn MERSCH geleitet.

Gemeinsam mit der Stelle Generalplan lief das Büro Betriebsdirektion.

Der Betriebsdirektor als Leiter des ganzen Betriebes (mit Ausnahme der technischen Büros) hatte die Bearbeitung der Aufträge innerhalb des Fabrikbetriebes zu überwachen und mit zu bestimmen, welche Aufträge vordringlich und welche für den Betrieb nicht geeignet, daher abzulehnen sind. Ausserdem wurden von hier aus die Arbeiten an die einzelnen Betriebsstellen verteilt und die Herstellungsweise durchgesprochen und festgelegt. Hier wurden auch die Arbeiter angenommen und entlassen. Ausserdem die Bearbeitungsmaschinen und die Werkzeuge der gesamten Fabrik kontrolliert und Vorschläge zur Verbesserung und Auswechslung dieser vorgenommen.

Im Büro der Arbeitsvorbereitung wurden die anzufertigen Maschinenteile in die einzelnen Arbeitsgänge zergliedert, die Kosten für die Bearbeitung der Teile festgelegt, also die Akkordlöhne festgesetzt, die Stücklisten und die Werkstattzeichnungen überprüft und Fehler richtig gestellt und geprüft welche auf Vorrat liegenden Maschinenteile Verwendung finden sollen.

TOPF
SILO BEGASUNGSANLAGEN

**VERNICHTEN
ALLE
GETREIDESCHÄDLINGE!**

**MASCHINENFABRIK
J. A. TOPF & SÖHNE, ERFURT
SPEICHERBAU und GETREIDEPFLEGEANLAGEN**

Document 6: Advertisement sheet of the Topf Company concerning disinfestation systems for silos. Source: SE, 5/411 A 191.

J. A. TOPF & SOHNE

Erfurt

Abteilung Spezialfabrik für Speicher-Anlagen.

Betriebsanleitung für Areginal-Begasungsanlagen



- 1.) Jede Areginal-Begasungsanlage ist bei der zuständigen Feuerversicherungs-Gesellschaft anzumelden. Vom Verbands privater Feuerversicherungs-Gesellschaften und vom Verbands öffentlicher Feuerversicherungs-Anstalten in Deutschland sind uns nachstehende Richtlinien zugegangen. Diese müssen in allen Punkten beachtet werden.
 - a) Das Areginal ist eine feuergefährliche Flüssigkeit der Gefahrenklasse A I und unterliegt der Polizeiverordnung über den Verkehr mit brennbaren Flüssigkeiten.
 - b) Die Einrichtung einer Areginal-Begasungs-Anlage gilt als anzeigepflichtige Gefahrerhöhung gemäss § 6 der A.F.B.
 - c) Das Areginal darf nur in Spezialanlagen, die vom Verband privater Feuerversicherungs-Gesellschaften und vom Verband öffentlicher Feuerversicherungs-Anstalten, beide in Berlin, anerkannt sind, verwendet werden.
 - d) Es darf der zur Begasung dienenden Luft nur soviel Areginal zugesetzt werden, dass die Mischung mit ausreichender Sicherheit unterhalb der sogenannten unteren Explosionsgrenze bleibt. Zum Zwecke der Kontrolle muss ein Areginal-Konzentrationsmesser in die Anlage eingebaut sein; dieser darf im Höchsthalle den Stand von 120 ppm in 1 cbm Luft erreichen. Eine weitere Zugabe von Areginal ist unzulässig.
 - e) Begasungsapparate sind in einer feuerbeständig von angrenzenden Räumlichkeiten abgetrennten Kammern unterzubringen; in dieser befindliche elektrische Einrichtungen sind gemäss den einschlägigen Sicherheitsvorschriften des V.D.E. für explosionsgefährdete Räume auszuführen.


Document 7: Front page of the Topf Company's operating instructions for disinfection systems for silos with Areginal. Source: SE 5/411 A 182.

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"УТ ВЕРИДА"

НАЧАЛЬНИК ОУД. ОКР "СМЕРН" 3 ГВ АРМИИ
ГВАРДИИ ПОЛКОВНИК


" 7 " марта 1946 г.



"САНИЦИОНИРУУ"

ВОЕННЫЙ ПРОКУРОР 3 ГВАРДИИ АРМИИ
ГВАРДИИ ПОЛКОВНИК ЮСТИЦИИ

" 7 " марта 1946 г.



ПОСТАНОВЛЕНИЕ

/ Об избрании меры пресечения

" 6 " марта 1946 г.

Я, зам. нач. 2 отделения ОКР "СМЕРН" 3 гв. армии гв. майор МОРУЗЕНКО, рассмотрев материалы о преступной деятельности-

ШУЛЬЦЕ Карла Карловича, 1900 г. рождения, урож. г. Берлина, выходец из семьи владельца кондитерской фабрики, по социологическим службам, с высшим образованием, инженер-конструктор, немец, немецко-подданный, житель г. Эрфурт, Рудольфштеттерштрассе 3,

НА Б Е Л:

Что ШУЛЬЦЕ Карл Карлович подозревается в преступлениях, предусмотренных частью I Указа Президиума Верховного Совета СССР от 19 апреля 1943 г. и принимая во внимание, что ШУЛЬЦ находясь на свободе может уклониться от следствия и суда, руководствуясь ст.ст. 145 и 153 УПК РСФСР,

П О С Т А Н О В И Л:

Мерой пресечения способов уклонения от следствия и суда ШУЛЬЦ Карлу Карловичу избрать содержание под стражей, о чем в порядке ст. 146 УПК РСФСР объявить арестованному под расписку в настоящем постановлении.

Копию постановления направить в/прокурору 3 гв. армии и передать начальнику тюрьмы для приобщения к личному тюремному делу.

ЗАМ НАЧ-КА 2 ОУД. ОКР "СМЕРН" 3 ГА
ГВ. ДИЛ. МАЙОР
Морозенко / МОРУЗЕНКО /

СОГЛАСЕН: НАЧАЛЬНИК 2 ОУД. ОКР "СМЕРН" 3 ГА
ГВАРДИИ КАПИТАН
Шатуновский / ШАТУНОВСКИЙ /

Настоящее постановление мне об"явлено:
" 7 " марта 1946 г. *В. С. Шатуновский*
/подпись /

Document 8: Arrest warrant for Karl Schultze dated 7 March 1945. Source: FSBRF, N-19262, Criminal Case 1719, p. 13.

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"УТВЕРЖДАЮ"
 ЗАМ. НАЧАЛЬНИКА 3 ГЛАВНОГО УПРАВЛЕНИЯ
 МГБ СССР
 Генерал-майор /БУДАРЕВ/
 "3" " апреля 1948 г.

Центральный архив ФСБ РФ

П О С Т А Н О В Л Е Н И Е

/О направлении в Особый лагерь МВД/

"3" " апреля 1948 г. г о р . М о с к в а .

Я, ст. оперуполномоченный 4 отдела 3 Главного Управления МГБ СССР подполковник ДОПЕРЧУК, рассмотрев следственное дело № 1719 по обвинению ПРЮФЕР Курта, 1891 года рождения, немца, германского подданного, члена НСДАП с 1933 г. в совершении преступлений, предусмотренных п. I Указа Президиума Верховного Совета СССР от 19/IV- 1943 г.

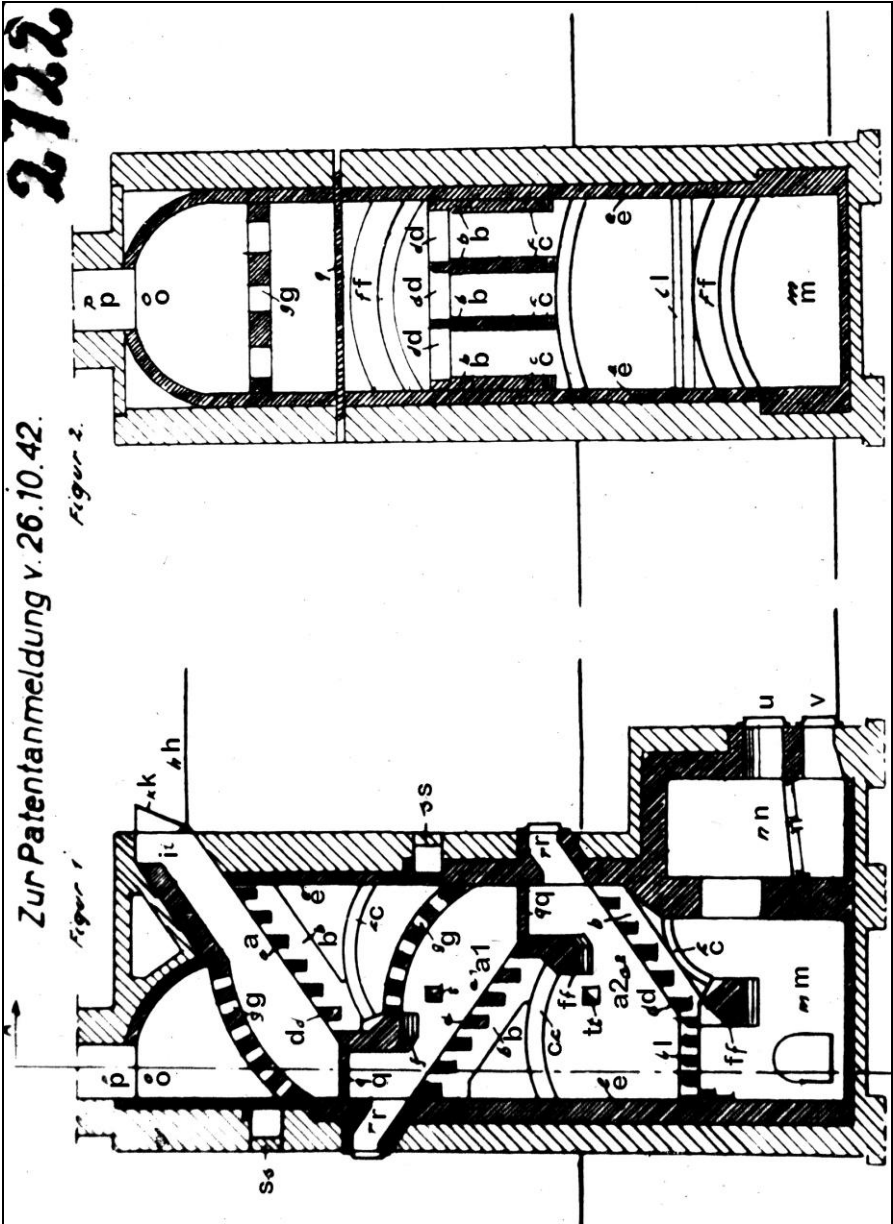
Н А Ш Е Л:

ПРЮФЕР Курт на протяжении 1940-44 г.г. был связан с карательными органами "СС" и по их заданию строил и оборудовал в концентрационных лагерях смерти крематории и газовые камеры, для массового истребления ни в чем не повинных людей.

Только в Освенцимском лагере смерти под руководством и при непосредственном участии обвиняемого ПРЮФЕР было построено и оборудовано пять мощных крематориев и 4 газовых камеры, в которых ежедневно гитлеровцы истребляли более 4700 граждан СССР, Восточной Европы, Польши и других стран.

ПРЮФЕР арестован органами контрразведки МГБ СССР 7/Е-46 года

Document 9: First page of the "Ordinance for Committing to a Special Camp of the Ministry of Internal Affairs" with which Kurt Prüfer was sent to a labor camp for 25 years. Source: FSB RF, N-19262, Criminal Case 1719, p. 451.



Document 10: Schematic drawing of a “Continuously operating corpse-cremation furnace for mass use” (“Kontinuierlich arbeitender Leichen-Verbrennungsofen für Massenbetrieb”), attached to Fritz Sander’s patent application of 26 October 1942. Source: Mattogno/Deana, Vol. II, Document 155, p. 232.

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1.

Ich, Kurt Prüfer als Oberingenieur in der Maschinenbau-Abteilung, bei der Fa. J.A. Topf u. Söhne, Erfurt beschäftigt, hatte im Auftrage der Herren Topf mit Herrn Betriebsdirektor Braun folgende geschäftliche Angelegenheiten zu besprechen und zu behandeln.

- 1) Gestellung von Helfern und Schlossermontören, so im Jahre 1940, Helfer für die Baustelle Ausschwitz, desgl. auch im Jahr 1942 und 1943 (Frühjahr).
- 2) Weiter wurden die Reklamationen der Montöre über nicht passende Eisenteile, die entweder in der Fabrik, oder durch fehlerhafte Aufgabee beziehungsweise Zeichnung, auf die Baustelle kamen, besprochen und hierbei die Fehlerquelle festgestellt. Diesen Besprechungen ging meistens ein von Herrn Braun ausgearbeiteter schriftlicher Bericht über die Herren Topf, voraus. Wie mir erinnerlich im Herbst 42 und Frühjahr 43 betreffend Baustelle Ausschwitz und Baustelle Mauthausen.
- 3) Für die Anfertigung von Schamottebrücken für die Muffeln der Ofen, die im Allgemeinen auf dem Werk in Erfurt mittels der Schamotte Masse „Monolit“ hergestellt wurden, fand mit Herrn Braun eine Aussprache über den Herstellungsplatz der Brücken, als auch über den Arbeiter, der die Anfertigung vornahm, statt. Diese ^{Ersatz-}Teile wurden tausend angefertigt. So im Jahre 1942, und 43 für die Lager Dachau und Ausschwitz.
- 4) Da während der Kriegszeit unser reichhaltiges Eisenlager nahezu aufgebraucht war und die gänglichen Eisensorten wie E u, L Winkel, T Eisen, I Doppel-I-Eisen, = Flacheisen nicht

Kurt Prüfer

Document 11: Kurt Prüfer's handwritten note of 19 February 1948 on Gustav Braun's duties at the Topf Company. Source: FSBRF, N-19262, Criminal Case 1719, pp. 149f.

2.

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immer zu haben waren, so mußte mit Herrn Braun besprochen werden, welche Eisen, die vorrätig waren und nicht für andere Kommissionen Verwendung fanden bzw. schon vorgesehen, genommen werden konnten. Diese Fragen waren hauptsächlich in den Jahren Herbst 42 u. Frühjahr 43 konkret.

- 5.) Auch wurden mit Herrn Braun Terminfragen erledigt, Herbst 42 u. Frühjahr 43.
- 6.) Da ich von den Herren Topf im Jahre 1944 den Auftrag bekam 4 Stück Wohnhäuser (kleinere) auf ein außerhalb des Fabriks-Grundstückes, gelegenen Plan zu erstellen, bzw. die Bauleitung zu übernehmen so waren mit Herrn Braun viele Fragen zu erledigen.
- a) Gestellung der zum Bau erforderlichen Gerüste.
 - b) Herabgabe von Fabriks-Maurer und Helfer u. Tischler.
 - c) Welche Vorrats-Materialien können vom Werk entnommen werden.
 - d) Gestellung von Fuhrwerken zur Anfuhr der Materialien auf die Baustelle.
 - e) Über die Verpflegung der auf der Baustelle beschäftigten Arbeiter von der Werksküche aus.

19.9.48

Kurt Trüper

Скоросамов Александр:

Од. Олзфисман. Уолг. З.п. Гл. м.с. с.с.
 Уолг. Олзфисман. Уолг. З.п. Гл. м.с. с.с.

(Олзфисман)

19.9.48

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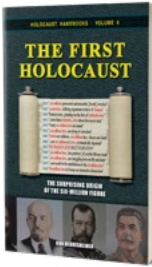
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HOLOCAUST HANDBOOKS

This ambitious, growing series addresses various aspects of the “Holocaust” of the WWII era. Most of them are based on decades of research from archives all over the world. They are heavily referenced. In contrast to most other works on this issue, the tomes of this series approach its topic with profound academic scrutiny and a critical attitude. Any Holocaust researcher ignoring this series will remain oblivious to some of the most important research in the field. These books are designed to both convince the common reader as well as academics. The following books have appeared so far, or are about to be released.

SECTION ONE: General Overviews of the Holocaust

The First Holocaust. The Surprising Origin of the Six-Million Figure. By Don Heddesheimer. This compact but substantive study documents



propaganda spread prior to, during and after the FIRST World War that claimed East European Jewry was on the brink of annihilation. The magic number of suffering and dying Jews was 6 million back then as well. The book details how these Jewish fundraising operations in America raised vast sums in the name of feeding suffering Polish and Russian Jews but actually funneled much of the money to Zionist and Communist groups. 5th ed., 200 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#6)

Lectures on the Holocaust. Controversial Issues Cross Examined. By Germar Rudolf. This book first explains why “the Holocaust” is an important topic, and that it is essential to keep an open mind about it. It then tells how many mainstream scholars expressed doubts and subsequently fell from grace. Next, the physical traces and documents about the various claimed crime scenes and murder weapons are discussed. After that, the reliability of witness testimony is examined. Finally, the author argues for a free

exchange of ideas on this topic. This book gives the most-comprehensive and up-to-date overview of the critical research into the Holocaust. With its dialogue style, it is easy to read, and it can even be used as an encyclopedic compendium. 4th ed., 597 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#15)

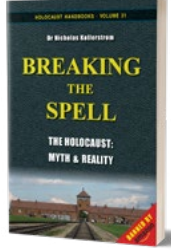
Breaking the Spell. The Holocaust, Myth & Reality. By Nicholas Kollerstrom. In 1941, British Intelligence analysts cracked the German “Enigma” code. Hence, in 1942 and 1943, encrypted radio communications between German concentration camps and the Berlin headquarters were decrypted. The intercepted data



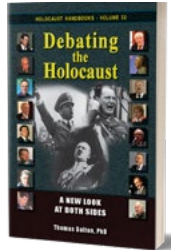
Pictured above are the first 50 volumes of scientific studies that comprise the series *Holocaust Handbooks*. More volumes and new editions are constantly in the works. Check www.HolocaustHandbooks.com for updates.

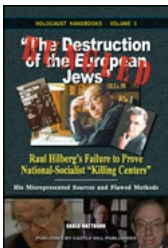
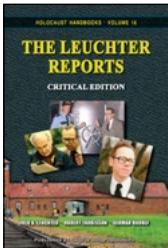
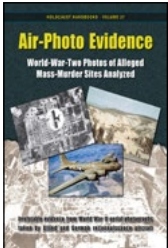
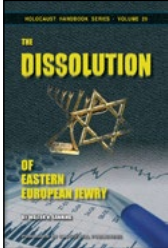
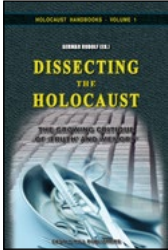
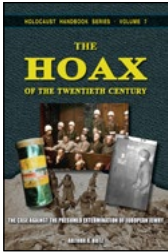
refutes the orthodox “Holocaust” narrative. It reveals that the Germans were desperate to reduce the death rate in their labor camps, which was caused by catastrophic typhus epidemics.

Dr. Kollerstrom, a science historian, has taken these intercepts and a wide array of mostly unchallenged corroborating evidence to show that “witness statements” supporting the human gas chamber narrative clearly clash with the available scientific data. Kollerstrom concludes that the history of the Nazi “Holocaust” has been written by the victors with ulterior motives. It is distorted, exaggerated and largely wrong. With a foreword by Prof. Dr. James Fetzler. 6th ed., 285 pages, b&w ill., bibl., index. (#31)



Debating the Holocaust. A New Look at Both Sides. By Thomas Dalton. Mainstream historians insist that there cannot be, may not be, any debate about the Holocaust. But ignoring it does not make this controversy go away. Traditional scholars admit that there was neither a budget, a plan, nor an order for the Holocaust; that the key camps have all but vanished, and so have any human remains; that material and unequivocal documentary evidence is absent; and that there are serious problems with survivor testimonies. Dalton juxtaposes the traditional Holocaust narrative with revisionist challenges and then analyzes the mainstream’s responses to them. He reveals the weaknesses of both sides, while declaring revisionism the winner of the current state of the debate.





4th ed., 342 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#32)

The Hoax of the Twentieth Century. The Case against the Presumed Extermination of European Jewry. By Arthur R. Butz. The first writer to analyze the entire Holocaust complex in a precise scientific manner. This book exhibits the overwhelming force of arguments accumulated by the mid-1970s. Butz's two main arguments are: 1. All major entities hostile to Germany must have known what was happening to the Jews under German authority. They acted during the war as if no mass slaughter was occurring. 2. All the evidence adduced to prove any mass slaughter has a dual interpretation, while only the innocuous one can be proven to be correct. This book continues to be a major historical reference work, frequently cited by prominent personalities. This edition has numerous supplements with new information gathered over the last 35 years. 4th ed., 524 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#7)

Dissecting the Holocaust. The Growing Critique of 'Truth' and 'Memory.' Edited by Germar Rudolf. *Dissecting the Holocaust* applies state-of-the-art scientific techniques and classic methods of detection to investigate the alleged murder of millions of Jews by Germans during World War II. In 22 contributions—each of some 30 pages—the 17 authors dissect generally accepted paradigms of the “Holocaust.” It reads as excitingly as a crime novel: so many lies, forgeries and deceptions by politicians, historians and scientists are proven. This is the intellectual adventure of the 21st Century. Be part of it! 3rd ed., 635 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#1)

The Dissolution of Eastern European Jewry. By Walter N. Sanning. Six Million Jews died in the Holocaust. Sanning did not take that number at face value, but thoroughly explored European population developments and shifts mainly caused by emigration as well as deportations and evacuations conducted by both Nazis and the Soviets, among other things. The book is based mainly on Jewish, Zionist and mainstream sources. It concludes that a sizeable share of the Jews found missing during local censuses after the Second World War, which were so far counted as “Holocaust victims,” had either emigrated (mainly to Israel or the U.S.) or had been deported by Stalin to Siberian labor camps. 3rd ed., foreword by A.R. Butz, epilogue by Germar Rudolf, and an update by the author containing new insights; 264

pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography (#29).

Air-Photo Evidence: World-War-Two Photos of Alleged Mass-Murder Sites Analyzed. By Germar Rudolf (editor). During World War Two both German and Allied reconnaissance aircraft took countless air photos of places of tactical and strategic interest in Europe. These photos are prime evidence for the investigation of the Holocaust. Air photos of locations like Auschwitz, Majdanek, Treblinka, Babi Yar etc. permit an insight into what did or did not happen there. The author has unearthed many pertinent photos and has thoroughly analyzed them. This book is full of air-photo reproductions and schematic drawings explaining them. According to the author, these images refute many of the atrocity claims made by witnesses in connection with events in the German sphere of influence. 6th edition; with a contribution by Carlo Mattogno. 167 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index (#27).

The Leuchter Reports: Critical Edition. By Fred Leuchter, Robert Faurisson and Germar Rudolf. Between 1988 and 1991, U.S. expert on execution technologies Fred Leuchter wrote four reports on whether the Third Reich operated homicidal gas chambers. The first on Auschwitz and Majdanek became world-famous. Based on various arguments, Leuchter concluded that the locations investigated could never have been “utilized or seriously considered to function as execution gas chambers.” The second report deals with gas-chamber claims for the camps Dachau, Mauthausen and Hartheim, while the third reviews design criteria and operation procedures of execution gas chambers in the U.S. The fourth report reviews Pressac's 1989 tome about Auschwitz. 4th ed., 252 pages, b&w illustrations. (#16)

Bungled: "The Destruction of the European Jews". Raul Hilberg's Failure to Prove National-Socialist "Killing Centers." By Carlo Mattogno. Raul Hilberg's magnum opus *The Destruction of the European Jews* is an orthodox standard work on the Holocaust. But how does Hilberg support his thesis that Jews were murdered *en masse*? He rips documents out of their context, distorts their content, misinterprets their meaning, and ignores entire archives. He only refers to “useful” witnesses, quotes fragments out of context, and conceals the fact that his witnesses are lying through their teeth. Lies and deceptions permeate Hil-

berg's book, 302 pages, bibliography, index. (#3)

Jewish Emigration from the Third Reich. By Ingrid Weckert. Current historical writings about the Third Reich claim state it was difficult for Jews to flee from Nazi persecution. The truth is that Jewish emigration was welcomed by the German authorities. Emigration was not some kind of wild flight, but rather a lawfully determined and regulated matter. Weckert's booklet elucidates the emigration process in law and policy. She shows that German and Jewish authorities worked closely together. Jews interested in emigrating received detailed advice and offers of help from both sides. 2nd ed., 130 pages, index. (#12)

Inside the Gas Chambers: The Extermination of Mainstream Holocaust Historiography. By Carlo Mattogno. Neither increased media propaganda or political pressure nor judicial persecution can stifle revisionism. Hence, in early 2011, the Holocaust Orthodoxy published a 400-page book (in German) claiming to refute "revisionist propaganda," trying again to prove "once and for all" that there were homicidal gas chambers at the camps of Dachau, Natzweiler, Sachsenhausen, Mauthausen, Ravensbrück, Neuengamme, Stutthof... you name them. Mattogno shows with his detailed analysis of this work of propaganda that mainstream Holocaust historiography is beating around the bush rather than addressing revisionist research results. He exposes their myths, distortions and lies. 2nd ed., 280 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#25)

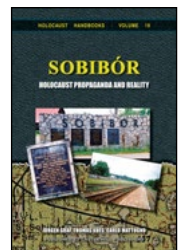
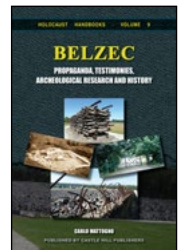
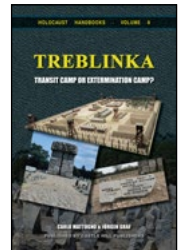
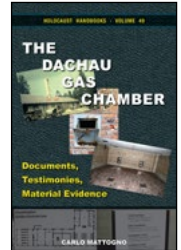
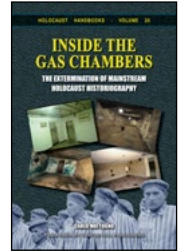
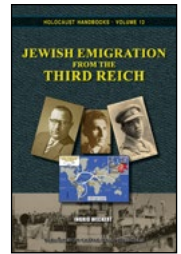
SECTION TWO: Specific non-Auschwitz Studies

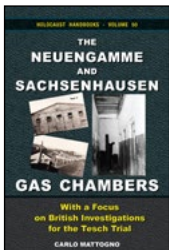
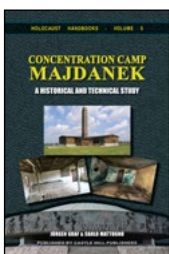
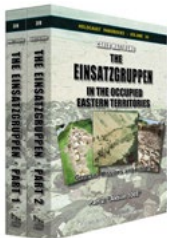
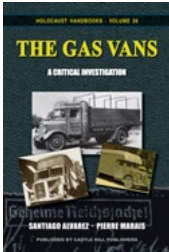
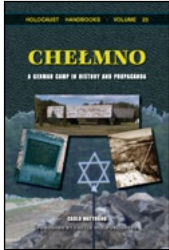
The Dachau Gas Chamber. By Carlo Mattogno. This study investigates whether the alleged homicidal gas chamber at the infamous Dachau Camp could have been operational. Could these gas chambers have fulfilled their alleged function to kill people as assumed by mainstream historians? Or does the evidence point to an entirely different purpose? This study reviews witness reports and finds that many claims are nonsense or technically impossible. As many layers of confounding misunderstandings and misrepresentations are peeled away, we discover the core of what the truth was concerning the existence of these gas chambers. 154 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#49)

Treblinka: Extermination Camp or Transit Camp? By Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf. It is alleged that at Treblinka in East Poland between 700,000 and 3,000,000 persons were murdered in 1942 and 1943. The weapons used were said to have been stationary and/or mobile gas chambers, fast-acting or slow-acting poison gas, unslaked lime, superheated steam, electricity, Diesel-exhaust fumes etc. Holocaust historians alleged that bodies were piled as high as multi-storied buildings and burned without a trace, using little or no fuel at all. Graf and Mattogno have now analyzed the origins, logic and technical feasibility of the official version of Treblinka. On the basis of numerous documents they reveal Treblinka's true identity as a mere transit camp. 3rd ed., 384 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#8)

Belzec: Propaganda, Testimonies, Archeological Research and History. By Carlo Mattogno. Witnesses report that between 600,000 and 3 million Jews were murdered in the Belzec Camp, located in Poland. Various murder weapons are claimed to have been used: Diesel-exhaust gas; unslaked lime in trains; high voltage; vacuum chambers; etc. The corpses were incinerated on huge pyres without leaving a trace. For those who know the stories about Treblinka this sounds familiar. Thus, the author has restricted this study to the aspects which are new compared to Treblinka. In contrast to Treblinka, forensic drillings and excavations were performed at Belzec, the results of which are critically reviewed. 142 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#9)

Sobibor: Holocaust Propaganda and Reality. By Jürgen Graf, Thomas Kues and Carlo Mattogno. Between 25,000 and 2 million Jews are said to have been killed in gas chambers in the Sobibór camp in Poland. The corpses were allegedly buried in mass graves and later incinerated on pyres. This book investigates these claims and shows that they are based on the selective use of contradictory eyewitness testimony. Archeological surveys of the camp are analyzed that started in 2000-2001 and carried on until 2018. The book also documents the general National-Socialist policy toward Jews, which never included a genocidal "final solution." In conclusion, Sobibór emerges not as a "pure extermination camp", but as a transit camp from where Jews were deported to the occupied eastern territories. 2nd ed., 456 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#19)





The "Operation Reinhardt" Camps Treblinka, Sobibór, Belzec. By Carlo Mattogno. This study has its first focus on witness testimonies recorded during World War II and the immediate post-war era, many of them discussed here for the first time, thus demonstrating how the myth of the "extermination camps" was created. The second part of this book brings us up to speed with the various archeological efforts made by mainstream scholars in their attempt to prove that the myth is true. The third part compares the findings of the second part with what we ought to expect, and reveals the chasm between facts and myth. 402 pages, illustrations, bibliography, index. (#28)

Chelmno: A Camp in History & Propaganda. By Carlo Mattogno. At Chelmno, huge masses of Jewish prisoners are said to have been gassed in "gas vans" or shot (claims vary from 10,000 to 1.3 million victims). This study covers the subject from every angle, undermining the orthodox claims about the camp with an overwhelmingly effective body of evidence. Eyewitness statements, gas wagons as extermination weapons, forensics reports and excavations, German documents – all come under Mattogno's scrutiny. Here are the uncensored facts about Chelmno, not the propaganda. This is a complementary volume to the book on *The Gas Vans* (#26). 2nd ed., 188 pages, indexed, illustrated, bibliography. (#23)

The Gas Vans: A Critical Investigation. By Santiago Alvarez and Pierre Marais. Did the Nazis use mobile gas chambers to exterminate 700,000 people? Are witness statements believable? Are documents genuine? Where are the murder weapons? Could they have operated as claimed? Where are the corpses? In order to get to the truth of the matter, Alvarez has scrutinized all known wartime documents and photos about this topic; he has analyzed a huge amount of witness statements as published in the literature and as presented in more than 30 trials held over the decades in Germany, Poland and Israel; and he has examined the claims made in the pertinent mainstream literature. The result of his research is mind-boggling. Note: This book and Mattogno's book on Chelmno were edited in parallel to make sure they are consistent and not repetitive. 2nd ed., 412 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#26)

The Einsatzgruppen in the Occupied Eastern Territories: Genesis, Missions and Actions. By C. Mattogno. Before invading the Soviet Union, the German authorities set up special units meant to secure the area behind the German front. Orthodox historians claim that these units called *Einsatzgruppen* primarily engaged in rounding up and mass-murdering Jews. This study sheds a critical light onto this topic by reviewing all the pertinent sources as well as material traces. It reveals on the one hand that original war-time documents do not fully support the orthodox genocidal narrative, and on the other that most post-"liberation" sources such as testimonies and forensic reports are steeped in Soviet atrocity propaganda and are thus utterly unreliable. In addition, material traces of the claimed massacres are rare due to an attitude of collusion by governments and Jewish lobby groups. 2nd ed., 2 vols., 864 pp., b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#39)

Concentration Camp Majdanek. A Historical and Technical Study. By Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf. At war's end, the Soviets claimed that up to two million Jews were murdered at the Majdanek Camp in seven gas chambers. Over the decades, however, the Majdanek Museum reduced the death toll three times to currently 78,000, and admitted that there were "only" two gas chambers. By exhaustively researching primary sources, the authors expertly dissect and repudiate the myth of homicidal gas chambers at that camp. They also critically investigated the legend of mass executions of Jews in tank trenches and prove it groundless. Again they have produced a standard work of methodical investigation which authentic historiography cannot ignore. 3rd ed., 358 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#5)

The Neuengamme and Sachsenhausen Gas Chambers. By Carlo Mattogno. The Neuengamme Camp near Hamburg, and the Sachsenhausen Camp north of Berlin allegedly had homicidal gas chambers for the mass gassing of inmates. The evaluation of many postwar interrogation protocols on this topic exposes inconsistencies, discrepancies and contradictions. British interrogating techniques are revealed as manipulative, threatening and mendacious. Finally, technical absurdities of gas-chambers and mass-gassing claims unmask these tales as a mere regurgitation of hearsay stories from other camps, among

them foremost Auschwitz. 178 pages, b&w ill., bibliography, index. (#50)

Concentration Camp Stutthof and Its Function in National Socialist Jewish Policy. By Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf. Orthodox historians claim that the Stutthof Camp near Danzig, East Prussia, served as a “makeshift” extermination camp in 1944, where inmates were killed in a gas chamber. Based mainly on archival resources, this study thoroughly debunks this view and shows that Stutthof was in fact a center for the organization of German forced labor toward the end of World War II. The claimed gas chamber was a mere delousing facility. 4th ed., 170 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#4)

SECTION THREE: Auschwitz Studies

The Making of the Auschwitz Myth: Auschwitz in British Intercepts, Polish Underground Reports and Postwar Testimonies (1941-1947). By Carlo Mattogno. Using messages sent by the Polish underground to London, SS radio messages sent to and from Auschwitz that were intercepted and decrypted by the British, and a plethora of witness statements made during the war and in the immediate postwar period, the author shows how exactly the myth of mass murder in Auschwitz gas chambers was created, and how it was turned subsequently into “history” by intellectually corrupt scholars who cherry-picked claims that fit into their agenda and ignored or actively covered up literally thousands of lies of “witnesses” to make their narrative look credible. 2nd edition, 514 pp., b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#41)

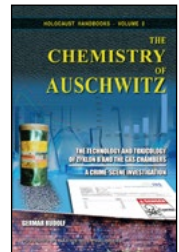
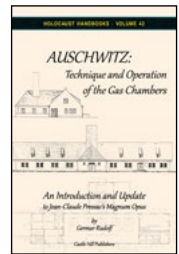
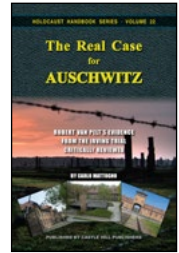
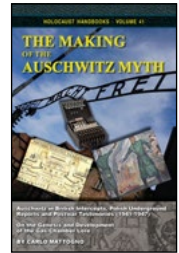
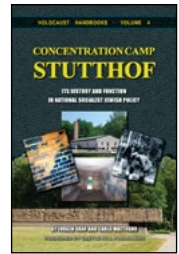
The Real Case of Auschwitz: Robert van Pelt's Evidence from the Irving Trial Critically Reviewed. By Carlo Mattogno. Prof. Robert van Pelt, a mainstream expert on Auschwitz, became famous when appearing as an expert during the London libel trial of David Irving against Deborah Lipstadt. From it resulted a book titled *The Case for Auschwitz*, in which van Pelt laid out his case for the existence of homicidal gas chambers at that camp. This book is a scholarly response to Prof. van Pelt—and Jean-Claude Pressac, upon whose books van Pelt's study is largely based. Mattogno lists all the evidence van Pelt adduces, and shows one by one that van Pelt misrepresented and misinterpreted every single one of them. This is a book of prime political and

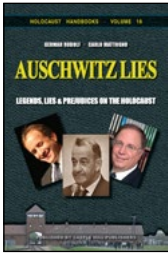
scholarly importance to those looking for the truth about Auschwitz. 3rd ed., 692 pages, b&w illustrations, glossary, bibliography, index. (#22)

Auschwitz: Plain Facts: A Response to Jean-Claude Pressac. Edited by Germar Rudolf, with contributions by Serge Thion, Robert Faurisson and Carlo Mattogno. French pharmacist Jean-Claude Pressac tried to refute revisionist findings with the “technical” method. For this he was praised by the mainstream, and they proclaimed victory over the “revisionists.” In his book, Pressac's works and claims are shown to be unscientific in nature, as he never substantiates what he claims, and historically false, because he systematically misrepresents, misinterprets and misunderstands German wartime documents. 2nd ed., 226 pages, b&w illustrations, glossary bibliography, index. (#14)

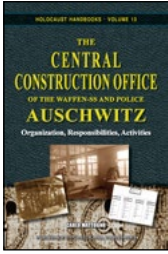
Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers: An Introduction and Update. By Germar Rudolf. Pressac's 1989 oversize book of the same title was a trail blazer. Its many document reprints are valuable, but Pressac's annotations are now outdated. This book summarizes the most pertinent research results on Auschwitz gained during the past 30 years. With many references to Pressac's epic tome, it serves as an update and correction to it, whether you own an original hard copy of it, read it online, borrow it from a library, purchase a reprint, or are just interested in such a summary in general. 144 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography. (#42)

The Chemistry of Auschwitz: The Technology and Toxicology of Zyklon B and the Gas Chambers – A Crime-Scene Investigation. By Germar Rudolf. This study documents forensic research on Auschwitz, where material traces reign supreme. Most of the claimed crime scenes – the claimed homicidal gas chambers – are still accessible to forensic examination to some degree. This book addresses questions such as: How were these gas chambers configured? How did they operate? In addition, the infamous Zyklon B is examined in detail. What exactly was it? How did it kill? Did it leave traces in masonry that can be found still today? Indeed, it should have, the author concludes, but several sets of analyses show no trace of it. The author also discusses in depth similar forensic research conducted by other scholars. 4th ed., 454 pages, more than 120 color and over 100 b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#2)

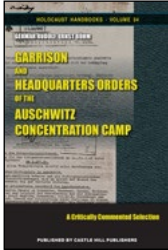




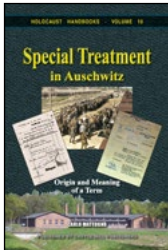
Auschwitz Lies: Legends, Lies and Prejudices on the Holocaust. By Carlo Mattogno and Germar Rudolf. The fallacious research and alleged “refutation” of revisionist scholars by French biochemist G. Wellers (attacking Leuchter’s famous report, #16), Polish chemist Dr. J. Markiewicz and U.S. chemist Dr. Richard Green (taking on Rudolf’s chemical research), Dr. John Zimmerman (tackling Mattogno on cremation issues), Michael Shermer and Alex Grobman (trying to prove it all), as well as researchers Keren, McCarthy and Mazal (who turned cracks into architectural features), are exposed for what they are: blatant and easily exposed political lies created to ostracize dissident historians. 4th ed., 420 pages, b&w illustrations, index. (#18)



Auschwitz: The Central Construction Office. By Carlo Mattogno. When Russian authorities granted access to their archives in the early 1990s, the files of the Auschwitz Central Construction Office, stored in Moscow, attracted the attention of scholars researching the history of this camp. This important office was responsible for the planning and construction of the Auschwitz camp complex, including the crematories which are said to have contained the “gas chambers.” This study sheds light into this hitherto hidden aspect of this camp’s history, but also provides a deep understanding of the organization, tasks, and procedures of this office. 2nd ed., 188 pages, b&w illustrations, glossary, index. (#13)



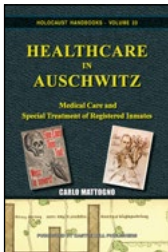
Garrison and Headquarters Orders of the Auschwitz Camp. By Germar Rudolf and Ernst Böhm. A large number of the orders issued by the various commanders of the Auschwitz Camp have been preserved. They reveal the true nature of the camp with all its daily events. There is not a trace in them pointing at anything sinister going on. Quite to the contrary, many orders are in insurmountable contradiction to claims that prisoners were mass murdered, such as the children of SS men playing with inmates, SS men taking friends for a sight-seeing tour through the camp, or having a romantic stroll with their lovers around the camp grounds. This is a selection of the most pertinent of these orders together with comments putting them into their proper historical context. 185 pages, b&w ill., bibl., index (#34)



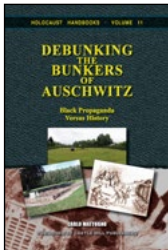
Special Treatment in Auschwitz: Origin and Meaning of a Term. By Carlo Mattogno. When appearing in German wartime documents, terms like

“special treatment,” “special action,” and others have been interpreted as code words for mass murder. But that is not always true. This study focuses on documents about Auschwitz, showing that, while “special” had many different meanings, not a single one meant “execution.” Hence the practice of deciphering an alleged “code language” by assigning homicidal meaning to harmless documents – a key component of mainstream historiography – is untenable. 2nd ed., 166 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#10)

Healthcare at Auschwitz. By Carlo Mattogno. In extension of the above study on *Special Treatment in Auschwitz*, this study proves the extent to which the German authorities at Auschwitz tried to provide health care for the inmates. Part 1 of this book analyzes the inmates’ living conditions and the various sanitary and medical measures implemented. It documents the vast construction efforts to build a huge inmate hospital inside the Auschwitz-Birkenau Camp. Part 2 explores what happened to registered inmates who were “selected” or subject to “special treatment” while disabled or sick. This study shows that a lot was tried to cure these inmates, especially under the aegis of Garrison Physician Dr. Wirths. Part 3 is dedicated to this very Dr. Wirths. The reality of this caring philanthropist refutes the current stereotype of SS officers. 398 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#33)



Debunking the Bunkers of Auschwitz: Black Propaganda vs. History. By Carlo Mattogno. The “bunkers” at Auschwitz-Birkenau, two former farmhouses just outside the camp’s perimeter, are claimed to have been the first homicidal gas chambers at Auschwitz specifically equipped for this purpose. They supposedly went into operation during the first half of 1942, with thousands of Jews sent straight from deportation trains to these “gas chambers.” However, documents clearly show that all inmates sent to Auschwitz during that time were properly admitted to the camp. No mass murder on arrival can have happened. With the help of other wartime files as well as air photos taken by Allied reconnaissance aircraft in 1944, this study shows that these homicidal “bunkers” never existed, how the rumors about them evolved as black propaganda created by resistance groups in the camp, and how this propaganda was transformed into a false reality by “historians.” 2nd ed.,



292 pages, b&w ill., bibliography, index. (#11)

Auschwitz: The First Gassing. Rumor and Reality. By Carlo Mattogno. The first gassing in Auschwitz is claimed to have occurred on Sept. 3, 1941 in a basement. The accounts reporting it are the archetypes for all later gassing accounts. This study analyzes all available sources about this alleged event. It shows that these sources contradict each other about the event's location, date, the kind of victims and their number, and many more aspects, which makes it impossible to extract a consistent story. Original wartime documents inflict a final blow to this legend and prove without a shadow of a doubt that this legendary event never happened. 4th ed., 262 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#20)

Auschwitz: Crematorium I and the Alleged Homicidal Gassings. By Carlo Mattogno. The morgue of Crematorium I in Auschwitz is said to be the first homicidal gas chamber there. This study analyzes witness statements and hundreds of wartime documents to accurately write a history of that building. Where witnesses speak of gassings, they are either very vague or, if specific, contradict one another and are refuted by documented and material facts. The author also exposes the fraudulent attempts of mainstream historians to convert the witnesses' black propaganda into "truth" by means of selective quotes, omissions, and distortions. Mattogno proves that this building's morgue was never a homicidal gas chamber, nor could it have worked as such. 2nd ed., 152 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#21)

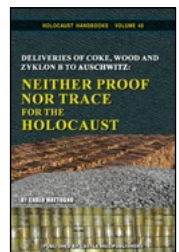
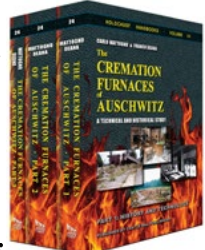
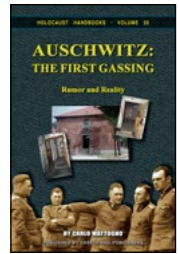
Auschwitz: Open-Air Incinerations. By Carlo Mattogno. In 1944, 400,000 Hungarian Jews were deported to Auschwitz and allegedly murdered in gas chambers. The camp crematoria were unable to cope with so many corpses. Therefore, every single day thousands of corpses are claimed to have been incinerated on huge pyres lit in trenches. The sky was filled with thick smoke, if we believe witnesses. This book examines many testimonies regarding these incinerations and establishes whether these claims were even possible. Using air photos, physical evidence and wartime documents, the author shows that these claims are fiction. A new Appendix contains 3 papers on groundwater levels and cattle mass burnings. 2nd ed., 202 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#17)

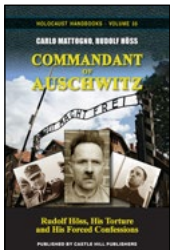
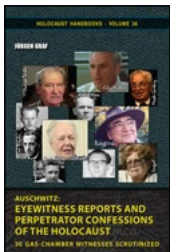
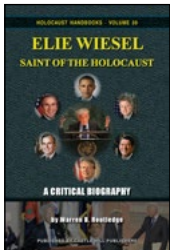
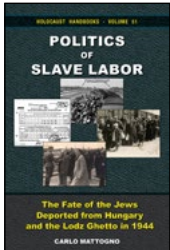
The Cremation Furnaces of Auschwitz. By Carlo Mattogno & Franco Deana. An exhaustive study of the early history and technology of cremation in general and of the cremation furnaces of Auschwitz in particular. On a vast base of technical literature, extant wartime documents and material traces, the authors establish the nature and capacity of these cremation furnaces, showing that these devices were inferior makeshift versions, and that their capacity was lower than normal. The Auschwitz crematoria were not facilities of mass destruction, but installations barely managing to handle the victims among the inmates who died of various epidemics. 2nd ed., 3 vols., 1201 pages, b&w and color illustrations (vols 2 & 3), bibliography, index, glossary. (#24)

Curated Lies: The Auschwitz Museum's Misrepresentations, Distortions and Deceptions. By Carlo Mattogno. Revisionist research results have put the Polish Auschwitz Museum under enormous pressure to answer this challenge. They've answered. This book analyzes their answer. It first exposes the many tricks and lies used by the museum to bamboozle millions of visitors every year regarding its most valued asset, the "gas chamber" in the Main Camp. Next, it reveals how the museum's historians mislead and lie through their teeth about documents in their archives. A long string of completely innocuous documents is mistranslated and misrepresented to make it look like they prove the existence of homicidal gas chambers. 2nd ed., 259 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#38)

Deliveries of Coke, Wood and Zyklon B to Auschwitz: Neither Proof Nor Trace for the Holocaust. By Carlo Mattogno. Researchers from the Auschwitz Museum tried to prove the reality of mass extermination by pointing to documents about deliveries of wood and coke as well as Zyklon B to the Auschwitz Camp. If put into the actual historical and technical context, however, as is done by this study, these documents prove the exact opposite of what those orthodox researchers claim. This study exposes the mendacious tricks with which these museum officials once more deceive the trusting public. 184 pages, b&w illust., bibl., index. (#40)

Mis-Chronicling Auschwitz. Danuta Czech's Flawed Methods, Lies and Deceptions in Her "Auschwitz Chronicle". By Carlo Mattogno. The *Auschwitz Chronicle* is a reference book for the history of the Auschwitz





Camp. It was published in 1990 by Danuta Czech, one of the Auschwitz Museum's most prolific and impactful historians. Analyzing this almost 1,000-page long tome one entry at a time, Mattogno has compiled a long list of misrepresentations, outright lies and deceptions contained in it. They all aim at creating the otherwise unsubstantiated claim that homicidal gas chambers and lethal injections were used at Auschwitz for mass-murdering inmates. This literary mega-fraud needs to be retired from the ranks of Auschwitz sources. 324 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#47)

The Real Auschwitz Chronicle. By Carlo Mattogno. Nagging is easy. We actually did a better job! That which is missing in Czech's *Chronicle* is included here: day after day of the camp's history, documents are presented showing that it could not have been an extermination camp: tens of thousands of sick and injured inmates were cared for medically with huge efforts, and the camp authorities tried hard to improve the initially catastrophic hygienic conditions. Part Two contains data on transports, camp occupancy and mortality figures. For the first time, we find out what this camp's real death toll was. 2 vols., 906 pp., b&w illustrations (Vol. 2), bibliography, index. (#48)

Politics of Slave Labor: The Fate of the Jews Deported from Hungary and the Lodz Ghetto in 1944. By Carlo Mattogno. The deportation of the Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz in May-July 1944 is said to have been the pinnacle of this camp's extermination frenzy, topped off in August of that year by the extermination of Jews deported from the Lodz Ghetto. This book gathers and explains all the evidence available on both events. In painstaking research, the author proves almost on a person-by-person level what the fate was of many of the Jews deported from Hungary or the Lodz Ghetto. He demonstrates that these Jews were deported to serve as slave laborers in the Third Reich's collapsing war economy. There is no trace of any extermination of any of these Jews. 338 pp., b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#51)

SECTION FOUR: Witness Critique

Elie Wiesel, Saint of the Holocaust: A Critical Biography. By Warren B. Rudledge. This book analyzes several of Wiesel's texts, foremost his

camp autobiography *Night*. The author proves that much of what Wiesel claims can never have happened. It shows how Zionist control has allowed Wiesel and his fellow extremists to force leaders of many nations, the U.N. and even popes to genuflect before Wiesel as symbolic acts of subordination to World Jewry, while at the same time forcing school children to submit to Holocaust brainwashing. This study also shows how parallel to this abuse of power, critical reactions to it also increased: Holocaust revisionism. While Catholics jumped on the Holocaust band wagon, the number of Jews rejecting certain aspect of the Holocaust narrative and its abuse grew as well. This first unauthorized biography of Wiesel exposes both his personal deceptions and the whole myth of "the six million." 3rd ed., 458 pages, b&w illustration, bibliography, index. (#30)

Auschwitz: Eyewitness Reports and Perpetrator Confessions. By Jürgen Graf. The traditional narrative of what transpired at the infamous Auschwitz camp during WWII rests almost exclusively on witness testimony from former inmates as well as erstwhile camp officials. This study critically scrutinizes the 30 most important of these witness statements by checking them for internal coherence, and by comparing them with one another as well as with other evidence such as wartime documents, air photos, forensic research results, and material traces. The result is devastating for the traditional narrative. 372 pages, b&w illust., bibl., index. (#36)

Commandant of Auschwitz: Rudolf Höss, His Torture and His Forced Confessions. By Carlo Mattogno & Rudolf Höss. From 1940 to 1943, Rudolf Höss was the commandant of the infamous Auschwitz Camp. After the war, he was captured by the British. In the following 13 months until his execution, he made 85 depositions of various kinds in which he confessed his involvement in the "Holocaust." This study first reveals how the British tortured him to extract various "confessions." Next, all of Höss's depositions are analyzed by checking his claims for internal consistency and comparing them with established historical facts. The results are eye-opening... 2nd ed., 411 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#35)

An Auschwitz Doctor's Eyewitness Account: The Tall Tales of Dr. Mengele's Assistant Analyzed. By Miklos Nyiszli & Carlo Mattogno.

Nyiszli, a Hungarian physician, ended up at Auschwitz in 1944 as Dr. Mengele's assistant. After the war he wrote a book and several other writings describing what he claimed to have experienced. To this day some traditional historians take his accounts seriously, while others reject them as grotesque lies and exaggerations. This study presents and analyzes Nyiszli's writings and skillfully separates truth from fabulous fabrication. 2nd ed., 484 pages, b&w illustrations, bibliography, index. (#37)

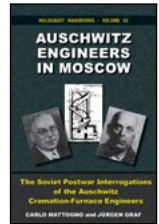
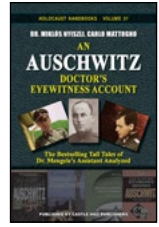
Rudolf Reder versus Kurt Gerstein: Two False Testimonies on the Belzec Camp Analyzed. By Carlo Mattogno. Only two witnesses have ever testified substantially about the alleged Belzec Extermination Camp: The survivor Rudolf Reder and the SS officer Kurt Gerstein. Gerstein's testimonies have been a hotspot of revisionist critique for decades. It is now discredited even among orthodox historians. They use Reder's testimony to fill the void, yet his testimonies are just as absurd. This study thoroughly scrutinizes Reder's various statements, critically revisits Gerstein's various depositions, and then compares these two testimonies which are at once similar in some respects, but incompatible in others. 216 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#43)

Sonderkommando Auschwitz I: Nine Eyewitness Testimonies Analyzed. By Carlo Mattogno. The 1979 book *Auschwitz Inferno* by alleged former Auschwitz "Sonderkommando" member Filip Müller has a great influence on the perception of Auschwitz by the public and by historians. This book critically analyzes Müller's various post-war statements, which are full of exaggerations, falsehoods and plagiarized text passages. Also scrutinized are the testimonies of eight other claimed former *Sonderkommando* members: D. Paisikovic, S. Jankowski, H. Mandelbaum, L. Nagraba, J. Rosenblum, A. Pilo, D. Fliamenbaum and S. Karolinskij. 304 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#44)

Sonderkommando Auschwitz II: The False Testimonies by Henryk Tauber and Szlama Dragon. By Carlo Mattogno. Auschwitz survivor and former member of the so-called "Sonderkommando" Henryk Tauber is one of the most important witnesses about the alleged gas chambers inside the crematoria at Auschwitz, because right at the war's end, he made several extremely detailed depositions about it. The same is true for Szlama Dragon, only he claims to have worked at the so-called "bunkers" of Birkenau, two makeshift gas chambers just outside the camp perimeter. This study thoroughly scrutinizes these two key testimonies. 254 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#45)

Sonderkommando Auschwitz III: They Wept Crocodile Tears. A Critical Analysis of Late Witness Testimonies. By Carlo Mattogno. This book focuses on the critical analysis of witness testimonies on the alleged Auschwitz gas chambers recorded or published in the 1990s and early 2000s, such as J. Sackar, A. Dragon, J. Gabai, S. Chasan, L. Cohen and S. Venezia, among others. 232 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#46)

Auschwitz Engineers in Moscow: The Soviet Postwar Interrogations of the Auschwitz Cremation-Furnace Engineers. By Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf. After the war, the Soviets arrested four leading engineers of the Topf Company. Among other things, they had planned and supervised the construction of the Auschwitz cremation furnaces and the ventilation systems of the rooms said to have served as homicidal gas chambers. Between 1946 and 1948, Soviet officials conducted numerous interrogations with them. This work analyzes them by putting them into the context of the vast documentation on these and related facilities. The appendix contains all translated interrogation protocols. 254 pages, b&w illust., bibliography, index. (#52)



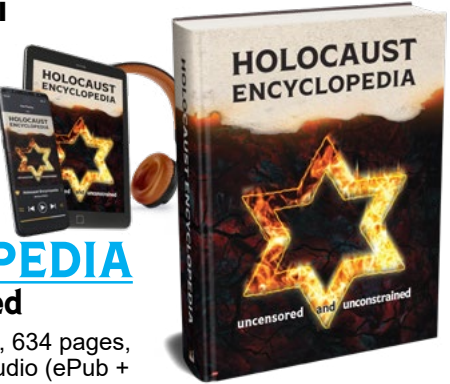
For current prices and availability, and to learn more, go to www.HolocaustHandbooks.com – for example by simply scanning the QR code on the right.



Three decades of unflagging archival and forensic research by the world's most knowledgeable, courageous and prodigious Holocaust scholars have finally coalesced into a reference book that makes all this knowledge readily accessible to everyone:

HOLOCAUST ENCYCLOPEDIA **uncensored and unconstrained**

Available as paperback (b&w) or hardcover (color), 634 pages, 8.5"×11"; as eBook (ePub or PDF) and eBook + audio (ePub + mp3); more than 350 illustrations in 579 entries; introduction, bibliography, index. **Online at www.NukeBook.org**



We all know the basics of “The Holocaust.” But what about the details? Websites and printed encyclopedias can help us there. Take the 4-volume encyclopedia by Israel’s Yad Vashem Center: *The Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* (1990). For every significant crime scene, it presents a condensed narrative of Israel’s finest Holocaust scholars. However, it contains not one entry about witnesses and their stories, even though they are the foundation of our knowledge. When a murder is committed, the murder weapon and the crime’s traces are of crucial importance. Yet Yad Vashem’s encyclopedia has no entries explaining scientific findings on these matters – not one.

This is where the present encyclopedia steps in. It not only summarizes and explains the many pieces that make up the larger Holocaust picture. It also reveals the evidence that confirms or contradicts certain notions. Nearly 300 entries present the essence of important witness accounts, and they are subjected to source criticism. This enables us to decide which witness claims are credible.

For all major crime scenes, the sometimes-conflicting claims are presented. We learn how our knowledge has changed over time, and what evidence shores up the currently valid

narrative of places such as Auschwitz, Belzec, Sobibór, Treblinka, Dachau and Bergen-Belsen and many more.

Other entries discuss tools and mechanisms allegedly used for the mass murders, and how the crimes’ traces were erased, if at all. A few entries discuss toxicological issues surrounding the various lethal gases claimed to have been used.

This encyclopedia has multiple entries on some common claims about aspects of the Holocaust, including a list of “Who said it?” This way we can quickly find proof for these claims.

Finally, several entries address factors that have influenced the creation of the Holocaust narrative, and how we perceive it today. This includes entries on psychological warfare and wartime propaganda; on conditions prevailing during investigations and trials of alleged Holocaust perpetrators; on censorship against historical dissidents; on the religious dimension of the Holocaust narrative; and on motives of all sides involved in creating and spreading their diverse Holocaust narratives.

In this important volume, now with 579 entries, you will discover many astounding aspects of the Holocaust narrative that you did not even know exist.

BOOKS ON THE HOLOCAUST AND FREE SPEECH

On the next six pages, we list some of the books available from ARMREG that are not part of the series *Holocaust Handbooks*. For our current range of products, visit our web store at www.ARMREG.co.uk.

The Holocaust: An Introduction. By Thomas Dalton. The Holocaust was perhaps the greatest crime of the 20th Century. Six million Jews, we are told, died by gassing, shooting, and deprivation. But: Where did the six-million figure come from? How, exactly, did the gas chambers work? Why do we have so little physical evidence from major death camps? Why haven't we found even a fraction of the six million bodies, or their ashes? Why has there been so much media suppression and governmental censorship on this topic? In a sense, the Holocaust is the greatest murder mystery in history. It is a topic of greatest importance for the present day. Let's explore the evidence, and see where it leads. 128 pp. pb, 6"×9", ill., bibl., index.

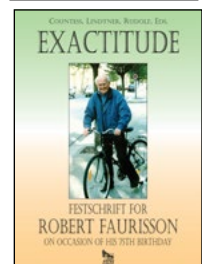
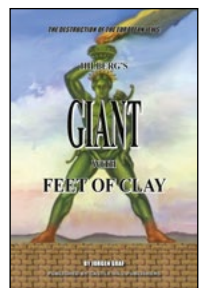
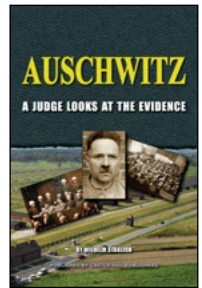
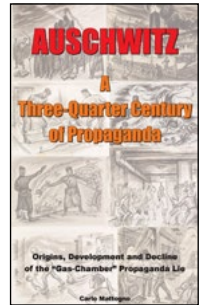
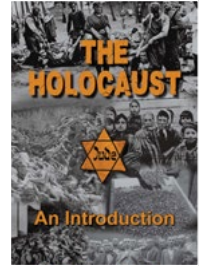
Auschwitz: A Three-Quarter Century of Propaganda: Origins, Development and Decline of the "Gas Chamber" Propaganda Lie. By Carlo Mattogno. Wild rumors were circulating about Auschwitz during WWII: Germans testing war gases; mass murder in electrocution chambers, with gas showers or pneumatic hammers; living people sent on conveyor belts into furnaces; grease and soap made of the victims. Nothing of it was true. When the Soviets captured Auschwitz in early 1945, they reported that 4 million inmates were killed on electrocution conveyor belts discharging their load directly into furnaces. That wasn't true either. After the war, "witnesses" and "experts" added more claims: mass murder with gas bombs, gas chambers made of canvas; crematoria burning 400 million victims... Again, none of it was true. This book gives an overview of the many rumors and lies about Auschwitz today rejected as untrue, and exposes the ridiculous methods that turned some claims into "history," although they are just as untrue. 125 pp. pb, 6"×9", ill., bibl., index, b&w ill.

Auschwitz: A Judge Looks at the Evidence. By Wilhelm Stäglich. Auschwitz is the epicenter of the Holocaust, where more people are said to have been murdered than anywhere else.

The most important evidence for this claim was presented during two trials: the International Military Tribunal of 1945/46, and the German Auschwitz Trial of 1963-1965. In this book, Wilhelm Stäglich, a former German judge, reveals the incredibly scandalous way in which Allied victors and German courts bent and broke the law in order to come to politically foregone conclusions. Stäglich also exposes the superficial way in which historians are dealing with the many incongruities and discrepancies of the historical record. 3rd edition 2015, 422 pp. pb, 6"×9", b&w ill.

Hilberg's Giant with Feet of Clay. By Jürgen Graf. Raul Hilberg's major work *The Destruction of the European Jews* is generally considered the standard work on the Holocaust. The critical reader might ask: what evidence does Hilberg provide to back his thesis that there was a German plan to exterminate Jews, to be carried out in the legendary gas chambers? And what evidence supports his estimate of 5.1 million Jewish victims? Jürgen Graf applies the methods of critical analysis to Hilberg's evidence, and examines the results in the light of revisionist historiography. The results of Graf's critical analysis are devastating for Hilberg. Graf's analysis is the first comprehensive and systematic examination of the leading spokesperson for the orthodox version of the Jewish fate during the Third Reich. 3rd edition 2022, 182 pp. pb, 6"×9", b&w ill.

Exactitude: Festschrift for Prof. Dr. Robert Faurisson. By R.H. Countess, C. Lindtner, G. Rudolf (eds.) Faurisson probably deserves the title of the most-courageous intellectual of the 20th and the early 21st Century. With bravery and steadfastness, he challenged the dark forces of historical and political fraud with his unrelenting exposure of their lies and hoaxes surrounding the orthodox Holocaust narrative. This book describes and celebrates the man and his work dedicated to accuracy and marked by in-submission. 146 pp. pb, 6"×9", b&w ill.



Auschwitz – Forensically Examined.

By Cyrus Cox. Modern forensic crime-scene investigations can reveal a lot about the Holocaust. There are many big tomes about this. But if you want it all in a nutshell, read this booklet. It condenses the most-important findings of Auschwitz forensics into a quick and easy read. In the first section, the forensic investigations conducted so far are reviewed. In the second section, the most-important results of these studies are summarized. The main arguments focus on two topics. The first centers around the poison allegedly used at Auschwitz for mass murder: Zyklon B. Did it leave any traces in masonry where it was used? Can it be detected to this day? The second topic deals with mass cremations. Did the crematoria of Auschwitz have the claimed huge capacity? Do air photos taken during the war confirm witness statements on huge smoking pyres? This book gives the answers, together with many references to source material and further reading. The third section reports on how the establishment has reacted to these research results. 2nd ed., 128 pp. pb., b&w ill., bibl., index.

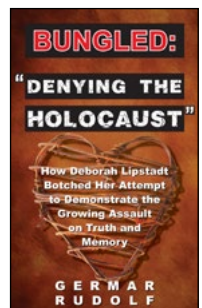
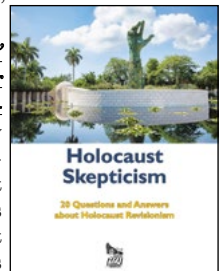
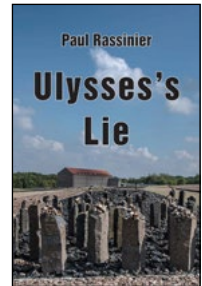
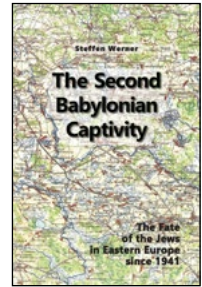
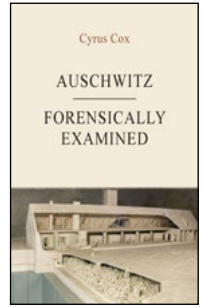
Ulysses's Lie. By Paul Rassinier. Holocaust revisionism began with this book: Frenchman Rassinier, a pacifist and socialist, was sent first to Buchenwald Camp in 1944, then to Dora-Mittelbau. Here he reports from his own experience how the prisoners turned each other's imprisonment into hell without being forced to do so. In the second part, Rassinier analyzes the books of former fellow prisoners, and shows how they lied and distorted in order to hide their complicity. First complete English edition, including Rassinier's prologue, Albert Paraz's preface, and press reviews. 270 pp, 6"×9" pb, bibl, index.

The Second Babylonian Captivity: The Fate of the Jews in Eastern Europe since 1941. By Steffen Werner. "But if they were not murdered, where did the six million deported Jews end up?" This objection demands a well-founded response. While researching an entirely different topic, Werner stumbled upon peculiar demographic data of Belorussia. Years of research subsequently revealed more evidence which eventually allowed him to

propose: The Third Reich did indeed deport many of the Jews of Europe to Eastern Europe in order to settle them there "in the swamp." This book shows what really happened to the Jews deported to the East by the National Socialists, how they have fared since. It provides context for hitherto-obscure historical events and obviates extreme claims such as genocide and gas chambers. With a preface by Germar Rudolf. 190 pp. pb, 6"×9", b&w ill., bibl., index

Holocaust Skepticism: 20 Questions and Answers about Holocaust Revisionism. By Germar Rudolf. This 15-page brochure introduces the novice to the concept of Holocaust revisionism, and answers 20 tough questions, among them: What does Holocaust revisionism claim? Why should I take Holocaust revisionism more seriously than the claim that the earth is flat? How about the testimonies by survivors and confessions by perpetrators? What about the pictures of corpse piles in the camps? Why does it matter how many Jews were killed by the Nazis, since even 1,000 would have been too many? ... Glossy full-color brochure. PDF file free of charge available at www.HolocaustHandbooks.com. Option "Promotion". This item is *not* copyright-protected. Hence, you can do with it whatever you want: download, post, email, print, multiply, hand out, sell... 20 pp., stapled, 8.5"×11", full-color throughout.

Bungled: "Denying the Holocaust" How Deborah Lipstadt Botched Her Attempt to Demonstrate the Growing Assault on Truth and Memory. By Germar Rudolf. With her book *Denying the Holocaust*, Deborah Lipstadt tried to show the flawed methods and extremist motives of "Holocaust deniers." This book demonstrates that Dr. Lipstadt clearly has neither understood the principles of science and scholarship, nor has she any clue about the historical topics she is writing about. She misquotes, mistranslates, misrepresents, misinterprets, and makes a plethora of wild claims without backing them up with anything. Rather than dealing thoroughly with factual arguments, Lipstadt's book is full of *ad hominem* attacks on her opponents. It is an exercise in anti-intellectual pseudo-scientific



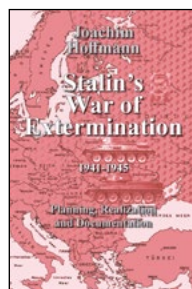
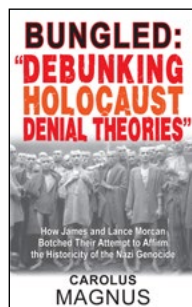
arguments, an exhibition of ideological radicalism that rejects anything which contradicts its preset conclusions. **F for FAIL.** 2nd ed., 224 pp. pb, 6"×9", bibl., index, b&w ill.

Bungled: "Denying History". How Michael Shermer and Alex Grobman Botched Their Attempt to Refute Those Who Say the Holocaust Never Happened. By Carolus Magnus (C. Mattogno). *Skeptic Magazine* editor Michael Shermer and Alex Grobman from the Simon Wiesenthal Center wrote a book claiming to be "a thorough and thoughtful answer to all the claims of the Holocaust deniers." As this book shows, however, Shermer and Grobman completely ignored almost all the "claims" made in the more than 10,000 pages of more-recent cutting-edge revisionist archival and forensic research. Furthermore, they piled up a heap of falsifications, contortions, omissions and fallacious interpretations of the evidence. Finally, what the authors claim to have demolished is not revisionism but a ridiculous parody of it. They ignored the known unreliability of their cherry-picked selection of evidence, utilized unverified and incestuous sources, and obscured the massive body of research and all the evidence that dooms their project to failure. 162 pp. pb, 6"×9", bibl., index, b&w ill.

Bungled: "Debunking Holocaust Denial Theories". How James and Lance Morcan Botched Their Attempt to Affirm the Historicity of the Nazi Genocide. By Carolus Magnus. The novelists and movie-makers James and Lance Morcan have produced a book "to end [Holocaust] denial once and for all" by disproving "the various arguments Holocaust deniers use to try to discredit wartime records." It's a lie. First, the Morcans completely ignored the vast amount of recent scholarly studies published by revisionists; they don't even mention them. Instead, they engage in shadowboxing, creating some imaginary, bogus "revisionist" scarecrow which they then tear to pieces. In addition, their knowledge even of their own side's source material is dismal, and the way they back up their misleading or false claims is pitifully inadequate. 144 pp. pb, 6"×9", bibl., index, b&w ill.

Stalin's War of Extermination 1941-1945. By Joachim Hoffmann. A German government historian documents Stalin's murderous war against the German army and the German people. Based on the author's lifelong study of German and Russian military records, this book reveals the Red Army's grisly record of atrocities against soldiers and civilians, as ordered by Stalin. Since the 1920s, Stalin planned to invade Western Europe to initiate the "World Revolution." He prepared an attack which was unparalleled in history. The Germans noticed Stalin's aggressive intentions, but they underestimated the strength of the Red Army. What unfolded was the cruelest war in history. This book shows how Stalin and his Bolshevik henchman used unimaginable violence and atrocities to break any resistance in the Red Army and to force their unwilling soldiers to fight against the Germans. The book explains how Soviet propagandists incited their soldiers to unlimited hatred against everything German, and he gives the reader a short but extremely unpleasant glimpse into what happened when these Soviet soldiers finally reached German soil in 1945: A gigantic wave of looting, arson, rape, torture, and mass murder... **428 pp. pb, 6"×9", bibl., index, b&w ill.**

Who Started World War II: Truth for a War-Torn World. By Udo Walendy. For seven decades, mainstream historians have insisted that Germany was the main, if not the sole culprit for unleashing World War II in Europe. In the present book this myth is refuted. There is available to the public today a great number of documents on the foreign policies of the Great Powers before September 1939 as well as a wealth of literature in the form of memoirs of the persons directly involved in the decisions that led to the outbreak of World War II. Together, they made possible Walendy's present mosaic-like reconstruction of the events before the outbreak of the war in 1939. This book has been published only after an intensive study of sources, taking the greatest care to minimize speculation and inference. The present edition has been translated completely anew from the German original and has been slightly revised. 500 pp. pb, 6"×9", index, bibl., b&w ill.



The Day Amazon Murdered Free Speech. By Germar Rudolf. Amazon is the world's biggest book retailer. They dominate the U.S. and several foreign markets. Pursuant to the 1998 declaration of Amazon's founder Jeff Bezos to offer "the good, the bad and the ugly," customers once could buy every title that was in print and was legal to sell. However, in early 2017, a series of anonymous bomb threats against Jewish community centers occurred in the U.S., fueling a campaign by Jewish groups to coax Amazon into banning revisionist writings. On March 6, 2017, Amazon caved in and banned more than 100 books with dissenting viewpoints on the Holocaust. In April 2017, an Israeli Jew was arrested for having placed the fake bomb threats. But Amazon kept its new censorship policy: They next culled any literature critical of Jews or Judaism; then they enforced these bans at all its subsidiaries, such as AbeBooks and The Book Depository; then they banned books other pressure groups don't like; finally, they bullied Ingram, who has a book-distribution monopoly in the US, to enforce the same rules by banning from the entire world-wide book market all books Amazon doesn't like... 3rd ed., 158 pp. pb, 6"x9", bibl., color illustrations throughout.

The First Zündel Trial: The Transcript. In the early 1980s, Ernst Zündel, a German living in Toronto, was indicted for allegedly spreading "false news" by selling copies of Harwood's brochure *Did Six Million Really Die?*, which challenged the accuracy of the orthodox Holocaust narrative. When the case went to court in 1985, so-called Holocaust experts and "eyewitnesses" of the alleged homicidal gas chambers at Auschwitz were cross-examined for the first time in history by a competent and skeptical legal team. The results were absolutely devastating for the Holocaust orthodoxy. For decades, these mind-boggling trial transcripts were hidden from public view. Now, for the first time, they have been published in print in this new book – unabridged and unedited. 820 pp. pb, 8.5"x11"

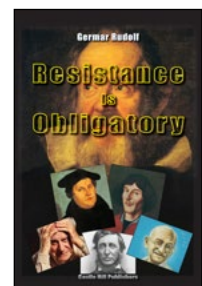
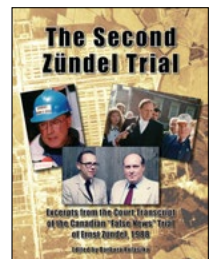
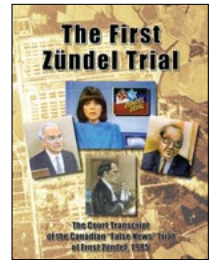
The Holocaust on Trial: The Second Trial against Ernst Zündel 1988. By Ernst Zündel. In 1988, the appeal trial of Ernst Zündel for "knowingly

spreading false news about the Holocaust" took place in Toronto. This book is introduced by a brief autobiographic summary of Zündel's early life, and an overview of the evidence introduced during the First Zündel Trial. This is followed by a detailed summary of the testimonies of all the witnesses who testified during the Second Zündel Trial. This was the most-comprehensive and -competent argument ever fought in a court of law over the Holocaust. The arguments presented have fueled revisionism like no other event before, in particular Fred Leuchter's expert report on the gas chambers of Auschwitz and Majdanek, and the testimony of British historian David Irving. Critically annotated edition with a foreword by Germar Rudolf. 410 pp. pb, 6"x9", index.

The Second Zündel Trial: Excerpts from the Transcript. By Barbara Kulaszka (ed.). In contrast to Ernst Zündel's book *The Holocaust on Trial* (see earlier description), this book focuses entirely on the Second Zündel Trial by exclusively quoting, paraphrasing and summarizing the entire trial transcript... 498 pp. pb, 8.5"x11", bibl., index, b&w ill.

Resistance Is Obligatory! By Germar Rudolf. In 2005, Rudolf, dissident publisher of revisionist literature, was kidnapped by the U.S. government and deported to Germany. There a show trial was staged. Rudolf was not permitted to defend his historical opinions. Yet he defended himself anyway: Rudolf gave a 7-day speech-proving that only the revisionists are scholarly in their approach, whereas the Holocaust orthodoxy is merely pseudo-scientific. He then explained why it is everyone's obligation to resist, without violence, a government which throws peaceful dissidents into dungeons. When Rudolf tried to publish his defence speech as a book, the public prosecutor initiated a new criminal investigation against him. After his probation time ended in 2011, he dared publish this speech anyway... 2nd ed. 2016, 378 pp. pb, 6"x9", b&w ill.

Hunting Germar Rudolf: Essays on a Modern-Day Witch Hunt. By Germar Rudolf. German-born revisionist activist, author and publisher Germar Rudolf describes which events made



him convert from a Holocaust believer to a Holocaust skeptic, quickly rising to a leading personality within the revisionist movement. This in turn unleashed a tsunami of persecution against him: lost his job, denied his PhD exam, destruction of his family, driven into exile, slandered by the mass media, literally hunted, caught, put on a show trial where filing motions to introduce evidence is illegal under the threat of further prosecution, and finally locked up in prison for years for nothing else than his peaceful yet controversial scholarly writings. In several essays, Rudolf takes the reader on a journey through an absurd world of government and societal persecution which most of us could never even fathom actually exists in a “Western democracy”... 304 pp. pb, 6”x9”, bibl., index, b&w ill.

Love: The Pursuit of Happiness. By Germar Rudolf. Rudolf’s autobiography on the sensual and emotional aspects of his life: love, affection, romance and erotica, as well as the lack of it. It tells about his human relationships with parents, siblings, friends and girlfriends, wives and children – and with a little puppy called Daisy; about his trials and tribulations as a lover and husband, and most importantly as a father of five children. This book might assist many readers to understand themselves and to help resolve or avoid relationship conflicts. It is an account filled with both humility and humor. Ca. 230 pp. pb, 6”x9” (to appear in late 2024)

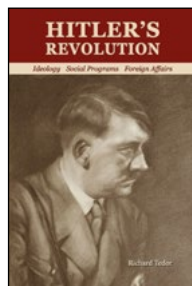
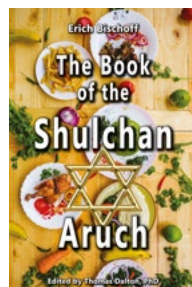
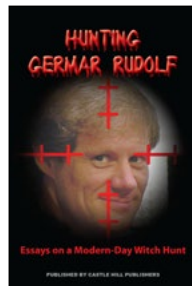
The Book of the Shulchan Aruch. By Erich Bischoff. Most people have heard of the Talmud-that compendium of Jewish laws. The Talmud, however, is vast and largely inscrutable. Fortunately, back in the mid-1500s, a Jewish rabbi created a condensed version of it: the Shulchan Aruch. A fair number of passages in it discuss non-Jews. The laws of Judaism hold Gentiles in very low regard; they can be cheated, lied to, abused, even killed, if it serves Jewish interests. Bischoff, an expert in Jewish religious law, wrote a summary and analysis of this book. He shows us many dark corners of the Jewish religion. 152 pp. pb, 6”x9”.

Hitler’s Revolution: Ideology, Social Programs, Foreign Affairs. By Richard Tedor. Defying all boycotts, Adolf

Hitler transformed Germany from a bankrupt state to the powerhouse of Europe within just four years, thus becoming Germany’s most popular leader ever. How was this possible? This study tears apart the dense web of calumny surrounding this controversial figure. It draws on nearly 200 published German sources, many from the Nazi era, as well as documents from British, U.S., and Soviet archives that describe not only what Hitler did but, more importantly, why he did it. These sources also reveal the true war objectives of the democracies – a taboo subject for orthodox historians – and the resulting world war against Germany. This book is aimed at anyone who feels that something is missing from conventional accounts. 2nd ed., 309 pp. pb, 6”x9”, index, bibl.

Hitler on the Jews. By Thomas Dalton. That Adolf Hitler spoke out against the Jews is beyond obvious. But of the thousands of books and articles written on Hitler, virtually none quotes Hitler’s exact words on the Jews. The reason for this is clear: Those in positions of influence have incentives to present a simplistic picture of Hitler as a blood-thirsty tyrant. However, Hitler’s take on the Jews is far more complex and sophisticated. In this book, for the first time, you can make up your own mind by reading nearly every idea that Hitler put forth about the Jews, in considerable detail and in full context. This is the first book ever to compile his remarks on the Jews. As you will discover, Hitler’s analysis of the Jews, though hostile, is erudite, detailed, and – surprise, surprise – largely aligns with events of recent decades. There are many lessons here for the modern-day world to learn. 200 pp. pb, 6”x9”, index, bibl.

Goebbels on the Jews. By Thomas Dalton. From the age of 26 until his death in 1945, Joseph Goebbels kept a near-daily diary. It gives us a detailed look at the attitudes of one of the highest-ranking men in Nazi Germany. Goebbels shared Hitler’s dislike of the Jews, and likewise wanted them removed from the Reich. Ultimately, Goebbels and others sought to remove the Jews completely from Europe—perhaps to the island of Madagascar. This would be the “final solution” to the Jewish Question. Nowhere in the



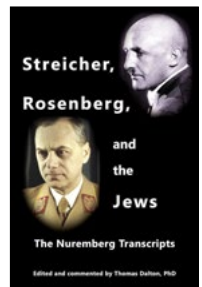
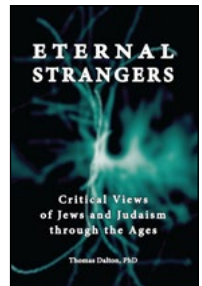
diary does Goebbels discuss any Hitler order to kill the Jews, nor is there any reference to extermination camps, gas chambers, or any methods of systematic mass-murder. Goebbels acknowledges that Jews did indeed die by the thousands; but the range and scope of killings evidently fall far short of the claimed figure of 6 million. This book contains, for the first time, every significant diary entry relating to the Jews or Jewish policy. Also included are partial or full transcripts of 10 major essays by Goebbels on the Jews. 274 pp. pb, 6"×9", index, bibl.

The Jewish Hand in the World Wars. By Thomas Dalton. For many centuries, Jews have had a negative reputation in many countries. The reasons given are plentiful, but less-well-known is their involvement in war. When we examine the causal factors for wars, and look at their primary beneficiaries, we repeatedly find a Jewish presence. Throughout history, Jews have played an exceptionally active role in promoting and inciting wars. With their long-notorious influence in government, we find recurrent instances of Jews promoting hard-line stances, being uncompromising, and actively inciting people to hatred. Jewish misanthropy, rooted in Old Testament mandates, and combined with a ruthless materialism, has led them, time and again, to instigate warfare if it served their larger interests. This fact explains much about the present-day world. In this book, Thomas Dalton examines in detail the Jewish hand in the two world wars. Along the way, he dissects Jewish motives and Jewish strategies for maximizing gain amidst warfare, reaching back centuries. 2nd ed., 231 pp. pb, 6"×9", index, bibl.

Eternal Strangers: Critical Views of Jews and Judaism through the Ages. By Thomas Dalton. It is common

knowledge that Jews have been disliked for centuries. But why? Our best hope for understanding this recurrent 'anti-Semitism' is to study the history: to look at the actual words written by prominent critics of the Jews, in context, and with an eye to any common patterns that might emerge. Such a study reveals strikingly consistent observations: Jews are seen in very negative, yet always similar terms. The persistence of such comments is remarkable and strongly suggests that the cause for such animosity resides in the Jews themselves—in their attitudes, their values, their ethnic traits and their beliefs.. This book addresses the modern-day "Jewish problem" in all its depth—something which is arguably at the root of many of the world's social, political and economic problems. 186 pp. pb, 6"×9", index, bibl.

Streicher, Rosenberg, and the Jews: The Nuremberg Transcripts. By Thomas Dalton. Who, apart from Hitler, contrived the Nazi view on the Jews? And what were these master ideologues thinking? During the post-war International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg, the most-interesting men on trial regarding this question were two with a special connection to the "Jewish Question": Alfred Rosenberg and Julius Streicher. The cases against them, and their personal testimonies, examined for the first time nearly all major aspects of the Holocaust story: the "extermination" thesis, the gas chambers, the gas vans, the shootings in the East, and the "6 million." The truth of the Holocaust has been badly distorted for decades by the powers that be. Here we have the rare opportunity to hear firsthand from two prominent figures in Nazi Germany. Their voices, and their verbatim transcripts from the IMT, lend some much-needed clarity to the situation. 330 pp. pb, 6"×9", index, bibl.



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