

BY CARLO MATTOGNO

# **BELZEC**

**IN PROPAGANDA, TESTIMONIES,  
ARCHEOLOGICAL RESEARCH & HISTORY**

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## *Belzec in Propaganda, Testimonies, Archeological Research & History*

By CARLO MATTOGNO

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Cover illustrations: Top—the modern-day entrance to the Belzec memorial. Bottom—portions of the grounds of the Belzec camp are today filled with chunks of concrete and rebar, appearing to some as a kind of foreboding lava field. The memorial was designed by Polish artists Andrzej Solyga, Zdzislaw Pidek and Marcin Roszczyk and opened with a big ceremony on June 3, 2004. Left—camp memorial consisting of pieces of stacked railroad track and railroad ties. It was upon such pyres than hundreds of thousands of corpses were allegedly incinerated. Right—close-up view of the entry gate to the Belzec camp (© Carlo Mattogno). Background: The landscape around the Belzec camp.

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# Introduction

For official historiography it is now indisputable dogma that, from March 1942 onwards, three extermination camps were set up on Polish soil – at Bełżec, at Treblinka, and at Sobibór – where mass murder of Jews deported there took place in homicidal gas chambers using the exhaust gases from diesel engines. However, this is neither the first nor the only version that circulated during the Second World War; it was the eventual result of a slow narrative evolution, the main phases of which can be followed in the propaganda, in the original historical version, and in the judicial proceedings of that time. Until 1946, there circulated several totally different versions of the extermination methods allegedly used in those camps, which nonetheless received the blessings of the Polish authorities. With respect to the number of victims in these camps, various absolutely ludicrous figures were reported: 3 million for Treblinka,<sup>1</sup> now reduced to 870,000; some 2 million for Sobibór,<sup>2</sup> now standing at 250,000; and 3 million for Bełżec,<sup>3</sup> against 600,000 at present.

How and why did the present ‘authorized’ version of official historiography come about? And what is its historical value? In the book *Treblinka: Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*<sup>4</sup> Jürgen Graf and I have exhaustively answered those questions for the alleged extermination camp at Treblinka. The present study undertakes the same task with respect to the alleged extermination camp at Bełżec. In the discussion which follows, I shall obviously make use of the results arrived at in my Treblinka book, without repeating the corresponding evidence each time, although some quotations become necessary.

I did not, on the other hand, think it necessary to reiterate the technical objections valid with respect to the use of diesel exhaust gases for homicidal gassings; they apply for the Treblinka camp just as much as for Bełżec.<sup>5</sup> Aside from this, I have been able to make use of a precious tool – archeological research at the ‘scene of the crime’ – which unfortunately was not available at Treblinka and which, as we shall see, will furnish us with conclusive criteria for testing the official theses.

Carlo Mattogno

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<sup>1</sup> Report of the Soviet commission of inquiry, Aug. 24, 1944. GARF, 7021-115-9, pp. 103-110.

<sup>2</sup> Testimony of Zelda Metz, in N. Blumental (ed.), *Dokumenty i materiały*, vol. I, Łódź 1946, p. 210.

<sup>3</sup> According to witness R. Reder. Cf. below, Chapter II.4.

<sup>4</sup> Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2004.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 111-137.