

JÜRGEN GRAF • THOMAS KUES • CARLO MATTOGNO

# **SOBIBÓR**

**HOLOCAUST PROPAGANDA AND REALITY**

**DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF  
JÜRGEN RIEGER**

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## 1. Introduction

On 12 May 2009, John Demjanjuk, 89 years of age, born in Ukraine, and erstwhile citizen of the United States, was deported to Germany where he was immediately jailed at Stadelheim prison in Munich and presented with an arrest warrant charging him with “aiding and abetting murder in at least 29,000 cases.” Five years earlier, the U.S. authorities had stripped him of his U.S. citizenship.

The leftist German news magazine *Der Spiegel* described the background of the matter as follows:<sup>1</sup>

*“As a guard in the extermination camp at Sobibór in 1943, Demjanjuk is said to have aided the Nazis in the mass murder of thousands of Jews. [...] Several documents suggest that Demjanjuk belonged to a unit of some 5,000 foreign helpers – Balts, Ukrainians, ethnic Germans – trained by the National Socialists at the Trawniki training camp east of Lublin in the mass murders perpetrated in the occupied territories.”*

A central position in the indictment is occupied by an identity card according to which Demjanjuk, in 1943, was serving as a guard at the Sobibór camp. As opposed to this, an expert opinion formed on the basis of a number of elements had concluded as early as 1987 that the identity card was a forgery.<sup>2</sup> Over the next few years the German media largely accepted this view and *Der Spiegel* stated clearly and succinctly in its edition of 2 August 1993:<sup>3</sup>

*“It [the document] had obviously been forged.”*

Even if the identity card were indeed authentic, it would merely attest to Demjanjuk’s *presence* in the camp but would not in the least prove that the Ukrainian had, in fact, participated in any murder, let

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<sup>1</sup> Georg Bönisch, Jan Friedmann, Cordula Meyer, “Ein ganz gewöhnlicher Handlanger,” in: *Der Spiegel*, No. 26/2009, 22 June 2009 ([www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-65794351.html](http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-65794351.html)).

<sup>2</sup> Dieter Lehner, *Du sollst nicht falsch Zeugnis geben*, Vowinckel Verlag, Berg/Starnberger See 1987.

<sup>3</sup> “Mörderische Augen,” in: *Der Spiegel*, No. 31/1993, 2 Aug. 1993 ([www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-13681024.html](http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-13681024.html)).

alone in 29,000 such acts. In the article mentioned initially *Der Spiegel* noted:<sup>1</sup>

*“For the German judiciary the case against the alleged SS-guard is a first. For the first time the authorities are attempting to bring to trial a hand from the lowest echelon of the hierarchy, not merely for some instance of excessive cruelty, but because of his participation in ensuring the smooth operation of the machinery of murder.”*

Whereas the “Nazi perpetrators” had been indicted for certain concrete crimes in all previous trials, this was no longer the case for John Demjanjuk: the Ukrainian is to be sentenced for his sole presence as a guard in the Sobibór camp at a time when, as the prosecution maintains, at least 29,000 people were murdered there! Concerning this monstrous perversion of justice the German judiciary provides us with the following justification:<sup>1</sup>

*“The arrest warrant states that the guard would not have had to participate in the mass murder. Like so many other men from Trawniki, he could have deserted.”*

By itself, the prosecution of an 89-year-old man for crimes which he allegedly committed at age 23 goes very much against the grain of our natural sense of justice and of European legal traditions, but the Demjanjuk case is further poisoned by the fact that the accused has already spent seven years in prison – five of them on death row – only to be declared innocent later on. We must remember that the U.S. authorities had extradited him to Israel in 1986. During his trial there, he was identified by a number of former Treblinka inmates as “Ivan the Terrible,” a Ukrainian whom these witnesses accused of having not only gassed a huge number of Jews with exhaust gases from the Diesel engine of a knocked-out Soviet tank, but also of having committed all kinds of mind-boggling atrocities.

In its verdict the Jerusalem court quoted the former Treblinka prisoner Pinchas Epstein, who had testified as follows:<sup>4</sup>

*“Sometimes he [Ivan] would come with a dagger, sometimes with a bayonet, and he would crack skulls, he would cut off ears. [...] I want to say, honorable court, that it was horrible to look at the corpses when they took them out of the cabins. People with crushed faces, people with stab wounds, pregnant women with stab wounds in their bellies, women with the fetuses hanging half out, young girls*

<sup>4</sup> Criminal case No. 373/86, State of Israel vs. Ivan (John) Demjanjuk, Verdict, p. 182 f. Awkward language here and in the following quotes in the original.



*with stab wound on their breasts, with eyes gouged out. [...] He would stand and gaze upon the results, what he had done, the stabbing of the girls, the gouging of the eyes, the severing of the girls' breasts – he stood there and enjoyed the scene.[...] This Ivan was a monster from another planet.”*

The witness Yehiel Reichmann testified as follows:<sup>5</sup>

*“I want to tell you what took place next to the well with my friend Finkelstein. While I was still washing teeth together with him, with Finkelstein, this devil Ivan came with a drilling machine for drilling holes. And he rotated the drilling machine for making holes on Finkelstein's buttocks and said to him: if you scream I'll shoot you. He injured Finkelstein; he was bleeding, he suffered great pain, intense pain, but he was not permitted to scream, because Ivan had given him an order: If you scream, I'll shoot you! Ivan was a super-devil, a super-destroyer from Treblinka.”*

On the basis of these testimonies Demjanjuk was sentenced to death by hanging back in 1988. On appeal in 1993, however, he was acquitted and allowed to return to the USA because the witnesses “had been mistaken.”<sup>6</sup>

The identity card which is now taken to prove Demjanjuk's presence at the Sobibór camp was in the hands of the Israeli authorities as early as 1986, but the Ukrainian was *never* indicted by the Israelis for any crimes committed at that camp.

Once the Demjanjuk trial had crashed in Israel, the German authorities apparently feared a similar flop. On the German radio service *Deutschlandfunk* a reporter asked the former minister of justice, Sabine Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger:<sup>7</sup>

*“There [in Israel], he [Demjanjuk] has been indicted and sentenced once before in the eighties for aiding and abetting the murder of more than 800,000 Jews at Treblinka. Later, however, the charges were dropped, the death sentence was rescinded. Is there a risk that there will be a repeat performance in Munich?”*

The former government minister replied:

*“I do not believe that what happened in Israel will now repeat itself in Munich. [...] Well now, I think, the possibilities that exist for*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 186.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. chapter 11.3.

<sup>7</sup> *Deutschlandfunk*, 14 July 2009, [www.dradio.de/dlf/sendungen/interview\\_dlf/998673/](http://www.dradio.de/dlf/sendungen/interview_dlf/998673/).

*demonstrating [his guilt] have now surely been examined by the prosecution very, very carefully and over many, many years.”*

Demjanjuk was formally charged two months after his extradition:<sup>8</sup>

*“The prosecution of Munich I has indicted the suspected NS-criminal John Demjanjuk on charges of aiding and abetting the murder of 27,900 Jews.”*

Thus the number of murders in which the Ukrainian is alleged to have participated had mysteriously diminished from 29,000 to 27,900, although in the period concerned, i.e. between May and July 2009, no document has surfaced which would in any way justify this revision – a truly disarming proof of the assertion that the German judiciary have examined the matter “very, very carefully and over many, many years.”

Faced with such a situation, *Der Spiegel* could not but note:<sup>1</sup>

*“NS-trials are laborious and delicate. Easily, the defendants appear to be pitiable and decrepit old men who are persecuted mercilessly.”*

Still, the Hamburg news magazine took the oncoming trial of John Demjanjuk to be a necessity by invoking the historian Norbert Frei and asserting:<sup>1</sup>

*“The Germans owe it to the victims and the survivors, but also to themselves, to prosecute Demjanjuk.”*

In other words, the old man *must be* sentenced – regardless of any legal aspects – because the Germans owe this to themselves!

In the last chapter of this analysis we shall discuss in detail the incredible perversions of justice committed by the German judiciary – in line with their American counterparts in earlier days – in the persecution of a defenseless old man. The main part of the present book is, however, devoted to the examination of the elements of proof regarding the alleged mass murders of Jews at Sobibór.

According to official historiography, this camp, together with Treblinka and Bełżec, was one of the three “extermination camps”<sup>9</sup> in eastern Poland where more than one and a half million Jews are reported to have been killed by means of exhaust gases from combustion engines. In 2002, two of us (C. Mattogno and J. Graf) presented a thorough do-

<sup>8</sup> “Ermittler erheben Mordanklage gegen Demjanuk,” *Tagesspiegel*, 14 July 2009 ([www.tagesspiegel.de/weltspiegel/Kriegsverbrechen-Mord-Konzentrationslager-John-Demjanjuk;art1117,2846684](http://www.tagesspiegel.de/weltspiegel/Kriegsverbrechen-Mord-Konzentrationslager-John-Demjanjuk;art1117,2846684)).

<sup>9</sup> The word *Vernichtungslager* (extermination camp) does not appear in any German document dating from WWII. It was coined by the Allies later on.

cumentation on Treblinka,<sup>10</sup> whereas the Belżec camp was dealt with by Carlo Mattogno two years later,<sup>11</sup> but until now no revisionist monograph has appeared on the subject of Sobibór. The present work aims at filling this gap.

To assist us in our endeavor, Carlo Mattogno and I managed to win the help of an extremely able researcher, the Swede Thomas Kues who had in the past written several most pertinent articles on this topic.<sup>12</sup>

Chapters 4 and 5 (except for sections 4.2 and 5.3) and section 8.4 of the present book have been written in English by Thomas Kues. Carlo Mattogno is responsible for chapters 3, 5.3. and 7 to 9 (with the exception of section 8.4), whereas I have contributed chapters 2, 6 and 10 to 12 as well as section 4.2. The chapters and sections written by Carlo Mattogno and myself have been translated into English by Henry Gardner from the respective original languages (Italian and German).

Jürgen Graf  
30 November 2009

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<sup>10</sup> Carlo Mattogno, Jürgen Graf, *Treblinka: Vernichtungslager oder Durchgangslager?*, Castle Hill Publishers, Hastings 2002 ([vho.org/D/Treblinka](http://vho.org/D/Treblinka)); Engl.: *Treblinka: Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, Theses & Dissertation Press, Chicago 2004 ([vho.org/GB/Books/t](http://vho.org/GB/Books/t)).

<sup>11</sup> Carlo Mattogno, *Belżec. Propaganda, Zeugenaussagen, archäologische Untersuchungen, historische Fakten*, Castle Hill Publishers, Hastings 2004 ([vho.org/D/b](http://vho.org/D/b)); Engl.: *Belżec in Propaganda, Testimonies, Archeological Research and History*, Theses & Dissertation Press, Chicago 2004 ([vho.org/GB/Books/b](http://vho.org/GB/Books/b)).

<sup>12</sup> [www.codoh.com/author/kues.html](http://www.codoh.com/author/kues.html).