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[A New Affirmationist Study on Auschwitz](#)

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(As a celebration of the 65th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz and the International Holocaust Remembrance Day, the Inconvenient History revisionist blog is proud to post a presentation of Carlo Mattogno's new massive study on the alleged homicidal gas chambers of Auschwitz-Birkenau, written by its author. Translated from the Italian by Thomas Kues)

By Carlo Mattogno (January 2010)

My work *Le camere a gas di Auschwitz. Studio storico-tecnico sugli "indizi criminali" di Jean-Claude Pressac e sulla "convergenza di prove" di Robert Jan van Pelt* (The Gas Chambers of Auschwitz. A Historical and Technical Study on the "Criminal Evidence" of Jean-Claude Pressac and the "convergence of evidence" of Robert Jan van Pelt, Effepi, Genoa 2009) has now been in print for several months and, as expected, it has been met with almost complete silence. Below I will speak of it briefly as a dignified celebration of the "Remembrance Day". The work in question is not "negationist" but *affirmationist* because it refutes the interpretations proposed by the authors mentioned in its title while reconstructing, piece by piece, thanks to documents unknown to Pressac and van Pelt, the real context of events. It is therefore not a work of sterile or negative criticism, but a positive contribution to our knowledge of the camp.

First some technical information. The book consists of 715 pages, whereof 658 are text and the remaining 51 contains reproductions of documents. The critical apparatus consists of 2,510 notes with references to documents from 22 archives and a bibliography listing approximately 270 works, including over 80 on the subject of cremations. The appendices contain, among other things, a glossary of more than 400 German technical terms. The study is divided into five parts and 19 chapters. The table of contents below already provides a fairly accurate idea of the topics that are treated. I will therefore limit myself to making some brief comments.

Part One is devoted to the "criminal traces" of the alleged homicidal gas chambers at Auschwitz, as presented by Jean-Claude Pressac and later – in a publication bordering on plagiarism – by Robert Jan van Pelt. The original formulation of the "traces" goes back to the Polish investigative judge Jan Sehn, who listed nearly all of them after the war.

With “criminal traces” Pressac means the alleged “bavures” that appears in several German documents relating to the crematoria of Birkenau and for which, he said, it is impossible to give any explanation other than a homicidal one. But, as is documented in the seven chapters of this section, this claim depends solely on Pressac’s inability to correctly explain the documents in question.

In Chapter 1 are listed accurately all the “criminal traces” put forward by the two historians, divided according to which crematorium they relate to, as well as distributed chronologically, highlighting the often overlooked fact that they are concentrated to the period of the construction of the crematoria. The orthodox historians wants us to believe, that the alleged gas chambers at Birkenau operated for several months without leaving any trace behind. In particular, the alleged gas chamber of crematorium II is supposed to have been in operation for twenty months, exterminating a total of 500,000 Jews (according to van Pelt) without leaving a single “criminal trace”.

The chapter concludes with a discussion of the ventilation systems of *Leichenkeller 1* (the semi-subterranean basement rooms supposed to have served as a homicidal gas chamber) and 2 (the alleged changing rooms) of crematoria I and II. The original German documents show that, for the alleged Auschwitz gas chambers, the SS planned 9.5 air changes per hour, whereas the ventilation capacity for the “undressing rooms” was set at 11 air changes per hour.

Thus the “undressing rooms” were better ventilated than the “gas chambers”! There follows another technical discussion, likewise based on German documents, concerning an elevator with a capacity of 300 kg which was installed in Crematorium II as a temporary device, but remained in permanent use, contrary to the unfounded claim of van Pelt that it was replaced with another elevator having a capacity of 1,500 kg (but which in fact was mounted in crematorium III). In order to bring the alleged 500,000 corpses from the semi-basement to the furnace room on the ground floor, the elevator would have had to make 100,000 trips up and down. This would mean 231 transports a day, each lasting 6 minutes, without interruption, day and night on all of the approximately 430 days during which the crematorium actually was in operation, without ever a mishap occurring and without a moment’s rest!

Chapter 2 covers, one by one, the “criminal traces” pertaining to crematorium II – *Vergasungskeller, Gaskeller, Gasdichttür, Auskleideraum, Auskleidekeller, Sonderkeller, Drahtnetzeinschiebevorrichtung* and *Holzblenden, Gasprüfer* and *Anzeigergeräte für Blausäure-Reste, Warmluftzuführungsanlage, Holzgebläse* and others – discussing them in detail and clarifying their real historical context, thus refuting the fallacious interpretations of Pressac and van Pelt. Chapter 3 examines the secondary “criminal traces” relating to the same crematorium, while Chapter covers the primary “traces” pertaining to crematorium III. Among other things I show here, basing my argument on documents unknown to Pressac and van Pelt, that the 14 showerheads mentioned in a document relating to *Leichenkeller 1* of crematorium III were not “fake”, as apodictically proclaimed by them, but real ones. They were, in fact, part of a program of “Special measures for the improvement of hygiene facilities” launched at Birkenau in early May 1943, which also included the crematoria and of which, apparently, the two abovementioned authors know nothing. In their ignorance, they have turned an installation for the maintenance of hygiene among camp inmates into a “criminal trace” of mass extermination.

Chapter 5 deals with the “criminal traces” of crematoria IV and V. While Pressac admitted that there exists no evidence for the presence of homicidal gas chambers in these buildings, he nevertheless ventured four different hypotheses regarding their structure and functioning, one more inconclusive than the other. It is no wonder that he described the gassing technique supposed employed here as “irrational and ridiculous”. Even this judgement is all too kind, because the procedure described by Pressac, with Zyklon B being inserted through small windows, was technically impossible. These windows were, in fact, fitted with metal bars, making it impossible to introduce a can of Zyklon B from the outside. Moreover, we are supposed to believe that the Auschwitz SS designed the alleged homicidal gas chambers in Crematorium IV and V without a mechanical ventilation system, at the risk of contaminating the entire crematorium, and this after ordering, on 9 December 1940, ventilation installations for the dissection rooms and the mortuary of crematorium I, and after installing ventilation systems not only crematoria II and III, but also in the disinfection gas chambers in Block 3 of the main camp as well as the disinfection facilities BW 5a and 5b in Birkenau and the so-called Kanada I.

In Chapter 6 are analyzed the “criminal traces” of a general nature, i.e. those not pertaining to a specific crematorium, such as *Normalgaskammer*, a standard warm-air circulation disinfection chamber constructed by Degesch. Incredibly Pressac argues that the term implies the existence of an “abnormal”

or “homicidal” gas chamber (the opposite of a *Normalgaskammer* was in fact a *behelfsmäßige Gaskammer*, a temporary gas chamber, such as all the existing disinfestation gas chambers at Auschwitz and Birkenau). Here is also discussed the only “criminal trace” discovered by van Pelt, the “cremation with simultaneous *Sonderbehandlung*“, which historical context and meaning van Pelt both distort due to his lack of historical and technical knowledge.

Chapter 7 deals with the “criminal traces” artificially attributed to the so-called “Bunkers” at Birkenau, two farmhouses allegedly converted into homicidal gas chambers, which in reality never existed as such. The individual “traces” are examined in their historical context and restored to their true meaning, which has been systematically distorted by the two abovementioned authors.

Part Two consists of a scientific study of the crematoria of Auschwitz-Birkenau. Opening it, Chapter 8 presents an 86 pages long summary of my research on this topic, which is yet to be published in full. As can be seen from the table of contents below, it addresses all the key technical problems related to the structure and operation of the cremation facilities, their capacity and the duration of the cremation process. The data from the actual operation of these facilities are compared with testimonies relating to them, which all turn out to be grossly exaggerated or false, a result of such exaggerations being functional to the Soviet propaganda figure of four million gassed at Auschwitz: only by attributing hyperbolic capacities to the Birkenau crematoria could the Soviet propaganda be propped up. But why, when *all* witnesses have lied intentionally regarding the cremations, should we trust their claims about the supposed gassings? As explained in my description of Chapter 10, they have already destroyed their own credibility on this issue. Here is also examined the allegations of massive outdoor cremations being carried out in 1944, which are contradicted by American and British aerial photographs of Birkenau. In Chapter 9 are discussed in detail Pressac’s claims regarding cremation and the crematoria at Auschwitz. Here is shown that the French historian had no grasp of the related technical problems and that his speculations in this regard lack any foundation.

Part Three deals with the two most important testimonies left by former Auschwitz inmates and SS camp staff. Chapter 10 presents a critical analysis of the statements of Henryk Tauber, a witness considered by Pressac to be “95% historically reliable” and whose testimony by van Pelt is ascribed “the highest evidentiary value”. The latter has also arrogantly proclaimed that “negationists have not been able to discredit him as a witness” and therefore prefer “to bury it [=Tauber’s testimony] in silence”. What has in fact been buried in silence are 47 pages of detailed criticism. In addition to the well-known deposition of Tauber before the investigative judge Jan Sehn on May 24, 1945, which I have analyzed in the original Polish, I introduce two more statements unknown to both Pressac and van Pelt: a deposition made by Tauber before a Soviet investigative commission on February 27 and 28, 1945, which I have examined in the original Russian, and a deposition in Polish made before the Jewish Historical Commission in Cracow in 1945. As can be seen from the table of contents, some thirty issues are dealt with in all. The conclusion reached by this critical analysis is that there is no need for the revisionists to discredit, since he has done this efficiently enough by himself with absurdities and mendacious assertions. And this is the witness par excellence!

Chapter 11 exposes the painful efforts of van Pelt to paint as credible the “confessions” of the former commandant of Auschwitz. He claims that “negationists have tried to find contradictions in Höss’s testimony” but that they “have not been successful in attacking Höss’s credibility, by pointing out contradictions”. However, van Pelt himself, in an earlier work, speaks explicitly of “internal inconsistencies in his statements”. In this chapter is highlighted the method of systematic distortion and complicit silence implemented by van Pelt to conceal these contradictions, which are so huge that they by themselves demolish the whole credibility of Höss’s statements.

Part Four is a careful examination of the historical and technical errors of van Pelt. Chapter 2 examines his statements regarding cremation and crematories, highlighting his astounding technical and historical ignorance on this subject. To this we must add his arrogance. He criticizes Fred Leuchter for his lack of “expert knowledge” on this issue even though he himself comes off as an illiterate (his knowledge in this regard is even smaller than that of Pressac), yet he has the gall to pontificate as were he a world-reknowned expert. Besides being absurd, his claims often border on the comical, as when he ascribes to a proposed yet never constructed crematorium furnace a cremation capacity of 7,200 corpses per day, despite the fact that this would require a furnace of rather unusual size, with a height of 100 meters and a width of 40 meters (the project in question was referring to an installation 6 meters high and 3 meters wide), or when he states that the cremation of a corpse requires 3.5 kg of coke (the average of the

Birkenau crematoria was approximately 17 kg when the furnaces had reached operating temperature, which required an additional quantity of coke). The reader may enjoy a large assortment of nonsense courtesy of van Pelt. Here he flounders desperately and has to resort to painful sophistry to keep from sinking, but in the end, the only thing to remain afloat is his blatant ignorance.

Among other things, this chapter examines van Pelt's fanciful claim that "by the time the crematoria were finished, Auschwitz had virtually no permanently dedicated morgue capacity", in other words: the morgues of the crematoria were permanently employed as gas chambers and undressing rooms. This claim is confronted with a series of documents, unknown to van Pelt and ranging in time from 20 March 1943 to 25 May 1944, which show that the morgues of the crematoria were *always* available as such. The mortuaries and morgues remained in use.

Chapter 13 contains a detailed discussion of the alleged Zyklon B introduction holes in the roof of *Leichenkeller 1* of crematorium II in Birkenau, which, through a detailed rebuttal of the two most important exterminationist studies on the subject, demonstrate that these openings never existed, so that the gassing technique described by the witnesses could never have worked.

Chapter 14 evaluates the conjectures drawn by van Pelt relating to Zyklon B. By carefully selecting witnesses favorable to him (those who claim that it took about 30 minutes for the victims to die) and excluding inconvenient ones (such as those who refer to a time of about 3 minutes) he rules that the alleged homicidal gassings took place with concentrations of hydrogen cyanide "as low as 100 ppm [parts per million]", corresponding to 0.12 g/m³. This is done mainly to "refute" the Leuchter Report. Unfortunately, the figures provided by Höss, van Pelt's SS witness par excellence, results in a concentration 140 times higher! By an even more bizarre calculation, he reaches the conclusion that a good 1,660 of the 12,000 kg of Zyklon B delivered to the camp during 1943 were used for the alleged homicidal gassings. However, since the documents on the use of Zyklon B are very rare and, moreover, refer exclusively to disinfection, this claim is completely unfounded and further contradict Pressac's conjecture that only 2-3% of the total deliveries of Zyklon B was used for the alleged gassings (while van Pelt's figure amounts to almost 14%). What we have here is proof of the fact that in the absence of documents, historians make arbitrary and unfounded speculations.

Chapter 15 concerns the number of Auschwitz victims. The various figures are examined chronologically, beginning with the 4 million of Soviet propaganda and the calculations found in the related "expert report" (which presuppose for the Birkenau crematoria an absurd capacity of 9,000 corpses per day, almost 10 times the theoretical capacity of the facilities – yet, as noted above, the "eyewitnesses" have readily conformed their statements to fit this figure) and ending with the official statistics of Franciszek Piper. Here is documented that Piper's figure contains at least 180,600 fictitious deportees. The number of *documented* deaths amounts to approximately 135,000.

Part Five deals with one of the fundamental principles of van Pelt's historical methodology: the "convergence of independent accounts". This assumes that the first reports about Auschwitz were truthful, independent and convergent.

Chapter 16 examines the origins of the propaganda spread by the resistance movement in Auschwitz, and how its first absurd stories, which later fell into oblivion, with difficulty came to form the literary motif of the homicidal gas chambers, aided by contributions from the Soviets, Brits and the Poles.

Chapter 17 considers the "reconstruction of how knowledge of Auschwitz had emerged" proposed by van Pelt and demonstrates how this propaganda was spread. The key document here is a report, written in 1944 by two Jewish inmates who escaped from Birkenau, Rudolf Vrba and Alfred Wetzler, which is well known for its blatant lies relating to both the crematoria and to statistics; lies that Pressac and van Pelt have painfully attempted to explain and justify with sophistry and nonsense.

Van Pelt makes a similar attempt to salvage also Boris Polevoi's article on Auschwitz from 2 February 1945, which contains clumsily invented claims about the alleged extermination process. Here is also examined the Polish reports and investigations (Roman Dawidowski, Jan Sehn), the major testimonies (Charles Sigismund Bendel, Miklos Nyiszli, Filip Müller) and the minor (Ada Bimko, Marie Claude Vaillant-Couturier, Severina Shmaglevskaya, Janda Weiss) as well as the statements from Germans who stood accused at the Belsen trial (Josef Kramer, Hans Aumeier, Fritz Klein and others) put forward by van Pelt in a most unseemly manner. One of the gems found in his exposition is the pathetic attempt to justify the ridiculous lies of Ada Bimko.

Chapter 18 demonstrates the inconsistency of van Pelt's historiographical methodology and his imaginative but evidentially baseless historical reconstruction, from the "first gassing" in *Block 11* of the Auschwitz main camp and the "gas chamber" of crematorium to the so-called "*Bunkers*" of Birkenau. Also discussed are the related testimonies put forward as evidence (Pery Broad, Hans Stark, Jerzy

Tabeau, Szlama Dragon, David Olère, Johann Paul Kremer).

Chapter 19 refutes the legend of the “terrible secret” of Auschwitz, which only came to light in 1944 through the Vrba-Wetzler report. In fact one should rather speak of a “terrible propaganda” which was only gradually developed from said report and subsequently “historicized” by the Soviets, Brits and Poles. The camp was permanently exposed to prying eyes: the prisoners in the more than one hundred Kommandos in the Auschwitz-Birkenau complex, the Polish workers employed by companies in the camp (only in Birkenau twenty firms were present), and workers released from Birkenau after a few weeks of internment for breach of employment contracts (at least 335 between July 335 and December 1944). From all these sources came no “terrible truth”, but only the absurd reports examined in chapters 16 and 17. Moreover, relatives of SS men stationed in Auschwitz were able to visit them in the camp (at least 270 such visits are attested to). Many senior SS officers also visited Auschwitz. The documents show, however, that these people discussed everything but the alleged “gas chambers” and extermination – there are not even veiled references or insignificant “bavures”. These important aspects have been completely overlooked by van Pelt.

Finally, the chapter examines the pivot of van Pelt’s methodology, the “convergence of evidence” and in extension the alleged “convergence of independent accounts” and documentary sources (documents, photographs, archaeological finds). The result should be a “convergence” between testimonial and documentary sources, that is, a mutual confirmation: the documents would corroborate the testimonies and vice versa. In reality, the testimonies are neither true, independent nor even convergent, while the documents are systematically misrepresented by van Pelt, so that the “convergence” he presents is purely fictitious. His unjustly celebrated book *The Case for Auschwitz* is not a historical study, but a journalistic overview of misunderstood and misinterpreted historical sources.

Historians, critics, journalists, polemicists, storytellers, holocaustianist bloggers, defenders “truth and memory” and all the faithful of the Auschwitz faith – they can not with impunity continue to repeat the arguments of Pressac and van Pelt without having to deal with this work, which refutes those arguments totally and radically, and in turn, they themselves deserve respect only if they meet the challenge presented by this work in a no less total and radical way.



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