Against that Darkness: Perseverance, Resistance, and Revolt at Treblinka

By
Chad S.A. Gibbs

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The dissertation is approved by the following members of the Final Oral Committee:
Amos Bitzan, Committee Chair, Assistant Professor, History
Kathryn Ciancia, Associate Professor, History
Mary Louise Roberts, Professor, History
Brandon Bloch, Assistant Professor, History
Sunny Yudkoff, Assistant Professor, German, Nordic, and Slavic+

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Against that Darkness: Perseverance, Resistance, and Revolt at Treblinka

Abstract

On August 2, 1943, Jews held inside the Nazi extermination camp Treblinka II rebelled against their SS and Ukrainian guards. What happened on the day of this revolt—representing one of the most gripping moments of Jewish armed resistance to the Shoah—is well-known to historians. Less explored and understood, however, are the deep roots of this uprising and the ways in which prisoners brought about such a stunning outcome. This dissertation examines the months and days before August 2, 1943 and the many actions, both large and small, taken by Jewish women and men along their path to insurrection.

Existing scholarly works predominantly devote their attention to Treblinka's role in Nazi designs for the extermination of European Jewry or focus narrowly on the day of the uprising, leaving inmate planning and perseverance strategies largely unanalyzed. Taking advantage of a greatly expanded testimonial source base, this research adds to the literature by exploring inmate relationships—or social networks—and the place-making resistance strategies prisoners used to control camp geography. Maintaining these spatial and social network analysis methods throughout, this work simultaneously delivers the first analyses of gender, sex, and masculinity in resistance at the camp. My findings contribute to wider understandings of Jewish resistance, the still underexplored roles and experiences of women in the Holocaust, and the strengths of geographic and network analyses. Finally, through my extensive work to find additional Treblinka survivors—expanding the list from 68 to 249 names—and to better explain the means by which they escaped, this dissertation provides recognition to long-overlooked stories of perseverance and resistance, strengthening our knowledge of Treblinka and the actions of people forced to endure its horrors.

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The family members, colleagues, friends, and organizations thanked below helped a former soldier struggling with the bitter end of a beloved career build a new life and find a new purpose. I hope you'll forgive the length of these acknowledgements so I can explain how it all began and offer my heartfelt thanks to the small army of people it took to get me here.

There is no way I would be who or where I am if not for the events of December 2, 2006. In the early morning hours of that day, I was severely wounded when the vehicle I was driving struck an Improvised Explosive Device near Tikrit, Iraq. After years in recovery and multiple surgeries to repair my left arm and leg, the US Army decided it was time for me to retire in 2009. The service was the only life and career I imagined for myself at the time. Even though I can recall thinking my army days were probably over as I laid there waiting for the medic, I fought hard against that outcome for three challenging years.

Feeling cast off without the identity and community the army provided left me broken in ways well beyond the visible injuries to my arm and leg. Looking for something new, and having no idea of where the decision would take me, I enrolled at the University of Wyoming that same fall. Writing these words and enjoying the completion of this project as well as my last days in Madison, so much has changed. It might seem strange to say, but I owe a lot of what my life is now to what could've been its last moment. All the rest of where I am is the result of efforts made by the people on these pages.

Standing beside me at every step is my wonderful family. My mom was always certain I was smarter than my narrow escape from high school even though I insisted that was not the case. I guess I've gone and proven myself wrong, much to her delight. My dad, for his part, is equally proud of where I am today and, as he likes to joke, happier still that I didn't "end up a

trucker." Mind you, neither of us have anything against truckers, that was his career for 35 years. I suppose he can breathe easier now that it seems I did duck that profession once and for all. My sisters Kammie, Kellie, and Kaylie are my inspiration. They've taken off on new paths and demonstrated by sheer determination all that is possible with hard work and good friends. They've also been enormously supportive from the moment I took on my new direction. No one could hope for better examples or a more a more enthusiastic cheering section.

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After undergrad at Wyoming, master's studies took me to the University of Nebraska at Omaha and a chance to learn more about the Holocaust and genocide with Waitman Wade Beorn. I owe much to his ability to push me to find the deeper answers and become a better writer. Bruce Garver, Christina Dando, and Jeanne Reames at Omaha were also indispensable mentors. Studying at Nebraska further afforded me the opportunity to work with the late Moshe Gershovich. Always supportive, Professor Gershovich helped me complete my thesis and graduate even as he fought his own final battle with illness. I and many others will never forget his intelligence or his kindness. As I did in Wyoming, I also leaned on a wonderful group of friends in Omaha. I thank Hilary Robinson, Bobby Hrbek, Jennifer Lassley-Knight, Charles

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My advisor Amos Bitzan is another person that it is impossible to thank enough. Amos is kind, flexible, supportive, and a motivated to help students learn and succeed. His nearly boundless intellect would be incredibly intimidating in a person not simultaneously so humble and helpful. I can say without exaggeration that people praise his thinking and his character from Madison to Jerusalem and all points in between. I owe him a debt and I hope to know him long enough to repay it over and over.

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At the University of Nebraska at Omaha, I was fortunate to receive the George and Virginia Dare Shuflata Fellowship as well as funding from the German Academic Exchange Service and the Frances and Sam Fried Holocaust and Genocide Educational Fund. In Wyoming, I began to look toward graduate school with pivotal assistance of the Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program. At UW-Madison, I also benefitted from funds provided by the Mosse/Weinstein Center for Jewish Studies, the Department of History, and the Center for Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia. Finally, though I had to decline, I was honored to receive the Saul Kagan Fellowship in Advanced Shoah Study from the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany. I am deeply grateful to each of these organizations and their donors.

Much as I was in the story that began these acknowledgements, I end my graduate studies incredibly fortunate. Shortly after I defend this dissertation, I will take up a position as assistant

professor of Jewish studies and director of the Zucker/Goldberg Center for Holocaust Studies at the College of Charleston. I can't wait to join my wonderful new colleagues at the Yaschik/Arnold Jewish Studies Program and work with the growing community of students, lifelong learners, and supporters in the South Carolina Lowcountry. I thank them for the confidence they've entrusted in me and the chance to contribute to their ongoing efforts.

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If you made it this far, I probably owe you thanks and an apology for the length of these remarks. There was just no other way I could express my gratitude and wonder at the help I've received from so many along this journey. Any good acknowledgements section wraps up by saying that the errors remaining are the sole possession of the author. That is true for me as well. The successes of this work, however, don't belong to me alone. What's done well here is the product of so much tireless work and support from others.

I hope this dissertation meets with their approval.

Chapter One

Introduction, Methodology, And Historiography

Introduction, Methodology, And Historiography

Anyone who came to fetch weapons had to give the password "Death!"
To which the proper reply was "Life!"

Death! Life! Death! Life!

Cries of enthusiasm arose as the long-awaited rifles, revolvers,
and hand grenades were handed out.
—Shalom Kohn[1]

The mood was tense, and the air electric with anticipation. Months of planning and false starts had finally come down to one day. Prisoners came quietly to the garage and camp kitchen in the early afternoon to collect weapons hidden in those places by comrades who had stolen them from the armory that morning. Each had to give the password "death," and receive the response "life."[2] Treblinka's prisoner uprising used a military-style challenge and response passphrase that American paratroopers shouting "thunder" and "flash" in the hedgerows of the Normandy bocage would have found eerily similar to their own training.[3] Always fearful of informants, the verbal countersign at Treblinka was meant to ensure that only individuals who were participants in the plan to revolt would receive weapons.

Then, "At [2:00 pm] an order came through from the committee that from that moment no Jew would be allowed to die," recalled one of the survivors.[4] Treblinka's revolt planners decided that the uprising would begin early if anyone's life were in danger from then on out. Sometime before the planned 4:30 pm starting time, Kurt "Kiewe" Küttner, one of the most hated guards in the camp, caught two prisoners in possession of cash. Everyone knew that the

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[1] Shalom (Stanislaw) Kohn, "The Treblinka Revolt," in *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (New York: Waldon Press, 1979), 229.
[2] Kohn, "The Treblinka Revolt," in *The Death Camp Treblinka*, 229.
[3] Stephen E. Ambrose, *D-Day, June 6, 1944: The Climactic Battle of World War II*, A Touchstone Book (New York: Touchstone, 1995), 193.
[4] Gitta Sereny, *Into That Darkness: An Examination of Conscience* (New York: Vintage Books, 1983), 239.

sentence for possessing money at Treblinka was death. Worried that these two coconspirators might die only moments before the revolt was to start, someone took a shot at Kiewe. The revolt had begun.[5]

Months of planning and careful deliberation went out the window because of the early start. Many prisoners had not yet collected their weapons, and some who had were not in their assigned attack positions.[6] Still, Treblinka burned, and around three hundred Jews fled the camp that day. Despite facing another twenty-one months of Nazi genocide and the dangers of war, at least seventy of those men and women went on to survive past 1945.[7]

The Nazis designed the Treblinka extermination camp and the other two *Aktion Reinhard* camps of Belzec and Sobibor to carry out the total annihilation of European Jewry and leave no witnesses left to tell the tale.[8] The survivors of Treblinka's revolt and their comrades who had escaped earlier foiled that plan. Even though their uprising was far less successful than it might have been because of the early start, the men and women who escaped that day succeeded in telling the world the truth of their experiences. Historian Michael Bryant also credits these survivors with the comparable success of the postwar justice process for onetime Treblinka guards. West German courts relied heavily upon the statements of survivors in postwar trials

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[5] Samuel Willenberg, "I Survived Treblinka," in *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (Waldon Press, 1979), 209.
[6] Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 240; Oskar Strawczynski, "Ten Months in Treblinka," in *Escaping Hell in Treblinka* (New York, Jerusalem: Yad Vashem Publications, 2007), 180–81.
[7] Though this source offers an incomplete, yet widely accepted survivor list, other sections of this work will explore the number of Treblinka survivors as well as the concept and definition of survivorship in great detail. See "Opór I Powstanie" (Muzeum Walky i Meczenstwa Treblinka, December 13, 2013), http://www.treblinka-muzeum.eu/index.php/historia/oboz-zaglady/opor-i-powstanie.
[8] "Operation Reinhard (Einsatz Reinhard)," United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, accessed August 20, 2015, http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005195.

dealing with Nazi crimes.[9] The relative success of the revolt meant that survivors could testify to the crimes of SS guards like Kiewe and his infamous superior Kurt "Lalka" Franz.

In four trials from the 1950s to the 1970s, West German prosecutors secured more convictions and longer sentences for former Treblinka guards than for those at any other camp in the *Aktion Reinhard* system. At Belzec, where no revolt occurred and where fewer prisoners survived than at any of the other camps, seven of the eight guards tried were acquitted while 90 percent of the Treblinka accused received jail time.[10] Only through the testimonies of revolt survivors, prior escapees, and those who passed through the camp, as well as a handful of bystander witnesses and former SS guards, can historians more deeply explore the history of Treblinka. Few primary sources remained after the thorough Nazi destruction of Treblinka itself and almost all relevant primary documents shortly after the revolt.[11]

The testimonies and written accounts of Treblinka survivors reveal the importance of friendships and social network-based assistance in helping arrivals to survive selection at Treblinka and to stay alive inside the camp. Mark S. Smith asserts that: "No member of the Jewish *Sonderkommando* survived Treblinka without friendship. Every survivor was helped by someone else — even though in many cases in the end that 'someone else' did not survive."[12]

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[9] Michael S. Bryant, *Eyewitness to Genocide: The Operation Reinhard Death Camp Trials, 1955-1966*, Legacies of War - G. Kurt Piehler, Series Editor (Knoxville, TN: The University of Tennessee Press, 2014), 223.

[10] Bryant, *Eyewitness to Genocide*, 20, 122.

[11] Recent archaeological work by Caroline Sturdy Colls and others has revealed that Nazi forces were less thorough in their destruction of physical evidence at the camp than previously understood, yet survivor testimonies remain our best sources for the reconstruction of daily life and resistance at Treblinka. See Caroline Sturdy Colls and Michael Branthwaite, "'This Is Proof'? Forensic Evidence and Ambiguous Material Culture at Treblinka Extermination Camp," *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 22, no. 3 (2018): 430–53, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10761-017-0432-3; Caroline Sturdy Colls, *Holocaust Archaeologies: Approaches and Future Directions* (London: Springer Publishing, 2015), http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-10641-0; Caroline Sturdy Colls, "Gone but Not Forgotten: Archaeological Approaches to the Site of the Former Treblinka Extermination Camp in Poland," *Holocaust Studies and Materials 3*, March 2013, 253–89; Caroline Sturdy Colls and Michael Branthwaite, "Finding Treblinka Exhibition," The Wiener Library - What's On, accessed July 13, 2016, http://www.wienerlibrary.co.uk/Whats-On?item=266.

[12] Smith makes uncritical use of the term *Sonderkommando* in his work. I will not do so here as the term was not actually often used in reference to Treblinka work prisoners. The prevalence of this word in some secondary works

Smith's belief further highlights a network-based preservation of individuals inside the camp that is sparsely explored in existing literature. In a significant number of cases, the actions of Treblinka's work Jews made survival of selection at the camp possible, in addition to preserving lives thereafter. Work Jews actively sought to select, and thereby save, individuals whom they knew through connections fostered in prior years. In many cases, they successfully removed friends, relatives, or acquaintances from the mass of humanity streaming toward Treblinka's gas chambers.

Treblinka inmates were subject to SS regulations and the barbed wire that controlled and surrounded their endangered daily lives. Owing greatly to the ever-evolving physical environment of Treblinka, geographies created by rules and camp infrastructure impacted the formation and maintenance of prisoner social networks. The places and spaces occupied by the camp population influenced their actions as much as the omnipresent power of the guards. In recognition of these mutually dependent factors, I use the methodologies of social network and geographical analyses in order to explore prisoner relationships in conjunction with the spatial and physical environments that shaped the history of Treblinka. My research further reveals the gendered nature of this same camp geography resulting from, once again, rules applied by guards as well as the actions of Treblinka prisoners themselves. This work uncovers how social networks, spatial conditions, and gender ideologies held by those within the camp were largely responsible for the outcomes of prisoner perseverance, resistance, and final revolt strategies in ways sparsely explored in existing literature.

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on Treblinka seems to be the result of assumptions that knowledge of Auschwitz can be transferred to the study of this camp. *Sonderkommando* will only appear in this dissertation when quoted or when referring to quoted material. Mark S. Smith, *Treblinka Survivor: The Life and Death of Hershl Sperling* (Stroud, Gloucestershire, UK: The History Press, 2010), 160, italics added.

Perhaps the least analyzed aspects of this history, however, are the contributions of women to resistance at Treblinka and the influences of gender norms and gendered thinking on guards and prisoner leaders alike. While I will cover the historiography of Treblinka in a later section of this chapter, it is worth noting here that only a single chapter out of all the works on this camp specifically addresses the conditions and lives of women held at the camp. In those scant five pages, resistance by Jewish women and their roles in revolt conspiracies is not even a topic of discussion. Throughout this work, I will pay specific attention to the lives of Treblinka's Jewish women prisoners and their pivotal participation in resistance. Though this camp is in need of a clear-eyed history of women, sex, and sexual violence, this work also goes further. While devoting attention to the long-neglected lives of women prisoners, I simultaneously address the ways in which masculinity and gender affected the outcome of events and have exerted continuing influence on how women were—and were not—remembered by their male fellow former inmates and resistance conspirators.

Aktion Reinhard in Holocaust Context

Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka occupied a distinctive position set apart from the wider 'concentration camp universe.' The *Aktion Reinhard* camps reported directly to Higher SS and Police Leader for the Lublin District, Odilo Globocnik, and through him to the *Reichsführer*-SS Heinrich Himmler, personally. The standard chain of camp command through the SS Inspectorate of Concentration Camps was not involved.[13] The *Reinhard* camps contributed to Nazi German state finances by sending belongings stolen from their victims back to Germany,

[13] Yitzhak Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka: The Operation Reinhard Death Camps* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 15; Manfred Burba, *Treblinka: Ein NS-Vernichtungslager im Rahmen der "Aktion Reinhard"* (Goettingen: Pachnicke, 1995), 6.

but they did not provide any labor income to the SS Main Economic and Administrative Department, as was the practice of concentration camps.[14] The purpose of the *Reinhard* camps was simple. Inside their small, wire-walled spaces, what Adolf Hitler and his fellow Nazi ideologues termed Europe's "Jewish Question" would receive its "Final Solution."

Using a system perfected through trial and error over the previous year at places like Chelmno, Majdanek, and Auschwitz, Nazi executioners transported Jewish victims by train at a rate of thousands per day and gassed almost all of them to death within hours of their arrival.[15] The *Reinhard* system of gassing victims at set locations replaced the previous mass shootings of Jews in the newly conquered east that evolved from the outset of the German campaign against Russia on June 22, 1941. In what Father Patrick Desbois terms "The Holocaust by Bullets," the SS-*Einsatzgruppen* followed the German *Wehrmacht* as it moved into the Soviet Union, rounded up Jews, communist party members, Soviet military political commissars, and other so-called 'Enemies of the Reich' and took them to forested or rural areas near their places of origin and shot them to death in open air massacres. Nazi forces murdered one and a half million Jews in this way before *Aktion Reinhard* even began.[16]

Nazi leadership soon discovered that even their most devoted ideological adherents found participation in the murder of hundreds or thousands of people per day by rifle shot physically and psychologically destructive. Men broke or became alcoholic while efficiency was lacking

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[14] Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 16; for discussion of standard camp economic and command hierarchy, see Nikolaus Wachsmann, *KL: A History of the Nazi Concentration Camps*, 1st ed. (New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2015).

[15] Deborah Dwork and Robert Jan van Pelt, *Holocaust: A History* (New York, NY: Norton, 2003), 287; Christopher R. Browning, *Fateful Months: Essays on the Emergence of the Final Solution*, rev. ed. (New York, NY: Holmes & Meier, 1991), 29; Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 15; Christopher R. Browning, *The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939-March 1942*, Comprehensive History of the Holocaust (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 356–57.

[16] Patrick Desbois, *The Holocaust by Bullets: A Priest's Journey to Uncover the Truth Behind the Murder of 1.5 Million Jews*, 1st ed. (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 7–13.

and the public spectacle of shootings and mass graves was impossible to conceal.[17] The decision to end *Einsatzgruppen* activities in favor of *Aktion Reinhard* was partly in response to these issues.[18]

Chelmno, the earliest of the pure extermination centers, began operations using gas vans to kill victims on December 8, 1941 as the *Einsatzgruppen* still operated further east.[19] Christopher R. Browning explains that:

> The development and production of the gas van constituted an intermediate stage between the mobile firing squad procedures of the *Einsatzgruppen* in Russia and the stationary gas chambers of the death camps in Poland in the Nazi attempt to murder the European Jews. The ancestry of the gas van, in both technology and personnel, traced back to the euthanasia program aimed at mentally and hereditarily ill Germans that had been ordered by Hitler in 1939. The motive behind developing the gas van sprang from the desire to alleviate the psychological burden on the firing-squad murderers, many of them middle-aged family men who were disturbed most of all by the endless shooting of women and children.[20]

As policy and practices evolved, so did a cadre of trained professional killers.[21] Ninety two of the 450 German SS troops employed in *Aktion Reinhard* camps came from the euthanasia program. These men "brought with them knowledge and experience in setting up and operating

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[17] Edward B. Westermann's recent work on the role of alcohol in Nazi genocide and atrocities is particularly instructive on these topics. His recent book also covers guard drinking rituals inside Treblinka. See Edward B. Westermann, *Drunk on Genocide: Alcohol and Mass Murder in Nazi Germany*, Battlegrounds: Cornell Studies in Military History (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2021); Edward B. Westermann, "Drinking Rituals, Masculinity, and Mass Murder in Nazi Germany," *Central European History* 51 (2018): 367–89; Edward B. Westermann, "Stone-Cold Killer or Drunk with Murder? Alcohol and Atrocity during the Holocaust," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 30, no. 1 (Spring 2016): 1–19.

[18] Dwork and van Pelt, *Holocaust*, 286–87; Browning, *Fateful Months*, 29; Browning, *The Origins of the Final Solution*, 353.

[19] Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 11; Ernst Klee, Willi Dressen, and Volker Riess, eds., *The Good Old Days: The Holocaust as Seen by Its Perpetrators and Bystanders*, trans. Deborah Burnstone (Old Saybrook, CT: Konecky & Konecky, 1991), 307–8.

[20] Browning, *Fateful Months*, 57.

[21] Josef "Sepp" Hirtreiter and commandant Franz Stangl among others are prime examples of this continuity of SS euthanasia program personnel finding their way to employment at Treblinka. Hirtreiter's 1959 euthanasia trial would eventually bring the accused and the events of Treblinka to the attention of the German courts and result in the subsequent Treblinka trials of the mid 1960s to early 1970s. See B162, Files 3817-3848, Central Office for the Investigation of National Socialist Crimes, Ludwigsburg, Germany.

gassing institutions for mass murder."[22] Euthanasia program-trained individuals furthermore "filled the key posts involved with the extermination methods, the planning and construction" of the facilities, and served in command positions.[23] The next stage in Nazi extermination designs would use the experience of these euthanasia personnel, the technological lessons learned from gas vans and early gas chamber experiments, along with knowledge of perpetrator psychological issues made clear by the *Einsatzgruppen* actions in order to multiply lethality and efficiency to an all-new level.

The Wannsee Conference of January 20, 1942 took place after Nazi officials assessed all of these steps, trials, and errors. The point of this meeting was the dissemination of a new plan for the Final Solution and the delegation of responsibilities to governmental departments that would take part. *Staatssekretär* Dr. Josef Bühler, representing the Generalgouvernement of German-occupied Poland, requested that the Jews there be exterminated first. Poland held the largest concentration of Jews in Nazi-occupied territories not already subjected to widespread shooting massacres like those carried out further east. German government officials estimated this population at 2,284,000 before deportations from the west swelled this number even further. Yitzhak Arad notes in his book, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka: The Operation Reinhard Death Camps*, that Bühler's request "was in fact accepted" and the *Aktion* did focus its deadly intent upon Polish Jewry.[24] Jews from eleven European states would eventually be brought to Treblinka, but the vast majority of its victims were indeed of Polish origin.[25]

[22] Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 17; Burba, *Treblinka*, 5.
[23] Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 17.
[24] Arad, 13.
[25] Arad, 138–149.

Overview of Treblinka History and Operations in Brief

Treblinka embodied all the technical lessons that Nazi Germany had learned about genocidal lethality carried through to its ultimate expression in cold, factory-like efficiency. Just as the entirety of *Aktion Reinhard* was a result of lessons in the practice of constructing and operating prior *Vernichtungslager*, or extermination camps, Treblinka eventually represented the refinement of practices pioneered at Belzec and Sobibor. Belzec was constructed first, with ground broken November 1, 1941, and completion in early March 1942.[26] Sobibor came next with construction starting in March, and mass gassing beginning there in early May 1942.[27] Construction at Treblinka using local Jews as slave labor began in late May or early June 1942.[28] Arad explains that:

> The construction of Treblinka death camp began after Belzec and Sobibor were already operational. The expertise gained in the building and the killing operations in the other two camps were applied in the planning and construction of Treblinka. It became the most "perfected" death camp of [*Aktion Reinhard*].[29]

Treblinka opened under the command of Irmfried Eberl, a medical doctor previously employed in the Nazi euthanasia program. The first victims arrived at the camp from the Warsaw Ghetto on July 23, 1942.[30]

Eberl was a veteran of the euthanasia program, though he quickly proved unequal to the task of organizing and running an extermination center on his own. Survivors and guards alike recall the period of Eberl's command as an era of woeful disorganization during which the camp received far more victims than it could kill on a daily basis, and bodies piled up unburied along

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[26] Browning, *The Origins of the Final Solution*, 361; Klee, Dressen, and Riess, *The Good Old Days*, 309.
[27] Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 30–31; Klee, Dressen, and Riess, *The Good Old Days*, 309.
[28] Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 37; Klee, Dressen, and Riess, *The Good Old Days*, 309; Konnilyn G. Feig, *Hitler's Death Camps: The Sanity of Madness* (New York, NY and London, UK: Holmes and Meir Publishers, 1981), 296.
[29] Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 37.
[30] Klee, Dressen, and Riess, *The Good Old Days*, 309; Chris Webb and Michal Chocholaty, *The Treblinka Death Camp: History, Biographies, Remembrance* (Stuttgart, Germany: Ibidem Verlag, 2014), 311–12.

the rail lines leading to the facility and in the disembarkation area of the camp itself.[31] Alerted to Eberl's failure to efficiently operate his post, Globocnik and his deputy, Christian Wirth, visited Treblinka in August 1942 and relieved him of his duties on the spot.[32] Their dissatisfaction with Eberl did not, of course, stem from the high death toll at Treblinka, but rather from the fact that the commandant had failed to run the camp quietly and efficiently, and that he was not returning goods stolen from the camp's victims to the *Reich*.[33] Wirth stayed on for a short period reorganizing the camp before *Hauptsturmführer* (SS rank equivalent to captain) Franz Stangl took over permanently as Eberl's successor. Prior to his assignment to Treblinka, Stangl worked at the Hartheim euthanasia site, and later Belzec, as well as a stint in command at Sobibor.[34]

Eberl's disorganization threatened the very purposes of *Aktion Reinhard*. It was considered a failure if a commander could not secure the camp against escapes or if he allowed the bodies of transported prisoners to lie in the sun for days or weeks, a situation that created a stench that Stangl himself recalled as noticeable for miles before arrival at the camp.[35] The first commandant's failures threatened to reduce *Aktion Reinhard* to little more than a continuation of *Einsatzgruppen* issues despite the fact that its facilities were supposed to make the extermination of Jews into a managed, secretive, and profitable affair. Stangl's "talent for organization" and the subsequent construction of larger gas chambers soon put the camp back in operation at the

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[31] Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 157–59.
[32] Witold Chrostowski, *Extermination Camp Treblinka* (London, UK; Portland, OR: Vallentine Mitchell, 2004), 37.
[33] Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 133.
[34] Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 30; Webb and Chocholaty, *The Treblinka Death Camp*, 319.
[35] Jacob Flaws' recent article "Sensory Witnessing at Treblinka" examines the sights, sounds, and smells of Treblinka to reveal a sensory zone of witnessing around the camp. His work is particularly instructive with regard to how the very smell of Treblinka betrayed its true purpose and made non-Jewish local Poles a kind of witness to the camp's horrors. Jacob Flaws, "Sensory Witnessing at Treblinka," *The Journal of Holocaust Research* 35, no. 1 (January 26, 2021): 41–65.

level of efficiency sought by Globocnik and Wirth.[36] Treblinka murdered 312,500 Jews during Eberl's tenure with only three gas chambers. Under Stangl's tenure and the brief end-stage command of his successor Kurt "Lalka" Franz, the camp's death toll would reach as high as 925,000 using a new ten-room gas chamber building constructed in the fall of 1942.[37] The lethality of Treblinka far outpaced all sites of Nazi mass murder save for the massive, combined total of the Auschwitz complex. A majority of the *Aktion Reinhard* dead lost their lives at Treblinka, while Belzec claimed the second most victims at approximately 434,500, and Sobibor ranked third in the system with at least 170,000 killed, despite being the last to close.[38]

The daily operations and physical layouts of the three *Reinhard* camps that achieved these death tolls were remarkably similar in general description and overall function. Without for the moment taking into account the nuances of geographic change-over-time that I will highlight later, the Treblinka II extermination center comprised three major sections called the "Reception Camp," the "Living Camp", and the "Death Camp" as did Belzec and Sobibor.[39] Rail transports, normally made up of box cars loaded with somewhere between 80 and 120 persons each, were broken into sections of twenty cars and pulled up at the platform of the Reception Camp.[40] Here, arrivals met between three and five SS guards, around ten Ukrainian

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[36] Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 161, quote 181.
[37] Richard Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence: Survival in Treblinka*, Jewish Lives (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1995), 37; "Operation Reinhard (Einsatz Reinhard)," United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, accessed September 4, 2015, http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005195.
[38] "Belzec," United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, accessed September 4, 2015, http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005191; "Sobibor," Online Encyclopedia, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, accessed September 4, 2015, http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005192; "Operation Reinhard (Einsatz Reinhard)."
[39] It is worth noting that while historians have moved away from 'death camp' as a term, survivors and guards alike use this phrase in reference to the distinct part of Treblinka that held the gas chambers, mass graves, and later body-burning infrastructure. It is often found on maps and in testimony demarcating that area of the overall camp. Peter Laponder, *Maps/Drawings Depicting the Treblinka Death Camp*, Overhead Computer Draft (Treblinka Extermination Camp: H.E.A.R.T. - Holocaust Education and Research Team, 2007), http://www.holocaustresearchproject.org/ar/treblinka/maps.html.
[40] House Committee on Foreign Affairs and Samuel Rajzman, "H.J. Resolution 93 - Punishment of War Crimes - 79th Congress, First Session" (United States Government Printing Office, 1945), 121–23, Doc. Y4.F76/1: W19/5,

guards, and twenty members of the Jewish slave labor force. Rail cars were hurriedly and often brutally emptied by the guards, with people directed by the Jewish laborers into the camp through a gate at the center of the rail platform.[41]

In Treblinka, as at other camps of the wider Nazi system, guards separated women and children from the men, with males sent to an open space at the right and women to a barracks building at the left where they would undress and have their heads shaved. Camp staff and members of the Jewish workforce directed men to undress outdoors and then proceed, always quickly and under threat of brutal physical assault by guards, up the narrow green fenced *schlauch*, or tube, pathway that led to the gas chambers.[42] Another commonality with camps outside the *Reinhard* system was the use of a standard lie about arriving people's clothes being washed and the tube leading to showers intended to fend off disease before travelers resumed their journey east. In reality, of course, the clothes were collected for use or profit by Nazi authorities and the *Schlauch*, or tube—often sardonically referred to as the *Himmelstrasse*, meaning the 'road to heaven'—actually led to the gas chambers.[43]

Standard practice was to kill adult men first, lest they catch wind of the danger to women and their families and attempt resistance. Once the men were dead, the women and children would be sent up the tube together. The whole process was repeated until the entire train was

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pps. 120-125, US Congressional Record; Chil Rajchman, RG-50.030.0185, *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Jeff and Toby Herr Oral History Archive* (hereafter JTHOHA), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), December 7, 1988; Rachel Auerbach, "In the Fields of Treblinka," in *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (New York: Waldon Press, 1979), 32.

[41] Eddie Weinstein, *17 Days in Treblinka: Daring to Resist, and Refusing to Die*, 4th ed. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem Publications, 2009), 39–41; Avraham Bomba, RG 50.030.0033, JTHOHA, USHMM, September 18, 1990; Abraham Kolski, RG 50.030.0113, JTHOHA, USHMM, March 29, 1990, March 29, 1990; statements of former SS guard Franz Suchomel Claude Lanzmann, *Shoah: The Complete Text of the Acclaimed Holocaust Film*, Second (New York, NY: De Capo Press, 1995), 97–98; Claude Lanzmann, *Shoah*, DVD, Documentary (Criterion Collection, 1985).

[42] Burba, *Treblinka*, 7; Chrostowski, *Extermination Camp Treblinka*, 25–27, 29–30.

[43] Chrostowski, *Extermination Camp Treblinka*, 60–61; Auerbach, "In the Fields of Treblinka," 34.

emptied.[44] These daily procedures also varied over time in response to changes in the built environment, rules imposed by guards, and—at times—the wider events of the war and the Holocaust, altering the prospects for survival of both arriving Jews and long-term slave laborers in the process. The effects of geographic and systemic change, as well as prisoner responses to these pressures, feature prominently in later sections of this dissertation.

Belzec and Sobibor employed near identical systems and geographies right down to the use of a fenced path called the *Schlauch* to shuttle arrivals from rail platforms to their deaths in the gas chambers.[45] *Reinhard* camps also shared a common lack of a selection experience anything like what a survivor of a standard concentration camp might remember. Each facility held only a small slave-labor force employed in the maintenance of the camp, the collection and sorting of victims' belongings, and the disposal of bodies. Though there were exceptions to these procedures that I discuss later on, large-scale selection of those thought fit for labor, a typical practice at places like Auschwitz, Majdanek, and elsewhere was, in general, neither the purpose of the *Reinhard* camps nor a necessity for maintaining their small labor populations. I argue that at Treblinka, prisoner intervention had much to do with the selection of the scant few individuals who might be removed from the line toward the gas. I will demonstrate that survivor testimonies repeatedly mention the importance of pre-arrival relationships and the assistance of slave-labor-force members in removing friends and acquaintances from the mass of daily arrivals moving up the *Schlauch.*

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[44] Samuel Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka* (Warsaw: Zydowski Instytut Historyczny, 1984), 18–19.
[45] Sobibor camp map, see: "Sobibor Camp, Spring 1942," *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, accessed September 5, 2015, http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/media_nm.php?MediaId=439; for witness-drawn images of camp, see Richard Rashke, *Escape From Sobibor*, 2013 ed. (Harrison, NY: Delphinium Books, 1982), 501–503; for map of Belzec created by Arad, see Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 437.

Testimonial analysis, as stated above, is the only method available to historians seeking to research prisoner perseverance, resistance, and revolt at Treblinka. Though this study is by no means the first to use many of these sources, I contextualize the information contained in survivor accounts within a framework of geographic, social, and gender analyses that is novel in the application of these materials. Additionally, many of the sources or collections of testimony now available for research of this type did not yet exist when authoritative works on Treblinka reached publication. Addressing the existence of new sources and voices in the study of this camp, the next chapter explores my work to find and expand the Treblinka archive in detail. This dissertation benefits from access to a larger pool of available sources than previous authors have had. In order to provide readers with an understanding of the differences between this research and its many predecessors, I next explain my questions and research methodologies before proceeding to a historiographical review of existing literature.

Questions and Methods

Gitta Sereny's book about her confrontation with former Treblinka commandant Franz Stangl has borne many titles. One of her work's German monikers, *Am Abgrund: Gespräche mit dem Henker*, can be translated as "Near the Abyss: Conversations with the Hangman."[46] A subsequent English edition bears the name *Into that Darkness: An Examination of Conscience*.[47] What's clear in these and other derivations is what Stangl represents in Sereny's quest to understand Treblinka itself and Nazi mass murder more broadly. Stangl's broken or absent moral core, and his inability or refusal to see his own wrongs, commands center stage. In the case of Sereny's book, that turn of phrase later became reality in the adaptation of *Into that*

[46] Gitta Sereny, *Am Abgrund: Gespräche mit dem Henker*, Überarb. Neuausg., 3. Aufl. (München: Piper, 1997).
[47] Sereny, *Into that Darkness*.

Darkness as a play by Robert David MacDonald.[48] As we see in Sereny's writing and MacDonald's dramatization, the paramount aim of her conversations with Stangl was to force, in him, a reckoning with the enormity of his personal criminality. Stangl, as the head hangman of Treblinka, represented the deepest darkness of the Holocaust. It was his conscience, and also the Nazi perpetrator's conscience, that she brought under direct examination in her book.

Sereny's questions for Stangl, and those in her examination of Albert Speer, focused, of course, on these Nazi leaders and their actions.[49] Her incisively probing questioning and analysis of these men sought explanations of the darkness of the Holocaust from the minds of two leading perpetrators. In this dissertation, I am inspired by Sereny's work though I turn my questions to the resistance actions of Jews at Treblinka. In "Against that Darkness," I seek to understand how Treblinka prisoners fought back against Stangl and his subordinates. As tools to find the answers I seek, this dissertation makes use of three main scholarly methodologies. In the sections below, I explain how attention to geographic space, social networks, and gender allow us to see the ways Jews fought against that darkness in greater detail. I begin here with the words of a Treblinka survivor recorded by Sereny herself.

As she searches for truth beneath the obfuscations of Stangl's statements, *Into that Darkness* leans heavily on interviews with Treblinka survivor Richard Glazar. Sereny says of him that, "A man of Richard Glazar's integrity is rare anywhere. That he should have survived Treblinka and be in a position to chronicle it for us is hardly less than a miracle."[50] Glazar is unequivocal in his belief that what enabled his own survival, and that of others, was relationships.

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[48] Robert David MacDonald, *Into That Darkness: In Quest of Conscience* (London, UK: Oberon Books Ltd., 2013).
[49] Gitta Sereny, *Albert Speer: His Battle with Truth*, 1st ed. (New York, NY: Knopf, 1995).
[50] Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 171.

> Of course there were loners. They will tell you now they survived *because* they relied on no one but themselves. But the truth is probably—and they may either not know it, or not be willing to admit it to themselves or others—that they survived because they were carried by *someone*, someone who cared for them as much, or almost as much as for themselves. They are now the ones who feel guiltiest. Not for anything they did—but for what they didn't do—for what… and this cannot be any reflection on them… for what simply wasn't in them to be.[51]

The fundamentally irreplaceable bonds of support that Glazar simply calls "relationships" became the social networks of Treblinka prisoners.

This research expands on existing archival and published records of victims' and survivors' social network-based resistance both on arrival at the camp and within Treblinka's confines. A particular goal of this study is to explore the complexities of Jewish survival, particularly how social networks contributed to the successful planning and execution of the August 2, 1943 revolt that largely ended the Nazis' reign of terror at Treblinka. Scott Weingart articulates the importance of relationships in his broadly explanatory article on the utility of the concept of social networks in research:

> If you're studying something with networks, odds are you're doing so because you think the objects of your study are *interdependent* rather than *independent.* Representing information as a network implicitly suggests not only that connections matter, but that they are *required* to understand whatever's going on.[52]

The history of survival and resistance at Treblinka—as Glazar shows us—requires just such an understanding of the social networks that existed among camp inmates.

Existing literature focused on the history of Treblinka and the other *Aktion Reinhard* camps follows two themes. On one hand, historians have crafted well-written and exhaustively researched accounts of Nazi official intent and camp chronology, while, on the other, survivors

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[51] Italics and elipses in original, Sereny, 186.
[52] Scott B. Weingart, "Demystifying Networks, Part 1," *Journal of Digital Humanities*, accessed May 22, 2014, http://journalofdigitalhumanities.org/1-1/demystifying-networks-by-scott-weingart/.

have authored autobiographical accounts of their individual experiences. In the testimonies of survivors, their individual experiences have rightfully taken center stage. It is also important to recognize that all of the book-length memoir accounts from Treblinka survivors are by men. As such, attention to the male voice and what this often leaves out as it relates to the experiences of women is of heightened importance to research on this camp.

Many scholarly accounts of Nazi concentration and extermination camps emphasize perpetrators while the survivors tend to place greater emphasis on their own actions and their individual paths to survival. These two paths toward understanding the Holocaust leave ample space for new work focusing on networks between survivors and how they affected the history of the camp. By integrating the information found in both approaches, this dissertation paints a picture of how survivor networks and perpetrator actions combined to decide historical outcomes. As a component of this work, I also direct greater attention to the roles and experiences of women prisoners that are underexplored by both male survivors and later historians.

Outside the field of Holocaust and Genocide Studies, social network analysis as a methodological strategy is successfully used to develop historical understanding of forces that affected women's history in 19th-century Middle America. Historian Sharon Wood's *Freedom of the Streets* depicts challenges faced by women seeking reputable employment outside the home in this era and the networks that aided them in overcoming social and political resistance in the gendered geography of a Gilded Age American city, Davenport, Iowa.[53] Wood uses archival materials and firsthand accounts to reconstruct the networks that the working women of Davenport used to bring likeminded peers to the city, challenge the gendered geography of the

[53] Sharon E. Wood, *The Freedom of the Streets: Work, Citizenship, and Sexuality in a Gilded Age City*, Gender and American Culture (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

city environment, and create opportunities for women seeking work and social advancement in a male dominated world. "Networks of sisters and friends" were prime movers in the initial creation of Davenport's Working Women's Lend a Hand Club, and in its later expansion.[54] Relationships brought educated leaders to the women of Davenport, and then created social aid structures valuable in expanding their opportunities through further use of networking strategies. "Like links in a chain," Wood explains, "these networks anchored women to a respectable identity and helped guarantee their welcome."[55]

Social networks created first by bonds of "sisters and friends" brought leadership to the working women of Davenport. Later expansion of these initial arrivals forged alliances destined to change law and gendered access to geography in this Gilded Age city by working "like links in a chain" toward common goals. Wood reconstructs these networks by taking first a wide net of all available sources and later zeroing in on the recurrence of certain characters and their collaborations with others. Repeated mention of names with special attention to geography and coincidence with other individuals in the sources determines the strength of connectivity and for each woman. The result in this book, as in other successful applications of social network discoveries in tandem with geographical and gender analyses, is the historian's ability to depict not simply what happened at a given place and time, but also who was involved, whom they worked with, and how their relationships and physical environment affected their roles in historical events. Wood further demonstrates how women and men in Davenport created and challenged the gendered geography of their city in a type of analysis that this dissertation employs in the study of Treblinka networks.

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[54] Wood, *Freedom of the Streets*, 263-7.
[55] Wood, 65.

The gendered nature of Treblinka geography is immediately apparent in source testimonies. From the moment of disembarkation at the camp, even those who did not long survive their arrival at Treblinka occupied different spaces based on their age and their sex. The camp kitchen briefly mentioned at the opening of this chapter is a further example of a gendered place in its role as a distribution point for weapons before the revolt. Prisoner conspirators stored stolen weapons at this location, at least in part, because guards did not as acutely fear an outbreak of resistance from the women who worked there. Chapter Six of this dissertation explores how such gendered beliefs on the part of guards and prisoners combined to render this place somewhat safer for prisoner conspirators. This same chapter will also reveal the existence of a camp brothel at Treblinka that is nowhere mentioned in the existing historiography. My analysis of this terrible location, and our knowledge of it, reveals much about the importance of women prisoners in the final revolt and how survivor men have at times avoided telling their stories.

My focus on the gendered places and spaces at Treblinka brings this work into conversation with growing historiographies of women, sex, sexual violence, and masculinity during the Holocaust. Through a painful, but necessary, discussion of sexual servitude at Treblinka, my work adds to Robert Sommer's analysis of Nazi camp brothels.[56] I also take up Maddy Carey's examination of Jewish masculinity while contributing more broadly to our understanding of women's lives, roles, unique threats, and "choiceless choices" during the Holocaust.[57]

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[56] Robert Sommer, *Das KZ-Bordell: Sexuelle Zwangsarbeit in Nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslagern* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2009); Robert Sommer, "Sexual Exploitation of Women in Nazi Concentration Camp Brothels," in *Sexual Violence against Jewish Women during the Holocaust* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2010).

[57] "Choiceless choices" is a term coined by Lawrence Langer. Lawrence L. Langer, *Versions of Survival: The Holocaust and the Human Spirit*, SUNY Series in Modern Jewish Literature and Culture (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1982); Maddy Carey, *Jewish Masculinity in the Holocaust: Between Destruction and*

"Against that Darkness" recovers the history of women at Treblinka and builds on existing scholarship by addressing erasure, silences, and gendered practices in the telling of history.[58] My research shows how Jewish women—despite having been a small minority inside the camp—occupied a pivotal place at the heart of resistance planning. I examine how women prisoners resisted individually, in groups with other women, and alongside their male comrades who sometimes later chose not to remember their contributions. The result of these sections of my dissertation is a clearer understanding of women's history at this camp, the impacts of gender norms on resistance, as well as the participation of women in resistance networks at Treblinka. Indeed, the focus on networks that I explain below, alongside the spatial historical practices above, provide the basis for new work on women at Treblinka while allowing us to envision both their literal and figurative places in the revolt.

For both women and men at Treblinka, it often required the actions of many to save one person. This reality mirrors other recent research using a social network analysis methodology in Holocaust and Genocide Studies. Marten Düring, Matthias Bixler, Michael Kronenwett, and Martin Stark collaborated on the article "Vennmaker for Historians: Sources, Social Networks and Software" exploring new information on the activities of resistance-minded Berliners and how digital humanities tools can help demonstrate these findings to audiences.[59] The work of Düring *et al.* is specifically relevant to this study as it focuses on underground activities in which

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Construction (London, UK; New York, NY: Bloomsbury / Bloomsbury Academic, An imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2017).

[58] Ayşe Gül Altınay and Andrea Petö, eds., *Gendered Wars, Gendered Memories: Feminist Conversations on War, Genocide and Political Violence*, 2018, 12; see also Zoë Waxman, *Women in the Holocaust: A Feminist History*, 1st ed. (New York, NY : Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2017); Ronit Lentin, "'A Howl Unheard': Women Shoah Survivors Dis-Placed and Re-Silenced," in *When the War Was Over: Women, War, and Peace in Europe, 1940-1956* (London, UK; New York, NY: Leicester University Press, 2000), 179–93; Svetlana Aleksievich, *The Unwomanly Face of War: An Oral History of Women in World War II*, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky, 1st ed. (New York, NY: Random House, 2017).

[59] Marten Düring et al., "Vennmaker for Historians: Sources, Social Networks and Software," *REDES-Revista Hispana Para El Analisis de Redes Sociales* 21, no. 8 (December 2011): 421–52.

secrecy and covert planning are necessary requirements for the survival of their subjects. Treblinka inmate social networks were also necessarily clandestine in nature, lending them to the same type of reconstruction used by Düring.

Previous studies of resistance figures within Nazi Germany and its occupied territories largely focus on individual actors or the personalities of those involved. These works develop comparisons of individual resisters with the goal of discovering personality characteristics held in common.[60] Crucially, Düring *et al* reject the idea that these resistance saviors worked alone. They believe instead that the personalities of isolated individuals are less important to the success of resistance than the bonds between affiliated people and groups working to save others. Their research in the archives of Yad Vashem and the German *Gedenkstätte deutscher Widerstand* (German Resistance Memorial) reveals that only a tiny minority of individuals working to save Jews and other hunted populations within Second World War Berlin did so alone.[61] As this dissertation will show in the case of Treblinka resistance, social network analysis can be an invaluable tool for historians when evidence reveals conspiratorial networks as having prime importance to the outcome of events. In their own work, Düring *et al.* use this tool to display the connectivity of many people in the preservation of only two individuals. Having ruled out independent action, the next obvious step was to find the relationships that made resistance and preservation of hunted peoples possible.

Social network analysis tools, such as the computer program "Vennmaker," reveal sixty persons responsible in some way for helping Erna Segel, a Jewish woman hiding in Berlin, as well as their roles in her salvation, how they were brought into the network, and their proximity

[60] Düring et al., 438.
[61] Düring et al., 438 and note 18.

to her.[62] In this and other network examples discovered by Düring's research, "brokers," or individuals who acted as go-betweens for others involved in the network come to light by plotting the connections from one involved person to the next.[63] Owing to the importance of brokers as conduits for information, Segel likely never met most of these righteous individuals, and social network analysis is able to display this and other facts relevant to her successful evasion of Nazi authorities. The tools used by Düring *et al.* highlight the strengths of social network analysis and the revelations that can be made utilizing this methodology. Their article dispels the myth of the lone resistance actor, displays how individuals became involved in helping others, and integrates findings in a way that makes complex relationships clearly apparent for researcher and reader alike. Many of the accomplishments of work on resistance networks in Berlin are relevant to the study of relationships responsible for preservation of life and the success of the revolt at Treblinka as both efforts were secretive and involved multiple individuals or groups working toward a single goal, though not necessarily in direct communication.

The recent edited volume *Geographies of the Holocaust* offers additional examples of the use of both geographic and social network methodologies in Holocaust and Genocide Studies.[64] The chapter "Bringing the Ghetto into View: Spatialities of Ghettoization in Budapest" explores how ghetto boundaries created conditions that made social network strategies vital for the survival of the local Jewish population.[65] Ghettoization in combination with antisemitic legislation created spaces and places of deliberately designed Jewish presence and Jewish

[62] Düring et al., 443.
[63] Düring et al., 445.
[64] Anne Kelly Knowles, Tim Cole, and Alberto Giordano, eds., *Geographies of the Holocaust* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 2014).
[65] Tim Cole and Alberto Giordano, "Bringing the Ghetto to the Jew: Spatialities of Ghettoization in Budapest," in *Geographies of the Holocaust* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 2014), 120–57.

absence in 1944 Budapest.[66] Here, the definitions of space and place are equally important, and not at all interchangeable.

This dissertation uses a definition of place, as opposed to space, having a fluidity not found in the built infrastructure of spaces. Places described here are created both by the physical environment and the human environment of rules and social constructs. A 'space' in wartime Budapest is exemplified by the market hall, a building where people purchased food and supplies, while a 'place' is the set of locations and areas in between the market hall and home that authorities allowed Jews to traffic at the specific times they could do so. The market hall is always a space, but it can have differing and even simultaneous definitions as a place.

The social factors that determine the definitions of places mean that a single location can be multiple spaces at once, as we will explore in several later chapters. This duality can be confusing, but Cole and Giordano's work provides a helpful guide. In Budapest, antisemitic legislation permitted Jews to leave their homes only between the hours of two and five in the afternoon.[67] Here, geography for wartime Jews was equally defined by physical locations and socially constructed rules that combined to determine their safety of travel and geographic access. Between the tightly regulated hours of access, spaces in Budapest such as the market hall could become places of Jewish presence, while outside these hours, the same locations were defined as places of Jewish absence. Here, as at Treblinka, the human experience shapes the meanings ascribed to inanimate geography.

No Jew living in Budapest, no matter how inconvenient or dangerous the trip, could survive without visiting a market hall to purchase goods. Cole and Giordano make use of Geographic Information Science (GIS) tools to demonstrate the difficulty of reaching a market

[66] Cole and Giordano, 122–23.
[67] Cole and Giordano, 143.

hall for some Jews due to distance, the short allowed hours of travel outside the home, and the additional prohibition on Jewish ownership of private transportation.[68] Taken together, these factors created a situation in which only social networks could deliver supplies to those living outside the navigable zone created by Nazi rules and impossible distances by creating a chain of helpers that overcame geographic restrictions. Likewise, Treblinka inmates existed in an even more restrictive regime of access to space and place. Only by leveraging networks that brought together inmates with varying access to locations and resources could Jewish prisoners carry out the Treblinka revolt.

Cole and Giordano's geographic work brought to light "the heightened importance of Jewish/non-Jewish social networks in the summer and fall of 1944" in order to retain access to needed goods and services.[69] For those whom ghettoization did not force to move away from long-held residences, acquiring needed items could be as simple as asking a longstanding non-Jewish friend or acquaintance for assistance.[70] Wartime necessity, opportunism, or antisemitism might still have meant that these neighbors would ask to be paid for their assistance, but with or without payment, the relationship was still valuable to Jewish survival.[71] In the case of Budapest, GIS was the starting point, and the historical questions answered by social network analysis came second. Rather than developing historical questions with one methodology to then in turn answer with another, my exploration of Treblinka's social networks and the impacts of geographies of space and place is simultaneous in this research.

The *Geographies of the Holocaust* chapter "Visualizing the Archive: Building at Auschwitz as a Geographic Problem" by Paul Jaskot, Anne Kelly Knowles, Chester Harvey, and

[68] Cole and Giordano, 144, 143.
[69] Cole and Giordano, 149.
[70] Cole and Giordano, 149.
[71] Cole and Giordano, 150.

Benjamin Perry Blackshear also has relevance to this study of Treblinka as it examines the connection between prisoner life and the built environment.[72] Jaskot *et al* explore construction at Auschwitz as a condition of daily life in addition to making important contributions on how the built environment affected an individual's ability to see the camp around them. As illustrated in a pair of maps produced by historical modeler Peter Laponder, Treblinka underwent extensive changes to its built environment as a result of construction between roughly October 1942 and August 1943.[73] Notable among the many changes to camp infrastructure was the movement of a guard tower from the center of the southern fence to an area directly in the middle of the region referred to by inmates and guards alike as the "Death Camp" area of Treblinka.[74] Since some members of the revolt fighting groups later took a southerly route through the fence at almost the exact spot this tower once stood, it is clear that construction and knowledge of the built geography of the camp had an impact on this choice of escape route.[75]

This is just one example of inmates taking advantage of construction or changes to the built environment to create opportunities for resistance. Jaskot *et al* note that two-thirds of Auschwitz escape attempts coincided with a period of peak construction at the camp.[76] Treblinka inmates followed the same logical use of circumstance and opportunity to further their own survival. This is true in both their early decisions regarding escapes from the camp before the construction of a new barracks altered these possibilities and in the selection of a southerly route of flight past the former location of the guard tower during the revolt.[77] Jaskot, as the

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[72] Paul B. Jaskot et al., "Visualizing the Archive: Building at Auschwitz as a Geographic Problem," in *Geographies of the Holocaust* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 2014), 158–91.
[73] Laponder, "Treblinka Map."
[74] Laponder.
[75] Smith, *Treblinka Survivor*, 135.
[76] Jaskot et al., "Visualizing the Archive," 182.
[77] Tomlinson, *Treblinka's Last Witness*; Smith, *Treblinka Survivor*, map displaying escape route for one group of prisoners, 135.

architectural historian of the chapter's collaborative group, personally undertook studies of sightlines, or a viewshed analysis at Auschwitz-Birkenau. His work reveals what an individual standing at various locations within the facility might have been able to see.[78] Since so much of both the guard and inmate experience of camp life was predicated upon their knowledge of their own environment, these viewsheds have the possible power to reveal what an individual could have known of their surroundings, and how they might have come to decisions about that world based on what they could see. In all of these exploits, networks were interdependent upon geographies.

The interdependence of Treblinka survivors lies at the heart of this research. The fact that "every survivor was helped by someone else" inspires the methodological approaches of this dissertation.[79] The means of facilitating this help through networks of social groups and individuals eventually responsible for one of the most successful acts of Jewish armed resistance during the Holocaust is worthy of further research. Exploration of survivor testimonies reveals that networks not only contributed to survival by selection, but also had a great impact on life within Treblinka's wires. In conclusion here, the section below details the existing historiography of Treblinka with specific attention to sources and methodologies in order to contextualize where room exists for this research to make interventions in an already considerable body of scholarship.

Historiography

Literature focused on Treblinka is nearly as old as the camp itself. Survivor memoirs and even historical accounts date back to at least 1944. Escapee Abraham Krzepicki was likely the

[78] Jaskot et al., "Visualizing the Archive," 179, 184.
[79] Smith, *Treblinka Survivor*, 160.

first Treblinka survivor to complete a chronicle of his experiences at the camp, having recorded his memories within the Warsaw Ghetto prior to his death in the uprising there.[80] Soviet journalist and writer Vasily Grossman's 1944 *The Hell of Treblinka* was the first account by an individual not personally present at the camp while it operated.[81] Survivor Yankiel Wiernik's *A Year in Treblinka* was the first from an individual who actually participated in the revolt.[82] Wiernik stated that he kept a secret diary during his time in Treblinka that informed his later book.[83] This would almost certainly make him the first person to put pen to paper about the terrible events that took place there. The memoir accounts of Moyshe Klaynman, Herschl Sperling, Samuel Rajzman, and Edie Weinstein soon joined those of Wiernik and Krzepicki at the end of or in the immediate postwar period.[84]

These early memoirs and histories of events at Treblinka share two characteristics. First, they all set out to reveal the truth of Nazi brutality as a call to arms while the war still raged in Europe and, secondly, they are all flawed in their knowledge of events. Krzepicki was only present in Treblinka for eighteen days before his escape, leaving him totally incapable of

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[80] Rachel Auerbach, assistant to Emanuel Ringelblum in his work to archive the history of the Warsaw Ghetto from within, recorded Krzepicki's account. Auerbach would write her own history of Treblinka shortly after the war. See Abraham Krzepicki, "Eighteen Days in Treblinka," in *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (New York, NY: Waldon Press, 1979), 77–145; Auerbach, "In the Fields of Treblinka."

[81] Vasily Grossman, *The Hell of Treblinka*, Reprint (Lexington, KY: Martin Zwinkler, 2015).

[82] Jankiel Wiernik, *A Year in Treblinka: An Inmate Who Escaped Tells the Day-to-Day Facts of One Year of His Torturous Experience*, eBook (Pickle Partners Publishing, 2014; originally published by the American Representation of the General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland, 1944).

[83] Testimony of Ya'akov (Jankiel) Wiernik at: Adolf Eichmann Trial (Jerusalem District Court, December 12, 1961).

[84] Moyshe Klaynman wrote his memoir in 1943 or 1944, though it has yet to reach translation or publication. Samuel Rajzman was first heard in testimony read into the U.S. Congressional Record in 1945, reaching wider publication in 1979 with an expanded account of his experiences, while Sperling found publication first in 1947 though not to a wider audience until 2010. Weinstein also wrote in 1947, but did not find wider distribution until 2002, after his own death. See Chad Gibbs and Matthew Greene, "*Briv funem arkhiv*: A Memoir in Four Acts: Moyshe Klaynman and Survival at Treblinka." *In geveb* (May 2020): Accessed March 9, 2021; Weinstein, *17 Days in Treblinka*; Hershl Sperling, "Treblinka - Eye-Witness Report," in *Treblinka Survivor: The Life and Death of Hershl Sperling* (Stroud, Gloucestershire, UK: The History Press, 2010), 243–52; Smith, *Treblinka Survivor*; House Committee on Foreign Affairs and Rajzman, "Rajzman Congressional Testimony;" Samuel Rajzman, "The End of Treblinka," in *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (New York, NY: Waldon Press, 1979), 231–51.

speaking to acts of resistance or perseverance beyond his own personal experience. Wiernik was a prisoner of the Death Camp portion of Treblinka, and though very well connected, informed, and important to the eventual revolt, his location there left him unable to portray the intricacies of resistance among the larger body of slave laborers in the main area of the camp.

Survivor memoir accounts are all, to a degree, myopic in nature. The very human and perfectly understandable urge to record one's own experiences can often leave out the big picture. Individuals also simply cannot write about what they did not personally know took place. Some testimonies and written accounts are much better at describing the totality of events than others, but all survivors are limited by their knowledge of what took place outside their own allowed space and outside their own social circle. Alongside these concerns, as mentioned above, we must remember that all known Treblinka memoirs were written by male survivors, leaving the voices of women inside this camp underrepresented as well as understudied by later historians.

Richard Glazar's *Trap with a Green Fence* and Samuel Willenberg's *Revolt in Treblinka*, two of the best survivor accounts by individuals well-connected to resistance in the camp, nearly overcome many of these issues, but they still must be scaffolded and cross-referenced with each other and with further witness statements in order to understand the full scope of Treblinka camp history.[85] Creating an interwoven fabric of survivor experience from testimonies, written accounts, and interviews is a cornerstone of this research. As I expand upon in Chapter Two, this work also benefits from a larger selection of witness accounts than was available to previous secondary writers.

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[85] Richard Glazar, *Die Falle mit dem Grünen Zaun: Überleben in Treblinka* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1992); Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*; Willenberg, *Surviving Treblinka*; Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*.

Grossman completed his work in the immediate aftermath of events, and therefore had the advantage of the freshness of memory for the witnesses he was able to find, but this was a very small section of Treblinka survivors and local non-Jewish Poles. Later works, such as Yitzhak Arad's seminal *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka: The Operation Reinhard Death Camps*, Konnilyn Feig's *Hitler's Death Camps*, Chris Webb and Michael Chocholaty's *The Treblinka Death Camp*, Manfred Burba's short, but accomplished *Treblinka: Ein NS-Vernichtungslager im Rahmen der "Aktion Reinhard,"* and Witold Chrostowski's *Extermination Camp Treblinka* had access to far more survivor witnesses than were available to Grossman as the war still raged across Europe.[86] Alexander Donat's 1979 volume *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary*, Gitta Sereny's 1983 *Into That Darkness*, and Claude Lanzmann's 1985 film *Shoah* contributed analysis and, most importantly, gifted researchers with powerful collections of witness testimony.[87]

None of the above-mentioned authors is in any way guilty of weak research or negligence, however, room exists to ask and answer new questions about Treblinka because methods have evolved and available sources have grown. Treblinka literature is as diverse as it is vast. Many works pursue questions either not limited to resistance and prisoner life at the camp, or not focused on these aspects of history at all. Historian Michael S. Bryant uses some of the same trial testimonies that inform my research, however, he does so in a quest to analyze the postwar justice process that spawned them, not the camp history they depict.[88] Likewise,

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[86] Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*; Feig, *Hitler's Death Camps*; Webb and Chocholaty, *The Treblinka Death Camp*; Burba, *Treblinka*; Chrostowski, *Extermination Camp Treblinka*.
[87] Alexander Donat, ed., *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (New York, NY: Waldon Press, 1979); Sereny, *Into That Darkness*; Lanzmann, *Shoah*, 1985; the transcript-book of the film makes use of its testimonies even easier for the researcher: Lanzmann, *Shoah*, 1995.
[88] Bryant cites extensively the collections of the *Zentralen Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen zur Aufklärung nationalsozialistischer Verbrechen* [Central Office of the State Investigator for National Socialist Crimes] Ludwigsburg, Germany, B162, Files 3817-3848. See Bryant, *Eyewitness to Genocide*.

Sereny's *Into That Darkness* focuses primarily on Treblinka's longest-serving commandant Franz Stangl, though she also yields excellent interview statements from the survivor witnesses she spoke to in order to contextualize the jailhouse admissions of Stangl. Ernst Klee, Willi Dressen and Volker Riess's edited volume *The Good Old Days* is also a fine Treblinka secondary source that is more concerned with perpetrator ideology and mindset than recreation of prisoner actions.[89] To this one can add *The SS of Treblinka* by writer Ian Baxter as another secondary source on the camp's German, and—to a lesser extent—Ukrainian perpetrators.[90]

The strongest work in the field, as mentioned above, is Arad's *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka.*[91] Arad covers the Treblinka revolt, devotes chapters to prisoner conditions and resistance with extensive use of testimony, but leaves room for additional findings in three regards.[92] His discussion of the camp does not take into account the changes in physical environment over time. My dissertation will demonstrate that changes in the geographies of prisoner life affected their chances for survival, resistance and eventual revolt, even making strong impacts on the importance and structure of the social networks they relied upon for subsistence and support. Secondly, while Arad does give some credit to these prisoner networks, he does not spend a great deal of time reconstructing the minutia of resistance over time or network formation.

The third area in which Arad leaves room for new contributions to scholarship on Treblinka concerns his attention to Jewish women at the camp. *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka* is

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[89] Klee, Dressen, and Riess, *The Good Old Days*.
[90] Ian Baxter, *The SS of Treblinka* (Stroud: Spellmount, 2010).
[91] Arad's work was recently rereleased in a revised and somewhat expanded edition. This 2018 edition, however, does not change the analysis of Arad's work or add to his original research. The main contribution of this reissue is a new placement of Arad's wiring in the historiography. As his core archival and analytical work as not changed, this dissertation cites the original unless otherwise noted. Yitzhak Arad, *The Operation Reinhard Death Camps: Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, rev. and exp. ed. (Bloomington, IN; Jerusalem, Israel: Indiana University Press; Yad Vashem, 2018).
[92] Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 286, 105, 114.

unique for Arad's inclusion of a chapter entitled "Women Prisoners," though this short five-page section does not address resistance by women and does not take advantage of gender as a category of analysis. Arad instead addresses the basic timeline of events as it applies to women prisoners, their jobs in the camp, and their living conditions. He shies away from matters of sex and sexual violence in particular.[93] In Chapter Six, below, I reveal many ways in which this inattention to gender, masculinity, sex, and sexual violence makes it impossible to see the full picture of resistance and revolt at Treblinka. "Against that Darkness" devotes attention to the gendered geography of this camp and, in turn, reveals the pivotal roles of women prisoners in resistance before addressing their later erasure or silencing in the telling of this history.

Arad's work is further constrained by the need to give equal space to the history of two other camps in a book devoted to the entirety of *Aktion Reinhard*. Feig's *Hitler's Death Camps* is even more capacious, including discussion of all Nazi camps with an extermination function in addition to those of *Aktion Reinhard.* Volumes devoted solely to the history of Treblinka itself include Chrostowski's work, Webb and Chocholaty, and Burba as well as Jean-Francois Steiner's *Treblinka*, Yoram Lubling's *Twice Dead* with, to a degree, Samuel Moyn's *A Holocaust Controversy*.[94] Steiner's *Treblinka*, although a powerful read, does not inform the background reading for this research. His work has been widely criticized for sensationalizing the revolt and resistance at the camp in ways that upset survivors of the camp among its other ills.[95] Moyn's *A Holocaust Controversy: The Treblinka Affair in Postwar France* exists entirely

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[93] Arad, Chapter 15, "Women Prisoners," in *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 114-18; Yitzhak Arad, *The Operation Reinhard Death Camps: Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, rev. and exp. ed. (Bloomington, IN: Jerusalem: Indiana University Press; Yad Vashem, 2018), Chapter 16, "Women Prisoners," 150-54.
[94] Jean-François Steiner, *Treblinka* (New York: Meridian Book, 1994); Yoram Lubling, *Twice-Dead: Moshe Y. Lubling: The Ethics of Memory, and the Treblinka Revolt* (New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2007); Samuel Moyn, *A Holocaust Controversy: The Treblinka Affair in Postwar France*, Tauber Institute for the Study of European Jewry Series (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press; Hanover: University Press of New England, 2005).
[95] Moyn, *A Holocaust Controversy*, 124.

in response to the tone of Steiner's work and the furor occasioned by its release.[96] Steiner not only continued the "sheep to the slaughter" narrative characterizing alleged Jewish passivity in the Holocaust, he also attempted to dramatize resistance at Treblinka as an example of when Jews did fight back.[97] While that approach makes Treblinka survivors heroes, it obviously has an all-together different effect on memory of the six million.

Though Steiner's rather elastic treatment of testimony and narrative caused controversy, his work is not the only book to play fast and loose with the use of quotes and emotionally charged analyses of fact. Lubling's *Twice-Dead: Moshe Y. Lubling, the Ethics of Memory, and the Treblinka Revolt* makes dubious and at times flatly wrong usages of survivor testimony. His work sets out to accomplish the laudable task of defining his own grandfather back into the Organizing Committee that motivated and led Treblinka resistance and revolt, but he oversteps on many occasions. In the most glaring example of his fluid use of testimony, Lubling quotes survivor Richard Glazar's description of his grandfather as a "contact person" in one part of the camp on the day of the revolt before overinterpreting that phrase as an assertion by Glazar that Lubling had been a leader of the entire revolt.[98] Glazar actually credits the author's grandfather for his actions as a geographic relay of information between spatially separated groups.[99] Lubling's later characterization of this role as "the "contact person" for the entire fighting force" is totally unsupported by the original account.[100] The spatial focus of this dissertation will demonstrate that it was entirely impossible for one individual to act as a contact person for the "entire fighting force." Multiple groups took part in separate locations within the camp. Moshe

[96] Moyn, xv–xxii.
[97] Moyn, 42.
[98] Lubling, *Twice-Dead*, 53, 67; Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 138.
[99] Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 138.
[100] Lubling, *Twice-Dead*, 67.

Y. Lubling was indeed important to one fighting unit, but my research shows that he could not have been in contact with the entire force and was not leader of the revolt.

The issues with Lubling's characterization of his grandfather's role in the revolt are compounded by avoidable research errors, such as listing SS guard Otto Horn among the Jewish survivors of the camp, and including personal attacks on survivors for not following Zionist principles when they "chose to live with former Nazis and their collaborators in foreign countries" instead of emigrating to Israel after the war.[101] Whatever one's analysis of historical events, it is certainly more than unnecessary to condemn Holocaust survivors for living wherever they chose or could find refuge after the war.

Lubling's work is followed by stronger entries in the field from Chrostowski, Webb and Chocholaty, Sara Berger, and most recently Michał Wójtek.[102] *The Treblinka Death Camp: History, Biographies, Remembrance* by Webb and Chocholaty is a strong, survivor testimony-based addition to scholarship. The authors conducted four new interviews with former Treblinka inmates in the process of their research.[103] Their work is additionally useful as a reference for its inclusion of chapters listing victims, survivors, guards, and witnesses with biographical excerpts on those persons for which the authors could find sufficient source materials.[104] Webb and Chocholaty only leave themselves open to criticism for the manner in which they use large, untested, or unsupported blocks of testimonial quotes in order to drive their narrative. While the

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[101] Lubling, 143–45, 148.
[102] Sara Berger's *Experten der Vernichtung*, or Experts of Extermination, explores Treblinka guard social networks. I comment on her work in greater detail in Chapter Two. Michał Wójtek's *Treblinka '43* is the most recent work of public-facing history focused on the prisoner revolt. His work also receives greater attention in later sections. Michał Wójcik, *Der Aufstand von Treblinka Revolte im Vernichtungslager*, trans. Paulina Schulz-Gruner (München: Piper Verlag, 2020); Michał Wójcik, *Treblinka '43: Bunt w Fabryce Śmierci* (Kraków: Znak litera nova, 2018); Sara Berger, *Experten der Vernichtung: das T4-Reinhardt-Netzwerk in den Lagern Belzec, Sobibor, und Treblinka*, 2. Aufl, Studien zur Gewaltgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts (Hamburg: Hamburger ed., 2014).
[103] Interviews with Samuel Willenberg, Eliahu Rosenberg, Kalman Teigman, and Edi Weinstein in Webb and Chocholaty, *The Treblinka Death Camp*, Chapter Eleven, 125–168.
[104] See all of Part II in Webb and Chocholaty, *The Treblinka Death Camp*.

extensive use of testimony is proper and necessary given the available source base, the authors do not network testimonies or test them against prisoner geographies in order to strengthen witness accounts for those closest to events or refute the guesses of those more distant from the events described.

Witold Chrostowski's much shorter *Extermination Camp Treblinka* makes better use of mutually supportive testimonies, yet also leaves room for further research. Chrostowski states that there were no survivors among the initial Jewish slave-labor force drawn from the small towns nearest the camp, though the testimonies of William Schneiderman and Samuel Goldberg prove this to be in error.[105] Chrostowski also uses the statement of a single survivor to characterize Treblinka's prisoner *kapos* as totally in league with the Germans, whereas almost all other voices mention *kapos* as members of the conspiracy and allied persons.[106] Finally, though Chrostowski's work is primarily valid, it makes no attempt to grapple with geographic change over time and the impacts of infrastructural changes on prisoner life, or matters of prisoner access to space.

Arad's *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka* continues to constitute the strongest entrant in the literature on the camp despite its age, smaller source base, and divided focus. Arad had access to fewer accounts than every author that came after him, yet he still powerfully linked the testimonies he did have into a cohesive narrative kept free of errors by cross-referencing testimonial sources. This dissertation expands on his work and focuses directly on perseverance,

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[105] Schneiderman was one of these first arrivals, having been brought to Treblinka's nearly empty site by truck from nearby Stoczek-Lukowski. As a long-time member of the slave labor force, he helped build the camp, saw its first arrivals, and survived the uprising. Samuel Goldberg arrived at Treblinka no later than June 1942. When he got there, the camp had not yet been completed or opened. Wiliam Schneiderman, (aka Wolf, Velvl, Velvel, and several other spellings of his last name in various sources). RG-50.030.0288, JTHOHA, USHMM, September 21, 1994; Shmuel "Samuel" Goldberg, Family Oral History Interview with Shmuel "Samuel" Goldberg, interview by Shlomo Goldberg, Transcript, 1991, in possession of the author; Karen I. Treiger, *My Soul Is Filled with Joy: A Holocaust Story*, 1st ed. (Seattle, WA: Stare Lipki Press, 2018).

[106] Chrostowski, *Extermination Camp Treblinka*, 46.

resistance, and revolt at Treblinka by taking advantage of access to additional testimonies and the methodological strengths offered by the geographic turn in Holocaust and Genocide Studies scholarship in conjunction with social network and gender analyses to properly contextualize witness statements.

Overview of Chapters

Including this Introduction, I present my research over eight chapters. In Chapter Two, "Finding the Treblinka Archive," I summarize and explore source collection issues relevant to the study of this camp and other Holocaust sites while explaining how the disjointed nature of the transnational Treblinka archive has long impacted our understandings of its history. Chapter Three, "Camp Geography and Early Resistance Activities," opens my analysis of resistance at Treblinka with an exploration of the geographies that affected prisoner knowledge of the camp and how this fed into plans for resistance over time. Chapter Four, "Defensive Resistance and the Formation of Social Networks," depicts Treblinka inmate perseverance and the growth of resistance possibilities as the camp evolved and prisoner social networks formed. Chapter Five, "Offensive Resistance: Prior Plans and the Revolt," will continue the previous analysis of networks and add emphasis on their methods of gaining access to space and place in the physical environment of Treblinka just prior to and on August 2, 1943. Chapter 6, "Reevaluating the History and Memory of Women at Treblinka," then collects several threads of relevance to the study of women prisoners and the importance of gender analysis from the previous chapters. This section further speaks to the erasure, or deliberate forgetting, of Jewish women in resistance by survivor men and later historians. Chapter Seven, "Surviving Treblinka: Finding the Few and Localizing Definitions of Survivorship," then turns to a discussion of survivorship and our

knowledge of how many Jews made it out of this camp alive. This last narrative chapter returns to the findings of Chapter Two, while using an analysis of the concept and definition of the term "survivor" to clarify and categorize the paths Jews took toward survival of this place. Finally, Chapter Eight, "Conclusion," wraps up this work and explores paths for future research.

Chapter 2

Finding the Treblinka Archive

Finding the Treblinka Archive[1]

Approaching Treblinka today, visitors walk through a pine forest clearing marked by a series of stone slabs representing the rail line that once led to the entrance. The site of what was an extermination camp is now a tranquil and thoughtful memorial located far from any major urban center. The rural serenity and undeniable beauty of its location contributes immensely to its unsettling emotional power. As remembered by the survivor Samuel Willenberg, this same scenery even held the attention of the terrified, starving, and desperate people the Nazis deported to Treblinka. "The cattle cars were close to the trees, touching them. Mothers were lifting up their children, showing them a forest for the first time. There was no forest in the ghetto. You could reach through the window covered with barbed wire and touch the forest for the last time. The way to death…"[2] Willenberg trails off while describing a path that saw as many as 925,000 people—almost exclusively Jews—transported to their murder in carbon monoxide-filled gas chambers. [3] A black, ashen construction meant to symbolize the pyres used to burn the bodies of the dead now lies near the recently rediscovered location of these rooms.[4]

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[1] A version of this chapter previously appeared as the article "Lessons from the Treblinka Archive: Transnational Collections and their Implications for Historical Research" in *The Journal of Contemporary Archival Studies*. Chad S.A. Gibbs, "Lessons from the Treblinka Archive: Transnational Collections and Their Implications for Historical Research," *The Journal of Contemporary Archival Studies* 5, no. 14 (October 2018): 1–16.

[2] Alan Tomlinson, *Treblinka's Last Witness*, DVD, Documentary (Tomlinson De Onis Productions LLC, 2014).

[3] Israel Gutman, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, vol. 4 (New York, NY: Macmillan, 1990), 1486; Konnilyn G. Feig, *Hitler's Death Camps: The Sanity of Madness* (New York, NY and London, UK: Holmes and Meir Publishers, 1981), 30; Chris Webb and Michal Chocholaty, *The Treblinka Death Camp: History, Biographies, Remembrance* (Stuttgart: Ibidem Verlag, 2014), 193; Witold Chrostowski, *Extermination Camp Treblinka* (London, UK; Portland, OR: Vallentine Mitchell, 2004), ix; Yitzhak Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka: The Operation Reinhard Death Camps* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1987), 392–98; "Permanent Collections: Concentration and Extermination Camps," Museum Webpage, *Beit Lohamei HaGhetaot - Ghetto Fighters' House Museum*, accessed October 19, 2015, http://www.gfh.org.il/eng/?CategoryID=61&ArticleID=77; "The Holocaust Resource Center - Yad Vashem - Treblinka," accessed October 8, 2017, http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/holocaust/resource_center/item.asp?GATE=Z&list_type=3-0&TYPE_ID=10&title=Treblinka; "Treblinka," *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, accessed October 8, 2017, https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005193.

[4] For information pertaining to archaeological work at Treblinka by Caroline Sturdy Colls, see Caroline Sturdy Colls and Michael Branthwaite, "Finding Treblinka Exhibition," The Wiener Library - What's On, accessed July 13, 2016, http://www.wienerlibrary.co.uk/Whats-On?item=266; Caroline Sturdy Colls and Michael Branthwaite, "'This Is Proof'? Forensic Evidence and Ambiguous Material Culture at Treblinka Extermination Camp," *International*

Further along what Willenberg called "the way to death"—moving toward where new arrivals were forced to undress—the memorial includes eleven stone steles inscribed with the names of countries from which victims arrived.[5] The human tragedy of Treblinka, visitors soon realize, was a crime that touched the whole of continental Europe. True to the enormity of loss at this place, each stone inscription, save for one, represents an entire Jewish community destroyed at Treblinka. Only Dr. Janusz Korczak—an orphanage caretaker who knowingly chose to die with his children rather than leave them when given the chance—receives a personally inscribed stone. From the ramp area where people disembarked at the camp to the farthest reaches of its former extent, over 17,000 etched and blank stones now cover the land. Each pays homage to centuries of Jewish life in a city, town, or shtetl brought to an abrupt and horrific end at this place.

In its terrible reign of destruction, the Treblinka extermination camp was the eye of a transnational needle through which so many passed and so few survivors emerged. As the state stones now lining the entrance to the memorial demonstrate, victims arrived from almost every corner of Europe. Today's orderly row of national markers, however, does little to represent the nature of the disjointed and haphazard scattering of fragments that I call the Treblinka archive, or the story of its birth. In addition to the wide dispersion of victim origins, the later flight or emigration of Treblinka's survivor diaspora contributed yet more scope to the geographic

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Journal of Historical Archaeology (July 20, 2017); Caroline Sturdy Colls and Michael Branthwaite, *Treblinka: Archaeological Investigations and Artistic Responses*, Staffordshire University Centre of Archaeology Book Series: Special Issue (Stoke-on-Trent, UK: Centre of Archaeology, Staffordshire University, 2016); Caroline Sturdy Colls, *Holocaust Archaeologies: Approaches and Future Directions* (London: Springer Publishing, 2015); Caroline Sturdy Colls, "Gone but Not Forgotten: Archaeological Approaches to the Site of the Former Treblinka Extermination Camp in Poland," *Holocaust Studies and Materials 3*, (March 2013): 253–89; Alex Nikolic-Dunlop, *Treblinka: Hitler's Killing Machine*, Streaming Broadcast, Documentary (Smithsonian Channel, 2014), http://www.smithsonianchannel.com/videos/treblinka-hitlers-killing-machine/29275.

[5] The eleven steles list Belgium, USSR, Yugoslavia, France, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Bulgaria, Germany, Austria, Greece, and Macedonia.

dispersion of information. Just as no single country suffered Treblinka's horrors, no one state contains all relevant historical source material today.

Because Nazi leaders paid as little heed to national borders as they did to human life, Treblinka requires geographically wide-ranging research to reconstruct its history. The multinational origins of victims and the later movements of its few survivors scattered far and wide the information and testimonies needed to reconstruct Treblinka's history. The international justice process in the years after World War II—taking place in at least five countries—also created a paper trail that, when combined with the memories left behind by survivors, forms the Treblinka archive. From about the mid-1970s to the present, historians, museum professionals, and others conducted interviews and drafted popular and scholarly works that continually added to this body of sources. Much of the memoir publications and oral history collection initiatives took place surprisingly recently, giving this scattered archive an unexpected youth that is out of character with the increasing temporal distance of the Holocaust.

In this chapter, I take on a study of the Treblinka archive that reveals why research on this place is so difficult and such a geographically ponderous endeavor. Indeed, in my own graduate studies, Treblinka research has taken me either physically or virtually to Washington, D.C.; Los Angeles, CA; New Haven, CT, as well as to holdings in Illinois, Florida, and Wisconsin. Internationally, I have conducted research at multiple sites in Germany, Poland, and Israel. All along this winding path, I have worked to collect the fragments of the Treblinka archive. It has been my good fortune to have the support of several organizations named in the Acknowledgements of this work. As addressed later in this chapter, financial constraints and researcher access to collections such as the Treblinka archive weigh heavily upon our understandings of their history.

Over the following pages, this chapter undertakes a study of the Treblinka archive itself as a means to uncover why—at least comparatively—the history of this camp is so under-explored. Given entrenched beliefs about the amount and strength of available source materials, work making new scholarly contributions to the story of Treblinka should first clarify how that is possible. This chapter addresses those issues before I turn to my work on the history of resistance at Treblinka in those that follow. At the same time, this chapter contributes to Holocaust studies and other fields more broadly by discussing problems inherent to the research of transnational events while offering a view of possible paths forward.

The penultimate chapter of this work returns, in a way, to some of the issues explored here. Chapter Seven examines the concept and definition of survivorship alongside my work to identify individuals who somehow made it out of Treblinka alive. While the history of resistance at Treblinka from 1942-1943 is the main focus of my work and the subject-matter of the next five chapters, we should also view the construction of the Treblinka archive as a continuing form of resistance *in and of itself*. Denial, forgetting, and erasure are often the last acts of genocide. The herculean efforts of survivors to create this archive are nothing short of a refusal to be silent and a demand that we remember. In the sections that follow, I locate those voices so that we can next hear what their histories tell.

The History of the Treblinka Archive

In his 1979 edited volume, *The Death Camp Treblinka*, Holocaust survivor, writer, and publisher Alexander Donat named sixty-eight survivors of Treblinka. This number continues to dominate understandings of Treblinka history and the potential for new research. In ways not unlike how the number "six million" often symbolizes the entire Holocaust, Donat's Treblinka

survivor list is now the starting point—and all too often the ending point—of our knowledge of this camp. Because Treblinka sources are, by and large, the testimonies and histories of survivors, Donat's work to create a list gave birth to the archive for this camp. His scroll of names is, in effect, a finding aid used by almost all who have come after him. This chapter and my later work on survivorship analyze that finding aid as a means to learn more about Treblinka and the people who made it out.

Through an analysis of Donat's work, I chart the birth of the transnational Treblinka archive and its implications for historical understandings of events at the camp. This same work also allows discussion of the responsibilities—as well as opportunities—the scattered fragments of this collection create for archivists charged with their stewardship. Above all else that he achieved, Donat's work contributed new survivor interviews to the Treblinka archive that are of immense and irreplaceable value. At the same time, however, his inclusion of a list of Treblinka survivors unintentionally cast a shadow over succeeding research on the camp. Though Donat noted that his attempt to locate the living was "anything but definitive," his list quickly became a matter of canonical belief, remaining in unchanged form and unchallenged use by the Polish state museum and memorial at the former site of Treblinka to this day.[6]

Donat's forty-one-year-old research is even less definitive now than it was by his own admission in 1979. For reasons that I expand upon below and in Chapter Seven, he was unable to locate many survivors and their important pieces of the Treblinka puzzle. My own research to-date reveals 238 named Treblinka survivors and the possibility that many more as yet unidentified people escaped death at this camp.[7] In focusing attention on why Donat only located

[6] Alexander Donat, *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (New York, NY: Waldon Press, 1979), 284; "Opór i Powstanie" (Muzeum Walky i Meczenstwa Treblinka, December 13, 2013), http://www.treblinka-muzeum.eu /index.php/historia/oboz-zaglady/opor-i-powstanie.
[7] See Chapter Seven and the Appendix for my revision of Donat's list.

a much smaller number of survivors, the story that emerges is not one of a poor historian doing shoddy work but rather of the difficult realities of doing transnational research. The Treblinka archive's complicated—and by no means singular—creation also demonstrates how historical work on a single place may at times require truly transnational methods. While seeking to understand the body of Treblinka sources and their origins, Donat's example also speaks to the skills, resources, and tools required to deliver meaningful contributions to the historical record. Finally, working from the lessons of the Treblinka archive, the conclusions here present suggestions for the process of doing cross-border historical research more generally and how this collection has bearing on current discussions in the field of archival science.

Transnational Collections, Provenance, and Historical Research

The story of the Treblinka archive and its scattered creation has relevance for vibrant and growing bodies of literature on archival provenance, displaced collections, and work on archives in the wake of human rights abuses.[8] The wide dispersion of the Treblinka archive resembles the fate of many collections torn apart by war and the attendant theft of national holdings, yet it differs importantly in regard to when and where the fragments of this archive were created, and by whom. The transnational body of Treblinka sources also functions as a case study in parallel provenance, provenance as place, and discussions of archival custodianship versus stewardship. The histories of Nazi SS actions at this singular location, those of their victims, and the post-

[8] For examples of recent works on provenance, see Chris Hurley, "Part 1 (What, If Anything, Is Archival Description?)," *Archives and Manuscripts* 33, no. 1 (May 2005); Chris Hurley, "Part 2 (When Something Is Not Related to Everything Else)," *Archives and Manuscripts* 33, no. 2 (November 2005); for discussion of provenance as place, see Jeannette Allis Bastian, "In a 'House of Memory': Discovering the Provenance of Place," *Archival Issues* 28, no. 1 (2004 2003): 9–19; for analysis of displaced archives in the wake of war, see James Lowry, *Displaced Archives* (London New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2017); Ricardo L. Punzalan, "Archival Diasporas: A Framework for Understanding the Complexities and Challenges of Dispersed Photographic Collections," *The American Archivist* 77, no. 2 (Fall/Winter 2014): 326–49.

escape lives of survivors contributed to the creation of this collection and continue to challenge research on Treblinka's history today.

Analysis of Donat's work reveals that the history of the Treblinka extermination camp and its archive are both best understood as transnational. As Chris Bayly pointed out in an *American Historical Review* conversation, the state-centric connotations of the term international fail to "[give] a sense of the movement and interpenetration" that the word transnational can achieve.[9] While the Third Reich's conquest of neighboring countries and its perpetration of genocide was certainly in many respects an international historical event, the ways in which this history and its aftermath scattered survivors goes far beyond the valences of international history. Approaching Treblinka's archive as a transnational collection better represents the postwar survivor diaspora responsible for much of its creation.

In his book *What is Global History?* Sebastian Conrad broadly agrees with Bayly and notes that the term transnational becomes more fitting when state decisions or state-to-state relations are not the primary drivers of the events in question.[10] The fact that no single country houses or directed the creation of the whole Treblinka archive makes Bayly's and Conrad's definition of transnational more in keeping with this widespread body of sources and fits with Chris Hurley's explanations of the concept of parallel provenance.[11] Several states created singular parts of the collection according to their own interests and their particular investments in the history of the Holocaust. Beneath, beside, or transcending these state actions were also those of individuals, non-governmental, and quasi-governmental organizations adding yet more components to the whole.

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[9] "AHR Conversation: On Transnational History," *American Historical Review* 111, no. 5 (December 2006): 1442.
[10] Sebastian Conrad, *What Is Global History?* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016), 44–45.
[11] Hurley, "Part 1 (What, If Anything, Is Archival Description?);" Hurley, "Part 2 (When Something Is Not Related to Everything Else)," 1, 39-40.

Each entity or person responsible for the creation of one or more parts of the Treblinka archive can be understood as the originator or holder of provenance for that component of the collection. Singularly, or read only in their current holding, however, these discrete files provide only fragmentary clues about the history of the camp. It is only in conversation and comparison with each other that these memoirs, testimonies, trial records, and other documentation can truly contribute to research. The Treblinka survivor diaspora—as scaffolded by recent archival literature—is simultaneously a creator diaspora calling for a particular understanding of the concept of provenance.

Working with a collection reminiscent of the issues raised by the Treblinka archive, Jeannette Bastian suggests the replacement of singular creator provenance with provenance as place in her article "In a "House of Memory.""[12] Bastian states that "Provenance as place implies both a physical community and an imagined community where the act of creation is tied to the actual space as well as to the other creators who have engaged within that space." Calling to mind Hurley's work, she concludes that "The provenance of place suggests multiple levels of provenance."[13] The Treblinka II extermination camp, in this sense, is the place holding one layer of provenance. Individual trial courts, testimony providers, memoir writers and others are creators with a parallel provenance joined by the state, organization, or other type of holding that participated in the making or later housing of component pieces of the wider archive. Understanding how these pieces of the whole came to exist and the interests each creator had in the history of Treblinka is paramount to the researcher's ability to locate and collate these distant fragments. This same knowledge, and a willingness to share what they have learned, is of equally

[12] Bastian, "In a 'House of Memory.'" In the "Introduction" to his recent edited volume, James Lowry expands upon the idea of place as provenance in his discussion of "territorial provenance" in reference to displaced collections and the issues they present for researchers and archivists alike. See Lowry, *Displaced Archives*, 3.
[13] Bastian, "In a 'House of Memory,'" 16.

great importance for each archivist's ability to contextualize and grasp the importance of their part of this wider collection.

In her widely-praised book *Along the Archival Grain* Ann Laura Stoler analyzes the Dutch colonial archive itself as a work of representation and derives lessons for archival research methodologies well beyond her own field.[14] Stoler's work shows that the Dutch imperial archive possesses its own "common sense" that can be revealed by questioning how it was organized, what it contains, and what it does not contain.[15] She adds that archival researchers must understand the "grids of intelligibility" that build and structure the collections they use.[16] Among these are the silences and euphemisms of imperial rule itself that drove the creation of the colonial archive in which she does her work. By drawing attention to the analytic usefulness of what we might today see as the flaws of a collection, Stoler means to demonstrate how an archive is a product of its creators, their agendas, and their biases. *Archival Grain* shows how this foundational knowledge of an archive's inner workings can often help historians learn more about their topics.

Deep subject awareness enables researchers to uncover more by pointing questions back at the forces that gave birth to their archive in the first place. Dutch East Indies governmental collections—and any other archives for that matter—assume certain knowledge on the part of anyone searching their shelves. Institutions or collections such as these are not set up for walk-in traffic or uninitiated, unfocused browsing. In order to navigate a collection, you must know enough about the history in question and how this contributes to the organization of holdings. Only by possessing such an understanding of archival construction and context can the historian

[14] Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009).
[15] Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain*, 9.
[16] Stoler, 24.

develop meaningful research queries and locate the desired files. As an added issue along these same lines, a researcher must know enough about Treblinka and the lives of its survivors to even find many components of the collection or gain clues as to which corner of the world may hold the sources they seek.

Stoler's work reads "along" the grain of the Dutch archive in that she seeks to discover what the organization of the collection tells about what colonial administrators found important.[17] Similarly, reading along the geographic dispersion of Treblinka materials speaks volumes about the afterlives of survivors, the justice process, and what meanings succeeding generations have bestowed upon the history of the camp. For Stoler, the order of files on the shelves of the archive tell a story as interesting as that written on any page. In the case of Treblinka, the location in the world, as well as the internal structure of any one holding, also reveals truths about persecution, survival, and the process of rebuilding post-Holocaust lives. The bulk of the Treblinka archive—in all its locations—consists of testimonial records left behind by survivors, Polish locals, and former German or Ukrainian guards. Witness statements by survivors and the accused at trial are among the earliest components of the collection, though they are now far outweighed in size and scope by memoirs, transcripts, and oral history recordings.[18] These sources are even more important to historians since SS authorities elected to close the camp in the aftermath of the August 2, 1943 prisoner revolt and attempted to eradicate

[17] Stoler, 47, 50.

[18] The very earliest piece of the Treblinka archive is the testimony of Treblinka escapee Abraham Krzepicki, recorded by Rachel Auerbach for Emanuel Ringelblum's *Oyneg Shabes* archive of the Warsaw Ghetto, see Rachel Auerbach, "In the Fields of Treblinka," in *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (New York, NY: Waldon Press, 1979), 19–74; Emanuel Ringelblum, *Notes From the Warsaw Ghetto: The Journal of Emmanuel Ringelblum*, ed. and trans. Jacob Sloan (New York, NY: Ibooks, 2006); Ringelblum-Archiv, Robert Moses Shapiro, and Tadeusz Epsztein, eds., *The Warsaw Ghetto Oyneg Shabes-Ringelblum Archive: Catalog and Guide*, English (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2009), 394.

its every physical trace, leaving little evidence of the built environment.[19] Well before the physical destruction of Treblinka, Nazi leaders also ordered prisoners to construct a safe for their papers that could destroy its contents when triggered.[20] The scant primary documentation these efforts failed to erase covers only the routing of trains to and from the camp. While these records allow historians to estimate the number of victims killed at Treblinka by counting the transports, they say nothing of the day-to-day existence within its barbed wire enclosures.[21]

Origins: The Birth and Growth of the Treblinka Archive

Owing to the thorough Nazi attempt to destroy the evidence of their crimes, the Treblinka archive is, in effect, a body of survivor documents and testimonies. Understanding this fact, Donat began his research by scanning the records of two major (and then-recent) West German prosecutions of former Treblinka guards for the names of witnesses and clues as to how he might contact them. He frequently cites and excerpts records of two trials that resulted in convictions for ten former guards.[22] The fact that these trials even took place and had any success at all is owed to the existence of survivors and resistance at Treblinka. With no uprising and far fewer living witnesses, West German courts acquitted seven of the only eight Belzec guards ever

[19] As cited above in note 3, the work of Caroline Sturdy Colls is uncovering more archaeological evidence than expected, but the fact remains that most of the camp infrastructure was destroyed well before the Nazis evacuated occupied Poland.
[20] Oskar Strawczynski, "Ten Months in Treblinka," in *Escaping Hell in Treblinka* (New York, NY; Jerusalem: Yad Vashem Publications, 2007), 166–67.
[21] Peter Hayes, "Deportation Transports of Jews: Concentration and Death Camps and/or the East" (unpublished, June 2017), in possession of the author; Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 392–97; see also Sara Berger, *Experten der Vernichtung: das T4-Reinhardt-Netzwerk in den Lagern Belzec, Sobibor, und Treblinka*, 2nd ed., Studien zur Gewaltgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts (Hamburg: Hamburger ed., 2014).
[22] Donat, *The Death Camp Treblinka*, 295–316.

brought to trial.[23] Escape and revolt saved the lives of witnesses, made possible some semblance of justice, and gave birth to an archive recording the history of the camp.

Donat's research also took advantage of material and witness statements from the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal (IMT) in addition to information presented in the prosecution of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem.[24] While the IMT and Eichmann records were widely disseminated and easily available at a distance, it appears that Donat acquired records of the West German Treblinka trials with the assistance of Adalbert Rückerl, an author and investigator of Nazi crimes.[25] He may have also contacted the Central Office for the Investigation of Nazi Crimes in Ludwigsburg, West Germany.

The Central Office in Ludwigsburg remains an important resource for all historians interested in any aspect of Holocaust history. This institution is open to research and—at first glance—appears to be a comprehensive repository of all files relevant to Third Reich prosecutions. For reasons that are reminiscent of Stoler's process of learning what the Dutch colonial administration designed their archive to tell, however, the Central Office does not hold all German prosecution records. The mission of this branch of the German Federal Archive is to assist prosecutors actively engaged in the investigation of former regime figures. As such, its mandate only requires that all files relevant to final judgements by a court be transferred to Ludwigsburg.[26] A German *Urteil*, or court ruling, contains an explanation of how and why the court came to its judgement.[27] This file and all documentation used to arrive at its decision are

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[23] Michael S. Bryant, *Eyewitness to Genocide: The Operation Reinhard Death Camp Trials, 1955-1966*, Legacies of War - G. Kurt Piehler, series ed. (Knoxville, TN: The University of Tennessee Press, 2014), 20, 122.
[24] Donat, *The Death Camp Treblinka*, 284.
[25] Adalbert Rückerl, *The Investigation of Nazi Crimes, 1945-1978: A Documentation*, trans. Derek Rutter (Heidelberg and Karlsruhe: C.F. Mueller, Publisher of Legal Literature, 1979).
[26] Melanie Wehr et al., "Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen: B 162 (Teilfindbuch)" (Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen zur Aufklärung nationalsozialistischer Verbrechen, 2012).
[27] Donat excerpts long sections of both rulings, see Donat, *The Death Camp Treblinka*, 296–316.

transferred to the Central Office, but matters that did not contribute to the outcome remain in the *Landesarchiv*, or state archive, of the region in which the trial was held. While this difference might seem trivial at first, it has important impacts upon what can and cannot be found in Ludwigsburg.

Because he did not visit the regional holding for the courthouse in which Treblinka guards were tried, Donat never discovered survivors Zenon Golaszewski and Ignac Litwak. Both men gave evidence during the investigations, but their files never went to Ludwigsburg because they were not used in the final judgements.[28] In research for her 2013 book *Experten der Vernichtung*, or *Experts of Extermination*, Sara Berger understood this aspect of the archival system and explored the regional Duisburg Branch of the North Rhine-Westphalia State Archive.[29] As a local German academic she had easier access to German archives and a better understanding of their practices. Berger's work demonstrates a keen awareness of the Ludwigsburg collection's true purpose and how that impacts their holdings. In my own work at the Central Office, I saw this reality in action when I was unable to view one of the forty-one listed boxes of Treblinka materials because it had been sent to a *Staatsanwaltschaft*, or prosecutor's office, to aid in the preparation of new charges.[30]

More recent scholars focused on the study of Nazi extermination camp trials seem also to have been unaware of the full implications of German archival procedures. Michael S. Bryant did not use the Duisburg archive in research for his 2014 book *Eyewitness to Genocide: The*

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[28] Zenon Golaszewski, Trial of Kurt Franz et al. - Investigative Interview of Survivor-Witness Zenon Golaszewski, Transcript, December 9, 1965, Gerichte Rep. 388, Nr. 781, Band 32c, pp. 276-280, Duisburg Branch - State Archives of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany; Ignac Litwak, Trial of Kurt Franz et al. - Investigative Interview of Survivor-Witness Ignac Litwak, Transcript, December 9, 1964, Gerichte Rep. 388, Nr. 781, Band 32c, pp. 281-283, Duisburg Branch - State Archives of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany.
[29] Berger, *Experten der Vernichtung*, 435.
[30] Unfortunately, so far, I do not know if this means there was another Treblinka-related trial or investigation at some time around my 2015 visit to the Central Office.

Operation Reinhard Death Camp Trials, 1955-1966.[31] Both Bryant and Donat, as much as any researcher, had to make decisions on costs, time, and what Lara Putnam has termed the "deep dive" in the "sure win" archive versus the probing trip to a risky possibility.[32] Berger, conducting her research as a graduate student resident in western Germany, might affordably take the train to Duisburg and roll the dice on what she might find there. Donat, as an independent researcher in the US on a shoe-string budget, and Bryant as an American professor with limited time for archival travel, faced the possibility of getting to Duisburg only to realize they had wasted their time. Taking this chance was even less likely since they could be reasonably sure that much of what they might want to read would certainly be in Ludwigsburg. In the end, Berger's risk paid off in the discovery that the Duisburg archive holds 287 boxes of Treblinka-relevant documentation in comparison with the forty-one containers at Ludwigsburg.[33]

In addition to the issues of procedural knowledge within certain collections and the time and funds required for travel, Donat's work in the 1970s also simply came before many parts of the Treblinka archive were created. Several more trials and similar legal proceedings took place in the years after his publication. Donat hardly could have predicted that the United States would find, denaturalize, and deport the former guards Feodor Fedorenko, Liudas Kairys, and a man believed to be a Treblinka guard known as "Ivan the Terrible," or John Demjanjuk for lying

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[31] Bryant, *Eyewitness to Genocide*.

[32] Lara Putnam, "The Transnational and the Text-Searchable: Digitized Sources and the Shadows They Cast," *American Historical Review* 121, no. 2 (April 2016): 377–402.

[33] I located the investigative testimonies of Golaszewski and Litwak during one week of research at Duisburg. On this short, probing trip I could only get a taste of how much was there, though I have not yet had the opportunity to see what else this collection may yield in terms of other survivors or information on Treblinka history in general. For a comparison of the sizes of these holdings, see Bundesarchiv Ludwigsburg/Außenstelle Ludwigsburg, Germany, Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen zur Aufklärung nationalsozialistischer Verbrechen [Central Office for the Investigation of National Socialist Crimes], catalogue: B162, Files 3817-3848; Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Abteilung Rheinland [State Archives of North Rhine-Westphalia, Rhineland Section], Duisburg, Germany, catalogue: Gerichte Rep. 388, Files 741-797, 195-196, 799-900, 1491-1493, 231-277, and 380-414.

about their wartime activities on applications for US citizenship.[34] In the trial of Fedorenko, six former Treblinka inmates testified against the defendant including one of the few known female survivors, Sonia (Lewkowicz) Grabinska.[35]

In addition to working with trial resources, Donat completed research at Yad Vashem, the Israeli state Holocaust memorial and archive, and the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw. His book acknowledges, however, that most of the materials held by Yad Vashem were at the time photocopies of materials he viewed in Poland, rather than new sources. Well after Donat's publication, the collection of Holocaust documentation and video testimonies exploded worldwide, greatly expanding available source materials. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) began collecting in 1994—before it even opened—while the even more recent advent of the *Polin* museum of Polish Jewry is revitalizing the assembly of Holocaust history in Warsaw.[36] Alongside these museums, the University of Southern California's Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive (VHA) now stands as the largest single repository of video

[34] For additional information on the trials that have taken place since Donat's work and the greatly expanded secondary literature derived from these proceedings, see United States v. Fedorenko, 597 F. 2d 946 (Court of Appeals, 5th Circuit 1979); Lawrence Douglas, *The Right Wrong Man: John Demjanjuk and the Last Great Nazi War Crimes Trial* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016); Asher Felix Landau, The State of Israel Vs. Ivan (John) Demjanjuk, No. 373/86 (District Court of Jerusalem April 18, 1988); Tom Teicholz, *The Trial of Ivan the Terrible: State of Israel vs. John Demjanjuk* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1990); US Federal Court Release #145: 04-10-97 - "U.S. Court Orders Denaturalization of Illinois Man Found to Have Taken Part in Massacre at Nazi Slave Labor Camp," accessed October 6, 2017.

[35] Sonia Lewkowicz (AKA Sonia Gabowski-Letkowicz), Treblinka Survivor - Testimony - Selected Extracts: Federenko Trial Fort Lauderdale, USA 1978, Website - Transcribed Text, 1978, http://www.holocaustresearch project.org/survivor/sonialewkowicz.html; Donat, *The Death Camp Treblinka*, 287, 288; Nevins also confirms that Sonia Lewkowicz and Sonia Grabinska are the same person. See Michael A. Nevins, *Dubrowa: Memorial to a Shtetl (Dabrowa Bialostocka, Poland)*, Yizkor Project (Spring Valley, NY: JewishGen, 2010), http://www.jewish gen.org/Yizkor/Dabrowa_Bialostocka/Dabrowa_Bialostocka.html#TOC; for full testimonial record, see *Fedorenko Trial*, 597 F. 2d, transcribed courtroom testimony, vol. 1-12.

[36] Joan Ringelheim et al., "United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Oral History Interview Guidelines" (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1998), USHMM, http://www.ushmm.org/m/pdfs/20121003-oral-history-interview-guide.pdf; "They Survived the Holocaust. The Survivors' Accounts," *Polin Museum of the History of Polish Jews*, accessed October 7, 2017, http://www.polin.pl/en/they-survived-the-holocaust-the-survivors-accounts; "Research and Publications," *Polin Museum of the History of Polish Jews*, accessed October 7, 2017, http://www .polin.pl/en/research-and-publications.

interviews, containing over fifty thousand Holocaust testimonies.[37] In addition to the Treblinka-relevant materials in these collections, still more interviews are held by several other institutions in the US and worldwide.[38]

These museums and oral history collections add importance to the transnational definition of the Treblinka archive. While Yad Vashem is supported by the Israeli government, the USHMM and *Polin* are both quasi-governmental organizations drawing part of their funding from the state and a near equal share from private donations. The university-based oral history archives are similarly funded by both focused investment and generalized support through the schools at which they are housed. The Shoah Foundation's robust private donor support, meanwhile, makes it more independent of the financial constraints of the University of Southern California but could also be part of the reason it costs so much to gain unlimited access to this collection. Though the Shoah Foundation is creating new programs and partnerships to address this issue, at current, only around sixty universities worldwide have full access to the video testimonies of the VHA.[39]

Users conduct searches of the online or digitized oral history collections with the assistance of computer keyword queries. While this works well for better-known locations or straightforward questions, current technology can cause problems for the searchability of these

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[37] Dana et al., "About the Institute," *USC Shoah Foundation*, accessed September 10, 2015, https://sfi.usc.edu/about/history.

[38] "Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies | Yale University Library," accessed October 7, 2017, http://web.library.yale.edu/testimonies; "Ghetto Fighters' House - Permanent Collections"; "Voices of the Holocaust Project," accessed October 7, 2017, http://voices.iit.edu/; "Music and the Holocaust," World ORT: Educating for Life, accessed November 22, 2016, http://holocaustmusic.ort.org/; "Herder-Institut Für Historische Ostmitteleuropa-forschung - Institut Der Leibniz-Gemienschaft," accessed October 7, 2017, https://www.herder-institut.de/startseite.html; David P. Boder, "David P. Boder Interviews Benjamin Piskorz; September 1, 1946; Tradate, Italy: Voices of the Holocaust Project," Online Archive, trans. David P. Boder, Voices of the Holocaust, Paul V. Galvin Library, Illinois Institute of Technology, 2009, http://voices.iit.edu/interview?doc=piskorz B&display=piskorzB_en.

[39] Dana et al., "About the Visual History Archive," USC Shoah Foundation, accessed December 6, 2017, https://sfi.usc.edu/vha/about; Dana et al., "About the Institute."

holdings. Knowledge of keyword metadata input by archivists and volunteer interviewers is one new grain of intelligibility for collections such as these. Mistakes or misunderstandings in the process of entering terms for each interview add to the pains of finding the desired testimonies. Since the Treblinka II extermination camp was near the Treblinka I forced labor camp, some testimonies encoded under Treblinka I could hold information relevant to the history of the adjacent death camp.[40] To locate the additional pieces of the historical puzzle that these witnesses might be able to contribute, however, researchers would need to know this aspect of the history, as Stoler points out, and they would need to take the time to side-glance Treblinka I testimonies in a manner reminiscent of Putnam's suggestions.

The wide postwar dispersion of survivors helps to explain how their interviews ended up in so many different collections. When Claude Lanzmann traveled to Poland in the 1970s to record segments of his film *Shoah*, he found only one Treblinka survivor still living there.[41] Donat conducted interviews with or wrote to those he located in Israel, Canada, and the United States. The later lives of these survivors and other factors added to the archive in each of these countries. Chil Berkowicz—who later changed his name to Charles Burke—lived out the remainder of his days in the Tidewater, Virginia area. He left behind a recollection of his experiences in a short print-run, local memorial book published by his Jewish community organization.[42] As is the case with many others, it seems Burke did not decide or desire to recall his experiences so soon after the Holocaust, when Donat was doing his work. Most of the

[40] In his memoir, Saul Kuperhand recalls the August 2, 1943 Treblinka II revolt that he witnessed from inside Treblinka I. His memories make it clear that Treblinka I testimonies may have much more to reveal about the history of Treblinka II, see Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka* (Urbana and Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1998).
[41] Claude Lanzmann, *Shoah: The Complete Text of the Acclaimed Holocaust Film*, 2nd ed. (New York, NY: De Capo Press, 1995); Claude Lanzmann, *Shoah*, DVD, Documentary (Criterion Collectoin, 1985).
[42] Elena Barr Baum, ed., "Charles Burke - Chil Berkowicz," in *Tidewater Federation Memorial Book* (Tidewater, VA: Tidewater Federation, n.d.), 42–45.

memoirs published by survivors did not, in fact, reach readers until the 1980s or later. At least sixteen people who escaped Treblinka chose to write a book about their experiences only after Donat published his own.[43]

Video history interviews, memoir publications, and other types of sources raise the issue of research language knowledge in the compilation and understanding of transnational historical works or finding aids. The VHA alone contains testimonies recorded in sixty-two countries and forty-one languages.[44] The memoir of Symcha Poliakiewicz is but one example of a source possibly kept from Donat because of where it emerged. Poliakiewicz published his Yiddish-language memoir of the Holocaust and his experience surviving Treblinka in Buenos Aires in 1948.[45] Though Donat could read Yiddish and the book was available well before the release of *The Death Camp Treblinka*, he never found this source, likely because it did not achieve wide dissemination. It is clear from his citations and bibliography that Donat either read or had access

[43] Barr Baum; Richard Chardkoff, *Sol's Story: A Triumph of the Human Spirit* (Nashville, TN: Cold Tree Press, 2002); Nick Del Calzo, Renee Rockford, and Linda J. Raper, eds., *The Triumphant Spirit: Portraits & Stories of Holocaust Survivors, Their Messages of Hope & Compassion* (Denver, CO: Triumphant Spirit Pub, 1997); Richard Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence: Survival in Treblinka*, Jewish Lives (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1995); Richard Glazar, *Die Falle mit dem Grünen Zaun: Überleben in Treblinka* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1992); Martin Gray, *For Those I Loved*, ed. Max Gallo, 35th Anniversary Expanded Edition (Charlottesville, VA: Hampton Roads Pub. Company, 2006); Kuperhand and Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*; Ya'akov Müller, "Eyewitness Testimony 47. The Uprising in Treblinka," in *Jewish Responses to Nazi Persecution* (New York, NY: Stein and Day Publishers, 1979), 262–68; Marian Platkiewicz, *"A Revolt in Hell," from: Plotzk (Plock): A History of an Ancient Jewish Community in Poland*, ed. Eliahu Eisenberg (Tel Aviv: Hamenora Publishing House, n.d.), www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/plock/plo76.html; Chil Rajchman, *The Last Jew of Treblinka: A Survivor's Memory, 1942-1943*, trans. Solon Beinfeld (New York, NY: Pegasus Books, 2011); Hershl Sperling, "Treblinka - Eye-Witness Report," in *Treblinka Survivor: The Life and Death of Hershl Sperling* (Stroud, Gloucestershire, UK: The History Press, 2010), 243–52; Frank Stiffel, *The Tale of the Ring: A Kaddish*, Mazal Holocaust Collection (Wainscott, NY: Pushcart, 1994); Strawczynski, "Ten Months in Treblinka;" Eddie Weinstein, *17 Days in Treblinka: Daring to Resist, and Refusing to Die*, 4th ed. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem Publications, 2009); Samuel Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka* (Warsaw: Zydowski Instytut Historyczny, 1984); Samuel Willenberg, "I Survived Treblinka," in *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (New York, NY: Waldon Press, 1979), 189–213.

[44] Dana et al., "About the Visual History Archive."

[45] Symcha Poliakiewicz, *A tog in treblinke: khronik fun a yidish lebn* (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Industria Argentina - tsentral-farband fun poylishe yidn in argentine, 1948).

to translations of English, Polish, German, Hebrew, and Yiddish sources. I find no conclusive indication, however, that he had access to Russian or Ukrainian sources.

Donat's primary concerns were the history of what went on inside Treblinka and tracing survivor lives thereafter in the quest to record their stories. Had he interested himself in the prehistories of victims more broadly, the language problem would have only grown more severe. As the stones at the gates of Treblinka indicate today, those deported to the camp may have spoken Russian, Polish, French, German, Czech, Slovak, Greek, Bulgarian, Macedonian, and any number of languages making up the former Yugoslav state. All this in addition to Yiddish, Ladino, and probably more. The overwhelming majority of Treblinka's (mainly) Eastern European Jewish victims would have been Yiddish speakers, but accessing records of their lives and the conditions that surrounded them in their states of origin would still require some capacity for the local vernacular. This issue alone may well be why no historian has yet attempted to tell a unified story of the communities lost at Treblinka.

When viewed with knowledge of their evolution, the same eleven national stones at the entrance to today's memorial help represent the transnationality of this single place and how even this has changed over time. When constructed in 1964, the monument included only ten state stones with that of Macedonia not installed until 2009.[46] The placement of this marker means that the commemoration of Treblinka's victims now includes mention of two states that no longer exist—Yugoslavia and the USSR—as well as one that did not appear on any map when the camp was in operation. As the survivors of Treblinka have moved beyond borders, so

[46] Marek Kucia, "Holocaust Memorials in Central and Eastern Europe: Communist Legacies, Transnational Influences and National Developments," Intergovernmental Research Institution Webpage, European Network for Remembrance and Solidarity, April 20, 2017, http://www.enrs.eu/en/news/47-articles/1746-holocaust-memorials-in-central-and-eastern-europe-communist-legacies-transnational-influences-and-national-developments; "Historical Injustice against Jews from Macedonia Corrected," Holocaust Fund Macedonia, October 2, 2009, http://holocaustfund.org/?p=1223&lang=en.

too has its memory and commemoration. Much like the ever-widening dispersion of the Treblinka archive among the new homes of the survivor diaspora, changes to the memorial help illustrate how the history of a single place can require truly transnational reach.

Alexander Donat's pioneering research helped uncover the worldwide connections of Treblinka survivors and began the process of collecting their histories. Forty-one years later this work continues. New technologies and a greater focus on the history of the Holocaust in general aid this work in some ways while also presenting new dilemmas with which succeeding researchers and archivists must grapple. Witold Chrostowski's 2004 book *Extermination Camp Treblinka* exemplifies contention with these issues.[47] Working in the internet age, Chrostowski located a great deal more information than Donat had at his fingertips, but he also seems to have lacked the travel and access funding to view many components of the archive. [48]

Though Donat certainly would have found internet resources and digitized archive keyword searches revolutionary, he too would have fast learned that these tools are not yet cures for the difficulties of transnational research in their current forms. Chrostowski worked from knowledge gathered by Donat, but had neither the ability to access digital collections with high-cost barriers, nor the funding or time to visit the USHMM, Yad Vashem, and other physical collections. Conducting his research as a graduate student in Poland, however, Chrostowski's work displays the same sort of local knowledge Berger's *Experten der Vernichtung* achieves with German sources. Tracing the difficult intricacies of transnational research that emerge in an analysis of Donat's work and that of later historians is not intended as an attack on their abilities. Revealing these difficulties instead demonstrates how Chrostowski and Berger's contributions

[47] Chrostowski, *Extermination Camp Treblinka*.
[48] Chrostowski's bibliography shows extensive online research, but no archival travel beyond his native Poland and neighboring Germany, see Chrostowski, 117–19.

move as intellectual descendants from those of Donat like generational steps forward in the process of broadening Treblinka research and source collection.

In the same *American Historical Review* conversation in which Christopher Bayly participated, Isabel Hofmeyr commented on the problematic nature of research travel for scholars from certain states and the increased costs associated with the desire to make transnational research a new norm.[49] While it is hoped that pushing historical research to be more transnational should result in work that better demonstrates the connections of places and people across time and space, this trend also raises new problems that are not easily addressed. Attempts to trace the postwar lives of the Treblinka survivor diaspora and gather fragments of the archive they created highlights the myriad language skills, resources, and time such work requires. These issues present the saddening possibility that the transnational turn may make the subject matter of historical works more inclusive while simultaneously rendering it all but impossible for historians without the necessary funds to take part.[50]

Ways Forward: Lessons from the Treblinka Archive

Possible solutions to the issues raised by transnational research and diaspora collections are not simple, but at least a few hold promise. Cross-border collaboration by research groups and consortia of archives and historians could help link widely separated collections and bring together individuals working on related topics. For projects like these to proliferate, however, the academy will need to decide how far it wants to take novel methods and how willing it is to make the system of scholar advancement and funding open to the products of group work and

[49] "On Transnational History," 1450–51.
[50] For additional exploration of cost barriers and the difficulties of transnational research, see Nancy L. Green, "The Trials of Transnationalism: It's Not as Easy as It Looks," *The Journal of Modern History* 89 (December 2017): 872–73.

attempts to innovate. Likewise, individual archives around the world holding related subject matter will need to decide how closely they are willing to cooperate.

Thinking back to the memorial's state stones highlights the need for and potential of cross-border cooperation in research and archival stewardship. If similar steles were to be carved representing countries holding some part of this scattered diaspora collection, they would include Argentina, Australia, Canada, Germany, Israel, Macedonia, the United States, Poland, Russia, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, Uruguay, and likely others yet unknown. The creation of most materials in the Treblinka archive as outlined above demonstrates that they do currently reside in their states of creation and original provenance. The American and Israeli collections of oral and video testimonies particularly illustrate how these documents—as the files of a survivor diaspora at home in new states—truly are voices that now make up integral parts of the culture and heritage of these nations. As such, I do not propose that repatriation of the Treblinka archive to any one place is either necessary or appropriate. Recognition of the fragmentary nature of these holdings by each institution, however, and a willingness to recast themselves as stewards of Treblinka history as opposed to custodians of discrete record sets, does seem fitting.

In his discussion of the issues inherent with work on "Archival Diasporas," Ricardo Punzalan suggests that "institutional collaboration," and the "linking of related materials" are fruitful solutions.[51] Ultimately, this consideration again returns to how archivists think of the provenance of these records. In addition to Hurley's concept of parallel provenance and Bastian's ideas on place as provenance, Michelle Caswell contributes her understandings of what she calls "community based" provenance.[52] For Caswell—a scholar intimately aware of the

[51] Punzalan, "Archival Diaspora," 328.
[52] Michelle Caswell, "Rethinking Inalienability: Trusting Nongovernmental Archives in Transitional Societies," *The American Archivist* 76, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2013): 130.

archival aftereffects of mass violence—archivists should rethink "provenance as it applies to records of human rights abuses to include survivors [and descendants] as key stakeholders," while recasting their own role from that of custodian "to one of stewardship (in which archivists steward records on behalf of communities)."[53] In his article "Ethnicity as Provenance," Joel Wurl concurs with Caswell, adding that "stewardship recognizes the futility of referring to a repository's holdings as anything more than a selection of potentially useful sources" as is obviously the case with any single Treblinka-related holding. "The goals of stewardship," Wurl continues, "are preservation and access to information, wherever it might be physically held."[54] The digital age, as we have seen in the improved searchability and usability of the above profiled collections, is thankfully providing innovative new solutions to challenges such as these.

In their article "The Taste of "Data Soup" and the Creation of a Pipeline for Transnational Historical Research" authors Jennifer Edmond, Natasa Bulatovic, and Alexander O'Connor not only display, but embody advancements in transnational research with useful cues and technological tools for archivists.[55] These authors—working in a group bridging separate institutions—show how the "Collaborative EuropeaN Digital Archival Research Infrastructure," or CENDARI, project links several archival collections under a unified search and digital access program. As a further feather in their caps as transnational practitioners in the internet age, their work appears in the *Journal of the Japanese Association for Digital Humanities*. Theirs is

[53] Caswell, 115; for additional examples of Caswell's work on archives and human rights, see Michelle Caswell, "Toward a Survivor-Centered Approach to Records Documenting Human Rights Abuse: Lessons from Community Archives," *Archival Science* 14, no. 3–4 (October 2014): 307–22; Michelle Caswell, "Defining Human Rights Archives: Introduction to the Special Double Issue on Archives and Human Rights," *Archival Science* 14, no. 3–4 (October 2014): 207–13.
[54] Joel Wurl, "Ethnicity as Provenance: In Search of Values and Principles for Documenting the Immigrant Experience," *Archival Issues* 29, no. 1 (2005): 72.
[55] Jennifer Edmond, Natasa Bulatovic, and Alexander O'Connor, "The Taste of Data Soup and the Creation of a Pipeline for Transnational Research," *Journal of the Japanese Association for Digital Humanities* 1 (n.d.): 107–22.

nothing less than group work on a trans-European topic disseminated by a journal based in Asia focused on computerized methods.

Though I note some of the flaws in keyword metadata searches above, I do believe the ability to conduct these across a worldwide digital network of similar topic archives would be revolutionary. Stoler's work and the exploration of the individual Treblinka holdings make clear the state-driven nature of many archival collections and how important it is to understand the original intent of their creators. Edmond *et al.* point to a possible path beyond these issues by demonstrating the CENDARI system's ability to break out of the national frame and enable searches across several archives and libraries across state borders. In its most hopeful contributions, the CENDARI system also works to compensate for language differences and encourages researchers to contribute metadata tagging while collaborating on the interpretation of holdings in digital space.[56] The emergence of search systems like this could ideally enable an improved form of digital side-glance, connecting relevant archives containing collections with demonstrable parallel provenance may make it possible for historians to compare holdings and make stronger, better-educated decisions on where to do deep dives as well as enable archivists to create enhanced collaborative finding aids with reach well beyond the walls of any one institution.

[56] Edmond, Bulatovic, and O'Connor, 112–15, 118; for additional work in the field of archival science supporting such collaboration, see Anne J. Gilliland, "Chapter 11: Networking Records in Their Diaspora: A Reconceptualisation [sic] of 'Displaced Records' in a Postnational World," in *Displaced Archives* (London, UK; New York, NY: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2017), 180, 181, 183; and, Douglas Cox, "Chapter 12: Revisiting the Law and Politics of Compromise," in *Displaced Archives* (London, UK; New York, NY: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2017), 209–10.

Conclusion

The proliferation of Holocaust museums, education centers, and local resource collections almost demands such a network to counteract a possible atomization of efforts that the otherwise positive addition of new infrastructure could produce. Regardless of how widespread integration initiatives such as CENDARI become in the future, the academy should take pains to reward the type of research done by Donat, Berger, Chrostowski, and others. The historical profession must recognize how works such as these contribute to a generational advancement of knowledge that each successive attempt updates and expands. Transnational histories working from diffused archives like that left behind by the Treblinka survivor diaspora necessitate an understanding of success that allows researchers to contribute what their time and resources make possible in their professional circumstances. Collaborative projects networking historians, archivists, and sources across national spaces offer possible answers to the transnational research dilemma and the responsibilities of stewardship over collections invested with complex parallel provenances as well as weighty emotional and historical significance. Indeed, this sort of teamwork and use of technology may be the only way to bring together the skills and local knowledge necessary to produce a unified history of the multilingual, multinational, and geographically dispersed communities destroyed at Treblinka.

The chapters that follow contain my attempts to move forward our knowledge of Treblinka by one more generation of effort and contribution. Chapters Three, Four, Five, and Six explain Treblinka resistance through the lenses of space, social networks, and gender before a revisitation of Alexander Donat's work and the issue of survivorship at Treblinka in Chapter Seven. Beginning my largely chronological approach to this history, the next chapter specifically addresses early resistance activities at Treblinka and the built environment in which

these events took place. Chapter Three also provides necessary explanations of the spatial terms used in this work and how Jewish prisoners experienced Treblinka geography that readers will need to know in subsequent sections.

Chapter Three

Camp Geography and Early Resistance Activities

Camp Geography and Early Resistance Activities

Death in a Nazi concentration camp requires no explanation. Survival does.
–H.O. Bluhm[1]

Making it out of any Nazi camp alive required physical endurance, ingenuity, and—above all else—an immense amount of luck. Given the peril under which inmates of the comparatively less-lethal concentration camps endured, survival at Treblinka, or any other extermination camp, is even more remarkable. This chapter begins the work of explaining survival at Treblinka by providing a concrete analysis of prisoner access to space, including how the ever-present problem of geographic access affected their ideas for resistance and their eventual planning for revolt. I next provide a timeline of camp history, as it was understood by the prisoners themselves, that helps contextualize changes to prisoner decision-making over time. In its final two sections, this chapter includes a historiographic analysis of resistance as a subfield of Holocaust studies before turning to a discussion of escape from Treblinka as a dominant form of early resistance to Nazi intent.

To truly understand the paths prisoners took to save their own lives and those of others we must first understand Treblinka geography and how this changed over time. I begin here with an exploration of survivor-created geographic sources and what they demonstrate about prisoner institutional and spatial knowledge inside the camp. The Treblinka revolt grew from a system of networked access to geography employed by the main plotters of the resistance Organizing Committee. Primary witness cartographic and artistic depictions of the camp demonstrate the limited spatial awareness of individual prisoners. Even those survivors who were deeply connected to revolt planning did not possess sound knowledge of camp areas

[1] H.O. Bluhm, "How Did They Survive? Mechanisms of Defense in Nazi Concentration Camps," *American Journal of Psychotherapy* 53, no. 1 (1999): 1.

outside their own regular range of vision or institutional knowledge. As the infrastructural and social environments changed, so did the ability of networks to overcome the spatial tunnel vision of individuals, thus providing new resistance possibilities through relationships. These changes had immediate influences on the life and death choices of individual inmates and the perseverance strategies of prisoner groups. Demonstrating the geographic knowledge of prisoners allows this research to explain why prisoners took certain actions when they did and how the entire chronology of Treblinka resistance set the stage for eventual revolt.

Treblinka Prisoner Spatial Knowledge and Access

A thorough analysis of survival and resistance at Treblinka is impossible without an understanding of the geographical environment in which prisoners lived. Because the spatial limitations imposed on prisoner life dictated the ways in which inmates could form social networks inside the camp, looking first at geography lays the groundwork for greater attention to networks in later chapters. Prisoner-created maps, drawings, and models of the camp bear out these facts with visual clarity. As example, the errors and vagaries of what I call the Duisburg Archive Treblinka Trial Map are as much, or more, demonstrative of the geographic facts of Treblinka inmate life, as the spatial information of the map correctly portrays. In this section, I undertake a detailed analysis of the Duisburg Map as a demonstration of geographic analysis and the importance of spatial knowledge for resistance and the formation of prisoner networks at Treblinka. This section, in effect, provides an in-depth view of the spatial methods I use in the consideration of survivor testimony throughout this work.

Originally entitled, "*Treblinka: Totenlagr* [sic] *Errinerungsskizze*," or Treblinka: Death Camp Sketch from Memory, this flawed cartographical source, held by the Duisburg Branch of

the State Archive of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany, visually proves the importance of spatial social networks for the success of prisoner resistance at Treblinka (See Figure 1).[2] The map's errors highlight the limited spatial knowledge of a former prisoner-mapmaker and, as such, reveals the necessity of networked access to institutional knowledge as well as place and space in order to plot resistance.

As introduced in Chapter One, Treblinka survivor testimonies unanimously insist that resistance required access to the entire area of the camp. They are nearly as uniform in the assertion that "relationships," or social networks, facilitated this access.[3] When the Düsseldorf state's attorney prosecuting the 1964-1965 trial of Kurt Franz *et al.* asked a single witness to draw a map of what they remembered of Treblinka, the resulting sketch reveals the spatial tunnel vision of one survivor providing the geographic details of the camp as he or she could recall from personal experience.[4] Thereby, this map, as a historical source, demonstrates the knowledge this former prisoner brought to resistance planning, what areas of access and institutional intelligence that would need to be filled in by others, and the myopic understanding of camp geography among inmates that resulted from SS restrictions on individual movement.

Geographies of the Holocaust offers methodological support to the importance of prisoner spatial awareness, and how this information would affect their ability to make decisions inside the camp environment.[5] The chapter "Visualizing the Archive: Building at Auschwitz as a

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[2] Figure 1: herein after referred to as "Duisburg Map," Unknown Author, "Duisburg Archive Treblinka Trial Map - Originating from the 1964-1965 trial of Kurt Franz *et al*." (Treblinka Extermination Camp, May 30, 1964), Gerichte Rep. 388, Nr. 781, Band 37, p. 66, Duisburg Branch - State Archives of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany.
[3] Gitta Sereny, *Into That Darkness: An Examination of Conscience* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1983), 180; see also Richard Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence: Survival in Treblinka*, Jewish Lives (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1995); Richard Glazar, *Die Falle mit dem Grünen Zaun: Überleben in Treblinka* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1992); Richard Glazer (in all other sources including his own book, Richard Glazar), RG-50.234.0014, JTHOHA, USHMM, October 26, 1981.
[4] For information on the Franz trial, see Bryant, *Eyewitness to Genocide*.
[5] Knowles, Cole, and Giordano, *Geographies of the Holocaust*.

Geographic Problem" uses mapped information to display what the authors call, "the social history of the spaces" inside Auschwitz-Birkenau.[6] Their chapter explores Auschwitz prisoner geographic knowledge through what is termed "viewshed analyses," but stops short of making decisions about how this information might be used in later research (see Figures 2 and 3).[7] Paul Jaskot believed, "these visualizations might be pedagogically useful to demonstrate the experiences of inmates and perpetrators at Auschwitz, but was uncertain how this approach might actually help in extending significant research questions."[8] In their work on Auschwitz, the chapter authors use architectural drawings of the camp as planned and realized by Nazi authorities.[9] While it is more difficult to conceptualize how range of vision information might benefit work with Nazi perpetrator-created maps and diagrams, this type of analysis has direct and powerful implications for the study of Treblinka.

Knowledge of the camp geography a former prisoner could regularly view is an important tool for the contextualization of their testimony. Given an understanding of what spatial access the inmate possessed in connection with their living space and their assigned duties as a member of the slave labor force, the researcher can conclude whether specific events they describe come from personal memory as a firsthand witness, or from immediate and even possibly much later information sharing among former prisoners. The most obvious use of spatial vetting of testimony is to select and rely upon the statements of the witnesses physically closest to the incidents they describe. Survivor-created maps can be contextualized in the same way, and the Duisburg Map receives just such a treatment here.

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[6] Jaskot et al., "Visualizing the Archive," 177.
[7] Jaskot et al., "Visualizing the Archive," 176. Figures 2 and 3. For Figure 2, "The dash of white near the middle of the map indicates the approximate field of view [or range of vision] for a person of average height standing in the center of that location." Figure 6.10, pp. 179. For Figure 3, the highlighted area represents the "overhead simulated viewshed from the ramp of Auschwitz-Birkenau, circa February 1944." Figure 6.13, p.185.
[8] Jaskot *et al*., "Visualizing the Archive," 176.
[9] See "Spotlight on Methods: Maps as Research" section, Jaskot *et al*., "Visualizing the Archive," 175–177.

No architectural or other drawings of Treblinka survive from when the camp actually existed. All known maps of the facility come from survivor postwar sources, or later secondary research cartographers. As such, a determination of a survivor-mapmaker's range of vision, or their actual lived space and what they could see from it, allows the historian to make decisions about the veracity of the information they map out. The "social history" of Treblinka spaces, as Jaskot and colleagues term the lived experiences of geography, is determined by what a prisoner could know of total camp geography and how they perceived this space. In the case of any Nazi camp, this social history was strictly imposed by the rules and expectations of prisoner existence dictated by guards and inmate reactions to those rules.

Testimonial research informs analyses of mapped information, which in-turn supports or refutes further research work in witness statements and primary accounts of camp history. What could a particular prisoner see? How does what they could see reveal their movements inside the camp? What do the answers to these questions contribute to our understanding of a survivor-drawn map? Finally, what do a survivor-created map's strengths and weaknesses contribute to knowledge of the social history of prisoner existence? The answers to this final question provide information about prisoner living conditions and their knowledge of tightly regulated camp geography.

The Duisburg Map is unattributed to any particular author, set of authors, or specific source provenance. However, the map's location in the archive, among other case and pre-trial documents from the 1964-1965 trial of Kurt "Lalka" Franz *et al.*, suggests production in connection with the trial.[10] Until now, scholars researching Treblinka, or the postwar justice process against former German SS guards have not cited the *Totenlagr Errinerungsskizze*—

[10] Unknown Author, "Duisburg Map."

referred to here as the Duisburg Map. While the inaccuracies of this map may have deterred researchers unfamiliar with the consequences of spatial restrictions on prisoner life at Treblinka, it is also true that few historical works on the camp make note of the Duisburg Branch, or the State Archives of North Rhine-Westphalia in general. Refer back to Chapter Two for discussion of this and other archives.

The most precise maps of Treblinka extant today are the works of historical modeler Peter Laponder (See Figures 4 and 5).[11] Laponder's two maps displaying Treblinka in its early and late phases are the result of painstaking research of testimony provided by multiple survivor witnesses, former guards, and court investigators in postwar Treblinka trials in addition to the use of maps created for later survivor memoir books and historical monographs. Laponder labels his early map "Pre-October 1942" (Figure 4), as he uses the construction of Treblinka's new gas chambers as the cutoff date between his two contributions.

His second map, entitled "August 1943" portrays the camp as it existed on the day of the revolt (see Figure 5).[12] The fact that the Duisburg Map shows Treblinka's new gas chamber indicates that it reflects camp geography as it existed after October 1942. The map also shows the body-burning apparatus installed in November of 1942, so it must portray what the author knew of the camp after this date as well.[13] Further dating evidence for the Duisburg Map does not exist. It likely displays the camp, as its author knew it on the day of the August 2, 1943 revolt. All other survivor, perpetrator, or court-created maps display the camp in its final form. It is logical to assume the author would have drawn the camp as they left it, rather than create a sketch of an earlier camp layout that they would have known did not reflect final realities.

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[11] See Figures 4 and 5. Laponder, "Treblinka Map."
[12] Laponder, "Treblinka Map."
[13] Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 29.

Despite its flaws, the Duisburg Map reveals much more than merely an attempt to portray camp geography on August 2, 1943. The map and its legend display visual and institutional knowledge of Treblinka's Camp 2, or Death Camp section, as known by a prisoner author.[14] The map is unlikely to have been created by a guard, as it displays no knowledge of the SS and Ukrainian guard living areas other than the general direction in which they lay and it gets much else wrong about camp geography overall. The inaccurate regions of the map make clear where the author could not personally go, a further sign to rule out a guard as creator of the map. Treblinka's German and Ukrainian staff possessed unfettered access to the entire area of the camp. They would certainly be able to remember their own housing areas, at the very least, and they would have greater knowledge of the camp in general than a prisoner with restricted access to space.

The general rule was that no prisoner was ever allowed to return to Camp 1 after having been a resident of Camp 2 (the Death Camp section). The only documented exception to this was the case of Jankiel Wiernik, an inmate of Camp 2 and a highly skilled carpentry and construction worker at Treblinka. No other prisoner of the Death Camp section was ever allowed to leave this part of the camp after having entered it.[15] This rule, and the level of Camp 2 knowledge the map displays, makes a prisoner from this section (the Death Camp) the only logical source of the map. The Duisburg Map sets this restriction, and the impact it had on Camp

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[14] See Figure 6 for representation of the difference between Camp 1 and Camp 2. Note that this is an internal division of the Treblinka II extermination camp, not a reference to the Treblinka I labor camp. Kurt Johansen, "M1," Overhead Computer Draft (Treblinka Extermination Camp, August 2015), inspired by the work of Laponder, see Laponder, "Treblinka Map."

[15] Adolf Eichmann Trial, 1–9, section 66, parts 8–9 (Jerusalem District Court 1961); Jankiel Wiernik, *A Year in Treblinka: An Inmate Who Escaped Tells the Day-to-Day Facts of One Year of His Torturous Experience*, eBook (Pickle Partners Publishing, 2014); *The Trial of German Major War Criminals: Proceedings of the International Military Tribunal Sitting at Nuremberg Germany, Taken from the Official Transcript* (London, UK: HM Stationary Office, 1946); see also: House Committee on Foreign Affairs and Samuel Rajzman, "H.J. Resolution 93 - Punishment of War Crimes - 79th Congress, First Session" (United States Government Printing Office, 1945), 123, Doc. Y4.F76/1: W19/5, pps. 120-125, US Congressional Record.

2 prisoner knowledge of the entire facility in bold relief. The division of prisoner life, knowledge, and communication between these two sections of Treblinka was an issue resistance planners had to overcome in order to coordinate resistance efforts. The chapters that follow expand on how Treblinka prisoners addressed this obstacle to unified knowledge and action.

Information contained within the Duisburg Map's Legend is a compelling descriptive source of facility knowledge for a Camp 2 prisoner. The Legend covers fourteen numbered structures, or points of interest on the map. Of these fourteen items, nine display intimate knowledge of Camp 2 functions and interior geography. Numbered points eleven, twelve, and thirteen are of greatest importance. All three relate to the Camp 2 prisoner barracks structure. This building is not only shown in the correct location on this map, it is also depicted with interior walls and use of space information. Clearly, the author has been inside this structure. The only buildings on the map with interior layouts depicted are in Camp 2. Legend item eleven, "*Die Baracke für die Häftlinge,*" or The Barracks for the Prisoners, denotes not only the barracks building in general, but also the specific center section in which male prisoners bunked. Number twelve, "*Die Baracke für die Frauen*," or The Barracks for the Women, is also illustrative of an intimate knowledge of Camp 2 realities. The author of this map knows that there are female prisoners in Camp 2, and he or she also knows the section of the barracks building in which they slept.[16] Finally, number thirteen, "*Die Küche*," or The Kitchen, displays the location of the prisoners' mess area within the walls of the overall barracks structure.

[16] Two of Treblinka's known female survivors, Bronka Sukno and Sonia Lewkowicz, were both Camp 2 prisoners for a certain time. I consciously avoid giving a gender to the creator of this map because it is possible, however improbable, that one of them was the source. Sukno did give evidence for the Franz trial, see: Bronka Sukno, Trial of Kurt Franz et al. - Investigative Interview of Survivor-Witness Bronka Sukno, February 7, 1965, Gerichte Rep. 388, Nr. 781, Band 37, pp. 243-252, Duisburg Branch - State Archives of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany.

Legend number ten points out the correct location of a Camp 2 structure and its usage status. The label, "*Das Ungenutzte Gleis*," meaning The Unused Rail Track, makes note of the abandoned status of this piece of Camp 2 infrastructure. The rail track's purpose was to transport the bodies of those murdered from the old gas chambers to the mass graves. Camp 2 survivors note that the track fell into disuse as the Germans decided that Jewish slave laborers working in two-man teams with stretchers moved corpses faster than loading and unloading the rail carts. Laponder's later map shows this track removed, as do some other survivor maps, however, the Duisburg author has left it in place among later structures.[17] A final item of note that highlights the author's knowledge of Camp 2 routines is their placement of the "*Appelplatz*," or Roll Call Square on the map. This area was a focal, and dominant part of Camp 2 prisoner life. Each workday began and ended with prisoner formations at the *Appelplatz.* Guards counted prisoners, doled out daily punishments, and gave work assignments here. It is unlikely that a prisoner would forget this location, though nothing about its physical character marked it out as a roll call area when it was not in use. The *Appelplatz* was only an open area large enough to hold all of the prisoners standing in ranks. The author's knowledge of this location is not a matter of seeing the place—which could be any piece of ground large enough for the purpose—it is a matter of witnessing or taking part in the daily drama of headcounts and punishments that mark out this place in memory.

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[17] See Figures 7a and 7b, photographs of the Wiernik model, from "Jankiel Wiernik Treblinka Model Provenance and Reference Page," Online Archive, *The Nizkor Project*, (2012), http://www.nizkor.org/ftp.cgi/camps/aktion.reinhard/treblinka/images/ftp.cgi?camps/aktion.reinhard/treblinka/images/model/Treblinka_Model.ref; "Wiernik Treblinka Model 02," Online Archive, *Nizkor Project*, (2012), http://www.nizkor.org/ftp.cgi/camps/aktion.reinhard/treblinka/ftp.cgi?camps/aktion.reinhard/treblinka//images/model/Treblinka_Model-02.jpg; "Listing Gallery Images for Treblinka Death Camp Model," Photo Storage Website, *Imgarcade*, accessed October 17, 2015, http://imgarcade.com/1/treblinka-death-camp-model/. Location marking notation of these photographs by the author. See also, Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*; Sereny, *Into That Darkness*. The model itself is now in the collections of the Ghetto Fighters' House Museum, see "Permanent Collections: Concentration and Extermination Camps," Museum Webpage, *Beit Lohamei HaGhetaot - Ghetto Fighters' House Museum*, accessed October 19, 2015, http://www.gfh.org.il/eng/?CategoryID=61&ArticleID=77.

The Duisburg Map depicts items integral to the everyday work, sleep, and regimentation regimes of a Camp 2 prisoner in intimate detail. By displaying his or her knowledge of the rail line's disused status, the exact room where prisoners of both sexes bunked at night, and the location where all Camp 2 prisoners lined up for roll call, the author shows the viewer their own daily routine in vibrant detail. For each of the above-mentioned aspects of the Duisburg Map that show an intimate knowledge of Camp 2, there is an equally incorrect aspect of its depiction of Camp 1 demonstrating that the author had no lived experience in this area.

First and foremost, the map is entirely wrong about the layout of the Camp 1 prisoner barracks. Legend item number five, "*Die Baracke für die Häftlinge*," or The Barracks for the Prisoners, is orientated improperly, drawn in an inaccurate shape, and only shows about half the size of the actual barracks as it existed. The map also completely omits the fence that existed around this structure in all other maps created by postwar German courts or Camp 1 prisoner recollections.[18] In this omission, however, the Duisburg Map is not alone. Jankiel Wiernik's scale model of Treblinka, created in the 1950s and entered into evidence at the 1961 trial of Adolf Eichmann, also leaves out this fence (see Figures 7a and 7b).[19] Wiernik's work assignment in Treblinka gave him access to Camp 1 that no other Camp 2 prisoner possessed, but his lived experiences did not imprint upon him the importance of this fence.[20] His depiction of the Camp 1 barracks structure is correct in exterior form and general size, though he still neglects the fence. If the Camp 1 barracks affected Wiernik's lived experience, or that of the

[18] See Figure 5, the late phase Laponder map for illustration of how this building should appear. Laponder, "Treblinka Map."
[19] See Figures 7a and 7b, from "Wiernik Model Reference Page"; "Wiernik Model"; "Treblinka Photo Gallery." For creation, usage, and current location information on the Wiernik Model, see "Wiernik Model Reference Page."
[20] For Wiernik's extensive testimony, writings, and interviews on Treblinka, see Wiernik, *A Year in Treblinka*; *Rajchman and Wiernik IMT Materials*; Adolf Eichmann Trial, 1–9 (Jerusalem District Court 1961); Donat, *The Death Camp Treblinka*.

Duisburg Map's author, it is unlikely either one of them would have left out this barbed wire obstacle to their daily lives and hopes for resistance.

The Duisburg Map leaves out not only the fence around the Camp 1 prisoner barracks, but also most Camp 1 structures in general. The entire SS and Ukrainian living area, as previously noted, is not depicted on this map at all.[21] The map also displays a version of what Laponder's maps call the "Reception Camp," that is equally compelling in what it omits and what it contains.[22] Two large rectangular blotches labeled, "*Kleider-Gepäck*," or Clothing-Baggage, mark this area on the Duisburg Map. These notations represent the mountains of stacked personal belongings stolen from those murdered in the gas chambers that Camp 1 prisoner work details sorted and piled in this area. Though this is a Camp 1 area, any Camp 2 prisoner would see this when they arrived at Treblinka. All prisoners passed this point when they disembarked, regardless of where they were eventually assigned.

The fact that these piles are retained in the mapped memory of a Camp 2 prisoner is a result of two factors. First, these mountains of clothing and baggage were a visual representation of the thousands murdered on a daily basis at Treblinka. The stark realities they represented would be hard for anyone to escape. A second reason they would be retained in the memory of a Camp 2 prisoner was their size. Prisoners stated that these mounds occasionally rose to staggering heights.[23] This would have meant that even though the Duisburg Map's Camp 2 prisoner-author would never have set foot in this area, he or she could have seen the top of these

[21] The map has only an arrow pointing off the page in the direction of this area with the notation, "*Zu den Wachmänner Baracken*," or To the Guards' Barracks.
[22] Laponder, "Treblinka Map."
[23] See Figures 8 and 9 for visual representations of the height of the clothing piles. See also the testimony of Abraham Krzepicki. Krzepicki, "Eighteen Days in Treblinka"; Plates 2 and 3 in Willenberg, *Surviving Treblinka*; Glazar also describes the sorting area, see Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*.

mounds over the sand berm separating the two camps in daily life, and over the fence separating the Reception Camp as they arrived.

The Duisburg Map's author was not the only individual to include a notation of something they could only see parts of over Treblinka's fences and separating sand berm in their depiction of the camp. Camp 1 prisoner and Treblinka Survivor Samuel Willenberg's *Surviving Treblinka* includes two overhead pencil drawings of the camp that support the geographic sensitivity of prisoner lived experiences (see Figures 8 and 9).[24] Willenberg's *Plate 2* (Figure 8) depicts in intimate detail the *Lazarett*, or Infirmary, where the SS took disabled arrivals, ill prisoners, and inmates under punishment of death and shot them over an open, ever-burning mass grave.[25] The Duisburg Map contains an area labeled "*Lazarettgruben*," or Infirmary Graves, but does not depict its structure or fence. No Camp 1 former prisoner testimony leaves out this building. Ending up at the *Lazarett* was a daily fear of Camp 1 inmates. Many survivors vividly recall the location and function of this place as part and parcel of the very horrors that made Treblinka what it was. For the Duisburg Map creator to casually denote an area where the *Lazarett* was, but devote no detail to its depiction, indicates that it was outside his or her lived experience.

The background areas of Willenberg's *Plate 2* confirm that the clothing and baggage piles did reach heights surpassing the top of the dividing sand berm, thus making a Camp 2 prisoner aware of their presence. Furthermore, Willenberg depicts only two things inside Camp 2 in his drawing of this area. He shows a tall guard tower and a steam shovel used to remove bodies from the mass graves so that they could be burned. Both of these were taller than the

[24] See *Plate 2* and *Plate 3*, reproduced here as Figures 8 and 9, from Willenberg, *Surviving Treblinka*.
[25] See Figure 8, copied from *Plate 2*, in Willenberg, *Surviving Treblinka*.

berm, and commensurately visible from Camp 1.[26] Willenberg's *Plate 3* further demonstrates these same points. In this plate, the scale of the mountains of people's belongings is shown in contrast to the miniscule figures of sorters shown standing around them. The background of this image again shows the guard towers and steam shovel of Camp 2. The intricate detail of Camp 1 depicted in *Plate 3* (Figure 9) is in stark contrast to the vast open space shown where Camp 2 should be. This includes the buildings of Camp 2, aside from guard towers, none of which are depicted by Willenberg at all.[27] As a Camp 1 prisoner, he is as ignorant of Camp 2, just as the Duisburg Map author is of Camp 1.

Willenberg's drawings and the accurate areas of the Duisburg Map are, in effect, depictions of the habitual range of vision of each creator. Wiernik's failure to depict the Camp 1 barracks fence in his model equally represents what he knew to be important for his own daily existence inside the camp. His access to space may well have allowed him to walk by that fence hundreds of times. His lived experience, however, never revealed to him its importance. Wiernik's mistake in the omission of the barracks fence is not one of vision, or even likely memory—for the fence was certainly within his habitually viewed area. Rather, his exclusion of that detail was a matter of personal perceived importance. Wiernik's and the Duisburg author's mistakes illustrate the importance of social networks for prisoner resistance. The revolt planners would need not only prisoners with combined range of vision intelligence over the entire camp, they would also need individuals with intimate institutional knowledge of each space and place.[28] In order to overcome the knowledge gaps and the regulated access to space of the average

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[26] See Figure 8, copied from *Plate 2*, in Willenberg, *Surviving Treblinka*.
[27] See Figure 9, copied from *Plate 3*, in Willenberg, *Surviving Treblinka*.
[28] This research uses a definition of place, as opposed to space, having a fluidity not found in the built infrastructure of spaces. Places described here are created both by the physical environment and the human environment of camp rules and social constructs. A space in Treblinka is exemplified by the prisoners' barracks, while a place is represented by the set of spaces and areas in between them that a prisoner or work detail had in fulfillment of their duties and daily routines, without threat of punishment for being where they were.

prisoner, Treblinka's revolt planners adopted strategies that networked individuals and groups, taking advantage of the combined spatial access and area intelligence that coordination made possible.

The Glazar Periodization

Strategies of resistance and later revolt grew as responses to the possibilities for such actions as the camp geography evolved. Understanding how the camp changed spatially and socially—"the social history of the spaces," in the words of Jaskot and colleagues—is a prerequisite for exploration of prisoner decision-making.[29] Despite operating for only eleven months, from July 22, 1942 – August 1943, Treblinka underwent drastic changes in camp infrastructure and modes of operation. The recollections of survivor Richard Glazar contained in Gitta Sereny's *Into That Darkness* provide a picture of Treblinka's timeline divided into four phases.

> Phase One: July – August 1942: The camp's early period under first commandant *Obersturmführer* Dr. Irmfried Eberl.
> Phase Two: August 1942 – Early 1943: The early rule of second commandant *Hauptsturmführer* Franz Stangl.
> Phase Three: Early 1943 – Approximately May of that year.
> Phase Four: Approximately May – August 2, 1943: The months prior to the revolt.[30]

Glazar arrived in Phase Two along with most of what would come to be called simply "the Czech group" by fellow prisoners and guards alike.[31] Phases One and Two occurred in a built geography that largely conformed to what Laponder depicts in his "Pre-October 1942" map (see Figure 4).[32]

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[29] Jaskot et al., "Visualizing the Archive," 177.
[30] Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 179.
[31] Sereny, 181.
[32] Laponder, "Treblinka Map."

In terms of the built environment, the most important distinction between Phases One and Two and Phases Three and Four, was the construction of the single barracks structure that housed all Camp 1 prisoners from January of 1943 (see Figure 5, Key Number 23).[33] Prisoners and guards alike referred to this structure as "the ghetto."[34] Prior to this move, Camp 1 prisoners could not seriously contemplate armed revolt. Most Camp 1 prisoners slept in a barracks building in the disembarkation area (see Figure 6) before the completion of the single Camp 1 barracks.[35] Only a small group called the *Hofjuden*, or Court Jews—a sardonic, defamatory nickname meaning privileged prisoners—had the access to the places and spaces that a revolt required. Separation of the Camp 1 prisoner workforce—especially the segregation of prisoners with the greatest access to the camp away from the main body of slave laborers—rendered full spatial networking impossible.

Survivor Kalman Teigman stressed the crippling nature of this separation, and the importance of the *Hofjuden* for later revolt strategies, in his testimony at the 1961 trial of Adolf Eichmann.

> When we [the other prisoner working groups] arrived at [the ghetto] and met the *Hofjuden*, they worked in the German quarters, they had access to all places. We knew that only with their assistance would we be able to accomplish anything, to get to a particular place, to escape or to carry out an armed revolt.[36]

The combined housing of all Camp 1 prisoners in the ghetto barracks changed everything. In his interviews for *Into That Darkness*, his own book, and later oral history recordings, Glazar seems not to realize it, but this move is also the dividing line between Phases Two and Three.

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[33] Laponder, "Treblinka Map."
[34] Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 25; Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 116; Willenberg, "I Survived Treblinka," 198.
[35] See "Barracks for all others," on Figure 6. Johansen, "M1." This barracks is in the same area of Treblinka Laponder labels as the "Reception Camp," in both of his maps. See Figures 4 and 5. Laponder, "Treblinka Map."
[36] Testimony of Kalman Teigman Adolf Eichmann Trial, 1–9, Session 66, Parts 4–7 (Jerusalem District Court 1961), italics added. Kalman Teigman and Kalman Taigman are the same person. The spelling varies depending on the source.

Phases One and Two offered no chance of camp-wide revolt because prisoners could not communicate with the group best able to access space. This did not, however, translate to a lack of resistance activities of any kind in these two phases. Chapter Four will pick up the analysis of revolt planning with the start of Phase Three, while the remainder of this chapter explores resistance in the first two phases and its place in the Treblinka timeline as well as the wider study of the Holocaust. As the site of a rare armed uprising against Nazi intent to destroy all the Jews of Europe, Treblinka occupies an almost singular place in the historiography and memory of resistance to the Holocaust. The next section continues the exploration of early perseverance and resistance activities at the camp while placing them in both the context of wider narrative trends in Holocaust and Genocide Studies and in their relationship to the eventual revolt itself.

Resistance at Treblinka in Historiographical Context

The vast scholarship on the subject of Jewish resistance to Nazi plans for the Final Solution is of varying quality and greatly influenced postwar memory and emotional attachment.[37] Robert Rozett charts the historiography of this sub-field of Holocaust Studies in his chapter "Jewish Resistance," in *The Historiography of the Holocaust*.[38] Rozett praises the contributions of Michael Marrus to this study at the end of his chapter, stating that Marrus "elucidates the different types of Jewish resistance without judging them or creating a hierarchy of merit."[39] Throughout his article "Jewish Resistance to the Holocaust," Marrus categorizes five types of Jewish resistance and gives examples of each.[40] The paramount contribution of

[37] Robert Rozett, "Jewish Resistance," in *The Historiography of the Holocaust* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 341.
[38] Dan Stone, ed., *The Historiography of the Holocaust* (Basingstoke, Hampshire, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).
[39] Rozett, "Jewish Resistance," 359.
[40] Michael Marrus, "Jewish Resistance to the Holocaust," *Journal of Contemporary History* 30, no. 1 (January 1995): 93.

Marrus's article is the codification of a taxonomy that supports analyses of multiple types of acts including armed violence as forms of resistance.

As in the case of Rozett's work, Marrus opens his article with a section on the historiography of resistance studies. The two authors note many of the same issues that plagued the field in its early days. Individuals who wrote about resistance in the initial years after the Second World War often privileged acts of armed resistance, while denigrating or disregarding other types of resistance all together.[41] Treblinka research, as explored in Chapter One, focuses so narrowly on the events of August 2, 1943, that many acts leading up to that day are left out of previous historical works. As a result, prisoner resistance acts that precipitated, or enabled the later revolt are often lost. My focus on prisoner geographic access and gender are also almost entirely non-existent in earlier research. Much of the existing scholarship on Treblinka appeared before the geographic turn in Holocaust and Genocide Studies. Even one of the most recent academic works to appear on the camp clearly makes no methodological use of geographic study and is hampered by the omission.[42] Gender, sex, and sexual violence—despite how these issues play into and enable resistance—receive even less coverage in the existing literature.

In the years up to and including the 1960s, historians had not yet provided a clear-eyed analysis of Jewish resistance to the Holocaust. Commensurately, even mainstream works at the time leveled the accusations that Holocaust victims who did not participate in armed uprisings had all gone, "like sheep to the slaughter."[43] Marrus credits Roger Gottlieb for expanding the understanding of resistance to include all acts contrary to the will and intentions of the Nazis that the individual responsible personally conceived of as resistance.[44] Gottlieb's interpretation of

[41] Marrus, "Jewish Resistance to the Holocaust," 85–86.
[42] See Chrostowski, *Extermination Camp Treblinka*.
[43] Marrus, "Jewish Resistance to the Holocaust," 86.
[44] Marrus, 91.

resistance opened the study to any act intended to disrupt the Nazis so long as this is what the actor intended. After widening the field of resistance study to include anything and everything intended to thwart Nazi intentions to kill all Jews, the need arose to categorize such an enormous variety of acts for ease of study.

Published in 1982, Werner Rings's *Life with the Enemy: Collaboration and Resistance in Hitler's Europe 1939-1945* provides the framework for Marrus's classification of various acts of resistance.[45] Rings names

> (1) Symbolic Resistance, or *I remain what I was*; (2) Polemic Resistance, or *I tell the truth*; (3) Defensive Resistance, or *I aid and protect*; (4) Offensive Resistance, or *I fight to the death*; (5) Resistance Enchained, or *freedom fighters in camp and ghetto*.[46]

As Rozett states, Marrus does not list these types of resistance by perceptions of their worth, effectiveness, or his own preference of any one above the others. Marrus instead orders these categories by the danger incurred by the individual resistant. While Marrus leaves Rings's resistance types in this order, he does not argue that personal danger makes the act of resistance any more or less valuable. Marrus, Rings and Rozett agree that the intention of the act of resistance—not its inherent danger or methods—determines its importance.

The Rings taxonomy usefully structures resistance acts at Treblinka. This includes both early background acts by prisoners, those that fed into revolt, and the revolt itself. These categories, however, must be slightly recast in order to better fit the study of resistance inside a Nazi extermination camp that does, in fact, lead to revolt. Resistance Enchained, by definition, includes all acts contrary to Nazi intent carried out by populations entrapped within camps or ghettos. As such, this is not a separate category for study of Treblinka prisoner actions, it is an

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[45] Werner Rings, *Life with the Enemy: Collaboration and Resistance in Hitler's Europe, 1939 - 1945* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1982).
[46] Marrus, "Jewish Resistance to the Holocaust," 93, italics added.

umbrella term for everything they did. Of the remaining four classifications, three predate, or feed into revolt. Offensive Resistance at Treblinka consisted mainly of the revolt itself, and is the focus of Chapter Five. Marrus and Rings do not believe that Symbolic Resistance, be it forms of protest or identity maintenance under threat, was open to the oppressed Jews of Nazi-controlled Europe in the same ways that some occupied non-Jewish populations were able to express themselves.

Marrus cites peaceful, public protests by the Dutch and the Danes as examples of Symbolic Resistance acts closed off to Jews.[47] Protest, it turns out, was not as closed to Jews at Treblinka as Marrus might have expected. Samuel Goldberg, the Camp 1 laundry supervisor, recounted in an interview how the women of his work detail rose up to protest his replacement as their leader. For Goldberg, this would have meant either immediate death or transfer to Camp 2 where the chances of survival were far worse than the rather privileged position he held as a leader in Camp 1. As arguments over Goldberg's dismissal escalated to a fight between him and a kapo and then to the attention of an SS guard, the women of the laundry detail pushed themselves forward. The guard was about to order Goldberg hanged for striking a kapo when the laundry women stated, "If you hang him, hang us all."[48] Likely stunned by their boldness and unanimity, the guard even asked them why before changing his mind and leaving Goldberg alive and in his position as head of the laundry. Protest by these women saved the life of a man who would eventually participate in the revolt. While their daring and vocal rising, in some ways, fits the Symbolic Resistance category, it also straddles the line into Defensive Resistance

[47] Marrus, "Jewish Resistance to the Holocaust," 94.
[48] Shmuel "Samuel" Goldberg, Family Oral History Interview with Shmuel "Samuel" Goldberg, interview by Shlomo Goldberg, Transcript, 1991, in possession of the author, transcription p. 7-8.

which I cover later. As with so many other events at Treblinka, however, these women's actions defy easy consideration under one or another definition.

European Jews in general, and even individuals arriving at Treblinka, could, and did, also participate in spiritual practices that fall more neatly under Rings's category of Symbolic Resistance acts.[49] Treblinka escapee Dudek Lewkowicz recalled the actions of the Piotrkower Rabbi Moshe Chaim Lau as he and his congregants disembarked at the camp. Evidently fully aware of what Treblinka was, Rabbi Lau gave a short speech to the Jews of Piotrkow and Preszów about their impending martyrdom as they were unloaded at the ramp. He then led them in the prayer and end of life confession of *Viduy* as guards rushed them all toward the *Schlauch* and the gas chambers. While many survivor testimonies mention Jews saying *Shema Yisroel* on their way to death at Treblinka, Lewkowicz's recollections are the only known mention of the longer *Viduy* prayer that would have required the possession of a prayer book. Rabbi Lau, unsurprisingly, must have possessed one, and his speech and prayer display remarkable poise, calmness, forethought, and knowledge of what came next. He knew that he and his fellow Piotrkow and Preszów Jews would soon be killed, and he acted to preserve and prepare their souls.[50]

Rabbi Lau's actions drew the attention of Dudek Lewkowicz as he worked at the arrival area as they must have drawn the attention of other workers and guards. We would be hard pressed to find an example that better represents Symbolic Resistance through the actions of victims demonstrating that they remained who they were even under threat.[51] At Treblinka,

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[49] Marrus, "Jewish Resistance to the Holocaust," 94.
[50] Israel Meir Lau, *Out of the Depths: The Story of a Child of Buchenwald Who Returned Home at Last*, trans. Jessica Setbon and Shira Leibowitz Schmidt (New York, NY: Sterling Publishers in conjunction with OU Press, 2011); Dudek Lewkowitz, "What I Saw in Treblinka," in *A Tale of One City* (New York, NY: Shengold Publishers in cooperation with Piotrkow Trybunalski Relief Association, 1991), 227–36.
[51] Marrus, "Jewish Resistance to the Holocaust," 93.

Rabbi Lau's recitation of *Viduy* sits alongside the continuation of other Jewish religious traditions and rituals by long-term prisoners of the camp. Several survivors state that inmates often recited the mourner's *Kaddish* at night for those murdered each day.[52] Whether the recitation of *Kaddish* was an open deed that could have drawn the ire of guards, or a solitary one taken under cover of darkness is immaterial. Prisoners knew better than anyone else in the world at that time the purpose of the Treblinka extermination camp. Continuation of Jewish religious practice while under threat of imminent death for being Jewish is by its very nature a personal Symbolic Resistance act.

Other than possible effects on prisoner morale, it seems likely that Symbolic Resistance at Treblinka did not enable, or set the stage for later revolt. Polemic Resistance, the next type in the Rings/Marrus scale, came in two forms at Treblinka. Many individuals sent to the camp elected to commit suicide rather than work as a cog in the Nazi machinery of death. These actions, while they may have had some small effect on the efficiency of the camp workforce, did not save the lives of others. An overall resistance intent of individuals who took their own lives at the camp is difficult to ascertain. Many may have been acting only for themselves, while others may have taken this recourse as a display of their refusal to be a slave to Treblinka's extermination mission. Suicide at Treblinka brings to mind the head of the Warsaw Ghetto *Judenrat*, Adam Czerniaków. Ordered to arrange the deportation of Jews from the ghetto, Czerniaków took his own life rather than obey Nazi orders.[53] While the sources do not exist to

[52] See Krzepicki, "Eighteen Days in Treblinka," 131; Wiernik, *A Year in Treblinka*, location 562; Rachel Auerbach, "In the Fields of Treblinka," in *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (New York, NY: Waldon Press, 1979), 63.
[53] Adam Czerniaków, *The Warsaw Diary of Adam Czerniaków: Prelude to Doom*, ed. Raul Hilberg, Stanislaw Staron, and Joseph Kermish (Chicago, IL: Ivan R. Dee, 1999).

find the reasons behind suicides at Treblinka, we should be open to the idea that they took their own lives for similarly polemic reasons.

Raul Hilberg's assessment of camp prisoners who elected to commit suicide in his book *Perpetrators, Victims, Bystanders* takes a far more judgmental tone than do the recollections of Treblinka survivors. In a chapter entitled "The Unadjusted," Hilberg calls suicides "the weary," "those who had given up," and repeats some well-known in-camp monikers for individuals unable to persevere any longer, such as "*Muselmänner*," or "*Gamele*."[54] Treblinka survivors from both sides of the Camp 1/Camp 2 divide mention suicide, but they do so in comparatively neutral, or even quasi-reverential phrasing.

Far from being a deed that drew the ire of survivors, or judgments on the weakness of the individual, suicide was an action prisoners even helped each other commit. Camp 1 prisoners Abraham Bomba, Isadore Helfing, and Richard Glazar all mention the quite normal occurrence of suicide in the barracks at night during Treblinka's early phases.[55] "Half asleep, I heard some men hang themselves. We didn't react then. It was almost normal," remembered Glazar.[56] Camp 2 survivor Eliahu Rosenberg's recollections of suicide even note prisoner unity and mutual assistance in the ending of another's life. "One asked the next to pull the chair from underneath him, so that he should not suffer, we helped each other."[57] Rosenberg's use of the

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[54] Raul Hilberg, *Perpetrators, Victims, Bystanders: The Jewish Catastrophe, 1933-1945*, 1st ed. (New York, NY: Aaron Asher Books, 1992), 172.
[55] Claude Lanzmann, *Shoah: The Complete Text of the Acclaimed Holocaust Film*, 2nd ed. (New York, NY: De Capo Press, 1995), 40–41; Claude Lanzmann, *Shoah*, DVD, Documentary (Criterion Collectoin, 1985); Isadore Helfing, Isadore Helfing, Treblinka Death Camp Survivor: Selected extracts from USHMM interview held on the 3 September 1992, Website - Transcribed Text, September 3, 1992, transcript p. 8, USHMM provided by Holocaust Education and Archive Research Team, http://www.holocaustresearchproject.org/survivor/helfing.html; Isadore Helfing, RG-50.005.0024, JTHOHA, USHMM, December 3, 1983.
[56] Lanzmann, *Shoah* (1995), 41.
[57] *Eichmann Trial*, 1–9 at Section 66, Parts 7-8.

word “we” in this context demonstrates that he did not personally distance himself from these acts at all, even implying that he took part in them.

In the early phases at Treblinka, prisoners who took their own lives did so in an environment almost completely devoid of hope. Pivotally, for our understanding of Treblinka inmate mindset over time, survivor testimonies make no mention of suicides after the beginning of Phase Three. Concentration camp survivor and Holocaust historian Herman Langbein contends that changes in the psychological resistance picture for camp inmates can have an effect on decision-making.

> If a person managed to become involved in a resistance movement, this meant additional risks for him, but such an activity also provided strong moral support by helping the prisoner overcome the paralyzing feeling of being helplessly at the mercy of an all-powerful, abysmally evil force.[58]

Suicides at Treblinka either stopped or diminished greatly after January of 1943, falling completely out of mention in testimony from this date onward. As Langbein points out, this can be interpreted as a date on which suicides ended due to improved chances for other types of resistance at the end of Phase Two. As in the case of suicidal intent, however, it is doubtful this observation about the timing of suicides in the camp could ever be definitively proven. As discussed above, the guards did not come into the new ghetto barracks at night. Nothing about the routine of the SS or Ukrainian overseers in Phase Three changed this trend. The change then lay in the mood among prisoners created by the newfound ability to communicate with the most privileged inmates and the possibilities offered by an altered camp geography. Spatial changes to the camp and newfound communication gave prisoners options and a rational ability to foresee some hope of escape from Treblinka, or at least the option to give their lives while fighting.

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[58] Hermann Langbein, *Against All Hope: Resistance in the Nazi Concentration Camps, 1938-1945*, 1st U.S. ed. (New York, NY: Paragon House, 1994), 393.

Prior to the start of serious resistance planning, prisoners who saw no hope of flight from the extermination camp sometimes opted for suicide in what Konrad Kwiet called, "the most radical category of attempts to escape from the Nazi terror."[59] Kwiet unreservedly classified their suicides—in clearly polemic terms—as, "an ultimate act of defiance," even though Marrus notes that in general, "we are unlikely ever to identify a political motivation among the thousands of suicides and attempted suicides of Jews that historians have noted."[60] Many more inmates did, however, see options for living escape from Treblinka either through personal guile, or the assistance of others, and a good deal were successful.

Escape as Individual, Defensive, and Polemic Resistance

The second type of Polemic Resistance carried out by Treblinka inmates was planned, purpose-driven escape. The intent of escapes from Treblinka was most certainly to save lives, and therefore this category of resistance action also straddles the line between Polemic and Defensive Resistance. Those who took opportunities to escape on their own, or with friends, where the intent was simply to get out alive, committed a Defensive Resistance act. Those who got out of Treblinka with the intent to warn the outside world fall into the category of Polemic Resistance. With specific relevance to escape plans by prisoner groups at the camp, Marrus states

> Some polemical resistance within the Jewish world consisted of persuading Jews of the reality of the Final Solution—telling the victims, against all experience and logic, that the German-organized deportations were part of an organized campaign of systematic mass murder.[61]

[59] Konrad Kwiet quoted in: Marrus, "Jewish Resistance to the Holocaust," 98.
[60] Kwiet quoted first and then Marrus, from Marrus, 98.
[61] Marrus, 96.

Treblinka inmates formed their first planned and networked conspiracies around acts of organized escape by selected prisoners with the expressed goal of warning the outside world about the reality of German plans to send Jews "to the east."[62]

Records contained in Emmanuel Ringelblum's *Oyneg Shabes* archive prove that early Treblinka plotters actually succeeded in spreading the word about the fatal truth of Nazi intentions.[63] Treblinka escapee Abraham Krzepicki was the first individual to record his recollections of the camp after he returned to the Warsaw Ghetto. Though Krzepicki died in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, his testimony exists today because Rachel Auerbach, an assistant to Ringelblum, transcribed it for the archive before his death.[64]

The testimony of Treblinka escapee Zenon Golaszewski perfectly describes the planned polemic intent of organized escapes in the early phases of camp operation. In his statement to the Düsseldorf prosecutor of the Kurt Franz trial, Golaszewski said:

> I escaped from the Treblinka camp after a more than month-long stay. I was able to do this because the prisoners hid me in a railcar full of the clothing of those murdered at Treblinka. The escape was prepared and organized by a group of insiders. One selected me because I did not have a Semitic facial appearance. The escape plan was intended to teach comrades in the ghettos what kind of a camp Treblinka was, and furthermore to ensure there would be a living witness to this horrible mass murder.[65]

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[62] Christopher R. Browning, *Fateful Months: Essays on the Emergence of the Final Solution*, rev. ed. (New York, NY: Holmes & Meier, 1991), 28.
[63] Donat, *The Death Camp Treblinka*, 77.
[64] Donat, 77. Auerbach herself would go on to survive the Warsaw Ghetto and the Holocaust. After the war, she made *Aliyah* and become a long-time archivist at Yad Vashem. Her chapter "In the Fields of Treblinka," in Alexander Donat's edited volume *The Death Camp Treblinka* and the 1947 Yiddish language work from which it is excerpted remain the only known writing on the camp authored by a woman. The overwhelmingly male voice of Treblinka sources and historical interpretation is a matter to which I return in Chapter Six. Rachel Auerbach, "In the Fields of Treblinka," in *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (New York, NY: Waldon Press, 1979), 19–74; Rahel Oyerbakh, *Oyf di felder fun treblinke: reportazsh* (Varshe; Lodzsh: Centralna Zydowska Komisja Historyczna, 1947).
[65] Zenon Golaszewski, Trial of Kurt Franz et al. - Investigative Interview of Survivor-Witness Zenon Golaszewski, Transcript, December 9, 1965, 280, Gerichte Rep. 388, Nr. 781, Band 32c, pp. 276-280, Duisburg Branch - State Archives of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany. In his oral history interview, survivor Morton Mattel recounts another instance of escape for the purpose of warning the outside world, see Morton Mattel, RG-50.347.0001, JTHOHA, USHMM, July 29, 1981. Richard Glazar adds the story of David Brat's escape with the intent of warning the Warsaw Ghetto. See Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 22.

The network of prisoners that assisted Golaszewski selected him to take part in their plan for his looks and the possibility that he might be able to blend into the non-Jewish Polish population better than others with a supposedly stereotypical Jewish appearance. Thankfully, Golaszewski survived the rest of the war and was later able to relay the intent of the plotters who helped him. His recollections before the court prove that Treblinka prisoners planned and executed acts of Polemic Resistance even when it had no hope of saving those left behind inside the camp.

To be certain, not all escapes were instances of Polemic Resistance intended to warn the outside world about the realities of Treblinka. Revolt survivor Oskar Strawczynski stated "small groups" would help men escape at this time, and that, "about [thirty to forty] people escaped daily" in the early phases.[66] Many were simply the Defensive Resistance acts of desperate men seeking to save their own lives and whomever else they might have been able to take out with them. Escapee Ignac Litwak, for example, recounts no mission-orientated planning before his flight from Treblinka. He and his friends merely realized that they could hide in clothing piles at the sorting area until nightfall and climb the fence when no guards were on duty.[67] With so many murdered on a daily basis, the choice of whether to stay or go was a nonissue. However, Litwak's unplanned escape was far less successful than that of Golaszewski. With no coordinated access to cash to bribe their way into hiding spots or purchase food, four of Litwak's six fellow escapees died on the run.[68]

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[66] Oskar Strawczynski, "Ten Months in Treblinka," in *Escaping Hell in Treblinka* (New York, NY; Jerusalem: Yad Vashem Publications, 2007), 145.
[67] Ignac Litwak, Trial of Kurt Franz et al. - Investigative Interview of Survivor-Witness Ignac Litwak, Transcript, December 9, 1964, 283, Gerichte Rep. 388, Nr. 781, Band 32c, pp. 281-283, Duisburg Branch - State Archives of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany.
[68] Litwak, 283.

The Litwak escape and several others like it are counterexamples to the power of coordinated resistance at Treblinka. Without the help of those with access to valuables, a plan to cover their exit, or a preconceived method of hiding on the outside, most of this escape group perished. The repeated failure of spontaneous resistance acts like Litwak's escape and other episodes likely had a strong impact on the desire of Treblinka prisoners to tightly script their later actions.

Treblinka survivors conclusively state that escapes ended because of the move to the ghetto barracks.[69] The new structure stood in the middle of Camp 1, far from possible routes out of the camp (see Figure 5, Key Number 23). In addition to the distance created by its central location, the ghetto barracks stood behind an additional fence built for the expressed purpose of ending escapes. In places, this barrier was actually a double-fence obstacle with space between for nighttime foot patrols by Ukrainian guards.[70] The gate of the ghetto ring fence was locked at night with guards patrolling only on the exterior. This meant that communication on the inside was not limited by fear of guards passing through the actual building at night, but prisoners also saw little to no chance of nighttime escape. Neither preliminary ideas, nor the final revolt plan ever countenance the idea of a late-night operation. Despite the possible benefits of the cover of darkness, the obstacles created by this new structure were evidently perceived to be so insurmountable that all plans make use of a start time prior to the final evening lockdown.

David Liebermann, one of the men who took flight with the last group to get out of Treblinka, also survived to tell his story. Liebermann snuck away from the old arrival area barracks in the dawn, pre-roll call moments of an early January day in 1943 with the assistance

[69] Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 195–96; Willenberg, "I Survived Treblinka," 198.
[70] Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 116.

and participation of three of his schoolmates from Czestochowa, Poland.[71] The camp's final escape was such a memorable episode for those who stayed on that Willenberg and others recall it exactly as Liebermann does.[72] Liebermann and friends got out of Treblinka the very day before inmates shifted to the new ghetto barracks that promised to make flight far more difficult. This was no coincidence, for Liebermann states that his accomplices timed the escape for that very reason.[73]

Liebermann and his fellow escapees took motivation from construction at Treblinka exactly as Jaskot and colleagues found was the case for inmates of Auschwitz.[74] It certainly helped that Treblinka's prisoners were the slave laborers forced to build the new escape-resistant barracks. The builders must have told others that the window of opportunity was closing, and the time was now. For those who remained behind, the Liebermann escape was an object lesson in how crucially important construction and timing would be for later resistance. This would not be the last episode of Treblinka inmates taking advantage of construction at the camp. With escape no longer a viable option for resistance-minded prisoners, Treblinka inmates shifted the focus of their efforts from January of 1943. I return to the matter of escape in Chapter Seven as I focus on survival at Treblinka.

The January 1943 beginning of Glazar's Phase Three coincides with the opening of the ghetto barracks, the end of escapes, and the co-housing of all Camp 1 prisoners. Now able to call upon the entire Camp 1 population, Treblinka plotters immediately realized that these conditions compelled new thinking on resistance while providing them chances to consider

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[71] David Lieberman, RG-50.030.0132, JTHOHA, USHMM, July 10, 1990.
[72] Willenberg, "I Survived Treblinka," 194, 198; Strawczynski, "Ten Months in Treblinka," 145; Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 25.
[73] David Lieberman, RG-50.030.0132, Transcript p. 7, JTHOHA, USHMM, July 10, 1990.
[74] Jaskot et al., "Visualizing the Archive," 182.

actions beyond the symbolic or polemic. Phase Three prisoner resistance harnessed geographic changes to living arrangements meant to end escape and deployed them in service of far grander plans. The fact that the most resistance-minded prisoners were no longer leaving Treblinka via escape also helped grow the possible network of revolt plotters. Defensive Resistance acts were not new to Phase Three, but the changed geography of Treblinka gave plotters new opportunities and possibly a more optimistic prevailing mood from which to draw coconspirators. The next chapter explores these defensive acts and how they fostered, expanded, and exploited spatially important social networks that enabled the eventual revolt.

Chapter Four

Defensive Resistance: The Formation and Preservation of Spatial Social Networks

Defensive Resistance

While undressing I saw Engineer Galewski of Warsaw, a friend of mine, among the workers. Galewski asked one of the [SS guards] to assign me to the worker's brigade.

I never saw my travelling companions again, after a few minutes I understood everything, I felt resentment against Galewski, due to whose intervention I was still alive.

I complained to my friend and reproached him for having saved me. His answer was unexpected; "I did not save you to keep you alive," he whispered, "but to sell your life at a higher price. You are now a member of a secret organisation that is planning an uprising and you must live."
—Samuel Rajzman[1]

Defensive Resistance episodes grew beyond early-phase escapes to eventually include the very prisoner-to-prisoner assistance that helped inmates build and preserve social networks later called upon for the revolt. Individuals drew assistance from networks of coworkers in the various work details at Treblinka as well as support from those they knew in life prior to arrival. This meant that birthplace or pre-deportation origins had much to do with the networks that formed within the camp. Individuals from Warsaw (both those native to the city and others later forced into the ghetto), for example, tended to work with and sleep near other people from the same location. The same was true for the camp's significant Czech and Czestochowa, Poland populations.[2] In an environment where trust of others was paramount to survival, pre-existing relationships were important for the formation and maintenance of bonds between inmates at Treblinka.

This chapter first explores the forces that led to the creation of networks based on pre-Treblinka origins before highlighting the importance of relationships based on prisoner work assignments. These two interdependent sources of inmate social networks found protection in prisoner decisions designed to safeguard those included in plans for revolt. The need to protect

[1] House Committee on Foreign Affairs, "Rajzman Congressional Testimony."
[2] Richard Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence: Survival in Treblinka*, Jewish Lives (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1995), 26; Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 25–28.

individuals and preserve the secrecy of planning, at times, led to actions against informants or fellow prisoners who were deemed unreliable. In an exploration of those events, this chapter next focuses on actions taken by prisoners against those they felt could not be trusted. These deeds, some quite violent, provide a bridge between the defensive, or less-aggressive, actions taken to persevere within Treblinka and the ultimate armed offensive of August 2, 1943 that is the focus of chapter five. The final section here turns from the creation and protection of social networks to the concept of "place-making" and a focus on how prisoners used bonds of trust to gain control over Treblinka geography as a means to save lives and further resistance as well as launch an eventual revolt.

Origin Networks and Surviving Arrival

Individuals unfortunate enough to arrive at Treblinka, no matter what their place of origin, were unlikely to survive. The thousands of daily arrivals at the camp yielded only a tiny number of replacements for the permanent workforce, and the ever-lethal selection process became even more restrictive as time went on.[3] Previous studies of the camp neglect the role Jewish prisoners played in this process and the effects their interventions had on the formation and maintenance of social networks within the camp based on prewar, or pre-camp relationships.[4] Successful methods of survival at the point of selection varied with the changing modes of SS operations over time. These changes affected strategies for individual or group selection survival as the camp evolved.

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[3] Arad, chap. 12 in *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*.

[4] While no previous works credit Jewish prisoners with much control over the selection process, Arad comes closest to acknowledging workers' influence upon the survival of others. Chrostowski's book, one of the most recent academic monographs on Treblinka, however, places all responsibility and power over arrival selection in the hands of the SS. Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*; Chrostowski, *Extermination Camp Treblinka*.

Phases One and Two witnessed mass killings not only of arrivals, but also the supposedly permanent workforce, prompting Glazar to remember them as a "period of utter arbitrariness where one SS might select a man for work and an hour later, he might be dead, sent 'up' by another."[5] The total disorganization at Treblinka in this early period was at least partially due to the lack of a stable workforce, a condition that contributed to the dismissal of the first commandant, Dr. Irmfried Eberl. The replacement commandant, *Hauptsturmführer* Franz Stangl, reorganized the camp in such a way that methods of arrival selection and almost every other aspect of prisoner life changed dramatically by early 1943.[6] Most importantly for those already inside Treblinka, the new commandant's reorganization measures prompted the move to the ghetto barracks at the start of Phase Three in January 1943, as discussed in the previous chapter. For individuals arriving from this date onward, Stangl's reorganization meant fewer chances for survival as a result of a more tightly controlled accountability of permanent workers.

During all of Glazar's phases, new arrivals disembarked from rail cars at the camp and met three to five German SS guards, approximately ten Ukrainian guards, and roughly twenty Blue Commando Jews. The Blues and another similarly tasked group called the Reds were responsible for moving people in the gate and giving them orders such as where to undress, and where to place their belongings.[7] In Phases One and Two, the camp's permanent workforce was barely marked or differentiated from new arrivals in any consistent or failsafe manner. Treblinka prisoners were never issued uniforms and, as Glazar points out, the SS arbitrarily killed members of the workforce at such a rate that the Germans could not possibly tell new arrivals from

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[5] Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 179.
[6] Gitta Sereny credits Franz Stangl for the reorganization of Treblinka operations given his "talent for organization" though she and Manfred Burba agree that much of the reordering of camp life was accomplished during the two-week interim command of Inspector of *Aktion Reinhard* Camps Christian Wirth. See Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 181; Burba, *Treblinka*, 14; Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 88.
[7] Interviews of Treblinka SS guard Franz Suchomel contained in Lanzmann, *Shoah* (film), 1985; Lanzmann, *Shoah*, 1995, 97–98.

established inmate workers. Prisoners used the anonymity granted them by high turnover and lax inmate monitoring by the SS to save others even while under constant personal threat of death.

Blue Commando prisoner workers had the additional assignment of cleaning out the boxcars of arriving trains after the disembarkation of the doomed. This detail drew its name from the blue patches (eventually armbands) that they wore on their clothing.[8] One early-phase salvation technique was to quickly instruct a friend or acquaintance spotted getting off the train on how to look like an experienced worker. Eliahu Rosenberg remembered a man approaching someone he arrived with and telling him, "Moshe, grab a broom and save yourself!"[9] The mere act of holding a broom and appearing to have a job made one less likely to be pushed toward the gas chambers.[10] Rosenberg is not the only survivor to mention the passing of brooms as a sort of macabre lifesaving baton relay in the early days of Treblinka. Eddie Weinstein and his companions in Treblinka's early workforce were well aware of the personal risk involved in saving others: "Indeed, every time we passed our brooms to newcomers we reduced our own prospects of survival – but we took the risk anyway."[11] In addition to the broom passing method, Treblinka's experienced prisoners were also adept at hiding groups of arriving men in the heaps of clothing they were sorting.

Traversing a gated fence to the right of the camp arrival area, prisoners reached a large open section called the *Sortierungsplatz*, or sorting area. In the early phases of the camp, one-or-two-hundred men—already undressed by orders of the SS—would run back and forth between

[8] Sperling, "Treblinka - Eye-Witness Report," 246; Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka,* 166–167.
[9] Testimony of survivor Eliahu Rosenberg, Adolf Eichmann Trial, 1–9, 66, parts 7–8. (Jerusalem District Court 1961).
[10] Weinstein, *17 Days in Treblinka*.
[11] Weinstein, 60.

the piles of clothes at the *Sortierungsplatz* and the train platform square where new arrivals undressed. These men gathered the clothes of the camp's most recent victims and delivered them to where the permanent workers would sort them for shipment to Germany before being sent off to the gas themselves when this work was completed.[12] Many realized their position in this naked group was incredibly dangerous, and they sought ways to escape the fate they sensed awaited them. Some hid among the piles of clothing while others were recognized by friends and pulled into a work detail after being hurriedly dressed. Still more volunteered for any assignment the Germans handed out, even if they did not know what it was.[13]

Over time the SS grew wise to these techniques and increasingly brutal in their reprisals. Weinstein recounted that after one quite full day of "broom-sharing and other ruses" designed to hide new arrivals, the evening roll call number was a full 200 men higher than guards expected.[14] SS recompense for this discrepancy was the immediate slaughter of the same number of men with complete disregard for whether they were long-term residents of the camp, or arrivals that had been snuck in that day.[15] This act demonstrates the brutality and wholesale murder of inmates that kept the camp's population from gaining any stability in its early months.

Prisoners lost the use of many of their methods of salvation to increased oversight as Stangl's reorganization of the camp took hold, though they benefited from these changes in other ways. In Phases Three and Four, it was simply no longer possible to hand off a broom or falsify a roll call number in order to hide arrivals among the existing population. By Phase Three, prisoners had assigned numbers pinned to their clothing, and SS as well as Ukrainian overseers

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[12] Account of SS guard Franz Suchomel in Lanzmann, *Shoah* (1995), 45; Lanzmann, *Shoah* (film), 1985.
[13] Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 210. Testimony of Josef Czarny in *United States v. Fedorenko*, 597 F. 2d 946, 4, 418–424 (Court of Appeals, 5th Circuit 1979); Weinstein, *17 Days in Treblinka*, 58.
[14] Weinstein, *17 Days in Treblinka*, 60.
[15] Weinstein, 60.

were more likely to recognize a new face in the crowd as time went on.[16] Though loss of anonymity would hurt prisoners' ability to smuggle in new arrivals or escape unnoticed by the guards, the same factor would also increase inmates' knowledge of each other and the ability to form lasting bonds. Survivor Kalman Teigman stated that prior to the solidification of the camp's working population, inmates "did not know one another" and found it impossible to trust or conspire in such ever-changing conditions.[17] A more static population offered better opportunities for planning large-scale resistance, with Glazar referring to the new conditions as the "first spark" of the eventual conspiracy.[18]

Stabilization put an end to group salvation of new arrivals and complicated—but did not eradicate—individual rescues. Alfred Galewski saved at least four people at the point of selection using his position as Camp 1 Jewish prisoner *Lagerältester*, or Camp Elder. Recalling the experience of his own deportation to Treblinka, survivor Samuel Rajzman stated that soon after arriving, he "never saw any of [his] traveling companions again, after a few minutes I felt resentment against Galewski, due to whose intervention I was still alive."[19] Rajzman and Galewski knew each other from life in the Warsaw Ghetto before the latter was sent to Treblinka among the earliest transports to the camp.[20] Galewski used his authority as *Lagerältester* to pull Rajzman from the arrival line and told him later: "I did not save you to keep you alive, but to sell your life at a higher price. You are now a member of a secret organization that is planning an

[16] Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 119.
[17] Testimony of Kalman Teigman Adolf Eichmann Trial, 1–9, Session 66, Parts 4–7 (Jerusalem District Court 1961).
[18] Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 27; Account of Kalman Teigman in Tomlinson, *Treblinka's Last Witness*; Adolf Eichmann Trial, 1–9 (Jerusalem District Court 1961).
[19] House Committee on Foreign Affairs and Rajzman, "Rajzman Congressional Testimony," 122–124; Rajzman, "The End of Treblinka."
[20] House Committee on Foreign Affairs and Rajzman, "Rajzman Congressional Testimony," 122–124; Rajzman, "The End of Treblinka."

uprising and you must live."[21] Of four survivors who note having been directly saved by him, Rajzman's account is the most demonstrative of Galewski's purposes. Not only did the *Lagerälteste* save his life, he went so far as to tell him exactly why he had done so. Galewski did not merely hope to prolong an acquaintance's life within the hell of Treblinka, he planned to use this man he already knew and trusted in the furtherance of resistance.

In his position as *Lagerältester*, Galewski wielded his influence with the SS to save lives as often as he could. Galewski had the persuasive power to point out a man and tell the SS arrivals overseer that he possessed a skill the camp needed and should therefore be saved. He successfully pulled Samuel Rajzman from the gas chamber line, as described above, by presenting him to the SS as a translator. In the case of Morton Mattel, Galewski used his own personal influence with the SS to save him by telling the guard that Mattel was his brother. A worker who recognized Berek Rojzman as he arrived saved him by asking for Galewski's help in getting him into the workforce.[22] Each one of these men would later take part in the revolt at Treblinka.[23] Galewski's statement to Samuel Rajzman makes it clear that the creation of a trustworthy group of individuals he could call on to resist was likely his reason for saving their lives.

Aside from Galewski, certain entire work groups had the opportunity to save individuals from selection even after Phase Two ended. The Red and Blue Commandos were best located to help save lives during the performance of their duties in the arrival area. The Blue Commando worked at the point of disembarkation, moving people into the camp and then cleaning empty

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[21] House Committee on Foreign Affairs and Rajzman, "Rajzman Congressional Testimony," 122–124; Rajzman, "The End of Treblinka."
[22] Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 186.
[23] Rajzman, "The End of Treblinka"; Sereny, *Into That Darkness*; Morton Mattel, RG-50.347.0001, JTHOHA, USHMM, July 29, 1981.

trains before their departure, as described above. The Red Commando was their counterpart on the inside of the fence at the arrival square. The Reds gave men orders to go to the right to undress outdoors and sent women to undress inside the left barracks. Whereas the SS had selected as many as 200 men to move the clothing of those who were gassed to the sorting area in the earlier phases, by Phase Three this was also the job of the Red Commando.[24]

Red Commando member Alfred Boehm saved Samuel Willenberg from selection when he arrived at Treblinka. Boehm was a young man Willenberg knew and befriended in his school days in prewar Czestochowa. Willenberg was born and raised in Czestochowa, while Boehm was born in Germany and moved to Poland with his family as Nazi discrimination escalated in the 1930s.[25] Willenberg defended the younger Boehm against the antisemitic attacks of local Poles in his neighborhood, and Boehm repaid the favor by saving his life at Treblinka. As Willenberg undressed he got Boehm's attention, Boehm confirmed his old friend's identity and instructed him to tell the German guard he was a builder.[26] With construction an almost ever-present feature of Treblinka life, this was a skill the SS were always on the lookout for as transports arrived. Willenberg had no experience as a builder, but the ruse worked all the same. *Lagerältester* Galewski assigned him to the sorting detail at first, and would later move him to where he could be of the greatest use to plans for revolt. Willenberg's young acquaintance was also Galewski's "servant" and this relationship facilitated Boehm's ability to introduce the two men and convince Galewski of Willenberg's trustworthiness.[27] Through Boehm's actions, motivated by a pre-war personal connection, Willenberg survived his arrival, met a key conspirator, and later became an indispensable member of the resistance organization.

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[24] Account of SS guard Franz Suchomel in Lanzmann, *Shoah* (1995), 98.
[25] Tomlinson, *Treblinka's Last Witness*; Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 20.
[26] Tomlinson, *Treblinka's Last Witness*.
[27] Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 28.

Lifesaving actions by Galewski and others with access to the arrivals area as part of their work assignments succeeded in bringing motivated and trustworthy coconspirators into the Treblinka slave labor force. Though the SS arbitrarily selected many as replacements for the people they murdered, those brought into the camp by fellow prisoners had an outsized impact on future events and a disproportionate representation among the pivotal participants in revolt.

Willenberg recounts being told after his arrival in the camp that the reason so many individuals from Czestochowa were there was the result of mass killings of prisoners in the early phases as well as by fate. The SS selected 200 men from his home city because they arrived the day after the mass execution of an equal number of prisoners.[28] In this terrible example, the SS created the original population of Czestochowa Jews who went on to select individuals they knew from arriving transports as often as they could. Willenberg himself arrived later on a transport from Opatow, but still survived as the result of a relationship forged in Czestochowa. The same effect is visible in the camp population of individuals from Warsaw. Treblinka received thousands of people from the ghettos located in these two cities.

As these populations arrived at the camp, the Jews of both cities gained beachheads, of sorts, inside the camp that later expanded and sustained themselves by saving others. In the end, a combination of SS actions, the cold reality of Polish rail geography dictating which Jewish population centers would be sent to Treblinka, and—not previously given adequate credit—the actions of Jewish inmates, created tightknit prisoner communities originating from Czestochowa and Warsaw.[29] These inmates endured alongside a small but significant Czech population and a

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[28] It is possible that this is the same incident that took the lives of 200 workers as mentioned by Weinstein above, however, solid dating evidence to confirm this has not emerged.

[29] See Figure 10 (Note: Treblinka's location is marked as "Malkinia"), from: "Poland's Main Line Railways Prior to World War II," Railway Chart, Railway Wonders of the World (Railway Wonders of the World, Courtesy Polish State Railways, June 14, 1935), http://www.railwaywondersoftheworld.com/wpimages/wp3ec12f35_05_06.jpg; "Poland's Main Lines: A New Country Creates an Important Railway System," *Railway Wonders of the World*, June 14, 1935; see also "German Railways and the Holocaust," *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, accessed

handful of individuals from other Polish cities. The Nazi SS murdered Jews from at least eleven European states at Treblinka. There is no evidence yet found to suggest that a significant number of Jews from outside of Poland or Czechoslovakia ever survived long inside.

Work Detail Networks

For resistance to grow into full-scale revolt, the inclusion of work details with greater access to places and spaces of importance throughout the camp was a necessity. Different areas of access to geography within the camp came with the duties of each work detail at Treblinka. Prisoners risked death for being outside the spaces that their dictated routines required. The Reds and Blues had access to the areas where new arrivals disembarked and disrobed before making their way up the *Himmelweg* to the gas chambers. This access is the reason these work groups and Galewski—with nearly unlimited access to Camp 1 geography as *Lagerältester*—had the only chance to save new arrivals, though the presence of coconspirators in only these areas was insufficient to plan a rebellion. A revolt would require the involvement of each and every work group in order to gain geographic access to all of the resources and areas any logical plan could not proceed without. Work assignments sometimes tightly coincided with an individual's place of origin, but this was not always the case. Owing to the fact that both origins and work assignments held equal sway over prisoner social networks, conspirators needed a grasp of both in order to plan their revolt.

January 30, 2016, http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005445; "European Rail System, 1939," *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, accessed January 30, 2016, http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/media_nm.php?MediaId=349.

In testimony read into the US Congressional Record in 1945, survivor Samuel Rajzman offered a breakdown of Treblinka slave labor details. His recollections of these groups are mostly correct yet incomplete.

> Group I: Classifying the new arrivals, carrying clothes and baggage to the storerooms.
> Group II: Sorting stolen clothes and loading them on cars going to Germany.
> Group III: Sorting, packing, and counting money, foreign exchange, gold, and valuables.
> Group IV: Crafts, such as shoemakers, tailors, carpenters, masons, locksmiths, etc., and who worked in the shops.
> Group V: Barbers.
> Group VI: Dentists.
> Group VII: Porters who carry corpses to the oven.[30]

According to Rajzman, "Groups I to V were strictly separated from groups VI and VII."[31] Groups I to V worked in Camp 1, while VI and VII were those who toiled in the Death Camp, or Camp 2. Rajzman underscores the separation of Treblinka's two sides, stating, "Even the slightest communication with them was made very difficult in order to prevent the crews that did not work directly in the [gas chambers] from learning how the mass murder was being carried out."[32]

Rajzman's much-simplified list of work details is supported and expanded upon by other survivors. His Groups I and II consist of the Red and Blue Commandos already introduced above. Survivors and guards alike almost always refer to Group III as the *Goldjuden*, or Gold Jews. SS guard Franz Suchomel was in charge of the *Goldjuden* during most of the time Treblinka operated. He was a Sudeten, or Czech-born German *Volksdeutscher*, who spoke Czech in addition to German and deliberately staffed this detail with Czech Jews who arrived at

[30] See Figure 11 and House Committee on Foreign Affairs and Rajzman, "Rajchman Congressional Testimony," 123.
[31] House Committee on Foreign Affairs and Rajzman, "Rajchman Congressional Testimony," 123.
[32] House Committee on Foreign Affairs and Rajzman, "Rajchman Congressional Testimony," 123.

Treblinka in substantial numbers from October of 1942.[33] Survivor Richard Glazar was one of these Czech arrivals, but he was not a *Goldjude* inside the camp. Given their ready access to money and valuables, and their ability to traverse much of Camp 1, the *Goldjuden* were important to plans for revolt. Any attempt to bribe Ukrainian guards or buy subsistence supplies from local Poles required their assistance for provision of currency or precious metals collected from the belongings of the murdered.[34]

Likewise, the *Tarnungskommando*, or Camouflage Commando, was crucial to planning for its ability to exit the camp during its work cutting branches in the nearby woods for maintenance of the fence. The men of the *Tarnungskommando*—the group with the most diverse assortment of individual origins of any important work detail—routinely took advantage of lax German supervision and easily bribed Ukrainian guards in order to trade with local Poles for food while they were outside the wire. This group, though not mentioned in Rajzman's description of work details, offered Treblinka's inmates an outside supplement to their meager rations that they shared at the most difficult moments of the camp's existence.[35] *Tarnungskommando* sharing might well be partially explicable by the group's diversity. Members of the *Tarnungskommando* shared what they "organized" or gained through "speculation," as prisoners called trade in illicit food and goods, with their bunkmates.[36] They, as others, bunked near individuals from their hometowns and thus shared out their goods with

[33] Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 37–38.
[34] Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 37–38; Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 96, 97–98; Abraham Kolski, RG-50.030.0113, JTHOHA, USHMM, March 29, 1990.
[35] Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 127–136; Willenberg, "I Survived Treblinka," 206–207; Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 98, 122–123; Abraham Kolski, RG-50.030.0113, JTHOHA, USHMM, March 29, 1990; Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 220, 236.
[36] Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 61, 129; Willenberg, "I Survived Treblinka," 192–193.

these friends.[37] Since the *Tarnungskommando* had such diversity in origin, members ended up sharing their gains across Treblinka's origin network divides.

Testimonies often refer to Rajzman's Group IV as the *Hofjuden*, or Court Jews. Just as in the case of the *Goldjuden*, the *Hofjuden* were important to revolt planning because of their possession of privileges and access to locations other groups simply could not attain. *Hofjuden* work assignments as builders, maintenance workers, and technical specialists made their presence in most of Camp 1 above suspicion from the guards. This group also had a stability of tenure from the earliest days of the camp owed to their necessity as technical specialists that was a luxury unheard of for the clothing sorters and arrival area workers in the other groups.[38]

The *Hofjuden* first consisted of those earliest arrivals forced to build the original camp structures in preparation for the beginning of gassing operations on July 23, 1942.[39] Commensurately, not only did they have the most freedom of movement within the camp

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[37] Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 61, 129; Willenberg, "I Survived Treblinka," 192–193.

[38] For descriptions of *Hofjuden* work assignments and access to geography, see *United States v. Fedorenko*, 597 F. 2d 946, testimony of Eugen Turowski (Court of Appeals, 5th Circuit 1979); Strawczynski, "Ten Months in Treblinka"; William Schneiderman, (aka Wolf, Velvl, Velvel, and several other spellings of his last name in various sources), RG-50.030.0288, JTHOHA, USHMM, September 21, 1994; Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*; Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*.

[39] In his book *Extermination Camp Treblinka* Witold Chrostowski states that none of the original local-born *Hofjuden* survived Treblinka. However, sources discovered in my research show that at least two did. William Schneiderman was from the nearby village of Stoczek-Lukowski and was transported to Treblinka by truck before the first trains arrived. He participated in the building of the camp and survived its entire tenure as a *Hofjude*. Samuel Goldberg, a close friend of Schneiderman, was also from a nearby community and survived Treblinka from its earliest days. For their stories, Chrostowski's analysis of this group and other supporting information on this camp population, see Chrostowski, *Extermination Camp Treblinka*; Schneiderman, William Schneiderman, RG-50.030.0288, JTHOHA, USHMM, September 21, 1994; Strawczynski, "Ten Months in Treblinka"; Kohn, "The Treblinka Revolt," 227; Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 142; testimony of Kalman Teigman Adolf Eichmann Trial, 1–9 (Jerusalem District Court 1961); Sam Goldberg, Interview 30760, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, July 13, 1997; Sam Goldberg, Family interview with his son, Dr. Shlomo Goldberg, 1991, in possession of the author courtesy of Karen Treiger, daughter-in-law of Sam Goldberg, see also Karen I. Treiger, *My Soul Is Filled with Joy: A Holocaust Story*, 1st ed. (Seattle, WA: Stare Lipki Press, 2018); Shmuel "Samuel" Goldberg, "Between Stok and Treblinka [*Tsvishn stok un treblinke*]," in *The Chronicle of Stok (Near Wengrow): An Eternal Memorial* [*Pinkes stok (bay vengrow): matseyve netsekh*], ed. Y. Tsudiker (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Organization of Stokers in Israel; Stok Community Group "Society" of North America; Stok Community Group of Argentina; Stoker Group of Canada, 1974), 429–34; Y. Tsudiker, *The Chronicle of Stok (Near Wengrow): An Eternal Memorial* [*Pinkes Stok (Bay Vengrow): Matseyve Netsekh*] (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Organization of Stokers in Israel; Stok Community Group "Society" of North America; Stok Community Group of Argentina; Stoker Group of Canada, 1974).

because of their duties as specialists, they also possessed the most institutional knowledge of camp operations due to their geographic access and low rate of turnover. Any group or individual plotting resistance was aware that inclusion of the *Hofjuden* would greatly improve the chances of successful resistance. With the outset of Phase Three and colocation of all Camp 1 workers in the single ghetto barracks building, the *Hofjuden* came into effective and continuous contact with other groups. Not only did the new barracks allow for communication between groups, it also must have fostered a feeling of common destiny among prisoners regardless of assignment or privileged status of any kind.

Oskar Strawczynski, himself a *Hofjude*, and Glazar agree that prior to this move the more privileged prisoners were not interested in ideas of resistance or revolt.[40] Strawczynski believed they saw themselves as distinct from the common prisoner workforce even "thinking Treblinka was somehow theirs," and that they reckoned their survival was made more likely in obeying SS rules and laying low.[41] The move to the ghetto barracks erased both a geographical and a psychological division between the *Hofjuden* and others. Isolation from the larger workforce gave the *Hofjuden* a feeling of distinction and separation from the common fate, while co-housing in a single barracks removed this mental barrier. Glazar mentions that the terms *Hofjuden* and the more openly derisive "better guests," again in reference to more privileged prisoners, lost favor as did even the wearing of the yellow triangle pinned on their clothing or armbands that had marked their status in earlier months.[42] From the moment the single ghetto barracks was open, *Hofjuden* begin to appear on survivors' lists of plotters and individuals important to resistance. Not only did they become involved in revolt planning, but their

[40] Strawczynski, "Ten Months in Treblinka," 141–142; Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 25–26; see also Richard Glazer, RG-0.234.0014, JTHOHA, USHMM. October 26, 1981.
[41] Strawczynski, "Ten Months in Treblinka," 142.
[42] Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 55.

locations of access also come into the revolt network. Plotters held meetings in the workshops where the *Hofjuden* toiled, and plans immediately changed to include several of their number in the uprising.[43]

The access to camp geography possessed by the *Hofjuden* was importantly strengthened by women prisoners among this group. In a 1961 interview, survivor Bronka Sukno told German prosecutors that she had complete freedom of movement in Camp 1 as a worker in the tailor's shop.[44] This location inside the ghetto barracks also functioned as a meeting place for prisoner conspirators as described by Moyshe Klaynman.[45] Since she was able to sit in on or overhear these meetings and move about the camp in the performance of her duties, Sukno and other women in similar work assignments were strongly positioned to aid in resistance. Despite this, Rajzman did not mention women in his description of work details and the camp population. As I will discuss in chapter six, Rajzman is far from alone in his omission of women from his recollections.

Samuel Goldberg, the laundry supervisor mentioned in the previous chapter, led a detail of 24-33 women employed in the Camp 1 laundries.[46] Sonia Lewkowicz was a member of these laundry details and a revolt survivor. Her testimony and that of Goldberg indicate that the laundry details—the largest group of women in Camp 1—had less regular access to space as

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[43] William Schneiderman, RG-50.030.0288, JTHOHA, USHMM, September 21, 1994; Willenberg, "I Survived Treblinka," 199, 206; Testimony of Kalman Teigman Adolf Eichmann Trial, 1–9 (Jerusalem District Court 1961); Strawczynski, "Ten Months in Treblinka," 178; Moyshe Klaynman, Unpublished memoir of Moyshe Klaynman, written between 1944-1947, in M.49, File 118, Item 3547904, Yad Vashem Archive [hereafter YVA].

[44] Statement of Bronka Sukno, June 14, 1961, in B162, F 3825, Bundesarchiv Ludwigsburg [hereafter BL], p.1875; former Treblinka commandant Franz Stangl also told Gitta Sereny that Jewish women were allowed in the SS barracks to clean it, see: Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 166.

[45] Unpublished memoir of Moyshe Klaynman, written between 1944-1947, in M.49, File 118, Item 3547904, YVA, p. 60

[46] Sam Goldberg, Interview 30760, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, July 13, 1997; Sam Goldberg, Family interview with his son, Dr. Shlomo Goldberg, 1991, In possession of the author courtesy of family member Karen Treiger; Karen I. Treiger, *My Soul Is Filled with Joy: A Holocaust Story*, 1st ed. (Seattle, WA: Stare Lipki Press, 2018).

compared to that of Sukno and other tailors.[47] This did not mean, however, that they were unable to contribute to resistance. The need to return washed uniforms and personal items meant that women on the laundry details could move between the ghetto barracks that held the laundries and the SS and Ukrainian living areas. This ability gave these women the chance to observe guard routines and, of particular importance, pick up information on their plans to go home on leave.

There were likely around 40 women in Camp 1 at most. In addition to the larger laundry detail and the handful of specialists in the tailor's shop, women also worked in the kitchens in this area of Treblinka.[48] As these roles indicate, the work assignments held by women in Treblinka were of a traditionally gendered nature. Women worked in stereotypically feminine occupations, never being assigned to the various male-coded trades like Strawczynski's tinsmith's shop or even the unskilled sorting details. The jobs women held at Treblinka and the access to space these gave them underscore Tim Cole's statement that "Holocaust landscapes were gendered landscapes."[49] At Treblinka, as elsewhere, that meant consciously designed places of women's presence and of women's absence; however, later sections will demonstrate the ways in which these gender norms created opportunities for resistance.

Regardless of their work detail, women slept in the same ghetto barracks as the men, though in a separate bunking area close to the workshops.[50] A group of roughly 13 women also worked in kitchen and laundry facilities of Camp 2 from at least February 1943 onward.[51]

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[47] Statement of Sonia Lewkowicz, November 8, 1959, in B162, F 3818, BL; Statement of Sonia Lewkowicz, June 23, 1960, in B162, F 3824, BL; Sam Goldberg, Interview 30760, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, July 13, 1997.
[48] Jonas Kornhendler, Interview 30369, Tape 1 of 4, 20:00-26:00 and Tape 2 of 4, 00:15-13:30 and PIQ Report, pps. 3,5,7, and 14, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, June 30, 1997.
[49] Cole, *Holocaust Landscapes*, 6.
[50] See Figure 5, Key number 23g, "Jewish women's quarters."
[51] Statement of Elias Rosenberg, December 24, 1947, in O.3, File 4548, Item 3558557, YVA, p. 11; Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 116.

Bronka Sukno and Sonia Lewkowicz were both eventually transferred to this section of the camp before the revolt.[52] (I return to a discussion of women in Camp 2 in the next chapter.) It seems that transfer to Camp 2—though it was meant to be punishment according to Lewkowicz—had much to do with their ability to make it out alive. There are no known survivors among the women held in Camp 1 on August 2, 1943.

Both men and women socialized and shared information according to their work assignment during the day and afterhours and by where they were located in the barracks at night. While colocation of all prisoners in a single barracks complex meant that prisoners could choose to communicate across work-detail lines in their off hours, neighborly inmate bunking area bonds remained cliquish according to pre-Treblinka life. Glazar recalls that when the new barracks opened and prisoners were allotted a lunch hour at this location, they generally chose to spend this time according to their home origin groups as well.[53] Czechs had their own area of the barracks and took lunch around their own just as did Czestochowa and Warsaw prisoners. *Hofjuden*, because they were first drawn from local villages in small numbers and then expanded with later arrivals, lacked tightknit origin networks by Phase Three, but they were likely able to replace this support structure with long-term work and personal relationships made possible by their stable tenure within the camp.

Prisoner work detail assignments and individual origins sometimes coincided, as was the case for the Reds and the Blues, however, this was not always the case. Prisoners from Czestochowa, for example, sometimes worked together, though some individuals important to the conspiracy worked separately or with groups pulled from other home origins. Warsaw

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[52] Statement of Sonia Lewkowicz, November 8, 1959, in B162, F 3818, BL; Statement of Sonia Lewkowicz, June 23, 1960, in B162, F 3824, BL, p. 179; Statement of Bronka Sukno, June 14, 1961, in B162, F 3825, BL, p.1877.
[53] Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 22, 139.

Ghetto deportees, by far the single largest origin network, appeared in almost every work detail in varying numbers. There were enough individuals from Warsaw for this origin group to possess internal divisions along former socioeconomic lines and persisting language barriers. The Reds, multiple survivors recall, came from the "Warsaw underworld," or—more generously—the lower levels of the city and ghetto's economic strata.[54]

The Blue Commando was, alternatively, drawn from people of a starkly different background. Survivors describe this group as relatively better-off young men who had spent their lives in religious study and dressed according to Orthodox or Hassidic standards prior to their arrival. Survivors recall the demeanor of the Blue Commando as "pleasant," or almost genteel in comparison to the rough and tumble Red Commando.[55] The notable Camp 1 Czech population, though only ever roughly twenty strong, was also divided across the *Tarnungskommando,* the *Goldjuden*, and various sorting details at one time or another. Thus, in effect, a conspiracy needed to include both work detail networks and home origin relationships to offer the strongest bonds, communication ability across language and social barriers, and chances for success in the final outcome of armed resistance.

Planning the final step toward successful rebellion would require leadership capable of bridging the gaps between work detail and hometown relationships in order to create a unified plan of action that had complete access to geography. This sort of planning, however, could hardly occur under threat from within. Given the importance of individual relationships developed across work and origin networks, prisoners took drastic, violent, and sometimes lethal action to defend them. As ever, prisoners took these actions in consultation with others and in

[54] Strawczynski, "Ten Months in Treblinka," 130–132.
[55] Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 54; Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 166–167.

keeping with the spirit of mutual dependence that anchored the community of prisoners at Treblinka.

Preserving the Networks – Violence Between Prisoners

Prisoners at Treblinka so profoundly relied upon the networks and relationships they created and maintained inside the camp that they took serious and sometimes violent actions to defend them. The greatest danger to prisoner life at the camp was of course the German SS, though certain fellow inmates also posed a threat. While exploitative and brutal kapos posed possibly an immediate and ever-present peril to prisoners of the large population concentration camps that possessed a true labor function, this was not the foremost concern inside Treblinka. A sense of shared fate among the monolithically Jewish camp population—especially after they were cohoused in a single barracks—meant that the German SS did not gain much success in use of their preferred divide-and-rule tactics. Individual reactions to the pressures of life inside Treblinka varied greatly. Prisoners fearing for their own lives might turn to informing on the resistance plans of others as a last resort, or even as a more prolonged strategy of singular survival. The exact motives of individuals who did choose to speak to the guards are unknown. Even if they had survived, these people would be unlikely to recount such an act in a personal written account or interview. The inherent desperation of their situation, however, renders an understanding of their psychological state and decision-making in extremis possible—if not entirely sympathetic.

In this section, I underscore the need to remove kapos and other prisoner leaders at Treblinka from the now-stereotypical view of concentration camp prisoner functionaries. Leaders of Treblinka's slave labor force were not, for the most part, the enemies of their fellow

inmates, or "no less cruel than the Germans or Ukrainians," as Witold Chrostowski portrays them in his work.[56] With prisoner leaders actually involved in resistance as they were at Treblinka, informants took on the role of the most feared danger from within. Survivor testimonies make mention of informants quite frequently, even if they personally had little or nothing to do with addressing the issue. Primary witness statements by survivors who participated in the process of dealing with internal threats to the security of prisoner networks exist in some quantity and a surprising level of openness. Statements by former SS guards also occasionally speak of the dangers that informants posed for prisoners and what they knew of how inmates dealt with these threats.

The issue of ethically questionable, aggressive, or even brutal acts between victims of the Holocaust remains a particularly emotional and difficult aspect of this history. Some historians shy away from, or even omit instances of prisoner-to-prisoner violence inside the camps and ghettos of Nazi-controlled Europe. Christopher R. Browning, however, reminds us not to render the oppressed as two-dimensional characters so sanitized that we discard any mention of their less-heroic or even morally objectionable responses to persecution. For Browning, "One of the saddest 'lessons' of the Holocaust is confirmation that terrible persecution does not ennoble victims."[57] He goes on to conclude that, "We must be grateful for the testimonies of those who survived and are willing to speak, but we have no right to expect from them tales of edification and redemption."[58] Though he leaves room for the bedevilingly rare perfectly virtuous hero or heroine at the end of his *Collected Memories*, Browning also takes pains to represent the reality

[56] Chrostowski, *Extermination Camp Treblinka*, 46.
[57] Christopher R. Browning, *Collected Memories: Holocaust History and Postwar Testimony*, George L. Mosse Series in Modern European Cultural and Intellectual History (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), 85.
[58] Browning, *Collected Memories*, 85.

of victims' options and the sometimes-uncomfortable outcomes of what Lawrence Langer famously called their "choiceless choices."[59]

Browning's comments come at the end of a section dealing with the killings of prominent camp prisoners by fellow Jews. His study of the Starachowice factory slave labor camps revealed several testimonies describing the revenge killings of nineteen former camp leaders and their associates by fellow prisoners aboard trains on the way to Birkenau. These killings might raise the moral hackles of the modern reader precisely because fellow Jews were the killers and, what might seem even worse, these events occurred when the Starachowice camps had closed, and all of the prisoners were on their way to the same uncertain fate.[60] Had these functionaries of the German slave labor system met their end inside the factory camps it might be easier to reconcile their deaths as a form of justifiable, defensive homicide. Coming as they did on the train to Birkenau, however, we can hardly call these killings anything other than acts of revenge. The Treblinka testimonial record reveals both instances of retribution like those carried out by the one-time inmates of the Starachowice factory camps, and episodes of the preemptive silencing of informants.

Starachowice prisoners are not alone in their recollections of violence directed against privileged, prominent, or leading inmates. Stories of the brutality of kapos are now part of the common memory of the Holocaust, though Treblinka lies outside of this now archetypal view of German-appointed prisoner leaders. In a video testimony recorded by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Survivor Isadore Helfing stated, "We didn't have bad kapos there

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[59] Lawrence L. Langer, *Versions of Survival: The Holocaust and the Human Spirit*, SUNY Series in Modern Jewish Literature and Culture (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1982).
[60] Browning, *Collected Memories*, 78–84; for more information on the Starachowice camps and the killing of prisoner functionaries, see Christopher R. Browning, *Remembering Survival: Inside a Nazi Slave-Labor Camp* (New York, NY: Norton, 2011); Christopher R. Browning, *Nazi Policy, Jewish Workers, German Killers* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

in Treblinka."[61] In opposition to Helfing's memories, however, Witold Chrostowski categorizes all kapos at Treblinka as in some way the willing lackeys of the SS guards in his book *Extermination Camp Treblinka*. Chrostowski's characterization of kapos as individuals who showed "their dedication to the new 'masters' by treating subordinate prisoners in a totally inhumane way" and were thus "hated and despised" with few exceptions is in almost complete opposition to the bulk of the testimonial record.[62] Chrostowski's assertions would be far more at home in the world of the standard concentration camps analyzed in the works of Herman Langbein and in Nikolaus Wachsmann's *KL: A History of the Nazi Concentration Camps*.[63]

Many of Treblinka's kapos, *Vorarbeiter* (foremen), and its *Lagerältester* actually occupied prominent roles on the revolt Organizing Committee. The systems of divide and control described by Langbein and Wachsmann, for the most part, could not and did not exist at Treblinka. The singular purpose of an extermination camp built to destroy European Jewry left few status-based prisoner divisions for the German SS to exploit. Langbein and Wachsmann agree that very few Jews received prominent positions in the concentration camps unless there were no political or German criminal prisoners to appoint instead. At Treblinka, the population was entirely Jewish. Though some testimonies speak of the arrival of as many as three transport columns of Roma and Sinti victims, all agree that none of these unfortunate people ever survived their arrival by gaining work inside the camp.[64] This meant that aside from ethno-national

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[61] Isadore Helfing, RG-50.005.0024, JTHOHA, USHMM, December 3, 1983; Isadore Helfing, RG-50.042.0014, JTHOHA, USHMM, March 9, 1992.
[62] Quotes from Chrostowski, *Extermination Camp Treblinka*, 46; survivor Joseph Siedlecki's statements to author Gitta Sereny for the only example of a prisoner who cast all kapos as the willing stooges of the SS for this research. Siedlecki's uniquely disconnected position inside Treblinka is expanded upon later in this research. Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 17, 187–190.
[63] Langbein, *Against All Hope: Resistance in the Nazi Concentration Camps, 1938-1945*; Wachsmann, *KL*.
[64] Wiernik, *A Year in Treblinka*, location 696; *United States v. Fedorenko*, 597 F. 2d 946, Vol. 3, p. 388 (Court of Appeals, 5th Circuit 1979).

divisions between Czech Jews and Polish Jews, Treblinka's prisoner population was, for all intents and purposes, a largely homogenous group.

With no German criminals or politicals to place in desirable positions, the SS appointed what they saw as workable Jewish leadership. Again, in agreement with the systems described by Langbein and Wachsmann, the SS found the most success with the appointment of German or Austrian Jews. Survivor testimonies that make mention of the Viennese *Oberkapo* (and later kitchen kapo) Karl Blau do so with the unanimous insistence that he was an informant and a willing accomplice of the Germans.[65] Barrack supervisor Kuba is also mentioned as an informant, but in opposition to Chrostowski's conclusions, these are the exceptions that prove the rule, not the rule itself.[66] In point of fact, the revolt would have been impossible without the assistance and leadership of most of the kapos and especially the *Lagerälteste*.[67] When the rare testimony speaks ill of leaders other than Blau or Kuba, they are not showing a unique understanding of the truth, but rather a unique misunderstanding of the real motives shared by the majority of Treblinka's prisoner leaders.

The kapos and other leaders of Treblinka had to make the Germans feel at ease with the trust placed in them in order to keep their positions. This sometimes meant appearing to beat a prisoner when a member of the guard observed an infraction or acting outwardly cruel in some other fashion.[68] All but a few prisoners, however, speak of knowing the reality of this ruse even

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[65] Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 141; Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 208–209; Chris Webb and Michal Chocholatý, *The Treblinka Death Camp: History, Biographies, Remembrance*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: Ibidem Verlag, 2021), 265-266.

[66] Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 208–209, see also Richard Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence: Survival in Treblinka*, Jewish Lives (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1995); Richard Glazer, RG-50.234.0014, JTHOHA, USHMM, October 26, 1981.

[67] Survivor Tanhum Grinberg even states that all kapos had a pistol on the day of the revolt. The assertion that all kapos were combatants might be supported by the fact that none of them survived the revolt. See Tanhum Grinberg, "The Revolt in Treblinka," in *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (New York, NY: Waldon Press, 1979), 214–23.

[68] *United States v. Fedorenko*, 597 F. 2d 946, Vol. 3, p. 294 (Court of Appeals, 5th Circuit 1979).

at the time. The rare inmate who believes, as Chrostowski does, that the prisoner leaders at Treblinka were in league with their German and Ukrainian tormentors is more likely to be an individual poorly connected to revolt planning, or even a person personally under suspicion of being an informant.

Survivor Joseph Siedlecki provides one of the only statements of a primary witness insisting all prisoner leaders were in league with camp guards. Siedlecki, however, not only admits he had no involvement in resistance, other survivor sources state that he was himself a kapo.[69] While the uniquely disconnected—and by some accounts, distrusted, and disliked—Siedlecki is the only survivor to paint all of Treblinka's prisoner leaders with the same unflattering brush, a few others make pointed accusations against individual leaders credited as part of the resistance organization by the majority.[70] As pointed out previously, however, the cellular structure of the revolt planning organization meant that no one prisoner was supposed to be aware of the identities of all the planners. One result of this form of secrecy is that any

[69] Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 188, 190, 244.

[70] In a USC Shoah Foundation interview, Samuel Goldberg recounts meeting a former Treblinka kapo at Grossinger's resort in upstate New York. For his part, Herschl Sperling recounted meeting Joseph Siedlecki at Grossinger's, though Sperling did not call him a former kapo. Siedlecki was interviewed for Gitta Sereny's book, though he does not speak about what his role was in the camp in these passages. Karen Teiger points out that it is unlikely two different Treblinka survivors could have worked at Grossinger's at the same time, so Siedlecki would have to be the former kapo for all of these survivor accounts to be correct. While sources differ on Siedlecki's role in the camp, it is clear that he was not well-connected or well-regarded. Goldberg stated that he "lived with ten girls" in his interview, not fully expanding upon what this statement was supposed to convey. It is obvious, however, that Goldberg sought to portray Siedlecki as exploitative at the least—possibly far worse. Siedlecki's own statement that he kept to himself—whether intended as an evasion of his actual past or not—is in keeping with a prisoner not brought into resistance planning. Karen I. Treiger, "A Kapo at Grossinger's," *So You Want To Write A Holocaust Book?* (blog), February 8, 2016, https://soyouwanttowriteaholocaustbook.wordpress.com/2016/02/08/a-kapo-at-grossingers/; Karen I. Treiger, *My Soul Is Filled with Joy: A Holocaust Story*, 1st edition (Seattle, WA: Stare Lipki Press, 2018); Karen I. Treiger, "The Kapo at Grossinger's – Revisited," *So You Want To Write A Holocaust Book?* (blog), December 29, 2016, https://soyouwanttowriteaholocaustbook.wordpress.com/2016/12/29/the-kapo-at-grossingers-revisited/; Sam Goldberg, Interview 30760, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation. July 13, 1997, transcript pp. 41-42; Sam Goldberg, Family interview with his son, Dr. Shlomo Goldberg, 1991, In possession of the author courtesy of Karen Treiger; Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 188, 190, and 244; Mark S. Smith, *Treblinka Survivor: The Life and Death of Hershl Sperling* (Stroud, Gloucestershire, UK: The History Press, 2010), 144.

survivor who believes a certain leader was a willing German stooge might simply have been outside of that leader's planning cell.

The purpose of the cellular organization employed by Treblinka prisoner resistance planners was to counter the very real threat of inmates divulging information under torture or in exchange for some form of compensation. Former prisoners are not the only sources on the dangers posed by individuals within their own ranks. SS guard Franz Suchomel, convicted for his actions at Treblinka in the 1964-1965 Düsseldorf trial, later told author Gitta Sereny that, "There were Jewish informers, employed by [Fritz, nicknamed "Kiewe"] Küttner, and Jews died because of them—that is true."[71] Suchomel even went on to tell of specific informers that met their ends at the hands of Jews. He told Sereny that he knew

> The notorious 'Koppowa [female kapo] Paulinka gave away at least six Jews to Küttner. After the revolt she was found, with her head shattered, on the path where she had tried to escape to [Camp 2]. And they dealt with one other informer too.[72]

Even as he recounted stories of prisoner-to-prisoner killings, however, Suchomel retained a degree of reverence for inmate actions. He said, "I know that [Christian] Wirth sometimes boasted that he even got Jews to kill each other."[73] That was not, however, what went on in Treblinka in his eyes. This former SS guard took pains to explain how prisoners would only kill informants. His insistence on this fact to Sereny drew a line between what he remembered and the bragging of his one-time SS superior.

The killing of other accused informants occurred well before the possible acts of revenge against Paulinka and the unnamed second individual on the day of the revolt. If Suchomel's

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[71] Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 247; per Glazar, Küttner was a prison guard in prewar life, and was therefore the best at discovering infractions and conspiracies among the prisoners. See Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 47.
[72] Franz Suchomel quoted in Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 247.
[73] Franz Suchomel quoted in Sereny, 247.

recollections are to be trusted, their deaths share the most in common with Browning's exploration of retribution on the part of Jews leaving the Starachowice camps. As such, these two killings stand at one end of a spectrum of deadly prisoner defensive acts for which the demise of a man named Kronenberg represents the other.[74] Samuel Willenberg recounts how, at the behest of *Lagerältester* Galewski, he acted to speed the death of the ill and endangered Kronenberg before he could reveal the plans of Treblinka's Organizing Committee. Kronenberg, a one-time Lvov journalist, was an early resistance participant who was highly regarded and trusted by Galewski and others. As such, he was privy to planning for the coming rebellion and the identities of several prisoners preparing to take part.[75]

Kronenberg fell ill in the spring 1943 typhus epidemic that ravaged the prisoner workforce and, as was common SS practice in regard to prisoners no longer able to work, "Kiewe" Küttner selected him for execution at the *Lazarett*. In his weakened state, Kronenberg began to offer details of the revolt conspiracy in exchange for his life as he was dragged away. Fearing Küttner would believe his confession and that it would lead to the deaths of other prisoners, Willenberg and Kapo Kurland of the *Lazarett* detail acted to speed his death by hastening the Ukrainian shooter and forcing Kronenberg quickly into position over the mass grave. Because of the language barrier, the Ukrainian guard did not understand what Kronenberg was offering in exchange for his life, and shot before Küttner could learn more.[76]

Kronenberg's death, hastened by his erstwhile colleagues in resistance, but actually carried out by German and Ukrainian perpetrators, stands at the least-culpable edge of acts prisoners took against informants. Not only did his fellow prisoners not personally end his life

[74] Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 85–87.
[75] Willenberg, 85.
[76] Willenberg, 87.

or set it in motion, Kronenberg himself would not have been in such a position were it not for the typhus infection that had weakened him. In opposition to Kronenberg's example, prisoners took a decisively active role in the demise of others that more willingly chose to aid their oppressors. These acts occupy a morally murky middle ground that inmate testimony tries hard to explain in context and reinforce with justification, a form of camp due process, and a rationale of the need for security amidst the extreme dangers of Treblinka.

Testimonies reveal that prisoners used the SS themselves to remove informants and what they saw as unreliable fellow inmates from their ranks. Survivor sources describe the killing of informers in language that hints these acts were, to some degree, commonplace. Richard Glazar describes how kapos used German selections for Camp 2 in order to permanently remove questionable prisoners.

> They are looking for people for the death camp. They have to replenish the ranks of those who labor right in death's workshop. As far as I know, they never take people directly from the transports to work in the death camp. Apparently they realize that an apprenticeship in the first part of the camp is the inescapable prerequisite for work with the totally naked death beyond the fence. Those who have just come from life outside are not equipped for it.
>
> "Well, kapo, who are the laziest ones here? Go get them!" Kiewe acts as if the selection were being made by kapos and foremen. They follow him reticently. The kapo hesitates, almost imperceptibly, in front of one man; he looks another over more carefully. Kiewe whips both of them out of the ranks. They are not among the reliable. Of course Kiewe doesn't know that. The kapos and the foremen, however, know only too well. This is how, with SS help, the slaves in this part of Treblinka silently mete out their own stern justice.[77]

Well attuned to the operations of the camp, as full participants in resistance, Treblinka's prisoner leaders used SS actions to full advantage. Küttner intended to sow discord among inmates by making them do the selection. In this event, however, prisoners used his designs for the exact

[77] Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 35–36.

opposite purpose. Not only was prisoner unity not impacted by these selections, they served to strengthen the whole by removing the most suspect individuals.

In addition to making use of SS demands, Treblinka prisoners also engaged in both spontaneous and planned acts of internal violence. Glazar explains how this "stern justice" at times masqueraded as work accidents.

> It does not only happen when selections are made for the death camp. Sometimes, during the chaotic operations out on the sorting site, help doesn't arrive in time. No one can really know how much of an accident it might have been, or how much it might have been the result of one person's revenge, or the revenge of the entire group.[78]

In this passage, Glazar opens the possibility that whole groups of prisoners may have planned retaliatory violence against others.

Samuel Willenberg takes this assertion further, describing withdrawal of mutual support from suspects, prisoner courts, and death sentences for those convicted that bring new meaning to Primo Levi's "Law of the Lager."[79]

> Later, the group decided to execute the traitors, spies and informers among the inmates. The men of the underground achieved significant results in carrying out this task. The executions would be carried out cautiously, secretly and without arousing any suspicion. The frequent cases of suicide among the prisoners helped camouflage the executions. Almost every one of us had a dose of cyanide or some other poison on hand [for ourselves] in case of trouble. Many people in the camp committed suicide by hanging themselves, but then cases of suicide in a state of nervous collapse were common even among people who were free and lived in relatively good conditions. Therefore the underground employed a unique stratagem: they would give the execution of an informer the appearance of a case of suicide, and as a rule the SS men did not realize what had happened. The executions were carried out only after a rigorous investigation of the activities of the traitor or informer. We had to be convinced beyond the shadow of a doubt that the accused was indeed guilty as charged. In many cases the traitor was first warned and given a chance to turn over a new leaf. If the warning did not help, a court was convened and meted out the death sentence. Thanks to the liquidation of such informers, the lives of many prisoners were saved, and a certain solidarity was preserved among the inmate population. I recall the case of

[78] Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 36.
[79] Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*, 172.

> a certain Hermann, a stooge of the Germans who for a long time had been informing the camp authorities of everything that was going on among the inmates. He gathered around him a group of petty informers and talebearers. Either directly or through these individuals he was informed about who owned gold or silver, who was planning to escape, who was engaging in barter or organizing the smuggling of food into the camp. Due to Hermann's informing, many prisoners lost their lives. Among his victims was a Jew from Czestochowa, Dzialoszynski, a very worthwhile person and an excellent comrade.
>
> We had no pity on suspected informers during the famine period, when we would distribute equal shares of the foodstuffs obtained from various sources. We did not help them in their hard labor and paid no attention to them during punishment drills. The traitors were abandoned and isolated. One of our kapos, a man named Rakowski, knew very well that we were liquidating the informers and secretly gave his consent to this. It happened that the doctors in the *Revier* [prisoners' clinic] played a certain part in the liquidation of dangerous characters. If one of the traitors fell ill, camp headquarters were notified of the fact, and he would be ordered killed by a bullet or by an injection of poison.[80]

Willenberg's frank list of internal prisoner violence is compelling in its honesty and deeply telling in its wording. His use of "we" in his discussion of the executions, in addition to the tone of this entire section, suggests that he was personally involved. Fellow survivor Richard Glazar describes Willenberg as "muscle" brought into the conspiracy for his physical strength and mental toughness, so his involvement in the rough business of dealing with informants is indeed in character with his description by others and makes him the best available source to explore these actions.[81]

The fact that prisoners used suicides, discussed in chapter three, to provide cover for their system of justice is a brilliant—even if harsh and unsavory—use of circumstances to advance resistance and protect social networks. In this instance, prisoners not only took advantage of a common facet of the Treblinka experience, it is also possible that they simultaneously provided cover for their change in psychological outlook as resistance planning

[80] Willenberg, "I Survived Treblinka," 196–197. The first brackets in this quote are in the original, the second are mine.
[81] Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 49.

gained momentum. Once Camp 1 inmates were cohoused in a single barracks structure, coinciding with the beginning of Phase Three, the mention of suicides falls from survivor testimonies in these later periods. Even if only mildly attentive, the SS might have noticed this change in their slave labor force. Küttner, the one guard with experience as a jailer in prewar life, might very well have been the first to spot this difference and become suspect of newfound optimism among the oppressed. With prisoners occasionally rooting out an informant and presenting their death as a suicide, however, the Organizing Committee not only concealed these acts of violence against SS collaborators, they also kept Küttner and other guards or distrusted prisoners from gaining a general awareness of a changed prisoner mindset.

Returning to the matter of informants, at one point in his testimony Willenberg states—quite matter-of-fact—that, "thanks to the liquidation of such informers, the lives of many prisoners were saved, and a certain solidarity was preserved among the inmate population."[82] In the end, nothing Willenberg says on this matter is more telling: prisoners killed fellow Jews, but they did so in order to preserve life and protect their plans for revolt. "Solidarity," for Willenberg, is the same force Glazar calls "relationships," and both define what I call social networks here. His use of the word "liquidation" is a tragic instance of the victim adopting the language of the perpetrator, and one that Lawrence Langer ably places in context. "The victim was forced by circumstances not to adopt SS *values*, but to be swept along by the rule of staying alive in the deathcamps [sic] that regularly saw one man's death become another man's means of survival."[83]

Forces beyond the control of any prisoner or group of prisoners created the world in which all had to endure. Their individual reactions to the physical and psychological world

[82] Willenberg, "I Survived Treblinka," 197.
[83] Langer, *Versions of Survival*, 106, italics in the original.

behind the wire varied from person to person. Some chose death by their own hands, some looked for any opportunity to escape, and still others came together to plan a revolt. Individuals who made the "choiceless choice" to inform on fellow Jews in the hope of personal survival created a situation that forced still more choiceless choices by those their actions endangered. It should be no surprise that prisoners felt informants had to be dealt with no matter how distasteful the process. Still, inmate actions were, for the most part, regulated and proportionate. Even the lives taken on the day of the revolt, as recalled by Suchomel, might have been acts of self-defense. What did Paulinka and the other person killed that day know about escape plans? Could they have divulged where prisoners were headed after they fled the camp? This is as plausible a question for us as it was for those who took violent actions to silence them as they fled the camp. What we cannot know about those possibilities and—even more—what we cannot understand of the desperate circumstances in which inmates lived, makes latter-day judgment of their deeds inappropriate.

Resistance Network Place-Making

Social networks defined by work assignments and prisoner origins were the primary tools of resistance coordination. Jewish prisoners defended these networks through the actions described in the previous section while using these same relationships to gain access to space. Treblinka resistance hinged on communication with prisoners possessing access to important spaces throughout the camp and the ability to create and control what I term "places of resistance" as they made preparations for revolt. Building on important recent spatial studies of the Holocaust, this section and the next chapter uncover the importance of resistance place-making at Treblinka. A focus on places of resistance and how prisoners used networks to

redefine the social meaning of spaces at the camp in their favor reveals how Jews managed to gain a level of control over Treblinka geography.

In his 2016 book *Holocaust Landscapes*, Tim Cole describes how Nazi genocide remade the geography of Europe. Cole outlines the ways in which victims and perpetrators dramatically altered the social meanings of both "macro-geographies" and "micro-geographies."[84] In explanation of what this spatial focus can do for our understanding of history, Cole points out that:

> the Holocaust was not simply something that happened at particular times and in particular places. It was also a place-making event that created new places—ghettos and camps—within the European landscape, or reworked more familiar places—such as rivers or roads—into genocidal landscapes.[85]

The Nazi creation of thousands of camps and ghettos is a powerful example of the macro-geography of the Holocaust. The same is true for the entire region of Timothy Snyder's *Bloodlands*.[86] Mass murder indelibly redefined the very meaning of whole swathes of Eastern European territory. For those aware of these histories, the social meanings of what were once the Polish Kresy or the Pale of Settlement can never revert to what they once were—genocide and *Vernichtungskrieg* have irrevocably altered and *emptied* the landscape.

At the micro-geographic scale, the changes wrought by the Holocaust are no less dramatic. We should think of how certain ancient placenames are now imbued with meanings their creators could have never imagined: Auschwitz, Bergen-Belsen, Birkenau, Buchenwald, Dachau, Hartheim, Ponary, and, of course, Treblinka. These places are now metonyms for euthanasia, mass shooting, and annihilation by poison gas. For those who heard these words in

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[84] Tim Cole, *Holocaust Landscapes* (London: Bloomsbury Continuum, 2016), 6.
[85] Cole, *Holocaust Landscapes*, 2.
[86] Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2010); see also Timothy Snyder, *Black Earth: The Holocaust as History and Warning*, 1st ed. (New York, NY: Tim Duggan Books, 2015).

1920, however, they were simply the names of castles, fields, forests, and small rail stop towns. Each place acquired new meanings through the horrible crimes of the Third Reich. As Cole points out in his work, however, it was not only perpetrators that could change the meanings of spaces at the macro or the micro scale.[87]

Jewish resistance defines what we imagine when we hear the term "Warsaw Ghetto" as much as our thoughts of German killers. Cole contends that "locating the Holocaust in specific places raises questions about the limits and possibilities of both German power and victim agency."[88] In the case of Treblinka, this Jewish agency often took the form of place-making on the truly micro-geographic scale. Cole's work speaks of hiding and bunker creation—and much else—in his focus on the minute levels of resistance place-making. The resistance conspiracy at Treblinka, meanwhile, takes this small-scale analysis down to the level of certain distinct buildings, rooms, or even the area around one important door.

Of singular importance for the understanding of Jewish actions at Treblinka is an analysis of how conspirators changed the meanings of certain spaces in the minds of German guards. Place-making by prisoners at Treblinka is the process by which they used relationships and clever strategies of deception to create a place of resistance, or a localized version of what Cole terms "spatial strategies of survival."[89] In one example, prisoners wrested back a degree of control over life and death by finding means to limit German entrance into a structure called the Pferdestall—German for horse barn, also called Storage Barracks B. The Pferdestall never actually functioned as a horse barn or living accommodation; the name comes from its design

[87] At particularly the macro scale, Paolo Giaccaria and Claudio Minca's edited volume *Hitler's Geographies* is also an important spatial analysis of the Third Reich. Paolo Giaccaria and Claudio Minca, eds., *Hitler's Geographies: The Spatialities of the Third Reich* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2016).
[88] Cole, *Holocaust Landscapes*, 7.
[89] Cole, 6.

and normal use in other camps. At Treblinka, the official use of this structure was to store clothing taken from victims. Control of this building and the SS-sanctioned prisoner infirmary enabled conspirators to both safeguard sick comrades and hasten the removal of distrusted informants. Due to the interconnected ways in which Jewish prisoners used them, these two locations combined to form a single place of resistance.

The infirmary and Pferdestall took on positions as a place of resistance through inmates' ability to control their uses and meanings. *Lagerältester* Galewski secured permission from the SS to create an infirmary in the main housing barracks with allowance for 15 inmates to recuperate there at any one time. Galewski used his position as an intermediary afforded some level of trust to convince the Germans that a system of recuperation rather than the killing of sick prisoners would lessen turnover in key roles and increase the efficiency of the camp.[90] It seems, however, that neither side of this bargain intended to use the official infirmary as a true place of healing.

From its creation, SS guard August Miete began sweeping the barracks infirmary for prisoners he considered too ill to work. Miete routinely marched those he selected from the infirmary bunks to a place of execution. The predictability of his actions made it possible for prisoners to not only protect those they hoped to save, but also to use him against their internal enemies. Individuals whom resistance members wanted gone could simply be left in the infirmary—some of them incapacitated due to injections given by inmate doctors—while sick members of the prisoners' conspiracy were instead hidden under the sorted clothing in the Pferdestall and allowed to recuperate there during the workday.[91] Survivor Samuel Willenberg

[90] Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 84-5; Israel Cymlich and Oskar Strawczynski, *Escaping Hell in Treblinka* (New York, NY, Jerusalem: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2007), 161-2.
[91] Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 84-5.

also points out how prisoners could even hasten the removal of an individual from the sick bay by informing the SS of their condition, thereby bringing about one of Miete's rounds on their own schedule.[92] Dr. Irena "Irka" Lewkowski was one of four prisoner doctors who may have helped drug informants so that they would appear ill enough for Miete to select them on one of his rounds.[93]

Prisoners controlled the safety of the Pferdestall as an actual place of recuperation by leveraging German SS fears of lice and typhus—a preoccupation owed in no small part to Nazi propaganda labeling Jews as carriers of lice and vectors of typhus. *Lagerältester* Galewski strengthened protection of this place by using his position to constantly remind guards that the clothing stored in the Pferdestall was infested with lice, giving them a reason to avoid the building rather than patrol it as normal.[94] Several survivors speak of the Pferdestall and its use as a hiding place for the sick as well as for resistance planning and covert communication during the daytime hours. In a statement given in 1962, survivor Bronka Sukno explained that her job in the tailor's shop gave her the ability to move freely between the shop and Pferdestall, among other areas.[95] Moyshe Klaynman, the supervisor of the tailor's shop, confirmed this and told of his own ability to move back and forth between these spaces at will.[96]

Tailors like Sukno and Klaynman needed access to the clothes stored in the Pferdestall to gather materials for items they were forced to make for German guards. This exploitation of the goods stolen from those killed in the gas chambers by guards was common at all three Aktion Reinhard camps. Terrible as these practices were, they provided Jewish prisoners with certain

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[92] Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 92-4.
[93] Cymlich and Strawczynski, *Escaping Hell in Treblinka*, 161-4.
[94] Cymlich and Strawczynski, 161-2.
[95] Statement of Bronka Sukno, June 14, 1962, B162, F 3825, BL, p.1875.
[96] Unpublished memoir of Moyshe Klaynman, written between 1944-1947, in M.49, File 118, Item 3547904, YVA, p. 44.

opportunities for resistance and survival. Treblinka survivor Eddie Weinstein successfully hid in the Pferdestall for as many as seventeen days with a bullet wound to his arm inflicted by a Ukrainian guard on the way to Treblinka. Despite a conspicuous inability to lift his right arm, Weinstein survived in this place of resistance until he was able to escape from the camp with the help of others.[97] Weinstein's survival in the Pferdestall was early in the existence of the camp—long before the establishment of the official infirmary at the suggestion of Galewski. This timing indicates that the creation of the infirmary as a location for healing may not have been Galewski's intent—prisoners already had an area to recover in the Pferdestall.

At this place, women prisoners helped remove informants and carried information to the Pferdestall that could have warned of impending visits by the guards or other changes during the daytime hours. While some scholarship on Treblinka already points out that Dr. Lewkowski took part in resistance, Bronka Sukno's ability to act as a courier between the Pferdestall and the prisoner workshops on the other side of the camp has not been recognized.[98] Moyshe Klaynman and other survivors further confirm that women working in the tailor's shop could enter the SS barracks to collect or drop off clothing.[99] The importance of their ability to watch this space and report on the comings and goings of the guards could hardly be overstated, though their actions are rarely mentioned by male survivors and later historians.

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[97] Edward Weinstein, Interview 2694, Tape 3 of 7, 00:20-19:00, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, May 17, 1995; for a more detailed description, see Eddie Weinstein, *17 Days in Treblinka: Daring to Resist, and Refusing to Die*, 4th ed. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem Publications, 2009).

[98] Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 206; Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 273; Cymlich and Strawczynski, *Escaping Hell in Treblinka*, 154, 161. Women's actions as couriers for resistance groups during the Holocaust is better explored in reference to ghettos and partisan activities than inside the Nazi camps. Judith Batalion's recent work demonstrates the actions of Jewish women as messengers for resistance and their other forms of support for fighting organizations—including participation in armed combat. Judith Batalion, *The Light of Days: The Untold Story of Women Resistance Fighters in Hitler's Ghettos* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2020).

[99] Statement of Bronka Sukno, June 14, 1962, in B162, F 3825, BL, p.1875; Unpublished memoir of Moyshe Klaynman, written between 1944-1947, in M.49, File 118, Item 3547904, YVA, p. 60; former Treblinka commandant Franz Stangl also told Gitta Sereny that Jewish women were allowed in the SS barracks to clean it. See Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 166.

Conclusion

By leveraging social networks based upon prewar relationships and personal bonds forged on the work details of Treblinka, Jewish prisoners worked to create places of resistance capable of protecting coconspirators. At the same time, inmates acted against informants to further safeguard those involved in resistance, blunt the power of guards, and retain their precious and ever-tenuous control of space. While luck and the timing of uncontrollable events were as important as ever, sources demonstrate that access to space—through the creation of places—and the ability to call upon capacious networks of trust were the paramount differences between vague desires to fight and what became the final revolt.

The next chapter analyzes abandoned plans for rebellion before describing the events of August 2, 1943. Illumination of the differences between previous revolt schemes and the eventual uprising places in bold relief the factors that prisoners thought necessary for success. As such, I outline the ways in which Jews created further places of resistance and how these endeavors supported the uprising. The exploration of work details, defensive acts, and place-making in this chapter began the process of restoring women prisoners to the history of Jewish resistance at Treblinka. The next chapter also deepens this intervention by providing greater analysis of their irreplaceable, yet often silenced, participation in the revolt.

Chapter Five

Offensive Resistance: Prior Plans, Resistance Place-Making, and the Revolt

Offensive Resistance

If I speak of a thirst, a talent for life as the qualities most needed for survival, I don't mean to say these were deliberate acts, or even feelings. They were, in fact, largely unconscious qualities. Another talent one needed was a gift for relationships. Of course there were *people who survived who were loners. They will tell you now they survived* because *they relied on no one but themselves. But the truth is probably—and they may either not know it, or not be able to admit it to themselves or others—that they survived because they were carried by* someone, *someone who cared for them as much, or almost as much as for themselves. They are the ones who feel the guiltiest. Not for anything they did—but for what they didn't do—for what…and this cannot be any reflection on them…for what simply wasn't in them to be.*

—Richard Glazar[1]

The Monday, August 2, 1943 prisoner rising was an armed revolt because Jewish men and women on both sides of the Camp 1 and Camp 2 divide found means to steal weapons from the guards. These acts were the very foundation of Offensive Resistance at Treblinka. In Camp 1, inmates accomplished this by breaking the lock of the SS armory and then creating a key for themselves when they were called upon to fix it. In a series of events that display the full strengths of relationships and the creation of networked access to space, revolt planners moved conspirators near the SS armory, rendered the lock inoperable, and created a spare key—all without the notice of guards. The way in which they did so was nothing short of genius.

As in many other ruses explored previously—and in this chapter, below—Treblinka resistance planners gained access to the area around the SS barracks and armory by maneuvering trusted inmates into the places required for revolt planning. In other words, they engaged in what scholars call place-making with the help of trusted coconspirators. To secure the armory key, prisoners leaned on the assistance of a group of "cleanup boys" allowed in the area. Though all agree that these young men and children were involved in one way or another, there are several differing survivor accounts of how prisoners managed to acquire the key. Richard Glazar's memoir contains one of the most detailed examples.

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[1] Richard Glazar quoted in Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 186, all punctuation from the original.

> One day little Edek dashed by the door of the munitions depot and shoved a metal fragment into the lock… Only a few of the Court Jews had access to this area: the singer, Salwe, little Edek, the younger cleaning boy Heniek, approximately fifteen years old, the other cleaning boy…
>
> When the [Jewish prisoner] locksmiths in the workshop again checked to see why the key would not fit into the lock, one of them hit it with his hand and screamed, the key fell from the workbench to the ground, one, two men bent over to get it, bumped into each other, felt for the key, and the others stood around and watched. Everyone was shouting and chattering incomprehensibly in Yiddish and by the time one of them stood up, key in hand, exclaiming [*shoyn*], great! The imprint of the key had already been made [*shon shoyn*] right under the watchful eyes of the SS.[2]

Glazar's memories of this moment display the use of Yiddish as code (or at least as distraction), prisoner discussions of resistance as a spatial problem, and the importance of relationships. Furthermore, he is far from alone in his recollection of how prisoners acquired this key.

Shalom Kohn also told of how the door was removed from its hinges and brought to prisoner workshops in the ghetto barrack for repairs. Kohn additionally recounted how the locksmiths distracted the guards and took an imprint of the key, though he was not aware that other Jews had jammed the lock in the first place.[3] Survivor, and former cleanup boy, Yaakov Miller's account of the key also mirrors that of Glazar and Kohn, though again without his knowledge of how inmates broke the lock.[4] Eugen Turowski, another Camp 1 revolt survivor, stated that he was one of the locksmiths who made this key. Turowski does not complicate the statements of Glazar and Kohn, though he unfortunately added very little explanation in his

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[2] Richard Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence: Survival in Treblinka*, Jewish Lives (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1995), 110.

[3] Shalom Kohn (Stanislaw Kon), "The Treblinka Revolt," in *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (New York: Waldon Press, 1979), 225–6; see also Testimony of Shalom Kohn, *United States v. Fedorenko*, 597 F. 2d 946 (Court of Appeals, 5th Circuit 1979).

[4] Sources use various spellings of Yaakov Miller's name depending on the language of the original document and where it was recorded. He appears variously as Yaakov, Ya'akov, Jacob, Müller, Muller, Miller, and Miler in a source translated from Yiddish. In Isaiah Trunk's volume, he is anonymized as "Y.M." Yaakov Miller, "Eyewitness Testimony 47. The Uprising in Treblinka," in *Jewish Responses to Nazi Persecution*, ed. Isaiah Trunk (New York, NY: Stein and Day Publishers, 1979), 264.

testimony during American court proceedings against former Ukrainian guard Feodor Fedorenko.[5]

The detailed and mutually supportive nature of Glazar and Kohn's accounts of the armory key sets them apart from other survivor memories. Though enormously helpful in reconstructing many aspects of Treblinka resistance, Samuel Willenberg, Oskar Strawczynski, and Samuel Goldberg differ on how inmates gained access to the armory. Strawczynski and Willenberg both state that the key was created as prisoner builders first constructed the armory. Goldberg, meanwhile, does not explain when or under what circumstances the key was made, but he does mention the work of the two Jewish locksmiths.[6]

Conducting research in survivor testimony almost always requires that historians weigh contradictory statements and make judgements in the absence of conclusive evidence. Memoirs, as discussed earlier, are documents of a personal and necessarily limited nature. They focus on the life of their writer and display the issues inherent to all memory sources. Oral history recordings conducted well after the events in question are limited by the weaknesses of human memory, the effects of time, and the similarly limited perspective of the interviewee. All of these issues are compounded by the cellular nature of the Treblinka revolt conspiracy. By its very design, no one—below the select few members of the Organizing Committee—was supposed to know everything.

Throughout this research, I work to overcome these issues by testing the memories of survivors against the geography of their lives and by comparing multiple witness statements. In

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[5] Testimony of Eugen Turowski, *United States v. Fedorenko*, 597 F. 2d 946 (Court of Appeals, 5th Circuit 1979), Vol. 2, p. 228.

[6] Sam Goldberg, Interview 30760, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, July 13, 1997; Sam Goldberg, Family interview with his son, Dr. Shlomo Goldberg, 1991, in possession of the author courtesy of Karen Treiger, daughter-in-law of Sam Goldberg, see also Karen I. Treiger, *My Soul Is Filled with Joy: A Holocaust Story*, 1st ed. (Seattle, WA: Stare Lipki Press, 2018).

the case of the armory key, the detailed and corroborating accounts of Glazar, Kohn, and Miller stand out. Goldberg's account, while in some ways unique, does also detail the work of the two prisoner locksmiths. Regardless of the discrepancies of some survivor sources, however, they are unanimous on the existence of a key and its singular importance. Beyond this, weighing the accounts of Glazar, Kohn, and Miller against their access to space, what we know about their social networks, and the strengths of their recollections overall, provide strong reason to accept their version of events.

In the sections of this chapter to follow, these spatial and social analytical tools underpin descriptions of the lead up to, and the day of, the August 2, 1943 revolt. The previous chapters span Richard Glazar's first three phases of camp chronology and three categories of Jewish resistance to Nazi intentions detailed in previous scholarship. This chapter's discussion of the planning and execution of Offensive Resistance bridges the time periods of Phases Three and Four. The analysis here includes an explanation of what caused Richard Glazar to recognize that a fourth phase of camp life had begun. Just as he placed no descriptive names on his time periods, nor provided any direct explanation of why Phase Three began when it did, Glazar did not pointedly state a reason for the beginning of the fourth and final era of camp operations. His recollections correctly pinpoint shifts between periods in the camp timeline that he could perceive both in real time and preserve in his later memory, but he stopped short of indicating to his reader or interviewers how he could tell that things had changed. This chapter addresses the last cleft in Treblinka's timeline, as previous chapters explained the changes to the camp environment that caused Glazar to recognize a third phase of camp operations.

Glazar's gut feeling of a sea change in camp life, as before, is supported by facts discovered in this research. The sections that follow reveal how prisoner leaders on the

Organizing Committee turned the relationships that Glazar found so pivotally important into spatial access and coordinated action.[7] Treblinka's Jewish inmates accomplished this by harnessing networks first used in defensive survival efforts, as described in the previous chapter, to create offensively-minded places of resistance. Bringing all of this together in secrecy, of course, was no small task.

Plans for Offensive Resistance came and went during Phase Three with various challenges, tragedies, and unforeseen circumstances forestalling the revolt. The next section details previous plans and the reasons for their abandonment. Institutional knowledge, weapons, resistance place-making, and—of highest importance—trusted individuals, had to come into concert. Glazar's Phase Four, again without his direct realization of the fact, began when these factors came together under leadership capable of brokering the connections and creating the places of access necessary for the task.

Survivor testimonies that attempt to date the start of planning for a full-scale revolt vary greatly. One says that planning dates back to November 1942, while another states that prisoners only began this process in April 1943.[8] Understood in the light of compartmented information, this explains why William Schneiderman—a man who was present for the entire period the camp operated—said that he had only a vague knowledge that planning was taking place, but knew nothing of the revolt in advance and simply escaped out of luck on the day itself.[9] Revolt planning of any serious or realistic type cannot predate January 1943. Prior to the move to a single barracks, as previously discussed, prisoners lacked access to the physical tools of revolt

[7] For all geographic aspects of this chapter, refer to Figure 5, the August 1943 depiction of Treblinka by historical modeler Peter Laponder. Laponder, "Treblinka Map."
[8] Glazar told Gitta Sereny he believed that revolt planning began in November 1942. Other accounts give varying later dates. Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 197.
[9] William Schneiderman, RG-50.030.0288, JTHOHA, USHMM, September 21, 1994; Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 188–190.

and avenues of communication required for revolt planning and execution. Phases One and Two of Glazar's periodization of camp life also lacked the stability of inmate tenure and the ability to trust fellow prisoners that enabled later planning. In addition to these issues, individuals and small groups still managed to escape quite regularly during this period, drawing off possible resistance members in the process.

Beginning in January of 1943, Phase Three's relatively stable inmate population, lack of escape potential, and newfound ability to communicate provided a realistic footing for thoughts of an uprising. From this point on, the prisoners of Treblinka hatched schemes to destroy the German SS and their Ukrainian helpers that showed logical promise as opposed to merely emotional desire. I do not mean to deny that some prisoners may have wanted to rise up from as early as November of 1942. However, I do not view these nucleic drives as examples of actual plotting with a reasonable level of networking or geographic access for success.

The next section of this chapter analyzes three designs for revolt or resistance crafted in the run of Phase Three that predate the final form of the Organizing Committee and the plan for revolt. Each of these schemes was a source of frustration, motivation, and learning for the plotters of Treblinka resistance. Exploring these strategies reveals what they lacked in comparison to the final plan and thus contextualizes the choices, places, and tactics employed in the ultimate revolt.

Phase Three Revolt Plans and Committee Members

Richard Glazar devotes a chapter of his book *Trap with a Green Fence* to an early strategy of action referred to by prisoners as "Plan H."[10] Under consideration by prisoner planners from February – March 1943, this scheme was the first full-scale effort in a series of failures prior to August 2. Looking at the structures and people involved in this plan and two successor attempts offers the ability to compare them to the final revolt and reveal what elements of the ultimate plan were missing. Plan H dates from Phase Three after the barracks move and included at its highest level *Lagerältester* Galewski, the Slovak Jewish former military officer Zelomir "Zelo" (formerly Zoltan) Bloch, Kapo Kurland of the *Lazarett*, and the Warsaw-born agronomist Engineer Sudowicz.[11]

Galewski of Warsaw contributed connections to this origin network as well as extensive institutional knowledge and relationships to other groups and work details owed to his position as *Lagerältester*. Bloch's inclusion granted this version of the Organizing Committee deep and trusted connections to the Czechoslovak prisoners that included members of the diverse *Tarnungskommando* with its extensive geographic access, the *Goldjuden* with their possession of valuables, and his own valuable military leadership experience. On the day of the revolt, each prisoner was to have a stash of cash or precious metals on hand for the purposes of buying food and shelter once on the run. Clothing sorters could illicitly gather some items in the process of

[10] Unfortunately, the source does not explain why this was called Plan H or indicate whether this means there were a group of ideas labeled A to G. Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 69–82.

[11] Bloch was from Preschau, present day Prešov, in Slovakia. He arrived at Treblinka on a transport from Warsaw and associated himself with the Czech group of prisoners in the camp. Most accounts that mention his nationality refer to him as a Czech, though new research by Christopher Webb and Michael Chocholatý reveals that Bloch was a Slovak Jew who went by the first name Zoltan prior to his time in Treblinka. (As most primary sources refer to Bloch by the name Zelo or a phonetic equivalent, I will do the same.) Their work also confirmed that Bloch was an officer in the Czechoslovak Army from 1934-1936 and again in 1938. Chris Webb and Michal Chocholatý, *The Treblinka Death Camp: History, Biographies, Remembrance*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: Ibidem Verlag, 2021), 303-4; Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 22, 69; Shalom (Stanislaw) Kohn, "The Treblinka Revolt," in *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (New York, NY: Waldon Press, 1979), 225.

their work, but in Camp 1, the large sums required for so many prospective escapees could only come from the *Goldjuden*. Finally, given Engineer Sudowicz's access to geography and personal connections as one of the *Hofjuden*, the committee had a great deal of the access to places of importance and connections to pivotal networks that the final revolt plan would feature.

Rounding out this group, Kapo Kurland's position on the Organizing Committee requires a different kind of explanation than other members. Kurland's occupation as kapo of the three-man *Lazarett* detail, which possessed access to only that one location, cannot explain his position on the Organizing Committee. His work assignment in Treblinka alone, hellish as it was, provided no benefit to resistance planning. Survivors, however, uniformly laud his strength as a person and the fundamental respect for him shared by all.[12] His position as a leader of resistance must be owed to these factors. Kurland lent a moral gravitas to the committee that no other prisoner could provide. Precisely because all inmates understood the horrors of the job he and his assistants performed, and the stoic way in which they carried it out, he became a sort of thought leader or emotional lightning rod at Treblinka. Kurland's presence was a human representation of the reasons to rebel. Others on the various iterations of the committee brought tools and resources to the table—Kurland embodied the motivation.

Even with all of its numerable strengths, however, the promise of Plan H collapsed when Bloch and another conspirator named Adasch, or Adolf, were sent to Camp 2 as punishment, and a typhus epidemic simultaneously disabled or killed many individuals the committee counted on for support.[13] Plotters also worried that Bloch's banishment to Camp 2 had more to do with the

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[12] Rajzman, "The End of Treblinka," 236, 241; House Committee on Foreign Affairs, "Rajzman Congressional Testimony;" Strawczynski, "Ten Months in Treblinka," 138, 174; Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 47–48, 83–87; Willenberg, "I Survived Treblinka," 198; Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 22, 56–57, 138–139.

[13] Webb and Chocholatý, *The Treblinka Death Camp*, 2nd ed., 303-4; Camp 2 survivor Chil Rajchman calls the second man, Bloch's companion, "Adolf." Though not all sources agree, I am confident the man called Adasch by some and Adolf by others is the same person. Chil Rajchman, *The Last Jew of Treblinka: A Survivor's Memory, 1942-1943*, trans. Solon Beinfeld (New York, NY: Pegasus Books, 2011), 120.

SS discovering their plans through informants than the supposed offense for which he and Adasch were punished.[14] Concern that the secrecy of the plan was compromised effectively destroyed the effort after their banishment. However, Bloch and his companion's loss from Camp 1 turned out to have fortuitous consequences that neither the SS guards nor the prisoners of either side of Treblinka planned or imagined. Survivors from Camp 2 explain that his arrival there helped weld that group into a fighting force and provided detailed knowledge of Camp 1 planning not otherwise possible to communicate across the divide.[15]

Bloch's presence brought the full planning knowledge of the Organizing Committee up to that point over to resistance-minded prisoners in what Rajzman called Groups VI and VII of Camp 2.[16] Jankiel Wiernik's testimony recounts how drastically Bloch's arrival changed the resistance-planning picture on that side of Treblinka. After a short period of time acclimating to his new surroundings and taking a measure of whom he could trust in his new environment, Bloch opened up about the Camp 1 conspiracy and participated in the creation of a "committee" at the head of a "secret organization" in Camp 2, mirroring that on the opposite side of the fence.[17] This new group consisted of Bloch, Wiernik, and at times as many as three others.[18]

Prior to Bloch's arrival in Camp 2, prisoners succeeded in using various ruses to communicate small pieces of information between the two sides of Treblinka. First and foremost, they took advantage of the language barrier between Ukrainian guards and themselves by speaking and singing messages to each other in Yiddish as they passed *en route* to work

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[14] Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 157–158; Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 80–81.
[15] Kohn, "The Treblinka Revolt," 226; Wiernik, *A Year in Treblinka*, L.570, L. 605; Adolf Eichmann Trial, 1–9, Section 66, Parts 3–4 (Jerusalem District Court 1961).
[16] House Committee on Foreign Affairs, "Rajzman Congressional Testimony," 123; Chil Rajchman, transcript p. 9, RG-050.030.0185, JTHOHA, USHMM, December 7, 1988; Chil Rajchman, *The Last Jew of Treblinka: A Survivor's Memory, 1942-1943*, trans. Solon Beinfeld (New York, NY: Pegasus Books, 2011), 58, 120–121.
[17] Quotes derived from Adolf Eichmann Trial, 1–9, Section 66, Parts 3–4 (Jerusalem District Court 1961). See also Wiernik, *A Year in Treblinka*, L. 570, L. 605.
[18] Adolf Eichmann Trial, 1–9, Section 66, Parts 3–4 (Jerusalem District Court 1961).

locations. They additionally used Yiddish to make it seem as if they were shouting at prisoners from their own camp, when in reality their intended audience was nearby members of the opposite camp workforce.[19] Taking into account the great similarities between spoken Yiddish and German, these tactics could not be used with confidence around German SS guards that might be able to understand much of what the prisoners were saying. The similarities of the two languages and the threat of German ears severely limited the utility of these communication strategies. Long-winded explanations of how to form a cellular resistance organization or what the main body of plotters in Camp 1 had in mind further eluded these strategies.

Bloch's arrival represents a drastic change to the communication picture as a result of the wealth of recent planning information he carried with him. As a prior member of the highest level of the Camp 1 Organizing Committee, he knew details of the revolt plan that were impossible to communicate in short winks and nods to passing Camp 2 prisoners under guard. The Yiddish communication strategies and short sentences of information passed in song could not convey the depth of information Bloch possessed. After the fortuitous accident of Bloch's arrival in Camp 2, future versions of resistance planning in Camp 1 could count on prisoners on the other side of the berm understanding the basic realities of their intentions. Wiernik's position as a construction foreman allowed him access to Camp 1 regularly, where he could at least communicate that Bloch was alive and that a sister conspiracy was on track in Camp 2. Furthermore, Glazar relates that he and others received word of Bloch's survival in Camp 2 on

[19] Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 92, 135; Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 221; Lanzmann, *Shoah*, 1995, 38; testimony of Jankiel Wiernik, in Adolf Eichmann Trial, 1–9, Section 66, Parts 3–4 (Jerusalem District Court 1961); Smith, *Treblinka Survivor*, 247; Rajchman, *The Last Jew of Treblinka*, 58, 120–121; Grinberg, "The Revolt in Treblinka," 221.

two occasions, with Yiddish used as code to confirm that all was ready in Camp 2 as late as July 31.[20]

Jewish camp physician Dr. Julian Chorazycki led the first version of the Organizing Committee that could count on support from Camp 2 and showed a serious potential for success. His death on April 19, 1943, however, dashed hopes for this short-lived plan. Chorazycki swallowed poison to protect other members of the conspiracy when deputy commandant Kurt Franz discovered him in possession of cash intended for use in bribing guards and buying shelter and supplies on the run.[21] After the loss of Bloch and Chorazycki, Galewski might have stepped up to lead the effort as he eventually did, but he was struck down with typhus at the same time. As Galewski languished in the prisoner infirmary that he had earlier secured permission from the SS to create, Kapo Rakowski of the Red Commando took over as *Lagerältester*.[22]

Rakowski's brief turn as *Lagerältester* paralyzed full-scale revolt planning. Many recent members of the Organizing Committee lay dead, battling illness, or permanently lost to Camp 2, while Rakowski alone lacked the personal network necessary to carry out a revolt. Additionally, as an individual new to the position and possibly unaware of its powers, Rakowski seems to have been incapable or unwilling to attempt to use his status as *Lagerältester* to create places of resistance as Galewski eventually would. The final plan, as the following section will show, leveraged the powers of Treblinka's highest-ranking Jewish prisoner-leader to move individuals and groups to key locations for the moment of the uprising. Rakowski's long-term position in the Red Commando did not prepare him to understand the powers of his position as camp elder,

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[20] Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 92,135; Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 221; Lanzmann, *Shoah*, 1995, 38.
[21] Abraham Kolski, transcript p. 9, RG-50.030.0113, JTHOHA, USHMM, March 29, 1990; Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 205–206; Willenberg, "I Survived Treblinka," 204.
[22] Strawczynski, "Ten Months in Treblinka," 161; *United States v. Fedorenko*, 597 F. 2d 946, Volume 3, 301 (Court of Appeals, 5th Circuit 1979).

nor did it not grant him a wide range of relationships with individuals that he could call upon as Engineer Galewski later did. Survivors Tanhum Grinberg and Oskar Strawczynski agree that Rakowski focused instead on a smaller-scale group escape in which he hoped to free himself and as many as fifteen others.[23]

Rakowski's time as *Lagerältester* came to a tragic end when the SS discovered cash or gold in his area of the kapo barracks room that he planned to use in order to bribe Ukrainian guards.[24] As in the case of Dr. Chorazycki's discovery in possession of cash, the revelation cost Rakowski his life. He was taken directly to the *Lazarett* and shot.[25] With Bloch, Dr. Chorazycki, and now Rakowski all gone, Galewski and Kurland were the only prisoners remaining in Camp 1 consistently named as revolt planners. The SS reinstated Galewski as *Lagerältester* in May or early June of 1943, coinciding with the beginning of Glazar's Phase Four.[26] Having persevered as camp elder from the very earliest days of Phase One, he knew full well how to leverage this position after his return. From that point on, Galewski and the final version of the Organizing Committee moved forward with what would become the revolt launched on August 2, 1943. Though Glazar does not spell this out, the return of Galewski moved Treblinka into its fourth and final phase.

The Phase Four Committee and the Treblinka Revolt

The Organizing Committee that coalesced in June of 1943 consisted of *Lagerältester* Galewski, Kapo Kurland, Kapo Moniek of the *Hofjuden*, Rudi Masarek of the Czech group, and

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[23] Grinberg, "The Revolt in Treblinka," 217; Strawczynski, "Ten Months in Treblinka," 175–6.
[24] Grinberg, "The Revolt in Treblinka," 217; Strawczynski, "Ten Months in Treblinka," 175–6.
[25] Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 142.
[26] This approximate date emerges from accounts of this period by Richard Glazar and Samuel Willenberg, though neither pinpoints the timing of events exactly. This date fits the flow of their narratives, and the other events they mention taking place at roughly the same time, see Richard Glazer, RG-50.234.0014, JTHOHA, USHMM, October 26, 1981; Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*; Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*; Willenberg, "I Survived Treblinka."

possibly the Czestochowa-originated *Hofjude*, Engineer Sudowicz.[27] Sudowicz's participation in the revolt is not in doubt, however, not all accounts place his name on the final list of top-level revolt planners.[28] It may be that Kapo Moniek replaced Sudowicz as the primary representative of the *Hofjuden* at the highest level of organization while he remained in position as an integral part of the fighting units and as the representative of his home city network. These revolt planners would take advantage of their strong leadership positions and connections to both individuals and groups in order to create important places of resistance with trusted, well-connected prisoners in place to exploit them.

This committee found power in Galewski's position as *Lagerältester*, Kurland's continued role as a motivating force, Masarek's military experience in addition to his possession of deep connections to the Czech prisoners that essentially replicated the previous role of Zelo Bloch, as well as Sudowicz and Moniek's connections to the *Hofjuden.* Home origin networks held representation through Galewski's ties to Warsaw, Sudowicz's position as a member of the Czestochowa group, and Masarek's representation of the Czechs. Finally, Kapo Moniek's inclusion heightened the representation of the poly-originated *Hofjuden*. Jankiel Wiernik provided the conspiracy with an avenue of communication to Camp 2 prisoners now organized under their own committee that continued to include Bloch as a leader on that side of the fence.[29] The ideas advanced by this group were nearly identical to Plan H, however, they benefited from

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[27] The term "originated" is used because testimonies vary on his place of birth; however, he arrived from the Czestochowa Ghetto. See Trunk, *Jewish Responses to Nazi Persecution*, 267; Strawczynski, "Ten Months in Treblinka," 165–167; Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 69.

[28] Wiernik, *A Year in Treblinka*, L.734; Trunk, *Jewish Responses to Nazi Persecution*, 264–265; Rajzman, "The End of Treblinka," 240; House Committee on Foreign Affairs, "Rajzman Congressional Testimony"; Chil Rajchman, transcript pps. 9–10, RG-50.030.0185, JTHOHA, USHMM, December 7, 1988; Isadore Helfing, RG-50.042.0014, JTHOHA, USHMM, March 9, 1992; Isadore Helfing, RG-50.005.0024, JTHOHA, USHMM, December 3, 1983; Smith, *Treblinka Survivor*, 251; Strawczynski, "Ten Months in Treblinka," 138, 174, 178; Kohn, "The Treblinka Revolt," 225; Grinberg, "The Revolt in Treblinka," 215.

[29] Fellow Camp 2 prisoner Avraham Lindwasser's testimony confirms Wiernik's role as Camp 1 to Camp 2 communication channel. See Adolf Eichmann Trial, 1–9, Section 66, Parts 8–9 (Jerusalem District Court 1961).

a more realistic expectation of organized participation by prisoners on both sides of Treblinka with Bloch then in Camp 2.

Describing the final plan of the revolt now scheduled for August 2, 1943, Samuel Willenberg stated:

> Now the plan was simple: on a day when a maximum number of Germans were on furlough and a minimum number of Ukrainians were in the camp, the servant boys would unlock and empty the arsenal. They would move the weapons to predetermined locations in the camp, the first being the potato kommando [sic] area opposite the Germans' huts and the [Camp 1] structures… The boys would move the weapons and distribute them to prisoners throughout the area.[30]

Willenberg's sketch of the revolt plan is mostly correct, though it lacks a few pertinent details. He lists several places from which stolen arms were to be distributed but he omits the Camp 1 kitchen. Other survivors stated that they were to pick up a weapon from the Jewish women who staffed this place.[31] While Willenberg may have been unaware of the kitchen as a place for arms distribution, he also would not be alone in leaving out the actions of women prisoners at Treblinka. Chapter Six returns to this issue and further explores the memory and history of women in resistance.

At the kitchen and other sites of resistance place-making, planners leveraged the participation of prisoners the German SS and Ukrainian guards did not view as significant threats to security. This included both the so-called "cleanup boys" who had access to SS living areas and secured the armory key as well as Jewish women held in both Camp 1 and Camp 2. In the main area of Treblinka, the gender biases of guards offered women the ability to access a greater area of the camp and even enter the SS barracks itself. As such, they were in a strong position to

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[30] See Figure 5, Key number 17; Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 179.
[31] Abram Kolski, Interview 49970, Tape 5 of 8, 03:00-13:20, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, July 29, 1999.

keep tabs on the guards and could offer a safe place to store weapons at the kitchen since it was less likely the guards would launch a search of their work area.[32]

Prisoners knew that German SS guard furlough rotations took place on Mondays.[33] Beyond individual prisoners noting the comings and goings of their own personal work detail supervisor, this piece of intelligence required the institutional knowledge of the *Hofjuden,* women who cleaned the SS barracks and did their laundry, and members of the tailor's detail in order to choose the correct day for maximum effect.[34] A further reason to choose a Monday for the revolt was the fact that it was SS laundry day, giving women prisoners from the camp laundry facilities a reason to be in the SS barracks area.[35] Galewski's regular interactions with the SS as *Lagerältester* also acquainted him with guard leave schedules. Moniek and Sudowicz could add to this intelligence given their positions as *Hofjuden.* In addition to the Germans absent on leave, guard manpower was further eroded on August 2 by the decision of SS deputy commandant Kurt Franz to take a party of roughly twenty Ukrainians to the nearby River Bug for a swim.[36] While this draw down in the number of guards present was certainly extremely fortunate, no survivor notes whether they knew this was to occur in advance. We should assume that they did given the fact that this took away such a significant number of the approximately 140 total guards.[37]

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[32] Jonas Kornhendler, Interview 30369, Tape 1 of 4, 20:00-26:00 and Tape 2 of 4, 00:15-13:30, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, June 30, 1997; Statement of Bronka Sukno, June 14, 1961, in B162, F 3825, BL, p.1875; Unpublished memoir of Moyshe Klaynman, written between 1944-1947, in M.49, File 118, Item 3547904, YVA, p. 60; Franz Stangl stated that Jewish women were allowed in the SS barracks to clean it, see Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 166.
[33] Strawczynski, "Ten Months in Treblinka," 181.
[34] Statement of Bronka Sukno, June 14, 1961, in B162, F 3825, BL, p.1875; Unpublished memoir of Moyshe Klaynman, written between 1944-1947, in M.49, File 118, Item 3547904, YVA, p. 60; Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 166.
[35] Peter Neusner, *Mut der Verzweiflung: Widerstand in Vernichtungslagern am beispeil Treblinka und Sobibor, Teil 1*, Documentary (Österreichischer Runkfunk (ORF), 1985), 49:00.
[36] Abraham Kolski, transcript p. 10, RG-50.030.0113, JTHOHA, USHMM, March 29, 1990.
[37] This is an overall number including both Germans and Ukrainians.

The east gate adjacent to the lumberyard and the daily working area of the *Tarnungskommando*, with Glazar, Willenberg, and Shalom Kohn as members, was one of the best possible escape routes. Only one guard-tower directly covered this gate that faced open territory and an adjacent forested area that offered cover from pursuing guards. The east gate and lumberyard location, given networked access through numerous members of the conspiracy present there on the day of the uprising, became a place of resistance that was especially important for escape on the day of the revolt. Camp 2 inmates, now integral to the conspiracy, could also tie down the guards from their area during the flight of Camp 1 prisoners to the east.

A simultaneous uprising in Camp 2 not only prevented reinforcement of this gate, it also provided another primary exit route. The gate separating Camps 1 and 2 was open on the day of the revolt as was normal in the course of the average workday.[38] Some prisoners from Camp 1, particularly the *Hofjuden* present around the barracks as the fighting began, took a southerly escape route through this gate, across the death camp section of Treblinka, and over the fence behind the Camp 2 barracks. Use of this route by Camp 1 prisoners further highlights how important it was to include Camp 2 inmates in the revolt plan.[39]

Treblinka's normal work routines in Camp 2 during the summer of 1943 confronted prisoners in this area with a problem that had to be solved before they could possibly take part in a revolt at the scheduled time. In the hottest months of the year, German guards split the Camp 2 workday into morning and evening portions with the prisoners locked in their barracks during the

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[38] See Figure 5. This gate is marked at the end of a path leading from the Living Camp toward Camp 2. The closest Key number to its location is 35, indicating the new gas chamber building. For statements indicating the gate was open on the day of the revolt, see Smith, *Treblinka Survivor*, 135; Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 92, 135; Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 221; Wiernik, *A Year in Treblinka*, L.614, L.626, L.789; Adolf Eichmann Trial, 1–9, Section 66, Parts 3–4 (Jerusalem District Court 1961).

[39] See Figure 13 and a map contained in Smith, *Treblinka Survivor*, 135; Statement of SS guard Franz Suchomel indicates that some prisoners elected to take a southerly escape route through Camp 2. See Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 247, see also Figure 5, fence directly south of Key number 39.

hours of peak daytime heat. This, of course, was not due to any kindness on the part of guards. Work did not proceed at midday in Camp 2 because the task being carried out at this time was the exhumation and incineration of bodies buried at the camp over the previous eleven months. The choking inferno of these fires along with the heat and humidity of a Polish summer was too much even for the Nazis. This meant, however, that prisoner leaders had to find a way to get out of the barracks and move conspirators to important places throughout Camp 2.

Survivor Eliahu Rosenberg wrote that Camp 2 prisoners overcame this obstacle by offering guards a detail of thirty volunteers who would continue the work of burning bodies through the midday heat in exchange for doubled lunch rations.[40] Historian Yitzhak Arad states that resistance planners in Camp 2 also "initiate[d] additional jobs in order to create as large a group as possible outside the barracks that afternoon" to be ready at the appointed time.[41] Always looking to move along their own priorities, guards accepted the exchange of food for an additional work shift and did not question the supposed need for other transfers of inmates.[42] What they failed to realize, however, was that the thirty volunteers were all members of the resistance conspiracy and that the point of this offer and other worker transfers was to position coconspirators for the uprising or, in other words, to create places of resistance in Camp 2.

Returning to Camp 1, the next major obstacle that had to be overcome on the day of the revolt was the matter of access to the SS armory.[43] Already possessing a key to the structure,

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[40] Eliahu Rosenberg, "The Death Camp Treblinka" [Das Todeslager Treblinka], Vienna, December 24, 1947, in O.3, File 4548, Item 3558557, YVA, p. 12-14; Neusner, *Mut der Verzweiflung: Widerstand in Vernichtungslagern am beispeil Treblinka und Sobibor, Teil 1*.

[41] Yitzhak Arad cites Camp 2 survivor and construction foreman Jankiel Wiernik in these sections. See Yitzhak Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka: The Operation Reinhard Death Camps* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1987), 284-5.

[42] Camp 2 survivor Chil Rajchman credits a Jewish foreman who he calls "Adolf" with getting the guards to agree to other movements of prisoners on the day of the revolt. I believe the person he calls Adolf is actually Zelo Bloch's companion Adasch who was transferred to Camp 2 at the same time. Chil Rajchman, *The Last Jew of Treblinka: A Survivor's Memory, 1942-1943*, trans. Solon Beinfeld (New York, NY: Pegasus Books, 2011), 126-7.

[43] See Figure 5, Key number 7.

planners created a means to get prisoners into this place with the help of the cleanup boys allowed in this area. These children and young men snuck into the armory, removed weapons, and distributed them throughout the camp, creating the very possibility of armed resistance as opposed to mass escape or an almost-certainly suicidal unarmed bullrush of the guards. This small, trusted group was, in effect, the lynchpin of the entire revolt in Camp 1.[44] These "boys," as they are always called, were all twenty-two or younger.[45] They had varying home origins, but all owed their positions on the cleaning detail to *Lagerältester* Galewski. The seventeen-year-old Jerzyk of Warsaw not only personally entered the armory and removed weapons and grenades, he is also a strong individual example of network survival.

When Jerzyk's transport arrived at Treblinka, a member of the Red Commando that he knew from life in the Warsaw Ghetto pulled him aside. The unfortunately unnamed Red who spotted Jerzyk asked Galewski to save him from selection through his influence with the SS. Galewski did so and then placed Jerzyk under a Czech foreman in the sorting groups, who in turn asked Willenberg to train and watch out for him.[46] Though little of this portion of camp history is directly dated in testimonies, it must have taken place before February of 1943, as Willenberg moved from sorting to the *Tarnungskommando* at or around this time.[47] Sometime between February and the August revolt, Jerzyk was reassigned as a cleanup boy around the SS barracks.

Not only did Galewski choose the members of this cleanup detail, he suggested its existence to the SS in the first place.[48] In addition to Jerzyk, Galewski also assigned the

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[44] See the testimony of "Y.M.," or Ya'akov Miller, who was a member of this detail, in Trunk, *Jewish Responses to Nazi Persecution*, 262–8.
[45] Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 110; Testimony of "Y.M." Trunk, *Jewish Responses to Nazi Persecution*, 265; Kohn, "The Treblinka Revolt," 227.
[46] Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 41.
[47] Willenberg, 98.
[48] Willenberg, 168; Chrostowski, *Extermination Camp Treblinka*, 89.

previously mentioned Alfred Boehm to the cleaning detail.[49] Boehm knew Willenberg in Czestochowa and saved him from selection when he arrived at Treblinka, as described earlier. Boehm's assignment when Willenberg arrived was divided between working in the arrival area and as Galewski's personal "servant."[50] Boehm was a trusted confidant of Willenberg and Galewski, and his proximity to both men explains how they came to know each other so well despite different home origins and duties within the camp. Before the barracks move, Boehm's sleeping quarters were behind a curtain partition with Galewski in the arrivals area barracks where the three men would visit in the evenings.[51]

When the prisoners moved to the new barracks, Galewski made Boehm one of the original cleanup boys and gave him the job of pushing a baby stroller used to transport trash away from the SS and Ukrainian living areas. With access to the entirety of Camp 1, Boehm could hide items stolen from the SS in his stroller under the trash he collected in the course of his cleaning duties.[52] On the day of the revolt, Boehm distributed the arms Jerzyk took out of the armory in precisely this manner.[53] Their access to these areas and the existence of the cleaning detail created a place of resistance around the armory itself. The Organizing Committee successfully included this location in their routine areas of access by creating a work crew with a need to be present there in the performance of its duties. As in other instances of resistance

[49] Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 20.
[50] Willenberg, 28.
[51] Willenberg, 22, 28.
[52] Alfred Boehm and his contributions to the Treblinka uprising were so etched in the memory of Samuel Willenberg that he depicted Boehm and his stroller in one of the bronze sculptures of Treblinka history that he created in later life. A picture of this sculpture is located in the back of his book. See Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 177, 179, sculpture on 328.
[53] Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 179–180; Willenberg, "I Survived Treblinka;" Tomlinson, *Treblinka's Last Witness*; Adam Kemp, *Death Camp Treblinka: Survivor Stories*, Streaming Broadcast, Television Documentary (BBC, 2012); Kohn, "The Treblinka Revolt," 228.

place-making, the *Lagerälteste*'s participation in the conspiracy made these assignments possible and placed them above suspicion from the guards.

The planned date of the revolt took advantage of construction work going on in front of the armory to create access to that location.[54] This building work also brought Wiernik from Camp 2, granting the conspiracy its avenue of communication to resistance plotters in that section of Treblinka.[55] Not only did the activity of men working around the structure create a helpful distraction for the removal of arms by the cleaning boys, it also allowed Galewski to place more individuals near the armory at the right moment. Morton Mattel, a person Galewski knew in Warsaw and personally saved from selection, worked as a cement mixer at the armory on the day of the revolt. Mattel, in his work capacity assigned by Galewski, was able to use his horse-drawn construction cart to participate in arms distribution after the boys got the weapons out of the armory.[56] The brilliant use of distractions and changes to the routine caused by construction as a mask for resistance access to space mirrors Jaskot's discoveries in his research on escapes at Auschwitz.[57]

The timing of the revolt on August 2 brings the reader back to the beginning of the narrative. The uprising was originally scheduled to take place at 4:30 PM before the intervention of emotional decision-making. Arms were removed by the cleaning boys and distributed starting at 2:00 PM, with work crews instructed to collect them shortly in advance of four.[58] Taking a weapon from one of the drop points used by the cleaning boys and Mattel required conspirators

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[54] Prisoners were erecting a water boiler at the SS barracks on the day of the revolt. Willenberg, "I Survived Treblinka," 209; Rajzman, "The End of Treblinka," 243; House Committee on Foreign Affairs, "Rajzman Congressional Testimony," 124.
[55] Wiernik, *A Year in Treblinka*, L.789, L.813.
[56] Morton Mattel, RG-50.347.0001, JTHOHA, USHMM, July 29, 1981.
[57] Knowles, Cole, and Giordano, eds., *Geographies of the Holocaust*, Chap. 1, 22-24, and Jaskot et al., "Visualizing the Archive" in *Geographies of the Holocaust.*
[58] Kohn, "The Treblinka Revolt," 228.

to use the password "*death*" and receive the response "*life.*"[59] Wiernik was made aware that the revolt was to occur that day during his work on construction materials in the lumberyard in the morning. He in turn relayed this information to others in Camp 2 during their lunch period around their barracks.[60] With no transports arriving, the Reds, Blues, and the *Tarnungskommando* were all working on materials for construction projects in the lumberyard located on the east side of Camp 1.[61] The placement of additional work details near the east gate was another intentional boon to possibilities for escape. Galewski helped create a place of resistance in the lumberyard near the east gate by securing the permission of the SS to send the Red and Blue Commandos there to help the *Tarnungskommando* prepare construction materials.[62]

This place of resistance largely coincides with the location of the previous place in the lumberyard and east gate location. Despite nearly identical physical geography, I analyze this area as a pair of places of resistance because of the different ways prisoners employed networks to gain access. Access to this place for some was a result of the network connectivity of the *Tarnungskommando* that was normally present in the lumberyard. Planners created a further place of resistance in the same location by moving additional prisoner conspirators with the help of Galewski's authority. The *Lagerälteste* also moved Samuel Rajzman to this place of resistance under the same pretense as he did for the Red and Blue Commandos. A sizable number of those who survived were either members of these details or took the east gate escape route when fighting broke out, and thus owe their lives to this creation of spatial access by

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[59] Kohn, 228.
[60] Wiernik, *A Year in Treblinka*, L.813.
[61] Rajzman, "The End of Treblinka," 244; Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 115, 139.
[62] Rajzman, "The End of Treblinka," 244; Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 115,139; see also Richard Glazer, RG-50.234.0014, JTHOHA, USHMM, October 26, 1981; House Committee on Foreign Affairs, "Rajzman Congressional Testimony."

Galewski and the committee. As with other placements of revolt participants, construction yet again provided prisoners with the opportunity to be in a part of the camp less traveled by guards and far closer to a favorable route of escape than they otherwise would have been.

Without construction, the *Tarnungskommando* would have been in the lumberyard that day, but the Reds and Blues, and Rajzman would have no reason to be there. Placement of these work details near the gate—and the personal intervention of Galewski to move his friend Rajzman to the same area on the day of the revolt—proves that this was an intentional creation of spatial access for the revolt that provided a ready and convenient avenue of escape. Rajzman stated:

> This was the only time since my arrival in Treblinka that I was transferred from my regular, daily place of work. I had always worked in one specific place, but that day I was supposed to be with my group at one of the watchtowers that surrounded the camp. I didn't know where I would be stationed. Only two or three people knew the exact arrangements. So Galewski went to "Kiewe" [Küttner] and told him that he didn't need me for polishing eyeglasses, so I should go with a group of branch cutters [the *Tarnungskommando*]… At one o'clock I was there, and that was the place where I was supposed to be stationed for the uprising. They brought me two hand grenades and two or three revolvers, that was all.[63]

Rajzman's account stresses the compartmentalization of revolt planning information right up to the day of the uprising, and the great influence Galewski had on the outcome of events. Rajzman, like Jerzyk, Mattel, and others, survived arrival at Treblinka, gained placement in a fighting group, and was positioned in an advantageous place of resistance through the efforts of the Organizing Committee, made possible by connections to prisoner networks.

Despite all that the Organizing Committee did to prepare for that day, one questionable choice and circumstances beyond their control fractured the plan. Glazar states the leaders of the revolt (he speaks in the plural here) put out word around two in the afternoon that no prisoner

[63] Rajzman, "The End of Treblinka," 244.

would be allowed to die from then on. If any inmate were in danger, the revolt would be triggered immediately.[64] When SS guard Kurt "Kiewe" Küttner caught two of the conspirators in possession of valuables just prior to four, prisoners began the fight immediately. An SS-appointed barracks elder and well-known informant named Kuba tipped off Küttner.[65] The cellular design of the revolt Organizing Committee meant that these two unnamed men could not have given up the entire plot, but the emotional decision not to allow the killing of any more prisoners before the revolt was already common knowledge. Even though this incident took place close to the intended time of the uprising, the early start still meant that not all prisoners had collected their arms or made it to their assigned positions when the fighting began. The outcome of this snap decision was chaos.

The Organizing Committee's hopes for unity of action and their battleplan for the uprising were the first casualties of the fighting. When the shot rang out, prisoners only managed to set the wooden structures of Camp 1 on fire as they scattered in every direction.[66] Setting the camp alight was made possible by the help of a prisoner normally employed to dispense disinfectant from a backpack-mounted sprayer. On the day of the revolt, survivor Samuel Rajzman stated that inmates switched out the normal contents of his backpack with gasoline provided by another prisoner who worked at the garage.[67] Tragically, the brick-built gas chambers themselves were not destroyed. I take up the matter of their continued operability and the extent of damage to Treblinka in general in Chapter Seven.

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[64] Statement of Richard Glazar in Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 239.
[65] Statement of Richard Glazar in Sereny, 239.
[66] Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 182–183; Willenberg, "I Survived Treblinka," 210; Rajzman, "The End of Treblinka," 244; Abraham Kolski, transcript p. 11, RG-50.030.0113, JTHOHA, USHMM, March 29, 1990.
[67] Samuel Rajzman, "The End of Treblinka," in *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (New York, NY: Waldon Press, 1979), 231–51, pp. 244-5; Testimony of Samuel Rajzman read before the U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs, "H.J. Resolution 93 - Punishment of War Crimes - 79th Congress, First Session" (United States Government Printing Office, 1945), Doc. Y4.F76/1: W19/5, pp. 120-125, US Congressional Record, p.125.

While some Ukrainian guards may have died in the fighting, others fled, laid low, or even surrendered rather than actively engage in combat with the prisoners.[68] The result was that most, if not all of them, lived out the day. In Camp 2, one or two Ukrainian guards were either killed or put out of action by Zelo Bloch and others at the well. Once Bloch heard the shot from Camp 1, he led a small group in an attack on these guards, disarmed them, and threw them down the well.[69] Whether these guards survived is unknown. Bloch himself then moved the fence behind the Camp 2 barracks and covered the escape of his comrades with a rifle taken from the guards at the well. It is likely that by the time Bloch arrived at the fence to cover the escape, other Camp 2 prisoners had already made a hole in the fence with butchering tools taken from the kitchen area.[70] Bloch did not survive the day, but Sonia Lewkowicz witnessed him kneeling by the fence firing at the guards as she hastily made her way out of the camp.[71]

The one or two rifles taken by Bloch and his group at the well were not the only arms available to Jews in Camp 2. Much like the Camp 1 cleanup boys, a group of women in Camp 2 became the indispensable lynchpins of armed resistance on the death camp side of Treblinka, though their actions have not been recognized by historians—or many survivors. The

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[68] Survivor Jankiel Wiernik recalled prisoners using gold and valuables to lure the guards out of the towers. Chil Rajchman also recalls prisoners luring them out and adds that some of them surrendered. Given their identity and the course of the war by August 2, 1943, I find it plausible that the Ukrainians would not be entirely energetic in their defense of Treblinka or incredibly willing to risk their own lives to fight against the uprising. Antisemitic as they were, I am confident they were prepared to kill, though I hold doubts about their willingness to die for a German cause. Wiernik, *A Year in Treblinka*, L.825; Rajchman, *The Last Jew of Treblinka*, 127.

[69] Survivor Avraham Goldfarb stated that he helped throw a guard down the well, after which he said that Bloch shot three guards. Statement of Avraham Goldfarb, March 3, 1961, in O.3, File 4181, Item 3558301, YVA, p. 26; survivor Aron Gleit stated that he was assigned to help attack the guards at the well with Zelo Bloch and his group, but the early start of the uprising meant that he was not in place when fighting began. After he heard the shot, he ran to the well only to discover the guards had already been thrown in. See Statement of Aron Gleit, November 1971, in O.3, File 3989, Item 3558403, YVA, p. 10.

[70] Chil Rajchman states that a butcher named Kalman was able to sharpen and prepare butchering tools without raising the suspicion of guards because it happened that prisoners were supposed to be receiving a horse to eat around this time. Rajchman further confirms Zelo Bloch's possession of a rifle. Chil Rajchman, *The Last Jew of Treblinka: A Survivor's Memory, 1942-1943*, trans. Solon Beinfeld (New York, NY: Pegasus Books, 2011), 125.

[71] Interview with Sonia Levkovicz [Lewkowicz], undated, in O.3, File 4181, Item 3558301, YVA, p. 4.

testimonies of survivors Eliahu Rosenberg and Szlomo Helman reveal the existence of a site of forced sexual exploitation, or what is often termed a camp brothel, in this section of Treblinka.[72] While Rosenberg's statement details the setup of this place and describes how guards as well as some senior kapos exploited the women held in this place, Helman revealed how these unnamed women provided the lion's share of arms available to Camp 2 prisoners on the day of the revolt.

Recalling that day, Helman stated, "Our girls, meanwhile, distracted the Ukrainians who had put down their rifles back in the waiting room" in the Camp 2 prisoner barracks building.[73] He further recounted how Moyshe Shnayder ran into this waiting room and attempted to flee with eight rifles these women secured. Shnayder was killed, though the number of Camp 2 testimonies that speak of prisoners firing on the guards seems to indicate that these weapons made it into the hands of others. This "waiting room" does not appear on any existing map of Treblinka. However, a women's barracks room, kapos' rooms, and a doctor's room adjoin in the same section of the Camp 2 barracks. Although all Helman says is "waiting room," there is no other conceivable purpose or reason for a waiting room that guards would use inside Treblinka—especially in the extermination area.

Szlomo Helman also recounts how Zelo Bloch and his group ambushed Ukrainian guards near the well. Without the other sections of Helman's statement, however, this is the only previously explored source of weapons (other than knives) for the revolt in Camp 2. Helman and Rosenberg's combined revelation of a brothel highlights the pivotal participation of women in

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[72] Though I find the term "brothel" distasteful, I recognize that its use does appear to be in keeping with current phrasing in the field of Holocaust studies more broadly while a suitable replacement is elusive. For work on camp sites of forced sexual exploitation and use of the term brothel, see Robert Sommer, *Das KZ-Bordell: Sexuelle Zwangsarbeit in Nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslagern* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2009); Sonja M. Hedgepeth and Rochelle G. Saidel, eds., *Sexual Violence against Jewish Women during the Holocaust*, HBI Series on Jewish Women (Waltham, MA; Hanover, NH: Brandeis University Press; University Press of New England, 2010).

[73] Statement of Szlomo Helman, June 7, 1961, in O.3, File 2267, Item 35555994, YVA, p. 14.

the revolt. The wording used by Helman is also important. He, a member of the resistance conspiracy, calls the women forced to endure the Camp 2 brothel "Our girls." Though this could mean "our" as fellow Jews or fellow prisoners, the need for coordination between these women and, at the very least, Moyshe Shnayder indicates that it is more likely these women were part of the conspiracy, included in "our" as coconspirators, or individuals fully aware of their role and what was to happen on the day of the revolt.

These eight additional rifles made it possible to pin down the guards and enable the escape of prisoners from Camp 2, as well as those who fled in this direction from Camp 1. Despite the number of weapons in the hands of prisoners from both sides of the fence and the existence of sources to the contrary, not one member of the German SS died in the frenzied confusion of that afternoon.[74] Only Kurt "Kiewe" Küttner, the target of that first fateful shot, was wounded during the fighting. The prisoners of Camp 2 fled through the south fence behind their barracks under the protection of Bloch and others, continuing in that direction through the forest.[75] Many Camp 1 prisoners near the ghetto barracks at the moment of the uprising followed this same path.[76] Members of the *Tarnungskommando* and the other groups the Organizing Committee managed to place in the vicinity of the east gate escaped by that route.[77] Willenberg recalled that the failure to silence the guard tower on that side of the camp led to

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[74] Rajchman, *The Last Jew of Treblinka*, 127; Testimony of Eugen Turowski, *United States v. Fedorenko*, 597 F. 2d 946, Vol. 2, p. 244 (Court of Appeals, 5th Circuit 1979).

[75] Smith, *Treblinka Survivor*, 135; since Wiernik was wounded on the run by a guard from Treblinka I, which was located to the south of Treblinka II, it is highly likely that he took the south escape route, though his testimony does not clearly confirm this. See Wiernik, *A Year in Treblinka*, L.825 and L.850; Rajchman, *The Last Jew of Treblinka*, 127; Kalman Teigman was present near the ghetto barracks and took a southerly escape route. See Testimony of Kalman Teigman, Adolf Eichmann Trial, 1–9, Section 66, Parts 4–7 (Jerusalem District Court 1961).

[76] Strawczynski is the exception to this generalization. He was near the ghetto barracks as the revolt broke out and headed out the east gate. See Strawczynski, "Ten Months in Treblinka," 181.

[77] Grinberg, "The Revolt in Treblinka," 222; Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 182; Tomlinson, *Treblinka's Last Witness*; Richard Glazer, RG-50.234.0014, JTHOHA, USHMM, October 26, 1981; Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 144; Rajzman's account also states that he fled in this direction with survivor Arie Kudlik. See Rajzman, "The End of Treblinka," 246; Abraham Kolski, transcript p. 11, RG-50.030.0113, JTHOHA, USHMM, March 29, 1990.

death by machinegun fire for many fleeing prisoners as they attempted to climb over the barbed wire entangled tank traps of Treblinka's outer perimeter.[78]

Sadly, the Organizing Committee itself had no survivors that day. According to survivor Leon Perelstein, Galewski made it to a concealed position in the woods outside the camp only to lose hope and commit suicide rather than fall back into German hands as he feared.[79] Galewski's reasons for taking his own life, if this single source is correct, are impossible to ascertain with certainty.[80] He might have preferred death to renewed captivity inside Treblinka, but he also could have been concerned that he knew too much about prisoner plans after escape to be taken alive. Whatever the reasoning for his decision, he lost his life—as did so many hundreds of thousands of others—to the terrible force of evil that was Treblinka.

Conclusion

At the moment the first shot rang out, Jews set Treblinka alight and made for the fences. Fully prepared or not, none wasted any time in making good on their plans for escape. In Camp 1, those positioned around the east gate, mainly the *Tarnungskommando*, the Reds, and the Blues, as well as others placed there by Galewski, took this path out of the camp. In Camp 2, the shot triggered Bloch's attack on the guards near the well as others grabbed rifles taken with the help of women at the brothel and worked to pin down the guards. All of this took place while still more prisoners cut the fence behind the barracks to the south in order to prepare a way out to the south. With the gate between both camps open as it was during the workday, many Camp 1

[78] Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 182–183; see also Willenberg's sculptures of revolt fighting and prisoners hung up on the east fence wires, 328.
[79] Testimony of Leon Perelstein states that Galewski took his own life outside the wire. See Webb and Chocholaty, *The Treblinka Death Camp*, 2nd ed., 236, 244.
[80] Sources do not agree on the manner of Galewski's death. Morton Mattel stated that he died in the revolt, but did not mention suicide. Morton Mattel, RG-50.347.0001, JTHOHA, USHMM, July 29, 1981.

prisoners fled through Camp 2 and took this southerly escape path. Bronka Sukno and Sonia Lewkowicz, both prisoners in Camp 2, escaped in this direction. Though others may have gotten out, they are the only two known women survivors of the Treblinka revolt.

While estimates vary, as many as 300 to 400 Jews may have fled the camp during the uprising.[81] Former commandant Franz Stangl told Gitta Sereny that only about 105 Jews out of around 840 in the camp remained alive inside after the fighting.[82] In Chapter Seven, I address what happened to the Jews who ran from Treblinka during the revolt as I analyze the concept of survival more broadly, including a discussion of how many people got out that day and what became of those who did not. The revolt made it possible for many prisoners to see the world beyond the fences even though a great deal of those people did not live out the day or long make good their escape. Chapter Seven further addresses the history of these people and how their stories make it necessary to define survival for this and other locations in the Holocaust.

It is impossible to know how many more prisoners might have survived if the informant Kuba had been dealt with as others were, or if prisoners had not made the emotion-driven decision to start the revolt early. Galewski and the other fallen planners and fighters of the revolt gave their lives in an organized act of violent, Offensive Resistance that enabled the flight of others, provided a measure of eventual justice for the perpetrators, and led to the preservation of historical facts the Nazis wished to erase. What's more, they and all other participants in resistance at Treblinka took control over the course—or even the end—of their own lives.

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[81] Samuel Willenberg thought that as many as 350 made it out on the day of the revolt while Samuel Rajzman estimated 150-200. Historian Yitzhak Arad estimated this number of people who fled during the revolt as high as 350-400. See Samuel Willenberg, "I Survived Treblinka," in *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (New York, NY: Waldon Press, 1979), 189–213, 212; House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Samuel Rajzman Testimony, "H.J. Resolution 93 - Punishment of War Crimes - 79th Congress, First Session" (United States Government Printing Office, 1945), Doc. Y4.F76/1: W19/5, pps. 120-125; Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 248; Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 298; Donat, *The Death Camp Treblinka*, 284.

[82] Sereny, *Into that Darkness*, 247-8.

Whether they lived out the day or not, history should recognize their efforts and view even death in resistance as a successful act of agency and control over one's own fate—one among many things the Holocaust attempted to take from all Jews.

I turn next to analyses of gender, memory, and the history of survival at Treblinka. The actions and importance of women prisoners in resistance at revolt at this camp are two distinctive interventions of this work. Chapter Six focuses on these and other issues, offering new understandings of how women persevered, how they carried out individual and networked acts of resistance, and why both survivor accounts and previous scholarship have paid so little attention to their lives and contributions. Despite the importance of resistance acts by women in both Camp 1 and Camp 2, very little attention has been paid to their efforts in the existing historiography of Treblinka. Men who survived the camp were also often reticent to discuss the lives of women or their roles in the uprising and earlier preparations. Chapter Six embarks upon an unsparing look at these issues, including further exploration of sex and sexual violence at Treblinka and the brothel that became an indispensable, yet barely remembered, place of resistance in Camp 2.

Chapter Six

Reevaluating the History and Memory of Women at Treblinka

Reevaluating the History and Memory of Women at Treblinka

Rita, as she preferred to be called for her privacy, never set foot in Treblinka. Try as they might, Nazi forces could not get her there. Twice placed on trains bound for the camp, she jumped and saved herself each time. Rita lived out the war and the Holocaust in hiding and recounted her experiences to a *Haaretz* reporter in 2004.[1] Her story is just one of many that demonstrates how Jewish women resisted before, during, and after transport to Treblinka. She is far from alone both in her will to thwart Nazi intentions and in her anonymity.

Lisa Spiro saved her son Harry by forcing him to join a group leaving the Piotrkow Ghetto. He tried to stay with her, but she was adamant, yelling "Let one of us survive!" as she forced him to join those chosen for work. Nazi guards placed Lisa and as many as 22,000 others on trains bound for Treblinka while Harry was sent to a labor camp. Knowing what awaited her, Spiro threw a final note from the train addressed to her son. A sympathetic local Pole delivered this message to Harry and he held on to her last words until the paper bearing them was taken from him at Buchenwald. Though she could do nothing for herself, her husband, or her daughter, Lisa Spiro saved her son from Treblinka. Lisa's name comes down to us through Harry's recollections of her life and fate.[2] Her knowledge of what came next, her tenacious will to protect her child even as she knew she would not live, and the very fact that her name is known set Lisa Spiro apart.

Morton Mattel endured life in the Warsaw Ghetto prior to his own deportation to Treblinka. While he was still there, he learned of what the camp really was from an escapee.

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[1] Neri Livneh, "In Hiding," *Haaretz*, February 26, 2004, https://www.haaretz.com/1.4727150; Personal Documents belonging to Holocaust Survivors Frymet Fusman and Fajwel Buchalter, 1945-1947, O.37, File 1161, Item 12065643, YVA.

[2] Harry S., Mssa.hvt.2359, November 30, 1990, Segment 12, 00:00:54, Yale University Fortunoff Video Archive [hereafter FVA]; Rosie Whitehouse, "The Loughton Boys: Holocaust Survivors in the Epping Forest District - Education Resource Pack - Part 2: Lesson Plans and Resources" (Epping Forest District Museum Education Service, May 2021), Epping Forest District Museum, 72-3.

Mattel recalled, "A woman came back … a lot of people [ran] away from the camp and they came back to tell."[3] When she returned to Warsaw, this woman was not believed. Whether or not he ever did know her name, Mattel did not provide it in his interview.[4] Whoever she was, this woman escapee passes out of Mattel's recollections after that one brief mention. Other women, also mostly nameless, occupy a larger place in at least the early written historical sources left behind by the men who survived Treblinka.

In recollections he originally penned in 1947, Eddie Weinstein wrote of seeing a woman dressed as a teenage boy working among the sorters at Treblinka. He stated that he did not know how long she survived in this disguise, but he was not the only man to remember a story like this.[5] Recording his experiences at Treblinka in 1943 for Emanuel Ringelblum's *Oyneg Shabbat* archive of the Warsaw Ghetto after his escape, Abraham Krzepicki also told of seeing a woman trying to pass as a man working among the Red Commando sorters. Without providing much further detail, Krzepicki stated that she was discovered and murdered by guards the same day. It is not entirely clear whether Krzepicki meant the same day that she arrived or the same day that he saw her, but another section of his writing insists that no women other than a few working in the kitchen survived in the camp for more than twenty-four hours.[6] Though that is not true, it does seem to represent his understanding of the camp or at least what he was willing to say about it.

In 1968, Gustaw Boraks told German investigators about seeing a woman who tried to blend into the sorting details dressed as a man before she was discovered by SS guard August

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[3] Morton Mattel, RG-50.347.0001, JTHOHA, USHMM, July 29, 1981.
[4] Morton Mattel, RG-50.347.0001, JTHOHA, USHMM, July 29, 1981.
[5] Eddie Weinstein, *17 Days in Treblinka: Daring to Resist, and Refusing to Die*, 4th ed. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem Publications, 2009), 56.
[6] Abraham Krzepicki, "Eighteen Days in Treblinka," in *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (New York, NY: Waldon Press, 1979), 77–145, 103, 117.

Miete, who took her to the Lazarett to be shot.[7] Speaking to investigators in 1961, Avraham Goldfarb also told of a woman from a Warsaw transport who managed to sneak herself into a work detail disguised as a man. Goldfarb described her as dressed in men's clothes with her short hair concealed, likely under a hat. This woman was spotted by "Kive," a nickname prisoners gave to SS guard Kurt Küttner, and singled out for torture. Küttner ordered her hung upside down from her feet until he had her killed.[8] The different fates of these women and the different guards recalled in these two stories make it clear that Boraks and Goldfarb are not describing the same person.

At least two women, and possibly more, tried to survive by posing as men in the work details at Treblinka. Close attention to the way Goldfarb described the hair of the woman he saw is also particularly important. Though unlikely, it might have been possible for a woman to arrive at Treblinka dressed in feminine clothing and quickly change into men's clothes as others undressed. The short hair Goldfarb described, however, indicates that this woman may have been posing as a man in a longer-term strategy of survival before ending up on a transport to Treblinka. Even though women's heads were shaved at the camp, it would not be feasible for a woman to redress or escape after this. The locations in which women had their heads shaved offered almost no chance to get away and slip into the workforce unnoticed. Indeed, by the time women reached the barbering areas of the camp their fates were already sealed.[9]

The fact that multiple witnesses recall women attempting to survive by dressing as men further indicates that this may have been a resistance technique women employed on a not

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[7] Statement of Gustaw Boraks, September 15, 1968, B162, F 3820, BL, p. 4254.
[8] Avram Goldfarb, March 13, 1961, O.3, File 1846, Item 3556004, YVA, p. 22.
[9] As described in previous chapters, the hair cutting area was for a time located in unused rooms of the new gas chamber building. After this experiment hair cutting was moved to a room in the left women's undressing barrack where it remained for most of the time Treblinka operated. Escape back into the prisoner population from either location, especially the gas chamber itself, would have been nearly impossible without calling on a great deal of help from prisoners and creating several witnesses to the process.

entirely infrequent basis. Risking all to avoid arrival at Treblinka, concealment of their sex, and other actions discussed later in this chapter should be recognized as resistance by Jewish women *as women*. Lisa Spiro's story, meanwhile, shows that women also knew what awaited them at the camp, and they sought to preemptively protect themselves and others. Spiro's "choiceless choice" was to focus her efforts on the protection of her son, while other women tried to find a way to avoid death themselves. The decision to dress as men further proves that women were aware of the additional dangers they faced on the basis of their sex. Even women not yet in Treblinka knew that their selection for work was even less likely than it was for men.

Although the above stories of women's arrival and pre-arrival resistance have long existed in the archives, they have received little attention from historians. Other equally underexplored instances of solo or uncoordinated resistance by women as they stepped off trains are even more startling. Goldfarb's statements to Treblinka investigators, for example, also included the story of a woman who stabbed a guard as she arrived at the camp. Additionally, survivor Czeslaw Augustyniak's statement to prosecutors in 1960 told of a woman—already undressed—who escaped from the line to the gas chambers and slashed a kapo with a knife. An SS guard seized that woman and placed her back in line to the gas, but the man she wounded later died of tetanus.[10] It again appears from the number of testimonies mentioning such attacks that they were not entirely rare.

Jankiel Wiernik, the Treblinka construction foreman, wrote in 1944 that a naked woman being led to the gas chamber broke away and rushed a Ukrainian guard. Remarkably, Wiernik told of how she took his rifle and killed one guard while wounding another so badly that his arm

[10] Statement of Czeslaw Augustyniak (formerly Leo Blaustein), February 4, 1960, B162, F3821, BL, pp. 992-9, p. 996.

later required amputation. She did not survive long after her attack.[11] Abraham Goldfarb further recounted to prosecutors the story of a woman who guards pulled from the line of arriving people with the intention of sexually assaulting her. This woman attacked her would-be rapists with a razor, foiling their plans. Though rape was never charged in Treblinka trials, prosecutors found this story so compelling that they questioned a former guard about it during his interrogation. No one should be surprised that he denied it ever took place.[12]

I begin this chapter with the above stories of individual resistance by women as a means to show that the will to push back against Nazi power was not the sole possession of men at Treblinka. Women's unplanned and even armed or violent resistance occurred often enough to enter the early record from several sources. Included among these is a powerfully retold instance of resistance during an attempted rape of a Jewish woman by Ukrainian guards.[13] These moments further indicate that the planning of resistance, though controlled by men, was not something in which those men needed to convince women to take part. The stories of these women make it clear that both sexes stepped of the trains looking for ways to send a message, save their own lives, or at least control the terms of their deaths.

This chapter turns my analysis of resistance at Treblinka to the actions of women and the reasons we have long known so little about them. Earlier chapters have already revealed a wide range of women's coordinated resistance actions from their successful group protest at the

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[11] Jankiel Wiernik, *A Year in Treblinka: An Inmate Who Escaped Tells the Day-to-Day Facts of One Year of His Torturous Experience*, eBook (Pickle Partners Publishing, 2014), L.397.

[12] Statement of former SS guard Arthur Matthes, March 30, 1962, B162, F3826, BL, pp. 2058-649, p. 2062 back side, also marked p. 11 on the document.

[13] Multiple mentions of knife or blade attacks by women arriving at the camp unfortunately provide no understanding of where women got these weapons. For all we may ever know, blades could have been found in the belongings of others as newly arrived people undressed or these knives could have been brought to the camp by the women themselves. With no answer here, we are again left wondering about the level of premeditation involved in these attacks just as we cannot answer how long the above women dressed as men in the attempt to improve their chances of survival

attempted removal of their foreman in the laundry, to their pivotal actions as couriers and observers, the revelation of a Camp 2 brothel, and their provision and distribution of weapons for the revolt. Also mentioned previously is the often-unhelpful silence of male survivors when it comes to the lives of women at Treblinka. Though the archival record does show that instances of women's resistance were not rare, several factors have long combined to obscure their history. First and foremost is the fact that there are so few identified women survivors. While Chapter Seven will take on the topic of survival in much greater depth, the next section addresses the paucity of sources by women and the importance this issue places on work to understand what men will and will not say about women.

To understand the lives of Jewish women at Treblinka, their roles in resistance, and their subsequent disappearance from the record, this chapter first focuses on how men discuss women in their early written sources before circling back to a pair of Places of Resistance explored earlier in this dissertation. Additional analysis of the Camp 1 kitchen demonstrates the roles of women prisoners in resistance and how their actions were, and were not, remembered in oral histories recorded with male survivors. Following this, a renewed focus on the Camp 2 brothel revealed in Chapter Five provides an opportunity to confront the ways in which historians themselves have at times avoided chances to provide a more complete picture of the lives of women at Treblinka.

Events that took place at the Camp 1 kitchen and the Camp 2 brothel, as well as our knowledge of them in the present, are inextricably entangled with the effects of gendered thinking. Belief in normative gender roles not only helped keep these places safe from the suspicions of guards, but also worked to conceal the very existence of women at Treblinka in both the later testimonies of male survivors and succeeding historical texts. A focus on the time

and type of Treblinka sources also shows that men recalled the presence and actions of women at Treblinka differently as the years since the Holocaust increased and as the storytelling format changed. In the penultimate section of this chapter, I return to the oral history recordings of male survivors and how these prompt consideration of archival silences and the gender dynamics of Holocaust memory and history more broadly.

The Scarcity of Women's Sources and Parsing the Recollections of Men

Bronka Sukno and Sonia Lewkowicz remain the only two known women survivors of the Treblinka revolt.[14] My research reveals another seven women who passed through the camp and made it out alive, though none of them were in Treblinka long enough to comment on life and resistance at this place.[15] As Morton Mattel's discussion of an unnamed woman escapee indicates, however, more as yet unidentified women survived Treblinka. Though the record in this regard is spotty at best, other sources draw out the reasons why women might have avoided identification as Treblinka survivors or tried to distance themselves from the post-Holocaust justice process as well as later history projects.

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[14] Alexander Donat's list of Treblinka survivors includes Bronka Sukno, Sonia Lewkowicz, and Sonia Grabinski. Grabinski, however, is the unmarried name of Sonia Lewkowicz. For the original list, see Alexander Donat, ed., *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (New York, NY: Waldon Press, 1979), 284-91.

[15] The seven other women survivors are: Minia Berman, Vivian Chakin (formerly Sidranska), Zelda Gordon, Riva Kremr, Linda Penn (formerly Luba Kremr, daughter of Riva Kremr), Helen Schwartz, and Feny Zycherman. Minia Berman is included on the updated Treblinka Muzeum list. I do not know how she survived, see Edwarda Kopówki and Aliny Skibińskiej, "Resistance and Uprising – Muzeum Treblinka," accessed September 28, 2019, https://muzeum treblinka.eu/en/informacje/resistance-and-uprising/. For the other six women, see Vivian Chakin, Interview 7457, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, November 21, 1995; Zelda Gordon, Interview 15, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, July 15, 1994; Linda Penn, Interview 38042, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, January 11, 1998; Linda Penn, Interview 55144, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, January 24, 1992; Helen Schwartz, Interview 2889, Tape 3 of 6. 07:20- 15:00 and archival PIQ Report, p. 5, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, May 29, 1995. Helen Schwartz also gave a prior, shorter, less-detailed interview to the Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre of Greater Toronto, a USC Shoah Foundation partner institution. She does not mention Treblinka in this interview. Helen Schwartz, Interview 54305, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, May 4, 1988; Feny Zycherman, Interview 1228, Tape 2 of 3. 02:30, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, February 27, 1995.

In an oral history interview, Treblinka survivor Yaakov Eisner recalled a telling interaction with a woman who survived Treblinka and sought to find a way out of appearing in court. As he was preparing to travel to Germany to testify at one of the Treblinka trials, Eisner stated that he spoke to a woman who feared she would have to admit she "lived with a German" if she testified.[16] He further explained that she did not want this revealed because she was by then married with children. Sadly, this woman told Eisner that she feared her husband might leave her and break up their family if what she did to survive came out in open court. Eisner wrapped up this story by relating how he helped this woman secure letters from two doctors stating that she was too ill to travel for the trial.

Jewish women who survived the camp may have avoided telling their stories for a variety of reasons, though Eisner's interview highlights one that is, for the most part, particular to their wartime and postwar experiences as women. Female survivors of the Holocaust endured not only the deep and lasting traumas of those events as did their male peers, but also the possibility of latter-day judgement on the part of loved ones and society at large. Of course, men too were at times victims of the sort of sexual violence and coerced relationships that could dissuade women from bearing witness, though this was neither routinely assumed of them, nor a frequent basis of character assassination for men in postwar life. This is also not to say that men were always willing voices of this history. Many of them never came forward or only did so briefly near the end of their lives. For men, however, the choice of whether or not to speak out had more to do with the emotional weight of reliving their own traumas than it did with the possible assumptions of their audiences.

[16] Yaakov E., Mssa.hvt.3371, Part 2, Segment 17, 00:24:51, FVA, June 19, 1992.

The scarcity of historical sources created by women that results from how few survived and how few came forward effectively means that research must be carried out almost entirely in documents and interviews by men. The most challenging issues presented by the overwhelmingly male voice of Treblinka sources are their tendencies to deny the presence of women at the camp or to judge and distort their actions. What's more, male survivors who do speak of women often tend to exclude their names, making further investigation of individuals nearly impossible.

In the same oral history interview recounting the story of this woman who was in the camp but did not want to testify, Eisner also, quite stunningly, states that there were no women prisoners in Treblinka. He made that assertion only *after* he described the dilemma faced by the woman survivor he knew in postwar life.[17] Eisner's oral history, thus, highlights two of the reasons we know so little about the history of women prisoners at Treblinka and their participation in resistance and revolt. The first is their own understandable reluctance to relive these events, and the second is their later erasure by many of the male survivors they lived and fought alongside.

For his part, Yaakov Eisner's failure to name the woman of whom he spoke was an act of protection. Naming her could have done the very damage that she sought to avoid by staying away from the trials. As the following sections make clear, however, the tendency of male survivors to leave women unnamed in their recollections cannot always be explained in this way. The erasure of women from Treblinka resistance history and from Places of Resistance at the camp—or at least the silence of many men as to their contributions—is a topic to which the

[17] Yaakov E., Mssa.hvt.3371, Part 4, Segment 31, 00:00:36, FVA.

succeeding sections return in one form or another. In the next, I turn to the earliest memoirs of male survivors and how these present the history of women at Treblinka.

Recollections of Women in Men's Early Memoirs

Of all the sources created by men, their early memoirs mention women's lives, acts in resistance, and what happened to them at Treblinka in the most candid detail. This is, of course, in part because these sources are the longest individual recollections created by each author. In addition to this, reading these sources in conjunction and comparison with more recent oral histories shows that men were much more open in the years immediately after the Holocaust and in the unmediated memoir form. While later sections of this chapter take up an analysis of oral histories and how the process of their creation can affect Holocaust survivor storytelling, a focus on the contents of the earliest memoirs uncovers a range of stories about women as well as recollections of sexual relations and sexual violence that is absent from later sources. Manuscripts that are sometimes called "forest account[s]," meaning those written in hiding as the war still raged and the Holocaust still threatened, are the greatest examples of this phenomenon.[18]

Moyshe Klaynman's forest account certainly holds place as the most unique firsthand account of life inside Treblinka. Written as early as 1943, Klaynman penned his recollections as a four-act musical drama.[19] Klaynman's memoir is further distinctive for his extensive recollections of the women who lived and worked around him at the Camp 1 tailor's shop. His

[18] David Silberklang, "Foreword," in *Escaping Hell in Treblinka* (New York and Jerusalem: Yad Vashem and the Holocaust Survivor's Memoirs Project, 2007), ix–xiii, op. cit. 2, p. x.
[19] Unpublished memoir of Moyshe Klaynman, written between 1944-1947, M.49, File 118, Item 3547904, YVA; see also Chad Gibbs and Matthew Greene, "*Briv funem arkhiv*: A Memoir in Four Acts: Moyshe Klaynman and Survival at Treblinka," *In geveb* (May 2020), Accessed Jun 21, 2021.

memoir includes a woman named only as "*dos meydl*," or the young woman, on 25 of its 72 pages—by far the greatest inclusion of women in any extensive source penned by a male survivor.[20] What's more, Klaynman's *dos meydl* character is not a mere subject of his story, she is a protagonist in his telling and a participant in the resistance conspiracy.

Dos meydl sings most of the songs that set the tone of Klaynman's memoir, and she puts questions to the character that represents Klaynman himself in ways that move the narrative. In a prime example, *dos meydl* is present for conversations about the danger of informants and what prisoners should do about this threat. As previously covered in detail, Treblinka prisoners acted to eliminate those who collaborated with the German SS and Ukrainian guards to protect the revolt plan. Offering her ideas on what to do about this problem, *dos meydl* asks "*der forarbeter*," or the foreman—Klaynman's character, "could some people take the informers one night and hang them? We could say that they did it themselves."[21] By suggesting that resistance organizers kill informants in the barracks at night and conceal their acts as suicide, *dos meydl* shows just how involved in resistance strategy she is as well as her deep awareness of planning problems. Her acts in resistance, however, do not stop at this incredible exchange.

Klaynman spells out the entire plan for the day of the revolt in a further conversation between his *der forarbeter* character and *dos meydl*. In this exchange, the reader learns all that Klaynman knew about what the Organizing Committee hoped to accomplish on August 2 and how *dos meydl* contributes information through her ability to enter the SS barracks.[22] However, this same exchange also demonstrates how the misogynist thinking of many men constrained the

[20] Moyshe Klaynman's memoir anonymizes all characters under work titles or personal descriptions. As such, though he only refers to the main female character in his writing as *dos meydl*, Klaynman's writing is not one of those sources that tends to leave out the names of women while naming men. In this manuscript, no one is named.
[21] Moyshe Klaynman, 1944-1947, M.49, File 118, Item 3547904, YVA, p. 27.
[22] Klaynman, 1944-1947, M.49, File 118, Item 3547904, YVA, pp. 59-60.

roles of women in resistance at Treblinka. *Dos meydl* asks Klaynman how she can be of help on the day of the uprising, and he states that she will need to prepare the other women for what is to come and keep them calm. Klaynman's character tells *dos meydl* that women get disturbed at the sight of blood and that he will need her help to keep the other women of the work details from becoming hysterical by having them look away and shelter themselves as men carry out the attack.[23]

Klaynman, it appears, sincerely believed that women in an extermination camp still needed to be protected from the sight of blood and acts of violence. Therein, his narrative displays a kind of paternalist thinking that is entirely out of sorts with the realities of life for anyone of either sex inside Treblinka. Historian and US Army officer Justine Meberg's research on depictions of women and the foundations of early American military culture is instructive for how we might parse Klaynman's recollections and those of others in this regard. Meberg explains both how military authorities had a tendency to "[write] women… out of the narrative" when describing combat and how a deeply ingrained "logic of protection" shaped men's thinking on women even in circumstances where this was entirely out of keeping with the realities of warfare experienced by both sexes.[24] The routinely brutal, murderous, and exploitative conditions of life inside Treblinka serve to place this kind of thinking in even greater relief.

While Klaynman does not write women out of the narrative—as his fellow survivors spoke them out of it in later interviews—he did pen a dramatic representation of Treblinka in which men acted on a logic of protection that was far beyond their true capabilities in the camp. His musical memoir further demonstrates that the world in which Klaynman found himself did

[23] Klaynman, 1944-1947, M.49, File 118, Item 3547904, YVA, p. 61-3.
[24] Justine Meberg, "The Logic of Protection: The US Army and Enemy Women in the Second Seminole War and Mexican War, 1835-1848" (Doctoral Dissertation, New York, NY, Columbia University, (in progress) 2021), 16-17.

little or nothing to break him of a belief in contemporary gender norms that had little place in camp realities. In this tendency, Klaynman was not alone. Oskar Strawczynski's forest account further displays how thoughts on propriety and morality were largely unchanged by pressures of life inside Treblinka.[25] Where Klaynman at least wrote of women in resistance, Strawczynski most often mentions them in conjunction with his judgements of their social interactions while granting women no role whatsoever in the planning or execution of the revolt.

Oskar Strawczynski's existence as head of the tin shop and one of the so-called *Hofjuden* at Treblinka placed him in regular contact and proximity to women prisoners living and working in Camp 1. Strawczynski's long and relatively privileged tenure inside Treblinka also gave him the ability to observe the duties and off-hours routines of the prisoners he called the camp's "aristocracy."[26] He is mostly correct in his statement that around thirty women lived and worked near him in Camp 1, though his descriptions of how they lived offer opportunities for further analysis.[27]

After providing the number of women prisoners and describing their jobs in the laundry, kitchen, craft-making, and one each employed as a doctor and a dentist, Strawczynski speaks of their actions in an aggrieved moralistic tone. He states that "The women did not work hard," before adding that "they dressed luxuriously and behaved disgracefully" in the camp.[28] His following passages make it clear that the behavior he found most disgraceful were their sexual relations with other prisoners and even guards. Strawczynski states that five women had husbands in the camp and places them beyond reproach, but also recalls that the remaining

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[25] Oskar Strawczynski penned his memoir in 1944, though it did not reach publication until 2007. His manuscript resides in Yad Vashem, see Testimony of Oskar Strawczynski, O.3, File 3131, Item 3557650, YVA. Published as Oskar Strawczynski, "Ten Months in Treblinka," in *Escaping Hell in Treblinka* (New York, Jerusalem: Yad Vashem Publications, 2007), 117–82.
[26] Strawczynski, "Ten Months in Treblinka," 158.
[27] Strawczynski, 154.
[28] Strawczynski, 154.

women all had "admirers" among the camp's leading prisoners and spent their free hours partying, drinking, and using obscene language. His ire continues with the statement, "They, our Treblinka women, were not squeamish even about Germans or Ukrainians."[29] While he does not explain exactly what he means in his statement about women and their interactions with the German or Ukrainian guards, Strawczynski's statements here should make us recall the woman Yaakov Eisner knew and why she sought to evade testifying in court after the war.

Strawczynski's position gave him the ability to attend or observe late evening performances by the Warsaw musician Arthur Gold and the orchestra that German guards formed around him. Gold and his band, sometimes accompanied by a mixed sex choir, would play for the guards when ordered and sometimes continue thereafter inside the ghetto barracks workshops with an audience of—as Strawczynski describes—leading male prisoners, their "girlfriends," and sometimes "bored Germans."[30] One of these so-called girlfriends was in a relationship with Kapo Rakowski of the Reds who was for a time *Lagerältester*. Though Strawczynski never mentions her name, Richard Glazar names this woman as "Cescha," or, most likely, Tchechia Mandel.[31] In fact, Strawczynski mentions the name of only one woman in his writing. He recalls the shooting death of "Maniele," one of the married women whom he describes more respectfully, during the revolt.[32]

Strawczynski's judgement of his fellow prisoners for their sexual relations did not stop at women, though the tone of his writing demonstrates that he held them to a different standard and was particularly disappointed in their actions. He called one male prisoner "corrupt and

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[29] Strawczynski, 154.
[30] Strawczynski, 158.
[31] Strawczynski, 176; Richard Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence: Survival in Treblinka*, Jewish Lives (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1995), 100; see also SS guard Franz Suchomel's recollections of Tchechia Mandel in Gitta Sereny, *Into That Darkness: An Examination of Conscience* (New York: Vintage Books, 1983), 195. Chapter Seven discusses the later fate of Mandel.
[32] Strawczynski, "Ten Months in Treblinka," 181.

debauched" and labelled another a molester of women.[33] Strawczynski also named Kapo Jurek of the Red Commando as a rapist, saying "This brute would not hesitate to take aside a girl, already naked, on her way to the bath. Promising to save her, he would do the worst, and then push her back into the line."[34] In these passages, Strawczynski shows a greater willingness to confront the sexual violence of fellow prisoners than that present in many other sources.

Strawczynski's memoir makes clear that he could not—at the immediate time in which he wrote—grasp the tenuous and additionally imperiled position of women at Treblinka. For him, the moral code of the outside world still applied despite all that he experienced or saw at Treblinka. Strawczynski still castigated women for behavior that we should view in the light of Lawrence Langer's "choiceless choices" or seek to clarify as forms of instrumental sex and a means of personal survival. Strawczynski and other skilled male prisoners could find a degree of safety in their roles. Women employed in easily replaceable jobs like those in the laundry or kitchens had no such luxury. Just as the wider prisoner conspiracy sought power in the cultivation of relationships, or networks, it can be logically assumed that women did the same in their decisions to attach themselves to individuals able to provide food or safety through their own much more secure and powerful positions in the camp. Strawczynski, however, is not the only survivor to address these relationships.

In his memoir written just after the war, though edited and published some four decades later, the tone and content of Richard Glazar's recollections show how the presentation of men's memories of women, sex, and sexual violence changed over time.[35] Glazar, too, was a member

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[33] Strawczynski, 132, 177.
[34] Strawczynski, 132.
[35] In his Foreword to the English-language edition of Glazar's memoir, Wolfgang Benz provides a history of Glazar's writing and publication. Benz states that Glazar wrote his manuscript in the years just after the war in Czech though it was not published until some forty years later in German translation. The English version appeared a few years after this in 1995. Benz mentions that Glazar edited his memoir in the 1990s before it appeared in English or German. Without access to his original Czech version, it is impossible to say what sort of mediation may

of what Strawczynski called Treblinka's "middle class" of prisoners often able to observe and interact with women and the men closest to them in the camp.[36] In his memoir, Glazar spoke of relationships between women and men as well but did so without inclusion of the darkest violent realities recalled by Strawczynski or the moral judgements of his fellow survivor. Recalling the same nights of music and what Strawczynski called "partying" in the barracks, Glazar wrote that as the musicians played:

> The others stand around the workshop tables. Sometimes a few of the women join in. It's said that, here and there, a few even find moments in which to satisfy their most personal desires. I find this hard to believe. In Treblinka these feelings are the first to be burned out, even before the rest of our bodies. Anyway, where would people get together now that the women are living in separate quarters?[37]

What Glazar says here is interesting for several reasons. First, because he wants to imply that sexual desire is quelled by the conditions of life in the camp and, second, because he confirms that women once did live in the same area as men.

Even after the move to new quarters of which Glazar speaks, however, women in Camp 1 were still only on the other side of a wall in the same building as men. Given the fact that all were locked into this structure at night with little or no immediate guard supervision, this wall would have mattered little to what went on at night. As to his wonder about where liaisons might take place, the answer is likely the same shops of which he also speaks. In a later section of his memoir, Glazar states that men and women relaxed outdoors with each other on hot nights and that they would "parade arm in arm with their men around the assembly site."[38] Clearly,

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have taken place between his immediate memories and what he chose to release those decades later. Wolfgang Benz, "Foreword," in *Trap with a Green Fence: Survival in Treblinka* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1995), vii–ix; Richard Glazar, *Die Falle mit dem Grünen Zaun: Überleben in Treblinka* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1992); Richard Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence: Survival in Treblinka*, Jewish Lives (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1995).

[36] Strawczynski, "Ten Months in Treblinka," 154.

[37] Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 57-8.

[38] Glazar, 124-5.

there was no need to conceal the existence of prisoner-to-prisoner intimate relationships from guards or other inmates. These two areas of Glazar's recollections indicate that desire was not "burned out" of many, and that he was, at some level, aware of connections between other men and the women of Treblinka.

In these contradictions between an end of sexual desire and recollections of intimate displays, Glazar's memories turn a corner toward the sort of silence that would come to characterize later accounts of Treblinka by men who survived the camp. Other memoirs, including one written by a man who later gave an oral history that contradicts his earlier account, further display how men's recollections of women change, becoming less detailed or even non-existent over time. To draw out the silences and evasions of these later sources, the next two sections focus on Places of Resistance at Treblinka and how the actions of women were of paramount importance at each. Sources by male survivors and later historians have, at times, worked to conceal or evade discussion of women at these places or at Treblinka entirely. The latter issue is most apparent in any analysis of oral histories. A section on those sources follows a return to the Camp 1 kitchen, next, and the Camp 2 brothel thereafter.

The Camp Kitchen and Male Silence

Exploration of women's roles in resistance at the camp kitchens returns us once again to the day of the revolt and plans for the distribution of stolen weapons just before the appointed start of the fighting. Renewed focus on this Place of Resistance and its role in the uprising further provides a prime example of how the later testimonies of men sometimes erase women from both the history of Treblinka and the planning of resistance. Taking on these issues also

moves from the analysis of early postwar sources to the later, and often late-life, interviews of male survivors.

In just such an oral history interview recorded in 1999, survivor Abram Kolski stated that he was to collect a weapon from the camp kitchen a couple of hours before the revolt. He explained that arms intended for his work detail were stored there after other prisoners had stolen them from the SS armory with use of the secretly acquired key.[39] What Kolski did not say—at this or any other time in his interview—was that Jewish women staffed this kitchen.

In fact, Kolski never mentioned women prisoners in his oral history at all. As we have seen in other sources, however, work details in the kitchen, the German, Ukrainian, and Jewish laundries, as well as tailors' shop in the main section of the camp were either entirely or partly staffed by Jewish women.[40] Survivor Sonia Lewkowicz worked in the German laundry.[41] Each of the laundries was quite near or inside the barracks, with the washing facility servicing the German SS adjoining the kitchen. Bronka Sukno, the other woman to survive the uprising, worked in the tailors' shop in the same building near both the laundry and kitchen. In total, as many as 40 Jewish women worked in Camp 1 with a further 13-20 working and housed near the gas chambers and burial pits. The latter group includes those held in the Camp 2 brothel.

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[39] Abram Kolski, Interview 49970, Tape 5 of 8, 03:00-13:20, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, July 29, 1999.

[40] Sam Goldberg, Interview 30760, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, July 13, 1997; Sam Goldberg, family interview with his son, Dr. Shlomo Goldberg, 1991, in possession of the author courtesy of Karen Treiger, daughter-in-law of Sam Goldberg, see also Karen I. Treiger, *My Soul Is Filled with Joy: A Holocaust Story*, 1st ed. (Seattle, WA: Stare Lipki Press, 2018); Shmuel "Samuel" Goldberg, "Between Stok and Treblinka [*Tsvishn stok un treblinke*]," in *The Chronicle of Stok (Near Wengrow): An Eternal Memorial* [*Pinkes stok (bay vengrow): matseyve netsekh*], ed. Y. Tsudiker (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Organization of Stokers in Israel; Stok Community Group "Society" of North America; Stok Community Group of Argentina; Stoker Group of Canada, 1974), 429–34; Y. Tsudiker, *The Chronicle of Stok (Near Wengrow): An Eternal Memorial* [*Pinkes Stok (Bay Vengrow): Matseyve Netsekh*] (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Organization of Stokers in Israel; Stok Community Group "Society" of North America; Stok Community Group of Argentina; Stoker Group of Canada, 1974).

[41] Statement of Sonia Lewkowicz, November 8, 1959, in B162, F 3818, BL, p. 179; Statement of Sonia Lewkowicz, June 23, 1960, in B162, F 3824, BL, p. 1658.

Abram Kolski is not alone in his silence on the daily lives and contributions of women prisoners. Unlike Eisner's interview, however, he did not deny the existence of women in Treblinka, he just never brought them up and he was not asked about them. Kolski's fellow survivor Abraham Bomba's oral history interview is more like that of Eisner. Asked about the presence of women in Treblinka, Bomba told his interviewer the following. (Note that by "my camp" Bomba means Camp 1.)

> Interviewer: Were there any women assigned in your camp?
> Abraham Bomba: In my camp there was no women.
> Interviewer: It was all men?
> Abraham Bomba: There was two women, which I find out about it. They were over there. They were working over there. After the war, I know – I know what one of them, Sonia, I knew her very well. I met her. We were together in Israel. A lovely woman. [In the following sentence, Mr. Bomba's tone becomes much more resolute, placing emphasis on individual syllables as he speaks.] But besides these two women, I don't know any other women was there. It could be, but I do not know.[42]

Bomba's statement here is remarkable for several reasons. First, because he is in error and—whether or not he had blocked out this truth by the time he gave his interview—he must have known this was not the case while he was in the camp.

Bomba escaped Treblinka prior to the revolt, though not until he had endured months inside the camp. As one of the few Treblinka survivors to achieve some level of notoriety, Bomba is widely remembered for the difficult and emotional interviews he gave to Claude Lanzmann for the documentary *Shoah*. In these, Bomba recalls his forced labor as a barber cutting the hair of women sent to their deaths in the gas chamber.[43] He and other men who evade or discount the existence of women prisoners in later interviews never deny that the Nazis murdered thousands of women at the camp. They just will not talk about the more personal fates

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[42] Abraham Bomba, Interview 18062, Tape 3 of 7, 21:27, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, August 14, 1996.
[43] Lanzmann, *Shoah* (film); Lanzmann, *Shoah* (book), 102-8.

of women who lived in the camp as fellow prisoners. Kolski, too, recounts resistance by women as they arrived—including a woman who killed one man and wounded another with a razor blade as she got off the train like those in the introduction of this chapter—all the while he says nothing about women prisoners.[44]

Other testimonies and attention to camp geography can help us arrive at conclusions despite the contradictions of witnesses like Bomba, Eisner, and Kolski. Treblinka survivor Jonas Kornhendler's oral history interview provides a starting point. Kornhendler arrived at Treblinka from Czestochowa, Poland in September 1943.[45] Bomba was also in the Czestochowa Ghetto and was deported to Treblinka at about the same time.[46] Neither man is exact about the date, so it is even possible they arrived on the same transport. Where Kornhendler diverts from the path taken by Bomba is in his frankness about the existence of women prisoners in Treblinka. He not only said that they worked in the kitchen, he also stated that you could see them and the kitchen from the barracks in which he slept—the same barracks as Bomba. Kornhendler also possessed almost identical access to geography, or areas in which he was allowed without drawing the attention of guards, from which he could observe the camp. It is almost impossible to believe that Eisner, Kolski, and Bomba did not see these women. Indeed, it is even hard to believe that they did not speak to them. Beyond Kornhendler's statement that you could see their workplace from the barracks, the fact that Jewish women prisoners slept in a partitioned area of the same building in which men were housed is also well-documented.[47]

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[44] Abram Kolski's level of detail in his recollection of a razor attack by a woman arriving at Treblinka is not sufficient to determine whether he is remembering a separate incident or one of those already noted above.
[45] Jonas Kornhendler was deported to Treblinka from the Czestochowa Ghetto around Yom Kippur (September 20-21) 1942. He escaped with one other man from Czestochowa over the fences after two weeks in the camp, see Jonas Kornhendler, Interview 30369, Tape 1 of 4, 20:00-26:00 and Tape 2 of 4, 00:15-13:30 and PIQ Report, pp. 3,5,7, and 14, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, June 30, 1997.
[46] Lanzmann, *Shoah* (book), 17.
[47] Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 58; Richard Glazar, Interview 8552, transcript p. 60, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, February 5, 1996.

The woman Bomba names in his interview—Sonia Lewkowicz—was not transferred to the other side of the camp until after Bomba had escaped.[48] At the time he, Eisner, Kolski, and Kornhendler were in Treblinka, Lewkowicz was one of the very women Bomba says he never saw.[49] It would be surprising if where she worked did not come up when they met in postwar life. The descendants of Sam Goldberg—laundry detail supervisor—recorded a prisoner reunion in the year 2000 that both Sonia Lewkowicz and Bronka Sukno attended along with four male survivors and family. At this gathering, the survivors all talked of the camp and what they went through there.[50] Bomba's earlier meetings with Lewkowicz would have likely gone the same way. Meeting women survivors in Israel, however, did not change Bomba's recollections of women's work details in the camp. What he said in the interview shows that making the acquaintance of Sukno and Lewkowicz only led him to state that there were two women in the camp—nothing more. He did not add context for their lives, discuss their larger work details, or comment on what they were doing in Treblinka. Contemporary witnesses, however, are not the only individuals to erase women from Treblinka and its story of resistance. Historians, too, have played a role in the lack of focus on women at Treblinka.

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[48] Sonia Lewkowicz told an American court that she was not transferred to Camp 2 until March 5, 1943. Her citation of this quite specific date indicates that this was a particularly strong memory for her, see: Testimony of Sonia Lewkowicz, United States v. Fedorenko, 597 F. 2d 946 (Court of Appeals, 5th Circuit 1979).

[49] Abraham Bomba escaped from Treblinka in January of 1943. Bronka Sukno arrived at Treblinka on January 18, 1943, so it is possible that they were also in the camp at the same time, though this cannot be stated with certainty. Lewkowicz arrived at Treblinka December 14, 1942, so she and Bomba were definitely in the camp at the same time, see Statement of Sonia Lewkowicz, June 23, 1960, in B162, F 3824, BL, p. 1658; Statement of Bronka Sukno, June 14, 1962, in B162, F 3825, BL, p.1874.

[50] Goldberg/Treiger Family Treblinka Survivor Reunion Video (in Hebrew, Yiddish, and English), February 2000, in possession of the author courtesy of Karen Treiger.

The Camp 2 Brothel and Historical Avoidance

This chapter lacks a historiographical section of its own because so little has been written about the lives of women at Treblinka. No academic article addresses the history of women at this camp specifically, let alone any monograph-length work. While this is at least in part understandable because women constituted such a small minority of prisoners and there exists such a scarcity of sources on women at Treblinka that I also acknowledge, a certain avoidance of the topics of sex and sexual violence in Holocaust historiography doubtless plays a role in this desideratum. In his 1987 book *The Operation Reinhard Death Camps: Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka* and its 2018 updated edition, the historian Yitzhak Arad titles a five-page chapter "Women Prisoners."[51] His work in this section remains the only entry in the secondary literature that focuses on Jewish women as specific subjects of research. Though Arad did take on this topic long before the field turned toward a greater emphasis on the study of women, gender, or issues like masculinity and sex and sexual violence, his work also provides a prime example of the avoidance of these difficult topics by historians.

Arad's chapter quotes survivor Eliahu Rosenberg on the formation of women's work details in the Camp 2 portion of Treblinka in about February of 1943. The punctuation Arad uses in this quotation is of great importance.

> At that time thirteen girls were brought to the camp: six were employed in the laundry, three in the kitchen, one by the camp doctor as an aide, and the others were allotted to the various [k]apos…[52]

Arad stops here with an ellipsis and makes little further comment on what became of these women. The quote used by Arad above and the one reproduced below are both from

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[51] Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, Chapter 15, "Women Prisoners," 114-18; Yitzhak Arad, *The Operation Reinhard Death Camps: Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, rev. and exp. ed. (Bloomington, IN: Jerusalem: Indiana University Press; Yad Vashem, 2018), Chapter 16, "Women Prisoners," 150-54.
[52] Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 116.

Rosenberg's written testimony provided to prosecutors in Vienna in 1947. Note the punctuation of the quote below as well—reproduced faithfully from the original.

> At this time, thirteen women were brought to the camp, of whom six were assigned to the laundry, three to the kitchen, where until then only a boy had worked, one was taken by the camp doctor as his "assistant," and three others were assigned to the various [k]apos for their "private use." Beyond these three [k]apos [specifically] the Germans allowed every [k]apo to visit these women between 6:00 – 10:00 pm in the evenings.[53]

This re-excerpted selection of Rosenberg's writing carries far greater implications than the selection used by Arad. Omission of the quotation marks around aide/assistant changes Rosenberg's meaning as night and day. Rosenberg also employed these scare quotes around the term "private use" in the section cut off by Arad. He was clearly pointing at something more.

Rosenberg's 1947 statement, alongside the 1961 Eichmann Trial investigation testimony of Camp 2 survivor Szlomo Helman, are the sources that reveal the existence of the Camp 2 brothel.[54] As explored in Chapter Five, Helman further described how the women forced to endure this place provided the lion's share of arms available to Camp 2 prisoners on the day of the revolt. It is unfortunate that survivors and historians alike avoided revealing the existence of this place as that has delayed acknowledgement of what these women endured and the role they played in the capture of arms for the uprising.

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[53] For the quote in his book, Arad cites "YVA O-3/4039, p.11, testimony of Eli Rozenberg (hereafter Rosenberg). Rosenberg was from Warsaw and worked in the extermination area." A statement by Rosenberg under this archival file number exists, however, it is not the correct document. Yad Vashem has reorganized their collections since the time of Arad's original research. For the original citation, see Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, Op. Cit. 8, p. 412, Arad's quotation of Rosenberg appears on p. 116. Rosenberg's statement in German with this quote on a page with the original numbering "11" can now be found in Statement of Elias Rosenberg, December 24, 1947, in O.3, File 4548, Item 3558557, YVA, p. 11. Translation from the German of this longer excerpt is my own.

[54] Robert Sommer, *Das KZ-Bordell: Sexuelle Zwangsarbeit in Nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslagern* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2009); Sonja M. Hedgepeth and Rochelle G. Saidel, eds., *Sexual Violence against Jewish Women during the Holocaust*, HBI Series on Jewish Women (Waltham, MA: Hanover, N.H.: Brandeis University Press; University Press of New England, 2010).

Yitzhak Arad's decision to stop short of quoting Rosenberg in ways that would clearly reference sexual exploitation and the existence of the brothel is in keeping with the time in which he wrote. His book *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka* also barely mentions the fact that Sukno and Rosenberg insist that the deputy commandant was homosexual and maintained a forced Jewish sexual partner in the camp.[55] Discussions of sex, sexuality, sexual exploitation, rape, gender, masculinity, and related topics began to appear regularly in studies of the Holocaust only years later. Much more importantly, however, Arad might have also feared that continuing the Rosenberg quote would harm living survivors. Recall the unnamed woman, above, who worried that her husband and family might discover what she had gone through—and judge her for it—if she testified against the guards. An extensive exploration of these topics in 1987 while most survivors were still alive might have made her fears a reality.

Silence and Erasure in Men's Oral Histories

The same sort of protectionist decision-making that can explain Arad's avoidance—among other factors—is also at play in the silences and erasures of later oral history interviews given by male survivors. Few oral history interviews given by men who survived Treblinka mention sex, sexual violence, or the lives of women inside the camp. This tendency to avoid the topic in recorded interviews at times runs contrary to the recollections of the same men in other formats. As discussed above, this is particularly true for statements written by men in the years just after the war. Eddie Weinstein says nothing of women at Treblinka in his oral history,

[55] Statement of Eliasz Rosenberg, April 17, 1961, in B162, F 3826, BL, p. 1919; Statement of Bronka Sukno, June 14, 1962, in B162, F 3825, BL, p.1876.

though in a memoir written in 1947 and published in 2008, he provides much more on the topic.[56] He states:

> We also heard that the Germans spared pretty women, whom they kept around for gang rape by German officers and Ukrainians, and murdered them. Only men were employed in the parts of Treblinka where I worked. Once someone called my attention to a young woman dressed as a teenage boy, who was sorting clothes with us. I don't know how long she survived.[57]

In this passage, Weinstein, as others, is more forthcoming about the fate of women that circumstances did not force him to consider personally. Here again the male survivor recalls what happened to anonymous women raped and murdered at the hands of the Nazis—albeit after the distancing words "we also heard."

Weinstein follows the example of Bomba, Kolski, and Eisner in denying the presence of women we can prove that he saw by examining the geography of his life in the camp. He lived in the same area as Bomba and must have been fed at the same kitchen as all the other Camp 1 prisoners. Likewise, the selections, rapes, and murders he says he "heard" about—and thus insinuates that he did not actually see—took place in areas he would have been able to view from his routine place of work in the camp. The most important difference between his oral history and that of the others is that the interviewer never directly asked about the presence of women, so he was never put in the position to make a denial.

What must be addressed first is that male survivors may have their own troubling reasons to avoid discussion of women in the camp. To be certain, the survivors quoted here—weighing their oral histories, the other sources they left behind, and conclusions about their lives in the camp supported by further evidence—do not appear to have any individual culpability in the

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[56] Edward J. "Eddie" Weinstein, Interview 2694, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, May 17, 1995.
[57] Eddie Weinstein, *17 Days in Treblinka: Daring to Resist, and Refusing to Die*, Fourth Edition (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem Publications, 2009), 56.

sexual victimization of Jewish women at Treblinka. This is not at all to say that acts of sexual violence or relationships of a tremendously unequal and exploitative nature did not happen between Jews in this camp or during the Holocaust writ large. Strawczynski's memoir, for one, unsparingly recounts rape committed by a kapo as discussed above. Considering what such accounts reveal, the existence of oral histories by men that avoid the topics of women prisoners, sex, and sexual violence compel an analysis of what could cause many male interviewees to be so evasive.

Sources like Strawczynski's memoir and the early—if later mediated—writing of Richard Glazar leave little doubt that Jewish men and women at Treblinka did enter into relationships that can be characterized as "sex for barter" or "instrumental sex," in the terms of historians Anna Hájková and Waitman Beorn, respectively.[58] In light of these earlier more candid sources, the silences of oral histories are best explained by what historian Mary Louise Roberts terms "gender damage," or injury to their masculine self-conception brought on for interviewees by the discussion of violence against women in the oral history environment.[59]

These men, Holocaust victims themselves, could do little or nothing to protect Jewish women from the sexual violence of guards and some prisoners in positions of power. The prospect of retelling such stories years later can be understood as a traumatic bridge too far. Addressing the realities of sexual violence against women at Treblinka with an audience could cause a revisitation of the male survivor's inability to protect women as their traditional gender roles required. Considering this personal psychological factor in the interview process also

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[58] Anna Hájková, "Sexual Barter in Times of Genocide: Negotiating the Sexual Economy of the Theresienstadt Ghetto," *Signs* 38, no. 3 (2013): 503–33; Waitman Wade Beorn, "Bodily Conquest: Sexual Violence in the Nazi East," in *Mass Violence in Nazi-Occupied Europe* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2018), 195–216.
[59] Mary Louise Roberts, "Beyond 'Crisis' in Understanding Gender Transformation," *Gender & History* 28, no. 2 (August 2016): 358–66.

provides an opportunity to think about how men at Treblinka, and in their lives long after the end of the Holocaust, continued to exhibit Meberg's "logic of protection" both regarding women at Treblinka and in consideration of the oral history audience.

In most cases, men who survived Treblinka and gave oral history interviews recorded their contributions in their own homes. Interviewers for the USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive, by far the largest collection of these interviews, did their best to make sure these survivors were recorded in private. That is, in the presence of only the interviewer and videographer and away from family members. Several interviews show, however, that this was not always possible. Archival interview notes for Treblinka revolt survivor Leon Diskin's oral history, for example, contain a remark by his interviewer that states the "survivor's wife arrives unexpectedly [at this point] and fuddles in the kitchen (even the best laid plans can go awry)."[60] Those best laid plans were the hope that Diskin could be recorded alone.[61] Similarly, family members and other individuals can clearly be heard moving about in the background of several interviews. Survivor Sam Goldberg's interview, for instance, includes the voice of his wife Esther calling out to him from another room on a couple of occasions.[62]

Treblinka escapee Adek Stein's oral history best demonstrates the relevance of audience and interviewer/interviewee interactions. As he approached the topic of sexual violence while describing what he saw during the Holocaust, Stein became deeply uneasy when he realized he would have to tell these stories in front of women.

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[60] Leon Diskin, Interview 17082, Archival Pre-Interview Questionnaire (PIQ) Report, "Spelling Verification Form" insert, p. 2 of 6, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, July 14, 1996.
[61] I would like to thank USC Shoah Foundation Collections Curator, Crispin Brooks for conversations on this topic and others. For USC Shoah Foundation interviewer training on the topic of sexual assault and the practice of interviewing subjects alone (that is with only the interviewee, interviewer, and videographer in the room), see "Interviewer Guidelines," USC Shoah Foundation, The Institute for Visual History and Education, October 2020, pp. 13, 43.
[62] Sam Goldberg, Interview 30760, transcript, pp. 32 and 33, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, July 13, 1997.

> Adek Stein: They take some girls – *long pause* – they take some girls to make fun, for fun. They take it out on the street. Not on the street, on the part where we have been – *long pause* – I don't want to say this to—it's too drastic to say what they do. The young girls are here [*looking around the room*].
> Interviewer DA: In front of you?
> Adek Stein: And this, this, the girls. I mean, these girls. These girls here.
> Interviewer DA: Don't worry about them.[63]

Stein's interview powerfully shows the difficulty that many older, traditional men had with the prospect of discussing sex and sexual violence in front of family and/or women generally. While he meant it was "too drastic" to tell these stories in front of young women, seeking to protect them from injury in hearing this history, it is also clear that he is protecting himself from the pain of reliving these events in the company of people who remind him of the victims he had no power to shield. As he discusses these topics he halts frequently and looks around the room uncomfortably at his audience. For Stein, it was not just the act of telling that was difficult, it was also the sex and age of those that would hear his stories. His own ingrained masculine logic of protection extended to the young women in front of him during his interview.

Stein's concern about his audience and his reluctance to discuss sexual violence in the company of women begs the question of how often this was an issue in the oral history format. The USC Shoah Foundation VHA contains 95 interviews tagged as individuals who experienced Treblinka. Out of these oral histories, 75 percent of male Treblinka survivors were interviewed by women. Considering only men who endured a period in the camp longer than one day, this number rises to 89 percent. Statistics on how many of these interviews were conducted near or in the direct presence of family members would be impossible to calculate with any accuracy.[64]

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[63] Adek Stein, Interview 3169, Tape 2 of 12, 06:45-11:00, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, June 13, 1995.

[64] Whether or not family members or others are nearby during the interview process is not routinely recorded in archival metadata and only becomes apparent if the individuals in the background or adjacent rooms of the home make themselves known. While it is not policy to allow an audience, research shows it was often unavoidable. Since many may have listened silently, statistics on how many interviews had an audience beyond the interviewer and videographer would be impossible to compile with any accuracy.

The percentage of male Treblinka survivors interviewed by women is actually a bit higher than the statistics for all Holocaust survivor interviews in the VHA. Of 53,231 Holocaust oral histories, 68% of all interviewers are women, while 67% of male survivors and 73% of female survivors were interviewed by women.[65]

Though the avoidances, silences, or distortions in the oral histories of some male survivors cannot be attributed exclusively to the sex of their interviewer, this is a factor that historians and oral history collection groups should consider. In multiple cases, male interviewees are more forthcoming in other formats or with male interviewers.[66] From Eddie Weinstein's book mentioning sexual violence while his interview does not, to the inaccuracies and inconsistencies of several other men, these observations are a cautionary tale to bear in mind when viewing these valuable sources.

Conclusion

The history of resistance at Treblinka and its memory are in multiple ways impacted by gender norms. Inside the camp, women's work details and the spatial access of individual women like Bronka Sukno reflected the gender conventions of German guards—often to the benefit of resistance. The SS did not view Jewish women as a threat to their control of the camp

[65] I compiled these statistics with the help of spreadsheets provided by Martha Stroud of the USC Shoah Foundation Center for Advanced Genocide Research. With the help of my sister, Kammie Gibbs, I first set aside some 1,722 interviews for which the identity of the interviewer is not recorded and then chose the sex of each identified interviewer based on their first names. The sex of interviewees is recorded in USC Shoah Foundation metadata, though the sex or interviewers is not. Therefore, some level of inaccuracy may exist if, for example, an interviewer named Alexandra recorded her name as Alex, though this should not be so significant as to profoundly affect the outcome of this statistical work. Similar statistical work for the Fortunoff collection is not possible given the large number of interviews conducted by multiple interviewers and the manner in which archival metadata is recorded for this collection.

[66] In his oral history interview with a male interviewer, survivor Richard Glazar discusses instances of rape during the Holocaust, see: Richard Glazar, Interview 8552, transcript p. 39, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, February 5, 1996.

in the same way they thought of men. As Sukno stated, she had the ability to enter the normally forbidden personal quarters of SS guards as a woman tailor.[67] Moyshe Klaynman, a male tailor, did not enter SS quarters. Of course, the violent sexual exploitation that other women endured in the Camp 2 brothel is the most terrible example of this same thinking—though women here transformed this place into a powerful source of material support for the resistance. Significantly, there was no other location where guards would set down their rifles in the presence of Jews. The sexual violence guards perpetrated in this location and others, as well as their beliefs about women's supposed inability to threaten their power, undoubtedly played a role in the laxity of their actions and the ability of prisoners to rise against them.

Knowledge of these events and others inside Treblinka, and during the Holocaust more broadly, is often a product of gendered thinking at the time and in the years following. As Eisner's interview shows us, women had greater—or at the very least different—fears about coming forward as trial witnesses and later oral history subjects. It is no coincidence that Bronka Sukno and Sonia Lewkowicz sought the community of their fellow survivors, though they never wrote memoirs and did not seek out opportunities to tell their stories and the history of Treblinka as often as their male counterparts. Nevertheless, attention to the networks and places of resistance at Treblinka allows us to read against the distortions and evasions of male testimony to recover the contributions of women in resistance.

Jewish women at Treblinka fought back in self-led, spontaneous moments of armed and unarmed resistance, organized to protect their own lives and those of others at great peril, and endured the eye of hell to arm an insurrection which they almost certainly knew would bring about their own deaths. This overall reevaluation of their presence and actions at Treblinka runs

[67] Statement of Bronka Sukno, June 14, 1962, in B162, F 3825, BL, p.1875.

through my dissertation. The pages of this chapter locate our long misunderstanding of women's roles at Treblinka in an unwillingness to confront the issues of sex and sexual violence on the part of male survivors and later historians. These same factors, alongside the tendency of male survivors to take full ownership of resistance and revolt, further explains why so few men name the women they speak of in any of the sources they created. Regrettably, it is unlikely the omitted names of women murdered at Treblinka or the identities of many more who survived will ever be recovered. The following chapter of this dissertation, however, takes up an analysis of survivorship in general and the ways those lucky few made it out of the camp alive. As those pages will show, the story of women's lives and actions at Treblinka continues to the very last moments of the camp's existence.

Chapter Seven

Surviving Treblinka:
Finding the Few and Localizing Definitions of Survivorship

Surviving Treblinka

Yes, I remained alive and find myself among free people. But I often ask myself why. Is it so that I might tell the world about the millions of innocent murdered victims, to be a witness to the innocent blood that was spilled by the hands of the murderers?

Yes, I remained alive to bear witness against the great slaughterhouse of Treblinka.
—Chil Rajchman[1]

Chil Rajchman's memoir movingly concludes with his thoughts on why he survived. His words, above, show that he wondered less at that moment about how he had made it out alive than he did about the future purpose of his life after all he had seen. He and several other survivors located their calling in work to "bear witness" and to recount the history of Treblinka for and in honor of all those who could not.

Rajchman and other Jews who made it out of Treblinka must have been racked by trauma, grief, and survivors' guilt for the rest of their lives.[2] Yet each, in their own way, got on with their lives and built new futures for themselves alongside whatever family they could find or start anew. Several commented in writing or interviews about the reasons for their survival, or what they saw as their mission after making it out of Treblinka. Those who spoke of the reasons

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[1] Chil Rajchman, *The Last Jew of Treblinka: A Survivor's Memory, 1942-1943*, trans. Solon Beinfeld (New York, NY: Pegasus Books, 2011), 138.

[2] For some, this grief and the trauma of all they had endured or their despair at the future became too much. According to his brother and fellow survivor, Frank, Martin Stiffel committed suicide in Rome in September 1947. His many personal losses and what he saw as the continued ill-treatment of Jews after the Holocaust tore down his will to go on. In a note, Martin let out a sadness caused by dashed hopes and his vision of a life "without a tomorrow." Though his death by his own hand was, as far as I know, the first in the postwar years, it would not be the last. Treblinka survivor Hershl Sperling, then a widower, took his own life in Glasgow, Scotland in 1989. Richard Glazar walked the same path a week after the death of his wife in 1997. Both men lived with the horrors of what they had seen and endured for many years, finally, perhaps, being overwhelmed by it after the loss of their wives. It was Glazar who wrote so beautifully about the power of relationships in his memoir. While a complete analysis or accounting of suicide after Treblinka is lacking, and the psychology of postwar traumatic stress is beyond the scope of this dissertation, it seems likely that the loss of relationships—loved ones capable of pulling these men from the darkness of their memories—contributed to their decisions. Frank Stiffel, *The Tale of the Ring: A Kaddish*, Mazal Holocaust Collection (Wainscott, NY: Pushcart, 1994), 346-7; Mark S. Smith, *Treblinka Survivor: The Life and Death of Hershl Sperling* (Stroud, Gloucestershire, UK: The History Press, 2010), 227-32; Ilona Flażyńska, "Richard Glazar," Museum Webpage, Muzeum Treblinka, accessed May 8, 2021, https://muzeumtreblinka.eu/en/informacje/richard-glazar/.

for resistance, and especially escape, underscored their desire to warn others about what Treblinka was as it still operated.[3] Others who explained their desire to carry out a revolt did not stop at mere revenge, though that was indeed a central motivation. Beyond retribution, Jews who participated in the uprising also stressed a duty to save witnesses of this place so that its crimes would never be forgotten or denied.[4]

Survivors are the witnesses who made real and undeniable the murder of so many at this terrible place. We should not forget that the statements of former guards at trials or, in rare cases, during later interviews would not have occurred without survivors to press the issue. When Franz Stangl spoke openly to Gitta Sereny, he did so in a jail cell. Making Stangl confront the enormity of his own personal guilt is arguably the entire arc and mission of Sereny's book. Before he was convicted largely on the basis of survivor testimony, he spent his days hiding in

[3] Stories of escape with the purpose of warning the outside world abound in the Treblinka archive. To name just a few, David Brat escaped Treblinka with the intention of returning to the Warsaw Ghetto to warn people about what transport really meant, Chris Webb and Michal Chocholatý state that the two Cienki brothers escaped Treblinka to warn the ghetto of their origin, Miedzyrzec Podlaski, where they were turned over to the Germans by ghetto authorities and killed. Jacob Rabinowicz was a journalist who escaped Treblinka and went back to the Warsaw Ghetto. Yitzhak Arad explained that it was his information that led to the Bund's dispatch of Zalman Friedrich Sigmund to investigate what Treblinka really was. Sigmund met the escapee Azriel Wallach (or Walach) in Sokolow in the process of his mission, gaining further information he could take back to Warsaw. What Sigmund learned from Walach was published in the Warsaw underground newspaper *Oyf der wakh* on September 30, 1942. Joseph Kermisz, *Jewish Underground Newspapers in Warsaw*, Vol. 6 (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1997); Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 244, 247, 260-261; Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 22; Webb and Chocholatý, *The Treblinka Death Camp* (2021), 268; see also Chapter Three of this dissertation in which the Polemic Resistance intent of escapes is discussed in the words of escapee Zenon Golaszewski, "Zenon Golaszewski, Trial of Kurt Franz et al. - Investigative Interview of Survivor-Witness Zenon Golaszewski," Transcript, December 9, 1965, 280, Gerichte Rep. 388, Nr. 781, Band 32c, pp. 276-280, Duisburg Branch - State Archives of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany.

[4] Yaakov Miller's account of the revolt, written in the immediate postwar years, is filled with statements about revenge and the need to honor the dead by fighting and killing the guards. His account is representative of how these opinions or reasonings change over time. Those who wrote later or gave interviews tend to speak, as Rajchman does, of the need to bear witness and revolt as a way to pursue justice through the statements of survivors. Yaakov Miller, "Eyewitness Testimony 47. The Uprising in Treblinka," in *Jewish Responses to Nazi Persecution*, ed. Isaiah Trunk (New York: Stein and Day Publishers, 1979), 262–68. Mentioning their attempts to warn the outside world, Yitzhak Arad states that prisoners wanted to carry out an uprising, at least in part, for the same reasons they wanted to escape. Survivor Abraham Goldfarb remembered another way prisoners attempted to ensure that the crimes of Treblinka could never be erased. A Camp 2 worker near the burial pits, Goldfarb stated that prisoners sometimes secretly reburied complete skeletons that they were supposed to destroy and hid messages in bottles among the remains as the SS were attempting to burn all the evidence at the camp. Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 176, 270.

Brazil never speaking a word about the camp.[5] Likewise, when Franz Suchomel spoke to Sereny and Claude Lanzmann it was only after his own conviction, incarceration, and release. By then he was beyond much worry about further consequences and had little need to deny what survivors had already confirmed in court. Regardless, Lanzmann used a hidden camera to gather more candid responses while Sereny still had to press Stangl for many long hours over several interviews to get him to approach the matter of his own participation in mass murder and personal guilt as camp commandant.[6]

Indeed, survivors are at the core of all we know about Treblinka. They were the irreplaceable moral force that drove prosecutions and their memories remain our most powerful sources of this history. At the same time, we should not lose sight of the fact that survival itself was resistance. This might seem so simple as to be an unnecessary point. The survival of Jews amounted to a defeat of Nazi Germany's so-called "Final Solution." To be Jewish was to be targeted and to survive was to overcome genocidal intent. That same perseverance later became the foundations of justice, history, and the generations after.

The voices and sources that provide facts about Treblinka exist as the results of resistance. Looking back to discussions of research sources in Chapter Two, it is also important to recall that survivors are the archive. Many Treblinka survivors like Samuel Willenberg and Richard Glazar made the act of telling—or bearing witness—a central mission of their later lives. I hope that my frequent use of their writings and interviews demonstrates how hard they worked to make these stories known. Looking at survival as resistance, and at every survivor source

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[5] Gitta Sereny, *Into That Darkness: An Examination of Conscience* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1983).
[6] Claude Lanzmann Shoah Collection, "Interview with Franz Suchomel," Accession Number 1996.166.1 (No RG number given), USHMM; Claude Lanzmann, *Shoah*, DVD, Documentary (Criterion Collectoin, 1985); Claude Lanzmann, *Shoah: The Complete Text of the Acclaimed Holocaust Film*, Second (New York, NY: De Capo Press, 1995). Suchomel also spoke to Gitta Sereny, again only after he had been convicted and released. Sereny, *Into that Darkness*.

brought to light as an act against forgetting, makes the identification and recognition of Treblinka survivors an important historical contribution.

Building on earlier descriptions of archival study in Chapter Two and the spatial, social networking, and gender analyses of resistance in Chapters Three through Six, this chapter takes up the task of identifying survivors and understanding their varied paths out of Treblinka. Historians have long known that only a precious few people made it out of this camp. Treblinka, in fact, stands as one of only a few Holocaust locations with what is thought to be a complete list of survivors. The museum at the former site of the camp today provides the names of 85 individuals known to have made it out alive.[7] My work to understand the archive and resistance at this place, however, reveals that this accounting of survival is far from complete.

This chapter revises understandings of survival at Treblinka while demonstrating what the creation of place-based definitions of survival can provide for study of the Holocaust more broadly. Defining survivorship for individual Holocaust locations like the thousands of camps and ghettos of the Nazi system is essential as historians seek to clarify the roles, uses, and evolutions of these sites. In the case of Treblinka, the varied means of survival indicate the need for some basic categories of survivor experience. Sections below explain Jewish survival under the headings of Revolt Survivors, Escape Survivors, and Through Transport Survivors. A following section highlights the differences between these categories—particularly that of Through Transport Survivors—and a non-survivor group termed Jewish Witnesses of Treblinka. Historians working on other locations will find such an exploration of survival useful as they

[7] The museum previously listed only 68 names. This list came directly from Alexander Donat's book. "Opór I Powstanie" (Muzeum Walky i Męczeństwa Treblinka, December 13, 2013), http://www.treblinka-muzeum.eu/index.php/historia/oboz-zaglady/opor-i-powstanie. The museum's recent update of their list to include 86 entries comes with a citation of Donat's book, a Yizkor book entry by the survivor Abraham Bomba (Bombe), and the work of Edwarda Kopówki and Aliny Skibińskiej. A typographical error dividing one survivor's name over two lines means that this list actually stands at 85, see: Edwarda Kopówki and Aliny Skibińskiej, "Resistance and Uprising – Muzeum Treblinka," https://muzeumtreblinka.eu/en/informacje/resistance-and-uprising/.

conceptualize the importance of issues like those explored here. Research that defines survival of certain places can, for instance, help scholars understand the reach and influence of a site beyond its fences, walls, or its otherwise seemingly discrete location. I expand on this particular benefit to wider Holocaust histories below in my discussion of Treblinka Revolt Survivors. This chapter concludes with a section relating the matter of survival definitions to the future of Holocaust studies and what historians should anticipate as the "era of the witness" nears its end.[8]

Historians working on most sites of Holocaust crimes will not contend with a list of survivors and should take pause before deciding to create one where none already exists. Survivor lists are undesirable because they imply completeness by their very existence. As a result, they often function as a research starting point by offering the names of eye-witness survivors in a single convenient location. This practice tends to unduly narrow the search for historical voices and sources. The problematic nature of survivor lists also extends to the recognition of individual experiences and how we memorialize the people who endured the sites we study as historians. Creating a list and inadvertently leaving someone out can unintentionally affect later research decisions or even how descendants view the recollections of a survivor ancestor. As the issues inherent in the identification of Treblinka survivors explored below will make clear, lists cannot hope to be comprehensive or without error. While recognizing these facts, the existence and acceptance of a list creates a situation wherein it can neither be erased nor wished out of existence. The only recourse once such an accounting holds sway is to improve it where possible while drawing new attention to its permanently incomplete nature.

Those needing to change or challenge a list will require an understanding of the criteria used in its creation as a first step. While the existence of a Treblinka survivor list provides the

[8] Annette Wieviorka, *The Era of the Witness* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006).

most pressing impetus for a definition of survivorship at this place, scholars seeking to understand both the literal and experiential boundaries of other locations during the Holocaust—whether a list exists or not—will also benefit from discovering their own answers to the questions addressed here.

Alexander Donat's Treblinka Survivor Definition

The list of survivors published by the Treblinka museum today originated with the work of Holocaust survivor-writer, Alexander Donat, for his 1979 volume *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary*.[9] As explored in Chapter Two, Donat compiled the names of survivors in the process of collating what he hoped would be the "most-panoramic and least repetitious picture of Treblinka."[10] His final product is an edited volume of survivor accounts with scaffolding from historical essays by himself and Holocaust survivor and Yad Vashem archivist, Rachel Auerbach.[11] As testament to the overwhelming lethality of Treblinka and the difficulty of locating witnesses in his time, the short biographical vignettes and general roster provided by Donat takes up just eight pages at the end of his volume.[12] Despite Donat's admission that his findings were "anything but complete," the list has remained largely unchallenged and unanalyzed these past forty-one years.[13] Providing a more accurate accounting of survivors with some qualified categorization of experiences at Treblinka demonstrates that a larger number of voices exists and improves the chances of finding any testimonies these individuals may have

[9] Alexander Donat, ed., *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (New York, NY: Waldon Press, 1979); For more on Donat himself and what he endured during the Holocaust, see his memoir: Alexander Donat, *The Holocaust Kingdom: A Memoir* (Washington, DC: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1999).
[10] Donat, *The Death Camp Treblinka*, 284.
[11] Donat, *The Death Camp Treblinka*; Rachel Auerbach, "In the Fields of Treblinka," in *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (New York, NY: Waldon Press, 1979), 19–74.
[12] Donat, *The Death Camp Treblinka*, 284–91.
[13] Donat, 284.

left behind. To begin this process, however, one must understand who the original list maker considered a survivor of Treblinka and then conceptualize their own definition.

Compiled from sources available at the time and of which he was aware, Donat's list of survivors consists mainly of individuals who broke free from the camp in the process of the revolt. He does, however, include six people who escaped the camp before the uprising.[14] Donat's inclusion of these names demonstrates that he did not think participation in the revolt was the only way one could be called a Treblinka survivor. Research on his list reveals only three mistaken inclusions. While some individuals have proven difficult to confirm, I have only found reasons to remove the names of Sonia Grabinska, Zygmunt Gostynski, and Tobias Mieczyslaw.[15] Her own later trial testimony in addition to historical research by others proves that Grabinska was the maiden name of Sonia Lewkowicz, also present on Donat's roster. Gostynski and Mieczyslaw, meanwhile, were both held at the nearby Treblinka I labor camp, not the Treblinka II extermination camp.[16]

A close reading of Donat also reveals one exclusion that is the first point of departure from his original criteria here. Despite including an excerpt of Abraham Krzepicki's testimony in his book, Donat leaves his name off the list of survivors.[17] Krzepicki escaped Treblinka before the revolt, returned to Warsaw, and recounted his experiences to Auerbach as a part of her work for Emanuel Ringelblum's *Oyneg Shabes* archive before he was killed fighting in the

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[14] See Czeslaw Augustiniak/Leo Blaustein, Oskar Bergère, Abraham Bomba, Aron Gelbhard, Abraham Goldfarb, and Abraham Lindwasser, in Donat, *The Death Camp Treblinka*, 284–91.
[15] Donat, 288.
[16] Sonia Lewkowicz (Sonia Gabowski-Lewkowicz), Treblinka Survivor - Testimony - Selected Extracts: Federenko Trial Fort Lauderdale, USA 1978, Website - Transcribed Text, 1978, http://www.holocaustresearchproject.org/survivor/sonialewkowicz.html; Michael A. Nevins, *Dubrowa: Memorial to a Shtetl (Dabrowa Bialostocka, Poland)*, Yizkor Project (Spring Valley, NY: JewishGen, 2010); *Fedorenko Trial*, 597 F. 2d; Statement of Zygmunt Gostynski, December 21, 1959, in B162, F 3819, BL, pp. 586-8; Statement of Tobias Mieczyslaw, November 13, 1959, in B162, F 3818, BL, pp. 375-6.
[17] Abraham Krzepicki, "Eighteen Days in Treblinka," in *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (New York, NY: Waldon Press, 1979), 77–145; Donat, *The Death Camp Treblinka*, 284–91.

Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.[18] His example provides evidence that Donat considered a person to be a Treblinka survivor only if they both escaped death inside the camp and then somehow lived through the rest of the war. This decision creates a dichotomy between Treblinka survivors who died in the Holocaust and Holocaust survivors who were inside Treblinka.

Excluding those who died after escaping Treblinka robs them of their place in history and unnecessarily diminishes the record of survival and resistance at this camp. Krzepicki's personal saga further illustrates what a failure to include such people and their stories costs historical research. Though it is unlikely that many more examples of people who escaped and recorded a testimony before being killed elsewhere will be found, this does perfectly describe Aron Liebeskind. Liebeskind escaped Treblinka before the revolt, but was ultimately recaptured by Nazi forces and murdered at Auschwitz. His story comes to us via the recollections of a fellow prisoner at Auschwitz and a song Liebeskind wrote about the loss of his son at Treblinka that he passed along before his death.[19]

Krzepicki and Liebeskind show how even individuals who did not survive the war contribute to the documentary record and plainly merit a place among the named survivors of Treblinka. Theirs and other individual paths out of Treblinka display such a marked variance in survival and resistance strategies and opportunities that the need for a system of categorization becomes apparent. Inspired by the literary and historical analysis of Lawrence Langer, and borrowing the title of his powerful and pioneering book, the following sections define survivorship at Treblinka across three main "versions of survival" while explaining what this

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[18] Krzepicki, "Eighteen Days in Treblinka;" see also Auerbach, "In the Fields of Treblinka;" Ringelblum-Archiv, Robert Moses Shapiro, and Tadeusz Epsztein, eds., *The Warsaw Ghetto Oyneg Shabes-Ringelblum Archive: Catalog and Guide*, English (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2009), 394.

[19] Liebeskind's song recorded in Polish as translated from the Yiddish language original "*A viglid far mayn yingele in krematoryum*," see "Lullaby for My Little Boy in the Crematorium," *Music and the Holocaust*, October 31, 2016, http://holocaustmusic.ort.org/places/camps/death-camps/treblinka/lullaby-for-my-little/.

categorization adds to our knowledge of Treblinka.[20] Each section, or version, below also offers comment on how work such as this can assist research on other sites of Holocaust perpetration.

Versions of Survival at Treblinka

Isadore Helfing endured ten horrific months at Treblinka.[21] Under constant threat of death from guards, hunger, and disease, Isadore labored in the sorting of clothing left behind by the dead, in tending horses used by German SS officers and prisoner work details, and in the disposal of bodies. On August 2, 1943, Helfing fought his way out of the camp in the revolt. He was lucky enough, once again, to survive the remainder of the war and recount these experiences to interviewers in a later oral history recording.[22] Helfing is one of 67 identified Revolt Survivors.

Zelda Gordon and Ben Lerman spent much less time at Treblinka, but managed to survive all the same.[23] Deported from Grodno in February 1943, German guards selected Gordon among one hundred Jewish women for dispatch to Majdanek. She and these other women, fearing they had been chosen "for the amusement of German soldiers," were then held in a barracks building overnight—as it happened this time, untouched by guards—before being placed on a train to Majdanek the next day.[24] Even more remarkably, Gordon is not alone in her

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[20] Lawrence L. Langer, *Versions of Survival: The Holocaust and the Human Spirit*, SUNY Series in Modern Jewish Literature and Culture (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1982).
[21] Isadore Helfing, RG-50.042.0014, JTHOHA, USHMM, March 9, 1992.
[22] Isadore H., Mssa.hvt.0413, Part 1, Segment 5, 00:27:01, Segment 8, 00:45:41, and Segment 9, 00:50:49, FVA, December 3, 1983.
[23] Zelda Gordon, RG-50.005.0018, JTHOHA, USHMM, March 6, 1984; Ben Lerman, RG-50.431.0469, JTHOHA, USHMM, June 26, 1997; Ben Lerman, MUA_GA_Lerman, The Generation After Oral History Project of Milwaukee, WI, Marquette University Libraries, October 5, 1983; four local newspaper stories covering Ben Lerman provided to the author courtesy of Jay Hyland and Ellie Gettinger of the Milwaukee Jewish Museum; telephone conversations and correspondence with the daughter of Ben Lerman in possession of the author.
[24] Zelda G., Mssa.hvt.0448, Part 1, Segment 4, 00:23:44, FVA, March 6, 1983; see also Sam E. Bloch, ed., *From Holocaust to Redemption: Bearing Witness* (New York, NY: World Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, 1984), 238.

description of this version of survival at Treblinka. Several other women from her group of one hundred also made it through the remainder of the war.[25]

Like Gordon, Ben Lerman was also in the camp for a very short period of time—for him, even less than one day. Ben and thousands of others arrived at Treblinka from the Warsaw Ghetto in April of 1943. His deportation coincided with the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. When Lerman's train stopped at the camp, guards and prisoner workers opened the doors of the railcars one at a time. Trains were normally unloaded all at once, so this must have been a strange sight to prisoners familiar with the routine. As unloading went on, guards selected people they deemed capable of work and set them off to one side. Lerman and others in this fortunate group were then put back on the train and sent off to Majdanek only a few hours later.[26] For many who spent short periods of time inside Treblinka, Majdanek was their next stop. Lerman, Gordon, and others like them could count themselves lucky to emerge from Treblinka at all, let alone after such a short time within its murderous confines. Together, these two are representative of the 86 individuals identified as Through Transport Survivors of Treblinka.

Yaakov Eisner had to deal with a longer incarceration at the camp than Zelda Gordon and Ben Lerman, though he found a way out before the prisoner revolt. Eisner and a small group evaded the notice of guards at the end of the workday to hide outside the prisoner barracks with plans to use the cover of darkness to make their escape. After the sun went down, he scaled the fence and made off through the nearby woods.[27] He was lucky enough to stay alive through the

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[25] Linda P. also survived in the same group as Zelda G. and stated that her mother Riva Kremr was another member of this group that survived and lived in the United States at the time of her interview. See Linda P.. Mssa.hvt.1962, Part 1, Segment 3, 00:12:08, FVA, January 24, 1992; Vivian Chakin, Interview 7457, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, November 21, 1995; Riva Kremr, Interview 38051, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, January 10, 1998.

[26] Ben L., Mssa.hvt.1023, Part 2, Segment 13, 00:13:48, Segment 14, 00:19:48, FVA, April 22, 1987.

[27] Yaakov E., Mssa.hvt.3371, Part 1, Segment 4, 00:30:08, Segment 6, 00:37:59, Segment 7, 0042:15, FVA, June 19, 1992; Abraham Bomba, Interview 18062, Tape 5 of 7, 28:00, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, August 14, 1996.

remainder of the war and recount his experiences to oral history interviewers later. His story is emblematic of Treblinka's 77 identified Escape Survivors.

These individuals personify the most common versions of survival for Jews deported to Treblinka, or what I term Revolt Survivors, Through-Transport Survivors, and Escape Survivors. As examples of the need for a reconsideration of survival at Treblinka, only Isadore Helfing Yaakov Eisner—out of all those profiled above—appear on the list created by Donat. Through the inclusion of experiential categories, I further emphasize variations in Jewish resistance strategies and Nazi perpetration at Treblinka that Donat's single list renders flat. Employing these categories in conjunction with the greatly expanded research sources available today, Revolt Survivors increase from Donat's initial list of 60 to 67 and Escape Survivors increase from his seven to 77. The named Through-Transport Survivors number 86, plus six additional questionable accounts, eleven persons uncategorized for lack of information, and two unique cases. Altogether, the scroll of Treblinka survivors expands from Donat's original 68 to 249 identified individuals—179 of whom confirmedly made it through the rest of the war. The three sections below define the three main categories of survival analysis while describing what each does for our understanding of the history of Treblinka and how this work contributes to wider studies of the Holocaust.

Revolt Survivors

At first glance, the category of Revolt Survivor would seem to be the easiest to define. Treblinka Revolt Survivors are individuals who found a way out of the camp during the August 2, 1943 prisoner uprising. Those named in this category must owe their lives to this act of Jewish resistance to be included, though the definition does not require that they took part. The

Revolt Survivor Joseph Siedlecki, for example, stated that he had nothing to do with resistance organization and had no significant prior knowledge of the impending inmate attack. Still, as he witnessed the events unfolding around him on that day, he wisely took advantage of the fighting and ran for the fences.[28] His own act of resistance, therefore, was not one of coordination with others but it is still instructive of how some Jewish prisoners acted to save their own lives when opportunities arose on that day and others.

In his book, Donat estimates that as many as 300 people escaped Treblinka on the day of the revolt. Revolt Survivor testimonies give estimates ranging between 150 and 350, though I have only identified 67 individuals who made it out of the camp that day.[29] The remaining 233 people, if that many did actually flee the camp, are representative of how the category of Revolt Survivor can get murky and why lists will always be incomplete. The post-escape stories of Revolt Survivors often include descriptions of how others fleeing alongside them later lost their lives to pursuing guards, German forces called in to assist the camp staff, or at the hands of the local population. Here, as elsewhere, in the German-occupied Generalgouvernement, non-Jewish Poles killed, turned in, or informed on Jewish fugitives out of plain antisemitism, fear of the Germans, or hope for reward.[30] It should also be noted, however, that almost all of the 67

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[28] Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 188, 190, 244.

[29] Samuel Willenberg thought that as many as 350 made it out on the day of the revolt while Samuel Rajzman estimated 150-200. Yitzhak Arad estimated the number of people who fled during the revolt as high as 350-400, though he believes that only about 100 survived the next few days, see: Samuel Willenberg, "I Survived Treblinka," in *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (New York, NY: Waldon Press, 1979), 189–213, 212; House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Samuel Rajzman Testimony, "H.J. Resolution 93 - Punishment of War Crimes - 79th Congress, First Session" (United States Government Printing Office, 1945), Doc. Y4.F76/1: W19/5, pps. 120-125; Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 248; Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 298; Donat, *The Death Camp Treblinka*, 284.

[30] Revolt Survivor Chil Rajchman's memoir contains particularly vivid memories of a non-Jewish Polish man attempting to capture him for a "reward" while a woman plead for his release. See Chil Rajchman, *The Last Jew of Treblinka: A Survivor's Memory, 1942-1943*, trans. Solon Beinfeld (New York, NY: Pegasus Books, 2011), 135-7. Historians Jan Grabowski and Barbara Engelking have published extensively on this topic. For examples see Jan Grabowski, *Hunt for the Jews: Betrayal and Murder in German-Occupied Poland* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013); Barbara Engelking, *Such a Beautiful Sunny Day…: Jews Seeking Refuge in the Polish Countryside, 1942-1945* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2016). Yitzhak Arad further addresses killings by local non-

Revolt Survivors who did persevere mention some form of help from non-Jewish Poles in their recollections.

In interviews with Gitta Sereny, former commandant Franz Stangl estimated that Treblinka held 840 prisoners on the day of the revolt and that 105 Jewish prisoners were left alive in the camp at the end of the day. Stangl further stated that he ordered guards not to kill these remaining prisoners immediately.[31] Though all numbers given by former guards and prisoners alike are merely estimates, it is likely that 300 to 400 people got out at least temporarily in the revolt while a similar number were killed in the fighting in and around the camp. The latter group does not include those hunted down by German forces outside the fences and in the fields, forests, and villages nearby. Stangl's quite specific recollection of 105 living Jews inside the camp after the fighting ceased may well be accurate. The fate of these people is a matter that adds further nuance to the category of Revolt Survivor.

German SS and Ukrainian guards eventually murdered most of the prisoners left alive inside Treblinka after the revolt. Before they did, however, this group was made to tear down the camp and erase all traces of its existence. Because of their location inside the Ghetto Barracks at the time of the revolt, many of the women prisoners of Camp 1 were among those left inside Treblinka. They were not able to get out of the building during the fighting as at least one guard was with them at the time of the first shot.[32] Though the roughly 100 persons left inside the camp lived through the uprising, they are not Revolt Survivors. While the definition of this category does not require that one took part in the planning or fighting, it does require that an individual gained at least temporary freedom from Nazi forces as a result of the prisoner

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Jewish Poles while noting that many Revolt Survivors found reliable help as well. See Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 342.

[31] Sereny, *Into that Darkness*, 247-8.

[32] Sereny, 247.

rising. Additionally, even though guards killed some of the last prisoners of Treblinka elsewhere, I do not count these unfortunate people as survivors either.

On October 20, 1943, a small train consisting of five railcars departed Treblinka for Sobibor. On board were many of the remaining guards and 25-30 Jews. These prisoners, perhaps taken along as labor to unload whatever else was on this train, did not survive long at Sobibor. Treblinka guards dispatched on the same train soon murdered them as well.[33] Despite the fact that they were outside the camp, or at least killed elsewhere, the members of this group are not Treblinka survivors because they never escaped the power of its guards. The unique story of one survivor, however, does show that at least one person did leave Treblinka alive after the revolt and live to tell the tale.

Kalman Jankowski was selected by the SS as a musician when he arrived at Treblinka. He and others were routinely forced to play for the amusement of the guards while also working as *Goldjuden* in Camp 2. After the revolt, Jankowski found himself alive, but still stuck in the camp. In statements given to investigators after the war, Jankowski stated that he was one of 18 to 25 prisoners sent to the Treblinka I labor camp after the revolt. He was later able to survive this camp by escaping in October 1944.[34] The fates and identities of the other 17-24 members of this group are unknown. Jankowski shows that some of the approximately 100 prisoners left alive in Treblinka after the revolt were transferred to the nearby labor camp. Whether the Germans planned to kill all of them to eliminate witnesses of the extermination facility before closing the labor camp is also unknown, though likely. What this does reveal, however, is that at

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[33] Sereny, 250.

[34] Testimony of Kalman Jankowski, August 25, 1960, TR.21, File 93, Item 7217722, YVA, pp. 132-6, p. 133; Statement of Kalman Jankowski, November 16, 1959, B162, F 3819, BL, pp. 403-8, p. 406; Statement of Kalman Jankowski, November 16, 1959, B162, F 3819, BL, pps. 403-8, p. 406; Statement of Kalman Jankowski, May 29, 1970, B162, F 3839, BL, pp. 5595-8, p. 5596.

least one person who did not make it out on August 2, 1943 survived the Holocaust. If the names of others in Jankowski's group ever come to light, they too would be survivors of Treblinka II—regardless of whether they survived the Holocaust—but not Revolt Survivors. This group was not freed by Jewish resistance on the day of the revolt, and so they represent a different path to life after Treblinka.

The fate of one more group that did not make it out of the camp during the revolt is also known. Former SS guard Franz Suchomel told Sereny that the last 25-30 Jews at Treblinka—after the departure of those sent out on the train and Jankowski's group left for Treblinka I—were all executed by guards.[35] Witold Chrostowski dates this last act of killing at the camp to November 17, 1943.[36] The last victims of this place included Tchechia Mandel and at least one, possibly two, other women.[37] Suchomel recalled her last words and the manner of her death.

With the camp torn down and all the work of obscuring its traces completed, guards took this small group to a chosen spot and forced them to kneel before each was shot in the back of the neck.[38] According to Suchomel, when it was her turn Mandel said, "Aha, I never did believe any of your fairytale promises, you pigs. Go ahead, kill us. Just do me a favor and don't ask us to undress."[39] This incredible exchange comes from one of the few times a guard ever directly named a Jew in an interview. Rarer still is a statement from a guard that quotes a Treblinka

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[35] Sereny, *Into that Darkness*, 195, 250.
[36] Witold Chrostowski, *Extermination Camp Treblinka* (London; Portland, OR: Vallentine Mitchell, 2004), 96.
[37] Sereny, *Into that Darkness*, 194-5.
[38] With this third group, the majority of Stangl's 105 post-revolt prisoners are accounted for. Altogether, 25-30 went to Sobibor, 18-25 went to Treblinka I with Kalman Jankowski, and 25-30 were shot at the end of the camp's existence. Taking the highest numbers from all each, this gives us the fate of 85 out of 105. Though what happened to this other 20 or more Jews is unknown, it seems likely they were killed by guards for one reason or another between August and November 1943. Some level of daily killings or deaths from exhaustion and disease was the norm in all phases at Treblinka. There is no readily apparent reason to assume this was not the case after August 2, 1943 as well. I do not, however, wish to close the door on discovery of further escapees from this period in the future. With a reduced guard force and extensive damage to the camp, it is possible some number of these last 105 Jews escaped after the revolt. Escapes in this period are at least no less likely than Stangl getting wrong the number of post-uprising prisoners.
[39] Sereny, 195.

prisoner. It is with these prideful and spiteful last words that Treblinka may have come to an end. Mandel and the others with her were the last group of Jews present at the camp. After that November day, the guards went on to other assignments and former prisoners lucky enough to still be alive faced the challenges of hiding, evasion, and—for many—further escapes.[40]

The timing of the revolt meant that Jews who escaped Treblinka on August 2, 1943 still had to find ways to endure another twenty-one months of war and Nazi genocide. The impossibility of arriving at any true reckoning of what happened to those who made it out alive, at least initially, demonstrates in part why the creation of lists is problematic. We will never know how many were killed in the fighting immediately or how many people made it close to the end of the war only to die at the hands of one or another force let loose by Nazi ideology and a continent in flames.

With these problems in mind, the definition of Revolt Survivor does require some bounds and clarification. People in this category are, as stated above, all those who made it out of Treblinka on August 2, 1943. The Revolt Survivor category further requires that the uprising itself was the reason for the survival of each individual, regardless of whether they took part. This means that those transferred to Treblinka I are not included because they owe their lives to an SS decision, not to Jewish resistance. I also do not include individuals who died at the hands of guards in chase on the day of the uprising or those killed by German and other forces in the time immediately after. Instead, I see the victims of Treblinka's own guards and the reinforcements they could unleash as casualties of the camp itself despite their possible position

[40] For information on the departure of the guards from Treblinka and their reassignment to anti-partisan warfare in the area of Trieste, Italy, see Sara Berger, *Experten der Vernichtung: das T4-Reinhardt-Netzwerk in den Lagern Belzec, Sobibor, und Treblinka* [*Experts of Extermination: The T4-Reinhard Network in the Camps Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*], 2. Aufl, Studien zur Gewaltgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts (Hamburg: Hamburger ed., 2014); Ian Baxter, *The SS of Treblinka* (Stroud: Spellmount, 2010).

outside the wire at the time of their deaths. How long after the revolt and how far from the camp's fences this should apply must vary case-by-case. Scholars working on other Holocaust sites should view this analysis as a chance to probe the geographic limits of their location, the reach of local perpetrators, and the boundaries of their power over victims and so-called bystanders.

The Third Reich's camps, ghettos, and mass shooting sites had impacts far beyond their recognizable physical edges. In their 2017 article "The Death Camp Eldorado," Volha Charnysh and Eugene Finkel revealed how the economic effects of Treblinka spread well beyond its gates. Their work plotted the level to which local non-Jewish Poles enriched themselves as Nazi mass murder went on and showed how the effects of this profiteering remain visible today in the quality and construction of housing around the former camp.[41] Work to define the category of Revolt Survivor can take this research back to the days around August 2, 1943 to reveal how far the murderous tentacles of this extermination camp spread into the Polish countryside. Similar work on other sites will also demonstrate the geographic scope of each and the breadth of their influence on local populations and potential victims.

Escape Survivors

Escape Survivors, personified by Yaakov Eisner, above, share quite similar stories. Like Yaakov, many found ways to evade the notice of guards until nightfall in order to make their way over the fences at night. These survivors tell us much about the operation of Treblinka. The prevalence of nighttime escapes seems to confirm that guard towers were not manned after

[41] Volha Charnysh and Evgeny Finkel, "The Death Camp Eldorado: Political and Economic Effects of Mass Violence," *American Political Science Review* 111, no. 4 (2017): 801–18. The work of Jan Gross and Irena Grudzińska-Gross is also informative on this topic. See Jan Tomasz Gross and Irena Grudzińska-Gross, *Golden Harvest: Events at the Periphery of the Holocaust* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2016).

prisoners were locked in their barracks at night. The sheer number of Escape Survivors is also instructive. So many found ways out of Treblinka before the revolt that we can only conclude guards were less than expert at their roles and that prisoner accountability must have been at least somewhat lax in general. Indeed, survivor testimonies frequently note that Treblinka did not issue uniforms and, for a long time, had no system of numbering individual inmates.[42]

Leon Diskin, Eddie Weinstein, and Michael Fischmann took the other most common path for Treblinka Escape Survivors. Rather than climb fences at night, these men hid onboard train cars as other inmates loaded them with the stolen belongings of those murdered in the Treblinka gas chambers.[43] Their daylight escapes were possible, again, owing to ineffective supervision by guards and the lack of an individualized inmate headcount. These conditions, however, did not last. As explained in previous chapters, SS guards and leaders realized that the camp was losing prisoners almost every day, and they began to make changes both in terms of the built environment and daily routines.

From January 1943, Treblinka's SS moved prisoners to a newly enlarged central barracks structure surrounded by its own interior fence. At about this same time, a new regime of prisoner control in the form of number patches attached to clothing and roll calls by number replaced basic headcounts which prisoners had found easy to falsify.[44] Thereafter, the permanent workforce stabilized and the opportunity for solo or coordinated escapes greatly diminished. The

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[42] For one example of a Treblinka survivor discussing the lack of prisoner uniforms, see Adek Stein, Interview 3169, transcript of interview, p. 22, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, June 13, 1995.

[43] Leon Diskin, Interview 17082, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, July 14, 1996; Eddie Weinstein names Michael Fischmann as an individual who escaped with him. See Edward Weinstein, Interview 2694, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, May 17, 1995; Eddie Weinstein, *17 Days in Treblinka: Daring to Resist, and Refusing to Die*, 4th ed. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem Publications, 2009).

[44] Samuel Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka* (Warsaw: Zydowski Instytut Historyczny, 1984), 187.

agency of the prisoners themselves in bringing about these changes should not be overlooked. The actions of Escape Survivors led to these changes in guard procedures and camp geography.

Understanding the varied paths and decisions of Escape Survivors does much to expand our knowledge of resistance at Treblinka and its impact on the ways in which guards operated the camp. To add shorthand clarity to this category, Escape Survivors are all those individuals who found a way out of Treblinka prior to the August 2, 1943 revolt through some form of resistance that did not involve selection by SS guards or planned transport to another place in the Nazi system. Some parts of this definition gain clarity through juxtaposition with Through Transport Survivors, below.

By analyzing the timing of escapes, their impact on Nazi SS decision-making, and their role in making possible the planning of wider resistance acts—as done in Chapter Three—Escape Survivors and their stories are instructive for the whole history of Treblinka. Scholars at work on further forms of resistance or means of survival at other camps will find it important to think of these subjects in terms of their chronology and how they affect the wider timeline of the place they study. At Treblinka, recognition of the switch from individual or small group escape to coordinated, large-scale planning makes it possible to understand the evolution of resistance and how that was tightly connected to changes in the spatial environment and guard routines. Through Transport Survivors offer new understandings of how Treblinka fit into the wider Nazi perpetration of the Holocaust and how outside acts of Jewish resistance had a major impact on the outcome of events at this camp.

Through Transport Survivors

For some, the short survival stories of Zelda Gordon and Ben Lerman may beg the question of how long an individual needed to be inside Treblinka or any other camp to be considered a survivor of that place. I could find no existing criteria on the concept of a time-based restriction of who is regarded as a survivor of a specific location of Holocaust perpetration in the existing scholarship. In addressing what, if any, time limits are appropriate to the definition of a survivor in the case of Treblinka, however, the very nature of this extermination camp and its normal operations suggests there should be none.

Nazi authorities designed Treblinka and its *Aktion Reinhard* sister-camps of Belzec and Sobibor to carry out plans for the total annihilation of European Jewry. Bearing in mind that most individuals who disembarked at Treblinka met their deaths less than two hours after arrival, it seems woefully inappropriate to place any time-of-stay restriction on the status of a Treblinka survivor.[45] Bearing this in mind, any individual who ever set foot inside the camp and somehow emerged alive should be considered as a survivor. Including these people gives them historical recognition for what they endured. In addition to this commemorative function, identifying these survivors also contributes to our understanding of how the Nazis operated Treblinka and offers a glimpse of how their procedures changed over time.

[45] During interviews with Franz Stangl, Gitta Sereny probed the commander's daily routine. Sereny succeeded in eliciting frank descriptions of how the system at Treblinka made fast work of mass murder. Guards and prisoners unloaded trains early each morning—normally twenty railcars all at once—with Stangl stating that by the time he finished morning paperwork at about eleven o'clock, "they were well ahead with the work up there." Sereny clarified Stangl's emotionless statement, saying "He meant that by this time the 5,000 to 6,000 who had arrived that morning were dead: the "work" was the disposal of the bodies." Stangl woke up, had breakfast, worked in his office, and by the time he sat down to lunch his men had exterminated six thousand or more human beings. Survivor witnesses corroborate Stangl's statement that the entire process from arrival to murder took about two hours for an entire transport. Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 167–71; Sereny, 167–71; Burba, *Treblinka*, 7; Chrostowski, *Extermination Camp Treblinka*, 25–27, 29–30; Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka*, 18–19.

Like Gordon and Lerman, Saul Kuperhand is another example of an individual who spent less than a day within its wire fences and emerged to tell the tale. The Nazis transported Kuperhand and his extended family from the Siemiatycze Ghetto in early November 1942. In an event that the testimonial record indicates did not often occur, SS guards selected 150 men from his transport for transfer from the Treblinka II extermination camp to the Treblinka I labor camp. Having been selected, Kuperhand managed to bring his brothers Yakov-Hirsh and Usher into the line of men leaving the extermination camp. As a result of his quick thinking, Kuperhand and two of his brothers survived while the rest of his family perished.[46] Beniamin Rok, another man from Saul Kuperhand's hometown and transport, evaded death in the same manner that day.[47] Israel Cymlich also survived Treblinka II with a similar combination of luck and initiative, enabling his transfer to Treblinka I, demonstrating that—while certainly not prevalent—these stories are not singular incidents.[48] Including these voices among the survivors of Treblinka gives credit to the fast-thinking resistance demonstrated by those able to recognize their situation and find a way to save their own lives and those of others at the point of disembarkation.

In another occurrence of transport from Treblinka to another camp, Benjamin Piskorz recounted how he was among 320 selected for transport from Treblinka to Majdanek in April 1943.[49] Piskorz, Gordon, and Lerman all recount transport to Majdanek. This camp was the

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[46] Kuperhand states that kapos and the SS did notice the two additional men in their selected group of 150, but let this go as they were well aware most of these men would be dead soon regardless. Despite his actions to save their lives on arrival at Treblinka II, Kuperhand's brothers Yakov-Hirsh and Usher would both later be killed inside Treblinka I. See Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka* (Urbana and Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 104–10.

[47] Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 109, 173; Testimony of Biniamin Rok, Undated, O.3, File 4843, Item 3558739, YVA, p. 9.

[48] Israel Cymlich, "My War Experiences," in *Escaping Hell in Treblinka* (New York; Jerusalem: Yad Vashem Publications, 2007), 1–116; Israel Cymlich and Oskar Strawczynski, *Escaping Hell in Treblinka* (New York, NY; Jerusalem: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2007).

[49] David P. Boder, "David P. Boder Interviews Benjamin Piskorz; September 1, 1946, Tradate, Italy: Voices of the Holocaust Project," Online Archive, trans. David P. Boder, *Voices of the Holocaust*, Paul V. Galvin Library, Illinois Institute of Technology, (2009), http://voices.iit.edu/interview?doc=piskorzB&display=piskorzB_en.

most prevalent next stop other than the nearby labor camp that shared Treblinka's name. These transfers demonstrate how Nazi uses of the Treblinka extermination camp changed with the wider events of World War II and acts of Jewish resistance elsewhere.

The April-May 1943 Warsaw Ghetto Uprising had a considerable, if as yet largely unrecognized, impact on day-to-day operations at Treblinka II. Piskorz was deported from Warsaw as German forces fought to regain control of the ghetto from Jewish combatants. As they did so, it appears that they resorted to the temporary use of the unloading ramp at Treblinka as a place to sort and select workers bound for other camps. Lerman also arrived at Treblinka during this same period.[50] These survivors indicate that resistance in Warsaw managed to change the routine at Treblinka and offered Jews arriving there a new path to survival if they could manage to get selected for transport to Majdanek or sneak themselves and others into the line out of the camp as Kuperhand did. Though they were sent elsewhere, these people did step off the train at Treblinka while hundreds or thousands of others from their same transport met their deaths in the gas chambers that day. Their transport out was often the result of subtle acts of resistance to this fate either by jumping into a better line or in doing their best to appear capable of work even after all they had already endured.

When read or viewed in full, the testimonies of Through Transport Survivors illustrate how people with one day or even only hours of experience inside Treblinka can still recount important details about the arrival of transports, the physical appearance of the facility, and how they managed to escape death in ways that change understandings of prisoner resistance and the normal routine inside this camp. For these reasons, everyone who stepped off the train at the camp merits inclusion among the survivors of Treblinka no matter how long they stayed. I draw

[50] Ben L., Mssa.hvt.1023, Part 2, Segment 13, 00:13:48, Segment 14, 00:19:48, FVA, April 22, 1987.

a fine line, however, between those who did get off the transports and those who did not. The latter group represent of a final category of experience that I term Jewish Witnesses of Treblinka.

Jewish Witnesses of Treblinka

In his recent article "Sensory Witnessing at Treblinka," Jacob Flaws sets out to determine the spatial, sensory, and experiential reach of the camp for Jews, Germans, and local non-Jewish Poles alike. Flaws stresses the importance of his search for sensory witnesses by stating that only "approximately 70" Jews made it out of the camp alive.[51] Therein, he accepts Donat's list as unamendable fact, uses it as his starting point, and mobilizes it in partial justification of his efforts to identify a new set of voices to recount the history of Treblinka. Flaws conducts his search for additional individuals with knowledge of the camp by defining a "zone of sensory witnessing" that spread far into the surrounding Polish countryside. He explains that persons within this zone—regardless of their identity—saw, smelled, and heard what went on inside Treblinka in one way or another. He thus employs an expansive codification of the sensory experience in his article to increase "the number of Treblinka witnesses potentially into the thousands."[52]

In Flaws' consideration, Jewish Witnesses of Treblinka are all those individuals who lived in or passed through the camp in one way or another as well as all those who hid within the geographic spread of its aural, visual, or audible traces. By including both those inside and outside the camp in the same version of witnessing, however, Flaws makes the term too capacious to be of analytical use in the consideration of survivorship. Meanwhile, his definition

[51] Jacob Flaws, "Sensory Witnessing at Treblinka," *The Journal of Holocaust Research* 35, no. 1 (January 26, 2021): 41–65.
[52] Flaws, "Sensory Witnessing at Treblinka," 43.

of non-Jewish local Poles as witnesses, so long as they lived within the same spatial zone of the camp's sensory presence, does help reveal the spread of knowledge about Treblinka. In his demonstration of the contemporaneous experiential zone of Treblinka and its connections to the area outside its fences, Flaws also, in a way, presupposes Charnysh and Finkel's work on the continuing local economic impact of the camp. Still, the local sensory witness voices Flaws recovers are mostly unable to comment in any detail on life within Treblinka or the routines of the camp.

As opposed to Flaws' quite broad formulation of witnessing, I define Jewish Witnesses of Treblinka as only those Jews who came quite near to the camp but *did not* enter its confines for even a moment. The definition of Jewish Witnesses, here, helps understand and contextualize the experiences of Treblinka survivors—particularly Through Transport Survivors. The stories of Jewish Witnesses of Treblinka have much to teach about the impacts of resistance, changes to Nazi procedures at this camp, and the evolving role of this place in the wider Holocaust.

Nazi forces in Bialystok deported Ralph B., Irene S., Yetta Eisner, and Doba Apelowicz to Treblinka on a pair of rail transports shortly after the August 2, 1943 prisoner revolt. Though none of them could date their experiences precisely, it is clear from their descriptions of the journey and events on arrival at Treblinka that they were on two different trains.[53] Since only two transports arrived at the camp after the uprising, these Jewish Witnesses contribute to understandings of what happened to both.[54] Ralph, Irene, Yetta and Doba also allow us to examine what took place at Treblinka after the revolt, as few others can. In the aftermath of the

[53] Ralph B., Mssa.hvt.0801, Part 1, Segment 8, 00:45:17, FVA, November 9, 1986; Irene S., Mssa.hvt.0098, Part 2, Segment 15, 00:16:35, Segment 17, 00:32:59, FVA, April 18, 1980; Yetta Eisner, Interview 3143, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, June 1, 1995; Doba Apelowicz, Interview 29753, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation. May 28, 1997.
[54] Gitta Sereny discusses the arrival of these two transports with Polish railway worker and underground member, Franciszek Ząbecki, see Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, 249.

fighting and the efforts of guards to pacify the camp, survivors of all kinds—with the unique exception of Kalman Jankowski—were no longer in Treblinka. All but one known Jewish survivor either made it out of the camp on August 2, 1943 or before that date. As such, only the possibly mendacious accounts of former guards and the statements of these Jewish Witnesses can provide us with much of a window into these last days of Treblinka.

The deportation from Bialystok of all four of these individuals also coincided with the destruction of the ghetto in that city and an accompanying wave of Jewish resistance there. What happened to their transports, therefore, must be viewed as the combined result of Nazi intentions and Jewish resistance at Treblinka and in the Bialystok Ghetto. As it happened, these acts of resistance changed deportation practices in Bialystok as well as arrival procedures at Treblinka in profound ways.[55]

Nazi authorities sorted the transport that took Ralph B. and Irene S. to Treblinka according to whom they thought capable of work before boarding. Ralph and Irene were placed in a railcar with others chosen for labor. When their train arrived in the area of Treblinka, only those cars carrying the sick, elderly, and infirm were taken into Treblinka. Ralph and Irene's railcars waited outside, likely at the Malkinia station. They never laid eyes directly on the camp, nor did they step off the train.[56] Yetta Eisner was likely on the same transport. As she described it,

> We were there for quite a while, I don't remember how long. I only know that three or four cars were disconnected because at that particular time they couldn't accommodate so many people and this, from there, we were taken to Lublin.[57]

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[55] Sara Bender, "Białystok," in *The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos 1933-1945*, trans. Andrew Koss (Washington, DC: Indiana University Press and United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2012).
[56] Ralph B., Mssa.hvt.0801, Part 1, Segment 8, 00:45:17, FVA, November 9, 1986; Irene S., Mssa.hvt.0098. Part 2, Segment 17, 00:32:59, FVA, April 18, 1980.
[57] Yetta Eisner, Interview 3143, Tape 2, 08:20, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, June 1, 1995.

Eisner not only recounts how the arrival of her train at Treblinka worked, she also offers a sound analysis of one reason why she and the others in her car did not enter Treblinka.

Though the revolt did not succeed in destroying the gas chambers at Treblinka, much of the camp's other infrastructure did burn. Additionally, all but about 100 prisoners experienced in the process of unloading and moving the people that arrived on transports had either fled or been killed in the revolt. These factors left the camp unable to kill as many as it had before and thus contributed to its closure after these two Bialystok transports.[58] What Eisner may not have realized, however, is the possible importance of resistance in Bialystok itself. Just as the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising influenced the temporary use of the Treblinka arrival ramp as a selection area, resistance at the Bialystok Ghetto could have forced the dispatch of these transports despite the damaged state of Treblinka at that time.

Doba Apelowicz endured a deportation from Bialystok that was similar to that of Yetta Eisner, Ralph B. and Irene S., but her arrival on the other of these two post-revolt trains was slightly different. When her train got to Treblinka, it appears that the cars were not arranged in an order that would allow those selected for life to be left at the nearby train station. Apelowicz describes instead how her train pulled onto the siding at Treblinka itself where other cars were opened. From there, she was able to watch from inside her own car as her mother and family were taken to the gas chambers. Though she did not step off the train, Apelowicz was an even closer Jewish Witness to what happened at Treblinka.[59]

Yetta Eisner, Doba Apelowicz, Ralph B. and Irene S. are not survivors of Treblinka because of one key difference between their experiences and those of the Through Transport

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[58] Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 298, 363.
[59] Doba Apelowicz, Interview 29753, Tape 4, 06:15, *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation. May 28, 1997.

group. Nazi authorities had all four of these individuals within their grasp, but did not intend to kill them at Treblinka. They did not get off the train at the camp and never set foot behind the fences because they had already been chosen for another fate. Their evasion of death at Bialystok and at Treblinka itself is at least in part due to pressures applied to Nazi planners by Jewish resistance. If the camp had not been damaged during the revolt and were Bialystok not also a site of fighting, all of those placed on these trains could have ended up in the line to death at Treblinka.

Any accounting, categorization, or definition must have bounds. I chose to count as survivors only those individuals who stepped off the train at Treblinka. I do this because Nazi guards placed these individuals in a position of the gravest danger of death the moment they disembarked. Once inside, even if a rare selection for departure was to become their fate, each had to fight to stay alive, to posture themselves in a way that appeared ready for work, or have the quick wit and opportunity to jump lines. The category of Jewish Witnesses as defined here also offers a new understanding of the impacts of resistance. Though the arrival of two transports after the revolt could be seen as evidence of its failure, the ways in which Jewish Witnesses describe their pre-selected journeys and unopened railcars at least complicates this judgement. Revolt at Treblinka and resistance at Bialystok saved lives by lessening this camp's capacity to kill and simultaneously creating a need to rush Jewish prisoners out of the ghetto before repairs could be made.

Jewish Witnesses of Treblinka demonstrate how resistance changed the normal course of events at the camp. The fact that Nazi guards did not intend to kill them—and did not remove them from the train to make this decision—shows how their experiences differ from those of Through Transport Survivors. Similar to the ways in which analysis of Escape Survivors shows

how resistance changed the built environment at Treblinka and moved prisoners toward the planning of revolt once this path closed, Jewish Witness stories demonstrate how the revolt changed procedures at Treblinka in a way that saved lives even for the last two transports. By considering the definition of Jewish Witnessing here, researchers focused on other locations will gain new ways to conceptualize the spatial bounds of their locations. Some will find that zeroing in on the timing of certain experiences will reveal changes made by the perpetrators or adaptations made by Jews. Regardless of the shape other studies take, conceptualizing versions of survival at other locations during the Holocaust is certain to expand our understandings of the ways in which people endured these sites as well as the area, or zone of their influence, and how each operated over time.

Conclusion: The "Last" Survivor of Treblinka and Localizing Definitions of Survivorship

On the occasion of Samuel Willenberg's passing in February 2016, media outlets around the world mourned him as the "last Treblinka death camp survivor."[60] The BBC, the *Times of Israel*, and the *Miami Herald*—to name just three—ran stories and obituaries prominently featuring the word "last."[61] Two days later, however, the *Times of Israel* corrected itself by running another story entitled "There are still Treblinka survivors living. One tells his tale."[62] Having seen earlier reports, the daughter of Leon Rytz reached out to the press to tell of her

[60] "Last Treblinka Death Camp Survivor Samuel Willenberg Dies," *BBC News*, February 20, 2016, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-35623492.
[61] "Last Treblinka Death Camp Survivor Samuel Willenberg Dies," *BBC News*, February 20, 2016; Monique O. Madan, "Samuel Willenberg, the Last Surviving Treblinka Prisoner, Dies at 93," *Miami Herald*, February 20, 2016, https://www.miami herald.com/news/local/obituaries/article61493247.html; Sara Miller, "Samuel Willenberg, Last Survivor of Treblinka Revolt, Dies at 93," *Times of Israel*, February 20, 2016, http://www.timesofisrael.com /samuel-willenberg-last-surviving-treblinka-prisoner-dies-at-93/.
[62] Amanda Borschel-Dan, "There Are Still Treblinka Survivors Living, One Tells His Tale," *The Times of Israel*, February 22, 2016, https://www.timesofisrael.com/there-are-still-treblinka-survivors-living-one-tells-his-tale/; T.O.I Staff, "President Pays Tribute as Last Survivor of Treblinka Revolt Is Laid to Rest," *Times of Israel*, February 22, 2016, http://www.timesofisrael.com/president-attends-funeral-for-last-treblinka-revolt-survivor/.

father's experiences. Rytz still lives in Sweden, where he settled not long after the Second World War. Though he is well-known there, his saga had not previously come to the attention of journalists outside his adopted home. After the *Times* and other outlets wrote about Rytz, a new framing of survival at Treblinka began to take hold. The *Times* subsequently relabeled Willenberg the "final survivor of the August 1943 *Treblinka prisoner's revolt*."[63] With italic emphasis the paper intended to show how Willenberg was the last representative of a certain experience, even though he was not the last living survivor.

Leon Rytz, as he explained to Amanda Borschel-Dan of the *Times*, escaped Treblinka before the revolt. Rytz also survived several other camps during his perilous path to 1945. These facts left Borschel-Dan questioning how we should define and label his experiences. She wondered whether it was "factually correct" to call Rytz a "Treblinka survivor" because he was also imprisoned in Majdanek, Buchenwald, and Bergen-Belsen. Borschel-Dan took her question to Yad Vashem's Ehud Amir, who assured her that there is "no binding definition of how a Holocaust survivor is labeled." Borschel-Dan quoted Amir, stating "a person who was in several camps can be considered a survivor from each camp [in which he was a prisoner]."[64]

The passing of Samuel Willenberg and the late recognition of Leon Rytz opened new conversations in the media. Noting, as they did, the different kinds of survival stories told by Willenberg and Rytz, media outlets also began to qualify different versions of survival at Treblinka. Willenberg became the last Treblinka revolt survivor while Rytz holds center stage as the last living survivor of the camp and as a pre-revolt escapee. Of equal importance is Borschel-Dan's search for a proper way to label survival and the differing experiences during the

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[63] Borschel-Dan, "There Are Still Treblinka Survivors Living, One Tells His Tale," *The Times of Israel*, February 22, 2016.
[64] Borschel-Dan, "There Are Still Treblinka Survivors Living," *The Times of Israel*, February 22, 2016.

Holocaust. That both of these men are Holocaust survivors was not at all a matter of discussion. While that is easily understood, how we might conceive of and categorize their experiences more specifically was less clear.

Amir's explanation to the *Times* reporter highlights the fact that there is no single or official way to label Holocaust survivors and their experiences. In addition to this, at present, there is no historiography of the term "survivor" as it relates to a specific place, such as a camp, ghetto, or shooting site during the Holocaust. Though many historians and organizations offer capacious definitions of the wider term "Holocaust survivor," little if any attention has been paid to how the term survivor should be employed locally.[65] This lack of place-specific understandings of survival is particularly noteworthy in light of the vibrant expansion of spatial Holocaust research in recent years.

As they reacted to the passing of Willenberg and the emergence of Rytz, however, reporters began an exploration of these questions and what their answers might mean for our understandings of the Holocaust. Leon Rytz may well be the last living voice of survival at this extermination camp. Though it is impossible to know for certain, the fact that any Treblinka survivor would be nearing 100 years old makes it likely that Mr. Rytz is now alone in his experiences. Likewise, the increasing age of all but the youngest child survivors of the Holocaust means that 'last' experience and 'last' voice news stories will, sadly, only increase in the coming years. As they do, journalists like the *Times'* Borschel-Dan will struggle to find prudent and respectful ways to describe the lives and paths of the people they cover. Historians

[65] As an example, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum states, "The Museum honors as survivors any persons, Jewish or non-Jewish, who were displaced, persecuted, or discriminated against due to the racial, religious, ethnic, social, and political policies of the Nazis and their collaborators between 1933 and 1945. In addition to former inmates of concentration camps, ghettos, and prisons, this definition includes, among others, people who were refugees or were in hiding." See, "Who Is a Survivor?," Museum Webpage, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, accessed February 27, 2021, //www.ushmm.org/remember/holocaust-survivors.

of the Holocaust would be wise to presuppose this coming wave of media definitions and experiential descriptions by providing their own. Getting ahead of this public discussion, however, is not the only reason scholars should address the definition of survivorship at the places they study.

Though someday, hopefully far in the future, we will no longer be able to call upon someone with direct memories of the camp, we should still be prepared to find another kind of "last" survivor of Treblinka. Many individuals now passed remain unacknowledged survivors of this place. The permanently incomplete nature of any survivor list means that even after Rytz leaves us, others who survived the camp will still await recognition. We should keep in mind that the memories and histories of others as yet unrecognized—and the recollections they leave behind—will emerge long after the "last" survivor has passed on.

This chapter provides examples of the many ways in which a localized conceptual framework for the title survivor can advance our understandings of perpetration sites, the actions of victims, and the spatial influence of individual places over so-called bystanders. Revolt Survivors compel us to consider where the bounds and power of this camp stopped, complicating any simplistic view of the fences as the limits of local perpetrator power. Escape Survivors, meanwhile, provide an important understanding of how Jewish resistance changed the very face of Treblinka and helped create the conditions needed for revolt planning. Through Transport Survivors take our knowledge of resistance other than the revolt still further while also allowing us to see how Treblinka fit into the wider Holocaust, as well as how camp routines changed over time. Finally, Jewish Witnesses of Treblinka provide yet another view of the boundaries of this camp as their experiences draw out changing perpetrator intent in addition to new information on

the impacts of Jewish resistance at Treblinka and elsewhere. These categories and others as yet undefined will benefit scholars of other sites.

No single definition of survivorship or dominant set of experiential categories is likely to emerge. Many of the over 44,000 camps and ghettos of the Third Reich will require a unique exploration of their own versions of survival. The thousands of mass shooting sites may demand still more reckonings with the idea of survivorship. Still, the utility of these questions is clear. Localized definitions of survivorship—without creating new lists—will assist scholars seeking to understand the experiences, choices, and paths of individuals forced to confront Nazi genocide. Spatial studies of the Holocaust will benefit still further from this means of determining the boundaries of their studies.

Increasing the number of survivors of a place that killed as many as 925,000 people from 68 to 249 in no way alters its overwhelming lethality. The importance of analyzing survivorship at Treblinka is instead the creation of an update to Donat's list that is more capable of foregrounding differences in individual paths to survival and demonstrating to interested researchers that additional testimonial evidence awaits their use. The stories of those left off Donat's list deserve recognition and inclusion by future scholars even while we continue to acknowledge that no collection of names will ever be definitive. The Appendix of this dissertation provides a new, and still incomplete, list of Treblinka survivors.

Chapter Eight

Conclusion

Conclusion

My greatest revenge is that I created a beautiful, loving family.
—Samuel Willenberg[1]

Treblinka was supposed to be a rumor. The Nazi attempt to exterminate European Jewry at this place was to be just one vaguely whispered part of what Heinrich Himmler called "an unwritten and never-to-be-written page of glory."[2] With the bodies burned, the fields plowed over, and witnesses gone or silent, little to nothing of what happened at Treblinka would have been known or widely accepted and understood. Nazi defeat and Jewish survival made sure this vision never came to be. While we must rightly credit Allied victory for putting an end to the Shoah, we should also recognize that it was Jewish resistance and the preservation of survivor voices through evasion, escape, and the uprising that preserved memory and evidence of what went on inside Treblinka.

This dissertation describes how Jews trapped inside Treblinka fought back against Nazi genocide and Himmler's vision of future erasure. The story revealed here centers the revolt but it also takes pains to uncover how many smaller, or less visible, acts of perseverance and resistance fed into and enabled that outcome. I show that resistance at Treblinka relied upon social networks and geographic place-making strategies. Jewish prisoner leadership created Places of Resistance by uniting like-minded prisoners and providing them with the tools and spatial access they needed to preserve life and, later, rise up. These resistance efforts grew from relationships of trust that Jews brought to the camp from prewar life as well as new bonds they created on their work detail assignments within the camp.

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[1] Alan Tomlinson, *Treblinka's Last Witness*, DVD, Documentary (Tomlinson De Onis Productions LLC, 2014).
[2] Heinrich Himmler, "Speech at Posen," printed in Anson Rabinbach and Sander L. Gilman, eds., *The Third Reich Sourcebook*, Weimar and Now: German Cultural Criticism 47 (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2013), 785-91, quote on p. 787.

This work contributes to our understanding of Jewish resistance during the Holocaust by demonstrating the origins of a relatively well-known event in the long background of prisoner actions that made it possible. The geographic and social network analysis research methodologies employed here are replicable and expandable for future work on Treblinka itself, as well as for wider questions in Holocaust and Genocide Studies, or any other field of historical inquiry. These spatial and social network research methods also underpin a turn to the analysis of gender and the roles of women in resistance at Treblinka.

This dissertation devotes greater space and research efforts to the lives and actions of women at this camp than the entire existing historiography of the place to-date. What I uncover here restores a small, but incredibly important and chronically understudied group of women prisoners to the historical record while explaining several factors that have long kept them at the margins of Treblinka history and memory. Spatial analysis of testimonies given by male survivors made it possible for this work to push beyond the silences of some and the complete erasure of others. Looking at gender and masculinity, meanwhile, makes it possible to explain the statements of men who avoid the topic of women's lives at Treblinka and their acts in resistance. My outcomes here offer a roadmap for further work on male testimony and gendered retellings of Holocaust history in conjunction with early memoirs and later oral histories especially. From start to finish, this research is made possible by an expansion of the known Treblinka archive and work to recognize unheralded individual accounts of survival.

An expansion of the Treblinka source base and the identification of 249 individuals as survivors has the potential to revitalize the study of this place. For too long, historians have believed that only 67 individuals survived Treblinka and viewed this as a fact that made further research next to impossible. This dissertation shows that much more evidence awaits new

questions. As I have also sought to stress—and will further explain in the appendix—the work of survivor recognition here is far from complete. It is, in fact, a process with no end. In the recovery of voices and acknowledgement of a greater historical source base, however, I hope that this work can launch new starting points for historians and others seeking to understand Treblinka, its victims, and those who made it out.

Directions for Future Research and New Projects

It will come as no surprise to any scholar that even after years of reading and research on this project, some paths remain untraveled, and some questions are as yet unanswered. In the final stages of writing this dissertation, new leads and source collections came to light while circumstances prevented the analysis of others. Additional research on the social networks of resistance at Treblinka, follow up on a myriad of possible survivor leads, and work in further archives may well merit updates to this work as I proceed with manuscript revisions for eventual publication.

In the process of writing this dissertation, I noticed repeated mention of the importance revolt planners placed on prior military experience. Several survivor testimonies indicate that individuals with military backgrounds were sought out for assignment to certain roles in the revolt plan based on their perceived expertise and weapons-handing abilities. Additional time to research how often this appears in sources and the opportunity analyze where the Organizing Committee placed these veterans in the camp geography could reveal how important they were to resistance and thus add new details about the overall revolt plan. Future work in this area might also involve primary research in interwar Czechoslovak and Polish military collections to uncover the training and experiences of revolt participants

Recognition of military experience as an important factor in the establishment of resistance networks came too late for inclusion here, though this is a matter I will pursue immediately in renewed work with existing sources during revision. Continued research will also include efforts to uncover the lives of non-Jewish civilian women employed in service roles at Treblinka. I have long known of this small group, though I thought the available sources on their lives at the camp were too few for new interventions. The publication of Chris Webb and Michal Chocholatý's revised and updated volume in the spring of 2021 brought to my attention the existence of investigative materials that may contain extensive statements by these women. Adding coverage of their roles at the camp alongside existing material on Jewish women's lives and resistance would be an important addition to the future manuscript.[3]

In addition to this pair of focused avenues for renewed research, there still exists the sizable collection of Treblinka-related materials at the Duisburg branch of the North-Rhine-Westphalia State Archive that I have not had time to work with in depth. A short trip there in 2015 yielded the names of two previously unknown survivors and a map of the camp that does not appear in the secondary literature. It is unfortunate that the pandemic prevented a return trip to this archive, though time will certainly exist for new work there going forward.

The wealth of new sources on survivors and their lives uncovered in the process of this research also offers a clear path to a pair of follow-on projects. One of the most fascinating discoveries during this research was Moyshe Klaynman's unpublished and untranslated musical memoir. I wholeheartedly believe Klaynman's manuscript deserves wide release and scholarly analysis. My colleague Matthew M. Greene and I will approach the Warsaw Jewish Historical Institute with a proposal to translate Klaynman's Yiddish-language text into English and publish

[3] Chris Webb and Michal Chocholatý, *The Treblinka Death Camp: History, Biographies, Remembrance*, 2nd Ed. (Stuttgart: Ibidem Verlag, 2021), 252-62, see especially note 575 on p. 253.

it in a multi-authored edited volume. The volume we envision would be centered on our translation of Klaynman's musical memoir alongside chapters analyzing his work from historical, literary, dramaturgical, musicological, and Yiddishist disciplinary perspectives. Such a work would reveal new insights into life and resistance at Treblinka as well as its earliest representations.

Having identified 249 survivors of Treblinka, I have begun to think about a new project that would investigate their lives after the August 2, 1943 revolt. This second monograph effort would focus on how each decided to deal with the burdens of bearing witness to the history of this extermination camp. A sizeable group of Treblinka survivors made it the mission of their postwar lives to seek justice for those murdered at the camp. This same dedicated group devoted extensive time and energy to Holocaust education and projects seeking to preserve the memory of Treblinka victims.

Their powerful and important efforts draw a line under one important and novel question. When does resistance end? Should we view work to convict former guards, demand compensation, and preserve memory of the lost as acts of latter-day resistance? To me, the answer to this question is an emphatic yes. Escape Survivors before the revolt and voices reporting on the planning of the uprising both insist that one central goal of resistance was the preservation of witnesses and a desire to tell the world what happened at this place. For decades after the end of the war, Treblinka survivors traveled to trials and investigations in (West) Germany, Austria, Ukraine, the USSR, Israel, and the United States. These men and women routinely paused their lives and traveled thousands of miles to publicly relive hell in the hopes of recording what happened and putting the killers behind bars.

With trials and legal proceedings having largely ended by the 1990s, Treblinka survivors continued their work to preserve memory and history in hundreds of interviews for archival oral history organizations, museums, schools, and documentary films. In their efforts to build a lasting body of evidence—in effect, their work to create the archive—Treblinka survivors sought to ensure that what happened at this extermination camp would remain unforgettable and undeniable. Today, scholars recognize the attempt to obliterate all traces of the crime as the final phase of genocide. In his speech at Posen, Heinrich Himmler basically admitted as much and declared the Nazi intent to do just that. Survivors fought against that plan long after 1945. In a follow-on project, I would continue my work to recognize their efforts by writing the history of Treblinka survivor afterlives and their efforts in the postwar world. Such a study would be of value to our knowledge of post-Holocaust survivor lives, the study of resistance, and efforts to understand the legacies of geocide. It might also, I hope, be a fitting tribute to the lifetime achievements of the survivors discussed in these pages.

Appendix

Survivors of Treblinka

Survivors of Treblinka

The list of survivors in this Appendix is an incomplete work in progress and a task impossible to conclude. I wish to stress these facts above all else. My work to expand our knowledge of survival at Treblinka should be seen as a step forward and, ideally, one part of an ongoing and collaborative process of recognition, documentation, and source gathering.

Understanding the history of Treblinka is crucial to our knowledge of the Holocaust, the meanings and varieties of resistance, and so much more. It is my hope that by demonstrating the existence of a much larger available source base, my work can spur further research on those killed at this camp as well as the lives and actions of survivors. With these goals in mind, the references of this section—placed at the end of the list for the sake of readability and ease of use—are extensive and wide-ranging. The endnotes of the list offer much more the basic information needed to confirm each person was a survivor of Treblinka, though they are still not exhaustive. Thankfully, in terms of available research sources, there are simply far too many survivor documents and materials to include comprehensively.

My work on this list comes after or alongside the laudable recent efforts of others. As mentioned in Chapter Seven, the Muzeum Treblinka recently provided a small update to the list of survivors maintained on their website. Michał Wójcik's 2018 *Treblinka '43: Bunt w Fabryce Śmierci* [*Treblinka '43: Revolt in a Factory of Death*] includes an updated list of survivors as does the book's more recent German language translation.[1] In 2021, Chris Webb and Michael Chocholatý released a revised edition of their 2014 book *The Treblinka Death Camp: History, Biographies, Remembrance.* This new work also includes a new list of survivors from which my

[1] Michał Wójcik, *Der Aufstand von Treblinka Revolte im Vernichtungslager*, trans. Paulina Schulz-Gruner (München: Piper Verlag, 2020); Michał Wójcik, *Treblinka '43: Bunt w Fabryce Śmierci* (Kraków: Znak litera nova, 2018).

efforts benefit greatly.[2] While we do not always agree on what constitutes survival of Treblinka, Webb and Chocholatý's book is a prime example of the ways in which each successive author, or pair of authors, can move this work forward.[3]

Readers will need to know a few things about the mechanics and philosophy of the list that follows. Most importantly, names are listed in alphabetical order without regard to the survival categories explored in Chapter Seven. These are useful in research and in understanding this history, though I do not want to imply a hierarchy of any kind by recording the identities of survivors in a list segregated by types of survival. In order to aid researchers interested in finding sources on Revolt Survivors, Escape Survivors, or Through-Transport Survivors, a parenthetical abbreviation appears after the name of each person denoting their means of survival. Those are (RS), (ES), and (TT) for the three main categories. A Means of Survival key, below, lists these categories and other less common paths of survival as well. One further parenthetical abbreviation is also a common notation in the list. All individuals identified by

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[2] Chris Webb and Michal Chocholaty, *The Treblinka Death Camp: History, Biographies, Remembrance* (Stuttgart: Ibidem Verlag, 2014); Chris Webb and Michal Chocholatý, *The Treblinka Death Camp: History, Biographies, Remembrance*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: Ibidem Verlag, 2021).

[3] Webb and Chocholatý list Adele Blau (nee Wallisch) as a survivor of Treblinka in their 2021 edition. I do not consider her a survivor because she was transferred to Sobibor after the revolt (as covered in Chapter Seven) along with Treblinka guards in the final days of the camp. There she and her husband Karl Blau committed suicide. Both were transferred in the same doomed group of Treblinka inmates sent to Sobibor. Those other than the Blaus were murdered by the SS. I believe the guards never had any intention of releasing Adele and Karl Blau but allowed them to commit suicide because of Karl Blau's acquaintance with Franz Stangl. As such, I do not consider them survivors—it was still the forces of Treblinka that decided their fate. Next, Alfred Galewski appears on the Webb and Chocholatý list because he took his own life in the frantic moments of the revolt just outside the camp. As covered in Chapter Seven, I do not consider him a survivor either because he did not truly break free from the grasp of Treblinka. He took his own life to avoid what he saw as immanent recapture. Webb and Chocholatý list David Milgrom as a survivor of Treblinka, though I believe "David" is actually just another name used by Naftali Milgraum/Milgroym who is already on the list. Citing the survivor Jerzy Rajgrodzki, Webb and Chocholatý list a "Moishele" as a survivor of Treblinka, though they note that he was shot in the chest during his flight and died. Because Moishele did not find lasting safety from Treblinka forces, I do not consider him a survivor of the camp. Finally, Webb and Chocholatý cite Richard Glazar in naming a "Schlojme" as a survivor of Treblinka because he also temporarily made it out of the camp on the day of the revolt. As was the case in the death of Moishele, however, Glazar further stated that he witnessed Moishele being shot and killed. Like Schlojme, who did not make it clear of the lethal power of the camp and the forces it could summon to quash resistance, I do not consider Moishele a survivor despite his death beyond the fences. Webb and Chocholatý, *The Treblinka Death Camp* (2021), 265, 271, 280, 285.

Alexander Donat on his original list have a (D) after their names.[4] I have also provided additional sources for these people in the endnotes for all instances in which more information is currently available.

For each individual, this list records the various spellings of their name as found in the sources of which I am aware. Some have quite a few different versions. Over almost eighty years, survivors, their descendants, historians, and archivists, creating and cataloging documents around the world in a multitude of languages, have altered and confused these spellings. Some names have even been over-translated, making, for example, a Josef Czarny sometimes appear as Joseph Black. The additional matter of differing transliterations from Yiddish and Hebrew language sources only adds to the variety. While this list attempts to provide a record of all variations found, the main text of this dissertation defaults to the name most commonly found in the sources or the variant generally found in other secondary literature.

The names of Treblinka survivors killed at a later point during the Holocaust are recorded in italics. This notation, however, should be taken with a grain of salt. The fates of some documented Treblinka survivors are unknown to me. I only place a person's name in italics if a source definitively states that the individual was killed before the end of the Holocaust. Those for whom conclusive sources have not yet been located are not italicized. It should also be noted that sources indicating someone died in the Holocaust may at some future point be called into

[4] I have removed three names present on Alexander Donat's list. These are Sonia Grabinska/Grabinski, Zygmunt Gostynski/Zygmunt "Selig" Gostinski, and Tobias Mieczyslaw. Grabinski/Grabinska was the maiden name of Sonia Lewkowicz, while archival sources located for both Gostynski and Mieczyslaw indicate that they survived the Treblinka I labor camp, not Treblinka II. Sonia Lewkowicz (AKA Sonia Gabowski-Letkowicz), Treblinka Survivor - Testimony - Selected Extracts: Fedorenko Trial Fort Lauderdale, USA 1978, Website - Transcribed Text, 1978, http://www.holocaustresearch project.org/survivor/sonialewkowicz.html; Michael A. Nevins, *Dubrowa: Memorial to a Shtetl (Dabrowa Bialostocka, Poland)*, Yizkor Project (Spring Valley, NY: JewishGen, 2010); Statement of Zygmunt "Selig" Gostinski, December 21, 1959, in B162, F 3819, (BL), pp. 586-588; Statement of Tobias Mieczyslaw, November 13, 1959, in B162, F 3818, (BL), pp. 375-376.

question by newly discovered information. As such, and truly in all regards, the list below is a snapshot of what I know now. It is certain to change in the future.

Finally, I want to make clear one last thing about the nature of survivor lists and the matter of resistance during the Holocaust writ large. Survival and resistance are, by their very nature, situational. Agency, that much-debated academic term encompassing all means and acts of taking control over one's life and fate, requires opportunity. It further requires a personal recognition of said opportunity, that can only come from a clear understanding of the moment at hand. The Nazi German SS designed Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka to strip away any clear sense of the moment from all their victims. Those disembarking at any of these camps encountered a maddening rush of brutality and hasty orders that most often resulted in a fog of fear and a total paralysis of the mental faculties. Deliberate and skillful disinformation also robbed people of the awareness required to exercise agency.

From the lie that Jews were being sent east for work as they boarded trains, to the deceptive painting and set dressing of Treblinka's arrival platform as an innocuous rail station, everything about this place was a carefully crafted attempt to deny victims any understanding of the moment that could spark resistance. In our privileged hindsight, we should not forget that belief in the existence of extermination camps at this time was anything but logical. While scholars continue to debate whether the Holocaust represents a unique event in comparison to other genocides, the *Aktion Reinhard* system itself certainly was something altogether new in the long history of human inhumanity. It simply does not make sense to expect that people would be able to fathom a world in which their next stop was a death factory. This is precisely why prisoners organized escapes to warn others. It is also the very reason those runaway messengers

were not always believed. When stunned incredulity at last gave way to terrified acceptance of the facts, it was often too late to be of any great use.

Rather than a resistance personality, a prescient ability to predict the future, or some other supposedly distinctive personal quality, what most frequently set apart the people who ended up on this list was their benefit from the selfless acts of others. A friend lent a hand or told them what to do, information made it to them before they got on the train, they saw an opportunity and leapt at it, or they just ran when others created a chance for them to do so. Among the nearly one million human beings murdered at Treblinka are, without doubt, many who would have grabbed at any chance to fight back and borne any pain or danger that came with it had they only known what was to come. Had they only possessed the opportunity.

The people listed here never claimed to be the best, most talented, or strongest individuals subjected to the horrors of Treblinka. In the end, what mattered most to their survival was chance and chances. Natural though it may be to look at a history as dark and terrible as this and seek heroes, that tendency can also distort reality. The stories of survivors righty fill us with awe and admiration, but our feelings should come with a recognition that those who lived are no more deserving of our attention and respect than those murdered at this place.

These are the voices that emerged from that darkness to remember and honor all those who never had a chance.

They are the lucky ones.

Survivor List Notes and Abbreviations

Name in italics = Survivor of Treblinka later killed during the Holocaust

Means of Survival
(ES) = Escapee Prior to the Revolt
(NC) = Method of Survival Not Confirmed – Revolt or Escape Survivor
(Q) = Questionable Account
(RS) = Revolt Survivor
(TI) = Transferred to Treblinka I after the Revolt – Escaped from Treblinka I
(TT) = Through-Transport Survivor
(UC) = Unique Case
(UN) = Method of Survival Unknown

The Known Survivors of Treblinka

Akam, Haim (TT)[1]
Alembik, Mordechai (ES)[2]
Angrest, Simcha (ES)[3]
Augustyniak, Czeslaw – formerly Blaustein, Leo (D) (ES)[4]
Bachner, Eddie (TT)[5]
Barbanel (No first name) (TT)[6]
Berger/Bergére, Oskar (D) (ES)[7]
Bergstein, Tadeus (TT)[8]
Berko/Berka (RS)[9]
Berman, Minia (UN)[10]
Birman, Szlama (TT)[11]
Blumenfeld, Maniek (TT)[12]
Bodak, Josef (TT)[13]
Bomba, Abraham (D) (ES)[14]
Boorstein, Moshe (ES)[15]
Boraks, Gustaw/Borax, Gustav/Godel/Godl (D) (RS)[16]
Brat, David (ES)[17]
Brenner, Henoch/Hejnoch/Henry – Brener, Enoch (D) (RS)[18]
Brodchandel, Zygmunt (TT)[19]
Broide, Avraham (TT)[20]
Buchalter, Feival/Fajwel Sharaga (ES)[21]
Bulkowstein, Adek/Avrom – later Adek Stein (ES)[22]
Burke, Charles – formerly Berkowicz, Yechiel "Chil" (ES)[23]
Bursztynski, Beno (TT)[24]
Cegiel, Szymon (ES)[25]
Ceranko, Jakob (Q)[26]
Chaimowitz, Jechiel (ES)[27]
Chakin, Vivian née Sidranska (TT)[28]
Chaniak, Abe (TT)[29]
Chimick, Idel (TT)[30]
Chodzko, Mieczslaw (TT)[31]
Ciechanowski, Chaim/Cham (D) (RS)[32]
Ciechanowski, Leizer (D) (RS)[33]
Cienki (First name unknown) (ES)[34]
Cienki (First name unknown) (ES)[35]
Cooperman, Yechezkel (ES)[36]
Czarny/Czerny, Josef (D) (RS)[37]
Czechowicz Frid, Aaron/Aron/Baron – Czechowicz, Aron (D) (ES)[38]
Diament, Nachman/Diamant, Nachum (ES)[39]
Diskin, Leon (ES)[40]
Doliner, Nuske (TT)[41]
Doliner, Usher (TT)[42]
Doliner, Yankel (TT)[43]
Domb, Jakob (D) (RS)[44]

Duszkiewicz, Berl (UN)[45]
Einshindler, Israel (ES)[46]
Eisner, Yaakov/Jakob (D) (ES)[47]
Epstein, Pinchas (D) (RS)[48]
Farber, Soimele (TT)[49]
Fawv (No last name) (ES)[50]
Finkelstein, Leon/Finkielsztajn, Lajzer (D) (RS)[51]
Finkelstein, Nisan David (TT)[52]
Finkelsztejn, Herz (UN)[53]
Fischmann, Michael (ES)[54]
Fleschner, Gilel (UN)[55]
Frankel, Henry (TT)[56]
Frydman-Gerberbaum, Morris (TT)[57]
Frydman, Adam (TT)[58]
Frydman, Saul (TT)[59]
Fuks, Mordechai (ES)[60]
Gavriel (No last name) (TT)[61]
Gelbard, Aron (D) (ES)[62]
Gerstman, Michael (TT)[63]
Glatt, Uryn (NC)[64]
Glazar/Glazer, Richard/Goldschmid, Richard (D) (RS)[65]
Gleit, Aron (RS)[66]
Golaszewski, Zenon (ES)[67]
Goldberg, Sam/Shmulke/Shmulik (RS)[68]
Goldberg, Szymon/Shimon (RS)[69]
Goldfarb, Abraham/Avram (D) (ES)[70]
Goldstein, Alexander (TT)[71]
Gordon, Zelda (TT)[72]
Gottlieb, Karl (ES)[73]
Gradel, Chaim (ES)[74]
Gray, Martin/Grayewski/Grynberg, Meitek (Q)[75]
Grinberg, Jehoszua (ES)[76]
Grinberg, Tadeusz/Tanhum – Greenberg, Tanchum (D) (RS)[77]
Grinsbach, Eliahu (D) (RS)[78]
Gross, Yosef (D) (RS)[79]
Grubstein, K. Jekutiel (TT)[80]
Gutman, Jósef (ES)[81]
Helfand, Adam (UN)[82]
Helfing, Isadore (RS)[83]
Hellman/Helman/Helmann, Szlomo/Shlomo/Schlomo (D) (RS)[84]
Herschkowitz (No first name – father) (ES)[85]
Herschkowitz (No first name – son) (ES)[86]
Jacobskind, Lejzer (UN)[87]
Jakubowicz, Jakob/Jacob (D) (ES)[88]
Jankowski, Kalman (D) (TI)[89]
Karpman, Feliks (ES)[90]

Karpman, Mordka (ES)[91]
Kaufman, Haskel (ES)[92]
Kaufman, Jozef (ES)[93]
Kelin, Judah (D) (RS)[94]
Klaper, Michael (TT)[95]
Klaynman, Moyshe/Klajnman Mosze (RS)[96]
Kohn, Shalom/Kon, Stanisław (D) (RS)[97]
Kolski, Abraham/Avraham/Abram (RS)[98]
Kon, Abe (D) (RS)[99]
Kornhendler, Jonas (ES)[100]
Koszycki, Jacob (D) (RS)[101]
Krawiec, Abe (TT)[102]
Krawiec, Eli (TT)[103]
Krawiec (No first name) (TT)[104]
Krawiec, Kałman (Q)[105]
Kremr, Riva (TT)[106]
Kruk (No first name) (RS)[107]
Krzepicki, Abraham/Yaakov (ES)[108]
Kudlik, Alexander "Arie"/Aleksander (D) (RS)[109]
Kulawy, Sam (Q)[110]
Kuperhand, Saul (TT)[111]
Kuperhand, Usher (TT)[112]
Kuperhand, Yakov-Hirsh (TT)[113]
Lachman/Lackman, Sol (Solomon) (D) (RS)[114]
Laks, Moszek/Mietek – Laks, Moishe-Mordechai (D) (RS)[115]
Laski/Leski, Simcha – Simon/Simcha-Simon (ES)[116]
Leff, Haim (TT)[117]
Leff, Moishe (TT)[118]
Leifer, Itzel (TT)[119]
Leizerovich, Mikhael (ES)[120]
Lerman, Ben (TT)[121]
Levi, Robert (UC)[122]
Levi/Lewi, Leon/Leo (D) (ES)[123]
Lewin, Pinek (TT)[124]
Lewkowicz, David "Dudek" (ES)[125]
Lewkowicz/Levkovitz, Sonia/Sonja – nee Grabinska/Grabinski (D) (RS)[126]
Liber, Sol (TT)[127]
Lieberman, David (ES)[128]
Liebeskind, Aron (ES)[129]
Linder, Eli (ES)[130]
Lindwasser, Abraham (D) (RS)[131]
Lipman, Bernard (ES)[132]
Litwak, Ignac (ES)[133]
Loddick, Ella (ES)[134]
Lonchik (No first name) (TT)[135]
London (No first name) (TT)[136]

Luck, Moshe (D) (RS)[137]
Markoff, Benjamin "Ben" (TT)[138]
Markus (D) (RS)[139]
Markus, Maurice (TT)[140]
Mattel, Morton (RS)[141]
Medrzycki, Anshel (ES)[142]
Miedziński, Szmul (UN)[143]
Milgraum/Milgroym, Naftali (ES)[144]
Miller, Yaakov/Miler/Miller, Jacob/Müller, Jakob (RS)[145]
Mitelberg, M. (D) (RS)[146]
Moniek (No last name) (ES)[147]
Mordski, Leizer (ES)[148]
Mydło, Mojżesz/Mydlo, Morris/Moishe (ES)[149]
Newerstein/Nuwerstein, Abraham (TT)[150]
Nieplotnik, Shepsel (TT)[151]
Nieplotnik, Shie (TT)[152]
Novodvorski, David (ES)[153]
Oleg (No last name) (TT)[154]
Pachter, Michel (Moyshe) (TT) [155]
Pachter, Zeev/Zev (TT)[156]
Pecanowski/Pacanowski, Moshe/Mosze (D) (ES)[157]
Penn, Linda/Kremr, Luba (TT)[158]
Perelstein, Leon (RS)[159]
Peretz, Asher (Q)[160]
Petakowski, Marek (D) (RS)[161]
Pilberg, Morris (TT)[162]
Pinchesowitz, Meyer (TT)[163]
Piskorz, Benjamin (TT)[164]
Plaszewski, Lejbusz (ES)[165]
Platkiewicz, Manny/Platkevitz, Marian (D) (RS)[166]
Poliakiewicz, Symcha (ES)[167]
Porzecki, Moshe (D) (RS)[168]
Poswalski/Posowalski/Pazovalski/Poswolski, Henry/Henryk (D) (RS)[169]
Pruss (No first name) (TT)[170]
Pruss, Pinchus (TT)[171]
Pruss, Simhale (TT)[172]
Pupke (No first name – titled Dr.) (TT)[173]
Rabinowicz, Jacob (ES)[174]
Rajbenbach, Nathan (ES)[175]
Rajchman vel Romanowski/Reichman, Yechiel/Chil/Henry/Henryk (D) (RS)[176]
Rajgrodzki, Jerzy/Georg (D) (RS)[177]
Rajzman/Reizman, Samuel/Shmuel (D) (RS)[178]
Rak, Meir/Cancer, Meier (D) (RS)[179]
Rapp, Avraham (ES)[180]
Rappaport/Rapaport, Moshe – Morris (D) (ES)[181]
Remba, Nahum "Natek" (TT)[182]

Richter (No first name) (ES)[183]
Rock, Abe (TT)[184]
Rock, Benjamin/Rok, Beniamin (TT)[185]
Rogozik, Yeshayahu Mendel (TT)[186]
Rojtman (D) (RS)[187]
Rojzman, Berek/Roizman (D) (RS)[188]
Rosen, Heniek (ES)[189]
Rosenberg, Eliahu/Elijahu/Eliasz (D) (RS)[190]
Rosenberg, Oskar-Asher (TT)[191]
Rosenberg, Sol (ES)[192]
Rosental/Rozental, Szymon/Schaman (RS)[193]
Rosenthal, Lejbel (ES)[194]
Rosenzweig, Gedalia (ES)[195]
Ross, Beniamin/Rozenwaks, Benjamin (TT)[196]
Rozenwaks, Joseph (TT)[197]
Rozmaryn, Jacob (TT)[198]
Rytz, Leon – Ryzczwol, Pejsach Leon "Poldek" (ES)[199]
Salzberg, Moniek (RS)[200]
Salzberg, Władysław (ES)[201]
Schwartz, Helen (TT)[202]
Seder, Allen/Sedrer, Abraham Osher (TT)[203]
Sharson, Lazar (ES)[204]
Shashkes (No last name) (ES)[205]
Shneiderman/Sznajdman, Wolf/William/Velvel/Velvl (D) (RS)[206]
Siedlecki, Joseph/Josef (D) (RS)[207]
Silberzweig, Sol (TT)[208]
Silver, David/Zybersztejn, Dawid (TT)[209]
Sperling, Herschl/Henrick/Henry (D) (RS)[210]
Staniszewski, Roman (UN)[211]
Sterdiner, Szlomo (Q)[212]
Stiffel, Frank (ES)[213]
Stiffel, Martin (ES)[214]
Strawczynski, Oskar/Oscar (D) (RS)[215]
Strawczynski, Zygmunt/Zigmund (D) (RS)[216]
Sukno, Bronka (D) (RS)[217]
Szajnberg, Henoch (TT)[218]
Szejnberg/Szeunberg, Wolf (D) (RS)[219]
Szklarz, Menachem (TT)[220]
Szmulowicz, Jacob (D) (RS)[221]
Sztabholc, Tedeusz/Stabholz, Thaddeus (TT)[222]
Sztajer/Steier, Chaim/Haim (D) (RS)[223]
Taigman/ Teigman/Tajgman/Tajgmann, Kalman (D) (RS)[224]
Tekel, Eliezer (ES)[225]
Tempelhof, Henry (TT) [226]
Tempelhof, Wladek "Vovek" (TT)[227]
Trach, Benzyl (TT)[228]

Turowski, Eugen/Eugene/Eugeniusz (D) (RS)[229]
Tyrkiel, Nathan (TT)[230]
Unger, Charles/Karel (D) (RS)[231]
Wallach/Walach, Azriel (ES)[232]
Warszawski/Warsaw, Sewek/Szyja/Neck/Yeshayahu (D) (RS)[233]
Wasser (D) (RS)[234]
Weinberg, Kazik Borys/Boris Kazik (RS)[235]
Weiner (ES)[236]
Weiner, Haim (TT)[237]
Weingrod, Bernard (TT)[238]
Weinstein, Eddie (ES)[239]
Weisberg, Sol (UN)[240]
Wiernik, Jankiel/Yankel/Jakob – Smarzyński, Jan (D) (RS)[241]
Willenberg, Samuel (D) (RS)[242]
Zagiel, Sewryn (Severin) (TT)[243]
Ziegelman/Zigelman, Mejer (D) (RS)[244]
Zonenfeld, Kive (TT)[245]
Zonenfeld, Pesach (TT)[246]
Zycherman, Feny (TT)[247]
Zylberberg, Moshe (TT)[248]
Zymerman, Joseph (UN)[249]

[1] Haim Akam was a Through Transport Survivor who arrived at Treblinka with Saul Kuperhand. He was transferred to Treblinka I where he was later murdered. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 109, 114.

[2] Mordechai Alembik was from Wielun, Poland. He escaped with Leo Lewi (as Lewi confirms in his testimony held by the Ludwigsburg archive) but died at some point later in the Holocaust as recorded by the Wielun Yizkor book, see *Sefer zikaron le-kehilat wielun* [*Wielun Memorial Book*] (Tel Aviv: Wielun Organization in Israel and the Memorial Book Committee in USA, 1971); Statement of Leon Lewi, March 30, 1960, in B162/3821 Bundesarchiv Ludwigsburg [hereafter BL], pps. 847-849, pp. 847B.

[3] Testimony of Simcha Angrest, October 14, 1994, YVA, O.3, File 8382 and O.3, File 3158, Item 3562676.

[4] Statement of Czeslaw Augustyniak, February 2, 1960, in B162/3819, BL, pps. 635-637; Statement of Czeslaw Augustyniak, May 30, 1960, in B162/3821, BL, pps. 992-999; Statement of Czeslaw Augustyniak, December 14, 1967, in B162/3831, BL, pps. 4006-4017; Alexander Donat, ed., *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (New York: Waldon Press, 1979), 284-5.

[5] Eddie Bachner arrived at Treblinka from the Warsaw Ghetto in May 1943. He and a group of others were selected after a motorcycle arrived with a message for the SS. Bachner also mentioned the selection of five or six "good looking women," insinuating that he knew their looks were the reason for their selection, and he knew what would happen to them. He did not elaborate further, however, and he was not asked by his interviewer. Eddie Bachner (Eliasz Bachner), Interview 53923, Tape 2 of 2, Starting at 13:30. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. August 19, 1997. Accessed September 8, 2020. In a second interview, Bachner estimated that he was one of 100 people taken out of Treblinka in this transport. Eddie (Eliasz) Bachner, Interview 43304, Tape 4 of 9, 24:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. January 26, 1998. Accessed September 8, 2020.

[6] Barbanel, an electrician, was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He was later killed at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 109, 111.

[7] Report Prepared by Oscar Berger. No exact date given, series of documents in which it resides dated 1938-1951. YVA, TR.21, File 47, Item 7060669; Donat, *The Death Camp Treblinka*, 285.

[8] Tadeus Bergstein was a Through Transport survivor sent to Treblinka on May 22, 1943 at the end of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising period. He was selected among a group of 400 and held on the platform overnight before being sent on to Majdanek. His interview with the USC Shoah Foundation is in Portuguese. Thanks go to Ita Gordon for translation assistance. Tadeus Bergstein, Interview 30503. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. June 30, 1997. Accessed September 16, 2020.

[9] Named as fellow Revolt Survivor, fleeing alongside Yaakov Miler in his testimony. Testimony of Yaakov Miler, March 1982 (day not given), YVA, O.3, File 7913, Item 3563554.

[10] Minia Berman is listed as a survivor (method of survival not stated) in the Treblinka Muzeum list update and in Michał Wójcik, *Der Aufstand von Treblinka Revolte im Vernichtungslager*, trans. Paulina Schulz-Gruner (München: Piper Verlag, 2020); "Resistance and Uprising – Muzeum Treblinka [Updated Museum Survivor List]," Museum Webpage, Muzeum Treblinka, accessed May 2, 2021, https://muzeumtreblinka.eu/en/informacje/resistance-and-uprising/.

[11] Szlama Birman was a Through Transport survivor from the Warsaw Ghetto. He was transported to Treblinka May 12, 1943 during the ghetto uprising. He was chosen (with others, numbers unknown) and sent on to Majdanek. Szlama Birman, Interview 26422, Tape 4 of 8, 22:00-28:00, and Tape 5 of 8, 00:10-02:20. See archival PIQ Report, pp. 9. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. January 26, 1997. Accessed September 16, 2020.

[12]Maniek Blumenfeld was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He later died at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 109, 114.

[13] Josef Bodak was a Through Transport survivor from the last trains out of the Bialystok Ghetto. He believed he was on the last transport. Bodak stated that he was held overnight in Treblinka before being sent on to Blizyn, possibly via Majdanek. Bodak also names a "Diamond," a young man, as a fellow survivor of Treblinka. Bodak said this man lived in Sydney, Australia after the war. Without further information, I have not yet placed Diamond on the list. Josef Bodak, Interview 40491, Tape 3 of 6, 20:30-End, Tape 3 of 6, 00:15-07:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. April 23, 1999. Accessed September 8, 2020.

[14] Statement of Abraham Bomba, November 4, 1960, in B162/3824, BL, pps. 1465-1466; Statement of Abraham Bomba, November 27, 1959, in B162/3819, BL, pps. 521-523; Abraham Bomba, Interview 18062, Tape 2 of 7, 22:00-28:30, Tape 3 of 7, 02:40-22:00, Tape 4 of 7, 00:30-27:00, and Tape 5 of 7, 07:05-10:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. August 14, 1996. Accessed September 15, 2020;

Claude Lanzmann, *Shoah*, DVD, Documentary (Criterion Collectoin, 1985); Claude Lanzmann, *Shoah: The Complete Text of the Acclaimed Holocaust Film* (New York, NY: De Capo Press, 1995); S.D. Singer, ed., *Tshenstokhov: nayer tsugob-material tsum bukh "Tschenstokhover yidn"* [Czenstochov: A New Supplement to the Book Czenstochover Yidn] (New York, NY: United Relief Committee in New York, 1958), 57-59; Donat, 285.

[15] Moshe Boorstein escaped with Simcha Laski and two others in the same outbound train of stolen goods. The two other unnamed young men were killed by guards as they tried to jump from the train. As I consider this still dying at the hands of Treblinka-associated German forces, I did not add them to the list as unnamed escape survivors. Simcha Laski named Boorstein as a fellow escapee that survived at least until they both reached Czestochowa in quoted excerpts of his writing used by Yitzhak Arad. It is not entirely clear whether Laski or Boorstein survived the war, but it seems Laski did. Yitzhak Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka: The Operation Reinhard Death Camps* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), pp. 259, op. cit. 1.

[16] In addition to his own testimony, Gustaw Boraks was mentioned by Leo Lewi, also of Wielun, Poland, in his testimony. Lewi calls him "Godel Boraks" and gives his address (in 1960) in Haifa, Israel. Boraks also wrote a section in the Wielun Yizkor book that he signs "Godl" in Yiddish. *Sefer zikaron le-kehilat wielun* [*Wielun Memorial Book*] (Tel Aviv: Wielun Organization in Israel and the Memorial Book Committee in USA, 1971); Statement of Leon Lewi, October 21, 1959, in B162/3818, BL, pps. 209-217, p. 216; Statement of Gustaw Boraks, March 15, 1961, in B162/3826, BL, pps. 1950-1953; Statement of Gustaw Boraks, September 15, 1968, in B162/3820, BL, pps. 4253-4255; Testimony of Gustaw Boraks, September 19, 1967, YVA, O.3, File 3061, Item 3556574; Donat, 285.

[17] Richard Glazar wrote of David Brat's planned escape that took place with the intent to warn the Warsaw Ghetto about Treblinka. His fate after escape is unknown. Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, 22.

[18] Statement of Henry Brenner, May 7, 1968, in B162/3832, BL, pps. 4066-4073; Testimony of Hejnoch Brenner, October 9, 1945, Materials from the Fischer Trial, Witold Pilecki Institute of Solidarity and Valor, Institute of National Remembrance, Poland, "Chronicles of Terror 39-45," Online Collection (www.chroniclesofterror.pl) (hereafter, CoT), IPN GK 196/69. Accessed December 16, 2019; Donat, 285.

[19] Postcards Written by Zygmunt Brodchandel, Undated, YVA, O.75, File 3184, Item 11057057.

[20] Testimony of Avraham Broide, September 23-24, 1975, YVA, O.3, File 4183, Item 3558303.

[21] Feival Sharaga Buchalter was in Treblinka for two days before his escape along with two unnamed others. Archival metadata provided by his daughter contains this information. Personal Documents of Frymet Fusman and Fajwel Buchalter (spelled Feival in metadata), Undated, YVA, O.37, File 1161, Item 12065643.

[22] Adek Stein (Avrom Bulkowstein), Interview 3169, Tape 2 of 12, 13:50-30:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. June 13, 1995. Accessed September 4, 2020; also mentioned in Malka Zylbersztajn, *L'Chaim: The Exceptional Life of Chaim Sztajer* (Melbourne, Australia: Jewish Holocaust Center Publishing House, 2018), 225.

[23] Elena Barr Baum, ed., "Charles Burke - Chil Berkowicz," in *Tidewater Federation Memorial Book* (Tidewater, VA: Tidewater Federation, n.d.), 42–45. Charles Burke, formerly Berkowicz, was named a fellow survivor of Treblinka by Abraham Bomba, see "Statement of Abraham Bomba," November 27, 1959, in B162/3819, BL, pps. 521-523, pp. 522; Abraham Bomba, Interview 18062, Tape 2 of 7, 22:00-28:30, Tape 3 of 7, 02:40-22:00, Tape 4 of 7, 00:30-27:00, and Tape 5 of 7, 07:05-10:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. August 14, 1996. Accessed September 15, 2020; S.D. Singer, ed., *Tshenstokhov: nayer tsugob-material tsum bukh "Tschenstokhover yidn"* [Czenstochov: A New Supplement to the Book Czenstochover Yidn] (New York, NY: United Relief Committee in New York, 1958), 57-59.

[24] Beno Bursztynski was a Through Transport survivor deported to Treblinka at the time of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. Bursztynski made it out with the help of Red Commando member Shloime Skurka. Skurka was a Warsaw rikshaw driver as was Bursztynski. Skurka told him how to get in the right group to save himself. This information saved his life and kept him from becoming a permanent Treblinka prisoner. Beno Bursztynski, Interview 47938, Tape 5 of 9, 00:50-16:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. November 8, 1998. Accessed September 9, 2020.

[25] Photo of Simon Cegiel in Ghetto Fighters House Archive carries the following metadata description, "Simon was born in Kosow Lacki, Poland, in 1920, the youngest son of Menachem - Mendel and Riwka (nee Kret). He had five older siblings. Cegiel was a carpenter. In 1941, when the Treblinka labor camp was established, he was put to work there. He was sent to the Treblinka extermination camp but escaped with ten other people. After the war, he testified in trials of war criminals." Photo, "Simon Cegiel, a young Holocaust survivor in Poland," photo dated 1942 (though the archive doubts this dating), Catalogue Number: 68174, Registry Number: 70414צ. Ghetto Fighters House Museum, Photo Archive, Haifa, Israel.; Szymon Cegiel appears on a list that is part of materials created by Samuel

Willenberg. Statement of Samuel Willenberg, Undated (likely 1945), in B162/3821, BL, pps. 913-955; Testimony of Samuel Willenberg, Undated (quite early, possibly 1945), YVA, O.3, File 567, Item 3560424.

[26] Jakob Ceranko's testimony held by Yad Vashem does not make it clear how he survived and whether he was in Treblinka I only or also briefly in Treblinka II. For this reason, I have placed him in the Questionable category until other sources can be located. Testimony of Jakob Ceranko, February 11, 1947, YVA, M.1/M.1.E, File 743, Item 3540995.

[27] Aron Gelbard named Jechiel Chaimowitz as a fellow escapee. Gelbard stated that Jechiel Chaimowitz escaped with him and lived in Tel Aviv, Israel in 1959. He also called Chaimowitz an engineer by training and trade. The quality of the Gelbard testimony document is quite poor, so it is possible that Jechiel is spelled Jeshiel and the O in Chaimowitz is not a complete certainty. Statement of Aron Gelbard, November 26, 1959, in B162/3819, BL, pp. 517.

[28] Vivian Chakin was named as a survivor of the same transport to Treblinka by Linda Penn. Penn stated that Chakin lived in New York after the war. They were close friends and stayed together all through the war and after. Penn's mother, Riva Kremr, took on Chakin as a daughter of her own after the murder of Chakin's parents at Treblinka. Linda P. Mssa.hvt.1962. Part 1, Segment 3, 00:12:08. University Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies (Hereafter FVA). January 24, 1992. Accessed January 22, 2019; Sam E. Bloch, ed., *From Holocaust to Redemption: Bearing Witness* (New York, NY: World Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, 1984), 238.

[29] Abe Chaniak was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He was later killed at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 109, 173.

[30] Idel Chimick was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He was later killed at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 109, 113, 173.

[31] Mieczyslaw Chodzko, *Évadé de Treblinka*, Témoignages de la Shoah (Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah) (Paris: Le Manuscrit: Fondation pour la mémoire de la Shoah, 2010), 13. Chodzko was also mentioned as a fellow survivor of Treblinka by Czeslaw Augustyniak/Leo Blaustein, see Statement of Czeslaw Augustyniak, February 4, 1960, in B162/3819, BL, pps. 635-637, pp. 637.

[32] Donat, 285.

[33] Donat, 285.

[34] Citing "Robert Kuwalek correspondence," Webb and Chocholatý state that the two Cienki brothers escaped Treblinka to warn the ghetto of their origin, Miedzyrzec Podlaski, where they were turned over to the Germans by ghetto authorities and killed. Webb and Chocholatý, *The Treblinka Death Camp* (2021), 268.

[35] Citing "Robert Kuwalek correspondence," Webb and Chocholatý state that the two Cienki brothers escaped Treblinka to warn the ghetto of their origin, Miedzyrzec Podlaski, where they were turned over to the Germans by ghetto authorities and killed. Webb and Chocholatý, *The Treblinka Death Camp* (2021), 268.

[36] Yechezkel Cooperman escaped alongside Abraham Bomba and Charles Burke (then-Yechiel "Chil" Berkowicz). Yitzhak Arad quotes Bomba speaking about his fellow escapees. It is not clear whether Cooperman survived the war. See Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka* (1987), 260.

[37] Statement of Josef Czerny, August 25, 1960, in B162/3824, BL, pps. 1679-1683; Statement of Josef Czerny, March 27, 1967, in B162/3832, BL, pps. 4237-4239; *Ivan the Terrible: The Demjanjuk Dossier* (1988). Yad Vashem Film Center, Item 5706; *United States v. Fedorenko*, 597 F. 2d 946 (Court of Appeals, 5th Circuit 1979); Donat, 285-6.

[38] Statement of Aron Czechowicz Frid, February 20, 1969, in B162/3833, BL, pps. 4393-4398; Testimony of Aron Czechowicz, October 11, 1945, CoT, IPN GK 196/69. Accessed December 16, 2019: Testimony of Aron Czechowicz, YVA, O.3, File 552, Item 3561280; Testimony of Aron Czechowicz, YVA, O.3, File 564, Item 3740164; Testimony of Aron Czechowicz, February 20, 1969, YVA, O.3, File 3800, Item 3557570; Donat, 286.

[39] Webb and Chocholatý, *The Treblinka Death Camp* (2021), 269; "Resistance and Uprising – Muzeum Treblinka [Updated Museum Survivor List]," Museum Webpage, Muzeum Treblinka, accessed May 2, 2021, https://muzeumtreblinka.eu/en/informacje/resistance-and-uprising/.

[40] Leon Diskin was in Treblinka for three days likely working in Camp 1 as a sorter. He escaped with a friend (Moyshe, no last name given, not added to this list for lack of information) on an outbound goods train hidden under clothes. It seems this train took them to Majdanek where they blended into existing workers to survive. Leon Diskin, Interview 17082, Tape 3 0f 5, Segment 21, 11:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. July 14, 1996. Accessed September 3, 2020.

[41] Nuske Doliner was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He was later killed at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 109, 111-2, 173.

[42] Usher Doliner was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He was later killed at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 109, 113, 173.

[43] Yankel Doliner was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He was later killed at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 109, 113, 114, 173.
[44] Statement of Jacob Domb, December 7, 1959, in B162/3819, BL, pps. 545-546; Statement of Jakob Domb, January 17, 1961, in B162/3826, BL, pps. 1938-1941; Donat, 286.
[45] Berl Duszkiewicz appears by last name only on Treblinka Muzeum list update. First name "Berl" found in Wójcik, *Der Aufstand von Treblinka Revolte im Vernichtungslager*; "Resistance and Uprising – Muzeum Treblinka [Updated Museum Survivor List]," Museum Webpage, Muzeum Treblinka, accessed May 2, 2021, https://muzeumtreblinka.eu/en/informacje/resistance-and-uprising/.
[46] Webb and Chocholatý state that Israel Einshindler was a sorter from Czestochowa who taught Oskar Strawczynski how to do the work there before escaping from the camp shortly after Strawczynski's arrival. Webb and Chocholatý, *The Treblinka Death Camp* (2021), 269-70.
[47] Statement of Jakob Eisner, December 6, 1960, in B162/3824, BL, pps. 1617-1621; Statement of Jakob Eisner, June 6, 1961, in B162/3826, BL, pp. 1966; Yaakov E. Mssa.hvt.3371, FVA, June 19, 1992. Accessed January 23, 2019; Abraham Bomba, called Eisner a fellow escapee who returned to Czestochowa. Abraham Bomba, Interview 18062, Tape 5 of 7, 28:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. August 14, 1996. Accessed September 15, 2020; Statement of Abraham Bomba, November 27, 1959, in B162/3819, BL, pps. 521-523, pp. 522; Donat, 286.
[48] Statement of Pinchas Epstein, December 21, 1959, in B162/3819, BL, pp. 553; Statement of Pinchas Epstein, June 7, 1960, in B162/3824 BL, pps. 1622-1629; Statement of Pinchas Epstein, June 13, 1961, in B162/3826, BL, pps. 1969-1971; Statement of Pinchas Epstein, February 1, 1967, in B162/3832, BL, pps. 4234-4236; Testimony of Pinchas Epstein, YVA, O.3, Tape Number V.T/564, Item 3561624; Donat, 286.
[49] Soimele Farber was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He was later murdered at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 109, 111, 173.
[50] Sol Rosenberg names Fawv (no last name given) as a fellow escapee. Richard Chardkoff, *Sol's Story: A Triumph of the Human Spirit* (Nashville, TN: Cold Tree Press, 2002). Sol Rosenberg mentions also mentions Fawv in his USC Shoah Foundation interview but does not name him. Sol Rosenberg, Interview 10098, Tape 4 of 8, 08:00-20:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. March 9, 1996. Accessed September 14, 2020.
[51] Leon Finkelstein/Lajzer Finkielsztajn's comments in his testimony from 1945 and his Ludwigsburg testimony of 1960 are diametrically opposed. In the 1945 testimony, he states that he escaped in the revolt and was active in its planning. In his 1960 testimony, he clearly states that he did not get out in the revolt and instead escaped alone after it in November of 1943. This would make him the only known post-revolt escapee from Treblinka II and one of only a few individuals to survive the cleanup and concealment phase that took place after the uprising. Though the names on these two testimonies are not exactly the same, both are the same age, and both were butchers resident in Warsaw before the war. Statement of Lajzer Finkielsztajn, June 21, 1960, in B162/3822, BL, pps. 1103-1106, pp. 1103; Testimony of Leon Finkelstein, December 28, 1945, CoT, IPN GK 196/70. Accessed December 16, 2019; Donat, 286.
[52] Nisan David Finkelstein was a Through Transport Survivor who arrived at Treblinka from the Warsaw Ghetto on May 13, 1943. He was placed back on a train to Majdanek in a group of 570 men. Testimony of Nisan David Finkelstein, July 1977, YVA, O.3, File 3923, Item 3557242.
[53] Wójcik, *Der Aufstand von Treblinka Revolte im Vernichtungslager*; "Resistance and Uprising – Muzeum Treblinka [Updated Museum Survivor List]," Museum Webpage, Muzeum Treblinka, accessed May 2, 2021, https://muzeumtreblinka.eu/en/informacje/resistance-and-uprising/.
[54] Michael Fischmann escaped with Edward Weinstein on an outbound stolen goods train. Fischmann was from Losice—his fate thereafter is unknown. Eddie Weinstein, *17 Days in Treblinka: Daring to Resist, and Refusing to Die*, 4th ed. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem Publications, 2009), 60-63; Edward Weinstein, Interview 2694, Tape 3 of 7, 00:20-19:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. May 17, 1995. Accessed September 4, 2020.
[55] In the court statements of former SS guard Franz Suchomel, the witness is asked several times to respond to allegations made by Gilel Fleschner. He specifically responds to Fleschner's testimony of January 20, 1960. Several points about Fleschner emerge in the transcript of this statement by Suchomel. Fleschner was a member of the Tailor's or Furrier's workshop. Suchomel was SS head of his detail. To this date, I have not found a statement by Fleschner himself, but the content of Suchomel's interviews shows that he was a survivor—method unknown. Statement of SS guard Franz Suchomel, October 25, 1960, in B162/3823, BL, pps. 1415-1426, p. 1419.
[56] Henry Frankel (Frankiel before his immigration to the US) was a Through Transport survivor deported to Treblinka from the Warsaw Ghetto. He was unloaded at Treblinka May 8, 1943 and placed back on the train the

same day with about 300 young men selected for work. They then went to Majdanek. Henry Frankel, Interview 20142, Tape 7 of 10, 05:30-22:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. September 30, 1996. Accessed September 9, 2020.

[57] Morris Frydman-Gerberbaum's brother, Adam Frydman stated that Morris was deported to Treblinka from the aftermath of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising on or about May 8, 1943. He arrived at the camp on or about 10 or 11 May 1943 at night. He was then selected among about 350 for transport to Lublin Alter Flughafen/Majdanek the same night. He was later killed at Skarzysko-Kamienna on November 3, 1943. Adam Frydman, Interview 34936, Tape 5 of 10, 24:45-30:00. See also PIQ Report, pp. 34. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. August 6, 1997. Accessed September 9, 2020.

[58] Adam Frydman was deported to Treblinka from the aftermath of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising on or about May 8, 1943. He arrived at the camp with his brother and father on or about 10 or 11 May 1943 at night—he stated that they were unloaded and selected in the dark. The three of them were selected among about 350 for transport to Lublin Alter Flughafen/Majdanek the same night. His brother and father were killed in later camps along their path. Adam Frydman, Interview 34936, Tape 5 of 10, 24:45-30:00. See also PIQ Report, pps. 13, 15, 28, 34. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. August 6, 1997. Accessed September 9, 2020.

[59] Adam Frydman stated that his father, Saul Frydman, was deported to Treblinka in the aftermath of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising on or about May 8, 1943. He arrived at the camp on or about 10 or 11 May 1943 at night. He was then selected among about 350 for transport to Lublin Alter Flughafen/Majdanek the same night. He was later killed at Majdanek during *Aktion Erntefest* on November 3, 1943. Adam Frydman, Interview 34936, Tape 5 of 10, 24:45-30:00. See also PIQ Report, pp. 28. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. August 6, 1997. Accessed September 9, 2020.

[60] Testimony of Mordechai Fuks, May 12, 1996, YVA, O.3, File 9124, Item 3563408.

[61] Gavriel (a butcher by trade) was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He was later killed at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 109, 113, 173.

[62] Statement of Aron Gelbard, November 26, 1959, in B162/3819, BL, pp. 517; Aron Gelbard was also named as a fellow Treblinka escapee who returned to Czestochowa by Abraham Bomba. In Bomba's Shoah Foundation testimony tagging and closed captioning, the name is spelled Aaron Gilbert. Abraham Bomba, Interview 18062, Tape 5 of 7, 28:30. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. August 14, 1996. Accessed September 15, 2020; Donat, 286.

[63] Michael Gerstman was a Through Transport survivor form Warsaw. He arrived at the time of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in April 1943. Gerstman was placed back on a train the same day with 500 others and sent to Majdanek. Michael Gerstman, Interview 14516, Tape 3 of 6, 06:40-10:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. May 8, 1996. Accessed September 9, 2020.

[64] In her book, Malka Zilbersztajn makes it clear that Uryn Glatt was a Treblinka survivor, but not whether he got out in the revolt or as an escapee. Malka Zylbersztajn, *L'Chaim: The Exceptional Life of Chaim Sztajer* (Melbourne, Australia: Jewish Holocaust Center Publishing House, 2018), 76, 80.

[65] Richard Glazar spoke frequently about Treblinka over the years up to his death in 1997. The following is just a selection of the many sources by him or created with his contribution. Statement of Richard Glazar, August 31, 1961, in B162/3825, BL, pps. 1882-1885; Statement of Richard Glazar, September 1, 1961, in B162/3825, BL, pps. 1886-1894; Statement of Richard Glazar, September 4, 1961, in B162/3825, BL, pps. 1895-1901; Statement of Richard Glazar, September 5, 1961, in B162/3825, BL, pps. 1902-1913; Statement of Richard Glazar, November 2, 1967, in B162/3831, BL, pps. 3845-3856; Statement of Richard Glazar, November 3, 1967, B162/ 3831, BL, pps. 4000-4005; Statement of Richard Glazar, February 18, 1970, in B162/3838, BL, pps. 5506-5508; Richard Glazar, *Die Falle mit dem Grünen Zaun: Überleben in Treblinka* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1992); Richard Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence: Survival in Treblinka*, Jewish Lives (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1995); Claude Lanzmann, *Shoah*, DVD, Documentary (Criterion Collectoin, 1985); Claude Lanzmann, *Shoah: The Complete Text of the Acclaimed Holocaust Film*, Second (New York: De Capo Press, 1995); Gitta Sereny, *Am Abgrund: Gespräche mit dem Henker*, Überarb. Neuausg., 3. Aufl (München: Piper, 1997); Gitta Sereny, *Into That Darkness: An Examination of Conscience* (New York: Vintage Books, 1983); Donat, 286-7.

[66] Testimony of Aron Gleit, November 1971, YVA, O.3, File 3989, Item 3558403.

[67] Statement of Zenon Golaszewski, December 5, 1965, Gerichte Rep. 388, Nr. 755 – Band 32C, Duisburg Branch, State Archive of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany (hereafter DB), pps. 276-283.

[68] Sam Goldberg, Interview 30760. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. July 13, 1997. Accessed September 8, 2020; Shmuel "Samuel" Goldberg, Family Oral History Interview with Shmuel "Samuel" Goldberg, interview by Shlomo Goldberg, Transcript, 1991, in possession of the author coutesy of Karen I. Treiger; Karen I. Treiger, *My Soul Is Filled with Joy: A Holocaust Story*, 1st edition (Seattle, WA: Stare Lipki

Press, 2018); Shmuel "Samuel" Goldberg, "*Tsvishn stok un treblinke* [Between Stok and Treblinka]," in *Pinkes stok (bay vengrow): matseyve netsekh* [*The Chronicle of Stok (Near Wengrow): An Eternal Memorial*], ed. Y. Tsudiker (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Organization of Stokers in Israel; Stok Community Group "Society" of North America; Stok Community Group of Argentina; Stoker Group of Canada, 1974), 429–34; Y. Tsudiker, *The Chronicle of Stok (Near Wengrow): An Eternal Memorial* [*Pinkes Stok (Bay Vengrow): Matseyve Netsekh*] (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Organization of Stokers in Israel; Stok Community Group "Society" of North America; Stok Community Group of Argentina; Stoker Group of Canada, 1974).

[69] Donat, 287.

[70] Statement of Abraham Goldfarb, November or December 21, 1959 (date blurry on document), in B162/3819, BL, pp. 550; Statement of Abracham Goldfarb (likely a name typographical error), June 11, 1961, in B162/3826, BL, pps. 1967-1968; Statement of Abraham Goldfarb, June 14, 1961, in B162/3824, BL, pps. 1607-1616; Testimony of Avram Goldfarb, March 13, 1961, YVA, O.3, File 1846, Item 3556004; Donat, 287.

[71] Alexander Goldstein arrived at Treblinka from the Warsaw Ghetto on May 12, 1943. He was placed back on an outgoing train after a selection in which he was chosen as one of 100 to leave—likely all young men. Goldstein's mother arrived at Treblinka with him and was killed there. Alexander Goldstein, Interview 25297, Tape 3 of 5, 00:25-00:00. See also PIQ Report, pp. 17. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. January 30, 1997. Accessed September 9, 2020.

[72] Zelda Gordon, RG-50.005.0018. JTHOHA. USHMM. March 6, 1984. Accessed May 25, 2021; Zelda G., Mssa.hvt.0448, FVA, March 6, 1983. Accessed January 22, 2020.

[73] Oscar Berger stated that he escaped alongside Karl Gottlieb by hiding on an outbound stolen goods train. Berger does not provide Gottlieb's later fate. Report Prepared by Oscar Berger, no exact date given, series of documents in which it resides dated 1938-1951, YVA, TR.21 File 47, Item 7060669.

[74] Chaim Gradel and three unnamed others (two men and a woman) escaped Treblinka by bribing Ukrainian guards. He also states that these same guards ran away at the same time that he and his group did. Testimony of Chaim Gradel, June 25, 1945, YVA, O.33, File 161, Item 3540911.

[75] Some dispute the story of survival at Treblinka that appears in Martin Gray's memoir. I have elected to leave Gray on the list of survivors under the Questionable category. *Seeking Martin Gray* (2006). Yad Vashem Film Center, Item 82565; Martin Gray, *For Those I Loved*, ed. Max Gallo, 35th Anniversary exp. ed. (Charlottesville, VA: Hampton Roads Pub. Company, 2006); Martin Gray-Grynberg, Interview 8605. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. January 29, 1996. Accessed September 2, 2020.

[76] Testimony of Jehoszua Grinberg, August 1971, YVA, O.3, File 3494, Item 3557027.

[77] Statement of Tadeusz Grinberg, January 19, 1961, in B162/3825, BL, pps. 1862-1868; Statement of Tadeusz Grinberg, June 11, 1961, in B162/3825, BL, pps. 1869-1870; Memoirs of Tanchum Grinberg, December 10, 1945, YVA, M.49/M.49.P, File 153, Item 3548142; Testimony of Tanchum Greenberg, December 1961, YVA, O.3, File 568, Item 3557277; Tanhum Grinberg, "The Revolt in Treblinka," in *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (New York: Waldon Press, 1979), 214–23; Donat, 287.

[78] Donat, 287.

[79] Donat, 287.

[80] Testimony of K. Jekutiel Grubstein, Wartime document accessioned 1947, YVA, O.3, File 3603, Item 3560485.

[81] Webb and Chocholatý, *The Treblinka Death Camp* (2021), 274; "Resistance and Uprising – Muzeum Treblinka [Updated Museum Survivor List]," Museum Webpage, Muzeum Treblinka, accessed May 2, 2021, https://muzeumtreblinka.eu/en/informacje/resistance-and-uprising/.

[82] Wójcik, *Der Aufstand von Treblinka Revolte im Vernichtungslager*; "Resistance and Uprising – Muzeum Treblinka [Updated Museum Survivor List]," Museum Webpage, Muzeum Treblinka, accessed May 2, 2021, https://muzeumtreblinka.eu/en/informacje/resistance-and-uprising/.

[83] Isadore Helfing, RG-50.042.0014. JTHOHA. USHMM. March 9, 1992. Accessed October 20, 2019; Isadore H., Mssa.hvt.0413. FVA. December 3, 1983. Accessed January 22, 2019. Isadore Helfing, Interview 5512. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. August 15, 1995. Accessed September 18, 2020.

[84] Statement of Shlomo Hellman, February 6, 1960, in B162/3820, BL, pp. 673; Statement of Shlomo Helmann, June 6, 1960, in B162/3824, BL, pps. 1630-1632; Testimony of Szlomo Helman, June 7, 1961, YVA, O.3, File 2267, Item 3555994; Donat, 287.

[85] A father and son named Herschkowitz escaped with Abraham Krzepicki. Krzepicki's writing is the original source. Donat, 135; Webb and Chocholatý, *The Treblinka Death Camp* (2021), 275.

[86] A father and son named Herschkowitz escaped with Abraham Krzepicki. Krzepicki's writing is the original source. Donat, 135; Webb and Chocholatý, *The Treblinka Death Camp* (2021), 275.

[87] "Resistance and Uprising – Muzeum Treblinka [Updated Museum Survivor List]," Museum Webpage, Muzeum Treblinka, accessed May 2, 2021, https://muzeumtreblinka.eu/en/informacje/resistance-and-uprising/; spelled Jakóbski in Wójcik, *Der Aufstand von Treblinka Revolte im Vernichtungslager*.
[88] Statement of Jakob Jakubowicz, November 20, 1959, in B162/3819, BL, pps. 409-410; Donat, 287.
[89] Statement of Kalman Jankowsky, November 16, 1959, in B162/3819, BL, pps. 403-408; Statement of Kalman Jankowski, February 11, 1960, in B162/3820, BL, pps. 821-826; Statement of Kalman Jankowsky, October 12, 1967, in B162/3831, BL, pps. 3821-3828; Statement of Kalman Jankowski, May 29, 1970, in B162/3839, BL, pps. 5595-5598; Testimony of Kalman Jankowski, August 25, 1960, YVA, TR.21, File 93, Item 7217722, pps. 132-6; Statement of Kalman Jankowski, November 16, 1959, BL, B162, F3819, pps. 403-8; Statement of Kalman Jankowski, May 29, 1970, in B162/3839, BL, pps. 5595-8, pp. 5596; Donat, 287.
[90] Feliks and his brother Mordka Karpman escaped Treblinka. Feliks Karpman, RG-50.488.0150, JTHOHA, USHMM. July 11, 2002. Timecoded notes, pp 2. Accessed May 25, 2021.
[91] Mordka Karpman escaped Treblinka alongside his brother Feliks Karpman. He survived the war and died of cancer in the US in 1961. Feliks Karpman. RG-50.488.0150. JTHOHA. USHMM. July 11, 2002. Timecoded notes, pp 2. Accessed May 25, 2021.
[92] Haskel Kaufman was a cousin of Abraham Bomba and escaped with him but was later murdered at Buchenwald. Abraham Bomba, Interview 18062, Tape 2 of 7, 22:00-28:30, Tape 3 of 7, 02:40-22:00, Tape 4 of 7, 00:30-27:00, and Tape 5 of 7, 07:05-10:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. August 14, 1996. Accessed September 15, 2020.
[93] Jozef Kaufman was identified as a fellow escapee by Pejsach Leon "Poldek" Rytz/Ryczwol. He survived the war and later reunited with Leon per a Swedish online news article. Thanks go to Svea Larson for translation from the Swedish. Amanda Borschel-Dan, "There Are Still Treblinka Survivors Living, One Tells His Tale," *The Times of Israel*, February 22, 2016, https://www.times ofisrael.com/there-are-still-treblinka-survivors-living-one-tells-his-tale/, Eva Janzon, "Överlevande: "Jag berättar för att hedra de döda"," News Magazine, Världen idag, January 25, 2019, https://www.varldenidag.se/reportage/ overlevande-jag-berattar-for-att-hedra-de-doda/reprlm!cpj22F3 xATjJNt@C57iC7w/?fbclid=IwAR3_ 91XKrKoDGkV3OnQ8o-ypZrhwzZVvTdkygYpyswquI-q4MLRb1HizGLQ.
[94] Donat, 287.
[95] Michael Klaper was the brother-in-law of Maurice Markus and survived alongside Markus and Dr. Pupke. Testimony of Maurice Markus, March 21-22, 1963, YVA, TR.21, File 103, Item 7217755.
[96] Unpublished memoir of Moyshe Klaynman, written between 1944-1947, YVA, M.49, File 118, Item 3547904; also listed as Mosze Klajman in Wójcik, *Der Aufstand von Treblinka Revolte im Vernichtungslager*.
[97] Statement of Schalom Kohn, November 12, 1959, in B162/3818, BL, pps. 379-381; Statement of Shalom Kohn, July 18, 1960, in B162/3824, BL, pps. 1644-1650; Statement of Shalom Kohn, May 9, 1961, in B162/3825, BL, pps. 1571-1573; Testimony of Stanisław Kon (Shalom Kohn), October 7, 1945, CoT, IPN GK 196/69. Accessed December 16, 2019; Shalom Kohn (Stanislaw Kon), "The Treblinka Revolt," in *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (New York: Waldon Press, 1979), 224–30; Donat, 287.
[98] Testimony of Avraham Kolski, January 1980, YVA, O.3, File 4102, Item 3558223; Abraham Kolski, RG-50.030.0113. JTHOHA. USHMM. March 29, 1990. Accessed May 25, 2021; Abram Kolski, Interview 49970, Tape 2 of 8, 13:30-28:00, Tape 3 of 8, 00:30-27:30, Tape 4 of 8, 01:30-27:00, Tape 5 of 9, 03:00-13:20. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. July 29, 1999. Accessed September 17, 2020.
[99] Statement of Abe Kon, October 9, 1945, in B162/3820, BL, pps. 669-672; Testimony of Abe Kon, October 9, 1945, CoT, IPN GK 196/69. Accessed December 16, 2019; Testimony of Abe Kon, YVA, O.3, File 549, Item 3561279; Donat, 287.
[100] Jonas Kornhendler was deported to Treblinka from the Czestochowa Ghetto around Yom Kippur 1942 (late-September). He was a sorter and a member of the *Tarnungskommando* outside the fences. He escaped with one other man from Czestochowa over the fences after two weeks in the camp. Jonas Kornhendler, Interview 30369, Tape 1 of 4, 20:00-26:00, and Tape 2 of 4, 00:15-13:30. See also PIQ Report, pps. 3,5,7, and 14. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. June 30, 1997. Accessed September 10, 2020.
[101] Donat, 287.
[102] Abe Krawiec was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He was later killed at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 109, 173.
[103] Eli Krawiec was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He was later killed at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 109, 111, 173.
[104] Krawiec (no first name found) was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He was later killed at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 106, 109, 173.

[105] Kałman Krawiec could be the same person already recorded on the list under the surname Krawiec without a first name. In light of this, I have placed him in the questionable category. Wójcik, *Der Aufstand von Treblinka Revolte im Vernichtungslager*; "Resistance and Uprising – Muzeum Treblinka [Updated Museum Survivor List]," Museum Webpage, Muzeum Treblinka, accessed May 2, 2021, https://muzeumtreblinka.eu/en/informacje/ resistance-and-uprising/.
[106] Riva Kremr was Linda Penn's (formerly Luba Kremr) mother. Riva Kremr also survived Treblinka after a stay of one night. Her story was passed on by Linda Penn in a Fortunoff Archive interview. Riva Kremr survived the war and lived in New York, NY and later Houston, TX with her daughter. Linda P. Mssa.hvt.1962. FVA. January 24, 1992. Accessed January 22, 2019
[107] Chil Rajchman who said that Kruk was from Plock, Poland and escaped Treblinka alongside him on the day of the revolt—his later fate is unknown. Rajchman, *The Last Jew of Treblinka*, 104; Webb and Chocholatý, *The Treblinka Death Camp* (2021), 276.
[108] Testimony of Menachem Krzepicki, 1967, YVA, O.3, File 3220, Item 3557351; Abraham Krzepicki, "Eighteen Days in Treblinka," in *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (New York: Waldon Press, 1979), 77–145; Donat, 77.
[109] Statement of Alexander "Arie" Kudlik, October 2, 1944, in B162/3830, BL, pps. 3673-3675; Statement of Alexander "Arie" Kudlik, December 7, 1959, in B162/3820, BL, pps. 663-664; Statement of Arie Kudlik, June 30, 1960, in B162/3824 BL, pps. 1663-1668; Statement of Arie Kudlik, June 11, 1961, in B162/3826, BL, pps. 1954-1955; Testimony of Aleksander Kudlik, October 10, 1945, CoT, IPN GK 196/69. Accessed December 15, 2019; Testimony of Aleksander Kudlik, YVA, O.3, File 562, Item 3740157; Testimony of Aleksander Kudlik, YVA, O.3, File 550, Item 3557813; Donat, 287.
[110] Sam Kulawy's oral history interview is inconclusive. If more confirmation evidence can be found, Kulawy may well be a Through Transport survivor. He stated that he was deported from the Biala Podlaska Ghetto as it was liquidated (among the last to leave in a group of men forced to clean the ghetto). He states that he was at Treblinka for eight days and then sent on to Auschwitz, though he twice slips in his interview and says Majdanek instead. This survival trajectory is abnormal, and the interview shows the frailty of memory. For these reasons I have left Kulawy in the Questionable category. Sam Kulawy, Interview 2697, Tape 2 of 4, 18:10-20:30, Tape 3 of 4, 00:30-5:45. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. May 18, 1995. Accessed September 10, 2020.
[111] Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka.*
[112] Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, 108-9.
[113] Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, 108-9.
[114] Sol Lackman, Interview 16282, Tape 1 of 4, 26:00-29:00, Tape 2 of 4, 00:45-29:30, Tape 3 of 4, 00:30-04:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. February 4, 1996. Accessed September 15, 2020. Also listed as Szaja/Salek Lachman Wójcik, *Der Aufstand von Treblinka Revolte im Vernichtungslager*; Donat, 287.
[115] Moishe-Mordechai Laks was named a fellow survivor of Treblinka (method of survival not stated/unkown) by Abraham Bomba, see Statement of Abraham Bomba, November 27, 1959, in B162/3819, BL, pps. 521-523, pp. 522; Donat, 287.
[116] Simcha-Simon Leski and Simcha Laski are the same person named in different sources. Arad names Simcha Laski as an escape survivor from Warsaw who was transported to Treblinka at the end of July 1942 and escaped four days later. Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, pp. 259, op. cit. 1. Arad is quoting from (in his citation, transliteration, and translation): *Fun Letzten Churbn*, No. 3, Munich, October-November 1946. Simcha-Simon Leski, Interview 19361, Tape 2 of 5, 10:30-26:30. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. August 26, 1996. Accessed September 10, 2020.
[117] Haim Leff was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He was later killed at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 109, 173.
[118] Moishe Leff was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He was later killed at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 109, 173.
[119] Itzel Leifer was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He was later killed at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 109, 173.
[120] Testimony of Mikhael Leizerovich, January 6, 1992, YVA, O.3, File 6744, Item 3560373.
[121] Ben Lerman, RG-50.431.0469. JTHOHA. USHMM. June 26, 1997. Accessed May 7, 2021; Ben Lerman. MUA_GA_Lerman. The Generation After Oral History Project of Milwaukee, WI. Marquette University Libraries. October 5, 1983. Accessed January 9, 2020; four local newspaper stories covering Ben Lerman provided to the author courtesy of Jay Hyland and Ellie Gettinger of the Milwaukee Jewish Museum; notes from telephone conversations and email correspondence with the daughter of Ben Lerman in possession of the author; Ben L.

Mssa.hvt.1023. Part 2, Segment 13, 00:13:48, Segment 14, 00:19:48. FVA. April 22, 1987. Accessed January 8, 2019.

[122] Robert Levi is the only German Jew known to have survived Treblinka. His is a unique case because he spent most of his time in Treblinka I, though he was forced to help build the original Treblinka II gas chambers and was present as the camp was constructed and first opened. His testimony shows intimate knowledge of the earliest killing procedures and other previously unknown incidents. Testimony of Robert Levi, August 5, 1960, YVA, TR.21, File 85, Item 7188907; Statement of Robert Levi, April 19, 1951, in B162/3817, BL, pps. 133-133B; Statement of Robert Levi, March 7, 1960, in B162/3820, BL, pps. 786-794.

[123] Statement of Leo Lewi, October 21, 1959, in B162/3818, BL, pps. 209-217; Statement of Leo Lewi, November 13, 1959, in B162/3818, BL, pps. 376-377; Statement of Leo Lewi, March 30, 1960, in B162/3821 BL, pps. 847-849; Donat, 288.

[124] Pinek (possibly diminutive of Pinchas) Lewin was confirmed as a fellow short stay survivor sent on to Majdanek by Thaddeus Stabholz. Stabholz also stated that Lewin had twice previously escaped from trains to Treblinka, returning to Warsaw each time. Escapes happened in August 1942 and January 1943. Lewin was also in Auschwitz with Stabholz after Majdanek. He was murdered by a "Lagerkapo" in Auschwitz-Birkenau after a period there of at least two months. Stabholz, *Seven Hells*, 5, 10, 142.

[125] Dudek Lewkowitz, "What I Saw in Treblinka," in *A Tale of One City* (New York: Shengold Publishers in cooperation with Piotrkow Trybunalski Relief Association, 1991), 227–36; Testimony of Dudek Lewkowicz, YVA, O.3, File 526, Item 3557790.

[126] Statement of Sonja Lewkowicz (nee Sonja Grabinska), November 8, 1959, in B162/3818, BL, pps. 179-180; Statement of Sonia Lewkowicz, June 23, 1960, in B162/3824, BL, pps. 1657-1662; Testimony of Sonia Levkovitz, YVA, O.3, File 4181, Item 3558301; Statement of Sonia Lewkowicz, November 8, 1959, in B162/3818, BL; Statement of Sonia Lewkowicz, June 23, 1960, in B162/3824, BL; Testimony of Sonia Lewkowicz, *United States v. Fedorenko*, 597 F. 2d 946 (Court of Appeals, 5th Circuit 1979); Donat, 287.

[127] Sol Liber arrived at Treblinka from the Warsaw Ghetto at the time of the uprising there. He had been a fighter in the ghetto uprising. Out of his train of 3,600 Jews, 500 young men, himself included, were chosen to return to Warsaw to clean up after the fighting. They left Treblinka after about two hours and traveled to Lublin where the Germans learned 500 Greek Jews had already been brought to Warsaw to complete this work. Because of this, Liber and his group were left at Majdanek, see Sol Liber, Interview 58, Tape 3 of 5, 21:05. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. August 11, 1994. Accessed September 3, 2020.

[128] Statement of David Lieberman, June 7, 1971, in B162/3839, BL, pps. 155-157; David Lieberman, Interview 2298, Tape 2 of 5, 01:30. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. May 3, 1995. Accessed September 3, 2020.

[129] Shirli Gilbert, *Music in the Holocaust: Confronting Life in the Nazi Ghettos and Camps*, Oxford Historical Monographs (Oxford: New York: Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press, 2005), 192–93; "Music and the Holocaust," World ORT: Educating for Life, accessed November 22, 2016, http://holocaustmusic.ort.org/.

[130] Webb and Chocholatý state that Eli Linder escaped on an outbound goods train and returned to Warsaw. Webb and Chocholatý, *The Treblinka Death Camp* (2021), 279.

[131] Statement of Abraham Lindwasser, December 21, 1959, B162/3819, BL, pp. 516; Statement of Abraham Lindwasser, July 6, 1960, in B162/3824, BL, pps. 1669-1676; Statement of Abraham Lindwasser, March 7, 1961, in B162/3826, BL, pps. 1959-1963; Statement of Abraham Lindwasser, April 18, 1961, in B162/3826 BL, pps. 1964-1965; Donat, 288.

[132] Bernard Lipman was deported to Treblinka from the Warsaw Ghetto. Dating is difficult from his testimony, but it is clear that he was at Treblinka early and definitely well before the ghetto uprising. He escaped the camp on the same day he arrived by hiding on an outbound stolen goods train. Bernard Lipman, Interview 55045, Tape 1 of 1, 21:30-26:30 and 36:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. April 24, 1994. Accessed September 2, 2020.

[133] Statement of Ignac Litwak, December 9, 1964, Gerichte Rep. 388, Nr. 775 – Band 32C, DB, pps. 281-283.

[134] Ella Loddick was a friend of Abraham Bomba, he escaped from Treblinka supposedly killing a Ukrainian guard in the process. Loddick returned to the Czestochowa Ghetto and is said to have married at this time, but died soon after. How he died and whether this was during or after the Holocaust is not stated. Webb and Chocholatý cite Abraham Bomba oral history interview. Abraham Bomba, Interview 18062. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. August 14, 1996. Accessed September 15, 2020.; Webb and Chocholatý, *The Treblinka Death Camp* (2021), 279.

[135] "Mr. Lonchik," called and accountant (no first name given), was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He was later killed at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 109, 113, 173.
[136] "Mr. London," a pharmacist by trade (no first name given), was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He was later killed at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 109, 173.
[137] Donat, 288.
[138] Benjamin "Ben" Markoff was a Through Transport survivor sent to Treblinka from the Warsaw Ghetto at the time of the ghetto uprising. He dated his six hours in Treblinka to April 27 or 28, 1943. He also named his friend Morris Pilberg as a survivor of the same transport in which about 300 were selected for transport on to Majdanek. Benjamin Markoff, Interview 50206, Tape 2 of 6, 20:30-25:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. September 18, 1999. Accessed September 10, 2020. Morris Pilberg named Ben Markoff as a fellow Through Transport survivor from the same train, see Morris Pilberg, Interview 1879, Tape 5 of 8, 12:30. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. April 18, 1995. Accessed September 3, 2020.
[139] Donat, 288.
[140] I believe that Maurice Markus is not the "Markus" on the Alexander Donat list. Maurice Markus is documented in a German trial testimony to which Donat had access. It is unlikely that Donat found this same Markus and did not get the first name from a source such as this trial record. Donat's entry for "Markus" does not give any information other than this single name. For the Yad Vashem testimony of Maurice Markus, see Testimony of Maurice Markus, March 21-22, 1963, YVA, TR.21, File 103, Item 7217755; for Donat's listing of Markus, see Donat, 288.
[141] Morton Mattel, RG-50.347.0001. JTHOHA. USHMM. July 29, 1981. Accessed April 6, 2015.
[142] Anshel Medrzycki escaped from Treblinka and teamed up with Abraham Krzepicki in the forest during September 1942. Webb and Chocholatý, *The Treblinka Death Camp* (2021), 279.
[143] Wójcik, *Der Aufstand von Treblinka Revolte im Vernichtungslager*; "Resistance and Uprising – Muzeum Treblinka [Updated Museum Survivor List]," Museum Webpage, Muzeum Treblinka, accessed May 2, 2021, https://muzeumtreblinka.eu/en/informacje/resistance-and-uprising/.
[144] Naftali Milgraum was an Escape Survivor who spent four days in Treblinka. He was deported to the camp directly from a jail in Czestochowa. In a planned escape, he and two unnamed others made it out of Camp 1 by going under the fence near the *Lazarette*. Milgraum's testimony is a part of the Perlman Collection of sources on the Holocaust that made their way to Mandate Palestine, 1942-1943. His inclusion in this collection shows how far the word of escapees traveled even during the war. It does not seem that Milgraum made it to Mandate Palestine himself. Thanks go to Michal Friedman for Hebrew language translation assistance. Testimony of Naftali Milgraum, 1942-1943, YVA, O.12, File 53, Item 5408698.
[145] Testimony of Yaakov Miler, March 1982, YVA, O.3, File 7913, Item 3563554; "Eyewitness Testimony 47. The Uprising in Treblinka," in *Jewish Responses to Nazi Persecution*, ed. Isaiah Trunk (New York: Stein and Day Publishers, 1979), 264.
[146] Donat, 288.
[147] Moniek was named as a fellow escapee by Sol Rosenberg, see Richard Chardkoff, *Sol's Story*. Not the same person as Moniek Salzberg as Salzberg makes it out in the revolt as explained by Yaakov Miler in a testimony held by Yad Vashem, see Testimony of Yaakov Miler, March 1982, YVA, O.3, File 7913, Item 3563554; Sol Rosenberg, Interview 10098, Tape 4 of 8, 08:00-20:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. March 9, 1996. Accessed September 14, 2020.
[148] Leizer Mordski escaped from Treblinka by hiding in an outbound stolen goods train according to his friend Edward Weinstein, though he was later killed in early-July 1944 by antisemites in the Polish Armia Krajowa (Home Army). Eddie Weinstein, *17 Days in Treblinka: Daring to Resist, and Refusing to Die*, 4th ed. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem Publications, 2009), 61-62.
[149] Morris Mydlo was deported to Treblinka from the Kielce Ghetto very early in the existence of the camp. He estimated his arrival to June or July of 1942. July is most likely from the actual timeline of Treblinka. He escaped from the camp about three days after his arrival by hiding on an outbound stolen goods train. The Polonized version of his name comes from the Treblinka Museum List Update. His Shoah Foundation testimony provides all the above information and allows his categorization as an escape survivor. Morris (Moishe) Mydlo, Interview 35486, Tape 1 of 4, 23:30-28:40, Tape 2 of 4, 02:05-09:45. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. November 9, 1997. Accessed September 11, 2020; "Resistance and Uprising – Muzeum Treblinka [Updated Museum Survivor List]," Museum Webpage, Muzeum Treblinka, accessed May 2, 2021, https://muzeumtreblinka.eu/en/informacje/resistance-and-uprising/.

[150] Abraham Newerstein was a Through Transport survivor sent to Treblinka from the Warsaw Ghetto at the time of the ghetto uprising. He arrived at the camp May 8, 1943. Newerstein initially stepped out as an electrician when guards asked for someone with those skills, but was warned by Treblinka workers that this would be fatal and switched to a group of men selected as carpenters. These men were placed on trucks and sent directly to Budzyn. Abraham Newerstein, Interview 12386, Tape 2 of 5, 12:00-22:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. February 22, 1996. Accessed September 11, 2020.
[151] Shepsel Nieplotnik was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He was later killed at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 74, 109, 111, 113, 173.
[152] Shie Nieplotnik was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He was later killed at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 74, 74, 109, 111, 173.
[153] David Novodvorski was identified as a Treblinka survivor by Yisrael Gutman in his book on resistance at Warsaw. Novodvorski arrived at Treblinka in August 1942 and escaped in the same week, see Israel Gutman, מרד ואחרי: מרדכי אניליביץ' ולחימת גיטו [*Revolt of the Besieged: Mordechai Anielewicz and the Uprising of the Warsaw Ghetto*] (Tel Aviv: Yad Vashem, 1993), 239.
[154] Oleg (no last name given) was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He was later killed at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 109, 173.
[155] Michel (Moyshe) Pachter's oral history interview and memoir show that both he and his brother Zev (or Zeev) Pachter were Through Transport Survivors of the same train. Michel (Moyshe) Pachter, Interview 5173, Segment 88, 25:28. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. October 30, 1995. Accessed September 2, 2020; Michel Pachter, *Varsovie, Treblinka, Majdanek, Skarzysko, Czestochowa*, Témoignages de la Shoah (Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah) (Paris: Manuscrit - Fondation pour la Mémoire de le Shoah, 2013). Thanks go to Alice Coulter Main for translations from the French.
[156] Michel (Moyshe) Pachter's oral history interview and memoir show that both he and his brother Zev (or Zeev) Pachter were Through Transport Survivors of the same train, see Pachter, Michel (Moyshe). Interview 5173. Segment 88. 25:28. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. October 30, 1995. Accessed September 2, 2020. Michel Pachter, *Varsovie, Treblinka, Majdanek, Skarzysko, Czestochowa*, Témoignages de la Shoah (Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah) (Paris: Manuscrit - Fondation pour la Mémoire de le Shoah, 2013). Thanks go to Alice Coulter Main for translations from the French. See also Zev Pachter's own interview, Zeev (Zev) Pachter, Interview 31902. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. May 23, 1997. Accessed September 2, 2020.
[157] Statement of Mosze Pacanowski, June 15, 1960, B162/3824, BL, pps. 1677-1678; Donat, 288.
[158] Linda Penn, Interview 38042. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. January 11, 1998. Accessed October 19, 2020; Linda Penn, Interview 55144. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. January 24, 1992. Accessed October 19, 2020; Linda P. Mssa.hvt.1962. Part 1, Segment 3, 00:12:08. FVA. January 24, 1992. Accessed January 22, 2019; Riva Kremr, Interview 38051. VHA. USC Shoah Foundation. January 10, 1998. Accessed February 28, 2021.
[159] Yoram Lubling names Leon Perelstein a survivor of the Treblinka revolt and recounts his story of Alfred Galewski's suicide on the day of the revolt. Lubling cites the Yad Vashem Archive source "YVA M.49.p/106," see Yoram Lubling, *Twice-Dead: Moshe Y. Lubling: The Ethics of Memory, and the Treblinka Revolt* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 122, op. cit. 49, pp. 221; Webb and Chocholaty, *The Treblinka Death Camp* (2021), 281.
[160] Photo of Asher Peretz in Ghetto Fighters House Archive carries the following caption, "Asher Peretz, a former inmate in the Treblinka camp. He was a witness in the war crimes trial of the camp's staff." Photo, "Asher Peretz, a former inmate of the Treblinka camp," Dated only "Postwar," Catalogue Number: 11381, Registry Number: 17753. Ghetto Fighters House Museum, Photo Archive, Haifa, Israel. Also listed as Ashert Peretz in Wójcik, *Der Aufstand von Treblinka Revolte im Vernichtungslager*. I placed Peretz in the Questionable category because these sources are less than conclusive—no explanation of his survival is given.
[161] Donat, 288.
[162] Morris Pilberg was deported to Treblinka from the Warsaw Ghetto around the time of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. He arrived at Treblinka around May 1943 (note that in his interview he is one year off—says 1942). He was then chosen as one of 320 sent on to Majdanek/Budzyn. This same train is mentioned by many others. See his USHMM (audio only) oral history interview. Morris Pilberg, RG-50.462.0762. JTHOHA. USHMM. April 22, 1985. Accessed May 25, 2021. See also "Filling their Hearts Up," *South Florida Sentinel* (Fort Lauderdale, FL), March 30, 2006; Morris Pilberg, Interview 1879, Tape 5 of 8, 12:30. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. April 18, 1995. Accessed September 3, 2020. Pilberg's friend Benjamin Markoff named him as a fellow survivor of the same transport and described the event in the same detail as Pilberg. Markoff dated their arrival at Treblinka to April 27 or 28, 1943, see: Benjamin Markoff, Interview 50206, Tape 2 of 6, 20:30-25:00.

USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive. USC Shoah Foundation. September 18, 1999. Accessed September 10, 2020.

[163] Meyer Pinchesowitz was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He was later killed at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 109, 113, 173.

[164] "Benjamin P.," Chapter 10, in Donald L. Niewyk, ed., *Fresh Wounds: Early Narratives of Holocaust Survival* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); David P. Boder, "David P. Boder Interviews Benjamin Piskorz; September 1, 1946; Tradate, Italy: Voices of the Holocaust Project," Online Archive, trans. David P. Boder, Voices of the Holocaust, Paul V. Galvin Library, Illinois Institute of Technology, 2009, http://voices.iit.edu/interview?doc=piskorzB&display=piskorzB_en.

[165] Lejbusz Plaszewski escaped Treblinka in an unnamed group of nine. Testimony of Lejbusz Plaszewski. June 6, 1947. YVA, M.1/M1.E, File 1252, Item 3545973. Abraham Bomba also confirms Plaszewski as a fellow survivor. Abraham Bomba, Interview 18062, Tape 2 of 7, 22:00-28:30, Tape 3 of 7, 02:40-22:00, Tape 4 of 7, 00:30-27:00, and Tape 5 of 7, 07:05-10:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. August 14, 1996. Accessed September 15, 2020; Statement of Abraham Bomba, November 27, 1959, in B162/3819, BL, pps. 521-523, pp. 522.

[166] Testimony of Marian Platkevitz, June 1979, YVA, O.3, File 4229, Item 3561380; Donat, 288.

[167] Symcha Poliakiewicz, *A tog in treblinke: khronik fun a yidish lebn* [*One Day in Treblinka: Chronicle of a Jewish Life*] (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Industria Argentina - Tsentral-Farband fun Poylishe Yidn in Argentine, 1948).

[168] The Ghetto Fighters House Archive contains a photo of Moshe Porzecki in which he is labeled a survivor of Treblinka and someone who testified at postwar trails. "Moshe Porzecki, a former inmate of the Treblinka camp," Dated only "Postwar," Catalogue Number: 11379, Registry Number: 17751. Ghetto Fighters House Museum, Photo Archive, Haifa, Israel; Donat, 288.

[169] Note that the first two items here are the same document held by both the Ludwigsburg and CoT archives. Statement of Henryk Poswolski, October 9, 1945, in B162/3820, BL, pps. 806-810; Testimony of Henryk Poswolski, October 9, 1945, CoT, IPN GK 196/69. Accessed December 15, 2019; Testimony of Henryk Poswolski, YVA, O.3, File 554, Item 3561646; Donat, 288.

[170] Pruss (unnamed son of Pinchus Pruss and brother of Simhale Pruss) was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He was later killed at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 109, 173.

[171] Pinchus Pruss (father of Simhale and the unnamed Pruss) was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He was later killed at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 109, 173.

[172] Simhale Pruss (son of Pinchus and brother of the unnamed Pruss) was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He was later killed at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 109, 112, 173.

[173] Dr. Pupke, no first name given, survived Treblinka as a Through Transport Survivor alongside Maurice Markus and Michael Klaper. Markus stated that he was later murdered at the Budzyn camp, see Testimony of Maurice Markus, March 21-22, 1963, YVA, TR.21 File 103, Item 7217755.

[174] Jacob Rabinowicz was a journalist from Warsaw who escaped Treblinka and went back to the ghetto there. Yitzhak Arad explained that it was his information that led to the Bund dispatching Zalman Friedrich Sigmund to investigate what Treblinka really was. Sigmund met the escapee Azriel Wallach in Sokolow in the process of his mission. It is not clear whether Rabinowicz survived the war from these sources. Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 260-261.

[175] Nathan Rajbenbach was an Escapee Survivor. Following his earlier escape from the Kossow Ghetto, he was recaptured and sent to Treblinka in November 1942. He was held in Treblinka working as a sorter for about one month until his escape in an outbound stolen goods train hiding under the bundles of clothes in December 1942. His story demonstrates that he was something of a career escapee. After his escape from Treblinka, he returned to Kossow. Thanks go to Ita Gordon of the USC Shoah Foundation for translation of this testimony. Nathan Rajbenbach, Interview 33635. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. September 14, 1997. Accessed September 17, 2020.

[176] Testimony of Jechiel Rajchman (Henryk Romanowski), October 11, 1945, CoT, IPN GK 196/69. Accessed December 15, 2019; Testimony of Henryk Reichman Romanowski, October 12, 1945, YVA, O.3, File 553, Item 3561645; Testimony of Yechiel Reichman, YVA, O.3, File 3816, Item 3557086; Testimony of Henryk Rajchman, YVA, O.3, File 566, Item 3560423; Chil Rajchman, Chil., Interview 5. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. October 24, 1994. Accessed September 16, 2020; Donat, 289.

[177] Donat, 289.

[178] Statement of Samuel Rajzman, May 15, 1968, in B162/3832, BL, pps. 4103-4115; Testimony of Samuel Rajzman, October 9, 1945, CoT, IPN GK 196/69. Accessed December 15, 2019; Testimony of Samuel Rajzman, December 3, 1945, CoT, IPN GK 196/69. Accessed December 17, 2019; Testimony of Samuel Reizman, YVA, O.3, File 547, Item 3557811; Testimony of Samuel Rajzman, YVA, O.3, File 561, Item 3560422; House Committee on Foreign Affairs, "H.J. Resolution 93 - Punishment of War Crimes - 79th Congress, First Session" (United States Government Printing Office, 1945), Doc. Y4.F76/1: W19/5, pps. 120-125, US Congressional Record; Samuel Rajzman, "The End of Treblinka," in *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (New York: Waldon Press, 1979), 231–51; *The Trial of German Major War Criminals: Proceedings of the International Military Tribunal Sitting at Nuremberg Germany, Taken from the Official Transcript* (London: HM Stationary Office, 1946); Donat, 289.

[179] Because Rak is Cancer in Yiddish, these two names are likely the same person. Use of Rak last name comes from the Treblinka Museum List Update and Donat's volume. Donat, 289; "Resistance and Uprising – Muzeum Treblinka [Updated Museum Survivor List]," Museum Webpage, Muzeum Treblinka, accessed May 2, 2021, https://muzeumtreblinka.eu/en/informacje/resistance-and-uprising/.

[180] Avraham Rapp worked as a clothing sorter before escaping Treblinka. Testimony of Avraham Rapp, December 12, 1946, YVA, M.1/M1.E, File 627, Item 3542274.

[181] Moshe Rapaport/Morris Rappaport (the latter spelling per the Bomba source) was called a fellow escape survivor who returned to Czestochowa by Abraham Bomba. Abraham Bomba, Interview 18062, 5 of 7, 28:30. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. August 14, 1996. Accessed September 15, 2020; Statement of Morris Rapaport, November 8, 1960, in B162/3824, BL, pps. 1467-1468; Donat, 289.

[182] Natek Remba was confirmed as a short stay survivor sent on to Majdanek by Thaddeus Stabholz. His full name and fate are filled in by Lawrence N. Powell's work. Thaddeus Stabholz, *Seven Hells*, 6; Lawrence N. Powell, *Troubled Memory: Anne Levy, the Holocaust, and David Duke's Louisiana* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2019), 250, 251, 265.

[183] Richter, first name unknown, was from Czestochowa. He escaped from Treblinka and returned to the small ghetto where he took part in resistance and attempted to kill "Rohn," the SS officer in charge of deportations. It is not known whether he survived the war. Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 260-261.

[184] Abe Rock (Rok) was Biniamin Rok's brother. He was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand and his brother Biniamin. He was later killed at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 109, 173-4.

[185] Testimony of Beniamin Rok, YVA, O.3, File 4843, Item 3558739.

[186] Yeshayahu Rogozik was a Through Transport Survivor sent on to Majdanek in a group of 320. Testimony of Yeshayahu Rogozik, March-April 1986, YVA, O.3, File 4432, Item 3558685, pps. 20-2.

[187] Donat, 289.

[188] Sereny, *Into that Darkness*; Donat, 289.

[189] Heniek Rosen was confirmed in the testimony of his Radom neighbor Henry Zagdanski. His fate after escape is not known. Henry Z. Mssa.hvt.1647. FVA, October 14, 1991. Accessed January 22, 2019.

[190] Statement of Eliasz Rosenberg, April 17, 1961, in B162/3826, BL, pps. 1919-1920; Statement of Eliahu Rosenberg, January 13, 1960, B162/3821, BL, pps. 966-970; Statement of Eliahu (Eliasz) Rosenberg, March 29, 1968, B162/3832, BL, pps. 4047-4050; Memoir of Eliasz Rosenberg, December 20, 1945, YVA, M.49/M.49.P, File 151, Item 3548140; Statement of Elias Rosenberg, December 24, 1947, YVA, O.3, File 4548, Item 3558557; Testimony of Elijahu Rosenberg, September 6, 1979, YVA, O.3, File 4039, Item 3558441; Statement of Eliasz Rosenberg, April 17, 1961, in B162/3826, BL; Donat, 289.

[191] Oskar-Asher Rosenberg (at wartime, Asher-Oskar) was a Through Transport Survivor sent to Treblinka from the Warsaw Ghetto at the time of the uprising there. He was chosen as one of 318 Jews sent on to Majdanek. He eventually ended up in the Budzyn camp. Oskar-Asher Rosenberg, Interview 26785, Tape 2 of 4, 25:00-30:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. February 20, 1997. Accessed September 16, 2020.

[192] Sol Rosenberg, Interview 10098, Tape 4 of 8, 08:00-20:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. March 9, 1996. Accessed September 14, 2020. Richard Chardkoff, *Sol's Story: A Triumph of the Human Spirit* (Nashville, TN: Cold Tree Press, 2002).

[193] Statement of Schaman Rosental, October 4, 1944, in B162/3830, BL, pps. 3676-3677; Statement of Szymon Rozental, January 25, 1968, in B162/3831, BL, pps. 3883-3886.

[194] Abraham Bomba stated that Lejbel Rosenthal escaped from Treblinka and then returned to the camp to tell Alfred Galewski how he had done it before escaping a second time. Abraham Bomba, Interview 18062. *USC Shoah*

Foundation Visual History Archive. USC Shoah Foundation. August 14, 1996. Accessed September 15, 2020. Webb and Chocholatý, *The Treblinka Death Camp* (2021), 284-5.

[195] Gedalia Rosenzweig escaped with Edward Weinstein on an outgoing stolen goods train. Rosenzweig was from Losice, his later fate is not certain. Eddie Weinstein, *17 Days in Treblinka: Daring to Resist, and Refusing to Die*, Fourth Edition (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem Publications, 2009), 54, 60-63; Edward Weinstein, Interview 2694, Tape 3 of 7, 00:20-19:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. May 17, 1995. Accessed September 4, 2020.

[196] Beniamin Ross (formerly Benjamin Rozenwaks) was a Through Transport Survivor deported from the Warsaw Ghetto on April 20, 1943 during the uprising there. He and his father Joseph Rozenwaks were chosen among about 800 and sent to Majdanek and then Budzyn. Beniamin Ross, Interview 8432, Tape 2 of 4, 00:10- 04:00 and archival PIQ Report, pps. 17 and 31. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. November 8, 1995. Accessed September 15, 2020.

[197] Joseph Rozenwaks was a Through Transport Survivor from the Warsaw Ghetto. He and his son Benjamin Rozenwaks (later known as Beniamin Ross) were deported on April 20, 1943 and selected at Treblinka among about 800 others. They were then sent on to Majdanek and Budzyn. Beniamin Ross states that his father likely died in or near Herzbrug (near Dachau) in 1944. Beniamin Ross, Interview 8432, Tape 2 of 4, 00:10- 04:00, 14:00-15:00, and archival PIQ Report, pps. 17 and 31. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. November 8, 1995. Accessed September 15, 2020.

[198] Jacob Rozmaryn was a Through Transport Survivor sent to Treblinka from the Warsaw Ghetto at the time of the ghetto uprising on either April 27 or 28, 1943. He was in Treblinka for less than one day and then sent on to Lublin-Majdanek and then Budzyn. Jacob Rozmaryn, Interview 28198, Tape 2 of 4, 18:00- 23:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. April 2, 1997. Accessed September 15, 2020.

[199] Leon Rytz was identified in a 2016 *Times of Israel* newspaper article. In the wake of Samuel Willenberg's death, Rytz's daughter stepped forward to state that her father had also survived the camp and—at that time—was still alive, see Amanda Borschel-Dan, "There Are Still Treblinka Survivors Living, One Tells His Tale," *The Times of Israel*, February 22, 2016, https://www.timesofisrael.com/there-are-still-treblinka-survivors-living-one-tells-his-tale/. Rytz also gave oral history interviews now held by USHMM, the USC Shoah Foundation. Leon Rytz, RG-50.998.0007. JTHOHA. USHMM. April 26, 2017. Accessed May 25, 2021; Leon Rytz. RG-90.047.0053. JTHOHA. USHMM. March 14, 2018. Accessed May 25, 2021; Leon Rytz. Interview 37378. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. November 14, 1997. Accessed September 2, 2020.

[200] Moniek Salzberg/Zalzberg (מוניעק זאלצבערג) was a Revolt Survivor identified in the testimony of Yaakov Miler. Testimony of Yaakov Miler, March 1982, YVA, O.3, File 7913, Item 3563554, pp. 20.

[201] Władysław Salzberg was named as fellow Revolt Survivor fleeing alongside Yaakov Miler in his testimony, see Testimony of Yaakov Miler, March 1982, YVA, O.3, File 7913, Item 3563554. His first name is given only as W. by Richard Glazar who stated that he knew a fellow survivor named "W. Zalcberg" who lived in Bavaria n 1960. Statement of Richard Glazar, March 10, 1960, in B162/3821, BL, pps. 895-908, pps. 906-907. Webb and Chocholatý use the spelling Władysław Salzberg and cite "Correspondence with Robert Kuwalek" for information on his survival. Webb and Chocholatý, *The Treblinka Death Camp* (2021), 285.

[202] Helen Schwartz, Interview 2889, Tape 3 of 6, 07:20- 15:00 and archival PIQ Report, pp.5. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. May 29, 1995. Accessed September 7, 2020. Helen Schwartz also gave a prior, shorter, less-detailed interview to the Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre of Greater Toronto, a USC Shoah Foundation partner institution. She does not mention Treblinka in this interview. Helen Schwartz, Interview 54305. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. May 4, 1988. Accessed September 7, 2020.

[203] Allen Seder was a Through Transport Survivor sent to Treblinka from Bialystok. The date of his arrival might be February 1943, but his testimony shows the frailty of memory. Seder was chosen with a small group to go on to Majdanek. Allen Seder (Abraham Osher Sedrer), Interview 8135, Tape 2 of 5, 25:40-28:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. October 31, 1997. Accessed September 16, 2020.

[204] Lazar Sharson escaped from the Camp 2/death camp area of Treblinka by tunnel on December 31, 1942. He was one of seven to make the attempt, five of whom made it outside the wire and to a local village. There four of his accomplices were recaptured, one shot on the spot, and the other three returned to Treblinka and executed. Sharson was the only one of this group to reach freedom. His story appears in Yitzhak Arad's work. Arad cites Eli Rozenberg, Yankel Wiernik, and Arie Neiberg's book, *Haacharonim* [*The Lost*], Merchavia, 1958, pps. 98, 190-191. Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 264.

[205] Shashkes (שאשקעס) was named as escapee later deported to Treblinka a second time as the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto intensified. As such, Shashkes is both a Treblinka Escape Survivor and a man killed at the camp. Testimony of Aron Czechowicz, February 20, 1969, YVA, O.3, File 3800, Item 3557570.
[206] Testimony of Wolf Sznajdman, 1945, YVA, O.3, File 560, Item 3561649; Karen I. Treiger, *My Soul Is Filled with Joy: A Holocaust Story*, 1st ed. (Seattle, WA: Stare Lipki Press, 2018); Donat, 290.
[207] Statement of Josef Siedlecki, May 8, 1968, in B162/3832, BL, pps. 4074-4077; Sereny, *Into that Darkness*; Donat, 290.
[208] Sol Silberzweig was a Through Transport Survivor sent to Treblinka from the Warsaw Ghetto (he estimates) in mid-April 1943. He fought in the uprising in Warsaw. He was selected as a carpenter and loaded back on the train in a group of 350. Sol Silberzweig, Interview 13715, Tape 2 of 8, 21:00-28:45, Tape 3 of 8, 04:220-10:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. March 28, 1996. Accessed September 14, 2020.
[209] David Silver (born and at wartime Dawid Zylbersztejn) was a Through Transport Survivor sent to Treblinka from Warsaw in approximately mid-April 1943 at the time of the ghetto uprising. He was chosen (stepped out as a volunteer) among 100 men to be sent elsewhere as carpenters. They were then sent to Budzyn. David Silver, Interview 4713, Tape 3 of 5, 06:30-19:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. October 5, 1995. Accessed September 14, 2020.
[210] Statement of Henry Sperling, April 12, 1961, in B162/3825, BL, pps. 1740-1751; Testimony of Henrick Sperling, April 1962, YVA, O.3, File 2229, Item 3556035; Mark S. Smith, *Treblinka Survivor: The Life and Death of Hershl Sperling* (Stroud, Gloucestershire, UK: The History Press, 2010); Donat, 290.
[211] Roman Staniszewski was named as a fellow Treblinka survivor in the court testimony of Czeslaw Augustyniak. The way in which he survived is not stated. Statement of Czeslaw Augustyniak, February 4, 1960, in B162/3819, BL, pps. 635-637, pp. 637.
[212] Szlomo Sterdiner's short testimony is inconclusive. He is likely a survivor, but the source does not confirm how. I have listed him as Questionable for lack of information. Testimony of Szlomo Sterdiner, July 20, 1961, YVA, O.3, File 53, Item 7060808.
[213] Frank S. Mssa.hvt.0532. FVA. February 4, 1985. Accessed January 22, 2019; Frank Stiffel, *The Tale of the Ring: A Kaddish*, Mazal Holocaust Collection (Wainscott, NY: Pushcart, 1994); Bloch, *From Holocaust to Redemption*, 269.
[214] Martin Stiffel escaped in an outgoing train alongside his brother Frank Stiffel. This is covered in his brother Frank's book and his Fortunoff interviews. Martin survived the rest of the war after Treblinka in Warsaw under false papers. He took his own life in Rome after the war. Frank S. Mssa.hvt.0532. FVA. February 4, 1985. Accessed January 22, 2019; Stiffel, *The Tale of the Ring*.
[215] Statement of Oskar Strawczynski, October 3, 1944, in B162/3830, BL, pps. 3669-3671; Statement of Oscar Strawczynski, December 20, 1959, in B162/3819, BL, pps. 625-631; Testimony of Oskar Strawczynski, October 7, 1945, CoT, IPN GK 196/69. Accessed December 17, 2019; Testimony of Oskar Strawczynski, 1945, YVA, O.3, File 558, Item 3561648; Testimony of Oskar Strawczynski, June 17, 1968, YVA, O.3, File 3131, Item 3557650; Oskar Strawczynski, "Ten Months in Treblinka," in *Escaping Hell in Treblinka* (New York, Jerusalem: Yad Vashem Publications, 2007), 117–82; Donat, 290.
[216] Statement of Zigmund Strawczynski, May 21, 1968, in B162/3832, BL, pps. 4089-4102; Oskar Strawczynski, "Ten Months in Treblinka," in *Escaping Hell in Treblinka* (New York, Jerusalem: Yad Vashem Publications, 2007), 117–82; Donat, 290.
[217] Statement of Bronka Sukno, June 14, 1961 in B162/3825, BL, pps. 1874-1877; Donat, 290.
[218] Henoch Szajnberg was a Through Transport Survivor sent to Treblinka from the Warsaw Ghetto at the time of the uprising there. Neither his testimony nor PIQ Report gives exact dating. He was chosen about a few hundred others (he was not specific) and sent on Majdanek. Henoch Szajnberg, Interview 11776, Tape 2 of 4, 26:30-28:00, Tape 3 of 4, 00:25-05:10. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. February 6, 1996.
[219] Donat, 290.
[220] Menachem Szklarz was a Through Transport Survivor sent to Treblinka from the Warsaw Ghetto on May 10, 1943, during the period of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. He was held overnight on the ramp and placed back on a train the next morning to Majdanek in a group of 500. Thanks go to Ita Gordon of the USC Shoah Foundation for Portuguese language translation assistance. Menachem Szklarz, Interview 24691. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. January 14, 1997. Accessed September 16, 2020.
[221] Donat, 290.
[222] Testimony of Tedeusz Sztabholc, YVA, M.1/M.1.E, File 1162, Item 3541275; Thaddeus Stabholz, *Seven Hells* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1990); Thaddeus Stabholz, Interview 12869, Tape 2 of 6, 29:00, Tape 3 of 6, 00:10.

USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive. USC Shoah Foundation. March 11, 1996. Accessed September 14, 2020.

[223] Statement of Chaim Sztajer, April 11, 1969, in B162/3834, BL, pps. 4479-4483; Testimony of Chaim Steier, YVA, O.3, Tape Number O.33.C/420 and O.33.C/534XX, Item 3561200; Malka Zylbersztajn, *L'Chaim: The Exceptional Life of Chaim Sztajer* (Melbourne, Australia: Jewish Holocaust Center Publishing House, 2018); Donat, 290.

[224] Statement of Kalman Taigman, November 11, 1959, in B162/3819, BL, pps. 602-604; Statement of Kalman Tajgmann, August 25, 1960, in B162/3824, BL, pps. 1600-1606; Testimony of Kalman Tajgman, YVA, O.3, File 1586, Microfilm Code 99.199, Item 3555720; Testimony of Kalman Tajgman, YVA, O.3, 7814, Item 3561022; Tzipi Baider, *Just the Two of Us*, DVD/Streaming (Hedva Goldschidt; Go2Films, 2011); Donat, 290.

[225] Testimony of Eliezer Tekel, 1995, YVA, O.3, File 9160, Item 3563435.

[226] Henry Tempelhof was confirmed as a Through Transport Survivor sent on to Majdanek by Thaddeus Stabholz. His first name and his murder at Majdanek are cited by Lawrence N. Powell. Stabholz, *Seven Hells*, 27; Powell, *Troubled Memory*, 250, 265.

[227] Wladek "Vovek" Tempelhof was conformed as a Through Transport Survivor sent on to Majdanek by Thaddeus Stabholz. His first name and nickname and his murder at Majdanek are cited by Powell. Stabholz, *Seven Hells*, 27; Powell, *Troubled Memory*, 250, 265.

[228] Benzyl Trach was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He was later killed at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 109, 173.

[229] Statement of Eugen Turowski, December 5, 1959, in B162/3819, BL, pp. 547; Statement of Eugeniusz Turowski, August 28, 1960, in B162/3824, BL, pps. 1595-1599; Statement of Eugeniusz Turowski, June 11, 1961, in B162/3826, BL, pps. 1956-1958; Testimony of Eugeniusz Turowski, October 7, 1945, CoT, IPN GK 196/69. Accessed December 23, 2019; Testimony of Eugeniusz Turowski, November 23, 1945, YVA, O.3, File 556, Item 3561647; Donat, 291.

[230] Nathan Tyrkiel was a Through Transport Survivor from the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising period. He dates his transport around the end of Pesach 1943, or April 27-28, 1943. He was selected for transport to Majdanek. Nathan Tyrkiel, Interview 3406, Tape 2 of 3, 02:00-4:30. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. June 21, 1995. Accessed September 14, 2020.

[231] Statement of Charles Unger, May 31, 1968, in B162/3832, BL, pps. 4120-4129; Photograph with caption of Charles Unger, Yad Vashem Photo Archive, Archival Signature 2BO5, Item ID 100436; Karel or Charles Unger was a Czech Jew and a friend of Richard Glazar. Glazar spoke of him extensively in his memoir. Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*; Donat, 291.

[232] Azriel Wal(l)ach was named as an Escape Survivor by Zalman Friedrich Sigmund who—as a member of the Bund—sought to learn more about where Warsaw Jews were being sent in a clandestine mission of information gathering. Sigmund stated that he met Walach in Sokolow. The information he learned from Walach was published in the Warsaw underground newspaper *Oyf der wakh*, September 20, 1942. Joseph Kermisz, *Jewish Underground Newspapers in Warsaw*, vol. 6 (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1997); Asaf Yedidya, "In Defiance of the Nazi Communications Blackout: How Polish Jews Tried to Discover the Destination of the Deportations," *Legacy*, 2012.

[233] Statement of Sewek Warszawski, October 28, 1959, in B162/3818, BL, pps. 244-249; Statement of Sewek Warszawski, January 21, 1960, in B162/3819, BL, pps. 618-624; Statement of Sewek Warszawski, May 23, 1962, in B162/3826, BL, pps. 2067-2073; Testimony of Szyja Warszawski, October 9, 1945, CoT, IPN GK 196/69. Accessed December 23, 2019; Testimony of Szyja Warsawski, September 10, 1945, YVA, O.3, File 557, Item 3557249. Warszawski was referred to with the first name Yeshayahu in the testimony of Szlomo Helman, see Statement of Shlomo Helman, June 6, 1961, YVA. O.3, File 2267, Item 3555994; Donat, 291.

[234] Donat, 291.

[235] Testimony of Kazik Borys Weinberg, July 20, 1945, YVA, O.3, File 565, Item 3557270. Webb and Chocholatý, *The Treblinka Death Camp* (2021), 291.

[236] Abraham Krzepicki named Weiner as a Hasid who escaped along with him, see Donat, 141; Webb and Chocholatý, *The Treblinka Death Camp* (2021), 291.

[237] Haim Weiner was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He was later killed at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 109, 173.

[238] Bernard Weingrod was confirmed as a Through Transport Survivor in emails with his son, Dr. Michel Weingrod, MD, a Parisian cardiologist. Thanks go to Waitman Beorn who provided contact with Michel Weingrod's niece Eve Ash, who put me in touch with her uncle. Email correspondence in the possession of the author. Dr. Michel Weingrod's story of his father's survival almost exactly mirrors that of Maurice Markus. Both were transported to

Treblinka at the final destruction of the Warsaw Ghetto, both were then sent on to Majdanek and then the Budzyn Camp, see Testimony of Maurice Markus, March 21-22, 1963, YVA. TR.21, File 103, Item 7217755.
[239] Eddie Weinstein, *17 Days in Treblinka: Daring to Resist, and Refusing to Die*, Fourth Edition (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem Publications, 2009). Edward Weinstein, Interview 2694, Tape 3 of 7, 00:20-19:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. May 17, 1995. Accessed September 4, 2020.
[240] Sol Weisberg was named a fellow survivor of Treblinka (method of survival not stated/unkown) by Abraham Bomba, see Statement of Abraham Bomba, November 27, 1959, in B162/3819, BL, pps. 521-523, pp. 522.
[241] Statement of Jakob Wiernik, August 23, 1960, in B162/3824, BL, pps. 1633-1643; Testimony of Jankiel Wiernik (Jan Smarzyński), October 12, 1945, CoT, IPN GK 196/69. Accessed December 23, 2019; Testimony of Jankiel Wiernik (Jan Smarzyński), January 4, 1945, CoT, IPN GK 196/75. Accessed December 23, 2019; Jankiel Wiernik, *A Year in Treblinka: An Inmate Who Escaped Tells the Day-to-Day Facts of One Year of His Torturous Experience*, eBook (Pickle Partners Publishing, 2014); *Adolf Eichmann Trial* (Jerusalem District Court December 12, 1961); *The Trial of German Major War Criminals: Proceedings of the International Military Tribunal Sitting at Nuremberg Germany, Taken from the Official Transcript* (London: HM Stationary Office, 1946); Donat, 291.
[242] Statement of Samuel Willenberg, Undated (likely 1945), in B162/3821, BL, pps. 913-955; Testimony of Samuel Willenberg, Undated (quite early, possibly 1945), YVA, O.3, File 567, Item 3560424; Tzipi Baider, *Just the Two of Us*, DVD/Streaming (Hedva Goldschidt; Go2Films, 2011); Monique O. Madan, "Samuel Willenberg, the Last Surviving Treblinka Prisoner, Dies at 93," *Miami Herald*, February 20, 2016, sec. Local Obituaries, https://www.miami herald.com/news/local/obituaries/article61493247.html; T.O.I Staff, "President Pays Tribute as Last Survivor of Treblinka Revolt Is Laid to Rest," *Times of Israel*, February 22, 2016, http://www.timesofisrael.com/president-attends-funeral-for-last-treblinka-revolt-survivor/; Alan Tomlinson, *Treblinka's Last Witness*, DVD Documentary (Tomlinson De Onis Productions LLC, 2014); Samuel Willenberg, "I Survived Treblinka," in *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentary* (Waldon Press, 1979), 189–213; Samuel Willenberg, *Revolt in Treblinka* (Warsaw: Zydowski Instytut Historyczny, 1984); Samuel Willenberg, *Surviving Treblinka*, ed. Władysław Bartoszewski (Oxford; New York, NY, USA: Basil Blackwell in association with the Institute for Polish-Jewish Studies, 1989); Donat, 291.
[243] Zagiel, Seweryn (Severin), Interview 4432, Segment 67, 30:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. August 7, 1995. Accessed September 2, 2020. Thanks go to Alice Coulter Main for translation from the French.
[244] Mejer Zigelman spelling found in Wójcik, *Der Aufstand von Treblinka Revolte im Vernichtungslager*; Donat, 291.
[245] Kive Zonenfeld was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He was later killed at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 109, 173.
[246] Pesach Zonenfeld was a Through Transport Survivor who survived alongside Saul Kuperhand. He was later killed at Treblinka I. Miriam Kuperhand and Saul Kuperhand, *Shadows of Treblinka*, 109, 173.
[247] Feny Zycherman's interview shows that she was a Through Transport Survivor deported from Warsaw to Treblinka in late-Aril or May 1943. She was placed back on the train and transferred to Majdanek. Feny Zycherman, Interview 1228, Tape 2 of 3, 02:30. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. February 27, 1995. Accessed September 8, 2020.
[248] Moshe Zylberberg was a Through Transport Survivor from the Warsaw Ghetto at the time of the ghetto uprising. He was arrived in late April or May 1943 and was selected among 400 or 350 for transport to Majdanek/Lipowa 7. Moshe Zylberberg, Interview 26491, Tape 5 of 8, 25:00-28:00, Tape 6 of 8, 00:25-09:00. *USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive*. USC Shoah Foundation. March 4, 1997. Accessed September 14, 2020.
[249] Kalman Teigman told Webb and Chocholatý that Joseph Zymerman was a survivor who settled in New York after the war. How he survived was not explained. Webb and Chocholatý, *The Treblinka Death Camp* (2021), 294.

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Figure 1

The Duisburg Map

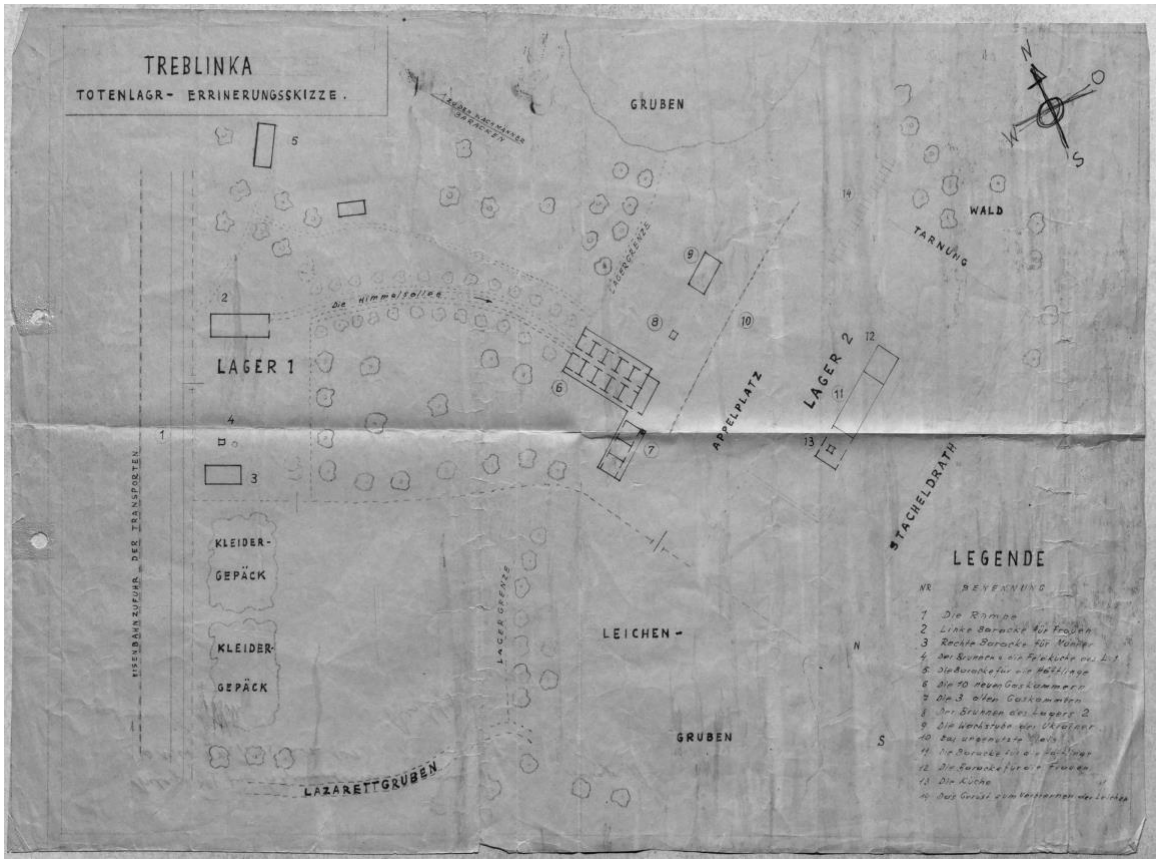
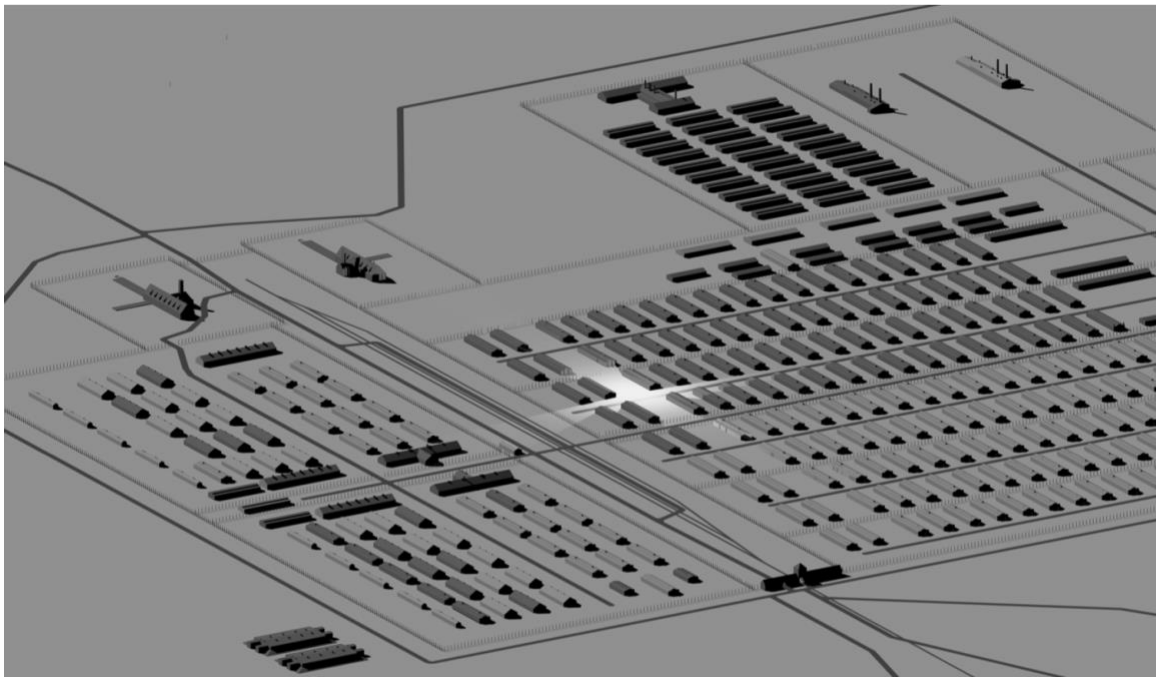


Figure 2

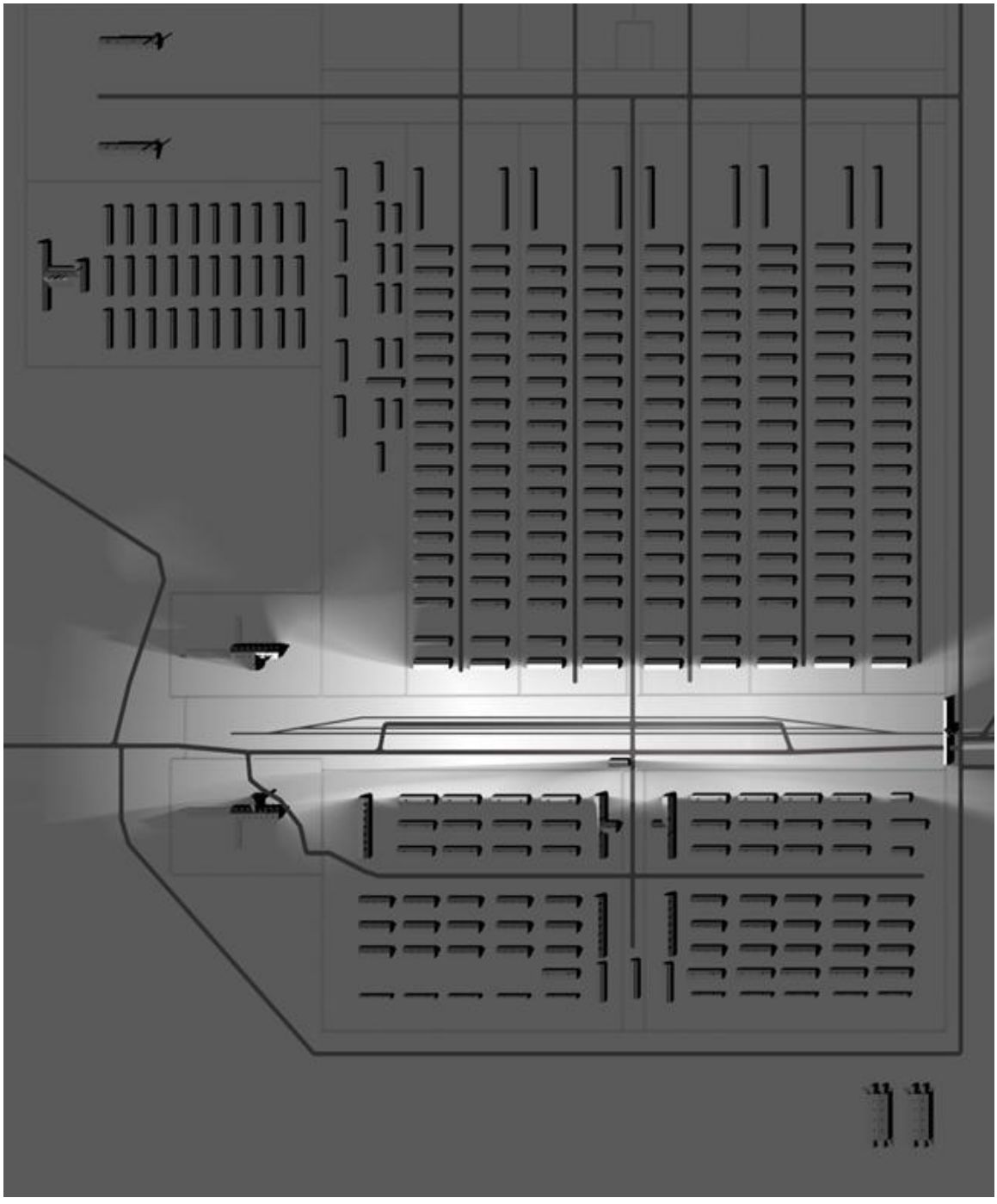
Jaskot/Harvey Birkenau Viewshed Analysis[1]



[1] Paul B. Jaskot et al., "Visualizing the Archive: Building at Auschwitz as a Geographic Problem," in *Geographies of the Holocaust* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2014), 158–91, p. 179.

Figure 3

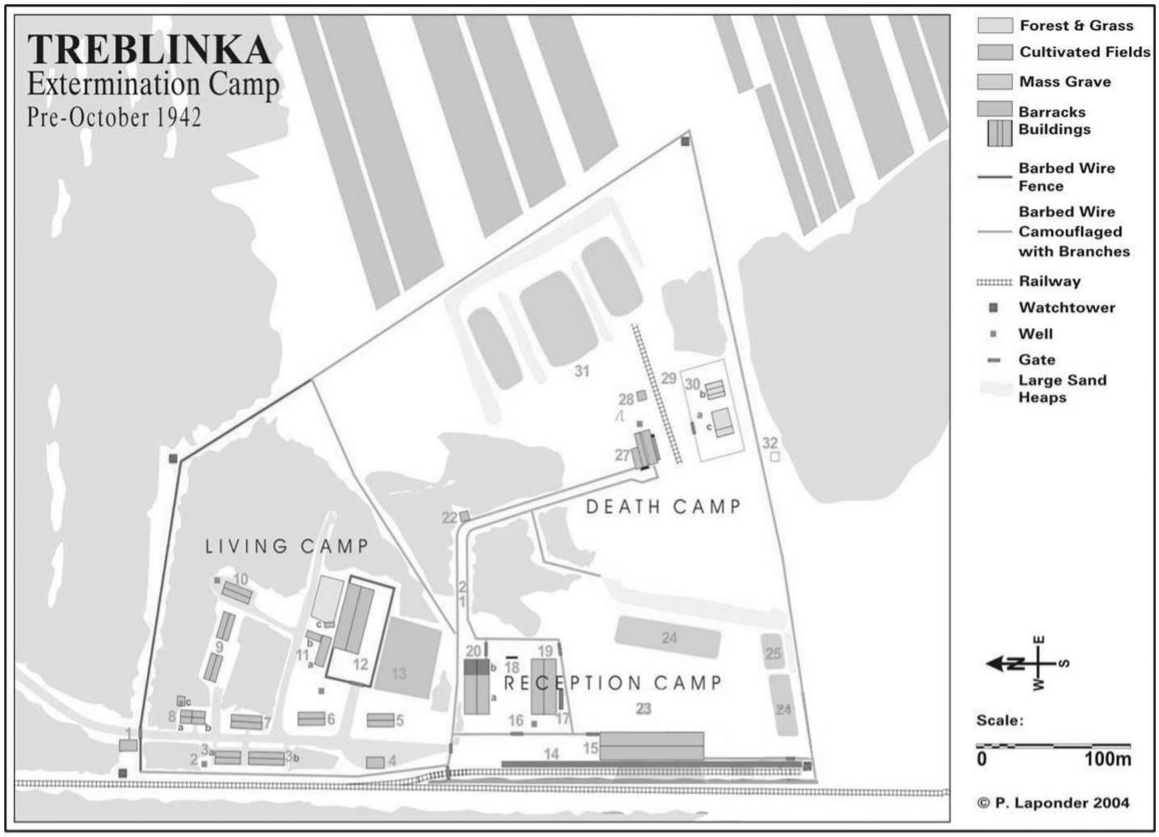
Jaskot/Harvey Birkenau Ramp Viewshed Analysis[2]



[2] Jaskot et al., "Visualizing the Archive," 184.

Figure 4

Laponder Pre-October 1942 Map[3]



KEY:

An 1940 aerial photo was used to fill in detail of forest in camp.
The original Wiernik map was used for the Tube and change of fencing in middle of camp.
The anti tank trap fencing was erected later etc.

Some reasons for placing features are mentioned in italics.

LIVING CAMP

1 First guard house. *(Was first outside gate and removed when Tyrolean guard house was build inside fence. The ornate main gate was built only later)*
2 Officer's well.
3 SS living quarters: **a**. Mess, **b**. Sleeping quarters.
4 Garage. *(Probably the garage shed was first at this side)*
5 Food Store. *(Probably later removed when big shed was built in sorting yard)*
6 Old Bakery.
7 Store for sorting valuables. *(Probably later became SS service building)*
8 **a**. Camp Commandant's living quarters **b**. Administrative office **b**. Punishment cell for Ukrainians.
9 Living quarters for Ukrainians. *(A few survivor maps [including Glazar's] indicate these barracks in this layout, it could well have been an earlier layout)*
10 Ukrainian kitchen.
11 Farmyard area: **a**. Stables, **b**. Pigsty, **c**. Chicken run.
12 Barrack for *Hofjuden, Goldjuden* sorting room and workshops. *(The other barracks were later build forming the 'U' shaped 'Gheto' complex)*
13 Vegetable garden. *(It is probable that a vegetable garden was turned into a Roll Call area. [The Platkiewickz map shows a vegetable garden in this area.]. The original Roll Call area was on the ramp in front of the undressing barracks)*

RECEPTION CAMP

STATION SQUARE

14 Platform for victim disembarkation and original Roll-Call area for prisoners. *(As mentioned in unpublished Strawcsynski memoirs).*
15 Storage barracks for items taken away from victims.

DEPORTATION SQUARE

16 Separation of victims: women to the left, men to the right
17 Open pit toilet. (*Later removed*)
18 Notice board, informing victims what to do. *(Later removed).*
19 Barracks. *(First used for male sleeping quarters later a wood store).*
20 **a**. Undressing barracks for females, **b**. Barber section *(Probable that the barber section was later added. Survivor Bomba [a barber] testifies that originally the cutting was done in the Old Gaschambers!!)*
21 'The Tube'. *(Note the original long length and the fact that the tube ran in a straight line towards the entrance of the Old Gas Chambers. The New Gas Chambers were built to make use of the same position of the Tube. There is evidence that the Old Gas Chamber entrance lines up with the centre passage of the New Gas Chambers)*
22 Kiosk for collecting valuables from victims going through 'The Tube'. *(Later removed as it hampered the speedy flow of victims to gas chambers)*

SORTING AREA

23 Sorting Yard. *(Probably the Latrines were build later. Double Barracks not included probably build later although Willenberg writes they were originally farm stables. Cannot be identified on 1940 aerial)*
24 Mass graves. *(Where corpses were buried during initial hectic phase as evident on aerial photo)*
25 Part of original mass grave which was later the site of the *Lazarett.*

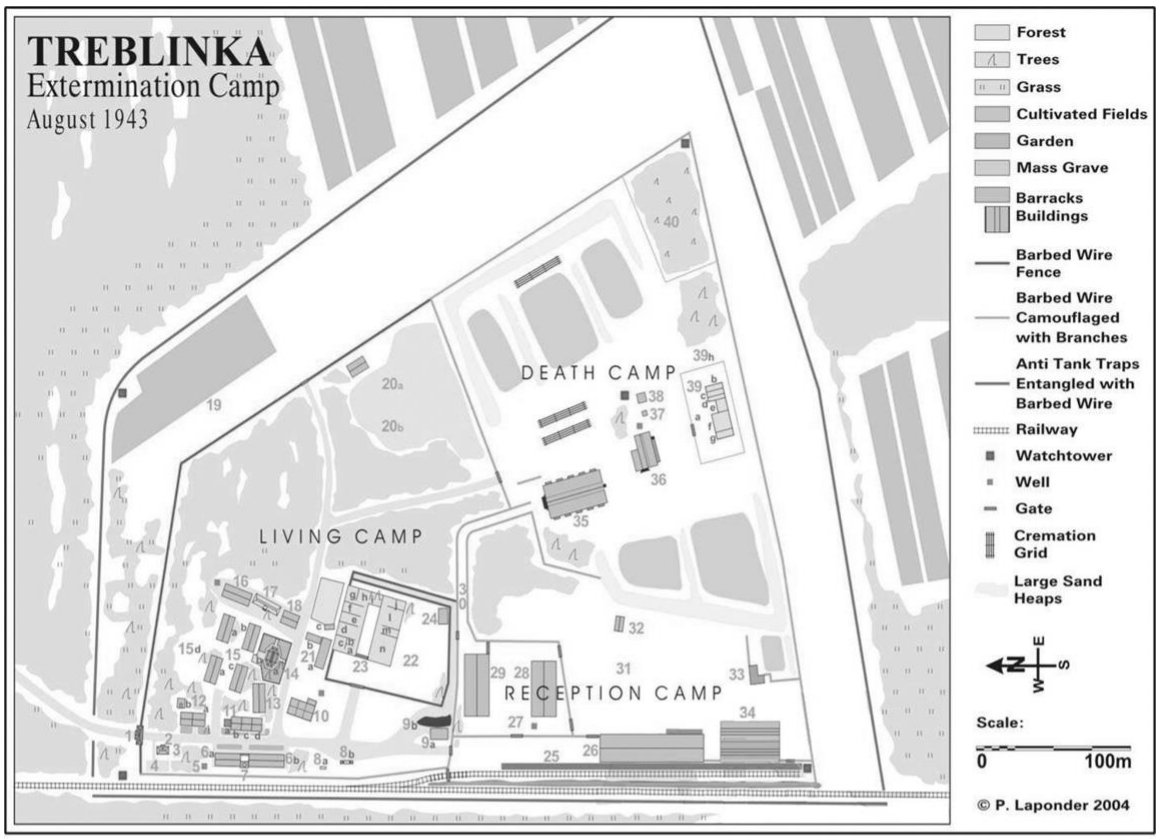
DEATH CAMP

26 Old gas chambers. *(The original three smaller gas chambers)*
27 Guard house. *(Probably there from the beginning)*
28 Narrow gauge railway. *(Later removed as it was impractical and the rails were used to make experimental cremation grids)*
29 *Sonderkommando* camp. *(The middle section of the barracks seems to have been build later as the Wiernik model indicates it as two separate barracks)*
30 No mass graves here yet. *(The earth mound being formed by the mass graves in the sorting yard. According to Wiernik's map, there were only mass graves in the east side of the camp)*
31 Mass graves.
32 Watchtower. *(Originally in this position but later removed to centre of Death Camp).*

[3] Peter Laponder, *Maps/Drawings Depicting the Treblinka Death Camp*, Overhead Computer Draft (Treblinka Extermination Camp: H.E.A.R.T. - Holocaust Education and Research Team, 2007), http://www.holocaustresearchproject.org/ar/treblinka/maps.html.

Figure 5

Laponder August 1943 Map[4]



KEY:

LIVING CAMP

1 Main gate.
2 Tyrolean guard house.
3 Armoured car. (used for transporting to Lublin, valuables taken from victims)
4 SS relaxation area.
5 Officer's well.
6 SS living quarters: **a.** Mess **b.** Sleeping quarters.
7 Arms storeroom and water tower.
8 **a.** Petrol tank **b.** Petrol pumps.
9 **a.** Garage **b.** Coal dump.
10 New bakery foundations. (utilized later for 'farmhouse' housing an Ukrainian, guarding against locals plundering mass graves)
11 Service building for the SS: **a.** Air raid shelter, **b.** Sick bay **c.** Dentist **d.** Barber.
12 **a.** Camp commandant's office and living quarters, **b.** Wine & spirits cellar.
13 Staff sleeping quarters for Polish and Ukrainian girls.
14 Zoo area; **a.** Zoo with pigeon coop on top **b.** Relaxation area for SS.
15 Living quarters for Ukrainians: **a.** Sleeping quarters, **b.** Night shift quarters **c.** Doctor and barber **d.** Roll call and exercise area for Ukrainians.
16 Ukrainian kitchen.
17 Potato cellars.
18 *GoldJuden.* (Where Jewish prisoners had to sort valuables and gold taken from victims)
19 Vegetable garden.
20 **a.** Timber store & yard **b.** Waste combustion area.
21 Farmyard area: **a.** Stables **b.** Pigsty, **c.** Chicken run etc.

ROLL-CALL SQUARE

22 Assembly area for prisoners.
23 'The Ghetto': Jewish prisoners' living and working quarters: **a.** Jewish kitchen, **b.** SS laundry, **c.** Jewish infirmary, **d.** *Kapo* barrack, **e.** Saddlery and shoemaker shop, **f.** Tailor shop, **g.** Jewish women's quarters, **H.** Carpenter shop, **i.** Blacksmith & locksmith, **j.** Tool storehouse, **k.** Jewish quarters I, **l.** Washroom **m.** Jewish quarters II.
24 Latrines.

RECEPTION CAMP

STATION SQUARE

25 Platform for victim disembarkation (accommodating 20 cattle trucks).
26 Storage barracks for items taken away from victims (Disguised at a later stage, on the platform side, as a railway station called *Obermaidan,* with a fake ticket window and locked doors with signs such as 'To first-class waiting room')

DEPORTATION SQUARE

27 Separation of victims: women to the left, men to the right.
28 Barracks (First served as male sleeping quarters, later a lumber store)
29 Undressing barracks for females (Including a 'cash-desk' and an area where barbers had to cut the prisoners' hair).
30 'The Tube' (Narrow camouflaged passage called the *Himmelstrasse* (road to heaven) through which victims were chased to 'the showers').

SORTING AREA

31 Sorting Yard.
32 Latrine.
33 *Lazarett* (field hospital), an execution site disguised as a hospital.
34 Double Barracks (For victims' belongings already sorted).

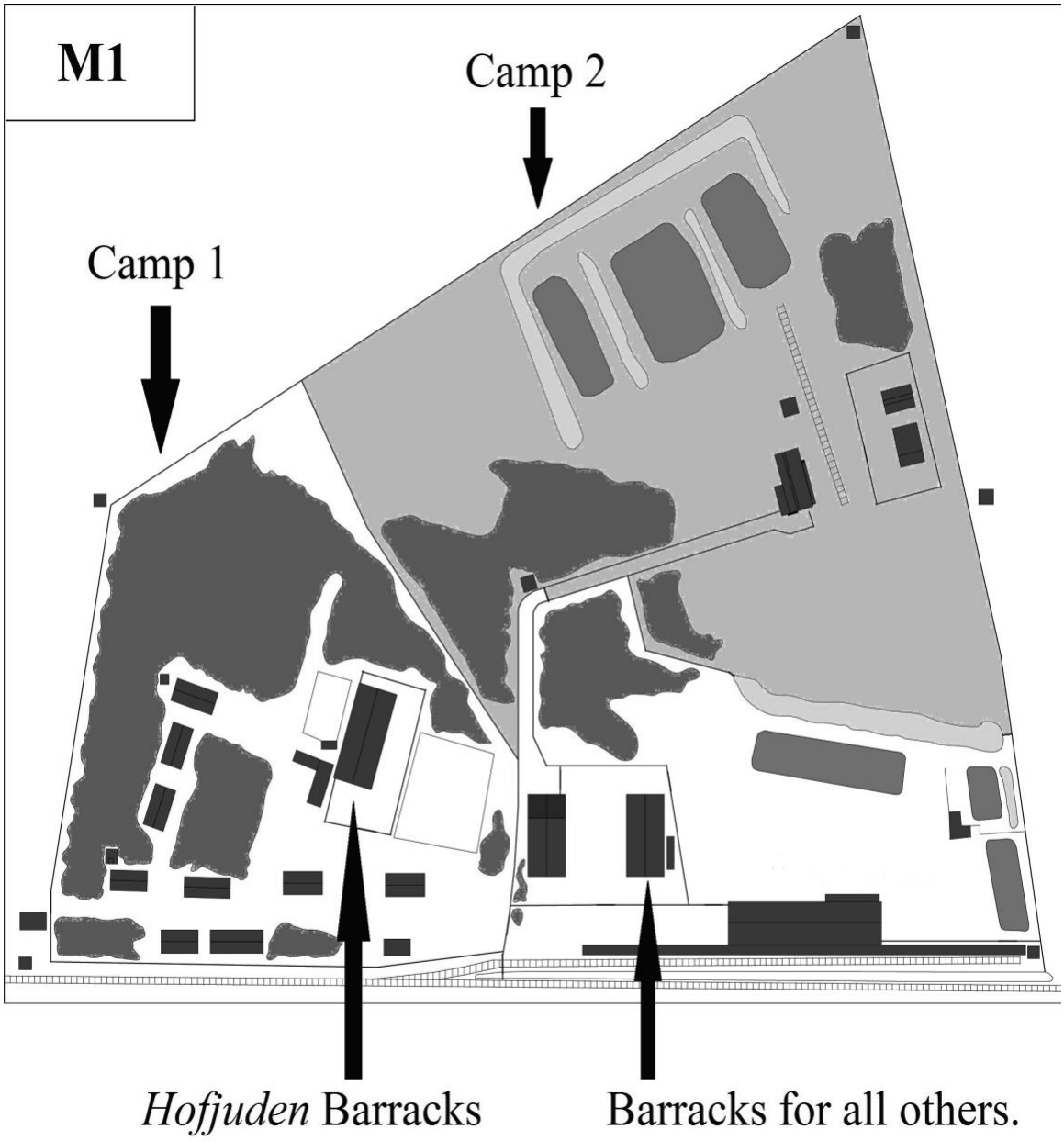
DEATH CAMP

35 New gas chambers (Five steps with potted plants leading up to entrance and passage. Ten gas chambers, each hermetically sealed, opened via trapdoors onto platforms outside, from which the corpses were removed)
36 Old gas chambers (The original three smaller Gas chambers).
37 Water pump shelter.
38 Guard house.
39 *Sonderkommando* camp (prisoners working in death camp section): **a.** Roll-call yard, **b.** Woman's quarters, **c.** Doctor, **d.** *Kapo*, e. Ablution, **f.** Men's Quarters, **g.** Kitchen, **h.** Laundry area.
40 Concealed burial pit (Re-vegetated with saplings and lupine).

[4] Peter Laponder, *Maps/Drawings Depicting the Treblinka Death Camp*, Overhead Computer Draft (Treblinka Extermination Camp: H.E.A.R.T. - Holocaust Education and Research Team, 2007), http://www.holocaustresearchproject.org/ar/treblinka/maps.html.

Figure 6

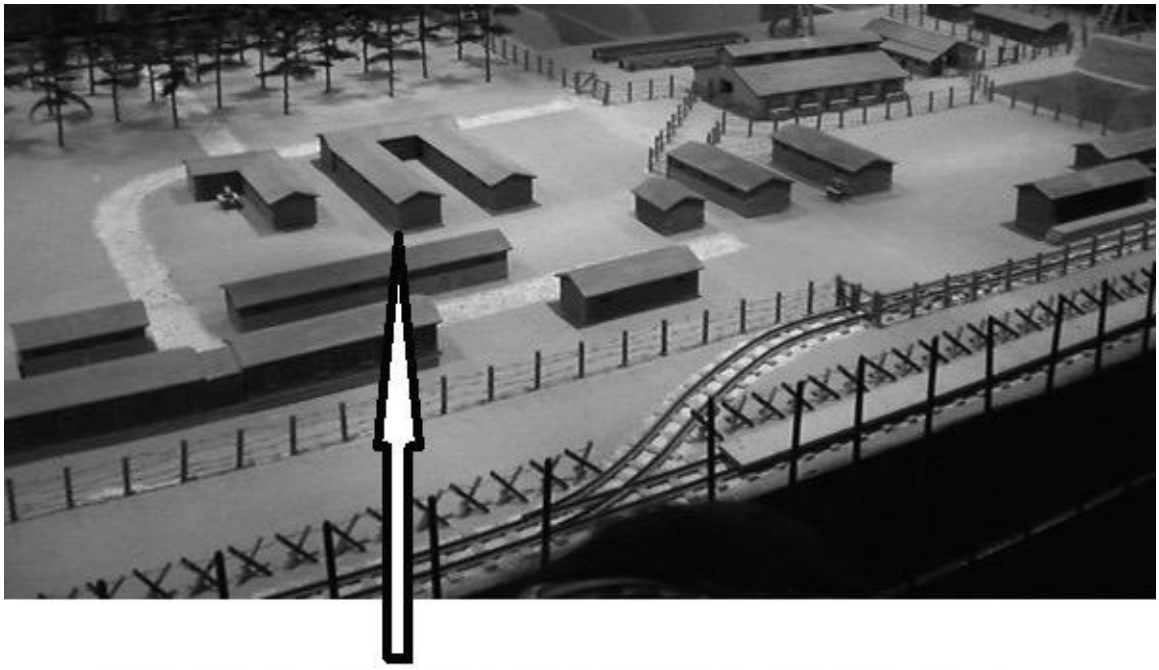
Camp 1/Camp2 Clarification Map[5]



[5] Annotations added by the author, see Kurt Johansen, *M1*, Overhead Computer Draft (Treblinka Extermination Camp, August 2015).

Figure 7a

Wiernik Model Photo 1[6]

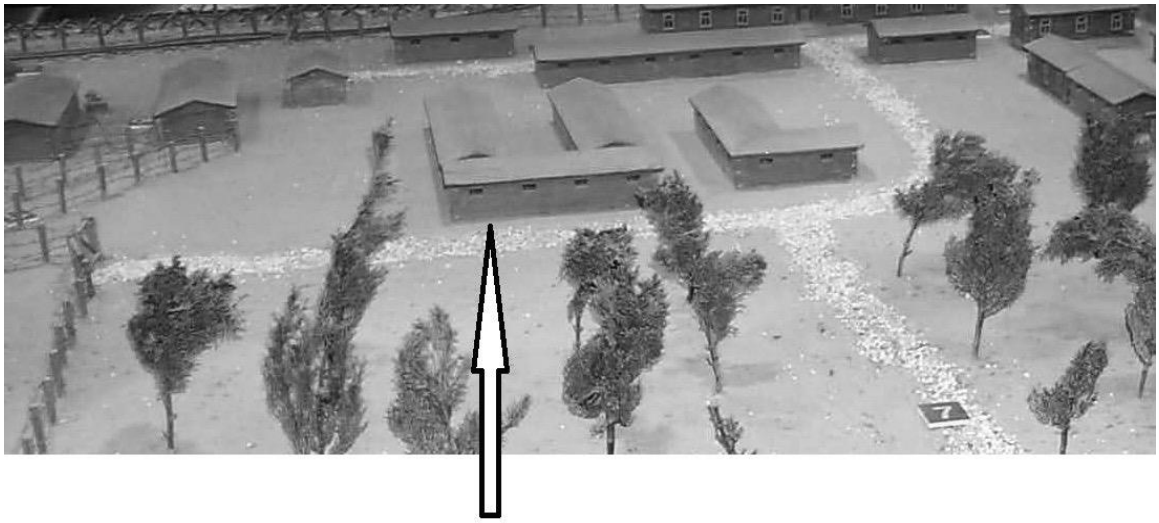


Camp 1 barracks depicted without surrounding fence.

[6] Annotations added by the author, see "Wiernik Treblinka Model 02," Online Archive, Nizkor Project, 2012, http://www.nizkor.org/ftp.cgi/camps/aktion.reinhard/treblinka/ftp.cgi?camps/ aktion.reinhard/treblinka/ images/model/Treblinka_Model-02.jpg.

Figure 7b

Wiernik Model Photo 2[7]

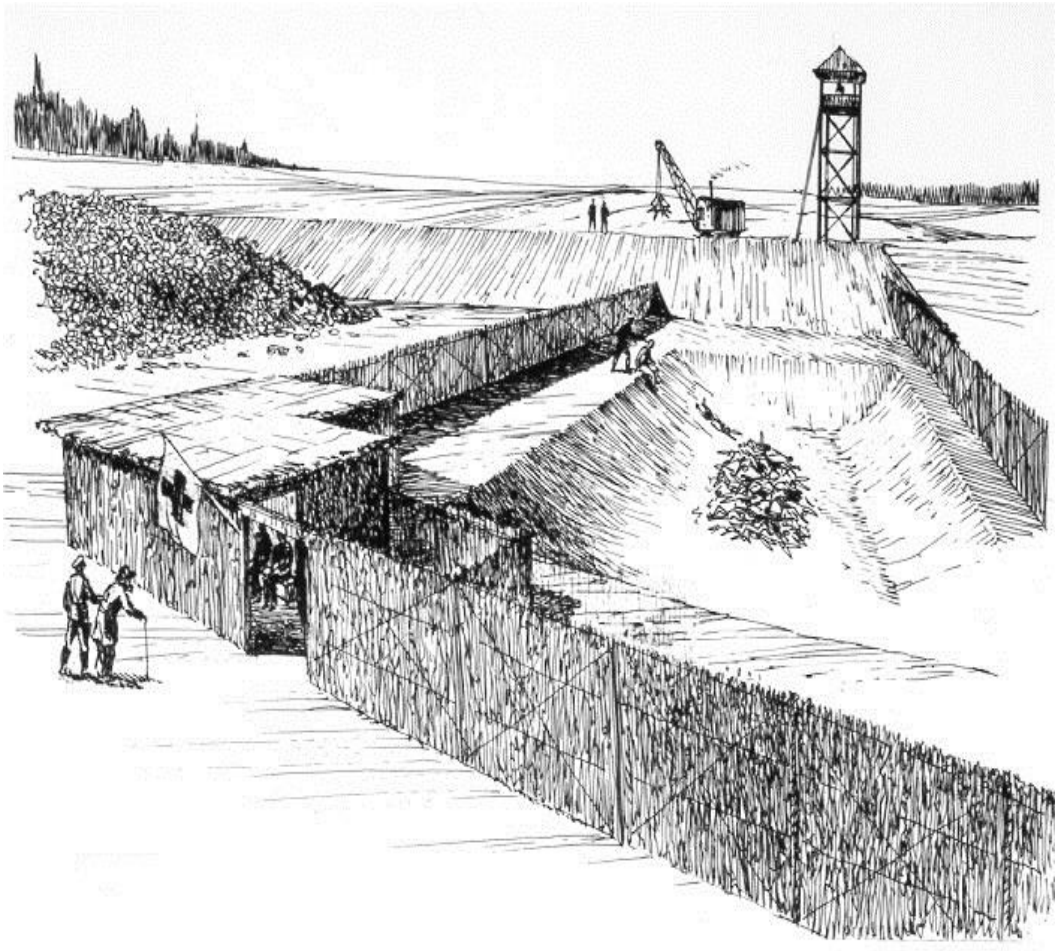


Camp 1 barracks depicted without surrounding fence.

[7] Annotations added by the author, see"Wiernik Treblinka Model 02," Online Archive, Nizkor Project, 2012, http://www.nizkor.org/ftp.cgi/camps/aktion.reinhard/treblinka/ftp.cgi?camps/ aktion.reinhard/treblinka/ images/model/Treblinka_Model-02.jpg.

Figure 8

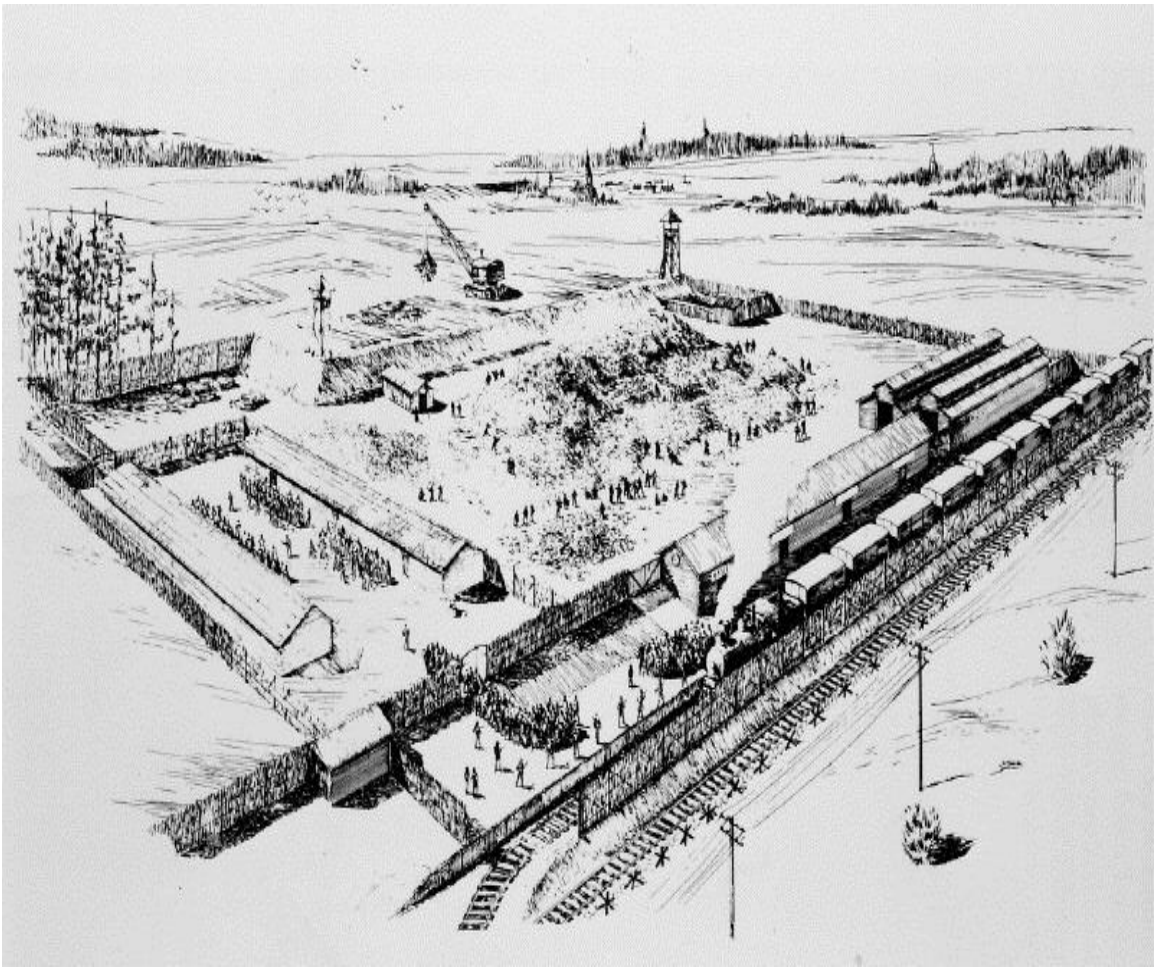
Willenberg Plate 2 *Lazarett* Drawing[8]



[8] Samuel Willenberg, *Surviving Treblinka*, ed. Władysław Bartoszewski (Oxford; New York, NY, USA: Basil Blackwell in association with the Institute for Polish-Jewish Studies, 1989), between ps. 116-7.

Figure 9

Willenberg Plate 3 Overview Drawing[9]

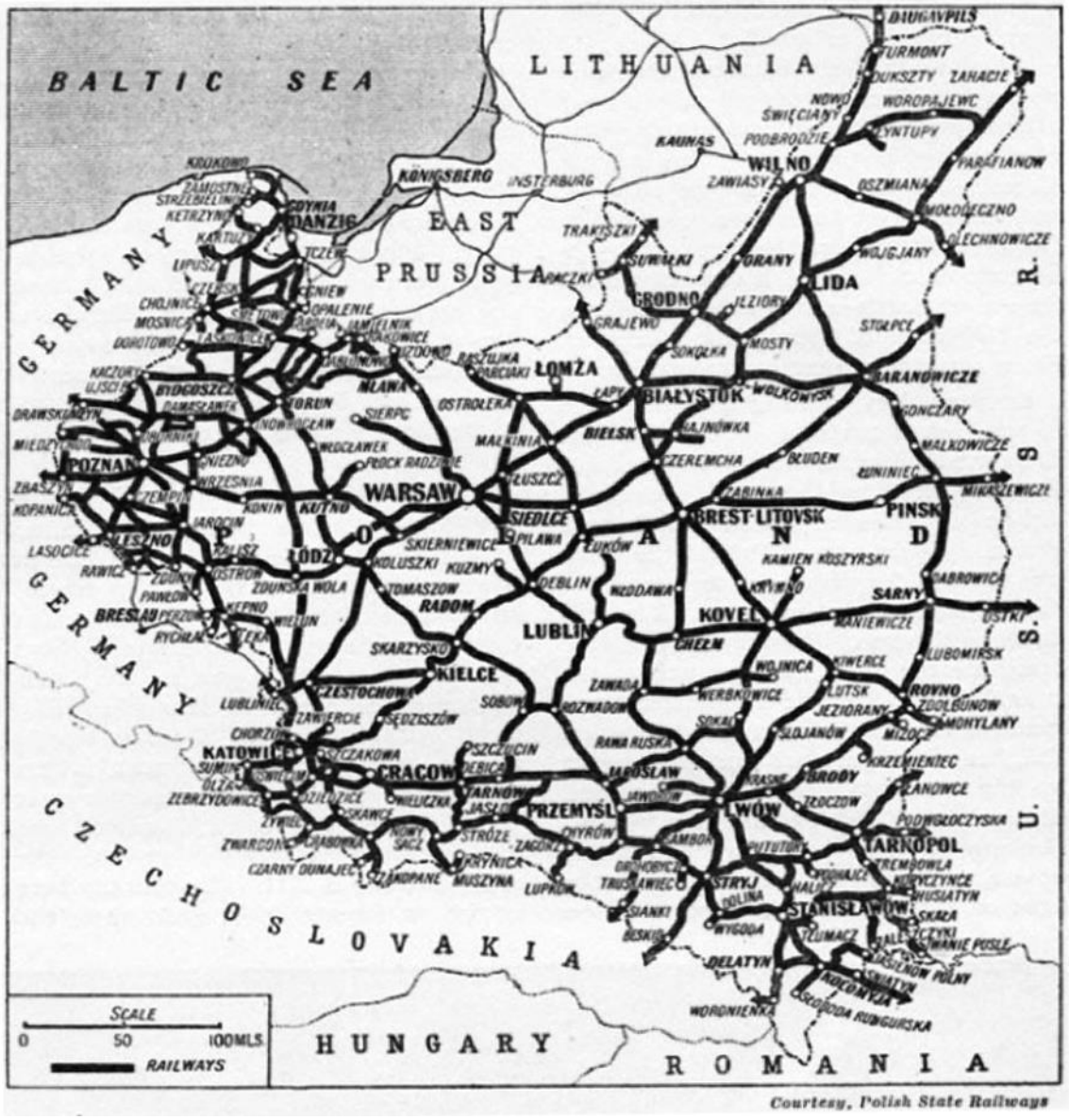


[9] Samuel Willenberg, *Surviving Treblinka*, ed. Władysław Bartoszewski (Oxford; New York, NY, USA: Basil Blackwell in association with the Institute for Polish-Jewish Studies, 1989), between ps. 116-7.

Figure 10

Polish Rail Map[10]

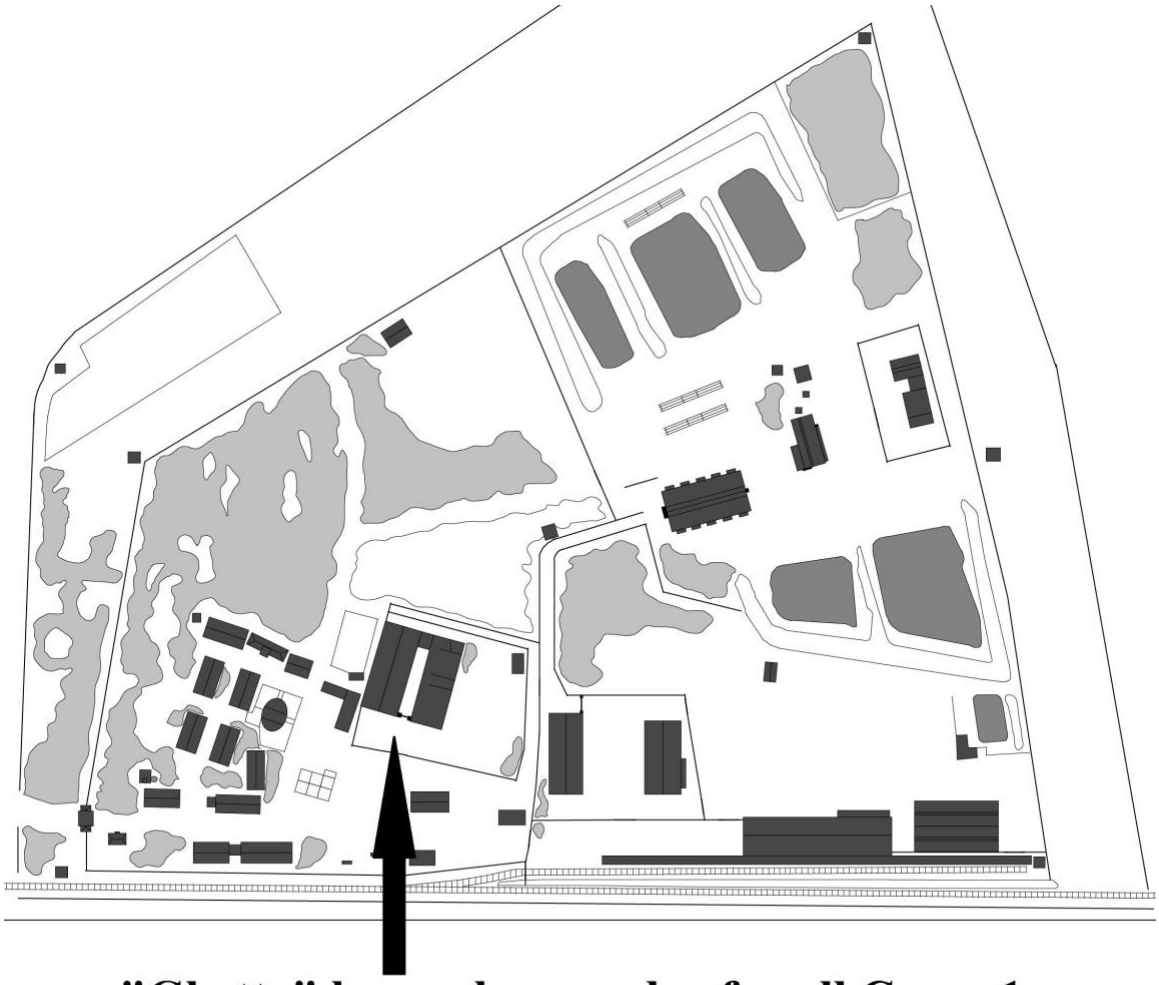
Note: Treblinka is nearest the location marked Malkinia.



[10] *Poland's Main Line Railways Prior to World War II*, Railway Chart, Railway Wonders of the World (Railway Wonders of the World, Courtesy Polish State Railways, June 14, 1935), http://www.railwaywondersofthe world.com/wpimages/wp3ec12f35_05_06.jpg.

Figure 11

Ghetto Barracks Location[11]



[11] Annotations added by the author, see Kurt Johansen, *M2*, Overhead Computer Draft (Treblinka Extermination Camp, August 2015).

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