



GANIA AJDELMAN

On 16 May 1945 in Oświęcim, Jan Sehn, regional investigating judge, member of the Commission for the Investigation of German Nazi Crimes in Oświęcim, on the motion, in the presence, and with the participation of Dr. Wincenty Jarosiński, deputy prosecutor of the Regional Court, and Dr. Jan Jodłowski, court expert, in accordance with art. 254 and pursuant to art. 107, 109, 115, and 124 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, interviewed as a witness Genia Ajdelman, a former prisoner of the Auschwitz concentration camp, prisoner number 12 864, who testified as follows:

Name and surname	Genia Ajdelman
Date and place of birth	23.11.1924 in Lubartów, lubelskie voivodeship
Names of parents	Josek and Arna <i>née</i> Śliwka
Religious affiliation	Jewish
Marital status	single
Occupation	works for parents, father is a merchant
Citizenship	Polish
Nationality	Jewish
Place of residence	before the arrest: Niedrzwica Duża, lubelskie voivodeship

In December 1941, together with other Jews, I was interned at the Jewish camp in Bełżyce near Lublin. In July 1942, I was moved to Budzyń with a transport of some 100 women. Aside from the women, there were 350 Jewish men on that transport. Some time before we were transferred to Budzyń, near Kraśnik, the Bełżyce camp was liquidated. Up to July 1942, there had been around 800 Jewesses at that camp, 700 of whom were executed, and only 100



of whom were moved to Budzyń. The death sentence was carried out by Oberscharführer Feiks, who was commandant of the Budzyń camp. Before the execution, Feiks ordered male prisoners to dig pits, and then ordered the Jewesses into these pits. First, the Jewesses who he had sentenced to death had to undress in the roll-call yard and then climb into the pits, where they were machine-gunned by Feiks.

Around October 1942, I was moved on a transport to Poniatów near Nałęczów. There were 15,000 Jews at the local camp. The working conditions at that camp were very tough. Prisoners worked at shoemaker's or tailor's shops inside the camp, they built roads etc. The nutrition was very poor. We would get some black coffee for breakfast, soup for lunch, and 1/6 kg of bread, and sometimes coffee, for supper. The SS men beat Jews mercilessly, kicked them, and killed them, all this for no reason whatsoever or for the slightest infractions.

In October 1942, we were transferred to Biała Podlaska. The transport consisted of 150 Jews and 40 Jewesses. After we arrived, another 50 Jews were added to our camp, survivors of the extermination of local Jews. Women at the camp worked cleaning flats, washing up, and cooking, while men worked at the aircraft factory. By the time of our departure for Majdanek, near Lublin, following a number of selections and ill treatment, only 20 women and some 100 men were still alive. The selections had been carried out by Superintendent Airman Mischke, and one Schultze, both of them Germans. They also carried out the death sentences.

We were transported to Majdanek in May 1944. Immediately after our arrival, we were ordered to go to the bathhouse, had our civilian clothes taken away, and were told to put on striped uniforms. Each female prisoner got a camp number. Mine was 8. There were twenty of us who came from Biała Podlaska, and another five from Zamość, and some 100 from Budzyń were added to the transport. We worked at tailor's shops, the laundry, and grew vegetables. The work itself was not hard, but the Kapos treated us in a grossly violent way and beat us mercilessly. A German Kapo whose first name was Edmund stood out for his particular cruelty.

In August 1944, as the result of the Russian front's approach, all prisoners were ordered to form groups with a view to their departure. None of us knew where the transport was headed for, but we suspected that the Germans were moving us to another camp because the Soviets were coming. Already, as we were leaving, we saw the glow of fire above Lublin



and heard explosions. The transport departed in the direction of Kraśnik, escorted by the SS and the military. There were around 1,000 prisoners in the transport. The first night and then the entire next day we were driven without respite. It was raining all the time and we had to march through forests in terrible conditions. If a prisoner grew weak and could not continue, an SS man would kill them with a revolver. After a few days we were loaded onto cargo wagons at some station, whose name I don't know, and transported to the Birkenau camp.

At Birkenau, we were told to bathe, got striped uniforms to put on, and were moved to the FKL [*Frauenkonzentrationslager*, women's camp] section, to block 11 (the quarantine block). We did not go to work while at this block, because all of us had wounds on our feet. After two or three weeks, we were assigned to particular work details. Initially, I worked operating rolling carts. We transported gravel and sand. Both Kapos and SS women beat us for no reason at all.

As a result of adverse nutritional conditions and hard toil, I got sick and developed a fever, so I was put in the hospital block. Let me add that during my time at Poniatów I had come across an acquaintance of mine, one Grün, and we "got married". This marriage was not recorded and it was celebrated by a rabbi, a prisoner at the camp. Grün was also with me at the Biała Podlaska camp, and there, following our repeated sexual intercourse, I got pregnant.

In October 1944, the Birkenau camp was being partly liquidated. Before the departure of a transport, a selection was carried out. During one such selection, I was excluded from the transport on grounds of pregnancy and I was designated for gassing. Aside from myself, three other pregnant women were selected on that occasion, as well as 104 sick women, the so-called "muselmanns" [physically drained prisoners]. They placed all of us in FKL B section, in the so-called sauna. We knew very well that we were to be poisoned with gas and that we were merely awaiting our death in the sauna. They kept us there for 48 hours, during which Kapos and SS women mocked us. On the second day, two SS men came to the sauna. One brought a gas mask, and the other – a box with zyklon. They told us that they had come to gas us and they made provisional preparations to that end, as if they really intended to make good on their threat. As we later found out, they were only mocking us.

On the same day, a little later in the evening, an SS woman and the *Lagerälteste* [camp senior] came to the sauna, took our names, surnames, and prison numbers, and



ordered us to go to FKL A section. There we were placed in block 4, and other female prisoners told us that we had avoided death through gassing thanks to a ban issued by Berlin. Immediately after we were placed at block 4, our health was again examined. The examination was entirely superficial and it was conducted by one Schuster (a non-medical practitioner) and Ems (*Lagerälteste*), a doctor. During the examination, Schuster was taking some notes. On the same day, we were taken to block 22, where we joined another twenty or so pregnant women. Another examination was carried out at this block, this time a detailed one: each woman was told to lie on a gynecological table, and then a female doctor, whose name I do not know, wearing a white frock and rubber gloves, performed an internal gynecological examination on us and collected all data pertaining to the pregnancy. During the examination I was feeling acute pain. Present at the examination were also Dr. Mengele and Schuster. I remained in block 22 for almost two weeks. Over that period, the gynecological examination was repeated a few times.

At the same time, the number of women being examined was increasing, because pregnant women, who no longer feared gassing, were reporting to the hospital. The number of pregnant women at that time was nearing 50. We learned then from the *Pflegers* [nurses] that it had been decided that abortions would be performed on all the women. These procedures were to be carried out partly in block 22, and partly in the emergency room of the men's sections in section F, in block 2, I believe. The women in early pregnancy were supposed to remain in block 22 and they were supposed to undergo abortion through curettage. Early pregnancy was classified as less than five months. When I was still in block 22, I saw pregnant women before they were taken into surgery, and then I saw them after the curettage procedure. I do not know how the procedure was performed, because the women I asked told me that they had been given an injection after which they had fallen asleep. I know that abortions through curettage were performed even in cases of pregnancies past the five-month mark. After the procedure, some women felt better than others and would recover over the next couple of weeks. They had to stay in beds, because often they could not stand on their feet. Every day, they were examined by a female doctor, and had their dressings changed by the nurses.

I also know from what other female prisoners told me, all of them pregnant women, that aside from employing the curettage procedure, female doctors also aborted more advanced pregnancies through injections. These injections caused premature labor. I cannot tell what



these injections were. The women told me they had gotten these injections in the buttocks, thighs, and arms. I do not know the surnames of these women. One of them was called Regina. They told me that some of them received five injections, some ten, and one even got around 20. Generally, each got one injection a day, but sometimes they would get two. To get the injection, a woman would go to the so-called “maternity unit”. After that she would return to the room, sometimes a few quarters of an hour later, and then, once the labor pains had set in, she would go back to the maternity unit to give birth.

Different women reacted differently to the injections: some went pale and quivered, others complained of pain at the injection site. They showed very different symptoms: some vomited, others complained of headaches and overall fatigue. Since my pregnancy was already very advanced, having passed the 7-month mark, I was transferred, together with 20 other women, to the men’s section F, to block 2, where my pregnancy was to be aborted in the emergency room. Abortions were performed one after another, and in the course of my stay at that block, which had lasted for around two weeks, 11 were carried out. Abortions were performed either through curettage, at block 22, or through the insertion into the vagina of a piece of rubber, the so-called catheter. I don’t exactly know the nature of this procedure. In any case, we knew that the catheter was supposed to expedite labor, because a few such procedures had already been performed. After the patients had catheters inserted, they walked around the room.

One morning, the block where we were staying was visited by Dr. Mengele, who summoned the doctors working there and ordered them to get the abortions done quickly, because once they were completed, the women had to be put on a transport. On the very same day, the next couple of abortions were performed and other pregnant women had procedures planned for the afternoon. By the evening, as we later learned from the doctors, an order had come which banned further abortions. I do not know who issued it. There were nine pregnant women who avoided the procedure, including myself. We were all transferred to the Gypsy camp, to block 28, where we remained for a while, not working. There, we learned from the female doctors that we would be giving birth as planned. From block 28 we were then transferred to block 7, the children’s block, where all of us remained until the labor. I gave birth to a boy on 10 January 1945. He was born alive, but he was small and weak, and he died on 27 January. Around the time of the labor and for sometime afterward, we received regular camp food rations, only for breakfast we would sometimes get white coffee, and



every day, instead of a piece of margarine, an equivalent portion of butter. I know that the eight children born at that time are dead. All of them died shortly after birth.

Presently, I am still at the camp, because I have no family and no one to return to, and I am waiting, because I believe that my "husband" Grün, who was sent to Germany on a transport, will return.

At this the report was concluded, and after being read out it was signed as a faithful record of witness Genia Ajdelman's testimony.