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13 Times of the Living in Spaces of the Dead: Genocidal Violence and Its Effect Upon Spatiotemporal Perception in Eddie Weinstein's Treblinka Testimony *Quenched Steel*

In the late afternoon of Wednesday, 9 September 1942, Eddie Weinstein escaped from the Nazi extermination camp Treblinka. Having survived for over two weeks – after being fortuitously selected for work – he eluded the predetermined death that was allotted to him by hiding in a freight car destined for Germany. Five decades hence, Weinstein reflected upon his imprisonment in his testimony, *Quenched Steel*, writing that "I had been there for seventeen days, each of which was more like a century. It would be more appropriate to reckon the time I spent in this inferno in seconds, not days."[1] Together with the highly similar extermination camps Bełżec and Sobibór, Treblinka constituted the locus of *Aktion Reinhardt* – the codename denoting the systematic annihilation of Jews residing in the *Generalgouvernement* area of occupied Poland during the Holocaust.[2] Out of approximately 1.7 million *Reinhardt* victims, at least 800,000 perished in Treblinka between June 1942 and October 1943, and fewer than 250 survived.[3] In their capacity as extermination facilities, the *Reinhardt* camps thereby differed from Nazi concentration camps as their purpose was not primarily characterized by imprisonment but by a different, exceedingly specific form of genocidal violence, *viz.* the "nigh immediate mass murder of those deported there."[4] Even those arbitrarily selected for "work" – egregiously coerced into complicity in the effectua-

1 Eddie Weinstein, *Quenched Steel: The Story of an Escape from Treblinka*, ed. Lenn Schramm, trans. Naftali Greenwood, 2nd ed. (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005), 62.

2 Stephan Lehnstaedt, *Der Kern des Holocaust: Bełżec, Sobibór, Treblinka und die Aktion Reinhardt* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2017).

3 Chad S.A. Gibbs, "Lessons from the Treblinka Archive: Transnational Collections and their Implications for Historical Research," *Journal of Contemporary Archival Studies* 5, no. 1 (2018): article 14. Throughout this chapter, "Treblinka" shall refer to the extermination camp (officially called SS *Sonderkommando Treblinka*). For the nearby forced–labor camp known as Treblinka I, see Chris Webb and Michal Chocholatý, *The Treblinka Death Camp: History, Biographies, Remembrance* (Stuttgart: Ibidem Verlag, 2014), 11–18.

4 Annika Wienert, *Das Lager Vorstellen: Die Architektur der nationalsozialistischen Vernichtungslager* (Berlin: Neofelis Verlag, 2015), 154 Translation mine throughout.

https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110781328-013

tion of these genocidal intents – lived under a constant existential threat since their remission from death was only temporary. In light of the scarcity of testimonial documentation concerning these camps following from this, Weinstein's text provides an unprecedented insight into the subjective experience of an extermination camp survivor. What makes it unique, however, is the manner in which the narrative portrays the repercussions which this distinct form of genocidal violence exerts upon the perception of space and time inside an extermination camp.

Conjointly enabling conceptualization and perception of the world and changes therein, space and time are foundational elements of human experience. This importance notwithstanding, virtually all scholarship pertaining to how time relates to space inside Nazi camps – regardless of their functional purpose – is derived from concentration camp testimonies, which frequently narrate temporality through relatively linear, chronological terms.[5] Irrespective of the veracity such narrative strategies hold, Weinstein's extermination camp testimony suggests that within Treblinka, time was not experienced as such. In this space, whose sole *raison d'être* was systemic, large-scale murder, time appeared unhinged as twenty-four-hour solar days were experienced as containing vast expanses of time, akin to centuries. A day, the most familiar point of temporal orientation, consequently became meaningless as it expanded into an empty abstraction. In contrast to this expansion, temporality in Treblinka only seemed to be conceptually apprehensible inversely. In a space where death perpetually loomed, one could only "reckon" with time *a priori* by leaving the day aside and taking recourse to its smallest observable constituent parts, the innumerable seconds elapsed during imprisonment.[6] As time became dislodged from its normative categories, the ephemerality of the second thereby took on the largest significance whilst temporality's normative cohesion unfurled into discordance.

Nonetheless, in contrast to this asymmetric dilation of time, Weinstein's narrative orders its spatial descriptions of events by supplementing it with an uncommon degree of chronological precision. Such a calendrical exactness – e.g., "the next morning, August 26th" – is usually encountered solely in testimonies based upon diaries and, paradoxically, surpasses the chronological specificity ordinarily observed in concentration camp accounts.[7] *Quenched Steel* therefore suggests that the perception of time within these annihilatory spaces operated differently in contrast to their concentrationary counterpart – an elusive corollary of genocidal vio-

5 Andrea Reiter, *Narrating the Holocaust*, trans. Patrick Camiller (London: Continuum, 2000), 150.

6 Weinstein, *Steel,* 62.

7 Ibid., 46.

lence which has hitherto remained unexplored in this context. Yet, how can the observed temporal asymmetry be reconciled with the purported rigid chronology of narrative in which it is encountered, and what does this tension subsequently entail for the specifically *exterminatory* space wherein it is experienced? Inspired by these questions, this chapter explores the relationship between space and time within Weinstein's testimony and the subsequent ramifications this dual interplay has upon subjective victim experience in an extermination camp.

An analysis focusing on how extermination camp prisoners interpreted their harrowing predicament is long overdue.[8] For one, scant attention has formerly been paid to the individual, affective dimensions concerning these traumatic experiences and the memory thereof. Due to the scarcity of survivors, as well as a paucity of archaeological remnants and historical documentation, *Aktion Reinhardt* testimonies have typically been approached as texts exclusively containing objective, historical facts – never as the personal life narratives they represent.[9] As a result, remarkably little is known about how survivors – the most important actors in these narratives – experienced their plight in these annihilatory spaces. Additionally, the attention historically accorded to Auschwitz-Birkenau has overshadowed the comparatively unknown *Reinhardt* camps. "Often appropriated as a filter or prism," Simone Gigliotti writes, "[Birkenau] has operated as a portable memory substitute for the witnesses and the correspondingly limited testimonial sources from the Operation Reinhard[t] camps."[10] The danger inherent in viewing Auschwitz-Birkenau in coinciding with Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka is that it may homogenize the experiential and testimonial specificity of survivors whilst inadvertently reducing the deceased victims of these camps to historical footnotes – overlooked and largely forgotten. Both on epistemic and ethical grounds, an inquiry into subjective victim experience within the *Aktion Reinhardt* context is therefore imperative. To this end, there is no point of departure more appropriate than space and time – the bedrock of human experience. However, despite the concept of space occupying a position of paramount conceptual importance in Holocaust Studies, this theoretical prominence is achieved at the unfortunate expense of the temporal dimension.

8 This particular type of victimhood, relatively speaking, necessarily comprises a minority position as the overwhelming majority who experienced Treblinka consists of those who perished there.

9 Dan Stone, "The Harmony of Barbarism: Locating the Scrolls of Auschwitz in Holocaust Historiography," in *Representing Auschwitz: At the Margins of Testimony*, eds. Nicholas Chare and Dominic Williams (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 17–19.

10 Simone Gigliotti. *The Train Journey: Transit, Captivity and Witnessing in the Holocaust* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2017), 172.

Notwithstanding the conjoint primacy of space *and* time, the latter is regularly reduced to a static horizon against which space simply unfolds itself. Two problems arise from this. First, as literary theorist Eva Hoffman notes, it is downright inconceivable to imagine a human endeavor occurring in space that does not concurrently "depend on the ability to conceive the existence of time."[11] This does not mean that space and time constitute an identical "undifferentiated four-dimensionality" but, rather, that the perception of one indelibly entails consequences with regard to the experience of the other.[12] Against these reductive tendencies, it is befitting to speak of "spacetime," a term that emphasizes space and time's entwined nature. By doing so, it expresses spacetime's role as a subjective and dynamic form – "a structuring principle" whereby *both* elements synchronously shape victims' experience,[13] which enables an inquiry of the latter by way of the former – whilst simultaneously echoing that "narrative representations of space cannot be separated from its representation of time."[14] Secondly, imprisonment in any Nazi camp – a largely autarkic, barbed wire enclosure with particular socio-material conditions – necessarily involved a change in temporal perspective which, depending on the specific circumstances, could take on various forms.[15] Despite extermination camps being architecturally predicated upon concentration camps – sharing many infrastructural features, as the term's latter half implies – it follows in tandem that as spaces primarily conceived for purposes of violent, *en masse* annihilation, such genocidal aims inflected the experience of time in differing and distinctive ways.[16] Sensitivity toward such divergences has, however, been virtually absent. Does this generalizing proclivity, together with the abovementioned obfuscation of the temporal dimension, thereby not restrict our already limited understanding of the *Reinhardt* camps – beclouding the implications which their particular socio-material conditions have upon the traumatic experience of

11 Eva Hoffman, *Time* (London: Profile Books, 2009), 63.

12 Doreen Massey, *For Space* (London: Sage, 2008), 18.

13 Caroline Levine, *Forms*: *Whole, Rhythm, Hierarchy, Network* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), 5.

14 Elena Gomel, *Narrative Space and Time: Representing Impossible Topologies in Literature* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 26.

15 Zoë Vania Waxman, *Writing the Holocaust: Identity, Testimony, Representation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 68.

16 By reflecting the historical genesis of these spaces whilst simultaneously emphasizing their primary purpose, the term "extermination camp" is better applicable compared to more ambiguous terminology such as "extermination centers," "death camps," or quasi–sensational monikers like "human slaughterhouses" or "killing factories." For a critique of the latter term in academic contexts, see Alf Lüdtke, "Der Bann der Wörter: 'Todesfabriken'," *WerkstattGeschichte* 13, no. 1 (1996): 5–18.

genocide and its narration thereof? Conversely, seeing that Weinstein's narrative suggests that space and time influence each other in ways previously unobserved with regard to the memory of genocidal violence, cannot his particular testimony support thinking through the spatiotemporal in Treblinka? Is it not time to think more critically about time?

Based on various passages from the third chapter of *Quenched Steel*, detailing the author's incarceration in the camp, this chapter asks (1) how spacetime's mutual reciprocity manifests itself through narrative and (2) which subjective effects upon victim experience can be discerned from its testimonial portrayal. Simply put, the question it seeks to answer is how did the perception of spacetime in Treblinka affect Weinstein's experience as an inmate, and what does this tell us about the genocidal violence perpetrated within the extermination camp itself? Spacetime's inherently subjective, interrelated nature – simultaneously capable of affecting and getting affected by those inhabiting its realm[17] – correspondingly positions the genre of literary testimony as the ideal base for this study as the latter apprehends spacetime on an equally subjective footing. Against providing a generic historical account of that which occurred, testimony allows traumatic events to be approached on their own terms – based on principles of *in*coherence – which elucidates how survivors, and their sense of spacetime, were affected by their predicament.[18] This interpretive character conversely entails that any *post facto* description is, by definition, fragmentary and partial. Survivors cannot but narrate through the prism of their own experience – a lens which is tainted by various personal perspectives and, as time lapses, the inevitable intrusion of "narratives of other survivors and historians" upon their own.[19] This is not to say that the testimonial genre is severed from historical reality. On the contrary, the act of bearing witness is "inextricably entwined with the social and historical conditions in which it is done."[20] What matters, however, is that an event and its interpretation, even many decades after the fact, cannot be disentangled "because interpretation necessarily occurs as part of the event."[21] It is therefore not spacetime in and of itself which is explored in this chapter but, rather, the interpretation thereof as narrated within testimony – with the caveat that anyone

17 Massey, *Space*, 9.

18 Reiter, *Narrating the Holocaust*, 168.

19 Selma Leydesdorff, *Sasha Pechersky: Holocaust Hero, Sobibor Resistance Leader, and Hostage of History* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 81.

20 Waxman, *Writing the Holocaust*, 2.

21 Ernst van Alphen, *Caught By History: Holocaust Effects in Contemporary Art, Literature, and Theory* (Redwood City: Stanford University Press, 1997), 59.

examining these narratives, following Selma Leydesdorff, "must be aware of the impossibility of mastering the total picture."[22]

To this end, the inquiry will first examine how space in Treblinka functioned. Specifically, in light of its genocidal character, in which way did the presence of death inflect space? In extension, it shall be explored how this inflection of space *subjectively* affected those within Treblinka's confines – asking which personally felt, affective consequences captivity in an extermination camp entailed. Third and finally, these spatial findings will be combined to elucidate the aforementioned, paradoxical portrayal of time in Treblinka, answering why this annihilatory space prompts such an asynchronous perception of temporality on the part of the writer. Combined, this approach offers an improved understanding of how extermination camp survivors subjectively grappled with their traumatic experience of genocidal violence whilst simultaneously elucidating the way spacetime translates itself through the testimonial narrative.

Spatializing Death

Eddie Weinstein was born on 26 September 1924 in the Polish town of Łosice as Yehuda Jakub Wajnsztajn.[23] The young boy attended a local public school, followed religious Jewish education, and, aged fifteen, began working in the town's only wholesale store.[24] Besides this concise preamble, Weinstein's testimony intimates little more about his background as its narrative hastens to address the occurrences on the eve of September 1939. Considering that the narrator's subsequent experiences during the Holocaust comprise the majority of the text, the narrative thereby discursively reiterates the motivation undergirding the testimony's production as declared in the preface: "to tell what happened to me, my parents, my brother, my uncles and aunts, and around forty cousins."[25] Weinstein consequently drafted an initial, 31-page testimony in 1947, whilst in Germany as part of the Polish army, and revised it at an unspecified moment in the late 1990s to include many *post facto* references prior to publication – approximately a decade before his death in New York on 12 August, 2010 at the age of 86. Written in Yiddish using Latin characters, the narrative was initially translated into Hebrew by Miriam

22 Leydesdorff, *Pechersky,* 81.

23 Despite the various iterations of his name appearing in circulation, Weinstein signed his name in the manner presented throughout this chapter.

24 Weinstein, *Steel,* 10.

25 Weinstein, preface to *Quenched Steel,* 7.

Talitman and published by Yad Vashem in 2001.[26] This volume served as the basis for the subsequent English edition – *Quenched Steel* – by Naftali Greenwood.[27] According to editor Lenn Schramm, "extensive revision" was done for the latter publication, including the rearrangement of sections and possibly chapters.[28] Mindful of the inadvertent consequences such changes may exert upon a critical inquiry of Weinstein's narrative, interpretative precedence shall be given to short passages in lieu of a general discourse analysis in an attempt to attenuate these perils.

Turning, then, to the chapter detailing the narrator's arrival in Treblinka, the narrative portrays his disembarkation in the early hours of Tuesday, 25 August in the following manner:

> Our car stayed where it was . . . I pushed my way toward the small peephole and looked out. All along the platform, corpses were heaped up. . . . Nothing was moving. Although at the time I didn't know anything about the gas chambers and the crematoria, I was sure we had been brought here to play our part in the Nazi genocide scheme. We all believed that the soldiers were going to shoot us the minute they opened the doors of the cattle cars. Several minutes later, when the doors were opened, we were struck by the sickening stench of burning flesh.[29]

After observing the corpses upon arrival, the narrating "I" immediately reflects upon this experience from the "compositional present"[30] – the time of writing – by professing that "at the time," he remained fundamentally unaware of the existence of the exterminatory space he had just entered. Following years of persecution, the Polish Jews were certainly aware that their deportation, in all likelihood, presaged their own death – for instance, by shooting. Nevertheless, the narrator's observations fail to precipitate a "flashbulb moment" whereby Treblinka's genocidally violent telos, together with the narrator's lethal predicament, suddenly become apprehended in their totality.[31] The acute unfamiliarity with this space thus

26 The published iteration of Weinstein's testimony, despite extensive narrative convergence with the unpublished 1947 draft version, shall be taken as a separate and distinct testimonial utterance. For Weinstein's unpublished work, see Testimony of Eddie Weinstein, Yad Vashem Archives (YVA), O.33/6435.

27 Two–step translations remain common practice in Israel due to the dearth of people who are simultaneously fluent in Yiddish and English. Naftali Greenwood, email message to the author, January 12, 2022.

28 The sections to which these changes pertained could no longer be determined. Lenn Schramm, email message to the author, May 2, 2022. Schramm additionally noted that the titular change from the fourth edition onward – to *17 Days in Treblinka: Daring to Resist, and Refusing to Die* – was done for commercial reasons at Yad Vashem's behest.

29 Weinstein, *Steel*, 39.

30 Reiter, *Narrating the Holocaust*, 154.

31 Jacob Flaws, "Spaces of Treblinka" (PhD thesis, University of Colorado, 2020), 108.

demonstrates the singular and unprecedented character thereof, as even the agonizing sight of hundreds of corpses lying indiscriminately "heaped up" and piled upon each other "all along" the 200-meter-long platform does not suffice in revealing Treblinka's true purpose. Prior knowledge of his destination would have altered little in this regard, for even if the narrator had somehow envisioned extermination camps to exist, then his "imaginings of how a death camp would look and feel disagreed with the space [he] first encountered at Treblinka."[32] This accounts for why the narrator's initial observations emphasize space's most salient aspect, *viz*. the estranging way in which the myriad corpses are viewed to inhabit it. As far as he can see, the anonymous victims pervade the entirety of the observable spatial plain – spreading both along the horizontal axis of the platform and vertically through "piles," which, as detailed later, "rose to a height exceeding that of the tallest man."[33] What do the corpses tell about the space in which they are observed?

Reducing the presence of these human remains to "merely" another grisly aspect of the genocidal environment would be erroneous, for such oversimplifications overlook the subtle ways in which death is manifested throughout the narrative. The significance accorded to the spatial dispersion signaled by the arrival passage, for instance, swiftly becomes a recursive narrative element as corpses start proliferating the chapter at every juncture – "strewn"[34] around space, emerging "in every conceivable posture,"[35] and appearing in various stages of putrefaction.[36] Moreover, the narrative abstains from viewing the deceased as the outcome of a systemic process of mass murder since this is, by the narrator's own admission, unknown. The passage, *pars pro toto*, thereby forces a conceptual reconsideration of the space in which the human remains are observed, which neither takes immediate recourse to Treblinka's telos nor envisions its space as the aggregate sum of its physical structures which shape the behavior of those within.[37] Specifically, the plethora of corpses supports pointing toward a conception of Treblinka's space that, following the geographer Doreen Massey, views that space as the outcome of "relations-between" – a space wherein events occurring *within* that space, the "embedded material practices," contribute just as much to the construction of space as the camp's physical structures.[38] As a result, the narrative can be viewed to imply two things about the

32 Ibid., 87.
33 Weinstein, *Steel*, 40.
34 Ibid., 41.
35 Ibid., 40.
36 Ibid., 47.
37 Krzysztof Lenartowicz, "Architecture of Terror: Memory of the Shoah: Contemporary Representations," *Kultura Współczesna* 4, no. 38 (2003): 64.
38 Massey, *Space*, 10.

genocidal environs within which the pervasive spread of corpses across space occurred.

First, by way of their corporeal presence, the "heaped up" corpses spatialize death within Treblinka. As soon as the piled remains are gazed upon, they instantaneously signal a sinister premonition in the narrator's mind, *viz.* "[his] part in the Nazi genocide scheme." Seeing that the narrator's customary associations related to death and dying – the funeral rites and decorum which respectively "remove the dead from active life" – are completely absent, the deceased are harrowingly reduced to nothing save their stark materiality.[39] By being debased to inanimate amalgams of flesh and bone, the corpses come to "embody" the *en masse* extermination of life, i.e., the particular form of genocidal violence perpetrated in Treblinka, in a mortifyingly literal sense. Within the camp's spatial confines, the gruesome panoply of corpses consequently acts as material instantiations of death which, as the narrator intuits, simultaneously portends to his own future demise. This, in turn, pre-empts the need for any further explication in the passage, as a mere glance suffices to attain this realization. Added to this, secondly, is the material multitude of the dead. Wherever the narrator shifts his gaze, the deceased permeate both spatial axes in vast numbers. Since human remains are always physically close and numerically legion, both here and throughout the chapter's narrative, the corpses amplify the spatialization of death and, by virtue thereof, constitute death as a spatial omnipresence – an all-encompassing element within Treblinka's space. This ubiquity becomes especially pronounced within the excerpt after the doors open and the narrator is "*struck* by the sickening stench of burning flesh."[40] After having first visually observed the remains, death is spatially evoked through the scent of smoldering human tissue in this second instance. The smell, exuded by corpses unseen from the narrator's vantage point, lingers in space as an invisible yet material presence that "hung in the air" – "striking" the narrator as if scent itself gained a form of agency.[41] "The ability for smell to *fill*, *hang*, and *penetrate*," as Jacob Flaws astutely observes, is in fact "among the most oft-repeated terminology" within *Aktion Reinhardt* testimonies to describe such sensorial impressions.[42] Comparable instances can, for example, be observed in Hershl Sperling's Treblinka testimony, where the "dreadful stench of the decomposing and burnt corpses *wafts* . . . over

39 Douglas J. Davies, *A Brief History of Death* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 48.

40 Weinstein, *Steel*, 39, italics added.

41 Ibid., 51.

42 Jacob Flaws, "Sensory Witnessing at Treblinka," *The Journal of Holocaust Research* 35, no. 1 (2021): 48.

the workers."[43] Here, the noxious smell almost tangibly envelops Treblinka's spatial enclosure, akin to a tidal wave violently enveloping vast tracts of shoreline. These cases illustrate that whilst the visible instantiations of death could conceivably, albeit with considerable difficulty, be ignored by closing one's eyes, the putrid scent affixes another, inescapable experiential layer to the narrator's spatial experience – consequently "suggesting its power to transform and dominate one's spatial experience."[44]

Besides the consequence of genocidal violence, death can thus additionally be viewed as infiltrating a wide array of sensory phenomena through which those in the extermination camp not only made sense of their spatial reality but which, additionally, served as constitutive narrative elements of their testimony. Treblinka's space, speaking with Gigliotti, is not empirically quantified through the testimonial narrative by way of size or numeric measurements but, rather, "embodied" by sights and burning smells as the material, sensorial instantiations of death signal its (in)tangible, omnipresent quality.[45] Contrary to the aforementioned, death is not merely an element *within* the camp's exterminatory space but an integral part *of* it. Treblinka's genocidal, *a priori* premise – an "embedded" material practice unto itself – therefore resonates as an irreducible aspect *of* space and *through* space, in excess of the camp's physical structures, which ordinarily constitute the notion of space as such.[46] Although this characterization is admittingly far from exhaustive, without "knowing anything about the gas chambers," the narrator nevertheless manages to convey a fundamental aspect of Treblinka's space, one that each respective part shares in, *viz.* the inextricable entwinement of death within space as omnipresent and materialized.

Spatiotemporal Proximity

From the abovementioned, it follows that space, constituted by embedded material practices, is by no means fixed or unchanging since the acts which produce it

43 Hershl Sprengler. "Treblinka," trans. Heather Valencia. Appendix to Mark S. Smith, *Treblinka Survivor: The Life and Death of Hershl Sperling* (Cheltenham: The History Press, 2010), 248. Italics added.

44 Flaws, "Sensory Witnessing," 48.

45 Gigliotti, *Train Journey*, 172.

46 Fellow Treblinka survivor Richard Glazar is similarly perceptive in *Trap with a Green Fence*, writing that "the smell of corpses . . . permeates everything – your lungs, the wood the barracks are built of." Richard Glazar, *Trap with a Green Fence*, trans. Roslyn Theobald (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1992), 56.

necessarily have to be repeated for the latter to exist – occasioning the observation that space is always-already in the process of being made.[47] In Treblinka, as well as in Bełżec and Sobibór, this process of "re-constitution" was predominantly effectuated by the immense influx of victims – through "the transports [which] were coming every day."[48] During the narrator's seventeen-day incarceration, for instance, more than 70,000 victims perished in Treblinka.[49] Furthermore, given that space is "never passively apprehended by those inhabiting these sites" – especially if that site is one of genocidal violence – it is productive to explore how this continual re-constitution affected the narrator's *subjective* experience of space.[50] In her exposé on Bergen-Belsen, Heléna Huhák argues that prisoners inevitably formed affective attachments, either positive or negative, with various spatial aspects of the camp, such as objects, sounds, and even the weather – just as they would in regular, everyday life. As this attestation similarly holds for the *Aktion Reinhardt* context, it becomes possible to inquire into these "emotional environments around the individual" in order to infer how the "physical and symbolic meanings of the environment influenced [inmates'] way of thinking."[51] However, contrary to any such affective attachment, why does the arrival passage remark upon the corpses ostensibly without any trace of pathos through remarks displaying a high degree of facticity and detachment? Moreover, as this laconic style of narrativization[52] pervades most of the chapter – culminating with the assertion that "murder had become so routine"[53] – does this imply that the narrator was so benumbed as to be indifferent to his genocidal surroundings?

This, in all probability, is unlikely. For one, opting for an *apparently* detached style can be considered an emotional response in and of itself. As Holocaust scholar Andrea Reiter explains, some survivors consciously attempt to abolish all emotion from their narrative to avoid a "pathos-filled aestheticization of their camp experience," which, according to themselves, endangers "falsifying the reality" they seek to convey.[54] Secondly, note that whenever the

47 Massey, *Space*, 84. This attestation additionally coincides with the material reality of every *Aktion Reinhardt* camp, "which, in their short span of existence, were being rebuilt almost uninterruptedly." Wienert, *Lager*, 124.

48 Weinstein, *Steel*, 56.

49 Yitzhak Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka: The Operation Reinhard Death Camps* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1987), 392–393.

50 Tim Cole, *Holocaust Landscapes* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), 6.

51 Heléna Huhák, "Place Attachment in a Concentration Camp: Bergen-Belsen," *Hungarian Historical Review* 9, no. 3 (2020): 432.

52 Reiter, *Narrating the Holocaust*, 166.

53 Weinstein, *Steel*, 51.

54 Reiter, *Narrating the Holocaust*, 166.

narrator advances such seemingly "detached" observations, they are, without exception, produced from a certain physical distance. Again, the arrival passage serves as an emblematic example because when the corpses on the platform were gazed upon, the narrator was spatially at a remove, situated in a freight car some yards away. Nevertheless, when this spatial separation is negated and corpses are viewed at close range, they appear to affectively charge the spatial environment – and, by implication, the narrator's experience thereof – in ways hitherto unobserved. This is demonstrated by the following excerpt, which closely succeeds the first passage. Whilst being forced to haul corpses away from Treblinka's railway platform, the narrator states that "many people who started working with us died before the night was over and were taken away exactly as they had dragged off other bodies."[55] As the narrator occupies himself with disposing of the aforementioned victims, the earlier use of the word "corpses" is terminated and replaced by the significantly more reverent term "bodies." In consequence of the spatial separation between narrator and victim being negated, the laconic narrativization thus assents to empathy and pathos. Whenever human remains loom physically close, the narrator must either utilize a decorous, deferent terminology or, if possible, describe bodies by way of their apparel, physiognomy, or even through details regarding their personhood. For instance, when working in the camp's surrounding forestry with other prisoners, the narrator remarks that "we saw two bodies. . . . One of them, a middle-aged man. . . . One of us recognized him; it was Nissim Rosenbaum, a well-to-do Warsaw merchant who was born in Łosice and had returned to his hometown along with his family when the war began."[56] The physical, measurable proximity between the dead – an integral part of space – and the living within Treblinka's space therefore plays a structural function regarding how this genocidal space *qua* emotional environment is perceived. Every time the corpses-turned-bodies draw near the narrator, another more empathically charged form of narrative representation appears requisite. This suggests that as the narrator becomes familiar with the various spatial elements comprising Treblinka, the apprehension of space shifts from an abstract, "undifferentiated space" to a progres-

55 Weinstein, *Steel*, 41.

56 Ibid., 42. Through the term "literary afterlives," Lara R. Curtis convincingly explains the moral ramifications of such elaborate descriptions. In the process, she notes in her book *Writing Resistance*, "unknown" victims are "recreated in an attempt to evade [their] inescapable death" so that they may "live on through the power of the writer's imagination." An inherently ethical undertaking, "to write resistance in this case is thus to write beyond the reality of atrocity so as to afford both the living and the dead a unique afterlife." Lara R. Curtis, *Writing Resistance and the Question of Gender: Charlotte Delbo, Noor Inayat Khan, and Germaine Tillion* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 31.

sively more complex, affectively charged "place" wherein physical distances toward particular spatial elements have direct repercussions for how the exterminatory environment is experienced.[57] One's locative position within the camp's space thus mattered for the experiential perception thereof. In light of spacetime's dual character, it follows that the perceptive processes pertaining to space conversely precipitate consequences concerning the awareness of time.

To this end, recall the excerpt's assertion that those who perished during the work on the platform, in close proximity to the corpses, were taken away in *exactly* the same fashion as they themselves had dragged off others only moments before. The term "exactly" is particularly indicative as it suggests that after death – i.e., after their use-value as vessels of slave labor has expired – the inmates will share the same identical end as those whose bodies they are currently in the act of unceremoniously removing. A temporal inevitability is thereby spatially prefigured as those partaking in the "dragging off" are implied to inescapably fall victim to that selfsame process – the very material practice which produces space. As death became spatialized, one's future, in a harrowing turn of phrase, thus literally lay in one's own hands whilst handling the bodies. This certainty is made explicit later in the chapter when the narrator observes that whenever captives perished, "replacements were selected immediately; but they, too, survived *only until* they had deteriorated to the condition of their predecessors."[58] Besides hinting at the aforementioned spatial process of re-constitution, this attestation expresses the traumatic temporal reality that Treblinka's inmates knew from the outset of their captivity that they would perish with *absolute certainty* at an unspecified time in the foreseeable future. Nobody, as the narrator observes, harbored any illusions regarding their fate: "we would all die in the end."[59] Combined, these passages suggest that death – as the direct consequence of genocidal violence – did not exclusively manifest itself in Treblinka's exterminatory environment as a spatial but, rather, as a spatiotemporal presence. Alongside its previously observed spatial attributions, death simultaneously evinced a temporal, i.e., anticipatory, character whereby it was perceived as a "future-anterior" entity – as a perditious process initiated in the past and to be concluded in the foreseeable future. Nonetheless, what does this inexorable immanence of death upon the temporal horizon entail for the narrator, and what does it suggest about his perception of temporality within a camp space geared specifically toward annihilation?

57 Yi–Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), 6.

58 Weinstein, *Steel*, 58. Italics added.

59 Ibid., 55.

Living Under Reprieve

In confronting these questions, it is paramount to observe that analogous to the varying approaches through which Treblinka's space can be apprehended – as an amalgamation of material structures or as relations-between – time can, likewise, be understood through its differing modalities and antecedents. For example, although the *Aktion Reinhardt* camps served the primary purpose of "annihilating a large number of human beings without a trace," the effectuation of this genocidal aim, as noted, required the imprisonment of approximately 1,000 Jewish slave laborers.[60] Bearing in mind the architectural genesis of these extermination facilities – predicated, despite their differing purpose, on concentration camps – the *Reinhardt* camps mirrored purposes of interment, albeit on a smaller scale.[61] It follows that Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka correspondingly retained much of the overall temporal structuring – the manner in which "camp time" was divided "according to intervals, periods [and] duration" – previously established in other such SS-administered camps.[62] The ceaseless work, for instance, similarly dictated the day's monotonous rhythm and prompted the overarching camp time in Treblinka to be measured against the background of "the transports [which] were coming every day."[63] "[As] one day was much like the next," the regularity of transports – especially when juxtaposed with the sun's position and seasonal changes – consequently provided an indexical marker through which a sense of temporal awareness could be retained, imprecise though it frequently was.[64]

Despite this rudimentary cyclicality, an "average" day in an extermination camp was "repeatedly punctured by moments of acute danger."[65] "No one knew who would be murdered next, where or why," Leydesdorff writes, as the marauding camp guards did not abstain from exerting extreme violence for the most trivial and arbitrary offenses.[66] To survive the daily horrors of Treblinka, it was therefore imperative that those imprisoned "develop[ed] a heightened awareness of the present situation" as one had to remain perpetually vigilant to avoid attracting un-

60 Wolfgang Sofsky, *The Order of Terror*, trans. William Templer (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 259.

61 Wienert, *Lager*, 9–16.

62 Sofsky, *Terror*, 73.

63 Weinstein, *Steel*, 56.

64 Ibid. This method primarily arose, as Treblinka survivor Samuel Willenberg writes in *Surviving Treblinka*, because "only foremen and *Kapos* were allowed to possess watches." Samuel Willenberg, *Surviving Treblinka* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1989), 91.

65 Sofsky, *Terror*, 74.

66 Leydesdorff, *Pechersky*, 79.

wanted attention.[67] In *The Order of Terror*, a theoretical benchmark in the study of spacetime in Nazi camps, sociologist Wolfgang Sofsky writes that through this "fundamental revamping of [prisoners'] time-consciousness," time's experiential order was reshuffled to the effect that, for those captive within the camp, the present "shifted center stage."[68] This temporal recalibration, in turn, demonstrates why Weinstein's narrator asserts that those imprisoned in Treblinka, despite being able to recourse to the camp's somewhat measurable rhythm, "lived not only from day to day but from minute to minute."[69] Moreover, in addition to such temporal rearrangements, the citation pertinently illuminates that the perception of time "rarely follows the logic of chronology, or a linear, unidirectional arrow."[70] This observation is critical as time, Hoffman writes, has a markedly affective dimension pertaining to it. In excess to the numbers read out by the dials on a clock, temporality's perception is noticeably more subjective as it is "laden with sensation and suffused with valences of pleasure or displeasure."[71] Whilst time may thus be abstracted and quantified *ad infinitum*, it is never experientially apprehended as such. This indicates that despite "objective" camp time being, to a limited degree, extant within Treblinka's confines, the aforementioned death future-anterior nevertheless indelibly entails ramifications that manifest themselves through the manner in which time is subjectively understood.

To paraphrase the preceding excerpts, those in Treblinka lived with the irrefutable awareness that one would perish "exactly" as others had before, for captives perdured only until the camp's egregious conditions whithered them down to the ranks of the dead. In this sense, time in an extermination camp was experienced as being "qualitatively different to time as it was known by many in the concentration camp[s]" because, and without presupposing a hierarchy, for the latter, an infinitesimally slim chance at survival remained.[72] Those imprisoned in Treblinka, by contrast, realized that their demise did not lurk in some indeterminate, distant future. Rather, the genocidal environment found in this annihilation camp which, in the narrator's words, "deteriorated [prisoners] to the condition of

67 Waxman, *Writing the Holocaust*, 68.

68 Sofsky, *Terror*, 87, 88. Whilst Weinstein's narrative affirms that a notable accentuation was placed upon the present, it does not follow that this effectively forced inmates into what Sofsky terms an "eternal present" – a state of complete stasis whereby the present is in no way coeval with its historical and futural dimensions, however ephemeral or fragile.

69 Weinstein, *Steel*, 49.

70 Hofmann, *Time*, 104.

71 Ibid., 86.

72 Nicholas Chare and Dominic Williams, *Matters of Testimony: Interpreting the Scrolls of Auschwitz* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2016), 171.

their predecessors," accounted for the fact that their deaths were, in essence, temporarily deferred as their deaths, future-anterior, confronted captives as an everyday, ever-present, spatiotemporal reality – a question not of *if* but of *when*. Analogous to the manner in which Nicholas Chare and Dominic Williams evaluate temporality in exterminatory environments, a "sense of impending doom" is therefore discernible through the testimonial narrative – "a particularly marked sense of time running out."[73] Generally stated, as one's end was inscribed in Treblinka's space, the "dwindling of time" was subsequently made "intensely, painfully obvious."[74] As a result of this process, those confined within the *Aktion Reinhardt* camps came to recognize that they lived, echoing Charlotte Delbo, "under reprieve" – they attained a sense of having temporarily evaded their accorded 'fate' which, nonetheless, hung over their heads like Damocles' sword.[75] In reference to the aforementioned excerpts wherein corpses spatialized death, this temporal reprieve explains why the narrator is effectively barred from conceptualizing death as an abstraction because each body metonymically represents the genocidal aim that Treblinka's space violently effectuates – *viz.* the certain demise of each who enters its premise, which comes to include the narrator himself. In tandem, the attestation of death as an integral part of spacetime is transposed and creeps into the most deeply felt personal realm – one's own finitude – which conversely elucidates why, whenever the physical spatial distance between the bodies and the narrator is negated, the narrative changes tone. As this process concurrently amplified the diminishing of time through the awareness of living under reprieve, it can therefore be contended that death in Treblinka was not, as previously asserted, merely a spatiotemporal presence but, rather, a dynamic spatiotemporalizing form – a structuring principle which inflected prisoners' experience of that spacetime. As such, what did this temporary evasion of death specifically entail for the experiential perception of the future that simultaneously beheld and inaugurated that death, especially with regard to the emphasis laid upon the present? To understand how a death future-anterior related to the present and the future, the analysis should expedite to what, at first, appears as an unlikely source – religious eschatology in literary narratives.

73 Ibid., 170.

74 Ibid.

75 Charlotte Delbo, *Auschwitz and After*, trans. Rosette C. Lamont, 2nd ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014), xxv.

Eschatology and (In)determinate Temporality

In "Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel," the literary scholar Mikhail Bakhtin elaborates, amongst other things, upon the topic of historical inversions in ancient novels – exploring how their narratives challenge the supposed rigidity of temporal demarcations between, for instance, the past and the future.[76] These unstable chronologies, similarly echoing the disjunctive perception of time in extermination camps, veer Bakhtin's ruminations toward the subject of religious eschatology. Being concerned with the last times, eschatological narratives envision absolute ends, be it global catastrophes or violent mass extinctions, as discernable upon the temporal horizon. The manner in which these preordained, annihilatory events shall transpire is only of secondary importance to the assumption that the end "effect everything that exists, and that this end be, moreover, relatively close at hand" supersedes everything.[77] As a consequence of the end drawing imminently nearer, the future – once open-ended and indeterminate – is "emptied out" as the perceived futural cataclysm essentially hollows out the path toward it.[78] This, however, does not suggest that the future somehow disintegrates or that it should be relegated to a position of superfluity. Rather, by asserting that the future is emptied out, Bakhtin draws attention to the fact that "eschatology always sees the segment of a future separating the present from the end as lacking value."[79] This means that, counterintuitively, the end which lies dormant in the future acts upon the present and, in doing so, circularly influences the present's perception of that future. Insofar that this implies for eschatology that the interstitial period "separating the present from the end" is devalued, it is erroneous to uncritically transpose this to the radically differing reality found in extermination camps.

Nevertheless, Bakhtin's insistence on the separating segment of time stretching toward the future's conclusion is decidedly productive in the *Aktion Reinhardt* context as he resituates the future as a relational category whereby the future is (a) not to be conceptualized as exclusively coinciding with the final moment of extermination whilst (b) concurrently indicating that this terminus mediates on the re-

76 Mikhail Bakhtin, "Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel" in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays,* trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 146–151.

77 Ibid., 148. Whilst outside the scope of this research, eschatology provides another productive methodology to explore the temporal perception of those incarcerated in extermination camps – especially with regard to religious Jews.

78 Ibid.

79 Ibid.

maining, intermediate interval *between* the present toward the end. Further substantiating what living under reprieve concretely entailed, Bakhtin's conceptualizations elucidate that although the future's indeterminate character was practically negated through the violent death which inmates had only temporarily evaded, an irreducible scrap of time remained which, by virtue of its presence, paradoxically retained some of the future's indeterminacy. Whilst death, as the preceding testimonial passages demonstrated, was perceived as an inexorable conclusive point upon the temporal horizon – thereby constituting a certainty – the definitive moment of death's arrival simultaneously remained entirely *un*certain as nobody in Treblinka knew when their demise would, exactly, be materialized. Despite being close at hand, the stretch of time in which their final inclusion into the whirlwind of genocidal violence was awaited thus maintained part of its aleatory character. Based thereupon, it can be contended that regardless of the future-*qua*-death being predetermined, the intermediate interval between "now" and "then" was less so. In the ephemeral segment of time which remained – as a time "left-over" or time "in excess" – a narrow expanse of an *un*determined future, transient and contingent though it was, nonetheless persisted. As such, with respect to the relation which the present bore to the future in Treblinka's space, it is befitting to speak of an (in)determinate future. Emphasizing the fractured character of time, the term expresses the tension between the absolute certainty of death that those imprisoned within the extermination camp experienced together with the radical contingency which the anticipation of this certainty simultaneously instigated – foreclosing the open-endedness of the future whilst partially retaining it nonetheless. Which tangible consequences did this tension have upon time and the narrativization thereof? To answer this, the analysis can return to the introductory passage. To repeat in full, the narrator noted: "[W]e left the death factory in the afternoon of Wednesday, September 9. I had been there for seventeen days, each of which was more like a century. It would be more appropriate to reckon the time I spent in this inferno in seconds, not days."[80]

As mentioned, an asymmetric temporal dilation is evident whereby days expand into meaningless eons – shapeless tracts of time only obliquely describable as being "like" centuries. Inversely, it is solely by taking recourse to time's smallest observable constituent, *viz.* the second, that a modicum of formal temporal expressibility is retained. This impasse in communicability, predicated upon the genocidal violence occurring within "this inferno," is not lost upon the narrator who, against categorically asserting that seconds emerge as the most apposite temporal measurements to encapsulate his experience, proposes, in an ambivalent fashion, that sec-

80 Weinstein, *Steel,* 62.

onds are purely "more *appropriate* to *reckon*" with the time spent in Treblinka. An ambiguity lingers henceforth because, far from relaying the desired meaning, seconds merely serve as measurements that are contextually more befitting insofar that they adduce a 'more appropriate' quantitative estimations of time relative to centuries. This degree of aptness, moreover, follows after the narrator has decided that whilst minutes may adequately describe daily existence – living not from "day to day but from minute to minute" – they are altogether superfluous when conveying a sense of Treblinka's temporality as a whole.[81] Implicitly pre-empting a claim to full understanding, the magnitude of 1,468,000 seconds holds sway as being more germane to enunciate the narrator's temporal perception compared to 1,700 years, yet the reason for this remains unbeknownst even to the narrator himself – "I cannot explain the nature of the occurrences and decisions that I retell here."[82] Based, however, on the abovementioned discussion on living under reprieve and the (in)determinate character of time, it becomes possible to respond to the narrator's injunction to "draw the conclusions" which reside within the narrative's enigmatic passages.[83]

Time, Narratology, and the Traumatic Impact of Genocidal Violence

The dilation of time, first and foremost, attests to the immense difficulty of an extermination camp survivor's attempt to enfold his temporal perception – an innately subjective, intimate experience – within a testimonial narrative utilizing nothing save numerical measurements. Without explicitly stating so, the narrator nevertheless appears conscious of this impediment by virtue of advancing a revised notion of time – days as centuries, inversely comprehensible in seconds. The significance of this cannot be overstated as it is only in the most violent of environments, such as those where mass atrocities are committed, that one feels impelled to overhaul the temporal coordinates that one has abided by throughout their life. This, for one, corroborates that within Treblinka, time is experienced as refusing to conform to the mathematical conceptualizations which are applied to it outside the camp or, as fellow survivor Richard Glazar terms it, "outside, in life."[84] In the *Aktion Reinhardt* extermination camps, the times of the living could

81 Ibid., 49.
82 Weinstein, preface to *Quenched Steel,* 7.
83 Ibid.
84 Glazar, *Fence*, 19.

simply not be forced into concordance with these spaces of the dead. Furthermore, despite the vast multitude of seconds potentially imparting an inkling of the torturing arduousness of time's passing, the expansive numerical amount of seconds still remain virtually as ungraspable as seventeen centuries. The narrator's endeavor to express time in numbers inadvertently serves to express the tragic futility thereof as the narrative, succinctly put, bears witness to the progressive slippage and subsequent disintegration of time as one would normally experience it. Consequently, it is arguably the difficulty in and of itself which the narrator experiences in aptly translating his harrowing perception of time that stands as the most befitting conveyer of the traumatic impact of genocidal violence – more lucid and illuminating than any numerical value could ever do justice to. However, in reference to the (in)determinate character of time, it is simultaneously possible to elucidate why, exactly, it is nigh impossible to express Treblinka's temporality felicitously through mathematical measurements.

By virtue of living under reprieve, the narrator is fully cognizant that his future beholds nothing except his imminent demise. This futural certainty thereby casts a shadow back upon the present or, more specifically, the interstitial segment stretching from the present toward such a future from wherein his observations are made. As a consequence, time's normative cohesion begins to fracture and unfurl under the assured weight of death as the rigid segmentation which is customarily bestowed upon time's flow – providing it with a modicum of chronological coherence into an indeterminate future – abruptly becomes invalidated. With time now disarticulated and dislodged under death's violent strain, the (in)determinate interval thus repels any efforts to contain it through normative temporal schemata as the latter are, *grosso modo*, incompatible to encapsulate the nature of time in Treblinka. This is why, after arriving in an exterminatory space where death is ubiquitously spatiotemporalized, the narrator attests to the faltering of the union of time as days give way to minutes which, in turn, dwindle down to seconds. Time, generally stated, breaks down to its smallest observable constituent part until all that is left is an endless concatenation consisting of fragments of time – giving rise to a perception of temporality which is (in)determinate in character, both aleatory *and* radically certain. In order to retain a modicum of temporal cohesion – in response to the unhinging of temporality and the aforementioned difficulty of conveying time's perception – narratological refuge is taken in the last available temporal bastion, *viz.* the calendar.[85] The entire testimonial narrative, as noted, is

85 For an elaborate expose on calenders and time keeping in various forms of testimonial Holocaust literature see Alan Rosen, *The Holocaust's Jewish Calenders: Keeping Time Sacred, Making Time Holy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2019).

replete with rigorous calendrical categorizations adduced to numerous recounted events. The passage above serves as an emblematic example as dates – such as 9 September – are frequently merged with a secondary temporal substratum consisting of superlatively elaborate information pertaining to the day in question – Wednesday – alongside the particular time at which specific events occurred – the afternoon.[86] Moreover, even when such calendrical dates, juxtaposed with their ancillary details, are not available, the narrative nevertheless deploys general temporal cues such as "the next morning"[87] or "at sunrise."[88] Considering all that was asserted about the disintegration of time, do these calendrical dates not attest to the opposite? Far from fracturing time's cohesion, the dates ostensibly provide a nigh unambiguous point of reference – seemingly ameliorating the abovementioned temporal problematics. Finally, seeing that the narrator's incarceration lasted seventeen days, was this duration not brief enough to retain a lucid and perspicacious sense of time's passing in general?

Whilst an estimated chronology is not an *a priori* impossibility, the numerous excessively elaborate calendrical details prompt the suspicion that the overdetermination of dates can be viewed as a strategy to adduce meaning where time itself cannot. In his essay "Memory's Time," Lawrence L. Langer cautions against taking such chronology, especially half a century after the fact, at face value. The nature of traumatic memories of genocide is such, he argues, that for survivors, the past cannot be safely confined to the annals of history, for that memory is constantly re-experienced in the minds of survivors – an *always-present* past.[89] When elaborating, for instance, upon a transport containing mostly children, the narrator notes that "as I write these lines, more than fifty years after that day, I still cannot overcome the horror"[90] – attesting to how the traumatic experience defies chronology and concurrently upends it. What therefore *appears* chronological in testimony, merely because "most writing cannot exist without the temporal succession," does not necessarily need to correspond to the personally felt, subjective reality of their trauma.[91] This means that in order to supplement the (in)determinate temporality with a modicum of

86 A third substratum is occasionally discernable whereby time between events is additionally provided, e.g., "*twenty minutes after* I helped the woman climb out." Weinstein, *Steel*, 57. Italics added.

87 Ibid., 46.

88 Ibid., 50.

89 Lawrence L. Langer, "Memory's Time: Chronology and Duration in Holocaust Testimonies" in *Admitting the Holocaust: Collected Essays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996): 15.

90 Weinstein, *Steel*, 57.

91 Langer, "Time," 16.

structure, the calendrical form observed in *Quenched Steel* must – to some extent necessarily – "misrepresent" the nature of trauma because whilst the reader is offered a chronology, the linearity thereof proffers little in the way of encapsulating the spatiotemporal perception of Treblinka's annihilatory environment. Despite providing a series of dates, the chronology remains verisimilitudinous as the calendrical signs imparted appear empty – as having little to no use to either the narrator or the reader. It seems tragically vacuous to ask in Treblinka – a place where thousands violently perished each day – what date it is, writing about it as if it had a before, a during, and an after. Calendrical time thereby appears antithetical not only to the genocidally violent nature of the events in Treblinka but also to the experience of time as the calendar's inherent artificiality is, finally, ontologically denied. Based thereupon, a number of concluding remarks can be brought forth.

Treblinka's violent, genocidal premise resonates through Weinstein's testimonial narrative on a number of hitherto unobserved, spatiotemporal levels. Amalgamating space and time enabled this analysis to discern that death should not merely be viewed as the direct consequence of the genocidal violence that occurred within the camp's confines. Rather, not only can death be posited as an integral part of the Treblinka's space, but such spatial manifestations, moreover, resonate in the temporal perception of those imprisoned, – leading to a sense of living under reprieve and an (in)determinate sense of time. Together, these attestations are indicative of the fact that within these extermination camps, i.e., spaces where genocidal violence was perpetrated *en masse*, the perception of spacetime was anything but stable in the minds of those captive. Whilst providing rocksteady anchor points in everyday life, *Quenched Steel* narratively suggests that spacetime manifests itself as a profoundly paradoxical, double-edged, and contingent element within the infernal realm of Treblinka and, conceivably, the other *Reinhardt* camps. Despite this study partly endeavoring to respond to the question as to why this should be so, it remains limited in scope as the *terra nova* which Weinstein's and similar *Reinhardt* testimonies proffer, attest to the need for more systematic research regarding how genocide and spacetime interrelate. Admittingly, space and time are exceedingly slippery, paradoxical entities to explore – even in the absence of genocide. The reticence within Holocaust Studies to analyze them is therefore, to some degree, understandable. However, in the face of the almost two million victims that these camps claimed, the disquieting laboriousness of the questions cannot deter critical inquiry. The light which the writings of Weinstein and other survivors shine upon Treblinka's abyssal darkness may thus illuminate our path when attempting to respond to these vexing, yet most fundamental of questions.

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