



## Erntefest

("Harvest Festival"), German code-name for the operation to eliminate the last Jews in the Trawniki, Poniatowa, and Majdanek camps. *Erntefest* was the last *aktion* in the *Generalgouvernement* area, beginning on November 3, 1943 and lasting for several days.

After the Sobibor uprising, Heinrich Himmler worried that the Jews might attempt to revolt elsewhere. He thus ordered the execution of all Jews in the labor camps in the *Generalgouvernement*. At that time, there were 15,000 Jews in Poniatowa and between 8,000--10,000 in Trawniki.

At dawn on November 3, 1943, thousands of SS and police surrounded Poniatowa and Trawniki, took the Jews out in groups, and shot them in pits. In Majdanek, the Jews were also shot after being separated from the other prisoners at the morning assembly. In Trawniki and Majdanek, music was blared to drown out the killing. Jews from other camps in Lublin were also brought to Majdanek to be executed. Between 17,000--18,000 Jews were killed there on the first day. In all, 42,000--43,000 Jews were murdered during *Erntefest*.

Some Jews attempted to fight back in Poniatowa, but were defeated. Jews who tried to hide were found and shot. Hundreds of Jews were left behind to burn the corpses, after which they were also killed.