ENCYCLOPEDIA OF PRISONERS OF WAR AND INTERNMENT

JONATHAN F. VANCE, EDITOR

ABC-CLIO
Santa Barbara, California
Denver, Colorado
Oxford, England

Copyright © 2000 by Jonathan F. Vance

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review, without prior permission in writing from the publishers.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Encyclopedia of prisoners of war and internment / Jonathan Vance, editor.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 1-57607-068-9 (alk. paper)
1. Prisoners of war—Encyclopedias. 2. Concentration camps—Encyclopedias. I. Vance, Jonathan Franklin William, 1963–
UB800.E53 2000
355.1'13—dc21
00-010129
CIP

06 05 04 03 02 01 00 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

ABC-CLIO, Inc.
130 Cremona Drive, P.O. Box 1911
Santa Barbara, California 93116-1911

This book is printed on acid-free paper ♾.

Manufactured in the United States of America.

From 1948 onwards, another group of prisoners dominated the population of the camps: those people who had been charged with crimes against the regime of occupation and who had been convicted by Soviet Military Tribunals (SMT). Among them were numerous members of democratic parties who defied the oppressive policy of Communism. When the German Democratic Republic was coming into being in the autumn of 1949, Soviet leaders decided to dissolve the camps. The majority of the internees were released at the beginning of 1950, while the majority of the SMT convicts were handed over to East German prisons to serve their sentences.

The prisoners of the Soviet special camps were entirely isolated from the outside world. They were not allowed to write or to receive letters, so their relatives had no knowledge of their whereabouts. As the special camps were not labor camps, the prisoners were condemned to agonizing inactivity. Notwithstanding that in fact numerous Nazis and war criminals were interned in the camps, the majority of the inmates had been arbitrarily arrested, among them a large number of adolescents and even children.

As two of the Soviet special camps—Sachsenhausen and Buchenwald—were established on the sites of former Nazi concentration camps, a comparison with the Nazi camps seems obvious. There were, however, significant differences. Physical abuses in the camps by Soviet guards have only rarely been reported, although maltreatment and torture usually occurred immediately after arrest. Furthermore, the special camps were not labor camps. Finally, documented evidence that the Soviets deliberately aimed at exterminating the internees has not been detected. There is, however, little doubt that Stalin knowingly condoned the deaths of more than 60,000 individuals as result of his arrest and internment policy in postwar Germany.

See also Buchenwald

References

Sergej Mironenko, Lutz Niethammer, and Alexander von Plato, in association with Volkhard Knigge and Günter Morsch, eds., *Sowjetische Speziallager in Deutschland, 1945 bis 1950*, 2 vols. (Berlin: Akademie, 1998).

Norman M. Naimark, *The Russians in Germany: A History of the Soviet Zone of Occupation, 1945–1949* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1995).

—Wolfram von Scheliha

SOYINKA, WOLE (1934–)

Wole Soyinka, the Nigerian playwright, poet, novelist, and Nobel laureate (1986), was imprisoned for almost two years by the Nigerian military authorities in 1967 at the outbreak of the Nigerian Civil War for allegedly attempting to secure a fighter-bomber for the rebels. Although not a combatant and never formally charged or tried, Soyinka was seen as a dangerous provocateur by the military government that had seized power in 1966.

Soyinka chronicles his imprisonment in two volumes: a book of poems, *A Shuttle in the Crypt*, written secretly while in prison, and a memoir, *The Man Died*, composed after his release in 1969 but based on notes written in the margins of the few books he was permitted to have in prison. *The Man Died* is a mix of history, political analysis, and personal testimony to the horrors of prison. Focused on the gross injustice of what he views as a questionable war carried on by a thoroughly corrupt and illegitimate regime, the most compelling and beautifully composed portions of the book relate how he slowly began to lose his sanity during the 15 months he spent in solitary confinement: his tortured imagination and paranoia periodically overcoming his rational mind, it also unleashed a torrent of hallucinations and imagery that give artistic shape to the book.

Soyinka was quietly released in 1969. He writes, "It was sad no longer to be considered a dangerous man." Through his subsequent writings (both creative and otherwise), speeches and political action, Soyinka has worked for political and social reform in a Nigeria ruled almost exclusively by the military. In 1995, having fled Nigeria a year earlier, he was sentenced to death in absentia, a sentence since annulled.

References
Wole Soyinka, *A Shuttle in the Crypt* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1972).
———, *The Man Died* (New York: Noonday Press, 1988 [1972]).

—*Mark L. Lilleleht*

SPANISH ARMADA

When the Spanish Armada came to grief during an abortive invasion of England in May 1588, over 500 Spanish sailors and soldiers fell into English hands. They included 397 men from the *Rosario*, which was captured after it was crippled by a collision with another Spanish ship, 17 from the *San Salvador*, which was captured after it was badly damaged by an explosion, and 158 from the *San Pedro Mayor*, which wrecked on the English coast. When the prisoners reached Devon, local authorities sorted them into "those of name and quality," who were to be transferred to "safe prisons", and "the rest of baser sort," who were to be held wherever accommodations could be found. Accordingly, some 200 men of this first group were sent to the prison at Exeter, while the rest were confined locally (in a building still known as the Spanish Barn) until their ship was repaired enough to serve as a floating prison. Members of this latter group were also put to work as agricultural laborers on local estates. A small group of prisoners of a higher rank, who were likely to command a good ransom, were sent to London for safekeeping. Those officers who remained in Devon had considerable freedom; one was given parole to work as a doctor in the area, and three others took advantage of their relative liberty to escape to Spain in February 1589.

Negotiations to ransom the prisoners began shortly after their arrival in England. Spanish authorities were willing to pay the equivalent of one month's pay (plus a small allowance for expenses) for the return of ordinary soldiers and seamen, and other amounts, ranging from 100 crowns for captains to 15 crowns for other officers, for officers. But English demands for a greater ransom meant that the prisoners remained in custody until 24 November 1589, when the majority of them were officially freed. Another group of 15 prisoners were freed at a later date; their captors had demanded as much as 20,000 crowns in ransom, but they were forced to relent when the Spanish arrested some English merchants on the continent as hostages. Don Pedro de Valdés, the commander of the *Rosario*, was freed in February 1593 upon payment of a ransom of £3550. The last Spanish captive in custody appears to have been an apothecary, who remained in England until 1597.

References
Paula Martin, *Spanish Armada Prisoners: The Story of the* Nuestra Señora del Rosario *and her Crew, and of the Other Prisoners in England, 1587–97* (Exeter: Exeter University Publications, 1988).

—*Jonathan F. Vance*

SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR (1898)

During the Spanish-American War of 1898, the United States held over 39,000 Spanish prisoners of war in America, the Philippines, Cuba, and outlying Spanish possessions. Spain, in contrast, held only a very few Americans, all of whom were exchanged during the conflict. The United States based its POW policy on the Geneva Convention of 1864, which it had signed in 1882, and so it faced several issues surrounding repatriation and the protection of Spanish prisoners from America's Cuban and Filipino allies.

In Cuba and surrounding Spanish territories, the U.S. military captured over 26,000 prisoners. Held with minimal restrictions after they surrendered their weapons and awaited transportation back to Spain, the Spanish prisoners openly fraternized with their American captors, much to the Cubans' dismay. Of the 1,774 naval prisoners—the entire surviving Spanish fleet after the Battle of Santiago Bay of 3 June 1898—nearly 360 of the sick and injured (half of whom died) went to Norfolk, Virginia, 79 officers and 14 enlisted men were held at the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland, and 20 were imprisoned at Fort McPherson, Georgia. The remaining POWs were secured at Seavey Island off of Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

Prisoners of War: The POW Experience American POW experiences began in the colonial past and continue as part of the human legacy of war. For three centuries, American POWs have examined their experience by writing personal histories that search for a sense of social, legal, historical, and personal order in the midst of captivity.Â The long march describes the dangerous journey from the place of capture to the place of permanent internment, with intermittent stops along the way. The experience removes the outer layers of the prisoner's cultural veneer as POWs are executed for such trifles as wanting water, walking too slowly, or falling down. Internment of prisoners of war. Chapter I. General observations. Article 21. The Detaining Power may subject prisoners of war to internment. It may impose on them the obligation of not leaving, beyond certain limits, the camp where they are interned, or if the said camp is fenced in, of not going outside its perimeter. Subject to the provisions of the present Convention relative to penal and disciplinary sanctions, prisoners of war may not be held in close confinement except where necessary to safeguard their health and then only during the continuation of the circumstances which make such con