

376 pages – 27€50

En librairie le 14 novembre
2012

Si le XX^e siècle apparaît comme le siècle des guerres, **la figure du prisonnier est longtemps restée comme oubliée**. Or, les captifs se comptèrent par millions lors des deux conflits mondiaux, se sont affirmés comme un enjeu central des guerres de décolonisation et **révèlent aujourd'hui les mutations, stratégiques et juridiques, des conflits du XXI^e siècle**.

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Les directeurs d'ouvrage :

Anne-Marie Pathé est ingénieur d'études au CNRS et responsable du centre des archives de l'Institut d'histoire du temps présent.

Fabien Théofilakis, agrégé d'histoire, a soutenu une thèse sur les prisonniers de guerre allemands en mains françaises (1944-1949). Il mène actuellement ses recherches au *Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung* sur les notions de germanité et de francité au XX^e siècle.

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LA CAPTIVITÉ DE GUERRE AU XX^e SIÈCLE

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27,50 € TTC France
EAN : 978-2-200-28044-4



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Sous la direction de
Anne-Marie Pathé et Fabien Théofilakis

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DES ARCHIVES, DES HISTOIRES, DES MÉMOIRES



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ARMAND COLIN / MINISTÈRE DE LA DÉFENSE / RECHERCHES

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Abstracts / Résumés

Branche Raphaëlle – “Why release prisoners? The case of the Algerian National Liberation Army”

Between 1954 and 1962 the French colonial presence in Algeria was challenged by an enemy that used non-conventional tactics, including guerrilla warfare as well as terrorism alongside diplomatic actions by the FLN. France responded to this attempt to challenge its power in Algeria by sending massive numbers of troops to Algeria while refusing to recognize the situation as a state of war. The military operations which took place in Algeria were thus considered as police operations, an internal matter to which the Geneva Conventions on prisoner treatment did not apply. The FLN tried a number of different approaches to try and contest this interpretation ; taking prisoners was one way of pressuring France and influencing the outcome of the conflict. However, taking prisoners in a guerrilla war was also a dangerous tactical choice for the survival of the combatant group. It is in light of this tense dynamic relationship that this paper will discuss the question of French soldiers who were taken prisoner in Algeria.

Debons Delphine – “‘Everything is possible for he who believes’ (Mark 9 : 23) ? The organization of religious practices in Second World War prisoner of war camps”

For the majority of French, British, American and British Dominion prisoners of war in German hands in the Second World War, as well as for German prisoners of war in Allied hands, captivity conditions were relatively stable and, overall, the detaining powers respected the Geneva Conventions of 1929 with regard to these prisoners’ treatment. Alleviating the physical sufferings of prisoners of war was one challenge for humanitarians, however, another challenge was to alleviate the moral torments to which captivity gave rise. The right to practice religion was a factor that was endorsed in this light : prisoners of war, be they Roman Catholic or Protestant, Muslim, Hindu, Jewish or Animist were entitled to benefit from religious freedom and to have freedom to hold religious services. Yet some limits were, nevertheless, placed upon these religious liberties. What was the nature of these limitations? What did they signify? What was the interaction between international law and the domestic regulations put in place by captor states to legislate for prison camps? Were such limitations specific to Germany or did they have a specifically German quality? This paper will suggest several answers to these central questions, which are so important in order to understand how religious practice functioned in prisoner of war camps.

Dogliani Patrizia – “From Allies to Enemies. The experience of Third Reich soldiers as prisoners of war in Italy: the case of the Rimini enclave, 1945-1947”

After the German capitulation in Italy, on May 2, 1945, camps for prisoners were set up by Allies in the recent liberated Centre-Northern regions of Italy : in Tuscany by US army, in Emilia-Romagna by British army. The paper puts the history of Allies’ camps in Italy in the complex recent historiographical debate on an international level over the German prisoners of war in Western Europe. The paper analyses the most important camp in Italy : Rimini . This

place was chosen by the Allies in May 1945 as an internment area for a large number of soldiers of the German army captured in the last weeks and days of war. What became justly called the “Rimini Enclave” along the Adriatic coast between Cervia and Riccione consisted of a complex system of camps which included not only over ten *POW* camps but also a set of supporting infrastructures, including hospitals, churches and cemeteries, which were intended to guarantee supplies and satisfy the principal needs of those interned. Between 1945 and 1947, an extremely diverse group of male and female prisoners were interned, either because of the role they had played in the war or because of their nationality. Most of the prisoners came from within the boundaries of the German Reich before 1938 but some belonged to ethnic groups considered by Nazism as *Volksdeutsche* or were soldiers enrolled in the German army from western and in particularly eastern countries of Europe. These prisoners were in turn guarded by an equally heterogeneous army which included British and Polish troops as well as soldiers of the new Italian army. A further interesting aspect of the Enclave was that there would appear to have been a first attempt at denazification and democratisation of German prisoners on the initiative of the British. The years 1945-47 were lived in a particularly delicate historical situation : the end of the world war and the immediate beginnings of a new division and “cold” war. Prisoners and guards were touched by these events living in close confinement on an everyday level, in contact with local population which had to face the reconstruction of its territory and homes, and political parties. This area was the theatre of a strong partisan resistance led by the Communist party ; soon the cohabitation between the local leftist oriented youth and the Polish soldiers became explosive in some towns ; instead inhabitants’ memories of the presence of Germans and Ukrainians prisoners remains good still today. The paper analyses also these aspects.

Frank Sarah Ann – “For ‘our’ prisoners: colonial prisoners of war and Vichy charitable aid organizations, 1940-1942”

Amongst the 1.8 million French soldiers captured in the debacle of June 1940 were tens of thousands of colonial prisoners of war (CPOWs). Despite being German prisoners CPOWs were held in Frontstalags, or prisoner of war camps in occupied France . While white prisoners from the Frontstalags were released by 1941, the colonial soldiers remained in captivity. Material conditions in the Frontstalags were a major concern for CPOWs. Local mayors and residents brought food to CPOWs, fed them at home, or even smuggled letters to avoid the military censorship. Additionally, various national and international aid groups sprung up to help French and colonial prisoners by providing them food, clothing and distractions. This allowed closer interactions between CPOWs and local populations. Some of these groups were based in the colonies and provided aid only ‘their’ prisoners, others like the International Red Cross helped all prisoners regardless of race or origins. This paper seeks to examine who was helping the CPOWs and why? How did CPOWs interact with the local and international charities? How did different organizations interact with each other and with the CPOWs? Did helping CPOWs fill a political need to maintain sovereignty over a vulnerable population, or was it based on purely humanitarian needs?

Jones Heather – “Humanitarian intervention, breaches of international law and western POW’s”

The treatment of prisoners of war in Western Europe in the First World War was based upon a tense dynamic relationship between humanitarianism and international law on the one side and military necessity on the other, which this paper will explore. In 1914- 1918, this tension ultimately led to significant protections for captives in Western Europe – such as collective bread and biscuit deliveries and a sophisticated food parcel system. Humanitarianism, with considerable state support, thereby saved countless lives, helping to explain the relatively low death rates among prisoners of war in Western Europe during the conflict. Yet this success story regarding humanitarian mobilization was accompanied by the widespread development of forced labour and the increased use of violence against captives, including extremely harsh forced labour at or near the western front. This Janus-faced dynamic, whereby humanitarianism and legal protections were continually countered by the growing military necessity to use prisoners in ever more damaging ways as forced labourers, epitomised the Great War and set key precedents for what would occur. The drive to ‘civilise’ prisoner treatment during the 1914- 1918 conflict and the growing use of forced labour and violence against prisoners of war that the war also provoked, charting how this balance of forces between these two processes ultimately determined the kinds of captivity that the Great War gave rise to in Western Europe.

Kreis Georg – “The ‘voluntary forced stay’. Russian Prisoners of War in Switzerland, 1942-1945”

This paper will deal with a specific group which experienced during 1942-1945 in Switzerland a “voluntary” forced stay for what was a more or less lengthy period. The constituent features of this group were Soviet nationality and the German captivity, from where they escaped “voluntary” to Switzerland. A third criterion was less clear : that is former soldiers of the Red Army or forced laborers who escaped civilian captivity in Switzerland. Among 10 000 persons, about 3 500 were female forced laborers. The dynamic of captivity is divided into three well-known phases : capture, captivity itself and liberation. In this paper, the median stage of the stay will be of particular note we have to distinguish the living conditions in the camp which generated interest only many years later, from the relationships with the foster land and its population. The authorities endeavored to reduce to the minimum the relationships between these prisoners of war and their own population. On one hand, they feared “subversive propaganda” through Soviet soldiers ; on the other, they refused any expression of sympathy or fellow feeling toward the Soviet soldiers. In order to facilitate this no camp was close to the cities (with a progressive population), by preference they were situated in the Alps (with the conservative population). Unlike the stereotype of the Russian, continuously drunk and violent, the internees were considered by the native populations as likeable and amiable.

Moore Bob – “British Perceptions of Axis Captives in Great Britain, 1939-1948”

During the Second World War, the British Isles played host to both German

and Italian prisoners-of-war. While the former were treated as dangerous enemies and Nazis, to be confined and removed elsewhere until they ceased to be a threat, the latter were assumed to be both harmless and uncommitted to the Fascist cause. Thus in 1941, the British authorities were deporting German POWs to internment in Canada while beginning the transport of Italians to the United Kingdom to supplement the domestic labour market. The 150 000 brought in Italians were rapidly integrated into the agricultural economy, often working unguarded and being billeted on individual farms. This was extended still further in the aftermath of Italian co-belligerency in 1943. By contrast, Germans were only brought to Britain in 1944, primarily in the aftermath of Operation Overlord. Over time, their numbers grew and they were gradually seen as a useful supplementary labour force, increasingly replacing the Italians as the latter were sent home in 1946-1947. This paper examines both state and public perceptions of these POWs and questions whether they were determined by pre-existing cultural stereotypes or by practical encounters with an enemy “other”.

Overmans Rüdiger – “German Treatment of Jewish POWs in World War II”

Much has been written about the treatment of Jewish Soviet POW by the Germans in World War II. Nearly all of those 100.000 Soviet Jews who were captured by the Germans were murdered consequently. Unfortunately the fate of the Non-Soviet Jewish POWs is never mentioned, although their number is estimated to be also as high as 100.000. This group consisted mainly of French, Yugoslav and British soldiers but there were also smaller groups from other nationalities like the Poles. The German policy towards the Non-Soviet POWs stood in stark contrast to the treatment of Soviet Jewish POWs. Generally they were not murdered and survived the Holocaust in the POW Camps. This is also true for the Polish Jews – mainly officers – and even for many rabbis who had been military rabbis in their respective armies. Unfortunately there is no general order concerning the treatment of Jews in German captivity. Even more there are few orders in which Jews are mentioned. One of the few exemptions is the order not to mark Jewish POWs by the “Yellow star”. The aim of the lecture is to give an explanation for this apparently surprising German policy.

Rachamimov Iris – “Liminality and Transgression : Breaching Social Boundaries in World War I Internment Camps”

During the First World War an estimated eight million men became prisoners of war or civilian internees. Cut off – partially or wholly – from their previous civilian or military standings, these men strived during their years in captivity to create meaningful social and cultural practices and preserve a feeling of self worth. POW officers and civilian internees in particular developed elaborate practices which attempted to uphold their sense of privileged male authority. However, contrary to the hopes and expectations of many of the prisoners some of these practices in fact challenged and even undermined gender boundaries and sexual norms. By examining the social and cultural life of English – and German – speaking inmates, this paper will focus on two mainstays of internment : theatrical productions (and especially drag performances) and camp domesticity (*i.e.* the attempts to create a “home away from home”).

Reiß Matthias – “Half-Naked Nazis : Masculinity and Gender in German POW Camps in the USA during World War II”

The so-called “War on Terror” and the discussion about the treatment of internees at Guantanamo Bay, Abu Ghraib or other detention centers has also triggered a renewed interest in the United States’ previous experiences with captured enemy personnel. Yet despite a growing body of scholarship, gender is still rarely used as an analytical category to study the captivity experience in American conflicts. This paper suggests that gender is crucial to understand the experience of the more than 371,000 German prisoners of war who were interned in the United States during the Second World War and argues that the perception of these prisoners as hyper-masculine soldiers influenced the way they were treated on American soil. Especially the members of the Army Group Africa who went into captivity in Tunisia in May 1943 successfully tried to maintain this image through various means behind barbed-wire and thereby influenced the way their captors behaved towards them. The prisoners’ continuous performance of a soldierly-masculine identity allowed them to build bridges to the Americans even before the end of the war and thereby contributed to paving the way for the rapid re-integration of the Federal Republic of Germany into the Western world.

Scheck Raffael – “French Officers as Jailers of Their Own Men? - The ‘Indigenous’ Prisoners under French Cadres, 1943-44”

In January 1943, the German commander-in-chief in France requested that the Vichy government provide French officers and NCOs as cadres for commandos of “indigenous” prisoners of war. Vichy agreed, and the replacement of German guards by French cadres began two months later. The opinion of historians on this agreement is severe : placing them under French cadres appears as the ultimate insult to the “indigenous” prisoners of war and as one of the most reprehensible examples of state collaboration. In reality, the origins and the execution of this agreement were riddled with misunderstandings and conflicts between German and French officials. The Germans never shed their mistrust in the French cadres and dismissed them immediately after the Allied invasion. The reaction of the “indigenous” prisoners to the French cadres was by no means uniform. The conference paper will examine the economic, social, and diplomatic aspects of this agreement. It will argue that it does not simply constitute a case of high treason but rather a typical example of collaboration, mixing elements of opposition and compliance in the face of manipulating but poorly coordinated German initiatives.

Schöttler Peter – “Fernand Braudel's experience as a prisoner of war in Germany: a response to both short term immediacy and the *longue durée*”

Braudel was a prisoner at Mainz and Lübeck from 1940 to 1945. During these long years he famously edited a preliminary version of his book “The Mediterranean”. Some commentators have seen this act as a form of “retreat into the past to escape from the present” and have interpreted his prisoner of war experience as an “existential” explanation for the structure of the book and for his concept of the “*longue durée*” that it advocates. Yet a close examination of a wide range of Braudel’s work and his behaviour reveals

that, in fact, Braudel, an historian with firsthand experience of war and of imprisonment, actually thought as much about contemporary history as he did about the sixteenth century.

Snizek Suzanne – “The trio is growing like an asparagus’: Hans Gál ’ and the Huyton Suite trio”

By May 1940 the war had taken a critical turn, and the British government decided to mass intern German and Austrian resident “enemy aliens”. This included numerous artists, scholars and musicians, amongst them a highly successful Austrian born classical composer, Hans Gál . Gál was just beginning to re-establish himself in Edinburgh when he was abruptly interned. While interned, Gál wrote a work for the three serious instrumentalists with instruments which were available in the camp : a flute and two violins. Though the conditions of internment were harsh and the available instruments highly unlikely in their combination, Gál managed to craft a first rate piece of chamber music which he called “Huyton Suite” (named after the camp in which he conceived and wrote the trio). This paper will explore the genesis of this musical work, the process through which it was first rehearsed and performed (in Central Camp on the Isle of Man), the thematic connections between the internment and its portrayal in the music and finally, the reception of this chamber music work. This paper will be supplemented by a live performance of the Huyton Suite, presented by the author and two violinists later in the conference.

Thénault Sylvie – “The internement of Algerians in 19th and 20th century warfare: developing a history of the long-term evolution of captivity”

Despite the chronological distance separating them, the colonial war to conquer Algeria (1830-1847) and the Algerian War of Independence (1954-1962) share at least one common characteristic : during both conflicts the treatment of Algerians taken prisoner by the French was described as “internment”. In the nineteenth century, this term referred to a wide variety of measures including sending prisoners to France to detention quarters. The treatment of Algerians at the time, however, did not diverge from the usual treatment of prisoners of war. In contrast, in the twentieth century, the term “internment” only referred to detention within a camp. As the French authorities officially refused to apply the Geneva Conventions in the Algerian War of Independence, the ALN prisoners were described as “internees” to whom the status of prisoners of war did not apply. Comparing these two conflicts thus aims to underline the differences that separate them and to call into question the idea of any simplistic long term continuity in colonialism over time, despite the use of the same term “internment” in both wars.

Théofilakis, Fabien - “This Rodolph is so cute! German Prisoners of War in contact with civilian French populations (1944-1948)”

Between mid-1944 and December 1948, the French authorities had to manage approximately one million German prisoners of war (POW) in Metropolitan France . This mass captivity constituted a challenge to foreign policy as well as to the military administration. The economic use of the captive labour and the decisions made in their management turned it into one

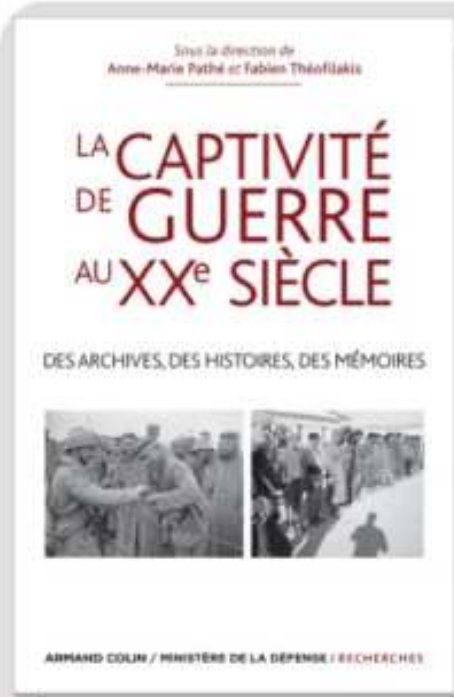
of the issues of the France “ sortie de guerre” : the whole French society was concerned, even challenged, by the presence of the former occupant – which they vanquished – to the heart of the country. Using national, but also local, archives, which allow to cross the French and foreign points of view, to look at the experiences of individuals – civilian as captive – as well as the perceptions of involved institutions, this paper goes back to look at the first cohabitation at peace between French and German people on a large scale. It will set out to determinate its regulatory and real-term modalities, to analyze why this war captivity in peace time constituted such a significant indicator for tensions which went through the French society after the victory. It will thus try to understand in what extent this second postwar period lead to a true French-German rapprochement unlike the first one of 1918-1921.

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Objet d'une forte demande sociale, en France comme à l'étranger, la captivité de guerre fait, depuis une décennie, un retour remarqué dans les travaux des historiens. Transnationale par définition, son histoire déborde les champs de bataille pour toucher l'ensemble des sociétés en guerre de Sarajevo à Guantanamo. Le prisonnier se retrouve ainsi au cœur des dynamiques de mobilisation comme de celles des sorties de guerre, militaires autant que culturelles. L'étudier offre des perspectives de recherche particulièrement fécondes sur les liens entre système de camps et droit international humanitaire, traumatismes et adaptations, sociales comme intellectuelles, et révèle la complexité des interactions entre les captifs et les sociétés qui les côtoient ou les attendent. Face à cet intérêt renouvelé, le présent ouvrage invite, pour la première fois, des archivistes, des historiens et d'autres spécialistes de sciences humaines à dresser un panorama international de la captivité en temps de guerre.

Anne-Marie Pathé est ingénieur d'études au CNRS et responsable du centre des archives de l'Institut d'histoire du temps présent.

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parution : 14 novembre
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