Gregor Feindt / Anke Hilbrenner / Dittmar Dahlmann (eds.)

Sport under Unexpected Circumstances

Violence, Discipline, and Leisure in Penal and Internment Camps

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Introduction

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Gregor Feindt / Anke Hilbrenner / Dittmar Dahlmann

Between "Barbed Wire Disease" and *Judenexerzieren*

Why the History of Sport in Penal and Internment Camps Matters

> In the afternoon we had to form up for parading. The older inmates called it "sport". […] On the vast parade ground the sun was strong. Four SS-Scharführers waited for us, received us, especially those limping from being footsore. […] Just wait, we'll wear you down! And then it was, double time, march.[1]

Sport in camps unsettles both contemporary witnesses and students of history. It seems impossible that human beings would perform anything like sport within the harsh camp reality of repression, hunger, violence, and possibly even murder. Yet, sport in penal and internment camps is a historical reality and studying this history allows for new insights into the reality of inclusion and exclusion in camps during the twentieth century. This volume will bring forward an understanding of camp experience that centres on subjectivity, performance, and social action and aims at complementing the existing research on camps in the twentieth century with a comparative perspective of European history.

Camps condense the history of violence throughout the twentieth century and mark off a genuinely violent age that for instance Zygmunt Bauman critically called a "century of camps".[2] Camps for prisoners of war (POWs) and the internment of alien civilians appeared at the dawn of the twentieth century and gained broader significance during the two World Wars. Such "total institutions"[3] confined thousands of human individuals in a small, tightly regulated space. The same spatial compression applies to the National Socialist concentration camps or the Stalinist Gulag system that merged forced labour with

1 Friedrich Maase, Archiv Gedenkstätte und Museum Sachsenhausen/Stiftung Brandenburgische Gedenkstätten Jd 2/7, Bl. 68; cited in Veronika Springmann, "'Sport machen'. eine Praxis der Gewalt im Konzentrationslager", in Lenarczyk Wojciech et al. (eds.), *KZ-Verbrechen. Beiträge zur Geschichte der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager und ihrer Erinnerung* (Berlin 2007), 92f.

2 Zygmunt Bauman, "A Century of Camps?", in Peter Beilharz (ed.), *The Bauman Reader* (Oxford 2011), 266–280. See also Jörg Später, "Jahrhundert der Lager? Über Stärken und Schwächen eines Begriffs", in *iz3W* 239 (1999), accessed 31 August 2017, URL: https://www.iz3w.org/zeitschrift/ausgaben/239_jahrhundert_der_lager/faa.

3 For the concept of "total institutions", see Erving Goffman, *Asylums. Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates* (Chicago, IL 1961).

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murder. Such violence was radicalised even more in extermination camps. In contrast to this, camps for displaced persons (DPs) or refugees lacked this radicalised violence but still strictly regulated the lives of their inhabitants. For many DPs, the camp was more than a transit station but was a long-time place of residence, often without a realistic perspective of moving on. Regardless of these specific and intriguing differences, camps as institutions central to the twentieth century induced experiences of violence, of an uncertain future, and total control exercised by both camp authorities and fellow internees.

In the reality of camps, sport appeared in different settings and different modes of internment, and sport remained contingent. Depending on the specific conditions in a given camp, sporting activities could be – to various degrees – official or unofficial, intramural or extramural, restricted to one hierarchical rank of camp society or open to all, continuous or discontinuous to earlier experiences of those held in camps. Similar to other joyful activities such as music or theatre, sport was a paradox of leading a "social life in the unsocial environment" of camps.[4] Moreover, the coercive qualities of sport varied with regard to the specific type of camp, the trajectory of internment, and the wider context of inclusion or exclusion. Many camps, especially Nazi concentration camps, adopted "doing sports" as a practice of violence. For instance, as quoted at the beginning of this chapter, SS (Schutzstaffel) men made use of punitive drills to weaken and torture camp inmates. Such "sport" was used to display an alleged racial hierarchy. Moreover it served as entertainment for guards and other camp personnel and obviously exceeded the common understanding of sport as "competitive activities regulated by set rules or customs" guided by equality and fairness.[5] However, internees and inmates also took up sport deliberately – even under the hardest circumstances – and risked sport contributing further to their exhaustion. Camp inmates and internees took part in sporting activities or followed these activities because they wanted to and sport provided some usage for them, fostered self-organisation, or helped to obtain material goods.

Camps and Sport: Confronting the Existing Research

The mere fact that camp inmates did sports under the violent circumstances of life in camps caused reactions from irritation to disgust. The shocking ubiquity of death on the one hand and survival on the other hand is drastically

4 Nikolaus Wachsmann, *KL. A History of the Nazi Concentration Camps* (New York 2015), 500.

5 Oxforddictionaries.com, s.v. "sport", accessed 7 August 2017, URL: http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/187476?rskey=KG56rR&result=1&isAdvanced=false#eid.

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symbolised by the performative display of healthy bodies at play. Therefore sport often figures as a metaphor for the impossibility of describing Nazi extermination camps. For example, in Tadeusz Borowski's *This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentleman*, a goalkeeper in Auschwitz-Birkenau reasons: "Between two throw-ins in a soccer game, right behind my back, three thousand people had been put to death."[6] Because of this harsh contrast of joy and deadly violence, sport as an everyday exercise in the face of extermination became an emblematic expression of the guilt of survival and survivors.[7] Moreover, sport seemingly contradicted the punitive and violent character of camps.[8]

Much of the existing research on the history of camps follows two ways of coping with the irritation of sport in camps. The most common form is the omission of sport from the memory of the camps as well as in the scholarly literature. Beyond the deletion of sport from camp memory and history, we can also detect a certain exotic fascination with the mere fact that sport existed in camps at all. Such narratives of exoticism prevail both in the sources and in the literature.

The drawing of Thomas Geve on the cover of this volume testifies to this second mode of perception. Geve was deported to Auschwitz in 1943 as a 13-year-old boy. He survived Auschwitz, Groß-Rosen, and Buchenwald.[9]

After the liberation of Buchenwald, Geve was sent to Switzerland to recover. During his recovery immediately after the war, he produced 79 drawings processing his camp experience. One of the most disturbing images is the one showing sport in Auschwitz. Within the cosmos of the drawing, SS guards are the intramural authorities illustrated by their extraordinary size. Their violent rule is marked by their whips[10] and clubs. The inmates appear much smaller,

6 Tadeusz Borowski, *This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentleman* (New York 1967), 84.

7 For Primo Levi such a football match was a metaphor for collaboration and guilt that resulted from surviving concentration camps, see Debarati Sanyal, "A Soccer Match in Auschwitz. Passing Culpability in Holocaust Criticism", in *Representations* 79:1 (2002), 1–27.

8 For instance, British voices on colonial internment in Kenya understood both regular meals and sporting activities for Kenyan internees as too soft a treatment. See Fabian Klose, *Human Rights in the Shadow of Colonial Violence. The Wars of Independence in Kenya and Algeria* (Philadelphia, PA 2013), 157.

9 For more information and drawings see Thomas Geve, *Geraubte Kindheit. Ein Junge überlebt den Holocaust* (Bremen 2013). For a more detailled contextualisation of Geve's picture see, Jörn Wendland, Das Lager von Bild zu Bild. Narrative Bildserien von Häftlingen aus NS-Zwangslagern (Cologne 2017), 175–180.

10 For the symbolical meaning of whips and their use against man, see Rebekka Habermas, "Peitschen im Reichstag oder über den Zusammenhang von materieller und politischer Kultur. Koloniale Debatten um 1900", in *Historische Anthropologie* 23:3 (2015), 391–412.

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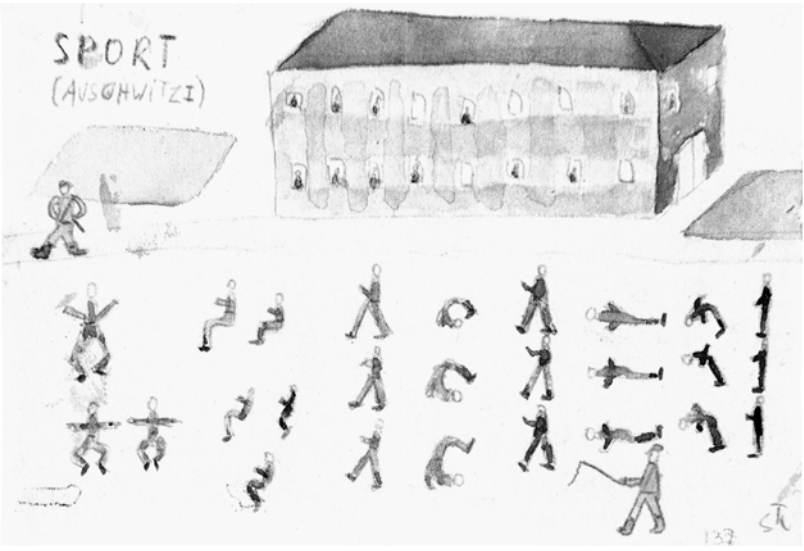

Thomas Geve, Sport (Auschwitz I), 1945

their bodies bent in awkward positions. The image draws attention precisely because of its seeming perversion, symbolised by the unnatural bodies performing a non-natural task, i.e. "Sport in Ausschwitz".

Within the very small amount of existing literature on the topic, most contributions derive from this exotic fascination. Consequently, such accounts are mostly of an anecdotal nature and represent the amazement that sport in death and concentration camps even existed. For instance, Joseph Robert White's research article points to this bewilderment in its emblematic title "Even in Auschwitz … Humanity Could Prevail".[11] White frames "humanity" as the comradeship of British sportsmen in Auschwitz towards the Jewish inmates. Another example is the concentration camp Terezín (Theresienstadt) known for a football league among the inmates who displayed a firm belief in sportsmanship and thought it impossible to injur any opponent during a match for the simple reason of not endangering his survival in the camp.[12]

11 Joseph R. White, "'Even in Auschwitz … Humanity Could Prevail'. British POWs and Jewish Concentration Camp Inmates at IG Auschwitz, 1943–1945", in *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* (2001), 266–295.

12 For Peter Erbens's account of playing football in Terezín see Victoria Reith, "Im Ghetto war nur der Fußball schön", in *Zeit Online*, 31 March 2015, URL: http://www.zeit.de/sport/2015-03/theresienstadt-fussball-liga-terezin/komplettansicht. See also the wider research on sport in Terezín, Stefan Zwicker, "Paul Mahrer, der Nationalspieler, der Theresienstadt überlebte", in Diethelm Blecking / Lorenz Peiffer (eds.), *Sportler im "Jahrhundert der Lager" und der Verfolgung. Profiteure, Widerständler und Opfer*

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At the same time, Nazi propaganda exploited sport as proof of humane living conditions in Terezín and highlighted it, for instance, in the 1944 documentary on the ghetto.[13]

Moreover, in Poland, historians have studied sport in concentration and POW camps since the 1960s and presented, for instance, the so-called camp Olympic Games held in the Langwasser and Woldenburg "Oflags" (camps for officers). In 1940 and 1944, officers who were held as POWs staged their own Olympic Games in camps although sporting activities were forbidden by German camp authorities.[14] In the case of POW camps, sport seemed to be more natural for both historical actors and later observers,[15] but similarly to concentration camps the topic of sport was often omitted. The existing research revolves around case studies[16] or biographical surveys.[17] Opposed to this anecdotal approach, a comprehensive analysis of the history of sport in camps within the context of a broader perspective on camps during the twentieth century is by and large still missing.

(Göttingen 2012), 323–329. See also, František Steiner, *Fotbal pod žlutou hvězdou. Neznámá kapitola hry, která se hrála přes smrtí* (Prague 2009); Nicola Schlichting, "'Kleiderkammer schlägt Gärtner 9:3'. Fußball im Ghetto Teresienstadt", in *nurinst. Beiträge zur deutschen und jüdischen Geschichte* (2006), 73–90; Mike Schwartz / Avi Kannar, Documentary: *Liga Terezin* (2012), available on DVD. František Steiner, Fußball unterm gelben Stern: Die Liga im Ghetto Theresienstadt 1943–44, ed. by. Stefan Zwicker (Paderborn 2017).

13 For the propaganda usage see the original documentary, Kurt Gerron, *Movie: Theresienstadt* (Terezín 1944), Min: 5:35–8:00, accessed 31 August 2017, URL: https://www.ushmm.org/online/film/display/detail.php?file_num=565.

14 Andrzej Bieszka, *Organizacja i formy działania w zakresie kultury fizycznej w obozie VIIA Murnau* (Warsaw 1970); Hudycz Tadeusz Marian, *Wychowanie fizyczne i sport w obozie jenieckim IIc Woldenberg* (Warsaw 1970); Teodor Niewiadomski, *Olimpiada, której nie było* (Warsaw 1973). For an overview, see Wojciech Półchłopek, *Wychowanie fizyczne I sport żołnierzy polskich w obozach jenieckich Wehrmachtu i NKWD (1939–1945)* (Opole 2002); id., *Sport za drutami (1939–1945)* (Warsaw 2015).

15 See, for instance, Peter Tauber, *Vom Schützengraben auf den grünen Rasen. Der Erste Weltkrieg und die Entwicklung des Sports in Deutschland* (Berlin 2008).

16 Other examples include, Roland Bude / Wladislaw Hedeler, "Zur Geschichte einer weggeworfenen Fotografie. Fußballspiele im GULag", in Dittmar Dahlmann et al. (eds.), *Überall ist der Ball rund – Zur Geschichte und Gegenwart des Fußballs in Ost- und Südosteuropa. Nachspielzeit,* Bd. 3 (Essen 2011), 157–168; Springmann, "'Sport machen'", 89–102; id., "'Árojs mitn bal cu di tojznter wartnde cuszojer'. Die Fußballvereine und -Ligen der jüdischen Displaced Persons 1946–48", in *nurinst. Beiträge zur deutschen und jüdischen Geschichte* (2006), 105–120; Philipp Grammes, "Ichud Landsberg gegen Makkabi München. Der Sport im DP-Lager 1945–1948", in Michael Brenner / Gideon Reuweni (eds.) *Emanzipation durch Muskelkraft. Juden und Sport in Europa* (Göttingen 2006), 190–215; Tauber, Vom Schützengraben auf den grünen Rasen.

17 As the majority of articles in Diethelm Blecking / Lorenz Peiffer (eds.), *Sportler im "Jahrhundert der Lager" und der Verfolgung. Profiteure, Widerständler und Opfer* (Göttingen 2012).

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In contrast, civilian internment forms a noteworthy exception as the case of Japanese camp inmates playing baseball during internment in the United States in the Second World War suggests. This example is extensively studied and well-known in US public discourse. Today it serves as a reference point for Japanese Americans and is widely discussed amongst scholars. For instance, the historian Brian Niiya stressed baseball's "potent symbolism – a combination of Americana, bucolic settings, and carefree recreation".[18] While baseball had been the most popular game amongst Japanese immigrants in the United States, since the 1900s it proved crucial for the expression of Japanese American identity both within this community and in relation to wider American society. In 1942, when the federal government ordered the internment of some 112,000 Japanese Americans, baseball was one of the few pastime activities and structured life both for players and spectators. Beyond this pragmatic function baseball obtained symbolic quality, when "[p]utting on a baseball uniform was like wearing the American flag" as one internee, Takeo Suo, recalled in a later account.[19] Playing baseball behind barbed wire proved the acculturation into American society. In addition, American authorities understood playing baseball as one criterion to determine the "Americanness" of internees and explicitly asked for sporting preferences in loyalty questionnaires.[20] Against this trajectory, scholars like Joel S. Franks or Sayuri Guthrie-Shimizu placed sporting activities during internment in a wider context of transcultural American history and demonstrated how the study of sport in camps may move beyond a mere anecdotal presentation towards an embedded narrative of cultural hybridity.[21]

These examples of widespread omission of and only scarce scholarly engagement with sport in camps raise the question of why the thriving and fruitful historical research on camps has so rarely related their discussion to the emerging cultural history of sport. While earlier sport history often leans

18 Brian Niiya, "Baseball in American Concentration Camps. History, Photos, and Reading Recommendations", in *Densho-Encyclopedia Blog,* accessed 5 April 2016, URL: https://densho.org/baseball-world-war-ii-concentration-camps-photo-essay-brief-history/.

19 *Michael, Beschloss* "For Incarcerated Japanese-Americans, Baseball Was 'Wearing the American Flag'", *New York Times. NY Times*. accessed 20 June 2014, URL: https://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/21/upshot/for-incarcerated-japanese-americans-baseball-was-wearing-the-american-flag.html?_r=0&abt=0002&abg=.

20 Cherstin M. Lyon, "Loyalty questionnaire", in *Densho Encyclopedia*, accessed 14 March, 2014, URL: http://encyclopedia.densho.org/Loyalty%20questionnaire/.

21 Joel S. Franks, *Crossing Sidelines, Crossing Cultures. Sport and Asian Pacific American Cultural Citizenship* (Lanham, MD 2009); Sayuri Guthrie-Shimizu, *Transpacific Field of Dreams. How Baseball Linked the United States and Japan in Peace and War* (Chapel Hill, NC 2012). For an overview, see Terumi Rafferty-Osaki, "Sports and recreation in camp", in *Densho Encyclopedia*, accessed 16 August 2017, URL: http://encyclopedia.densho.org/Sports_and_recreation_in_camp/.

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towards harmonising narratives of fairness, sportsmanship, beauty, and peace, which by and large reproduced the self-conceptualising of the sports movement in the tradition of Pierre de Coubertin, the latest research has brought forward a non-normative perception of sport.

However, the historiography on camps focused on violence instead and continued the wide omission of sport regardless of such innovation and the analytical potential of the cultural history of sports.[22] For instance, the German sociologist Wolfgang Sofsky analysed camps as *The Order of Terror* and brought forward a thick description of camps as spaces of violence that gave way to the experience of inmates and their suffering.[23] Taking up Hannah Arendt's "totalitarianism", Sofsky employed a concept of "absolute power" that decontextualised violence and maintained the complete "dissolution of society" in camps.[24] In response to these claims and fostered by a growing scholarly and public interest in the Holocaust since the 1980s, sociologists and historians fiercely debated the structural quality of camps in the twentieth century and discussed the relation between structure and subjectivity in camps.[25] For instance, Jörg Baberowski, a German historian specialising in Eastern Europe, made us aware of this debate when studying Stalinism.[26] Together with Anselm Doering-Manteuffel, Baberowski employed the paradigm of violence to compare National Socialism with Stalinism and in doing so tackled a major taboo in historiography.[27] Well before that, Dittmar Dahlmann and Gerhard Hirschfeld had argued for the combined study of concentration camps and the Stalinist Gulag system and pointed out the analytical insights such a comparison provides beyond simplistic equalisation.[28] More recent studies have inquired into the long imperial disposition of modern camps and vividly discussed the qualitative and situational difference of colonial concentration camps and Nazi or Stalinist camps, which accordingly subordinated

22 In his recent seminal book on Terezín, Wolfgang Benz discusses culture and classical music in the camp widely, but omits football altogether referring only to the documentary and its untrue representation of everyday life in the ghetto. See Wolfgang Benz, *Theresienstadt. Eine Geschichte von Täuschung und Vernichtung* (Munich 2013).

23 Wolfgang Sofsky, *The Order of Terror. The Concentration Camp* (Princeton, NJ 1997).

24 Cf. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York 1951).

25 See Maja Suderland, "Relektüre. 'Absolute Macht […] ist ziellose, negative Praxis […]' Wolfgang Sofskys Die Ordnung des Terrors. Das Konzentrationslager (1993)", in *Medaon* 15 (2014), URL: http://www.medaon.de/pdf/MEDAON_15_Suderland.pdf, accessed 17 August 2017.

26 See for his treatment of violence his controversial book, Jörg Baberowski, *Verbrannte Erde. Stalins Herrschaft der Gewalt* (Munich 2012).

27 Jörg Baberowski / Anselm Doering-Manteuffel, *Ordnung durch Terror. Gewaltexzesse und Vernichtung im nationalsozialistischen und stalinistischen Imperium* (Bonn 2006).

28 Dittmar Dahlmann / Gerhard Hirschfeld (eds.), *Lager, Zwangsarbeit, Vertreibung und Deportation. Dimensionen der Massenverbrechen in der Sowjetunion und in Deutschland 1933 bis 1945* (Essen 1999).

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the studies of camps as total but ambiguous institutions to their character as places of genocide.[29] Following these initial ideas, in recent years sociologists and historians came to study camps as a space of violence from a more general perspective and gained new insights especially from a micro-historical approach.[30]

Studying camps from the angle of violence puts a clear emphasis on specific, mostly Nazi- and Soviet-style camps, i.e. concentration camps and the Gulag system. Nevertheless, the existing research has – explicitly and implicitly – stressed the variation of camps and the multiplicity of the context of internment and incarceration, of coercion and radicalised violence throughout the twentieth century. Consequently, any analytical definition of camps may only revolve around general characteristics. From an analytical perspective both the confinement of human beings to a segregated and condensed space and the significant degree of coercion forced upon those being held in camps marks off camps from any other form of social organisation. Segregation and coercion are, moreover, crucial to the institutional totality that makes camps the "protean institution in war and peace" through the twentieth century, as Alan Kramer argues in the following introductory chapter of this volume.

Perspectives for a History of Sport and Camps

Against the background of the existing research on camps and its widespread omission of sport in camps, this volume aims at new insights into the historical understanding of penal and internment camps and hopes to stimulate

29 While Jürgen Zimmerer claims a direct continuity from colonial German genocide to the Holocaust, other historians underlined the camps situational focus on internment and their distinctive quality. See, for instance, Jürgen Zimmerer, "Colonialism and Genocide", in Matthew Jefferies (ed.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Imperial Germany* (London 2015), 433–451; id., "Lager und Genozid. Die Konzentrationslager in Südwestafrika zwischen Windhuk und Auschwitz", in Christoph Jahr / Jens Thiel (eds.), *Lager vor Auschwitz. Gewalt und Integration im 20. Jahrhundert* (Berlin 2013), 54–67; Robert Gerwarth/Stephan Malinowski, "'Der Holocaust als 'kolonialer Genozid?' Europäische Kolonialgewalt und nationalsozialistischer Vernichtungskrieg", in *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 33 (2007), 439–466; Jonas Kreienbaum, *Ein trauriges Fiasko. Koloniale Konzentrationslager im südlichen Afrika 1900–1908* (Hamburg 2015).

30 Christoph Jahr / Jens Thiel (eds.), *Lager vor Auschwitz. Gewalt und Integration im 20. Jahrhundert* (Berlin 2013); Bettina Greiner / Alan Kramer (eds.), *Welt der Lager. Zur "Erfolgsgeschichte" einer Institution* (Hamburg 2013); Wladislaw Hedeler, *Karlag. Das Karagandinsker Besserungsarbeitslager 1930–1959* (Paderborn 2008); Wladislaw Hedeler / Meinhard Stark, *Das Grab in der Steppe. Leben im GULAG* (Paderborn 2008); Felicitas Fischer von Weikersthal, *Die "inhaftierte" Presse. Das Pressewesen sowjetischer Zwangsarbeitslager 1923–1937* (Wiesbaden 2011); Meinhard Stark, *GULAG-Kinder. Die vergessenen Opfer* (Berlin 2013).

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future research. Focusing on an everyday practice such as sport, this volume inquires into the experience of camps from the perspective of those held in camps and questions the too easy binary opposition of internees and authorities.

After this introduction, Alan Kramer will begin the volume with an in-depth discussion of the camp as the protean institution of war and peace. His chapter unravels the long, but far from linear evolution of internment and coercion in the twentieth century. He marks off colonial concentration camps from those established after the First World War, namely Nazi concentration camps and the camps of the Gulag system. Drawing on this comparison, Kramer argues for the scrupulous discrimination of different types of camps, which, consequently, puts camps after 1945 into a perspective of both continuity and discontinuity. Kramer carves out "the twisted paths of an institution that has been a scar on humankind"[31] and with this informs the volume's ten case studies that will follow the topic of sport played within such camps in more detail.

The chapters of this volume establish a broad perspective on sports in camps both across Europe and with global outreach and throughout the twentieth century. Taking up a much debated aspect of current violence studies, the individual chapters pay special attention to the subjectivity of internees and camp inmates and study their agency and combine these with a transnational and comparative approach towards the history of camps.

The following outline of this volume introduces three key aspects of this contribution, namely the significance of camps for modernity, the performance of bodies under internment and violence, and the trajectory of identity and memory within and beyond camps. As sections of this volume, these three aspects organise our study of sport in camps. Each of them begins with an introduction by the editors that opens up the analytical horizon for the individual case studies but does not intend to formulate specific instruments for studying the respective examples of sport being played in camps.

The first section, Camps as Nomos of Modernity, discusses penal and internment camps beyond the framework of a state of exception. While it is widely held, both in violence studies and political theory, that radicalised violence takes place under extraordinary circumstances, this section questions such an assumption and asks for the inherently radical quality of what contemporaries experienced as modernity. Processes of bureaucratisation, institutionalisation, education, and the imagination of communities underpinned modernisation and permeated everyday life in all different forms of camps. In this regard, the section argues that embedding such practices in camps into modernity fosters

31 See Alan Kramer, *The World of Camps. A Protean Institution in War and Peace*, in *this volume,* 38.

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our understanding of camps and overcomes narratives that follow too closely the epistemology of historical actors. For this, we propose two strategies of critically re-assessing camps and modernity, namely scholarly self-reflexivity and epistemic disobedience.

The chapters in this section put an emphasis on prisoners of war camps from the South African War (1900–1902) to the Second World War and centre on the experiences of camp inmates. The respective chapters analyse how both camp authorities and internees made use of sport to structure camp life and fight the boredom of internment. Floris van der Merwe studies the popularisation of British sports such as rugby among Boers during the South African War and the imperial trajectory of such practices. Christoph Jahr and Panikos Panayi scrutinise how internees during the First World War used sport as a pastime and a cultural contact zone: Jahr brings up German POWs' different usage of English sports or German *Turnen* in English and Japanese internment, and Panayi underlines how Germans, who had already been living in Britain before the war, took up sports to express a sense of belonging. Doriane Gomet studies the history of imprisoned French officers in German camps during the Second World War and confronts sport as a mechanism to govern these POWs with their self-empowerment through sport. The four studies of this section reveal that internees and captives cannot be reduced to the status of depraved or passive objects, but demonstrated a significant subjectivity and reflected upon their life in civilian and POW camps.

The second section, Bodies in Camps between Destruction and Perfection, focuses on bodies and their performances in camps. This focus reveals an immanent distinction within the scholarly literature on camps. The first type of camp seems to be a mere shelter for the masses in extraordinary circumstances, while the second type employs a normative approach towards its inmates. They are at least nominally designed to correct or educate them, or to act out racial hierarchy within a society as well as within the camps. Another distinction can be made with regard to sport itself. While sport in camps describes any athletic activity that happens to take place within the camp, camp sport is an integral part of the normative approach of the second type of camp towards its inmates and is as such a repressive or even abusive practice.

Felicitas Fischer von Weikersthal sheds light on the rare examples of any kind of sportive activity in the Soviet Gulag where sport apparently did not play an important role. In Nazi concentration camps Kim Wünschmann and Veronika Springmann detect the contrary. Wünschmann describes sport as a ritual in early National Socialist concentration camps and finds out about its liminality, and Springmann focuses on the complex interaction of sport and work in Mauthausen during the Second World War. Together the chapters contradict a totalitarian approach to Nazi concentration camps and to the

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Gulag, because of the irritating ambiguousness of sport even under the most violent circumstances of camp experience.

The third section of this volume, Camps Producing Identity and Memory, centres on social integration and community building in camps and takes up two virulent topics in recent cultural studies, identity and memory. The chapters in this section study the significance of sport and social performance to the self-understanding of camp inmates during their experience. In the aftermath, sport was often scarcely remembered by former camp inmates or even omitted, therefore the contributions to this section discuss the potential and limits of bringing up aspects of everyday life in a strictly regulated camp environment. Consequently, the section reveals the dynamics of unmaking and reinventing identity and memory and reconceptualises the spatial and temporal rupture that camps meant for those living inside them.

With a focus on post-war history, the three chapters of this section inquire into camps for displaced persons, refugees, and political activists or even terrorists. Marcus Velke compares the role of sport for Jewish and Estonian DPs and highlights the linkage of DPs identity with wider discourses of national history and identity. Mathias Beer investigates the story of a small Stuttgart-based football club that represented a settlement of German expellees from Yugoslavia as a micro-historical case study of the expellees' integration into West German society. Dieter Reinisch, in contrast, studies Irish and British prisons and internment camps for IRA fighters and their contextual approximation to different sports that challenge the seemingly clear distinction of English and Irish sports. All these different examples stress the historical agency of inmates and link the discussion of historical subjectivity in contexts from radically violent camps to civilian camps in post-war history.

Manfred Zeller concludes this volume with a chapter on the fate of the body modern complementing Kramer's introduction from the perspective of sports history. Here, Zeller argues for a generalising debate on the inherently modern quality of camps. He takes up the discussion on subjectivity and bodies, the agency of camp inmates, as well as the revision of the categories of inmates and camp authorities as such that have come to the fore in the introductory chapters and the case studies of this volume. Arguing for more research on the topic, Zeller points to three major contributions in the case studies of this volume that will help to foster further discussion. This is the inherent modernity of sport in camps, both in discipline and education of camp inmates. Furthermore, the liminal state that qualifies camps as total institutions reproduces hegemonic self-concepts, especially in the field of masculinity. This leads, moreover, to the imaginative quality of sporting performances transposing the reference to wider concepts of order and community such as the nation or an empire. Sport in camps, Zeller points out, both constructs and transgresses the boundaries of modernity.

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Writing the History of Sport in Camps

Writing the history of sport in camps matters. Even more so, this history makes way for a better understanding of camps and provokes new insights into the social structure of camps and their inmates' self-assertion. In conclusion, this volume brings forward three analytical claims that will contribute to the study of camps. First, sport as a violent practice, as well as the inmates' pursuit of cultural sovereignty, can serve as a tool of comparison of different forms of camp experiences throughout the twentieth century and moves the differentiation of inclusive and exclusive camps. Its research illustrates not only the mere dimension of violence in different areas of camp life, but also reveals methods of self-assertion in an institution of heteronomy. The subjectivity of the victimised inmates becomes visible and thus contradicts a too easy understanding of the violent hierarchies within (and beyond) the camp.

Second, sport sheds light on the social processes within the camp. It allows for the measurement of any scope of development of agency of the inmates and endows future research with tools to find out about inner hierarchies and the norms of the inmates. Third, the research of sport in camps serves to overcome a romanticising image of sport and broadens the disciplinary perspective. Sport irritates the routine of the memory of camps, as places of violence and death. This irritation may help to process the modes of memory and to analyse the sources of camp history in a new and refreshed way.

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The editors would like to thank the Fritz Thyssen Stiftung for funding our international conference on Sport in Camps at the Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn in September 2015. This conference gathered experts on the history of camps as well as sport historians in order to discuss the enormous scope of camp experiences in a global perspective throughout the twentieth century. This comparative perspective gave many insights in the structural differences of the variety of camps in question. The conference moreover formed a network of academics producing this volume that we are proud to present to our readership.

Like most other conferences, this one could not have taken place without the help and assistance of many people. We would like to thank in particular the student research assistants Vera Gewiss, Alexander Lang, Alice Lichtva and Alexander Saß of the Department of East European History; Dr. Matthias Koch, warden of the Institute of History; and Iraida Pehl, secretary of the Department of East European History, all at Bonn University, for their kind support in the organisation of the conference.

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Gregor Feindt, Anke Hilbrenner, Dittmar Dahlmann

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Alan Kramer

The World of Camps

A Protean Institution in War and Peace

The term *camps* in modern history evokes images of concentration camps, the Gulag, and genocide. The crematorium at Auschwitz and the bodies piled up at Bergen-Belsen, as seen by Allied soldiers at the liberation in 1945, are ingrained in public memory. These icon-like representations have all but eclipsed the historical context. Focusing on Nazi camps as the endpoint of a tragic history has distorted research; only recently have historians begun to use a transnational, comparative approach that reveals the myriad functions of internment and penal camps. The intention is not to devise a hierarchy of terror and suffering, but to broaden our analytical perspectives. Camps were institutions that can be distinguished from prisons, workhouses, and sites of mass murder. The main focus in this chapter will be on "repression" or "exclusion camps", but "inclusion camps", intended to integrate imagined communities, also form a part of the history. Internment and penal camps, and above all, concentration camps, have shown protean transformability over the last century.[1]

Concentration camps were a creature of modernity, some have argued.[2] It is more precise to say they were a creature of modern warfare, but how did war influence their development? The existence of different forms of camps underlines that their development was contingent, not an inevitable or irreversible process. The connections between different types of camps are evident in the fact that camps, for example, for refugees and displaced persons, which were certainly not exclusion camps, were often located in the former concentration camps.

The first "concentration camps" were set up in the South African War (also known as the Second Boer War), in 1900, when the British army interned the rural Boer civilian population. Although the British did not intend to

1 For a discussion of definitions, see Nikolaus Wachsmann, "The Nazi Concentration Camps in International Context. Comparisons and Connections", in Jan Rüger / Nikolaus Wachsmann (ed.), *Rewriting German History. New Perspectives on Modern Germany* (Basingstoke 2015), 306–325, on pp. 308–310.

2 Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Cambridge 1989); Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer. Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford, CA 1998), see e.g. chapter "The Camp as the *Nomos* of the Modern".

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punish, still less kill the inmates, the camps soon acquired notoriety as sites of misery and mass death. Some 25,000 Boer civilians died, out of about 150,000 inmates, or about 17 per cent.[3] A total of 115,700 black people, whose fate was until recently ignored, were also interned; of these at least 14,154 – perhaps up to 20,000 – died.[4] Notwithstanding Marc Bloch's warning against the historian's obsession with origins, "confusing ancestry with explanation",[5] it is worth examining the motivations of the British to create this institution. The explanation disrupts the fashionable narrative of a linear progression from colonial camps to Nazi genocide.

Did the British in South Africa build on a precedent? The many contemporary British critics of the government alleged that the army had emulated the brutal policies of the Spanish General Weyler in Cuba. In 1896, the Spanish military had implemented a policy of destroying the huts, crops, and livestock of the peasantry, and resettled, or, as the Spanish put it, "reconcentrated" the rural population in order to separate them from the independence fighters and deprive the guerrilla army of supplies. Weyler moved at least 400,000 people into fortified villages and towns. Although many historians loosely use the term *concentration camps*, it was not in use at the time.[6] Strictly speaking, there were no camps in Cuba; it was a policy of concentration without camps.[7] A recent scholarly account by John Tone concludes that between 155,000 and 170,000 Cubans (10 per cent of the entire population), died of disease and starvation.[8] If we take 155,000 as a plausible estimate that excludes other civilian deaths, the mortality rate of 39 per cent of *reconcentrados* was more than double the rate in South Africa.

3 I am following the estimate in Iain R. Smith / Andreas Stucki, "The Colonial Development of Concentration Camps (1868–1902)", in *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 39:3 (2011), 417–437, on p. 427. Smith concludes that the figure of 27,927 deaths calculated in 1906 by the Transvaal archivist P.L.A. Goldman, and repeated by Afrikaner nationalists ever since, relied on suspect methodology. The official British total of 20,139 was equally dubious.

4 Elizabeth van Heyningen, *The Concentration Camps of the Anglo-Boer War. A Social History* (Johannesburg 2013), 150, 169.

5 Marc Bloch, *The Historian's Craft* (Manchester 1992), 24–27.

6 Andreas Stucki, *Aufstand und Zwangsumsiedlung. Die kubanischen Unabhängigkeitskriege 1868–1898* (Hamburg 2012), 10. The US historian Tone places the term *concentration camps* inside quotation marks, indicating distance from it: John Lawrence Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba, 1895–1898* (Chapel Hill, NC 2006), 8.

7 Jonathan Hyslop uses the term uncritically in "The Invention of the Concentration Camp. Cuba, Southern Africa and the Philippines, 1896–1907", in *South African Historical Journal* 63:2 (2011), 251–276, on p. 258; cf. Andrzej J. Kaminski, *Konzentrationslager 1896 bis heute. Eine Analyse* (Stuttgart 1982). Critical by contrast: Andreas Stucki, "Streitpunkt Lager. Zwangsumsiedlung an der imperialen Peripherie", in Bettina Greiner / Alan Kramer (ed.), *Welt der Lager. Zur "Erfolgsgeschichte" einer Institution,* (Hamburg 2013), 62–86.

8 Tone, *War and Genocide,* 223f.; cf. p. 11. Stucki (*Aufstand und Zwangsumsiedlung* 8) endorses the total of 170,000 deaths.

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Cuba and South Africa were part of a broader context of colonial counter-insurgency warfare that emerged at the turn of the century. In the Philippines, the US forces responded to guerrilla warfare in 1901 with a similar policy, and moved 300,000 people into "protected zones", in which up to 10,000 died.[9] The American officers at the time had no compunction about using the term *concentration camps*, indicating awareness of Cuba and South Africa, but concentration was limited to small areas: there was no policy of sweeping the population of entire, contiguous regions into concentration camps.[10]

In German South West Africa, thousands of people of the Herero and Nama tribes who survived General Lothar von Trotha's "war of annihilation" (1904–1907) were interned in camps. Some 7,700, or 45 per cent, died. At the worst camp, on Shark Island, where the death rate was about 60 per cent, a Herero missionary described the conditions:

> We had no proper clothing, no blankets, and the night air on the sea was bitterly cold. The wet sea fogs drenched us and made our teeth chatter. The people died there like flies that had been poisoned. The great majority died there. The little children and the old people died first, and then the women and the weaker men. No day passed without many deaths.[11]

Unlike in Cuba or South Africa, the initiative to establish camps came from the government, not the army, under pressure from German public opinion, which was shocked at the mass death of the Herero, and from the German settlers who needed labour. The high death rates suggest deliberate genocide. But the camps were not the outcome of a military doctrine of total annihilation, as Isabel Hull has claimed. Despite their punitive character, they were intended as a means to restrain military violence.[12] In addition, they functioned as forced labour reserves.

In all four colonial concentration camp systems at the turn of the twentieth century, misery and mass death were not the result of genocidal policy, but of counter-insurgency warfare, with race and class as important but variable criteria. There were international learning processes, but these were not

9 Hyslop, "The Invention of the Concentration Camp", 260.

10 Stuart Creighton Miller, *"Benevolent Assimilation". The American Conquest of the Philippines, 1899–1903* (New Haven, CT 1982).

11 Cited in Casper W. Erichsen, *"The Angel of Death Has Descended Violently Among Them". Concentration Camps and Prisoners-of-War in Namibia, 1904–08* (Leiden 2005), 95. Death rate: Jonas Kreienbaum, *"Ein trauriges Fiasko". Koloniale Konzentrationslager im südlichen Afrika 1900–1908* (Hamburg 2015), 125.

12 Isabel V. Hull, *Absolute Destruction. Military Culture and the Practices of War in Imperial Germany* (Ithaca, NY 2005); Claudia Siebrecht, "Formen von Unfreiheit und Extreme der Gewalt. Die Konzentrationslager in Deutsch-Südwestafrika, 1904–1908", in Greiner / Kramer, *Welt der Lager*, 87–109; Kreienbaum, *"Ein trauriges Fiasko"*.

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