



ARCHAEOLOGY OF CAMPS THE MATERIALITY OF EXCLUSION

Organized by Reinhard BERNBECK, Susan POLLOCK and Christine GLAUNING

23 May 2022

9.00 – 9.15 Opening remarks
Reinhard Bernbeck, Susan Pollock, Christine Glauning

Session 1 – Past internment camps, present refugee camps

Chair: Claudia Glatz (University of Glasgow)

9.15 – 9.50 Beyond the fences: The materiality of Franco's concentration camps in Spain
Laura Muñoz-Encinar (CSIC-Incipient, Spain)

9.50 – 10.25 Archaeology of World War Two Internment Camps in France
*Juliette Brangé, Michaël Landolt and Jean-Pierre Legendre (Archéologie
Alsace, Sélestat /Ministère de la Culture, DRAC Grand Est, Service régional de
l'archéologie Metz/Ministère de la Culture, DRAC Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes,
Service régional de l'archéologie Lyon)*

10.25 – 11.00 The material structures of Japanese-American incarceration
Koji Lau-Ozawa (Stanford University)

11.00 – 11.20 *Coffee/tea break*

11.20 – 11.55 From Zaatari to Azraq: A comparison of two contemporary camps for Syrians
in Jordan
Sophia Hoffmann (Universität Erfurt)

11.55 – 12.30 Ecologies of forced migration and resistance in the Plantationocene
Rui Gomes Coelho (Durham University)

12.30 – 13.00 Discussion
Moderator: Carolin Jauß (Freie Universität Berlin)

13.00 – 14.00 *Lunch*

Session 2 – What do camps for the preparation of war share with internment camps?

Chair: Karoline Georg (Gedenkstätte Stille Helden)

14.00 – 14.35 Forced labour camps during WW II in the 'Reichshauptstadt' Berlin and forms
of reuse and remembrance after the war
Christine Glauning (Dokumentationszentrum NS-Zwangsarbeit, Berlin)

14.35 – 15.10 Housing and treatment of sick forced laborers by the Berlin health services
Ulrike Kersting (KULTURvermittlung/vermittlungskULTUR)

15.10 – 15.45 Nazi forced labor camps at Tempelhof
*Kathrin Misterek and Judith Stern (Deutscher Verband für Archäologie /
Landesdenkmalamt)*

15.45 – 16.05 *Coffee/tea break*

- 16.05 – 16.40 If you build them, wars will come: how foreign military bases fuel war and empire
David Stiefel Vine (American University)
- 16.40 – 17.15 Vectors of harm across the fence-line of military camps
Catherine Lutz (Brown University)
- 17.15 – 18.00 Discussion
Moderator: Matthias Wemhoff (Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte Berlin)

Dinner

24 May 2022

Session 3 – Systems of power, systems of camps, and their materialities

Chair: Manuela Bauche (Freie Universität Berlin)

- 9.00 – 9.35 Materiality and people – archaeology of NS-camps
Thomas Kersting (Brandenburgisches Landesamt für Denkmalpflege und Archäologisches Landesmuseum)
- 9.35 – 10.10 Destructive industries: a landscape-archaeological approach towards Nazi concentration and forced labour camps
Barbara Hausmair (Universität Innsbruck)
- 10.10 – 10.45 An apparatus for removal: Camp systems, transport and the materiality of disappearance
Reinhard Bernbeck (Freie Universität Berlin)
- 10.45 – 11.10 *Coffee/tea break*
- 11.10 – 11.45 Materiality, power and practices: Perspectives from refugee camps in the global South
Annett Bochmann (Universität Siegen)
- 11.45 – 12.20 Understanding the "worst camp on earth": The "hotspot" of Moria, Lesbos
Yannis Hamilakis (Brown University)
- 12.20 – 13.00 Discussion
Moderator: Juliane Haubold-Stolle (Stiftung Berliner Mauer)
- 13.00 – 14.30 *Lunch*

Session 4 – Issues of comparison

Chair: Roland Borchers (Dokumentationszentrum NS-Zwangsarbeit, Berlin)

- 14.30 – 15.05 "To the East": Materialities of exclusion, deception and annihilation in the Aktion Reinhard camps
Caroline Sturdy Colls (Staffordshire University)
- 15.05 – 15.40 Comparisons: Practical, theoretical, and ethical issues
Susan Pollock (Freie Universität Berlin)
- 15.45 – 16.45 Final discussion
Moderator: Felix Wiedemann (Universität Regensburg)

Dinner

An apparatus for removal: Camp systems, transport and the materiality of disappearance

Reinhard Bernbeck, Freie Universität Berlin

The preoccupation with the material legacy of camps, including those that are places of torture and death, leads us to explore in detail these places and their structures, their internal dynamics, and their functions. In the course of this concentration on specific places, one ephemeral spatial dimension of the camp universe is all too easily forgotten: transport and transfer from one camp to another. Camps have never existed as self-contained places; rather, they are integrated into networks.

I approach the question of routes and transportation between camps by comparing three different cases and perspectives. First, I discuss problems of "tracing" that I myself witnessed as an employee of the International Committee of the Red Cross during the violent conflicts in Afghanistan. Then I look at networks of camps for forced laborers in the Nazi era in the Berlin region and examine transfers as potentials for disappearance. Finally, I reverse the external perspective and analyze reports of transfers by former concentration camp inmates. I emphasize the connection between the materiality of forced movement and locational knowledge as well as the enforced lack of such knowledge.



Materiality, power and practices. Perspectives from refugee camps in the Global South

Annett Bochmann, Universität Siegen

My talk sets out the relationship between materiality, power, and social practices using the example of refugee camps in the Global South. Firstly, I explain to what extent refugee camps are a consequence of the nation-state-oriented world order. I understand refugee camps as part of the border materiality and infrastructures. But this global order does not reflect how camps are arranged locally and neglects the dynamics on the ground. (2) Therefore, secondly, I show how materialities (especially infrastructure and architecture) are built with the intention to establish exclusion and immobilities and how they nevertheless give rise to mobilities. I show the structural and interactive workarounds (micro-mobilities of bodies) of those materialities of exclusion through video excerpts and observations at camp borders. Thirdly, I argue that these materialities of immobilization and the external view of them still create a collective body. My conclusion is that even if these materialities of exclusion are locally circumvented and undermined (based on powerful microstructures), they construct a visible collective body and promote at least temporary human differentiations.

Archaeology of World War Two Internment Camps in France

Juliette Brangé (Archéologie Alsace, Sélestat), Michaël Landolt (Ministère de la Culture, DRAC Grand Est/Service régional de l'archéologie, Metz), Jean-Pierre Legendre (Ministère de la Culture, DRAC Auvergne–Rhône-Alpes/Service régional de l'archéologie, Lyon)

Several archaeological digs have recently focused on World War II prisoner of war camps in France, but there are also the remains of many camps who served to intern civilians. In 1939, 500 000 Spanish republicans who had fled Franco's regime were interned. Under the Vichy regime, Jews were rounded up for deportation to Germany and various "undesirables" (gypsies, tramps, communists). At the same time, in Alsace-Moselle, which was annexed to the Reich, the Nazi authorities set up a series of camps for political repression, Soviet soldiers and forced laborers. After the war, many camps were used to imprison suspected collaborators; some were used until the 1960s.

The desire to forget historical episodes considered "embarrassing" led in the post-war decades to a modest veil being drawn over the existence of the camps, whose sites were left forgotten. Buildings that had been converted to house internees were returned to their original use, while wooden barracks quickly disappeared, victims of bad weather, or were deliberately destroyed.

Today, real archaeological studies are being carried out as part of the development and restoration of these camps. We will develop the studies currently being carried out on the site of the former Natzweiler-Struthof concentration camp and as well in some of its annexes. These programs contribute to the development of French research on these issues.



Forced labour camps during WW II in the 'Reichshauptstadt' Berlin and forms of reuse and remembrance after the war

Christine Glauning, Dokumentationszentrum NS-Zwangsarbeit, Berlin

This talk focuses on the approximately 3,000 forced labour camps in the "Reich capital" Berlin. It aims to present the different types of camps in which a total of around 500,000 forced labourers from the occupied territories of Europe were housed during the Second World War. Questions of exclusion and the different living conditions in the camps, but also the dissolution of boundaries and omnipresence through the visible materiality of the camps in the city will be examined as examples.

So far, the later uses of the Berlin camp cosmos has been only selectively researched. In the second part of the lecture, examples of private as well as state and municipal uses of former forced labour camps after 1945 will be presented. Finally, in the context of the long-repressed history of Nazi forced labour, some of the current debates on the preservation of former forced labour camps that take place in the field of tension between remembrance and urban development will be discussed.

Ecologies of forced migration and resistance in the Plantationocene

Rui Gomes Coelho, Durham University

The emergence of plantation economies across the world triggered a series of social and ecological changes whose consequences are still unfolding today. The perseverance of the plantation system came to define modernity, despite all sorts of regime change, and the racial and class hierarchies that shape our lives on this planet. Yet, this continuity was only possible because it was grounded on a concrete material form: the camp. The modern expectations of unrestricted extraction, accumulation, and discipline first took shape in the physical contours of the plantation, and gradually expanded in offshoots such as concentration and refugee camps. In this presentation I will propose a genealogy of the camp and the ways in which the plantation continues to define contemporary experiences of exploitation, but also of resistance.



Destructive industries: a landscape archaeological approach towards Nazi concentration and forced labour camps

Barbara Hausmair, Universität Innsbruck

Under the Nazi regime a broad variety of political and economic institutions operated brutal and murderous internment facilities. Until now, German scholarship has focused predominantly on the building structures and the material conditions of everyday life *in* Nazi internment camps. While this perspective is crucial, it also has to be borne in mind that most camps were inseparably linked to German economy by providing unfree labour for the Nazis' war effort. People exploited by the Nazis spent most of their time outside of the camps, grafting on construction sites or in factories. At the same time, war industry had a massive impact on the regions where they operated by remodelling local landscapes and regional structures to an extent that impacted on those regions far beyond the end of World War Two. This paper presents a holistic approach that conceives of industrial landscapes as a product of Nazi persecution, forced labour and economic desires, using the Nazi shale-oil project "Unternehmen Wüste" (Wurttemberg, 1944-45) as an example. By exploring the spatial and material dimensions of the shale-oil industry, it will be shown how inmates of associated camps were entangled in and affected by its creation and operation, but also how this late Nazi project impacted on the region in the long-term. Based on the presented observations, "landscapes of destruction" are proposed as theoretical model that brings together the destruction of human lives, resources and regional structures.

Understanding the "worst camp on earth": The "hotspot" of Moria, Lesvos

Yannis Hamilakis, Brown University

Moria, on the border island of Lesvos, was the largest refugee camp in Europe and it was completely destroyed by fire in September 2020. It gained notoriety worldwide due to its scale, conditions, and visibility in the global visual economy. Based on fieldwork since 2016, and adopting an assemblage approach grounded on materiality, in this paper I will reflect on the nature, workings, and role of this facility in the border regime of the European Union. While it shared certain features with the well known camps in the Global South, I argue that such a comparison will be of limited value, and that Moria exemplified and embodied a new kind of border facility: a facility which was suspended between surveillance and spectacle, a sophisticated apparatus for the extraction and capturing of data on the people on the move, as well as a global stage for the performance of the rituals of humanitarianism. Containment, detention and the regulation of migrant movement were some of its roles, as was the performance of the biopolitical pedagogy of wretchedness and subjugation. And yet, it was also a field of struggle, a contact zone, a meeting ground which gave rise to multifarious agency, mutual-aid initiatives, and political organizing.



From Zaatari to Azraq: A comparison of two contemporary camps for Syrians in Jordan

Sophia Hoffmann, Universität Erfurt

It is particularly with regards to their material assemblages that a comparison of Jordan's two large camps for Syrians offers valuable insights into the relationship of things, human agency and state authority within camps. Zaatari camp, built rapidly and without much planning in 2012, was from the beginning characterised by the camp population's high degree of self-organisation. The mind-boggling difficulties and expense of providing camp logistics in a centralised manner fueled a drive among entrepreneuring Syrians to provide and distribute resources autonomously. For some observers this display of Syrian agency was admirable and even exemplary. For others, most notably the Jordanian authorities, Zaatari's exceptional space soon became a source of great concern and violent clashes between the police and the camp population ensued. Azraq camp, carefully planned while the conflict around Zaatari escalated and opened in 2014, was designed to firstly, meet all the inhabitants' needs and thus to preempt any need for autonomous organisation and secondly, to present a formidable security apparatus to deter autonomous action. Thus, when comparing the two camps, they show striking differences with regards to the provision and circulation of objects of daily life, as well as in their physically secured borders. In this presentation I will describe these differences and then offer an analysis about what the move from Zaatari to Azraq reveals about the relationship of humanitarian aid and statehood in contemporary West Asia.

Materiality and People – Archaeology of Nazi Camps in Brandenburg

Thomas Kersting, Brandenburgisches Landesamt für Denkmalpflege und Archäologisches Landesmuseum

In Brandenburg archaeology is dealing with materiality of Nazi camps since 25 years, and it's time to present first results to the public, e.g. with the exhibition "Exclusion" (Ausgeschlossen) since 2020.

The evaluation of the finds shows, that most objects of a 20th century industrial culture can be assigned to a function quickly and many typical structures and finds are found at almost every camp site. But many objects show a certain change of function under conditions of terror, which seems characteristic for Nazi camp finds. Material remains can be assigned to different spheres of life in the camps, both perpetrator and victim groups can be recognized archaeologically.

The function of material remains in different camp types is discussed, and in result we see that specific material remains characterize groups of people rather than camp-types. People exposed to racist ideology, military conventions, economic interests, and political dictates were treated in a way that left traces in materiality. What becomes archaeologically visible here is the criminal efficiency and high flexibility in the exploitation of people up to their extermination.



Housing and treatment of sick forced laborers by the Berlin health services

Ulrike Kersting, KULTURvermittlung/vermittlungsKULTUR

Illness and work absence did not fit the "labor deployment" of foreign workers in the German Reich between 1939 and 1945. How should the sick Poles and Eastern workers in particular be treated from the racial ideological perspective of the Nazi state? A brief excursus on the living conditions of the forced laborers clarifies the reasons for their mass illness. The procedure in case of illness of forced laborers was determined by several actors (health insurance companies, health offices, companies, labor offices) in interaction and changed constantly because it depended on the current war situation and the "supply" of labor. The various accommodations of the health office in Berlin and the surrounding area are briefly presented. The example of the "Krankenhaus der Reichshauptstadt in Mahlow" is used to illustrate the materiality of exclusion. The use of the site after 1945 and the "rediscovery" of the site with the installation of a memorial site as well as the results of the building history research are discussed at the end.

The material structures of Japanese American incarceration

Koji Lau-Ozawa, Stanford University

The WWII incarceration of Japanese Americans relied on a mixture of modified, converted, and purpose-built structures connected by mostly pre-existing infrastructures to assemble, transport, and confine approximately 126,000 people. Over the past 30 years, the study of these structures has varied with some receiving fairly intensive study whilst others scant attention. Understanding the full variability of this archipelago and the material realities of its construction provides insight into the lives of incarcerated and the legacies of incarceration. This talk first provides an overview of Japanese American incarceration in the United States and archaeological projects that have examined it. It then turns towards the recent work at the Gila River incarceration camp, and how its material construction and supply chains shaped the everyday experience of Japanese American incarcerated. Further the material remnants of the camp still impact the present day and the futures of Indigenous communities on whose land the camp was constructed.



Beyond the fence: The materiality of Franco's concentration camps in Spain

Laura Muñoz-Encinar, CSIC-Incipient, Spain

The Francoist repressive strategy – unleashed after the coup d'état of 17 July 1936 – developed complex mechanisms of physical and psychological punishment. The end of the civil war – in April 1939 – resulted in tens of thousands of prisoners being (re)integrated into the social fabric of the “New Spain”. From then on, thousands of inmates embarked on a journey that, in the best case, would take them to concentration camps, prisons, or forced labour camps. Over the past decade, conflict archaeology has played a new role in the investigation of the Francoist punitive system. Concentration camps, prisons, and labour camps have been archaeologically investigated, producing new narratives surrounding contemporary Spanish history. A step further in the research has been taken through the analysis of the mass graves within the landscape of the conflict in Spain. The results have revealed new aspects of the role played by violence as a form of social control as well as the extreme living conditions to which the inmates were subjected.

Vectors of harm across the fenceline of military camps

Catherine Lutz, Brown University

Military camps represent a special species of enclosed, securitized spaces of violence. Such camps have varied through history in the nature of their management of space, war material, and military personnel in ways reflective of the mode of warfare in which they engage and the territory in which they are established. This paper explores the nature of the military camp fenceline, what movement it has prevented, and what movement it in fact has allowed or encouraged in the era of modern warfare. In particular, it describes the continuities and discontinuities, and the differences and similarities between the chemists'/physicists' camps (so-called for the era of modern industrial warfare's use of the expertise of physical scientists for its weaponry and the environmental and secrecy impacts of that era, which continues through today) and the social scientists' camps (those of the hyper-modern era in which public relations, outsourcing, and privatization have come to prominence as a mode of warfare and in which the flows across the fenceline have become both ideological and economic in new ways).



Nazi forced labor camps at Tempelhof

Kathrin Misterek (Deutscher Verband für Archäologie) and Judith Stern (Landesdenkmalamt Berlin)

Between 1940 and 1945, several thousand people were forced to work for the German Luftwaffe at the Tempelhof airport in the heart of Berlin. They had to build and repair aircraft. The forced laborers came from Poland, the Soviet Union, France, Bulgaria, Italy and Hungary, among others. They lived in three large barrack camps on the Tempelhof airfield, which were archaeologically examined in the years 2012-2014. In addition to the remains of building structures, over 90,000 finds were uncovered. The latter consist of a modest number of unique objects and tens of thousands of mass finds, including nails, fragments of glass and porcelain. The artefacts and their context have been evaluated in a multi-year research project at the Freie Universität Berlin until the end of 2021. The project aimed to help shed light on everyday camp life beyond the written reports and files of the perpetrators and to help keep alive the memory of the great and omnipresent crime of forced labor under National Socialism.

Comparisons: Practical, theoretical, and ethical issues

Susan Pollock, Freie Universität Berlin

Comparison has long been a central epistemological element of anthropological and more specifically archaeological knowledge production. Indeed, anthropology has often been known for its explicitly comparative approach. At the same time, there have been numerous calls to free ourselves from the shackles of comparison, ranging from arguments against analogical reasoning to an insistence on the primacy of individual case studies. Nonetheless, most scholars would agree that comparison is something that we cannot do without.

My concern in this talk is specifically with the status of comparison in historical studies that focus on contexts of injustice, oppression, and suffering. Can such contexts and the suffering they lead to be compared? Or by doing so, do we do violence to the individuality of people's experiences and the situatedness in which they occur? If comparison is ethically impossible, as implied by Adorno, are we left with little more than single "cases"? Or can we pursue comparison as an ethical matter, as proposed by D. Battaglia?



"To the East": Materialities of exclusion, deception and annihilation in the Operation Reinhard Camps

Caroline Sturdy Colls, Staffordshire University

On the 19 July 1942 – shortly after the completion of the Treblinka extermination camp - Himmler ordered the *'resettlement of the entire Jewish population of the General Government'*. This was certainly not the first time that the notion of *'resettlement to the East'* had been suggested, nor was it the first attempt to convince Jews that they were being sent to labour camps in Eastern Europe. However, as Timothy Snyder (2011: 217) accurately asserts in *Bloodlands*, by the end of 1941 *'resettlement to the East would mean mass murder'*. Comparing the findings from archaeological research at Bełżec, Sobibor and Treblinka, this paper will examine the material evidence of exclusion, deception and annihilation at the Operation Reinhard camps. It will discuss the ways in which the Nazis used the architecture of the camps to mask the true nature of their extermination actions and consider whether the materiality of the camps can provide new information about how the victims perceived their fate. Ultimately, it will consider the contribution that comparative archaeological methodologies can make to our understanding of the euphemistic *'resettlement to the east'* policy and Nazi genocidal actions more broadly.

If you build them, wars will come: How foreign military bases fuel war and empire

David Stiefel Vine, American University

Military camps (or bases) share some commonalities and genealogical connections with camps of containment, forced labor, and killing (the camps of oppression that are the focus of this conference). Comparing military camps and camps of oppression, however, is of limited use analytically, politically, and materially. Prisons surely have more in common with camps of oppression than do military camps.

Avoiding what the organizers rightly call “ethically unacceptable abstraction and reduction,” my paper will outline the history of military camps, pointing to commonalities with camps of oppression and the role of militaries in creating camps of oppression. I will show how, in qualitatively different ways than other camps, foreign extraterritorial military bases have been a foundation for imperial profit-seeking wars, mass killing, and the control of foreign lands and peoples for millennia.

Focusing on the United States empire, I will discuss how U.S. foreign bases have played key roles in launching wars and expanding U.S. imperial control since the 18th century. My paper will describe the role U.S. and other foreign military bases played leading up to Putin’s war in Ukraine and offer a plan for placing restrictions on bases that could help negotiate an end to the war.