

The Third World in World War II



Die **Dritte Welt** im Zweiten Weltkrieg



Erweiterte Ausstellung

im NS-Dokumentationszentrum der Stadt Köln

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Geschichte · Kunst · Filme · Theater · Musik

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Graph: Amado Alfadni

The poster for the last presentation of the exhibition
in spring 2025 at the NS Documentation Centre of the City of Cologne
(Graphic: Amado Alfadni, Egypt/Sudan)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	5
PROLOGUE	
A Suppressed Chapter of History	8
First, Second and Third World (Explanation of the term “Third World”)	9
Uncounted Victims (The problem of numbers and statistics)	
CANVAS I: Colonial Powers and Colonies at the Start of World War II	10
VIDEO I: Forgotten Liberators	13
AFRICA	
Ethiopia 1935: The Outbreak of WWII in Africa	16
TWISTED HISTORY: History Textbook for German Schools on Ethiopia	17
LISTENING STATION 1: Te Mikael Kidanemariam – Ethiopia	
The Colonial Plans of the Nazis	18
Konrad Adenauer as Deputy Chairman of the German Colonial Association	19
Alternatives to the “final solution” in Madagascar	
The British Colonial Army in World War II	20
African Combatants from the French Colonies	21
De Gaulle: “Launching Pad Africa”	22
LISTENING STATION 2: Yoro Ba – Senegal	
Crimes against African Prisoners of War committed by the Wehrmacht	23
LISTENING STATION 3: Mamadou Hady Bah – Guinea	24
The Thiaroye Revolt and the French Reaction	
VIDEO II: The Colonial Friend, Short film, Rachid Bouchareb, Algeria/France 2004	26
A Day of Liberation in Europe – A Day of Mourning in Algeria (8th of May 1945)	27
Raw Materials for the Weapons Industry	28
Donations for the Allies	29
Supplies for the Nazis	
Forced Labour for the War of the Colonial Rulers	30
Alms not Pensions for African War Veterans	31
“Apartheid” to the Grave (South African Soldiers in WWII)	32
LISTENING STATION 4: Samuel Masila Mwanthi – Kenya	
The Portuguese Colonies during the Second World War	33
Mussolini’s Airport in Cape Verde	34
East Timor as a Theatre of War	
ASIA	
China 1937: The Outbreak of War in Asia	35
TWISTED HISTORY: “War became a World War at Pearl Harbor 1941”	36
Korea’s Role in Japanese Warfare	37
The Japanese War Crimes Committed Against Asian Women	38
The Tokyo Women’s Tribunal in 2000	39
LISTENING STATION 5: Hwang Kum-Ju – South Korea	
CANVAS II: Women’s Portraits: “Abducted and Abused in Japanese Military Brothels”	40
Japan’s War of Annihilation against China	43
The Massacre of Nanking 1937/38	44
Eyewitness Accounts from Nanking	
The Consequences of the War on the Malay Peninsula	45
We have a choice (Chin Peng – Malaya)	46
The 1945 Famine in Indochina	
The Indonesian Islands under Japanese Rule	47
India: The Largest Colonial Army of All Time	48
TWISTED HISTORY: Churchill on Hindustan (India)	49
The 1943/44 Famine in Bengal	
The Philippines – A Country of Resistance	50
Manila 1945	51
LISTENING STATION 6: Remedios Gomez-Paraiso – Philippines	
After the War Meant Before the War	52

OCEANIA

Nauru 1940: The Outbreak of War in Oceania	53
Hawaii 1941: The Polynesian Victims of Pearl Harbor	54
TWISTED HISTORY: German TV – War in the Pacific fought on “uninhabited islands”	55
LISTENING STATION 7: Haunani-Kay Trask – Hawaii	
Deployment Bases for the Allies in the South Pacific	56
New Guinea: Farmers and Fishermen at War	57
TWISTED HISTORY: Yusako Goto, Japanese High Command, on Compensations	58
LISTENING STATION 8: Asina Papau/Ovivi Arau – New Guinea	
The Revolt of Colonial Soldiers from Papua	59
Scouting for the Allies on the Solomon Islands	60
Jacob Vouza – “National Hero of the Solomons”	61
LISTENING STATION 9: Biuku Gasa – Solomon Islands	
Australian Aborigines: Soldiers at No Cost	62
Granny Lovett’s Stars (Australia)	63
The Maori-Battalion of New Zealand	
French Colonies in the Pacific: From the South Seas to North Africa	64
Polynesian Island Chief Warns about Hitler in 1939	65
A Critique of “Modern” Warfare (Solomon Islands)	
Atolls between the Fronts: The War in the Central Pacific	66
The 1945 Banaba Massacre	67
Final Battles and War Crimes in Micronesia	68
“Radiant Times” after 1945: The Militarisation of the Pacific	69
For a nuclear-free Pacific!	70
Eyewitness from Palau: “Your next war please not in our part of the world”	
From “Million Dollar Point” to “Iron Bottom Sound”	71

SOUTH AMERICA

Brazilians in Monte Castello – Mexicans in Manila	72
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CARIBBEAN

Tens of Thousands of Volunteers against Fascism	73
Surinam’s Resistance Fighter Anton de Kom	74
Martinique’s Anti-Fascist Frantz Fanon	

PERSECUTION OF JEWS (OUTSIDE OF EUROPE)

Anti-Semitic Laws and Labour Camps in North Africa	75
Hitler’s willing Helpers in North Africa	76
LISTENING STATION 10: Alice Cherki – Algeria	
Nazi Plans for the “Final Solution” in the Middle East	77
Turkey and the Holocaust	78
Nazi Plans for the “Final Solution” in the Far East	79

COLLABORATION

Fascist Sympathisers in the Middle East	80
“Celebrating Nazi victories”	81
Arab Saviours (like Khaled Abdelwahhab – Tunisia)	
Palestine Leader and War Criminal (Hadj Amin el-Husseini)	82
TWISTED HISTORY: “Supporting the Allies” – consensus approach in Palestine	83
The Mufti of Jerusalem and the “Final Solution”	
3,500 Indians in the Waffen-SS – 50,000 on the Side of the Japanese	84
Subhas Chandra Bose (India) admires “youthful spirit” of Fascism	85
The Fascist World Order	
Fascist Sympathisers in the Far East	86
Jews out – Nazis in. Argentina under Juan Perón	87
The Collaborators’ Victims	88

EPILOGUE

The Right to Remembrance (Professor Kum’a Ndumbe, Cameroon)	89
An Exhibition by recherche international (Credits)	90

INTRODUCTION

This brochure catalogues the exhibition ‘The Third World in World War II’, which was curated by journalists and social scientists from the ‘recherche international e.V.’ association based in Cologne.

The exhibition was the result of more than ten years of research across 30 countries in Africa, Asia and Oceania, during which the authors worked with local historians and surviving witnesses. In Africa, these included contributors such as Joseph Ki-Zerbo from Ouagadougou who, in 1978, published the first history of Africa from an African perspective, as well as combat veterans from Algeria, Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Morocco, Namibia, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania and Western Sahara.

In Manila, we met Ricardo Trota Jose from the University of the Philippines, who has spent many years researching the impact of Japanese occupation. He told us that a shocking 1.1 million people died in his country during the Second World War – one in 16!

In Hong Kong, Chinese historian Tim Ko showed us around a museum on the consequences of Japanese occupation in what was then still a British Crown colony.

On a research trip that took us to seven Pacific island states, we learnt that in the 1980s historians from the University of the South Pacific in Hawaii held oral history conferences on the islanders’ experiences of the war. These are documented in a number of publications in English and Pidgin.

On the islands of Vanuatu, local field researchers recorded hundreds of interviews with eyewitnesses on the Second World War. The tape recordings are now archived in the cultural centre in the island nation’s capital, Port Vila, where we were allowed access to them.

The findings from the many years of research were published by ‘Verlag Assoziation A’ (Hamburg/Berlin) in 2005 in a book entitled ‘Our Victims Don’t Count’. Course materials for schools and other educational institutions followed in 2008. Both have since been issued in new editions. A paperback edition of the book is still available from the Federal Agency for Civic Education (bpb) as of 2025.

The exhibition’s opening event at the NS Documentation Centre of the City of Cologne





ANC veteran Denis Goldberg (1933 – 2020) at the installation of the Cape Town exhibition in February 2017



A school group visiting the exhibition's South African section at Cape Town

In a further effort to increase awareness of the important role – albeit one largely ignored in the history books – of the Third World in the Second World War, recherche international e.V. curated a (touring) exhibition on the subject in 2009, which is now documented in this catalogue.

Leaving the Soviet Union out of the equation, more soldiers from the Third World fought in World War II than from Europe. Numerous Third World regions, from the coast of South America via West, North and East Africa, the Middle East and vast areas of Asia all the way to the Pacific Islands, became theatres of war and were left devastated post-1945. China alone mourned a higher number of casualties than the combined total incurred by the fascist countries responsible for the war, i.e. Germany, Italy and Japan.

The exhibition highlighting these forgotten facts has – as of 2025 – been on show in over 60 locations in Germany and Switzerland. An English version has been touring South Africa since 2017. A Portuguese version was made for Mozambique. The exhibition consists of four geographical sections (on Africa, Asia, Oceania and South America & the Caribbean) as well as two sections on specific topics (the persecution of Jews outside Europe and collaboration). The exhibition's ten listening stations feature contemporary witnesses from a range of different countries sharing their experiences. Their contributions also appear in written form in this brochure.

The exhibition's video station I will present 200 photographs of people from all continents who fought to free the world from fascism in the Second World War. Portraits of these 'forgotten liberators' are partially documented in the brochure.

South African premiere of the exhibition at the Castle Museum in Cape Town



Algerian director Rachid Bouchareb's short film *THE COLONIAL FRIEND (L'AMI Y A BON)* will be on display at video station II in the Africa section of the exhibition. It recalls the Thiaroye massacre in 1944, in which colonial soldiers from West Africa, upon returning home from the war and demanding to be paid what they were owed, were massacred on the orders of their French officers.

Following the conclusion of the longer project – with the final extended exhibition to be held at the NS Documentation Centre of the City of Cologne in early 2025 – online versions of the exhibition in German, English, French and Portuguese will continue to be available free of charge at www.3www2.de. The website also offers extensive background information on the research and publication project.

The project archive featuring the documents, books, interviews, photos and films compiled over four decades will be run by the 'Archiv für alternatives Schrifttum (afas)' in Duisburg and therefore continue to be freely accessible to everyone.

The creators of the 'Third World in the Second World War' project hope that it will help to bring about a change in perspective – from a Eurocentric to a more global historiography. A global view of history in general – and specifically of the Second World War – could inspire more of a sense of solidarity with (war) refugees today and help Europe to face up to its historical responsibility towards the countries, regions and continents that were devastated by the European powers through colonisation and war.

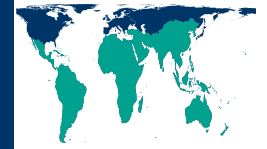
March 2025

recherche international e.V.

Banner advertising the exhibition at the Castle of Good Hope in Cape Town



A Suppressed Chapter of History



PROLOGUE

The Third World fielded more soldiers in World War II than Europe and suffered more losses than Germany, Italy and Japan combined. Vast areas of the Third World served as battlegrounds, and the warring nations requisitioned food for their troops and raw materials for their weapons industries there.

On the eve of the war, the world was still largely colonized. All the warring nations utilised their colonies for military purposes. As the biggest colonial power, **Great Britain** with its Commonwealth commanded an empire comprising a quarter of the globe as well as a quarter of the world's population.

France's colonies were 20 times larger than the “motherland” and boasted a population of 100 million. The area of the **Dutch East Indies** (present-day Indonesia) equalled Western Europe in size.

The **USA** ruled over the Philippines and over large parts of the Pacific from island bases such as Hawaii and American Samoa.

Japan controlled the North Pacific with Micronesia as well as the Korean peninsula, Formosa and Manchuria. In East Africa, Mussolini's fascist regime controlled a colonial territory which was several times larger than **Italy**.

In the wake of the First World War, **Germany** had to hand over its colonies in Africa and the Pacific to the victors. However, claiming them back was one of the Nazis' declared military objectives. With the help of the collaborating Vichy government in France, the Nazi regime gained access to raw materials, workers and soldiers from French colonies in Western and Northern Africa as well as Indochina from 1940 onwards.



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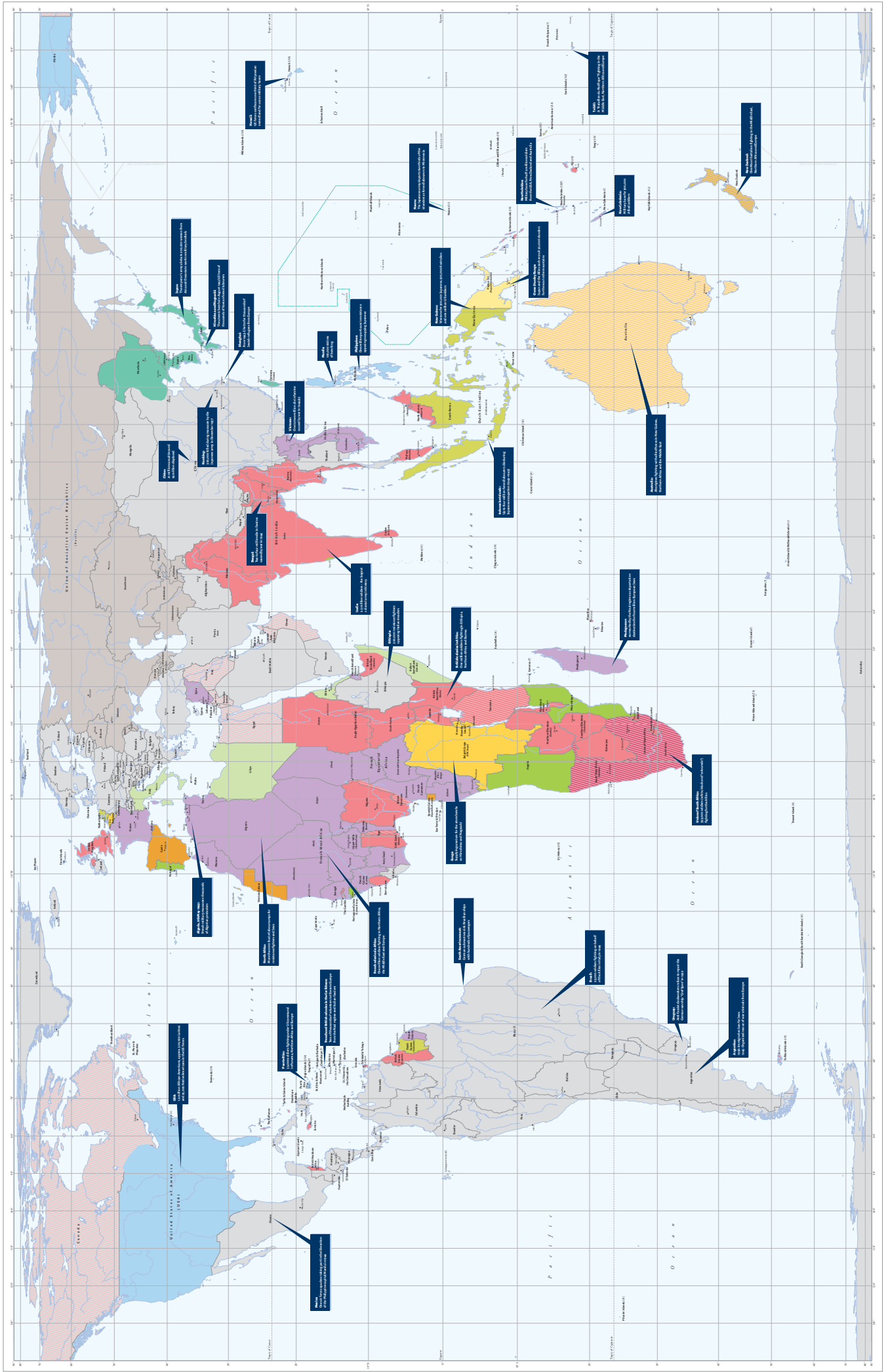
The term “Third World” has been criticised because it treats different countries from Africa to the Pacific as a single entity and categorises them linguistically two places below the “First World”. But it is the only term that encompasses everything shown in this exhibition, and to speak of the “Global South” in contrast to the industrialised nations of the “North” would be geographically incorrect, because countries in the Northern Hemisphere were also involved in the war and countless indigenous and migrant populations from the industrialised nations of the “North” were recruited for military service. The anti-colonial thinker Frantz Fanon coined the term “Third World” for this “colossal mass”, the “four-fifths of humanity” that Europe enslaved and subjugated. Fanon saw this as a global class concept and demanded that the “Third World” must “begin a new chapter in history” in order to “solve the problems that Europe has not been able to solve”. This is also how the term is understood in the exhibition.



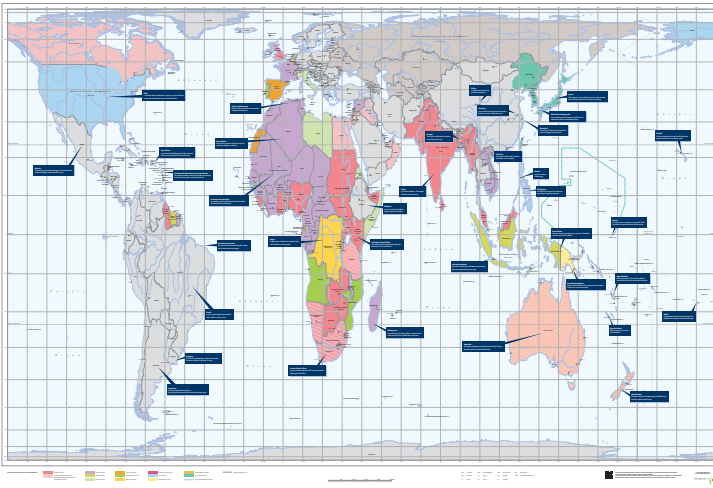
Although the number of people from the Third World who lost their lives in the Second World War exceeds the number of those from Europe, they don't usually feature in statistics about the victims of this war. Dead soldiers and civilians from the colonies were either not counted at all or added to the losses of their respective colonial powers.

European history books therefore still feature statistics about “the death toll of World War II” which, in addition to the approximately 20 million victims in the Soviet Union and more than five million in Germany, list all the losses of European countries including “1,400 casualties in Denmark”, but none of the millions upon millions of deaths in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Oceania. The numbers quoted in this exhibition are based on estimates by historians from the affected countries as well as critical researchers from the (former) colonial powers. Even though they can only serve as approximations, they clearly illustrate the sheer magnitude of the war victims from around the world that so far have been forgotten.

Colonial Powers and Colonies at the Start of World War II



Colonial Powers and Colonies at the Start of World War II



The map is based on the so-called “Peters-Projection”, which uses an equal-area projection to illustrate the real size of the colonies and the countries of the colonial powers at the beginning of World War II.

Americas

USA:

1.2 million African-Americans, approx. 300,000 Latinos and 25,000 Native Americans in the US forces

Mexico:

One air force squadron taking part in the liberation of the Philippine capital Manila in 1944

Puerto Rico:

53,000 soldiers fighting under US command in Panama, Northern Africa and Europe

French and British Colonies in the Caribbean:

Tens of Thousands of volunteers to liberate Europe from the Nazi-Regime and Italian fascism

Brazil:

25,000 soldiers fighting on behalf of the Allies in Italy in 1944

Argentina:

1938: Immigration ban for Jews
1945: Organized rescue of war criminals from Europe

South American coast:

German submarines sink Brazilian ships with hundreds of passengers

Uruguay:

Anti-fascist harbour workers refuse to repair the German warship “Graf Spee” in 1939

Africa

Algeria, 8 May 1945:

French military massacres thousands of Algerian protesters

North Africa:

More than 100 fascist labour camps for resistance fighters and Jews

French Colonies in Africa:

One million soldiers fighting in Northern Africa, the Middle East and Europe

Ethiopia:

500,000 resistance fighters opposing Italian invaders

British colonies in Africa:

One million soldiers for war operations in Ethiopia, North Africa and Burma

Congo:

Supplying uranium for the atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki

Madagascar:

Earmarked by the Nazi regime as deportation destination for four million European Jews

Union of South Africa:

335,000 soldiers (white, black and “coloureds”) fighting for the Allies

Asia

Japan:

The Emperor's army abducts 200,000 women from Asia and Oceania to its military brothel

Hiroshima and Nagasaki:

The atomic bombs in August 1945 kill tens of thousands of Korean forced labourers

China:

21 million casualties and 95 million displaced

Nanking:

300,000 killed during massacre by the Japanese army in December 1937

Shanghai:

From 1943: Ghetto for thousands of Jewish refugees from Europe

Vietnam:

One to two million die in famine caused by war in 1944/45

Bengal:

Two to four million die in famine caused by war in 1944

India:

2.5 million soldiers — the largest colonial army in history

Manila:

100,000 victims of bombing

Philippines:

One million partisans in resistance opposing occupying Japanese

Indonesian Islands:

Up to four million forced labourers die during Japanese occupation (1942-1945)

Oceania

Hawaii:

US forces confiscate one third of Polynesian owned land for use as military bases

Nauru:

The Japanese army deports two thirds of the islanders as forced labourers to Micronesia

New Guinea:

Warzone for 300,000 Japanese, 500,000 Australian and one million US soldiers

Owen Stanley Range:

Japan and the Allies each recruit 50,000 islanders for the war in the mountains

New Hebrides:

Military base for half a million soldiers from the USA, New Zealand and Australia

Tahiti:

A „Bataillon du Pacifique“ fighting in the Middle East, Northern Africa and Europe

New Caledonia:

Military base for 300,000 allied soldiers

Australia:

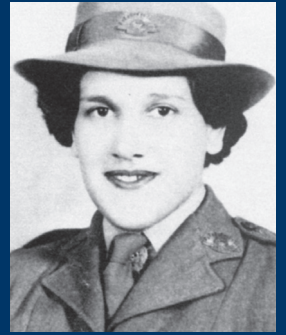
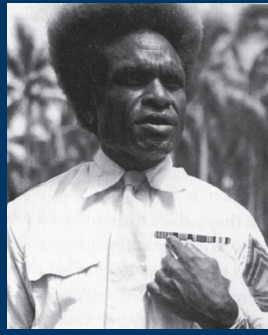
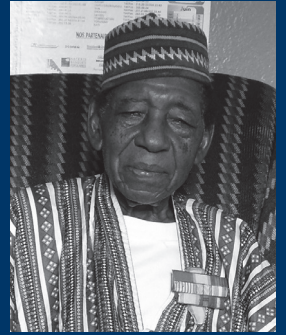
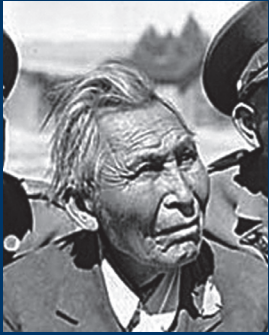
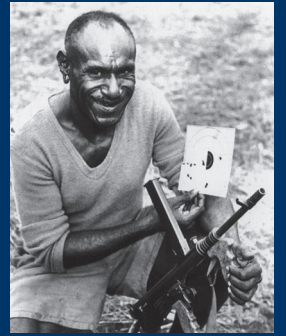
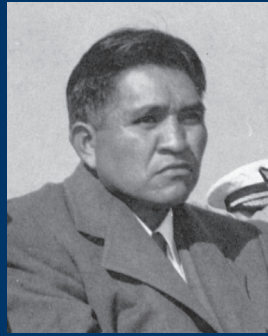
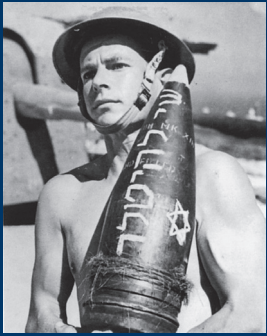
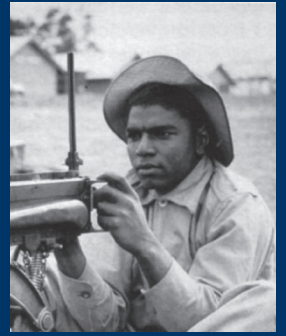
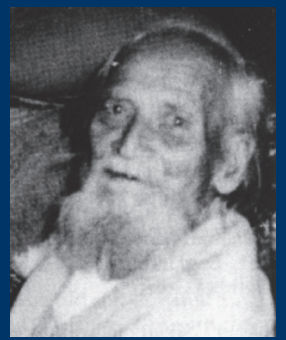
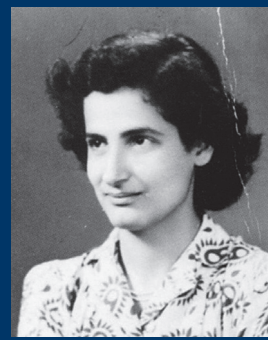
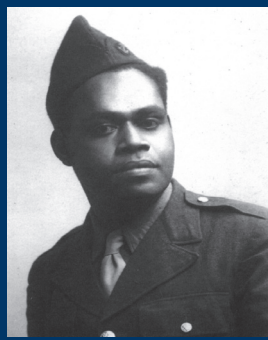
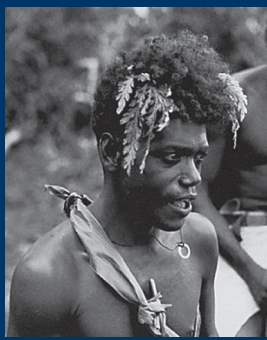
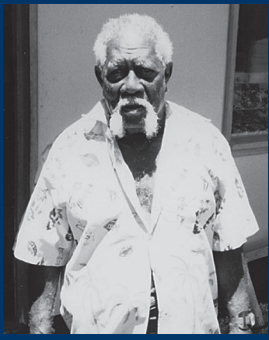
Aborigines fighting with allied forces in New Guinea, Northern Africa and the Middle East

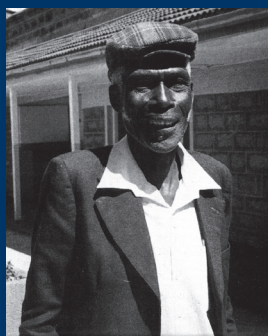
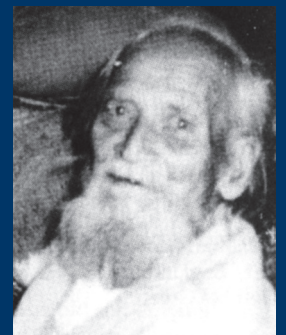
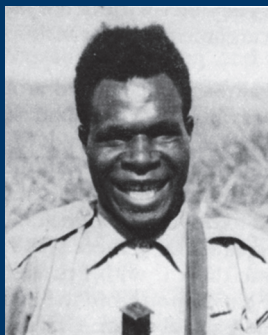
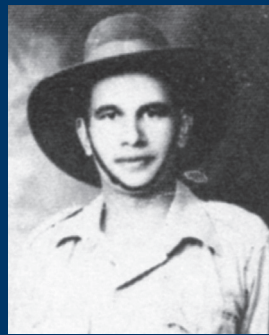
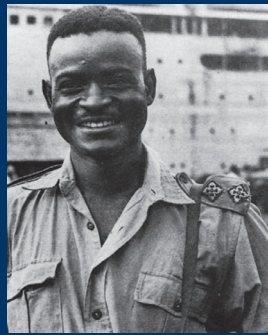
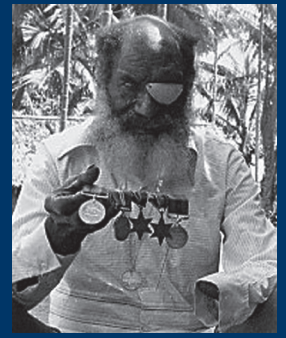
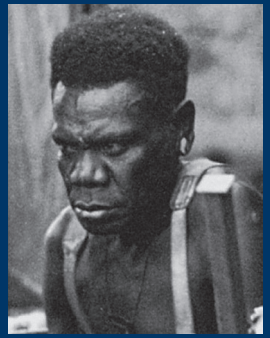
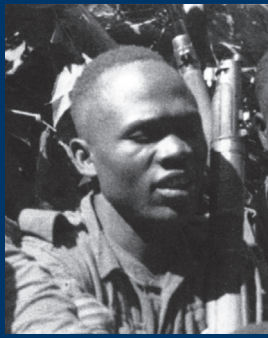
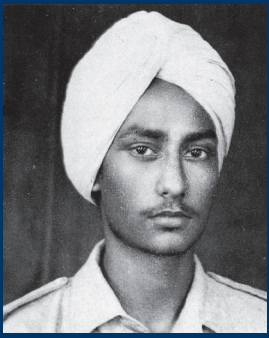
New Zealand:

One Maori battalion fighting in the Middle East, Northern Africa and Europe



FORGOTTEN LIBERATORS





Ethiopia 1935: The Outbreak of WW II in Africa



AFRICA

On 3rd October 1935 Italian troops invaded Ethiopia. Italy's fascist dictator Benito Mussolini wanted to set up a new "Roman Empire" in East Africa.

Half of the 300,000 invaders were African soldiers from Italy's colonies in Libya, Somaliland and Eritrea.

Ethiopia, the only African country to have withstood European colonisation up to this point, commanded a 250,000 strong army. However, it was forced to retreat under the weight of the Italian troops with their modern tanks, aeroplanes, cluster bombs and poison gas.

By the time the Italian fascists reached the capital Addis Ababa on 5th May 1936, they had already massacred 150,000 civilians.

The Ethiopian emperor Haile Selassie fled to exile in London and Mussolini appointed the Italian marshal Rodolfo Graziani "viceroy" of Ethiopia. Graziani established a reign of terror where rape and executions were the order of the day. Ethiopians had to salute portraits of "Il Duce" in the streets and carry out forced labour.



500,000 partisans resisting the Italian invaders

The Ethiopian resistance formed primarily in the countryside. For four years, 500,000 partisans who called themselves "patriots" fought largely unsupported against the Italian occupiers.

troops from 17 countries and four continents were engaged in this theatre of war in Eastern Africa. This is why for many Africans the Italian attack on Ethiopia in October 1935 marks the beginning of World War II.

Only after Italy had declared war on Great Britain and France in June 1940 did the Ethiopian guerrilla troops receive support from the British colonies in Western and Eastern Africa as well as from India and South Africa.

Until the capitulation of the Italians in Ethiopia in April 1941,





“The Ethiopians were unable to counter the (Italian) attack which was led with modern weaponry, poison gas and extreme brutality.”

From a history textbook for German schools, 2006/07.



Te Mikael Kidanemariam (above left), born 1924, was only ten years old when he joined his adult brothers in the ranks of the Ethiopian freedom fighters. From 1936 to 1941, about 500,000 “patriots” fought in a frantic attempt to resist the Italian invaders. Six decades later, some of the survivors were still meeting regularly at the Addis Ababa Veterans Club, amongst them Adamu Asseghan (above right) as well as Like T. Astatke Abate, Assefa Bayu (President of the “Ethiopian Patriots Association”) and Kengnzmach Mike Ytbarek (below, left to right).



Te Mikael Kidanemariam – Ethiopia



Listening station 1: Te Mikael Kidanemariam – Ethiopia

“My father was a close attendant of the emperor Heile Selassie. He fought at the battle of Mai Ceu with the emperor. When he came back he was wounded. He came back with his own rifle and a lot of bullets. He called his sons of whom I was one and said: ‘The emperor has asked the Ethiopians not to give up to the Italians but to resist the aggressors. And he told us that he would be coming back later on’.

My older brothers wanted to fight; then I decided to go. I asked my father to give me his gun and he gave it to me and I joined my relatives, who decided to go to the bushes and into the mountains to fight the Italians.

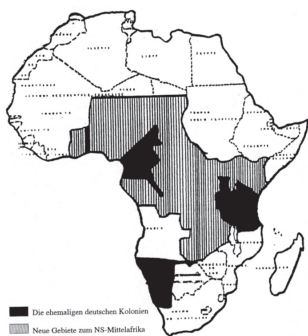
Our strategy was: when the Italians come in huge numbers we hide and let them pass way down into the interior into the peasants areas and then we surround them and finish them there. Then we disappear. We take as many as guns and bullets as possible and then we hide ourselves.”

The Colonial Plans of the Nazis



In the wake of World War I, the German Reich had to hand over “its” colonies to the victorious powers at the Versailles peace negotiations in 1919. Since then, German importers and sellers of colonial goods as well as industrialists and bankers who had been profiting from the exploitation of the German colonies were agitating against the so-called “shame of Versailles”. Nationalist-conservative politicians supported this propaganda and from 1933 the Nazi regime picked it up and seamlessly continued it.

The Nazi party NSDAP set up an Office for Colonial Policy (KPA) in order to prepare for the administration of a “Germanic colonial empire” in Africa. This was supposed to stretch from the Atlantic coast in the West of the continent all the way to the Indian Ocean in the East. Its conquest was one of the Nazis’ declared military objectives and was to follow the subjugation of Eastern Europe.



German colonial plans 1940.

From 1940 onwards, the Nazi regime recruited police and SS personnel for duty “in the tropics” and trained selected men and women to manage plantations and mines.

The African colonial empire was supposed to supply Nazi Germany with nuts, oils, coffee, tea, cocoa, tobacco and fruits, as well as cotton, sisal, tropical woods, ores, metals, gold and diamonds. There were even some “work record books” printed to register the “natives” who were meant to carry out forced labour under German supervision. And Nazi lawyers drew up a “colonial blood protection law” to prevent any “racial mingling” within the colonies.



“Here, too, is our lebensraum!”

“There are a great many things that Germany must procure from the colonies and we need colonies just as much as any other power.” – Chancellor Adolf Hitler to a representative of the “Sunday Express” on 11.2.33.

As early as July 1941, the KPA was able to announce, “When the Führer, the shaper of the German future, gives the mission order for the colonial territories, he will find the Office for Colonial Policy equipped to carry out his order to the best of its abilities.”

For the East African island of Madagascar the Nazi regime had a particularly sinister use in mind. It was meant to be the destination of four million European Jews. The Nazis were well aware that such a high number of people couldn’t possibly survive on the island. The death of most of the deportees had already been factored in. It was the superiority of the British fleet around the sea routes of Africa which prevented Madagascar from becoming the location of the holocaust.

AFRICA

Konrad Adenauer

(German Chancellor 1949-63) was, prior to 1933, not only the mayor of the city of Cologne, but also Deputy Chairman of the Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft (German Colonial Association). In a "Special Colonial Exhibition" at the Cologne press convention "Pressa" in 1928, the conquest of "deserted space" in Africa was propagated with the use of an Adenauer quote.

FOTO: SPACE WITHOUT PEOPLE

"The German Empire must pursue the appropriation of colonies by all means. There is not enough room in the empire itself to accommodate the large population. Especially the daring, forward-pushing elements who cannot busy themselves in our country but could find occupation in the colonies are being constantly lost. We need more room for our people and therefore need colonies. Adenauer"

RAUM OHNE VOLK

DAS DEUTSCHE REICH MUSS UNBEDINGT DEN ERWERB VON KOLONIEN ANSTREBEN • IM REICHE SELBST IST ZU WENIG RAUM FÜR DIE GROSSE BEVÖLKERUNG • GERADE DIE ETWAS WAGEMUTIGEN STARK VORWARTSSTREBBENDEN ELEMENTE DIE SICH IM LANDE SELBST NICHT BETÄTIGEN KONNTEN ABER IN DEN KOLONIEN EIN FELD FÜR IHRE TÄTIGKEIT FINDEN • GEHEN UNS DAUERND VERLOREN • WIR MÜSSEN FÜR UNSER VOLK MEHR RAUM HABEN UND DARUM KOLONIEN • ADENAUER



Alternatives to the "final solution" in Madagascar

South African soldiers of the British Royal Navy en route to Madagascar. With their efforts they contributed to preventing the East African island from becoming a concentration camp for millions of Jews.



"In August 1940 I forwarded to you for your records my department's plan for the final solution of the Jewish question, for which the island of Madagascar was to be demanded from France in the peace treaty whereas the practical implementation was to be the responsibility of the SS-Reichssicherheitshauptamt (Reich Main Security Office). (...) In the meantime, the war against the Soviet Union has opened up the opportunity of providing different territories for the final solution. Therefore, the Führer has decided that the Jews shall not be deported to Madagascar, but to the East instead. Consequently, Madagascar does not need to be earmarked for the final solution. Heil Hitler!"

Franz Rademacher, Head of the "Referat für Judenfragen" (Department for Jewish Issues) in the Foreign Office, on 10th February 1942, to his colleague Ernst Bielfeld, Head of the Colonial Department.

The British Colonial Army in World War II



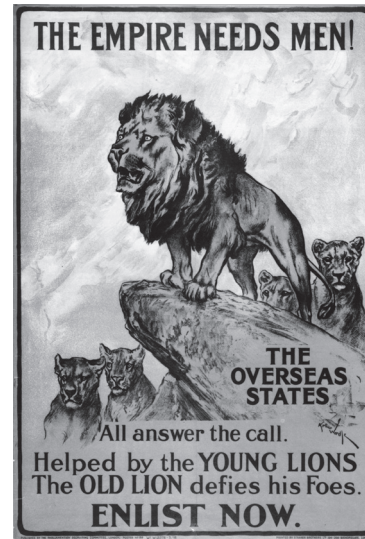
AFRICA

In 1933, the British Empire together with the Commonwealth states comprised a quarter of the world's population as well as almost a quarter of the entire globe.

When the British government declared war on Germany two days after the German invasion of Poland on 3rd September 1939, the British colonies were drawn into this war without being asked. Only the governments of British "dominions" (former British colonies such as Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the Union of South Africa) decided independently to fight against the Axis powers on the side of the British.

One million colonial soldiers from Africa

A total of eleven million soldiers served under the British flag, six million from Great Britain and five million from the colonies. In Africa, the British Army recruited about one million men – often with the use of force. They fought against Italian colonial troops in British Somaliland and Ethiopia in 1940/41, against German-Italian forces in the border region of Libya and Egypt from 1940 to 1943, against the Vichy regime in Madagascar in 1942 and against Japanese troops in the jungles of the British colony of Burma in 1944.



African soldiers received significantly less pay than the British forces, and their meals were a lot worse. The colonial troops were commanded by white officers. They were prepared for their command by a brochure issued by the British High Command which stated that African soldiers had in many respects "the mind of a child". The colonial soldiers reacted to these forms of racial discrimination by staging protests and mutinies. The leaders of the rebellions were court-martialed by the British and received corporal punishment and also death sentences. In spite of this, more than 25,000 men deserted in 1944/45 in Eastern Africa alone.

African Combatants from the French Colonies



AFRICA



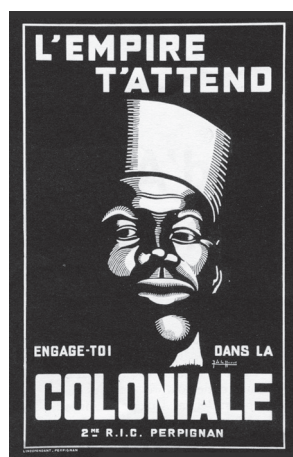
Approximately one million African soldiers served under French command in the Second World War – on changing sides. Following the declaration of war on Nazi Germany in September 1939, the French Republic recruited 500,000 African soldiers from their colonies in Africa. In May 1940, many of them fought in the front line in the North of France, trying to repel the invasion of the German Wehrmacht.

After the French defeat and the truce between the Vichy collaboration government and the Nazi regime, colonial soldiers from West and North Africa had to fight on the side of the fascist powers, for example in Dakar and the Levant (Syria and Lebanon) against soldiers from Central and Eastern Africa under allied command.

Their initial base was Fort Lamy in Equatorial Africa (present-day Chad).

When the Vichy government lost control over the colonies following the Allied landing in North Africa in 1943, de Gaulle recruited hundreds of thousands of additional soldiers in North and West Africa for the Allied landing troops in Italy and France. African soldiers made a vital contribution to freeing Europe from Nazi rule.

All African combatants under French command shared one common experience: their discrimination in relation to the white soldiers for being black. Only when it came to finding soldiers to “charge into open fire and bravely bear one’s chest”, were the Africans given preferential treatment by the French.



Even General Charles de Gaulle, who called for resistance against the Vichy regime and Nazi Germany from London in June 1940, mobilised his Free French Forces in the colonies.

However, when the liberation of Paris was imminent in the summer of 1944, General de Gaulle ordered the “blanchissement” of his troops, replacing the majority of the black soldiers who had fought for the Free French with white ones. It was young Frenchmen who were to parade down the Champs Élysées as liberators. In the meantime, the African soldiers were made to wait for their transport back to their homelands in sordid transit camps – some until 1947.

De Gaulle: “Launching Pad Africa”

“In the vast expanses of Africa, France actually managed to recruit a new army to defend its sovereignty (...) and thus reverse the balance of power on the front line. Africa, within reach of the peninsulas of Italy, the Balkan and Spain, served as an excellent launching pad for recapturing Europe.”

General Charles de Gaulle, Commander-in-Chief of the Free French resistance troops, in his memoirs.

De Gaulle inspecting troops in Sudan in 1941.



Yoro Ba was forced into service by colonial officials of the Vichy regime in Senegal in 1940 to repel an Allied attack on the port of Dakar. When the Allies gained control over the French colonies in West Africa in 1943, Yoro Ba was forced to fight for them. He took part in the landing in Provence and the liberation of France from German occupation.

After the end of the war in Europe in 1945, he was stationed in Germany. Not until 1947 was he able to return to Senegal. Six decades later, the French government was paying Yoro Ba a pension of 13 euros a month for his military service.



LISTENING STATION 2

2'30 min.

Yoro Ba – Senegal



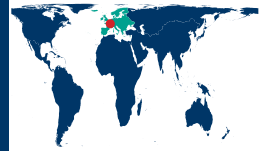
Listening Station 2: Yoro Ba – Senegal

“I was born in 1919 in Kew Djiby in the Sine Saloum region of Senegal. My name is Yoro Ba. In 1940, the French toured the villages looking for soldiers. They directly approached either the village or the regional chiefs and requested lists of all the young men. Nobody asked us. We had to go to war. Had we stayed at home, they would have court-martialled and possibly shot us. I still remember the thunder of the cannons in September 1940. The threat at the time was the bombardment of the city of Dakar, but nobody had explained to us what the fighting was actually about. We just woke up one day and the Vichy French ordered us to go to the front. That was all.

Before we left Dakar in 1943, the French gave each of us an injection. After that they didn't have to feed us for 24 hours. Because we didn't feel any hunger. We didn't feel anything at all. There were nine German divisions at Toulon and we fought from seven in the morning to six in the afternoon to force them to retreat. We dragged quite a few of them out of their trenches and captured them. Many of our comrades lost their lives in the process. After one battle there were so many dead that diggers and bulldozers arrived to dig a mass grave for all the fallen *Tirailleurs Sénégalais* (Senegalese skirmishers).

White and African soldiers had already been strictly separated during training. In the army, there were French cooks for the French soldiers and black cooks for the *Tirailleurs*. The ‘Toubabs’, the whites, received French food, all the others had to make do with manioc and maize gruel with peanut sauce. Even on the battlefield, we Africans were disadvantaged. I can't remember exactly what the pay of the European soldiers was, but ours was definitely less. And sometimes they didn't even pay us what they had promised.”

Crimes against African Prisoners of War Committed by the Wehrmacht



AFRICA

When France was defeated in June 1940, about 100,000 colonial soldiers ended up in German captivity, including 20,000 from sub-Saharan colonies. The Wehrmacht murdered at least 3,000 of them after their units had already capitulated. The reason for this: the colour of their skin.

The massacres were not ordered by central command. They were the result of the Nazi regime's hate campaign aimed at black "murder beasts" fighting for "niggerfied" France who had to be shown "no mercy". An order by Oberst Walter Nehring, Chief of Staff of the Panzergruppe Guderian, read: "Any leniency towards native prisoners is uncalled for".

The massacre of Chasselay

On 20th June 1940, a unit of African soldiers was captured by the Germans in Chasselay, a village near Lyon. Their French officer Gaspard Scandariato later gave the following testimony: "We had to line up as a column, the African 'tirailleurs', arms raised, at the front, and us, the white officers, ten metres behind them. After they had led us about 500 metres outside the village, we encountered German sol-



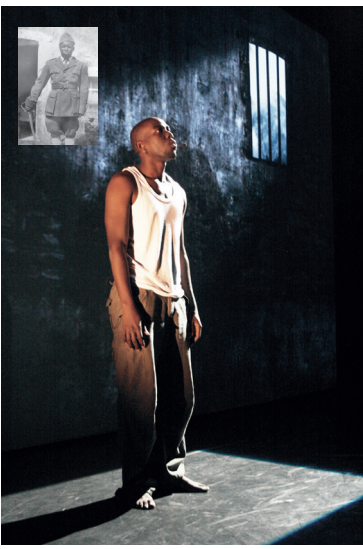
African cemetery in Chasselay.

diers with tanks. Their fingers on the triggers of their machine guns, they ordered us to lie flat on the ground. Then all of a sudden we heard the rattling of their weapons and screaming. From a distance of less than ten metres, the Germans emptied the magazines of their heavy machine guns onto the 'tirailleurs' and mowed down most of them with their initial bursts.

The few that had survived shielded by others, tried to flee in all directions. I can still see it now, how the German Panzergrenadiers calmly took aim and picked off our pitiable 'tirailleurs' like rabbits."

African soldiers in German captivity.





Mamadou Hady Bah came to France from Guinea in 1938 as the cook of a colonial official. As a soldier of the 12th regiment of the “Tirailleurs Sénégalais” (“Senegalese skirmishers”), he was captured by the Germans in June 1940, but was able to escape and continue to fight the German occupiers on the side of the Resistance. When he fell into the hands of the Germans for the second time in July 1943, even the cruellest torture committed by the Gestapo couldn’t make him talk. He was executed on 18th December. The French theatre group “Mémoires Vives” commemorates colonial soldiers and partisans like Hady Bah with their hip hop dance production “A nos morts” (“The Forgotten Liberators”): “Your silence has saved lives. Your suffering has prevented further suffering. You were stronger than your enemies and put their torture to shame with your courage.”

Mamadou Hady Bah – Guinea



Listening Station 3: Mamadou Hady Bah – Guinea

Song – lyrics see above.

The Thiaroye Revolt and the French Reaction



AFRICA

In November 1944, 1,300 “Tirailleurs Sénégalais” (“Senegalese skirmishers”) returned to West Africa after their military service in Europe. Many of them had suffered years of imprisonment and forced labour in German camps.

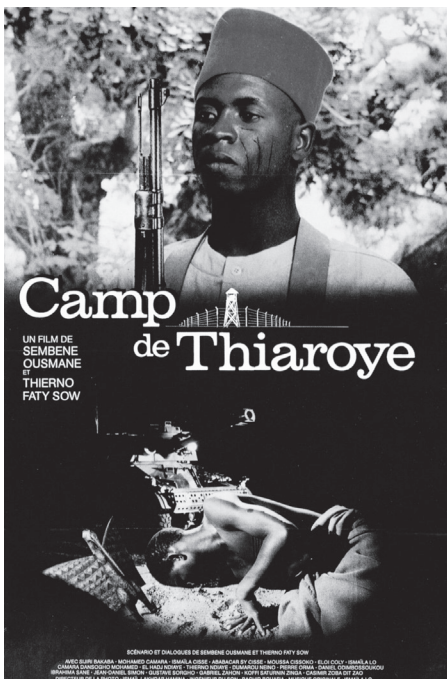
At Thiaroye, a temporary transfer camp just outside the Senegalese port of Dakar, they were waiting to be given their outstanding pay as well as the demobilisation premiums of 500 francs they were promised. They also demanded the same compensation of 5,000 francs per person that the French prisoners of war were receiving.

The colonial officers on the ground refused to pay out and in addition to this were only willing to pay half the official rate for changing French francs into the colonial currency CFA. This caused a revolt.

The Africans took a French officer hostage and only released him after he promised that all their demands would be met. What happened instead was that French tanks surrounded the camp in the early hours of 1st December and at 5 a.m. opened fire. When the drowsy “tirailleurs” rushed out of their barracks, the French commanders had them shot without mercy.



The victims of the French massacre of 1944 are buried at the Thiaroye cemetery on the outskirts of Dakar.



Depending on the sources, the number of the victims varies from 35 to 300.

In March 1945, French court-martials convicted 34 so-called ringleaders of the revolt. They received prison sentences of up to ten years. Five of the men died in prison, the remaining 29 were released in June 1947 as part of an amnesty due to increasing political pressure.

News of the massacre of Thiaroye spread quickly throughout Western Africa. It became a symbol of the arbitrary rule of the French colonial power and provided a boost for the independence movements in the region. A feature film by the Senegalese director, writer and active combatant Ousmane Sembène commemorates the event.



L'AMI Y'A BON

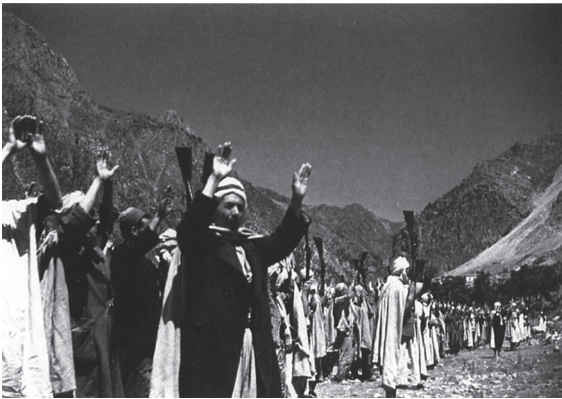
The Colonial Friend

Short film by Rachid Bouchareb
Algeria/France 2004 • 8:44 min.

A Day of Liberation in Europe A Day of Mourning in Algeria



AFRICA



On the **8th of May 1945** processions celebrating the end of the war in Europe were also seen in Algeria. After all, tens of thousands of Algerians had fought in this war, and many were hoping that now was the time for the colonies to also attain freedom and autonomy, as promised by the Allies in their “Atlantic Charter”. This is why, during the victory celebrations in the small town of Sétif, there was also an Algerian flag amongst the French, British and US ones. When the procession reached the Café de France, Lamri Bouras witnessed how a French commissioner “drew his Colt and fired into the crowd. Several other shots were fired from the balconies.” This day already saw hundreds of deaths. As a result, protests against the massacre sprung up throughout the region. The French colonial administration reacted by deploying the air force and the marines. “The soldiers shot at everything,” remembers Haada Mani, “people dropped like dried grapes off a vine.”

According to the French colonial administration, 1,500 died in the massacres, however, Algerian sources put the figure as high as 45,000 victims.

When the Algerian soldiers who had fought for the liberation of Europe returned from the war at the end of May 1945, many were unable to find their families.

One of them was **Lounès Hanouze**:

“When I arrived in Kerrata, there was a long queue of people. They tried to tell me something, but they were crying. I asked them, ‘Where is my family? Where is my father?’ They finally told me that they were transported to the Kerrata gorge on the back of a lorry. There, at the bridge – it is now called the **Hanouze Bridge** –, my father and my brothers were given a choice: should they start with him or with them? I think my father was shot first. We come back from the war to find our families executed. It’s impossible to forget something like this.”

Today, the 8th of May is still a national holiday in France. In Algeria it is a day of mourning. The street in Sétif where the first shots were fired now bears the name of 8th May ‘45, and on the wall in front of the former Café de France, a plaque commemorates “the first martyr, Saal Bouzid”, who was killed here. And by the side of a dilapidated lime kiln in the region an inscription in Arabic reads: “This kiln was used by the French to burn the bodies of the martyrs of the 8th of May 1945. It is testament to the horrors and tells future generations the story of freedom: ‘She is my bride, but her dowry is blood.’”

Quotes from the film “The Massacres of Sétif – A Different 8th May” by Mehdi Lallaoui and Bernhard Langlois, France 1995.

Raw Materials for the Weapons Industry



Africa's proportion of raw materials extracted for the weapons industry (1938):

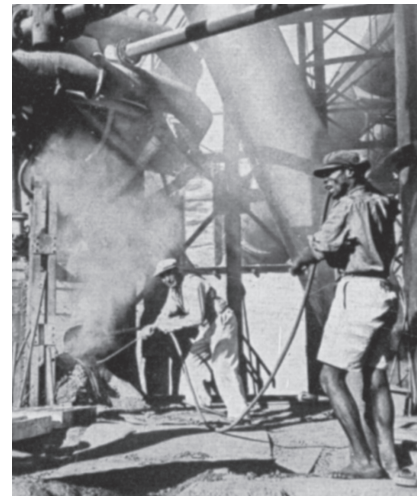


Africa ■ Rest of the World ■

Joseph Ki-Zerbo, Historian, Burkina Faso:

“Ever since the slave trade and the carving up of the continent at the hands of the colonial powers at the Berlin Conference in 1884, no event has affected Africa more devastatingly and lastingly than the Second World War.”

South African migrant workers returning from gold and coal mines.



Copper mine in Southern Africa.



Uranium mine in the Congo.

Sisal processing for nautical rope in East Africa.



AFRICA

Donations for the Allies

Africans also supported the war of the Allies with donations, for example by contributing to the construction of the British “Spitfire” fighter plane. From 1940, the Allies collected money for this in all the colonies. Accra, the capital of the Gold Coast (present-day Ghana), was home to a “Spitfire Fund Thermometer” which in 1940 stood at 36,000 pounds (cf. photo). For donating 5,000 out of the 12,000 pounds it cost to build a plane, big donors, usually cities or entire states, could have their name on one of them. The colonies financed a total of 1,000 “Spitfires” which therefore included a “Mombasa”, a “Kamba Meru” and a “Kalahari”, as well as two “Sierra Leones” and three “Zanzibars”. Africans also donated maize, rice, cattle, goats, sheets, plates, glasses, cutlery and many more items to the upkeep of the troops of their colonial powers. These donations added up to an estimated six million pounds.



Caricature from the Second World War, showing the head of the French collaboration government, Marshall Philippe Pétain, as henchman of the Nazis in West Africa.

Supplies for the Nazis

In West Africa, the colonial officials of the French collaboration government were extracting money at the behest of the Nazi regime from 1940 to finance provisions for African prisoners of war in German camps. Farmers from the Ivory Coast region were forced to hand over kola nuts, maize, honey, flour and money to a “Committee for the Subsistence of Prisoners of War”.

In the space of one year, Algeria supplied 4,429 tons of grain, 220,000 sheep and 105.6 million gallons of wine whilst the Algerian population were suffering from malnourishment, tuberculosis and typhoid. From February 1941, there was the additional burden of supplying the German panzer divisions in Northern Africa for which further provisions, cars and lorries were seized in the Maghreb.

The colonial administration of the Vichy regime also supplied the fascist axis powers with raw materials for their weapons industries, including 990,000 tons of phosphate and 385,000 tons of iron.

Forced Labour for the War of the Colonial Rulers



AFRICA

French colonies

In the French colonies, forced labour had been the order of the day since the “Code de l’indigénat” (“Law for Natives”) of 1881, but in World War II, it reached a massive and hitherto unknown scale.

Tens of thousands of Africans were drafted into public building works such as the construction of a section of road leading from the Central African Congo to the Atlantic which was important for the export of resources during the war. Forced labourers had to build dams, dig canals and work on sisal and cotton plantations. The French colonial administration wanted to turn the Niger delta into “one giant cotton field”.

Only in 1946, the forced labour law was officially abolished in the French National Assembly – at the initiative of African deputies.

British colonies

In mid 1942, the government of the British colony Southern Rhodesia passed a law which legalised forced labour in “unusual situations ... which brook of no delays whatsoever”.

Decisions on larger operations were made by the war cabinet in London. Africans refusing to comply were faced with fines, corporate punishment or even imprisonment.

In Kenya alone, 20,000 men had to carry out forced labour in the sisal, sugar, rubber and flax processing industries.

In 1943, the British colonial administration in Northern Nigeria requisitioned 100,000 Africans for hard labour in the tin mines which one in ten did not survive.

In Southern Rhodesia, more than 33,000 labourers were forced to build airstrips.

In Northern Rhodesia, white farmers and entrepreneurs were able to “hire” forced labourers from the colonial administration for one shilling per day.



Alms Not Pensions for African War Veterans



AFRICA

The British Army only granted their colonial soldiers singular compensation payments for military services and war wounds following demobilisation. Africans only received a fraction of the amounts paid to European combatants and drew no pensions whatsoever. Only exceptionally “destitute” veterans were allowed to apply for a singular allowance of up to 470 euros from the “Royal Commonwealth Ex-Servicemen League”, a British charity.

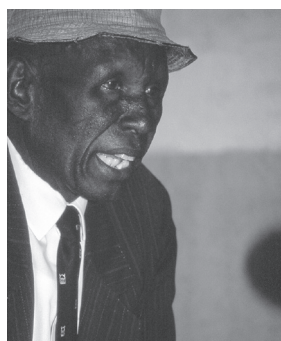
The French government did grant its colonial soldiers pensions after the war, not least because many continued to serve in the French military after 1945 (e.g. in Indochina and Algeria). But right from the start, pensions for Africans were only half of what Europeans received. And many World War II veterans went empty-handed as they were unable to produce the documentation demanded by the colonial authorities (e.g. a minimum of 90 days front line service).

The Vichy regime had destroyed large numbers of documents during its collapse, while the Nazis had confiscated the pay books of their African prisoners.

Furthermore, in 1959, the de Gaulle government passed a law which prevented African soldiers from claiming any further pension from France after their countries became independent – in an attempt to play the veterans off against the liberation movements. When most African countries voted for independence nevertheless, the existing pension entitlements of African veterans were “frozen” at their current level (“crystallisation”). In spite of massive protests and a European Court ruling against the discrimination of colonial soldiers by the French government, sixty years after the war Senegalese veterans still received only a third and Algerians only an eighth of the pensions of their French counterparts.

Issa Ongoïba, Member of the Veterans Association in Bamako (Mali):

“In the eyes of the French we are still the little negro soldiers who they think they can fob off with a measly tip. But during the war, the enemy bullets didn’t differentiate between black or white targets. They all died the same death.”



Jones Kilundo (Kenya)
Military service in Ethiopia, Madagascar and Burma; no pension.



Joseph Djemakangar (Chad)
Military service in Libya and France; pension: 40 euros a month.



Frank Kayzer (South Africa)
Military service in the Libyan-Egyptian desert; pension: 1.60 euros a month.



Aja Awa Sonko (Gambia)
Her husband died fighting for the Allies; no widow's pension.



Veteran Peter Hartzenberg,
Cape Corps, South Africa:
"Whites were never deployed with
blacks or coloureds. We called the
blacks 'darkies'. They really
suffered a lot."

"Apartheid" to the Grave

335,000 South African soldiers served in World War II, including black and white combatants as well as so-called "coloureds". In 1941, 60,000 of them fought the Wehrmacht's "Afrikakorps" in the North African desert. On 21st November, the fifth brigade of the "Cape Corps" was engaged in a costly battle against German panzer divisions and fighter planes during which 3,000 South Africans were captured by the Germans and 224 killed. The survivors buried their dead side by side in a mass grave. But the South African High Command had the bodies exhumed shortly afterwards to bury them again – this time separated according to colour. Apartheid didn't become an official state doctrine in South Africa until 1948, but the military already practised strict "racial segregation" during the war.



Samuel Masila Mwanthi, born 1919, was a driver and radio operator for the British forces. He fought the Italian occupation in Ethiopia in 1940/41 and against Japanese troops in the Burmese jungle in 1943/44. Back home in East Africa he received some new clothes when he was decommissioned. He never drew a war pension.



LISTENING STATION 4

2'06 min.

Samuel Masila Mwanthi – Kenya



Listening Station 4: Samuel Masila Mwanthi – Kenya

"The accommodation in the barracks we had European quarters and African quarters. We used to lie on a board, the Africans bed, with three blankets without matraze, without pillows, without sheets. I was a driver but I was not permitted to drive a car, just lorries. The cars were for European officers. By the time we had no African officers. And we did not have guns, just machetes.

In Burma the Japanese did hide underneath the grass and when you passed they would cut your leg. But we defeated them because we had our machetes and we did cut their arms.

On the way to going home from the army we very given a shirt without a collar and one blanket. And may be you got some boots and one pair of socks. You could identify an ex-army-man because he had 10 cents for a tea."

The Portuguese Colonies during the Second World War



AFRICA

Following a military coup in 1926, Portugal became a dictatorship, headed by António de Oliveira Salazar from 1932. Salazar established the secret police of his authoritarian 'estado novo' based on the model of the German Gestapo and welcomed Germany's attack on the Soviet Union. However, Salazar wanted to avoid entering the war on the side of the fascist Axis powers for fear of losing the Portuguese colonies in Africa to Britain. He declared Portugal 'neutral' at the start of the war and proceeded to do business with both sides.

He supplied Nazi Germany with strategically important resources from the colonies such as tin and tungsten in exchange for German weapons, and he also silently tolerated the use of Portuguese harbours by German battleships and U-boats, for example in Cape Verde.

In 1943, Portugal was forced to lease an airport on the Azores to the Allies as a stopover en route to North and South America and to fight German U-boats in the Atlantic.

Commemorative plaque in Espargos, capital of the Cape Verdean island Sal.



The British Navy controlling the route tried to prevent the export of colonial goods to the fascist Axis powers. Portuguese settlers therefore took over any plantations in the colonies that had been run by Germans up to that point and supplied commodities mainly for the Portuguese domestic market – rice, tea and cotton from Mozambique, maize and coffee from Angola and cocoa beans from São Tomé & Príncipe.

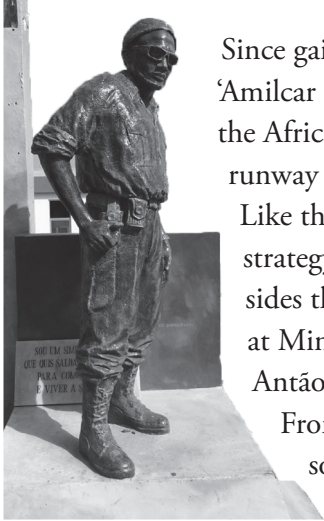
Hundreds of thousands of indigenous people had to carry out heavy work for this. Francisco Vieira Machado, Minister for Colonies under Salazar, commented on this in 1943, 'If we want to civilise the natives, we must imprint on them as a basic moral imperative the concept that, without work, they have no right to life.'

Beatings, torture, sexual abuse and arbitrary imprisonment were rife on the plantations. According to estimates by Henrique Galvao, a high-ranking official within the Portuguese colonial administration, about two million people fled Mozambique and Angola to neighbouring countries because 'only the dead are really exempt from contract labour.'

All this contributed to the rise of anti-colonial movements during the Second World War. The movements took inspiration from the former Portuguese colony Brazil which had been able to gain independence as early as 1822. The Portuguese authorities responded with a wave of arrests in Angola and Mozambique in 1940/41.

Even after the war, Salazar clung on to Portugal's colonial empire. Only after costly wars of liberation and the 1974 Carnation Revolution were the Portuguese colonies on the African continent able to win independence in 1975.

Mussolini's Airport in Cape Verde



Statue of Amilcar Cabral in front of the International Airport of Cape Verde, named after him.

Since gaining independence in 1975, Cape Verde international airport on Sal Island has been named 'Amilcar Cabral', after the leader of the 'Partido Africano para a Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde', the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC). However, the airport's first runway was built in 1939 by an Italian airline on behalf of fascist dictator Benito Mussolini.

Like the Azores and Madeira, the Cape Verde islands were extremely important in terms of military strategy due to their location between the west coast of Africa and the American continent. Both sides therefore fought for control of the islands. The Axis efforts included German U-boats mooring at Mindelo harbour in São Vicente and torpedoing British ships off the neighbouring island of Santo Antão.

From 1940, to prevent the islands' occupation by the warring factions, Portugal sent thousands of soldiers to Cape Verde which was suffering from a period of catastrophic drought at the time.

With shipments being disrupted by the war and the sparse food supplies being used up by soldiers, an estimated 25,000 islanders starved to death between 1941 and 1943.

East Timor as a Theatre of War

Due to Portuguese dictator António de Oliveira Salazar declaring his country 'neutral' at the outbreak of World War II, Japan spared the Portuguese enclave of Macau during its campaign of destruction in China. Unlike Hong Kong, the city on the South China Sea remained unoccupied and therefore became a safe harbour for tens of thousands of people fleeing the neighbouring provinces.

The Portuguese colony of East Timor did, however, become a theatre of war. After the advance of Japanese troops onto the neighbouring Indonesian islands, Allied Forces landed in East Timor at the end of 1941. In February 1942, they were joined by Japanese soldiers who, as part of an anti-Portuguese propaganda drive, also recruited indigenous people to form colonial troops – the so-called 'Black Columns', who fought Timorese under Australian command. From 1943, the Japanese occupiers controlled the entire island of Timor and commandeered anything they needed from the islanders. 'We had nothing to eat and nothing to wear,' recalled the Timorese Maurubi even half a century later. 'When we did get any food, the Japanese soldiers would take it from us and we had to watch them eat it. The soldiers were very cruel.'

In the fights between Japanese and allied troops on the island of Timor, children were also recruited as soldiers.



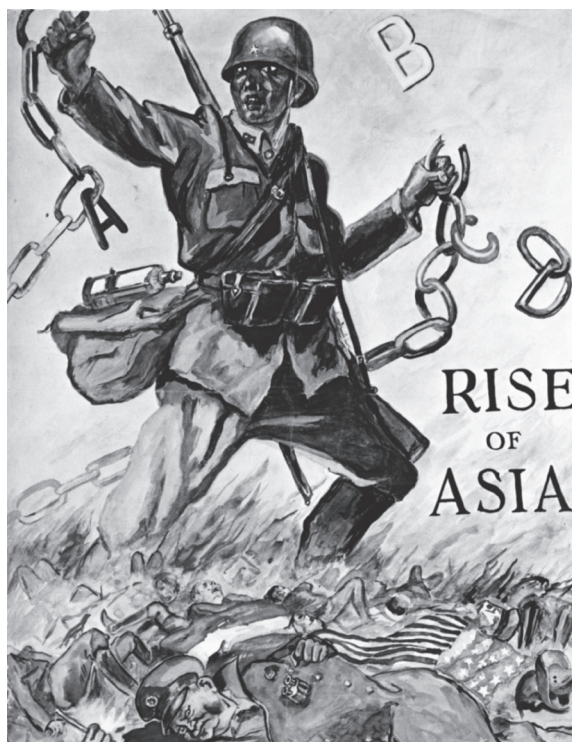
China 1937: The Outbreak of War in Asia



On the 7th of July 1937, Japanese soldiers feigned a military encounter with a Chinese unit near Peking. Japan used this as a pretext for the attack on China.

So began the Second World War in Asia.

Since the early 20th century, Japan's military had gained more and more political power. Its megalomaniacal aim was the conquest of all of Asia. The almighty emperor (or "Tenno"), revered by all as a "descendant of the sun goddess Amaterasu", supported this imperial ideology. Wars against China (1894/95) and Russia (1904/05) over the control of the Korean peninsula were the first signs of the Japanese expansionism. In the First World War, Japan fought on the side of France and Great Britain and as a victorious power was granted the League of Nations mandate to administrate the former German colonies in Micronesia. This was used by the Japanese army to establish military bases on the islands in the North Pacific.



ASIA

In September 1931, a section of the Japanese army stationed in North East China invaded Manchuria to install the satellite state of Manchukuo, thus securing coal and gas resources for Japan's weapons industry.

Japan's expansion campaign throughout the Asia-Pacific region began with the attack on the Chinese heartland in 1937. For this, Japan recruited six million soldiers and accompanied its war with anti-colonial rhetoric, claiming its aim was to drive the European colonial powers from the region, give "Asia back to the Asians" and to establish a "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere".

In reality, the "Tenno" and his military were trying to establish a massive empire under Japanese rule.

Asians from other countries were considered second-class inhabitants, having to carry out forced labour and providing Japan with cheap foods and resources.





With the Japanese attack on the U.S. Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor on 7th December 1941, “the war became a world war”.

From history textbooks e.g. for German schools:

Cf. Beck, Dorothea et al., “Zeit für Geschichte. Band 4. Geschichtliches Unterrichtswerk für Gymnasien”, 2007; Goerlitz, Erich et al.: “Taschenhandbuch zur Geschichte”, 2005; Regenhardt, Hans-Otto et al. (ed.), “Forum Geschichte. Band 4: Vom Ende des Ersten Weltkriegs bis zur Gegenwart”, 2006; Bergmann et al.: “Geschichte und Geschehen”, 2008.

Korea's Role in Japanese Warfare



ASIA

Korea had been a Japanese colony since 1910 and during World War II gained exceptional strategic importance as a deployment, retreat and supply base for the Japanese forces.

Following the start of the war in 1937, Japan's occupying regime tightened its grip.

In 1938, Korean language and history were banished from school curricula. All Koreans were forced to adopt Japanese names.

In April 1938, the Japanese government proclaimed the "National Labour Service Mobilisation Law".

4.5 million Koreans had to carry out a whole range of wartime services until 1945.



The cenotaph for the 35,000 Korean victims of the Hiroshima atom bomb depicts a tortoise. From its shell rises a column bearing a relief of two stone dragons. The inscription below reads: "The souls of the dead ride into heaven – on the back of the tortoise."



Chung Ki-Young was a student at Seoul University when the Japanese colonial administration drafted him for military service on 20th January 1944.

Having already forcefully recruited most of the adult Korean population, the Japanese administration in 1944 also started drafting pupils and students. 155,000 Korean boys aged 13 or 14 had to carry weapons and armaments for the Japanese military and load their ships and trains. 10,000 Korean child soldiers were sent to the front lines.

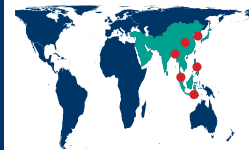
1.5 million Koreans were deported to Japan to labour in mining plants, coal mines, harbours and weapons manufacturing.

When the first atom bomb hit Hiroshima on 6th August 1945, 35,000 Korean forced labourers were thus among those who lost their lives.

Three days later, another 15,000 Koreans died in Nagasaki. Most of them had been made to work on the construction of warships for the Imperial Japanese Navy in the Mitsubishi factories.

Only after a protracted dispute with the Japanese authorities was it possible to erect a cenotaph commemorating the Korean atom bomb victims at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park in 1999.

The Japanese War Crimes Committed Against Asian Women



ASIA

According to figures provided by Asian NGOs, Japanese forces abducted an estimated 200,000 women and girls to suffer sexual abuse in their military brothels during World War II. In addition to 80,000 to 120,000 **Korean women**, they included women from **China**, the **Philippines**, **Malaya**, **Burma**, **Portuguese Timor** (present-day East Timor) and the **Dutch East Indies** (present-day Indonesia), where Dutch women were also affected.

The Japanese generals justified the existence of these military brothels with the cynical rationale of wanting to avoid mass raping by Japanese troops in the occupied countries and to protect their soldiers from sexually transmitted diseases in order to retain their fighting abilities.



Female survivors from the Japanese military brothels following their liberation by the Allied troops, 1945.

It was only thanks to the efforts of the victims themselves that the Japanese war crimes committed against Asian women became known to the public. “The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan” was founded in 1990. During a state visit of the then Japanese Prime Minister Miyazawa Kiichi to South Korea in 1992, the autonomously organised women demanded publicly for the first time that the Japanese government fulfill the following demands: “... reveal the truth in its entirety about the crimes of military sexual slavery, make an official apology, make legal reparations, punish those responsible for the war crime, accurately record the crime in history textbooks (and) erect a memorial for the victims ...”

Due to growing political pressure, the Japanese Cabinet Secretary and later Foreign Minister Yohei Kono felt compelled to apologise to the victims who had been ‘recruited against their will’ in 1993. However, his statement had no consequences as it was not authorized by the Japanese government.

In December 2015, the governments of Japan and Korea concluded an agreement to compensate ‘comfort women’ through a foundation. But the victims were not involved, and shortly afterwards Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe again declared that there was no evidence that the ‘comfort women’ had been ‘forcibly abducted’ by the Japanese army. The agreement failed because Japan’s government continued to refuse to critically analyze the war crimes committed by the Japanese military during the Second World War. Nothing changed until 2025.



Chinese, Korean and Philippine participants at the Women's Tribunal, Tokyo, 2000.

The Tokyo Women's Tribunal in 2000

In the 1990s, many Asian countries saw the establishment of autonomous organisations by women who had been deported to Japanese military brothels during the Second World War. They convened a “Women’s International Tribunal on Japanese Military Sexual Slavery” in Tokyo in 2000.

Although the Women’s Tribunal did not wield any legal authority, it attracted a great deal of attention on an international scale. Based on the testaments of witnesses from several Asian countries, the legally qualified women acting as tribunal judges found Emperor Hirohito, who had been in power during World War II, along with his government and his armed forces, guilty of causing the institutionalised rape and sexual enslavement of tens of thousands of female victims. As it was a case of “crimes against humanity”, Japan’s post-war governments were to be held accountable and were responsible for compensating the victims.



Hwang Kum-Ju was 19 years old when she followed an appeal by the Japanese Emperor promising “unmarried women and girls (...) a lot of money” for “serving three years in a Japanese weapons factory” in the Korean provincial town of Hamhung. In actual fact, she was made to board a blacked-out railway carriage with numerous other girls and after an odyssey lasting several days finally reached a military compound in Manchuria. The very next morning she was raped by a Japanese officer and over the next six years was raped by up to 40 soldiers a day. Hwang Kum-Ju remained traumatised for the rest of her life. In the 1990s, she was among the first victims to demand an apology and compensation by the Japanese government for the mass abduction of Asian women to be abused in Japanese military brothels.



LISTENING STATION 5

2'19 min.

Hwang Kum-Ju – South Korea



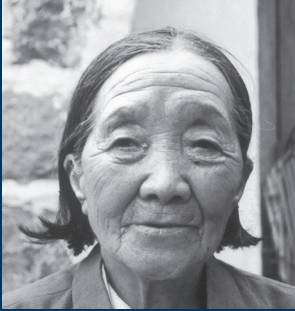
Listening station 5: Hwang Kum-Ju – South Korea

“My name is Hwang Kum-Ju and I’m 83 years old. When I was 12, I moved from the countryside to the city of Hamhung, and when I was 19, I responded to a notice by the Japanese. They said they were looking for girls and young women to work as factory workers. My employment was supposed to be in Jirin in Manchuria. The Japanese promised me I could return to my Korean home after two years. In actual fact, they kept me there for six years, and I wasn’t able to tell anyone what I had to suffer for decades afterwards.

After the war, I kept my past a secret out of shame. Who was I supposed to confide in? Returning to my home was not an option. If I had told my story, people would have treated me like an outcast. That’s why I always kept quiet and also why I never married. It wasn’t until the 90s, when Kim Hak-Sun, a fellow victim, went on television and called for breaking the silence, that I finally found the strength to go public. All the world should know that the Japanese lured tens of thousands of young women away with the prospect of jobs and then abducted them to their military brothels and killed many of them. The Japanese behaved like animals, not like human beings. May heaven punish them.

I’m not after money. There can never be any compensation for my lost youth, but as long as I’ll live, I’ll be waiting for an admission of guilt from Tokyo. When the North Koreans took a few Japanese hostage some years ago and five of them died, the Japanese authorities made a lot of noise and demanded compensation for the victims from North Korea. The same Japanese government departments claim not to know anything and don’t want to hear anything about the tens of thousands of unmarried young women who were abused by Japanese soldiers during the war. They are just waiting for women like me to quietly die.”

Abducted and Abused in Japanese Military Brothels (1)



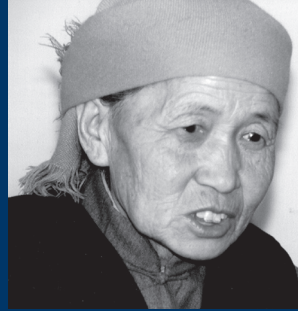
Zhou Xixiang
China

Abducted while acting for the anti-Japanese Women's Salvation Association in 1944 at the age of 19. Confined, raped and tortured in Jinguishi, Shanxi Province.



Liu Mianhuan
China

Abducted as a 15-year-old in 1943 and taken to a Japanese barracks in Jinguashi. Raped nightly by the commander and daily by up to 40 soldiers.



Zhang Xiantu
China

Taken to cave emplacements by Japanese troops following the invasion of Xiyan and raped for 20 consecutive days by dozens of soldiers when she was 15.



Zhao Cunni
China

Abducted aged 24 during an attack on her village of Yaoshan in 1942, suffering mass raping while being shackled to prevent her escape.



Ellen C. van der Ploeg
Netherlands/Indonesia

Abducted from the Halmahera Internment Camp in Semarang in Indonesia and abused in a military brothel of the Japanese occupying force.



Jan Ruff-O'Herne
Netherlands/Indonesia

Taken to a detention centre for Dutch settlers following the conquest of Java by Japanese troops. From there, deported to a military brothel with 35 other women.



Kim Yong-suk
North Korea

Kidnapped aged 13 by a Japanese policeman in 1940 and taken to a military brothel in Shenyang in China.



Kwak Kum-nyo
North Korea

Abducted to a military brothel in Muling, North East China, in 1939 where she was beaten into submission until she managed to escape two years later.



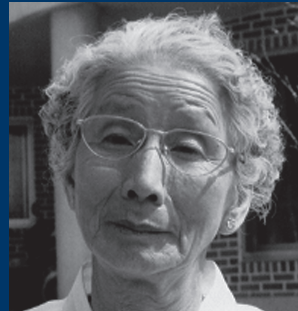
Lee Yong-soo
South Korea

Taken to a military brothel in Hsinchu, Taiwan in 1944 at the age of 15. A hanging blanket marked her room's entrance, where she was raped every day.



Lee Ok-seon
South Korea

Kidnapped aged 15 while out shopping in 1942 and taken to a military brothel in Yanji in North-East China. Tortured following an unsuccessful attempt to escape.



Kim Soon-duk
South Korea

Promised "factory work" in 1937, aged 16, but deported instead to a military brothel in Shanghai where she was raped daily by 30 to 40 soldiers.



Kim Kun-ja
South Korea

Abducted to a military brothel in Huichun in China as a 16-year-old and abused by 40 soldiers daily, suffering a pierced eardrum as a result of the beatings.



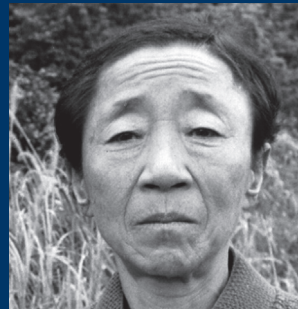
Sabina Villegas
Philippines

Her father died in 1942 during a Japanese attack on her mountain village on the island of Luzon after which she and her sisters had to endure mass raping in a military barracks.



Song Shin-do
South Korea/Japan

Abducted to the "Sekaikan" military brothel in Wuchang, China, in 1938, aged 16. There, she incurred several pregnancies and births. Living in Japan since the end of the war.



Bae Bong-gi
South Korea/Japan

Reported to an employment agency in Pusan in 1943, aged 29. Deported by warship to a military brothel on the Japanese island of Okinawa where she continued to live after the war.



Wu Hsiu-mei
Taiwan

Forced to run a canteen together with her husband in Guandong in 1940, aged 23, before being deported to a military brothel near the front lines under the name of "Kiyoko".

Abducted and Abused in Japanese Military Brothels (2)



Wan Aihua
China

A member of the anti-Japanese resistance when aged only 12. Captured and mass-raped. The first Chinese survivor to go public with her tale of woe.



Zhao Runmei
China

Kidnapped from under the eyes of her foster parents as a 16-year-old and raped for 40 days at the Hedong Battery. Suffered from infertility and torture trauma after the war.



Esmeralda Boe
East Timor

First raped in her village of Memo, aged 12 or 13, then for two years at the mercy of the Japanese officers Uemura, Haruku and Kawano.



Marta Abu Bere
East Timor

Deported from her village to Marobo, a hot-spring resort. There, she had to serve the Japanese soldiers during the day who then raped her at night.



Lee Sang-ok
North Korea

Was ordered to "contribute her virginity" to the war effort at the age of 17. Had to endure up to 25 Japanese rapists daily while being kept in a prison-like cell.



Pak Yong-sim
North Korea

First abducted and taken to Nanking at the age of 17 in 1939, then to military brothels in Burma and the Chinese Yunnan Province.



Kim Soon-ok
South Korea

Lured under false pretences to a military brothel in Northeast China where she was abused by officers as a 20-year-old in 1942.



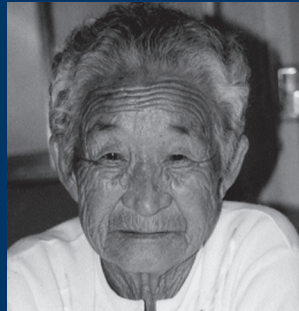
Park Du-ri
South Korea

Abducted at the age of 17 and sexually abused in a military brothel in Taiwan in 1940, where her ordeal only ended five years later, after the war ended.



Shim Dal-yeon
South Korea

Kidnapped while working on a field aged 12 or 13 and taken to the extreme cold of North East China to be abused in military brothels for front-line soldiers.



Park Ok-ryeon
South Korea

Answered a Japanese newspaper advert in 1941, aged 23. Ended up in a military brothel in Rabaul in the South Pacific where she was not allowed to speak any more Korean.



Rufina Fernandez
Philippines

Mother, father and sisters died during Japanese revenge campaigns in Manila in 1944. Being 17 years old, she suffered mass raping in a Japanese garrison.



Tomasa Salinog
Philippines

Abducted aged 13 by "Captain Hiro'oka" who had decapitated her father on the island of Panay in 1942. Abused by Japanese soldiers for several years.



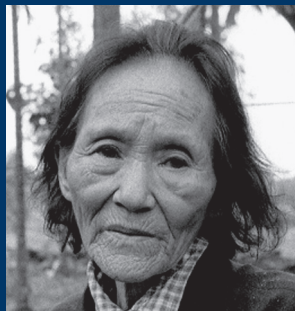
Anika
Taiwan

Newly married at the age of 21 and on her way to meet her husband when she was abducted to a military brothel in Hong Kong in 1942. Raped daily by the officers there.



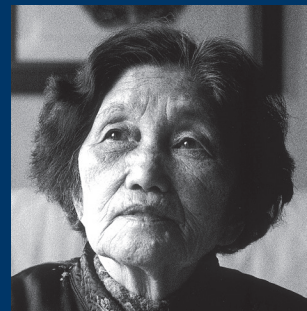
Su Yin-chiao
Taiwan

Attracted by a job offer in 1943 at the age of 20 and abducted to a military brothel on the island of Hainan from where she returned to Taiwan after she became seriously ill.



Rabai Ubusu
Taiwan

Ordered by local police to work for the Japanese troops in 1944, aged 15. Raped repeatedly by soldiers and later became pregnant.



Rapin Umaw
Taiwan

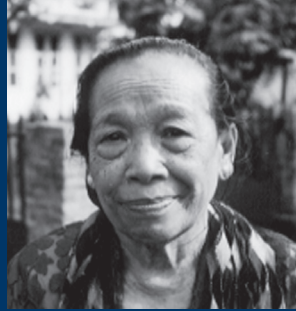
Forced to perform as a singer in front of Japanese troops, aged 16, in 1944. Later abducted to a military brothel where she gave birth to a daughter.

Abducted and Abused in Japanese Military Brothels (3)



Mardiyem
Indonesia

Lured to Borneo aged 13 by the promise of being able to perform as an actress, but instead ending up in a military brothel where she had her first abortion at the age of 14.



Suhanah
Indonesia

Abducted by 6 Japanese in front of her house in Badong in 1942, she remained imprisoned in a military brothel for officers and soldiers until the end of the war.



Rosalind Saw
Malaysia

Abducted while in the presence of her two children in 1942 and taken to a military brothel where she was abused by up to 60 Japanese soldiers a day.



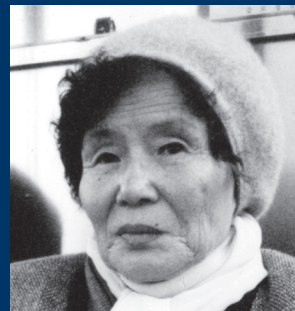
Moon Pil-gi
South Korea

Deported aged 18 to a military brothel in Manchuria along with 30 other Korean women who suffered beatings if they offered any resistance.



Gil Won-ok
South Korea

Deported to a military brothel in Harbin, China, in 1940, aged 13. Traumatized by the brutality of the Japanese soldiers, contracted severe venereal disease.



Kang Duk-kyung
South Korea

Deported to work in a Japanese factory at the age of 16. Captured by military police during an attempted escape and held captive in a brothel.



Justina Villanueva Pido
Philippines

A market-woman on the island of Negros in 1942. Raped by a Japanese soldier named Yamato, then imprisoned for ten months in a Japanese garrison where she gave birth to his child.



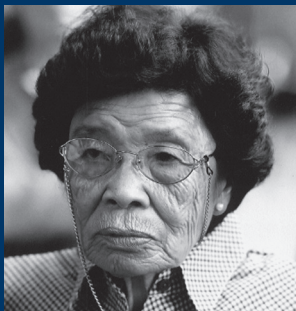
Rosita P. Nasino
Philippines

Kidnapped aged 15 on the way to her grandmother on the island of Panay in 1943 and the victim of mass raping in a barracks along with ten other women.



Maxima Regala de la Cruz
Philippines

Abducted aged 14 together with her mother from a market in San Ildefonso by Japanese soldiers in 1944 and taken to their garrison where she was raped daily for three months.



Chen Chen-tao
Taiwan

Kidnapped aged 19 on her way to school by a Japanese police officer in 1942 and taken to the Andaman Islands in the Indian Ocean from where she returned pregnant.



Lu Man-mei
Taiwan

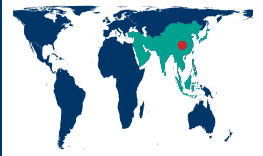
As a 17-year-old lured to the island of Hainan by the promise of a better job in 1943 and only allowed to return home after she was eight months pregnant.



Iyang Apai
Taiwan

Forced to perform as a singer in front of soldiers, aged 17, under orders of the Japanese police officer Takemura before being taken to a military brothel.

Japan's War of Annihilation against China



ASIA

When the first 500,000 Japanese elite soldiers invaded Northern China in 1937, the Chinese government only had 100,000 trained soldiers at their disposal. Although another 200,000 were hurriedly recruited, they were unable to withstand the conquest of Shanghai and the Japanese troops' advance on Nanking. In what was then the capital of China, Japanese soldiers massacred 300,000 to 400,000 civilians and raped 80,000 women in the space of a few weeks from the end of 1937 to the beginning of 1938.

The Japanese forces also used chemical and biological weapons in China. They contaminated villages and fields with plague and cholera bacteria and conducted human experiments on Chinese, British and US prisoners of war at the Pingfan experimental facility. The military surgeon Shinozuka Yoshio recalls how Japan's war of annihilation also targeted women, children and the elderly:

"The children as they might grow up to become enemies of Japan, the women as they might bear more children, and the elderly as they might be spies."

1942: Chinese soldiers on the Burma Road, the only supply route open to them following the disconnection of road links to North Vietnam by the Japanese occupiers.



Mao Zedong addressing his troops during the Second World War.

In defence of their country, Mao Zedong's communists and the Chinese Nationalist government under Chiang Kai-shek recruited approximately 14 million soldiers up to 1945.

In 1938, Chiang Kai-shek ordered the destruction of the dams of the Yellow River (Huanghe) in East China to halt the Japanese advance which resulted in the flooding of vast areas containing eleven cities and 4,000 villages. Up to an estimated 890,000 people drowned and four million lost their livelihood.

In total, 95 million people were displaced because of the hostilities in China.

According to approximations by Chinese and European historians, up to 21 million lives were lost. This means that the Second World War claimed more victims in China than in the countries responsible for it – Germany, Japan and Italy – combined.

The Massacre of Nanking 1937/38



Victims of the massacre.



Prisoners were buried alive.



A Japanese soldier shoots a monk.



A child amongst the debris.



Bayonet training using prisoners.

Eyewitness Accounts from Nanking

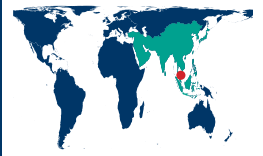
Recorded by the "Research Centre on the Nanking Massacre" at Nanking University

Mr Kun: "The Japanese (...) loaded three lorries full with men (and) (...) took them down to the river (...) There, they fired machine gun rounds into us. I tried to find cover behind a willow tree and was so scared that I passed out. When the Japanese thought that everyone was dead, they left. Then people wearing headbands from the Red Cross arrived to collect the bodies. They found me unconscious near the river under the willow and brought me back to my mother, thus saving my life.

Apart from myself, there were hardly any survivors out of the approximately 10,000 men."

Ms Ni: "We didn't dare cook anything for fear the Japanese would become aware of us (...) until we just couldn't bear it anymore. My mother asked my father to wash some vegetables and rice in the river. But as he approached the riverbank, the Japanese opened fire. He keeled over and fell to the ground (...) My mother immediately rushed out towards him when she heard the shots, so the Japanese shot her too. I was eleven years old at the time. I also ran out and saw my parents lying on the ground. The Japanese shot at me, too, and I got hit in the shoulder blade. The bullet scar is still visible today."

The Consequences of the War on the Malay Peninsula



ASIA

While the attack on the US Fleet at Pearl Harbor took place in December 1941, Japanese planes were also bombarding US bases in the Philippines as well as British bases in Hong Kong and Rangoon. They sank the Royal Navy's most modern vessels off the coast of Malaya, whereupon Japanese ground troops proceeded to invade the colony of British Malaya. Prior to this, they had been given free passage by both the Vichy collaboration regime in Indochina and the military regime in Thailand.

On the Malay Peninsula, international troops under British command, which included Indians, Chinese, Malays and Australians, tried to halt the Japanese advance. When they were forced to capitulate on 15th February 1942, they had suffered losses of more than 138,000.



Japanese troops are being celebrated on their passage through Bangkok on 9th December 1941.

Cheah Boon Kheng, emeritus historian at Penang University:

“People were very shocked, especially the Chinese community which made up almost 40 per cent of the Malayan population, for they too had heard of the devastation the Japanese had caused in North China and of the Nanking massacre. So the Chinese were very afraid.”

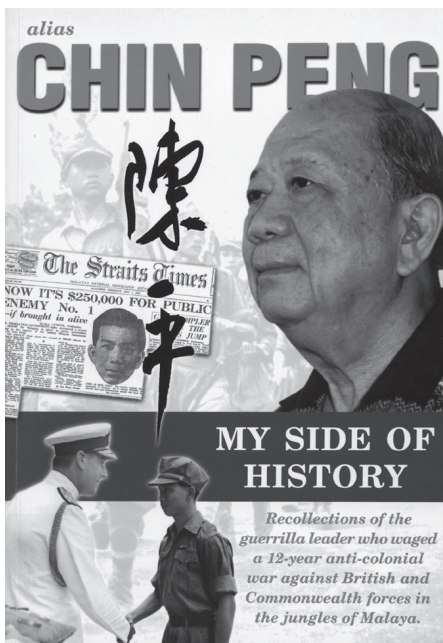
In actual fact, the Japanese occupiers deported tens of thousands of Chinese to labour camps and massacred several thousands more in broad daylight. The Chinese community puts the number at 45,000 killed.

This was also one of the reasons why the Chinese formed the core of the communist underground movement, the “Anti-Japanese People’s Army”, carrying out acts of sabotage against the occupying forces.

On the other hand, the Japanese military, adhering to the maxim “divide and conquer”, managed to recruit administration staff and volunteer soldiers amongst the Malays who constituted the largest part of the population with 45 per cent. In addition to this, tens of thousands of Indians, who made up approx. 15 per cent of the Malayan population, joined the Japanese forces.



Japanese propaganda poster from Singapore.



We have a choice

“We all have options – to stand our ground or to compromise, to save or to waste, to confront or to look the other way, to forget or to remember. I had to be a liberation fighter. (...)

I could not compromise with the Japanese; neither could I have worked within a system that perpetrated the continuance of British colonialism.”

Chin Peng, guerrilla fighter in the anti-Japanese resistance, later General Secretary of the Communist Party of Malaya (CPM) and leader of the anti-colonial guerrillas, in his memoirs “My Side of History”.

The 1945 Famine in Indochina

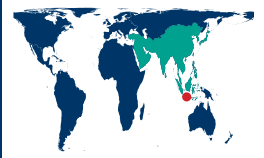


Viet Minh unit, 1944.

On 9th March 1945, the Japanese military drove the ailing French colonial administration of Indochina, who had collaborated with Japan, out of office and thus gained power in the last remaining European colony in Southeast Asia. From then on, the local farmers had to replace their grain crops with jute and oil plants to produce petrol for the Japanese war machinery. In their desperate search for food, hundreds of thousands of people flocked from the countryside to the cities in North Vietnam alone.

The communist resistance movement Viet Minh under Ho Chi Minh called for the continuation of the anti-colonial resistance also against the Japanese occupation. A pamphlet distributed to farmers read: “Don’t turn over a single kilogram of rice, don’t give a single peanut, don’t grow another jute plant for the (fascist) bandits!” Armed Viet Minh units supported the population’s storming of food stores belonging to large-scale landowners and occupiers. In spite of these efforts, one to two million people died in the famine caused by the war in Indochina.

The Indonesian Islands under Japanese Rule



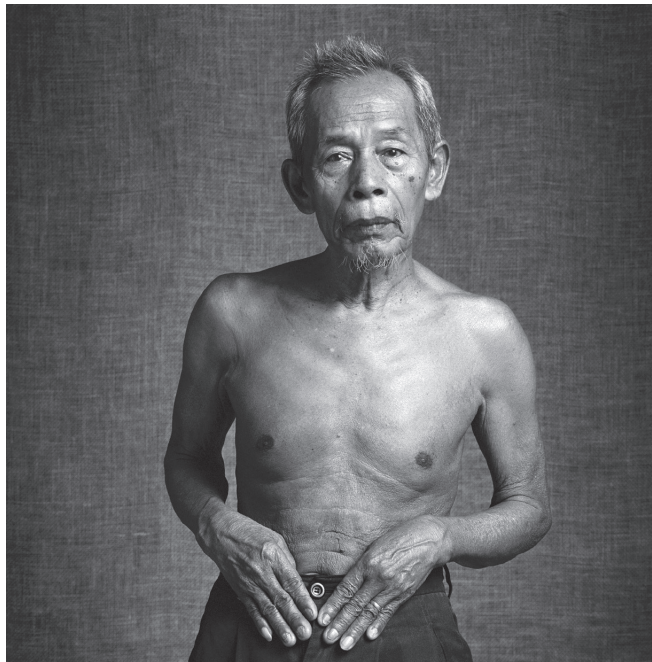
ASIA

From Singapore, the Japanese forces crossed the Strait of Malacca to Indonesia.

Nowhere else in Asia was Japan's war propaganda ("Asia to the Asians") more successful than on the over 17,500 Indonesian islands which had suffered three-and-a-half centuries of Dutch rule.

The Indonesian population celebrated the Japanese invaders as if they were liberators.

In the cities, excited Indonesians knocked colonial statues off their pedestals whilst in the provinces they drove out the colonial administration. On the shores, the landing troops were given a triumphant welcome and many Indonesians volunteered for military duty.



The Indonesian Samlawi had to carry out forced labour at the construction of a railway track on the island of Sumatra from 1942 to 1945.

But the Japanese "liberators" didn't grant the Indonesian people the right to self-government either. The Japanese military treated Indonesians with disdain and made hundreds of thousands of them carry out forced labour to build fortifications, air raid bunkers, barracks, airstrips, harbours and roads.

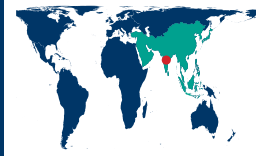
In 1942, the Japanese military deported forced labourers and prisoners of war from Indonesia and other occupied countries to Thailand in order to construct a railway through the jungle to Burma. 100,000 Asian workers died in the process. The construction of a railway track on the island of Sumatra in 1944 claimed countless further lives.

The Indonesian writer Pramoedya Ananta Toer estimates that during World War II, "four million or more Javanese farmers had died as 'romusha' (forced labourers), fodder for the sun god's militaristic descendants".



*Allied leaflet:
Only the defeat of the Japanese will free the forced labourers who were called "romusha" in Indonesia.*

India: The Largest Colonial Army of All Time



ASIA



Indian troops in Singapore in 1941.



Indians at Monte Cassino in Italy in 1944.



Indian pilots being deployed for Great Britain.

India was the largest, the most economically important, and with over 320 million inhabitants the most populous colony of the British Empire. With the 2.5 million soldiers of the *Royal Indian Army* on the Indian subcontinent, Great Britain commanded the largest colonial army of all time. Added to them were 120,000 Gurkhas from the kingdom of Nepal. The *Royal Indian Army* was an army of volunteers, which is why Indian soldiers found themselves in a better position than the often forcefully recruited African soldiers from the British colonies. Whilst the African troops were almost entirely led by British officers, the number of Indians who took on command positions rose to 14,000 during the Second World War. Indian soldiers also received invalid benefits and pensions after their service.

Even though these were lower compared to what British soldiers received, the veterans of the *Royal Indian Army* were substantially better off than the African combatants. 30 divisions of the *Royal Indian Army* made an important contribution to the Allied victory over the Axis powers in the Middle East, Asia, North Africa and Europe. India itself was also a theatre of war. Following the occupation of Malaya and Singapore by Japanese troops, the spring of 1942 saw air attacks on cities on the Indian east coast. Japanese submarines sank 23 Allied cargo ships in the Gulf of Bengal, and Japanese planes and gunboats bombed Ceylon, where the Royal Navy kept fuel tanks. Approximately 60,000 Indian soldiers lost their lives in World War II and the same number were injured. Almost 80,000 Indians ended up in German, Italian or Japanese captivity.



Indian troops loading tank ammunition.

Indian soldier in front of a destroyed Italian plane in Africa, 1941.





“No great portion of the world population was so effectively protected from the horrors and perils of the World War as were the peoples of Hindustan (India). They were carried through the struggle on the shoulders of our small island.”

Winston Churchill, *The Second World War*, London 1954, Vol. 4.

The 1943/44 Famine in Bengal

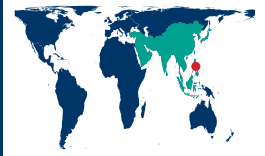
Bengal was the easternmost province of the British Crown Colony of India, near the border with Burma. When the region became a war zone, Bengal suffered the biggest famine on the Indian subcontinent since the 18th century. The Japanese invasion of Burma disrupted the rice imports from the neighbouring country into Bengal. Within a few months, the price of rice had risen fifteen-fold. Merchants were also withholding stock as they feared a Japanese invasion, and new stock couldn't be brought in as the British military had confiscated any boats in the Bay of Bengal. Masses of starving peasants and farm workers were roaming the province in search of food.

In October 1944 alone, Calcutta saw 100,000 people begging in the streets. According to researchers, the famine caused by the war claimed an estimated two to four million victims in Bengal. In Winston Churchill's history of the Second World War in six volumes it is not mentioned at all.

Zainul Abedin recorded the famine in Bengal with his drawings.



The Philippines – A Country of Resistance



ASIA

The Japanese attack on the Philippines, then a US colony, happened at the same time as the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941. After some brief rearguard action, the US troops abandoned the land of the 7,000 islands at the beginning of 1942 and the Filipinos were left to mount their resistance against the Japanese occupiers over the next three years on their own.

Nevertheless, guerrilla groups soon sprang up throughout the Philippine islands. The largest one on the main island of Luzon was the “Anti-Japanese People’s Liberation Army” (Hukbalahap) and consisted of 30,000 armed fighters and 70,000 reservists.

In total there were about one million partisan fighters. They had already liberated most of the country’s provinces by the time US forces returned to the Philippines in 1944.

For this, the Japanese troops cruelly punished the civilian population during their retreat until Japan was finally forced to capitulate in 1945.

Ricardo Trota José, historian at the University of the Philippines:

“The Philippines among the Southeast Asian countries was the country which lost the most number of lives and suffered the most de-

struction during the Second World War.

The government puts the official number of Filipinos who were killed at 1.1 million.

This means one out of 16 Filipinos died as a result of the war, which is a very big percentage.”



“Veterans Tomb” in a cemetery in Sagada, a mountain village in the Northern Philippines.



Musa O. Ami, Muslim anti-Japanese guerrilla fighter on the southern Philippine island of Mindanao from 1942 to 1945: “Our guerrilla troops consisted of 300 people. We withdrew to the countryside, and soon the Japanese didn’t dare leave the city and enter areas controlled by us. We had hardly any guns and attacked them with our machetes.”



Hadji Abundi Ajiji, Muslim anti-Japanese guerrilla fighter on the southern Philippine island of Jolo, seriously injured during an attack on a Japanese garrison on 15th April 1945: “Until now, I have a bullet lodged in my leg. At that time, the Americans still hadn’t returned to Jolo yet. But the guerrillas had already liberated large parts of the island.”



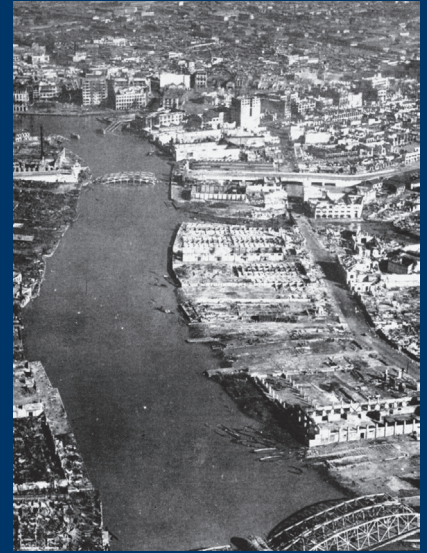
Luis Taruc, commander of the “Anti-Japanese People’s Liberation Army” (Hukbalahap), speaking at a rally after the end of the war (left) and in front of the Veterans Bureau in Quezon City (right):

“We were avid students of the socio-political developments around the world and we were reading newspapers from all over the world. We were aware of Hitler’s deceiving attempts to dress up his nationalist goals with socialist phrases as represented by his book ‘Mein Kampf’. This is why we were surprised that the German people, despite their advanced political maturity and economic strength, were mesmerised by Hitler and his superior race mentality. After all, it was there in black and white that he pursued an aggressive policy and wanted to occupy the whole of Europe. With all the information we were getting, we were able to foresee in 1939 that the war would eventually reach the Philippines. The Japanese had already conquered Formosa and had occupied Korea and Manchuria before entering China. From there, it was only a small step to the Philippines. And our country was already a target because it was home to the largest American military bases outside the United States. While we did not like the extreme evil of Nazism, fascism, and Japanese militarism, we were also very much against American imperialism. Comparing the two, we came to the conclusion, that we better side with the lesser evil. We were hoping that even the very capitalist USA would become more democratic after the war. So we already began boycotting Japanese goods in 1939 and organised rallies against Nazism, fascism and Japanese imperialism in Manila and the larger provinces of the main island of Luzon. As one of the most popular speakers the party leadership eventually asked me to establish an anti-Japanese guerrilla movement, the Hukbalahap.”

Manila 1945

They are dead now– they are all dead now -
a horrible death – by sword and fire...
They died with their house
and they died with their city –
and maybe it’s just as well they did.
They could never have survived
the death of the old Manila.

From an elegy about the destruction of Manila by the Philippine writer Nick Joaquin. 100,000 civilians died during the liberation of the city – more than in the German cities Dresden, Cologne or Berlin.



Remedios Gomez-Paraisa was one of the few women who held a command position in the Philippine “Anti-Japanese People’s Liberation Army” (Hukbalahap).

In the 1990s, she fought for the recognition of the Hukbalahap as a resistance movement and for pension payments to the former guerrillas by the Philippine government.

At the age of 80 she was still helping former fellow fighters with filling out their pension forms in a small veterans bureau on the outskirts of Manila. She herself received a pension of the equivalent of 60 euros a month in 2000 – two euros a day for four years of armed struggle for the liberation of her country.



LISTENING STATION 6

3'02 min.

Remedios Gomez-Paraisa – Philippines



Listening station 6: Remedios Gomez-Paraisa – Philippines

“I came from Anao, Pampanga. My father was the mayor of our town when the Japanese invaded our country. That was back in 1942. When the Japanese occupied the country, they instructed all government officials to surrender with their arms but my father refused to surrender. Instead he went on hiding, evading the Japanese. When he was betrayed and apprehended by the enemies, he refused to participate with the Japanese so he was tortured to death.

During those days, we began hiding. I was just a teenager. We were hiding at the foot of the mountain of Mt. Arayat. We were able to organise a squadron, but we began with only one pistol, the pistol of my father.

After our encounters with the Japanese, with the military forces, we just retreated anywhere in a safe place without food. One, two, three days or even one week we were depending on edible plants along the rivers or in the mountains. It was really very difficult. Many of our comrades died without taking any medicine. We were fortunate that some of us survived those struggles.

We were not afraid to die during those days. We believed that it was our sole obligation to defend our country whenever it is in need.

During the liberation we cleared the way for them (the US troops). We were hoping then that we would win real genuine freedom, democracy and justice. But we did not. After liberation it took only a few months until we returned to the mountains again because our hopes were not fulfilled.”

After the War Meant Before the War



ASIA



After a civil war lasting until 1949, Mao Zedong proclaimed the People's Republic of China.



Following the Korean war, the country remained divided along the 38th parallel from 1953.



In 1945, Ho Chi Minh hoped in vain that the "new France" of the Résistance would end Vichy's colonial policy and allow an independent Vietnam.



At Tokyo's Yasukuni shrine, war criminals are being honoured to the present day. The ceremonies were in the past often also attended by high-ranking government officials such as the prime minister.

Whilst the Second World War ended in Europe with Germany's surrender on 8th May 1945, Japan only capitulated four months later – after the atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The fight for political post-war power in Asia led to numerous subsequent wars.

In **China**, the military power struggle between Mao Zedong's Red Army and Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists didn't end in a communist victory until 1949. In **Malaya, Indonesia** and the **Philippines**, independence movements continued to fight against the old and new colonial masters from Europe and the USA after 1945.

Similarly, the war in **Korea** from 1950 to 1953 was a consequence of the country's division at the hands of the victorious powers of World War II. Two million civilians lost their lives on the Korean peninsula, plus one million North Korean and Chinese soldiers, 250,000 soldiers from South Korea and nearly 37,000 from the US.

Indochina had to fight against the French and American colonial powers for another 30 years. As early as 2nd September 1945, Ho Chi Minh had proclaimed **Vietnam's** independence in Hanoi for the first time. But it wasn't until 1975 that it was finally achieved. Until then, US forces had dropped ten times more bombs on Indochina than on Nazi Germany throughout the Second World War.

In **India**, gaining independence in 1947 led to the division of the subcontinent according to religion which resulted in several wars between Hindu-dominated India and Muslim-governed **Pakistan**.

Japan, on the other hand, swiftly regained a position of political and economic leadership in Asia as an ally of the Western powers during the Cold War, without ever having to pay adequate compensation for the victims and the damage it caused in its neighbouring countries in World War II.

In 1990, Japanese military expenditure was amongst the highest worldwide with 30 billion dollars, and at the turn of the millennium, Japan commanded the third strongest military fleet in the Pacific after the USA and Russia.

Nauru 1940: The Outbreak of War in Oceania



OCEANIA



According to general perception, World War II in the Pacific started on 7th December 1941 with the Japanese attack on the US naval base at Pearl Harbor on Hawaii.

In actual fact, there had already been an attack on the Central Pacific island of Nauru on 27th December 1940. On that day, a ship bearing the Japanese name “Manyo Maru” and flying the flag of the Japanese merchant navy approached the island. The islanders were hoping it brought long-awaited rice shipments, but when the ship entered the harbour its crew opened fire on the phosphate loading facilities and the oil tanks, for in reality it was the German armed cruiser “Komet” disguised as a Japanese cargo ship. Encountering no resistance whatsoever on Nauru, the German marines hoisted their swastika flags and bid their fascist salute before disappearing as unexpectedly as they had arrived.

In August 1942, bombardments announced the landing of Japanese troops on Nauru. They held the island occupied for three years and deported two thirds of the 2,000 inhabitants to the Micronesian atoll Truc, located 5,000 kilometres away, which Japan had made into the world’s largest naval base. There, the deported had to carry out forced labour. 463 of them died in the process.

For the survivors the Second World War only ended on 31st January 1946 – with the return to their island. 22 years later to the day, Nauru gained its independence, albeit only on paper as the phosphate strip mining carried out by a British-Australian mining company had left large parts of the island so devastated that the planet’s smallest state remained wholly dependent on their former colonial rulers Australia. And the Australians made use of this in 2001, when they offered Nauru 20 million dollars for accommodating 400 refugees from Iraq and Afghanistan who were not welcome in Australia. This way, yesterday’s island of the deported became the dumping ground for today’s deportees. It took international protests and a change of government in Australia for the refugee camps in Nauru to finally be closed in 2008. They were reopened in 2012, however, and Australia continued to use Nauru as a dumping ground for refugees suffering “severe abuse, inhumane treatment and neglect” through until 2023 (*Amnesty International*).

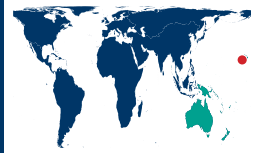


Harbour facilities on Nauru set on fire by the German war vessel “Komet” in 1940.

Asylum seekers from Sri Lanka in a camp on Nauru demanding recognition by the Australian government during International Refugee Week in June 2007.



Hawaii 1941: The Polynesian Victims of Pearl Harbor



OCEANIA

Honolulu Star-Bulletin 1st EXTRA

8 PAGES—HONOLULU, TERRITORY OF HAWAII, U. S. A., SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1941—6 PAGES PRICE FIVE CENTS

WAR!

(Associated Press by Transpacific Telephone)
SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 7.—President Roosevelt announced this morning that Japanese planes had attacked Manila and Pearl Harbor.

OAHU BOMBED BY JAPANESE PLANES

SIX KNOWN DEAD, 21 INJURED, AT EMERGENCY HOSPITAL

Attack Made On Island's Defense Areas

WASHINGTON, Dec. 7.—(AP)—The Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor from the air and all naval and military activities on the island of Oahu, principal American base in the Hawaiian Islands.

Oahu was attacked at 7:55 this morning by Japanese planes.

The Rising Sun emblem of Japan, was seen as planes winged high.

When other were of bombers streamer through the clouds, dropping fire from the sky and their searchlights on a city.

According to the uncorroborated report of the governor's office, the Japanese handgrenades, most public shortly before 10:00 a. m. they attacked Oahu, reached island in force.

Witnesses said they saw at least 30 airplanes over Pearl Harbor.

The attack centered in the Pearl Harbor area.

The rising sun was seen on the wing tips of the airplanes.

Although several bombs had been dropped on the city, the city of Honolulu was unscathed.

It is reliably reported that many objectives were hit.

Some enemy planes were reported shot down.

One of the planes was seen in a plume of burning oil.

Civilians are ordered to stay off the streets until further notice.

CIVILIANS ORDERED OFF STREETS

The army has ordered that all civilians stay off the streets and highways and not use telephones.

Evidence that the Japanese attack has reached Honolulu has been shown by three bombing jetties of smoke in the Pearl Harbor and Hickam field areas.

All many personnel and civilian defense workers, with the exception of women, have been ordered to duty at Pearl Harbor.

The Pearl Harbor area was immediately placed on a strict curfew.

A holding stream of injured people began pouring into the city emergency hospital to receive after the bombardment started.

Thousands of Honolulu calls about the attack.

At the Star-Bulletin office the phone calls flooded the single operator and it was impossible to take any more.

At 10:05 a. m. today Governor Poindexter has declared a state of emergency for the entire Hawaiian Islands.

The emergency that Governor L. Dyer, acting Governor Poindexter, signed all residents of Honolulu to remain off the street, and the post office to remain closed.

Mr. Dyer reported that all major disaster agencies, including the fire department, are on duty.

Working employees of Pearl Harbor were ordered at 10:10 a. m. not to report at Pearl Harbor.

The major disaster appeal was to be held at the city hall at about 10:30 this morning.

At least two Japanese planes were reported to have been shot down.

One of the planes was shot down at Pt. Kaula and the other back of the Waipahoehoe.

ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS IN ACTION

First indication of the raid came shortly before 8 this morning, when anti-aircraft guns around Pearl Harbor began sending up a thick smoke barrier.

At the same time a great cloud of black smoke rose from the west coast and also from the east coast.

Shortly before 9:30 a bomb fell near Waikiki near the residence of the governor.

It was reported that the bomb killed an unidentified Chinese man across the street from the Governor's Cottage, C. E. Daniels, a welder, found a fragment of the bomb.

It was reported that the bomb was dropped from a plane.

The secretary of the major disaster appeal has been appointed director under the War Relocation Authority.

Witnesses said they saw at least 30 airplanes over Pearl Harbor.

The attack centered in the Pearl Harbor area.

The rising sun was seen on the wing tips of the airplanes.

Although several bombs had been dropped on the city, the city of Honolulu was unscathed.

It is reliably reported that many objectives were hit.

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Hundreds See City Bombed

Names of Dead and Injured

Schools Closed

Editorial

HAWAII MEETS THE CRISIS

Honolulu and Hawaii will meet the emergency of war today as Honolulu and Hawaii have met emergency in the past.

At the public affairs and news wire in the city, Governor Poindexter and the army and navy bands have issued orders to remain calm.

The report, issued with the emergency promptly taken up by the public.

It is likely that the largest number of people, and that will be in the new state and determination to play their part in the emergency.

BULLETIN

Additional Star-Bulletin extras today will cover the latest developments in this war.

The electricity was turned off at night, windows had to be blacked out, food and petrol were rationed, no-one was permitted to change employment and there was a curfew. Anyone who ventured out after eight o'clock in the evening was shot."

The Polynesian inhabitants had to relinquish one third of their territory to the US forces during World War II. It was never returned. Only as recently as the late 19th century, Hawaii had been an independent country under the reign of the Polynesian Queen Liliuokalani. But then American plantation owners who wanted to export their sugar tax free to the US had seized power by means of a coup d'état, brought about the affiliation of the island group with the US against the will of the Polynesian population and forced the Hawaiian regents to sign over the Pearl River delta on the island of Oahu to the US military. It was a fateful concession that led to the creation of the naval base of Pearl Harbor. Leaning on their naval power, the United States declared Hawaii US territory in 1900.

"Only this made our islands a target for the Japanese in the Second World War", says the Polynesian Napua Keko'olani-Raymond.

Official US historiography describes the 7th of December 1941 as "Day of Infamy". On this day, a surprise attack by Japanese forces almost completely wiped out the US Pacific fleet at Pearl Harbor on Hawaii. Only in the wake of this attack did the USA enter the Second World War.

Today, a gigantic open air museum at Honolulu Harbor commemorates "the worst disaster in US naval history":

"21 vessels, including all eight first-class battleships, were sunk or damaged, 170 army and navy planes were destroyed. The number of casualties: 2,400 dead, 1,200 wounded."

For the Polynesian Kekuni Blaisdell, 7th December 1941 also marks a significant date, but mostly for the approximately 100,000 traditional inhabitants of Hawaii:

"Immediately after the attack, a state of war was declared on our islands. The US military assumed power.

Today, Pearl Harbor is the largest US war museum with more than 1.5 million visitors each year.





“Fighting in the jungles of the often uninhabited islands was one of the most gruesome experiences of the war in the Pacific.”

From the German television documentary “Von Hawaii nach Iwo Jima – Der Krieg im Pazifik” (From Hawaii to Iwo Jima – The War in the Pacific) (“ZDF History”, Guido Knopp (editor), 5.9.2004). Not a single islander is seen or heard in the documentary.



Haunani-Kay Trask, Director of the Centre for Hawaiian Studies at Honolulu University, points out that after the Japanese attack on the US Pacific fleet at Pearl Harbor not only US soldiers had to go to war, but also many of the traditional inhabitants of the islands. Her father was one of the Polynesians recruited in 1941. His traumatic experience in the “racially segregated” US military haunted him to old age. At the regular commemoration ceremonies for the fallen of World War II at “USS Arizona Memorial National Park” on the Pearl Harbor Navy Base, the Polynesian victims are not deemed worth mentioning.



Haunani-Kay Trask – Hawaii



Listening Station 7: Haunani-Kay Trask – Hawaii

“I wasn’t born, when my father went into the war. My parents were married after Pearl Harbor. Pearl Harbor was December 7th 1941 and they were married on January 2nd. Martial law was immediately declared and everybody who was a good American signed up to go to war including my father and all the rest of the Hawaiians. Because the American military was segregated in the Second World War they didn’t know where to put the Hawaiians because they weren’t black – the military had whole separate black units – but then they couldn’t put them with white men either, because white men would get upset and say ‘What are these blacks doing here?’.

So they had their own sort of little units in the war, which of course was the result of a kind of apartheid thinking which created separation even though when they actually went to war and they were all there getting killed at the same time. And many, many people died. But my father didn’t die. Fortunately he came back but like many soldiers he never wanted to talk about the war. He became an advocate and he fought very hard against racism. But he very rarely talked to us as children about the war because it was so terrible.”

Deployment Bases for the Allies in the South Pacific



OCEANIA

In the wake of their attack on **Pearl Harbor**, the Japanese forces advanced from Micronesia to New Guinea in the South Pacific in early 1942.

On the offshore island of **New Britain** they established a gigantic military base in the small harbour town of **Rabaul** where up to 90,000 troops were stationed. From there, Japanese forces intended to advance to the neighbouring north coast of Australia, which the Allies tried to prevent at all cost.

The US shipped hundreds of thousands of soldiers with heavy military equipment to the region over a distance of 10,000 kilometres. To ensure their supply with weapons and ammunition, food, clothing, and medical care, a close network of military bases throughout the Pacific was quickly set up.

Hawaii served as the first outpost where over a million US soldiers stopped over on their way to the battlefields of Oceania.

The **Midway Islands** were not located on the actual deployment route, but their position is half way between Hawaii and Japan which made them an important naval base for US aircraft carriers. Off the coast of these islands, in June 1942, the opposing powers fought one of the most significant naval battles of the Second World War.

Also of strategic importance alongside the French Pacific colonies of **Polynesia** and **New Caledonia** were the archipelagos of **Samoa**, **Fiji** and in particular the **New Hebrides** (present-day Vanuatu). There, on the island of Espiritu Santo, the “Island Command Base IV” was established in 1942 – training ground, recreation area and medical camp for half a million soldiers from the US, Australia and New Zealand.

The inhabitants of the islands occupied by the US military had to serve in their tens of thousands as cheap aides, builders, food suppliers or scouts. In **American Samoa**, the US Navy also recruited soldiers, and over 8,000 Fijian islanders went to fight in the jungle war on the Solomon Islands in 1943.

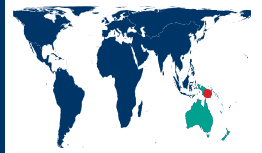
Swearing-in of recruits in American Samoa.



July 1943: Soldiers from Fiji fighting for the Allies on New Georgia in the Western Solomon Islands.



New Guinea: Farmers and Fishermen at War



OCEANIA

Until 1942, there were only around 8,000 white people living amongst two million indigenous islanders on New Guinea, a territory roughly the size of France. Over the course of the following three years, the largest island in the Pacific was steamrolled by 300,000 Japanese as well as one million Americans and just under 500,000 Australians, making it almost one foreign soldier for each islander.

The foreign forces recruited about 100,000 local aides on the ground. Both warring sides committed a multitude of crimes: they looted houses, burnt down villages and stole the villagers' supplies and cattle. They used corporal punishment and torture, raped women, abused their men and had any islanders whom they suspected of collaboration executed by firing squad.

Japanese officers frequently ordered islanders to march in front of their own troops as a "human shield". But the Allies, too, forced the locals at gunpoint to carry out various war duties.

The main theatre of war was the rough mountainous terrain of the Owen Stanley Range in New Guinea's interior.

Only a narrow footpath led from the north coast, where the Japanese had landed, to the harbour town of Port Moresby in the Australian colony of Papua on the south coast. This path, the Kokoda Trail, was the subject of a war of attrition lasting several months in which both sides depended on local helpers. These had to scout the terrain, clear jungle paths, build temporary bridges, erect camps, build sheds as well as dig trenches, set up rifle ranges and build bunkers. They went hunting and fishing for the soldiers. They set traps and laid ambushes. Over steep paths, they carried everything that the foreigners needed to conduct their war up into the mountains: tents and sleeping bags, crockery and lamps, food and water supplies, canons and grenades, guns and ammunition. And on their descent they balanced the wounded on bamboo stretchers to carry them back to the base camps and field hospitals in the valley.

127,000 Japanese and tens of thousands of Australians and Americans died during the fighting on the island. Nobody bothered counting the victims amongst the locals.

Local porters for the Allies at the front-line in the mountains of New Guinea.



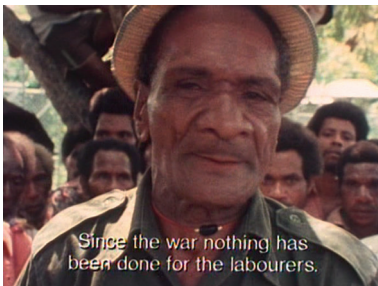
Members of a New Guinean infantry battalion, November 1944.





“For what and on what grounds should Japan compensate? If the New Guineans asked for compensation, I'd like to ask them the grounds of their claim. After all, we were defending them. I don't think we caused them any trouble. We only used their land as a battlefield.”

Yusako Goto, member of the Japanese High Command in New Guinea during the Second World War, in the Australian documentary “Senso Daughters” (1990).



Asina Papau and **Ovivi Arau** were among the tens of thousands of local porters and aides used by the Allies in New Guinea in World War II. Half a century later, in an interview for the documentary “Angels of War”, they criticized the government of their former colonial power Australia for never acknowledging, let alone compensating them for their war efforts. And this was in spite of the fact that during the war servicemen from New Guinea enjoyed a legendary reputation. Popular singers had celebrated them as “Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels” (on account of their curly hair), and the Australian soldier Bert Beros had dedicated a poem to them in the fiercely contested Owen Stanley Mountains in 1942 which Australian radio had popularised nationwide. All this was forgotten once the war had ended.



Asina Papau/Ovivi Arau – New Guinea



Asina Papau/Ovivi Arau – New Guinea:

(Australian song “Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels”)

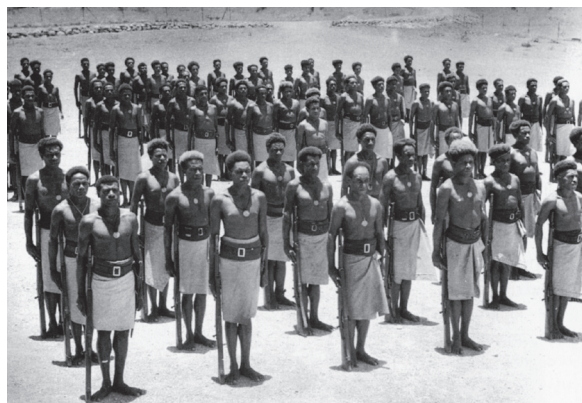
(Bert Beros, Australian soldier, reads his poem “Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels”):

“Many a mother in Australia when a busy day is done
Sends a prayer to the Almighty for the keeping of her son
Asking that an angel guide him and bring him safely back
Now we see those prayers are answered on the Owen Stanley
Track...
Slow and careful in bad places on the awful mountain track
The look upon their faces would make you think that Christ was
black...
May the mothers of Australia when they offer up a prayer
Mention those impromptu angels with their fuzzy wuzzy hair.”

(Asina Papau – New Guinea): “Since the war nothing has been done for the labourers. Young people don't know how hard things were for us. People are forgetting that we carried the wounded on one shoulder and bombs on the other. We were not afraid of the Japanese. We worked hard despite all of the danger. We were promised compensation and I ask now for what we were promised.”

(Ovivi Arau – New Guinea): “It was so terrible as a labourer that we had to sleep in our own shit. Australia has treated us like that – like shit! I had to sleep on the corpses of Japanese. I drank water full of their rotting flesh. But for enduring all this, we have got nothing.”

The Revolt of Colonial Soldiers from Papua



In New Guinea, thousands of islanders fought on the side of the Allies, many of whom came from the Australian colony of Papua in the south of the island. The commander of the 162nd US Infantry Battalion in New Guinea wrote about the Pacific Islands Regiment manned by local soldiers: “The work of the members of this Company during operations was outstanding and without the valuable assistance of this, our troupes would have had extreme difficulty in accomplishing their mission.”



However, many Australian officers viewed the colonial soldiers as subordinates who were not fit to be treated on the same terms as their white masters. The battalions from Papua often had to fight on the front-line during the day and keep watch during the night so that the Australian soldiers could enjoy a good night's sleep. In late 1944, Australian commanders ordered the indigenous soldiers to take off their uniforms and carry on fighting in their loincloths, even attaching the insignia of their military ranks to them.

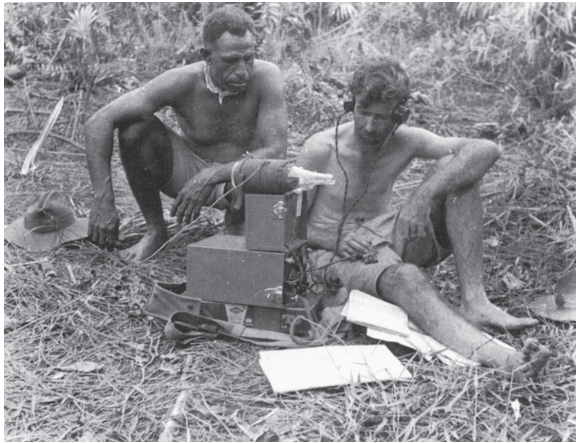
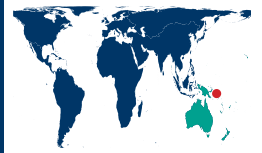
A *Pacific Islands Regiment* sergeant named Tapioli refused to obey this humiliating order and informed his Australian superior that he would rather paint his stripes “on his arse” than wearing them on his thigh. Other soldiers followed Tapioli's example and complained vociferously about this “deliberate insult”. When young Australian officer D.J. Kerr tried to reprimand them, the islanders set upon him with sticks. The altercation nearly escalated into an exchange of gunfire between the revolting soldiers and the Allied troops.

Four of the New Guinean rebels were made to appear before a military tribunal which sentenced them to six months in prison. However, the defendants used the trial to further their cause. They denounced the inequality and racist attitude of their Australian officers. An indigenous corporal named Diti summarised his outrage by saying he was accustomed to saluting with his arm, like all soldiers did. If he was forced to wear his stripes on his laplap he would show his officers what he thought of them by lifting his leg, like a dog, and flashing his genitals.

Sergeant William Matpi shouted that “if the masters wanted to shoot him, they could”. He had fought well alongside the Australian and American soldiers, and he should have a proper uniform, “not one worn by house servants”. As a result of these protests, the Australian commanders were finally forced to retract their new uniform regulation.

OCEANIA

Scouting for the Allies on the Solomon Islands



Local scouts delivered information on Japanese positions to secret Allied radio stations.



The Solomon Islands Labour Corps consisted of 3,700 men who carried out all kinds of labour for the Allies.

The almost one thousand islands and atolls of the Solomons, inhabited by about 200,000 hunters, farmers and fishermen at the time, were not even mapped in any detail yet when they became a battleground in World War II, referred to as “big death” by the islanders because of its devastating consequences.

At the beginning of 1942, the Japanese air force carried out its first aerial attacks on the islands. Shortly afterwards, Japanese troops landed on the main island of Guadalcanal and started building an airstrip on the east coast. It was intended to be three kilometres long and 300 metres wide and was supposed to enable the Japanese to control the airspace over the South Pacific. In order to complete it as quickly as possible, Japanese troops deported thousands of men to Guadalcanal from Korea and also rounded up islanders from the surrounding villages as forced labourers. All day long, and even at night under floodlight, they had to clear coconut plantations, level fields and gardens, remove raised terrain, dig trenches and build depots, air raid shelters and barracks.

However, local scouts kept the Allies informed about the progress of the Japanese building works. Most of these islanders were volunteers who had previously been members of the British Colonial Police. They now mingled with the other workers at the Japanese construction site, spying on layout plans and troop positions. Their messengers then carried the information at night over jungle paths to hidden radio stations in the mountains. From there, it was transmitted in encoded form to Allied bases in Fiji, Vanuatu and Hawaii. This information enabled US landing troops to seize the airport on Guadalcanal shortly before its completion and subsequently use it for their own war efforts.

In late 1943, the Japanese troops were forced to withdraw from the Solomon Islands. The campaign on the islands was a turning point in the war in Oceania. Here, Japan lost vital battles in the air, at sea and on land. Without the help of the local population the Allies would not have achieved this, or at least not this quickly. Thousands of islanders sacrificed their lives. The exact number of victims remains unknown.

OCEANIA

Jacob Vouza – “National Hero of the Solomons”



A statue at Honiara, the capital of the Solomon Islands, commemorates the local volunteers who fought and died on the side of the Allies in the Second World War. It stands in the city centre and shows a Melanesian soldier in a loincloth holding a machete. The bronze statue depicts Jacob Vouza, a “coastwatcher”, who refused to reveal Allied positions even under torture when he was captured by the Japanese. The plaque below the statue reads: “America, Australia, New Zealand and the Allies thank the Solomon Islanders for their tremendous WWII efforts. This touches also Solomon Islanders who fought alongside us during the Solomon Island battles from Guadalcanal to Bougainville.”

This stone appreciation by the Allies of their local auxiliary troops may be quite remarkable – being so rare –, but it still did not bring any financial benefits. After the war, the majority of Solomon Islands veterans were left empty-handed.



Biuku Gasa hails from a remote lagoon territory in the north of the Solomon Islands and during the war made world wide history. When the Solomons became a battlefield in 1943, Biuku Gasa volunteered to scout Japanese positions for the Allies. Disguised as a traditional fisherman and together with his friend Aaron Kumasi he operated behind enemy lines. On one of their reconnaissance trips in a dugout canoe, they discovered a group of US soldiers stranded on a tiny islet. The scouts went to get help and thus also saved the life of the stranded US captain: John F. Kennedy. 60 years later, Biuku Gasa still proclaimed proudly: “Without me, there would have been no US President John F. Kennedy.”



LISTENING STATION 9

3'15 min.

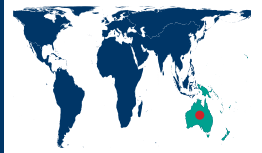
Biuku Gasa – Solomon Islands



Listening Station 9: Biuku Gasa – Solomon Islands

“The Japanese were the first to turn up here in the area of Munda. At the time, everybody ran away, scattering in all directions. I went to Gizo to volunteer as a scout. I was on my way back to Gizo with my friend Aaron Kumasi when we discovered a boat shattered on a reef at the entrance of the lagoon. We paddled towards the nearest island when suddenly a man came out from under the trees and onto the beach, calling out: ‘Hey, hey, come, come!’ But we pushed off again quickly, thinking he was Japanese. He shouted: ‘Hey, if you are scouts, you know John Kari, don’t you?’ John Kari was from my village and was also a coast guard. That’s how we knew that we had come across friends. They were Americans, nine men in total. We told them to watch out because we’d spotted another man on a neighbouring island who was probably Japanese. But they replied: ‘No, no, he’s not Japanese, that’s our captain looking for water. Kennedy!’ When Captain Kennedy had steered his boat into the bay of Kolombangara, he hadn’t noticed that a Japanese destroyer was in pursuit. And so it made ‘boom!’ The Japanese launched their torpedoes and sank Kennedy’s boat. Two of his crew members died. The remaining eleven fled to a small islet at the entrance of the Vonavona lagoon. That was where we found them. We climbed coconut palms to fetch coconuts for them, cracked them open and gave them to the Americans, including Kennedy. He spoke a little Pidgin English and wanted us to deliver a message to his troops. But we had no paper. I said to him: ‘Why don’t you write the message on the skin of a coconut, or, as you white people say, on the shell?’ Kennedy was so delighted with this idea that he held my head in his hands and asked how I had come up with it. He then carved the message into the coconut with a knife: ‘Eleven of us have survived. The two natives know where we are. We need a boat. They can take you to us.’ He asked us to take the message to Rendova. But we mustn’t be seen by anyone. If we encountered any Japanese we were supposed to throw the coconut over board. We paddled 60 kilometres to Rendova where there were many Americans and led them back to the islet. This was how we saved Kennedy’s life. And that’s the end of the story.”

Australian Aborigines: Soldiers at No Cost



OCEANIA

As late as 1940, Australian recruiting officers were still instructed by the military authorities that it was „neither necessary nor desirable” to recruit „persons who were not substantially of European descent”. However, after the first Japanese bombing hit the city of Darwin in the north of the continent on 19th February 1942, Aborigines were also welcome to guard this region which was only sparsely populated by white people. The Aborigines had no rights as citizens or any voting rights – these were only granted following a referendum in 1967. But they had already been good enough to risk their lives for the Australians on the front-lines of World War I. Now they were tasked with operating as „mobile patrols” along the Australian north coast, measuring thousands of kilometres, and with carrying out „guerrilla warfare in the event of landing by enemy forces.”

The cost of this coast guard was described by the Australian military as „very moderate” as the Aborigines’ service was not rewarded financially, but instead with „tobacco... fish hooks, wire for fish spears, tomahawks and pipes”. Aborigines were also only allowed to carry their „traditional weapons”, meaning spears and no guns. In spite of this, their white instructors were confident that the Aborigines could easily defeat at least any smaller Japanese landing troops:

„The Aborigines were total masters of their environment. Their bushcraft skills were superb. They knew the country in intimate detail; in particular they knew where water was to be found. Their bushcraft skills and local knowledge gave them a mobility which could never have been matched by the Japanese... the unit had no supply line to protect. The Aborigines found their food, water and even weapons in the bush. The Japanese, on the other hand, had they landed, would have been at the end of an extended and vulnerable supply line – presenting ideal opportunities for guerilla operations.”

However, the Australian military were still faced with a problem they found difficult to resolve. The Aborigines couldn’t understand why all of a sudden they were meant to kill any Japanese without being punished, after they had only recently experienced the exact opposite. In 1932, the Australian police had sent a punitive expedition to them to take three of their leaders away to prison. They were charged with the murder of Japanese pearl-fishers who had harassed Aborigine women. Apparently it took some time until the Aborigines believed that they were now expressly requested to kill Japanese.



Aborigine warriors only armed with spears took on guarding the sparsely populated Australian north coast in Arnhemland in 1942.

Granny Lovett's Stars

„During World War Two, the Defence department gave stars to some women, symbolising Australia's recognition of the sacrifices being made by its women during wartime. One star was issued for each male relative in the armed forces (...) Granny Hannah Lovett (...) could have worn a crown of stars.

Granny Hannah and her husband, James, raised a family of fighters. Five of their sons served overseas in the First World War (...) Edward, Frederick, Herbert and another son, Samuel, also volunteered for World War Two. (...) Granny Hannah's family served Australia well, but Australia ignored the Lovetts when they asked for soldier settlement blocks on the land their ancestors had occupied for millenia. It was given instead to white soldiers.”

Alick Jackomos, Derek Fowell: Forgotten Heroes. Aborigines at War. Melbourne 1993.



„Granny” Hannah Lovett (centre, with medal).
19 members of her family across two generations served in wars for Australia.



While serving in Europe, Maori soldiers only very rarely received news from Aotearoa (New Zealand).



Soldiers of the Maori Battalion prepare for deployment in Faenza in northern Italy.

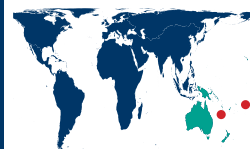
The Maori Battalion of New Zealand

Before the Second World War, the indigenous Maori population of New Zealand were seen as second class citizens in their country and as such not eligible to join the military. But when necessity called, they too were allowed to go to war, albeit only as a separate “Maori Battalion” and under the command of white officers. Maori fought on the side of the Allies in Syria, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Greece and Italy. They suffered 640 dead, 1,791 wounded and 158 captured.

The marching song of the Maori Battalion:

*“A loyal band of Maoris. Sailing from New Zealand
To win us freedom and peace. Marching shoulder to shoulder onward
And we will shout again
Ake aka kia kaha e. Haere tonu haere tonu ra. Kia-o-ra Kia-o-ra.
Maori Bataillon march to victory (...)”*

French Colonies in the Pacific: From the South Seas to North Africa



When **France** declared war on Germany on 3rd September 1939, two days after the Wehrmacht's attack on Poland, the general mobilisation also included the French colonies in the Pacific.

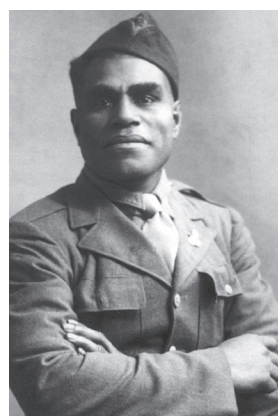
Not only did the islanders have to carry out forced labour constructing military bases, for instance in New Caledonia, where 300,000 allied soldiers prepared for their deployment to the South Pacific; thousands of islanders also had to go to war on the other side of the world with the *Bataillon du Pacifique*.

Polynesians (from Tahiti) and **Melanesians** (from New Caledonia) fought with the Free French Army against the troops of the Vichy government in the Lebanon in 1941, and against fascist German and Italian forces in the Libyan desert in 1942/43. They took part in the liberation of Rome as well as in the allied landings in Provence.

And at the end of 1944, they pushed the German troops all the way back to Belfort in Alsace before having to wait one year in a camp in the south of France for their transport back to the Pacific.

In **1940**, Henri Naisseline, a high ranking local dignitary, had appealed to his compatriots to “side with de Gaulle” in order to defend the honour of the tricolour, “symbolising the spirit of freedom and justice”. At the same time he wrote a letter to General de Gaulle, expressing his hope that the islanders would be granted French citizenship in recognition of “the deeds and sacrifices all those of us contribute who will fall on distant battlefields”.

In **1945**, Naisseline reminded the French rulers that both Governor Sautot and Admiral d'Argenlieu had promised him to grant citizenship to the islanders “after the conclusion of the hostilities”. France never honoured this promise.



Volunteers of the Bataillon du Pacifique (anonymous portraits from the „Archives territoriales de Nouvelle-Calédonie“).

OCEANIA

Polynesian Island Chief Warns about Hitler in 1939



The coral atoll of Hikueru, over 500 kilometres east of Tahiti. From there, Nohorai Sue, the island's traditional "chief", offered its help against Hitler's Germany in a letter to Radio Club Océanie (R.C.O.), the broadcasting station of the French colony Polynesia, on 21st October 1939.

"When Hitler talked about peace in the past, it already contradicted his actions. Everything Hitler says is a lie. We know about the cruelties of his unjust regime. We know that he doesn't even honour the treaties that he himself has signed. This is confirmed by his threats, his aggression and his wars against smaller European states. First he annexed Austria, then Czechoslovakia, and last month he descended on Poland. Germany has revealed itself to the world as a nation which must be ostracised. Anyone who values justice and freedom will find it unbearable having to witness yet another cruel war in Europe in 1939. Not even two decades after the German nation, which has always wished harm onto others, was wrestled to the ground, it has once again risen to attack other countries in order to appropriate their wealth and the fruits of their inhabitants' labour. Therefore, the population of Hikueru is prepared, unanimously and instantly, to follow any call to defend France and come to the aid of the country."

A Critique of "Modern" Warfare

The Second World War, conducted by foreign troops on the Pacific islands, left many of the inhabitants there with a culture shock. The anthropologist David Welchman Gege illustrates this using his own island of Malaita in the Solomons as an example:

"Among the Kwara'ae on Malaita – my culture – war consisted of small raids and skirmishes between tribes, with bows and arrows as weaponry, face-to-face combat, strong mutual anger and antagonism between opposing fighters, and low casualty rates." The Kwara'ae elders were shocked by the behavior of the foreign soldiers, "who fought all day and then returned to camp at night to watch movies, joke, and have a good time" while "the battlefields were covered with dead bodies – too many to even bury (...). Because these soldiers were not personally angry at their opponents, the Kwara'ae elders found it hard to understand what the war was about".



Atolls Between the Fronts: The War in the Central Pacific



OCEANIA

During 1943/44, the front-line of the war in Oceania moved to the British-controlled **Gilbert and Ellice Islands** in the Central Pacific area. The north of the archipelago had been occupied by Japanese troops since 1942; the south became a deployment area for the Allies.

The Japanese base was located on the island of **Tarawa**. Tupua Leupena, an eyewitness, remembers: „The Japanese entered people’s houses and looted. They took women by force, but there was nothing we could do, we were afraid.”

In spite of the deadly threat, some islanders secretly continued to operate radio stations previously installed by the New Zealand military. They transmitted warnings to the Allies whenever Japanese bomb squadrons or naval units were approaching from the North Pacific. Thanks to this reconnaissance, the Allies were able to land only several hundred kilometres south of the Japanese positions on **Funafuti**, one of the Ellice Islands, in 1942. The island was populated by about 4,000 people at the time who had not been warned about the arrival of the first 1,000 US marines and numerous construction units „for security reasons”.

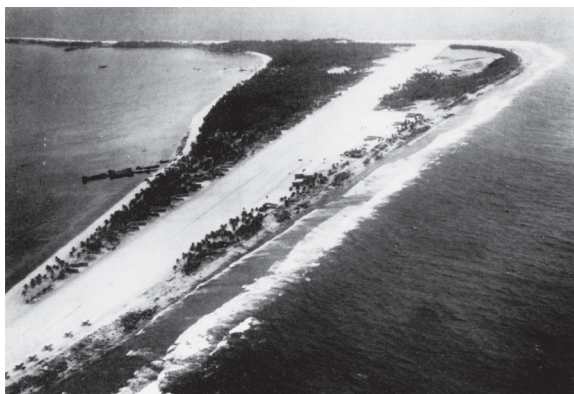
Panic thus spread amongst the locals as the war vessels first approached the island. An eyewitness recounted that the armada looked like a „group of giant crabs crawling across the ocean towards us”.

The US forces confiscated a third of Funafuti for an airstrip and resettled the inhabitants to a small islet.

After several weeks of combat, the allied troops finally managed to take the Japanese base on Tarawa. There, they recruited 2,000 men for the *Gilbert and Ellice Islands Labour Corps*. The Americans called the local workers „bootless soldiers” as they went bare-footed.

When the front-line moved further north towards Micronesia in 1944 the islanders started to rebuild their villages. But where once there had been coconut palms, they now found nothing but scorched earth. The Allies did pay some compensation for the destroyed plantations and gardens, but this didn’t even cover the value of the fruit, coconut and fish the islanders had been made to provide to the foreign soldiers free of charge throughout the previous years of war.

*Funafuti 1943:
The Allies had tens of thousands of coconut palms felled
to make room for an airstrip.
It allowed them to attack the Japanese positions
on the neighbouring island of Tarawa.*



*Tarawa 1944:
Local women worked for the allied troops,
for example as cooks, washerwomen and cleaners.
They presented a hand-woven rug
to the soldiers as a „present for the war”.*



The 1945 Banaba Massacre

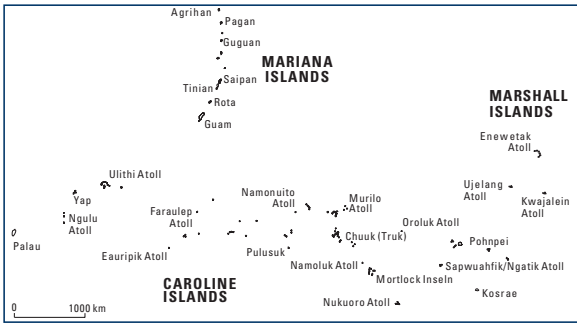
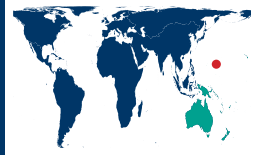
On the 24th of August 1943, 500 Japanese marines landed on the Central Pacific island of Banaba. They forced over a thousand islanders onto ships and deported them to Japanese military bases in the North Pacific to carry out forced labour. Only about 150 were kept on Banaba as work slaves. These were still at the mercy of the occupiers when Japan capitulated on 15th August 1945. On this date, the war in Oceania was officially over, but not on Banaba.

On the 20th of August, Japanese soldiers tied the hands of the workers and lead them to the cliffs near the village of Tabiang. There they blindfolded their captives and shot them. According to a report by UNESCO, 143 men died in the massacre. When the Allies landed on Banaba on 1st October 1945, they only found the Japanese there who claimed they had evacuated all the islanders. The truth only came to light two months later when a half-starved man emerged from his hiding place and revealed what had really happened. His name was Kabunare, he was 28 years old and the only survivor of the massacre.

On these cliffs Japanese soldiers massacred 143 inhabitants of Banaba on 20th August 1945, one week after the Japanese capitulation.



Final Battles and War Crimes in Micronesia



Without its colony of Micronesia, Japan would not have been able to carry out the surprise attacks on Pearl Harbor, the South Pacific and Asia at the end of 1941. The Japanese forces had established outposts, training camps and supply bases on the North Pacific islands following World War I.

When the Allies advanced on Micronesia in 1944, the Japanese troops defended their military fortifications there „to the last man”. They did not surrender even in completely hopeless situations.

On the island of **Saipan**, hundreds of them jumped to their deaths off the steep cliffs on the northern tip of the island which since then are known as the „Suicide Cliffs”.

The Allies had to mobilise 600 warships and a quarter of a million soldiers to liberate the Micronesian islands from Japanese occupation.

*Guam 1942:
Japanese officers guard
local forced labourers planting rice.*



When the US Air Force started bombing Japanese positions on the island of **Guam**, the soldiers stationed there took revenge on the indigenous Chamorros.

In Agat, Japanese soldiers ordered a 40-year-old farmer to kneel down, smashed him in the back of the neck with a sword and left him for dead. In Agana, they buried a group of young people alive. In Tai, Fonte and elsewhere, they randomly decapitated islanders.

From the 8th of July onwards, Guam was bombed day and night for 13 consecutive days from hundreds of ships. When the US troops were finally able to come ashore, two thirds of the island’s buildings were destroyed and over 90 per cent of the approximately 22,000 Chamorros were homeless.

Other Micronesian islands also suffered heavily in the war. The Japanese deported men from **Pohnpei** to the front-lines of New Guinea. On **Kosrae**, they forced the islanders to carry out forced labour. And on **Palau**, the seat of the Japanese High Command, the 5,000 indigenous islanders were outnumbered tenfold by Japanese soldiers who robbed them of their entire supplies during an allied naval blockade. A third of the islanders starved to death.

Conquering the small island of **Tinian** proved vital to winning the war. From here, the US Air Force could for the first time reach the Japanese mainland with long range heavy bombers, which on the 6th and 9th of August 1945 dropped the atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki that forced Japan to capitulate.

This spelled the beginning of the atomic age in the Pacific – with far-reaching consequences for the region’s inhabitants.

„Radiant Times“ after 1945: The Militarisation of the Pacific



1946: Atomic bomb test on the Bikini Atoll in Micronesia.

The bloc confrontation didn't just shape Europe's post-war history; it also had a significant effect on Oceania. Many Pacific islands from Polynesia to Micronesia were denied independence after 1945, because their former colonial rulers continued to use them as military bases and intended to test their weapons there. Until 1996 the USA, Great Britain and France detonated over 300 atom, hydrogen, plutonium and neutron bombs in the Pacific region.

US forces installed monitoring facilities for nuclear submarines on the Micronesian island of **Yap** as well as radar stations for the US Air Force on the northerly **Mariana Islands**. On **Kwajalein**, an atoll of the Marshall Islands which had already served as a Japanese base in World War II, the US military forced the inhabitants to relocate to **Ebeye** in 1960 – an island 13 times smaller. Since then, Kwajalein Lagoon has been used as testing ground for long-range missiles detonating there after having been launched over 7,000 kilometres away in California.

At the height of the Cold War, the Soviet Union also detonated long-range missiles in the Pacific Ocean between Japan and Hawaii.

The People's Republic of China's first intercontinental ballistic missiles hit north of the **Fiji Islands**. As early as the 1980s, more than 100 nuclear powered submarines of various nationalities cruised throughout the Pacific, in addition to warships and aircraft carriers with over 10,000 nuclear warheads on board. On **Hawaii**, there were more nuclear weapons stationed than anywhere else in the world. In the countries bordering the Pacific, 200 nuclear power stations were constructed and radioactive waste was dumped in the ocean at numerous locations.

The US military viewed the Pacific as an „American lake“ and set up a dense semicircular belt of military bases 10,000 kilometres west of the American mainland, from **Okina-wa** in Japan via **South Korea, Taiwan** (formerly Formosa), the **Philippines** and **Micronesia** to **Australia** and **New Zealand**. 360,000 soldiers were stationed there at the end of the 1980s.

The “Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Movement” (NFIP) formed in 1975 as an opposition to the militarisation of Oceania, uniting anti-colonial, indigenous and ecological initiatives throughout the entire Pacific region. The movement succeeded in bringing about a stop of nuclear testing in the year 1996.



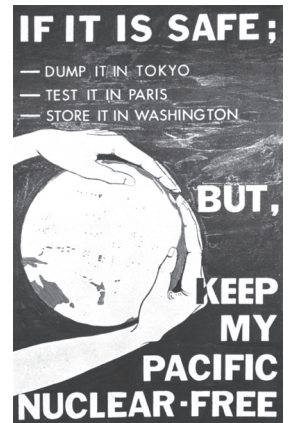
*Kwajalein in Micronesia:
In World War II first
a Japanese base,
then port of call
for the US forces
in the Pacific from 1944.
Testing ground for
US long-range
missiles since 1960.*

OCEANIA

For a nuclear-free Pacific!



Caricature from Hawaii.



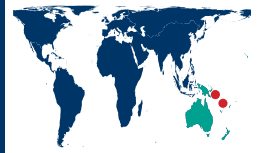
Protest poster of the Pacific Conference of Churches against the contamination of Oceania caused by nuclear waste, bomb testing and weapons storage.



„The next time you go to war, please don't do it in our part of the world!"

An old woman from the Palau archipelago in Micronesia.

From „Million Dollar Point“ to „Iron Bottom Sound“



A beach on the island of Espiritu Santo is still strewn with the rusty debris of the US troops who dumped their equipment in the ocean after the war ended. The islanders call the place „Million Dollar Point“.

On a beach on Espiritu Santos, a small island in northern Vanuatu, US troops dumped their entire equipment in the sea after the war ended in 1945: working jeeps and lorries, tyres and engines, guns and cannons, spare parts and tools, radio stations, receivers and telephone equipment, uniforms and tents, steel tables and chairs, wound dressings and medication as well as countless boxes of food and drink. The islanders couldn't believe their eyes when the soldiers used bulldozers to dump all these valuable goods off a pier and into the sea.

There were several reasons for this gigantic wastefulness. The island's British-French colonial administration did not want the departing US troops to hand out their partly new equipment to the islanders as they could have sold them on and lived off the profit rather than work for their colonial masters. The USA also considered the population of the Pacific as future customers for their goods which was why the soldiers were not allowed to give anything away, provoking similar scenes on many Pacific islands.

The islanders aptly named the venue of this enormous act of waste **Million Dollar Point**. Back then, people even came by boat from the neighbouring islands to „search for clothes and edible items“ on the ocean bed.

The tourists who visit the Solomon Islands consist mainly of veterans and their relatives. They can buy postcards depicting the military rubble left behind on the islands by the troops of their countries.



Throughout the Solomon Islands there are also still traces of the war visible six decades after it ended. Foreign visitors touch down on the main island Guadalcanal at an airport which was built during the war and was named „Henderson Air Field“ after a US officer. As the seat of the British colonial administration on the small island of Tulagi had been completely bombed out, the new capital Honiara was created not far from the airport on debris from the war.

The road leading there is lined with caved-in barracks and bunkers, cannons and bomb craters, plane wrecks and decaying parts of tanks. Wrecked warships and landing craft are still rusting away on the island's beaches.

The hills west of Honiara are called **Bloody Ridge** because of the brutal battles that took place there. And the strait off the capital is referred to as **Iron Bottom Sound** as here the bottom of the sea is home to 48 sunken Japanese and American warships.

Nowadays such remnants of the war serve as tourist attractions. Local guides offer „World War II Tours“ and diving schools organise trips to sunken warships.

These kinds of war relics can be found everywhere on the Pacific islands.

OCEANIA

Brazilians in Monte Castello Mexicans in Manila



Tens of thousands of soldiers from South and Central America fought against the fascist Axis powers, and the continent also supplied the Allies with cheap raw materials.

Bolivia was among those countries who paid for the war, according to the writer Eduardo Galeano: “Already condemned to starvation rations, the country supports the Allied cause by selling its tin ten times cheaper compared to what the already low going rate would fetch.”

Uruguay sent wound dressings to the Allied troops during the war and also provided the Red Army with boots that were produced by antifascist committees. When the struck German battleship “Graf Spee” docked in Montevideo in 1939, the shipyard workers refused to repair it. The captain proceeded to sink his own ship at the mouth of the Rio de la Plata.

Mexico declared war on Nazi Germany on 22nd May 1942 after German U-boats had sunk Mexican merchant ships in the South Atlantic.

The Mexican government had already taken in tens of thousands of Republican refugees after the Spanish Civil War and also provided asylum for 1,500 German antifascists. In April 1944, Mexico deployed an air force wing to the Philippines to take part in the liberation of Manila from Japanese occupation.

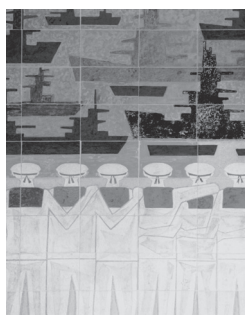


Soldiers of the Força Expedicionária Brasileira before embarking on their way to serve in combat in Italy.

Brazil produced rubber, the raw material for the tyres of military vehicles. To keep up with the increased demand caused by the war, 55,000 men from the northeast of Brazil were drafted in as labourers. They were called “rubber soldiers”. After German and Italian submarines had sunk Brazilian military and merchant ships off the country’s coast in 1942, the Brazilian military command sent the *Força Expedicionária Brasileira (FEB)* into combat with 25,000 soldiers. They fought on the side of the Allies in Italy in 1944, for instance in the battle of Monte Castello during which 500 Brazilians were killed.

“The welcome (in Italy) was anything but friendly. There were monkeys painted on the walls, and there were slogans saying Brazilians ate human flesh. The Brazilians gave the trembling children chocolate to prove that they weren’t animals.”

(Pablo Reis: Memórias do Front. 2003)



Mosaic from the memorial in Rio de Janeiro honouring the fallen of World War II.

SOUTH AMERICA

Tens of Thousands of Volunteers against Fascism



CARIBBEAN



Soldiers from the Caribbean on their way to the front-lines of Europe.

On the island of **Puerto Rico**, a US colony, US military registered 350,000 men at the beginning of the war of which 53,000 were eventually drafted. The majority of them remained in the country as a protection force, the rest were stationed on Cuba and in the European colonies of **Jamaica**, **Trinidad**, **Curaçao**, **Aruba** and **Dutch Guiana**. The *65th Infantry Regiment* of the Puerto Rican National Guard was deployed to protect the Panama Canal from 1943. When there was no more threat of any German or Japanese attacks there, the regiment was moved first to North Africa and then to France in December 1944. In March 1945, the Puerto Ricans crossed the Rhine to rid Southern Germany of the Nazi regime. Other Puerto Rican soldiers saw combat in Hawaii and Burma.

At the time of the Second World War, most islands of the Caribbean were under British colonial rule. With the help of local workers

the US Air Force set up eleven air force bases in the region on **Jamaica**, **Antigua**, **St. Lucia**, **Trinidad**, the **Bahamas** as well as in **British Guiana** and **British Honduras** (Belize). Their purpose was to repel U-boat attacks by the German navy which had sunk 336 ships in the Caribbean in 1942 alone, half of which were oil tankers.

16,000 West Indian men volunteered to join the British Army. The French colonies of **Martinique** and **Guadeloupe** also provided thousands of men for the Free French troops.

The population of the Caribbean islands also supported the Allied war effort with financial donations.

On the tiny island of **Grenada** alone, no more than 60,000 inhabitants donated over 20,000 pounds for the British War Fund.

Surinam's Resistance Fighter Anton de Kom

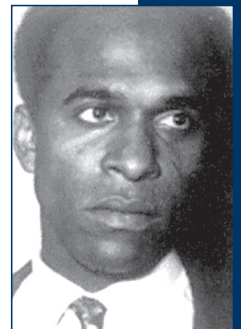


In 1930s Surinam, a resistance movement emerged against the Dutch colonial rule. Anton de Kom, one of the country's pre-eminent intellectuals, played a key part in it. He studied in Holland, where he organised other students from the colonies who supported independence. When he returned to Surinam at the beginning of 1933, many put high hopes in him. However, the colonial rulers deported him and his family back to Amsterdam. When the Nazi troops occupied the Netherlands in May 1940, Anton de Kom joined the resistance and worked for the underground newspaper "De Vonk". In August 1944, Gestapo agents discovered subversive material in his letterbox. They took him to Kamp Vught, a German concentration camp on Dutch soil. From there, the Nazis moved him to Oranienburg in September and later on to Sandbostel, a subcamp of the Neuengamme concentration camp. He died there on 24th April 1945, just a few days before the camp was liberated. Since Surinam gained independence in 1975, the university in the capital Paramaribo bears the name "Anton de Kom Universiteit van Suriname".

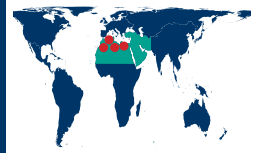
Martinique's Anti-Fascist Frantz Fanon

Frantz Fanon, an international representative of the Algerian liberation movement FLN in the 1950s, originally hailed from Martinique, where as a 17-year-old he volunteered to fight for the Free French. He had shown an early interest in the consequences of racism. The genocide of the Jews committed by the Germans had been an important factor for his decision to fight in the Second World War. In his book "Black Skin, White Masks" he explained:

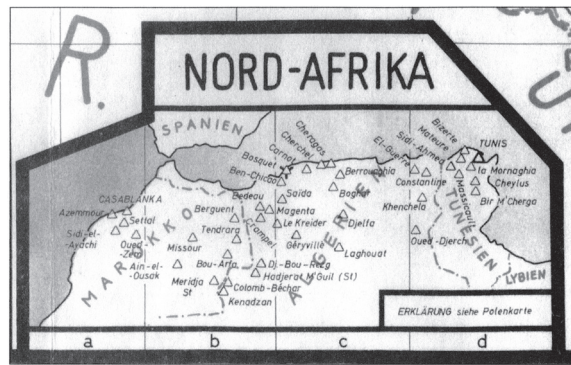
"Colonial racism is by no means different from any other racism. Anti-Semitism hurts my innermost core, it aggravates me, and a horrible disrespect stems my blood; I am being denied the opportunity to be a human being. I cannot distance myself from the fate that awaits my brother."



Anti-Semitic Laws and Labour Camps in North Africa



Marshall Philippe Pétain with Adolf Hitler in 1940.



German map of labour camps in North Africa.

PERSECUTION OF JEWS

After the ceasefire agreement between the French collaboration regime under Marshall Philippe Pétain and the Nazi regime in June 1940, the approximately 500,000 Jews in France's North African colonies were also faced with mortal danger.

As recently as May 1940, 1,350 Algerian Jews had given their lives in the French fight against the German Wehrmacht. But with the transfer of the colonial administration to the Vichy regime, the Jews in Algeria lost first their citizenship and then any public offices or functions they held.

After the "Statute on Jews" of 3rd October 1940, it was illegal for them to work for example as journalists or teachers, and from June 1941 the ban was extended to lawyers, traders, insurance agents and businessmen. The French colonial officers finally forced the Jews to sell their businesses and residential properties at knocked-down prices and banned them from schools and universities.

Together with their French collaborators the German and Italian fascists operated over one hundred labour camps in North Africa, where members of the political opposition and inmates deported from Europe were also joined by thousands of Maghrebian Jews who were taken there. 562 detainees were worked to death in a single camp in Giado in **Libya**, then an Italian colony.

In Eastern **Morocco**, 7,000 forced labourers had to lay the tracks for a planned Trans-Saharan Railway which was to extend all the way to the Niger.

The camps in **Algeria** and **Tunesia** were mostly located in remote desert regions where tens of thousands of prisoners were exposed to the stifling hot days and the bitterly cold nights without any shelter. This was why the partisan fighter Claudio Moreno described the camp of Hadjerat M'Guil as a "French Buchenwald in North Africa".

As a result of starvation, abuse and torture in the labour camps, of pogroms such as the one in Tunisia in 1941, and of the deportation to the death camps of the Nazis, between 4,000 and 5,000 North African Jews were killed.

Remnants of the Tendirra labour camp in Eastern Morocco. The prisoners there had to lay the tracks for the Trans-Saharan Railway planned by the Vichy regime.



Hitler's Willing Helpers in North Africa

Arab religious leaders from Algeria with Marshall Philippe Pétain in Vichy, 1942.



“Numerous testimonies affirm that Arab soldiers, policemen, and workers all played roles – sometimes large, sometimes small – in implementing the designs of the European persecutors of North African Jewry: from the execution of anti-Jewish statutes, to the recruitment of Jewish workers, to the operation of forced labour camps. From the outskirts of Casablanca to the deserts

south of Tripoli, Arabs routinely served as guards, watchmen, and overseers at those labour camps. With rare exceptions, they were feared by Jewish (and other) captives as willing and loyal servants of their Nazi, Vichy, and Fascist superiors.”

Robert Satloff: Among the Righteous. Lost Stories from the Holocaust's long reach into Arab Lands. New York 2006.



Alice Cherki is a writer and psychiatrist. Born in Algiers into a Jewish family, she already had to suffer from an early age the anti-Semitic laws of the Vichy regime which were also enforced in the French colonies. In the 1950s she revolutionised Algerian psychiatry together with Frantz Fanon and fought side-by-side with him against French colonial rule in the Algerian War. In 2000 she published a biography of the theorist of the anti-colonial liberation movements: “Frantz Fanon, A Portrait”, which was also published in English (Cornell University Press, New York 2006). In it, she demonstrates how significant the experiences Fanon made during the Second World War proved for his later analyses of racism and colonialism.



LISTENING STATION 10

1'08 min.

Alice Cherki – Algeria

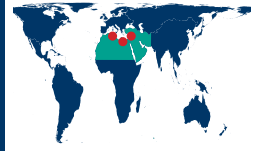


Listening Station 10: Alice Cherki – Algeria

“When the Vichy regime came to power in 1940, a substantial part of the European settlers in Algeria were supporters of Pétain. They put the laws of the Vichy collaboration government into practice as quickly as possible, which wasn't necessary at all in Algeria. Jews were removed from public office, their possessions confiscated and Jewish children weren't allowed to go to school any more. Honest Jewish traders who had never been involved in politics were transferred to camps.

I remember the time very well, even though I was only three years old then. One day, a kindergarten nurse sent me home – because I was a Jew. I asked her: ‘Madame, what does it mean, being a Jew?’ Because at three years old I didn't know anything about these things yet. She replied: ‘Being a Jew means having big eyes, a big mouth and big ears – just like you!’”

Nazi Plans for the “Final Solution” in the Middle East



PERSECUTION OF JEWS

The Nazi regime also planned the annihilation of the Jews in the Arab countries. The SS Special Commando which was supposed to organise this was waiting on call in Athens since mid 1942.

The unit – including “seven SS Führer, 17 Unterführer and squads” – was under the command of SS Obersturmbannführer **Walter Rauff**, who had already been involved in mass murders in Poland. In 1941 he’d had lorries modified to facilitate killing the people inside with the exhaust fumes.

His “familiarity with the process of the rationalised extermination of Jews” predestined Rauff “for the new position as leader of a mobile death squad for the Middle East.”

Rauff’s unit consisted of no more than 100 men, but, as in Eastern Europe, the Nazis counted on finding sufficient local “volunteers” for the annihilation of the Jews: “As the mood had already indicated for a long time, there was a substantial and in parts already well-organised contingent of Arabs from the local population who offered their services as willing henchmen of the Germans. The main objective of Rauff’s commando, the realisation of the Shoah in Palestine, would have been swiftly put into action immediately after the arrival of the ‘Panzer Army Africa.’”

After the Allies were able to repel the attack of the German-Italian troops in Egypt, the SS Death Commando landed in Tunisia in November 1942, where approximately 85,000 Jews were living at the time. Immediately after his arrival, Rauff had leading members of the Jewish community arrested and ordered them to mobilise 2,000 Jewish forced labourers by the following day to work on the development of the German front-lines. Should they fail to do so, Rauff threatened “the instant arrest of 10,000 Jews”.

The German occupiers had 30 labour camps built in Tunisia and also forced Jews to continue working in the ports and on the railway lines during the Allied bombing.

In addition to this, Jews had to pay charges amounting to millions which were used to compensate the Arab population following the Allied attacks as “international Judaism” had allegedly been responsible for them.

In the Tunisian town of Sfax, the SS command planned the construction of a concentration camp, which couldn’t be realised due to the advance of the Allies.

Quotes from:

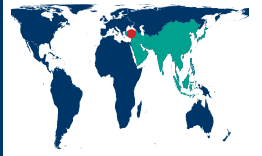
Klaus Michael Mallmann/Martin Cüppers, Halbmond und Hakenkreuz. Das Dritte Reich, die Araber und Palästina, Darmstadt 2006.

Walter Rauff, the SS commander for the Middle East.



Jews in Tunis on their way to work as forced labourers, December 1942.





“Stolperstein” (stumbling block) at 83 Rothenbaumchausee, Hamburg-Eimsbüttel (Germany), for Alegra Benezra whose family hailed from Smyrna. She was taken to the concentration camp Fuhlshüttel in 1940 and deported to Riga in 1941.

“The approximately 20,000 to 25,000 Turkish Jews living in Europe (also) became the target of Nazi persecution (...) 2,200 to 2,500 Jews of Turkish descent were deported to the extermination camps of Auschwitz and Sobibor during the Holocaust, and a further 300 to 400 to concentration camps in Ravensbrück, Buchenwald, Mauthausen, Theresienstadt, Dachau and Bergen-Belsen, where many of them lost their lives. Others succumbed to the poor conditions in the Drancy and Westerbork camps, were shot or tortured to death by the Gestapo (...)”

The Kavajero family from Izmir was deported to Auschwitz on 11th February 1943.



“The importance of neutral Turkey for the German war strategy and the high number of ‘Reichsdeutsche’ (Imperial Germans) living in Turkey provided the Turks with formidable opportunities to protect their Jews living in Europe. Several Turkish diplomats used this constellation successfully to obtain exemptions from anti-Jewish measures for their Jewish protégés, and in numerous individual cases lobbied determinedly for the release of arrested Jews (...)”

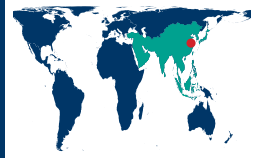
“Contrary to the efforts of specific diplomats on the ground, Ankara’s official policy was geared first and foremost towards avoiding the immigration or remigration of Jews to Turkey. At the time of the Evian Conference in 1938, the Turkish government had already issued the confidential decree 2/9498, which prohibited the immigration of persecuted Jews. As early as the 1930s, Turkey had revoked the citizenship of many Turkish Jews living abroad (...)”

“In October 1942, the Nazi government issued an ultimatum to the neutral and Axis states to repatriate their Jewish citizens. The Turkish Jews constituted one of the largest groups; the Nazi officials estimated 4,000 to 5,000 Turkish Jews requiring repatriation from Northern France alone. The government in Ankara reacted to the ultimatum by expatriating thousands of further Turkish Jews residing in Europe and instructed its consulates not to undertake any group repatriations (...) By adopting this passive approach, Turkey broke its protective obligation towards its citizens abroad.”

Quotes from:

Corry Gutstadt: *Turkey, the Jews and the Holocaust*. Cambridge 2013.

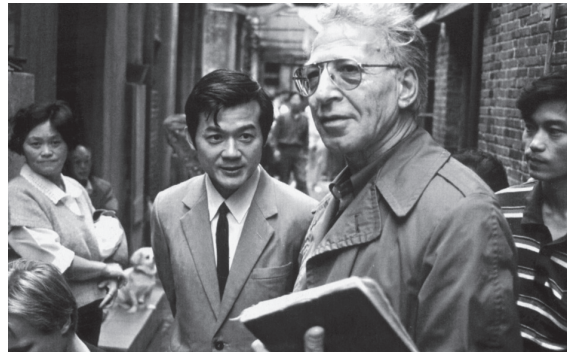
Nazi Plans for the “Final Solution” in the Far East



In the wake of the Nazis coming to power in 1933, many Jews fled Germany by sea or on the Trans-Siberian Railway to Chinese Shanghai as this was one of the few remaining places where refugees without a visa were welcome. Until 1938, about 18,000 European Jews arrived there, the eventual total number is said to be 30,000.

The majority of “Auslandsdeutsche” (Germans Abroad) who were living in China conducting “oriental trade” were sympathetic towards Nazism. “At the end of 1933, more than 600 of the Germans living in China were already members of the NSDAP/AO. There was a Gauleiter, a Hitler Youth and a newspaper bearing a swastika named “Ostasiatischer Beobachter”, and since the arrival of Jewish refugees from Germany there was also massive anti-Semitic propaganda aimed at the Chinese and the Japanese.”

Pressurised by the German Nazis, the Japanese occupying administration installed a ghetto for the Jewish refugees in the bombed-out quarter of Hongkou in 1943.



Peter Finkelgruen visiting the former Jewish ghetto in Shanghai.

According to the writer Peter Finkelgruen, who was born in Shanghai in 1942, the Nazi regime also sent a high-ranking Nazi official to Shanghai in Josef Meisinger who had acquired the nickname “the butcher of Warsaw”. He submitted proposals to the Japanese occupiers advocating “the final solution of the Jewish refugee problem” even here in distant China:

“The Jews could be recruited to carry out forced labour at decidedly insufficient food rations. This would already decimate their numbers considerably. The surviving Jews could be loaded onto a disabled ship, towed out into the open seas and abandoned or sunk there. The Police Commissioner has contributed a further proposal: on the Potong peninsula a so-called gas chamber could be built with German assistance.”

The Japanese occupiers were not taken by these extermination plans. But in the ghetto, which they set up and which existed until the city was liberated by US troops on 3rd September 1945, numerous people died nevertheless – including Peter Finkelgruen’s father.

Quotes from:

Peter Finkelgruen, Haus Deutschland oder die Geschichte eines ungesühnten Mordes, Hamburg 1994.



The daily struggle for survival in Shanghai’s Jewish ghetto.



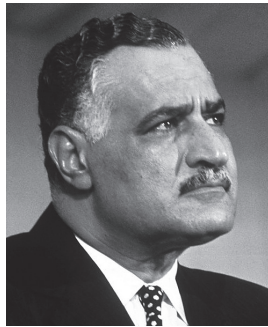
Memorial in the quarter of Hongkou commemorating the Jewish refugees and the Shanghai Ghetto.

PERSECUTION OF JEWS

Fascist Sympathisers in the Middle East



The sympathy towards Nazi Germany and fascist Italy in the Middle East wasn't just restricted to parts of the population; it also extended to the highest government circles. In many places, fascist parties and youth organisations following the example of the Hitler Youth already sprang up during the 1930s, such as the "Syrian Social Nationalist Party" (1932), the "Young Egypt Party" (1933), and the Futuwwa in Iraq (1935) and Palestine (1936). Representatives of these organisations took part in the Nuremberg Rallies, and some of them were personally invited by the Hitler Youth leader Baldur von Schirach when he toured the Middle East from Damascus via Baghdad to Teheran in 1937. In Egypt and Morocco, in Iraq and the Lebanon, translations of Hitler's "Mein Kampf" were available even before the war.



Gamal Abdel Nasser, Egyptian president from 1954 to 1970.



Anwar as-Sadat, Egyptian president from 1970 to 1981.

Egyptian officers, including the later presidents **Gamal Abdel Nasser** and **Anwar as-Sadat**, were in permanent contact with the command of the German "Afrikakorps" in Libya in 1942 and coordinated their activities with Nazi General Erwin Rommel. For this, Sadat received radio equipment and 20,000 pounds from German secret agents in Cairo in 1942.



King Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia informed Hitler that he had nothing but "the greatest respect and admiration" for "Germany's Führer".

Egypt's **King Faruk** declared himself to have "enormous admiration for the Führer and the utmost respect for the German people", whose victory over England he "eagerly wished for" in 1941. Faruk was in touch with SS leaders and revealed British military secrets to the German Wehrmacht. The Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, whose following rose from 8,000 to 200,000 in the 1930s, followed the German example by calling for a boycott of Jewish shops and demanded: "Jews out of Egypt and Palestine". This resulted in bomb attacks on a synagogue and Jewish private residences in Cairo in 1939.

Arab leaders also maintained friendly contact with Mussolini, who tried to ingratiate himself to them as the "Sword of Islam" in Arabic language radio broadcasts from Italy and who wanted to personally lead the German-Italian troops into Cairo in 1942 "on a white horse".

Egypt's King Faruk and **Schekh el-Azhar**, the head of the Egyptian Muslims, were planning a tremendous welcome for the fascist troops which was to exceed the pomp with which Napoleon himself was once welcomed. The British forces in North Africa prevented this – with the help of tens of thousands of colonial soldiers from around the world.

COLLABORATION

"Celebrating Nazi victories"

"Twenty-four hours on the day the radio stations of Bari, Palermo, and Berlin were screaming the promises of Mussolini – the 'Sword of Islam' – in the Arabic language: 'Loot immeasurable, death to the English and the Jews!' (...) In the near east (...) an ominous and sinister stillness prevailed at the British army's back. Young King Farouk of Egypt and his ministers had refused to lift one little finger in the defence of their invaded country. We know from diplomats who were in Cairo at the time that Nazi victories were commented upon with hopeful smiles and an exchange of meaningful glances in the palaces on the Nile. In Palestine, the effendis (landed aristocrats) were telling the fellahin (peasants): 'Now go and sell your land to the Jews and be quick about it, for in a month Hitler will be in Jerusalem, and you will not only have your land back but everything the Jews possess!'"

Pierre van Paassen, Canadian of Dutch descent and correspondent of US newspapers, on the mood in the Middle East in 1943.



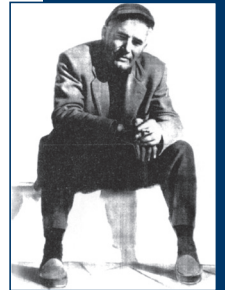
Arab Saviours

"In every stage of the Nazi, Vichy, and Fascist persecution of Jews in Arab lands, and in every place that it occurred, Arabs helped Jews (...) And there were occasions when certain Arabs chose to do more than just offer moral support to Jews. They bravely saved Jewish lives, at times risking their own in the process. Those Arabs were true heroes."

One of these "heroes" was **Khaled Abdelwahhab**. After the German troops marched into Tunisia, he hid the extended Jewish family of Anny Boukris on a farm when he learned that a German officer was planning to abduct her mother to take her to a military brothel. The academic Robert Satloff therefore suggested honouring Khaled Abdelwahhab at the Israeli memorial of Yad Vashem as a "Righteous among the Nations" – the first Arab amongst nearly 23,000 people from around the world who saved Jews from the Holocaust.

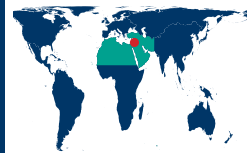
Quotes from: Robert Satloff, Among the Righteous.

Lost Stories from the Holocaust's long reach into Arab Lands, New York 2006.



The Tunisian Khaled Abdelwahhab saved a Jewish family from German occupiers in 1942.

Palestine Leader and War Criminal



COLLABORATION



Hadj Amin el-Husseini had been the pre-eminent political and religious leader of the Arab population in Palestine since the 1920s. In his role as “Head of the Muslims” he congratulated Heinrich Wolff, the German consul general of Jerusalem, when the NSDAP came to power in Germany in **1933**, expressing his hope that the “fascist anti-democratic form of government” would also take hold in other countries.

When he led the revolt against the British Mandate and the Jews in Palestine in **1936**, Husseini received not only propagandistic, but also financial support from Nazi Germany and fascist Italy.

Wanted by British police, he went to Lebanon in **1937** and then on to Iraq, where in April **1941** he took part in a pro-fascist coup to overthrow the government put in place by Great Britain. When their coup had been crushed, Husseini and the head of the pro-fascist Iraqi government, Rachid Ali al-Ghailani, fled to exile in Nazi Germany. There, Husseini declared “the war against the Allies and the Jews” to be “the sacred duty” of all Muslims in a series of Arabic language

broadcasts mimicking the German propaganda. Following his appointment as SS Gruppenführer by Heinrich Himmler, Husseini recruited tens of thousands of Muslim volunteers for the Wehrmacht and the Waffen-SS. He not only met with Goebbels and Eichmann, but also, on **28th November 1941**, with Hitler whom he admired as an “ingenious leader”.

Husseini was also personally involved in the Holocaust. In

1943, he urged the Nazi leadership to refuse Jewish men, women and children from Bulgaria, Rumania and Hungary emigration to Palestine and instead deport them to German extermination camps in Poland where certain death awaited them.

Although Husseini remained in Nazi Germany until **7th Mai 1945** and was included on the list of war criminals, he managed to return unscathed to the Middle East where the Arab League wasted no time in appointing him highest representative of the Palestinian Arabs in **late 1945**. The Palestinian National Council elected him president in **1948**.

In these roles, Husseini could again call for “a war of extermination against the Jews” and the state of Israel following the UN’s decision on a two-state solution in Palestine in 1947/48.

A Palestinian delegate at the Non-Aligned States Conference in the **1950s** and chairman of the Islamic Summit in the **1960s**, Husseini never distanced himself from his collaboration with the Nazis until his death in **1974**.

As recently as 2002, Yassir Arafat called him a “hero” and himself “one of his followers”.

“Supporting the Allies’ fight against the Axis powers during the time of the war was the consensus approach within the Arab population.”

Many historians keep quite about sympathy towards Nazi Germany in Palestine.
Quote from: René Wildangel, Zwischen Achse und Mandatsmacht. Palästina und der Nationalsozialismus, Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin 2007.

The Mufti of Jerusalem and the „Final Solution”

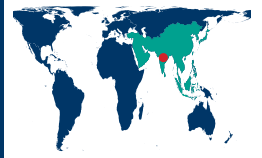
„Extremes can only be countered by extremes. Can iron be burred by anything softer than iron? The Arabs in particular and the Muslims in general are obliged to pursue a goal which they must not deviate from and must strife for with all their might. It is the expulsion of all Jews from the Arab and Muslim countries. (...) National Socialist Germany knew how to save itself from the calamity of the Jews. (...) It detected the Jewish danger in full detail and found a final solution for it which will dispel the calamity on a worldwide basis. (...) Arabs and Muslims, beware not to squander this opportunity (...)”

Palestinian leader Hadj Amin el-Husseini in a speech at the „Islamisches Zentral-Institut zu Berlin” (Central Islamic Institute Berlin) on 2nd November 1943.



Palestinian leader Hadj Amin el-Husseini recruiting Muslim volunteers for the SS in Bosnia in 1943.

3,500 Indians in the Waffen-SS 50,000 on the Side of the Japanese



Subhas Chandra Bose was one of India's most influential politicians at the start of the Second World War. In **March 1939**, the Indian National Congress, the most important organisation of the anti-

colonial movement, elected him president for the second time even though his opponent had the support of both Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. Unlike them, Bose not only advocated armed resistance against the British colonial masters, but also the cooperation with the fascist Axis powers.

For Nehru, "The triumph of Hitler and the Brown Terror that followed was a great shock". And Gandhi declared: "If the Nazis come to India, the Congress will give them the same fight that it has given Great Britain." When Bose learnt that Great Britain and Nazi Germany were at war in **September 1939**, he was elated and told a crowd of 200,000 supporters in Madras: "The much expected crisis has at last come. This is India's golden opportunity." Placed under house arrest by the British colonial administration, he managed to escape to Germany in **1941**, where the Nazi regime provided him with one million Reichsmark to spread anti-British Nazi propaganda through Indian print and broadcast media.

Bose saw Hitler as a "revolutionary" and adapted the byname "Netaji" ("respected leader"). He instructed his colleagues to study fascist organisations such as the Hitler Youth, the Gestapo and the Reichsarbeitsdienst as an inspiration for the creation of an independent India and a society which was supposed to be "a synthesis of socialism and fascism".



Indian Legion soldiers fighting for the German Wehrmacht at the Atlantic Wall in the South of France, 1944.

In **1942**, Bose recruited 3,500 defectors amongst the Indian students and soldiers who had fought for the British and ended up in German captivity for his "Indian Legion". They were first integrated into the German Wehrmacht and later into the Waffen-SS and hunted resistance fighters in France in 1944.



Indian volunteers from Singapore going to war with Japanese forces.

Bose himself returned to Asia on board a German U-boat in **1943**. Based in Singapore, he recruited another 50,000 volunteers for his *Indian National Army* which invaded India together with Japanese troops across the Burmese border in **1944**.

Bose died in a plane crash while on the run from the Allies in **August 1945**. To the present day, many Indians consider him a "hero", especially in his native region of Bengal. There, schools and universities are named after him as well as an underground station and Kolkata International Airport; there are Bose statues and a party referring to him.

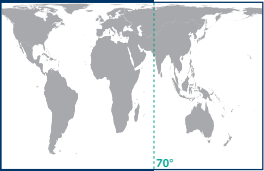
COLLABORATION

“What we admire most in fascism is the youthful spirit, the creative excitement.”

The Indian politician Subhas Chandra Bose in an interview with the Italian newspaper “Il Giornale d’Italia” from 29th December 1933.



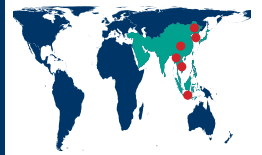
The Fascist World Order



Once the war had begun, the fascist Axis powers discussed arrangements to divide the world that they were planning to conquer amongst themselves. Germany was to receive Eastern Europe, parts of Asia stretching to Afghanistan and a colonial empire in Central Africa. Italy claimed the southern states adjacent to the Mediterranean from Maghreb to the Middle East as well as East Africa. Japan was to have the Pacific region and large parts of Asia. The 70th meridian (in the east of present-day Pakistan, west of the city of Bombay) formed the border between the German and Japanese hemispheres. There, both forces intended to join up after “freeing India from the British yoke”.

Wherever the three powers gained military control within their respective territories, they installed puppet regimes. In the countries that were still under Allied (colonial) rule, they recruited collaborators to carry out acts of sabotage and defectors to join their own forces.

Fascist Sympathisers in the Far East



Korea became a Japanese colony in 1910. Some elements of the Korean elite – mainly large-scale landowners, religious leaders and intellectuals – were happy to be integrated into the Japanese colonial administration and saw it as an honour that they were able to send their children to prestigious Japanese universities and military academies.

Manchuria, occupied by Japanese troops in 1931, became the satellite state of Manchukuo. Its head of state was the last Chinese emperor Pu Yi, who had been forced to abdicate before the start of the war in Peking.

In **China**, politicians of the National People's Party, such as Wang Jingwei, were prepared to be part of a puppet government under Japanese control, in spite of Japan's war of extermination in the country.

Indochina, a French colony, was under the control of the Vichy collaboration regime from mid 1940. "Future leaders" were trained in fascist youth organisations, and local feudal lords, such as Bao Dai in Vietnam, Norodom Sihanouk in Cambodia and Sisavang Vong in Laos, were all too happy to be photographed with Marshal Pétain for propaganda brochures.

Thailand was ruled by Field Marshal Phibun Songkhram who openly admitted his admiration for Hitler and Mussolini. He gave himself the byname "po nam" ("leader"), and all newspapers had to print the header "One Land: Thailand. One Leader: Phibun. One Goal: Victory." His nationalist orientation culminated in the renaming of the country in 1939 from Siam to Thailand, literally meaning "Land of the Thais" and excluding the Chinese minority. In order to repatriate the Thais from the neighbouring countries to his great Thai empire, Phibun sent his army marching into Cambodia and Laos with Japanese backing in 1940.

In **Burma**, Aung Sang, father of the current opposition leader Aung Sang Suu Kyi, was on the side of the Japanese invaders until just before the end of the war. The Japanese provided him with military training and promoted him to major general. His vision for Burma's future read: "What we want is a strong state administration as exemplified in Germany and Italy. There shall be only one nation, one state, one party, one leader."

In **Indonesia**, Achmed Sukarno, who later became the country's president, was the highest Indonesian official within the Japanese occupation authority from 1943. Leading Indonesian politicians drafted their declaration of independence in August 1945 at the office of the Japanese Admiral Maeda.



*Chinese Emperor
Pu Yi in Manchukuo.*



*Wang Jingwei (China), in the
service of the occupiers.*



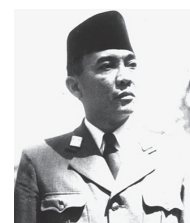
*Bao Dai (Vietnam),
a friend of Marshal Pétain.*



*Thailand's "Leader"
Phibun Songkhram.*



*Aung Sang (Burma) serving
in the Japanese military.*



*Sukarno (Indonesia),
loyal to Japan.*

COLLABORATION

Jews out – Nazis in Argentina under Juan Perón



Juan Domingo Perón, Argentina's long-standing president, already visited the fascist countries of Europe as a young officer in the **1930s**.

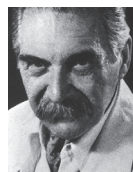
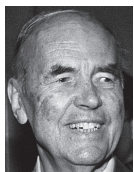
In Italy, he underwent military training in Mussolini's army. Back in Argentina, he maintained close contact with the secret service of the Nazis, whose "military discipline" he admired. The military clique with whom he snatched power in **1943**, endorsed an "agreement on the mutual cooperation" with Walter Schellenberg, the head of the Nazi Sicherheitsdienst (Intelligence Agency).

When Argentina had to declare war on Germany under pressure from the Allies in **February 1945**, Perón assured his "German friends" that they, too, would "profit" because, "as a warring country", Argentina would be able to "move freely in Germany after the war (and) bring a great number of people to Argentina".

Among those who were able to escape to Argentina, thanks to the rescue operation organised from Perón's presidential palace, were infamous war criminals like Adolf Eichmann, responsible for the deportation and murder of millions of Jews; Josef Mengele, the Auschwitz concentration camp physician responsible for human experiments and sending tens of thousands to the gas chambers; Josef Schwammberger, commander of several Polish labour camps and responsible for the deaths of countless Jews; and Erich Priebke, the right-hand man of the head of Rome's Gestapo and involved in the shooting of 335 Italian hostages. European collaborators of the Nazi regime also ended up in Argentina, for example the entire leadership of Croatia's fascist Ustaše regime, including its head of government Ante Pavelić, who had been responsible for the murder of hundreds of thousands of Jews, Serbs and Sinti and Romanies.



*Evita and
Juan Domingo Perón.*



*War criminals who
found refuge in
Argentina (left to right):
Josef Schwammberger
Erich Priebke
Adolf Eichmann
Josef Mengele
Ante Pavelić.*

Jewish refugees were less welcome in Argentina. As early as **12th June 1938**, the Argentine government issued a directive to their consulates to refuse immigration visas to "all persons" who in their countries of origin were "classed as undesirables" – in other words, Jews.

In **1947**, the Perón government still employed a fanatic anti-Semite as head of the Argentine immigration authority, Santiago Peralta, who had studied anthropology in Germany and decried Jews as "cysts on the body of the populace" who had to be "warded off".

Quotes from:

Uki Goñi: The Real Odessa – How Peron Brought the Nazi War Criminals to Argentina, London 2003.

COLLABORATION

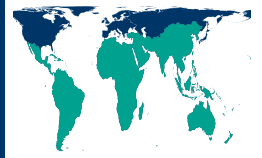
The Collaborators' Victims



Muslim volunteers from Turkestan serving in the military of Nazi Germany in France in 1943. In total, the German Wehrmacht was able to recruit about 200,000 Muslim defectors in the Southern Soviet Union.

Collaborators supported the fascist Axis powers all around the globe, politically, economically and in many cases also militarily. Even the death squads of the Waffen-SS, the poison gas brigades of the Italian fascists and the killer commandos of the Japanese occupiers found thousands of willing henchmen. Tens of thousands volunteered to work in the weapons industries of the war-mongering powers, hundreds of thousands reported to serve in their forces, and millions of people cheered on their victories. These mass collaborations seriously constrained and delayed the liberation of the globe from European fascism and Japanese megalomania. Millions of deaths were the consequence. They would not have happened without collaboration.

The Right to Remembrance



EPILOGUE

“The history of the Second World War, like any history, is written by the victorious powers, but also by the owners and the wealthy. In spite of their defeats, Germany and Japan are ultimately counted amongst the winners of the war as they are perceived as people of equal rank, even though both countries’ historiographies had to endure critical examination and revision. But the ones who were forgotten after the war, as if they hadn’t existed while it was in progress, the ones who are forced to re-learn its history together with their children without finding their own deeds recorded, they are the ones who can be counted amongst the truly defeated. Defeated and without a voice of their own, this is how hundreds of millions of people and their descendants are still living today, in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Australia and throughout the Pacific.”



*Kum'a Ndumbe,
professor at Jaunde University in Cameroon,
in his preface to the book
“Unsere Opfer zählen nicht –
Die Dritte Welt im Zweiten Weltkrieg”
(Our Victims don't count –
The Third World in WWII),
Rheinisches JournalistInnenbüro /
recherche international e.V. (Hg.),
Berlin/Hamburg 2005.*

“Researchers from the wealthy countries are consciously or unconsciously suffering from a silent racism which causes them to regard any events outside their own ‘centre of wealth’ as almost irrelevant to their work. This creates a body of literature on the Second World War, which is mainly concerned with the rich nations. Whoever has the means also determines the topics, theories and lines of research. This is why victims from the periphery don’t count. And the victims themselves learn and read the literature on the Second World War as published and distributed worldwide by the centres of the wealthy, and in it do not recognise their own history.”

An Exhibition by recherche internationale (Germany)



The list of all those who since the 1990s have conducted research, written texts, taken on organisational responsibilities or provided funding for the long-term project THE THIRD WORLD IN WORLD WAR II is a very long one. The names of everyone involved can be found in the various publications on the topic and on the website. The project culminated in an extended version of the (touring) exhibition for the NS Documentation Centre of the City of Cologne in spring 2025, for which online versions and PDF booklets of the exhibition were also produced in four languages. The following people contributed:

Conception and realization: Christa Aretz & Karl Rössel (recherche internationale e.V., Cologne)

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Layout / graphic design:

Amado Alfadni (poster), Holger Deilke (exhibition), Andreas Hollender (catalogue)

Cartography: Beate Reußner (Berlin)

Translation and subtitling: Lise Mercier & Giovanni Pannico (French) | Subtext Berlin (English & Portuguese) & Beatriz de Medeiros Silva (Portuguese)

Speakers of the listening stations: Maria Schüller, Ernst-August Schepmann & Hartmut Stanke (German) | Susan Bonney-Cox & Alan Fountain (English) | Lise Mercier & Mark Wartenberg (French) | Aline Frazão & Mário Fradique Bastos (Portuguese)

Translators: Jil Richter (English), Christiane Zender (French), Katja Krause (Portuguese)

Online versions: Christine Bolz, Ralf Dank, Redaktionsbüro Dank, Cologne

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Website: Thorsten Schiller

Social Media: Malwina Cronin, Cologne

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We were not able to identify the source of some of the photos. In such cases, we ask potential copyright holders to contact recherche internationale e.V. in Cologne.



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Stadt Köln





Banner advertising the exhibition at the Castle of Good Hope in Cape Town