

PRISONERS OF WAR DEATHS

and PEOPLE HANDED OVER

to GERMANY

and THE SOVIET UNION

IN 1939-55

A Research Report
by the Finnish National Archives

***POW DEATHS AND
PEOPLE HANDED OVER TO
GERMANY AND THE SOVIET UNION
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Archives

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Foreword

The research project 'POW deaths and People Handed Over in Finland in 1939-55' was carried out by the National Archives in 2004-08. The aim of the project was to look into the circumstances surrounding the war-time deaths of Prisoners-of-War (POW) in Finnish prison camps, as well as into the handing over and exchange of people between Finnish and Nazi-German authorities during WWII, and to the Soviet Union in the post-war period.

To support their research, the members of the project collected and compiled several databases arranged according to the names of the perished POW, internees, people handed over to the Germans, and prisoners repatriated to the Soviet Union; altogether, individual electronic cards were made for 36,772 people. The Finnish data legislation allows free access only to information on dead individuals, so the National Archives published and placed on the internet, in the fall of 2007, only the cards of already deceased individuals. All in all, these databases, arranged by name, contain 24,000 cards (<http://kronos.narc.fi/>).

The researchers of the project produced, for their own part, several monographs on the different sub-topics of the project. Their central observations and findings have been gathered into this book in the form of articles. The book starts with an introduction presenting the particular situation of Finland as a parliamentary-governed ally of Germany in 1941-44. The next two articles explore the extent of and the reasons for the high mortality among the Soviet POWs and interned civilians held in Finnish camps. An article also casts some light on the Germans' POW camps on Norwegian and Finnish soil.

Two further articles examine the handing over of Soviet POWs, civilians, and refugees to the Nazi-German authorities. The book concludes with a couple of articles on the role of the Finnish authorities in the repatriation of Soviet POWs and civilians in the post-war period, and on the fates of the repatriated in the Soviet Union.

Helsinki, November 2008

Lars Westerlund

Introduction

Oula Silvennoinen

Most of the current territory of Finland was integrated into the Swedish empire over the course of the Middle Ages. Linguistically, most of the population in the area spoke a Finno-Ugric language, and could be called Finns. Geographically however, the region had no clearly defined borders. The area understood to be Finland in the Swedish state never had more than a portion of the Finns within it. In addition, those who spoke Finnish and the groups who spoke closely related languages lived in a big region that extended to the White Sea, to Ingria and to the areas east of Lake Onega. The Finns in the area of modern Finland accepted Western traditions in governance and the Lutheran faith, although a significant Russian Orthodox minority lived in the eastern portions of this territory.

Finland remained a part of the Swedish kingdom until Russia conquered it during the Napoleonic Wars and made it part of its empire in 1809. Finland was granted extensive administrative autonomy. This autonomy allowed the area to remain a separate unit within the Russian empire. Finnish nationalism grew from this basis in the 19th century when the administrative connection with Sweden was broken and awareness of a linguistic and cultural distinctiveness was born.

Two negations determined some of the defining characteristics of Finnish nationalism. An old Finnish saying attributed to A. I. Arwidsson can be used to illustrate the point: "Swedes we are not, Russians we do not want to become, let us therefore become Finns." The Finns could not be Swedes, not only for the obvious linguistic reasons, but also because they had been administratively cut off from Sweden with the coming of the 19th century. The Finns did not wish to become Russians because of the long Western traditions in governance and because of linguistic differences. The only thing left was to be Finns, and to create and cherish their own cultural and linguistic identity.

This Finnishness naturally needed the support of a nation-state before long. When the grip of the Russian empire on its border regions began to weaken at the beginning of the 20th century, the goal of independence gradually changed from a day dream to a realistic objective. Simultaneously the Russians increasingly began to be depicted as the opposite of Finnishness, as enemies of Finland, and oppressors. The Russian authorities further aggravated the situation at the

beginning of the 20th century by launching a period of Russification. These Russification policies endangered the administrative and cultural distinctiveness of the Finnish position in the Russian empire. They also increased the creditability of the propaganda of the nationalist agitators.

By the beginning of World War One, there was a group in Finland that actively pursued separation from the Russian Empire. With the start of the war, support for an armed uprising to gain independence was received from Germany. Young Finnish men began to secretly travel to Germany to receive military training in hopes of an armed rebellion.

Along with many other peoples in the border regions, Finland broke away from the Russian Empire in 1917. This was a perfect moment as the Bolshevik government was then incapable of effective counteractions. It consented to recognize Finnish independence in the belief that the coming world revolution would also soon return Finland to the socialist motherland. This belief also had a basis, as revolution soon began in Finland as well.

Finnish social democrats shared the fate of their fraternal colleagues in Russia in that there also was a fundamental dispute over policy in Finland. At the beginning of the 20th century, Finnish social democrats were radicalized in favor of the wing supporting an armed rebellion. The organizations for Finnish workers armed themselves and founded their own Red Guard units. On the right, the Civic Guards were established to fight for order. The situation came to a head at the end of 1917. The Finnish parliament issued a declaration of independence on December 6, 1917. This day is celebrated as Finnish Independence Day, but it was not immediately clear to whom control of the country would belong. The leadership of the radical wing of the social democrats saw a golden opportunity to launch an armed uprising. The Red Guards were mobilized at the end of January 1918. Industrialized Southern Finland became the Red base. The Civic Guards simultaneously began to create a base for themselves in northwestern and northern Finland by disarming the Russian units still in the area. The so-called Jägers, who had received training in the German Army, returned to Finland and joined the White Army being built around the Civic Guards. A short, but bitter and bloody, civil war followed in Finland.

Imperial Germany intervened in the Finnish Civil War in the spring of 1918 by sending one division to fight on the White side. In the end, the Whites won and the Reds fled to Soviet Russia. The 1920 Tarttu Peace Agreement ended the *de facto* state of war prevailing between Finland and Soviet Russia. The agreement was supposed to resolve the smoldering territorial and ethnic disputes in the regions near Finland. However, it did not satisfy the nationalist-minded territorial aspirations of some in Finland. The Soviet government was also not really interested in completely implementing the provisions of the treaty. In the end, the Finnish eastern border was defined in a way that was quite favorable to Finland.

Finland got access to the Arctic Ocean through the Petsamo area. It also received control of the entire Karelian Isthmus. The distance to Petrograd, soon to be Leningrad, from the Finnish border on the Karelian Isthmus was only thirty kilometers.

The experiences and memories of the struggle for independence and the Civil War came to define Finnish relations with both Germany and the Soviet Union. A defining feature of the Finnish Republic that arose as a result of the Civil War was its relationship with communism. The Reds who fled from Finland founded the Finnish Communist Party in Soviet Russia. It aimed to launch a new armed uprising and revolution in Finland. The communists in Finland attempted to continue their operations via different cover organizations. Anticommunism played a key role in the state ideology of independent Finland. The Soviet Union was thought of as the archenemy and the actions of Finnish communists at home and abroad were thought to be treason. Relations between Finland and the Soviet Union remained cold and strained during the entire interwar period.

World War One had ended in German defeat and the fall of the German Kaiser. Finland thus lost the power most interested in guaranteeing its independence. The Weimar Republic seemed powerless, and it was understood that it was both unable and uninterested in acting as Finland's supporter. As the Soviet Union grew more powerful in the 1930s however, the search for friends and allies against the threat began in Finland. Hitler's 1933 rise to power in particular was seen in traditional pro-German circles as a phenomenon that had again made Germany a worthy ally. The anticommunist rhetoric of the Nazis drew the gaze of many who were ready to look through their fingers at the negative features of their government. Germany's aggressive foreign policy and the beginning of rearmament did not necessarily seem threatening when seen from Finland. Quite the contrary, these actions were welcomed because they would again make Germany into a significant player on the world stage. They were also more than welcome as a counterweight to the Soviet Union.

As the 1930s progressed, Finland began to become more and more isolated. In the end, Finland decided to seek a solution for its burning security problem in an alliance with Sweden. However, both the Soviet Union and Germany quickly made it clear that they would not allow this kind of thing. When the war began, any policy that relied on the Western powers became impossible in practice. The Western powers could not help Finland after the 1940 German offensive in the West had forced them onto the defensive. Unfortunately, the only options left were

trying to survive without assistance, leaning on Germany, or giving into the Soviet Union.

In World War Two, Finland had to fight in three different conflicts. In August 1939, the Molotov-Ribbentrop Non-aggression Pact was signed by Germany and the Soviet Union. The Secret Protocol of the pact placed Finland in the Soviet sphere of influence. The Soviet government was therefore free to organize matters with Finland in the manner it saw fit. In the fall of 1939, the Soviets proposed negotiations to the Finns on the territorial arrangements on the borders between the countries. Finland rejected the demands on its territory, which were seen as endangering the country's ability to defend itself. The Soviet Union then attacked Finland on November 30, 1939. Finland had to fight alone in the Winter War (1939-1940) that followed. The defense succeeded in stopping the Soviet forces, but Finland was forced to sue for peace in March 1940 when the military situation deteriorated. The peace conditions were harsh. Among other things, the terms meant that Finland lost large areas of its eastern Karelian region. Simultaneously, the food supply in Finland came under more pressure as over 400,000 refugees fled the area that was handed over to the Soviet Union. Housing had to be found for them elsewhere in Finland. In addition, Finland, like Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, had to surrender a base on its own territory for use by the Soviet Union. Hankoniemi became the base from which Soviet naval forces could monitor the traffic in the Gulf of Finland.

The war caused a crisis in Finnish society. Governing authority in Finland shifted to a political-military leadership consisting of the president of the republic, the more important ministers and members of the Finnish Defense Forces. The significance of the Finnish parliament in running the country had already decisively declined when the Winter War began. In the situation that arose, it was understood that conditions required increased independence for those carrying out policies and that the armed forces would have to be brought into the governance of the state. Finland was subject to Soviet pressure in the peace that followed the Winter War. The Hankoniemi base was seen as a springboard for the occupation of Finland. The Soviet Union also showed increasing interest in the nickel deposits of Petsamo. However, Soviet designs ran straight into German interests. Germany had again begun to pay attention to Finland as it prepared to turn east.

Finland signed an agreement with Germany in September 1940. Among other things, the agreement granted Germany transit rights for supplying its troops in Northern Norway. The agreement was a barely concealed pretense to increase the German military presence in Finland. Meanwhile, Germany prepared to seize control of the Petsamo nickel deposits, if Finland again came into conflict with the

Soviet Union. However, the Germans moves were seen in Finland as an indirect promise to guarantee the inviolability of Finnish territory. The foreign policy options of Finland seemed to have shrunk to only one option. The remaining course was to follow Germany. When the Finnish political-military leadership found out about German plans for the near future, the decision was made to take an active part in the war alongside Germany.

The strong chance of getting the areas lost in the Winter War back pulled strongly in this direction. The absolute majority of Finns had not the slightest doubt about the justice of this goal. In addition, this option opened up the possibility of achieving the dream of Greater Finland that had particularly prevailed among the nationalist right. This meant uniting the Finnic peoples and all of Karelia with Finland and making it into a unified and powerful state. This would end the fragmentation of the Finns, as it was thought that all these people formed a culturally and linguistically indivisible community. Alongside this dream, there were also more real political considerations. One question was whether Finland could remain uninvolved in a conflict between Germany and the Soviet Union, even if it wanted to. The country could become a battlefield between the Germans who were already there and Soviet troops. If Finland would have avoided making a choice in favor of one or the other, its negotiating position would have been fundamentally weaker. Finland took a calculated risk when it joined up with the Germans. The potential returns of the policy could have been unimaginably huge. The possibility of defeat was only seldom considered in this phase of the war. On the basis of experiences from the Winter War, the combat ability of the Red Army and the chances of the Soviet Union was also completely, but dangerously, underestimated in Finland.

Taking the common needs in the war into consideration, there was an agreement between Finland and Germany that German troops would take responsibility for military operations in the northern part of Finland. The southern section of the over thousand kilometer long Finnish-Soviet border remained the responsibility of the Finns. Finnish units operating in the north were subordinated to German command. Members of the German Armed Forces enjoyed extraterritorial rights in Finland. The Finnish civilian administration remained in Northern Finland, but it had only limited control over German actions. Even more importantly, the German prisoner of war administration also extended its operations to Finland. A distinguishing feature of the coming war was the strong presence of the German armed forces, particularly in Northern Finland. The Germans were also along all the supply routes, in the harbors of Southern Finland and along the lines of transportation.

The German assault on the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941 began a short performance, where Finland pretended it was neutral. The Soviet Union ended this situation on its own. After an attack by the Soviet Air Force on Finnish territory at the end of June 1941, the Finnish government issued a public statement where it declared that the country was again at war with the Soviet Union.

The resulting conflict has come to be called the Continuation War (1941-1944) in Finland, as it was widely understood to be a continuation and an unavoidable consequence of the Winter War. In the north, Finnish and German forces began their attack on the Soviet Union at the beginning of July, which was also when full combat operations began on the section of the front controlled by the Finns. Finnish units advanced to the old border on the Karelian Isthmus, where they dug in while they waited for German units to advance on Leningrad. The Finns crossed the old borders in Ladoga Karelia and advanced to the Maaselkä Isthmus and the River Svir. This line was thought to be more strategically advantageous.

The attack also cut the Murmansk railway, but this event remained strategically insignificant as the railway connection with Murmansk was preserved through a side track connection with the main railway at Belomorsk. The final breaking of the railway connection at Belomorsk was sketched out together with the Germans at the end of 1941. Meanwhile, Great Britain and the United States of America pressured Finland not to take part in an operation to cut the northern lend-lease route to the Soviet Union. The front lines stabilized by the beginning of 1942, nor did the Finns begin any large scale offensive operations any more. The advance of Finnish and German units in the north was stopped without achieving its goals. Combat operations froze into positional warfare until the summer of 1944.

In total, Finnish units took approximately 64,000 Soviet soldiers prisoner during the Continuation War. Most of the prisoners were taken when the Finns were advancing in the later half of 1941. The large number of prisoners surprised the Finnish prisoner of war administration and led to a rapid rise in the death rate in the Finnish prisoner of war camps. All-in-all, the death rate for Soviet prisoners of war rose to around thirty percent. From an international perspective, this number is exceptionally high. Among those countries who took part in the war, there was a similarly high mortality rate in the Japanese camps and in the German camps. The former were famous for the cruel treatment meted out to their prisoners and the latter for not always preparing to take care of even the most basic needs of prisoners. In addition, the dimensions of the catastrophe in the Finnish camps are emphasized by the fact that most of the prisoner deaths happened in the winter of 1941/1942 and the following spring. After the summer of 1942, international pressure began to build and the situation started to change.

The Soviet Union launched a massive attack on Finland at the beginning of June 1944 with the aim of knocking Finland out of the war. The fighting in the summer of 1944 ended with the stopping of the Soviet attack, as they were forced to turn to their efforts against Germany elsewhere in Europe. Finland was offered the opportunity to get out of the war under more advantageous conditions than what the Soviet Union had been ready to grant in the summer. A ceasefire between the armed forces of Finland and the Soviet Union came into force on September 15, 1944. The open question was the reaction of the Germans who still held Northern Finland. The Germans began to withdraw in accordance with a timeline agreed with the Finns, but the Soviet Union demanded more active measures against the

Germans. Soviet troops advanced over the border in Northern Finland. Contact was made between the advancing Finns and the withdrawing Germans in October, and it escalated into combat. This is how the so-called Lapland War (1944-1945) started.

The Germans implemented a scorched earth policy and began to destroy nearly everything in Northern Finland. This quickly made the Finns bitter and the fighting between the Finns and the Germans flared up into full scale combat. The Germans withdrew towards the Norwegian border, relying on previously prepared defensive positions. The last German units left Finnish territory only in March 1945.



The individual numbers of the POWs are checked in camp # 6 in the Viipuri area in 1942.
Kansallisarkisto

The Mortality Rate of Prisoners of War in Finnish Custody between 1939 and 1944

Lars Westerlund

Between 1939 and 1944, a total of 23,681 prisoners of war and civilians died in camps run by Finnish military authorities. If the deaths are broken down by category, then 135 deaths are related to the Winter War (1939-1940), 19,085 deaths are related to the Continuation War (1941-1944), 4,279 deaths occur in the concentration and transfer camps of Eastern Karelia (1941-1944), 138 deaths occur in the Miehikkälä camp for civilians (1941-1944), and 44 deaths are related to the German attempt to seize the island of Suursaari and the Lapland War of fall 1944. This article aims to clarify the causes of death in the camps and the degree of responsibility that Finland bears for the neglect of those in the camps.

Camp inmates had a particularly disastrous year in 1942. More than 15,000 Soviet prisoners of war and nearly 3,700 civilians died in that year, resulting in totally over 19,000 dead. According to research based on the card files on the prisoners of war and the civilians, most of those who died succumbed to disease. Intestinal infections were the cause of death in approximately one quarter of the cases. Respiratory infections accounted for about one tenth of the deaths. Other infections and diseases were the cause of death in nearly a fifth of the cases. It is estimated that around 1,500 Soviet prisoners of war died of wounds received in combat. This corresponds to almost a tenth of the cases. In addition, the camp guards and command staff shot 1,019 Soviet soldiers and 19 civilians dead. This number corresponds to 5.3% of the Soviet prisoner of war deaths and 0.4% of the civilian deaths.

The widely spread popular conception is that the mass mortality among the prisoners of war and the civilians in the camps in the winter of 1941/42 stemmed from hunger. This in turn was a consequence of the general lack of food supplies in Finland, which did not allow for the distribution of adequate rations to those in the camps because they were at the end of the supply chain. However, research does not completely support this idea, as only one fifth of the Soviet prisoners of war who died and 2% of the civilians who died actually succumbed to malnourishment. The standards on rations issued by the Finnish General Headquarters were sufficient for keeping the prisoners of war and the civilians alive in the camps. However, the camps had supply personnel, command staff, guards, and trustee prisoners favored by the Finns who appropriated some of these rations. The consequence was a generally uneven distribution of rations. In the camps, a tiny fraction of the Soviet prisoners of war gained weight, while most somehow stubbornly held on, and the rest suffered from malnutrition.



Grave diggers marching to work. *Olli Ingervon kokoelma*

Overview of the Mortality Rates of Prisoners of War and Civilians

The noted reporter and human rights activist Elina Sana published a book entitled *The Persons Handed Over: Finland's Deportations to the Gestapo* in 2003.¹ This work drew an unusual amount of attention both at home and abroad. It has been characterized as a work of investigative journalism. It consists of two sections dealing with events in the Continuation War (1941-1944): just under 300 pages cover the transfers of civilian refugees to German custody organized by the Finnish State Police (VALPO) and just under 100 pages cover the exchanges of prisoners of war with the German prisoner of war authorities carried out by the surveillance section of the Finnish General Headquarters. Both topics had been researched

¹ Sana 2003.

earlier, with the transfer of civilian refugees even being quite extensively covered.² Information based on archival research on the exchange of prisoners between Finland and Germany had already been published years before Sana's book. The Israel-based journalists Serah Beizer and Semy Hahan, who are of Finnish origin, have covered the topic in particular. Because these somewhat short pieces had appeared either in fairly obscure publications or in Swedish however, they had not spread extensively among the general Finnish-speaking audience.³

Thus, the information presented by Sana on the exchange of prisoners during the Continuation War was not new in and of itself. The difference was that Sana covered the subject more extensively than before in her monograph. The material published by Sana on the prisoner of war exchanges, which was fundamentally the same as what had appeared before, partially got a lot of attention because the Simon Wiesenthal Center inquired about follow-up measures from the office of the Finnish president as a result of the book's appearance. This center had not reacted in this way when the information on the prisoner of war exchanges was published earlier in 1995 and 2001. This leads to the conclusion that *The Persons Handed Over: Finland's Deportations to the Gestapo*, which was written by a well-known author and issued by a significant Finnish publisher, created a favorable opportunity this time to focus on the issue. Another factor in the background of the attention given to the book by the press was the sensitivity of the international media to all information on the genocide of the Jews perpetrated by Germany during World War Two. The media was given an opportunity to bring up the issue as there were a small group of prisoners of war who were of Jewish origin among the approximately 2,500 Soviet prisoners of war transferred to German custody as a result of actions taken by the surveillance section of the Finnish General Headquarters. Although Sana did not go very deeply into the reasons for the prisoner of war exchanges, she did leave the impression that Finnish law enforcement and military officials had added their own little contribution to the Holocaust.⁴

The descriptions in Sana's book of the transfer of civilian refugees and Soviet prisoners of war to German custody and the aforementioned inquiry of the Simon Wiesenthal Center led to the office of the Finnish Council of State inviting Emeritus Professor of Finnish History Heikki Ylikangas to outline a research project. Ylikangas' report was completed in 2004. In accordance with its recommendations, the office of the Council of State empanelled in 2004 a research project under the National Archives of Finland on the deaths of prisoners of war and the transfers of individuals to Germany and the Soviet Union. The project was

² Suominen 1979, Torvinen 1984, Rautkallio 1983, pp. 302-303, Rautkallio 1987, Rautkallio 1989, Cohen-Svensson 1995, pp. 70-93, Lundgren 2003, pp. 300-320, Smolar 2003.

³ Beizer 1995, pp. 11-24, Beizer 2001, pp. 10-11, Hartikainen 2001, p. 63, Semy Kahan: Finland utlämnade många judar [Finland Handed over Many Jews]. Article in the newspaper *Hufvudstadsbladet* 24.11.2001.

⁴ Ylikangas 2004, pp. 7-8.

to last from 2004 to 2008. The research group that was created in fall 2004 took the name *Finland, prisoners of war, and people handed over 1939-1955* for the research project.⁵

Elina Sana's book contains extensive material on the exchange of Soviet prisoners of war between Finland and Germany, but she does not cover the mortality rate of the prisoners of war.⁶ However, Ylikangas stressed the primacy of researching the mass mortality among Soviet prisoners of war. His basis for this was that those that died made up a large group, but the only thing that was known about them were the raw numbers, aside from a few details about those who were shot for one reason or another. Although this issue was not a question of transfer or exchanges, "the topic is from a purely humanitarian perspective at least as tragic as the handing over of individuals to other states and demands as much an explanation of the judicial and decision making processes. In addition, it could reveal the same kind of discrimination in selections as can be seen in transfers and exchanges. I would also maintain that modern Finland once and for all wants to cease all concealment and openly lay down all its cards from the time of crisis, which would require an investigation into the prisoner deaths." Ylikangas further stated that the answers appearing in the literature on the reasons for the catastrophe were limited to 1941/42 and really stayed at a quite general level. Thus, it would be necessary to more precisely research "who died, where they died, why they died, as well as by which means and what decisions by what organizations were able to reduce the prisoner mortality. The investigation of this question would be important as it would also bring up cases where Jewish prisoners died. There is a special interest in their fate from the beginning of this investigation."⁷

However, the topics covered in this research are somewhat broader than the initial outline by Ylikangas. Ylikangas particularly stressed the need to investigate the mass mortality among Soviet prisoners of war in 1941 and 1942. This research now also includes the prisoner of war deaths in the concluding years of the Continuation War (1943-1944), the Soviet prisoners of war who died during the Winter War (1939-1940), and the German prisoners of war who died in the fall of 1944. In terms of numbers, this extension is not very large, as the aforementioned groups only total about a thousand dead prisoners of war altogether. There are two reasons to expand the research scope. The first is to enable comparisons between the mass mortality among Soviet prisoners of war and other cases that occurred at the same time where the prisoner of war mortality rate was relatively low. The second is that it provides a complete picture of the wartime mortality rate among prisoners of war. This research has therefore stressed covering both the different relevant groups and the relevant time periods.

The research scope has also been expanded to include deaths among civilians in the

⁵ Electronic version of the data files on the Internet pages: investigations of *Prisoners of war and people handed over 1939-1955* <http://www.narc.fi/Arkistolaitos/luovutukset/index.htm>.

⁶ Sana 2003, pp. 302-395.

⁷ Ylikangas 2004, pp. 37-38.

camps in Eastern Karelia and in Miehikkälä in the Kymenlaakso region during the Continuation War. There are many reasons for this. There have been big differences of opinion in the entire postwar era between Finnish and Russian historians about size of the mortality rate in the concentration and transfer camps in Eastern Karelia between 1941 and 1944. Although Finnish researchers have attempted to determine the number of dead based on documents in the archives, it has so far only been possible to present some uncertain estimates about the extent of the phenomenon. Research data on the mortality rate among civilians in the camps can also serve as a comparison point with the research on the mortality rate among prisoners of war. The civilian camps in Eastern Karelia and Miehikkälä were part of the entire Finnish prison camp system established for non-nationals during the war years. Thus, the understanding of this entire system is made more complete by this research. The research scope thus includes the mortality rates for both prisoners of war and civilians during the Winter and Continuation Wars.

Data as a Research Tool

According to Ylikangas' report, there was reason to create an electronic database for all the deaths when researching the mass mortality among Soviet prisoners of war. The database could then be used for documentation and analysis. It would include the names of the dead and their personal information, as well as data about their units, where they were taken prisoner, the prison camps they were in, and the cause of death. "The names of the dead prisoners would also be published on the Internet, accompanied by their personal data, nationality, information about possible offences and where the person in question was buried."⁸

Between 2005 and 2008, this research project created several databases on the dead, the interned, those transferred to German or Soviet custody, and returned prisoners of war. These databases are mainly based on the prisoner of war cards of the Finnish Red Cross and the registration cards of the civilian camps of Eastern Karelia. The databases represent a significant amount of work, and their creation required the equivalent of ten people working for a year.⁹ The completed databases include information on 36,772 individuals altogether, of whom 23,757 died. The lists of names of prisoners of war and civilians from camps who died during the Winter and Continuation Wars were published on the web pages of the National Archives of Finland in 2007.¹⁰ The following individual databases were created for the different groups:

- Dead Soviet prisoners of war during the Winter War 1939-1940 (135 individuals, 0.6%)

⁸ Ylikangas 2004, pp. 39-40.

⁹ Westerlund 2008, pp. 59-60, 68.

¹⁰ *Finland, prisoners of war, and people handed over 1939-1955*. <http://kronos.narc.fi>.

- Dead Soviet prisoners of war during the Continuation War 1941-1944 (19,085 individuals, 80.6%)
- Dead civilians in the camps in Eastern Karelia 1941-1944 (4,279 individuals, 18.1%)
- Dead civilians in the Miehikkälä civilian camp 1941-1944 (138 individuals, 0.6%)
- Dead German prisoners of war in the fall of 1944 (44 individuals, 0.2%)

These databases have two main uses. First, they can be used to perform searches for individuals, and some other individual searches such as place of death and cause of death. Second, the saving of the information contained in the cards of prisoners of war and the registration cards of the civilians in the camps in electronic format allows different statistical reports to be generated and used. Both the individual data and the statistical reports serve as research aids. This research has particularly benefitted from the statistical data contained in the databases.

The Mortality Rate of Soviet Prisoners of War Taken during the Winter War (1939-1940)

There is no information on the exact final numbers of Soviet prisoners of war taken during the Winter War. The prisoner of war cards of the Finnish Red Cross for the Winter War contain information on 5,594 Soviet prisoners of war.¹¹ However, some of the Soviet prisoners of war were not registered, as information given by Commander-in-Chief Gustaf Mannerheim on January 15, 1940 indicated that there already were 5,470 prisoners of war, two months before the end of the Winter War.¹² According to statistics compiled by the staff of the home army on April 8, 1940, there were then 5,465 registered Soviet prisoners of war. The number still grew on April 12 and 16, 1940, as the 25 Soviet soldiers dropped behind Finnish lines were added, which increased the total to 5,494.¹³ Taking into account the fact that perhaps 135 registered Soviet prisoners of war died, then perhaps there were at least approximately 5,620 official prisoners of war. According to Gunnar Rosén,

¹¹Prisoner of war office of the Finnish Red Cross. Catalog of prisoner of war camps 1940. Tilasto sotavangeista 1940 [Statistics on prisoners of war 1940]. Be 1. Kansallisarkisto [National Archives of Finland].

¹² Vlasov-Vlasov 2007, p. 156.

¹³ Sv. Tilasto 8.4.1940. Kotijoukkojen esikunta. Komentotoimisto. Sotavankiasiain kirjeistö 1939-40 [POW statistics April 8, 1940. Home Army staff. Command Office. Prisoner of War correspondence 1939-1940]. Fc 1. Kansallisarkisto [National Archives of Finland].

Finnish forces took 5,617 Soviet prisoners of war during the Winter War,¹⁴ which includes two female medics.¹⁵

Different researchers in both Finland and Russia have presented divergent information on the number of Soviet prisoners of war in the Winter War. The official history of the Winter War gives the number 5,469.¹⁶ Based on archival research, Raija Hanski has concluded that the number was "at least" 5,615, of whom 5,468 were returned.¹⁷ Rosén also mentions that 5,468 Soviet prisoners of war were returned.¹⁸ According to Lieutenant General W.E. Tuompo however, there were approximately 6,000 prisoners of war.¹⁹ Professor of Military History Ohto Manninen has also given the number "almost six thousand", of whom only 5,572 were returned.²⁰ According to researcher Jouni Kauhanen, the total number of Soviet prisoners of war would have been "about" 5,700.²¹

Russian researcher Viktor Stepakov mentions the official Soviet view that there were 5,769 Soviet prisoners of war in the Winter War.²² However, the Russian Ministry of Defense researcher into wartime deaths, G.F. Krivosheev, gives a figure of 5,468.²³ According to Russian researcher Vladimir Galitskii, the NKVD recorded that 5,447 prisoners of war returned from Finland. On the basis of information he has gathered however, he claims that the Finns took 6,166 Soviet prisoners of war, but it is unclear what precise information this number is based on.²⁴ The Russian researcher Ludmila Nosyreva has also put the number at over 6,000.²⁵

For his part, Dmitri Frolov says that the statistical data is extremely contradictory and varies between 5,546 and 6,116. He cites Finnish military and civilian officials, memoirs of military police and prison guards, the witness statements of foreign journalists and NKVD data as his sources. However, Frolov also does not distinguish more precisely when he uses these sources. His presentation ends with the claim that none of these sources are completely reliable.²⁶

¹⁴ Rosén 2002, p. 509.

¹⁵ Prisoner of war office of the Finnish Red Cross. Catalog of prisoner of war camps 1940. Tilasto sotavangeista 1940 [Statistics on prisoners of war 1940]. Be 1. Kansallisarkisto [National Archives of Finland].

¹⁶ Vuorenmaa, Anssi – Laakso, Veikko – Soila, Antero: Kotijoukkojen toiminta [Actions of the home army]. Talvisodan historia. Osa 4 [History of the Winter War, Part 4] 1979, p. 186.

¹⁷ Hanski 1990, pp. 32-33, 113.

¹⁸ Rosén 2002, p. 509.

¹⁹ Tuompo-Karikoski 1949, p. 383.

²⁰ Manninen 1997 II, pp. 304-305, Manninen 2000, pp. 812, 815.

²¹ Kauhanen 2005, p. 230.

²² Stepakov 1995, p. 190.

²³ Krivosheev 2001, p. 195.

²⁴ Galitskii 1997, p. 191.

²⁵ Nosyreva 1999, p. 806.

²⁶ Frolov 2000, p. 175.

The Tactics of the Winter War Produced Relatively Few Prisoners of War

The mortality rate for registered Soviet prisoners of war in the Winter War was 2.4%. This rate is quite low from an international perspective, as the wars of the 20th century have generally had a higher mortality rate for prisoners of war. However, the mortality rate for Soviet prisoners of war taken in the Winter War is particularly low when compared with the corresponding rate for those prisoners taken in the Continuation War. In the latter, 30.3% of the Soviet prisoners of war in Finnish custody died. There are many explanations for why the mortality rate during the Continuation War was over 12 times higher than the rate in the Winter War. The Winter War was short and lasted only 105 days. The Continuation War lasted approximately 1,150 days, or about 11 times as long. The significantly longer time that prisoners spent in captivity during the Continuation War clearly increased the number of those who died.

However, a more important explanation for the difference is the change in the tactics followed by the Finnish military leadership during the Winter and Continuation Wars. The Winter War was defensive in nature, even if its tactics were based on encircling counterattacks that resulted in the famous pockets. Finnish units sought to cause as much harm and personnel losses among Soviet units as possible. Many Soviet soldiers died in these encircled pockets as a result of these successful tactics. This was because the encircled Soviet soldiers had no chance of surviving without rations, heat, basic accommodation, supplies and organized medical care. Mass surrender occurred comparatively seldom among the Soviet soldiers in their hedgehog defensive positions in the encircled pockets. Instead, Finnish units made sure that breakout attempts did not succeed. They let time and the freezing temperatures do their work while waiting for a favorable moment for the final strike. After this so-called ripening and destruction phase, these encirclements often only produced tiny numbers of prisoners, and not even always that.²⁷

The iron discipline maintained by Soviet officers was one significant factor behind the relatively small number of prisoners taken from the encircled pockets. This was because it was easy to keep an eye on every Soviet soldier packed into the confined spaces of the encircled pockets. Surrender was not allowed. In spite of the freezing cold, the lack of rations, and the general hopelessness of the situation, the encircled pockets held out from one week to the next as the Soviet soldiers fought to the last man. This was certainly shown by the fact that Soviet prisoners of war taken from these encircled pockets were, with rare exceptions, “completely fed up and dissatisfied with the entire war, considered themselves to be betrayed, and were prepared to at length and generally truthfully tell everything they knew (...).”²⁸

When Finnish units broke up the formations advancing along the roads in the countryside and forests, large numbers of individual Soviet soldiers and small

²⁷ Järvinen 1948, pp. 71-186, 191-258, Manninen 1997 I, pp. 158-164.

²⁸ Järvinen 1948, p. 198.

groups ended up wandering randomly without supplies and connections to other units. Thousands of Soviet soldiers probably came to the end of their journey in a few days in this manner. Finnish units often did not even try to take the wandering Soviet soldiers prisoners, as generally the Soviet soldiers roaming about in the woods were quite harmless.

The Continuation War was different. Finnish units were on the offensive in 1941. The adopted tactics were still based on encirclement, although the military leadership sought to take certain strategic locations and to occupy entire areas. Partially as a result of the extensive encirclement operations, large numbers of Soviet soldiers were trapped in pockets that they could not escape. In the end, they were taken prisoner by the Finns or were driven into wandering in the dense forest.²⁹ According to Finnish estimates, the Soviet Army lost 265,000 soldiers killed and missing in fighting against Finnish and German units on the Finnish front between 1941 and 1944. About half of them, roughly 132,500 military personnel, were lost during the offensive operations in the last half of 1941.³⁰ Finnish units took nearly 56,000 registered Soviet prisoners of war during the offensive operations in 1941. Around 8,000 additional prisoners of war were taken during the positional and defensive fighting between 1942 and 1944. German units on the Finnish front probably took about 6,000 Soviet prisoners during the offensive operations of 1941, and approximately 3,000 Soviet prisoners between 1942 and 1944. The 64,000 prisoners of war in Finnish custody represented about 48% of all the losses of Soviet personnel on the front between the Gulf of Finland and the Arctic Ocean in 1941. The prisoners of war taken between 1942 and 1944 represented about 8% of the losses for this period. The relationship between the dead and those who were taken prisoner was 2 to 1 in 1941. Between 1942 and 1944, it was a significantly larger, as it was 12 to 1.

In the Winter War, Soviet forces probably lost approximately 150,000 soldiers killed and missing, including about 6,000 who were taken prisoner. This meant that prisoners of war represented only about 4.0% of the losses. The relationship between those killed and those captured was 25 to 1. This can also be shown by the fact that Finnish and German units on the Finnish front during offensive operations in the Continuation War took 12 times more prisoners of war than were taken by Finnish forces during the Winter War. However, only twice as many prisoners of war were taken during the positional and defensive phases of the Continuation War. The relatively small number of prisoners of war taken in the Winter War thus clearly differed from the positional and defensive warfare phases of the Continuation War.

Rosén argues that the number of prisoners of war taken from the Soviets in the Winter War, just over 6,000 prisoners, is a surprising small number, considering

²⁹ Järvinen 1950, pp. 170-180.

³⁰ *Jatkosodan historia. Osa 6* [History of the Continuation War. Part 6] 1994, pp. 488-491, Manninen 1994, pp. 295-313.

the big battles over the encircled pockets and the destruction of numerous enemy divisions.³¹ This observation is valid. If the ratio of dead to prisoners of war in the Winter War would have been the same as in the Continuation War, then perhaps 30,000 to 40,000 Soviet prisoners of war would have been accumulated in the Winter War. Correspondingly, if the ratio of dead to prisoners of war had been the same during the Continuation War as it was in the Winter War, then only 10,000 to 15,000 prisoners of war would have been taken during the Continuation War.

Causes of Death Among Soviet Prisoners of War in the Winter War

On May 14, 1940, the staff of the Finnish home army drew up a list of names of Soviet prisoners of war who had died in the prisoner of war camps and the camp hospitals. According to it, a total of only 114 prisoners of war died,³² although the Finnish Red Cross prisoner of war cards and military hospital records recorded 135 deaths. However, the statistical overview compiled up by the Finnish Red Cross on the Soviet prisoners of war of the Winter War did not have a category for deaths. Instead, it contained information on the wounded and frostbitten as follows:

Table 1: Wounded and frostbitten Soviet prisoners of war

Group	Number (n)	Percentage (%)
Wounded	1 921	78.8
Frostbitten	353	14.5
Wounded and frostbitten	164	6.7
Total	2 438	100,0

The information shows that there were a total of 2,438 wounded and frostbitten prisoners of war, which corresponded to 43.6% of the registered prisoners of war. Four fifths of this number were wounded and a fifth were frostbitten. Under a third of the frostbitten were also wounded.

The aforementioned numbers can be used to conclude that at least almost half of the prisoners of war were in poor condition. Even so, the mortality rate among the

³¹ Rosén 2002, pp. 509.

³² Sv. leireissä ja sv. sairaalassa kuolleita venäl. sotavankeja 14.5.1940 [Russian prisoners of war who died in POW camps and POW hospitals May 14, 1940]. Kotijoukkojen esikunta [Home army staff] Komentotoimisto [Command office]. Sotavankiasiain kirjeistö 1939-40 [Prisoner of war correspondence] Fc 1. Kansallisarkisto [National archives of Finland].

registered Soviet prisoners of war was tiny.

The following table contains information on the cause of death for prisoners of war.

Table 2. Causes of death for Soviet prisoners of war

Cause of death	Number (n)	Percentage (%)
Septicemia (blood poisoning)	72	53.3
Pneumonia	8	5.3
Heart problems	6	4.4
Suffocation	5	3.8
Peritonitis	5	3.8
Meningitis	4	3.0
Tetanus (lock jaw)	2	1.5
Gangrene	2	1.5
Suicide	2	1.5
Surgical operation	1	0.7
Festering wound	1	0.7
Sudden death	1	0.7
Shot	1	0.7
No information	25	18.5
Total	135	100.0

The data shows that over half of the dead lost their lives due to septicemia (blood poisoning), and a fifth from lung, heart, and stomach problems, and infections. There is no data on the cause of death in a fifth of the cases.

The medical care on offer to prisoners of war during the Winter War was not always satisfactory. Colonel Maximilian Spåre, inspector of prisoners of war, stated that the prisoner of war camps were generally a long trip away from the railway stations. “As the clothes and footwear of the prisoners of war were poor and the prisoners were weak, they could not generally be marched from the railway station to the camps, particularly during the winter, and they have often been transported by car until now.” The so-called “medical hut” of the prisoner of war

camps did not fulfill the most basic requirements. One room could contain 28 prisoners of war in different conditions. The condition of the seriously wounded and frostbitten prisoner of war patients in particular left a depressing impression, as there were none of the prerequisites for the required care. The municipal doctor visited the sick hut only once a week or when called. The only nurse complained about the lack of even the most basic equipment and bandages. According to Spåre, some patients should have been sent to a proper hospital. The situation in Pelso was better, but there were also a lot of prisoner of war patients there who should have been sent to the hospital. There were a total of 117 prisoners in Pelso, of whom 48 were sick. Of this ill persons six had such badly frostbitten feet that amputation was necessary. In the Parikkala collection camp, 60% of the prisoners of war were patients, mostly wounded and frostbitten. The camp only had a general clinic, and no medical hut for infectious cases. A female municipal doctor handled the medical needs of the prisoners of war in Parikkala, and the camp did not have a permanent nurse.³³

The Mortality Rate of Soviet Prisoners of War during the Continuation War between 1941 and 1944

The Number of Soviet Prisoners of War

There is also no precise data on the number of Soviet prisoners of war during the Continuation War between 1941 and 1944 as the records of the Divisions at the Front are not completely reliable. On the basis of military dispatches, 65,358 prisoners of war would have been taken in 1941 alone and an additional of some 7,000 prisoners in the period of 1942-44.³⁴ Thus, at least 72,000 Soviets military personnel would have been captured. However, there is reason to suspect that the prisoner of war numbers in the military dispatches are imprecise and it has been suggested that the real figure for the whole of the Continuation War was approximately 67,000 Soviet prisoners.³⁵ Also this is an estimate and as far is known only approximately 64,000 Soviet prisoners of war were registered and received their own prisoner of war card.³⁶

A very large proportion of the Soviet prisoners of war taken during the offensive operations of 1941 were captured in the area between Lakes Lagoda and Onega. These personnel accounted for approximately 30,000 of the prisoners taken, or about 43% of the captured prisoners. Another 13,000 were taken by the Finns on the Maaselkä Isthmus, which corresponded to roughly 19% of all prisoners.

³³ Sotavankitarkastaja Maximilian Spåren tarkastuskertomus Kotijoukkojen esikunnalle 1.3.1940 [Inspection report of prisoner of war inspector Maximilian Spåre to the staff of the home army March 1, 1940]. T 17763/1. Kansallisarkisto [National Archive of Finland].

³⁴ Mikkola 1976, pp. 196, 209-210, Mikkola 2000, pp. 28-29.

³⁵ Kujala 2008, 311

³⁶ Mikkola 1976, pp. 183-197.

Roughly 10,000 prisoners were taken on the Karelian Isthmus, or nearly 15% of the entire number.³⁷

According to an estimate drawn up on September 4, 1944, there were a total of 68,881 Soviet prisoners of war from the entire war. However, according to statistics prepared for repatriation on December 31, 1945, there would have been a total of 66,324 prisoners of war,³⁸ i.e. 2,557 less. The staff of the commandant of prisoners of war prepared a report in 1953 that placed for its own part the total number of Soviet prisoners of war at only 64,188.³⁹ This number is probably based on the prisoner of war cards of the Finnish Red Cross and probably corresponds to the number of registered Soviet prisoners of war. This would also mean that 3,000-4,500 Soviet prisoners of war remained unregistered. The gap between the numbers stems from many factors. The records in the war diaries could be inexact to some degree. In addition, recently captured prisoners of war were shot on the spot, escaped, or died of their wounds before they were transported to the collection point or camp.⁴⁰ This also meant that they were not registered.

Where Prisoners of War Were Held

In order to systematically and comprehensively investigate the mortality rate among Soviet prisoners of war, the statistical data on those who died must be organized according to the places the prisoners were held. The following five categories are used for this analysis:

Large prisoner of war camps. Each of the four largest camps had 800 to 2,800 prisoners of war die. On the basis of how many prisoners they held, the four largest prisoner of war camps are: PoWColCamp 1 in Naarajärvi, PoWColCamp 2 in Nastola, PoW Camp 6 in Viipuri, and PoW Camp 9 in Ajos, Kemi. These camps probably held a maximum of approximately 15,000 prisoners of war.

Medium-sized prisoner of war camps. The medium-sized prisoner of war camps had 90 to 330 prisoners of war die.⁴¹ These camps probably held a maximum of

³⁷ Mikkola 1976, p. 210.

³⁸ Kopsa, Pentti: Suomen Punaisen Ristin sotavankitoimisto 1939–45 [Prisoner of war office of the Finnish Red Cross 1939-1945], p. 24. Kansallisarkisto [National Archive of Finland]. The aforementioned statistics were drawn up by Prisoner of War Inspector Sulo Malm, and there is a copy in the archives of the Finnish Red Cross. Information from Pentti Kopsa.

³⁹ Sotavankikomentajan Esikunnan selvityselimen laatima tilasto toukokuussa 1953 [Statistics drawn up by the Repatriations/Settlement Committee of the Commandant of Prisoners of War in May 1953] B 60. T 19661, Kansallisarkisto [National Archives of Finland].

⁴⁰ Manninen 1994, pp. 281-284.

⁴¹ This group included POW Camp 1 in Köyliö, POW Camp 2 in Karvia, POW Camp 3 in Huittinen, POW Camp 4 in Pelsö, POW Camp 5 in Orimattila, in Sotjärvi, in Jessoila and in Petrozavodsk, POW Camp 7 in Karkkila, in Lohja, in Mustio and in Hanko, POW Camp 10 in

about 9,000 prisoners of war.

Small prisoner of war camps. The small prisoner of war camps had 0 to 60 prisoners of war die.⁴² These camps probably held a maximum of about 10,000 prisoners of war.

Military and field hospitals. The number of prisoner of war patients was at its greatest between October 1941 and May 1942, when there were 4,500 to 5,000 of them. After this, the number decreased in the beginning of the summer first to about 4,000 and then to roughly 3,000 at the end of the summer. In 1943, the number of patients continued to decrease from 3,000 to nearly 1,500 and stayed at that level through 1944, not counting the summer months. The number of prisoner of war patients grew again to approximately 1,900 in the beginning of the fall of 1944 as a result of the Soviet offensive at the time. The ratio of prisoner of war patients to all prisoners of war varied from a tenth to a fifteenth in 1941 and 1942. On September 6, 1941 it was 10.2%, on December 27, 1941 it was 8.7%, on April 6, 1942 it was 10.1%, on July 25, 1942 it was 6.4% and on December 31, 1942 it was 7.5%. From 1943 to 1944, it fell further to a fifteenth to a twentieth. Between January and November 1944, 17,873 different cases of illness were recorded.⁴³ This meant that there could have been a total of approximately 100,000 cases of illness between 1941 and 1944, as the sick rate in 1941/1943 was about twice that compared to the situation in 1944.

On February 17, 1942, there were a total of 12,563 Soviet prisoners of war who were incapable of working.⁴⁴ In spite of the high mortality rate, this situation continued. On March 14, 1943, over a year later, a report indicated that 13,210 prisoners of war were still incapable of working. This corresponded to 27.6% of the prisoners. They were incapable of working because of wounds, invalid status, sickness or weakness.⁴⁵ The real number was probably higher, as already approximately 8,800 Soviet prisoners of war had died by the middle of March.

Värtsilä, POW Camp 12 in Kurkijoki, POW Camp 14 in Tervaneva, in Sortavala township and in Helylä, POW Camp 16 in Impilahti, in Syskyjärvi, in Matkaselkä and in Tuomiokylä, POW Camp 17 in Rautalampi and in Suomussalmi, as well as the Naval Forces Camp in Hanko.

⁴² This group included POW Camp 8 in Kolosjoki, in Ivalo and in Köyliö, POW Camp 11 in Valkeakoski, POW camp 13 in Ylikuunu, POW Camp 15 in Kihniönjoki and in Suomussalmi, POW Camp 18 in Kälviä, POW Camp 19 in Kiuruvesi and in Oulu, POW Camp 20 in Rellentinsuo in Räisälä, POW Camp 21 in Liminka and in Aholhti, POW Camp 22 in Mäntyluoto, POW Camp 23 in Orivesi, POW Camp 24 in Riitasensuo and in Mustasaari, POW Camp 33 (Kannas Group) in Perkjärvi and in Rautakorpi, POW Camp 34 in Valkjärvi, POW Camp 51 in Latva and V Army Corps in Jessoila, VI Army Corps in Olonets, VII Army Corps in Petrozavodsk and the 14th Division prisoner of war camp in Tiiksjärvi.

⁴³ Lauri Tiainen: Manuscript Kotijoukkojen toiminta sodan 1941–1945 aikana [Actions of the home army during the war in 1941–1945], Chapter XIII "Sotavangit" [Prisoners of War] p. 18. Military History Department of the National Defense College.

⁴⁴ Kopsa, Pentti: Suomen Punaisen Ristin sotavankitoimisto 1939–45 [Prisoner of War Office of the Finnish Red Cross], p. 12. Kansallisarkisto [National Archives of Finland].

⁴⁵ Mikkola 1976, p. 110.



Guards, nurses and patients in the 28th Military Hospital in Kokkola 1941. *Leo Berkovits*

All-in-all, six military hospitals were established to provide medical care to prisoners of war. These hospitals had 5,124 beds,⁴⁶ although one source indicates that they even had over 6,000 beds.⁴⁷ The main military hospitals were the 28th Military Hospital in Kokkola, the 58th Military Hospital in Kannus, the 63rd Military Hospital in Uti, the 64th Military Hospital in Viipuri, the 65th Military Hospital in Lappeenranta, and the 69th Military Hospital in Helylä. The 66th Military Hospital in Petrozavodsk took care of prisoner of war patients as well as military patients. The 14th Field Hospital and the 2nd Field Hospital (the Kiviniemi prisoner of war hospital) took care of large numbers of prisoner of war patients. In addition to this, prisoners of war randomly received care on a small scale in dozens of other military hospitals and the seven other field hospitals. A total of only 28 Soviet prisoners of war died in these other facilities.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Puolustusvoimien huolto 1988 [Logistics of the Defense Forces], p. 830.

⁴⁷ Mikkola 1976, p. 91.

⁴⁸ These were the 8th Military Hospital, the 10th Military Hospital, the 17th Military Hospital, the 22nd Military Hospital, the 25th Military Hospital, the 27th Military Hospital, the 41st Military

Military and field hospitals lost a sum total of 5,762 Soviet prisoners of war, which corresponds to under a third of the Soviet prisoners of war who died while in Finnish custody.

Prisoner of war companies. As the need to use prisoners of war as labor came up in the areas where military operations were going on, prisoner of war companies were established. These became work companies that were two hundred men strong. They were mostly used in forest and road work. Finnish engineers, master builders and foremen generally served as their commanders.⁴⁹ The Soviet prisoners of war in the prisoner of war companies can be considered to be their own group. There were a total of 65 prisoner of war companies.⁵⁰ On October 1, 1942 there were a total of 6,772 prisoners of war in these companies.⁵¹ However, it is estimated that approximately 8,000 prisoners of war served in them.⁵² A total of 945 prisoners of war died in the prisoner of war companies.

Other. In addition to the aforementioned categories, another category, called other here, is required for those cases that do not naturally fit with the other groups. This group includes 3,639 of the prisoners who died, which makes it a large group. These prisoners of war probably mostly died in subcamps and at prisoner of war work sites. However, there is no entry in the Finnish Red Cross prisoner of war cards for a camp where they died for 3,569 of them. The databases contain a total of 841 different locations for the deaths. Because about 140 of these cases are either completely or mostly identical, it can be said that the prisoners of war in this category died in at least about 700 different places. The real number of places where prisoners died is probably considerably larger than this number, as there are no entries in the Finnish Red Cross prisoner of war cards for a place of death in 940 cases. At the end of 1942, there were about 3,350 places where Soviet prisoners of war worked.⁵³

In terms of the number who died, the Orivesi-Längelmäki-Jämsä railway construction site was a big site as a total of 280 Soviet prisoners of war died there. Other locations where a high number of deaths occurred were Petrozavodsk (86), Vammelsuu (66), Perkjärvi (60), Pitkäranta (57), Käkisalmi (54), Kiviniemi (54) and the Riitanensuo prisoner work site (51). A total of 198 prisoners have entries that indicate that they died while being transported, meaning they died before

Hospital, the 55th Military Hospital, the 59th Military Hospital and the 68th Military Hospital as well as Field Hospital numbers 13/17, 13/27, 29, 32, 35, 36 and 38.

⁴⁹ Lauri Tiainen. Manuscript Kotijoukkojen toiminta sodan 1941–1944 aikana [Actions of the home army in the war 1941-1944], Chapter XIII "Sotavangit" [Prisoners of war] p. 9. Military History Department of the National Defense College.

⁵⁰ Kopsa, Pentti: Suomen Punaisen Ristin sotavankitoimisto 1939-45 [Prisoner of War Office of the Finnish Red Cross 1939-1945]. Appendix, Prisoner of War Companies.

Kansallisarkisto [National Archives of Finland].

⁵¹ Kopsa, Pentti: Suomen Punaisen Ristin sotavankitoimisto 1939-45 [Prisoner of War Office of the Finnish Red Cross 1939-1945], p. 8. Kansallisarkisto [National Archives of Finland].

⁵² Mikkola 2000, p. 44.

⁵³ Mikkola 2000, p. 169.

reaching their destination. There could have been a maximum of about 21,000 prisoners of war in this category.

On the basis of the statistical data, it is possible to provide a broad estimate of the mortality rate in the different categories. There is precise data on the number of deaths, but it is not possible to say exactly how many Soviet prisoners of war were in the different categories. This is because the number of prisoners in the different locations were constantly changing. The following table contains information on the mortality rate for the different locations on the basis of the maximum number of prisoners of war in each category:

Table 3. Mortality Rate of Soviet Prisoners of War per category in 1941/1944

Location	Deaths (n)	Maximum # of prisoners	Mortality rate (%)
Large camps	6 484	15 513	41.8
Medium camps	1 785	9 130	19.6
Small camps	467	10 589	4.4
Prisoner of war companies	945	8 000	11.8
Military and field hospitals	5 762	about 100 000 ⁵⁴	5.8
Other	3 642	no data ⁵⁵	
Total	19 085		

Because there is no precise and comparable data on the number of prisoners of war in the different categories, the information on mortality rates can only give an indication of tendencies. On the basis of the presented calculations, it can be seen that the mortality rate was clearly the highest in the large prisoner of war camps. A key observation is also that the mortality rate declined in accordance with the size of the camp. While the mortality rate in the large camps was 41.8%, it was 19.6% in the medium-sized camps, and 4.4% in the small camps. The mortality rate in the prisoner of war companies was 11.8% and about 5.8% in the military and field hospitals. In spite of gaps and the lack of uniformity in the data, all these percentages can be regarded as reasonably reliable.

⁵⁴ Number indicates prisoner of war patients who received care.

⁵⁵ It is not possible to estimate the number of Soviet prisoners of war in other locations even by the process of elimination. This is because some of the prisoners of war went to military and field hospitals directly from the front and some from other camps.

Camp Mortality over Time

A total of 19,085 registered Soviet prisoners of war died between July 1941 and November 1944 during the Continuation War. The deaths can be separated out by year and month as follows:

Table 4. Time of death of Soviet prisoners of war by year and month

Month	1941	1942	1943	1944	
January		2 402	110	28	
February		2 665	92	29	
March		2 361	79	25	
April		1 753	93	28	
May		1 553	94	28	
June		1 029	61	43	
July	23	895	65	42	
August	76	867	50	28	
September	166	531	24	27	
October	237	299	26	14	
November	599	196	21	4	
December	1 479	176	21		
No data					746
Total	2 580	14 727	736	296	746

The table shows that of the 19,085 Soviet prisoners of war who died, the breakdown is as follows by year: 2,580 (13.5%) in 1941, 14,727 (77.2%) in 1942, 736 (3.9%) in 1943, and 297 (1.6%) in 1944. There is no information on the year or month of death in 746 (3.9%) cases. The real period of mass mortality for prisoners of war is from November 1941 to September 1942. A total of 16,136 prisoners of war, corresponding to 84.5% of those who died, died in this 11 month period. The mass mortality increased significantly from December 1941, and reached a high point in February 1942, when 2,665 prisoners of war died. After this the mass

mortality rate declined somewhat evenly, with the decrease ending in mid-fall 1942. The growth period in mass mortality lasted four months, and the period where the number was declining lasted seven months.

The table also illustrates the extraordinarily high mortality rate among Soviet prisoners of war. If it is estimated that the normal mortality rate for men of an active age is no more than 5% per year, then there should have been about 960 deaths from disease, accidents, incidents at work, suicide and other causes among the 64,188 men in the three years they were held. The high mortality rate becomes a little smaller when the approximately 1,500 men who died as a consequence of their wounds are subtracted from the 19,085 dead prisoners of war for purposes of this calculation. If the statistical mortality rate is calculated on the basis of these approximately 17,600 men, the mortality rate is over 18 times what the mortality rate would be under normal conditions.⁵⁶

Causes of Death for Soviet Prisoners of War

For purposes of this research, the data on the cause of death comes from the entry in the personal data in the databases. Two or more causes of death were entered for the same individual in some cases. If the cause of death in the data field was entered in Latin, then it has been translated into English with a dictionary for the master database. Unclear, uncertain, and conflicting information in the sources has been omitted from the statistics. When uncertain information has been added to the database it has been marked as such. When necessary, it has been more completely commented in the cause of death notes field. When conflicting information has appeared in the sources, the most probable, complete, or precise data has been interpreted into statistically probably information on a case by case basis when the information was entered.

The cause of death listed in the data files for the dead Soviet prisoners of war in the research project can be placed in the following groups to provide a general overview:

- 1 Intestinal infectious diseases
- 2 Infectious diseases of the respiratory system
- 3 Other infectious diseases
- 4 Other illnesses
- 5 Symptoms, conditions, and less precisely determined causes of death
- 6 Violent deaths and events
- 7 Cases where information is missing

⁵⁶ Calculation by Pentti Mäkelä.

Although the number of registered dead Soviet prisoners of war is placed at 19,085, there are a total of 22,903 causes of death marked in the records. The confirmed number of causes of death thus exceeds the number of dead by 3,818. This is because the prisoner of war cards contain two or more entries for the cause of death in 16.7% of the cases.

In approximately 53% of the deaths, some kind of illness or disease is marked down as the cause of death. Although there is no certain information on the quality or nature of this information, it could be reasonable to suppose that the judgments in these cases could be rather reliable. The violent deaths category, which can be regarded as reasonably reliable, accounts for one tenth of the deaths. Therefore, a total of approximately 63% of the deaths fall into categories with moderately reliable information.

A symptom, condition or less precisely defined factor was marked as being the cause of the death in approximately 30% of the deaths. In addition, information on the cause of death is missing for 7% of the deaths. Therefore, a total of 37% of the deaths have a cause of death where the more precise details remains open to interpretation.

The following table shows the aforementioned causes of death in relation to the previously established categories for where the prisoners were held

Table 5. Cause of death of Soviet prisoners of war by category of where they were held

Intestinal infectious diseases

Cause of death	Large camp	Medium camp	Small camp	Hospitals	POW company	Other	Total
Intestinal illnesses	1 435	351	64	1 746	104	312	4 012
Diarrhea	483	18	2	45	11	59	618
Stomach illness	148	39	17	194	67	90	555
Dysentery	174	3	-	6	4	11	198
Total	2 240	411	83	1 991	186	472	5 383

Respiratory infectious diseases

Cause of death	Large camp	Medium camp	Small camp	Hospitals	POW company	Other	Total
Lung disease	628	255	64	1 074	155	276	2 452
Tuberculosis	54	13	5	45	1	34	152
Throat illnesses	1	4	-	14	1	3	23
Total	683	272	69	1 133	157	313	2 627

Other infectious disease

Cause of death	Large camp	Medium camp	Small camp	Hospitals	POW company	Other	Total
Septicemia	106	28	15	253	18	36	456
Phlegmon	7	7	-	155	1	9	179
Spotted fever	67	24	-	25	-	17	133
Abscess	9	4	1	47	-	4	65
Fever, malaria	8	4	1	11	8	10	42
Influenza	24	6	4	2	3	8	47
Typhoid fever	19	4	-	4	1	-	28
Tetanus (lock jaw)	-	-	-	15	-	-	15
Shingles	3	2	-	4	2	3	14
Total	243	79	21	516	33	87	979

Other illnesses

Cause of death	Large camp	Medium camp	Small camp	Hospitals	POW company	Other	Total
Heart diseases	367	98	54	203	101	218	1 041
Dropsy	93	116	2	663	15	61	950
Scurvy	-	110	3	49	5	63	230
Kidney disease	99	15	3	36	20	53	226
Anemia	109	26	1	29	-	32	197
Brain diseases	57	19	6	50	19	23	174
Rheuma-	1	6	-	123	-	3	133

tism							
Boils	5	-	-	58	1	4	68
Gangrene	31	4	1	22	2	6	66
Cancer	16	2	-	19	1	3	41
Pruritus (scabies)	-	-	-	37	-	-	37
Stroke	4	2	4	16	7	3	36
Epilepsy	2	-	4	5	1	5	17
Liver disease	-	5	-	10	1	1	17
Mental illness	4	2	-	10	-	-	16
Osteo- myelitis	2	3	1	12	-	-	18
Total	790	408	79	1 342	173	475	3 267

Symptoms, conditions and less precisely determined causes of death

Cause of death	Large camp	Medium camp	Small camp	Hospitals	POW company	Other	Total
Malnutrition	1 408	498	39	1 936	67	519	4 467
Weakness	1 278	280	16	156	106	238	2 074
Death struggle	7	-	-	140	-	4	151
Total	2 693	778	55	2 232	173	761	6 692

Violent deaths and events

Cause of death	Large camp	Medium camp	Small camp	Hospitals	POW company	Other	Total
Shot	139	110	82	15	141	532	1 019
Died of wounds	3	6	12	491	2	23	537
Froze to death	12	9	3	169	30	25	248
Poisoning	17	39	7	16	20	46	145
Fracture	5	4	1	46	7	11	74
Accident	8	5	1	2	4	32	50
Contusions	5	3	4	20	2	18	52
Died in bombing	3	8	-	33	-	33	77
Death sentence	-	1	1	-	-	19	21

Suicide	3	1	2	2	1	11	20
Burns	-	4	-	10	-	6	20
Died from mines	4	2	-	-	1	4	11
Drowned	1	-	1	-	1	8	11
Murdered	-	1	-	-	2	2	5
Total	199	190	114	804	211	774	2 296

Information missing

Cause of death	Large camp	Medium camp	Small camp	Hospitals	POW company	Other	Total
Unknown causes	207	64	2	39	29	136	477
No information	38	77	6	142	41	882	1 186
Total	245	242	8	181	70	1 018	1 663

The following section looks more closely at this information.

Main categories for cause of death

The information in the prisoner of war cards on the cause of death has been placed into some main categories to create a general picture of events, as was outlined earlier.

The absolute numbers for the main categories for the cause of death are presented below in more compact form:

Table 6. Deaths by numbers (n) and category of where they were held

Cause of death	Large camp	Medium camp	Small camp	Hospitals	POW company	Other	Total
Intestinal infection	2 240	411	83	1 991	186	472	5 383
Respiratory infection	683	272	69	1 133	157	313	2 627
Other infection	243	79	21	516	33	87	979
Other illness	790	408	79	1 342	173	475	3 267
Symptoms	2 693	778	55	2 232	173	761	6 692
Violent	199	190	114	805	211	774	2 292

deaths							
Information missing	245	141	8	181	70	1 018	1 663
Total	7 093	2 279	429	8 199	1 003	3 900	22903

In order to be able to compare the data for the cause of death in a sensible way, the causes of death for the categories of where the prisoners were held are expressed in terms of their relative percentages. The following table illustrates these percentages:

Table 7. Deaths by percentage (%) and category of where they were held

Cause of death	Large camp	Medium camp	Small camp	Hospitals	POW company	Other	Total
Intestinal infection	31.6	18.0	19.3	24.3	18.5	12.1	23.5
Respiratory infection	9.6	11.9	16.0	13.8	15.7	8.0	11.5
Other infection	3.4	3.5	4.9	6.3	3.3	2.2	4.3
Other illness	11.1	17.9	18.4	16.4	17.2	12.2	14.3
Symptoms	38.0	34.1	12.8	27.2	17.2	19.5	29.2
Violent deaths	2.8	8.3	26.6	9.8	21.0	19.8	10.0
Information missing	3.5	6.2	1.9	2.2	7.0	26.1	7.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Nationalities and ethnicities of Soviet prisoners of war

The intelligence section of the Finnish General Headquarters paid a great deal of attention to the ethnic or national backgrounds of the Soviet prisoners of war. The results of its preparatory work led to a statistical form that listed 89 different nationalities.⁵⁷ The table below has information on 1) those still alive at the end of August 1944⁵⁸ 2) those who died in Finnish custody, and 3) Soviet prisoners of war

⁵⁷ Pietola 1987, pp. 58-62.

⁵⁸ Otsikoimaton ja päiväämätön laskelma sotavankien kansallisuuksista, laadittu ehkä elokuun lopussa 1944. Päämaja [Untitled and undated summary of the national and ethnic

transferred to the Germans. The first set of data is based on undated statistics on nationality. The other information is from the data files created by the research project on the dead and the Soviet prisoners transferred to the Germans.

The data is as follows:

Table 8. Ethnic background of Soviet prisoners of war

Nationality	1944	Dead	Transferred ⁵⁹	Total
<u>Slavs</u>				
Russians	28 157	14 274	566	42 997
Belarusians	1 456	580	51	2 087
Ruthenes (Western Ukrainians)	1	-	-	1
Ukrainians	4 757	1 588	179	6 524
Poles	291	58	63	412
Cossacks ⁶⁰	-	6	-	6
Total	34 662	16 506	859	52 027
	66.6 %	31.7 %	1.7 %	100.0 %

origin of prisoners of war, which may have been drawn up at the end of August 1944]. T 19656/F3, Kansallisarkisto [National Archives of Finland], Sotavankikomentajan Esikunnan puhelinsanoma sotavankivahvuudesta 27.9.1944. Sotavankileirien sijoituspaikat [Telephone memos of the staff of the Commandant of Prisoners of War on the numbers of prisoners of war September 27, 1944. Locations of prisoners of war camps]110 E 6.

Ulkoasiainministeriön arkisto [Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs].

⁵⁹ Includes 93 who died while in German custody in Pori.

⁶⁰ The Cossacks were not a homogenous group, but rather a multiethnic collection of peoples, although they were mostly paramilitary groups of Ukrainian origin.

Nationality	1944	Dead	Transferred	Total
<u>Finnic peoples⁶¹ from far away</u>				
Erzya Mordvin	214	-	-	214
Khanty (Ostyak)	1	2	-	3
Komi-Permyak	9	-	-	9
Komi-Zyrian	182	-	-	182
Komi	-	94	6	100
Mari (Cheremis)	166	89	1	256
Moksha Mordvin	8	-	-	8
Mordvin	-	179	3	182
Mordvin (Moksha and Erzya)	293	-	-	293
Nenets (Samoyed)	1	-	-	1
Udmurt (Votyak)	148	67	4	219
Total	1 022	431	14	1 467
	69.7 %	29.4 %	1.0 %	100.0 %

Finnic peoples from the region near Finland

American Finns	-	1	-	1
Olonets Karelians	305	-	-	305
Savakko Ingrians	12	-	-	12
Ingrian Finns	593	30	4	627
Ingrians from nearby	206	-	-	206
Eastern Karelians	679	-	-	679
Nearby Karelians ⁶²	131	-	-	131

⁶¹ The term Finnic is used here to refer collectively to those peoples whose original mother tongue belonged to the Finno-Ugric group of the Uralic languages. Examples of these languages from the region near Finland include Finnish, Estonian, Ingrian, Karelian, Veps and some others.

⁶² This group has been interpreted as being nearby Karelians. The documents only read "... Karelians," as there is a hole at the front of the word which makes it unclear which Karelians were meant. Because the expression "nearby Karelians" appears in a catalog, this term has been used here. The basis for the nationality classification does not appear in the text. The

Karelians	-	98	13	111
Saami (Lapps)	2	-	7	9
Finns	137	16	1	154
Tver Karelians	518	-	1	519
Votes	10	-	-	10
Veps	210	14	3	227
White Sea Karelians	10	-	1	11
Total	2 813	159	30	3 002
	93.7 %	5.3 %	1.0 %	100.0 %

Nationality	1944	Dead	Transferred	Total
<u>Peoples from the Baltic</u>				
Latvians	4	15	88	107
Lithuanians	2	2	11	15
Livonians	1	-	-	1
Estonians	10	7	482 ⁶³	499
Total	17	24	581	622
	2.7 %	3.9 %	93.4 %	100.0 %

Turkic peoples

Altay	24	8	-	32
Azerbaijanis	29	32	63	124
Balkars	-	8	4	12
Bashkirs	132	48	1	181

term "nearby Karelians" also appears in a nationality breakdown drawn up on February 17, 1942. Pentti Kopsa: Prisoner of War Office of the Finnish Red Cross 1939-1945 Appendix 2. Kansallisarkisto [National Archives of Finland].

⁶³ Of the 393 cases in the "no data" category, it has been estimated that 236 of them were Estonian based on their names.

Khakas	19	9	-	28
Karachays	4	7	20	31
Kazakhs	394	83	4	481
Kyrgyz	82	40	-	122
Kумыks	12	5	1	18
Nogai	-	2	-	2
Tatars	1 226	464	14	1 704
Cherkes	7	1	17	25
Chuvash	203	200	2	405
Turks	11	1	8	20
Turkmen	11	7	-	18
Uzbeks	276	47	1	324
Total	2 430	962	135	3 527
	68.9 %	27.3 %	3.8 %	100.0

Nationality	1944	Dead	Transferred	Total
<u>Peoples from the Caucasus, excluding Turkic peoples</u>				
Abkhaz	1	2	3	6
Adyghe (Cherkes)	-	1	7	8
Armenians	18	32	112	162
Belokanys	1	-	-	1
Caucasian Avars	9	26	47	82
Dagestanis	6	-	5	11
Dargin	8	9	3	20
Georgians	21	80	127	228
Ingush	1	4	2	7
Kabardin	10	8	15	33

Caucasians	5	-	8	13
Laks	-	2	9	11
Lezgins	10	21	30	61
Mingrelians	1	1	2	4
Ossetians	6	10	19	35
Tabasarans	-	-	1	1
Chechens	6	31	34	71
Total	103	217	434	754
	13.7 %	28.8 %	57.6 %	100.0 %

Germans

Volga Germans	2	-	-	2
Other Germans	1	-	-	1
Germans	-	8	168	176
Polish Germans	-	-	1	1
Total	3	8	169	180
	1.7 %	4.4 %	93.9 %	100.0 %

<u>Jews</u>	333	93	51	479
	69.7 %	19.5 %	10.9 %	100.0 %

Nationality	1944	Dead	Transferred	Total
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Others

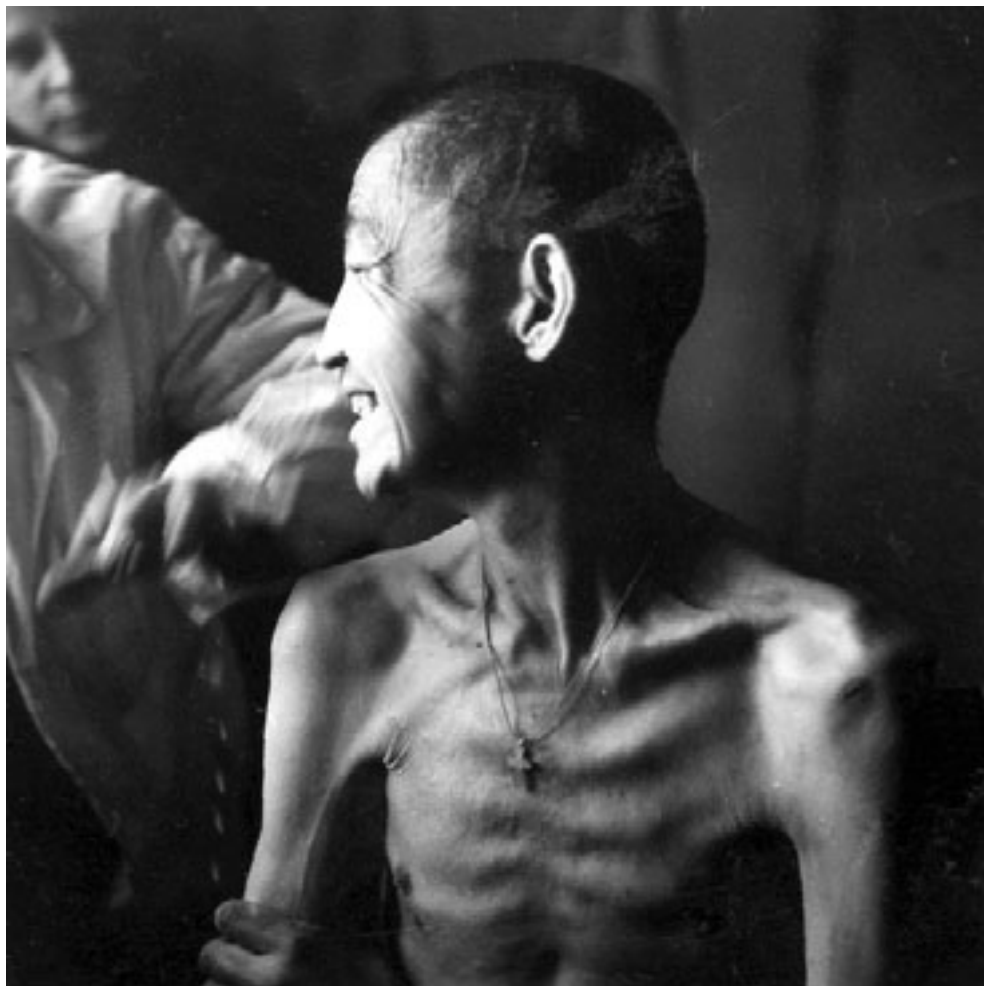
Assyrians	-	-	3	3
Bessarabians	-	-	1	1
Bulgarians	-	-	1	1

Buryats	5	3	-	8
Spaniards	1	2	-	3
Dutch	-	-	1	1
Kalmyks	18	14	-	32
Koreans	3	-	-	3
Greeks	6	-	-	6
Mongols	1	1	-	2
Moldovans	19	7	3	29
Romanians	6	-	-	6
Roma	-	1	-	1
Tadjiks	12	3	-	15
Czechs	2	-	1	3
Evenks (Tungus)	-	-	1	1
Other minority peoples	22	-	-	22
Total	95	31	11	137
	69.3 %	22.6 %	8.0 %	100.0 %
No information	-	644	157	801
	-	80.4 %	19.6 %	100.0 %
Total	41 478	19 085	2 432	62 995
	65.9 %	30.3 %	3.9 %	100.0 %

The details in these tables are examined in greater detail in the following sections

Survivors, those transferred to German custody, and Soviet prisoners of war freed from imprisonment. According to the data in the tables, there were 41,496 Soviet prisoners of war who were alive in September 1944. According to information given to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by the Finnish General Headquarters on

September 18, 1944, there were 41,472 Soviet prisoners of war.⁶⁴ According to the table, 2,432 Soviet prisoners of war had been transferred to the Germans. In addition, a total of 19,085 prisoners had died. The tables therefore contain information on a total of only 63,013 registered Soviet prisoners of war, although the real number exceeded 64,000 by many hundreds.



A POW suffering from starvation. *Olli Ingervon kokoelma*

⁶⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Finnish Embassy in Bern 18.9.1944. Ruotsin ja Kansainvälisen Punaisen Ristin edustajat tutustumassa sotavankihuoltoon Suomessa [Representatives of the Swedish and International Red Cross inspecting the care of prisoners of war in Finland]. Fb 110 A2 b, Ulkoasiainministeriön arkisto [Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs].

The difference is caused by the release of many Soviet prisoners of war with a Finnic background to found the 3rd Volunteer (Finnic) Battalion. At least 1,115 Finnic prisoners served in this unit. The 6th Independent Battalion had at least 729 soldiers.⁶⁵ Other Soviet prisoners of war with a Finnic background served in other units. In addition, the Finnish General Headquarters released some Soviet prisoners of war who declared a desire to cooperate when interrogated. These individuals then worked in intelligence, and served as propagandists, interpreters, and local experts in various tasks.⁶⁶ According to the Finnish General Headquarters, there were just about 2,000 prisoners of war with a Finnic background in August 1942.⁶⁷

Because the information is based on statistics drawn up in the summer of 1944, those prisoners who were freed from captivity were not included. The prisoner of war section of the Finnish Red Cross was not even told about the Soviet prisoners of war with a Finnic background who were attached to Finnish military units.⁶⁸

The Repatriations/Settlement Committee of the Commandant of Prisoners of War also compiled some statistics in 1953.⁶⁹ When this data is combined with the information collected by the *Finland, prisoners of war, and people handed over 1939-1955* research project, it is possible to present information on the numbers in the different groups of Soviet prisoners of war.

⁶⁵ Selostus venäläisten ja saksalaisten sotavankien ja internoitujen luovutuksesta 4.11.1944 [Report of the transfer of Russian and German prisoners of war and interned civilians November 4, 1944] p. 46. Päämaja [Finnish General Headquarters]. Sotavankikomentajan esikunta [Staff of the Commandant of Prisoners of War]. Yhteysosasto [Liaison Section] 8 F. Sal. and yl. Ryhmä 15. Sotavankeja ja sotarikollisia koskeva [Secret and General Correspondence on prisoners of war and war criminals], T 19498/22, Kansallisarkisto [National Archives of Finland], Blinnikka 1969, p. 34, Syrjä 1991.

⁶⁶ Kopsa, Pentti: Suomen Punaisen Ristin sotavankitoimisto 1939–45 [Prisoner of War Office of the Finnish Red Cross], p. 7. Kansallisarkisto [National Archives of Finland].

⁶⁷ Letter from Lieutenant Colonel K. Å. Slöör, who was acting head of the intelligence section of the Finnish General Headquarters, to the ministry of foreign affairs August 12, 1942. Prisoners and their destiny in the war. Fb 110 A2 b. Entertainment for prisoners of war. YMCA. World's Alliance of Young Men's Christian Association. Ulkoasiainministeriön arkisto [Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs].

⁶⁸ Petramaa, Ahti: "Sotavangit" [Prisoners of war], p. 32. Study, Kansallisarkisto [National Archives of Finland].

⁶⁹ Sotavankikomentajan selvityselimen laatima tilasto toukokuussa 1953 [Statistics drawn up by the Repatriations/Settlement Committee of the Commandant of Prisoners of War in May 1953] B 60. T 19661, Kansallisarkisto [National Archives of Finland].

Table 9. Overview of the Soviet prisoners of war from the Continuation War by group (in numbers)

Group	Number (n)
Returned to the Soviet Union by May 1, 1953	42 411
Dead	19 085
Transferred to German custody	2 432
Returned from Sweden to the Soviet Union	49
Stayed or left in the Soviet Union during the war	12
Sent on intelligence operations to the Soviet Union and did not return	49
Prisoners of war taken by Soviet partisans	1
Transferred to Polish chargé d'affaires in Stockholm	36
Transferred to the Spanish chargé d'affaires in Stockholm	21
3 rd Volunteer (Finnic) Battalion	
- Dead	85
- Defected to the Soviet Union	7
- Taken prisoner	1
- Transferred to the Estonian embassy	1
- Taken prisoner of war by Soviet partisans	1
- Returned with the Ingrian transports to the Soviet Union	1
Transferred to the Soviet Union on the basis of escapee lists	703
Total	64 895

The table illustrates that there were at least 64,895 registered Soviet prisoners of war. This number also includes Soviet prisoners of war with a Finnic background who had been freed earlier and who Finnish authorities succeeded in capturing for return to the Soviet Union. Some of the Soviet prisoners of war transferred to the Germans died on Finnish soil, and some were transferred by the Germans to Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Germany, Norway, and elsewhere.

Particularly large percentages of prisoners of war from some ethnic backgrounds were transferred to the Germans. Of the Soviet prisoners of war held by the Finns, the following groups were transferred to the Germans: 93.9% of the 180 prisoners of war with a German background, 93.4% of the 622 prisoners from the Baltic

countries, and 57.6% of the 754 prisoners of war from the Caucasus. Meanwhile, 10.9% of the 479 Jewish prisoners of war were transferred to the Germans, as were 3.8% of the 3,527 prisoners of war with a Turkic background, 2.7% of the 6,524 prisoners of war of Ukrainian origin, 1.3% of the 42,997 Russian prisoners of war, 1.0% of the 3,020 Finnic prisoners from the region near Finland, 0.9% of the 1,466 Finnic prisoners of war from far way from Finland, and 8.0% of the 137 prisoners of war from other backgrounds.

Ethnic backgrounds of the Soviet prisoners of war. Of the aforementioned 62,995 Soviet prisoners of war, there were 42,997 Russians, which corresponded to 68.2% of the total. There were also 6,524 Ukrainians, which corresponded to 10.4% of the prisoners, and 2,087 Belarusians, which corresponded to 3.3% of the total. When these numbers are compared to the general breakdown of nationalities in the Soviet Union, it can be said that the breakdown of the nationalities among the Soviet prisoners of war in Finnish custody differed from that in the Soviet population generally. According to the 1938 Soviet census, Russians only made up 50.6% of the population, Ukrainians 20.3% and Belarusians 3.1%.⁷⁰ Thus, Russians were massively overrepresented among the prisoners of war taken by the Finns. Their share exceeded the expected number by 17.6 percentage points. The Ukrainians were clearly underrepresented, by 9.9 percentage points. The Belarusian share was somewhat the same, with only an increase of only 0.2 percentage points.

On the basis of Russian reports, it seems that 8.7 million soldiers fell and went missing in the Great Patriotic War. Of them, 60.6% were Russian, 15.9% were Ukrainian, and 2.9% were Belarusian.⁷¹ This report also supports the observation that Russian soldiers in particular were mobilized for the front and that Ukrainians were underrepresented given their share of the population. It may also be possible that some men from various national backgrounds declared that they were Russian when they were interrogated.

Connections between mortality rates and national background. The treatment received by Soviet prisoners of war from different national and ethnic backgrounds varied greatly. On the basis of the statistical data, it appears that this treatment affected the extent of the mortality rates for the different groups. The following table contains data on the mortality rates of the different national groups.

⁷⁰ Term "Russia", Iso tietosanakirja [Big Encyclopedia] 1939, p. 174.

⁷¹ Glantz 2005, p. 604.

Table 10. Mortality rates by nationality

Nationality	Prisoners	Dead	(%)	Difference
Russians	42 997	14 274	33.2	+ 2.9
Finnic peoples from far away	1 467	431	29.4	- 0.9
Peoples from the Caucuses	754	217	28.8	- 1.5
Belarusians	2 087	580	27.8	- 2.5
Turkic peoples	3 527	962	27.3	- 3.0
Ukrainians	6 524	1 588	24.3	- 6.0
Jews	478	93	19.5	- 10.8
Poles	412	58	14.1	- 16.2
Finnic peoples from the nearby region	3 020	159	5.3	- 25.0
Germans	180	8	4.4	- 25.9
Peoples from the Baltic countries	622	24	3.9	- 26.4
Others	170	41	24.1	- 6.2
No information	808			
Total	63 013	19 085	30.3	

The data indicates that the mortality rate was clearly at the highest among the Russian prisoners of war. This phenomenon manifested itself from the beginning. The Finnish military leadership became aware of the high mortality rate of the Russian prisoners of war already at the beginning of the period of mass mortality among Soviet prisoners of war. The commander of the home army informed the chief of the Finnish General Staff that 2,720 Soviet prisoners of war had died by January 10, 1942. This included 2,233 Russians, which corresponded to 82.4% of the dead.⁷² While the average mortality rate was 30.3%, the Russian prisoners of war had a mortality rate of 33.2%. This was a difference of 2.9 percentage points. Of the 19,085 Soviet prisoners of war who died during the Continuation War, 75.1%, or 14,274 of them, were Russian. This was in spite of the fact that only 68.2% of all Soviet prisoners of war were Russian. The difference was 6.9 percentage points. The basic reason for the high mortality rate among Russian

⁷² Kopsa, Pentti: Suomen Punaisen Ristin sotavankitoimisto 1939–45 [Prisoner of War Office of the Finnish Red Cross 1939-1945], p.12, Kansallisarkisto [National Archives of Finland].

prisoners of war could be that their status in receiving rations, lodging and clothing were the worst of all, while their treatment was the harshest of that received by any prisoners.

The other Slavic Soviet prisoners of war clearly survived the experience better than the Russians. The mortality rate for Poles was up to 16.2 percentage points under the average mortality rate. The Ukrainian mortality rate was 6.0 percentage points under the average, and the Belarusian mortality rate was 2.5 percentage points under the average.

The mortality rate for prisoners of war who were Jewish was also clearly lower than the average, as 19.5% of them died, which was 10.8 percentage points under the average.

Caucasian peoples who became prisoners of war had a mortality rate of 28.8%, which was 1.5 percentage points less than the average. The Turkic peoples who became prisoners of war had a mortality rate that was 3 percentage points less than the average mortality rate.

There was a big difference between the Finnic peoples who were from nearby and those who were from far away among the Soviet prisoners of war who were of Finnic origin. The Finnic peoples from nearby and Soviet prisoners of war who could speak even tolerable Finnish were placed in Prisoner of War Camp 21. This camp was founded on September 19, 1941 in Aholampi in Savonlinna. The people in this camp were freed on August 7, 1942. They were given armbands that read "Finnic person." They were strengthened with the biggest C rations and three cigarettes a day.⁷³ As a result, those Soviet prisoners of war with Finnic backgrounds who were from nearby had a mortality rate of only 5.3%, which was 25.0 percentage points less than the average.

The mortality rate among Soviet prisoners of war who were Finnic and from far away was near the average, as the difference was only 0.9 percentage points. An order was issued to the prisoner of war companies in July 1942 to distribute better rations to Eastern Karelian, Ingrian, Vep, and Estonian prisoners of war, as well as to prisoners of war from the Tver and Novgorod regions. They did not need to carry prisoner of war identifications, as they were issued armbands that read "Finnic person." However, these benefits were not given to Mordvins, Cherimis, and those Finnic peoples who did not belong among the Nordic peoples. Political officers, leading members of the Communist Party, and Finns born in Finland who had moved to the Soviet Union were also excluded from these privileged groups.⁷⁴

⁷³ Kopsa, Pentti: Suomen Punaisen Ristin sotavankitoimisto 1939–45 [Prisoner of War Office of the Finnish Red Cross], p. 7. Kansallisarkisto [National Archives of Finland].

⁷⁴ Antti Ervasti: Pohjoisestakin juutalaisia kuolemanleireille. Kuolema ja nälkä olivat tuttuja vieraita Kemin Ajossaaren vankileirillä. [Jews from the North as well to the Death Camps. Death and Hunger Were Familiar Visitors in the Prison Camp of Ajosaari, Kemi] Article in the newspaper *Kaleva* December 14, 2003.

Germans and Soviet prisoners of war from the Baltic countries survived best of all the prisoners of war, as only 4.4% and 3.9% of them died. The difference between these numbers and the average mortality rate was 25.9 and 26.4 percentage points. The mortality rate among the other Soviet prisoners of war was 24.1%, or 6.2 percentage points less than average.

The Mortality Rate in the Civilian Camps in Eastern Karelia between 1941-1944

The Number of Civilian Internees

When units under Finnish command attacked Eastern Karelia in July 1941, the Soviet authorities evacuated most of the inhabitants of the region. It is estimated that over 86,000 Soviet citizens were left in the region, of whom 36,000, 42%, were of Finnic origin. The rest were Russians or from other backgrounds. Commander-in-Chief Gustaf Mannerheim issued an order on July 8, 1941 that mandated the internment of the so-called non-national population. On this basis, up to 27% of the inhabitants of the region were confined to concentration camps. By November 1941, 11,166 individuals had been collected into these camps. By the end of the year, the number was 20,005. The largest number of internees in the camps was reached in March 1942, when they contained 23,984 individuals. The number of internees began to decline in 1942 as a result of the high mortality rate and releases from the camps. At the beginning of 1943, there were 15,240 individuals in the camps. At the beginning of 1944, there were 11,908 individuals.⁷⁵ All-in-all, approximately 25,000 individuals could have received camp registration cards.⁷⁶ Because the data files drawn up by this research project on the number of deaths in the camps contain 4,279 names, this means that the mortality rate in the concentration and transfer camps would have been around 17% on the basis of these calculations.

Mortality Rates in the Camps by Time

Internment in the Eastern Karelian camps lasted three years at most, from July 1941 to July 1944. The table below contains information on the time of death of people in the camps on a yearly and monthly basis.

⁷⁵ Sotilashallintoalueen väkiluku. Itä-Karjalan sotilashallinnon väestötilastoja. [Population of the region under military administration. Eastern Karelian military administration population statistics] T 9729/37, Kansallaisarkisto [National Archives of Finland], Seppälä 1989, pp. 36-37, Laine 2007, p. 71.

⁷⁶ Turunen 1978, p. 104.

Table 11. Deaths in the Eastern Karelian Civilian Camps by Year and Month (n)

Year	1941	1942	1943	1944	No data
January		35	128	20	
February		113	58	17	
March		164	36	19	
April		235	30	13	
May		371	32	10	
June		517	39	3	
July	2	564	23	-	
August	-	476	23	1	
September	6	293	33	-	
October	26	187	21		
November	51	162	25		
December	45	127	16		
Only year of death	19	314	3		
No information					22
Total	149	3 558	467	83	22

Of this who died, 149 (3.5%) died in the civilian camps in 1941. This was followed by 3,558 (83.2%) deaths in 1942, 467 (10.9%) deaths in 1943, and 83 (1.9%) deaths in 1944. There is no data on the year of death for 22 (0.5%) of the dead. The period of mass mortality for those in the camps occurred between February 1942 and January 1943. This twelve month period saw the death of 3,651 individuals in the camp. This corresponds to 85.3% of those who died, when all the 314 individuals who died in 1942 without an indication of the month of death are included among the dead.

The distribution of mortality by time in the Eastern Karelian camps differs from the mortality rate among Soviet prisoners of war in the Continuation War. The period of mass mortality in the concentration camps only began in February 1942, two months later than in the prisoner of war camps. It picked up in the spring and the early summer, and peaked in mid-summer, or in July 1942. After this, the mass mortality declined in August and September, tapering off during the fall, even if

the period of mass mortality only stopped in January 1943. The intense period of mortality for the prisoners of war was January, February and March 1942, when 38.9% of the prisoners of war died. The intense period of mortality for those in the camps was in the summer months. Nearly the same percentage died in the concentration camps in June, July, and August. These months accounted for 36.4% of the dead.

If it is thought that the deficient provision of food supplies caused mass mortality in the Eastern Karelian civilian camps, the peak of mortality in summer 1942 is odd. The availability of food supplies was then greater than in the winter or spring. In addition, people in the camps had the best opportunities to take care of their personal hygiene requirements in the summer. The occurrence of the mass mortality mainly in the summer seems to indicate that some disease was the primary cause of death.

Causes of Death in the Eastern Karelian Civilian Camps

The causes of death in the Eastern Karelian civilian camps are mostly estimated on the basis of shaky written information. In some cases, the information is missing entirely. Both the medical reliability of the causes of death and the methods and comprehensiveness of the data is questionable to a significant degree. Russian doctors were responsible for medical care in the camps, except when surgery was required. Surgery was handled in the 66th Military Hospital in Petrozavodsk. The diagnoses of the Russian doctors have been characterized as “quite superficial and unreliable.” Even so, the cases recorded are important as a method for following the health of those in the camps.⁷⁷ Since better information is not available and since the recorded causes of death, despite the deficiencies, can shed light on the composition of the mortality rates, this presentation includes a section on the recorded causes of death.

A maximum of two Finnish doctors, four Finnish nurses, nine Russian junior doctors, 25 Russian nurses, three midwives and medics were responsible for the health care of those in the camps in the last years of the war.⁷⁸ Five Russian doctors, four junior doctors, seven midwives, eleven nurses and 12 medics served at the beginning of 1944. In 1943, the camp hospitals had 231 beds. In 1944, there were 180 beds. There were four polyclinics, so that it is possible to make regular observations for the causes of death for at least these years.⁷⁹ On the basis of samples of the recorded causes of death for the people in the Eastern Karelian camps, 32% were written in Latin, which is presumably confirmation that they were made by a professional doctor.

⁷⁷ Rosén 1998, p. 116.

⁷⁸ Merikoski 1944, p. 84.

⁷⁹ Selostus Äänislinnan siirtolajeistä 22.2.1944, Sotavankileirien tutkimuskeskus [Report on the transfer camps of Petrozavodsk February 22, 1944, Research Center on Prisoner of War Camps], T 16072/3, Kansallisarkisto [National Archives of Finland], Seppälä 1989, p. 85.

In 1941, the causes of death were not yet nearly as extensively recorded, but the record keeping was handled better in 1942 and 1943. Although, deficiencies could still appear in the camps in the countryside. Russian personnel in particular recorded the causes of death in 1942 and partially also in 1943. However, the personnel of the Eastern Karelian military administration thought that these were unreliable and only a basis for approximate estimates. Only the diagnoses of typhoid were confirmed by Finnish laboratories. The diagnoses of dysentery were only based on symptoms. It can be supposed that cases of diarrhea caused by hunger are hidden among the numerous stomach diseases. From the end of 1943 however, the information on the causes of death is estimated to be more reliable.⁸⁰

The statistics on the causes of death below are based on data for 4,174 individuals, as 105 cases have been removed from the total of 4,279 deaths because there is no information or because there is uncertainty on the basis of different data from different sources. The same individual appears in the cause of death statistics in two or more categories in some cases either because many causes of death were recorded for the individual or because the cause of death fits into more than one category. The statistics include a total of 4,297 individual causes of death in the categories. This number should not be confused with the 4,279 dead among the people in the camps however, although the numbers do look deceptively alike.

The table below contains information on the causes of death in the Eastern Karelian camps by age group:

Table 12. Causes of Death in Eastern Karelian Civilian Camps by Age Group (n)

Intestinal, infectious diseases

Cause of death	60+ years old	15-59 years old	0-14 years old	Total
Stomach illnesses	188	238	318	744
Gastric disorders	24	42	222	288
Intestinal disease	62	59	25	146
Dysentery	16	17	4	37
Diarrhea	1	1	6	8
Total	291	357	575	1223

⁸⁰ Turunen 1978.

Respiratory infectious diseases

Cause of death	60+ years old	15-59 years old	0-14 years old	Total
Lung infections	27	126	176	329
Tuberculosis	5	62	33	100
Total	32	188	209	429

Other infectious diseases

Cause of death	60+ years old	15-59 years old	0-14 years old	Total
Spotted fever	2	15	5	22
Typhoid fever	1	11	3	15
Septicemia (blood poisoning)	2	5	1	8
Influenza	1	4	-	5
Fever	1	2	1	4
Total	7	37	10	54

Other illnesses

Cause of death	60+ years old	15-59 years old	0-14 years old	Total
Heart diseases	225	123	19	367
Swelling and hydremia	79	85	42	206
Kidney disease	15	35	61	111
Scurvy	31	36	23	60
Children's diseases	-	-	20	20
Brain disorders	4	6	5	15
Rickets	-	-	15	15
Measles	-	-	13	13
Anemia	3	7	2	12
Stroke	4	5	1	10

Internal illness	3	5	2	10
Cancer	4	4	-	8
Mental illness	1	5	1	7
Epilepsy	-	5	1	6
During birth	-	1	5 ⁸¹	6
Arteriosclerosis	4	1	-	5
Rheumatism	1	2	1	4
Hardening of the arteries	4	-	-	4
Diabetes	-	-	2	2
Asthma	-	1	-	1
Total	378	321	213	912

Symptoms, conditions and less precisely determined causes of death

Cause of death	60+ years old	15-59 years old	0-14 years old	Total
Old age	257	47	-	304
Weakness	19	33	60	112
Malnutrition	74	13	3	90
Total	350	93	63	506

Violent deaths and accidents

Cause of death	60+ years old	15-59 years old	0-14 years old	Total
Shot	-	17	1	18
Poisoned	1	9	1	11
Accidents	-	6	-	6
Drowning	-	1	2	3
Suicide	1	1	-	2
Burns	1	-	-	1
Bruising	-	-	1	1
Total	3	34	5	42

No information	402	385	344	1 132
Total				4 297

⁸¹ As five 0-14 year olds died at birth, this may indicate that the children were born dead.

The details in these tables are examined in greater detail in the following sections

Main Categories of the Causes of Death

To sketch a general overview of the Eastern Karelian civilian camps, the information on the causes of death have been divided into age groups. The absolute numbers of the main categories of the causes of death are as follows:

Table 13. Categories of death by number and age group (n)

Category	60+ years old	15-59 years old	0-14 years old	Total
Intestinal infections	291	357	575	1 223
Respiratory infections	32	188	209	429
Other infections	7	37	10	54
Other illnesses	378	321	213	912
Symptoms	350	93	63	506
Violent deaths	3	34	5	42
No information	402	385	344	1 131
Total	1 463	1 415	1 419	4 297

In order to be able to use the statistical data for comparative purposes, the causes of death for the different age groups are shown by relative percentage. The following table illustrates these percentages:

Table 14. Categories of death by percentage and age group (%)

Category	60+ years old	15-59 years old	0-14 years old	Total
Intestinal infections	19.9	25.2	40.5	28.5
Respiratory infections	2.2	13.3	14.7	10.0
Other infections	0.5	2.6	0.7	1.3
Other illnesses	25.8	22.7	15.0	21.2
Symptoms	23.9	6.6	4.4	11.8
Violent deaths	0.2	2.4	0.4	1.0
No information	27.5	27.2	24.2	26.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Mortality Rate in the Miehikkälä Civilian Camp between 1941 and 1944

Number of People in the Camp

According to the first order issued on September 8, 1941, 1,141 individuals were placed in the Miehikkälä civilian camp. However, there were already 1,811 individuals gathered in the camp in November 1941. This number increased somewhat, although it remained under two thousand. The number of people in the camp could have reached a maximum of 1,973 individuals in February 1942.⁸² There are also estimates that there possibly were up to 3,500 people in the camp when children are included. Children were not given their own cards in the camp registration system. Since there could have been over a thousand children in the camp, there possibly were more people in the camp than the adults for which there is data.⁸³ It is also possible that the registration cards of the Miehikkälä camp contain duplicates.



Inmates in the Miehikkälä camp for civilian Soviet citizens. *Kansallisarkisto*

⁸² Laine 1992, pp. 23, 26.

⁸³ Antero Leitzinger manuscript, archives of the *Finland, prisoners of war, and people handed over 1939-1955* project. Kansallisarkisto [National Archives of Finland], information provided by Antero Leitzinger.

The ethnic background of those in the camp was very diverse, as the inhabitants had been brought from all over the Soviet Union for *kolkhozes* established by Soviet authorities on the Karelian Isthmus. There were 17 different nationalities in the camp. The largest groups were the Russians (around 40%), the Belarusians (approximately 28%), the Ingrians and Karelians (roughly 18%), and the Mordvins (about 7%). In addition, there were dozens of Tatars, Ukrainians and Estonians, as well as several Poles, Italians, peoples from the Caucasus, Germans, and others. The Finnic peoples were gradually released from the beginning of 1942. In addition, the Ministry of the Interior had already granted permission at the end of 1941 to transfer 80 to 90 Muslims from the Miehikkälä civilian camp to a camp in Järvenpää north of Helsinki.⁸⁴ However, not all of the people in the camp were placed in Järvenpää, as some of them were granted residence permits as domestic help in Helsinki and other cities.⁸⁵

Mortality Rates in the Camps by Time

The deaths in the Miehikkälä camp can be distributed by year and month as follows.

Table 15. Deaths in the Miehikkälä civilian camps by year and month (n)

Month	1941	1942	1943	1944	No data
January		9	1	2	
February		11	1	-	
March		6	3	2	
April		7	-	1	
May		10	-	-	
June		20	3	2	
July	-	14	-	-	
August	-	26	-		
September	-	5	-		
October	3	2	-		

⁸⁴ Kopsa, Pentti: Suomen Punaisen Ristin sotavankitoimisto 1939–45 [Prisoner of War Office of the Finnish Red Cross], p. 19. Kansalliskirjasto [National Archives of Finland], Laine 1992, p. 26.

⁸⁵ Information provided by Antero Leitzinger.

November	1	4	-		
December	2	1	1		
No information	-	-	-	-	1
Total	6	115	9	7	1
	4.3 %	83.3 %	6.5 %	5.1 %	

The data illustrates that the mortality rate was at its highest in 1942, when over four fifths of the deaths in the camp occurred. The actual period of mass mortality took place between January and August 1942, when 103 of the people in the camp died. This corresponded to 74.6% of those who died. The mortality rate was comparatively low in other years, meaning 1941 and 1943/1944. The period of mortality was concentrated in the summer months of 1942. This recalls the period of mortality in the summer for the Eastern Karelian concentration and transfer camps. The largest period of mass mortality in the Miehkälä camp occurred in June, July, and August 1942, when 43.5% of those who died were lost. However, the main period of mass mortality was not as intense as in the Eastern Karelian civilian camps.

The Causes of Death in the Miehkälä Civilian Camp

Because the number of dead in the Miehkälä civilian camps is relatively small, the incidences of death have not been organized in greater detail in this case. The causes of death have been categorized as follows:

Table 16. Causes of Death in the Miehkälä Civilian Camp by Category

Category	Number (n)	Percentage (%)
Intestinal infectious diseases	4	2.8
Respiratory infectious diseases	43	29.7
Other infectious diseases	2	1.4
Other illnesses	47	32.4
Symptoms	33	22.8
Violent deaths	15	10.3
No information	1	0.7
Total	145	100.0

The table illustrates that the mortality rate from intestinal infectious diseases was comparatively low in the Miehikkälä civilian camp, as the rate was 2.8%. However, the mortality rate for respiratory infectious diseases was high at 29.7%. This pattern differs significantly from the situation in the Eastern Karelian civilian camps. Those camps had a significantly greater share of deaths from intestinal diseases (28.5%) and a clearly smaller share from respiratory diseases (10.0%). The differences are in the order of 25.7 and 19.7 percentage points.

Other illnesses and accidents clearly accounted for a greater share of deaths in the Miehikkälä civilian camp. Their shares were 32.4% and 10.3%, while the corresponding shares in the Eastern Karelian civilian camps were only 21.2% and 1.0%. The differences are 11.2 and 9.3 percentage points. There are no natural explanations for these differences, but it can generally be said that the number of deaths in the Miehikkälä civilian camp (138) corresponded to only 3.2% of the number of deaths (4,279) in the Eastern Karelian civilian camps. Chance in such a tiny population can cause relatively large differences. It is also possible that the multiethnic background of the people in the Miehikkälä civilian camp brought a relatively large variety of diseases to those in the camp. Cultural habits alien to the conditions in the Finnish camps could also have had a background influence.

The Mortality Rate in the Camp by Ethnic Background

The estimate of the ethnic background of the dead in the Miehikkälä civilian camp is as follows:⁸⁶

Table 17. Ethnic Background of the Dead in the Miehikkälä Civilian Camp

Nationality	Dead (n)	(%)	General ethnic background (%) ⁸⁷	Difference (%)
Russians	70	50.7	40.5	+ 10.2
Belarusians	30	21.7	27.6	- 5.9
Mordovians	13	9.4	6.9	+ 2.5
Ingrians, incl. Karelians	10	7.2	18.2	- 11.0
Ukrainians	5	3.6	1.1	+ 2.5
Jews	1	0.7	-	

⁸⁶ The nationality of the dead individuals in the Miehikkälä camp is indicated on the registration cards in only 18 cases. Researcher Pekka Kauppala has made an estimate of the ethnic or national background of the dead on the basis of their names and information on their place of birth.

⁸⁷ Ethnic background February 17, 1942, Laine 1992, p. 26.

Tatars (Muslims) ⁸⁸	1	0.7	3.9	- 3.2
Estonians	-		1.0	
Finns	-		0.3	
Poles	-		0.2	
Peoples from the Caucasus	-		0.2	
Germans	-		0.1	
Italians	-		0.1	
No data	8	5.8	-	
Total	138	100.0	100.0	

On the basis of the data in the table, it seems that the Russians clearly had a high mortality rate in the camp (10.2 percentage points more than their share of the population). It was equally clear that the Ingrians had a low mortality rate (11.0 percentage points less than their share of the population). The Mordvin also had a slightly higher mortality rate in relation to their general share of the camp population. The Belarusian and Ukrainian death rates were lower than their general proportion in the camps. The fact that fewer Tatars (Muslims) died than their general proportion in the camp could stem from their transfer to Järvenpää and elsewhere.

As far as is known, there was no specific camp meant for the Tatars (Muslims) in Järvenpää. The authorities granted residence permits to Muslims for work in the Finnish Islamic community. In practice, the Tatars of Järvenpää housed and fed them. They could also have received some pay for participating in the construction of a mosque. There were not any deaths among the Tatars.⁸⁹

It is relevant to emphasize that information on the ethnic background of those who died in the camp is based on estimates and not on the records of the camp authorities. For this reason, the official ethnic origin could be something other than the supposed ethnicity in some cases.

The Mortality Rate of German Prisoners of War in Fall 1944

This section examines the mortality rate among German prisoners of war in Finnish custody in the fall of 1944. Finnish units took approximately 2,500 Germans prisoner in the fall of 1944, of whom 44 died. All the prisoners of war could have

⁸⁸ The term "Tatar" appears in the statistics of the staff of the home army and the cards of the Finnish Red Cross. However, the only such person who died was Ferida Abakarova, whose ethnic background was Kazakh. For its part, the Finnish Islamic community did not distinguish between Tatars and Muslims from other backgrounds. It only used the term Muslim. Information provided by Antero Leitzinger.

⁸⁹ Information provided by Antero Leitzinger.

died of wounds received in battle or in the field, even if the manner of death is not recorded in a third of the cases. The mortality rate of the German prisoners of war was low, as it was approximately 1.8% of those captured. Of these deaths, over a third were associated with the German attempt to seize the island of Suursaari in the eastern part of the Gulf of Finland. The remaining deaths were from the Lapland War.

The following brief sections are on the mortality rates for German prisoners of war for the attempted seizure of the island of Suursaari and the Lapland War. In addition, there is a short description of the transfer of other German prisoners of war to the Soviet Union in accordance with the Armistice Agreement.

German Prisoner of War Deaths after the Attempt to Seize the Island of Suursaari

A fleet with approximately 2,700 German soldiers made an unsuccessful attempt to land on the island of Suursaari after midnight on September 15, 1944. The result was the deaths of 153 Germans and the capture of 1,231 prisoners. The remaining soldiers involved in the landing attempt either drowned or withdrew.

The most seriously wounded German prisoners of war were taken for care to the 43rd Military Hospital at Rauha, Tiuruniemi, in Imatra. A total of 17 prisoners of war died in this military hospital between September 17 and October 11, 1944. Every dead soldier succumbed to his wounds.

Mortality among Prisoners of War from the Lapland War

The Lapland War against the German units in Northern Finland began in earnest at the beginning of October 1944. Finnish units captured roughly 1,400 prisoners from the withdrawing German units. Of these, a total of 27 prisoners of war died in October and November 1944. Most of them died while under care in the 32nd Military Hospital in Oulu. Other individual prisoner of war patients died in other hospitals.

International Law and Finnish Responsibility for Mass Mortality among Soviet Prisoners of War and Interned Civilians

This section covers Finnish responsibility for the mass mortality among Soviet prisoners of war in 1941 and 1942. It also explores the prisoner of war policies practiced by the Finnish General Headquarters and their relation to the 1929 Geneva Convention on the treatment of prisoners of war. In the end, the ineffectiveness of the Finnish Red Cross and Field Marshall Gustaf Mannerheim's double role as commander-in-chief of the Finnish defense forces and chairman of the Finnish Red Cross is considered.

The Mass Mortality of Soviet Prisoners of War between 1941 and 1942 Stemmed from Neglect

The conclusion of this research can be said to be that the mass mortality among the Soviet prisoners of war and in the Eastern Karelian civilian camps in 1941 and 1942 stemmed from neglect. Signs of this neglect were the insufficient rations for the people in the camps, deficient accommodation, partially inferior equipment, the unsatisfactory hygienic conditions in the camps, inadequate health care, and the harsh and occasionally inhumane treatment of Soviet prisoners of war

All the aforementioned deficiencies and the treatment of the Soviets played a role in their entirety in the mass mortality of the prisoners of war and the individuals in the civilian camps. It is not possible to comprehensively and reliably determine the precise cause of death for all individuals in the camps. The many areas of neglect and the harsh treatment often worked together to contribute to the mortality. During the war, the inspectors of the prisoners of war and the camp authorities appropriately understood the mass mortality as a consequence of the generally miserable conditions in the camps with their many deficiencies, inadequately provided care and the unhygienic conditions prevailing among the people in the camp. Beginning already in the early fall of 1941, the inspectors of the prisoner of war camps and the camp authorities continuously reported the situation to the staff of the home army and to the Finnish General Headquarters. They may have made hundreds and hundreds of truthful reports on the conditions in the camps and also presented numerous proposals for improvements. The staff of the home army responded early to this stream of reports. The descriptions of the situation by the inspectors of the prisoners of war and the camp authorities and the presented proposals for improvement were agreed with to a significant degree in the home army. However, the Finnish General Headquarters systematically rejected both the reports and the improvement suggestions. It did not always provide a detailed basis for its position.

A very negative attitude towards the Soviet prisoners of war prevailed among the leading officers in the Finnish General Headquarters for all of 1941 and still in the beginning of 1942. The fundamental basis for these attitudes cannot be unambiguously determined from the responses of the Finnish General Headquarters to the correspondence of the staff of the home army, the inspectors of the prisoners of war or the commanders of the prisoner of war camps. It can be supposed that the aforementioned officers did not want to present their real reasons, perhaps because they could not have withstood external inspection. According to the basic views of both Commander-in-Chief Gustaf Mannerheim and the other high officers in the Finnish General Headquarters, the rations for the Soviet prisoners of war were meager, but sufficient to keep the prisoners of war alive. This viewpoint cannot in itself be shown to be wrong. The officers of the Finnish General Headquarters brought up one clear principle when discussing the rations of the prisoners of war. This was that the energy value of the daily rations of the prisoners of war could not exceed that of the corresponding energy value of

the daily rations of the civilian population in any essential manner. The explanation for this viewpoint was at least formally a fear that the general public and the men at the front would denounce the prisoner of war policy of the Finnish General Headquarters.

After the Continuation War ended, the fumbling search for ways to explain what happened began. When compared to the wartime descriptions, this search was awkward. It emphasized the significance of the inadequate rations of the prisoners of war in particular as a cause for the mass mortality. The deficient rations were explained by the difficult food supply conditions prevailing in the country. This made it possible to explain the mass mortality in a way that transferred responsibility from the prison camp administration and the Finnish General Headquarters to external factors, namely the generally strained food supply situation during the war. According to the typical view of these kinds of explanation, the food supplies were not sufficient for the Soviet prisoners of war and the inhabitants of the civilian camps, as they were at the bottom of the military hierarchy. These supplies were not even properly sufficient for the Finnish soldiers who were fighting for their existence and for Finnish civilians. To writers and researchers who criticized the Continuation War, the starving Soviet prisoners of war also served as illustrative demonstrations of a prisoner of war policy by military circles that was cruel and indifferent.

Thus, the employment of starvation as the main cause of mass mortality among Soviet prisoners of war and in the Eastern Karelian civilian camps was extensively used. It rather straightforwardly suited both right and left wing circles. It was also an obvious analogy to the use of starvation as a general explanation for the mass death in the prison camps of the war in 1918. In the history written by the Whites, the inadequate food supplies were cited as the general explanation for the catastrophe in the prison camps. In this telling, the deficiencies led to starvation in the prison camps and in the population centers of Southern Finland. According to this viewpoint, the ultimate causes for the lack of food were external factors, such as the isolation of Finland and the overconsumption of food supplies in Southern Finland while the Reds were in control. The history written by the Reds in the 1920s also emphasized the starvation in the prison camps as a sign of the ruthlessness and cold-blooded attitude of the Whites and a manifestation of the White Terror. The comrades who died of hunger in prison were sensitively seen as martyrs who sacrificed their lives on behalf of their ideals in the manner of the fallen and executed Reds. Death from epidemic diseases would no more have suited the White than the Red historians.⁹⁰

The viewpoint that the worrying situation for food supplies in Finland was the ultimate cause of the mass mortality in the camps was not propounded in quite a straightforward and organized manner. Other external factors contributing to the mortality rate were also often emphasized. Two of these factors were seen as

⁹⁰ Mäkelä 2007, p. 9.

having a significant role. The first was the view that the Soviet prisoners of war were originally already in bad physical shape, which was thought to stem from the stresses of being at the front and the inadequately handled logistics of the Red Army. The second view that also appeared now and then was that Soviet prisoners of war and the people in the camps did not take care of their personal hygiene due to their negligence. This was because they had become accustomed to living in filthy conditions and did not even want to change.

Many postwar academic researchers have also stressed the significance of the starvation of the prisoners of war and those in the civilian camps as the ultimate cause of the mass mortality. The key factors in influencing this view are the documents drawn up by the inspectors of the prisoners of war and the camp authorities. The reports from 1941 and 1942 often bring up the insufficient rations of the prisoners of war and for those in the camps. These documents also generally mentioned the inadequacies that often appeared in the rations. In looking for explanations for the mass mortality, these researchers have often too narrowly emphasized the inadequacy of the rations for the prisoners of war. They have often not remarked on the fact that the energy value of the no doubt meager daily rations of the Soviet prisoners of war and those in the civilian camps generally sufficed to maintain the necessary life functions of the people in the camps for a long time.

The first indication of this is that there was no essential difference one way or another in the energy value of the daily rations of the prisoners of war between the period of mass mortality between July and November 1941 and the period between October 1942 and October 1944. The second indication is that the mortality rate among the Soviet prisoners held by the Germans in Norway and Finland was significant lower than that of Soviet prisoners of war held by the Finns. This was in spite of the fact that there were no significant differences in the rations of these prisoners of war.

Why Was the Mortality Rate Lower among Soviet Prisoners of War in German Custody in the North?

There are many reasons why the mortality rate among Soviet prisoners of war in German custody in Norway and Finland was generally lower than the mortality rate among Soviet prisoners of war in Finnish custody. The Germans may have brought roughly 100,000 Soviet prisoners of war to Norway and over 20,000 prisoners to Finland. These prisoners of war were most often captured further south on the Eastern Front. They were chiefly brought to Norway and Finland only after the spring of 1942. When they arrived, these groups of prisoners were most often composed of those who had survived the miserable conditions for prisoners of war on the Eastern Front. Approximately two million of the Soviet prisoners captured by the Germans died in the period between July 1941 and February 1942. The wounded, seriously ill, and all the prisoners of war who were in poor shape died. The prisoners of war who were brought to Norway and Finland were thus to a great

degree in better shape than their comrades who had died. While the prisoners of war brought to Norway and Finland by the Germans represented in this sense a preselected group that was in better condition, the wounded prisoners and those who were in poor condition who were in Finnish custody died. When comparing the mortality rate of the Soviet prisoners of war of the Germans in Norway and Finland with the mortality rate of Soviet prisoners of war in Finnish custody, it must be noted that those who were in poor shape in Finland had not been sifted out.



The feeding of the POWs is carried out in good order. Depending on the work load, the state of health and the physical condition of the POWs the calorie value of the rations were divided into A, B and C size categories. *Kansallisarkisto*

German policies on Soviet prisoners of war were characterized from the summer of 1941 to the end of the year by a great deal of negligence. Massive numbers of prisoners of war were allowed to die due to non-existent logistics or due to very serious deficiencies. In the early months of the war, the intention of the German military leadership may even have been to have the Soviet prisoners of war starve to death. However, the general conclusion was reached at the end of 1941 and the beginning of 1942 that it was less expedient to let millions of Soviet prisoners of war die, as this would mean that some of a labor resource that could be important, useful and beneficial to German military goals would disappear. For this reason, German military and civilian authorities began in the winter of 1941/1942 to more and more systematically and deliberately plan and prepare to exploit the labor potential of the Soviet prisoners of war.

When the first big batches of prisoners of war were brought to Norway in the fall of 1941 and to Finland in the spring of 1942, the Germans already operated purposefully and with an eye on the long term in providing for prisoners of war. There would have been no reason to bring large numbers of Soviet prisoners of war to Norway and Finland only to die. Because the German intention was to use the prisoners brought to Norway and Finland to further important fortification, road building, logging and logistics efforts and to free their own military personnel for military purposes, it was expedient to take care of the basic needs of the prisoners who had been brought there. In practice, this meant that the rations, lodging and health care of the prisoners of war had to be taken care of. The German arrangements for their prisoners of war were not very much different from that arranged by the Finns for their prisoners of war. The care of the Soviet prisoners of war by the Germans was still characterized by continuing deficiencies and disruptions. From the spring of 1942 however, the worst period of mass mortality among Soviet prisoners of war was clearly over, particularly in Norway and Finland. As the mass mortality among the Soviet prisoners of war in Finnish custody ebbed in the fall of 1942, the mortality rate was somewhat the same, remaining at a relatively low level in both the German and Finnish prisoners of war camps.

It is also possible that the Germans in Norway and Finland were somewhat more effective in preventing infectious disease due to the smaller than average size of their prisoner of war camps. All-in-all, it has been calculated that there were 278 prisoner of war camps and 190 subcamps in Norway.⁹¹ A total of 167 prisoner of war camps, subcamps, prisoner of war companies and prisoner war fortification companies were operating in different areas in Finland and in occupied Soviet territory between 1941 and 1944.⁹² The Germans may have had at least 100 camps in these areas. On the basis of this data, it can be said that the average camp in Norway contained 200 to 210 prisoners. In addition, the average German camp in Finland had 280 to 300 prisoners, while the Finnish camps held 380 to 390 prisoners of war.

The Germans may have captured a total of approximately 9,000 Soviet prisoners of war on the Petsamo, Salla and Kiestinki fronts between 1941 and 1944. Most of these were taken in the summer and fall of 1941. No high mass mortality rate manifested itself in the early months of the war among these prisoners. The care of this relatively small number of prisoners of war did not produce any problems worth mentioning for the Germans units in Northern Finland. No mass mortality among Soviet prisoners of war appeared on the Northern Front in the manner of further south on the Eastern Front.

⁹¹ Neerland Soleim 2004, pp. 56, 474-482.

⁹² Sotavankimuodostelmien sijoituspaikat 1941–44. Hakuluettelo [Locations of prisoner of war formations. Search catalog], Sota-arkisto [Military archives].

Customary Law in International Agreements on War

By the beginning of World War Two, international legal norms on the treatment of prisoners of war and interned civilians had taken shape. However, these norms were weak and it was unclear how legally binding they were. This section examines the key principles of international customary law. It also describes how the administration of international customary law was carried out in the end when conflicts that led to war were resolved by military means.

In World War Two, the key so-called laws of war on prisoners of war were the 1907 Hague Convention on the Laws and Customs of War⁹³ and the 1929 Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War.⁹⁴ During World War Two Finland had approved and ratified the first of these agreements, which meant it had been integrated into national legislation. Finland had approved the second agreement, but it had not ratified it yet when the Winter War broke out in late fall 1939.⁹⁵

Lieutenant Colonel A.E. Martola was the representative of Finland at the Geneva Conference in 1929. He accepted the convention without reservation just like all the other representatives at the conference. The basis for this acceptance was that the agreement was not impossible for Finland to comply with, and that the implementation of the agreement required unanimity.⁹⁶ After the signing of the Geneva Convention but before the war, general overviews on international law stated that the 1929 Geneva Convention had not replaced the 1907 Hague Convention, it had just completed it. These overviews stressed the validity and applicability of the articles of the convention.⁹⁷ When the Winter War broke out however, the Finnish General Headquarters abandoned its belief in the universal applicability of not only the Geneva Convention but also of the Hague Convention. Thus on December 8, 1939, the Finnish General Headquarters stated that the Hague Convention was also not binding on Finland, because the Soviet Union was not a

⁹³ See the actions in the Second Hague Peace Conference and the international agreements signed there on October 18, 1907. Suomen sopimukset vieraitten valtioiden kanssa N:o 11 1924, Konventionen ang. lagar och bruk i lantkrig (IV Haagkonventionen) [Agreements of Finland with other states], in Krigets lagar 1979, pp. 38-51, 1907 Hague Convention IV Respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land. in Documents on the Laws of War. Oxford 1982 pp. 43-69.

⁹⁴ General Agreement on the Treatment of Prisoners of War 1931–1932, Numbers 1, 2 and 4. There is no known Finnish language publication of the agreement text. The unpublished summary is in the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The convention on the treatment of prisoners of war July 27, 1929. Fb 8:66. Publication of the July 27, 1929 agreement, Ulkoasiainministeriön arkisto [Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs].

⁹⁵ Rosén 1998, pp. 100-101.

⁹⁶ Raportti 1:p:nä heinäkuuta 1929 Genèveen koolle kutsutun diplomaattisen konferenssin töistä. [Report on the work of the diplomatic conference called at Geneva on July 1, 1929] 8 M 6/2136 KD 25 Sodassa haavoittuneita ja sairastuneita sekä sotavankeja koskeva sopimus 27.7.1929 [Convention on the wounded, sick and prisoners of war of July 27, 1929], Ulkoasiainministeriön arkisto Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

⁹⁷ Björkstén 1937, pp. 354-358.

formal party to the agreement. The interpretation of the Finnish General Headquarters during the Continuation War was as well as that Finland was not obligated to follow the Hague Convention, even if some of its articles would be followed for humanitarian reasons.⁹⁸ There was no longer even talk of the Geneva Convention during the war. The ulterior motive could have been a wish to pressure the Soviet Union to follow those articles of the Hague Convention that concerned the right of the international Red Cross to inspect prisoner of war camps, the right of prisoners of war to receive letters and the obligation to report the personal data of the prisoners of war. These were conditions that Finland was also not in the end able to very convincingly fulfill during the war.

Although the Soviet Union has not participated in the conference on the Geneva Convention, signed it, or ratified the agreement, it never completely rejected its principles. The most important reason why the Soviet Union had not signed the convention was probably the criminal legislation of the Soviet Union. According to this legislation, surrendering was a crime except for when the surrender took place in conditions that indisputably required becoming a prisoner of war. Because the Geneva Convention guaranteed better rights to prisoners of war than the criminal legislation of the Soviet Union, it would probably have been impossible to accept the convention. This was because it would have permitted prisoners of war from an enemy army to enjoy a more protected status than that granted to Soviet soldiers by their own state.⁹⁹

The question of whether the 1907 Hague Convention and 1929 Geneva Convention were legally binding was complicated and unclear. The situation was not helped by the self-interested interpretations and national reservations of the countries participating in the war. This section does not intend to straighten out the real legal situation with respect to the agreement, as this kind of presentation would require extensive explanations. It would also probably not yield any clear principles.¹⁰⁰ In addition, it can be said that the differences of interpretation on the applicability and legally binding nature of the aforementioned agreements during the war were not resolved in a single case in any international tribunal or court of arbitration, as would have been required by the conciliatory resolution of international disputes under the 1907 Hague Convention (articles 1–97). Many differences of opinion and divergent interpretations of the practical application of the 1907 Hague Convention and the 1929 Geneva Convention occurred, but these were chiefly part of diplomatic and military policy rhetoric during the war years in particular.

Although the laws and customs of war were regularly broken everywhere in the world and extensively in the wars and armed conflicts of the 20th century, states have often found that they have attempted to follow humanitarian principles even so. There were many reasons for this. The first was that states were afraid of

⁹⁸ Hanski 1990, p. 16.

⁹⁹ Frolov 2005, p. 56.

¹⁰⁰ Hanski 1990, pp. 15-24, 140-141, Frolov 2004, pp. 56-72.

reprisals and resorted to the so-called reciprocity principle. According to this principle, states at war were to treat prisoners of war in the same manner as their own captured soldiers were treated. The second reason was that glaring violations of the laws and customs of war led to negative publicity, which there was naturally a desire to avoid. The third reason could be that nations at war attempted to behave honorably.¹⁰¹ Almost all states approved the 1899 Hague Convention and the 1907 Hague Convention on the laws and customs of war on land, which included the so-called Friedrich von Martens Clause. According to his formulation, “in cases not included in the Regulations adopted by the High Contracting Parties, the inhabitants and the belligerents remain under the protection and the rule of the principles of the law of nations, as they result from the usages established among civilized peoples, from the laws of humanity, and the dictates of the public conscience.” The Martens Clause meant that international customary law could be seen as always being binding in all cases. The Nurnberg and Tokyo international military tribunals referred to this principle of customary law after World War Two.¹⁰² Customary law is regarded in principle as being more important than written agreements on the basis that customary law is the original source of justice, which binds all states.¹⁰³

For these reasons it can be said that questions about the formally binding nature of international agreements is just not a key issue in practice for those countries engaged in World War Two. The essential issue is that in accordance with the viewpoints of the victorious powers the agreements recorded the forms of war that were generally acceptable to the so-called civilized countries. The agreements were in line with the principles of customary law, and included the reasonable obligations of the belligerent powers and the matters often related to them, including the question of prisoners of war. Of course these agreements were subject to many national reservations. Aside from the Soviet Union and Japan, nearly all the countries participating in World War Two had approved the 1929 Geneva Convention. The principles within the agreement therefore guided the treatment of prisoners of war. The legal model offered by the convention was also taken as the basis for judging war criminals by the postwar tribunals.¹⁰⁴

This article holds that Finland was bound in the Winter, Continuation, and Lapland Wars by customary law as it was written in the 1907 Hague Convention on war on land and the 1929 Geneva Convention on the treatment of prisoners of war. The Hague Convention has a special section on prisoners of war (Chapter II, Articles 4-21), and the entire Geneva Convention is about prisoners of war (Articles 1-97). Many of the principles on prisoners of war in the Hague Convention appear in

¹⁰¹ The International Relations Dictionary 1982, pp. 191-192.

¹⁰² Dinstein 1996, pp. 1-18, Levie 1996, pp. 123-139, Pustogarov 1996, pp. 310-311, Ticehurst 1997, pp. 125-134, Rosén 1998, p. 100, Pustogarov 2000, pp. 157-194, 297-328, Fleck 2003, pp. 21-25.

¹⁰³ Hanski 1990, p. 2.

¹⁰⁴ Levie 1999, p. 727.

more detail in the Geneva Convention, which is also more extensive. The articles of the Hague Convention are developed further in the Geneva Convention, which international cooperation crafted on the basis of experiences from World War One. However, some important sections only appear in the Hague Convention, such as the definition of a prisoner of war and the articles on the rights of an occupier in enemy territory. For these reasons, this articles continues from an understanding that the Hague Convention and the Geneva Convention, taken together, appropriately reflected the principles to be followed in the treatment of prisoners of war by the so-called civilized countries. In practice, this means that this article refers to either the principles in the Hague Convention or those in the Geneva Convention, depending on the issue in question.

The Treatment and of Prisoners of War Required by International Law in Finland

All the aforementioned serious neglect of Soviet prisoners of war in Finland was in conflict with the 1929 Geneva Convention on the treatment of prisoners of war. The following sections contain a summary, brief overview of this neglect in relation to international customary law as it was in World War Two.

Food. The rules on the rations for prisoners of war during World War Two were contained in Article 11 of the 1929 Geneva Convention. According to it, the food rations of prisoners of war were to be equivalent in quantity and quality to that of the depot troops of the detaining power. The prisoners of war were to receive the means for preparing for themselves such additional articles of food as they possessed. In addition, a canteen was to be located in all prisoner camps, at which prisoners were to be able to procure, at the local market price, food commodities. According to Article 4, Paragraph 1 of the convention, the detaining power was required to provide for the maintenance of prisoners of war in its charge.¹⁰⁵ During World War Two, the countries involved in the war did not precisely apply the aforementioned articles, as in practice the general food supply situation of each country also affected the rations of the prisoners of war. Because the International Committee of the Red Cross was not otherwise able to get involved in the situation, it urged all parties to generally improve the rations given to the prisoners of war in a way that properly furthered the good health of the prisoners of war regardless of

¹⁰⁵ Documents on Prisoners of War 1979, pp. 179-180. There is no known Finnish language publication of the 1929 Geneva Convention on the treatment of prisoners of war. However, there is an unpublished Finnish translation. Yleissopimus sotavankien kohtelusta 27 päivältä heinäkuuta 1929 [Convention on the treatment of prisoners of war July 27, 1929]. Fb 8:66, Ulkoasiainministeriön arkisto [Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs] and Raportti 1:p:nä heinäkuuta 1929 Genèveen koolle kutsutun diplomaattisen konferenssin töistä. Sodassa haavoittuneita ja sairastuneita sekä sotavankia koskeva sopimus 27.7.1929 [Report on the work of the diplomatic conference called at Geneva on July 1, 1929. and Convention on the wounded, sick and prisoners of war of July 27, 1929]. 27.7.1929. UM 8 M 6/2136 KD 25, Ulkoasiainministeriön arkisto [Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs].

the level of rations available to the depot troops of the detaining power.¹⁰⁶ The rations available to Soviet prisoners of war in Finland inadequately corresponded to the rations available to Finnish military personnel and did not fulfill the minimal requirements of the aforementioned conventions.¹⁰⁷

Lodgings. According to Article 10 of the 1929 Geneva Convention, prisoners of war were to be lodged in buildings or huts which afforded all possible safeguards as regarded hygiene. The premises had to be entirely free from damp, and adequately heated and lighted. As regards the lodgings, their total area, minimum cubic air space, fittings and bedding material, the conditions were to be the same as for the depot troops of the detaining power.¹⁰⁸ According to the observations of the International Committee of the Red Cross, the lodging conditions of the prisoners of war varied greatly during World War Two. In many cases, the conditions in the camps were very primitive and the hygiene conditions were poor. The lodging conditions did not correspond to the demands of the convention very often.¹⁰⁹ The lodgings of the Soviet prisoners of war in Finland were organized in a very unsatisfactory manner in some places, particularly in 1941 and 1942.¹¹⁰ The arrangements did not correspond to the minimal requirements of the aforementioned convention. From 1942 however, the accommodations of the prisoners of war improved through corrective measures. In 1944, there still was need to correct the situation however

Clothing. According to Article 12 of the 1929 Geneva Convention, clothing, underwear and footwear were to be supplied to prisoners of war by the detaining power. The regular replacement and repair of such articles had to be assured.¹¹¹ During World War Two, many of the countries at war were not able to provide clothing for their prisoners of war in an appropriate manner because of the strained economic situation stemming from the war.¹¹² Because Soviet prisoners of war in Finnish custody were tolerably provided with clothes suitable for Finnish environmental conditions,¹¹³ it could be that Finland formally somewhat complied with the minimum requirements of the aforementioned convention. In spite of this however, the clothing of the prisoners of war was unsatisfactory and in conflict with the key purpose of the article of the convention in question. The prisoners of

¹⁰⁶ Report of the International Committee of the Red Cross on its activities during the Second World War. Volume I 1948, p. 254, Feilchenfeld 1948, pp. 35-39, Levie 1977, pp. 126-130.

¹⁰⁷ See also Hanski 1990, pp. 51-55.

¹⁰⁸ Documents on Prisoners of War 1979, p. 180.

¹⁰⁹ Report of the International Committee of the Red Cross on its activities during the Second World War. Volume I 1948, pp. 247-249, Feilchenfeld 1948, pp. 41-42, Levie 1977, pp. 124-125.

¹¹⁰ Mikkola 1976, pp. 55-61, Hanski 1990, pp. 48-50, Mikkola 2000, pp. 74-78.

¹¹¹ Documents in Prisoners of War 1979, p. 181.

¹¹² Report of the International Committee of the Red Cross on its activities during the Second World War. Volume I 1948, p. 258, Feilchenfeld 1948, p. 39, Levie 1977, pp. 130-131.

¹¹³ Mikkola 1976, pp. 62-66, Hanski 1990, p. 51, Mikkola 2000, pp. 78-81.

war partially covered themselves in useless rags.

The Danish war correspondent Holger Hörsholt Hansen published a book in Sweden in 1943. In it, he wrote: “the prisoner’s clothes are the worst possible. All the uniforms and footwear that are in good condition are taken from the prisoners and used by the Finnish Army. The once brown Russian jackets are easily recognized, as they have been dyed grayish green. Finnish soldiers are often seen clothed in these items. Old ragged Russian uniforms are given to the prisoners in place of these excellent uniforms. By no means could these old uniforms have been used at the front. The situation is particularly difficult with regards to footwear. Many prisoners can be seen while marching in the camp area with their feet wrapped in rags and paper. There is a reason for this poor clothing, which is used in propaganda and presented in pictures to show how poorly equipped the Red Army is. I have seen numerous Russian prisoners on the front immediately after they were captured, and all their equipment and clothing was excellent.”¹¹⁴

Unsuitable and inadequate clothing caused numerous cases of frostbite and accidents. In addition, some limitations that deviated from the aforementioned article were placed on the prisoners of war in the summer. They were prevented from wearing boots and shoes. Colonel Lauri Tiainen, who served as section chief on the staff of the home army, made a presentation on the prisoners of war. He stated that “in the summer the prisoners of war went barefoot, if their job permitted it. This saved footwear and partially reduced the threat of flight, which was at its greatest in the summer in particular.”¹¹⁵

Hygiene. Articles 13, 14 and 15 of the 1929 Geneva Convention covered hygiene in camps. According to these articles, the detaining power was required to take all necessary measures to ensure the cleanliness of camps and to prevent epidemics. In accordance with what was possible, baths and shower-baths were to be provided to prisoners of war. Each was to possess an infirmary, where prisoners of war were to receive the attention they might require. Medical inspections of the prisoners of war were to be arranged at least once a month. Their object was to supervise the general state of health and cleanliness, and the detection of infectious and contagious diseases, particularly tuberculosis and venereal complaints.¹¹⁶ According to International Committee of the Red Cross reports on World War Two, the hygienic conditions in the prisoner of war camps were often inadequate. The provisions of the convention were not completely applied. Instead, the detaining power generally struggled to maintain even primitive medical care for prisoners of war. The organization of regular medical inspections was often overwhelming. According to the observations of the International Committee of the

¹¹⁴ Hörsholt Hansen 1943, p. 49.

¹¹⁵ Lauri Tiainen. Manuscript Kotijoukkojen toiminta sodan 1941–1945 aikana [Actions of the home army during the war 1941-1945], Chapter XIII “Sotavangit”.[Prisoners of war] Maanpuolustuskorkeakoulun sotahistorian laitos [Military History Department of the National Defense College], Mikkola 1976, p. 65, Pietola 1987, p. 200.

¹¹⁶ Documents on Prisoners of War 1979, p. 181.

Red Cross, it was generally common for hygienic conditions to improve with the inspections of the organization.¹¹⁷

The medical care in the prisoner of war camps in Finland was unsatisfactory in some places in the early years of the war in 1941 and 1942. Instead, a quite extensive network of sick huts and prisoner of war hospitals was gradually established. During the Continuation War, this network could have taken care of approximately 100,000 wounded and ill prisoners of war. The level of care was significantly more modest in the war hospitals and especially in the sick huts of the camps and in the medical barracks that were quickly put together when needed.¹¹⁸ Taking the diseases among Soviet prisoners of war that lead to mass mortality in 1941 and 1942 into account however, the health care in the prisoners of war camps was not at the level specified by the 1929 Geneva Convention. It cannot be a coincidence that the mortality rate among Soviet prisoners of war from infectious diseases was so high, as the treatment of military patients suffering from various illnesses was quite successful. The large difference between the mortality rates of prisoners of war and military patients has no explanatory factors other than the differences in the scope and quality of the care received and in the prevention of epidemics. The relatively good level health care provision for prisoners of war required by the convention was mostly not reached in the early years of the Continuation War.

Use of Soviet prisoners of war in unsuitable labor. According to Article 27 of the 1929 Geneva Convention, the detaining power could under certain conditions employ physically fit prisoners of war as workmen according to their rank and their ability. According to Article 29 of the convention, no prisoner of war could be employed in work for which he was physically unsuited.¹¹⁹ The aforementioned convention was broken during World War Two by using prisoners of war in such tasks as mining and in other dangerous and very strenuous work.¹²⁰

The use of prisoners of war as labor in Finland was authorized on June 29, 1941. Prisoners could be assigned to tasks by the fortification section of the Finnish General Headquarters, the commander of the pioneer troops, the railway section, the commander of the military administration of the occupied territory, the commanders of the naval and air forces, the defense ministry, and by civil authorities and private employers through the ministries of communications and general labor. Thus, many interests had the right to benefit from the labor of prisoners of war, who were used like migrant laborers. They were continuously

¹¹⁷ Report of the International Committee of the Red Cross on its activities during the Second World War. Volume I 1948, pp. 263-273, Feilchenfeld 1948, pp. 40-41, Levie 1977, pp. 131-137.

¹¹⁸ Mikkola 1976, pp. 91-96, Hanski 1990, pp. 59-60.

¹¹⁹ Documents on Prisoners of War 1979, pp. 183-184.

¹²⁰ Report of the International Committee of the Red Cross on its activities during the Second World War. Volume I 1948, pp. 329-332, Feilchenfeld 1948, pp. 47-50, Levie 1977, pp. 218-221, 225-237.

transferred from one worksite to another. At the beginning of 1942, over 5,000 prisoners of war were permanently assigned to work in the forest industry. This number grew to over 7,000 at the beginning of 1944. In January 1942, prisoners of war worked a total of 276,391 days in the forest. The corresponding number for 1943 was 366,709. In addition, many thousands of prisoners of war worked in the construction and stevedore industries, as well as in industry in general. Soviet prisoners of war were used in mining at Kolosjoki.¹²¹

Human rights researcher Raija Hanski has characterized acts such as the roadwork done by Soviet prisoners of war in Eastern Karelia, the repair work on the airfields and the fortification work in the rear of the front as borderline cases in the violation of the convention.¹²² One sign of the use of prisoners of war in heavy labor were the prisoner of war daily rations for those doing heavy physical labor and those doing extremely heavy physical labor. When the often weakened physical condition of Soviet prisoners of war, the somewhat bad health conditions and the constraints in the rations are taken into account, it is clear that the work assigned to the prisoners of war was too heavy to be suitable for them. According to Pirkka Mikkola, a researcher on the prisoners of war, the most common infringement of the convention by the Finnish prisoner of war administration were the rations handed out, given the demands of the work and the often starving prisoners of war who were poorly feed and laboring in harsh working conditions.¹²³ The extensive and long term use of Soviet prisoners of war in physically demanding and sometimes dangerous work was thus often in conflict with the aforementioned convention.

Ban on dangerous and unhealthy work by prisoners of war According to Article 32 of the 1929 Geneva Convention, the employment of prisoners of war in dangerous or unhealthy work was forbidden. According to Article 31, Paragraph 1, work done by prisoners of war was to have no direct connection with the operations of the war.¹²⁴ During World War Two, Germany used prisoners of war in the armaments industry, in transporting ammunition, and in loading bombs into airplanes. For their part, the French and the Americans used German prisoners of war for clearing mines in the final stages of the war, and in its immediate aftermath.¹²⁵ Finland used Soviet prisoners of war somewhat in clearing mines, which was clearly in conflict with the aforementioned convention.¹²⁶

Placing Soviet prisoners of war behind the front According to Article 7, Paragraph 1 of the 1929 Geneva Convention, prisoners of war were to be evacuated to depots sufficiently removed from the fighting zone for them to be out of danger, as soon

¹²¹ Mikkola 1976, pp. 164-173, Appendix 5.

¹²² Hanski 1990, pp. 101-109.

¹²³ Mikkola 2000, pp. 94-98.

¹²⁴ Documents on Prisoners of War 1979, p. 184.

¹²⁵ Report of the International Committee of the Red Cross on its activities during the Second World War. Volume I 1948, pp. 332-335, Levie 1977, pp. 238-240.

¹²⁶ Mikkola 2000, p. 95.

as possible after their capture. There was a provision in Article 9, Paragraph 3 that prisoners of war could not at any time be sent to an area where they would be exposed to the fire of the fighting zone.¹²⁷ During World War Two, the rapid growth in the operational range of bombers since 1929 proved to be a problem, as prisoners of war on the continent of Europe randomly became the victims of bombing. The transport of prisoners of war by sea was often dangerous.¹²⁸ In Finland, Soviet prisoners of war were placed and used for labor in areas immediately behind the front.¹²⁹ This diverged from the intention of the aforementioned convention.

Cruel and inhumane treatment. According to Article 2 of the 1929 Geneva Conventions, prisoners of war were to be humanely treated and protected, particularly from acts of violence and from insults. Measures of reprisal against prisoners of war were forbidden. According to Article 3 of the convention, prisoners of war were entitled to respect for their persons and honor.¹³⁰ Numerous cases of offences against prisoners of war occurred in World War Two.¹³¹ There is plenty of information on cruel and inhumane treatment of Soviet prisoners of war in Finland as well. Prisoners of war were often insulted and they were treated in a derogatory manner.¹³² At least dozens and dozens of prisoners of war were probably killed in prisoner of war camps without just cause and many thousands may have been either moderately or grossly maltreated.

Corporal punishment. According to Article 46, Paragraph 3 of the 1929 Geneva Convention, all forms of corporal punishment, among other things, were prohibited.¹³³ It is probable that many thousands of official floggings or beatings with truncheons before interrogations were carried out during the Continuation War.¹³⁴ The flogging used by Finland was obviously in conflict with the convention.¹³⁵

Favorable or discriminatory treatment of different nationalities. According to Article 4, Paragraph 2 of the 1929 Geneva Convention, differences of treatment between prisoners were permissible only if such difference were based on the military rank, the state of physical or mental health, the professional abilities, or the

¹²⁷ Documents on Prisoners of War 1979, pp. 179-180.

¹²⁸ Report of the International Committee of the Red Cross on its activities during the Second World War. Volume 1 1948, pp. 305-326, Levie 1977, pp. 120-124.

¹²⁹ Mikkola 1976, pp. 44-54, 173-177, Hanski 1990, pp. 108-109.

¹³⁰ Documents on Prisoners of War 1979, p. 179.

¹³¹ Report of the International Committee of the Red Cross on its activities during the Second World War. Volume I 1948, pp. 365-372, Feilchenfeld 1948, pp. 55-56, Levie 1977, pp. 315-342.

¹³² Mikkola 1976, pp. 221-224, Pietola 1987, pp. 170-183, Mikkola 2000, pp. 103-114.

¹³³ Documents on Prisoners of War 1979, p. 187.

¹³⁴ Mikkola 1976, p. 151, Pietola 1987, pp. 73, 164, Hallikainen 2000, Mikkola 2000, pp. 145-151.

¹³⁵ Mikkola 1976, pp. 242-243, Hanski 1990, pp. 63-65.

sex of those who benefitted from them.¹³⁶ However, the officials in the prisoner of war administration in Finland systematically practiced a policy of differentiation based on national or ethnic origin. As a consequence discrimination or favoring of prisoners of war on the basis of their national or ethnic origin was practiced.¹³⁷ This was in conflict with the spirit and the letter of the aforementioned convention.

In summary, it can be said that the treatment of Soviet prisoners of war in Finland during the Continuation War was not in accordance with the spirit of the 1929 Geneva Convention on the treatment of prisoners of war. This was particularly the case with individual provisions on care. Under international law, Finland had the responsibility for the humane treatment and suffering of its prisoners of war. In the early years of the Continuation War, and particularly in the winter of 1941/1942, Finland did not begin to fulfill the conditions and requirements specified by the aforementioned convention. The consequence of this extensive neglect was mass mortality among the Soviet prisoners of war, even if the prisoner of war policy pursued by the Finnish General Headquarters did not intend to have the prisoners of war starve to death. However, the Finnish General Headquarters reviewed its prisoner of war policy as winter turned to spring in 1942. This partially happened as a response to the reports and proposals drawn up by the commanders of the prisoner of war camps, the inspectors of the prisoners of war, and the staff of the Finnish home army. However, a more important factor in the change in the attitude of the Finnish General Headquarters may have been the negative publicity Finland received in the mass media of Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland, Great Britain, and the United States of America. In this situation, the Finnish General Headquarters chose to improve the conditions of the Soviet prisoners of war. As a consequence, Finland was more successful in the years 1943 and 1944 in fulfilling the requirements of the aforementioned convention, although there still were some defects.

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¹³⁶ Documents on Prisoners of War 1979, pp. 179-180.

¹³⁷ Mikkola 1976, pp. 36-40, 155-166, 211-220, Pietola 1987, pp. 50-64, Hanski 1990, pp. 86-91.

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The Unlawful Killings of POWs during the Continuation War, 1941-1944

Antti Kujala

The war that Finland waged against the Soviet Union from June 1941 to September 1944 is known as the Continuation War, due to the general view that the war would not have happened without the Winter War that preceded it in 1939–1940. Accordingly, the Soviet Union, by placing external pressure on Finland and threatening its independence, drove the nation into an unofficial alliance with Germany by June 1941. The Continuation War was, for Finland, not only provoked by the desire for reparations, but also for conquest. Its original aims were broader than merely regaining territories lost to the Soviet Union in the Truce of Moscow in 1940, as the unspoken objective of the Finns was also to annex East Karelia. Against all expectations, Germany was unable to defeat the Soviet Union, and as by 1943 at the latest, the tide of the war turned in the favour of the Soviet Union, the German troops were forced back west step by step from the Soviet areas that they had occupied. When the Soviet army began its mass summer offensive of 1944 on the Finnish fronts, the Continuation War turned into a battle for survival for the nation, its individual citizens, and its national institutions, much like the Winter War had been. The Continuation War ended with the truce agreement of 1944.

The study which this English summary deals with was written as part of “Finland, Prisoners of War, and people handed over”, a research project for the National Archives, which was launched by decision of the Prime Minister’s Office in 2004. When I joined the project in January 2006, I was tasked with investigating the homicides, which is to say unlawful killings, of Soviet POWs during the Continuation War. International treaties and Conventions, which Finland had also joined, protected the lives and basic rights of surrendered enemy soldiers who had become Prisoners of War.

The Hague Convention of 1907, the result of the international Second Peace Conference, had a section on the Laws and Customs of War on Land (IV), which required the government of the country that had captured POWs to properly supply them and protect their safety. The Convention forbade the killing or harming of wounded enemy soldiers who had surrendered or laid down their arms, and guaranteed certain rights for POWs. Finland had joined the Convention, but during the Continuation War, the General Headquarters did not feel that the Convention applied to the conflict, because – according to them – the Soviet Union had not become a party to the Convention. Thus, Finland guaranteed only certain basic rights for the Soviet POWs, but in practice the various international Conventions did guide the actions of the Finns, at least as a kind of customary law; besides, certain post-war sentences handed out for war crimes upheld the notion that the

Hague Convention was in force during the war. However, I must note that Finland did not ratify the Geneva Convention of 1929, as it believed that the Convention was in conflict with parts of the country's own military legislation.

The truce of September 1944 required Finland to sentence those of its citizens who had committed war crimes. Usually this is associated in Finland with the so-called "war guilt tribunals", where the Soviet Union forced Finland to sentence to imprisonment some of its leading war-time politicians, who the Soviets felt were responsible for the Continuation War. However, this study does not touch upon these political trials, but rather on the crimes perpetrated by Finns against Soviet POWs, and even of these, a narrow sub-set: unlawful killings. The Soviet Union allowed Finnish civilian courts and military tribunals to sentence these war criminals in accordance with the nation's own national legislature.

In 1945–1949, 56 cases of the killings of POWs during the Continuation War in *combat situations on the front* ended up before the Supreme Court, after having gone through lower levels of adjudication. Of these, 33 cases resulted in the Supreme Court sentencing a total of 35 people. In 23 cases, no one was sentenced (the Supreme Court reassigned one of these cases to a military tribunal, but even after this case eventually made its way to the Supreme Military Tribunal, no one involved was sentenced).

Design 1

Cases adjudicated in 1945–1949 by the Supreme Court dealing with the killings of POWs on the front:

Cases that resulted in sentences	33
Cases that did not result in sentences	23
Total	56

These 56 cases deal with the killing of a total of 181 POWs. This figure is naturally unreliable, and in these cases mainly represents the minimum death toll.

Design 2

Type of sentence passed by the Supreme Court for the killings of POWs on the front:

Murder	0
Manslaughter	22
Involuntary/negligent manslaughter	9
Inappropriate conduct for a soldier	3
Abuse of position	0
Assault	1
Total	35

Note: Where a person was sentenced for more than one crime, only the main crime has been marked above.

The most common sentence handed out by the Supreme Court was manslaughter. For these cases, the crime was voluntary manslaughter, manslaughter, or incitement to commit- or acting as an accessory to manslaughter. Inappropriate conduct for a soldier meant shooting the body of an already dead POW or enemy soldier.

The soldiers who were sentenced represented, at the moment when their crimes were committed, these ranks: captains and above – 13; lieutenants and sub-lieutenants – 9; NCOs and privates – 13. A partial explanation for the disproportionately low number of enlisted men lies in the fact that if they, following an order from their commanding officer, shot someone, they were not usually punished, even though they had carried out the actual killing for the officer. Almost without exception, the men who actually shot the POWs were rank and file soldiers, and especially higher officers did not in these cases personally shoot the captives. The over-representation of officers, especially high-ranking officers, among the sentenced in contrast to their low proportion in the army in general is due to three factors: 1) The payback mentality that reigned at the beginning of the Continuation War was, in general, stronger among them than among the enlisted men. 2) It was generally held that the latter could not be able to understand the illegal nature of the orders to shoot POWs, if they received them from their commanding officer, and therefore rank and file “executioners” were not punished in these cases. 3) People were, after the war, more likely to report crimes committed by officers; fellow soldiers were more willing to forget the killings of POWs committed by other rank and file soldiers.



A deceased POW is transported to the cemetery. *Olli Ingervon kokoelma*

Design 3

Date of occurrence of crimes in cases handled by the Supreme Court that dealt with the killings of POWs on the front:

1941	40
1942	11
1943	1
1944	4
Total	56

Sources for designs 1-3: KA (National Archives), KKO, päätöstaltiot ja aktit 1945-1949.

Most of the cases of killings of POWs on the front that ended up in the Supreme Court occurred in 1941, and to a lesser extent in early 1942 (9 of 11 total cases in 1942). It is quite obvious that the progress of the war between Germany and the Soviet Union, and Finland's role in it, decisively affected how the POWs were treated.

The Supreme court handled, in 1945-1949, a total of 148 cases of POWs killed during the Continuation War in *POW camps, POW companies placed under the authority of the fortification department of the General Headquarters, POW camps and -units placed under the authority of military formations, and outside the military* in the domestic areas (as well as 56 such cases from the front, which were handled above and are not included in the following).

Design 4

Cases adjudicated in 1945–1949 by the Supreme Court dealing with the killings of POWs behind the front lines:

	Cases	sentenced	Killed POWs
Outside the military	9	9	11
POW companies under fort.dep.	43	61	248
POW camps and units under other mil.form. and POW camps in domestic areas etc.	96	108	241
Total	148	178	500

Outside the military means that in these cases the accused were considered to be civilians at the time when the crimes occurred, and that these cases were handled in lower levels of the civilian criminal law system before making their way to the Supreme Court. In the three lower categories, the accused were considered to be military personnel at the time when the crimes occurred, and their cases were handled in military tribunals (after the Paris Peace Treaties of 1947 came into force

in the military justice system) and the military court of appeals, before they also ended up before the Supreme Court.

Design 5

Type of sentence passed by the Supreme Court for the killings of POWs behind the front lines:

Murder	10
Manslaughter	101
Involuntary manslaughter	22
Inappropriate conduct for a soldier	11
Abuse of position	22
Assault	12
Total	178

Note: Where a person was sentenced for more than one crime, only the main crime has been marked above.

It is important to note that far from all cases resulted in sentences, and some people were sentenced only for non-lethal assaults on POWs. The persons responsible for some of the killings were seen to have exercised reasonable force (for example by trying to prevent the escape of a POW in the accepted manner, or fending off an attack by a POW), and in some cases the circumstances surrounding the killing were so unclear that it was not possible to sentence anyone for them. A guard was allowed to shoot at a fleeing POW, after first either shouting an order to halt two times or shouting once and firing a warning shot into the air; in such a case, if the POW died, the shooter would not be held responsible for any crime. Guards were also allowed, if POWs threatened their lives, to kill in self-defence.

Manslaughter was, as expected, the most common crime for which people were sentenced in these cases. The designation manslaughter also includes incitement to commit- and acting as an accessory to manslaughter, as well as killing at the request of the victim. Involuntary manslaughter deals not only with death due to negligence or carelessness, but also death through assault without the intent to kill. If a soldier shot the body of an already dead POW or enemy soldier, he was sentenced for inappropriate conduct for a soldier.

Design 6

Rank of those sentenced at the date when crimes occurred

Captain or above	9
Lieutenant, Sub-Lieutenant, or equivalent	29
NCO, private, or civilian	129
NCO or private acting as Commander of POW company	11
Total	178

Here, the portion of sentenced NCOs and privates was much larger than their equivalent share of those sentenced for killings on the front. The most common sentence given to the highest-ranking category was abuse of position (five officers out of a total of nine), and only one of them was sentenced for murder. NCOs and privates acting as commanders of POW companies have been separated into their own category, because as commanders of guard companies, their status was similar to that of officers acting as commanders of regular companies.

Design 7

Date of occurrence of crimes in cases handled by the Supreme Court that dealt with the killings of POWs behind the front lines:

1941	44
1942	105
1943	11
1944	8

Note: In some cases killings occurred during two consecutive years, so the case has been reported separately for both years. The total number of cases remains 148.

Sources for designs 4-7: KA (National Archives), KKO, päätöstalliot ja aktit 1945–1949.

As is evident from the above designs, the killings of POWs behind the front lines also for the most part occurred during the first two years of the war (1941-1942), when there was still hope that Germany would win its war against the Soviet

Union, and that Finland would end up on the winning side (nevermind what the position of the Western Allies would be in the eventual peace treaty). The reasons for the uneven temporal distribution of the crimes are exactly the same as for the killings on the front, even though the share of high-ranking officers, and officers in general, among those sentenced was far lower. The desire for payback or revenge, hatred of Russians, and individual reasons (altered mental state, abuse of drugs and alcohol, etc.) all played a part in the unlawful killings in the POW camps, but the motives for the crimes were somewhat different behind the lines than on the front. In combat situations, most of the rank and file soldiers felt shooting surrendered enemy soldiers to be dishonourable, and the officers often had great trouble finding someone to shoot captives for them. In contrast, the rank and file guards of on the POW camps had ample reason to shoot prisoners, for example as warning examples; they upheld discipline through unlawful executions, as the articles of the Hague Convention of 1907, the stipulations of Finnish military law, and the orders that they had been given during the Continuation War effectively made legal means of execution impossible. By far the most common situation in which POWs were shot behind the front lines was when the occasional captured fugitive or prisoner charged with insubordination was executed as a warning example to his fellows.

Based on their military personnel cards, of the 178 people sentenced for the shootings, only a little over 20 were or had once been members of the Suojeluskunnat (Civic Guards), even though it was apparently not rare to leave marks of membership in the Suojeluskunnat out of the copies of the military personnel cards provided for the investigating officials; for officers, such a mark was only made in exceptional cases. Nevertheless, the career officers and most of the reservists had probably been members of one of the Suojeluskunnat, with some of the former acting as leaders of local branches of the movement. Despite this, it is unlikely that members of the Suojeluskunnat are significantly over-represented in this group of 178 war criminals (in contrast to the situation among those sentenced for the killing of POWs on the front). The officials had great problems finding enough guards for the POWs, of whom there were at the highest 60 000 at the same time; in fact, they did not even come close to succeeding in this. The Finnish armed forces were a true popular army: enemy bullets and shrapnel from grenades did not choose their targets based on party allegiance. As all combat-worthy men were sent to the front, those who were assigned to guard duty were not fit for active duty due to serious wounds, mental problems, disease, or advanced age. The guards represented, at least in terms of political opinions, a cross-section of the Finnish young male population (with the exception of a few special camps, which were staffed completely by members of the Suojeluskunnat). Only a small minority among the guards shot or brutalized POWs. There were even a few leftist, or even radical leftist guards, who were sentenced for shooting POWs – a testimony to the strength of the anti-Russian mood that reigned at the beginning of the war (where these killings were not merely the results of individual savagery). Nevertheless, it is likely that their share of the sentenced was considerably lower than the portion of leftists in the army in general.

The commanders and guards of the POW units came up with an illegal disciplinary strategy to counter the prisoners' insubordination. Lieutenant General K.L. Oesch's IV Army Group was apparently the only one where such a strategy was set into place from the beginning by the highest authorities. All levels of the military administration were aware of the real state of affairs. However, the guards and personnel of the POW units knew best the situation on the ground, with knowledge of it decreasing the farther and higher up in the military chain of command one went. Nevertheless, almost by unspoken agreement, the situation on the POW camps was allowed to continue, and only the outcome of the battle of Stalingrad forced people to change their attitudes – a change that only benefited those POWs who had survived the first two years of the war. It is telling that investigations into the crimes committed against POWs were only launched after the truce of 1944 made them mandatory.

Source:

Kujala, Antti: Vankisurmat. Neuvostosotavankien laittomat ampumiset jatkosodassa. Helsinki 2008



Inmates and guards spending a winter day in the Naarajärvi camp.
Pentti Pullisen perikunta



The German Strategic Use of POW Labor in the Far North

Lars Westerlund

During WWII, the German Supreme Commands in Norway¹³⁸ and Finland had approximately 110,000 Soviet and other eastern European Prisoners of War (POWs) under their control between 1941 and 1945. The bulk of these prisoners were transferred to Norway and Finland in 1942–44, since German troops captured only roughly 9,000 Soviet POWs on the northeastern Litsa, Salla, and Kiestinki Fronts, which was less than a tenth of the total. On average, three quarters of the POWs in the far north were deployed in Norway, and a quarter were in Finland throughout the war.

In this survey I will use the term "POW policy" to describe the intentional macro-level aims of using the POWs. First, the term covers the rational use of the POWs as a labor force. Second, it encompasses the special orders given by the military and political leadership for the treatment of the POWs. I aim to deal with two central issues in German POW policy in the north. First, why did the Germans deploy the bulk of their POWs in Norway despite the fact that the frontline was in Finland, where POW labor would have had a greater impact on the military operations? In answering this question I will emphasize to a degree the strategic use of the manpower that the POWs represented. Second, why was the mortality rate among the Soviet POWs in German custody in both Norway and Finland considerable lower than that among the Soviet POWs captured by Finnish forces?

¹³⁸ In 1940-45, the German government made several changes in the high command structure of the forces in Norway and Finland. *Armee-Ober-Kommando Norwegen* was established in December 1940 as the German High Command in Norway. From June 1941 to January 1942, AOK Norwegen also commanded the considerable German forces on Finnish territory. At this point, the German forces in Norway and Finland were subordinated to two high commands: AOK Norwegen, which primarily oversaw Norwegian territory, and AOK Lapland which included Finland and northeastern Norway as its area of operations. In June 1942, AOK Lapland was renamed AOK Finnland. When AOK Norwegen was dissolved in December 1944, AOK 20 took charge of all German forces. At this point the German forces had, however, retired from Finnish territory with the exception of the small Kilpisjärvi area near the Norwegian border.

The treatment of the POWs would, in a broad sense, include issues such as food supply, accommodation, clothing, health care, and discipline, but it is my intention in this survey to focus solely on the death rate among the POWs. In Norway this was about 14%, among the POWs in German custody, in Finland it was perhaps roughly 20% for POWs in German custody, and among Soviet POWs in Finnish custody it was approximately 30%

This survey starts with a few words about the national and ethnic backgrounds of the POWs. Many nationalities served in the Soviet Army as the Soviet Union was a multiethnic state. According to the 1938 Soviet census, 51% of the population were Russian, 20% were Ukrainian, and 3% were Belarusian. Different Caucasian, Turkish, Baltic and Finnic peoples, as well as Jews, Poles, and others made up the remaining quarter.¹³⁹ Of the Soviet KIAs (Killed in Action) and MIAs (Missing in Action) in 1941-45, the Russian share was 61%, the Ukrainian share was only 16% and the Belarusian share was 3%. The remaining fifth was made up of the other nationalities.¹⁴⁰ Thus, it seems that Russians in particular were mobilized for duty in the Soviet Army and this was also reflected in the POW numbers. Of the some 64,000 registered Soviet POWs in Finnish custody between 1941 and 1944, no less than 68% were Russian, only 10% were Ukrainian and 3% were Belarusian.¹⁴¹ Altogether 89 different nationalities were registered by the Finnish authorities.¹⁴²

Of the approximately 78,500 POWs who were repatriated from Norway in 1945, it seems that approximately 60% were Russian, 27% were Ukrainian and 5% were Belarusian. The other nationalities made up 7% of the repatriated. However, these figures are only a rough estimate since there is no information on the nationality of 23,300 repatriated POWs.¹⁴³ Nevertheless, the pattern suggests that the Germans brought considerably more Ukrainians to Norway, and relatively fewer Caucasian, Turkish, Baltic, Finnic, and other peoples. The mix of Soviet POWs was different than what the original nationality distribution among the POWs would have presupposed. Furthermore, the death rate among Russian POWs was probably somewhat higher in the war years than the average mortality rate. This means that the Russian share of the Soviet POWs transported to Norway had originally been higher than 60%. However, there is some uncertainty about the distribution of

¹³⁹ Entry "Venäjä" [Russia]. Iso Tietosanakirja 1939 [Big Encyclopedia], p. 174.

¹⁴⁰ Glantz 2005, p. 604.

¹⁴¹ Westerlund, manuscript 2008, 154-164.

¹⁴² Pietola 1987, 58-62.

¹⁴³ Summary of Soviet prisoners of war:

<http://www.arkivverket.no/riksarkivet/kilder/nett/krigsfang/storover.htm>.

different nationalities as the Germans tended to use the terms "Russian" and "Soviet" as synonyms.¹⁴⁴ Since Norwegian authorities registered the national backgrounds of the POWs in this case, this information is likely to be somewhat reliable. Altogether, 55 different nationalities were recorded among the POWs. Generally the Germans treated Soviet POWs of Russian and Jewish origin more harshly than those who had a Ukrainian, Baltic or Volga German background.



The Rautahovi tar plant. *Kansallisarkisto*

For the Soviet POWs in German custody in Finland there is no corresponding information, but the main pattern in Finland is likely to be rather similar to that in Norway.

Additionally, the Germans brought approximately 4,000 Serbs, a number of Croats and some other Yugoslavs to Norway in 1942. As a consequence of pressure from the International Red Cross, these people were granted POW status in 1943. In

¹⁴⁴ Information provided by Reinhard Otto.

1942, approximately 1,600 POWs of Polish descent were brought to Norway.¹⁴⁵ The Germans also used forced laborers in Norway and Finland. This survey only pays a little attention to the ethnic background of the POWs however, since this study does not aim to focus on nationality issues among the POWs.

Scholars of WWII in Finland and Norway have often restricted their studies on the German war effort in the north either to the territory of Finland or Norway. However, they have often paid only a little, if any, attention to the strategic connections between German military operations on Finnish and Norwegian soil. Although limiting the scope of research on a territorial basis can highlight particular issues, it is not possible to reach a proper understanding of German actions in the Northern Theatre of Operations without taking account of the coherent operational area that Norway and Finland represented to the Germans. I will apply such an approach.

The Concentration of POWs in the North in Norway

There are similarities in how the Germans made use of POW labor in both Norway and Finland. In both of these countries, Soviet POWs were generally used not only by the Army and the Luftwaffe, but also by the Organization Todt labor service. In Finland and in Norway, Soviet and other eastern European POWs in German custody were employed in road, railway, and airfield construction, and in snow clearing work. In Norwegian Sør-Varanger and particularly in Finland however, they were also used in cutting and loading lumber. The Germans used their POWs primarily to develop supply and transport infrastructure in both Finland and Norway.

While the POWs in Norway were heavily engaged in preparing military facilities such as the Trondheim submarine base, the strategic railway lines and the heavy artillery positions along the long Norwegian coastline, POWs in Finland had the special task of cutting and transporting wood for fuel. The partly treeless Petsamo area was thus provided with wood from the forests of Ivalo, about 150 kilometers to the south. However, a remarkable proportion of the POW labor in Finland seems to have had no clear and immediate military focus.

Even though some of the many German construction projects aimed to improve supply lines to the front and the operational capacity of the Luftwaffe, other efforts

¹⁴⁵ Koch 1988, pp. 96-99.

were intended to either establish new lines of communication with Norway or to improve the general living and accommodation conditions of the German units and formations far behind the front. This would seem to indicate a German intention of maintaining a long-term presence in the far north, rather than merely seeking to achieve a decisive military outcome in the area.

German Transport Logistics and the Use of POWs

The German occupation of Norway in the spring of 1940 and the entry into Finnish territory in June 1941 necessitated enormous transportation operations. Since there was no available land route between Germany and Norway, the Germans had to ship troops, equipment, and supplies from their bases in the south to Norwegian and Finnish ports. No extensive information exists on the number of ships involved in these operations, but we can roughly estimate that 10,000 ships from Germany or nations occupied by Germany sailed for Norwegian ports in 1940–45. Correspondingly, a total of about 5,000 German or German-controlled ships probably reached Finland through the Baltic Sea in 1940–44.

After the German forces and goods had reached Norwegian and Finnish ports, they had to continue their journey by train, motor vehicle, small boat, ferry, horse, mule, and foot. The challenging geography of Norway with its mountains, fjords, straits, and rivers made transportation difficult, and required a constant, low-level commitment of resources. In northern Finland the roads were few, narrow, and often hard to traverse, rising over hills and dipping into valleys. In the far north there were no railroads at all, either in Norway or in Finland. Furthermore, in the sectors to the east of the Finnish border where offensive operations were being conducted, there were hardly any roads at all. Thus, it was a demanding task to supply the advancing German forces with ammunition, equipment, and food. One solution to the problem of supplying the fronts could have been the use of Soviet POWs as carriers, loaders, and road builders. One of the main reasons why the German offensive on the Litsa Front in July 1941 failed was the lack of horses, which could have transported enough ammunition to the artillery positions in the area.¹⁴⁶ Indeed, the Germans used POWs for these purposes in the Finnish border areas, but not particularly extensively. This is surprising, as it would have been rational to use the manpower that the Soviet POWs represented to systematically supply operations on the frontline. While this was indeed done to a modest extent,

¹⁴⁶ Korpi 1996, p. 153.

the clear majority of POWs were held in the inner regions of Finland and Norway, far from the frontline.

About 500 kilometers of new roads were constructed in northern Finland in 1940–41, and 1,150 kilometers of old roads were improved. Although the Finnish road administration also participated in this work, the Germans took care of the greater share of the project. The over 500-kilometer long Arctic Ocean Road, reaching from Rovaniemi to Liinahamari in Petsamo, was straightened, broadened, and improved by the addition of better bridges. A new 100-kilometer long road running west from Ivalo through Kaamanen to Karigasniemi on the Norwegian border had already been constructed in 1941. In 1942, another new 160-kilometer long road was constructed on the northwestern border of Finland, running from Palojoensuu through Kilpisjärvi to the Norwegian village of Skibotn. Several road construction projects were also carried out in the Petsamo area, aiming to extend the existing roads to Norway. The Nord-Mo road from Norwegian Holmfoss (the Nordmo farmyard) over the Paasjoki river valley to the Petsamo side was finished in 1941 as was the road with eventually two bridges from Nyrud to the Petsamo side. In 1942–44, a 41-kilometer long road from Finnish Parkkina to Norwegian Tårnet was constructed. On Norwegian soil the Germans constructed the road from Storskog to Kolttaköngas (Boris Gleb) reaching the already existing road from Elvenes to Kolttaköngas, which connected to the Arctic Ocean Road on the Finnish side of the border. Already before the war there was a ferry operating between Norwegian Svanvik and Finnish Salmijärvi, but the Germans fairly extensively extended the connections.¹⁴⁷

The Germans also constructed new roads and communication lines running eastwards in order to supply the attack routes against Soviet forces. Thus, they repaired the railroad and roads running between Salla and Alakurtti from 1941 onwards. The Germans also improved the roads in the Kiestinki area, and in the summer of 1942 they started a construction project for a narrow-gauge field railroad running along the line Hyrynsalmi-Kuusamo-Kiestinki. They managed to build roughly 178 kilometers from Hyrynsalmi to Vanttaja of the planned length of 308 kilometers by 1944. The Germans improved the so-called Russian Road (*Russenstrasse*) in the Petsamo area, running from Parkkina to Litsa, and eventually constructed the Prinz Eugen, Speer, and von Hengl bridges. Additionally, a 48-kilometer long cableway running from Parkkina to Litsa with a 13 kilometer long branch line at Titovka was built in 1942–43. However, the

¹⁴⁷ Information provided by Johan B. Siira.

Germans had to abandon plans to construct a railroad from Rovaniemi to Petsamo at the behest of the Finns as early as the fall of 1941. Although there had also been earlier Finnish plans for a railroad connection, the Finnish governor in Rovaniemi, Kaarlo Hillilä, rejected the project because he feared that such a railroad, partly running parallel to the Soviet Leningrad-Murmansk railroad, would have too strong a strategic significance.

The Number of German Forces in Norway and Finland

During WWII, the Germans deployed considerable forces in the north. Between April and June 1940, German forces totaling not more than approximately 11,000 men seized Norway with minimal losses.¹⁴⁸ In the summer of 1940 many more troops were shipped to the country, with the resulting total being roughly 136,000 men.¹⁴⁹ Later in 1942 the German forces in Norway were increased to approximately 250,000 men.¹⁵⁰ However, the average number of soldiers in Norway in 1940–44 has been estimated to be 300,000.¹⁵¹ At the end of 1943, there were 314,000 German soldiers¹⁵² in Norway, and this figure increased considerably as the German forces in Finland retreated to Norway in the fall of 1944. In May 1945, German troops in Norway numbered nearly 400,000 men.¹⁵³

The Finnish army had around 450,000 soldiers on the front between the Gulf of Finland and the Arctic Ocean in the summer of 1941¹⁵⁴, and still 400,000 in the early fall of 1943. At the same time, there were 170,000 German troops,¹⁵⁵ and in December 1943 the figure was 172,200 men.¹⁵⁶ However, the Finnish military historian Sampo Ahto gives a figure of 210,000 German troops for 1943.¹⁵⁷

¹⁴⁸ Gamst 1984, p. 14.

¹⁴⁹ Zetterling 2008, p. 110.

¹⁵⁰ Grannes 1989, p. 60.

¹⁵¹ Bohn 1999, p. 132, information provided by Marianne Neerland Soleim.

¹⁵² Ziemke 1960, p. 267.

¹⁵³ Bohn 1999, p. 132. According to a study by Michel Tamelander and Niklas Zetterling, there would, however, have been only 169,000 German troops in Norway in June 1941. These men corresponded to 4% of the total strength of German forces. Tamelander-Zetterling 2004, p. 283. Arthur L. Smith states that the German strength in Norway in the summer of 1944 was to have been 340,000 men supported by an additional 27,000 German paramilitaries and civilians. Smith 1977, p. 60.

¹⁵⁴ Tuompo 1968, p. 38.

¹⁵⁵ Ziemke 1963, p. 240. However, the German Liaison Officer at the Finnish General Headquarters, General Waldemar Erfurth, states that there were 350,000 Finnish and 200,000 German troops in September 1943. Erfurth 1951, p. 95.

¹⁵⁶ Ziemke 1960, p. 235.

¹⁵⁷ Ahto 1980, p. 24.

According to Matti Haro, the number of German troops in AOK 20 was 170,370 in October 1942 and 195,586 in May 1945.¹⁵⁸ The differences depend partly on classification issues as Ahto and Haro also include auxiliary forces. Thus, it seems that the number of German troops in AOK 20 rose throughout the war years to an average of about 200,000 men.

The German air force played a very modest role in the attack on Murmansk, Kandalaksha (Kantalahti) and Belomorsk (Sorokka). The Luftwaffe had approximately 260 aircraft in the north in 1941, but only 60 of these, or less than a quarter, were assigned to the Eastern Front. About 200 aircraft were reserved for the defense of Norway.¹⁵⁹ From 1942, the Luftwaffe employed the bulk of its aircraft in the north in raids against Allied cargo convoys bound for Murmansk. When German aircraft were initially reserved for the *Silberfuchs Operation* against Murmansk and the Murman railway line and other related actions in the spring of 1941, there were as yet no convoys. In fact, only a total of 55 Allied cargo ships even entered the Arctic in the last months of 1941. Of the more than 4 million tons of equipment and supplies transported during the war by the Western Allies to Murmansk and Arkhangelsk, only 290,000 tons, or about 7%, were delivered in 1941.¹⁶⁰ Of a total of 811 ships, 108 cargo ships were destroyed.¹⁶¹ In 1944, the Soviet side in the north deployed 549 fighters and 746 other aircraft against 102 German fighters and some 60 other aircraft.¹⁶²

The German fleet stationed in the eastern part of the Arctic Ocean also played only a minor role, and the Soviet fleet had continuous local superiority in the Murmansk-Fisher (Rybachiy) Peninsula sea area north of the front lines.¹⁶³ There were 500 fishing boats capable of landing troops just in Murmansk,¹⁶⁴ which is precisely what the Soviets eventually did. In 1941-45, the main naval casualties occurred in the western part of the Arctic Ocean. The Western Allies lost two cruisers, seven destroyers, one submarine, and eleven other warships. A total of 9,000 crew members perished in the loss of the aforementioned vessels. The

¹⁵⁸ Haro 2004, p. 129.

¹⁵⁹ Wangel 1972, p. 30, Bilaga p. 5, Korpi 1996, p. 156.

¹⁶⁰ Mann-Jørgensen 2003, p. 121, Henriksen 2004, p. 327.

¹⁶¹ Holopainen 1980, p. 60.

¹⁶² Gyllenhaal-Gebhardt 2004, pp. 60, 78.

¹⁶³ Korpi 1996, pp. 153, 155.

¹⁶⁴ Korpi 1996, p. 56.

Germans lost a battleship, a battle cruiser, three destroyers, and 31 submarines, and their crew losses amounted to about 5,200 personnel.¹⁶⁵

The Soviet Northern Fleet, which operated in the Arctic Ocean, lost two destroyers, 20 submarines, 16 patrol vessels and 13 minesweepers in 1941-45.¹⁶⁶ This amounted to a loss of 10,905 personnel,¹⁶⁷ but of these only 9,597 were combat losses. As most of the lost ships were small vessels, it can be supposed that only a small share of the personnel casualties were crew members. If the average crew size of the submarines, patrol vessels, and minesweepers was approximately 50 people, then the total crew losses for these ships would not have exceeded 2,000 personnel. A considerable part of the personnel losses of the Soviet Northern Fleet could have been suffered by landing parties transported by small vessels. In other words, they were not actually naval losses. Therefore, only a relatively small proportion of those who died, perhaps about 3,000 personnel at the most, could reasonably have been crew members. Thus, in any case the aforementioned figures indicate that the bulk of the sea battles occurred between British and German naval units, and that Soviet vessels played only a secondary role.

In summary, there seems to have been a total of approximately 300,000 German soldiers in Norway and about 200,000 in Finland in 1941-44. Thus, the forces on Finnish soil represented only a good third of the German forces in the north.

The Number of POWs in German Custody in Norway and Finland

The Germans already started to bring Soviet POWs from transit camps in the Stettin area to Norway in August and September 1941. They initially brought a limited number of POWs however, as only 3,253 Soviet POWs arrived in 1941. In 1942 the number of POWs transferred to Norway increased to 18,606, and in 1943 the number reached 44,137. The documentation on the transportation of POWs in 1944 is poor, but it seems that the number of transferred POWs was at least 9,750,¹⁶⁸ although it could be as high as 29,500.

In addition, the German forces retreating from Finland in the fall of 1944 brought perhaps at least 11,000 evacuated Soviet POWs with them.¹⁶⁹ However, it is

¹⁶⁵ Henriksen 2004, p. 327.

¹⁶⁶ Krivosheev 1997, pp. 265-271.

¹⁶⁷ Krivosheev 1997, p. 211, information provided by Michael Suprun.

¹⁶⁸ Koch 1988, p. 49-56.

¹⁶⁹ Koch 1988, p. 101.

possible that the number of evacuated POWs was higher as there were roughly 16,000 Soviet POWs in AOK 20 custody in August 1944. In May 1945, there were 78,200 POWs on Norwegian soil. Approximately 75,000 of them were Soviets, 1,600 were Poles, and around 1,600 were Serbs and others.¹⁷⁰ If it is assumed that 13,000 POWs died, the total number of POWs brought to Norway would have been approximately 90,000.

There is also some uncertainty about the number of Soviet POWs in Finland and in the conquered areas of the Soviet Union. The Germans apparently captured around 6,000 POWs on their Petsamo, Salla, and Kiestinki Fronts in 1941, around 1,200 in 1942, another 1,200 in 1943, and roughly 500 in 1944. This would make for a total of approximately 9,000 captured Soviet POWs. Additionally, the Germans transferred around 9,000 POWs to Finland in 1942, roughly 5,400 in 1943, and about 6,000 in 1944, for a total of approximately 20,500.¹⁷¹

Combining these pieces of information yields the following table:

Table 1. Number of POWs in German custody captured or transferred to Norway and Finland 1941-45 by year (n)

Year	Norway		Finland	
	Transferred to	Evacuated to	Captured	Transferred to
1941	3,250		6,000	
1942	18,600		1,200	9,000
1943	25,500		1,200	5,400
1944	19,600	11,000(?)	500	6,000
Total	67,000	11,000(?)	9,000	20,500

Grand total: Norway 1941-45, 78,000 and Finland 29,500.

¹⁷⁰ Koch 1988, p. 100.

¹⁷¹ Westerlund 2008, pp. 59-62, 93-96.

The figures in the table indicate that the overall share of POWs in German custody in Finland corresponded to approximately 30% of the total POWs in the north. In 1941, there were twice as many POWs in Finland as in Norway. However, this was a temporarily state of affairs. From 1942 onwards the proportions changed so that approximately 2/3 of the POWs were permanently in Norway.

In June 1944, the Norwegian branch of Organization Todt (OT), "Einsatz Wiking," had 58,403 workers and POWs. The Finnish OT-counterpart, "Einsatz Finnland," had only 6,000–6,500 workers and POWs in 1943.¹⁷² This meant that only about a tenth of the OT-work force in the north was employed in Finland.

It is apparent that the German High Command in the north deployed military forces as well as POW labor in similar proportions in Finland and Norway. While 2/3 of the soldiers were deployed in Norway, 2/3 of the Soviet POWs were also assigned there. Despite the fact that the whole of Finland bordered the front running from the Gulf of Finland to the Arctic Ocean, the Germans assigned only a third of both their forces and their POW manpower to this front and its connecting rear areas. The explanation for this state of affairs will be presented further on.

The Purpose of the German Attack in the Arctic Ocean Region

The main objective of the German occupation of Norway (*Operation Weserübung*) was military-strategic, not economic.¹⁷³ It was designed to fend off a possible British attack on the German north coast, and to secure the operational freedom of the German fleet and the transport routes along the Norwegian coast. Additionally, the Germans wanted to use Norwegian territory as a base area from which to launch submarine and aerial attacks against Britain. The occupation reduced British control of the North Sea and made it harder to impose an economic blockade on Germany.¹⁷⁴

In his study "The German Northern Theater of Operations 1940–1945" (1960), the U.S. military historian Earl F. Ziemke concludes that the objectives of the German offensive towards the Murmansk area (*Operation Silberfuchs* "Operation Silver Fox") in the summer and early fall of 1941 were political and psychological rather than strategic. He suggests that the attack was basically directed more against

¹⁷² Westerlund 2008, p. 197.

¹⁷³ Didriksen 1987, 156-158.

¹⁷⁴ Krog 1969, p. 14, Didriksen 1987, p. 156, Benkow-Grimnes 1990, Riste 1990, Mann-Jørgensen 2002, pp. 187-188, Tamelander-Zetterling 2004.

Britain than the Soviet Union, and that it became worthwhile to disregard sound tactics and to attempt to stage a quick strike along the Arctic coast to Murmansk. Its prime purpose was to demonstrate the isolation and helplessness of Britain, not to defeat the Soviet forces defending the Murmansk area.¹⁷⁵

In their preparations for *Operation Silberfuchs* from late January to April 1941, the Germans intended to designate Finnish Field Marshal Gustaf Mannerheim as commander-in-chief. However, as the plans matured in late May, General Nicholas von Falkenhorst, commander-in-chief of AOK Norwegen, was appointed the commander of the German-Finnish forces in northern Finland. As early as February 1941, the German High Command gave up the original aims of *Operation Silberfuchs*, which were to attack south of Kandalaksha (Kantalahti), through which the Germans believed they could reach the Salla area in just a few days. Consequently, Finnish forces had to meet the enemy alone in the south where the opposition was strongest without any German support on the flanks.¹⁷⁶

The planned advance on Murmansk was also reduced in scale in April 1941, as there were no decisive plans for the conquest of this city. In their planned attack on Murmansk, codenamed *Operation Platinfuchs* ("Operation Platinum Fox"), the Germans intended to encircle the city of Murmansk from the west, occupying the naval ports of Vladimir and Polarnyi on the Arctic Ocean. This would have prevented enemy naval transport operations by closing the upper part of the Kola Fjord. The Germans also planned to destroy Soviet airports and industrial plants on the western side of the Kola Fjord. Thus, the city of Murmansk was not even the main target of the operation, as plans for its occupation hinged on the general situation and the nature of the terrain found on reaching Polarnyi.¹⁷⁷

Furthermore, the significance of *Operation Silberfuchs* in the grand Barbarossa plan was, according to Ziemke, not merely subsidiary but also superfluous to the main operations in the overall theatre, and actually lacked any direct connection to them. *Operation Silberfuchs* was deliberately launched with limited forces and, quite correctly, requests for substantial reinforcements were refused in order not to detract from the possibility of achieving a decision on the main front. Thus, the original dispersal of German forces along the Norwegian coast and in the Petsamo, Salla, and Kiestinki areas in Finland was actually justified. After the forces had been committed there, the situation in Finland became static because it turned out

¹⁷⁵ Ziemke 1960, p. 185.

¹⁷⁶ Ziemke 1960, p. 133, Wangel 1972, pp. 15-18, 37, Korpi 1996, pp. 49-76.

¹⁷⁷ Ziemke 1960, pp. 129-130.

to be impossible to completely close down any of the three attack sectors. This was despite the fact that offensive operations there had become unprofitable.¹⁷⁸ General Franz Halder, Commander of the General Staff of the OKH, characterized the plans for *Operation Silberfuchs* as an expedition rather than an operation on May 14, 1941.¹⁷⁹



Inmates at work in the Miehikkälä camp. *Kansallisarkisto*

However, the Germans also had an important additional reason for *Operation Silberfuchs*: This was namely to influence Finnish and Swedish foreign policy, although this was not mentioned in the documents for the plan. AOK Norwegen needed unconditional Finnish military support to carry out its attack. The Finnish advance into Eastern Karelia in the summer and fall of 1941 engaged the main part of the Soviet forces in the area between the Gulf of Finland and the Arctic Ocean, considerably diminishing the resistance the German units met on their sectors of

¹⁷⁸ Ziemke 1960, p. 185, Wangel 1972, p. 28.

¹⁷⁹ Ziemke 1960, p. 133, Halder 1963, p. 411, Wangel 1972, p. 44.

the Northern Front. The ratio of German and Finnish forces in the summer of 1941 was nearly 1:3 in favor of the Finns. Without their impact on the war, German operations on both the Leningrad Front and on the Northern Front would probably have been significantly less successful and failed even earlier than they did. It is quite doubtful whether Finland would even had joined the Germans in the fight against the Soviet Union without the existence of *Operation Silberfuchs*. For the advance into the Karelian Isthmus and Soviet Karelia north and east of Lake Ladoga, Finnish forces needed significant German military back-up in the Baltic and the Leningrad area and at least strong German support for securing the Petsamo and Arctic Ocean area.

As the German attacks on the Litsa Front petered out against stiff Soviet resistance in July and October 1941, representatives of AOK Norwegen tried to tie the Finnish government more firmly to German war goals by suggesting that the Kola Peninsula could be ceded to Finland after the Soviets had been defeated. The tactics of the Germans were still fairly successful at this point, as Finnish President Risto Ryti wanted to include the whole Kola region in the coming Greater Finland.¹⁸⁰ The provincial administration in Lapland was also ready to organize a new administration on the Kola peninsula.¹⁸¹ In any case, without *Operation Silberfuchs*, the more limited *Operation Renntier* ("Operation Reindeer, which was an uncomplicated German advance into Petsamo and Kolosjoki on Finnish territory in cooperation with Finnish authorities) and *Operation Platinfuchs* ("Operation Platinum Fox" - the German advance on Murmansk), Britain and the Soviet Union would definitely have had more impressive opportunities to hinder Finnish war plans.

In addition, a key political purpose of *Operation Silberfuchs* was probably to make Sweden favorably regard German war aims. In the preparations for *Operation Silberfuchs* in the spring and early summer of 1941, the Germans expected at least that the Swedish policy of neutrality would work in their favor by permitting the transit of German units.¹⁸² The Germans also saw prospects for Sweden joining the war against the Soviet Union, provided that Finland ceded the Åland Islands to Sweden.¹⁸³ Without *Operation Silberfuchs* and the corresponding German moves in the Arctic Ocean region, Sweden would have been inclined to be influenced to a greater degree by British foreign policy.

¹⁸⁰ Ziemke 1963, Manninen 1980, p. 259, Nordström 1996, pp. 275-276.

¹⁸¹ Manninen 1980, p. 269.

¹⁸² Ziemke 1963, p. 294.

¹⁸³ Wangel 1972, p. 23.

Thus, the German government had a strong interest in creating the impression of a future German military build-up in not only the Arctic Ocean region, but also in the Kola and White Sea regions. This effort was also fairly successful for a while, as it probably played a part in enticing Finland to join the war against the Soviet Union, and put pressure on Sweden to allow German troop transits.

Numerous studies have pointed to the existence of the nickel mines and the nickel enrichment plant in Kolosjoki as a key reason for the German military presence in the Petsamo area. However, these views may be exaggerated. The Germans did indeed use the nickel reserves in Kolosjoki, but perhaps partly because mining in the area was cost-efficient. Had these resources not been available, they could probably have acquired nickel ore or other compensating materials elsewhere. The German Head of State, Adolf Hitler, particularly stressed, on many occasions, the importance of the Petsamo nickel, and most scholars have fully accepted this information without critically approaching the presented facts. However, it seems that Hitler made extensive use of the nickel argument with his generals to give the impression of a rational reason for the deployment of German forces in the north. Otherwise, this reason seemed to be lacking.

The Transfer of POWs as a Consequence of a Shift from Offensive to Defensive Thinking

The Germans had originally occupied Norway and made use of Finnish territory for offensive purposes such as submarine attacks against the Western Allies and strikes against the Soviet Union. However, the offensive schemes faded away at a rather early date in both areas, as defensive thinking eventually gained more support. One sign of this change was the steadily increasing use of POW manpower throughout 1942 and further on in 1943 and 1944. In reality, AOK 20 gave up on the attempt to defeat the Soviet forces in the far north, and started instead to improve conditions in the rear. Obviously, the new road connections between Finland and Norway would have had a strategic significance had the Allies implemented their plans for a landing in northern Norway or Petsamo. In such a situation, the Germans would have benefited considerably from a deep rear area with supply roads connecting to stores of ammunition, fuel, food, and equipment.

In Norway the Germans constructed a system of coastal artillery positions, which was a northern extension of the huge *Atlantikwall* called *Festung Norwegen*. This was composed of about 350 coastal fortifications and roughly 20 airports.¹⁸⁴ Defensive concepts eventually gained increased support in Finland as well. The coastal fortifications in the Petsamo area belonged to *Artilleriegruppe Unterabschnitt Finnland*, which formed the northeastern part of *Festung Norwegen*. This unit was composed of four fixed artillery positions in Ristikenttä, Liinahamari, Kap Romanov and Petsamo and a torpedo battery in Siebruniemi at the mouth of the Petsamo Fjord. In 1942, the Germans fortified the Kolosjoki nickel mine and enrichment area in Petsamo with 90 anti-aircraft artillery guns. No industrial plant in Germany was better protected than this spot and in no place at the long Eastern front there was a similar concentration of anti-aircraft positions.¹⁸⁵ The Germans used the expression "*Festung Kolosjoki*" to describe this fortified area. power station at Jäniskoski in Inari. Of the 14 German airports in northern Finland, three were situated in the Petsamo area. These were the airports in Yli-Luostari (Dietlstadt), Salmijärvi (Suonijoki) and Nautsi. Additionally, after making some preliminary plans as early as 1943, the Germans deployed some of their Soviet POWs in the summer of 1944 to construct field fortifications in the Sodankylä (*Schutzwall*) and Karesuando-Kilpisjärvi (*Sturmbock-Stellung*) areas as a bulwark against possible Soviet or Finnish attacks.

As the German attacks on the Petsamo, Salla, and Kiestinki Fronts ground to a halt in the early fall of 1941, AOK Norwegen turned its attention to preparing proper winter accommodations for its forces. The solution was largely to furnish the units with Finnish plywood tents and wooden huts, which were acquired by the thousands. Theoretically, these tents and huts had the capacity to house the whole of AOK, but huts were also imported from Germany and Norway.¹⁸⁶ From the fall of 1942 onwards, the Germans put considerable emphasis on improving their living conditions and accommodations. The female representatives of the German Red Cross participated in upgrading stables and residential huts in the city of Rovaniemi and the Lapland area into cozy Soldier's Homes (*Soldatenheim*). Thus, the soldiers could relax, keep company with each other, listen to German music and watch German movies. All this aimed to keep up their morale.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁴ Fjørtoft 1982, Rolf 1998.

¹⁸⁵ Paasilinna 1983, 383-384.

¹⁸⁶ Westerlund 2008, p. 137.

¹⁸⁷ Herrmann 1957, pp. 216-217.

The Mortality Rate among the POWs

As stated earlier, the mortality rate in the German POW camps in Finland was probably around 20%; considerably less than elsewhere on the German Eastern Front. It is estimated that almost 3.3 million Soviet POWs out of the 5.7 million who were in German custody, or a little under 58%, died.¹⁸⁸ However, there were regional differences in the mortality rates. The Germans founded four *Reichskommissariats*, or administrative areas, behind the frontlines. In one of these, *Reichskommissariat Ostland*, the mortality rate among POWs was 29.4% between late November 1941 and January 1942. The corresponding number for *Reichskommissariat Ukraine* was 46.4% between December 1941 and February 1942. It was as high as 85.7% in the *Generalgouvernement* (Polish areas) from fall 1941 to April 1942.¹⁸⁹ This variation was connected to the operational conditions and special circumstances in each of these areas, even though the POW policy of the German High Command also affected mortality rates.

However, the main reason for the considerably lower mortality rates in the far north – where the Soviet POWs represented, in general, a relatively scarce resource in terms of manpower - was that the Germans took better care of the POWs in order to sustain their ability to work.

The Treatment of the POWs and the Need to Maintain Their Ability to Work

In order to help out with the Army Group's supply problems, the Germans likely brought at least 20,000 Soviet POWs to areas administered by AOK 20 from summer 1942 onwards. As the POWs represented an important labor reserve, it was necessary for the Germans to see to it that they remained relatively fit and able to complete their work assignments. The Soviet POWs brought to Norway and Finland were meant to serve as slave labor, and were at least to some extent hand-picked for just such a task. In other words, the Germans had screened out the physically unfit, and possibly also politically dangerous prisoners, before they were transported to the north.¹⁹⁰ Accordingly, the POW policies of AOK 20 were not geared for the wide scale liquidation of Soviet POWs. If this had been the intention of the Germans, it would have been unnecessary to bring them to Finland in the first place.

¹⁸⁸ Streit 1978, p. 10.

¹⁸⁹ Neerland Soleim 2004, p. 173.

¹⁹⁰ Neerland Soleim 2004, p. 174.

A hundred Soviet POWs were transferred from Finnish POW Camp 9 at Ajossaari in Kemi to Palkisoja in Inari for lumber work and ploughing for the Germans. The Germans were in charge of guarding and feeding the POWs, and the Finns oversaw their work. A disagreement arose between the Germans and the Finns at Palkisoja about the treatment of the POWs. Captain Seibold, a German, wrote a report where he raised concerns about the food supply, medical care, and general treatment of the POWs. He stated that because the work the POWs were doing was for the benefit of the armed forces and because the POWs were not unwilling to work, at least token efforts should be made to maintain their ability to work.¹⁹¹ The aforementioned disagreement was quickly resolved, but it proves how, even before the large-scale transfer of POWs to Finland, there were individual German officers who tried to look after the well-being of the POWs.

In September 1942, the German guards at Uhtua in Kiestinki reported that they had generally treated the POWs quite well. The POWs were given warm soup two times a day and a quarter of a loaf of bread. The POWs themselves also found their conditions to be satisfactory, although they did not receive sufficient food given the long days they had to work. They had received harsh treatment during their time in captivity and been beaten with fists and sticks, but not anymore. Lieutenant General August Krakau, the Divisional Commander, also confirmed this information. According to his orders, the POWs received 50 grams of meat every day, and the guards had been forbidden to strike the prisoners.¹⁹² The health of the Soviet POWs in the custody of AOK 20 in northern Lapland improved in spring 1942 because the Germans had unlimited amounts of Swedish turnip, potato, and horse meat soup to offer the prisoners. The improved food supply situation might have been due to the fact that the number of prisoners in the camps had been steadily decreasing. Few new Soviet POWs had been captured on the Petsamo, Alakurtti, and Kiestinki Fronts, and no prisoners had been transferred from the continent because epidemics were raging in the south.¹⁹³

¹⁹¹ Selonteko olosuhteista Palkisojan vartiokomennuskunnassa 15.11.1941. Päämajan järjestelyosasto. Olosuhteita Palkisojan sv työkomennuskunnassa 24.6.1942 [Report on the conditions in the Palkisoja guard detachment November 15, 1941 Organization Section of the Finnish General Headquarters. Conditions in the Palkisoja POW work detachment June 24, 1942], T 19654/F1. The National Archives of Finland.

¹⁹² Väriikki Frank Jernströmin toimintakertomukset 14. ja 30.9.1942. Yhteysesikunta Roi, [Warrant Officer Frank Jernström's report September 14 and 30, 1942] T 5471, Kansio I. The National Archives of Finland.

¹⁹³ Valtiollisen poliisin Rovaniemen alaosaston tilannekatsaus toukokuulta 1942. EK-VALPO. Sotavankileirit. Asiakansio 595 [Situation report of the State Police detachment in Rovaniemi

In March 1942, Organization Todt's POWs were apparently fairly well supplied with equipment. For example, they were issued new Norwegian uniforms. In Kuusamo every POW had two blankets and proper footwear. According to the report of a Finnish liaison officer, the working efficiency of the Soviet POWs had nevertheless decreased considerably due to insufficient food supply. The prisoners captured in Rostov and brought to Finland in particular were ill-fed, and consequently they were supposed to do as little work as possible and get plenty of rest for the first two weeks. The high-ranking officials of Organization Todt were puzzled why their special instructions had not been carried out. After all, they felt that it was worthwhile to take proper care of the POW laborers, as increased rations would improve working efficiency.¹⁹⁴

There were 260 Soviet POWs being treated in an SS hospital in Kuusamo in May 1943. The patients received sufficient, good-quality food, clean clothing, and either three cigarettes or a cigar every day. It was strictly forbidden to bully or beat the POWs.¹⁹⁵ German First Lieutenant Koch, stationed in Kiestinki, was particularly interested in the well-being of the POWs in the early fall of 1943. He made certain that the POWs lived in properly built accommodations and instructed the commanders of various units and work sites to save the scraps from the kitchens for the POWs, as well as the cigarette butts. The rationale for this policy was that the POWs were engaged in hard physical labor. In order to properly carry out their duties, they should be offered the material required to do so.¹⁹⁶ In the spring of 1944, 1,500 Soviet POWs were brought to Finland from Danzig, with 350 of them being sent to Hyrynsalmi. Upon arrival, these POWs were suitably clothed but hungry, and eleven of them died on the journey. The aforementioned POWs were used at Hyrynsalmi to take care of the horses, the oats of which they apparently stole and cooked as porridge on more than one occasion. Captain Deinert immediately gave orders that all of these POWs were to receive the largest permitted daily rations for the time being. This German military ration (*Verpflegungssatz*) included, among other things, 600 grams of bread. Deinert also gave orders that the POWs should not be used for hard labor for a time. Thanks to

from May 1942 STATE POLICE, Prisoner of War Camp Folder 595]. The National Archives of Finland.

¹⁹⁴ Luutnantti Erik Krantz in toimintakertomus 11.11.1942. Yhteysesikunta Roi.[Report of Lieutenant Erik Krantz November 11, 1942, Liaison staff Roi] T 5471.Folder II. The National Archives of Finland.

¹⁹⁵ Alftan 2005, p. 123.

¹⁹⁶ Luutnantti Leonid Schaterin toimintakertomus 29.8.–13.9.1943. Yhteysesikunta Roi [Report of Lieutenant Leonid Schater August 29 - September 13, 1942] T 5471, Folder X. The National Archives of Finland.

the aforementioned procedures, the food supply of the POWs improved considerably.¹⁹⁷ In comparison to 1942–1943, there were very few escape attempts by Soviet POWs in Kuusamo in 1944. It was believed that an important reason for this change was the increased attention the Germans had paid to the supply situation of the POWs.¹⁹⁸

A historical parallel demonstrates that the death rate among POWs in the Arctic region could be high even if there was an urgent need for their labor. The Murmansk railroad between Lake Ladoga and Murmansk was constructed between 1915 and 1918 by 60,000–70,000 German, Austrian and Hungarian POWs in Russian custody. It has been estimated that a total of 25,000 of these POWs, corresponding to 35–40% of them, could have perished either at the construction sites or later in their interment camps. However, the Russians did not intend to exhaust the POWs. The terrain, the climate and living conditions were harsh and housing and supplies were poor since equipment, medicines and foodstuffs had to be transported by train from Petrograd (St. Petersburg). The death rate in the construction sites was low as POWs suffering from scurvy, tuberculosis and rheumatism were continually transferred to remote places, where the bulk of them later perished.¹⁹⁹

Mortality Rates among the Soviet POWs in Norway

It is commonly believed that approximately 13,000 Soviet POWs, including Serbs and Poles, perished on Norwegian soil.²⁰⁰ However, there is some uncertainty about this figure. The Pax Lexikon suggests that the total number of dead POWs was approximately 17,000.²⁰¹

If we assume that 13,000 out of the total of 93,000 POWs in Norway died, the overall mortality rate would be 14%. However, we must take account of the fact

¹⁹⁷ Luutnantti Samuel J. Pentin raportti 14.-15.3.1944 ja luutnantti Tauno Kaliman raportti 30.3.–15.4.1944 Yhteysesikunta Roi [Report of Lieutenant Samuel J. Pentti March 14-15, 1944 and report of Lieutenant Tauno Kalima March 30 - April 15, 1944 Liaison Staff Roi] T 5471, Folders XI and XIII. The National Archives of Finland.

¹⁹⁸ Sotavirkailija Vjadoskelov Vladimirovin toimintakertomus 28.5–11.6.1944. Yhteysesikunta Roi [Report of military clerk Viadoskelov Vladimirov May 28 - June 11, 1944 Liaison Staff Roi], T 5471, Folder XI. The National Archives of Finland.

¹⁹⁹ Nachtigal 2001, pp. 124-126, Nachtigal 2006, pp. 272-273.

²⁰⁰ Koch 1988, p. 76.

²⁰¹ The entry: Tysk økonomisk politikk i Norge. Norges Lexis nettutgave av Pax Leksikon. [German economic policy in Norway. Norway's Lexis net service from Pax Leksikon] <http://www.norgeslexi.com/krigslex/t/t4.html>

that many Soviet POWs died due to British aerial attacks. Somewhere between 1,800 and 2,098 Soviet POWs died in such a manner in the vicinity of Tjøtta in Helgeland on the north Norwegian coast when British pilots unknowingly sank *m/s Rigel*, a transport vessel in the process of evacuating POWs, on November 27, 1944.²⁰² A total of 893 POWs are known to have perished in the similar sinking of the steamer *Palatia* on October 21, 1942.²⁰³ There are general estimates that over 3,000 Soviet POWs died in British aerial attacks in Norwegian waters.²⁰⁴ As the Germans were not responsible for these deaths, the number of deaths among Soviet POWs in German custody would have been around 10,000, which corresponds to a mortality rate of around 11%.

Mortality rates among the forced laborers in Norway were relatively low, as only 100 of the total of 9,000 workers died, and even of these 18 died in British attacks.²⁰⁵ This would only amount to a mortality rate of 1.1% among the forced laborers.

Mortality rates among Soviet POWs in Norway were highest in northern Norway. The Russian researcher M.M. Panikar has estimated that the general mortality rate among Soviet POWs in Norway was 14.5%. However, it was about 40% in northern Norway.²⁰⁶ Accordingly, one of the largest cemeteries for deceased POWs was in Høybuktnoen, on the Petsamo side of the border in Sør-Varanger. In 1945, there were 1,502 bodies buried there.²⁰⁷ At least roughly 720 Soviet POWs died in the Elvenes camp,²⁰⁸ and a total of 2,300 graves for Soviet POWs have been registered in the Sør-Varanger area.²⁰⁹ This means that 17.7% of all the Soviet POWs in Norway were buried in this single municipality. After the war, 8,651 POW bodies were counted in the 125 regions of the five northernmost counties (*fylke*) of Norway. The other, southern counties had 2,053 bodies in 28 regions.²¹⁰ This would indicate that 80.8% of the bodies of POWs that were known at the time were buried in the north and that 81.7% of the burial sites were situated there.

²⁰² Koch 1988, p. 76, Carlsen 2003, Mezjentsev 2007, p. 89.

²⁰³ Information provided by Michael Stokke.

²⁰⁴ Stokke 2003, p. 4.

²⁰⁵ Information provided by Michael Stokke.

²⁰⁶ Panikar 2008, pp. 15-16, 18.

²⁰⁷ Neerland Soleim 2004, p. 171.

²⁰⁸ Information provided by Johan B. Siira, Steffenek 1995, Vedlegg Nr. 4, p. 41.

²⁰⁹ Helskog 2004, p. 43, Gorter-Gorter-Suprun 2005, p. 19.

²¹⁰ De russiske krigsgraver i Norge [Russian military graves in Norway] 1951, p. 191.

According to one report, 1,492 Soviet POWs died in the nine southernmost counties of Norway.²¹¹ As there were 15,520 Soviet POWs in these counties, the mortality rate among them was around 9.6%.²¹² Even within southern Norway, the mortality rates among the Soviet POWs who participated in the building of the coastal artillery batteries were higher than those who were stationed inland.²¹³ This was due to the exhausting nature of the fortification work, the harsher climate on the coast, and the supply and transportation problems there. The POWs also did not receive as much food from the local people in these sparsely settled areas as those held in population centers inland did.

Among the POWs brought to Norway, mortality rates were particularly high among the Serbian POWs. Cveja Jovanović, who was held as a POW by the Germans in Norway during the war, estimates that 4,200 Yugoslavs and Croats were shipped to Norway.²¹⁴ The real figure may be a little smaller or larger than this, but 2,900 of these POWs are known to have died, resulting in a mortality rate of about 69%. Under pressure from the Red Cross, the Germans granted POW status to the Yugoslavs in the spring 1943, after which they were treated better as the duty of guarding them was shifted from the SS to the Wehrmacht. Consequently, the mortality rate decreased to a fraction of what it had been.²¹⁵ There is a document in the Militärarchiv in Freiburg that focuses on the mortality rates among the Serbian POWs from the point of view of the German leadership. According to a telex message sent to AOK Norwegen in 1943, 374 Yugoslav concentration camp prisoners were brought to a camp at Karasjok in late July. By December 8, 1942, which amounted to a period of 138 days, 140 of them had been shot due to sabotage, refusal to work, or attempts to escape. In addition, 123 prisoners died due to exhaustion or illness, for a total of 236 prisoners. This was a mortality rate of 70.3%. The remaining prisoners were transferred to southern Norway on December 15, 1942, except for 46 inmates who were too ill for transport.²¹⁶

²¹¹ The counties (fylke) are: Sogn og Fjordane, Hordaland, Rogaland, Vest-Agder, Øst-Agder, Telemark, Vestfold, Østfold and Buskerud.

²¹² Information provided by Michael Stokke.

²¹³ Stokke 2003, pp. 3–4.

²¹⁴ Jovanović 1985, p. 374.

²¹⁵ Christie 1972, pp. 58–59, Koch 1988, pp. 98–99.

²¹⁶ Jovanović 1985, copy of the telex message on page across from p. 128.

Mortality Rates among the POWs in German Custody in Finland

Mortality rates among POWs on the Eastern Front were highest during the first months of *Operation Barbarossa*. Of the Soviet POWs captured by the Germans, about 2 million, or 60%, died during the six months between October 1941 and March 1942.²¹⁷ The main reason for this high mortality rate was the Germans' inability – or unwillingness – to provide proper supplies to the Soviet POWs. The number of POWs captured by AOK Norwegen at this point was still fairly small, as it was below 5,000. Thus, AOK Norwegen did not have the same problems with taking care of the POWs that were experienced on the rest of the Eastern Front. This is because it was possible to organize at least partly adequate supplies and accommodations for such a small group. Since there were already plans for bringing POWs to the north, AOK 20 was ready for the new prisoners when they were actually brought to northern Finland. AOK 20 was able to make sufficient preparations for larger quantities of prisoners, and to manage their supplies. Conversely, there were only relatively few preparations before the war for the proper supply of the enormous numbers of POWs that were captured elsewhere on the Eastern Front.



POWs in the Kämärä labor camp in 1942. *Kansallisarkisto*

²¹⁷ Encyclopedia of Prisoners of War and Internment 2000, p. 328.

The mass mortality among the Soviet POWs held by the Finns falls into a period of ten months from December 1941 to September 1942, during which three quarters of the deaths occurred. There is no similar pattern evident for POWs held in German camps in Finland, where POWs died at a relatively stable rate throughout the war. In Finland, it would be more accurate to say that the Germans slowly worked POWs to death in their camps, rather than starved them, even though their food supply was rather modest. On the other hand, Gunnar Rosén, historian of the Finnish Red Cross, has claimed that the Soviet POWs held by the Germans in northern Finland lived in inhuman conditions, and that they died in droves in POW camps and at forced labor sites.²¹⁸

There is not enough data for us to reach a comprehensive understanding of the mortality rate among the Soviet POWs held in German custody. However, we do have enough fragmentary knowledge to make overall estimates.

The Province of Lapland, Lake Nangujärvi in Inari, and Vallitunsaari in Kemi. According to a list drawn up by the State Provincial Office of Lapland in 2006, a total of 3,503 Soviet soldiers are buried in the province.²¹⁹ Of these, an estimated 500 probably died in the battles of the Winter and Continuation Wars. The other 3,000 were Soviet POWs. A total of 1,633 Soviet POWs died in the Finnish-run prison camp of Ajossaari in Kemi. In addition, dozens of other prisoners also probably died in Finnish custody. When we deduct the aforementioned numbers from the list of Soviet soldiers buried in the province, it would seem that around 1,300 Soviet POWs died in German custody in the current area of Finnish Lapland.

There is a German burial ground from 1942-1943 for Soviet POWs at Lake Nangujärvi in Inari, where 140 bodies have been interred. As the camps in the area were originally intended for around 700 POWs,²²⁰ the mortality rate was possibly at least 25%. In any case, there were 323 POWs at Lake Nangujärvi in March 1942, a third of whom were unable to work.²²¹ If we assume that a little more than a hundred POWs had died by then, there would have originally been around 450 men at the Lake Nangujärvi camp. As 140 of them died, the mortality rate among them

²¹⁸ Rosén 2002, p. 511.

²¹⁹ Luettelo Lapin läänissä sijaitsevasta venäläisten sotilaiden hautapaikoista 14.12.2006 [Catalog of the burial sites of Russian soldiers in the province of Lapland December 14, 2006]. The State Provincial Office of Lapland, police department.

²²⁰ Vankileirien saaristo. Saksalaiset hakkasivat estoitta Inarin ikimetsää [The prison camp archipelago. The Germans cut the primeval forest of Inari without inhibition] in Ylä-Lappi 16.6.1997.

²²¹ Westerlund 2008, p. 283.

would have been around one third of the total. There was another camp of around 800 inmates at Vallitunsaari in Kemi. The cemetery there contains 162 Soviet POWs who died in the camp.²²² The mortality rate for the entire war would thus have been around 20%.

The Salla area. No data exists for the total number of Soviet POWs in the Salla area. However, we do know that during the latter part of 1941, 312 Soviet POWs died at Stalag 309 in Kuolajärvi. If we assume that mortality rates remained stable throughout the war, this would mean that around 600 POWs died every year, for a total figure of 2,000 casualties for the entire war. However, we do not know whether the aforementioned figure was only for the POW camp at Kuolajärvi, or for all registered and deceased Soviet POWs in Stalag 309. During the latter part of 1941, the mortality rate among the POWs in the Kuolajärvi camp was 11%.

According to the POW card catalog of the Finnish Red Cross, 21 Soviet POWs died in Salla, 46 at Kuolajärvi, and 30 at Kairala. Thus, a total of 97 Soviet POWs died in Finnish custody in the Salla area.

The Suomussalmi-Kuusamo-Kiestinki area. There is likewise no data on the overall death rate in this area. However, it would seem that at least 600 Soviet POWs died at the construction sites for the Hyrynsalmi-Kuusamo railroad alone. The bodies of the Soviet POWs found in the POW camps connected to the railroad were transferred to the collection grave of the Kuusamo border guard in the 1950s. In 1998, 772 corpses were buried there.²²³ Some of them likely died in combat, though we can assume most of them were Soviet POWs who died in German captivity. There are probably still some bodies belonging to dead POWs in the terrain around the field railroad, as POWs were also buried at the cemetery in Sänkikangas,²²⁴ near the POW camp in Tervajoki, and right in the banks of the railroad.²²⁵ According to the Finnish Red Cross' card catalog, five Soviet POWs died in Kuusamo in Finnish captivity.

²²² Syrjö-Lipponen 1998, p. 30-42, Lapin lääninhallituksen luettelo haudatuista saksalaisista sotilaisista ja neuvostosotilaisista [Catalog of the Lapland provincial administration of buried German and Soviet soldiers]. The Provincial Archive of Oulu, Aaltonen 2005, p.16, Kemi ja Keminmaa kiistelevät Vallitunsaaresta [Kemi and Keminmaa quarrel over Vallitunsaari], in the newspaper *Helsingin Sanomat* July 21, 2005.

²²³ Syrjö-Lipponen 1998, pp. 24-30, Archive of the Ministry of Education.

²²⁴ Sotavangit lepäävät unohdettuina [Prisoners of war lie forgotten]. article in the newspaper *Kaleva* July 24, 2001.

²²⁵ Skiftesvik 1977, Heikkinen 1998, pp. 30-31.

If an estimated 600 POWs died out of the total of 2,500 POWs and forced laborers who worked on the field railroad, then this would amount to a mortality rate of 25%. The mortality rate in Railroad Construction Camp 3 in Kuusamo was probably about 20-25% in the spring and summer of 1943, as 124 POWs, including those shot, died out of a total of 500-600 in just three months.²²⁶

According to the card catalog of the Finnish Red Cross, 54 POWs died at Suomussalmi during the Continuation War, and 12 at Juntusranta in Suomussalmi for a total of 66 dead Soviet POWs. POW Camps 15 and 32 operated at Suomussalmi at different times, along with a few POW companies. Four Soviet POWs died at POW Camp 32, which operated among other places at Hyrynsalmi, and one at Taivalkoski. Thus, it is likely that at most 71 Soviet POWs died in Finnish custody in the area.

There is no data on the number of Soviet POWs who died in the Kiestinki area, and the Finnish Red Cross' card catalog contains no information on how many died in Finnish custody.

Petsamo. There is likewise no data on the overall mortality rate among the POWs in the Petsamo area. However, if we note that 2,300 Soviet POWs were buried in Sør-Varanger, Petsamo's neighboring municipality to the west, the death toll in Petsamo may also have been high, as we can assume that POWs were treated more or less in the same manner in both areas.

A total of 5,997 German soldiers were buried in Parkkina between 1941 and 1944.²²⁷ Even larger figures have been proposed, such as 6,070,²²⁸ 6,000–7,000,²²⁹ 10,000,²³⁰ and 12,000.²³¹ A memorial erected in the Parkkina German military cemetery in 1994 states: "the Arctic Ocean Front. Dedicated to our 12,000 fallen comrades" (*Eismeerfront 1941–1944. Unseren 12 000 toten Kameraden*).²³² However, we can presume that this total of 12,000 German soldiers was for the entire Arctic Ocean Front, not the number of soldiers buried in that particular cemetery.

²²⁶ Alikersantti Vjadoskelav Vladimirovin raportti 29.5.12.6.1943. Yhteysesikunta Roi. [Report of Corporal Viadoskelav Vladimirov May 29 - June 12, 1943 Liaison Staff Roi] T 5471, Folder IX. The National Archives of Finland.

²²⁷ Valttonen 1997, p. 135.

²²⁸ Matsek 2005.

²²⁹ Paasilinna 1983, p. 364.

²³⁰ Korpi 1994, p. 604, Kaukoranta 1997, p. 298.

²³¹ Lehtipuu 2005, p. 706.

²³² Tuomisto 1998, p. 263, Gorter-Gorter-Suprun 2005, p. 13.

According to Russian sources, the number of buried German soldiers would have been 6,074 in 1943, and 10,000 for the entire war.²³³ AOK 20 lost 16,373 men between 1941 and 1944.²³⁴ Perhaps half of them fell on the Petsamo Front or more to the west, in northern Norway, towards the end of the war. According to one estimate, at least 5,500 German soldiers died in the area of the Arctic Ocean in 1944-45. Most of these deaths were in Norway.²³⁵ Thus, it is likely that the number of burials at the Parkkina German military cemetery would have been around 6,000.

However, Soviet soldiers were not buried in this German cemetery. POWs and executed German soldiers had their own burial grounds in Kripaniemi (*Sieniniemi*) near Kaakkurinjoki, to the east of the River Petsamo, across from Parkkina. German deserters were also executed in this area.²³⁶

Yrjö Råme, a Finnish Orthodox priest from Petsamo, claims that he and the German Catholic priest Josef Tomaschkin carried out over 4,000 burial ceremonies, with those being buried belonging to different denominations. Most of these men were probably German soldiers who had succumbed to their wounds in the infirmaries in Parkkina. Some were local Finns, Lutheran and Orthodox, but it is possible that some of the buried were Soviet POWs.²³⁷ According to one source, 450–550 people were buried at Kripaniemi.²³⁸ Most of these must in any case have been POWs, as the number of executed German soldiers could hardly have been in the hundreds.

According to the card catalog of the Finnish Red Cross, two Soviet POWs died at Petsamo, and 51 in POW Camp 8, which operated at Kolosjoki in 1941-1942. Thus, 53 Soviet POWs died in Finnish custody in Petsamo.

Pori. As mentioned earlier, the Finns loaned 207 Soviet POWs to the Germans in early 1942 to expand the airport in Pori. When the Finns demanded at the end of the year that these prisoners be returned due to the bad treatment they had received, 93 of them had already perished while in German custody. This was a mortality rate of 45% for just one year.

²³³ Matsak 2005, p. 59.

²³⁴ *Jatkosodan historia 6* [History of the Continuation War, Part 6] 1994, p. 490.

²³⁵ Fløtten 1993, p. 104.

²³⁶ Information provided by Arvo Kaarninen.

²³⁷ Information provided by Raimo Råme, *Kälkäjä* 1991, p. 72, *Kälkäjä* 2002, p. 104.

²³⁸ Paasilinna 1983, p. 359.

In addition to these fatalities, 222 other Soviet POWs brought to Finland by the Germans were buried in the cemetery in Vähä-Rauma. The total number of Soviet POWs buried in Pori would thus have been either 317²³⁹ or 319.²⁴⁰ Five Soviet POWs died in Finnish custody in Pori.²⁴¹

Organization Todt. Organization Todt had about a thousand Soviet POWs in its custody in late 1942. According to a Finnish liaison officer, these were part of the same "dying crowd" that had been there since the previous fall. Despite the fact that no Soviet POWs were shot, 216 of them had died of exhaustion and illness in about two months.²⁴² This was a mortality rate of almost 22%.

An estimate of the total mortality rate. The German researcher Reinhard Otto has estimated that around 3,000 Soviet POWs died while in AOK 20 custody, excluding northeastern Norway. This would make for a mortality rate of around 10%.²⁴³ However, several factors indicate that the total number of deaths was higher than this.

The data on the mortality rates among the Soviet POWs in German custody in the Province of Lapland, Salla, Suomussalmi-Kuusamo-Kiestinki, Petsamo, and Pori indicate that there were at least 4,700 deaths and probably more. The information that we do have on the region is scattered both by area and time. Nevertheless, it indicates that the mortality rate varied between 11% and 45% depending on the area. By combining this data, we can estimate that the total number of deaths would have been around 5,000, or a fifth of the total number of Soviet POWs placed in the custody of AOK 20.

The German POW Policy in the North

As a conclusion it can be said that *Operation Silberfuchs* was basically just an eastern extension of the anti-British German strategy of occupying Norway. The attack lacked a substantial connection not only to Finnish operations in the Lake Ladoga area, but also to the overall plans for *Operation Barbarossa*. In World War II, Germany mobilized altogether about 21 million soldiers. Of these,

²³⁹ Syrjö-Lipponen 1998, p. 11.

²⁴⁰ Pietola 1987, p. 250.

²⁴¹ Koivuniemi 2004, p. 50.

²⁴² Luutnantti Erkki Krantzin toimintakertomus 20.12.1942–5.1.1943. Yhteysesikunta Roi [Report of Lieutenant Erkki Krantz December 20, 1942 - January 5, 1943. Liaison Staff Roi] T 5471, Folder XII. The National Archives of Finland.

²⁴³ Westerlund 2008, p. 288.

approximately 500,000, or about 2%, were more or less permanently stationed in Norway, Finland, and the areas of this front taken from the USSR in the north. Although these figures do not seem particularly large, it is still evident that the Germans deployed a considerable military force in the north. The strategic significance of deploying such an army has, with good reason, been questioned, as greater military benefits would have been achieved by deploying these forces on the Moscow or Leningrad Fronts in 1941, or to other areas of the Eastern Front.

The POW policies carried out by the Germans on their Northern Front, which is to say in Norway and Finland, form their own cohesive whole. These policies are a kind of hybrid of the policies carried out in the West and the East. The Germans treated their British, French, Belgian, and North American POWs considerably better than their Slavic ones, such as their Polish, Serbian, and particularly their Soviet POWs. This racial segregation was also formally approved in the guidelines of the German military leadership.²⁴⁴ In practice this meant that Germany followed fairly extensively and with few exceptions the guidelines of the 1929 Geneva Convention on POWs when it came to Western POWs. On the other hand, Germany did not even attempt to follow the Convention when it came to Slavic POWs captured on the Eastern Front. As a direct consequence of German POW policy, only 3.5 to 5.1% of Western POWs perished,²⁴⁵ while the corresponding figure for Slavic POWs was far higher.

In planning for an attack on the Soviet Union, German military officials calculated that their troops would capture at least two to three million Soviet POWs, one to two million of whom would be taken in the first six weeks. Nevertheless, no plans were drawn up for the supply, accommodation, and transportation of these prisoners. In April 1941, the German military leadership was clearly not planning to provide sufficient food supplies for its Soviet POWs. In the early phases, there were also no particular plans for making use of the labor force that the POWs represented. The people in charge felt that were the Germans to provide appropriate food supplies to their prisoners, it would hamper their ability to feed their own troops and civilian population. This attitude, combined with malnourishment, typhoid, and shootings, resulted in the deaths of 1.4 million Soviet POWs in German custody just during 1941.²⁴⁶ Mounting military setbacks and the troubling possibilities raised by them made, in late 1941, the Germans

²⁴⁴ Documents on prisoners of war 1979, p. 207.

²⁴⁵ Encyclopedia of Prisoners of War and Internment 2000, p. 329.

²⁴⁶ Homze 1967, p. 81, Herbert 1997, pp. 140–141, Tooze 2006, pp. 482–483.

reconsider their attitude towards using Soviet POWs as labor. From December of 1941 onwards, both military and civilian officials tried to come up with plans for improving the fitness of the POWs and improving their food supply. These plans included extra rations, bed rest, the manufacturing of Russian Bread (*Russenbrot*) from substitutes, the improvement of the food supplies of Soviet POWs brought to Germany, and the assignment of POWs to agricultural labor for "fattening" (*Aufpäppelung*) up. However, these procedures were undertaken too late. In addition, they often lacked the desired effect due to the indecisive way in which they were carried out. Meanwhile, some officials opposed them. As a result, the Germans could only employ 167,000, or 5%, of the 3.4 million Soviet POWs captured between June 1941 and March 1942 as laborers.²⁴⁷

There were three primary causes for the mass deaths among the Soviet POWs captured in the USSR and brought to Germany. First, the Germans neglected the basic care of their Soviet POWs, especially during the first eight months of the war. POWs were often housed outdoors without any accommodations, shelter, or proper food supply. They were also transported in terminally cruel conditions.²⁴⁸ Second, the Germans used Soviet POWs for exhausting physical labor, often gradually working them to death. Third, the regulations on the work of the POWs required harsh discipline, which led – through shootings and disciplinary procedures – to the deaths of some of the prisoners.

While the German intentions to use Soviet POWs as labor were beset by many setbacks, the situation was better in the north. Nevertheless, even here the German did not follow the 1929 Geneva Convention in their treatment of their POWs. They never attempted to arrange the conditions of their prisoners to fulfill those specified by the Convention, and are not known to have even alluded to this treaty.

When Soviet POWs were being assigned to construct railroads in Norway in 1942, Hitler expressed the personal wish that the prisoners be given additional rations to better withstand the arctic climate. However, his wish was not respected for the most part. In February 1943, Hitler gave orders for lavish additional food supplies for the prisoners before they were to be transferred out of Norway.²⁴⁹

In December 1943, the commander of the Polar Area (LXXI A.K/71. *Polarbereich*) declared that the state of the food supplies, accommodations, and

²⁴⁷ Herbert 1997, pp. 156–157.

²⁴⁸ Streit 1978, p. 137.

²⁴⁹ Milward 1972, pp. 275–276.

clothes of the Soviet POWs in northern Norway were worse than those in southern Norway.²⁵⁰ In any case, the Germans followed a very different policy with respect to their POWs in the north when compared with the east. The POWs in the north received better supplies, even though this was still often insufficient to meet the needs of the prisoners, and there were deficiencies and disruptions in these supply efforts. There were probably around 110,000 POWs in German custody in Finland and Norway. Up to 96% of them were transferred there from far away to provide labor for the various local projects in the area. To maintain the ability to work of these imported prisoners, the Germans had to take care of the basic needs of their prisoners in an operational area where – unlike in the areas taken from the USSR in the east – there was a constant shortage of labor.

The Germans often treated their Soviet POWs in a whimsical and unsystematic manner in the north. A German captain stationed in Petsamo complained about this state of affairs: "sometimes the POWs are treated very harshly, beaten and shot, and then for long they are handled in a far too soft and 'easy' manner".²⁵¹ Regimental CO Wolf H. Halsti, who also participated in the Lapland War, has noted in his memoirs that the Germans treated their Soviet POWs in an uneven manner. On the one hand, there were camps and work sites where the POWs were in good health and treated in an exemplary manner. On the other hand, there were also extraordinarily wretched places, such as the camps around the Hyrynsalmi-Kuusamo railway construction works.²⁵²

The relatively low death rate among the Soviet POWs in Norway has been explained by proposing that they received food from either the civilian population or from other, better situated fellow POWs, with their German guards turning a blind eye.²⁵³ However, there were few civilians who could have helped the POWs near the front on the eastern border of Finland. On the front, the German troops had to concentrate their energies on defeating and fighting the enemy. This led to an operational atmosphere where absolute obedience and devotion to work was required of the POWs at every stage, while supply worked less effectively than in the areas behind the front. Nevertheless, even in these conditions the Germans were better able to organize proper supplies for their POWs than in the more southerly sections of the German-Soviet Front. This is due to the fact that the areas around

²⁵⁰ Neerland Soleim 2004, p. 157.

²⁵¹ Alftan 2005, p. 117.

²⁵² Halsti 1980, pp. 255–257.

²⁵³ Neerland Soleim 2004, p. 174.

the Gulf of Finland and the Arctic Ocean were, from a military standpoint, of secondary importance.

The British researcher Norman Davies has drawn up a crude estimate of the use of military forces in Europe in 1939-1945, counted in terms of millions of man-months. From the data presented by him, I have selected the data on Finnish, German, and Soviet forces on the front in the Gulf of Finland and the Arctic Ocean, leading to the following table:²⁵⁴

Table 2. The active use of troops in military actions in Europe 1939-1945

Military action	Man-months	Share
	millions (n)	(%)
The occupation of Poland, fall 1939	2.6	0.6
The Finnish Winter War, 1939-40	9.0	2.0
The occupations of Denmark and Norway 1940	0.04	-
The German attack in the West 1940	9.0	2.0
The war between Germany and the USSR 1941-45		
- the front from the Gulf of Finland to the Black Sea	352.0	77.9
- the front from the Gulf of Finland to the Arctic Ocean	54.0	11.9
- the front in Finland	40.0	8.8
- the German front in northern Finland	14.0	3.1
North Africa	5.0	1.1
The fronts in Italy 1943-45	4.4	1.0
The Western Front 1944-45	16.5	3.6
Total	452.0	100.0

²⁵⁴ Davies 2006, p. 21, *Jatkosodan historia. Osa 4* [History of the Continuation War. Part 4] 1993, p. 141.

This table demonstrates the enormous relative proportion of effort spent on the German-Soviet Eastern Front in comparison to all military actions. Almost nine tenths of the total man-months were used in conjunction with that conflict. The front from the Gulf of Finland to the Arctic Ocean appears to claim a fairly large share, as 54 million man-months were used there. This was 11.9% of the total used in military actions throughout Europe. However, the front lines did not move much after the fall of 1941, and this front mainly became a relatively quiet area of stationary warfare. The front lines started moving again only shortly before the Soviet attacks over the Karelian Isthmus and Eastern Karelia, and in Petsamo later in the spring.

We can also see from the number of KIA (Killed in Action) and MIA (Missing in Action) soldiers on the front that it was of secondary importance in military terms. At least 265,000 Soviet soldiers appear to have fallen or gone missing in battle against Finnish and German troops on the Gulf of Finland – Arctic Ocean Front in 1941–1944.²⁵⁵ According to one estimate, the Soviet army suffered over 300,000 casualties.²⁵⁶ Still, out of a total of 8.9 million Soviet soldiers killed in action, this figure amounts to only around 3% of the dead. However, it does account for 11.9% of the soldiers committed to that front. Meanwhile the Germans and Finns suffered about 85,000 killed in action on the same front. This corresponds to 2.2% of the total number of soldiers killed and missing in action that Germany and its allies suffered on the entire Eastern Front.

The Finns took a little over 64,000 and the Germans around 9,000 POWs on the Gulf of Finland – Arctic Ocean Front. This amounts to a total of around 70,000 prisoners, which is only 1.2% of the 5.7 million POWs captured by Germany and its allies. The Soviets only captured a few thousand Germans and Finns on the same front, which corresponds to only around 0.1% of the four million or so POWs captured by the Soviet Union.

We can thus assume that the relative immobility and calm of the front in northern Finland kept the number of casualties among Soviet POWs to a minimum in comparison to the situation in the south. More extensive military operations and more fierce battles on the eastern border of Finland would have, on the contrary, both increased the number of Soviet POWs and likely led to higher mortality rates. Thus, both unintentionally and indirectly, the Finnish military leadership had a role

²⁵⁵ *Jatkosodan historia. Osa 6 [History of the Continuation War. Part 6] 1994, p. 491, Manninen 1994 II, pp. 313.*

²⁵⁶ *Vuorenmaa 1984, p. 16.*

in ensuring that the mortality rates among the Soviet POWs held by the Germans did not rise. The clear difficulties experienced by the German troops in the vicinity of Leningrad and in northern Finland must have given rise to serious doubts in September 1941 in the Finnish Government and the Finnish General Headquarters of Germany's possibilities for success in the war. Together with diplomatic pressure from the Western Allies, this must have steered Finland's offensive operations into a more cautious and reactive direction by the end of 1941. Against German wishes, the Finnish military leadership chose to act cautiously and ceased their strategic offensive. Realistically speaking, they no longer had the kind of positioning and organizational leadership to offer to their troops that could have rendered the combined Finnish and German troops into an effective military force on the Gulf of Finland – Arctic Ocean Front. In contrast, the originally effective offensive military pact between Finland and Germany turned into, for the above reasons, an ineffective and disunited military alliance. This can be seen from the stalled front lines and the relative lack of action on the front. For Soviet POWs held both by the Germans and the Finns, this was ultimately a mitigating factor in their mortality rates.

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Going to work. The POW party in the background has been equipped with shovels. *Pentti Pullisen perikunta*

Prisoner of War Transfers During the Continuation War

Ida Suolahti

The Red Army soldiers captured by the Finns and transferred to the Germans during the Continuation War provided the title for Elina Sana's 2003 book *The Extradited: Finland's Deportations to the Gestapo*. Sana's book revealed that Finland had transferred several thousand Soviet prisoners of war to the Germans, including several dozen Jewish prisoners of war. The transfer of prisoners of war to the Germans was kept secret at the time, and has not been researched. This stands in sharp contrast to the repatriation of captured Germans, or of others who fought in the German Army, to the Soviet Union after the end of the Continuation War. These repatriations were discussed in the press immediately after the war and in many later studies.

This study covers the transfer of prisoners of war or individuals treated as prisoners of war to the German authorities. To clarify, the term "transfer" is used to describe the placing of prisoners of war under the control of officials of another state both physically and administratively. The term transfer does not imply a criminal process, as no prisoner of war was transferred on the basis of a legal decision.

There was nothing unusual in the transfer of prisoners of war. The return home of prisoners of war after the succession of hostilities or in some cases while the war was still going on had been the norm in the West since the end of the Thirty Years War. The return home of prisoners of war during the hostilities became rarer in the 19th century. After World War One, the practice almost completely disappeared, although the exchange of ill prisoners of war on a man for man basis did also occur during World War Two.²⁵⁷ During World War Two, the transfer of prisoners of war from one country or state to another was quite common. For example, the British sent prisoners of war to the Commonwealth countries of Canada, India, Kenya, and South Africa. There was no desire to keep prisoners of war on the British Isles because they were regarded as a threat to security. Of course, this was not a case of transfers to a third party as these were states that were nominally under the same head of state.

The transfer of prisoners of war by Finland to the Germans during the Continuation War was an example of a transfer to a third party. This was also not unique in World War Two. A corresponding transfer to a third party also occurred in May 1940 when the Dutch shipped approximately 1,200 captured Germans to England just before the Netherlands surrendered on May 14, 1940. The prisoners of war became the responsibility of the Commonwealth when they arrived in England and they were treated in the same manner as prisoners taken by the British or the Allies.

²⁵⁷ Barker 1974, pp, 7-17, 181, 184.

Most of them were sent on to Canada.²⁵⁸ Transfers to third parties also took place after the Normandy landings when American and British units each took responsibility for half of the prisoners taken, ignoring who had captured the prisoners.²⁵⁹

Prisoner of war transfers and international agreements

The transfer of prisoners of war to third parties is not banned in principle by international law. The international agreements in force during World War Two did not generally regulate the exchange and transfer of prisoners. The 1929 Geneva Convention only limited the transfer of sick and wounded prisoners of war when it would hamper their recovery. Otherwise, the agreements only mentioned that the prisoners were to be told ahead of time where they were going when they were to be transferred. They were also to be given the opportunity to take their belongings with them. Only the 1949 Geneva Convention regulated the transfer of prisoners of war to third parties in more detail. It also chiefly regulated the transfer of prisoners of war from one holding facility to another and only secondarily covered the transfer of prisoners of war to another power.

According to the 1949 Geneva Convention, prisoners of war may only be transferred to a power that is a signatory of the Geneva Convention and when the power holding the prisoner of war is convinced that the state to which the transfer is to be made is willing and able to comply with the Geneva Convention. In this case, the responsibility rests with the power to whom the prisoner of war has been transferred. However, if the state that captured the prisoners has cause to suspect that the state receiving the prisoners of war was not treating them in accordance with the convention, then the state that captured the prisoners had to either demand the return of the prisoners of war or that the deficiencies in the treatment of the prisoners be corrected. The sections of the 1949 convention on the transfer of prisoners were chiefly added on an Italian initiative because many ships transferring prisoners of war from one country to another had come under attack and were sunk with their cargoes.²⁶⁰

Earlier research on prisoner of war transfer by Finland

The transfer of prisoners of war to the Germans by Finland has chiefly led to controversy because Elina Sana claimed that Finnish authorities transferred Jewish

²⁵⁸ Moore 1996, pp. 22-34.

²⁵⁹ Moore 1996, p. 36.

²⁶⁰ Rosen- Parkkari 2004, pp. 111-112, 125-126, 262-264, Levie 1977, pp. 104-106 and Geneva III Convention, 12, and Articles 46-48 Geneva IV Convention, Articles 41-46 and Supplementary Minutes with Commentary, pp. 253-255, 1929 Geneva Convention, Articles 25 and 26.

prisoners of war to the Germans despite the fact that it was known in Finland that Germany sent Jews to concentration camps to be killed. This viewpoint was noted outside of Finland and also gave the initial impetus to found a research project entitled *Finland, prisoners of war, and people handed over 1939-1955* under the auspices of the National Archives of Finland. Sana's data on the transfer of Jewish prisoners of war was not completely new however. Transfers of prisoners of war by Finland to Germany has been touched upon in historical research and in other literature since the 1960s.²⁶¹ In principle, the general public also knows about the prisoner transfers since newspaper articles on the subject were published at the beginning of the 2000s. Prisoner exchanges and transfers have been most extensively covered in unpublished papers on the wartime administration of prisoners of war by Finland.²⁶² The research has primarily concentrated on the number of prisoners transferred and on analyzing the explanations given for the policy after the war. Jukka Lindstedt's Ph.D thesis on death sentences in Finland during World War Two mentions that 351 prisoners from Prisoner of War Camp 3 were transferred to the Germans. It is possible to conclude that at least some of these prisoners were Jews, based on their names.²⁶³ The other side of the equation, the transfer of Finnic prisoners of war to Finland, has perhaps been researched still less.²⁶⁴ In addition to Antti Laine's Ph.D thesis, the matter has been touched upon in Veli Ojala's master's thesis and in the article on Vilho Helanen's career in *Eteläntien kulkija – Vilho Helanen 1899–1952* [Traveler of the south road - Vilho Helanen 1899-1952].²⁶⁵

Earlier understandings of the number of transferred prisoners

Elina Sana's 2003 book *Luovutetut [The Extradited]* covered prisoner of war exchanges and transfers in a more extensive manner than before. Although the source base was not sufficient for the topic, Sana was able to successfully create a general picture of the volume of transfers and to present a theory on the reasons for and the consequences of the transfers.²⁶⁶ As a result of the controversy stemming from the book, Professor Heikki Ylikangas was given the task of creating a report

²⁶¹ Sana 2003, Blinnikka 1969, pp. 36-37, Pietola 1987, pp. 82, 217, 229, Lappalainen 1987, p. 239.

²⁶² Mikkola 1976, Mikkola 2000, Kujansuu 1995, pp.50-53, Kujansuu 1999, pp. 61-65, Hanski 1990, pp. 131-139, Hanski 1992, pp. 65-66, 76, 83-84.

²⁶³ Lindstedt 1999, p. 283; This prisoner of war camp was meant for prisoners of war kept under close observation, including political officers, NKVD agents and temporary assistants, leaders of the communist party, committed communists, agitators and activists.

²⁶⁴ The term Finnic is used here to refer collectively to those peoples in the Baltic Sea region whose original mother tongue belong to this branch of the Finnic division of the Finno-Ugric group of the Uralic languages. Examples of the Finnic branch include Finnish, Estonian, Ingrian, Karelian, Veps and some others. In the context of this article, the term Finnic refers to those non-Estonian Soviet citizens from the above groups.

²⁶⁵ Syrjä 1991, Ojala 1974, Laine 1982, Laine 1997, Roiko-Jokela 1997.

²⁶⁶ Tilli 2006, pp. 117-120.

that would present a comprehensive summary of earlier research on prisoner of war transfers and related topics.²⁶⁷ Jukka Lindstedt's article on the transfer of Jewish prisoners of war appeared almost simultaneously. This article also went extensively into legal questions and into where the responsibility for the events should lay.²⁶⁸ Currently, Lindstedt's article is also the most thorough treatment of the transfer of Jewish prisoners of war.

The question of how many prisoners of war were transferred and particularly of how many Jewish prisoners of war were handed over has provoked extensive discussion in both academic publications and in the press. No answer has been agreed on for the moment due to the difficulty of acquiring source material. This article examines the prisoner of war transfers from a statistical perspective, with particular focus on how many were transferred and on their backgrounds. The database created by the *Finland, prisoners of war, and people handed over 1939-1955* research project has been of great help in compiling these statistics. This has enabled the comparison of the often extremely sparse information appearing in different sources, which in turn has allowed mistakes and omissions in previous research to be corrected. The most important source of information has been the prisoner of war cards preserved in both the archives of the prisoner of war section of the Finnish Red Cross and in the archives of the individual prisoner of war camps. In addition, the database has allowed information from other individual sources to be compiled into a format that can be compared.

Treatment of the prisoner of war transfers as one event easily leads to over simplification. The transfer of prisoners of war to the Germans is a common name for many events that happened in parallel, which arose from many different factors. The transfers stemmed from different causes and they sought different goals. The biggest problem in researching the transfer of prisoners of war is the lack of information, and the scattered nature of what does exist. Individual sources removed from their context and of uncertain providence have enticed researchers to draw overreaching interpretations whose accuracy is difficult to confirm. There never were written records of the all details associated with the transfers, as many things were agreed verbally.²⁶⁹ A larger problem is the destruction of a key source of information, the archives of the surveillance section of the Finnish General

²⁶⁷ Ylikangas 2004.

²⁶⁸ Lindstedt 2004.

²⁶⁹ Kotijoukkojen esikunnan sotavankitoimiston kirjelmä [Letter of the prisoner of war office of the headquarters of the home army] nro 3577/Järj.1b7sal. 20.12.1941, KotijE svtsto, Fa 6, Puolustusvoimien pääesikunnan yhteysosasto kirjelmä [Letter of the Liaison Section of the General Staff of the Finnish Defense Forces] KD nro 380/3 a. 2.1.1945, T19663/F1, Puolustusvoimain pääesikunta, sotavankikomentajan esikunnan selvityselin, kirjelmä [Letter of the Repatriations/Settlement Committee of the Headquarters of the Commandant of Prisoners of War, General Staff of the Finnish Defense Forces] nro 1479/Sv.1 LVK:lle 8.6.1945; For example, the claim that there was no correspondence about Spanish prisoners of war and that it all happened based on verbal agreement is wrong. Even so, the declaration that there was no correspondence in the military administration was correct, but the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had some documentation.

Headquarters. Most of the archive of the surveillance section of the Finnish General Headquarters was destroyed by order of either Defense Minister Rudolf Walden or Aladar Paasonen, head of the Intelligence Section of the Finnish General Headquarters, in early September 1944. Some documents were probably taken to Sweden, where they may have been destroyed. It is thought that the archives were burnt to prevent them from ending up in the hands of the Allied Control Commission.²⁷⁰



POW # 2769. Every POW was given a metal badge with an individual number code. *Kansallisarkisto*

²⁷⁰ Panschin 2000, pp. 92-97.

Estimates of the number of transferred prisoners of war vary greatly in the research literature. Elina Sana has provided the highest number: 2,829 prisoners of war on the basis of the transfer shipments or 2,640 prisoners of war counted on the basis of nationality. Most other researchers have trusted in the summary calculations done after the war or without mentioning the primary source directly on Timo Mikkola's 1976 master's thesis *Sotavankikysymys Suomessa vuosina 1941-1944* [The Prisoner of War Question in Finland 1941-1944]. Mikkola mentions that 2,661 prisoners of war were transferred, on the basis of the transfer lists, and that 2,181 prisoners of war were received. Mikkola refers here to the 1945 report drawn up by the Liaison Section of the General Staff of the Finnish Defense Forces for the Allied Control Commission. As Raija Hanski has stated, the number of those transferred in later official calculations is smaller. The Settlement/Repatriation Committee of the Headquarters of the Commander of Prisoners of War had transfer information on 2,076 prisoners of war in its cards in spring 1945. The number of those transferred had dropped to 2,048 prisoners of war in a report drawn up in 1953.²⁷¹

Individual researchers or officials in the 1940s and 1950s were not able to compile an electronic database with information on those transferred, so calculations based on the most accurate transfer shipments had to be imprecise. The numerous corrective calculations have led researchers to suppose that there was an attempt to conceal the prisoner of war transfers. In the interpretation of Heikki Ylikangas, the aforementioned reduction in the numbers of those transferred in the calculations of the military authorities indicates that the number that appears in official sources, 2,661, is more too small than too large. He presents various reasons for the reduction in the numbers. One example of a possible motive would be the desire of the military authorities to portray the transfers as a man for man exchange.²⁷² However, he does not take account of the fact that there is no, nor has there ever been, unified catalog or list of those transferred to the Germans. Thus, military authorities would have also had difficulties in making a precise calculation.

For her part, Elina Sana claims that calculations based on individual sources have to be incomplete. However, she does not account for the overlap in the different kinds of sources. Rather, she concludes by claiming that the number of those transferred is probably yet higher than the 2,891 prisoners of war derived from the transfer shipments. Because the catalogs and calculations made by the authorities were done and arranged on different principles, it is impossible to combine them

²⁷¹ Puolustusvoimain pääesikunnan yhteysosaston kirje KD 380/3a, salainen, ulkoasiainministeriölle [Letter of the Liaison Section of the General Staff of the Finnish Defense Forces to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (secret)] 2.1.1945, T19663/F1, T19659/B17, Sotavankikomentajan esikunnan selvityselimen laatima tilasto toukokuulta 1953 [May 1953 statistics from the Repatriations/Settlement Committee of the Headquarters of the Commandant of Prisoners of War], T19661/B60, Mikkola 1976, pp. 193 and 208, Sana 2003, pp. 353–354, Hanski 1990, pp. 132–133, Hanski 1992, pp. 65–66, 76, 83–84, Blinnikka 1969, pp. 37.

²⁷² Ylikangas 2004, p. 29.

together as they are for one set of comprehensive statistics. This is why 702 prisoners of war must be removed from the 2,891 number war mentioned by Sana. The biggest errors arise from interpreting marks that actually refer to the same transfer shipments as separate shipments. For example, the prisoners of war transferred through Prisoner of War Camp 19 on November 8, 1941 appear twice in Sana's list. Mention of the 557 prisoners of war marked as transferred on July 2, 1942 is again connected with the January 1, 1942 and April 6, 1942 correspondence on transferred prisoners of war, and is therefore a mistaken double count. There are other small overlaps in Sana's list in addition to these, as well as other mistakes. An example of the latter would be the interpretation of prisoners transferred from the Germans to the Finns in August 1941 as a transfer from the Finns to the Germans, which could be a simple translation error.²⁷³

When these clear errors are removed from Sana's aforementioned total number of transferred, the result is a total of 2,189 transferred prisoners of war. Sana also calculated the total numbers of the transferred prisoners of war by looking at the distribution of nationalities and came up with the number 2,640. The number appears to be calculated directly from the statistics generated by the Repatriations/Settlement Committee of the Headquarters of the Commander of Prisoners of War, which also separated out the numbers on the basis of nationalities. There was an error in these numbers caused by the 344 prisoners of war transferred to the Germans by the III Army Corps.²⁷⁴ These prisoners were returned to the III Army Corps by the summer of 1942.

The number of transferred prisoners based on personal data

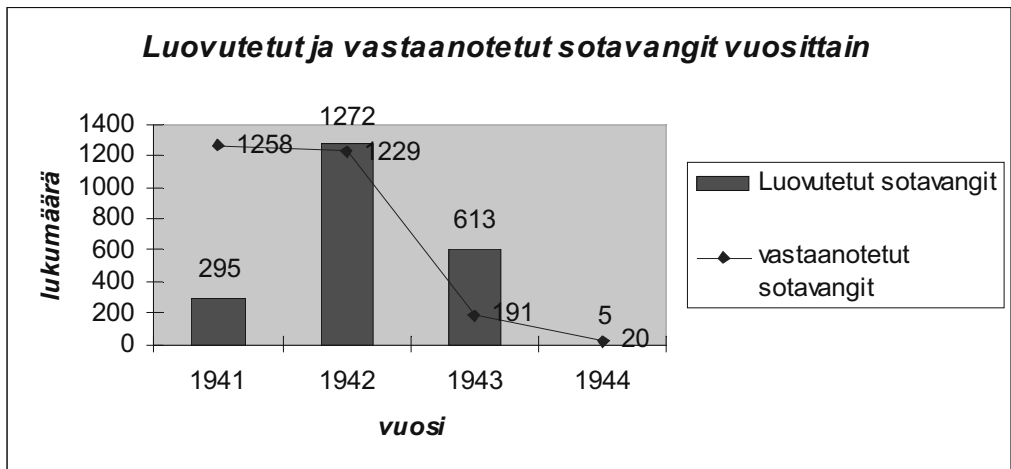
The *Finland, prisoners of war, and people handed over 1939-1955* research project has compiled a database based on many sources. When the information in this database is combined with other individual sources of information, the total number of prisoners of war transferred to the Germans reaches 2,916 prisoners of war. However, 640 of these prisoners of war were returned to the Finns, so that the final total number of prisoners of war transferred to the Germans is 2,276 prisoners of war, based on the information in the database. The identity of those 2,276 prisoners of war transferred to the Germans is clear.²⁷⁵ Although all prisoner of war transfers were not part of prisoner exchanges, transfers were made in both directions. Finnish military authorities received 2,714 prisoners of war from the

²⁷³ Sana 2003, pp. 350–355.

²⁷⁴ Sana 2003, p. 354, Saksan sotilasviranomaisille luovutetut sotavangit, kansallisuuksittain jaoteltu tilasto vailla päiväystä [Prisoners of war transferred to German military authorities, broken down according to nationalities (undated)], T19659/B18.

²⁷⁵ T19659/B17, T19659/B18, T19661/B60, SPR svtsto Bb 54-56, Bc, Bh 1, Ea 7, Ea 13, Ea 14, T5856/25. T19684/Ab10-12

Germans during the Continuation War. Of these, 500 prisoners of war were returned to the Germans.²⁷⁶



Source: T19659/B17, T19659/B18, T19661/B60, SPR svtsto [Finnish Red Cross prisoner of war section] Bb 54-56, Bc, Bh 1, Ea 7, Ea 13, Ea 14, T5856/25. T19684/Ab10-12

Chart: Title: Transferred and received prisoners of war by year

Legend: Transferred prisoners of war, received prisoners of war

Y axis: Number, X-axis: year

The chart illustrates the numerical distribution of the transferred and received prisoners of war over time between 1941 and 1944, not including 91 individual cases whose date is unknown. These instances were usually cases where prisoners of war were transferred before registration, but for whom some information could still be found. As the chart illustrates, the main phase of prisoner of war transfers and exchanges was in 1942 and 1943. In 1944, it was chiefly individual prisoners of war that were transferred to and received from the Germans.

The 2,276 prisoners of war permanently transferred to the Germans represented three to four percent of the total number of prisoners of war in Finland during the Continuation War as Finland had captured approximately 70,000 prisoners of war.

²⁷⁶ Luettelo os. 9458:n 23.11.Stalag 322:sta vastaanottamista erikoistehtäviin koulutettavista sotavangeista, päivätty 2.12.1942 [Catalog of section 9458 prisoners of war received on November 23 from Stalag 322 for training for special services dated December 2, 1942], T 19658/B10, Saksan sotilasviranomaisilta saadut sotavangit (päiväämätön) [Prisoners of war received from German military authorities (undated)], T19659/B18.

It is possible and even probable that some individual transfers of prisoners of war to the Germans have left no records behind, so it could be that there were a few more transferred prisoners of war, although it is hardly likely that it was more than a few dozen more. The individual transfers in particular have left very few tracks behind, nor has complete personal information on all the transferred been found when looked for. The time and place of the transfer as well as the transferring party has remained unclear in many cases. Elina Sana claims that the number of transferred prisoners of war was bigger in reality and that the sources on bigger prisoner shipments would have been successfully destroyed.²⁷⁷ However, this may not be correct as the Finnish Red Cross, which was responsible for registering prisoners of war, was not part of the Finnish Defense Forces. This meant that the Finnish Defense Forces could not give it orders. Without exception there is information on the transferred prisoners of war in the archives of the Finnish Red Cross' prisoner of war section. The only information missing from the archives of the prisoner of war section of the Finnish Red Cross were individuals who were handed over before they were registered as prisoners of war and the aforementioned 640 prisoners of war who were "loaned" to the Germans and then returned.

Reasons for transferring prisoners of war

The development of prisoner of war transfers and exchanges follows the developments in the relationship between Finland and Germany. However, the investigation of the prisoner of war transfers as a phenomenon arising directly from the evolution of a general policy simplifies the situation too much. The prisoner of war transfers cannot be viewed as a consistent program. Instead, these transfers must be regarded as many different events occurring for different reasons at the same time. Practical concerns drove the first prisoner of war transfers and exchanges. Decisions on these transfers were made at the individual unit level. The German Army had prisoner of war camps in the area in Finland where the Germans were responsible for operations. However, prisoners captured by the Germans in northeastern Finland and at sea could be transferred to Finnish custody, or the other way around without great formalities. Since the fight was against a common enemy, captured enemy soldiers were also held in common. One example of this practice is when German naval forces transferred 23 prisoners of war that they had captured at sea to the 1st Coastal Brigade on August 13, 1941. The prisoners were left with Finnish naval forces and were eventually transferred from their custody to a prisoner of war camp under the authority of the headquarters of the home army. The Germans alone had captured the prisoners handed over to the Finns on August 13, 1941. This group included 16 wounded. One of them was hurt so badly that he

²⁷⁷ Sana 2003, p. 355.

died without regaining consciousness in the military hospital on Suomenlinna.²⁷⁸ In October 1942, the headquarters of the 6th Division, which was under German command and responsible for an area of the front near Kuusamo, reported to Finnish General Headquarters that it had transferred most of the prisoners of war it had taken to a German field detention unit immediately after they were captured.²⁷⁹

Later prisoner of war transfers happened because of labor shortages in Finland and Germany. For example, Finland was suffering from a significant lack of workers at the beginning of the Continuation War. Over 15% of the entire population and over 30% of the men had been mobilized, and the war itself created additional jobs.²⁸⁰ Labor was needed for the harvest and for construction behind the front, particularly in the summer and early fall of 1941. The use of prisoners of war as labor was the only possibility as Finnish soldiers could not be released from service. The easiest way to get additional workers was by "loaning" prisoners of war from the Germans. Thus, the Finns in practice had 100 prisoners of war transferred by the Germans working on harvesting the hay and other tasks in Salla at the beginning of August.²⁸¹ The Germans did not yet extensively use prisoners of war as labor in the summer of 1941. Units were allowed to use prisoners as labor only for essential work. However, it became clear in the fall of 1941 that there were not enough workers in Germany, which was hindering the military industry. Relief for the situation was sought by using prisoners of war, who could be used in military industry where necessary by an order issued by Hitler on October 31, 1941. This situation was also reflected in the use of prisoners of war as labor in the areas occupied by Germany. Because there was a need for many workers in Norway for building roads and other tasks, it is estimated that nearly 100,000 prisoners of war were sent to work there between 1941 and 1945. The Germans even transferred 9,000 prisoners of war from Finland to Norway in the fall of 1944. It could be that the Germans transferred over 10,000 prisoners of war to Finland between 1941 and 1942.²⁸² With the change in orders and the beginning of German preparations for

²⁷⁸ 1. Rannikkoprikaatin esikunta, KD nro 1.111./I/17/sal. Kotijoukkojen esikunnan sotavankitoimistolle 18.8.1941 [Secret letter from the headquarters of the 1st Coastal Brigade to the prisoner of war office of the headquarters of the home army], KotijE, svstso, Fa 2, Uudenmaan rannikkoprikaatin esikunta kd 204/VI/2.sal Merivoimien esikunnalle [Letter from the Uusimaa Coastal Brigade to the headquarters of Finnish Naval Forces] 7.11.1942 T15889/1487a, Uudenmaan Rannikkoprikaatin meripoliisitoimiston sotapäiväkirja [War diary of the naval police office of the Uusimaa Coastal Brigade] 13., 14. and 20.8.1941, Spk 24370.

²⁷⁹ 6. divisioonan esikunta, kirjelmä nro 1008/I/7/1067 päämajan järjestelyosastolle 4.11.1942 [Letter from the 6th division headquarters to the organization section of the Finnish General Headquarters], T19654/F5.

²⁸⁰ *Jatkosodan historia* 4, pp. 141-142.

²⁸¹ Bruno Kivikosken kirje ulkoasiainministeriön kansliapäällikkö Aaro Pakaslahdelle 4.8.1941 [Letter from Bruno Kivikoski to Aaro Pakaslahti, Head of the Secretariat of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs August 4, 1941], UM Fb 110 A6.

²⁸² Neerland Soleim 2004, pp. 46-48, 50-57.

fighting in the winter on the Murmansk front, the German requirement for the labor of prisoners of war also grew in Finland. Among other things, the maintenance and improvement of the Arctic Highway required workers. The prisoners of war transferred to the Germans for use as labor were not selected on the basis of nationality or military rank.

Transfers also occurred to improve the situation of prisoners of war from certain particular ethnic backgrounds. This was the reason prisoners of war who were ethnic Germans or from Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were transferred. Finnish military authorities said that Estonian and Latvian prisoners of war "could not be treated as normal prisoners of war, but were in a special situation."²⁸³ Finnish military authorities did not want to waste resources on prisoners of war who were to be sent home immediately after the war was over.

The prisoners of war were not looked after properly and the living conditions were wretched, particularly in 1941. Because it was expected that the war would be over quickly, there was no plan for winter accommodations, nor were winter supplies acquired. The lack of food that prevailed in the entire country in the winter of 1941/1942 particularly affected prisoners of war, whose rations were insufficient given the heavy labor they carried out. The intention of the Finnish authorities was to return prisoners of war who were from a Western European background to the original area that their ethnic group was from, where the Germans would free them.

The idea of sending prisoners of war home led to the exchange of prisoners of war who had particular ethnic backgrounds. This meant the Germans transferred prisoners of war who had a Finnic background to the Finns, and the Finns transferred prisoners of war from the Caucasus and the Ukraine to the Germans. The exchange of prisoners of war began to be planned already in the fall of 1941, when the legal advisor to the headquarters of the military administration of Eastern Karelia, Veli Merikoski, went to Riga. He was there to visit the German ministry for the occupied eastern territories (*Ostministerium*) and the civil administration of the conquered eastern areas (*Reichskommissariat*). In accordance with his instructions from the Finnish General Headquarters, he negotiated the transfer of the Russian civilian population that had remained in Eastern Karelia to Germany with the *Ostministerium* and the *Reichskommissariat*. Both parties in the negotiation were favorably disposed to trading the Russian civilian population of Eastern Karelia for Finnic populations in the areas conquered by Germany. The trade was to be made when the road along the south side of Lake Ladoga was opened for traffic. In practice, this required the capture of Leningrad. In preparing

²⁸³ SA, Kotijoukkojen esikunnan kirje KD nro 1107/Järj.1b/sal. Päämajan ulkomaanosastolle 9.9.1941 [Letter of the headquarters of the home army to the foreign section of the Finnish General Headquarters], KotijE, svstso, Fa 4.

for the exchange, the *Reichskommissariat* in Riga separated out the people of Finnic heritage in its area into their own groups in the population registers.²⁸⁴

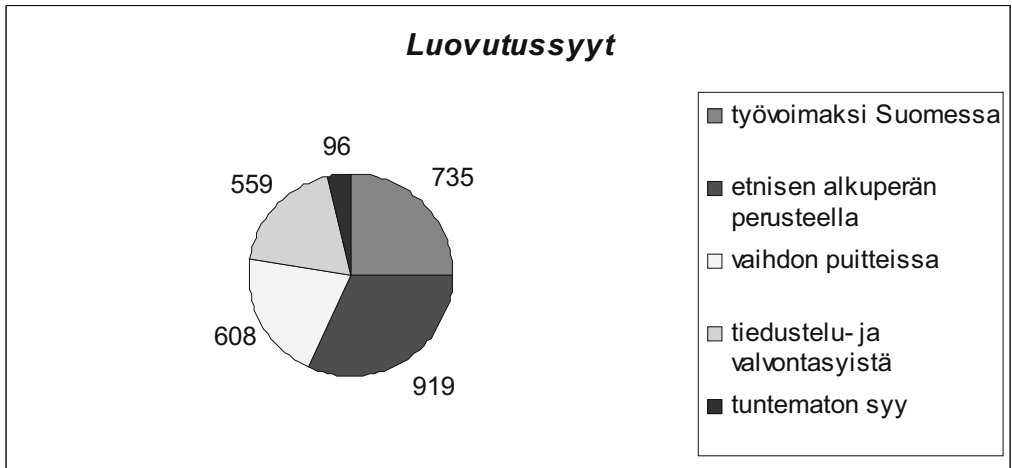
Leningrad was not captured, and the civilian population of Eastern Karelia was never traded for the peoples of Finnic heritage in the areas occupied by Germany. Still, the Finns were able to select Finnic prisoners of war from German prisoner of war camps. In practice, this meant selecting Finns, Ingrian Finns, Karelians and Veps. The initial plan was to use these prisoners of war to settle Eastern Karelia. Instead, the 3rd Volunteer (Finnic) Battalion was established in the fall of 1942. The men in the unit were chiefly Eastern Karelian and Ingrian Finnish prisoners of war. Prisoners of war with a Finnic background and transferred from Germany were also enlisted in the Finnish Army. Due to their massive need for labor, the Germans did not hand over Finnic prisoners of war to the Finns without asking for something in exchange. The Germans requested prisoners of war from the Caucasus, and others, in exchange on a man for man basis.

Both parties to the exchanges also used prisoners of war for intelligence and surveillance. All the subsections of the intelligence section of the Finnish General Headquarters also participated in the exchange or transfer of prisoners of war during the Continuation War. The foreign section handled contacts with the Germans when it came to exchanges and transfers. The intelligence section also received prisoners of war from the Germans who were of interest from an intelligence perspective. In return, they transferred prisoners of war of corresponding interest to the Germans outside the scope of the actual exchange program. The surveillance section transferred many hundreds of prisoners of war to the Germans outside the scope of the exchange agreements as well. In addition, the regional office in Lapland of the surveillance section, and possibly others, transferred and received prisoners of war for counterintelligence purposes.

The intelligence section of the Finnish General Headquarters attempted to get information on enemy military operations and the details associated with them. The section then packaged the information appropriately and distributed it to the units of the Finnish Defense Forces that needed it. In addition to monitoring enemy movements, economic and social conditions in the Soviet Union were monitored, as was the infrastructure behind the front lines. The personnel of the intelligence section of the Finnish General Headquarters thought that the information known by the prisoners of war could be of broader significance to the course of the war, the future, and even for historical research. From the beginning of the war, information was collected on the general economic, political and morale situation in the Soviet Union from knowledgeable prisoners of war. The most universally applicable

²⁸⁴ Travel report by Veli Merikoski, legal advisor to the headquarters of the military administration of Eastern Karelia. His intention was to familiarize himself with the German administrative organization of the conquered territories in the east. Dated 1.12.1941, T2870/1.

information was sent to the office of military history for later historical research.
285



Reasons for transfer in numbers of prisoners, the total number of transferred is 2916 individuals.

Chart: Reasons for transfer

Legend: Labor in Finland

Ethnicity or nationality

Prisoner of war exchange

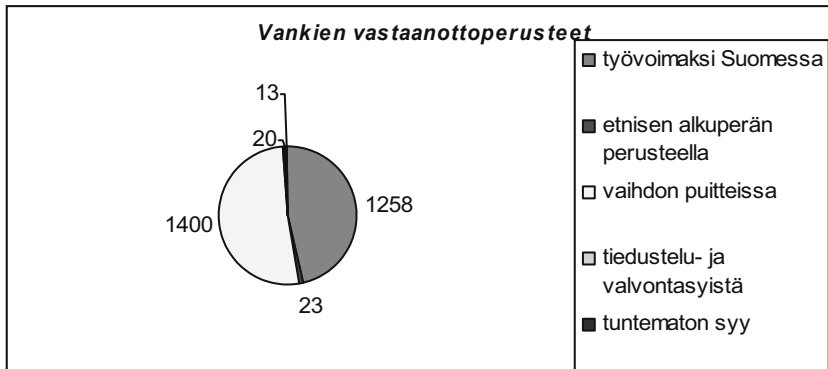
Intelligence and surveillance reasons

Unknown

By roughly dividing the prisoner of war transfers according to the reason for the transfer it becomes clear that 32% of the prisoners of war were transferred to the Germans on the basis of their nationality (their ethnic origin), making it the leading cause. Other important causes for transfers were prisoner of war exchange (21%), and surveillance and intelligence reasons (19%). A comparatively large share of the prisoners of war (25%) were transferred to serve as labor for the Germans in Finland, but most of them were returned to Finnish prisoner of war camps. Only

²⁸⁵ Tiedusteluopas 1943 [Intelligence Guide 1943], pp. 4-5.

3% of those who were permanently transferred served as laborers for the Germans in Finland



Reasons for receiving transfers in numbers of prisoners, the total number of received prisoners of war is 2,714 individuals. Sources: Luettelo os. 9458:n 23.11.Stalag 322:sta vastaanottamista erikoistehtäviin koulutettavista sotavangeista, päivätty 2.12.1942 [Catalog section 9458 Nov 23 prisoners of war received from Stalag 322 for training for special tasks, dated December 2, 1942], T 19658/B10, Saksan sotilasviranomaisilta saadut sotavangit (päiväämätön) [Prisoners of war received from German military authorities (undated)], T19659/B18

Chart: Reasons for receiving prisoners of war

Legend; Labor in Finland

Ethnicity or nationality

Prisoner of war exchange

Intelligence and surveillance reasons

Unknown

When the Germans transferred prisoners of war to Finnish custody, the leading cause was the exchange of prisoners of war (51% of those received). The second most significant cause for transfer was the need for labor (46% of those transferred). However, only a portion of those prisoners of war transferred for labor remained permanently with the Finns, making up about 30% of those received. These were the prisoners of war transferred to the Finns to clear the Hanko area. They had been in the Red Army in Hanko before they were taken prisoner. Only a few prisoners of war, less than 1% of those received, were transferred to the Finns solely on the basis of their ethnic background. The Finns received a corresponding number of prisoners of war for intelligence and surveillance reasons.

Reasons for transfer by transfer group

Prisoners of war transferred to German authorities by the Finns

Prisoners of war captured by the Finns and transferred to work for the Germans; total of 735 of whom 95 were not returned to the Finns

<i>Unregistered</i>	<i>Num</i>	<i>Notes</i>
November 1941	300	Returned to the Finns by summer 1942
December 1941	101	Does not include 44 prisoners of war taken by the III Army Corps, for whom 44 prisoners taken by the Germans were received in exchange
<i>Registered</i>		
19.11.1941	94	Remained with the Germans (Palkisoja)
February 1942	206	Returned on December 5, 1942 (Pori airfield)
December 1942	34	All except 1 returned by October 1, 1943 (Kemi airfield)

Transferred on the basis of ethnicity; total of 919

Day	Nationality	Number
8.11.1941	Ethnic German	80
21.11.1941	Ethnic German	3
1.1.1942	Ethnic German	40
1.1.1942	Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians	562
28.5.1942	Ethnic German	26
4.6.1942	Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians	58
8.10.1942	Ethnic German	95
20.10.1942	Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians	55

Transferred in an exchange; total of 608

Day	Nationality	Number
5.1.1943	Caucasian peoples, 2 Ukrainians	502
19.9.1943	Includes Caucasian peoples, self requested	75
20.10.1943	Includes Poles and Ukrainians	29
13.5.1944	Belarusian	1
24.6.1944	Ukrainian	1

Transferred for intelligence and surveillance reasons; total of 559

<i>Transfer time</i>	<i>Number</i>
29.10.1941	52
13.12.1941	60
17.2.1942	60
14.3.1942	56
8.4.1942	60
27.6.1942	60
22.7.1942	62
8.9.1942	60
22.9.1942	50
Years 1941-1944	39

In addition, there are 95 prisoners of war, whose time of transfer or cause of transfer is not clear

Altogether 2,916 were transferred, of whom 2,276 were permanently transferred

Prisoners of war transferred by the Germans by reason for transfer

Prisoners taken by Germany and transferred to the Finns to work; total of 1,258, of whom 758 prisoners remained with the Finns

July 1941	100	Probably returned to the Germans
September 1941	400	Probably returned to the Germans
December 1941	758	Crew of the Joseph Stalin liner

Transferred by the Germans due to ethnic background; total of 23

Day	Nationality	Number
1.8.1941-5.11.1942	Finnic peoples	16
23.1.1943	Finnic peoples	7

Transferred by the Germans in an exchange; total of 1,400

Day	Nationality	Number
25.7.1942	Finnic peoples	808
22.12.1942-6.1.1943	Finnic peoples	393
17.9.1943	Finnic peoples	179
25.5.1944	Finnic peoples	20

Transferred by the Germans for intelligence or surveillance reasons; total of 20

Day	Number
-	20

In addition, 13 prisoners of war were transferred for unknown reasons between 1942 and 1943

Altogether, the Germans transferred 2,714 prisoners of war to the Finns, of whom 2,214 remained with the Finns

The ethnic background of prisoners of war transferred to the Germans

The actual exchange of prisoners of war with the Germans was firmly connected with the nationalities policy and groupings of the prisoner of war administrations of both countries. The Germans treated their prisoners of war in very different ways depending on their ethnic background. Prisoners captured from the nations of Western Europe were treated notably better than prisoners of war representing the nations of the Soviet Union. Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians, ethnic Germans and Muslims (particularly Muslims from the Caucasus) were at the top of the hierarchy of prisoners captured in the Soviet Union, followed by the Ukrainians in the middle. Russians were at the bottom. Jews in Germany and the territories it occupied were persecuted. When prisoners were captured, the Jews were supposed to be sifted out and murdered. This happened with prisoners taken in the Soviet Union, as Jews among prisoners captured from the Western Allies were not murdered.²⁸⁶

Ingrian and Karelian prisoners of war, both Finnic peoples, received favorable treatment in the Finnish prisoner of war administration. The determination of the ethnic background of the prisoners of war was based on the prisoners' own declarations. A registry of ethnic groupings came into force in 1942, and lasted in practice to the end of the war. This catalog mentioned 85 different nationalities.²⁸⁷ In practice, there were not big differences in the treatment of prisoners of different ethnic backgrounds, aside from prisoners of war with Finnic backgrounds. The prisoners with Finnic backgrounds were put in their own camp in September 1941. This camp provided slightly better conditions than prisoners received generally,

²⁸⁶ Overmans 2005, pp. 806-807, 868-875, Streit 1978, pp. 69-70, 72.

²⁸⁷ Kotijoukkojen esikunnan kirje nro 7275/Järj.1b/sal, päämajan järjestelyosastolle 5.11.1942 [Letter of the headquarters of the home army to the organizational section of the Finnish General Headquarters November 5, 1942], T19654/3-4, Kotijoukkojen esikunnan kirje nro 2697/Järj.1b/sal Päämajan järjestelyosastolle 20.4.1942 [Letter of the headquarters of the home army to the organizational section of the Finnish General Headquarters], Kotijoukkojen esikunnan sotavankitoimisto, Fa 14.

including better rations. Jews, Poles, and Cossacks who had been captured were also placed in specific camps in 1942/1943. However, only the Poles were treated in a different way than other prisoners, as their morale was looked after and they were assigned to more suitable labor. The Poles also possibly received fewer heavy labor assignments. Female and invalid prisoners of war were correspondingly concentrated in specific camps.²⁸⁸

The following figure illustrates the ethnic background of prisoners of war transferred to the Germans. It only covers those 2,276 prisoners of war that were permanently transferred. The personal data on the 640 prisoners of war temporarily transferred to the Germans as labor has not been preserved because they were transferred before they were registered. The basis of their transfer was their ability to work, not their ethnic origin. This means that the unregistered prisoners of war transferred to the Germans as labor probably represented a normal sampling of the ethnic background of the Red Army. Many of the prisoners of war transferred to the Germans were handed over due to their ethnic background. This is why people from the Baltics and the Caucasus each made up about a quarter of those transferred, equaling approximately 550 prisoners of war in each case. The third largest group was the Russians, and the fourth largest was the Germans. Jewish prisoners of war were clearly overrepresented, as 49 were transferred permanently. Many researchers have noted this fact previously. All-in-all, there were approximately 400 prisoners of war who were registered as Jews in Finland during the Continuation War. This means the 49 who were transferred to the Germans represented over 10 percent of the Jewish prisoners of war in Finland.

²⁸⁸ Kotijoukkojen esikunnan kirje nro 6618/järj.1b.sal. 1.10.1942 [Letter of the headquarters of the home army, October 1, 1942], Kotijoukkojen esikunnan sotavankitoimisto, Fa 20, Sotavankileiri 6:n kirje KD nro 34/III/215/sal. 9.2.1942 [Letter from Prisoner of War Camp 6, February 9, 1942], T5619/25; Päämajan järjestelyosasto, kirjelmä nro 144/Järj.4/sal. Kotijoukkojen esikunnalle 22.1.1943 [Correspondence of the organizational section of the Finnish General Headquarters to the headquarters of the home army], T19654/F7.

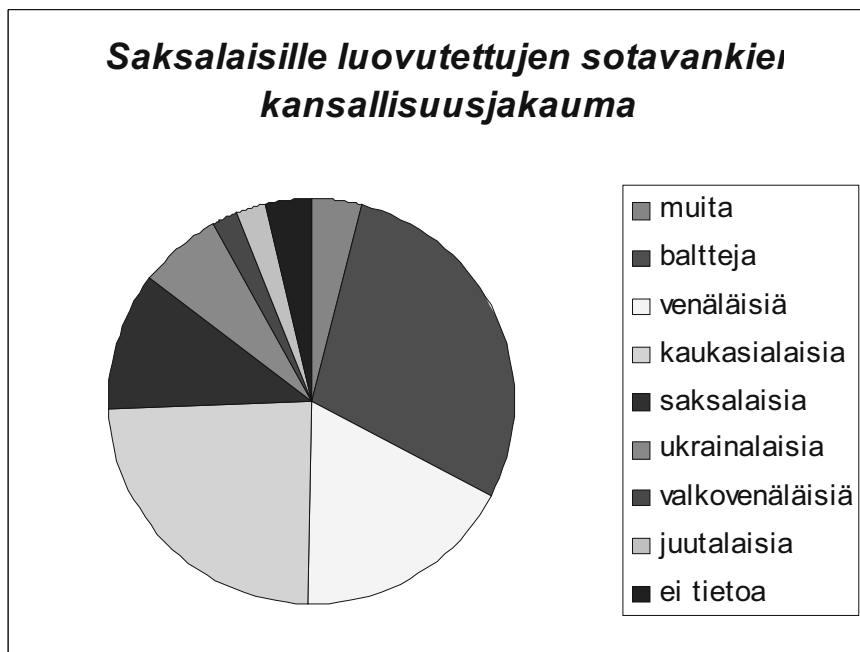


Chart: Prisoners of war transferred to the Germans by ethnicity

Legend: Other

Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians

Russians

Peoples from the Caucasuses

Germans

Ukrainians

Belrusians

Jews

Unknown

The experience of Jewish prisoners of war in Finland during the Continuation War has been the subject of a television documentary. In addition, Shimon Yantovsky, one of the Jewish prisoners of war in Finland, has written extensively of his imprisonment in his memoir. However, the question of what happened to the Jewish prisoners of war has not been comprehensively investigated. This is the reason that conclusions about the treatment of Jewish prisoners of war generally differ from each other so much. Based on her research into the transfer of prisoners of war, Elina Sana has claimed that the purpose of concentrating all the Jewish

prisoners of war in Prisoner of War Camp 3 was to transfer them from there to the Germans. Serah Beizer has used the archives of the Jewish community in Finland to conclude that the concentration of the Jewish prisoners of war in one camp stemmed from practical concerns dictated by attempts to assist them.²⁸⁹



Accommodation in the Karvia POW camp. SA-kuva

Jewish prisoners of war captured from Soviet forces were in many different prisoner of war camps in Finland between 1941 and 1942, but they were not separated out in the minority ethnicities lists of the headquarters of the home army before the end of 1942. In fact, other groups like the Bulgarians were also not separated out. However, prisoners of war were registered as Jews from the beginning and not, for example, as Russians as becomes apparent from the cards of the frontline interrogations conducted by Group O in the fall of 1941.²⁹⁰ This was

²⁸⁹ Sana 2003, pp. 344-346, Beizer 1995, pp. 19-21.

²⁹⁰ Kotijoukkojen esikunnan kirje nro 2697/Järj.1b/sal. PM järjestelyosastolle 20.4.1942 [Letter from the headquarters of the home army to the organizational section of the ministry of defense, April 20, 1942], Kotijoukkojen esikunta, svtsto, Fa 14, Frontline interrogation

not a very large group in itself, as they totaled about four hundred prisoners of war. The number is imprecise as it is based on combining statistics compiled on different principles. An exact number cannot be determined because some Jewish prisoners of war declared another nationality when they were registered. Serah Beizer presumes that some Jewish prisoners of war were attempting to conceal their background when they were captured by an ally of Nazi Germany. This conclusion is based both on the sparse numbers of Jewish prisoners of war in Finland and on the recollections of Shimon Yantovsky, himself a prisoner of war.²⁹¹ The number of Jewish prisoners of war increased during the period in the Continuation War when the fronts had stabilized, as the prisoner of war camps had time to organize their cards and to check gaps in the information. It then became clear that many prisoner of war camps had prisoners of war who turned out to be Jews when interrogated again.²⁹² The phenomena was not limited to only Jews, as members of other nationalities and ethnicities "declared themselves" while the fronts were stable during the Continuation War. The best examples of this were the ethnic German prisoners of war, but Ukrainians and Belarusians had also initially been classified as Russians. Since ethnic classification was based on a prisoner's own declaration and since Finnish interrogators of prisoners of war did not particularly attempt to separate out or identify Jewish prisoners of war, Jewish prisoners of war ended up being placed in many different ethnic categories.

A total of 52 Jewish prisoners of war were transferred to the Germans, of whom 2 were returned to the Finns together with other prisoners of war who had worked on the Pori airfield. A third Jewish prisoner of war who had worked at the Pori airfield died while in German custody. He was shot while trying to escape.²⁹³ Aside from two individuals, not much is known currently of the other Jewish prisoners of war transferred to the Germans. Boris and Moses Levi, brothers and Jews born in Estonia who had ended up as laborers for the Red Army, were transferred to the Germans in Tallinn on January 1, 1942 together with six hundred other Baltic and

cards of Group O; for example prisoners of war Joffe, Stambler, Jefimov B, Zweriew, T4013/23-24.

²⁹¹ Beizer 2005, p. 15.

²⁹² According to the summary of the prisoner of war office of the headquarters of the home army (Fa 27), there were a total of 267 Jewish prisoners of war in the prisoner of war camps on home territory on May 15, 1943. According to the database on dead prisoners of war from the Continuation War, 89 Jewish prisoners of war died in the prisoner of war camps during the war and according to the prisoner of war cards of the Finnish Red Cross (Bb 54-56) 49 registered Jewish prisoners of war were transferred to the Germans. Combining these numbers results in a total of 405 Jewish prisoners of war, based on declarations of nationality. See for instance letter from Prisoner of War Camp 10 nro 1468/II/6 SPR:lle 28.12.1942, SPR/svtsto, Ea 10, Sotavankileiri 14:n kirje nro KD 503/II c. SPR:lle 29.3.1943, SPR sotavankitoimisto, Ea 12.

²⁹³ Database on dead prisoners of war at the Pori airfield,, sotavankijärjestelyleiri 1:n kirjelmä KD nro 1011/III 11.4.1942 liitteeseen [Letter and attachment from Prisoner of War Camp 1], T8981/19.

ethnic German prisoners of war.²⁹⁴ After the transfer, all 602 prisoners of war were taken to the Tallinn central prison for interrogation by the local security police (Die Politische Polizei der Prefektur Reval-Harrien). According to a contemporary account, the German authorities asked the prisoners if their group included Jews. This was how the three Jews in the group were detected. Of them, the Estonian-born brothers Boris and Moses Levi were condemned to death and executed on February 14, 1942. The reason for the death sentence was that they were Jews and that the men had been mobilized in Hanko and been taken prisoner by the Finns there.²⁹⁵ There is no reliable information on the fate of the third Jew among the prisoners. He was Alter or Altör Kopel, who was born in Lithuania in 1896. He probably suffered the same fate as the Levi brothers, as being a Jew was enough to receive a death sentence during the German occupation.

It seems that the Finnish authorities had not known or cared about that the Levi brothers and Alter Kopel were Jews. They had been members of a group of laborers who had been taken prisoner in Hanko at the beginning of December 1941. These prisoners had been moved to a temporary prison camp in Karjaa awaiting transfer to Estonia. The interrogation of the prisoners was limited to questions about personal and unit information because there was no one in the camp in Karjaa who could speak Estonian properly. A determining factor in the transfer of the prisoners of war to Estonia seems to have been the home or place of birth of the prisoner, as prisoners with completely Russian names were also transferred to Estonia in the same transport.²⁹⁶ It is thus completely possible that the Finnish authorities did not know or care about the ethnic background of these prisoners.

²⁹⁴ Letter from the headquarters of the home army to the organizational section of the Finnish General Headquarters 2.1.1942 and Helsingin suojeluskuntapiirin esikunnan kirje KD nro 17/II.40.211 Kotijoukkojen esikunnan sotavankitoimistolle 7.1.1942 [Letter from the headquarters of the Helsinki Civic Guards district to the prisoner of war section of the headquarters of the home army, January 7, 1942], T19653/7-8 j and Sv.järjestelyleiri nro 1:n kirjelmä nro KD 1078/III/1036 KD 1387 [Letter from Prisoner of War Organizing Camp 1], Kotijoukkojen esikunnan sotavankitoimisto [Prisoner of war office of the headquarters of the home army], Fa 12.

²⁹⁵ Usai 1993, pp. 240 -245, Kivine 2006, pp. 277-283, ERA ,Tallinn-Harju police prefecture to the German security police of Tallinn 3.1.1942, page 8, R 64-4-392, LVVA, von Blücher's memo to Auswärtiges Amt on Estonian prisoners of war 20.6.1942, P 70-5-62, page 25, Paavle 2002, p. 160, Trett 1989, p. 156.

²⁹⁶ Their names are in the catalog of transfers to the Helsinki Civic Guards district in November, T11110, group 40; Kotijoukkojen esikunnan kirje nro 1571/Järj.1b Päämajan tiedusteluosastolle 6.3.1942, KotijE [Letter of the headquarters of the home army to the intelligence department of the Finnish General Headquarters], svtsto, Fa 11, Trett 1989, p. 147.

Summary

The transfer of prisoners of war to the Germans is the common name for many events that occurred at the same time. These events stemmed from many different factors. The transfers were made for different reasons and sought to accomplish different goals. The reasons behind the prisoner of war transfers were the labor shortages in both Finland and Germany, the preferential treatment of prisoners of war belonging to certain ethnic groups, the exchange of prisoners of war and intelligence and surveillance reasons. During the Continuation War, Finnish military authorities transferred a total of 2,916 prisoners of war to the Germans, of whom 2,276 remained in German custody. The Germans transferred 2,714 prisoners of war to the Finnish military authorities, of whom 500 prisoners of war were returned to Germans.

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T15889 Merivoimien esikunta, hallinnollinen toimisto [Headquarters of Finnish Naval Forces, Administrative Office]

T19653 Päämaja, hallinnollinen toimisto (järj.2) [Finnish General Headquarters, Administrative Office (Org 2)]

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Fb 110: A6

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A bare-foot POW in the middle. The POWs were not usually allowed to wear shoes in the summertime as this as well spared the footwear as made escapes more difficult. *Aarne Backmanin perikunta*

The Transfer of Civilians to German Authorities 1941–1944

Oula Silvennoinen

Research Task

The Finland, prisoners of war, and extraditions 1939-1955 research project under the auspices of the National Archives of Finland is a significant attempt to investigate the handing over of individuals to German and Soviet officials during World War Two and its aftermath. The project also includes the fates of the prisoners of war.

Elina Sana's 2003 book "*Luovutetut. Suomen ihmislouvutukset Gestapolle*" (*The Extradited: Finland's Deportations to the Gestapo*) serves as a backdrop for this project. In this work, Sana returned to the question of the role and responsibility of Finnish authorities in the persecution of those individuals regarded as ideological or racial enemies by Nazi Germany. Although Sana and other researchers had earlier written on these transfers, the issue again became news in Finland. This time the news was prominent enough to draw international attention. The Simon Wiesenthal Center in the United States of America soon contacted the president's office and asked if the Finnish state planned to begin an investigation on the deportation of Jews. The affirmative response to this question from the president's office began a process that launched the *Finland, prisoners of war, and extraditions 1939-1955* research project under the auspices of the National Archives of Finland in 2004.

The project's researchers have drawn up reports on the different areas being investigated in accordance with the established timetable. The subject of this summary are the cases where civilians were surrendered to German authorities, as well as the background of these cases. The goal of this part of the research project was clear and straightforward, but there were still many unknown details despite previous research into these cases. The biggest unresolved matter, into which even Sana's research had not extended, was the ultimate fate of the individuals who were handed over to the Germans. In addition, the handing over of individuals to the Germans during the war particularly raises the questions of to what degree and on what basis did Finnish authorities assist in the genocide of the Jews.

There are no final or conclusive answers for all these research questions. Some of the archive material has been irrevocably lost or destroyed. In some cases, it is clear that there never was the documentation that historians have grown accustomed to using as sources.

In order to setup the discussion on the deportation cases, this summary first examines the relevant legislation on aliens and its development, the actions of the

State Police in their role in interacting with aliens, and the nature of the cooperation between the Finnish and German security police. The Ph. D thesis of the author, "*Salaiset aseveljet*" (*Secret Comrades-in-Arms*), contains additional information on the details of the cooperation between the Finnish and German security police. This summary does not repeat the examination of broader background of the facts related to the deportations. The database created by entering all the information on civilians deported to Germany and the transfers of military deserters arranged by the law enforcement authorities supplements this summary.

Aliens and the Authorities

Development of the Legislation on Aliens

In all the wartime cases of the transfer of civilians to German authorities that are in the scope of this research project, the individuals in question are always foreigners. No Finnish citizen was among those who were transferred. Therefore, it is necessary to provide an overview of the regulations pertaining to the arrival of aliens in Finland and to their residence therein. There is also a need to examine the scope of the authority of the officials responsible for monitoring the aliens during the time period being researched. The provisions of the 1933 Aliens Statute defined the regulations on the arrival of aliens to Finland, and their residence therein. This 1933 legislation did not fundamentally change during the period being researched. The next section covers the basic principles of this legislation and those changes that did occur.

The first requirement for the arrival in Finland of an alien was a valid passport. Exceptions were made for citizens of Estonia and the other Nordic countries, who could enter Finland by only presenting a travel document. In addition to a passport, many travelers were required to have a visa issued either by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs before the trip or by representatives of Finland abroad. However, Finland had concluded bilateral agreements on visa free travel with many countries. In addition to the aforementioned Nordic countries and Estonia, examples of other such countries included Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, Japan, Latvia, and the Danzig Free State.

A foreigner entering Finland with either a visa or with just a passport or travel card was entitled to reside in Finland for three months. If the foreigner wanted to extend his or her stay, he or she had to apply for a residence permit. A so-called residence book had to be requested from the provincial administration. This book was where the period of validity of the residence permit was marked. If the provincial administration approved the application and issued a residence book, the alien received a residence permit for at most a year at a time. Before this happened however, the provincial administration had to request an opinion on the applicant from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

If an alien wanted to seek paid employment in Finland, he or she had to apply for a separate work permit. The provincial administration granted work permits, and it first had to request an opinion from the Ministry of Social Affairs. The provincial administration could not grant permission against the opinion of the Ministry of Social Affairs without a specific reason.

An alien could be deported from Finland by order of the Ministry of the Interior if "the security of the state or other valid reason" required it. The role of the Central Investigative Bureau in defining these reasons was key, although it was not directly mentioned in the relevant statute. An alien could be sent away without any deportation proceedings if he or she was found in Finland without a valid residence or work permit, or if the provincial administration found reason to cancel an already granted residence permit. While the deportation decision was being prepared, the alien could be detained or placed under surveillance. When it was making a deportation decision however, the provincial administration was required to take account of mitigating factors, such as possible long term residence in Finland, family ties and economic factors.

The basis for a deportation decision was that an alien sought his or her livelihood by begging, as an itinerant musician, peddler or in a "dishonorable" fashion. This last mostly meant prostitution, but many other unusual ways of making a living could also fit under the concept of "dishonorable" fashion. In other words, those aliens who met the criteria defined in the Vagrancy Act were primarily defined as being subject to deportation. In addition, the provincial administration was entitled to deport an alien whose "behavior had otherwise shown that his or her residence in Finland was not desirable." There was no right of appeal to deportation decisions.

The provincial administration was required to take account of the personal situation of the alien when preparing a deportation decision. This meant that the authorities were obliged to also consider the consequences of deportation in every case. Changes in the legislation on aliens expanded the discretionary powers granted by the regulations to the authorities. During the war, the policy was clearly tightened. The 1942 statute on aliens gave the Ministry of the Interior the right to deport aliens on its own discretion.

The legislation on aliens left the authorities considerable freedom. The language of the regulations gave the Ministry of the Interior and the provincial administrations broad and discretionary powers to intervene in the affairs of any resident alien in the country who was seen to be undesirable, regardless of whether the travel documents and other paperwork of the alien were in order. Reference to vague facts that fit under "other valid cause," "honor," or "other behavior" were enough to serve as a basis for a decision. When the law left so much room for maneuver, the actual policy on preventing aliens from entering the country and on deportation was only defined in practice by administrative decisions.

In addition to the legislation on aliens that defined the general requirements for residence in Finland, there were also different agreements between Finland and

other states that had to be taken into account. In the context of the wartime agreements on transferring individuals between Germany and Finland, the May 1937 Finnish-German agreement on extradition must be mentioned. When this agreement came into force in October 1937, the parties to the agreement were required to give legal assistance to each other in criminal matters. The agreement mandated the surrender of those found guilty of crimes, as well as the surrender of suspects and evidence when certain criteria were fulfilled. Article 4 of the agreement specified separately that the extradition obligation (*Verpflichtung zur Auslieferung*) was not binding for political criminals if the crime was not murder or attempted murder. The extradition obligation was also not binding in the following cases: if the crime was solely an infraction of the military code or was otherwise only punishable by military law, if the punishment following the crime was mandated by either country's legislation on freedom of expression, or if the crime was related to the settlement of public law or the transport of goods. This all meant that political criminals and those fleeing military service were directly left outside the scope of those covered by the agreement.

When Finland transferred individuals to the German authorities during the war, reference was made to the 1937 extradition agreement no more than a couple of times. The legal framework for the transfer of these civilians was more based on their status as aliens and the existing Finnish legislation on the treatment of aliens. In this case, the extradition agreement became irrelevant, as the legislation on aliens offered a means by which alien civilians could be deported to areas controlled by the Germans and to German authorities. The war-time "extradition" of civilians is thus mainly a question of measures based on the legislation on aliens. The following sections will examine what the precise intention was of these transfers. Was it simply a question of deporting

aliens who were regarded as undesirable, or was it more the intentional delivery of certain aliens into German hands?

The State Police's Role in Monitoring Aliens

The monitoring of aliens in Finland was the responsibility of the Ministry of the Interior, which meant the tasks fell upon the provincial administration and law enforcement personnel. The Finnish Central Investigative Bureau, which served as Finland's security police, was the most important law enforcement organization when it came to handling alien affairs, although it was not yet the only one at the beginning of the 1930s. The monitoring of aliens was one of the Central Investigative Bureau's tasks, and all deportations of aliens carried out under the auspices of the legislation on aliens had to be separately communicated to it. However, the Central Investigative Bureau was not even required to provide opinions for residence permit applications. Its tasks were limited to the surveillance of individuals who were dangerous to national security. Some of the duties associated with the monitoring of the arrival of aliens and their registration fell on

the local law enforcement authorities. In practice, this meant the police departments in the cities and the district police in the countryside.

However, the situation was changing. After the 1933 Aliens Statute, a basic feature of the legislation on aliens in the 1930s was the growing influence of the ministries in matters dealing with aliens. By the end of the 1930s, this influence became so strong that the opinions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Social Affairs were first defined as being binding on the provincial administration in residence and work permit matters. In the end, the power to make decisions was taken entirely away from the provincial administration. In 1938, the Central Investigative Bureau was replaced by the State Police. It became the Ministry of the Interior's main specialist organization and the most important monitoring authority on aliens arriving in the country and on resident aliens. One of the State Police's main tasks was: "the monitoring of aliens residing in Finland and passenger traffic between Finland and other countries."



There were POWs of many nationalities in the Naarajärvi camp. The man to the right is the Tatar driver Abdullah. *Pentti Pullisen perikunta*

The legislation on aliens was also being changed at the end of the 1930s. The next big reform in the legislation on aliens was the 1938 Aliens Statute, which clarified the areas that the different officials had authority over. The statute gave the State Police the duty of inspecting passports in the entire country, which fundamentally improved their ability to monitor issues. All aliens arriving legally in the country through border crossing points had to pass through inspections by the State Police. A second important change from the 1933 Aliens Statute was the fact that opinions from the State Police became part of the residence permit application process. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also increased its influence in questions related to entering the country, as provincial administrations were no longer entitled to dismiss its opinions without special grounds. However, an opinion from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs still carried more weight than one from the State Police. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs even made the final decision on entry into the country for individuals seen as a risk to national security. The Ministry of the Interior and the State Police still retained their decision making power in deportation cases.

The backdrop for the changes in the Finnish legislation on aliens were the growing numbers of refugees and the increasingly tense political climate in the 1930's Europe. While the 1938 statute defined the boundaries of the authority of different officials during peacetime, there was soon a need to prepare for a state of emergency. The long predicted war between the great powers of Europe began on September 1, 1939 when Germany attacked Poland. On the same day, the Council of State was given the right to issue orders on the arrival and residence of aliens that were not in accordance with the legislation on aliens. The Council of State was to retain this right while Finland was at war or under threat of war. This power was not used immediately, but it did make it possible to bypass the existing legislation on aliens when necessary. Another law enabling exceptional measures was also soon passed. The October 1939 Security of the Republic Act gave authorities the powers to act in contravention of the constitutional rights of citizens during states of emergency. Neither the Security of the Republic Act nor the right granted to the Council of State to circumvent the legislation on aliens when needed led in themselves to any special measures, but they did signify preparations for the worst.

The next measure affecting the legislation on aliens began in November 1939. The Council of State decided to transfer the duties assigned to the provincial administrations under the aliens statute to the Ministry of the Interior until further notice. This meant the handling of issues related to aliens was strongly centralized under the ministry, and under the State Police in particular since it was the Ministry of the Interior's relevant specialist unit. The State Police and its passport department thus occupied a key position in deciding on the right of an alien to come to Finland and to reside in the country. In addition, the growing influence of the State Police became visible in the process of granting residence permits. The Ministry of the Interior was still required to request an opinion from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but the State Police were able to find sufficient grounds for acting

against the opinions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs when needed. At the same time, a decree was issued that the residence and work permits of those aliens already residing in Finland would cease to be valid after November 15, 1939. This decision was binding for everyone except citizens of other Nordic countries. The effect was to force all those in Finland with residence permits to apply for an extension of their permit. The existing residence and work permits continued to be valid while the applications were being processed, but a negative decision meant the applicants were in the country illegally and that they could be removed when necessary. In practice, this measure meant the reexamination of the cases of all the aliens in Finland who had residence permits.

Events now followed each other so quickly that the legislation could not keep pace. The Soviet Union attacked Finland on the morning of November 30, 1939. The Finnish government met in Helsinki before midday and declared that the country was at war. After this step, a statute was issued on the basis of a presentation from Minister of the Interior Urho Kekkonen that limited personal freedoms on the basis of the Security of the Republic Act. This enabled the authorities to place limitations on where individuals could live or on their residence in the country. The orders would be for cases where there were established grounds for believing that individuals would engage in acts that would harm the national defense or worsen Finnish relations with other countries. The harshest sanction that the statute enabled was the ability to detain someone if other surveillance measures were deemed insufficient. If an individual had engaged in actions covered by the act at some point in time, then this was sufficient grounds for forced relocation or detention. In addition to the State Police, the statute granted provincial administrations the right to take action to limit personal freedoms. The provincial administrations did this by drawing up their own lists of individuals who absolutely were to be detained through the State Police. No changes in the orders issued under this statute could be sought.

War had come to Finland, and the legislation on the treatment of aliens during wartime had in practice been finalized. Only one significant change was made to the legislation on aliens during the war, and it was only the logical conclusion of developments that had already been going on for a long time. At the beginning of April 1942, a new statute permanently assigned to the Ministry of the Interior those tasks that had already been temporarily transferred to it. The independent decision making authority of the Ministry of the Interior grew as the opinion of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs only had to be requested in those cases where there was a desire to block the arrival of an alien in Finland in spite of the fact that he or she could present travel documents with the appropriate stamps. In addition, the opinions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were only advisory. The increased significance of the passport department of the State Police was acknowledged in the change in the statute on the State Police that was issued in April 1942. According to it, the following individuals belonged to the State Police division under the Ministry of the Interior: the Chief of the State Police, Arno Anthoni at this time; Deputy Chief

Ville Pankko; and the Head of the Passport Department, Aarne Kovero. The power of the Ministry of the Interior, the State Police and the Passport Department in managing alien issues had reached its zenith.

Some very concrete background factors made the changes in the legislation and the wartime treatment of aliens by the authorities understandable. As a consequence of the Winter War (1939-1940), Finland was placed in an extremely difficult position as it lost large areas to the Soviet Union that played important roles in supplying the country with food. In addition, housing and work had to be found for approximately 400,000 refugees from Karelia. The extension of the war to Scandinavia in the spring of 1940 either threatened or completely cut off Finnish supply lines from abroad. With the economic isolation, unemployment rose and economic prospects weakened throughout 1940. In these circumstances, it was easy to begin to regard those aliens who were in the country for a variety of reasons as a burden. In the name of the general welfare of the country, there was cause to lessen this burden by getting rid of them whenever it was possible. The war also made passenger traffic fundamentally harder. In addition, the wartime conditions made the deportation of aliens more difficult than usual. Sweden was the only unoccupied country that one could travel directly to from Finland during the Continuation War (1941-1944). Occupied German territory had to be crossed to get anywhere else. Most of the aliens removed from Finland during the war were from areas that were under German control by 1941 at the latest.

In deportation cases, the State Police tried to find out whether there was some country that would take the alien deported from Finland. In practice, this country was Sweden, almost without exception. If it was not clear that this would happen, then the deportation order would not be carried out. The case would be left to develop or the attempt would be entirely abandoned. However, the German authorities operating in the area near Finland repeatedly showed interest in the individuals deported for reasons that will be covered later. The deportation of aliens did not necessarily require a lot of attention on the details of the move. Deportation could happen in accordance with simple written or verbal agreements with the receiving authorities.

Deportation entered the picture for those aliens who were unable to leave the country on their own. The most common reasons for this were incomplete travel documents, a lack of resources, or difficulties in getting a visa. The sources make it clear how the State Police pressured certain individuals to leave Finland, followed their visa applications and even tried occasionally to help. The individuals detained in Finland were a separate group, as they were regarded as untrustworthy from the beginning and thus unsuited for residence in Finland. State Police Chief Arno Anthoni issued an opinion in June 1942 in the case of Georg and Leonid Kusmin, who were in detention. This opinion illustrates quite well the operating principles of the department when it came to aliens who were regarded as dangerous. After the residence permit applications of the Kusmins were rejected, they were:

...to be kept in detention under the provisions of the aliens statute as aliens harmful to the country, and as such they could not be freed as long as the war lasted before there was an opportunity to deport them from the country

Deportations and the Deported

The concept of a right to refugee status first appeared in Finnish law in the 1930 aliens statute. In practice, Finland acknowledged the existence of a right to refugee status, but the statute did not more precisely define on what basis refugee status was to be granted. It remained the task of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to decide if an alien was entitled to refugee status in Finland, or would preventing that alien's entrance into the country otherwise cause unreasonable harm to him or her. The granting of refugee status was transferred from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the discretion of the Ministry of the Interior in the 1942 aliens statute. In any case, the right to refugee status was limited, as Finnish authorities retained the right to deport any aliens whose presence in Finland was regarded as undesirable. It was only the 1984 Aliens Act that introduced to Finnish law an absolute ban on returning aliens to areas where their life or freedom was threatened on the basis of their "race, religion, nationality, membership in a social class or political opinion."

The cases described as extraditions in earlier research literature are usually not extraditions in the legal sense, meaning official measures based on the 1937 extradition agreement, but ordinary deportations. In this summary the term deportation is used in its common meaning to describe the consequences of many different actions. In this sense, cases where the individual was transferred directly from Finnish hands to the German authorities without that individual being free in between have been classified as deportations. A stay aboard a passenger ship between two predefined harbors has not been classified as freedom. In terms of these classifications, it was only freedom when the alien had a real opportunity to decide upon the final destination. An exception to this are those individuals signed onto German ships or merchant ships traveling to German or German-controlled harbors. This summary does not attempt to systematically cover them because these cases have not been deemed to have the distinguishing characteristics of deportation in the sense meant in this research project. Therefore, this summary only takes note of those individuals whose names have come up in earlier research, or when the case is otherwise interesting or illustrative.

In this summary, deportations or actions treated as such also did not need to always occur against the will of the person being deported. The sources contain many cases where individuals requested that they be sent away from Finland, usually back to their homelands. In these cases, the Finnish authorities began the normal deportation proceedings with the aim of sending the person back home. Because

earlier research did not systematically attempt to separate these cases out from the others, this summary also considers these cases along with the other cases. Thus, this summary covers both those who requested deportation and those who were deported against their will.

Large numbers of people who had been driven to leave their home regions for different reasons by the war and the political developments that preceded it were on the move in Europe and further elsewhere during World War Two. Examples of individuals within this diverse group included people who had to leave German controlled territory due to political or ethnic persecution, migrant workers, volunteers looking to fight in the war, adventurers, deserters, drifters, con artists, and criminals. There were many tales among this mass of peoples. For some, falling into the hands of the German authorities signified the worst possible fate. For others, deportation did not lead to any significant consequences. Many of the stories of the deported are quite mundane and undramatic. However, there were also tragedies and comical experiences as well. When examined many decades later, the knowledge of what was to come to pass easily affects the conclusions drawn.

Summary

Finland deported 135 civilians to the German authorities during World War Two. Nearly all deportations occurred during the Continuation War (1941-1944). All these individuals were considered to be aliens in the judgment of the Finnish authorities. The foreign background of the individuals in question was in all cases, without exception, the key factor in explaining the later actions taken by the authorities.

Deporting individuals from Finland ceased to be even a reasonably simple matter as soon as Finland entered the war. The normal peacetime measures for deportation had become impossible in most cases. Deportation measures during peacetime were a relatively simple and unilateral affair, as states were obligated to take back their citizens when they were deported. During the Continuation War however, Germany had occupied nearly all the countries to which Finland would have wanted to deport aliens. In practice, the only receiving country to which aliens could be transported that was not German occupied territory was Sweden. Sweden did not normally want to receive individuals deported by Finland. The reality was that every deportation had to be negotiated separately with either Swedish or German authorities.

The couple of cases where groups of civilians were deported during the Continuation War were all the result of separately made agreements among the leadership of the Finnish and German security police. Both mass deportations and the deportations of individuals were always agreed to ahead of time. Finnish authorities did not deliver anyone into German hands on the basis of a unilateral

decision. The initiative also seems to have come, almost without exception, from the Finnish authorities. It seems that there were only a few cases where German security police were an active participant and requested the delivery of some named individual. On the basis of lower level agreements, only individuals were deported to the German security police in Norway or Estonia.

The deportation of civilians to German authorities was chiefly solely the result of actions taken in accordance with the existing legislation. The regulations gave the authorities extensive powers to prepare and implement individual decisions on aliens and simultaneously left the aliens insufficient legal protection. The right to appeal was limited and the legislation only contained vague mention of a right to refugee status. Aside from being turned away at the border, the authorities in practice did not have to consider the consequences of measures and the reasonableness of the deportation. When the legislation did not offer clear instructions, the authorities were left with the power to decide practical measures.

Decision making power on matters concerning aliens resident in the country was clearly concentrated under the Ministry of the Interior towards the end of the 1930s. Because measures went through the State Police division of the ministry, this meant the expansion of the influence of this specialist organization. This development culminated in the 1942 Aliens Act, which made the Ministry of Foreign Affairs the only channel to apply to for changes. However, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs no longer had legally defined powers to intercede in the execution of decisions. The Ministry of the Interior and the law enforcement authorities were only required to inform the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of decisions they took when canceling residence permits and deporting people. The opinion of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was only required in cases where there was an intention to turn away the alien at the border even if he or she had proper travel documents or appealed to a right to refugee status.

The decision making process in deporting an alien was short in both the State Police and the ministry, and it was not necessarily the case that anyone other than the chief making the decision and the people presenting the case took part. In practice, matters decided by the Ministry of the Interior were again handled by direct presentations to the chief of the State Police. The factors in the background that affect the decisions have often not left any trace in the documentation of the State Police. The details related to the decision making preparations are in the personal archives of the people presenting the cases, and are not in the archives of the State Police. In any case, the process was probably mostly verbal. However, it is possible to detect an underlying logic in these cases by examining the individual details of the deportations and the circumstances associated with them.



Newcomers in the Naarajärvi camp in the fall of 1941. *Pentti Pullisen perikunta*

The State Police were a law enforcement organization whose main duties were not in the actions related to aliens. The led to a state of affairs where law enforcement viewpoints were emphasized in the views of the State Police on resident aliens. The starting point was that aliens were first and foremost regarded as potential risks. Their deportation was immediately seen as the primary and most suitable measure to be taken when an issue arose. Although regulations in principle required the authorities to take account of the probable consequences of their actions and to consider how reasonable and suitable these measures were, sympathy did not generally extend to members of groups and nationalities who were seen as particularly untrustworthy.

The main motive of the State Police was to get rid of aliens seen as "objectionable." By the end of the Winter War at the latest, the State Police thought that all these should be removed from Finland. Deportation was again the preferred solution, as any foreigner sitting in detention in a Finnish prison was just taking up the already stretched resources of the Finnish penal system. Individuals could be labeled as "objectionable" for quite minor reasons including self-conscious or combative behavior, economic irregularities or violations of the prevailing sexual mores. When deportation was considered, these kind of details tended to assume much more weight in the thinking of the State Police officials than the possible consequences of the measure. Only in a few cases is there evidence in the related documentation that the authorities actually took the likely consequences of deportation into account. It can be supposed that if such consideration was regularly given, then it was based on verbal discussion and on the evaluation of the individual official handling the case.

Anti-Semitic attitudes were a distinctive feature of these deportation decisions. These attitudes can be shown to some degree to run through the mental world and operational culture of the personnel of the State Police. The influence of anti-Semitism in the deportation decisions for those individuals regarded as Jews is undeniable, but anti-Semitism cannot be shown to be the only influencing factor in a single case. In other words, being a Jew was not sufficient reason to deport an individual. Even so, the starting point was that the State Police were more suspicious of Jews than members of any other group except for Soviet citizens. Individuals regarded as Jews more easily ended up being investigated and thus more easily on the deportation lists. In the eyes of the officials of the State Police, being a Jew was a serious factor, as it was believed that it made individuals susceptible to communism. This meant that anti-Semitism had an influence in more easily allowing some people to be labeled as "objectionable" in the eyes of State Police personnel than others. In the view of the State Police, "objectionable" individuals were to be deported.

In addition to prejudice based on ethnicity, the treatment of individual aliens was also influenced by their positions as citizens of countries that Germany had positive or negative relations with. One of the main duties of the State Police was the prevention of intelligence operations that targeted Finland. In this context, aliens in general were seen as risks, while citizens of potential hostile countries constituted a special risk factor. Before the Continuation War, the State Police got ready for the start of hostilities by preparing for a round of preventive detentions and by updating their information on aliens resident in Finland. On the basis of its card files, the main office prepared up-to-date lists of the "objectionable aliens" resident in the country. This information was distributed to the sections in the middle of June 1941. The lists included all the citizens of all those countries that the State Police assumed would have negative relations with Germany, and thus also with Finland when it entered the coming war. The lists included the citizens of the Soviet Union, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium and Norway, as well as

Jewish refugees resident in Finland. In addition, the lists had letters and numbers for the background information that was seen as relevant. These markings were "S" for military personnel, "V" for Winter War volunteers, "J" for Jews, and "1/2" for individuals with family ties to Finns. This information was considered to be significant when it came to an individual's continued residence in Finland, possible surveillance measures, preventive detention decisions, and possible deportation actions. The influence of at least latent anti-Semitism in the tactical thinking of the State Police can of course be seen in the emphasis laid on recording who was a Jew in the lists. Those who were regarded as Jews were seen as untrustworthy and as possible enemies of Germany, and thus also of Finland, regardless of their citizenship. Thus, it was believed that they required tighter supervision than normal, which of course meant they were more easily selected for deportation.

Finland handed over to the German authorities a total of 12 civilians regarded as Jews. Not all of them would have been considered Jews from a Jewish perspective. The decisive factor was that they were considered to be Jews under German law, and that the State Police considered them to be Jews as well. It is known for certain that nine of the deported lost their lives as a result of measures taken by the German authorities. Two of the deported, Georg Kollmann and Georges Busch, survived the experience. The ultimate fate of one of those deported, Nikolajs Arnolds, is unclear.

The question of moral responsibility must be answered alongside the question of legal responsibility. The handing over of individuals regarded as Jews to German officials was clearly a questionable action, which would have required at least careful consideration from the authorities according to the spirit of the legislation of the time. However, as a rule, the State Police did not take the possible individual consequences of deportation into account. They were indifferent to the right to refugee status contained in the legislation on aliens and did not follow the principle of avoiding unreasonable harm with any consistency. There is no doubt that the Finnish authorities knew for a long time that Jews and communists delivered to German officials could expect to become victims of, at the very least, abnormally brutal treatment. After October 1941 at the latest, the leadership of the State Police was also aware that individuals considered to be Jews or communists delivered to German officials were in immediate danger of coercion measures or even losing their lives. In spite of this, the State Police carried out many deportations of individuals considered to be Jews or communists until November 1942. These people were handed over to German officials with this knowledge, but with indifference to the possible consequences.

However, in the sources there is no evidence of any planning for measures to remove entire ethnic, ideological or religious groups from Finland and to hand them over to German officials. The source materials make it clear that the absolute majority of Jewish refugees resident in Finland did not become subject to plans of deportation. The State Police, not even with the assistance of the Ministry of the Interior, were not the only ones making decision in matters concerning aliens.

During the entire war, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had its own role, particularly in the handling of cases that drew more attention. Civic organizations and the press, including the press in Sweden, likewise followed these events and got involved through their own channels of influence. The State Police often had to change an already planned measure as a consequence of outside pressure. However, it must also be remembered that the actions of the State Police were primarily guided by what were considered as law enforcement considerations. The express aim of the State Police was not to deliver particular individuals into the hands of the German authorities, but remove these individuals from Finland. For example, an individual leaving Finland on their own, along with the resulting fuss arising from this action, was just as acceptable an outcome from the viewpoint of the State Police.

Knowledge of the policy of terror and genocide practiced by the German authorities, with its accompanying concentration and death camps, can easily lead to the conclusion that there must have been equally dramatic and sinister causes for any deportations to such a fate. Nothing, however, suggests that this would have been the case. In reality, the reasons leading to individual decisions of deportation were apparently minor, human and petty. Those persons ultimately selected to be deported had usually drawn the attention of the State Police by having been in the wrong place at the wrong time or having sat in detention for too long without the State Police finding a suitable destination for him or her. It is essential to see that the deportations were more a case of a mass of individual cases, not a consistent policy, but the contours of the whole picture can be drawn only by examining the details of the individual cases.

Source: Silvennoinen, Oula: Salaiset aseveljet. Suomen ja Saksan turvallisuuspoliisiyhteistyö 1933-1944, Helsinki 2008

Soviet Demands for Repatriations from Finland between 1944 and 1955

Juha Pohjonen

For Finland, the end of World War Two came in two phases. Hostilities between Finland and the Soviet Union ceased on September 4/5, 1944, after which armistice negotiations began. As a result, an armistice was signed on September 19, 1944. One of the conditions of the armistice was the removal from Finnish territory of the German units that were still in Finnish Lapland. This led to the Lapland War, which ended at the end of April 1945 when the last German units left Finnish soil.²⁹⁷

There were two articles on repatriation (numbers 2 and 10) amongst the many items in the armistice agreement. In Article 2, Finland committed to disarming German military units and to placing their personnel under Allied (Soviet) control. In addition, German and Hungarian citizens on Finnish territory were also to be interned. According to Article 10, Finland was to hand over all Soviet and Allied prisoners of war to the Soviet Union.²⁹⁸ The situation was clear for the captured German and Red Army prisoners of war; and their repatriation to Soviet authorities did not cause great problems. It was a case of returning normal prisoners of war just like when the Soviets repatriated Finnish prisoners of war to Finland. Problems only began when the Allied Control Commission, which had been created to monitor compliance with the armistice agreement, started to interpret the agreement in new, broader, and unilateral ways. The ultimate question was who was to be repatriated. The Finns had to take a long time to ponder this issue thoroughly.

The Finns and the Soviets had very little experience with exchanging prisoners or with repatriating prisoners of war. The only clear precedent for the Finns was the Winter War, or rather the situation following the March 1940 Moscow Peace Treaty. In the Moscow Peace Treaty prisoners of war were passed over with a short mention, according to which practical arrangements would be dealt with in a separate agreement. Negotiations began and led to an exchange of prisoners of war beginning on April 16, 1940. The last of the most seriously wounded and ill were repatriated by both sides by summer 1940. The final numbers were as follows: the

²⁹⁷ Ask 645a/19.9.1944; Elfvengren 2005, pp. 1124-1149 (in *The Continuation War Little Giant*, edited by Antti Juutilainen and Jari Leskinen).

²⁹⁸ Ask 645a/19.9.1944, Articles 2 and 10.

Soviet Union handed over 847 prisoners of war to Finland, and Finland sent 5,648 prisoners of war to the Soviet Union.²⁹⁹

In 1944, prisoners of war were seldom spoken about, particularly in the unsuccessful peace negotiations conducted in the spring. People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs Vyacheslav Molotov repeatedly stressed that all prisoners of war had to be returned, including Estonians and Ingrians. However, the problem remained in the shadow of more important issues. Molotov later emphasised separately that all those who had been taken by force would have to be repatriated, but not those who came to Finland voluntarily.³⁰⁰

The armistice negotiations of the fall did not introduce anything new to the issue of repatriating prisoners of war. The Allies had agreed to peace conditions in their earlier meetings so Article 10 of the armistice was dictated to the Finns for acceptance as it was. This meant that the Finns committed to repatriate all Soviet and Allied prisoners to the supreme Allied (Soviet) military leadership. It also meant that citizens of the Soviet Union and the United Nations (as the Allies were called before the founding of the modern organization with the same name) who had been interned or taken by force were to be returned to their countries of origin.³⁰¹

When it came to international agreements, Finland and the Soviet Union were at least partially in uncharted territory. On June 9, 1922, Finland had ratified the convention on the laws and customs of war on land, which had been agreed at the Second Hague Peace Conference on October 18, 1907. The convention contained precise provisions on the treatment of prisoners of war. In a manner of speaking, Finland had already ratified the agreement in February 1907. Finland had then been part of Russia, which had also signed the agreement. In the interpretation of the Swiss Executive Federal Council, Russia had never withdrawn from the convention. However, the Soviet Union had not joined the Third Geneva Convention of 1929 in any way, and the ratification process in Finland had also not come to a conclusion. Thus, the only legally binding international agreement was the 1907 Hague Convention, although the Soviet Union was certainly familiar with the contents of the Third Geneva Convention.³⁰²

In this situation, the only clear criteria for the repatriation, return, or exchange of prisoners of war was the Moscow Armistice signed jointly by both countries as well as the interpretations of this agreement made by the Allied Control Commission between 1944 and 1947 before the final Paris Peace Treaty was signed. The guiding principle was clear. When it signed the armistice agreement,

²⁹⁹ Minutes of the Finnish-Soviet Joint Committee Num 1/14.4.1940, 109 E 7, box 43, UM; Polvinen 1995, p. 155.

³⁰⁰ Minutes of the Moscow negotiations 27.-29.3.1944, Carl Enckellin Collection, KA.

³⁰¹ Polvinen 1980, pp. 85-105, Palm 1973, pp. 94-150, Ask 645a/19.9.1944.

³⁰² Letter from the Finnish Embassy in Bern to the Foreign Ministry 26.8.1926, 8 M, UM; Rosas 2005, pp. 75-78.

Finland had naturally also committed to follow it. When discussing the implementation of the agreement, the Soviets pointed out this fact.

The Repatriated

The Red Army prisoners of war and interned Soviet citizens in the different prisoner of war and internment camps were the first and easiest group to repatriate. Their repatriation to the Soviet Union began on October 15, 1944, and it resulted in the rapid emptying out of the prisoner of war camps. By the beginning of November, the Finns had sent 42,495 prisoners of war, 1,615 Soviet civilian internees and other Soviet citizens, 2,565 German prisoners of war and 178 German civilian internees to the Soviet Union. According to the slightly confused statistics of the final years of the war in Finland, 1,098 Soviet prisoners of war, 2 interned Soviet citizens, 1,331 German prisoners of war and 24 interned Germans had still eluded repatriation to the Soviet Union.³⁰³ Simultaneously, expectations for the return of the first Finnish prisoners of war to Finland rose.

If the Soviets and the Allied Control Commission had been satisfied with the initial Finnish assumptions about the repatriations, the situation would have been mostly clear. Some of those subject to repatriation were still missing, but the problem was under control. The Finns knew that the confused conditions of the end of the war had led to unintentional and partially intentional statistical errors. In many cases however, the Finns were unable to control the destiny of those who had escaped, as it was known that some of the prisoners of war who had fled were hiding in Sweden. The Finns could not influence the refugee policies of another country.³⁰⁴ The Finns could attempt to clarify how many of the prisoners of war who had fled might be in Sweden, but their repatriation to the Soviet Union was in reality a matter between the Soviet Union and Sweden. The Finns could only attempt to prevent escapes to Sweden and look for prisoners of war who might still be hiding in Finland.

The situation changed on November 1, 1944 when the Allied Control Commission announced that the Finnish military leadership had acted in contravention of generally recognised conventions by allowing some Soviet prisoners of war to join the Finnish army. These men had participated in active combat both in independent battalions and in individual units. The Allied Control Commission demanded that these men be repatriated almost immediately. The deadline was November 10, 1944, or in about a week.³⁰⁵

³⁰³ Nevalainen 18989, p. 304.

³⁰⁴ Memorandum from Colonel Sulo Malm 16.7.1945, T 19661/ B 60, SArk; Letter of Carl Enckellin num B-1934/17.7.1945 to Ambassador G. A. Gripenberg, Fb: 110 E 6, box 124, UM.

³⁰⁵ Letter of the deputy of the chairman of the Allied Control Commission, Lieutenant General Grigory Savonenkov to the Foreign Ministry 1.11.1944, T 19498/22, SArk.

The attention of the Allied Control Commission focused mostly on the members of the 3rd Volunteer (Finnic) Battalion, which had chiefly had Ingrians and Eastern Karelians in its ranks.³⁰⁶ Repatriation demands were also made for the men of the 6th Independent Battalion, which was a unit raised from Ingrian volunteers.³⁰⁷

The demand to repatriate those who were not normal Red Army prisoners of war or Germans caused the Finns their first moral and legal problems after the repatriations began. The Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs sought opinions from all the leading experts on international law in Finland in an attempt to clarify the legality of the request for repatriation in the light of international law, Finnish law and the armistice agreement. After numerous memorandums and appraisals, the conclusion was that it was clear that the Soviet demand for repatriation was legal and legitimate at least as far as the 3rd Volunteer (Finnic) Battalion was concerned. However, there was no basis for repatriation of the men of the 6th Independent Battalion. Rafael Erich, professor of international law at the University of Helsinki and former judge on the Permanent Court of International Justice at The Hague, was certainly at least quite sceptical about the stress on "ethnic solidarity" among Finnic peoples, as it "unfortunately was without legal significance" in his opinion.³⁰⁸

Repatriation of the men of the 3rd Volunteer (Finnic) Battalion to the Soviet Union began immediately in November 1944, and continued at least to the early years of the 1950s. The repatriation of these men grated on Finnish-Soviet relations immediately from the beginning of the fall of 1944, as many members of the battalion had anticipated the situation and fled to Sweden. Officially, the battalion had 1,115 men at the end of the war. By spring 1951, 649 men had been repatriated to the Soviet Union. A few were still in hiding in Finland, but most of the rest remained in Sweden the entire time.³⁰⁹

³⁰⁶ The term Finnic is used here to refer collectively to those peoples in the Baltic Sea region whose original mother tongue belong to this branch of the Finnic division of the Finno-Ugric group of the Uralic languages. Examples of the Finnic branch include Finnish, Estonian, Ingrian, Karelian, Veps and some others. In the context of this article, the term Finnic refers to those non-Estonian Soviet citizens from the above groups.

³⁰⁷ Memo of the Repatriations/Settlement Committee of the Headquarters of the Commandant of Prisoners of War (Pv.PE:n Sv.Kom. Selv.E) 13.1.1949 (summary) repatriations of the 3rd Volunteer (Finnic) Battalion and 6th Independent Battalion as well as some other groups, T 19661/ B 58; Clarification of the fates of the aforementioned groups, letter from the foreign section of the Defence Forces General Staff (Pv.PE:n ulkomaastato) 17.6.1945 to Lieutenant General Savonenkov, T 19503/7, SArk.

³⁰⁸ Secret memo of Rafael Erich 18.10.1944, Memo from Erik Castrén 25.9.1944 and 2.10.1944, Fb 110 E 6 box 55 and Fb 110 E 11, box 42, UM.

³⁰⁹ Memo "On the necessity of checking the detailed identity of prisoners of war who have fled from our country to Sweden" 16.7.1945; letter Repatriations/Settlement Committee of the Headquarters of the Commandant of Prisoners of War (Sv.kom.E:n Selvityselin) 5.4.1951, repatriation and escapee statistics; prisoner of war statistics of the Repatriations/Settlement Committee of the Headquarters of the Commandant of Prisoners of War (Sv.kom.E:n Selvityselin) 1.5.1953, T 19661/ B 60, SArk.



"The Tatar Brothers". Their task was to heat up the camp sauna. As the war ended many of the Tatar POWs would have liked to stay in Finland but generally this was not possible. *Pentti Pullisen perikunta*

The 6th Independent Battalion, which was mainly composed of Ingrians, led to yet more headaches. The men had come to Finland as volunteers in 1943 to fight in a conventional manner with Finnish units. According to the information the Finns had received from the Germans, there had been no prisoners of war in the unit. The men had been dismissed from service in a conventional manner at the end of September 1944. The Finns had not seen any reason to repatriate them. However, Lieutenant General Grigory Savonenkov, who was the Russian representative on the Allied Control Commission, was of a different opinion. On June 12, 1945, he ordered Prime Minister Mauno Pekkala to take action to also repatriate these men to the Soviet Union. The Finns attempted to explain that these men had only been

common soldiers, but this resistance did not help. In August 1945, the Ministry of the Interior issued an order to begin looking for these men as well.³¹⁰

The repatriation of the men of the 6th Independent Battalion to the Soviet Union was a difficult matter for the Finns. The men had not been prisoners of war, they had not been brought to Finland by force, and it was an open question whether these men were even Soviets. They had fought for Finland against the Soviet Union, but then so had many others. If the repatriation of the men of the 3rd Volunteer (Finnic) Battalion was difficult, sending the men of the 6th Independent Battalion to the Soviet Union proved to be even more difficult. Quite a few succeeded in hiding in Finland and even more fled to Sweden. By May 1953, 187 of the men had been repatriated and 283 had returned voluntarily in the Ingrian transports. A total of 729 men had served in the battalion. At least 217 had vanished and the rest had been killed or gone missing.³¹¹ In the case of these repatriations, the Finns understood that they were in practice breaking all international laws. For example, Tauno Suontaus, head of the legal affairs department of the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, put the matter in a nutshell in May 1945 when he said: "a belligerent power that repatriates prisoners of war to a country other than that of their country of origin is not acting in accordance with the agreements of international law."³¹²

However, the so-called Leino prisoners caused the most controversy and criticism. This was a group of 20 civilian and military individuals (ten of whom were Finnish citizens) who were handed over to the Soviet Union under orders from the Allied Control Commission at the beginning of Yrjö Leino's term as Minister of the Interior.³¹³ The Soviets has obviously chosen these men after careful consideration as the backgrounds and activities of all of them were at least in principle of interest to the Soviets. The group included Russian émigré activists, former citizens of the Russian Empire serving in intelligence roles in the Finnish Defence Forces, one prisoner from the Winter War, and one Finnish SS man. However, they were not particularly guilty of war crimes. The order of the Allied Control Commission was carried out on April 21, 1945 and the men were sent to prison camps. Six men died, two remained in the Soviet Union, 11 returned in the 1950s, and the mystery of the fate of the prisoner of war remains unsolved.³¹⁴

³¹⁰ Letter from Grigory Savonenkov to Prime Minister Mauno Pekkala 10.6.1945, T 19499/37, SARk; Interior Ministry circular 31.8.1945, Finnish Security Police(EK-Valpo II), folder XXXV, KA.

³¹¹ Memo Repatriations/Settlement Committee of the Headquarters of the Commandant of Prisoners of War (Pv.PE Sv.kom.E:n Selvityselin) 1.5.1953, T 19661/ B 60.

³¹² Memo from Tauno Suontaus 24.5.1945, Fb 110 E 11, box 61, UM.

³¹³ Yrjö Leino was a Finnish Communist politician who served as minister of the interior between 1945 and 1948. He had been elected to the Finnish parliament in 1945 as a member of the Finnish People's Democratic League.

³¹⁴ Memo from Ralph Enckell 11.9.1955 "To the Allied Control Commission on the 20 individuals repatriated on April 21, 1945", Kc 8 UM; State Police list of individuals detained and removed on April 21, 1945 for the Parliamentary Ombudsman: catalog of arrests made

When the Allied Control Commission later tightened its grip, other groups were targeted. These included all the prisoners of war who had been in service with the Finnish Armed Forces, the citizens of other countries who had had business with German units in some way or other and of course the men of the 3rd Volunteer (Finnic) Battalion and the 6th Independent Battalion. The searches for these individuals continued until at least 1955 when the last repatriation was conducted.

It is difficult to present an indisputably precise number for how many individuals were repatriated from Finland to the Soviet Union between 1944 and 1955 before the Russian archives open. However, the Finns did meticulous work so a precise summary can be presented. According to this summary, over 47,000 people were repatriated to the Soviet Union as a result of Finnish measures.

Prisoners of war and others repatriated 15 Oct 1944 - 7 Mar 1955³¹⁵

Group	Number
Soviet prisoners of war	41,505
Members of the 3 rd Volunteer (Finnic) Battalion	656
Members of other defence force units	49
Female prisoners of war, including two children	204
Prisoners of internment camps	1,459
Members of the 6 th Independent Battalion	187
Interned civilians	178
German deserters	372
German prisoners of war	2,562
"Leino prisoners" April 21, 1945	20
TOTAL	47,192

(undated), Amp XXV C 6 A; Björkelund 1966, pp. 344-351, Leino, Olle 1973, pp. 153-156, Polvinen 1999, pp. 504-506 and Diaries of J.K. Paasikivi. I, 23.4.1945.

³¹⁵ Numbers for the table based on material collected from the Repatriations/Settlement Committee of the Headquarters of the Commandant of Prisoners of War (Sv.kom. E:n selvityselin), Finnish Security Police (EK-Valpo), local police, the Finnish Border Guard (Rajavartiolaitos) and the Security Police (Supo).

Carrying out the repatriations

The Repatriations/Settlement Committee of the Headquarters of the Commandant of Prisoners of War (hereinafter the Repatriations/Settlement Committee) was established on November 27, 1944 to direct the searches for prisoners of war who had fled and others that were to be repatriated to the Soviets. The Repatriations/Settlement Committee replaced the Headquarters of the Commandant of Prisoners of War, which was abolished on the same day. The task of the Repatriations/Settlement Committee was to monitor and direct the remaining ongoing activities of the regional repatriation/settlement committees. These were Prisoner of War Camp 41 in Oulu, the returning Finns camp in Hanko, the repatriation committee for prisoners of war in Vainikkala and the collection point for prisoners of war who had fled established in Lappeenranta at the end of 1944. In practice, this meant that the Repatriations/Settlement Committee handled both the reception of prisoners returning from the Soviet Union to Finland and the transfer of prisoners of war who had fled as they were repatriated to the Soviet Union after capture. Staying in contact with the Allied Control Commission was one important task. After the departure of the Allied Control Commission in the fall of 1947, this duty was transferred to the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which handled matters with the Soviet embassy.³¹⁶

The Repatriations/Settlement Committee did not have any men in the field. Instead, law enforcement personnel under the Finnish Ministry of the Interior, the national State Police and the local police districts were responsible for the searches. After 1949 the State Police was replaced by its successor, the Security Police. The national police had its own special group at its disposal, the so-called Search Group, which was established in July 1947. For its part, the Ministry of the Interior maintained a registry of those who had been caught. The ministry also regularly published a Search bulletin in a variety of formats about those who were still wanted. Initially there was only one Search Group with 1 inspector and 12 men. In addition, two men from the State Police helped, mainly with interrogation duties. Later in 1947 the Search Group was split up into smaller 2-3 men patrols, which were active all over the country. At the same time three members of the mobile police patrol reinforced the group. Altogether the group was quite small, consisting of about 20 men. The Search Group always had difficulties and was never very productive because local law enforcement officials were not very eager to assist the detectives of the State Police, who had a bad reputation.³¹⁷

In addition to the Repatriations/Settlement Committee and the law enforcement authorities, a separate B-Section of the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs also

³¹⁶ Repatriations/Settlement Committee (Selvityselin) memo 13.1.1949, T 19661/ B 58, SArk.

³¹⁷ Repatriations/Settlement Committee (Selvityselin) memo 13.1.1949, T 19661/ B 58, SArk; State Police (Valpo) memo 18.12.1947, Amp XXV C 6 – XXV C 10, EK-Valpo II, KA

supported the searches. The B-Section's task was to keep in general contact with the Allied Control Commission. The Liaison Section of the Defence Forces also contributed to the general effort. However, the role of these officials was tiny when it came to the searches themselves. The B-Section forwarded the orders of the Allied Control Commission and the Liaison Section delivered all the information that the Allied Control Commission wanted about the actions of the Finnish Armed Forces during the war. The Finnish Red Cross also had some influence, chiefly due to its excellent card files on the prisoners of war. The main responsibility for the searches was with the law enforcement authorities the entire time.

The searches for those who had fled can be chronologically divided into three phases. The mass returns phase was in the fall of 1944 when the prisoner of war camps were emptied out. In this phase, the Repatriations/Settlement Committee was the key actor. At the end of 1944 the prisoner of war camps had been emptied and at the same time the Allied Control Commission began to demand more effective searches for individuals who had fled and for members of the 3rd Volunteer (Finnic) Battalion. Simultaneously, the State Police drifted ever more clearly into the hands of the left, changing into the "red" State Police. There were many who fled during the beginning of the new State Police era in 1945-1946, so a camp was established in Lappeenranta to collect the many hundreds of individuals who were to be repatriated to the Soviet Union on the basis of the Armistice Agreement. From the end of 1945 the number of those taken into custody shrunk continuously, which made the Lappeenranta camp no longer necessary. It was therefore closed in August 1946. After this, those who were to be repatriated were more sporadically detained, with the number declining from year to year. The role of the local police became more prominent. The Security Police also arrested some individuals after it was founded in 1949. When the last repatriation was carried out in March 1955, there had only been isolated individual cases in the period leading up to the end.

Little research has focused on the collection point in Lappeenranta for prisoners of war who fled. From November 1945 to August 1946, this was the key location for the transfer of those who fled the mass repatriations. The Finns established the camp independently without urging or pressure from the Allied Control Commission or the Soviets. The camp certainly interested the Allied Control Commission, but its representatives only visited the facility once, expressing satisfaction with Finnish arrangements.³¹⁸

The Lappeenranta camp was perfectly located in every respect. It was right in the city centre, but in the garrison area of the Fortress of Lappeenranta. The area was easy to isolate and the old jail within was well-suited for short-term detention of those who had fled. The good transit connections were even more important. The

³¹⁸ Letter from the Headquarters of the Commandant of Prisoners of War (Sv.KomE) num 8094/Sv.1/sal/18.11.1944; Letter from the Headquarters of the Commandant of Prisoners of War (Sv.KomE) num 8300/Sv.1/sal/25.11.1944, T 19665/ F 6-7; Spk 14920/1, 29.11.1944, T 19665/1, SArk.

trip to the Nurmi repatriation station, now on the other side of the new border, was only just over 30 kilometers. It was also easy to bring groups of prisoners and individual escapees to the camp by either train or car. A railway spur that ran just by the prison made the camp location ideal. This meant that the transfer of those likely to flee could be handled without trouble. Not counting a couple of smaller uprising attempts, the camp was peaceful and not one single prisoners escaped from the transports the entire time. Only a couple of prisoners succeeded in escaping from the camp itself, and they were also quickly recaptured.³¹⁹

The camp was particularly active in 1945. From its founding until the end of the year, 484 individuals were transferred through the camp to the Soviet Union. This included 123 members of the 3rd Volunteer (Finnic) Battalion, 93 men of the 6th Independent Battalion and 268 other individuals who had fled or were designated for repatriation. After this, most of those who had fled had been taken into custody or had gone abroad, mostly to Sweden, and the repatriation transportations subsided.³²⁰

The repatriations themselves proceeded peacefully. The camp prisoners were transferred to railway cars, which travelled to Nurmi station in the Soviet Union. The Finns gave the Soviets a repatriation list translated into Russian, kept one copy for themselves, and sent a third copy to the Finnish Red Cross. Everything happened carefully, in a business like manner, and in a way that the Soviet could not complain about.³²¹ The repatriation of individuals and small groups at the border later on worked on the same principles. The Finns drew up the repatriation documents and their Soviet counterparts inspected and accepted them. This practice continued until 1955.

The Soviets continuously accused the Finns of being too soft in repatriation matters. This was partially true. Particularly immediately after the end of hostilities between Finland and the Soviet Union, Finnish military authorities attempted to protect military comrades living under the threat of repatriation. For example, the prisoners in the Mustasaari Prisoner of War Camp near Vaasa were offered the opportunity to acquire false identities by the army. There were other similar cases.³²²

³¹⁹ Letter on the collection point for prisoners of war who have fled to the Ministry of Defence 23.7.1945, T 19665/F 6-7; Letter of the Lappeenranta garrison commander num 54/IIb/18.2.1945 to the chief of the command staff of the Defence Forces General Staff (Pv.PE); letter from the Repatriations/Settlement Committee of the Headquarters of the Commandant of Prisoners of War (Pv.PE:n Sv.Kom E:n Selvityselin) to the chief of the command staff num 943/Sv.1/28.2.1945, T 19663/ F 1, SArk.

³²⁰ Military diary of the Lappeenranta collection point for prisoners of war who had fled 25.11.1944-31.8.1946, T 19665/F 4-5, T 19665/aa3, Ab 7-8 and B 4-5, SArk

³²¹ Regulations of the collection point for prisoners of war who had fled 20.2.1945, T 19663/ F 1, SArk.

³²² Interview of Andrei Huuhka 27.9.-2.10.1947, Vaasa section of the State Police num 441/4.10.1947, T 189960/ B 39, Letter from the Ministry of Defence/ Headquarters of the Commandant of Prisoners of War (PM/Sv.Kom.E) num 7673/Sv.1/4.11.1944 "Report on the

The protective measures taken by the defence forces seem to be something that happened at a unit and prisoner of war camp level. There is no hint of a systemic plan. The protective measures and document forgeries performed by the army clearly targeted a small and close group of men. In other words, this was just the group who many supposed were in the greatest danger. Examples included those who had served in long range patrols behind enemy lines, interrogators of prisoners of war, those who had assisted in intelligence operations, and naturally those Finnic volunteers from the Soviet Union who had served in the Finnish military. The actions of the army were quickly investigated and sentences were handed out.³²³

Civil disobedience was a significantly more difficult problem for the State Police. When those who had most successfully hid were taken into custody at the end of the 1940s and the beginning of the 1950s, law enforcement officials noted that average civilians, local police and clergymen had knowingly or unknowingly sheltered Finnic prisoners of war from the Soviet Union. In reality, both officials and civilians operated with full knowledge of their actions in nearly every case, but it was difficult to get proof. Even ministers or pastors who entered people into church registers on particularly weak grounds were not charged with anything in the end. The cases were carefully investigated only in the early 1950s and the final conclusion was that everyone had acted in good faith. No sentences were handed down over the protective measures.³²⁴

These protective measures, which started immediately in the fall of 1944, were also not part of any larger plan. Many men who had fled had created very close and intimate relationships with the areas where they lived, and even marriages were not uncommon. In these conditions, the heads of farms protected the new inhabitant of a house or village with obvious pleasure. After all, the new neighbour might be the father of the child of the daughter of the house, a husband, and a hard worker in addition to everything else. There was no problem for the clergymen in this matter. A new member was registered with the congregation, and everything was settled. All the men who had fled had fought for Finland, so the sympathy was easy to understand.

repatriation of Russian and German prisoners of war and internees", T 19498/ 22; Letter from foreign section of the Defence Forces General Staff (Pv.PE:n ulk. os) num 2502/Ulk.2/28.7.1945 prisoners of war in the intelligence units, T 19499/ 37; Letter from Repatriations/Settlement Committee of the Headquarters of the Commandant of the Prisoners of War (Sv. Kom. E:n Selvityselin) num 1589/Sv.1/6.7.1945 Forged names for the Allied Control Commission, T 19499/ 37; Letter from foreign section of the Defence Forces General Staff (Pv.PE:n ulkomaosasto) 17.6.1945, PM "Clarification for Lieutenant General Savonenkov of the Allied Control Commission provided by the defence department on the suspected concealment of correspondence on prisoners of war , T 19503/ 7, SArk.

³²³ Court of appeals of military courts judgment 2.10.1945; Minutes of the interrogation of Into Kuismanen and Vladimir Marmo num 170/45/4.8.1945, HMP 4349, EK-Valpo II, KA.

³²⁴ Memo from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs 9.2.1950, Carl Enckell Collection, box 95, KA.

Refugees in Sweden

Finnish civilians and also partially the defence forces quickly organised escape routes to Sweden. These measures were partially based on unrequested assistance, but cash was also involved.³²⁵ The traffic over the Gulf of Bothnia was brisk, and the Finns had already figured out in 1945 how many had fled. According to information collected by the General Staff in the fall of 1945, at least 559 escaped prisoners of war, 381 men from the 3rd Volunteer (Finnic) Battalion, 346 men from the 6th Independent Battalion, and 103 individuals who had participated in one way or another in military actions in other defence force units had gone to Sweden.³²⁶

The Allied Control Commission demanded in no uncertain terms that these men should also be repatriated, but the Finns soon declared that the task was impossible. First, the Swedes were extremely reluctant to provide any information on those who had arrived seeking refuge and reacted extremely negatively to the thought that these people would be repatriated to Finland and then handed on to the Soviet Union. For their part, the Finns understood that they had no means of pressing for or otherwise demanding repatriations. Sweden was a sovereign nation, which handled its refugee affairs as it wished.³²⁷

Even so the Finns attempted to clarify as much as possible which individuals subject to repatriation under the provisions of the Armistice Agreement and the 1947 Paris Peace Treaty might be in Sweden. Although pressure from the Allied Control Commission, really from the Soviets, was being exerted in the background the entire time, the information was also beneficial in Finland. Because the search for people who had fled was at its most intense in Finland from 1945 to 1947, it was essential to know who did not need to be looked for. By combining the lists of those already repatriated to the Soviets with the information on who was in Sweden, the authorities could get the best possible estimate of how many of those being sought could still possibly be hiding in Finland.³²⁸

Working with the Swedes was difficult. Swedish authorities, primarily the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which was responsible for refugee affairs, and the National Board of Aliens treated Finnish requests with extreme caution. Major Väinö Teutari and Major Sulo Malm travelled to Sweden from Finland many times between 1945 and 1947, and received at least relatively precise data on the individuals who had fled Finland. This information was enough because the Finns were able to justify with these figures why all those subject to repatriation had not been detained. In addition, the Finns received excellent support in resisting the demands of the Allied Control

³²⁵ Mertanen 2000, pp. 20-52.

³²⁶ Letter from Defence Forces General Staff (Pv.PE) to the ministry of defence 3.9.1945, T 19661/ B 60, SArk.

³²⁷ Memo from Colonel (retired) Sulo Malm 16.7.1945, T 19661/ B 60, SArk; Letter from Ambassador G.A. Gripenberg num 5949/13.8.1945 to Minister P.K. Tarjanne, Fb 110 E 6, box 124, UM

³²⁸ Letter from Defence Forces General Staff (Pv.PE) 3.9.1945 to the ministry of defence, T 19661/B 60, SArk.

Commission. The Finns could not affect political decisions and internal affairs in Sweden. The issue was a matter to be worked out by the Soviet Union and Sweden.³²⁹

At the beginning of 1947, the Finns were able to present very precise figures to the Allied Control Commission:

15.Feb.1947 report on those subject to repatriation but not surrendered³³⁰

In Finland		In Sweden				Total in Sweden
Unit	Strength	Remaining	Confirmed	Not completely confirmed	Unconfirmed	
6 th Ind Bat	729	232	84	41	9	134
3 rd Vol (Finnic) Bat	1,117	333	143	23	5	171
Ministry of Defence Intelligence Section	no information	42	28	2	-	30
Ministry of Defence Propaganda Section	no information	16	14	-	-	14
Other units	no information	37	12	-	-	12
PoWs who had fled	no information	428	27	3	-	30
TOTAL	1,846	1,118	308	69	14	391

³²⁹ Letters from Väinö Teutari to Captain Hansen 25.2.1946, 31.3.1946 and 16.5.1946; Letter from Väinö Teurari to Major Ek 16.5.1946, Ek's letter 16.5.1946 to Teuri and Ek's letter 21.1.1947 to Teutari (quote), T 19661/ B 59, SArk; Catalog of the refugee situation from the Control Bureau of the Swedish National Board of Aliens 1.10.1946, SUK/F 3: 1/ RA.

³³⁰ Memorandum of Lieutenant Colonel Viktor Ursin 15.2.1947, Fb 110 E 6, box 124, UM

Soon after the fall of 1944, Sweden was the most important refuge for those prisoners of war who had fled and other individuals living under the threat of repatriation to the Soviet Union. The stream of refugees coming out of Finland was a quite small matter to the Swedes in the end because a flood of escapees were coming to Sweden from almost every country in Europe and particularly from the Baltic region.³³¹

Sometimes 3rd Volunteer (Finnic) Battalion veterans who had fled to Sweden and had in effect established new lives for themselves forgot that Finland still closely followed the provisions of the peace agreements in the 1950s. In the summer of 1953, Fyodor Kalinin found this out. He had skilfully hidden in Finland for a long time in a small community near Kuopio from 1945 to at least 1950. He then fled to Sweden, either because of the poor employment opportunities in Finland or because the Soviet Union had momentarily taken a harder line on the return of those subject to repatriation. Kalinin left a boy, born in 1946, behind in Finland. When he returned to Finland in May to see the child, the police immediately arrested him. The Security Police determined in an interrogation that they had indeed arrested a man from the 3rd Volunteer (Finnic) Battalion. The case was clear. Fyodor Kalinin was handed over to the Soviet Union in Vainikkala on July 18, 1953.³³²

Information on the ending of the searches for those who fled came indirectly through Sweden. In January 1957, Andrei Vasiliev, a Soviet citizen, arrived in Helsinki on a flight from Stockholm. In Finland, he was also known as Antti Vasila. He had been on the list of those being sought since the end of the war. The Security Police detained and interrogated him. Vasiliev admitted that he had been a prisoner of war and had fled to Sweden in 1947. He hoped to return to his country, telling the embassy that he was quite legally travelling back home. A family was waiting in Gorki.³³³

A visitor from the Soviet embassy arrived at the offices of the Security Police on Ratakatu. Grigory Golub', head of the consulate section, wondered why a Soviet citizen arriving in Finland had been subject to police interrogation. Armas Alhava, chief of the Security Police, referred to Article 10 of the Armistice Agreement. This was the article on repatriations. Golub' thanked the Finns for their actions, but

³³¹ The Swedes had all the information on those who were in their country without permission and on those who were there as refugees with permission, see Swedish National Board of Aliens/Control Bureau, catalog 1945-1947, SUK/ F 3: 1, RA.

³³² Interrogation of Heikki Kalinin 18.5.1953, Police investigation minutes of the police department of the city of Helsinki num 126/1/18.5.1953, T 19960/ B 39; repatriation document 18.7.1953, T 19960/ B 39; Personal and repatriation information on Kalinin see T 19661/ B 58, SArk.

³³³ Security Police circular num 275/2.2.1957, Amp XXV C. 6 A , SUPO

stated that all prisoners of war had been granted amnesty. Alhava clarified the situation: did this decision mean that the searches could stop. An official representative of the Soviet Union in Finland declared that this was so.³³⁴ The searches for those who had fled ended, but only as a result of a Soviet initiative.



Officers, a youngster and a POW who worked as a tailor in the Naarajärvi camp. The second man from the left is Evald Rand – a so called Kinsmen warrior who probably was repatriated to the Soviet Union after the war. *Pentti Pullisen perikunta*

Internment

According to Article 2 of the Armistice Agreement, Finland committed to intern German and Hungarian citizens in the country. The national police issued the order on internment on September 19, 1944. Initial estimates were that there were approximately 700 German and 15 Hungarian citizens in the country. Paavo Kastari, head of the State Police, interpreted Article 2 of the Armistice Agreement as leaving the following categories outside the internment order.³³⁵

³³⁴ Security Police (Armas Alhava) PM 2.2.1947, Amp XXV V 6 A, SUPO.

³³⁵ Memorandum from Paavo Kastari 19.9.1944, Fb:110 b 7b. box 118, UM.

1. Finnish women who had lived their entire lives in Finland and who had become German citizens by marriage, which caused them to lose their Finnish citizenship.
2. Individuals who were regarded as having so clearly lost their German citizenship before September 2, 1944 that they could not have received German citizenship again.
3. Children under the age of 15 whose parents were no longer in Finland
4. Those whose status were being deliberated, examples including older individuals between the ages of 60 and 65

A total of 172 individuals were interned by the beginning of October and the transfer of a couple dozen people to the internment camps was underway. Minister of Foreign Affairs Carl Enckell informed the Allied Control Commission of the status of the internment process and the difficulties related to it on October 5, 1944. The searches continued the entire time, but at least 112 individuals were missing. According to an estimate made by the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at least some of the missing had left the country with the German military forces. Alternatively, they had fled to Sweden by some secret method.³³⁶

In September 1944, the Finns only interned adults. At the end of the month, 165 individuals were interned in the Hyvinkää and Pohjankuru population transfer camps. This group included 20 German deserters. In this phase, the Finns recorded separately who they had not interned. This included individuals holding dual citizenship, orphans under the age of 15, individuals granted German and Hungarian citizenship through marriage and those who had been certified by a doctor as being too sick to be interned. However, the internment of those over age 65 had begun.³³⁷

This is how the situation remained under the middle of October. On October 11, 1944, 82 individuals were interned in Hyvinkää and 101 people were interned in the Lempäälä camp, which had replaced the earlier Pohjankuru camp. This figure included eight Hungarians. The Finns regularly delivered a list of names of those interned in the different camps to the Allied Control Commission. Most of the Germans interned in Hyvinkää had been born in the 1800s. The youngest internee was Alf Schmidt, born in 1934. The youngest internee in Lempäälä was Eberhard Siebel, who was born in 1929 and classified as a child.³³⁸

The Finns surprisingly tightened their policy on October 17, 1944, when the Finnish Council of State decided to intern all groups formerly outside of the

³³⁶ Carl Enckell to the Allied Control Commission 5.10.1944, Fb:110 b 7b. box 118; Memo from the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs 2.2.1945, Fb: 110 b 7 b. box 30, UM.

³³⁷ Ministry of Defence 25.9.1944. "Some details on implementing the Armistice Agreement that the State Police have worked with", Fb: 110, E 11. box 62, UM

³³⁸ Attachment from a memo from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs num B. 60/5.10.1944, Fb: 110, E 11, box 62, UM.

internment policy. The decision was harsh, as quite small children, women and the aged would now be placed in the camps. However, the Finns were now able to respond to Allied Control Commission complaints that the Finns were protecting Hungarians and Germans. Simultaneously, the number of internees began to grow, rising to 470 before the releases in the spring of 1946.³³⁹

In this phase, the Finns in practice interned all the Germans and Hungarians that they found, including 118 German and Hungarian nationals who had been granted Finnish citizenship on September 19, 1944. Although the Finns stubbornly tried to alleviate the situation and requested permission to free at least the women and children, the Allied Control Commission was immovable. The Finns had decided themselves on the internments and this was how the policy was to be implemented.³⁴⁰

In interning the Germans and the Hungarians, the Finns acted nearly as purposefully as they had done in repatriation matters. It is pretty unnecessary to speculate whether Finnish authorities could have acted differently. At least within the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs it was realized that all the demands of the Allied Control Commission or the Soviets were at the least not on a very firm basis with regards to international law. For example, on September 19, 1944 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs wrote as follows about those women who had received Finnish citizenship:

”--- There were also native-born Finnish women amongst the interned German and Hungarian citizens. They had received the rights of German or Hungarian citizenship through marriage. However, according to laws issued on June 17, 1927 and May 9, 1941 they had retained their Finnish citizenship because they had not left the country. On the basis of the principles of international justice and according to established practice, these women were to be treated in Finland as if they were Finnish citizens ---

--- However, the Finnish Government had in due course intentionally chosen to regard these individuals as subject to internment in order to accelerate and facilitate internment measures.”³⁴¹

³³⁹ Memo of the decision of the Finnish Council of State 17.10.1944, dated 18.10.1944 (hand-written and in the memo there is a reference to a decision of the foreign affairs committee; Memo of Lieutenant General Savonenkov 26.10.1944 to Minister of Foreign Affairs Carl Enckell; Memo from Carl Enckell num B 245/29.10.1944 to the Allied Control Commission (announcement of the extension of internment to cover all Germans and Hungarians), Fb: 110, E 11. box 62, UM.

³⁴⁰ Memo of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs num B-118/12.1.1945 to the Allied Control Commission; Letter of Andrei Zhanov 29.1.1945 to Prime Minister Paasikivi, UM Fb: 110, C 7 B (folder: Interned German and Hungarian citizens 24.11.1944-18.7.1947 II), UM:

³⁴¹ Memo of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs num B-118/12.1.1945 to the Allied Control Commission, Fb: 110 C 7 B (folder: interned German and Hungarian citizens 24.11.-18.7.1947 II), UM.

The Finns struggled fiercely with the legality of the internments, nor was clarity achieved. The Armistice Agreement was signed in accordance with the enactment provisions of the constitution, which also allowed for limitations on the constitutional rights of Finns. In addition to the Armistice Agreement, the Security Act of the Republic enacted in 1938 was still in force. This act gave state authorities significant rights to limit the right of free residence and even personal freedom. One additional legal provision that gave authorities powers for harsh measures was the 1942 statute on the arrival and residence of foreign nationals in Finland.³⁴²

The internment of the Germans and Hungarians was carried out following, at least loosely, interpretations of Finnish laws. However, there are legitimate questions to be raised about whether the Finns had to intern small children in dismal camps from October 1944 to March 1946. The strict demands of the Allied Control Commission at the beginning of 1945 pointed to an interpretation of the Armistice Agreement where women who had received Finnish citizenship would have to be interned in any case, whatever the Finns decided. Now the decision was made before the demands of the Allied Control Commission. Later attempts to free even some of the interned, mostly women and children, were hopeless. In attempting this, the Finns received the following abrupt answer on February 2, 1945 from Colonel General Andrei Zhdanov, the Soviet head of the Allied Control Commission: "Only when the rules are being followed can you begin to think about exceptions; otherwise, we easily end up in a situation where the exception becomes the rule."³⁴³

The situation can also be looked at from the other side. Whatever the Allied Control Commission or the Soviets defined as the rules was always the last word. The Finns could try to negotiate, but the last and final interpretation of the Armistice Agreement always came from the Allied Control Commission, both in internment matters and in repatriations. This was the rule between 1944 and 1947.

Summary

The status of Finnish-Soviet relations between 1944 and 1947, and partially up to 1955, was based on how well the Finns were fulfilling the demands of the articles of the Armistice Agreement. The Finnish political leadership and key officials quickly realised this. Although meeting the obligations of the articles on repatriations and internment required a lot of work and were demanding, they were

³⁴² Memo of Chief Consul V.J. Ahokas 5.4.1946, Fb: 110 C 7 B (folder: interned German and Hungarian citizens 24.11-18.7.1947 II), UM: Ask 6.10.1939/307 and the last valid arrests AsK 30/12.1946/897; AsK 30.1.1942/97.

³⁴³ Memo from V.J. Ahokas 2.2.1945 of a meeting with Colonel General Andrei Zhdanov, Lieutenant General Grigory Savonenkov, Minister Pavel Orlov, Ambassadorial Council Eliseiev, a group of other Soviet officers and Mauno Pekkala, Kaarlo Hillilä and V.J. Ahokas, who served as an interpretator, JKP V:3, KA.

only two of 23 articles. The entire state machinery of Finland worked at maximum efficiency to comply with all the articles.

The repatriation and internment policies affected a large number of people however, and the cases tested peoples' sensitivities more than the massive war reparations payments. Despite the delicacy of the repatriations or perhaps because of it, Finnish authorities handled the matter very pragmatically. The point of departure was that they had to try to fulfil the requirements of the articles as quickly and as effectively as possible. The orders of the Allied Control Commission had to be listened to carefully. Although there were attempts in negotiations to appeal to humanity and to Finnish and international law in particular, the word of the Allied Control Commission was always law.

The Finns handled the repatriations well. Nearly all Russian, the so-called normal, prisoners of war were quickly repatriated to the Soviet Union by December 1944. Because tens of thousands of people were subject to repatriation, it was clear that some escaped. Some fled to Sweden, some remained in Finland, and in some cases the men only disappeared. Most of the missing were lost in the camps or in the transports. In some cases the records were incomplete or the Finns were given incorrect personal information. A small group of prisoners of war received false identity documents in fall 1944, and some of them disappeared permanently.

The German prisoners of war were also repatriated quickly. They were "fresh" prisoners taken in the Lapland War, which did not give the men much opportunity to hide. A couple of individual escapees were still detained in 1947, but taken as a whole the Soviets did not have much to complain about in the repatriation of this group. The fact that citizens of other nations were repatriated amongst the Germans chiefly stemmed from the overenthusiastic measures of the Finns. However, it can be legitimately questioned whether they would have later had any chance of avoiding repatriation.

The searches for those Finnic peoples from the Soviet Union who had fought in Finnish uniforms were more problematic. These men were protected by their language skills, and support from civil servants and society. Many were able to flee to Sweden. This was particularly the case with the men of the 6th Independent Battalion, about whom the most bitter disputes raged. This was because the men of this unit were not prisoners of war nor were they really subject to repatriation according to the articles of the Armistice Agreement. The interpretation of the Allied Control Commission, however, overturned this approach.

The Finns did not get through the case of the so-called Leino prisoners with clean hands. Half of the prisoners were Finnish citizens. Although their background was quite irregular, the Finns should have been able to resist repatriating them. Although these men are called the Leino prisoners in history, it is questionable whether all the blame can be placed on the shoulders of one man. The Soviet Union had clearly investigated the backgrounds of these men. The Soviet attitude was so strict that some consequences would certainly have been in store for them.

However, long prison sentences and tens years in the camps did not bring honor to Finland.

Finnish politicians and officials were left in a difficult position when they fulfilled the requirements of the peace agreements. There was a desire to observe the provisions of the Armistice Agreement and the Paris Peace Agreement. However, there was also a simultaneous wish, particularly in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to quite desperately look for some sort of legal basis for the repatriation measures. Sometimes such a basis was discovered, but not in all cases by any means. However, the Finns always appealed to the law when opposing unreasonable demands from the Allied Control Commission. Although the head of the Allied Control Commission could not ever really be turned, the Finns did, however, succeed in justifying their position, nor were negotiations ever broken off. It seems that there was in at least a certain way some respect for Finnish exertions amongst the Soviets. Both countries recognised the situation. The Soviets and the Allied Control Commission ruled supreme, but still the Finns dared to argue. The Finnish resistance succeeded once. This occurred at the end of 1949 when the Finns refused to hand over the 56 "war criminals" demanded by the Soviet Union. Of course, this demand was part of a bigger political game, but four of those subject to repatriation were found. The Finns did not send them by force to the Soviet Union.

Movement in the no man's land between the laws and the Allied Control Commission was also limited by one concrete factor: there were Finnish prisoners of war in the Soviet Union. This issue also had to be taken into account when beginning to dispute interpretations of the repatriation articles. Surprising as it may be, the Soviets never directly linked these matters. From the Finnish perspective however, it was a danger that had to be acknowledged. Most Finnish prisoners of war were returned by 1946, but the last arrived only at the end of the 1950s, voluntarily and as free men.

The Finns followed the same line in internment measures as in the repatriations. First, there were attempts to follow as lenient and moderate an internment policy as possible. After this, the demands of the Allied Control Commission were anticipated and things went too far. The point of departure was the same, however, as with the repatriations. The measures should have some sort of legal basis, and the guiding star was that the internment articles would be complied with in a manner that satisfied the Soviet Union.

As a country that had lost the war and become the neighbour of a new superpower, Finland survived the crisis years after the wars well. The human suffering on an individual scale was sometimes horrible, but the entire picture corresponded with Finnish policies in its relations with the Soviet Union. There was an attempt to hold fast to Finnish principles, and to compromise only when it was absolutely necessary. In this light, the repatriation and internment policies of Finland followed exactly the same concept as Finnish foreign and domestic policies otherwise. Although the big decisions on Finnish policy for the following 50 years were made

in cabinets and among heads of state, well handled repatriation measures formed one foundation for the later reiterated mantra of friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance. However, this was hardly a consolation for those repatriated to the Soviet Union against their will, in contravention of the law and against the norms of human rights.

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**PM/Pv.PE muut arkistonmuodostajat
(Ministry of Defence - Defence Forces-General - Staff/Other archive
collections)**

T 19525/Tied.1/PM – Ulk. 2./ Pv.PE, salaista kirjeenvaihtoa 1944-1945
(Reconnaissance.1/Ministry of Defence - Foreign Ministry / Defence Forces -
General Staff: Secret correspondence 1944-1945)

T 19498/22 Yhteisosasto/Päämaja yhteisosasto/Puolustusvoimain pääesikunta,
salaista ja yleistä kirjeistöä 1944
(Liasion Section/Finnish General Headquarters Liasion Section/Defence Forces -
General Staff/ Secret and general correspondence 1944)

T 19499/37 Yhteisosasto/Pv.PE, sotavankeja koskevaa kirjeenvaihtoa 1945
(Liasion Section/ Defence Forces - General Staff: Correspondence on prisoners of
war, 1945)

T 19499/38 Yhteisosasto/Pv.PE, sotavankeja koskevaa kirjeenvaihtoa 1945
(Liasion Section/ Defence Forces - General Staff: Correspondence on prisoners of
war, 1945)

T 19501/2 Yhteisosasto/Pv.PE, salainen ja yleinen kirjeenvaihto
(Liasion Section/ Defence Forces - General Staff: Secret and general
correspondence)

T 19501/11 Tiedusteluosastossa toimineet sotavangit ja siviilit
(Civilians and prisoners of war serving in the intelligence section)

T 19503/6 Tilastotsto (Ulk.2.)/Pv.PE. Omia ja lähteneitä kirjelmää
(Statistics Office (Foreign Ministry 2)/Defence Forces - General Staff:
Correspondence)

T 19503/7 Pv.PE/Ulk.os. Sotavankileirien sulkemiset, valvontaosaston toiminta
(Defence Forces - General Staff/Foreign Ministry: Closing of prisoner of war
camps, measures of the surveillance section)

T 19503/8 Tilastotsta (Ulk.2.)/Pv.PE. Salaista kirjeenvaihtoa 1945-1947
(Statistics Office (Foreign Ministry 2)/Defence Forces - General Staff:
Secret correspondence 1945-1947)

T 19525/4 Tied 1./PM – Ulk.2/Pv.PE, salaista kirjeistöä 1944-1945
(Intell.1/Ministry of Defence - Foreign Ministry 2/ Defence Forces - General Staff:
Secret correspondence 1944-1945)

T 19499/37 Yhteysosasto/Pääsikunta, yleistä kirjeistöä 1945, venäläiset
sotavangit, saksalaiset sotavangit, sotarikolliset
(Liasion Section/General Staff: General correspondence, 1945, Russian prisoners
of war, German prisoners of war, war criminals)

T 20362/1 PM –Pv.PE/Yhteysosasto 1944-1948
(Ministry of Defence - Defence Forces-General Staff/Liasion section 1944-1948)

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T 19665, Lappeenrannan leirin sotapäiväkirjat 25.11.1944-31.8.1946
(Military diary of the Lappeenranta camp Nov 25, 1944 - Aug 31, 1946)

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Statens utlänningskommission (National Board of Aliens)

*Kontrollbyrån 1938-1952 (Control bureau 1938-1952)

*Pssbyrån 1917-1952 (Press bureau 1917-1952)

*Skandinaviska avdelning (Scandinavian section)

*Hemliga arkivet (Secret archives)

Säkerhetspolisen (Säpo), Arninge (Security police)

*Säkerhetspolisen inkl. Statspolisens i Stockholm kriminalavdelnings 3:e rotel, P-
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(Security police, including the state police in the Stockholm criminal section)

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109 Talvisota (Winter War)

Fb: 109 Suomen ja Neuvostoliiton väliset neuvottelut loka-marraskuussa 1939 ja vv. 1939-1940 sota

(Negotiations between Finland and the Soviet Union Oct/Nov 1939 and in the years 1939-1940)

110 Jatkosota (Continuation War)

Fb :110 Suomen sota 1941-1944 (1947) Suomi-Neuvostoliitto, Suomi-Saksa (War of Finland 1941-1944 (1947) Finland-Soviet Union, Finland-German

Fb: 110 Neuvostokansalaisten luovutukset, sotavangit (1951-)
(Repatriations of Soviet citizens, prisoners of war (1951 -))

Kc Maailmanpolitiikka/ Toinen maailmansota ja siihen liittyvät kysymykset
(International politics/World War Two and questions related to it)

7 Sota ja siihen liittyvät kysymykset
(War and questions related to it)

7B Maailmanpolitiikka 1918-1950/Kansainväliset konferenssit ja niihin liittyvät sopimukset sekä yleensä ns. monenkeskiset sopimukset
(International politics 1918-1950/International conferences and agreements related to them as well as generally multilateral agreements)

8 Sota ja siihen liittyvät kysymykset
(War and questions related to it)

12 Suomen suhteet muihin maihin
(Finnish relations with other countries)

12 L Venäjä/Ruotsi/Norja
(Russia/Sweden/Norway)

12N Pariisin rauhansopimuksen tulkinta/Luovutettavat neuvostokansalaiset

Raja-asiaintoimikunta
(Interpretations of the Paris Peace Agreement/Repatriated Soviet citizens/Border Commission)

16 Maanpuolustus*
(National defence)

27 B Turvapaikkaoikeus/Suomen lainsäädäntö ja määräykset
(Right to refuge/Finnish legislation and regulations)

Ulkoasiainministeriön B-osaston sotilastoimiston arkisto
(Archives of the military office of the B section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

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(Archives of the Finnish Embassy in Moscow)

Tasavallan presidentin arkistosäätö, Orimattila
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Huts and inmates in the Naarajärvi POW camp. SA-kuva

Sent, Returned, and Repatriated from Finland to the Soviet Union: The Logic, Tragedy and the Humanity of Fate

Pekka Kauppala

More than 100 000 Soviet citizens were repatriated or returned from Finland to the Soviet Union in the period of 1944–55. Sometimes these individuals were given no choice. Other times these journeys were somewhat or entirely voluntary. In some cases it is possible to show that some opposed their repatriation. This author estimates that approximately 8 000 of those returned went against their will. The ultimate fate of those who were sent to the Soviet Union was chiefly determined by the internal dynamics of Soviet decision making. It is only possible to demonstrate direct external influence, in practice coming from Finland, in one special case. The repatriations were not regulated by bilateral agreements. This meant that the Soviet Union retained a free, or in any case nearly free, hand to do whatever it wanted.

Death sentences, work camps, service in Soviet punishment battalions, and forced relocation to workplaces outside an individual's home district were the possible punishments that could await those who were sent to the Soviet Union. Therefore, the decision making process must be explained as even when the judgment in question followed the formal forms of the legal process, the issue was not primarily a question of determining the objective guilt or innocence of the accused. In reality the process was more the implementation of a previously prepared administrative decision. Furthermore, the legal grounds of these decisions could be extremely questionable. In these cases, justice at most was defined by how severe the sentence was within the given guidelines.

Very few repatriates and returning persons passed through the process without receiving some sort of punishment. Such cases were only common among those returned prisoners of war who had done nothing worthy of mention during their captivity or who had reacted by stressing their loyalty to their government.

This summary is based on research that has systematically examined for the first time what happened to those sent to the Soviet Union on the basis of interviews and Soviet archives. The fate of returnees is tracked from the moment they passed over the Soviet border. It should be noted that the archives in the Russian Federation are still extremely difficult to use. In some cases, the situation has even gotten worse than a few years ago because as a rule no material is made available on those who have not been rehabilitated. The situation for those who have been rehabilitated and for those who escaped sentence is difficult and complex. Conditions in the Ukraine are somewhat similar. In addition, the new decentralization of the most important Ukrainian archive materials leads to local

variations that have an effect on research. However, the open Estonian archives, which welcome researchers, make things somewhat easier.

The openness of the Estonian archives and the heartening attempts of the archives of the Russian army to achieve a relative level of openness have enabled new attempts to clarify some remaining unclear questions. This research has brought to light groundbreaking material on the fate of those Soviet prisoners of war who were placed under German control by Finland during the Continuation War (1941-1944). In many cases, they can also be tracked when they were again in the Soviet Union.

Soviet laws were so severe that the dictatorial administrative culture tended to try to soften the application of the law than apply it harshly during the Continuation War. The default punishment for treason while serving in the military was a death sentence. This judgment was only rarely handed down.³⁴⁴ It was not even the preferred result for those who had served directly in an enemy army or intelligence unit. In addition, most death sentences were commuted through amnesty to a term in the camps. The deportation of relatives mandated by the same law was similarly only rarely implemented. Thus, the treatment of those sent to the Soviet Union after the Continuation War was gentler than that meted out to the Soviet prisoners of war returning from the Winter War (1939-1940).³⁴⁵ After the massive losses in the war, there clearly was no longer any desire in the final phases of World War Two and its aftermath to reduce on a large scale the amount of labor available to the state. Mass death sentences were reserved first and foremost for show as a mechanism to scare the celebrated and privileged generals, and there were not many of them.

³⁴⁴ Section 58-b of the criminal code of the Russian Federative Socialist Republic. There were similar provisions in the constitutions of the other soviet republics (Karelo-Finnish, Estonian, Ukrainian, Byelorussian, etc.)

³⁴⁵ The fate of the Soviet prisoners of war who returned after the Winter War is not the main focus of a research project focused on the Continuation War. Because their fate was fundamentally harsher than those sent to the Soviet Union after the Continuation War, getting materials on them would without a doubt have been yet more thorny. [Stepakov, Viktor: *Sodalla on hintansa [War Has Its Price]*. Helsinki 1996 [Russian language original 1995] shows on the basis of interviews that the bulk of all prisoners of war who returned from the Winter War ended up in GULag work camps, most commonly in Vorkuta in the Komi Republic. In addition, a significant number were executed.

Members of the Finnic peoples of the Soviet Union in the Finnish Army

One group subject to forced repatriation were those so-called Finnic³⁴⁶ or Estonian volunteers who had served in the Finnish Army. Of them, only two Estonian volunteers repatriated in January 1948 seemed to have avoided any form of punishment. A public request from Finland to the Soviet Union to treat them with mercy made the situation of this small, late arriving group easier.³⁴⁷ Three others in this group of 14 volunteers also initially managed to remain free. However, they eventually fell into the teeth of Yezhov's machinery of terror³⁴⁸ when it raised its head again in 1949.³⁴⁹ As a result, they were sentenced.

³⁴⁶ The term Finnic is used here to refer collectively to those peoples in the Baltic Sea region whose original mother tongue belong to this branch of the Finnic division of the Finno-Ugric group of the Uralic languages. Examples of the Finnic branch include Finnish, Estonian, Ingrian, Karelian, Veps and some others. In the context of this article, the term Finnic refers to those non-Estonian Soviet citizens from the above groups.

The names of Finnic individuals appear in their own Latin forms. The names of other Soviet individuals are transliterated in the English manner. However the names of books in the footnotes use the international scientific method.

³⁴⁷ Rautkallio, Hannu: Suomen suunta 1944-48 [Finland's Course 1944-1948]. Helsinki 1964.

³⁴⁸ Arch Getty, J.: The Origins of the Great Purges. The Soviet Communist Party Reconsidered. Cambridge 1985 is the first academic work that showed the significance of competition in the apparatus in the great terror of 1937-1938. He also showed that the group around the head of the NKVD, Nikolai Yezhov, that served as the driving force of this unparalleled wave of mass murder retained its influence despite the execution of their leader in 1939. They went on the offensive again in 1949.

³⁴⁹ The fate of this group had been an object of some study previously. For example, Enn Säde dedicated his documentary film "Jätikusõja viimased sõdurid / Jatkosodan viimeiset soturit [The Last Soldiers of the Continuation War], Tallinn 2003" entirely to them. Another example is a memoir from Pastor Paul Saar, who was one of the people sent back. It describes what happened to him. See Issakainen, Martti: Soomepoisi elurännak [The Road Traveled by a "Finnish Boy"]. Tallinn 2002 (Finnish translation: "Toinen vyöttää sinut". Paul Saarin tie papiksi Viroom ja Inkerinmaalle ["Another Prepares You". Paul Saar's Road to Being a Priest in Estonia and Ingria]. Helsinki-Pieksämäki 1994.) See also Vabaduse eest. Soomepoiste lühielulood. [For Freedom. Short Biographies of the "Finnish Boys."]; (edit.): Raul Kuutma. Tallinn 1997. This work is a collection of short biographies of many of the Estonian volunteers in the Finnish Armed Forces (known as "Finnish boys" [*soomepoissid*]). It offers groundbreaking information, even if it contains quite a few errors. For additional information on the background of the phenomenon and on individual cases of repatriation, see also Kuutma, Raul: Suomen poikien tie. Virolaissotilaiden kohtaloita [The Path of the "Finnish Boys". Fates of Estonian Soldiers]. Helsinki 2004; Isohella, Anne-Riitta: Suomen-pojat. Virolainen jääkäritarina. ["Finnish Boys". The Story of the Estonian Volunteers.] Jyväskylä 1999. Laar, Mart: Unohdettu sota. Sissi- ja tiedustelusotaa Virossa toisen maailmansodan aikana ja sen jälkeen [Forgotten War. Guerilla War and Intelligence Operations in Estonia during World War Two and Afterwards]. Jyväskylä 1993.

There are no corresponding cases among the Finnic volunteers from the Soviet Union, regardless of whether they had originally been Soviet soldiers who had become prisoners of war or not.³⁵⁰ A very few Ingrian Finnish volunteers for the Finnish Armed Forces managed to only receive sentences of forced relocation outside their home districts. These soldiers had decided to return with the mass repatriation of Ingrian civilians and had succeeded in avoiding having the information about their service in the Finnish Army from being spread.³⁵¹ However, most who attempted this kind of thing got caught. Their fate was then the same as the main stream of those Finnic volunteers who were returned to the Soviet Union. Finnic volunteers who voluntarily returned to the Soviet Union also did not get any apparent reduction in their sentences for their voluntary return or confessions.³⁵²

³⁵⁰ General works on the Finnic volunteers who served in the Finnish Armed Forces often contain sometimes quite superficial and erroneous statements about their fates. Only one genuine research work on the volunteers from the Finnic peoples of the Soviet Union has been published. This is Veli Ojala's 1974 3rd Volunteer (Finnic) Battalion, see Ojala, Veli: Heimopataljoona 3 [3rd Volunteer (Finnic) Battalion] Helsinki 1974. The work is a master's thesis in Finnish history from the University of Helsinki and was available for restricted use only until the dissolution of the Soviet Union. However, Ojala's research only extremely rarely contained anything on the life of the volunteers after they were repatriated to the Soviet Union. Syrjä, Pentti: Isänmaattomat. Heimosoturit jatkosodassa 1941-1944 [Without a Fatherland. Finnic Volunteers in the Continuation War 1941-1944]. Porvoo - Helsinki - Juva 1991 contains slightly more, if less trustworthy, material on what happened after the repatriations. However, it is most directly copied from Ojala's research. On the Russian side, the Finnic volunteers have been nearly taboo for historians, even in the Karelian Republic. For documentary literature on the 6th Independent Battalion, see Mutanen, Pekka: Vaiennetut sotilaat [Silenced Soldiers]. Helsinki 1999. Pages 227-270 of this work deal with the period after the repatriations to the Soviet Union, often with high-quality interviews.

³⁵¹ For example, Jooseppi Kouhiainen, who was a soldier in the 3rd Volunteer (Finnic) Battalion and who currently lives in Helsinki, succeeded in avoiding getting caught in the return of the Ingrian civilians.

³⁵² As late as 1948 Vladimir Ragujev (Rashkainen), who was a soldier in the 3rd Volunteer (Finnic) Battalion, decided to return voluntarily from Sweden to the Soviet Union after personal disappointments. He received the same 25 year sentence as those who had been repatriated by force. For more details, see A UFSB RK (Arhiv Upravljenija Federalnoj Služby Bezopasnosti Respubliki Karelii -The Archives of the Administration of the FSB in the Republic Karelia) arh. 28 byv [former] 465 temat 5 tema 113-5, p.16 and the memoir of the man he met in prison Makara, Antti: Rajat eivät pidätä [The Borders Do Not Hold]. Saarijärvi 1983. Salmi, Taito: Näen vieläkin unta. Muistelmia [I Still See Dreams. A Memoir]. [Lappeenranta 2006, unpublished manuscript] offers a biography of his father, who was a volunteer in the Finnish Armed Forces, was sent to the Soviet Union, and received a sentence. Makara has also published under a pseudonym a memoir of his life until his going over to the Finns in 1941: Marokon Kauhun lähettipoika [The Messenger Boy of the Terror of Morocco ("The Terror of Morocco" was the nickname of a Finnish colonel)]. (Ed.) Toivo T. Kaila. Porvoo 1944.

No one who served in the Finnish Army was executed.³⁵³ Some death sentences were commuted to work camp sentences.³⁵⁴ No information has come to light yet that would reveal cases where Finnic volunteers who were returned to the Soviet Union died "accidentally" in suspicious circumstances after their repatriation. An unconfirmed source certainly indicates that two Finnic volunteer soldiers became random victims on a river boat in Siberia when a prisoner rebellion was repressed³⁵⁵. If this event did indeed occur, this was certainly not an act of intentional violence directed at them in particular. All of this is significant. While the Soviet Union certainly doled out some death sentences to returned "enemies of the people," this research suggests that the number seems to probably be vastly overstated in Western research.³⁵⁶

Soviet Lieutenant General Andrei Vlasov and the entire higher leadership of the armed forces of the Committee for the Liberation of the Peoples of Russia (VS KONR) were executed. At least at first glance it is not clear why their crimes against the Soviet state would have been greater than those of the Finnic military volunteers. Aside from the tentative commitment to combat of one unit, the Committee for the Liberation of the Peoples of Russia had not fought against the Soviet army, nor had it been under the direct command of the Germans.³⁵⁷ The

³⁵³ Raimo Rosendahl, the long-time treasurer of the Karelian and Ingrian Veterans Society, has extensively studied the fate of the Finnic volunteers. Although he has not yet published anything about his research and interview trips to Russia, Rosendahl has not been able to verify even one of the numerous rumors of executions of Finnic soldiers.

³⁵⁴ This was the case for Antti Makara. He was an Ingrian Finn from the Soviet Union who volunteered for the Finnish Army and who was later repatriated. He was the only one of this group to publish his memoirs. The death sentence is missing from Makara's book (see footnote 9.) as the publisher removed this section. Makara, who lives in Sweden, confirmed the death sentence and the details of the immediate amnesty that followed it. In some contexts, the Ingrian Finnish volunteer Juho (Ivan) Melnikov has let it be understood that there were three death sentences for Finnic volunteers. However, in an interview with the author, Melnikov talked about a Finnic volunteer and a Finnish translator at his mass trial who he did not know. They received death sentences, but he declared that he did not know what ultimately happened to them. Makara's recollection of the automatic nature of amnesty could lead to the assumption that this had probably been the case with others condemned to death.

³⁵⁵ The case is that of the Eastern Karelian Fjodorov brothers, see the Raimo Rosendahl Collection.

³⁵⁶ It is even estimated that hundreds thousands of those who were sent back or returned were executed.

³⁵⁷ Aleksandrov, Kirill: *Russkie soldaty Vermahta. Geroi ili predateli* [Russian Soldiers of the Wehrmacht: Heroes or Traitors?]. Moskva 2005. The Committee for the Liberation of the Peoples of Russia (VS KONR) was really only a basic army corps that was clearly organized by the Vlasovites and led by the Russians themselves. The Russian Liberation Army (ROA) contained units, including the Cossacks, who had actually fought against the Soviet state, as well as against the Allies in France and Yugoslavia. The ROA was a broader umbrella organization that was led by Vlasov on paper, but was virtually nonexistent in practice. For

comparison to the soldiers of the Committee for the Liberation of the Peoples of Russia is quite natural because the term "Vlasovite" was commonly used in the past in Russia for the repatriated Finnic volunteers. In fact, it is still sometimes used. There is so little information in practice about the fate of Soviet citizens who served directly in the German Army and were subsequently repatriated to the Soviet Union that it is difficult to estimate the number of death sentences. Since the veteran organizations in Germany are extremely fragmented for historical reasons it is also not possible to get as extensive memoir information as is available from the Finnish Finnic veterans association.



The man to the right is the artist POW Jefremov, who had studied in the Leningrad Art Academy. He enjoyed a privileged status in the Naarajärvi camp and painted many portraits of the officers' family members. *Pentti Pullisen perikunta*

information on their return, see Tolstoy, Nikolai: Die Verratenen von Jalta: Englands Schuld vor der Geschichte. München, 2. Aufl. 1980.

The apparent lack of the harshest sentences for the Finnic volunteers is to a certain extent surprising. On average, those who were repatriated to the Soviet Union while World War Two was still going on were worse off than those who were repatriated later. The death penalty was in force until 1947 and the treatment of "traitors" was harsher during the war. Another popular sentence of the time was a kind of indirect, potential death sentence. This option was a sentence to serve in a punishment battalion. No Finnic volunteer received this sentence either. The death rate in the punishment battalions proved to be surprising low as well. It was under 10 percent for those Soviet officers repatriated to the Soviet Union.³⁵⁸ One reason for this was that these were not the standard basic punishment battalions for common criminals. Instead, these officers were sent to less merciless "storm battalions" (*sturmovye batal'iony*). Of course, it was also the case that service in a storm battalion was also often only an additional punishment. After surviving service in a punishment battalion, either with their honor intact or not, they often nevertheless ended up in the GULag because of their actions in Finland.³⁵⁹

In this sense, the treatment meted out to the Finnic volunteers was on the whole relatively mild by the very brutal standards of the Soviet state. Of course, it must also be noted that while there was no particularly brutal treatment, there was also no sign of really light sentences either. Many real "Vlasovites" did not end up in the work camps at all. They were only sent for "special resettlement," which meant forced relocation to some distant area to clear new land for settlement or something similar without the right to leave. No cases like this seem to have happened to the Finnic volunteers who were sent back by force. No Finnic volunteer received a sentence to camp that was under ten years, with one exception for a minor.³⁶⁰ In comparison, other Soviet prisoners or war repatriated by force from Finland received five year sentences. One Russian major, who was a leading and flexible collaborator with the Finns, received a five year sentence and even continued with his military career afterwards.³⁶¹ The sentences for the Finnic volunteers were particularly consistent. They were 10 or 25 years in a work camp, combined with a 5 or 15 year ban on living in their administrative home region (in their home oblast or republic).³⁶² In practice this generally meant bans on living in the Karelo-Finnish Soviet Socialist Republic or the Leningrad Region.

³⁵⁸ Copies from the officer cards of CA MO RF (Central'nyj Arhiv Ministerstva Oborony Rossijskoj Federacii– Central Archives of the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation) for the officers repatriated from Officer Camp 1 in Finland.

³⁵⁹ Officer cards from CA MO RF and A UFSB RK arh. 28 byv [former] 465 temat 5 tema 113-5, p.16

³⁶⁰ Raimo Rosendahl Collection. The 17 year old Finnic volunteer received a 5 year camp sentence in this case.

³⁶¹ The case of Aleksandr Vladislavlyev. CA MO RF officer card.

³⁶² No researcher has been able to see the relevant documentation. The most revealing document is a negative legal decision from 1992 on a case where a Finnic volunteer sentenced to 10 years in a work camp sought rehabilitation. The document also mentions detailed personal information on other individuals who

In comparison to the Vlasov soldiers, the fate of the Finnic volunteers was much more standardized. Obviously the individual role or circumstances of the Finnic volunteers mattered less than for the members of the Vlasov army. The question of why things were this way is impossible to answer with certainty as long as the documents on the decisions remain unavailable to researchers. However, there are two different possibilities. One option may be that the Finnic volunteers were saved from really harsh punishments by their relatively low military ranks and by the lack of a prominent authority figure in their group. For its part the lack of lighter punishments in this option can partially stem from the earlier than average period in which they were repatriated or from the fact that the Finnic volunteers had generally really actively fought against the Soviet Army. The other option could be that the Soviets regarded the separatist Finnic volunteers as objectively "worse" than the Vlasovites, who were Russian patriots at heart. However, it could be that Finland was unofficially given the understanding that the repatriated would not receive the harshest sentences in order to promote cooperation. This was not at all mentioned in the Armistice Agreement. However, there was an official promise of this for the Estonian volunteers. As relations developed positively with Finland, pressures to break this theoretical verbal promise possibly did not appear later.

The lack of an intermediate stage in a so-called filtering camp (*proveročno-filtracionnye lagery*) was a special feature of the treatment of the Finnic volunteers. Filtering camps were meant to determine the fate of prisoners of war and others detained there on the basis of individual interpretations of individual decisions. The standardized nature of the sentences of the Finnic volunteers naturally made the onerous filtering process unnecessary. The presumption is that there was a special administrative decision on the sentences to be handed out to the Finnic volunteers somewhere, although it has not yet come to light. Such a decision could be connected with that of their Romanian and Moldovan colleagues. These groups were also not represented amongst those in the filtering camps. Romania also concluded a separate peace with the Soviet Union at almost the same time as Finland.³⁶³ New administrative sentencing decisions have been published in recent years, nor is there reason to suppose that all of them have yet been published.

The later the members of the 3rd Volunteer (Finnic) Battalion were repatriated to the Soviet Union, the longer their stay in investigative detention. This was particularly the case for men of the 6th Independent Battalion, most of whom ended up being investigated in Bashkortostan near the bend in the Volga River.³⁶⁴ The result was the same as in the earlier quick mass trials. Everyone got a 25 year sentence. By its nature, the longer sentence was a legal formality and covered

received sentences of similar length in the same trial. Copy: Raimo Rosendahl Collection.

³⁶³ Research on the Romanian experience in corresponding population transfers is exceedingly thin. For some brief mentions, see Dedu, Constantin: *Repatrieria prizonierilor aparținând națiunilor unite, după 23 August 1944*. http://www.centrul-cultural-pitesti.ro/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=833&Itemid=97, pp. 6 and 8.

³⁶⁴ Raimo Rosendahl Collection.

everyone. By comparison, the members of the 3rd Volunteer (Finnic) Battalion, who tended to be repatriated much earlier (in 1944), generally received 10 year sentences either directly from Vipuri prison or from the investigative detention center located in the Beloželski window factory near Kalinin (Tver).³⁶⁵

A very important detail in understanding the relative harshness of the punishment was the question of where the forced labor sentence was served. The sentences themselves never mentioned where the prisoner was to serve his time. Later judgments would have first and foremost defined what the Finnic volunteer was to do.³⁶⁶ Even the open Estonian archives contain no documentation on the issue. Over half of the Finnic volunteers were sent to the Komi Republic, which was bad but not the worst place in the GULAG archipelago of the Soviet Union. The climate in the coal rich northern part of the Komi Republic, with its woods and tundra, was cold and raw. This climate was a heavy additional burden for the poorly looked after prisoners.³⁶⁷

However, the conditions cannot be compared to the harsher climate of Northeastern Siberia, and particularly to that of the Magadan region. Currently, there is evidence that only one Finnic volunteer was sent to Magadan. Things went differently for the prisoners of war who were Estonian. If these men were transferred to the Germans by Finland, they were sent to Magadan merely on the basis of their service in the Estonian National Civil Guard, and soon died there.³⁶⁸ At least three Finnic volunteers ended up in the desert camps of Kazakhstan in Central Asia. On the basis of one interview, the conditions there were at lot worse than in the Komi Republic.

³⁶⁵ Ibid.

³⁶⁶ Nikita Petrov, a GULag expert from Moscow, confirmed in a conversation with the author on April 11, 2008 that there is no hint of the existence of anything other than general labor policies when the courts decided where to send individuals for their work camp sentences.

³⁶⁷ The GULag in the Komi Republic is particularly well researched, see for example Morozov, N.A.: GULag v Komi krae, 1929-1956 [The GULag in Komi 1929-1956]. Syktyvkar 1997; Maksimova, L.A.: Lagerja i industrial'noe osvoenie Severa (na primere republiki Komi) [The Camps and Industrial Conquest in the North (for example, in the Komi Republic). Vestnik Syktyvkerskogo universiteta ser. 8 Vyp. 2 Syktyvkar 1997, pp. 70–80, Negretov, P.: Vse dorogi vedut na Vorkutu [All Roads Lead to Vorkuta]. Benson; Vt. 1985. A quite factual German memoir is interesting: Scholmer, Josef: Arzt in Workuta. Bericht aus einem sowjetischen Straflager. München 1954. The best and most thorough Western work on the entire GULag is the German Stettner, Ralf: "Archipel GULag": Stalins Zwangslager – Terrorinstrument und Wirtschaftsgigant: Entstehung, Organisation und Funktion des sowjetischen Lagersystems 1928–1956. Paderborn 1996. See also Ivanova, G.M: Istorija GULaga 1918-1958. Social'no-ëkonomičeskie i politiko-pravovye aspekty. Moskva 2006. Also worth mentioning is the massive GULag: Glavnoe upravlenie lagerej [GULag: Main Administration of the Camps]. (ed.): A.I. Kokurkin and N.V. Petrov. Moskva 2000.

³⁶⁸ Sentences of three members of the Järvan family. Riigiarhiv (State archives [of Estonia]), KGB collection, personal maps.

The camps in Vorkuta and Inta in the Komi Republic were some of the larger forced labor construction sites in the Soviet Union in the 1940s. In comparison to the somewhat similar behavior of the Germans towards Soviet prisoners of war, the death rate in the camps in the Russian arctic regions do not seem particularly large, at least in relation to the Finnic volunteers. The estimated death rate for the Finnic volunteers in the camps was approximately 15%. The fact that the death rate for Finnish prisoners of war in Soviet prison camps was higher (approximately 40%) is particularly interesting and surprising.³⁶⁹ This was the case even though the status of prisoners of war was certainly higher than that of the prisoners sentenced for punishment in the GULag and even though the Finnic volunteers were imprisoned longer. The reason for this may certainly be the particularly high death rate in winter 1941/1942 of Finnish prisoners of war taken in the beginning phases of the Continuation War, not the better treatment of the Finnic volunteers. Even so it is probably the case that in reality prisoners of war did not have it better in their camps than prisoners had it in the GULag. The mass deaths in the first half of 1945 of the German prisoners of war handed over by Finland also confirms this.³⁷⁰

On the basis of interviews, the Finnic and Estonian volunteers who served in the Finnish Armed Forces did not seem to end up in any special position in the work camps.³⁷¹ Other prisoners did not seem to pay special attention to them. The main reason that the camps existed was to have their inmates work. If a prisoner in a camp performed well in the naturally always long and heavy labor, he had a real opportunity to get some relief in his life as an incentive. Correspondingly punishment seemed to try to avoid things that would reduce a prisoner's ability to work, like severe beatings, starvation, and long term detention. The punishment favored by camp leaders seemed to be forcing the prisoner to stand outside in his underwear for many hours in the severe cold that came many times a year in the northern part of the Komi Republic. In practice, prisoners had to remove their underwear as well and then hop around naked for hours on top of them to keep from freezing to death. It was simultaneously painful the entire time and a humiliating experience, which without a doubt effectively steered prisoners to the desired pattern of behavior. The sleep deprivation and night-time interrogations typical of the filtering camps seemed to have only taken hold chiefly for special political prisoners in the GULAG. This was the case for the prisoners on the Leino list discussed later in this summary, but did not apply to the Finnic and Estonian volunteers.

³⁶⁹ Malmi, Timo: *Suomalaiset sotavangit Neuvostoliitossa 1941–1944* [Finnish Prisoners of War in the Soviet Union 1941-1944]. Tampere 2001. Frolov, Dmitri: *Sotavankina Neuvostoliitossa: suomalaiset NKVD:n leireissä talvi- ja jatkosodan aikana* [Prisoners of War in the Soviet Union: Finns in NKVD Camps during the Winter and Continuation Wars]. Helsinki 2004 provides a slightly lower number.

³⁷⁰ Copies of the cards of German prisoners of war and reports on detention (*učetnye dela*) provided by the RGVA.

³⁷¹ 15 interviews conducted by the author between 2004 and 2008.

Serious labor in northern conditions could not happen when the workers were starving. Therefore, the diet of the Finnic volunteers somewhat met the most basic requirements in many cases in the camps. Some sort of heating in the barracks and basic health care was also organized. Due to the massive human and material losses suffered by the Soviet Union during the war, it was just not possible to replace labor that had become "useless" and the coal mines of Komi were at the foundations of the Soviet Union's strategic industrialization plans. There was no spare capacity to let the ability of the "traitors" to work decline.

Other locations included the coalmines of the Kemerovo region, as well as the industrial construction sites of the Chelyabinsk, Omsk, Irkutsk, and Sverdlovsk regions in southern and central Siberia. Conditions in these cases were generally comparable to those in the Komi Republic. However, the gentler climates of these locations made these areas more bearable. The timber camps of the Arkhangelsk region were somewhat comparable to the conditions in the Komi Republic.

The Finnic volunteers received sentences of at least ten years in the work camps. However, the political realignment after the 1953 death of the dictator Joseph Stalin soon improved their situation. Thus, there is only the hypothetical possibility of a plan in the Stalinist era to extend *en mass* the sentences of among others the Finnic volunteers as liberation day approached.³⁷² Those Eastern Karelians who sentences ended in winter 1954/1955 before the mass amnesties began in summer 1955 were slightly unlucky. Unlike those whose sentences were nullified slightly later, the Eastern Karelians were still not allowed to return to their home districts for five years. As the Ingrian Finns, with a few rare exceptions, were not otherwise able to return to their home districts until the second half of the 1980s, this issue was of little practical significance to the Eastern Karelians. Many Eastern Karelians were from the Olonets area. Some of them settled for the aforementioned five years on the immediate other side of the republic's border in the Lodeinoye Pole area in the Leningrad Region. This area was looking for labor to work in the forests.³⁷³

Many convicted Finnic volunteers and others who had fought in the Finnish Army received amnesties in 1955 and 1956. In 1959, Second Lieutenant Sven Ise, who was an Estonian volunteer, was the last to be freed as his sentence had been reduced but not quashed in 1955.

After the amnesties, the road was open to the Karelian Republic for both Eastern Karelians and Ingrian Finns, who still were not allowed to settle in the Leningrad area. Most Eastern Karelians took advantage of the opportunity to return to their own village, or one nearby. They generally found work again in the expanding

³⁷² In the author's opinion, there is no reason to believe this popular rumor. In 1952, some Finnic volunteers who had already had their sentences reduced by exceeding their work assignments had already been freed. This kind of extension of a sentence that had been handed down was also never typical of normal political prisoners. It only happened in special cases.

³⁷³ Interview with Juho Uuttu in Helsinki in 2005. This had happened to both his brother and an acquaintance.

forest sector, where the wages and other benefits offered were also good. The former Finnic volunteers were socially accepted without problems in nearby or slightly further away villages if no one knew about their past. In these cases the Finnic volunteers generally carefully concealed this information, sometimes from their own children and other close relatives.³⁷⁴ If a Finnic volunteer returned to his own village, there was some talk of "treason" from some villagers, but obviously not extensively enough that social life became impossible.

Interviews have revealed one case where an Olonets Karelian volunteer soldier was too well-known in the community life of his village in the Olonets area. Jegor Fedulov-Yrkönen was the highest ranking repatriated volunteer. He had been a former Red Army officer and was later a volunteer officer in the Finnish Armed Forces. When his relatives showed fear of being associated with him, he decided to return to the camp city of Inta. He voluntarily worked in the mines, and never returned again to Olonets.³⁷⁵

Not one interview revealed information on new interrogations or other displays of distrust by the system after the prisoner was freed. According to Annette Goeken-Haidl, this was also typical of what happened to returning Soviet prisoners of war after they were freed.³⁷⁶ Goeken-Haidl's thesis seems strongly exaggerated, particularly when other interviews of lesser "enemies of the people" have not produced confirmation. "Traitors," perhaps more the lower ranking than the higher, had certainly lived in fear that their past could catch up with them until *perestroika*. Even so, the Soviet state clearly left them in peace, as a general rule. In some cases, initial difficulties were encountered in finding work due to entries in internal passports. However, help in looking for work could appear from surprising quarters.

³⁷⁴ The author saw a touching example of this at a memorial service in Eastern Karelia for a Finnic volunteer who passed away in 2005. The relatives at the occasion certainly remembered that the departed had been in a work camp and had very negative opinions about communism and its symbols. Even so, no one knew that he had fought in the Finnish Armed Forces. At the daughter's suggestion, I told them about this phase in his life. The only reaction was understanding and respect.

³⁷⁵ Interview with Galina Fedulova in Aunus (Olonets) 2005.

³⁷⁶ Goeken-Haidl, Ulrike: *Der Weg zurück. Die Repatriierung sowjetischer Zwangsarbeiter und Kriegsgefangener während und nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg*. Essen 2007. Frolov, Dmitri: *Sotavankien paluu Neuvostoliittoon 1939-1956* [Return of Prisoners of War to the Soviet Union 1939-1956]. *Idäntutkimus* 1/2005, pp. 55–62 provides a slightly too sunny picture of the return of the Soviet prisoners of war from Finland and the phenomena around it, in an otherwise carefully researched work. Also compare the thorough account of the situation of Ukrainian prisoners of war in Germany and in their homeland. Čajkovskij, Anatolij: *Plen. Za čužie i svoi grehi (Voennoplennye i internirovannye v Ukraine 1939-1953 gg.)* [Prisoner of War. For Our Sins, and the Sins of Others (Prisoners of War and Internees in the Ukraine 1939-1953)]. Kiev 2005. However, the work has regrettably little comparison and interpretation.

However, the Finnic volunteers did not receive any recognition in the Soviet Union either. Such an acknowledgement could have strengthened their belief in their position, and could perhaps have also led to a more or less open discussion with those close to them about their time in the Finnish Army. They were not rehabilitated, and only received amnesties.³⁷⁷ When relatives claim these individuals were rehabilitated, that claim has always shown itself to be confused with receiving an amnesty. Due to this lack of rehabilitation, the Finnic volunteers who remained in Russia did not receive the retiree benefits to which they were clearly entitled until the end of the 1980s.

The Estonian volunteers received quite substantial retirement benefits. The high social status surrounding the admiration shown them in the new Estonia has been reflected in their days in retirement. The weak standard of living in Russia and the lack of respect shown them in society led many still living Finnic volunteers to decide to take advantage of the veterans assistance offered by Finland after 1992. The right to emigrate to Finland without needing to wait in line that came with the standard Finnish veterans benefits was a valuable asset to them. However, time spent in prison in the Soviet Union was not equated with time spent as a prisoner of war when evaluating a pension. Therefore, their retirement benefits remained quite low despite the incredibly severe nature of their military service.

Perhaps the happiest fate awaited the Finnic volunteers who successfully fled to Sweden under threat of repatriation to the Soviet Union. Sweden did not return any of them to the Soviet Union. Instead, it granted them work permits almost immediately without problems. The only practical limitation was that they were not allowed to live in the three largest cities in Sweden (Stockholm, Gothenburg, or Malmö) due to their status as foreigners. The intention was to mitigate problems in foreign policy by minimizing possible contacts with Soviet diplomats. However, they could receive Swedish citizenship after five years of working.³⁷⁸

Those who wanted to get to Sweden and succeeded in their efforts clearly had more self-initiative and were more self-assertive than average. These individuals generally did not have great difficulties in finding a satisfactory or quite good position in Swedish society. After interrogations in the first months, they were not bothered by such things. The Soviets only very rarely tried to interrupt the normal course of their lives with suspicious offers of return, or similar things. On the whole, the experience of an Ingrian Finnish volunteer could be regarded as representative. He stated that he never could have dreamed when he was a young man in his home village that his life could have turned out as well as it did.³⁷⁹ One possible inconvenience for the Finnic volunteers living in Sweden is that they cannot receive any benefits from Finland other than free visits to spas because of a lack of registration at the right time for one reason or another. Albert Hämäläinen,

³⁷⁷ Hristoforov, Vasili: Kenraali Kirpitšnikovin sotavankeus ja paluu Neuvostoliittoon (in *Sotavangit ja internoidut – Prisoners of War and Internees*. Helsinki 2008).

³⁷⁸ Statement of Raimo Rosendahl to the author on the basis of his interviews.

³⁷⁹ Interview of Alexander Sahlenfors in Mikkeli in 2005.

who was a Red Army captain and a volunteer officer, was the highest ranking volunteer soldier during the war. He is one of those who fled to and settled in Sweden.³⁸⁰

Eastern Karelian civilians were also forcibly repatriated to the Soviet Union. Some of them had assisted the Finnish Army as laborers and others with merely civilians. These individuals received significantly lighter sentences than the Finnic volunteers who served in the Finnish Armed Forces. However, it should be noted that this is a group about whom there is very little information in the interviews and archival resources. Sentences to GULag camps seem to have been great rarities. When such sentences were handed out, they were always under 10 years. Quite a large proportion managed to avoid any punishment. However, based on extremely scant material, it can be estimated that perhaps half of them ended up with 2-5 years of forced labor.³⁸¹ The work was performed somewhere outside of Eastern Karelia, but in European, non-arctic, Russian centers of production. Typically, the sentence was to some particularly poor and miserable *kolkhoz* without the right to switch jobs or their place of residence. For the new arrivals, relations with the local population could also be poor or even hostile because of their low status and perhaps because of a lack of an ability to speak Russian. In some cases the repatriated attempted to flee to their home village. These attempts sometimes succeeded without unpleasant repercussions. Alternatively, the individual was captured while fleeing and returned to the place they were sentenced to also without additional punishment.³⁸² It was also possible to return to a home region after the sentence had been served.

Although obviously no one called Eastern Karelian returnees "traitors," fear of the possible return of troubles gnawed at their minds at least until the end of the 1980s.³⁸³ There is no more reason to regard this fear as evidence of poor nerves or lack of judgment amongst the civilian returnees than among the Finnic volunteers. The fear was a reflection of a realistic evaluation of the deficient nature of the Soviet system when it came to the rule of law and its strong tendency for sudden changes of policy. A very few of the volunteer assistants of the Finnish Army, who registered sufficiently quickly enough between 1992 and 1994, have moved to Finland in pursuit of the right to relocate and some other benefits. In addition, a very few receive their benefits in the current Karelian Republic. Their numbers could, however, grow quite extensively if the opportunity to register was reopened in accordance with a change in the law currently being considered in the Finnish parliament. As a rule, this group was quite young during the war. In addition,

³⁸⁰ Raimo Rosendahl Collection.

³⁸¹ The biggest individual group could be a Veps fortification construction unit, whose approximately 150 members were ordered to retreat with the Finns to Finland in June 1944. Raimo Rosendahl has interviewed its members in 2006 in Soutjärvi (Shoutarve/Šëltozero).

³⁸² Interview with Nikolai Melnikov in Aunus (Olonets) in 2005. Melnikov succeeded on a second attempt and knew about many other successful attempts.

³⁸³ *Ibid.*

women, who live longer, were strongly represented in the group. A significant portion are still alive.

Soviet prisoners of war who did not want to return

In comparison to the Finnic volunteers, the fate of the other Soviet prisoners of war who did not want to return, or at least their most prominent group - those who had served in the Finnish intelligence services - was sometimes worse, and sometimes better. Major General Vladimir Kirpichnikov, who was condemned to death and executed in Moscow in 1950, can be included in this group.³⁸⁴ At least on the surface it does not seem to researchers of Kirpichnikov that he cooperated very extensively. It is known that he wrote some memos for the Finns, including one more extensive one on the causes of the Soviet Union's initial losses in the Continuation War. The letter he sent to General Vlasov is perhaps not known among the researchers. However, his general's rank could have proved fatal to him.

Most of those transferred from Officer Camp 1 in Köyliö's Peipohja back to their fatherland were sent to storm battalions. These storm battalions were punishment battalions, which meant that death was more likely. An overwhelming majority of them were sent after a "quick filtering" to a punishment battalion. Referring to the overly hasty filtering, the NKVD continued to investigate them. They often ended up with harsh work camp sentences.³⁸⁵

A general picture of the fate of other repatriated individuals who served in Finnish intelligence can be formed by combining individual details from the Russian archives and some memoirs. Most of them ended up as colleagues of the Finnic volunteers in the GULag archipelago, sometimes with a slightly more complex and lengthy sentence.³⁸⁶ In these cases, sentences to punishment battalions were not used. Sentences of less than 10 years were handed out. Unlike what happened to the Finnic volunteers, it seems that the degree to which the repatriated revealed what they had done played a key role.³⁸⁷

A special and interesting detail was that the individuals in a large portion of these cases, perhaps even up to half, passed successfully through the filtering at first in spite of everything. In these cases, the men returned to normal service in the army. However, they were later imprisoned and sentenced to the GULag, mostly for long sentences. This occurred chiefly in 1948/1949. Finnish archival resources confirm

³⁸⁴ Hristoforov, Vasili: "Ja vernus' na svoju rodinu daže, esli menja tam budet ždat' smert' (Istorija plena i vožvraženija generala Kirpičnikova). [I Will Return to My Homeland, Even If Only Death Awaits Me there]. The Tale of General Kirpichnikov as a Prisoner of War and His Return Home].

³⁸⁵ AU FSB RK arh. 28 byv [former] 465 temat 5 tema 113-5.

³⁸⁶ CA MO RF, card catalog and A UFSB RK Doklady 2 otdela MGB K-FSSR 1948g. 1.1.47-31.12.47 delo no4 častn svob 13.11.2002 tema 55a BI 37. Many cases like this also recall that of Makara (see footnote 9.).

³⁸⁷ A UFSB RK arh. 28 byv [former] 465 temat 5 tema 113-5.

that most of them appear as liaison officers in documents from Finnish intelligence. The charge of cooperation with enemy intelligence had not been manufactured out of nothing.

The Leino list - forced repatriations of Finnish citizens and stateless individuals

The experience of the Leino list, named for the then communist minister of the interior, Yrjö Leino, of 20 individuals repatriated in 1945 is quite similar to the aforementioned group of those who had served in Finnish intelligence. The Leino list was small, but it was particularly important. After their arrest, they were transferred in a special airplane from the Malmi airport straight to Moscow. More precisely, they were taken to the Lubyanka, the center of the NKVD.³⁸⁸ Aside from one prisoner of war, these prisoners were Finnish citizens or holders of Nansen passports.³⁸⁹ It is still quite unclear why the NKVD had prepared this list of "special wishes." The chief connecting factor in the group seems to be Russian ethnicity and service in Russian white émigré organizations. One Nansen passport holder was repatriated because he was confused with someone of the same name.

³⁹⁰

Only the highest ranking of those on the Leino list seemed to be a first class candidate for a demand for repatriation from the perspective of his intelligence value. This was Severin Dobrovolskii, who was a former general in the Imperial Russian Army. Dobrovolskii was not accused of connections with German intelligence in his trial, as has often been claimed. It was more a question of

³⁸⁸ For information on the creation of the Leino list, see Martelius, Juha: "Leinon vankien" pidätys ja luovutus Neuvostoliittoon [The arrest and extradition of the "Leino prisoners" to the Soviet Union]. In: Turvallisuuspoliisi 75 vuotta 1919-1994. Helsinki 1994 (=Poliisin oppikirjasarja Nr. 1236-8261; 1994, 1), pp. 164-169. A systematic investigation of the fate of those on the list is in Edvard Hämäläinen: Hämäläjäinen [Hämäläinen] Edvard: "Uzniki Lejno" ["The Leino Prisoners"] Russkaja mysl Nr. 4371, 5.7. 2001. Also available on the internet: <http://www.kolumbus.fi/edvard.hamalainen/docs/uzniki.htm>. Three of the people on the list who returned to Finland have also published their memoirs: Björkelund, Boris: Stalinille menetetyt vuoteni. Elämäni vaiheet 1945-1955 [My Years Lost to Stalin. Phases of My Life 1945-1955]. Porvoo 1966. Berin-Bey, Boris: Venäjän punainen lihamylly [The Red Meat Grinder of Russia]. Turku 1974. Parvilahti, Unto: Berijan tarhat. Havaintoja ja muistikuvia Neuvostoliitosta vuosilta 1945-54 [Beria's Gardens. Observations and Recollections of the Soviet Union from 1945 to 1955]. Helsinki 2.ed 2004. *ibid.*: Terekille ja takaisin [To Terek and Back].

³⁸⁸ Interview of Irina Björkelund in Helsinki on January 7, 2006. Nearly all the archival material is in the Archives of SUPO (Security Police) and the VALPO (State Police) Collections at the Finnish National Archives.

³⁸⁹ A mysterious prisoner of war by the name of Aleksandr Kalashnikov had served in Finnish intelligence. Finnish intelligence believed the individual was actually Orest Belyanskii (SUPO XXV A 6 27), which could also be a pseudonym because this person is not in the records of the little town of Kargopol, which was said to be his hometown.

³⁹⁰ Vasilii Maksimov, mistaken for his politically more active uncle and namesake.

connections with Finnish and Japanese intelligence.³⁹¹ Alongside Kirpichnikov, Dobrovolskii became (in 1946) the second victim to be executed among the groups repatriated from Finland to the Soviet Union.³⁹²

Everyone else on the Leino list, including the one repatriated by mistake, received 5 to 20 year sentences to the GULAG after months of interrogations in the Lubyanka. Unlike the other groups, special tribunals operating outside the law handed down these sentences, not military courts. On the basis of three memoirs, systematic sleep deprivation was used as a method of torture during the interrogations. This method was familiar to others who were repatriated. Physical beatings were not used. All the individuals on the list were sent to serve their sentences in places separated from each other. Their camps were also often switched as well.

These prisoners were clearly regarded as exceptionally important politically. They were not left in peace after their sentences. They were often retrieved from their camps to be brought back to prison for weeks or months. In addition to sleep deprivation, they were starved, threatened, and subjected to faked evidence to pressure them. High ranking NKVD officers participated in the interrogations, most of whom were executed in 1953 with the fall of Lavrenti Beria in the realignments in the Soviet leadership following Stalin's death. The sentence of at least one of the repatriated was extended while serving his term because of a lack of cooperation.³⁹³

Five of those on the Leino list died in camp or prison. Along with the aforementioned death sentence and the unknown fate of the prisoner of war, this results in an approximately 32% mortality rate. This rate is a good illustration of the much harsher "special treatment" meted out to them when compared to the Finnic volunteers. The death rate is not sufficiently explained by the greater age of some of the people on that list, as the majority were young or in healthy middle age. Those who survived were often in very poor shape psychically and physically. These prisoners received amnesties in 1954-1956, and 11 of them returned to Finland. Two had taken Soviet citizenship during their imprisonment to ease their lot and remained there. Those who returned to Finland immediately received a rather large sum of money as compensation for everything when they came back. The condition was, however, that they had to first sign a declaration that they abandoned all other claims regarding their repatriation and imprisonment. Of the

³⁹¹ Bazanov, Pëtr in the project book. Čuev, Sergej Gennad'evič: Spetssslužby tret'ego Rejha. Kniga I [Special Services for the Third Reich. Book I]. Sankt-Petersburg 2003; portrays Dobrovolskii as a fully paid employee of the Gestapo.

³⁹² Defectors are not included here. Artur Lõoke (see p. 23 here), who was returned to the Soviet Union and executed in 1950 can be included among them.

³⁹³The case is that of Boris Björkelund, who has written a very fine memoir (see footnote 45).

two who stayed in Russia, it is known that one was able to return to his civilian career as an engineer. He lived the rest of his life without incident.³⁹⁴

Only one person on the Leino list was rehabilitated. This was the only ethnic Finn.³⁹⁵ This was not a result of pressure from the Finns, but an initiative from the Russian side. This could point to the Russian ethnicity of the individual being still seen as a deciding factor if he had been in a strategically important service for his new fatherland.

Ingrian orphans

Unlike the general treatment accorded to Ingrian Finns, the hundreds of Ingrian orphans forcibly repatriated by police action were never taken back to Ingria. A very few of them succeeded in getting sent to their relatives elsewhere in Russia. Two orphans in an orphanage in Vologda managed to achieve a little demonstration of humanity by writing and mailing themselves a letter directly to Stalin in 1946, going to the top of the system of violence. The orphan sisters were returned to their former foster home in Finland.³⁹⁶

Beginning in 1989, some orphans were able in the end to return with the Ingrian return to Finland. At least a few Ingrian orphans avoided a certainly traumatic forced repatriation without supportive adults when the supportive relatives sacrificed themselves by returning, although they did not want to. However in this case, the orphans easily ended up with their supportive adults in a multiyear forced relocation in particular misery.³⁹⁷

German prisoners of war taken by Finland

Based on the collections of the Russian military archives (RGVA), a harsh phase of starvation in 1944-1945 weighed on the fate of the 2,700 German prisoners of war repatriated by Finland.³⁹⁸ When the war came to an end, the situation improved very rapidly. The mortality rate as a whole was about 30 percent. Among the ethnic Germans, their return to Germany and other fates seem the same as with other German prisoners of war generally. Most Austrians were transferred to Romania,

³⁹⁴ Phone interview with the daughter of Igor Verigin in 2006.

³⁹⁵ The case is that of Unto Boman, who published two memoirs under the name Unto Parvilahti (see footnote 45).

³⁹⁶ Toivola Elena: Onnellinen sotaorpo Suomessa [The happy war orphan in Finland] *Inkeriläisten Viesti* 1-2/2005, s.10-12.

³⁹⁷ Interview with Hanna Joronen in Tartu in 2005.

³⁹⁸ The former Military Archives of Finland (SA), now part of the National Archives of Finland, has lists of German prisoners of war transferred (Finnish Red Cross Collection, SPR Bg 6) to the Soviet Union. These lists contain 2,640 names. In addition, Finland sent approximately 70 shipwrecked German sailors to the Soviet Union in December 1944.

where information on them is generally not available. Many of these Austrian prisoners of war probably actually returned through the intermediate stopping point of Romania.

Mysterious questions remain about the fate of the volunteers or forced conscripts of many nations transferred along with the real German prisoners of war. For understandable reasons, many of them had difficulty in getting to Romania or elsewhere. Their fate in the prison camps had not been any easier than that of the Germans. However, a lowered mortality rate can be discerned among the Austrians. The main camp for all the transferred prisoners was located in the Borovichsky district in the Novgorod region.

Soviet defectors

The last group repatriated from Finland to the Soviet Union was made up of Soviet defectors who had arrived in Finland after the Armistice and then were repatriated. Most of them were Estonian in the 1940s, which was the most active period. They ended up in the GULAG system as a rule. However, at least one of them, Artur Lõoke, received a sentence that differed from the norm. In 1950, a military court handed down a death sentence, that was then carried out. This third victim executed among those repatriated from Finland to the Soviet Union belonged to the Estonian resistance movement opposing the occupation. This was not the official reason for the death sentence, however, as the accusation focused on the aiding and abetting of a murder committed with German troops while the Germans were occupying the area. Lõoke had a helpful network of contacts spread throughout Finland. The same can be said about Herman Treial, who had served as a Captain in the Estonian army defected with him and died later in Finland of illness.³⁹⁹ Only his lethal illness saved him from repatriation with Lõoke.

Prisoners of war transferred to Germany in the light of Soviet documents

When it came to the Soviet prisoners of war transferred from Finland to Germany, archival material from the Russian Ministry of Defense Archive (TsAMO) in Podolsk was delivered quickly and efficiently. This material has many mysterious gaps and often has few details. Nevertheless, it is possible to draw some conclusions. This judgment focuses on the fate of those who were transferred both when they were in German hands and later on in the Soviet Union.

The transfers from Finland to Germany seemed to have been part of a purposeful plan in the context of intelligence and collaboration policies. Most of the officers and political officers either had been in German service or such service can be suspected on the basis of indirect reasoning. However, there is no sign of any officer or political officer generally serving directly in the German Army. Instead,

³⁹⁹ SUPO XXV A 6 854.

the majority of soldiers from the Caucasus are recorded as serving in the German Army. In practice, this means they were in the so-called national legions.

One of those transferred to the Germans was later executed by the Soviet state. The Polish Soviet officer Aleksandr Patrinnik was obviously found on an intelligence mission on the Kola Peninsula in 1943. As a consequence, he was condemned to death.⁴⁰⁰

With regards to the transferred, it can be partially shown and partially estimated that the majority of them returned to the Soviet Union. Obviously sentences followed these returns. In some cases, perhaps intelligence operations were kept secret; however, in the Russian archives the materials on these operations were made available for use. Only a small minority of the transferred were able to continue their original careers after they returned to the Soviet Union.

The most famous individual in this group certainly did not prosper in his career. However, he was able to avoid a sentence in investigative detention. Kristjan Palusalu (March 10, 1908 - July 7, 1987) won two gold medals in heavyweight wrestling (one in Greco-Roman wrestling and one in freestyle) in the 1936 Berlin Olympics. No one has been able to replicate this feat in any other single Olympics.⁴⁰¹ It has recently been confirmed that the model for the controversial Bronze Soldier of Tallinn (Enn Roos, 1946) was Palusalu. The location of the monument became an object of dispute between Estonia and the Russian Federation.⁴⁰²

⁴⁰⁰ <http://www.obd-memorial.ru>, personal acts of Aleksandr Patrinnik.

⁴⁰¹ The chief source on Palusalu's life for the following section is Kivine, Paavo: *Kristjan Palusalu. Mälestusi, müüte, materjale* [Memories, myths, materials]. [Tallinn?] 2006. The work is not a systematic biography, but a collection of different materials about his life. The collection includes a lot of stories by people who knew Palusalu, newspaper articles and photographs. It also includes an Estonian translation of the investigative documents related to Palusalu's arrest from 1945/1946. An attempt at a modest biography is the bilingual Paloheimo, Pertti: *Kristjan Palusalu: urheilusankari / spordisangar* [Kristjan Palusalu: the hero athlete]. [?] [200?].

⁴⁰² Kauppala, Pekka: *Tajna broncovogo soldata*. In: *Delo* 21.6.2007. pp. 1 and 8. Also: <http://www.idelo.ru/468/1.html>
ibid.: *Niezwykłe losy "Brazowego Estończyka"*. *Tygodnik Powszechny* 8.7.2007, pp. 10-11. Also: wiadomosci.onet.pl/1421949,2678,1,0,1,kioskart.html?drukuj=1.



The head of the Bronze Soldier and a commemorative poster of Kristjan Palusalu from the 1936 Berlin Olympics. *Collage by Aleksandr Zakirov*

Kristjan Palusalu fled from a punishment battalion to Finland in the fall of 1941. He was transferred to the Germans in Tallinn on January 1, 1942. Although Palusalu was very quickly released from German detention (like all other prisoners of war brought in the same shipment according to Soviet information), he did not seem to be particularly favored by the Germans. According to his wife's story, the Germans did not let him live in Tallinn and therefore the family lived on the family farm in his home district. Palusalu was also not seen on any wrestling mat.

An NKVD detachment fighting "bandits" arrested Palusalu at his family farm in January 1945 for suspected participation in seizing Soviet partisans and infiltrators. Palusalu was declared a prisoner on suspicion of voluntarily surrendering in 1941. He denied this charge. Charges were raised on the basis of article 58 b of the Soviet criminal code, which was the heaviest statute available. The case was transferred to a military prosecutor. After an investigative detention lasting a year and a half, the deputy military prosecutor in charge dropped the case due to a lack of evidence. In August 1945, Palusalu was freed as new investigations came to the conclusion that he had been taken prisoner when he was wounded while encircled. The prevailing

view is that the Estonian party leader Nikolai Karotamm and the NKVD leader Boris Kumm, who was a sports enthusiast arranged the release. Similar procedures were also done for other athletes. Palusalu returned to his position as a trainer in Tallinn. He even competed in numerous wrestling exhibitions in different parts of Estonia between 1948 and 1951. However, Soviet authorities discriminated against him which ended his career as an international athlete in practice.

The leadership of the Vlasov army also included a rather famous person, who was in all probability transferred as a Soviet prisoner of war from Finnish custody to the German. Photographs and archival documents strongly suggests that the propaganda chief of general Vlasov was actually a professor of Herten Institute in Leningrad, Aleksandr Malkis. When serving in this role Malkis used the pseudonym Meletii Zykov.

Zykov was regarded as the most intellectual and the most secretive member of the Vlasov organization. He is commonly held to have played a large role in the buildup of the movement. This Jewish political officer, who was in German service, disappeared in the aftermath of the July 1944 assassination attempt on Hitler. His “protector” was one of the key members of the attempt, Major Wessel Freytag von Loringhoven. The Gestapo most likely arrested and executed Zykov.

Malkis was the highest ranking political officer (*politkomissar*) transferred from the Finns to the Germans⁴⁰³. It should be also noted that other Jewish political officers, as well as ordinary officers, were transferred by the Finns to German custody. The majority of them collaborated with the Germans⁴⁰⁴.

⁴⁰³ CA MO RF personal card (with a photography). Malkis was born in 1897 in Odessa. To Zykov s. Steenberg, Sven: Wlassow. Verräter oder Patriot? [Vlasov. A Traitor or a Patriot?] Köln 1968; and Strik-Strikfel'dt [Strick-Strickfeldt], V.: Protiv Stalina i Gitlera. General Vlasov i Russkoe osvoboditel'noe dvizhenie [Against Stalin and Hitler. General Vlasov and the Russian Liberation Movement]. 3rd issue. Moskva 1993 [German orig. 1970], especially pp. 158-159 and also Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv [German Military Archives in Freiburg i. Br.] MSG 137/8 – 165 and –149; MSG 149/8 -98.

⁴⁰⁴ See remarks like “serving the Germans” (“služil u nemcev”) in CA MO RF ordinary officer and political officer cards.



Meletii Zykov (left) with General Georgii Zhilenkov of the Vlasov army during the war in Germany. *Steenberg Sven: Wlassow*

From an international perspective, what then is the final evaluation of the fate of those transferred, repatriated and returned from Finland to the Soviet Union. Such repatriations are not the slightest bit unique, particularly in an Eastern Europe that

was strongly under the influence of the Soviet Union.⁴⁰⁵ The Western countries also generally transferred their Soviet prisoners of war to the Soviet Union, whether they wanted to be sent back or not. Only Liechtenstein refused as a matter of principle to repatriate individuals by force. Former Soviet citizens who fought against the Soviet Union were likewise easily transferred by force. However, these transfers and repatriations, particularly from Eastern European states, have only rarely been even initially researched in any professional sense.⁴⁰⁶ For example, the most interesting point of comparison of all to Finland, the transfers from Romania to the Soviet Union and possibly also elsewhere, is mostly uninvestigated.

One factor was that the Soviet Union had a massive shortage of labor due to the destruction caused by the war. It attempted to relieve this problem by scraping together as much foreign labor as possible on different grounds. For the same reasons meanwhile, the Soviet Union only tried in exceptional cases to destroy collaborators who had committed really serious crimes. Instead, the Soviet Union preferred to try to acquire labor *en masse* in former enemy countries, even from civilian populations that had not taken part in the war at all. Things never went this far in Finland, even in the form of a request.

For various reasons, the labor reserve available in Finland was only a drop in an ocean of need. The Soviet Union experienced extreme poverty in the 1940s. In 1947 in particular, it swayed on the edge of starvation conditions on the whole. In these conditions, all the different groups of the "army of labor" acquired from

⁴⁰⁵The basic work on the bilateral German-Soviet exchange of individuals and the fate of prisoners of war in general is Poljan, Pavel: *Žertvy dvuh diktatur. Žizn, trud, uniženie i smert' sovetских voennoplennyh i ostarbeiterov na čužbine i na rodine* [Victims of Two Dictatorships: The Life, Work, Abuse, and Death of Soviet Prisoners of War and "East Workers" in Foreign Lands and at Home]. Moskva 2002. The German version (Poljan, Pavel M.: *Deportiert nach Hause. Sowjetische Kriegsgefangene im „Dritten Reich“ und ihre Repatriierung*, München/Wien 2001) is chiefly composed of the same information, but is considerably shorter. The very extensive Zagorulko, M.P. (ed.): *Voennoplennye v SSSR. 1939–1956* [Prisoners of War in the Soviet Union 1939-1956]. Moskva 2000 is catalog and statistically oriented. Also note Zemskov, V.N.: *Specposelency v SSSR 1930–1960* [Forced Settlement in the Soviet Union 1930-1960]. Moskva 2003. This is the most extensive and comprehensive work of the author, which also contains extensive material for things extending from the return of prisoners of war to other conditions. Short collections on the entire theme include: *ibid.*: *K. voprosu o repatriacii sovetских graždan. 1944–1951 gody* [On the Question of the Repatriation of Soviet Citizens, 1944-1951], *Istorija SSSR* Nr. 4, 1990; *ibid.*: *Repatriacija sovetских graždan i ih dal'nejšaja sud'ba, 1944–1956* [The Repatriation of Soviet Citizens and Their Later Fates]. *Sociologičeskie issledovanija* Nr. 5-6, 1995; and Arzamaskin, Ju.: *Založniki vtoroj mirovoj vojny. Repatriacija sovetских graždan v 1944–1953 gg.* [Hostages of World War Two. The Return of Soviet Citizens 1944–1953]. Moskva 2001.

⁴⁰⁶ The basic work on these issues is still Tolstoy (see footnote 14).



Фамилия *Малкис*
 Имя *Александр*
 Отчество *Исакович*
 Состав *Высшие Лейтенантский*
 (ран воюет) *Полковой Комиссар*
 Пр. НКО 1940 г. № *21/02*
 (ран воюет) *БВС № 11*
 По *Октябрьскому* РВК *Минусинск* КРАЯ
Зина Виллис 1919 г., чл. бил. № *2451398* в РККА с 1919 г. по 1926 г.
 (партийности)
 Род. в *гор. Одессе* в 1897 г.
 Пронх. Соц. полож. *Слушаний*
 Вн. образ. *Не имеет*
 Гражд. вобр. и спец. *Киевский университет - физико-математический факультет*
в 1919 г. Одесский университет - экон. и статистический факультет по специальности
экономиста в 1922 г. Прибыло в гос. ст. канд. на звание кандидата экон. наук
в 1926 г. Ученая степень в Украинском университете в 1928 г. Ученая степень
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в 2006 г. Ученая степень в Украинском университете в 2008 г. Ученая степень
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в 2018 г. Ученая степень в Украинском университете в 2020 г. Ученая степень
в 2022 г. Ученая степень в Украинском университете в 2024 г. Ученая степень

Aleksandr Malkis' pre-1941 political officer's card from the Soviet Army. CAMO, Russian Federation

abroad and the workers "gathered" from the Soviet homeland were treated much like each other. On all sides, every last possible drop of labor had to be wrung out of the repatriated. In the long run these workers could not be destroyed because the policy of taking advantage of this labor had to continue. This presupposed a decent diet and the prevention of the spread of disease. However, in order to not make "useless" investments everything that could even hint at rising the standard of living needed to be avoided.

Thus, life in the GULag archipelago or in the comparable civilian conditions was extremely difficult. But, the chance of survival in this dismal state within a state was average in the end. An extermination camp it wasn't. Nikolai Jaakkola, who was a well-regarded Soviet Karelian writer, was transferred from Finland to Germany and then to the Soviet Union.⁴⁰⁷ In the end, Jaakkola was released

⁴⁰⁷ The return to the Soviet Union in 1944 is without doubt true. Jaakkola's card in the Finnish Red Cross, Finnish Military Archives, SPR Bg 54 card catalogs is in the section for prisoners of war transferred to the Germans, but there is no record of the transfer. Jaakkola is not on the list of those transferred to the Germans. The card could have ended up in the wrong catalog by mistake, but it is also possible that Jaakkola belonged among the group that was transferred to the Germans, but was then returned to the Finns. There are at least two such cases.

without a sentence from a Soviet filtering camp. He later said that his time as a prisoner of war opened his horizons and allowed him to develop into a significant writer.⁴⁰⁸ The concluding book of his main work, the Pirttijärvi epic, was "To Calm Waters." The end is easy to interpret as a meditation on a personal and larger level on the war. It is a symbol of the tragedy and greatness of human life among those repatriated and transferred from Finland to the Soviet Union, and of those who swayed between the two.

"When Huoti and Natalia went to check the nets at the Mauranhauva Deeps, clouds appeared in the sky and the wind began to blow. The wind was not strong, but it was there, causing the waves to crash into each other at the mouth of the bay leading to the village. The boat swayed. Huoti recalled what the men of the village had said about his father. In his life he had tried to escape from the crosswinds to calm waters. Maybe he could get there? It was hard to get there when you must row over the peaks of the waves where it was seldom calm. After a moment of calm, the wind begins to blow again, churning the water, from the side, from the front, from the back. The wind is eternal. And you must always row from the crosswinds to calm waters, from the calm waters to the crosswinds, and then back again to calm waters..."⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁸ Jaakkola, Nikolai: Heillekin oli kotimaa kallis [The homeland was also dear to them] Carelia 7/1992, p. 4-54 and 8/1992 [post mortem publication], p. 4-46. This work is his memoir of this time as a prisoner of war. A basic "confession" for the filtration process in 1944-45 can be found in A UFSB RK; N 27 delo n lager-izoljator n 3 Sjujuspoh'ja i peresel. lagerja Naarajarvi, Haukiperja (Finljandija) (pokazanija sov. plennyh Jakkola, Nefedova, Lehto, Kojvisto, Aalto) temat 5; pp.1-110.

⁴⁰⁹ Jaakkola, Nikolai: Pirttijärven rantamalla [On the shores of Pirttijärvi]. Petroskoi 1977, p. 607.



PRISONERS OF WAR DEATHS

In World War II Finland held in custody around 70,000 registered Soviet Prisoners-Of-War (POW), and roughly 26,000 interned Soviet civilians. Mortality among the POWs was fairly modest during the Winter War of 1939-40, but boomed in 1941-1944, during the Continuation War. During Finland's alliance with Germany in 1941-1944, the Finns handed over approximately 2,500 POWs and civilians to the German authorities. Roughly 42,000 surviving Soviet POWs were repatriated to the Soviet Union, partly contrary to their own wishes – a few thousand of them had fought along with the Finnish forces.

The National Archives carried out a research project on these topics in 2004-08. The book sheds light upon these crucial events.

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