

Prisoners of war

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Résumé ou extrait : The Second World War between the European Axis powers and the Allies saw more than twenty million soldiers taken as prisoners of war. While this total is inflated by the unconditional surrender of all German forces in Europe on 8 May 1945, it nonetheless highlights the fact that captivity was one of the most common experiences for all those in uniform - even more common than frontline service. Despite this, and the huge literature on so many aspects of the war, prisoner of war histories have remained a separate and sometimes isolated element in the wider national chronicles of the conflict constructed in the post war era. Prisoners of every nationality had their own narratives of military service and captivity. While it is impossible to encompass their collective histories, let alone the individual experiences of all twenty million prisoners in a single volume, Bob Moore uses a series of case studies to highlight the key elements involved and to introduce, analyse, and refine some of the major debates that have arisen in the existing historiography. The study is divided into three broad sections: captivity in Eastern and Western Europe during the war itself, comparative studies of specific categories of prisoners, and the repatriation and reintegration of prisoners after the war.

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