

## BUCHENWALD



"To Each His Own": The camp gate at Buchenwald taken after liberation.  
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## BUCHENWALD MAIN CAMP

The Buchenwald concentration camp was established at the beginning of July 1937 on the climatically harsh north slope of the 478-meter-high (1,568-foot-high) Ettersberg, a hill north of the city of Weimar. The camp was to hold up to 8,000 prisoners, mostly from central Germany (Thuringia, Hessen, the Ruhr, and parts of Saxony), and was to replace several camps such as Bad Sulza, Sachsenburg, and Lichtenburg, which were in the process of being dissolved. The immediate reason for the establishment of the camp just north of Weimar was the clay to be found in the area, which could be used for the manufacture of bricks.

The first prisoners arrived at the camp on July 15, 1937. They were confronted with very difficult conditions: they had to clear the forest and construct the barracks and other buildings without excavators, cranes, tip carts, or tractors. These conditions, together with the completely inadequate rations, led to an enormous loss of life during the camp's construction.

The camp was built initially on 104 hectares (257 acres) and later expanded to cover 190 hectares (470 acres). It consisted of

33 wooden barracks, 15 two-story stone buildings, a roll-call square, a prisoners' infirmary (*Revier*), kitchen, laundry, canteen, storerooms, workshops for the camp's tradesmen, a disinfection building, market garden, and various other structures. Additional buildings included a crematorium built in 1940, another disinfection building in 1942–1943, and at the end of 1943 a railway station, as well as a brothel—the first in a concentration camp. About 16 female prisoners, most from Ravensbrück, were forced to prostitute themselves for German and Austrian non-Jewish prisoners and, from 1944 on, for foreign prisoners other than Soviets. The camp was secured by a double electrified barbed-wire fence more than 3 meters (9.8 feet) high and by 22 two-level guard towers.

The camp administration and SS facilities were located outside the prisoners' area. These comprised the command buildings, adjutant's offices, political department (headquarters of the Gestapo), and the SS canteen (*Führerkasino*), as well as administration and operational buildings such as garages, barracks for the commandant's men, workshops, armory, shooting range, central heating station, stables, kennels, and indoor rid-



Post-liberation aerial view of Buchenwald, 1945.  
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ing arena. The SS-Totenkopfstandarte (Death's Head Regiment) 3 "Thüringen" was stationed here; it was responsible for securing the camp. Some of the members of the Standarte were very young and were called up to the front in September 1939. They were replaced by guards from the Concentration Camp Reserve (KL-Verstärkung), who were essentially older SS men, many of whom had been disabled in combat. Beginning in July 1944, more than 2,700 Luftwaffe members were transferred to the guard. By the end of the camp's existence, they were divided into 46 companies each of 150 men and were responsible for the main camp and the subcamps. Buchenwald also was the central base for the Waffen-SS Driver, Training, and Replacement Unit (Kraftfahrt-, Ausbildungs- und Ersatzabteilung). Furthermore, close to the camp were two settlements for SS members and their families, including living quarters for the camp commandant, SS-Standartenführer Karl Koch (July 1937 to December 1941) and his successor, SS-Oberführer Hermann Pister (January 1942 to April 1945). Buchenwald was a concentration camp, production site, military base, and civilian SS settlement, and in the spring of 1945, it became the last headquarters of the SS-Führungshauptamt.

There were numerous prisoner detachments in the area of the camp. The prisoners were used to clear forests and to work in the quarry detachment (Steinbruchkommando); they worked at the brick mill established in Berlstedt (part of the German Earth and Stone Works, or DESt) in 1938; and they served local firms, for which they constructed the Marschler Settlement in Oberweimar and laid water pipes between Tonndorf and Buchenwald. They worked for the workshops operated by the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Grossmarkthalle Weimar. They built gas lines for the Weimar Stadtwerke. Altogether, the prisoners worked at more than 90 locations for employers in Weimar and its surroundings. From 1940 on, there was a branch of the German Equipment Works (DAW) in the camp, where up to 1,400 prisoners worked in meeting SS war needs. In 1942, an armaments factory was established adjacent to the camp, which the SS leased in 1943 to the Weimar Wilhelm-Gustloff-NS-Industriestiftung. In 13 factory



Prisoners perform forced labor near the entrance to Buchenwald, nd. USHMM WS # 81241, COURTESY OF IPN

buildings, between 5,000 and 6,000 prisoners manufactured rifles and carbines, pistols, gun mounts, optical devices, and mechanical parts for the V-1 and V-2 (Vengeance weapons). The factory, secured by an electrified barbed-wire fence and 13 guard towers, was destroyed during an Allied bombing raid on August 24, 1944. Production just about ceased completely.

By 1940, construction of the camp was largely completed. Only in 1942–1943 did the camp's character change one more time when it became a main camp and transit camp. Likewise, the number and type of prisoners went through a similar transformation. During the early stages of the camp, German political prisoners formed one of the most important prisoner groups. They arrived with the first transports from Sachsenhausen, Sachsenburg, and Lichtenburg, which included leading Communists and other prominent personalities.<sup>1</sup> In the autumn of 1938, prominent Austrians arrived at the camp, including senior officials from the Dollfuss and Schuschnigg governments.

In the years that followed, several special prisons for prominent inmates were established close to the camp. French politicians were held in Falkenhof between 1943 and 1945; between 1942 and 1944 members of the Romanian Iron Guard were held in the "Sonderlager Fichtenhain." Political prisoners and conspirators from the July 20, 1944, coup attempt were held in an isolation barracks. SS detention facilities in a cellar of one of the troop barracks held special Reich Security Main Office (RSHA) prisoners from March 1945 on.

The camp was marked from the beginning by a bitter struggle between the criminal, so-called green prisoners (for the color of badge they wore) and the political or "red" prisoners, over positions in the camp's prisoner administration.<sup>2</sup> By 1943, the Communist prisoners with their allies had control of all the important camp positions, including the camp elder and almost all block elders, as well as foremen in the important detachments. Organized along Stalinist lines, schooled in conspiratorial work, and with the benefit of intensive cooperation before their imprisonment in Buchenwald, the Communists, as one of the most stable groups in the camp, could build an administrative structure that, on the one hand, became indispensable for the SS and, on the other hand, could channel the SS terror. Eugen Kogon, himself a Buchenwald prisoner, stated, "What the Communists did in service of the concentration camp prisoners . . . cannot be valued highly enough."<sup>3</sup> While this monopoly led to privileges held by a specific prisoner group, improved their chances of survival, and resulted in the pragmatic exercise of power, it could not exclude some collaboration with the SS. There also existed, parallel to the prisoner administration, a secret organization of (mostly German) Communists, the International Camp Committee Buchenwald (Internationales Lagerkomitee Buchenwald, ILKB). The ILKB was the largest Communist underground organization within the SS camp system, and it controlled and coordinated the prisoners' activities. This became obvious during the last years of the war, when the 100-strong Lagerschutz,



the camp elder's mobile security force, became operational, including its own sanitation and rescue squads as well as a fire brigade. At least to some extent, the *Lagerschutz* was able to limit the SS presence in the camp. But this group also served as a supplier for the planned armed uprising by the prisoners, which was to be done on strict military lines with the few weapons that had been smuggled into the camp.<sup>4</sup>

There were not only Communists and criminals in the camp. The many other prisoner groups included Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexuals, Sinti and Roma (Gypsies), deserters, and others deemed "unworthy of military service" (*Wehrunwürdige*). Buchenwald was, in its early phase, the only concentration camp to which the so-called "work-shy" prisoners (*Arbeitsscheue*) were sent. Beginning in 1938, and especially following the 1938 Reich Pogrom (also called *Kristallnacht*), Jews were also sent to the camp. Between November 1938 and February 1939, around 10,000 so-called *Aktionsjuden* were held in a "Pogrom Special Camp" (*Pogromsonderlager*), a barnlike emergency accommodation without heating, windows, or foundations. Many died from the inhuman conditions. A short-lived tent camp was established in September 1939 at the edge of the roll-call square for 400 Viennese and 100 Polish Jews as well as 100 non-Jewish Poles (partisans or so-called *Heckenschützen*). By February 1940, more than 40 percent of these inmates had died.

In addition to these two temporary camps, there were other fenced-off special areas in the camp that served specific purposes. For example, between 1941 and 1945, three barracks held Soviet prisoners of war (POWs), and several barracks functioned as a labor education camp (*Arbeitserziehungslager*). With the outbreak of World War II, more and more foreign prisoners were sent to Buchenwald, including Czechs, Slovaks, Dutch, Poles, French, Spaniards, and Soviets: POWs, forced laborers, and resistance fighters.<sup>5</sup> Eventually there were prisoners from 35 nationalities in the camp.



Dutch Jewish prisoners stand at roll call shortly after their arrival, on February 28, 1941, at Buchenwald. The letter "N" stands for the Netherlands.

USHMM WS # 83718, COURTESY OF AG-B

The total population varied between the period of comparative normality, in which the camp held 8,000 to 10,000 inmates, to periods of catastrophic overcrowding. The high point was reached on April 6, 1945, when the camp held roughly 48,000 prisoners. The frequent overcrowding, coupled with the inhuman work, horrific living conditions, and the abysmal hygiene, resulted in epidemics, which at times spread to neighboring villages.

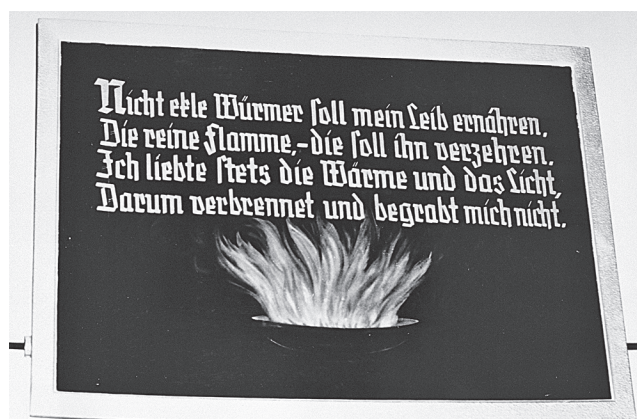
Prisoners did not die just from the extreme work and poor living conditions. They were also deliberately murdered. The nefarious camp punishment system, with hours-long punishment roll calls, punishment labor during rest periods, food deprivation, arrests, and beatings, as well as labor in closed punishment companies (for example, the quarry and market gardens), resulted in physical injuries and exhaustion, which were deadly under the conditions of the camp. In addition, the prisoners were physically mistreated, for example, with "tree hangings" (*Baumbängen*). Occasionally, prisoners were deliberately driven across the sentry line (*Postenkette*) toward the camp fence, which meant that the guards could shoot them without warning. Buchenwald was the first concentration camp where a prisoner was publicly hanged; this took place in 1938, following an escape attempt in which an SS man was killed.

Prisoners were also killed on a much larger scale, however. In 1940, Roma from the Burgenland who were suffering from an infectious eye disease were killed by injection. In the middle of 1941, the same fate met all those prisoners who were obviously suffering from tuberculosis—approximately 500 victims. In 1941–1942, as part of the 14f13 Program, at least six transports with 517 incurable or handicapped prisoners, mostly Jewish, were taken to the euthanasia facilities at Bernburg and Sonnenstein bei Pirna and killed. The murder of prisoners who could no longer work reached its climax at the beginning of 1945, when completely exhausted prisoners from evacuation transports from Auschwitz and Gross-Rosen were selected to be *abgespritzt*, camp slang for death by injection.

Through about 1943, 8,000 Soviet POWs were killed in specially converted stables; they were shot in the neck by members of the so-called Kommando 99 while undergoing a fictitious medical examination. In autumn 1943, 36 Polish officers were hanged, and in autumn 1944, 38 members of Allied secret services were murdered in the camp. These executions took place mostly in the crematorium and its courtyard.

Buchenwald was also one of the execution sites for regional Gestapo offices. Civilians, prisoners, and foreign forced laborers who committed a "crime" were executed here. The most prominent victim of such executions was Ernst Thälmann, chairman of the German Communist Party (KPD) since 1925. He had been interned since 1933 and was murdered in the Buchenwald crematorium on August 18, 1944. Kogon estimates the number executed in Buchenwald at around 1,100.<sup>6</sup>

Medical experiments conducted in the camp also contributed to the number of deaths. Early in 1942, following discussions between government authorities, Wehrmacht offices, representatives of the chemical industry including IG Farben



A sign on the crematorium wall at Buchenwald reads, "No loathsome worms should feast on my body. The pure flames should consume it. I always loved the warmth and light, and for that reason you should not bury but cremate me."

USHMM WS # 06494, COURTESY OF NARA

and Madaus AG, and the SS, Barracks 44 and 49 (later also Barracks 46) were converted into laboratories where the effectiveness of vaccines was tested on prisoners. Initially confined to epidemic typhus, the tests were expanded to include yellow fever, small pox, typhoid, paratyphus A and B, cholera, diphtheria, various poisons, phosphorous rubber (the contents of incendiary bombs), and the effectiveness of blood plasma beyond its date of expiration. Block 50 was opened in 1943 by the department of the Institute of Hygiene—Department for Typhus and Viral Research (Hygiene-Institut der Waffen-SS [Berlin] Abteilung für Fleckfieber- und Virusforschung) as a production site for a typhus serum; medical practitioners from the Wehrmacht, the Robert-Koch-Institut in Berlin, and a number of companies were able to work in the guest laboratory (*Gästelabor*). Hundreds of prisoners died during the experiments.

In 1942–1943, the transformation of the camp into a main and transit camp led to the establishment of the so-called Kleines Lager (or small camp). Here, on the one hand, newly arrived prisoners were held in quarantine. On the other hand, the Kleines Lager served as a kind of waiting area for prisoners who had been selected for the work in subcamps. The conditions in the Kleines Lager, which was located in the northern area of the camp barracks, were even worse than in the main camp: it had 12, later 17, Wehrmacht stables, in each of which 1,000 to 1,500 people were accommodated in three- and four-level bunks. Sometimes there were also completely overcrowded army tents, which offered no real protection from the elements. The Kleines Lager was separated from the main camp by a double barbed-wire fence. Severe lack of food and catastrophic hygienic conditions (for example, there was only one mass latrine) turned the Kleines Lager into a camp of death and disease (*Siechen- und Sterbelager*), especially from the beginning of 1945, when it became the favorite depository for prisoner transports arriving from Gross-Rosen and Auschwitz. As the largest remaining concentration camp at this time, Buchenwald was required to take these transports. Within 100 days at the

beginning of 1945, more than 5,200 died in Buchenwald. In the week from February 26 to March 2, 1945, 3,096 prisoners died, most of them in the Kleines Lager.<sup>7</sup>

Even the prisoner administration was helpless in the face of these conditions. Nevertheless, Buchenwald remained until the end a place of self-assertion and resistance, as can be seen in many examples, for instance, in the life of the Evangelical priest Paul Schneider<sup>8</sup> or the establishment, from 1943 on, of national prisoner assistance committees that undertook measures to save the lives of children sent to the camp. On the initiative of the camp elder, two *Kinderblocks* were established that held Jewish, Ukrainian, and Russian children, where they were educated in the so-called Poles' School (Polenschule). Nine hundred and four children survived Buchenwald; the youngest, Stefan Jerzy Zweig, son of a Polish Jewish lawyer, was three and a half years old.

The evacuation of the prisoners to Theresienstadt, Dachau, and Flossenbürg was planned for the first few days in April. But the camp elder's influence and the prisoners' passive resistance resulted in the continued delay of evacuation transports so that of the 48,000 prisoners in the camp at this time, only 28,000 were evacuated, mostly Jews and Soviet POWs. It is estimated that about a third of the prisoners did not survive these death marches.

The camp was liberated on April 11, 1945, after about 2,700 of the 3,000 SS men had fled the camp. Around midday, when a U.S. Army tank was seen at the edge of the camp, the military-trained prisoners took action and occupied the camp's guard towers. They patrolled the area around the camp, where they were able to capture around 80 SS guards and make contact with U.S. troops. Care for the approximately 21,000 prisoners who remained in the camp continued in the hands of the prisoner administration even when the U.S. Army officially took over the camp on April 13 and disarmed the prisoners. In the following months, around a quarter of the 4,700 seriously ill prisoners died. In all, approximately 56,000 of the 238,980 male prisoners sent to Buchenwald died.<sup>9</sup> At around 30 percent, Jews were the largest group of dead in Buchenwald. The last prisoners left the camp in July 1945.

Representatives of the SS guards were tried before a U.S. military court after the war in the so-called Buchenwald Trial in 1947. Thirty SS members were tried together with SS-Obergruppenführer Josias Erbprinz zu Waldeck und Pyrmont, the Höhere SS- und Polizeiführer of Oberabschnitt Fulda-Werra and the highest Buchenwald overlord. Included among the 30 SS members was the SS-Standortarzt Dr. Gerhard Schiedlausky, who was tried separately before a British military court, sentenced to death, and executed. Camp commandant SS-Oberführer Pister was sentenced to death in 1947 but died in prison. Members of the medical personnel were also tried, including Dr. Hanns Eisele, responsible for the murder of those suffering from tuberculosis. Ilse Koch, wife of the SS-Standartenführer and camp commandant Karl Koch, was brought to trial. Her husband had been arrested in December 1941 on suspicion of corruption. As punishment, he was posted to Lublin-Majdanek as commandant of that



camp. He was sentenced to death by an SS police court and executed in April 1945.

The trial ended on August 14, 1947, when 22 death sentences, 5 life sentences, and 4 prison sentences of between 4 and 10 years were handed down. Twenty-five subsequent trials before a U.S. military court in Dachau investigated crimes committed in Buchenwald. By 1951, 9 members of the camp's command and a camp elder had been executed. By the middle of the 1950s, all the convicted were free except for Ilse Koch. Further court proceedings before German courts continued into the 1960s, for example, against Martin Sommer and Ilse Koch at the Bayreuth Landgericht in 1958, and in 1961 against SS-Hauptscharführer Wilhelm Schäfer, who had taken part in the murder of Soviet POWs.

**SOURCES** A bibliography on Buchenwald literature would comprise many volumes. Only a few key resources will be stated here. One of the earliest camp descriptions appeared in English and French with the title *Papers Concerning the Treatment of German Nationals in Germany 1938–1939* (London: HMSO, 1939). Six years later, the British Parliament published a report of a parliamentary delegation that inspected the camp: James Richard Stanhope, *Buchenwald Camp: The Report of a Parliamentary Delegation* (London: HMSO, April 1945). Another important source for the history of the camp is the *Bericht des Internationalen Lagerkomitees des KZ Buchenwald* (1945; repr., Offenbach: Verlag O. Benario and H. Baum, 1997), which was based upon 250 individual reports. Many Buchenwald prisoners have published their prison experiences, including Eugen Kogon's sociological analysis, *Der NS-Staat: Das System der deutschen Konzentrationslager* (Munich, 1947), which has been reissued numerous times since. It is available in English as *The Theory and Practice of Hell* (New York: Berkley, 1984). The Buchenwald concentration camp was used in the GDR as a means to legitimize the Communist struggle against National Socialism. From the early 1950s, publications focused strongly on this part of the camp's history including the brochure published by the Komitee der Antifaschistischen Widerstandskämpfer der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, Buchenwald (Berlin: Kongress-Verlag, 1959). There was a similar focus in the publication in 1958 on the establishment of the Nationale Mahn- und Gedenkstätte Buchenwald: Fritz Cremer, *Das Buchenwald-Denkmal* (Dresden: Deutsche Akademie der Künste, Verlag der Kunst, 1960); and Günther Kühn and Wolfgang Weber, *Stärker als die Wölfe: Ein Bericht über die illegale militärische Organisation im ehemaligen Konzentrationslager Buchenwald und den bewaffneten Aufstand* (1976; rev., East Berlin, 1988). In the following years, the *Buchenwaldbefreiung* published by the Gedenkstätte Buchenwald focused increasingly on less researched aspects of the camp's history. The catalog *Ausstellung Konzentrationslager Buchenwald: Post Weimar/Thür* (West Berlin: Nationale Mahn- und Gedenkstätte Buchenwald, 1990) updated aspects of research and interpretation. A very critical view of the history of the camp and its prisoner administration based on documents from the Stalinist purges in the GDR in the 1950s is Lutz Niethammer's *Der "gesäuberte" Antifaschismus: Die SED und die roten Kapos von Buchenwald* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1994). The author investigates the postwar careers of former prisoner-functionaries

in the Soviet Occupation Zone and later the GDR. The Gedenkstätte Buchenwald has published numerous works on the history of the camp, including specialized themes. A good review on the state of research and a detailed history of the camp is Harry Stein's article in Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel, eds., *Ort des Terrors*, vol. 3, *Sachsenhausen, Buchenwald* (Munich: Beck-Verlag, 2006), pp. 301–356. Harry Stein has written several other essays on the camp, including *Juden in Buchenwald 1937–1942* (Weimar: Gedenkstätte Buchenwald, 1992); (with U. Schneider), *IG Farben—Buchenwald—Menschenversuche: Ein dokumentarischer Bericht* (Weimar-Buchenwald, 1986); "Die Vernichtungstransporte aus Buchenwald in die 'T4'-Anstalt Sonnenstein," *SBGSSS* 3 (2001): 29–50; and "Das Sonderlager im Konzentrationslager Buchenwald nach den Pogromen 1938," in *Nach der Kristallnacht: Jüdisches Leben und antijüdische Politik in Frankfurt am Main 1938–1945*, ed. Monica Kingreen (Frankfurt am Main, 1999), pp. 19–54. Information on the camp brothel is to be found in Christa Paul, *Zwangsprostitution: Staatlich errichtete Bordelle im Nationalsozialismus* (Berlin, 1994); and Christa Schulz, "Weibliche Häftlinge aus Ravensbrück in Bordellen der Männerkonzentrationslager," in *Frauen in Konzentrationslagern: Bergen-Belsen, Ravensbrück*, ed. Claus Füllberg-Stolberg et al. (Bremen, 1994), pp. 135–146. A review of current questions on archeological research on the camp site is by Ronald Hirt in *Offene Befunde: Ausgrabungen in Buchenwald; Zeitgeschichtliche Archäologie und Erinnerungskultur* (Weimar: Gedenkstätte Buchenwald, 1999). In *Die Inszenierung der Stadt. Planen und Bauen im NS in Weimar* (Weimar, 1999), Karin Loos investigates the relationship between the city and the concentration camp, as does Jens Schley in *Nachbar Buchenwald: Die Stadt Weimar und ihr Konzentrationslager 1937–1945* (Cologne: Weimar; Vienna: Böhlau-Verlag, 1999). Information on camp commandant Koch is to be found in Tom Segev, *Soldiers of Evil: The Commandants of the Nazi Concentration Camps* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1988), pp. 180–183; and for his wife, Ilse Koch, and her trials at the beginning of the 1950s, see Arthur L. Smith Jr., *Die "Hexe von Buchenwald"* (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 1983). For further specialized aspects of the camp history, see Katrin Greiser, "Die Buchenwald-Bahn," in *Mohn und Gedächtnis*, ed. Ute Wrede (Ostfildern-Ruit, 1999), pp. 27–60; Wolfgang Röhl, *Homosexuelle Häftlinge im Konzentrationslager Buchenwald* (Weimar, 1992); Katrin Greiser, "'Sie starben allein und ruhig, ohne zu schreien oder jemanden zu rufen': Das 'Kleine Lager' im Konzentrationslager Buchenwald," *DaHe* 14 (1998): 102–124; and Werner Scherf, *Die Verbrechen der SS-Ärzte im KZ Buchenwald—der antifaschistische Widerstand der Häftlinge im Häftlingskrankenbau*, 2nd ed. (Berlin, 1987). Buchenwald concentration camp is listed in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer SS in Deutschland und den besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 62; and the "Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und ihrer Aussenkommandos gemäss § 42 Abs. 2 BEG," *BGBI.* (1977) Teil I, p. 1795.

The extensive collection of original documents in the AG-B collections and at ITS are the most relevant for the reconstruction of the history of the Buchenwald concentration camp. In addition, there are numerous files held in the collections of the ThHStA-W, in particular, NS 4 Bu with its numerous subgroups. See the same collection in USHMMA RG 14.023M, Records of the Buchenwald Concentration Camp.

USHMMA holds other collections on the Buchenwald concentration camp, including RG-04.029\*01, Buchenwald construction drawings and a report by the Sixth Service Command from 1944 on conditions in Buchenwald, including statements by early prisoners; RG-09.005\*08, USHMC, 1981 International Liberators Conference, Collection: Buchenwald; Acc. 1995.A.049, Alexander Szczucki letter, a description of the camp made shortly after its liberation; RG-02.127; Acc. 1994.A.211, "And where was God?" a 1960 MSS that describes the experiences of a prisoner in Prague, Łódź, Buchenwald, Nordhausen, and Bergen-Belsen; RG-02.166, the memoirs of Benjamin Klotz, 1939–1946, including his arrest and transfer to Buchenwald; RG-55.003\*17 Acc. 1992.A.034, correspondence and statement by Aleksander Tytus Kulisiewicz on music in Buchenwald; and Acc. 1995.A.762, memoirs by Nicholas Burliuk regarding Buchenwald survivors on a hospital ship, as well as countless others. USHMMPA holds a collection of photographs from the time Buchenwald was liberated. Other files are held in NARA, including statements by the former camp commandant, Hermann Pister, to the U.S. military court and other trial documents in RG 153, Records of the JAG, *USA v. Prince von Waldeck, et al.*, in Modern Military Branch; Collection Fourth Armored Division, 604-2.2-Daily Reports, June 1944–May 1945, which includes the report of U.S. Army member Paul Bodot, who as a scout of the Fourth Armored Division of the Third U.S. Army entered the camp; and in RG 33, Records of Allied Operational and Occupation Headquarters, World War II, a report by 1st Lt. Egon W. Fleck and Edward A. Tenenbaum, Psychological Warfare Department, Twelfth U.S. Army Group, with the title, "Buchenwald: Ein vorläufiger Bericht" of April 24, 1945. An interesting documentary source is held in the LMRD, a photo album apparently prepared at the request of the SS and titled "Buchenwald Jahresende 1943." Numerous details can be obtained from charges, trial records, and statutory declarations made during the Buchenwald trials, which are also not listed here. A statutory declaration by camp commandant Hermann Pister from July 2, 1945, is found in NO-254. Files on the SS court's investigation into the first camp commandant, Karl Koch, are in BA-B, Signatur NS 71/1020. Aside from Kogon's account, there are numerous autobiographies by Buchenwald prisoners: Benedikt Kautsky, *Teufel und Verdammte: Erfahrungen und Erkenntnisse aus sieben Jahren in deutschen Konzentrationslagern* (Vienna: Verlag der Wiener Volksbuchhandlung, 1961); Julius Freund, *O Buchenwald* (Klagenfurt: Self-published, 1945); Moritz Zahnwetzler, *KZ Buchenwald: Erlebnisbericht* (Kassel-Sandershausen, 1946); Alfred Bunzöl, *Erlebnisse eines politischen Gefangenen im KZ Buchenwald* (Weimar, 1946); Walter Poller, *Arztstreifer in Buchenwald* (Hamburg: Phönix-Verlag Christen & Co., 1946); Ernst Wiechert, *Der Totenwald* (Zurich: Rascher-Verlag, 1946) (which was written in 1939); and Wiechert, *Häftling Nr. 7188: Tagebuchnotizen und Briefe* (Munich, 1966); Isa Vermehren, *Reise durch den letzten Akt: Ein Bericht* (Hamburg: C.-Wegner-Verlag, 1946); Jorge Semprun et al., *Was für ein schöner Sonntag* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1999), originally available in English as *What a Beautiful Sunday!* (San Diego, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1982); and Semprun, *Schreiben oder Leben* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1995). Other survivors' memoirs are Karl Barthel, *Rot färbt sich der Morgen: Erinnerungen* (Rudolstadt,

1959); Abram Korn, *Abe's Story: A Holocaust Memoir* (Atlanta: Longstreet Press, 1995); Giovanni Marcato, *Buchenwald il mio nome era 34989* (Treviso: Canova-Verlag, 2000); and Paul Vicctor, *Buchenwald: A Survivor's Memoir* (Tucson, AZ: Wheatmark, 2006). The former prisoner Bruno Apitz has provided a lasting but heroic memorial to the Communist resistance in the camp in his novel *Nackt unter Wölfen* (Halle an der Saale: MitteldeutscheVerlag, 1958), which has been translated into many languages.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. For a list of prominent Buchenwald prisoners including biographical details, see Gedenkstätte Buchenwald, ed. *Buchenwald Concentration Camp 1937–1945. A Guide to the Permanent Historical Exhibition* (Göttingen, 2004), pp. 293–305; and Lutz Niethammer, *Der "gesäuberte" Antifaschismus: Die SED und die roten Kapos von Buchenwald* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1994), pp. 493–519.

2. The early literature calls this administrative system the "Häftlingsselbstverwaltung." Harry Stein correctly points out that the functionaries only had a degree of autonomy, and this did not in any way reach the level of prisoner self-administration. See Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel, eds., *Der Ort des Terrors*, vol. 3, *Sachsenhausen, Buchenwald* (Munich: Beck-Verlag, 2006), p. 333.

3. Eugen Kogon, *Der NS-Staat: Das System der deutschen Konzentrationslager* (Munich, 1947), p. 330.

4. Although there is not room for a detailed examination of the issue here, the reader should know that the resistance's scope and degree of organization are disputed.

5. For more exact numbers, see *Ausstellung Konzentrationslager Buchenwald: Post Weimar/Thür* (West Berlin: Nationale Mahn- und Gedenkstätte Buchenwald, 1990), pp. 23–54; *Buchenwald Concentration Camp 1937–1945. A Guide to the Permanent Historical Exhibition*, pp. 60–85, 152–176.

6. Kogon, *Der NS-Staat*, p. 166.

7. The high number of dead is not only due to the generally catastrophic conditions in the camp but also to the mass killing of prisoners by injection of those who arrived on the evacuation marches from Auschwitz and Gross-Rosen in the camp in a completely weakened state. The number of the dead was 3,096, according to the *Bericht des Internationalen Lagerkomitees des KZ Buchenwald* (1945; repr., Offenbach: Verlag O. Benario und H. Baum, 1997), p. 7.

8. See *Der Prediger von Buchenwald: Das Martyrium Paul Schneiders*, intro. by Heinrich Vogel (Berlin, 1953); and Claude R. Foster, *Paul Schneider, the Buchenwald Apostle: A Christian Martyr in Nazi Germany; A Sourcebook on the German Church Struggle* (West Chester, PA: West Chester University Press, 1995).

9. This number is an estimate based upon the following: the number of registered dead to the end of March 1945 (33,462); 913 dead between April 1 and 10, 1945; around 27,000 prisoners who died in the Buchenwald subcamps, around 8,000 shot Soviet POWs, 1,100 other executions, and around 12,000 victims on the evacuation marches, as estimated in Stein in Benz and Distel, *Ort des Terrors*, p. 347.